

the first traveller to reach the west coast was a Chinese monk. The dates of his travels are unknown, but in China there is an old record of a monk who journeyed east and crossed a body of water, which was probably Bering Strait, and then travelled south to find some huge trees. His description of these trees fits the Douglas fir of British Columbia, Oregon and Washington. Then the record describes a tree similar to the California redwood, he must have travelled pretty well down the coast. There is nothing in our own history about this; perhaps it is just a legend.

Along about 1778, less than two hundred years ago, Captain Cook came upon the Pacific coast while travelling east in search of the Northwest Passage. Prior to this time all explorers had sailed westward to find the Northwest Passage. His venture was a most important one as far as the British government was concerned, because they had offered a prize of £100,000 to the discoverer of the Northwest Passage, and a smaller prize of £5,000 to the explorer who got within a few degrees of the North Pole. Captain Cook landed on the west coast of Vancouver Island at a place now called Nootka Inlet, and he told about the sea otter and other fur-bearing animals that he saw. The result was that a few years later a fur-trading station was set up in Nootka Sound. English traders loaded their ships here with furs, and soon commenced bartering them in China for silks, tea, spices and other oriental produce, after which the ships returned to England. British Columbia lacked overland transportation, and in 1788 or thereabouts an export trade by water was opened up.

The next discoverer of British Columbia was Captain George Vancouver, who made an accurate chart of the coast in 1792. The big island off the mainland was named after him in his honour, as were two coastal cities. One of these, the original Vancouver, is in the State of Washington. It is 100 years old, and celebrated its one-hundredth anniversary when Vancouver, B.C. was celebrating its sixtieth anniversary.

The next explorer to journey to the far western province was Alexander Mackenzie, the first man to reach the Pacific coast by the overland route. As honourable senators know, the early explorers were racing to establish fur-trading posts on the west coast. When they got beyond Winnipeg, because they could not make the trip back to Montreal in one year, they had to carry their stock of furs for two years. Some of the companies, not having sufficient money to finance themselves for two years, ran into trouble. They were in a worse plight than the prairie farmers today who have to carry over for one year.

Mackenzie was soon followed by Lewis and Clark, on the American side, who came up from the Missouri river and arrived at the mouth of the Columbia river in 1803. The Canadian fur traders, hearing that Lewis and Clark were coming, thought they would try to get ahead of them, but were a little late. They arranged with Simon Fraser to endeavour to get to the mouth of the Columbia river in advance of Lewis and Clark. He got to the mouth of a river all right, but it was not the Columbia. The river he reached is the one which now bears his name, the Fraser river, which is some 300 miles north of the Columbia. Fraser was quite disappointed to find that he had not arrived at the Columbia river, but he had done a good job of exploration for Canada, and blazed a trail for the fur traders going out there.

In about the year 1811 John Jacob Astor, who was then the fur king of New York, thought he would get into the fur trade on the West Coast. Being a very smart business man he established, at the mouth of the Columbia river, a trading post called Astoria, a thriving town which is still there. His actions revealed his business ingenuity. The site that he chose for the post was at that time supposed to be on British territory, and England sent out a sloop of war to take over the fort that he had erected. But before the sloop arrived, Astor sold the fort to the Canadians. He did very well out of this, because he got his money, and the fort was later handed back by the British.

The Treaty of Ghent, signed in 1818 between the United States and Britain, neglected to specify the southern border on the West Coast, and we had a squabble in trying to decide where it should be. Finally the matter was settled. The original border ran down to the Columbia river. One of the arbitrators, an Englishman, said that as the salmon on the Fraser river would not rise to a fly, the territory there was not worth keeping, anyway, and should be given to the Americans. So they got the line north of the Columbia river up to the forty-ninth parallel. A peculiar clause was inserted in the treaty and is still in force. It provides that any Canadian citizen—a trader or anyone else—can navigate up and down the Columbia river, through American territory, without any let or hindrance from the customs authorities. If that had been known during the rum-running days in California and Oregon, I am afraid the American authorities would have had a good deal of trouble with people wanting to run rum through the city of Portland, through which city the river flows.

In 1836, to provide better transportation on the coast, the Hudson's Bay Company sent out from England a vessel called the *Beaver*, the