



INSTALLING CRIBBING ON THE CARIBOO WAGON ROAD

This painting by Rex Woods shows a party of Royal Engineers installing cribbing on the Cariboo Wagon Road above Spences Bridge. Dress for the officers was a scarlet tunic with dark blue trousers featuring a scarlet strip along the seams; yellow cord on the shoulder straps, collar and sleeve cuffs; blue collar and cuffs; yellow cord on the shoulder straps, collar and sleeve cuffs; blue collar and cuffs; blue pill-box with a yellow band and red piping; and a buff white belt. The sappers wore grey shirts with their uniform.

A wall of rock has been breached and a cleft is being cribbed and filled as horses drag heavy logs from below the limber-line on "goboy" skids or sleds. Sappers and Chinese toil in the background. Their assignment completed, the detachment of Royal Engineers was disbanded in 1863. Many remained as settlers in the expanding west.

TWENTY-SIX MEMBERS OF THE NINCUMSHIN FIRST NATIONS GATHER FOR A GROUP PHOTO NEAR SPENCES BRIDGE ON THE THOMPSON RIVER. TWO OF THE WOMEN HAVE NEWBORNS IN FIRST NATIONS BASKETS.

HISTORICAL PHOTO #71719 ROYAL BC MUSEUM & ARCHIVES PHOTOGRAPHY BY FREDERICK DALLY, 1868

Twenty-six members of the Nincumshin First Nations gather for a group photograph near Spences Bridge on the Thompson River in 1868. Two of the women have newborns in Indian baskets.

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES HISTORICAL PHOTO #071719 PHOTOGRAPH BY FREDERICK DALLY, 1868



CLINTON

Originally known as 47 Mile House or 47 Mile because it was 47 miles from Lillooet, Clinton was named in honour of Henry Pelham Fiennes Clinton, the fifth Duke of Newcastle and the Colonial Secretary from 1859 to 1864. The Duke had visited Canada in 1860. Here William Bose's 14 oxen stand harnessed in readiness to haul two heavily-laden wagons in tandem to the Cariboo goldfields in 1868.

HISTORICAL PHOTO#000758 ROYAL BC MUSEUM & ARCHIVES PHOTOGRAPHY BY FREDERICK DALLY, 1868.



Clinton in 1868 with the Cariboo Wagon Road in the left foreground with a toll gate, the Smith General Store and the Clinton Hotel all just to the left of centre. The numerous barns contain hay and grains for the animals coming and going to the Cariboo as well as shelter. Brothers the spring of 1861 brothers George and Robert Watson began to build anew log structure that came to be the famous Clinton Hotel. In 1863 the Watsons placed an advertisement in the Victoria Colonist stating that they had "...built a new building that had a large bar, a private sitting room and free beds to people that bought their own blankets." The Watsons apparently leased their new

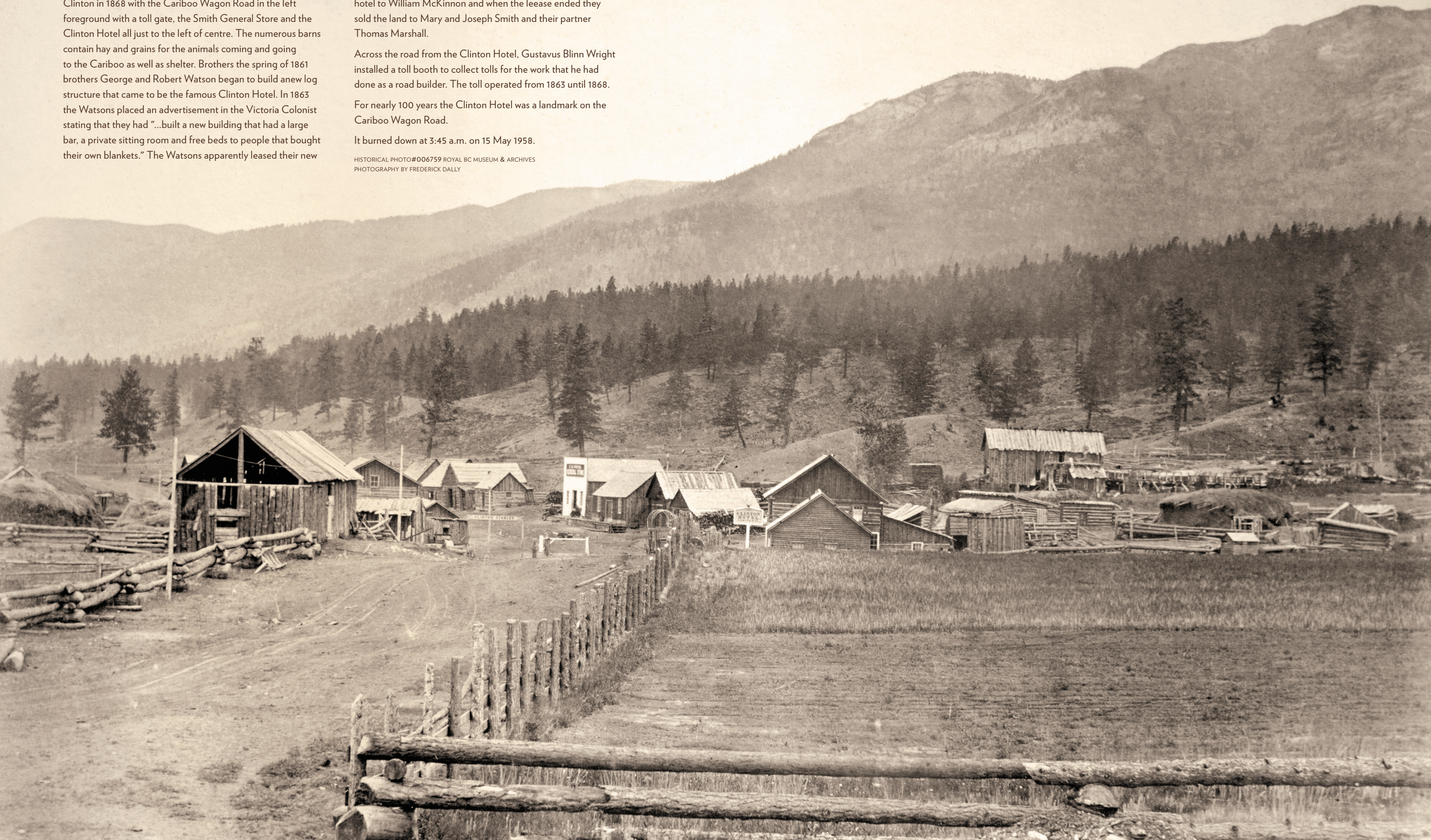
hotel to William McKinnon and when the lease ended they sold the land to Mary and Joseph Smith and their partner Thomas Marshall.

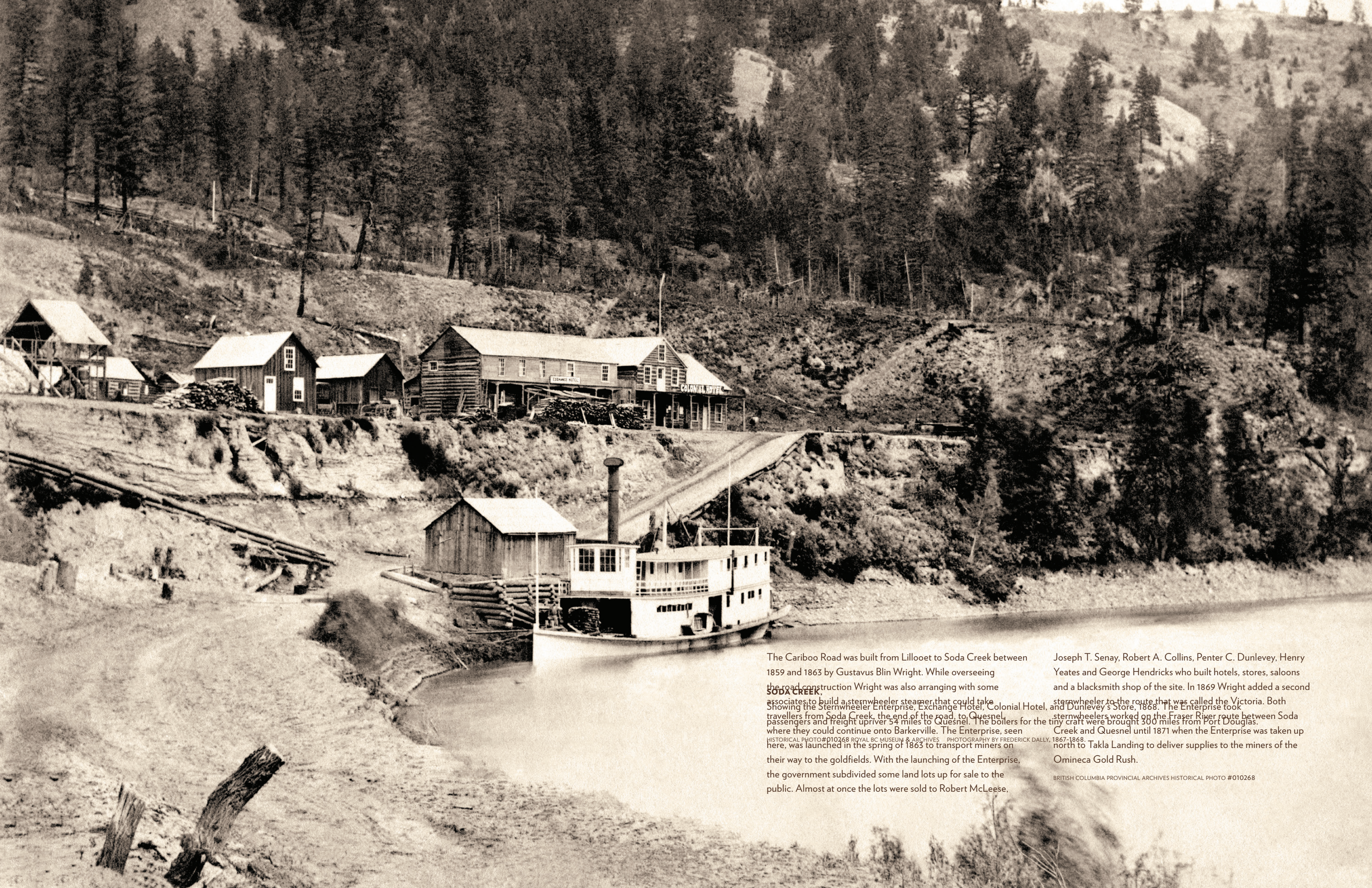
Across the road from the Clinton Hotel, Gustavus Blinn Wright installed a toll booth to collect tolls for the work that he had done as a road builder. The toll operated from 1863 until 1868.

For nearly 100 years the Clinton Hotel was a landmark on the Cariboo Wagon Road.

It burned down at 3:45 a.m. on 15 May 1958.

HISTORICAL PHOTO#006759 ROYAL BC MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY FREDERICK DALLY





The Cariboo Road was built from Lillooet to Soda Creek between 1859 and 1863 by Gustavus Blin Wright. While overseeing the road construction Wright was also arranging with some

associates to build a sternwheeler steamer that could take travellers from Soda Creek, the end of the road, to Quesnel, where they could continue onto Barkerville. The Enterprise, seen here, was launched in the spring of 1863 to transport miners on

their way to the goldfields. With the launching of the Enterprise, the government subdivided some land lots up for sale to the public. Almost at once the lots were sold to Robert McLeese,

Joseph T. Senay, Robert A. Collins, Penter C. Dunlevey, Henry Yeates and George Hendricks who built hotels, stores, saloons and a blacksmith shop of the site. In 1869 Wright added a second sternwheeler to the route that was called the Victoria. Both sternwheelers worked on the Fraser River route between Soda Creek and Quesnel until 1871 when the Enterprise was taken up north to Takla Landing to deliver supplies to the miners of the Omineca Gold Rush.

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES HISTORICAL PHOTO #010268

SODA CREEK WAS 264 MILES ABOVE YALE

HISTORICAL PHOTO #010269 ROYAL BC MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY FREDERICK DALLY, 1867-1868.





SEVEN GOLD RUSH PIONEERS RELAX IN FRONT OF THE COLONIAL HOTEL AT SODA CREEK.

The two gentlemen on the extreme left of the photograph are Peter C. Dunleavy and Robert McLeese, owners of the two side-by-side hotels in Soda Creek.

HISTORICAL PHOTO#10270 ROYAL BC MUSEUM & ARCHIVES PHOTOGRAPHY BY FREDERICK DALLY, 1867-1868.



EITHER CHARLES DONALDSON OR RED-HEADED DAVIS (DEPENDING ON THE SOURCE) ARISE AT FIRST DAWN WITH THEIR PACKERS AND MULES TO CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY FROM QUESNELLE FORKS TO BARKERVILLE.

The horses and mules were loaded with 250 to 400 pound packs each daybreak for a 15-mile daily continuation of the 450-mile trip from Yale to Barkerville. No packsaddles were used. Instead a sort of leather sack filled with straw and called an "aparejo" was tied to the mules' back and the freight was lashed to it with a diamond hitch.

Here the animals wait to be loaded before being ferried across the river at Quesnelle Forks. The animals were not tethered to each other but instead walked in single file. A white mare usually led the train. The mules weren't tied together in any way, each knew its place and kept it throughout the journey. The freighter and his assistants can be seen inspecting the packs prior to

loading them onto the horses and mules. Each animal knew by smell its own two packs.

The crew usually consisted of a cook and a cargodore who had overall command, plus one man for every 8 to 10 animals.

A return trip from Yale to the goldfields took about two months with three trips usually being made per season.

At the beginning packing was very profitable. In 1861 the rate from Yale to Quesnelle Forks was \$1 a pound, but as more packers entered the trade prices soon dropped to 40 cents a pound. The mule trains largely passed away with the completion of the Cariboo

FERRY RIDE ACROSS THE QUESNEL RIVER

A mule train belong to "red-headed Davis" waiting to make an early morning ferry ride across the Quesnel River. Each mule knew by smell the pack that it carried the previous day. Charles Danielson operated the ferry.

1863 WILD HORSE CREEK GOLD DISCOVERY

by Arthur Raymond (Bud) Ryckman

Some reports suggest that a couple of American soldiers were the first to find gold on the Canadian side of the border in the Kootenay district. In any event, in 1863 a party of prospectors headed by Joseph Finlay set up camp near the confluence of the Kootenay and Saint Mary's Rivers. Their camp was located where an unnamed stream flowed into the east side of the Kootenay River. A washed test pan revealed a substantial amount of placer gold in the unnamed creek. Subsequent tests with their panning continued to produce large flakes of gold. The unnamed creek was proving to be very rich in placer gold. One of the men noticed the presence of a wild horse stallion in the area so they named the creek "Stud Horse Creek." It was late in the season; they were running out of supplies so they pulled up stakes and headed south to winter at Walla Walla, Washington. Word soon got out about this gold discovery.

The following spring, American gold prospector parties headed by Robert Dore and John Fisher arrived at Stud Horse Creek, staked their claims and commenced panning in the rich gravels. A gold rush ensued with all of the hopeful miners, merchants and others looking for the anticipated Utopia that followed the discovery of gold in a wilderness area. By mid-summer of 1864 there were more than five thousand men with gold pans and rockers working the gravel bars of Stud Horse Creek and its tributaries. The first settlement was named Fisherville after the early prospector Jack Fisher. Later, one of the highest mountain peaks in the Canadian Rocky Mountains located in the area was named Fisher Peak in his honour. The majority of the men arrived by foot or horseback on the west side of the Kootenay River. The Kootenay is a large river that is very dangerous and difficult to ford. An enterprising gentleman named John Galbraith built a cable ferry and charged a fee of one dollar per man and five dollars per horse to ride across the Kootenay River on his ferry. Galbraith built the first home, a log cabin, on the plateau located above the Kootenay River and the community was given the name of Galbraith's Landing. John Galbraith then acquired title to much of the crown land in the area and became the largest landowner in the community. His brother Robert was afterwards joined him.

The original settlement of Fisherville was made up of miners who had rushed to the area with very little in the way of supplies and for the

most part nothing more than tents for accommodation. The nearest source of supplies was Walla Walla, Washington. There were no roads, trails or any kind of connection to the business and government area of British Columbia that was located in the coastal communities of New Westminster and Victoria. In August of 1864, the government of the Crown Colony of British Columbia sent two men to look into the mining development in the Kootenays, determine how substantial the operation was and what part the government should take in providing access from the lower mainland to the new gold mining area. Upon their return, they advised that the merchants located in Victoria and New Westminster wanted to develop trade and supply the mining community that was developing. There would have to be an extension of the existing Dewdney Trail from Vermilion Forks (now Princeton) to Wild Horse Creek—the name of the creek had been changed as the government of the day thought the name of Stud Horse Creek was not acceptable. Edgar Dewdney headed the construction of the extended Dewdney Trail that was completed and provided access for travel from Hope to Wild Horse Creek in 1865. By the end of 1865 most of the Wild Horse Creek ground was under claim so the excitement of the rush was over, the easily obtained surface gold had been taken and the gold while still plentiful required more expensive and technical mining equipment so many of the original miners moved to wherever the next discovery was rumored to exist. Word circulated that placer gold had been discovered on the Big Bend of the Columbia River so many miners packed up and headed for the Columbia. Hydraulic mining procedures were employed to win the deeper deposits. The banks of the Wild Horse were soon laced with flumes and giant hoses to wash the gravel under pressure and expose the gold.

The completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 brought new entrepreneurs into the region via Golden and then stage coach to Galbraith's Ferry. Some came as prospectors, some as ranchers and some as merchants. Colonel James Baker, who had retired from the British Army, purchased acreage from John Galbraith in an area known as Joseph's Prairie. Joseph's Prairie was the traditional land of the Kootenay Indians and was named after Kootenay Chief Isadore's father Chief Joseph. Chief Isadore was not pleased when Colonel Baker demanded that members of his band get off the Kootenay First Nations lands. Several other disputes developed between the band members and new landholders who were building fences around ground that had previously been the traditional territory of the Kootenays. A more serious matter of irritation between Chief Isadore and the newcomers to his territory occurred when two white miners named Hilton and Kempt were found murdered on the road to Golden in 1884. The area became known as Dead Mans Creek. Two years later two members of the Saint Mary's Band named Kapla and Little Isadore were arrested by the town constable and held in the town jail on suspicion of having committed the murders. Chief Isadore was outraged with the fact that two of his band members had been arrested and charged with an offence that had occurred two years earlier. He demanded the release of the prisoners and stated that he, the Chief of the Saint Mary's Band of the Kootenays, was the only person

qualified to pass judgment on members of his band. When the request was ignored, Chief Isadore, along with several of his warriors arrived at the wooden structured jail on horseback, held the town constable at bay, broke the jail open and took their imprisoned members with them. As the white community of Galbraith's Landing was severely outnumbered by the Kootenays, they sent word to the nearest North West Mounted Police detachment for help. The detachment was located in Fort MacLeod, North West Territories (Alberta had not yet been established) under the command of Colonel Samuel B. Steele.

Steele had been born in Purbrook, near Orillia, Ontario in 1848. He received his earliest education at the family farm before attending Royal Military College in Kingston. At the age of 18, Steele joined the Canadian Military hoping to participate in the Fenian Raids against Irish-Americans wanting to inflict pressure on Britain to withdraw soldiers from their homeland. Steele also went west in 1870 to participate in the Red River Rebellion of Louis Riel but arrived after the Métis had surrendered. The following year he joined Canada's first regular army unit hoping to see action. Instead, he was returned to Kingston as an instructor at the artillery academy.

In 1873 Steele was the third officer sworn into the newly formed North West Mounted Police and was one of the officers to lead the raw recruits on the 1874 March West to Fort Whoop-Up [now Lethbridge, Alberta] to deal with American whiskey traders coming up into Canada and selling their concoction of bug-juice, called 'firewater', to the First Nations braves. Partners John Jerome Healy and Alfred B. Hamilton had originally named their whiskey-trading post Fort Hamilton but the nature of their business resulted in the name change. The Mounties were being sent west at the request of Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald to deal with Americans who had crossed the border into Canada and murdered 'Canadian' First Nations braves. Upon learning that a Canadian police force was being sent to Fort Whoop-Up the Americans merely got rid of the booze. Steele had been posted to Fort Whoop Up from Fort MacLeod with a crew of 75 officers and men of the "D" Division. The "D" Division had originated in Battleford, Saskatchewan. Steele returned to Fort Garry [present day Winnipeg] as a Staff-Sergeant Major and as an accomplished horseman went about training new recruits. It was during this period that Steele was initiated as a Freemason in Selkirk, Manitoba. In 1877 Steele met with Chief Sitting Bull, the Lakota Sioux holy man who led his warriors in a major victory against Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer at the Little Big Horn. Chief Sitting Bull then crossed the border into Saskatchewan with his followers in an attempt to escape the United States cavalry—and vengeance. Steele attempted unsuccessfully to persuade Sitting Bull to return to the United States.

Steele's division was selected to resolve the dispute with Chief Isadore at Galbraith's Landing. His orders were to assemble the "D" Division at Lethbridge and await further orders. They departed Lethbridge in late June of 1887 and arrived at Galbraith's Ferry on 31 July 1887. Steele immediately sent word to Chief Isadore that Kapla and Little Isadore would have to face a trial according to the laws of the land with the assurance that he, Steele would guarantee that the accused would be given every consideration and a fair and just trial. The battle of the Little Big Horn—Custer's Last Stand—had recently occurred in nearby Montana. On 25 June 1876

the 7th Cavalry Regiment of the United States Army commanded by General Custer was in the process of attacking the First Nations population located on the plains of Montana. Their goal was to wipe out the Plains First Nations population so cattle ranchers could occupy the land. The Lacota and Cheyenne tribes, who were well known to members of the Kootenays, were the principal targets of the cavalry whose battle cry was "the only good Indian is a dead Indian." Under the command of Chief Sitting Bull the Indians fought back and annihilated the 7th Cavalry killing General Custer in the process. Having knowledge of this battle, and being aware of the U.S. Cavalry plans to wipe out all of the existing Plains Indians, Isadore was very reluctant to accept Steele's invitation and fully expected an attack on his people from the Canadian North West Mounted Police. Isadore's knowledge of the U.S. Cavalry combined with the fact that he had never seen a formation of Mounted Police with their bright red coats, rifles and side arms, led him to believe that they were soon going to be under attack. He waited for the expected raid but to his surprise, none came. In the meantime as a show of strength, patience and British diplomacy, the members of the "D" Division commenced building an apparent fort along the edge of the plateau where the community of Galbraith's Ferry was located. It wasn't really a fort but a tall fence that looked like a massive fort from the Kootenay flats where Isadore resided along with the very large Saint Mary's band of Kootenay First Nations. The Kootenay Flats were part of the St. Eugene Mission located on the west side of the Kootenay River and the south side of the Saint Mary's River about 100 feet below the level of the plateau where the village, and now, the apparent huge fort was being constructed. As no attack came and Steele continued to convey a message of peaceful co-operation, Isadore became convinced that Steele was sincere so he agreed to surrender Kapla and Little Isadore to face "British Justice." On 20 August 1887 the accused were turned over to Steele. On 5 September, Steele dismissed the charges for insufficient evidence and from that point on Isadore regarded Steele as one of the very best and most honest men that he had ever encountered and that Steele was a man of his word and without doubt had administered a fair and just trial. Over the period of the next year, Steele and Isadore became close friends. Steele in his memoirs stated that Isadore was the strongest and most competent chief and leader that he had ever met in the many First Nations Bands and Tribes that he had encountered. By working with both sides, Steele also managed to resolve the land disputes that occurred between the Kootenays and the new settlers. The most serious dispute was between Colonel James Baker and Isadore over the title and ownership of the land area known as Joseph's Prairie. Steele worked closely with Isadore and Baker to bring about a harmonious relationship with the two men. He spent considerable time and effort detailing the regulations of the government of British Columbia pertaining to local law and land ownership, the Federal Government of Canada regarding Federal Law, the Indian Act and the Department of Indian Affairs. He also explained in detail the position and function of the Indian Agent, the St. Eugene Reservation, and the Roman Catholic Oblate Missionaries who had erected a church and were preparing to build a hospital on the grounds of the St. Eugene Mission.

On 7 August 1888, their mission accomplished, Colonel Steele and his detachment departed Galbraith's Landing for the trip by horseback through the Crow's Nest Pass to their home

post of Fort MacLeod. Their mission had kept them in the village of Galbraith's Landing for more than a year. Their accomplishments were monumental and peaceful in every way. Unlike the neighbouring Americans who arrived with the plan and intention of driving the First Nations off of the land so that they could develop it for cattle ranching, the Canadians came as traders and participants in the development of the community. Steele made a point of explaining how the Americans came as conquerors and the Canadians came as traders—principally as fur traders from the Hudson Bay Company with the factor often taking an Indian wife and remaining in the community trading and raising a family. The members of "D" Division of the North West Mounted Police, known as the "Red Coats" were accepted and recognized as friends and protectors by both the white and First Nations population of the community.

After the Mounties departed, the residents of the

village of Galbraith's Landing were so impressed with the work that Steele had accomplished that they decided to rename their village and call it "Fort Steele,"—despite the fact that there was never a real fort at the location but a very effective look alike fort with the massive log fence built along the edge of the townsite.

Chief Sitting Bull, who had led the Lacota and Cheyenne warriors in the devastating defeat of General Custer and the American Army 7th Cavalry Regiment in the Battle of the Little Big Horn, had fled to Canada with 1,200 of his men for the protection that he knew they would receive from the Canadian North West Mounted Police. Steele was instrumental in providing accommodation and provisions for Sitting Bull and his men at a reserve in Wood Mountain, Saskatchewan. Sitting Bull remained in Canada at Wood Mountain until 1881 when he returned to the U.S.A. to spend some of his time on a tour with the Wild West Show

Rock Creek yielded the very first gold in the Kootenay District that brought prospectors into British



ROCK CREEK GOLD RUSH
 On September 6th, 1958 this cairn was placed where placer gold was discovered 100 years before. Thousands of miners, Americans, and Chinese among them, in a flurry of activity recovered over \$200,000 in gold from this small creek. A time capsule, containing historical data of the Boundary District and sealed in this cairn, will be opened in the year 2058.
 ERECTED BY
 CITIZENS OF THE BOUNDARY DISTRICT
 DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & CONSERVATION
 1958

of Buffalo Bill Cody. He died from a gunshot wound inflicted by a policeman after he was arrested for participating in the "Ghost Dance" in 1890 at the Standing Rock Reservation.

In the course of his duties at Fort MacLeod, Sam Steele met a very sophisticated lady named Marie Elizabeth Harwood. Miss Harwood was at Fort MacLeod visiting her aunt Min, the wife of Superintendent Alex MacDonnell, commander of "H" Division at the fort. Sam Steele was now in General Command of the MacLeod Detachment and thereby was Alex MacDonnell's superior officer as well as one of his very best friends. Marie's father was a member of the Canadian Parliament. From their first meeting they appeared to have much in common. They were both expert equestrians and would ride off together at every opportunity. They both enjoyed music and singing and sports that were actively played at the fort. Samuel Steele was very good at story telling and Marie was a good listener. The most significant activity that they both loved and were very good at was dancing. They never missed a party where there was dancing and they were inevitably the first couple on the floor and the last to leave. Probably the dancing did more to enhance their relationship into a solid love affair than anything else. Steele proposed and Marie was delighted to accept. There was, however a problem. She was a Roman Catholic and he was an Anglican and a Freemason. His friends and fellow officers said he would be making a huge mistake to go ahead with the marriage. Sam Steele was satisfied that their love was genuine and deep and would not fail because of any religious difference. They agreed that any children would be raised as Roman

Catholics and there ended the matter. They were married on 15 January 1890 in Marie's hometown of Vaudreuil, Quebec. For their honeymoon they traveled by train to New York City and then returned to Fort MacLeod. They settled into the life of a married couple resident in a rapidly developing community. Steele kept busy discharging his duties and responsibilities at the fort and as a couple they were actively involved in the social life. Their marriage produced 3 children: Flora, born in 1891, died in 1948, Gertrude, born in 1895, died in 1963 and Harwood, born in 1897, died in 1978. Steele's accomplishments as a policeman became legendary as he rose up through the ranks.

It is interesting to look back on the history of the town of Fort Steele. In the 1890s the population of the town was growing very rapidly. Fort Steele was the boomtown of the East Kootenays. The economic and development outlook was very promising. A substantial base metal mine was in the development stage—the Sullivan Mine—at nearby Kimberly that eventually became the largest base metal mine in the world. The Wild Horse Creek, Cherry Creek, Perry Creek and others were continuing to produce placer gold. There was little doubt that modern geology and engineering would find the mother lode—source of all the placer gold that had been found in the Wild Horse since 1863. Many of the best geologists and mining engineers in the industry searched for the elusive mother lode without success. My cousin William Patmore who had a Doctorate in Geology from Princeton University and a personal friend of Albert Einstein spent a small fortune searching for the mother lode without success. Bill was convinced that a property that he was heavily involved called the Estella Mine

located at the 6000-foot level in the Rocky Mountains above Fort Steele would prove to hold the mother lode of all of that placer gold that was found in the Wild Horse. Some ore containing commercial quantities of lead and zinc with traces of gold were obtained so a mill was constructed and exploration went ahead at full speed. The gold that they were seeking wasn't found; the quantities of lead and zinc were insufficient to continue operation of the mill so the Estella Mine was abandoned.

William Astor Drayton, a multi-millionaire member of the John Jacob Astor family of New York came to Fort Steele in the 1920s to manage an investment that he had made. He acquired a substantial amount of property and built a beautiful mansion that he furnished with elegant, expensive tapestries, deluxe furniture and artwork. He had log cabins constructed on the property for his servants and hired help. A dairy barn and livery stable were also constructed for the livestock. On occasion, highly bred horses and cattle could be seen grazing on the fenced-in pastures. William Drayton believed that the mother lode would be located with the use of the latest and most sophisticated mining machinery and equipment. He supplied the equipment and employed the

services of some of the very best geologists and mining engineers available to complete the quest. Despite all of the expense and effort, the elusive mother lode was not located. The economic depression of the 1930s and finally the outbreak of World War in 1939 ended William Astor Drayton's search for the principal source of the massive amounts of placer gold found in the Wild Horse Creek since 1863. Drayton sold the mansion, packed up the valuable artwork and tapestries and moved back to New York.



A MONITOR OR "GIANT"

This machine with a nozzle was used in "Hydraulic mining" or for directing and controlling a jet of water on Wild Horse Creek. The jet, under high pressure, excavated and washed away unwanted overburden of unwanted material. An adequate supply of gravity-fed water, ample dump space for tailings and a suitable bedrock grade were required for efficient hydraulic mining. The gold was recovered partly by cleaning the bedrock after the gravel had been stripped away but chiefly by trapping it with the riffles in the sluice box through which the gravel and water flowed to the tailings dump. This monitor was used at Wild Horse Creek.

1864 LEECHTOWN

After six years of James Douglas' joint governorship of Vancouver Island and the Mainland, the British Government decided to split the two responsibilities. In March 1864 Captain Arthur Edward Kennedy arrived in Victoria and was appointed the first Governor of Vancouver Island. He immediately suggested that the citizens of the capital city provide funds for the exploration of the island. The liberal and thoughtful offer of the new governor was taken up warmly, and a number of volunteers, including some ex-Royal Engineers, presented themselves for the acceptance of the authorities and were approved. Dr. Robert Brown, a 22-year old, acting on behalf of the British Columbian Botanical Society of Edinburgh, was appointed commander of the expedition for the island.

Lieutenant Peter John Leech, an ex-engineer and astronomer for Dr. Brown's Vancouver Island Exploration Expedition, was to examine the resources of the southern part of the province. Louis Lazzar, of the T'Sou-ke First Nations, was the guide on the expedition. He had arrived in Sooke mid-century via Quebec and the fur trade across the continent and down the Columbia River to the Willamette Valley and had then come up into Canada shortly after the signing of the Treaty of Oregon. His origins were French-Canadian and Iroquois, and he was "adopted" by the T'Sou-ke Chief with the understanding that he would marry into the Chief's family and inherit the title of Chief.

Also included were botanist John Buttle, two university graduates Henry Thomas Lewis (Cambridge University) and Alexander Barnston (McGill University) and Ranald MacDonald (Barnston's cousin) and John Foley. Leech was paid a salary of \$100. The other members were paid \$60.

The expedition left Victoria on 7 June 1864 aboard the gunboat Her Majesty's Ship Grappler for Cowichan.

Dr. Brown led an expedition exploring the interior of Vancouver Island after delegating Lieutenant Leech to

investigate the southern end of the island. On 14 July 1864 Leech's party discovered gold on a tributary of the Sooke River. Ranald McDonald, already associated with several gold discoveries on the mainland, suggested that the tributary be named the Leech River in honour of their leader. As soon as word got back to Victoria, British Columbia's a new gold rush was born. Gold miners remembered the California and Cariboo gold rushes and many hastened to the new discovery. The steamer Enterprise sometimes carried 100 people daily to Sooke Harbour and by September 1864 some 500 miners were working on the Leech River and two months later there were 1200 men, including Afro-American and Chinese, all looking for gold in the shantytown of Leechtown. Victoria was soon practically deserted and even Governor Kennedy left the capital for a house in Leechtown. A tent town arose on Kennedy Flats, named after the governor, and soon it supported six general stores and three hotels. The first hotel in the area was the ten-room Mount Arrart. The stores sold flour, bacon, lard and all kinds of groceries and provisions, including picks, shovels, axes, rockers and other mining tools. Fresh beef sold for 25 cents a pound, considered expensive at the time.

Within a month, more than \$300,000 had been realized. Single nuggets valued at \$70 were found although most claims paid from \$10 to \$25 a day per man. Malcolm Munro was awarded a contract to build a mule trail from the Sooke Basin.

The smaller Leech River was a branch of the Sooke River but immediately following Leech's discovery and his closer examination of the larger tributary the name "Leech" was bestowed upon it by a party headed by Ranald MacDonald in honour of the discoverer.

Lieutenant's Peter Leech's discovery of gold resulted in British Columbia's first Vancouver Island gold rush. In Victoria the British Colonist newspaper account of 4 August 1864 proclaimed: "The steamer Alexandra arrived... from Sooke...most gladsome intelligence...



Peter John Leech, R.E.
born Dublin, 1826, educated Trinity College
Dublin, and died Victoria, 1899.

NAMEGIVER OF LEECHTOWN ON SOUTHERN VANCOUVER ISLAND

HISTORICAL PHOTO#003246 ROYAL BC MUSEUM & ARCHIVES TAKEN 1885
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN ALLEN SPENCER

good diggings...struck on Leech River... people were immediately thrown into a feverish excitement... three cheers for Sooke.

Lieutenant Peter John Leech, an of the Vancouver island exploring expedition, discovered gold at the junction of the Leech and Sooke Rivers on 14 July 1864. Hundreds of claims were soon staked and records indicate that about 12,000 ounces of gold—some nuggets up to 4 ounces—were recovered. Assays of the gold described it as a fine yellow colour of exceptional quality. The miners stripped the soil and sluiced the worthwhile portions that in most instances came from picking gravel out of the crevices where the gold had been deposited on the bedrock. Smith, Moffat and Company systematically worked their way down to the bedrock by sinking shafts (cribbing and puddle with clay). They tried to divert the flow of the creek while others had their claims flooded by the creek. The rocky creek bed proved to be an immense obstacle for the miners.

By 1874 only a few parties, chiefly Chinese, remained working the claims. The 1890's and 1900's saw further production of gold with it being felt that the "Mother Lode" had yet to be discovered.

Lieut. Peter Leech's own words, written on July 14, 1864, indicate how great were the expectations for the area. Obviously, an enormous gold strike was anticipated with all its consequences.

Leech wrote, "A discovery which I have to communicate

is the finding of gold on one of the forks of the Sooke River about 10 miles from the sea in a straight line...the lowest prospect obtained was three cents to the pan; the highest, \$1...the whole value of the diggings cannot be easily overestimated. The gold will speak for itself."

Today, it is hard to imagine once there was a bustling town called Leechtown in the area of the Leech and Sooke Rivers with an equally busy town, Boulder City, Thompsons Landing, Kennedy Flats and Sooke City. It was, in fact, once feared that Victoria's population would sharply and dangerously decline if many more people headed out to the fast-growing communities on the Sooke River.

The first Vancouver Island gold rush marked its peak and a few years later only a few lonely prospectors working their rockers remained. During the interval between 1870 and 1930, Leechtown virtually disappeared. During the depression years in the 1930's, attempts were made once again to find gold. In the 1940's and 50's, Leechtown became a thriving logging community with a mill that shipped out logs and lumber on the Canadian National Railway.

WADDINGTON & THE CHILCOTIN WAR

The Tsilhqot'in (Chilcotin) First Nation had grown increasingly hostile towards the whiteman because of the ill treatment they received at his hands. Their women had become diseased from sleeping with the men, their traditional way of life had been destroyed by alcohol, and now smallpox was wiping them out. The final insult was meted out to them during the building of a new road from Bute Inlet to the Cariboo when the road builder refused any payment for work done.

In the spring of 1862, Alfred Waddington, a progressive businessman from Victoria, had obtained a charter from the government for the construction of a toll road from Bute Inlet along the banks of the Homathko River to the goldfields of the Cariboo. He had hoped that this route, 200 miles shorter than the Cariboo Wagon Road, would encourage more business with Victoria, which lay directly across the inlet.

Aware of his plans, settlers William Manning and Alexander McDonald began to formulate plans to build a stopping house at Puntzi Lake. The two men ignored the fact that they were trespassing on First Nations land. A group of 40 road builders under the supervision of Francis Poole arrived at Bella Coola where the leader chose to leave several men that were inflicted with smallpox.

The disease decimated the First Nations peoples in that community. James Taylor and Angus McLeod, two unconscionable fur traders at Bella Coola, removed HBC blankets from the dead and sold them to a Chilcotin village. These blankets, that carried the smallpox disease, killed some 200 men, women and children. The loss of so many families destroyed the Chilcotin way of life.

In the fall of 1863 some 90-road builders commenced constructing a road and bridges up the Homathco River and many Chilcotin braves offered to hire on as laborers. Little was accomplished. The white labour force left to winter over in Victoria. Cusshen, a young Chilcotin, was hired to guard 25 sacks of flour until the men returned in the spring but the flour was stolen. The Chilcotin road builders approached the road foreman for payment but were told that the money had to come from Victoria.

In March 1864 the First Nations braves went back to work but William Brewster, the road foreman, again gives the same story regarding the nonpayment of wages. Brewster was furious that the flour had been stolen and threatened to send the smallpox sickness into the



ALFRED WADDINGTON (1801 - 1872)

A merchant from Victoria, Waddington attempted to build a route to the goldfields of Cariboo through Bute Inlet. His refusal to pay his First Nations labour force resulted in the 'Chilcotin War'.

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Chilcotin encampment. In mid-April 14 Chilcotin were hired as packers and were allowed to set up camp near the road builders. The road crew refused to share their food with the Chilcotin. Some time later a few young Chilcotin girls came to the camp of the road builders to ask for food. They were offered grub for sex. Foreman Brewster and two others raped the girls—the youngest being only 11 years of age.

In late-April small bands of braves led by Klatsassin arrived at a ferry crossing, shoot its operator, and destroyed his camp. The following night some Chilcotin braves painted themselves before singing and dancing in preparation for battle. Early the following morning, the braves, without warning swept down on a sleeping party of road builders. The Indians cut the guy ropes of the road builders' tents and began stabbing with spears and knives through the canvass. Only 3 of 18 white men escaped. Brewster's genitals were mutilated, his mouth slit, and his heart hollowed for his crimes. By the end of May, 19 road builders and a farmer were dead in what came to be known as Western Canada's deadliest attack by aboriginals on non-aboriginal settlers.

The news of the attack reached Victoria on 12 May. Governor Frederick Seymour, the man chosen by the home government to replace the aging Douglas, promptly ordered Chartres Brew to recruit a force of New Westminster volunteers and proceed to Bute Inlet to arrest the Indians responsible for the killings.

Brew, a bachelor Irishman, had been appointed by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, secretary of state for the colonies, to organize the first police force. Prior to coming to British Columbia, Brew had served in the Irish Constabulary and in the Crimean War. He recruited 38 volunteers, mostly disciplined soldiers from the disbanded Royal Engineers corps, and chartered the H.M.S. Forward to go up the coast to the scenes of the crimes and hold an inquest. Instead of following orders and chasing after the Indians, Brew returned to Victoria to discuss the matter with the governor. He advised Seymour that the inland route along the Homathko River was not suitable for horse travel and suggested that the New Westminster volunteers be taken to Bentinck Arm and head inland from Bella Coola by following the recently upgraded MacKenzie Trail. The governor sent a letter via express to Williams Lake advising Gold Commissioner William George Cox of the massacre and of Brew's departure to Bella Coola to try and intercept the First Nations. He instructed Cox to recruit a volunteer army of miners to take the trail out of Alexandria until the two parties were able to rendezvous. Cox wasted little time and soon had a volunteer

army of 68 miners under his command.

Donald McLean, the former Hudson's Bay Company chief at Fort Kamloops but now owner of the Hat Creek stopping house located on the wagon road between Spence's Bridge and Clinton, went along as a scout since he was familiar with both the country and the Indians. Cox's party reached Puntzi, located at the halfway mark on the trail, where they inadvertently galloped upon the First Nations' encampment. The braves vanished into thin air while Cox put his force to work constructing a log fort on the top of a small knoll. He was at the fort awaiting attack when Seymour reached the lake.

The governor was livid and disgusted to find Cox idling about and unceremoniously ordered him to get on with the job of pursuing Indians. McLean, who always wore an iron breastplate when going into battle, was scouting ahead of Cox's main party when a shot knocked him out of the saddle. He was dead before he hit the ground with a bullet through his heart. An Indian, knowing about the breastplate, shot him in the upper chest. Cox, deprived of the experienced HBC man, at once retreated to Puntzi Lake and to the wrath of Seymour. The governor sent Brew, with the much smaller force, to harass the Indians so continuously that they had no time to hunt or fish. He also sent scouts out to find Chilcotin Chief Dehtus Anahiem and request that he refrain from supporting the small renegade band of warriors. The chief complied and on 15 August Klatassin and his small band surrendered to Cox under a promise of clemency. They were taken to Quesnel Mouth and held to await the arrival of Judge Begbie to stand trial for murder. Only a month after their surrender, Klatassin and 4 of his warriors were hanged in retribution for the killing of 21 whites at Quesnel. A fifth brave was hung in New Westminster a year later. The entire fiasco bothered Judge Begbie until the day he died.

As far as the First Nations braves were concerned, they were participating in an act of war and were not murderers. It was not seen that way by the British government. In a "letter" of the "murder" of one of the victims Lytton summed up thusly:

HE WAS BRAVE, GENEROUS, KIND AND JUST

OPPOSITE

A bronze cast of Sir Matthew Baillie Begbie, the first Chief Justice in the Crown Colony of British Columbia, stands at the entrance to the Law Courts in New Westminster.

In Affectionate Remembrance of
CLIFFORD ALFRED HIGGINS

Aged 27 years.

Who while on his way through new Aberdeen at the Head of the Bentick Arm of Fort Alexandria, on the Fraser River, Vancouver's Island, British Columbia, in the company of Alexander McDonald and six others, having with them 12 pack animals laden with merchandise, when they were attacked by a numerous party of Indians, at Nancootloon Lake, he was shot through the breast at the first fire, and fell from his horse mortally wounded: only one of the brave party escaped uninjured from the murderous assault."

Although the sentencing of the six chiefs from BC's central interior Chilcotin-Cariboo haunted Judge Begbie until the day he died, he did not consider that the killing of the road builders occurred in an act of war and not murder. The chiefs' execution was part of a long history of conflict between the Tsilhqot'in and the government.

The most recent chapter saw the Tsilhqot'in fight a long-running battle that ended 150 years later with a landmark decision from the Supreme Court of Canada that for the very first time awarded a band title to their territory. The previous year the court unanimously ruled in favour of the Tsilhqot'in after a decades-long court fight that granted them title to 1,700 square kilometres of land in the remote Nemiah Valley, land southwest of Williams Lake that would have been part of the Cariboo road.

In November 2015 Premier Christy Clark's provincial Liberal government issued a formal apology in the legislature for the "wrongful arrest, trial and hanging of the six chiefs." She said the government confirmed "without reservation that these six Tsilhqot'in chiefs are fully exonerated of any crimes or wrongdoing."



THE LETTER FROM SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

This letter from Lytton, the Secretary of State to the Colonies, was presented to Higgins' family after the death of their son in the Chilcotin War.

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OPPOSITE

A bronze cast of Sir Matthew Baillie Begbie, the first Chief Justice in the Crown Colony of British Columbia, stands at the entrance to the Law Courts in New Westminster.

THE ROAD TO CONFEDERATION

JOHN SEBASTIAN HELMCKEN (1824 - 1920)

A medical doctor in Victoria, Helmcken married Governor James Douglas' daughter Cecilia. This statue, which stands adjacent to his residence and the British Columbia Museum, is in Elliott Square Park. The statue, created by Armando Barbon and Gabriele Vicari, was donated to the BC Museum by the family of Yole and Armando Barbon. Dr. Helmcken earned acclaim as a physician, colonial legislator and negotiator of British Columbia's entry into confederation.



The Colony of Vancouver Island and the mainland Colony of British Columbia were united in 1866 under the name British Columbia. For two years the capital was in New Westminster, but in 1868 it moved to Victoria where it has remained ever since. This reduced the expense of two separate governments, but heightened the rivalry between the island and mainland. Many islanders wanted to remain in a British Colony, while others demanded more self government or talked of annexation to the United States.

In 1867, just after Confederation of the eastern colonies, a group led by Amor de Cosmos proposed that B.C. join the new Dominion. In 1868, a Confederation League was formed in Victoria, with strong support from mainland settlers. A Convention was held at Yale with 26 delegates from both the island and the mainland.

The "Yale Convention" outcome encouraged BC to join Canada, with Canada taking over the colony's debt and paying a grant per head of the population, the introduction of responsible government, and the building of a good wagon road to B.C.

The outcome from the Convention were heatedly debated by those opposed to Confederation, referring to the meeting as the "Yale Conspiracy". The proposals were voted down in the Legislative Council. Generally mainland members favoured joining Canada, whereas island members did not. In 1870 a delegation of 3 men went to Ottawa to find out what the Canadian government would offer if B.C. did join the new country. Assuming the debt, providing extra Members of Parliament, building a drydock in Victoria and constructing a trans-continental railway were all put on the table and the delegates returned to B.C. full of enthusiasm. After further debate B.C. became a province of Canada on July 20th, 1871, and the proposals of the Yale Convention became a reality.

In the spring of 1870, British Columbia sent a delegation of three men to negotiate union with Canada; they were Dr. John Sebastian Helmcken (Governor James Douglas' son-in-law), Joseph W. Trutch (the first Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia), and Robert W. Carrall (Cariboo goldminer). Governor Musgrave had selected all three delegates without the input of the Legislative Council. The choices disappointed longtime pro-Confederation activists like De Cosmos and Robson. The British Colonist, which was edited by Robson, sent Henry E. Seelye to cover the event and to lobby for responsible government.

His stories provided an interesting perspective on the trip to Ottawa and the negotiations that took place there.

Negotiations began at Ottawa on June 7, 1870. The delegates found their Canadian counterparts accommodating, and willing to grant major concessions. At first, the Canadians even seemed ready to allow the passage of Clause 15; however, after meeting with Seelye, the Canadians insisted that the colony would have to have responsible institutions if it entered Confederation. Also, there was disagreement over the means of calculating the proposed per capita subsidy. The final agreement included provisions for responsible government, pensions for the unelected officials who would lose their positions after union, assumption of the colonial debt, and an allotment of three senators and six members of Parliament. Perhaps most important was the agreement to construct a permanent rail link to the West Coast. These terms were put before the electorate in November 1870. Legislation had recently been amended to allow the elected officials to outnumber those who were appointed, and pro-Confederation members were elected in each of the ridings. The new assembly passed all the terms of union without change in 1871.

The generosity of these terms was met with surprise and even disbelief in British Columbia, but without contest. Such was not the case in Ottawa. In the spring of 1871, Trutch returned to Ottawa to ensure the legislation's intact passage. He discovered that the opposition, and many government members from Ontario, saw the terms as entirely too generous. Trutch worked successfully to convince concerned government members that the conditions of the deal were both reasonable and necessary. The terms were passed in both the House of Commons and the Senate without amendment, and received the Royal Assent on May 16, 1871.



ROBERT WILLIAM WEIR CARRALL (1837 - 1879)

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JOSEPH WILLIAM TRUTCH (1826 - 1904)

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