

The Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank Building in the 1930's when the Canadian Trade Commission moved into it. A prestigious address in its day, the building was fully air conditioned – one of the first in Hong Kong.

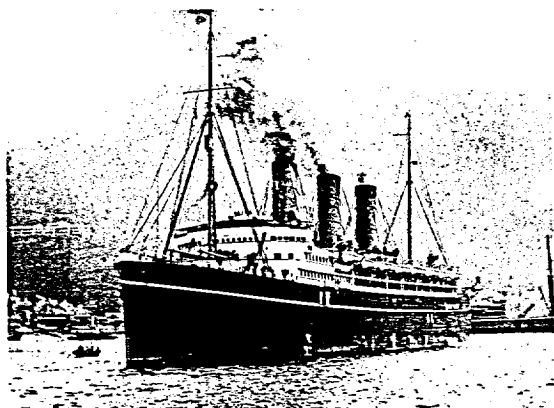
make any official trips out of the Colony, the isolation was even worse. Commercial and political developments at home soon put them out of touch with the current scene. They no doubt bemoaned the fact, that with a Bachelor degree, the rewards of private industry might have been more lucrative and less lonely.

While no one is sure of the exact date in the late 1930's, the Trade Commission moved offices to the second floor of the new Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank Building on Des Voeux Road Central. The Bank had prospered in recent years to become the main channel by which British investment flowed into China. From the 1911 Revolution, until China secured tariff autonomy in 1928,

the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation was the sole bank to receive Chinese customs revenues.

The building was designed on a grand scale, and one of the first in Hong Kong to be fully air-conditioned. The office space for the Canadian Trade Commission was approximately the same size as before. The Trade Commissioner and Assistant Trade Commissioner had private offices looking out onto Des Voeux Road Central, with a general office and small store-room for stationery beside them. The Trade Commissioner, Major Duclos, was succeeded by Paul V. McLane, but the locally-engaged staff remained unchanged.

Hong Kong at the close of the thirties was still a nineteenth century colonial outpost. Rickshaws and sedan chairs competed with motor cars in its streets, piracy infested the outlying islands and the loud shouts of "Boy!" by Englishmen in bars and clubs was common. The Peak was still off-limits to Chinese households. It was a scene ripe for change.



The Canadian Pacific Steamship "The Empress of Asia" in Hong Kong harbour in the 1920's. The relationship between the Trade Commission and Canadian Pacific was a strong one.