

The Okanagan Valley

The name Okanagan means stormy waters, and was applied by the Indians to the lake which is seventy miles long, from one to three miles wide, and, in places, at least 1,800 feet deep. It covers an area of 86,240 acres and extends from near Vernon to Penticton, or about half the length of the Okanagan Valley. At the time we first mentioned, this vast territory was peopled almost entirely by Indians, the only white people being the pioneer clergy of the Roman Catholic religion, who about the year 1863 established their headquarters at what is known as the mission, a point some 3½ miles south by east of Kelowna. Shortly afterwards a few of the earliest settlers came in from the south and acquired large tracts of land which they used for cattle raising. In course of time people in search of agricultural land followed. At present the population of the Okanagan would be about 13,000, not including Indians, whose numbers are rapidly decreasing.

Topographically the Okanagan Valley is some 150 miles in length and from two to six miles in width, and may be roughly described as lying at the 50th parallel, between the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Washington, U. S. A., boundary line. It is about 300 miles from the Pacific Coast.

Sheltered by the mountains from the cold winds of winter and tempered by cool lake breezes in summer, this garden spot of Western Canada rests upon the climatic advantages, in the fertility of soil, in its immunity from drought and flood, in its widespread popularity, its general prosperity, in its great past and in its still greater future now irresistibly drawing nearer. Traverse its great lakes, drive over its mountain roads, visit its picturesque nooks, wander through its orchards and meadows, fish in its streams, bask in its sunshine, go where you will you shall not find in Western Canada a fairer spot, nor one which combines so well a means of making a good livelihood with the comforts which make life worth living.

The Valley may be approached on the south, via the Great Northern, from Spokane (Wash.) and other points, and so by stage to Penticton; but the majority prefer to come via the C. P. Ry., since travellers from Eastern points are enabled by means of the Soo Line to connect at Moose Jaw. From Sicamous Junction the Shuswap and Okanagan branch line will take us through Mara, Enderby, Armstrong and Vernon to Okanagan Landing, and a fine C. P. R. boat will still further convey us to Kelowna, Peachland, Summerland, Naramata, and Penticton. Thus we may for simplicity divide the Valley into two parts—the Upper and the Lower districts. The former comprising the portion watered by the Spallumcheen River and its tributaries, and the latter the area tributary to Okanagan Lake.

Midway between these two lies Vernon, the central and largest of the Valley cities. From here, as elsewhere, good roads lead to all outlying towns, notably the Kamloops and Grand Prairie road, and the Vernon and Salmon Arm road via Armstrong and Enderby, and the Kelowna and the White Valley stage roads. This last passes through the Coldstream Valley, with its celebrated ranch of that name, and on to Turnby, Blue Springs, etc.

Concerning Okanagan, the Provincial Government Official Bulletin, No. 10 for 1907, on Agriculture, says: "The district is traversed from Sicamous to Vernon by the Shuswap and Okanagan branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which connects at Okanagan Landing, at the head of the lake, with Canadian Pacific steamers running to Penticton at its southern end. The railway runs for almost its whole length (51 miles) through a magnificent farming country, a large

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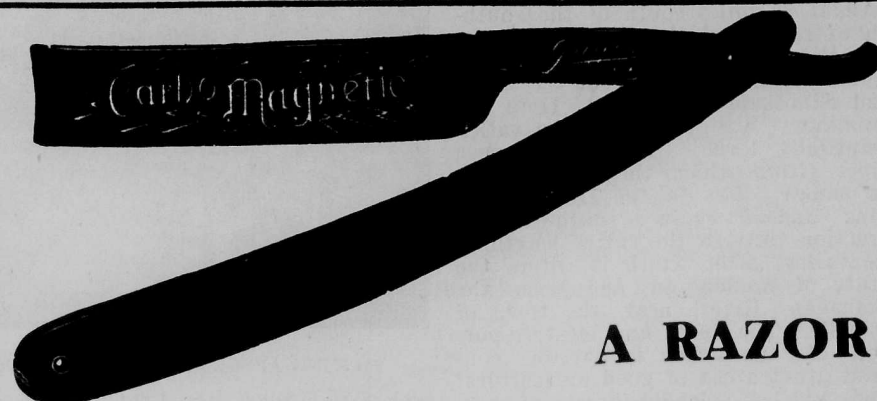
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