

# "MILIONS FOR ST. JOHN AS A PORT"

What Our "Boom" Looks Like to a Boston Newspaper ---  
Calls St. John's Prospects the "Biggest Boom that  
Ever Struck any City on the Atlantic Seaboard."

(By Mary Bronson Hart, in the Boston Transcript.)

Something is "doing" in St. John, N. B. So much is borne in upon the least inquisitive of travellers before he has been an hour in the town. A new pall of smoke hangs over the waterfront, new factories loom out of the cloud, a new note sounds in the casual talk of the man on the street. Expansion, "works," breakwaters, docks, irrigation, and the winter port—these are the things that are forced on a stranger's attention. As for the newspapers, they seem to be in a fever. Formerly as compact a city as the complexity of the sea and river site permitted, St. John is now spoken of editorially in terms of a civic triumph.

—St. John, St. John, St. John West. If the visitor ignores these signs, he can scarcely ignore the heavy blasts of dynamite which, on the eastern side of the town at least, keep the window panes chattering day and night.

A Boom to Last.  
Is it a boom? It is a boom, the biggest boom in all probability, that ever struck any city on the Atlantic seaboard. And it is not the kind of boom that "busts." No inflation from too vivid a civic imagination is here. The forces of expansion came from outside St. John. Three great transcontinental railway systems, the vast export trade of the Dominion, and thirty millions of good government money—these are the solid factors in the boom.

But why the sudden excitement? The winter port is not new. Nature made it when she set an ice-cessal at the mouth of the St. Lawrence. For five months of every year St. John has become of geographical necessity the spout through which the Canadian North-west poured out toward the Old World, and the tide of immigration flooded in from the Old World toward the new. Yet recent as has been the importance of the winter port, St. John has hitherto had little to say about it. How was that?

Well, you see all this pouring hasn't been particularly profitable for the passive port. The Canadian Pacific had the fun. Three days in early March brought three thousand immigrants into the winter port. Beyond the sale of sandwiches and cups of coffee, nothing! The splendid Empress steamers of the Canadian Pacific; Canadian Pacific trains were waiting along the pier and whisked the strangers swiftly away.

Not even the profit of trans-shipment which has made so many fortunes along the Great Lakes comes to industrial St. John. The heavy freights of the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian Northern are reaching down toward St. John as their eastern port. The present harbor cannot possibly be stretched to accommodate the terminals. Only by dint of heavy dredging and costly reclamation of land from the sea can it be made to keep pace with the flow of the rail and water traffic of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Another site was imperative.

Raw material for the new harbor was found at Courtenay Bay, to the east of the main peninsula of the Result? Large areas of hitherto neglected country lands sprang into sudden commercial importance, the sudden influx of engineers, contractors and laborers created an eager demand for housing. Better than that, the promised rail and shipping facilities immediately turned toward St. John a number of new industries.

Hence the boom. Rents went hopping up, up, up, especially rents for business property, although for the matter of that, as leasing time came round, no man courted an interview with his landlord. Real estate began to change hands so rapidly that the registry offices fell months behind in the work of recording transfers. Building permits were in enthusiastic demand. Not since the fire of 1877 has there been such an epidemic of building.

The cause of all this stir, Courtenay Bay, was till last May, a placid place enough—low, green, curving shores on a shallow blue basin which at low tide became little more than pinkish mud flats. The farther shore was dotted with country homes. A famous place, they tell me, for bathing in delicious little coves.

Seen as I saw it recently, still white under February snows, the bay still wears an air of uncommercial calm. True, a breakwater has crept out from the eastern shore perhaps a thousand feet. Tiny trains of flat cars may be seen crawling out on the narrow wall to dump their loads of blasted rock.

What Will Be in Five Years.  
Five years from now the bay won't know itself. Behind a sheltering wall nearly a mile long (4,700 feet), will lie a great drydock—the biggest in the world, large enough to accommodate the biggest ships afloat. The whole basin will have been dredged out and piers for ocean liners will have been built. At first there will be only berths for four steamers. But look a little farther into the future and a series of docks, two miles of them, will bristle round the whole irregular crescent of the bay. A modern ship-repair plant will flank the

drydock. And above the drydock, on 225 acres of reclaimed land, will smoke the tall stacks of a big steel plant, employing 2,000 men. At the head of the bay, where snowy fields lie now, will spread the terminals of the Grand Trunk Pacific, which has already bought up seventy acres for its sheds.

It is no airy scheme. Contracts for \$11,500,000 worth of work have been given by the Dominion Government to a firm of British contractors, Norton, Griffiths & Co., to cover only the cost of blasting, dredging the harbor and building the breakwater, the drydock and two piers for ocean-going ships. Government plans carry the total ultimate expenditure to \$30,000,000.

All the Makings.  
As for the steel plant, that is practically assured; it is only a question of making suitable arrangements with the Provincial Government for the reclamation of the necessary land. Indeed, one can hardly see how the opportunity could be resisted, the facilities are so great. Coal is handy at Joggins, N. S., whence it would come in barges to the company's docks, and also at Grand Lake, directly on the line of the new Grand Trunk Pacific. Limestone is abundant in the immediate neighborhood of the bay. And as for the third desideratum, iron ore, the Drummonds own an iron mine in Gloucester county and another in Nova Scotia. Moreover, the ship repair depot would provide a steel market for steel plate.

Not content with the view from the city, I embraced an opportunity to drive round to the eastern shore, or St. John East, to the actual scene of operations. No trolley yet serves the district, but an extension is promised before long. Snow-bunting were wheeling in flocks over the cold white fields of the prospective wharf. Not only are the hills out and named, but lots are sold by the hundred and houses are actually building. Last summer the shore did not begin to provide housing for the men employed in construction work. They lived in shacks and tents as best they could, and every family with house-room to spare took in one or two young men to board.

Stone for the breakwater is handy. Part of it is blasted out of the cliff directly at the shore end of the wharf, and part comes from a quarry a few hundred feet farther inland. A spongy desolation, they have made of a once lovely shore. On the top of the plateau are perched a machine shop, and blacksmiths with fires warmly glowing. Below the bank two big steam shovels are at work filling the dump cars which incessantly travel out to the end of the sea wall. The whole scene is a picture of industry and activity. Five locomotives, three locomotive cranes, one steam derrick, one steam derrick, eighteen steel dump cars of eighty yards capacity, and eight air-dump cars of twenty yards capacity.

The Breakwater.  
At present the breakwater appears but a wall of tumbled stone. Later, however, the sides will be covered with great stone blocks of two to five tons. This for more than half of the distance out. Then will come a section with cribwork next the harbor and stone on the side exposed to the sea, and the last five or six hundred feet will consist of cribwork in 25 feet of water, with a superstructure of reinforced concrete. On the sea side the wall will be defended by ground running out at right angles 50 feet. These will break the force of the waves.

Next spring when the dredging in Courtenay Bay begins in earnest St. John will have the merriest fleet of "drudges" ever brought together in Canadian waters. For beside those in Courtenay Bay there are five at work in the western harbor together with an awe-inspiring stonelifter. Indeed to cross the ferry to St. John West (it used to be called St. John West) there are five at work in the harbor. The frantic hubbub of construction over there, you might easily be persuaded that here was the great government extension. Round the picturesque old beaconlight in the harbor a swarm of clumsy "drudges" is busy. I believe they mean to clear the channel and do away with the benches altogether. On shore, alongside an enormous concrete elevator accommodates a million bushels; a twin elevator is starting up on made land. A long wing-dam encloses the whole space ultimately to be reclaimed, and behind it the multitudinous pine-mounds and the forest of rusty steel rods of the reinforced concrete construction, spread over an alarming area.

How pressing is the need of the C.

P. R. for additional elevator space may be judged by the fact that the work is pushed through zero weather, although every bit of gravel used in the concrete must be hot, and every drop of water must be heated. The stuff is mixed in a tall frame tower sunk 30 feet below low-water level. In addition to the new elevator, the C. P. R. is extending its freight facilities, while the government is building for the road a number of additional steamer berths.

By luck an ocean liner was just docking when I left the ferry at Courtenay. I climbed up the great ladder, shed with the illuminated sign: "Welcome to Canada," over the top "The Ladies' Canadian Club" of St. John put it there. Up above where immigrants, conspicuously targeted for their railway destinations, were rushing about, a profusion of flags, produced a gala effect. A sign of the times, I thought, that the immigrants, the strangers, who seemed in some little danger of denationalization, considering the variety of literature they receive. One plaintive sign caught my eye. "We want you in New Brunswick." It was true. They could do with a few of the right sort of immigrants for the farms of the province; but most of them are bled through to western ports. Considering how few immigrants remain with them it is really very nice of St. John to make them so cordially welcome in the name of Canada.

Below in the freight sheds, bales and boxes were sliding down from the steamer's side to go trundling across the shed directly into the wide doors of freight cars drawn up alongside. Oh, yes, with its trains and its immigrants, the picture of a busy port, the winter port is a bustling place. Last year during the five winter months 125,000,000 of exports went through the hands of the C. P. R. Of this, perhaps one-third came from over the American border; 75,000 passengers were shipped westward; and 75 per cent. of the goods were bound. This winter the figures will run considerably higher.

We have not exhausted the news at St. John. Last August a law went into effect prohibiting the export of pulp wood. Four or five large pulp and paper mills on New Brunswick soil were the immediate result. One of these, which it is said will be the largest in the world, will apparently be located at St. John and another at Grand Falls will send its finished product down the river.

A plan is being pushed to have the city reclaim ninety acres of the extreme south end of the city by building a sea wall and filling in the area as a site for factories. At Coldbrook, a development company has secured 800 acres for an industrial garden suburb.

The provincial government is building the St. John Valley Railroad from Grand Falls to tidewater, a step which will open up six million acres of fine fruit-growing lands and serve as an additional feeder for the harbor traffic.

Factories A-Building.  
A sugar refinery with capacity of 2,000 barrels a day will shortly go up on the old harbor front. The land—eleven acres—has already been purchased. The Maritime Motor Company is constructing a factory to turn out 500 cars a year. A company has just purchased 300 acres of lime deposits at Green Head, where they will manufacture Portland cement. A new armory is nearly completed, a new theatre is going up in King square, a new post office will be begun in the spring. A million dollar hotel is planned for Prince William street, a new bank building for Market square.

Both bridges over the picturesque reversing falls of the St. John are to be replaced, the towed suspension bridge with one on the cantilever principle. An American company is negotiating for the purchase of the street railway system of the city, holding out promises of suburban lines to Pothessay and to the beautiful wild park and aboretum, which is one of the particular glories of St. John. Strangely enough, the present trolley company has never seen fit to extend a line to the park.

Natural gas is playing a part in the development. The Albert county areas are producing crude petroleum—which may come in handy if ships take to using oil for fuel—and natural gas in wells whose surface pressure is 700 pounds to the square inch. The wells are seventy miles from St. John but more recently others have come to light at Sussex, only forty miles from town.

Crowd all these doings and planings into a city the size of St. John

## INDIANTOWN HAD A SMALL DELUGE

Choked Catch Basin Caused Flood—Water 18 Inches Deep in Some Places—Slight Damage Done.

There was another flood in Indian town at the foot of Main street last evening, and quite a number of residents and some of the storekeepers were for a time as practically marooned as if they had got adrift in Noah's ark. Some portions of the street were covered to a depth of 18 inches, and wild-eyed maelstroms of mud and water stood in the doorways watching the rising of the dark and dreadful waters, and wondering whether the world was to be destroyed by flood again for the sins of the Liberals at Ottawa.

A heated argument broke out between two neighbors as to whether in such a dire emergency it would not be better to have a tin pot navy in the neighborhood of Courtenay Bay, which might come to the rescue of good citizens menaced by floods of icy water nearly as sure as the sins of the Liberals at Ottawa.

Meanwhile the water filled the cellars and flowed into the stores and some of the houses and the people had to get busy saving their household goods. A call for help went over the telephone to the Wilmore and the men of the water and sewerage department, and in due time some help was forthcoming in rubber boots for the citizens who were waiting to be drowned in their happy homes.

However, it was not the river that was rising and causing tempers to rise too. The rain storm was the responsible party, and the fact that a catch basin was choked or overworked.

## OBITUARY.

At Head Line, Queens Co., March 17th, James H. McKinney, eldest son of the late Stewart McKinney, died at the age of 44 years, leaving a mother, four brothers and four sisters. The brothers are Stewart A. McKinney, Samuel, Francis and Walter, at home. The sisters are Mrs. J. W. Pollock and Mrs. G. A. Keast of this city, Mrs. J. W. Armstrong of Summer Hill, and Mrs. W. B. Kerr of North Clonca.

The funeral services were conducted yesterday by Rev. Mr. Whitley, in the Episcopal burying ground at Head Line.

## The Reunion Plan.

The secretary of the Board of Trade has received two more applications from old country people who want to borrow money from the Imperial Reunion Fund to bring out their wives and families. Letters are being received almost every day from parties of old country people asking if there is any work in St. John for them, and in many cases places are secured for them with the manufacturers of the city.

(42362) and things look lively. With one of the model harbors of the whole Atlantic coast, capable of accommodating steamers of deeper draught than can go up the St. Lawrence, why should not St. John become a port of importance not in winter alone, but all the year 'round?

## LABOR MEN AND THE HEAD TAX

Will Take Referendum of Unions to get at Opinion as to its Retention or Abolition.

At the meeting of the Trades and Labor Council last evening the tax imposed by the city on laborers coming here to work was the subject of a vigorous discussion, and as the delegates were not unanimous on the matter it was decided to take a referendum of the unions to find out whether the members thought it advisable to fight for the retention of the tax.

Some of the delegates stated that the catalogues in the public library were cumbersome, and that it required a lot of time to look through them and discover the book wanted. One delegate said workingmen should have more respect for themselves than to patronize a Carnegie library. The secretary was instructed to write to the commissioners of the library and request them to have the catalogues revised and simplified, and to sell cheap copies to the public. The secretary was also instructed to urge the commissioners to secure labor papers and magazines, and place them in the reading room.

A letter from the Textile Workers' Union in reference to the organization of the cotton workers here was referred to the organization committee. A label committee was appointed and instructed to boost the sale of union made goods in the city. The matter of holding another meeting of the Provincial Federation of Labor was discussed, but no action was taken.

## ESTEEMED PARRISORE LADY BURIED YESTERDAY.

Special to The Standard.  
Parrisore, March 20.—The funeral of Mrs. N. C. Nordby, whose death from heart failure, occurred Monday night, took place this afternoon and was very largely attended. Mrs. Nordby was the widow of the late Captain Nordby, Swedish vice-consul, and was an estimable lady. She was a member of St. George's Anglican church, and was foremost in every good work. Her death will be sincerely mourned by a large circle of relations and friends, and her place in the parish will not be easily filled.

## SHERIFF'S SALE AT WOODSTOCK.

Woodstock, Mar. 20.—Sheriff Tompkins sold at public auction today the land and store lately occupied by Hugh Hay and Son, subject to a mortgage held by the Bank of Nova Scotia amounting to \$6,540. The property was bid in by J. C. Hartley, who is said to represent the John McLaughlin Co. for the sum of \$1,900 above the mortgage. A. H. Haunington of St. John, attended the sale in the interests of some of the creditors. The property is a desirable one, on the east side of Main street, in the centre of the town.

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The feelings of fatigue and languor which overcome so many people at this season of the year tell of the exhausted condition of the nerves. It is impossible to keep up the action of the heart and the vitality of the nerves when the blood is thin and watery, and this is why nearly everybody needs tonic treatment in the spring.

Some of the symptoms are restlessness, nervous activity, insomnia, absent-mindedness, tired gait, lack of ambition and enthusiasm, headache and neuritic pains, dyspepsia and feelings of languor and depression. Monotony of work and mental overstrain or worry sap the nervous system, as does also the strenuousness of modern life, whether in the business or social world.

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