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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Interlude or Industry? : Ranching in British Columbia, 1859-1885

According to one of British Columbia's most eminent early historians, R.E. Gosnell, "cowpunching was more or less inducive to laziness and lack of public spirit" and ranching was the means whereby disillusioned miners passed the time until the railroad arrived.[1] Like Gosnell, modern academic historians have largely ignored the role of ranching in their rush to examine the fur trade, the gold rush and the railroads as the important features of nineteenth century British Columbia.[2] Most of the literature on ranching is in the form of reminiscences that are often more colourful than accurate such as Uncle Dan Drumheller Tells Thrills of Western Trails.[3]

In fact, in the twenty years between the decline of the Cariboo gold rush and the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885, ranching dominated the economy of the interior of British Columbia. Ranching generated the capital that allowed diversification into other types of agriculture and sustained fledgling grain and fruit industries until they were competitive. While statistical proof is not available, it also seems probable that the growth of ranching as an indigenous agricultural industry was the major means whereby British Columbia captured the few lasting economic benefits of the gold rush.

The cattle ranching industry in the Pacific Northwest began on Saturday, April 23, 1814 at Fort George (Astoria), a small fur trading post established by the Astor Company at the mouth of the Columbia River. In 1813, the North West Company "bought" the post and it was one of its traders, Alexander Henry, who recorded in his journal the arrival of the ship, the Isaac Todd, and "how at 6:30 a boat with six men landed two young bulls and two heifers brought from San Francisco."[4] From this humble beginning, the herd at Fort George increased, at first very slowly, under the auspices of the North West Company.

The amalgamation of the North West Company with the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821 brought a new emphasis to stock raising. When Governor George Simpson of the Hudson's Bay Company toured the Columbia region in 1824, he was shocked by the expense of maintaining the posts and declared that every post should become self supporting. The herd that was only 17 strong when Simpson arrived increased to over 450 by 1833 under the careful supervision of Dr. John McLoughlin.

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[1] R.E. Gosnell, "History of Farming," in Adam Shortt and Arthur G. Doughty, eds., Canada and Its Provinces, (Toronto: T.A. Constable, 1914), vol. XXIII, p. 531.

[2] Martin Robin, The Rush for Spoils (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), p.36. In her British Columbia: A History (Toronto: Macmillan, 1958), Margaret Ormsby gives ranching in the post gold rush era but passing mention. (p. 240)

[3] D. Drumheller, Uncle Dan Drumheller Tells Thrills of Western Trails (Spokane, 1925).

[4] Alexander Henry Journal, cited in C.S. Kingston, "Introduction of Cattle to the Pacific Northwest," Washington Historical Quarterly, vol. XIV (July 1937), p. 165. The Spaniards imported cattle to Nootka, 1792-1795, but the cattle disappeared after the Spanish left.

Cattle from this herd were driven up the fur brigade trails to Fort Kamloops, Fort Alexandria, and Fort George and later to Forts Colvile, Nisqually, Okanagan, and Vancouver. In addition, Forts Kamloops and Alexandria kept large herds of packhorses for the use of the fur brigades. By 1848 there were between five and six thousand head at Fort Kamloops and two hundred at Fort Alexandria.[5] When the international boundary was settled on the forty-ninth parallel from the Rockies to the Coast, the Hudson's Bay Company and its subsidiary, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, began moving their stock north into British territory to Fort Victoria, Fort Langley, and especially to Fort Kamloops.

The thousands of hungry miners who entered the Fraser Canyon in 1858 and worked their way up river to the Thompson River opened a huge market for beef. Towns were "pitched" at Hope, Yale, Lytton, Lillooet, and Douglas and at smaller communities at various "bars" along the river. By September, 9,000 men were making good wages on the bars above Hope. The next season, miners and prospectors spread up as far north as Fort George. In 1860, the rich strikes at Keithley Creek and Williams Creek, made the Cariboo the focus of excitement. Fabulous wages were being made and equally fabulous prices were being demanded for food especially since the cost of transporting provisions from Victoria to Alexandria was $825 a ton.[6]

Oregon ranchers quickly seized the opportunity to supply the mining population, estimated to have exceeded 30,000 in a single season; they soon displaced the Hudson's Bay Company.[7] Cattle bought for $10 a head in Oregon sold for $40-50 a head in the Cariboo.[8] Because many ranchers were not prepared to undertake the risk of a cattle drive or take time away from their ranches a class of professional drovers developed. Many were continuing a career they had followed in the American West, others were young ranch hands looking for adventure. Many subsequently started their own ranches in British Columbia.

Why did the Hudson's Bay Company play such a passive role in meeting the demand for beef and other food stuffs? It is possible that the Company's cumbersome corporate structure, geared for so long to dealing in furs, prevented fast action and an easy switch to the cattle trade. However, this does not fully explain why even after ten years of consistently high demand the company made so little use of its cattle resources or why it assisted other drovers to the extent of lending them money to pay the duty of two dollars a head on imported horses, cows and bulls and one dollar on sheep and goats.[9]

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[5] F. W. Howay and E.O.S. Scholefield, British Columbia from the Earliest Times to the Present (Vancouver, S.J. Clarke, 1914) Vol. II. pp. 590-2.

[6] Ormsby, British Columbia, pp. 161 and 183.

[7] H.P. Plasterer, Fort Victoria, (n.p., n.d.), p. 32.

[8] Gregory E.G. Thomas, "The British Columbia Ranching Frontier, 1858-1896," M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1976, p. 21. Estimates of prices vary. Clement Cornwall records in his diary that he paid $60 a head at Lytton while Alex Bulman says that cattle could be bought in Oregon for $25-30 a head and sold in the Cariboo for $125-150 a head.

[9] Thomas, "B. C. Ranching Frontier," p. 85.

Usually, an individual borrowed money to buy a herd of between two and eight hundred head, hired four to ten cowboys, depending on the size of the herd, and headed north to the border. After paying duty, the expense of keeping the cattle was limited to the cowboys' wages of $25 to $30 per month and board.[10]

Typically, the cattle drovers crossed the border at Osoyoos and passed along the shore of Okanagan Lake on the old fur brigade trail, then over through Kamloops and up to Quesnel thence east to the Barkerville area. The timing of the drive was of great importance to the drovers whose main obstacles were the crossings of the Columbia, Thompson, and lesser rivers. Crossing the rivers was impossible in the spring freshets so that the most lucrative drive was the first to arrive at the mines in the spring. Because many of the miners left the camps for the winter, a herd of cattle was almost useless if it arrived in the fall. As a consequence, many drovers started out in the fall and let their cows winter on the rich bunchgrass of the Interior Plateau, then crossed the Plateau to the mines in the early spring.[11] In this way the drovers became aware of the ranching potential of the region. The winters were generally mild enough for the cattle to forage year round, water plentiful, the land unclaimed and the bunchgrass so luxuriating that Judge Matthew Baillie Begbie suggested "the entire country resembles a vast park attached to a nobleman's mansion in England - nothing but grass and ornamental clumps of trees."[12] Many of the drovers like Louis Campbell, James Leighton, A.S. Bates, and J. Palmer, found themselves with windfall profits. Rather than paying the rising costs for increasingly scarce range land in Oregon and Washington they started ranching in the colony. The cattle drovers continued to play an important role in feeding the miners and stocking the growing number of ranches until 1870 when the colony became virtually self-sufficient in beef production.[13]

Two of the most significant of the early drovers were Jerome and Thaddeus Harper. The Harper brothers were born in West Virginia in the 1820's. They first appeared in the colony in 1859 and within two years pre-empted land on the Fraser in the Yale district. They began assembling land by buying out pre-emptors, purchasing land opened by Indian Reserve reductions, and buying out

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[10]Blue Book for the Colony of British Columbia, 1860, Provincial Archives of British Columbia (PABC). British Columbia, Department of Agriculture, Annual Report, 1891. Cowboys were expected to supply their own horses and often their own saddles. Although the $25-30 per month figure is for 1891, cowboys working on Thaddeus Harper's cattle drive to San Francisco in 1874 are reported to have earned $60 per month plus board.

[11]Drumheller records fifty cattle drivers wintering in the Ashcroft area in the winter of 1862-3 with several hundred cattle and five hundred mules. Drumheller, Uncle Dan Drumheller, p. 62.

[12]M.B.Begbie to Governor James Douglas, PABC, Colonial Correspondence, F 142.

[13]F.W. Laing, "Some Pioneers of the Cattle Industry," British Columbia Historical Quarterly (hereafter BCHQ), vol. VI (1942), p. 259.

military grantees. By 1884, Thaddeus (Jerome having died in 1874) owned 14,797 acres east of the Fraser including the Perry Ranch at Cache Creek, Kelly Ranch at Clinton, and Harper's Camp east of Kamloops. To this he added another 18,912 acres purchased from the Crown in 1885 on the west bank of the Fraser in the Chilcotin. This property is still known as the Gang Ranch.[14]

While the American drovers brought with them the operational techniques of cattle ranching, the scale of operations and the trappings of the American cattle frontier, they did not have a monopoly on the cattle trade. Governor James Douglas had early recognized the importance of encouraging agriculture and the fragility of a mining and mercantile economy. As he explained to the Colonial Secretary,

> The miner is at best a producer, and leaves no traces but those of despoilation behind; the merchant is allured by hope of gain, but the durable prosperity and substantial wealth of States is no doubt derived from cultivation of the soil. Without the farmer's aid British Columbia must forever remain a desert, be drained of wealth, and dependent on other countries for food.[15]

To this end, the land policy adopted in British Columbia stands in contrast to that initially implemented on nearby Vancouver Island where land sold for one pound per acre and only the gentry were encouraged to settle. In British Columbia the Land Ordinance of 1860 allowed settlers to pre-empt 160 acres with full title being granted after improvement requirements were met, the land was surveyed and ten shillings per acre paid. Additional land could be bought at a five shillings an acre down payment with the remaining five shillings due at time of survey. In 1861 this was changed to allow pre-emptions of 320 acres east of the Cascades and the purchase of additional land at $1 per acre.[16] So attractive was this price that ranchers continued to buy large quantities of land even through the lean years of the 1870's.

Ranchers formed the nucleus of many interior settlements. By 1871 small ranching settlements had grown up around Kamloops, Williams Lake and Big Bar Creek, as well as along the Cariboo Road and in the Nicola Valley.[17] Unlike

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[14] Ibid., pp. 266-269

[15] Douglas to Newcastle, 18 October 1859 cited in G. Neil Perry, "The Significance of Agricultural Production and Trade in the Economic Development of British Columbia," Scientific Agriculture, vol. XX (September 1939).

[16] Robert E. Cail, Land, Man, and the Law (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1974), pp. 13-18.

[17] Margaret Ormsby, "Agriculture in British Columbia," Canadian Journal of Agricultural Science, vol. XX (September 1939), p. 64; Thomas R. Weir, Ranching in the Southern Interior Plateau of British Columbia, Memoir No. 4, Geographical Branch, Mines and Technical Surveys, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1964), pp. 90-92. The first year round ranch was probably that started by missionaries in the Okanagan Valley in 1859. The next year three other ranches were taken up in the Okanagan as well as one at Dog Creek and another in the Similkameen. Thomas, "B.C. Ranching Frontier," p. 42.

the ranchers who settled the Alberta ranching frontier, these settlers were not a homogenous group. Two competing elites emerged. The Americans tended to have economic control; the Anglo-Irish and Canadian faction, political power.

A significant proportion of the early ranchers had been drawn by the California and Cariboo gold rushes from all over the world. The Australian Ranch belies the origin of its owners; the Basque and the Guichon (Quilchena) Ranches were established by Frenchmen; and Americans such as Joel Palmer, the Jeffrie brothers, the Harper brothers, and the Van Volkenberg brothers made a large impact on the Cariboo. The latter two pairs secured virtual monopoly control of cattle importation by 1863. The Van Volkenbergs controlled the slaughterhouses at Barkerville and formed a partnership with the Harper brothers to import cattle from the United States or buy excess cattle from local ranchers. Although this partnership controlled the price paid to local ranchers, cattle were in short supply and prices were relatively high until after 1870 by which time the importance of the Cariboo market had declined. The American Civil War had reduced the supply from south of the border and forced the Harpers to purchase increasing numbers north of the border. These factors ensured that ranches continued to be established throughout this period.

While economic control rested in the hands of American immigrants, the Anglo-Irish and Canadian ranchers held many political, administrative, and social reins. Clement and Henry Cornwall pre-empted land just west of Cache Creek in 1862, and bought their first cows from an Oregon drover for $60 a head.[18] While hardly typical of the ranching population as a whole, the Cambridge educated Cornwall brothers set the pace for political and social life in the interior. Clement Cornwall, the first member of the Legislative Council elected for Yale, served in political office until his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor in 1881. C.F. Houghton represented Yale-Kootenay in the House of Commons (1871-2) as one of British Columbia's first M.P.s while Hewitt Bostock of the Monte Creek Ranch represented Yale-Cariboo (1896-1900) and later became Liberal leader in the Senate. Irishmen such as the Vernon brothers, Thomas Ellis and Edward Trounce played political, social or administrative roles in the ranching community. Educated eastern Canadians who took up ranching such as former Ottawan, Cornelius O'Keefe and the former school teacher, Charles Semlin, who later became premier, formed a compatible group.

While the British and Canadian ranchers became probably the most visible interest group in the province prior to the railway, they never approached the power of the "Cattle Compact" that appeared later on the Alberta frontier. The British Columbia ranchers did not have the influential lobbyists which the Alberta ranchers and their predominantly eastern investors had in Ottawa. Furthermore, the heterogenity of the ranchers in ethnic origin, education, and the size of holdings prevented the establishment of an organization similar to the Stockgrowers Association that formed a power base for the Alberta "Compact."[19]

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[18] Clement Cornwall, Diary, 1862, PABC.

[19] David Breen, "The Canadian West and the Ranching Frontier, 1875-1921," Ph.D. thesis, University of Alberta, 1972.

The peak in Cariboo gold production and the completion of the Cariboo Wagon Road in 1863 had great significance for the ranchers. Ranches sprang up along the road, often in conjunction with "Road Houses" at such places as 70 Mile, 100 Mile, and 150 Mile Posts. The Cariboo Road and other wagon roads provided access to previously hard to reach ranching areas, communication with the markets at the gold fields, and trade from the travellers and stage coaches. The stage coaches required a set of fresh horses approximately every eighteen miles so ranches and road houses developed at this interval. The rancher earned revenue from keeping and feeding stage horses and selling food, beverage, and lodging (usually floor space) to the travellers. From a simple road house the rancher often diversified into a store, a blacksmith shop and earned capital that could be invested in other endeavours.[20]

The ranchers with capital could also take advantage of the economies of scale with regard to the provision of labour. They established the first flour and grist mills in the interior. In 1861 Samuel Lerner and Charles Brown established a mill and by December 1866 Clement Cornwall reported, "the little mill has ground since the middle of September something over 70,000 lbs., of wheat, about $1,050 worth." The Harper brothers were involved in the construction of a flour mill at Clinton in 1868, as they had a sawmill at Quesnelmouth in 1863. The Cornwalls also operated a sawmill at an early date and other ranchers followed suit. The ranchers also introduced fruit farming into the interior. Between 1864 and 1880, Thomas Earle made large plantings around Lytton; in 1879 plantings were made near Penticton but the first large commercial planting did not occur until 1892 when Lord Aberdeen had 200 acres planted at both of his ranches, the Guichon at Kamloops and the Coldstream at Vernon. The ranchers already had a labour force with which to maintain the trees and a steady income to sustain them while the trees matured.[21]

Ranchers showed their adaptability to new circumstances when the Cariboo began to decline in importance as a mining district and as a market for their cattle. As prices in the Cariboo tumbled from $60 a head to $12-$15 a head,[22] more and more ranchers used improved roads and trails to drive their cattle to the coastal markets of Victoria and New Westminster. Okanagan and Nicola Valley ranchers used the Dewdney Trail, which had been extended to Rock Creek in the Kootenays in 1865. Ashcroft and Kamloops district farmers drove their cattle down the Cariboo Road to Yale, and the Cariboo ranchers over the Seton-Anderson and Harrison Lake route to Douglas. Cattle would then be taken by steamer to New Westminster or to Victoria where they grazed at "Cattle Point" before ending up in the Van Volkenberg's wholesale and retail butcher shop.

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[20] A.S. Bate had a hotel, store, and a blacksmith shop as well as running 400 head of cattle at 150 Mile House after 1861. (Virginia Paul, This Was Cattle Ranching (Seattle: Superior, 1973), p. 26.

[21] F. W. Laing, "Early Flour Mills in British Columbia," BCHQ, vol. V (1941), p. 194; Clement Cornwall, Diary, December 10, 1866; Nina Wooliams, Cattle Ranch (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1979), p. 12.

[22] Laing, "Some Pioneers of the Cattle Industry," pp. 267-9

Cariboo ranchers also exported large quantities of stock. In 1865 John Shaw drove the first large herd into Alberta and laid the foundation for the cattle industry there.[23] In 1876, Thaddeus Harper embarked on a cattle drive to Salt Lake City where he planned to load his herd on the railway and ship them to the Chicago market. Instead, he diverted his herd to San Francisco and made a tidy profit.

The brightest spot on the rancher's horizon, however, was the coming of the railway and the markets it would open up. One rancher was not content to wait for the arrival of the railway. Joseph Blackbourne Greaves, (pronounced Graves), an Englishman, came to British Columbia by way of California as a drover in 1864. He practised his father's vocation as a butcher for a few years, started ranching near Walhachin and, from there, drove his cattle to the coast. Like many other ranchers of the period he accumulated land during the relatively lean years of the 1870's, and by 1879 he owned 1,000 acres along the Thompson River. Greaves was one of the first to realize the significance of the CPR's 1881 call for tenders to supply beef for construction crews. Realizing that his herd would not make a dent in the demand for beef, he searched for means to control a larger supply. He introduced Van Volkenberg to the idea of cornering the B.C. cattle market and securing the contract to supply the CPR. To amass the estimated $80,000 necessary the pair interested four additional partners: Joseph Despard Pemberton, former surveyor general and wealthy Victoria landholder; William Curtis Ward, manager of the Bank of British Columbia, probably the most important financial figure in B.C.; Charles Thompson, a Victoria entrepreneur and owner of the Victoria Gas Company; and former Gold Commissioner, member of the Legislative Council, and Judge, Peter O'Reilly. The syndicate charged Greaves with buying up all the steers and cows ready for the 1882 market. Keeping the plan secret, Greaves rode all over B.C. buying local cattle at $17-25 a head and leaving them on the owners' ranch until they were needed. Thaddeus Harper got the CPR contract in 1882 but had to pay well over $25 a head for the available cattle. By the following year Greaves had the market cornered. Harper had to default on his contract, which the syndicate picked up. The syndicate made enormous profits, and continued to control the cattle market even after 1884, when Greaves made history by shipping the first cattle from Yale to Port Moody by rail. A reorganization of the syndicate in 1884 brought Charles Beak, the partner of Greaves cattle raising business, into the group as O'Reilly and Pemberton sold out. In 1886 the four remaining partners formed the first cattle company in B.C., the Douglas Lake Cattle Company.[24] Two years later, the Western Canada Ranching Company, a British investment firm, bought out the Harper interest, including the Gang Ranch.

Until this time, the dominant form of ranching ownership had been partnerships, and often one family partnerships as is evidenced by the Harpers, the Jeffries, the Van Volkenbergs, the Vernons, the Cornwalls, the Moores, and the Guichon brothers. These and other partnerships such as that of Thomas Wood and Cornelius O'Keefe developed for a variety of reasons. Partnerships facilitated the raising of the initial capital for cattle purchases, doubled the size of

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[23] Breen, "The Canadian West," p.22.

[24] See Wooliams, Cattle Ranch, for the Greaves' story.

holdings available for pre-emption. (160 acres per person), and lasted as the dominant form of organization because of their flexibility in the face of constantly changing circumstances. However, by 1884 the concentration of market power and the increased competition via the railway, with the large Alberta Companies forced some British Columbia firms to adopt corporate control of their ranches.

The coming of the CPR meant other changes for the ranchers. One of the most dramatic of these was the gradual appearance of fences literally snaking their way across the interior plateau. Crop, fruit and vegetable growers who took up the land in the railway grant had to protect their farms from grazing herds. In sharp contrast to the Alberta settlement frontier, British Columbia experienced relatively few rancher-settler conflicts and nothing approaching the range wars of Alberta. In a large part this was due to the limited number of homesteaders who made their way to the interior of British Columbia because of the inability of the area to sustain intensive cultivation. Where orchards replaced ranches, as in the Okanagan and at Walhachin, the ranchers were often delighted to sell to British land companies at the inflated prices of the 1890's fruit boom. Thomas Ellis, for example, sold his 30,000 acres for $300,000 to the South Okanagan Land Company in 1905 along with his 3,750 cattle which added to his profit.[25]

The realization that ranchers had allowed over-grazing and the degradation of much of the rangelands -- most of which have never fully recovered -- also prompted the fencing of range land. Concern about over-grazing had been expressed as early as 1865 when the land ordinance was introduced to allow private ownership of grazing rights. In 1873, Reverend G.M. Grant, secretary to Sanford Fleming on his railway surveying expedition, described the Ashcroft areas as being "little better than a vast sand and gravel pit bounded by broken hills, bald and arid except on a few summits that support a scanty growth of scrub pine."[26] Ranchers began to fence cattle out of parts of the range to allow the bunchgrass to recover.

With the coming of the C.P.R., ranchers were able to send cattle to the coast in better condition and they got better prices. The railway, however, also brought competition from Alberta and this forced British Columbia ranchers to pay closer attention to improving quality through cross-breeding and winter feeding. Previously, most ranchers considered winter feeding unnecessary except in very severe winters. Cattle left to forage for themselves were often four or five years old before they were of marketable size; if fattened by winter feeding and more nutritious diets, they could be sold younger. The introduction of the horse-pulled bay mowing machine in the late nineteenth century and the hay baling machine in the early years of the twentieth increased the practicality of growing forage crops and accelerated their use.

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[25] C. W. Vrooman, "A History of Ranching in British Columbia," The Economic Annalist (April 1941), p.22.

[26] Cited in Ed Gould, Ranching in Western Canada (Sidney: Hancock House, 1978), p. 112.

Technology was changing other industries in the 1890's and these began to overshadow ranching in parts of the province. Irrigation systems were watering the orchards in the Okanagan, steam engines were making coastal logging more efficient, and hardrock mining techniques were being applied in the Kootenays. The economy of British Columbia was changing.

In the period between the decline of gold as the staple of the economy and the fruit, mining and lumber boom, cattle ranching was ascendant as the dominant economic activity of the interior. While information regarding the colonial and early post-Confederation years is far from complete, and in many cases of questionable accuracy, it is possible to glimpse a picture of the economy. As early as 1865, the unofficial census reported 180 men employed in agriculture compared with 200 in mining, 22 in commerce and none in manufacturing in the Quesnelmouth district in the heart of the mining district. In 1870 it was reported that in the whole colony 2300 men were engaged in mining, 1800 in agriculture, 1300 in trade and 400 in manufacturing. This trend towards a proportionately larger labour force in agriculture is demonstrated by the 1881 census which showed 2,792 were employed in mining while 2,617 worked in agricultural pursuits. Of the five census districts in British Columbia only the Cariboo had more men engaged in mining than in agriculture, though it was also an important ranching district.[27] Throughout the province, ranching was the dominant use of agricultural land. Of 441,255 acres occupied in 1881, all but 86,428 acres were pasture or grazing lands. Even these figures underestimate the importance of ranching because much of the orchard, garden and land under crops was devoted to growing fodder.[28] Ranching also provided the main agricultural export. At no time between 1872 and 1900 did animal products comprise less than eighty per cent of agricultural exports and in some years such as 1881, they provided one hundred per cent of these exports.

Of the estimated $39,953,718 total yield of the Cariboo gold rush between 1858 and 1876,[29] probably little more than that paid to ranchers actually stayed in British Columbia. The predominantly transient population invested little of its takings in British Columbia. What little was invested was largely directed to ranching, road houses and associated endeavours. Very little of the capital equipment used by miners was manufactured in British Columbia. Many of the merchants who capitalized on the influx of miners into Victoria were newly transplanted San Francisco merchants who withdrew with their profits

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[27] British Columbia, Blue Book, 1865; R.E. Caves and R.H. Holton, "An Outline of the Economic History of British Columbia, 1881-1951," in J. Friesen and K. Ralston, eds., Historical Essays on British Columbia (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), p. 152; Canada, Census, 1881, vol. 2, pp. 319-327.

[28] Canada, Census, 1881, vol. 3. p. 113. The Census also illustrates the extent of crop land devoted to fodder: the Yale district with a population of 9,200 Indians and Whites and no urban markets had 26,393 acres under crop while New Westminster district with its population of 15,000 had 28,600 acres in crops.

[29] M.Q. Innis, Economic History of Canada (Toronto: Ryerson, 1935), p. 227.

when the rush subsided.[30] Without a doubt, the largest capital gains accruing to British Columbia residents over the period came from the conversion of the rolling hills of bunchgrass into productive ranches that came to be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars by the turn of the century, and a large proportion of these capital gains stayed in the province.[31] Thus, while the evidence remains fragmentary, it seems to point to the conclusion that agriculture in general and ranching in particular played a highly significant role in British Columbia's development in the late nineteenth century. Ranching was more than an interlude, it was an industry and it was investment.

John S. Lutz

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[30]While the extent of capital exported in this way cannot be easily quantified, an indication of the extent of the operation of American firms can be gleaned from the fact that one third of the over eighty firms listed in Victoria's first directory were based in San Francisco, Harry Gregson, A History of Victoria (North Vancouver: J.J. Douglas, 1977), p.22.

[31]Perry, "Significance of Agricultural Production," p.85.

Roads, Ranchers and Reds: A Political Letter of 1894

The letter published below from Premier and Attorney-General Theodore Davie to J.D. Prentice, the manager of the Gang Ranch, touches on several persistent themes in British Columbia history: the interplay between road building and politics, the role of British investment in provincial development, and the political establishment's fear of socialism.

Ever since Sir James Douglas authorized the construction of roads to the gold fields, roads in British Columbia have been transportation routes as well as ways to political success. Though the emphasis has been on main highways and trunk roads, the provincial government has also had to concern itself with local roads in those areas of the province where municipal government did not exist. From the context of the letter it is evident that the British Columbia Land and Investment Agency, through its associated company, the Western Canadian Ranching Company (the corporate name of the Gang Ranch), had built a public road for its own purposes with the expectation that it would recover the cost from the province. Though the Estimates and Public Accounts published in the Sessional Papers are detailed, it is difficult to ascertain, without more identification, whether the $1500 that Davie refers to was actually included in the Estimates or paid out.

Nevertheless, the Davie government did impose a punishment for Prentice's political actions. When H.C. Beeton, a London resident, retired as Agent-General later in 1894, the government did not appoint an officer of the B.C. Land and Investment Agency to replace him but selected F.G. Vernon, an

Okanagan rancher and former member of the Davie cabinet who had been defeated in the 1894 election.

The B. C. Land and Investment Agency, whose head office was in London, England, traced its history back to 1863. It engaged in the insurance and investment brokerage business as well as in the management of estates. When Thaddeus Harper, the original owner of the Gang Ranch,[1] went into bankruptcy after serious head injuries caused by a kick from a horse impaired his ability to manage his business affairs, the Western Canadian Ranching Company took over the Gang Ranch. The Company then employed J.D. Prentice, a well-educated native of Edinburgh, Scotland, as manager. Prentice, who had worked briefly as a bank clerk after coming to Canada, became one of a "growing minority" of professional ranch managers in the province.[2]

As manager of the largest ranch in the Lillooet district, Prentice was naturally concerned about public affairs. At a meeting at Ashcroft in 1892 he claimed that his company paid at least half the taxes in the district and was investing large sums of money which would be of permanent benefit to all residents of the area.[3] Such involvement easily led to an interest in political office.

There was, of course, no formal party system in provincial politics before 1903 but the supporters of the Government and of the Opposition were often clearly defined. Yet, Davie's chagrined comment that "you had yourself informed me that you were a government supporter" is indicative of the fluidity of political loyalties. Prentice was not intimidated by Davie's warnings. In a campaign speech at Clinton he explained that he was opposing the Government particularly because of its misuse of public credit on the Nakusp and Slocan Railway and in the construction of the Parliament Buildings.[4] He was elected by a one vote margin in July 1894 and became financial critic for the opposition. Since there was some question about the eligibility of some voters in Lillooet East, the Legislature had to pass a special act permitting Prentice to sit until a by-election could be held in the spring of 1895.[5] On that occasion, Prentice was defeated and he briefly returned to a full-time career as rancher. In 1896 he supervised twenty-five cowboys who drove 862 beef steers, one of the largest herds ever transferred at one time in British Columbia, to new feeding grounds.[6] Prentice, however, retained his political interests. In the 1898 general election he was returned as member for Lillooet East. Two years later, he was appointed Provincial Secretary and Minister of

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1 For further details see John Lutz, "Interlude or Industry?: Ranching in British Columbia," B.C. Historical News, vol. 13, (Summer 1980), pp 2-11.

2 Gregory E.G. Thomas, "The British Columbia Ranching Frontier, 1858-1896," M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1976, pp. 143-145.

3 Ibid., pp. 162-163.

4 Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser, 5 June 1894.

5 British Columbia, Statutes, 58 Vic, c. 33 (1895)

6 Victoria Daily Colonist, 3 December 1896.

Education in the cabinet of James Dunsmuir.[7]

That Prentice should serve under Dunsmuir, the coal mining magnate of Vancouver Island and bête noire of the Socialists, makes Davie's dire warnings about socialism especially ironic. Nevertheless, that fact tends to conform to the conventional wisdom that provincial politics were based more on personalities than on principle. It was, however, apparently on principle that Davie directed much of his argument against Prentice's support of the Opposition. As Davie correctly noted, among the supporters of Opposition leader Robert Beaven were several candidates including Robert McPherson, Francis Carter-Cotton and A. Williams, all of Vancouver, who had been endorsed by the Nationalist Party.[8]

The Nationalist Party appeared in Vancouver in late March 1894 after a large meeting of working men met to draft a platform for municipal, provincial and Dominion elections. The platform included the planks mentioned by Davie as well such other ideas as the abolition of land and monetary subsidies to private individuals and corporations -- one of the government's favourite ways of encouraging railway building -- and the replacement of the poll and personal property taxes by a tax on land values.[9] The Henry George idea of the Single Tax was then being discussed in Vancouver and Victoria by enthusiastic members of single tax clubs. Davie, however, did not mention the single tax idea although it would certainly challenge "the rights of property" of those who held land for speculation. His reason may be that the province had already conceded the principle. The Act incorporating the City of Vancouver in 1886, for example, empowered the city to exempt improvements from taxation.

Davie's fears about socialism, anarchism and communism seem confused. His opposition to representation by population appears anti-diluvian but in the British Columbia context it was undoubtedly simply a reference to the exceedingly controversial question of the weight of representation to be given to the Island and to the Mainland in the Legislature. It was, indeed, one of the last main acts in the sectional rivalry that had plagued British Columbia since the Gold Rush era. His concern about property and financial qualifications for municipal or provincial election candidates was largely unfounded. The Constitution Act, which governed the qualifications for election to the Legislative Assembly, made no mention of a property qualification. The Municipal Act, however, did include nominal qualifications: to serve as mayor or reeve an individual had to have property of assessed value of at least $500; to serve as alderman or councillor, $250. Only Vancouver, which had its own charter, had different rules. After an anti-Chinese Riot in 1887, the Legislature had raised the property requirements in Vancouver to $2,000 for the mayor and $500 for the aldermen. The Nationalists might have been complaining only about Vancouver.

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[7]Prentice also served as Minister of Finance and Agriculture in the cabinet of E.G. Prior (1902-3).

[8]News-Advertiser, 8 June 1894. All three won.

[9]News-Advertiser, 25 March and 15 April 1894.

A few of the Nationalists' ideas were somewhat "advanced." The idea of initiative, referendum and recall were even considered somewhat radical imports from the United States and challenges to the Parliamentary system when they later became part of the platform of the Progressive Party in the 1920's. The Nationalist party, however, got its ideas from Switzerland, not from the United States. The eight hour-day plank is also a little surprising as Vancouver and Victoria workingmen had only recently been agitating for a reduction in the working day to nine hours.[10] The nationalization of banks is a Socialist idea but the nationalization of railways had wide support. In 1902 the provincial Conservative Association passed a resolution calling for "government ownership of railways wherever possible."[11] Davie's final concern about the "communist" platform, that no one should "profit out of the wages of the laborer except the laborer himself," is expressed much more ominously than in the platform of the Nationalist Party which simply read, "We demand for producers and wage earners the full product of their toil."[12]

In fairness to Davie, it should be noted that his letter was obviously written in haste. The original handwritten letter is still in the possession of the Prentice family and we are indebted to them, and especially to Dr. Alison Prentice of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, for providing us with a copy of the letter and permitting us to publish it. The letter raises more questions than it answers but it does offer an insight into a little known period in British Columbia's political history.

P. E. R.

Province
of
British Columbia

Attorney-General's Office
Victoria, B.C. 24 May 1894

J. D. Prentice Esq
Western Can. R. Co.
Dog Creek -

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your letter of the 17 May, in which you state that you understand from the B.C. L. & I. A. that I have threatened to withold the $1500 set aside in the Estimates to recoup your Compy, in part, for road building, if you are an opposition candidate for the East riding of Lillooet. -

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[10] Paul Phillips, No Power Greater: A Century of Labour in British Columbia (Vancouver: B.C. Federation of Labour, 1967), pp. 18-19.

[11] J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review, 1902 (Toronto: The Annual Review Publishing Company, 1903), p. 88.

[12] News-Advertiser, 15 April 1894.

In reference to this, permit me to say that I never made any such threat, or conceived any such intention, and moreover, that your attitude whether as an opponent, or supporter, candidate, or private citizen will not influence the Government in any way regarding the treatment of your Company in respect to the matter referred to.

Whilst not in any way intimating that the vote of $1500 would be withheld, I did have a conversation with Mr. P.R. Brown[13] of the B.C. L.& I. Ag. in which I expressed my surprise and disappointment, at hearing that you had announced your intention of opposing the Government at the approaching Election. I told Mr. Brown that I found it difficult to reconcile your action, on the ground of political convictions, as you had yourself informed me that you were a government supporter, and most of your friends I know to be the same. Neither could I account for your opposition on personal grounds, and I referred to this particular vote of $1500 - which whilst a public appropriation, commended itself particularly to the Govern-members, on account of the large amounts of money expended in development works by your Company, and on account of your Company being the largest taxpayer in the District. - At the same time I may candidly say that in granting the aid which we did last year, and entertaining the hope of doing something in future a personal desire to do justice to a deserving friend was not altogether an absent feature of our deliberations. - It is a fact, known perfectly well to Mr. Brown, and Mr. Holland[14] also that so high has been and is the esteem of the Government for the gentlemen with whom you are associated, that upon the retirement of Mr. Beeton from the Post of Agent General in London (which is likely to occur at any time) we have openly announced our intention of conferring the post of agent general upon one of the members of the B.C. L.&I. Ag. resident in London.

It was in view of all these considerations, that I expressed myself to Mr. Brown as bewildered at your action reconcileable, as I thought it only with ingratitude, towards a government composed wholly of your friends, and your friends friends. - Particularly did I feel hurt at your action, in view of my knowledge that you are a thinking, reading man, and cannot have failed to perceive, that the government is engaged in a hand to hand conflict with an element, whose efforts, altho' possibly, there are many of them who do not perceive it, tend distinctly towards socialism & communism who are identified with a platform which claims that population shall be the only basis of legislative representation: that no property, or financial qualification whatever be required of candidates for any election whether municipal or provincial, that the initiative and referendum be adopted - banks and railways be nationalized eight hours be made to constitute a days labor, and no profit out of the wages of the laborer except the laborer himself. - If that is not a platform

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[13]Percival Rideout Brown was born in Nova Scotia in 1855. He came to Victoria at age seventeen, was employed by the Sayward Lumber Company and soon became its manager. In 1881 he became the manager of the B.C. Land and Investment Agencies, a position he held until 1900 when he left to join the Colonist Printing and Publishing Company. He later established his own real estate firm.

[14]C. A. Holland was managing director of the B.C. Land and Investment Agency, 1887-1922.

of Communism, and anarchism for you I dont dont (sic, don't know) what would be. How long would there be any rights of property if such a gang as that got into power? - It seems simply astounding to me, that you could ally yourself with such a faction, as against those who are your friends, and are honestly striving for the rights of society, and declaring war to the knife against such principles. -

It is true that now that these principles of our opponents, have been openly denounced by the Government, the opposition leaders - Cotton,[15] Kitchen[16] & others, have, declared that they never held their views, but - I can, from their own newspapers prove in the clearest way that they did do so. - and moreover they never to this day have repudiated the principles of the "Nationalist" platform - containing all the hideous planks, I have just alluded to. - So far from doing it - the opposition ticket at Vancouver consists of Cotton - Williams,[17] R. McPherson,[18] the latter of whom is the nominee of this very party. You tell a man by the Company he keeps & his actions speak louder than his words.

If you happen to come to a meeting at Clinton, or elsewhere, where I speak you will hear all this, amply demonstrated. -

I must apologize to you for this long letter - you will of course not make any allusion to what I have said about the agent general - but anything else you can make any use of you choose -

Permit me, in closing, to reiterate that your political views will have no bearing whatever on the government, in respect to appropriations, whether in favor of the Ranching Co. or otherwise.

Yours truly

Theodore Davie

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[15] Francis Carter-Cotton arrived in Vancouver in 1887 where he established the News-Advertiser. He was first elected an M.L.A. in 1890 and after his defeat in 1900 returned to the Legislature in 1903 as M.L.A. for Richmond. At various times he served in the cabinet. Under Richard McBride he was president of the council from 1904 to 1910 when he resigned in order to devote more attention to his personal business.

[16] Thomas E. Kitchen was born in England in 1852. He emigrated to the Fraser Valley in the early 1880's and became a farmer. He was elected as M.L.A. for Chilliwack in 1890 and re-elected in 1894 though running as an "oppositionist." He died in office in 1897. He also served as reeve of Chilliwack.

[17] Adolphus Williams, a native of Ontario, was a graduate of the University of Toronto. In Vancouver, he practised law and listed himself in the Parliamentary Guide as a Conservative.

[18] Robert MacPherson was born in Scotland in 1853. He settled in Manitoba in 1882 and came to Vancouver in 1888. He earned his living as a carpenter and builder. In the Parliamentary Guide he listed himself as a Liberal.

First Gold in British Columbia: The Pend-d'Oreille

From the time Jason and his band of heroes set out on the Argo to search for the Golden Fleece, countless prospectors and adventurers have sought gold. Tales of rituals involving El Dorado (The Gilded One) and of cities of gold hidden in the wilds of the Orinoco and the Amazon lured Spaniards to the New World. Seizing the treasure of South America, they ranged over Mexico and the southwest. In 1848, a carpenter's finding of yellow flakes of gold in the mill-race of the American River led to the great California rush and exploration of the entire western slopes of the Rockies and the Sierras. Ten years later, the gravel bars of the Fraser River in British Columbia yielded quantities of the precious metal to hordes of gold seekers. Although all agree that gold was found in the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1852, pioneers differ as to the discovery site on the British Columbia mainland. A strong contender for that honor is the Pend d'Oreille River in the southeastern part of the province.[1]

In 1854, Joseph Morel, a teamster at the Hudson's Bay Company post of Fort Colvile, noticed black sand while he was drinking from the Columbia River at the mouth of the Pend d'Oreille. He shook the sand in his hat and, finding "scales of gold bigger and smaller than a pinhead," took back a half-cupful to Angus McDonald, clerk in charge of the trading post. McDonald sent word of "gold indeed and no mistake" to his superiors at Fort Vancouver. Throughout the winter the men at Fort Colvile thought about prospects of the mountain being full of gold and sent private word to friends in Oregon. That spring, McDonald recalled later, a few French Canadians and halfbreeds came, set up rockers, and made about three dollars a day each. Then, several of them went upriver and brought "three or four ounces of splendid gold scales from the mouth of the Pend O'Reille where it leaps with a bound of about ten feet into the Columbia." With great ceremony, the gold rush began. As the gold seekers prepared to set off up river, they loaded to the muzzle with powder and lashed to a big stone a "short thick brazen field piece" that had been rusting in the front yard. "An old buffalo robe and a bear skin were hauled up on the flagstaff, instead of a flag...the boat was moored immediately and off we started. The little cannon made the opposing mountain answer him as if it has been a young earthquake. When fired, he rolled lashed to the boulder as if he had been a devil or a tortoise." In short, McDonald concluded, "we went and found the Pend O'reille mines, the first found in British Columbia" except for the Queen Charlottes. In the fall, McDonald sent seventeen pounds of gold to Fort Hope.[2]

Born and raised in the Scottish highlands of Rosshire, a land of mountains, lochs and glens, Angus McDonald passed most of his life in far distant mountains and lakes in the Columbia River basin or North America. Dwelling

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[1] See F.W. Howay, British Columbia from the Earliest Times to the Present (Vancouver: S.J. Clarke, 1914), vol. II, pp. 9-15.

[2] F. W. Howay, William S. Lewis and Jacob A. Meyers, eds., "Angus McDonald: A Few Items of the West," Washington Historical Quarterly, vol. VIII (July 1917), pp. 201-2.

in a domain that straddled the International Boundary line, he has had his name perpetuated in a towering peak of the Mission Range of Montana and in a lake cupped in those mountains; on the Canadian side of the line, a lake in the Boundary country bears the name of his daughter, Christina.

He was twenty-one years old when he bound out as an apprentice clerk to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1838. Sent to the company's various depots, he served among the Flatheads, on the seacoast at Forts Simpson and Nisqually, at Forts Hall and Boise in Idaho and at Saleesh House in Montana. About 1842 he married Catherine Baptiste of the Nez Perce band and fathered a family of thirteen children.[3] In 1852 he was put in charge of Fort Colvile, the company's post a few miles below the British border on the Columbia River. The following year he was named chief trader in charge of all the smaller posts in the district such as Shepherd, Kootenai, Flathead and Okanagan. In 1871 he sold his interest in the Company and moved to Montana where he engaged in stockraising until his death in 1889.

A tall, slim man, black of hair and beard, the Indians called him Oops-chin (meaning Whiskers). Wearing dressed deerskin shirt and pants, he was often seen leading a brigade of 200 or so horses carrying the year's trade of furs. Like a Scottish laird he held sway over the far-flung territory where Flathead and Salish tribes replaced the clansmen of his native land. He loved their life of movement and ritual and frequently joined their ceremonies, such as the great gathering where they danced a farewell to the warriors going to battle. McDonald stripped, painted his upper body vermilion, and wearing an eagle feather cap cantered on his black buffalo charger round and round with the Indians, keeping time to the staid insistent strain of song while the women wept loud and deep. He spoke their dialects as well as French, English and his native Gaelic. A man of literary tastes, he read widely in the classics and recorded Indian history, legends, and his personal philosophy in a ledger book always carried in his saddle bags. Fond of music, he played the Jew's-harp, claiming that in the hand of the experienced, this "unassuming instrument" could make "very soft and sensitive harmony." He played for his daughters as they danced to its strains before a trip to the interior, "a kind of farewell to the remaining and the going." His prized possession was his bagpipe that he had brought from Scotland, "the great warpipe of my native hills." Nothing delighted him more than the skirl of its music and the sonorous chant of Gaelic songs.[4]

Fort Colvile was a stopping place for every traveller up the Columbia and became known for its hospitable host. When Governor Isaac Stevens and General George McLellan visited the post in 1853, McDonald had fifty Imperial gallons of extra rations to entertain the Governor and his company. He wrote:"All hands had been steeped during the day and found the grass and their blankets the very best they could."[5] The Governor, on his part, described McDonald as

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[3]Howay et al, p. 189 list thirteen children. Another source, Albert J. Partoll, "Angus McDonald, Frontier Fur Trader," Pacific North West Quarterly, vol. 42 (April 1951), p. 139, lists only twelve.

[4]Howay et al., p. 220.

[5]Howay et al., p. 197.

"an upright, intelligent, manly and energetic man."[6]

Angus loved the rivers and waters of his adopted country, particularly the site of Fort Colvile which he called the prettiest spot on the Columbia. "When the Columbia is up in June, the sound of the Colvile Falls on a silent summer night is very grand. All the congregated water from Ross Hole to the smallest spring of Condi River are massed in that torrent. Its Indian name is Schonet Koo, meaning Sounding Water."[7]

That flurry in 1854-56 amounted to little. Gold in the Pend d'Oreille was overshadowed by the discovery of gold in the Fraser and the succeeding great rush to Cariboo. However, it may have had some influence on the decision of the Hudson's Bay Company to set up a post across the boundary line on British territory. Ever since the Oregon Treaty of 1846 Fort Colvile had been in the United States and the Company could foresee customs difficulties if prospectors and miners flocked into the country. Accordingly, Chief Trader Angus McDonald was given charge of erecting a new trading post on the wide gravel flat above the Columbia opposite the mouth of the Pend d'Oreille River. Two warehouses, a storehouse, men's quarters and officers' lodgings were built of hewn and squared logs within a fence of rough pickets. An Indian village of two to three hundred people camped nearby. Known first as Fort Pend d'Oreille, it was named Fort Shepherd in 1859, presumably in honor of John Shepherd, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company (1856-58) whose death occurred in that year.

During the 1860's gold was found in the East Kootenay at Wild Horse; Fort Shepherd became a depot on the trail built by Edgar Dewdney from Hope to the goldfields. By 1866 the shallow diggings at Wild Horse had been exhausted and a new strike drew adventurers to creeks in the Big Bend area of the Columbia River. The bulk of the freight and passengers went up the Fraser and then overland but a considerable number of gold-seekers hired boats and canoes to travel from Colville up the Columbia.[8]

In the spring of 1865 a steamer, the Forty-Nine, was built at Colville for the trade. She made three trips. On the first she carried 85 passengers; on the next, 200; but on the last, only five. By 1866 the bubble had burst.

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[6]Partoll, "Angus McDonald," pp. 140-141

[7]Howay et al, p. 197.

[8]Joel E. Ferris, in the Spokesman-Review (Spokane), 13 May 1956. There were two forts of the same name. The first, Fort Colvile, was the Hudson's Bay Company post established in 1825-26. In June 1859, four companies of the Ninth Infantry, U.S. Army, under command of Major Pinkney Lougenbeel established a fort on a flat near Mill Creek, three miles from the Colville River and southeast of the old Hudson's Bay Post, to protect the American Boundary Commission after the Indian Wars of the 1850's. This was the origin of what later became the city of Colville." Pinkney City sprang into existence near Fort Colville. The fort (military) was abandoned in 1882 and in 1883 the townsite of Colville was plotted.

The gold did not lie on the surface but required deeper digging. Fort Shepherd was a depot for miners' supplies in both rushes but the good days did not last long. Gold was still washed from the waters of the Pend d'Oreille and many of the Chinese employed by Edgar Dewdney in building his trail stayed to look for gold near the boundary at Waneta but there was not enough trade to warrant keeping the post open. In 1870 Fort Shepherd was closed. Two years later, the buildings burned to the ground. Today, the world has completely by-passed the site of Fort Shepherd. It is accessible by a jeep road which services a power line but the modern highway runs on the opposite side of the Columbia. For many years stone chimneys marked the place but they have since crumbled into piles of stone, half-hidden by chaparral. The only evidence remaining is a stone cairn erected in 1951 by the Kinsmen Club of Trail with a bronze plaque donated by the provincial government.

Although the turbulent waters of the Pend d'Oreille continued to yield colors it was never the scene of a large scale rush. Individual miners recovered moderate returns, especially during the Depression of the 1930's. Boom days came to the Kootenays in the 1890's when copper-gold ore was discovered in the hills above the Columbia where Rossland Camp sprang into existence. The days of placer mining had passed and fur trading had disappeared. Fort Colvile was closed in 1869 when the Hudson's Bay Company finally withdrew from American territory. Angus McDonald had long since ended his life as a cattleman and rancher on Montana ranges. But surely history will not forget that band of French Canadians and Indians shaking gold flakes from the gravel of the Pend d'Oreille and the Columbia before British Columbia became the mecca of the gold seekers.

Elsie G. Turnbull

Mrs. Turnbull, a member of the Victoria section, has written extensively on the history of the Kootenays.

News and Notes

THE HISTORICAL RECORDS INSTITUTE AT SIMON FRASER

A research group, known as The Historical Records Institute, was recently recognized by the University's Board of Governors. The purpose of the Institute is to assist in the editorial preparation of historical documents suitable for publication.

At present the Institute is assisting with three editorial projects relating to British Columbia.

1. The Journal of Alexander Walker on the Northwest Coast in 1785-1786.

This journal of a very early visit to Nootka and Prince William Sound is in the Scottish National Library. It is of great historic and ethnographic interest. Walker was only the second European to visit Nootka Sound and to write an account of his experiences and observations that has survived. He was an intelligent observer who recorded information about the Indians of the

area before they had been greatly affected by the presence of the European. His account contains important new information about Nootka society.

The task of publishing this account has been made easier by the fact that a version was prepared for publication by the author.

Editors: J.M. Bumsted and Robin Fisher.

2. The Letters of Gilbert Malcolm Sproat as Indian Reserve Commissioner in B. C., 1875-1880.

Sproat was Indian Reserve Commissioner at an important time in the history of Indian-European relations in British Columbia. The white settlers were asserting their dominance over the Indians and this fact was reflected in the Indian land policy of the Province, a policy that Sproat often opposed. As Reserve Commissioner, Sproat encountered all of the problems and difficulties that have beset Indian land questions to the present day. He was a perceptive and intelligent observer of Indian cultures, and in his letters to his federal superiors he was pointed and opinionated. His letters as Indian Reserve Commissioner are therefore a lively account of an important problem in British Columbia history.

Editor: Robin Fisher.

3. The Diaries, Letters and Publications of George Mercer Dawson relating to British Columbia and the Yukon, 1875-1902

G. M. Dawson, a member and then director of the Geological Survey of Canada, devoted much of his service, especially between 1875 and 1894, to the exploration of B.C. and the Yukon. His writings give a vivid description of the localities he visited as well as valuable information on mining and natives. His diaries, virtually complete, are in the McGill University Library with family letters in the McGill Archives.

Editors: Douglas Cole and Brad Lockner.

The work is being carried out with the financial assistance of the Vice-President, Academic and the University's Programs of Excellence funding.

CONGRATULATIONS !

This has been a very rewarding spring for historians of British Columbia and we extend our congratulations to all of them. Maria Tippett has won both the Governor-General's Gold Medal and the Canadian Historical Association's Macdonald Prize for her biography of Emily Carr. Each award also includes a $5,000 cash prize.

The Canadian Historical Association has also awarded certificates of merit for outstanding contributions to regional history to two British Columbia projects. Certificates will be awarded to Margaret Prang and Walter Young for editing BC Studies over the last decade and to Leslie Ross, for writing Richmond: Child of the Fraser, a volume prepared under the direction of the Historical Committee of the Richmond Centennial Society.

LETTERS

Dear Editors:

In the Fall 1979 issue of the B. C. Historical News, Alan F.J. Artibise declares that the Sound Heritage issue entitled "A Victorian Tapestry" is "not good history" but we remain unchastened and unrepentant. Had Artibise read the introduction carefully he would have discovered that this issue was not intended to be a "history", at least not in his narrow sense of the term, and had he checked his facts before he made his statements about our editorial policy and our funding (and the quality of the Orchard tapes), he would have discovered that his "facts" were inaccurate.

When I began examining the eighty hours of interviews on Victoria for this issue, I did consider such a history as Artibise thinks this should be, but one of the most interesting aspects of these tapes was the personal account of daily life in the city by this group of articulate and lively individuals which could be consolidated into a single volume and complemented by the rich visual and aural material available for a study of daily social life at this time. The introduction and the content of the issues, including photographs and a map, do in fact, give a clear, if non-statistical, impression of the context, "economy, social composition, spatial growth, etc." though the inclusion of more statistical footnotes might have been useful to some readers. However, the magazine was not intended to present a definitive description of the city at that time, a chronological history or a formal "interpretation" of that history.

The specific example Artibise uses in his criticism of the editorial approach -- that of the racist attitudes presented in the "Ethnic Communities" chapter -- profoundly disturbs me for the presentation of such material always involves serious moral and professional questions. There is in this section, no example of racist comments presented as fact. As the introduction states and the accounts clearly show, these are the attitudes of a particular group toward "less privileged and ethnically different residents." The stories of Herrmann, the magician, and the Chinese laundryman, for example, are told by the informants deliberately to illustrate the racism of the time. The physical descriptions of people and events in the ethnic communities and the use of words like "squaw" and "Chinaman" are clearly the subjective impressions and terminology of the speakers remembering their impressions of people from cultures which they did not understand, and not objective facts about the ethnic groups themselves.

Such comments as these and many of the points made by Robin Fisher in a review of the "nu.tka" volumes cited by Artibise are based on Artibise's particular view of history and Fisher's favourable view of Cook and scepticism about aural history. As such, they are within the bounds of scholarly criticism although they are debatable.

What is more significant in these reviews is that neither critic deals directly with the aural evidence or any of the controversial issues surrounding its use. Rather, they focus on issues such as our funding and working methods about which neither of them has any accurate information although they write as

if they do. The most peculiar aspect of these reviews is their emphasis on the appearance of the publication and its alleged costliness, as if it would be more credible if it appeared dull and cheap. In fact, the appearance of the magazine, its illustrations, photographs, and maps are an essential part of the historical evidence and the printing cost of the whole is significantly less than the small price of $2.50 for which it is available and from which considerable revenue is earned.

"A Victorian Tapestry" is a rather special volume but it has several purposes in common with all our issues: to interest the general reader in B. C. history, to return this particularly lively form of historical record to the people whose heritage it legitimately is, to edify and entertain in the process, and to contribute something real about the people of British Columbia to the internationally distributed body of information about the province. If it is not "history" in Artibise's sense of the term, it still has historical value.

We will, however, be happy to have the contributions of such scholars -- proposals or manuscripts for issues of Sound Heritage, for example -- if they stress the primary source material and view aural documentation on its own merits and not merely as unhistorical in some unspecified or narrowly-defined way. If such historians become involved in the "re-humanization" of history, the result will be all the more valuable and "history" might even begin to regain its lost credibility with the student population and the public at large. A review of the sort contributed by Mr. Artibise will not achieve any such goal and, although it contains some provocative remarks, it is not good criticism.

Janet Cauthers

(We apologize to Dr. Cauthers for an inadvertent delay in publishing her letter. Eds.)

Book Reviews

BRIGHT SUNSHINE AND A BRAND NEW COUNTRY: RECOLLECTIONS OF THE OKANAGAN VALLEY 1890-1914. Compiled and edited by David Mitchell and Dennis Duffy. Sound Heritage. Victoria, vol. viii, No. 3, 79pp., illus., $2.50 pa.

This collection of reminiscences is based on recordings of Imbert Orchard's conversations some fifteen years ago with early settlers in the Okanagan Valley, a work which he undertook for the Living Memory project of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation at Vancouver. Many of those interviewed have died since 1965; one must be glad that some of their recollections have been preserved.

Mr. Orchard made no attempt to interview a cross-section of Okanagan society; he chose instead to concentrate his attention of a few pioneer settlers like Kathleen Ellis, Val Haynes and Tierney O'Keefe who were born in the Valley,

and on colourful figures of the early fruit settlement period. Two daughters of Price Ellison, Mrs. Ellen Sovereign and Mrs. Myra DeBeck, provided information about their father, a pioneer of the '70's, who became a landed proprietor and a provincial cabinet minister. Similarly, Mrs. Gwen Hayman and Dorothy Robinson, daughters of J.M. Robinson, the Manitoban who developed fruitlands at Peachland, Summerland and Naramata, were asked to recall their father's dream of moving farmers from the prairies to a more hospitable land. But the majority of those chosen by Mr. Orchard for interviews were members of the British immigrant group which arrived in the Valley after 1892 when the railway was completed from Sicamous to Okanagan Landing and after regular steamboat service commenced on Okanagan Lake in 1893.

The recollections cover the period to 1914 when the Valley was drained of its manpower by the rush to take up arms. During the twenty years that preceded this efflux, the Okanagan Valley had been transformed from open range land covered with bunchgrass and pine trees into park-like fruitlands. The decline of cattle-ranching, the Valley's first industry, had coincided with the coming of the railway and with the purchase by Lord Aberdeen of large properties near Kelowna and Vernon which were to be planted with fruit trees. The holidays spent by the family of the Governor General in the Valley focussed attention on it. The Canadian Pacific Railway, which had acquired the railway spur line and put a luxurious steamboat system into service on Okanagan Lake publicized the beauties of the area; and in London, both the British Columbia Agent-General and the Canadian High Commissioner encouraged emigration to the Interior of the province.

At the conclusion of the Boer War, British settlers began to arrive in some number. Some were war veterans who were looking for new adventures in a country that bears some resemblance to the South African veldt. Graduates of Oxford and Cambridge arrived. Some of them were imbued with romantic notions about what life was like in western Canada: almost all of them wanted to see a "red" Indian. (Once settled in the Okanagan Valley, they ignored the presence of the native population.) Parsons and parsons' sons came. So did some ne'er-do-wells. This element was far outnumbered by adventurous young men who felt that they could strike out for themselves since, at the beginning at least, they had the assurance of a regular income from "home". The background of most of the British immigrants was similar to that of the young men who at an earlier time had arrived in gold-rush days, and who had proved themselves to be a stabilizing force in the gold colony. Most of the immigrants of this later period had sufficient capital, or assurance of aid from home, to purchase properties of ten or more acres for the planting of fruit trees. The "remittance men" who are recalled in these interviews were chiefly homesteaders who chose locations on the steep and rocky western shores of Okanagan Lake which were quite unsuitable for fruit-growing.

This small volume captures the atmosphere of early fruit settlement days, and the tone which the British immigrants added to provincial society. Country life in the new country was delightful; there was still plenty of open space, everyone was young, eligible men outnumbered women, and everyone had time for boating, dancing, picnicing, and riding. The men interviewed remembered the fun of playing cowboy, taking part in coyote hunts, and engaging in tennis and cricket matches. The past they endowed with a warm glow. The women interviewed did not remember the life as being so carefree. They remembered the pleasure they took in the genteel pastimes, but also recalled the patient wait for the

trees to come into production and return a portion of the investment, the hard work that was involved in clearing land and in "clean" cultivating the orchards, and the constant tramping to patrol the open irrigation ditches.

The emphasis in these interviews is on country life; little information as obtained about town life. Yet the towns were an integral part of the fruit-growing industry. Mr. Orchard would have given a more balanced picture of the settlement of the Okanagan Valley if he had chosen to interview some of those grocers, butchers, hardware, and clothing merchants who, willingly or unwillingly, over-extended their credit while everyone was waiting for the trees to grow and the fruit to mature. He might also have discovered how dependent the fruit-growers were on townspeople who were mostly Canadian and who supplied the professional services.

In fact, this picture of the Okanagan Valley would be more accurate if a greater number of settlers at the northern end of the Valley had been interviewed. Some attention would then have been paid to the lumber industry and to the mixed farming area outside the dry belt. Lumby, almost a solidly French Canadian community, is ignored. The reference to the native population is negligible. Almost the only Indians remembered in these pages are the Nez Perces who crossed "The Line" for several years to travel north on the Hudson's Bay Brigade Trail to pick hops at the Coldstream Ranch.

One definite limitation to the usefulness of this publication is the failure of the editors to provide biographical information. That information is readily available in the Reports of the Okanagan Historical Society; neither the editors nor Mr. Orchard seem to be aware of the vast quantity of historical information the Society has collected. Perhaps Mr. Orchard would have broadened his own terms of reference when he set out to make these interviews if he had consulted this source.

The editors have made a few slips of fact. The Coldstream Ranch was named before Lord Aberdeen became its owner. The generous hotel-keeper in Vernon was Mueller, not Miller (in addition to Canadians, there were also Germans in the Okanagan Valley.) The Land and Agricultural Company purchased part, but not all, of the O'Keefe Ranch. I question the contention that the Okanagan Valley, with its excellent transportation link with the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, was an "Isolated frontier". Indeed, the reason that the settlers found it so interesting to meet "the boat" was that one never knew who might be travelling through the Valley--perhaps Lord Strathcona, or Earl Grey, or Sidney and Beatrice Webb, or Sir Thomas Shaughnessy--or even, occasionally, a provincial politician.

The editors are to be congratulated on the fine selection of photographs, and their happy choice for the cover of Charles William Holliday's painting "Sunny Okanagan".

The recollections are lively and interesting and throw light on the romantic side of the settlement process. They are the memories of a people who came with the privileges of good family background, education, and means. For a broader view of life in the Okanagan Valley, they should be supplemented by consulting two other recent publications, Grass-Roots of Lumby, and Ursula Surtees' Sunshine and Butterflies.

Margaret A. Ormsby
Vernon, B.C.

Margaret Ormsby is the author of British Columbia: A History.

DEPRESSION STORIES. Sydney Hutcheson. Vancouver: New Star Books, 1975. Pp. xi, 138, $3.95 pa., $9.95 cl.

This little book, for any who would know and understand the great depression of the 1930's has both universality and particularity of interest. The detail is about the life of a young man in the Kootenays in the 1920's and 1930's. The depiction of the struggle to survive is one that, with variations of local colour, could have been told by a million and one other young men in a thousand and one other places. What adds zest to the pages of the book is Sydney Hutcheson's unvarnished gift of telling stories.

As a contemporary of Sydney Hutcheson, this reviewer can testify to the authenticity of his protrayal of life as it then was in Western Canada. Not all of the emotions revived in reading his pages were pleasant. But memories of the fun things came back too.

Of the Kootenays themselves I was at the time only vaguely aware. Contacts in subsequent years and travel in the area have given me some knowledge of the colourful history and unique characteristics of life in this south-eastern region of our province -- enough to say that Hutcheson's depictions ring true. In this respect the book is an enriching contribution to the record: an opportunity for those who do not know the region to get acquainted. The little reproductions of the then current maps are a bonus for this purpose.

Chapters of the book are arranged under such headings as "Road Building", "Box Car Travelling", "Hospitals" and "Incidents on Relief"; and appear to have been composed at different times. This results in some repetition of incidents. I did not find this carried to the point of being tedious.

Hutcheson's accounts of life in the 1930's have much of the same matter-of-factness as those to be found in Barry Broadfoot's compilation of Depression recollections. The difference in this book is in the continuing saga of one individual and those whose paths he crossed.

The stage is briefly set in the early part of the book, from his arrival as an infant at Fernie in 1908 to his leaving school in 1922 to flunkey in a logging camp. The flavour of life in communities sprung from mining and logging in days of much more primitive technology; the horrors of mine accidents and forest fires and the glories of mountain country still largely unscathed by man provide the continuing backdrop for the stories that carry through to the arrival of World War II and the end of the Depression. Says Hutcheson of the Crow's Nest Pass: "There is a valley that was the most beautiful place in the whole world to live and work. I now realize that I was born and raised in a little piece of Canada that was ideal." Such is the pride of place of those who sprang from the valleys of the Kootenays; as indeed from many other parts of Canada.

An introduction to the book by Tom McGauley places Sydney Hutcheson in the ideological setting into which his life experience molded him. He suggests, however, that Hutcheson was not really a theorizer. As he puts it, "We are presented ... with raw evidence, and very little attempt at conscious synthesis of the experience."

McGauley comments on Hutcheson's urge to write before tape-recorded "oral

history" became the vogue. "He struggled against the social amnesia which has robbed so many generations of workers of their history." Again he says, "Sydney did not fall into the trap of some others who spiced up their pieces as a 'proper writer' is supposed to do." He adds, "This, then, is rare stuff." I agree with Tom McGauley.

Tom Barnett

Mr. Barnett, the mayor of Campbell River and former M.P. for Comox-Alberni, spent part of the Depression years as editor of the Wells Chronicle.

"DANGEROUS FOREIGNERS": EUROPEAN IMMIGRANT WORKERS AND LABOUR RADICALISM IN CANADA, 1896-1932. Donald Avery. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Canadian Social History Series, ed. Michael Cross, 1979. Pp. 204, $6.95 pa.

A catchy title notwithstanding, the first part of this volume is a straightforward review of Canadian immigration policy in the years to 1914, particularly as it affected immigrants from European countries, as distinct from English-speaking immigrants from the British Isles and the United States. On this topic, Professor Avery makes some interesting points. At the beginning of the period under consideration, the official policy of the Immigration Branch was to encourage migration of agriculturalists to fill up the Prairie West. Avery shows how under pressure of the labour needs both of resource and construction companies and of already-established farmers, this policy was modified. A floating labour force was created to meet the seasonal and fluctuating needs of farm and harvest labour, railway construction, forestry and mining. Avery outlines the horrendous, and unconsidered, social consequences that the recruitment of a "reserve" army of labour had on those recruited. He then details one response by migrants to the abysmal conditions in which they found themselves--their joining in the struggles of radical labour unions and political parties in the new land.

The second part of the book argues that the entry of the European immigrant into the labour movement changed the perception of the Canadian political and business elite as to his desirability as an immigrant. The immigrant as "enemy alien" during the first World War and as protagonist in post-war upheavals like the Winnipeg General Strike changed their view of him from contempt for the strong-backed, docile "bohunk" to fear of the "dangerous foreigner". In turn, this produced official harrassment and jailings, tightened restrictions on immigration and deportations for dissident political opinions. The "red scare" at the war's end was reinforced in the 1920's by adherence of some immigrants, especially among Ukrainians, Finns and Jews, to the Communist Party of Canada. The onset of the depression of the 1930's brought a fresh wave of persecution and deportation. Thus runs the author's argument.

Professor Avery's conclusion is, however, one for which the text has not prepared the reader. He suggests that militant industrial unions and radical political parties were, in fact, agencies for assimilating the immigrant into Canadian life. Federal and provincial governments failed to take up their responsibilities in the field and private groups like Frontier College, the YMCA and Protestant churches were hampered by their WASP preconceptions, so the immigrant turned to the revolutionary fringe of the labour movement. "Alienated immigrant workers," says Avery in summary, "turned to groups who sought to transform Canadian life through revolution . . ." The author does

not in fact claim that this was true of all immigrant workers but his focus on radical labour tends to give an unbalanced picture. No sweeping generalization about "alienated immigrant workers" is possible. For example, it is indeed true that Ukrainain, Finnish, and Jewish immigrants made up the bulk of Communist party strength in the 1920's. But these same ethnic communities were rent asunder by conflicts between left and right. For every Ukrainian who adhered to the left-leaning Ukrainian Farmer-Labour Temple Association, another enrolled in a right-wing organization. A pro-Communist press was matched by an anti-Communist one. So at best radical parties and unions acted on only a portion of any ethnic community. The reverse could be argued--that any ethnic-based group, whether right, left or centre, was not an agency of assimilation and that those most anxious to assimilate were those who first broke their ties to such organizations.

Professor Avery clearly intends his book to be a contribution to the debate on the respective roles of class and ethnicity in the Western Canadian labour and radical movement, a debate to which Professors Bercuson and McCormack have recently contributed. If so, he might better have structured his argument around the hypothesis that he just introduces in his conclusion. It is a besetting sin of reviewers to chide authors for not writing books that they did not intend to write, but a focus on the variable roles of occupation and ethnic background in the process of integration and assimilation would have given this work a unity it does not now possess.

Keith Ralston

Professor Ralston teaches British Columbia history at the University of British Columbia and has a special interest in labour history.

SAINTS: THE STORY OF ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL FOR BOYS, VANCOUVER. Douglas E. Harker. Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1979. Pp. 288, illus. $12.50.

In 1931, when St. George's School was founded in Vancouver, over forty similar schools--institutions run privately by one or more individuals without any government regulation whatsoever apart from the practical necessity that students pass standard "matriculation" examinations--existed in British Columbia. In the decade of St. George's foundation yet another dozen private ventures came into being. Only ten of these "independent" schools, as they are now termed, remain in operation. Prominent among them is St. George's, whose enrollment of well over 600 boys is the highest in British Columbia and among the largest of any independent school in Canada.

Douglas Harker's Saints goes a long way toward explaining why this should be so, why when over four-fifths of its fellows have fallen by the way, St. George's has survived and become a very successful, expansive institution. Douglas Harker, St. George's third headmaster (1963-71), has been closely associated with the school since 1933, when his older brother, John, took over St. George's from its founder, Captain F.J. Danby Hunter. In other words, the two Harkers between them ran--indeed, personified--St. George's for almost forty years, guiding it from several dozen boys studying in a private house to a modern, sophisticated institution divided between two campuses.

Douglas Harker has written the history of St. George's, not unjustifiably, as a success story. His warm, intimate account is filled to overflowing with

the names of individuals--teachers, students, parents, janitors and even pets who have contributed to the life of the school--and with the extraordinary variety of events which has marked its development. The result is in no way detached or probing, nor indeed was it intended to be: readers seeking to discover the warts on St. George's will be disappointed.

At the same time, Douglas Harker's history provides a valuable series of insights into the strength of the school and makes clear that its survival was no accident. His statement that "the School survived and flourished because over the years a number of men and women gave it devoted service" is absolutely correct. Over and over again, the pages of the book tell a story of hard work, of dedication, of tenacity, of willingness to improvise, and--perhaps most importantly--of pragmatic accommodation to changing conditions.

Unlike many private-venture schools, which were unable or unwilling to shift from their generally British origins to meet the demands of the much more "Canadianized" British Columbia which emerged out of World War Two, the Harkers and St. George's kept their fingers on the pulse of the province and, more importantly, on that of Vancouver. A significant segment of the city's business and professional community was early brought into the life of the school, as governors, as parents, and as "old boys." As Vancouver grew and developed, so St. George's not only expanded physically but retuned its education to meet the changing needs of its potential clientele. It is in this sense that the history of St. George's is indeed a success story.

Jean Barman
Vancouver, B.C.

Jean Barman is currently writing a doctoral dissertation on the history of private schools in British Columbia.

THE OTHER A.Y. JACKSON: A MEMOIR. O.J. Firestone. Toronto, McClelland and Stewart. Pp. 272. illus. b & w.

Firestone's The Other A.Y. Jackson is a most welcome addition to the annals of Canadian art literature. The book is exactly what the title leads one to believe - a look at A.Y. Jackson, the man and personality. It is not an academic analysis of his painting.

The author is an economist and art collector who first met Jackson in 1954. The two became particularly good friends in 1955 when the artist was seventy-two, and had moved from the studio building in Toronto to the Ottawa area. Jackson's fame as a Canadian artist came first with his association with the Group of Seven, but after its dissolution in 1933 he continued as a major Canadian painter, portraying the Canadian landscape and its rural settings. The author, interested in art only as a hobby, warns his readers of his reservations about writing such a personal reminiscence of a great man: "How could I write about a hobby and about friends?" He did, and generally successfully.

Jackson, according to Dr. Firestone, had two personalities: "one an outgoing selfless and modest man, to whom most people responded warmly, the other a dedicated artist." The Other A.Y. Jackson is a sensitive, personal portrayal

and gives us glimpses of his private life - his living quarters, his habits and his thoughts about people. It reveals his strength of character, his independence and humility.

In his preface, Firestone cautions the reader that "a good part of what I have to say is based on recollections, and the trouble with memory is that one forgets." While he adopts the style of the raconteur and often repeats himself, Dr. Firestone has given considerably more than a series of recollections. He quotes extensively from letters, tapes, notes and Jackson's A Painter's Country to substantiate memory. Birthday tributes from friends like Charles Comfort, and conversations with fellow artist Arthur Lismer add to the interest of these reminiscences. So too do Jackson's comments on some of his contemporaries, his attitudes to abstract painting, and his thoughts on art education in the schools.

The book is written from a refreshing point of view. Dr. Firestone makes some interesting comments on Jackson's income, and his financial needs and security. Of note too are the passages describing how the artist worked, his preparation of the sketch and then the canvas, his peculiar manner of holding his brush and palette, and his intense concentration on the subject, composition, colours and challenge before him.

Firestone's conclusions in his chapter "Alec and His Women," are based on fact and backed by correspondence. They provide interesting insights into Jackson's friendships and relationships with women and his thoughts on marriage, but I have reservations about the chapter. The long speculative and sometimes purely hypothetical passages and allusions seem redundant and unneccessary.

The bibliography and list of works referred to in the text are useful. An index, however, would be an asset. While some of Jackson's works are reproduced in black and white, one wishes the publishers had included more, and had reproduced some in colour.

Jackson's often quoted line was, "What the 'experts' will say does not matter." With this in mind, one can only recommend The Other A.Y. Jackson to both amateurs and professionals in the art world. Many vignettes which provide valuable insights into the Canadian artistic community during fifty fast-changing years are now at last recorded by Dr. Firestone in his warm biography of a great Canadian.

Patricia E. Bovey
Victoria, B. C.

Patricia Bovey was Associate Curator, Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1970-1980.

A Trio of Heroes

HENRY LARSEN. John Bassett. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1980. Pp. 63; illus.

This is a concise, illustrated story of Henry Larsen, the skipper of a small R.C.M.P. Schooner, the St. Roch. Not only did the St. Roch under Captain Larsen conquer the formidable Northwest Passage from east to west, but it was the first ship to complete a voyage from west to east. The booklet describes

some of the duties performed by members of the Arctic Patrol. Larsen's sensitive treatment and understanding of the Inuit are featured as well as the incredible difficulties encountered with Arctic ice. The voyage re-established Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic during World War II. This volume would make a worthwhile addition to high school libraries.

GRANT MCCONNACHIE. Alison Gardner. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1979. Pp. 63, illus.

This is a brief but well written biography of one of the many bush pilots who played such an important role in the history of Canadian aviation during the 1920's and 1930's. It traces the trials and tribulations of a man completely dedicated to flying from the moment he flew his first plane until he became president of Canadian Pacific Airlines at age 38 - "never before in C.P.R.'s history had anyone moved so swiftly up the corporate ladder to the top." It is a story of great courage both in a physical and business sense as McConnachie constantly courted disaster in the air and in the board rooms of his creditors during the grim days of the Depression.

This is the story of a man who certainly deserves the title "hero" but the constant use of metric terms is annoying. It is difficult to imagine McConnachie asking a trapper how far it was to the nearest lake and the trapper answering, "It's 16 km . . ." (p. 18)

SAM STEELE. Stan Garrod. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1979. pp. 63, illus.

Steele is considered to be one of the giants in the history of the "Mounties", as indeed he is, but this biography does not do him justice. The chapters are incredibly short and often made up of far too many quotations. Three "Sam Steele Stories" are entertaining, but in a short biography they replace more pertinent material that could have been included.

There are a number of factual errors which have no place in a reference booklet for students. The following are examples:

p. 4 "Whoop-up was an impressive fortification." In reality, it was a decrepit building.

p. 6 "Frenchman's Knoll" is Frenchman Butte and "Black Bear" is Big Bear.

p. 43 "Fort Steele is today a National Historic site." It is a provincial historic site.

Perhaps reading this volume will create a desire to learn more about an incredible career; if so, Steele's autobiography, Forty Years in Canada is the book to read.

Alfred E. Loft

After teaching in the schools of Saskatchewan and British Columbia, Mr. Loft joined the Department of History of the University of Victoria where he taught Canadian history until his recent retirement.

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NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

WELLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY - 1980

Since its inception in the early 1960's and incorporation in 1972, the Wells Historical Society has been attempting to preserve the historical aspect of Wells as a 1930's hard rock mining town.

To this end, the Society has been operating the Wells Museum on Pooley Street as an interpretive display depicting the social and economic life of Wells from circa 1932 to 1967. A three-storey false front building, the museum was once a Chinese laundry and later became the Miner's Union Hall. This year's opening of the Museum is set for July 2nd. With the help of a Summer Youth Employment Program, the society is planning to upgrade its present facilities, continue documentation of the present collection, set up a museum library and initiate an aural history program in the community. Volunteers are needed for our newly formed Museum Committee to help with these and other activities.

The Sunset Theatre, built in 1934, was the original Wells Movie Theatre and later served as B.C.'s only licensed gambling hall. This building was refurbished by the society in 1974 and is now functioning once again as a Movie House from June through September. Plans for the theatre this year include the re-painting of the exterior. Opening day for the film season is June 6th with a showing of "The Godfather".

Since 1978, the Wells Historical Society has increased its commitment to the maintenance of the false front architectural style so typical of the town in the 1930's. To this end, the Society purchased the Old Government Liquor Store on Saunders Avenue, the Old Pool Hall and the Hill Meat Market on Pooley Street, with a view to restoring these buildings. The Society's goal in acquiring these buildings was to revitalize them, secure the maintenance of the false front characteristic through the preparation of restrictive covenant clauses and then to offer them for sale to the private sector once it was felt that their reconstruction could be guaranteed.

This aim has to some extent become a reality now with the release of the buildings to empathetic private hands under a Covenant clause, being prepared with the aid of Heritage Canada and the B.C. Heritage Conservation Branch, as a pilot project in this province.

East Kootenay Historical Association - 1980

The East Kootenay Historical Association has planned an extensive programme of events for the summer of 1980, two for more active members and two for those unable to hike in the bush.

In June we go on a conducted tour of old logging camps in the Elko country; with a similar type of activity in the Wardner area planned for July. August will see us joining other East Kootenay associations for the annual picnic and meeting of the Columbia-Kootenay Zone of the B.C. H.A., now in its second year. The September event will be a picnic at Creston, with a talk by their society on the Dewdney Trail they have located in their area.

We look after the Wild Horse, Perry Creek, Moyie and Fort Steele cemeteries, and put up historic area signs each spring in the Wild Horse area. These must be removed each fall prior to the hunting season. We have formed a cemetery association at Fort Steele to look after their graveyard, which is still in use.

We have been asked to design an historic marker for Fort Steele, giving names of pioneers and others responsible for starting the idea of the present Park complex and also giving a history of the area from Indian Days to the present. Numerous letters to the Department of Indian Affairs have resulted in promised action to repair the historic little church on the St. Eugene Mission, built in 1897 by Father Coccola from sale of shares in the St. Eugene mine at Moyie. We have supported Creston in efforts to save the artifacts they "loaned" to a museum complex near Yahk. Work on our Baillie-Grohman walking trail and picnic area will proceed following a meeting with B.C. Hydro regarding their planned Kootenay Diversion.

Nanaimo Historical Society - 1980

Following the publication of our book "Nanaimo Retrospective" to coincide with the annual convention held in Nanaimo in 1979, we are delighted to report

an excellent year with about 2000 copies already sold.

Specially bound copies are presented by the City of visiting dignitaries, and Princess Alexandra, who visited Nanaimo in May 1980, received a copy from our Mayor.

The Society has had a most interesting series of talks including a repeat of Bob Turner's "Ships of the Pacific Coast" which those who attended last year's convention saw, and we also enticed Dan Gallacher up from Victoria to speak to us on the mining industry, as he could not be with us at convention time. This talk stressed the importance of the coal industry which was the foundation of British Columbia's wealth as well as the reason for our City's existence.

In November the Society led the celebrations to mark the 125th anniversary of the arrival in Nanaimo of the settlers who came to this coast in 1854 aboard the Princess Royal, and whose home was the Brierley Hill area of England. Since that time someone has always been at the landing site in Nanaimo on November 27th to observe the occasion, and since 1954 the Society has made it a special day in Nanaimo's history.

This year we were joined in thought by the people of Brierley Hill who held a joint celebration with us, and by the Hudson's Bay Company whose Governor sent a special message and a number of medallions to be presented to the Descendants of the Princess Royal families.

It is possible - in fact probable - that this is the longest, continuing recognition of an occasion in British Columbia's history.

We have forged closer links than ever with the Museum Society and the Heritage Advisory Committee over the past year, both of these are compatible but separate bodies from the Society. We have also found new rapport with the schools in our efforts to make the children more aware of their history through the Barraclough Memorial Essay Fund. Prizes are presented from this fund to students at the Junior Secondary School level, and books will also go to the school libraries.

The Society looks forward to an interesting and active year as we review our past in the light of Nanaimo's developing future.

Pamela Mar, President.

COWICHAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY - 1980

Since April 1979, we have held nine general meetings and nine executive meetings. Members have attended seven conferences or training courses. Our speakers have been: Farnham Foote, Movie on logging; Mr. Murray Thompson, Fairbridge Farms; Farnham Foote, Two films - Trip to Port Hardy and area and a fishing trip off the West Coast of the Island; Miss Elizabeth Norcross, The part played by women in Canadian history; Mr. Edward Williams, a film on heritage buildings around the world; Mr. George Minkler, The work done by the Telephone Pioneers; Mrs. Mary Isendorn, History of scouting in the Cowichan Valley.

We have tried to save some heritage buildings. The C.P.R. Station has been declared a heritage building, but we lost the Acadian School and the Section House.

Our summer museum was opened July 17th., and was open for seven weeks. This

display was very well received and we are very grateful to the I.O.O.F. for the use of their hall for our first venture into museum work. Our present temporary building, at 2731 James St., was opened December 1, 1979 and we have had a fairly good interest shown by the public. Probably more publicity would help to gain more interest by the local residents.

Our meetings time and place was changed in September and dues were raised to $6. per person and $10. per couple.

Four directors of the museum were nominated in October - Dr. F. Nagy, Ken Jacques, Mr. Hammond and Mrs. S. Kincaid.

We have received many letters of co-operation and encouragement from local organizations.

Displays were placed in the library, Chamber of Commerce office and the foyer of the Cowichan Community Theatre. At present, there are 20 displays in stores and businesses in downtown Duncan, with petitions placed in these and other stores asking for the public approval to have the use of the Activity Centre building for a museum.

Briefs have been presented to the Municipality of North Cowichan and the City of Duncan. Our Society participated in the planning of "Heritage Week" with a special night at the Cowichan Community Centre Theatre, February 17th., to start the week.

We have applied for a Provincial Youth Employment grant and a Lotteries grant.

I would like to thank the executive for their hard work and co-operation. Hopefully, in the coming season, we will attain our goal of having a permanent home for our museum.

M. Haslam, President.

CHEMAINUS VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - 1980

The Annual Meeting was held on February 12th, 1979 and the following officers were duly elected: President, Mary Anne Niehaus; Vice-President, Grace Dickie; Secretary, Helen Plester; Treasurer, Lillian Gustafson; Past President, George Pedersen. Directors presented by the President were: Tony Motherwell, Audrey Ginn, George Pedersen, Joy Mutter and Harry Olson; Phoning Committee, Mabel Clayton.

At this meeting it was decided to purchase a Term Deposit of $6,000.00 from the New Horizon's Account and one for $1,000.00 from the Society Account. A decision was made not to order a second printing of "Memories of the Chemainus Valley".

Several members enjoyed a visit to the Museum at Metchosin on April 8, 1979.

At the General Meeting on April 30th, Mary Niehaus and Lillian Gustafson were appointed as delegates to the B.C. Historical Association convention in Nanaimo. Grace Dickie was appointed Secretary replacing Helen Plester who resigned. The Guest speaker at this meeting was Dr. Jacque Mar of Nanaimo who spoke on Chinese emigration.

At the General Meeting July 30th, Lillian Gustafson gave her report on the

B.C.H.A. convention in Nanaimo. An agreement was made to spend up to $200.00 towards cleaning up the Pioneer Cemetery on Kuper Island. Mary Niehaus reported that she had been at the opening of the temporary Museum in Duncan.

The Museum Train was in Chemainus August 11th and 12th. Local artifacts and albums of old pictures, as well as our book, were on display and this was manned by members of our Society.

A floral arrangement was sent from our Society to Mr. and Mrs. Stephenson for their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

At the General Meeting on October 29th, 1979 the guest speaker was Thelma Godkin representing Pym Perfume of Saltair who gave an interesting talk on the history and romance of perfume.

A special executive meeting was held on November 5th and Karl Schutz of the Chemainus-Crofton Chamber of Commerce spoke on the proposed map covering the Chemainus area. It was agreed that our Society Donate $250.00 towards this project.

Book sales continued to be very gratifying and we now have only about 175 copies left of "Memories of the Chemainus Valley".

We have had four regular and four executive meetings plus a few unofficial meetings to clean up minor matters.

Among the old pictures received for the book "Memories of the Chemainus Valley" was one of Eliza Smith who was the midwife for the Chemainus area before there was a hospital or any doctors. Our Society had this picture enlarged and framed and it was presented to the Chemainus Hospital on April 30th, 1980 by Mary Anne Niehaus and received by Mr. E.F. Dickson, Administrator of the hospital. Several of Eliza Smith's descendants were present at the ceremony.

I would like to thank the officers and members for their help and co-operation during this past year.

Mary Anne Niehaus, President.

Annual Convention

Travelling along the Hope-Princeton Highway, in the gloaming, too late in the day to attend the formal reception in Princeton for the Annual Convention of the B. C. Historical Association, my passengers and I were greeted informally by residents of Manning Park - deer, bear and baby moose. This seemed to be an appropriate beginning to our meeting for the first time in the small town of Princeton.

On Friday morning, May 30th, the Mayor of Princeton, Sandra Henson, who could be seen later at her desk as Community Librarian, greeted visitors to the Convention prior to the morning's programme. The first presentation was by Harley Hatfield and Victor Wilson, intrepid hikers, who gave an impassioned plea for support of their petition to the Provincial Government to enlarge Manning Park to include an extra forty or so miles of the Cascade Wilderness Historic Trail,

the longest stretch of early packtrail still extant in Canada, and which is in grave danger of being destroyed if logging is allowed. The two speakers have taken various groups over trails in this area during the past decade, and we enjoyed Victor Wilson's excellent slides of several Hudson's Bay brigade trails.

In the absence of the next scheduled speaker, Winnifred Weir, Don Tarasoff of the Heritage Branch, Victoria, gave the members an outline of sources and methodology for research into historic sites. In the short time allotted to him he talked of resources in Victoria, mentioning also what was available outside the province, in Ottawa, the United States, Great Britain, etc.

Lunch was followed by conducted tours to the Newmont copper mine, a few miles out of Princeton. There we were taken through the mill and then to see the open pit workings.

Friday evening's event was held in the school auditorium, where the cream of Princeton's young talent presented a programme of songs, bagpipes and mime, followed by Bill Barlee's belated presentation on the Chinese gold miners of British Columbia. Mr. Barlee's racy account, liberally interspersed with amusing and interesting anecdotes of colourful gold miners, was a fitting end to the formal proceedings of the first day of the Convention.

Day two began with the Annual General Meeting. In the afternoon two field trips were offered, one to the pictographs on Old Hedley Road, and one to Granite Creek. I heard no reports on the pictograph outing, but I can say that the Granite Creek trip was a delight for all who took it and who survived the five hour outing. We travelled by bus to Coalmont, then up the mountain to see the old coal mine workings at Blakeburn. Walking a few yards on an original Hudson's Bay Brigade trail was a moving experience, the more so when Victor Wilson pointed out a sample of an original blaze on a tree, and how to recognize one. Back down the mountain, we drove to Tulameen, where we were refreshed by tea and entertained with some reminiscences of 77-year old Mrs. Fripp who was born and spent her entire life in the valley. My own neighbour on the bus was Dollie Waterman, another local old-timer, who kept up a steady patter of information during the whole trip. One passenger at least came off the bus, semi-intoxicated by the experience.

The grand finale to the Convention was a sumptuous banquet, prepared by Princeton ladies, after which our President, Ruth Barnett, described to the gathering the impressions and stimulation of life in Ottawa as a West Coast Member's wife.

So ended another B. C. H. A. Convention.

Anne Yandle.

HISTORICAL BOOKLETS

CANADIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The Canadian Historical Association has planned a series of booklets to provide the general reader, the teacher and the historical specialist with concise accounts of specific historical problems. They are written by experts in their fields and include the results of the latest research. The series includes topics on which teachers and others have expressed a desire for more information than is now available in general works and texts.

Booklets are available in both English and French. Each member of the Canadian Historical Association receives one copy of each new booklet free at the time of publication. The price of booklets for general sale is $1.00 or 75 cents for bulk orders of ten copies or more. Inquiries concerning booklets or CHA membership should be addressed to The Treasurer, Canadian Historical Association, c/o The Public Archives of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa K1A 0N3.

The following books are presently in print:

No. 1 C. P. Stacey, *The Undefended Border: The Myth and the Reality*
No. 2 G. F. G. Stanley, *Louis Riel: Patriot or Rebel?*
No. 3 Guy Frégault, *Canadian Society in the French Regime*
No. 4 W. S. MacNutt, *The Making of the Maritime Provinces, 1713-1784*
No. 5 A. L. Burt, *Guy Carleton, Lord Dorchester, 1724-1808: Revised Version*
No. 6 Marcel Trudel, *The Seigneurial Regime*
No. 7 F. H. Soward, *The Department of External Affairs and Canadian Autonomy, 1899-1939*
No. 8 F. H. Underhill, *Canadian Political Parties*
No. 9 W. L. Morton, *The West and Confederation, 1857-1871*
No. 10 G. O. Rothney, *Newfoundland: a History*
No. 11 Fernand Ouellet, *Louis-Joseph Papineau: A Divided Soul*
No. 12 D. C. Masters, *Reciprocity, 1846-1911*
No. 13 Michel Brunet, *French Canada and the Early Decades of British Rule, 1760-1791*
No. 14 T. J. Oleson, *The Norsemen in America*
No. 15 P. B. Waite, *The Charlottetown Conference, 1864*
No. 16 Roger Graham, *Arthur Meighen*
No. 17 J. Murray Beck, *Joseph Howe: Anti-Confederate*
No. 18 W. J. Eccles, *The Government of New France*
No. 19 Paul G. Cornell, *The Great Coalition*
No. 20 W. M. Whitelaw, *The Quebec Conference*
No. 21 Jean-Charles Bonenfant, *The French Canadians and the Birth of Confederation*
No. 22 Helen I. Cowan, *British Immigration Before Confederation*
No. 23 Alan Wilson, *The Clergy Reserves of Upper Canada*
No. 24 Richard Wilbur, *The Bennett Administration, 1930-1935*
No. 25 Richard A. Preston, *Canadian Defence Policy and the Development of the Canadian Nation, 1867-1917*
No. 26 Lewis H. Thomas, *The North-West Territories, 1870-1905*
No. 27 Eugene A. Forsey, *The Canadian Labour Movement: the First Ninety Years (1812-1902)*
No. 28 Irving Abella, *The Canadian Labour Movement, 1902-1960*
No. 29 Joseph Levitt, *Henri Bourassa — Catholic Critic*
No. 30 Bruce G. Trigger, *The Indians and the Heroic Age of New France*
No. 31 R. C. Macleod, *The North West Mounted Police, 1873-1919*
No. 32 J. M. S. Careless, *The Rise of Cities in Canada Before 1914*
No. 33 Ian MacPherson, *The Co-operative movement on the Prairies, 1900-1955*

MEMBER SOCIETIES

(The individual societies listed below are responsible for the accuracy of address, etc.)

Alberni District Museum and Historical Society, Mrs. C. Holt, Box 284, Port Alberni, V9Y 7M7. 723-3006.

Atlin Historical Society, Mrs. Christine Dickenson, Box 111, Atlin, V0W 1A0.

BCHA, Gulf Islands Branch, Elsie Brown, R.R. #1, Mayne Island, V0N 2J0.

BCHA, Victoria Branch, Frances Gundry, 255 Niagara, Victoria, V8V 1G4. 385-6353.

Burnaby Historical Society, Una Carlson, 6719 Fulton Ave., Burnaby, V5E 3G9. 522-8951

Campbell River & District Historical Society, Julie O'Sullivan, 1235 Island Highway, Campbell River, V0W 2C7.

Chemainus Valley Historical Society, Mrs. B.W. Dickie, Box 172, Chemainus, V0R 1K0. 246-9510. Mrs. A.C. Nicholas RR1 9376 Cottonwood, Chemainus

Cowichan Historical Society, W.J.H. Fleetwood, Riverside Road, Cowichan Station, V0R 1P0

Creston & District Historical and Museum Society, Mrs. Margaret Gidluck, Box 164, Creston, V0B 1G0. 428-2838.

District #69 Historical Society, Mrs. Mildred Kurtz, Box 74, Parksville, V0R 1S0. 248-6763.

Elphinstone Pioneer Museum Society, Box 755, Gibsons, V0N 1V0. 886-2064.

Golden & District Historical Society, Fred Bjarnason, Box 992, Golden, V0A 1H0.

Historical Association of East Kootenay, Mrs. A.E. Oliver, 670 Rotary Drive, Kimberley, V0A 1E3. 427-3446.

Kettle River Museum Society, Alice Evans, Midway, V0H 1M0. 449-2413.

Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows Historical Society, Mrs. T. Mutas, 12375-244th Street, Maple Ridge, V2X 6X5.

Nanaimo Historical Society, Linda Fulton, ~~1855 Latimer Road, Nanaimo, V9S 2W3.~~ Bx 933 (museum) V9R 5N2

Nootka Sound Historical Society, Beverly Roberts, Box 712, Gold River, V0P 1G0.

North Shore Historical Society, Doris Blott, 1671 Mountain Highway, North Vancouver, V7J 2M6. David Gamble 815 W 20th St. — V7P 2B5

Princeton & District Pioneer Museum, Margaret Stoneberg, Box 687, Princeton, V0X 1W0. 295-3362.

Sidney & North Saanich Historical Society, Mrs. Ray Joy, 10719 Bayfield Road, R.R. #3, Sidney, V8L 3P9. 656-3719.

La Société historique franco-colombienne, #9, East Broadway, Vancouver, V5Z 1V4

Trail Historical Society, Mrs. M. Powell, 1798 Daniel Street, Trail, V1R 4G8 368-9697

Vancouver Historical Society, Irene Tanco, Box 3071, Vancouver, V6V 3X6. 685-1157

Wells Historical Society, Ulla Coulsen, Box 244, Wells, V0K 2R0.

Williams Lake Historical & Museum Committee, Reg Beck, Box 16, Glen Drive, Fox Mountain, R.R. #2, Williams Lake

Windermere District Historical Society, Mrs. E. Stevens, Box 784, Invermere, V0A 1K0