

connect these with the settled parts of the Province. Miners are a profitable community to deal with, and the British Columbians were unwilling that the Colville merchants, south of the boundary line, should monopolize the trade of what were expected to turn out rich gold fields. From Kamloops, steamers could run up the South Thompson River and Shuswap Lake; and from a point on the lake called Seymour, Mr. W. Moberly constructed a trail through the Gold Mountains to the Big Bend; and in 1865, he discovered a direct pass from Shuswap Lake to the Columbia. Mr. Trutch, in a Report of the Land and Works Department, dated 29th October, 1865, speaks of this pass and of his hopes in connection with it, in what has turned out to be prophetic language:—"It was not only unknown to white men but so far as can be ascertained, neither the Shuswap nor the Columbia River Indians had any knowledge of it previous to Mr. Moberly's reconnaissance. . . . The Gold Range was supposed to be an unbroken and impassable wall of mountains. The summit of this pass, now known as Eagle Pass, is only four hundred and seven feet above the level of Shuswap Lake, which lake is one hundred and twenty-seven feet lower than the Columbia River at low water mark at the mouth of the pass—the distance through being thirty-two miles. For some distance near its summit, this pass is walled in on each side by abrupt cliffs and is not therefore available for the construction of a cheap trail; but for a waggon road or railroad it is most applicable, and its discovery may be regarded as of great value, for by this pass, it may be confidently hoped will one day be brought a line of communication, by waggon road first, and afterwards by railroad, from the British possessions on the Saskatchewan across the Rocky Mountains into the central portions of British Columbia, and down the valley of the Fraser River to the sea."

The Eagle Pass through the Gold Range having been discovered, Mr. Moberly was naturally anxious to find a pass across the Selkirks also. He was sure that quartz mining in the Big Bend would be most extensive, though it would take time to develop the mines, as the extremely difficult nature of the country made it impossible for prospectors to move about without trails. Those quartz veins to which he alluded in his reports are still awaiting a railway through the Rockies before they can be developed. That there was a pass through the Selkirks he had little doubt. On coming through the Gold Mountains to the Columbia, a cleavage through the Selkirks can be seen, almost as if it were a continuation of the Eagle Pass. Through this cleft the Ille-cille-waut runs into the Columbia, and it was obvious that by it a pass should be sought. He sent one of his engineers to ascertain if anything favourable could be found, but his report was discouraging. He himself then took the matter in hand. Proceeding up the Ille-cille-waut to its forks, and rightly judging that the eastern branch of the river was the one to follow to its source, he tried hard to induce his Indians to accompany him up it and all the way across the range. But, as he reported, "all my efforts were unavailing, as they affirmed that if we went on we should be caught in the snow and never get out of the mountains. As I now found it would not be possible to complete the exploration of the easterly branch so as to arrive at a definite conclusion, . . . and as a partial exploration would only be a waste of time and money, for should it be explored throughout, at any future time, which I would recommend, the same ground would have to be traversed again, I decided to explore the northerly fork At a distance of about four miles above the forks I entered the slate range, and continued in it the rest of the distance travelled up the stream. These slate mountains are intersected in all directions by innumerable veins of quartz, and on the river banks and bars much hard blue gravel, intermixed with clay, was seen." He washed a few pans of dirt and obtained prospects pronounced to be five cents to the pan. Noticing traces of silver in a vein of quartz, he knocked off a few pieces of rock, and the Government Assay Office reported the mineral to be argentiferous galena, with 84 oz. of silver to the ton. Finding that the valley turned more and more to the north, and that nothing could be gained by a longer continuance in the Selkirks that year, he retraced his steps and reached Shuswap Lake on the 10th of October.

Soon after these explorations, the diggings at the Big Bend having proved disappointing to the miners who had flocked to them without proper equipment, the necessity for further examination of the Selkirks by the British Columbia Government ceased. The colony had no money to spend on surveys that did not promise an immediate return, and Mr. Moberly had thus no opportunity of discovering the pass in the existence of which he fully believed. That honour was reserved for our friend the Major.

When the Syndicate decided to get a more direct route to the Pacific than that which the Yellow Head Pass offered, it became all important to know whether the Selkirks could be crossed or not. Major Rogers, who was appointed Engineer of the Mountain Division in February, 1881, was

instructed to settle the point. Studying the Reports, he saw that he had only to take up the examination of the mountains where Moberly had been obliged to leave off. In April, he left Victoria, B.C., for Kamloops, and obtaining ten Shuswap Indians from the mission there, he determined to push through the Eagle Pass, cross the Selkirks somehow, and reach the mouth of the Kicking Horse; for, from the first he had come to the conclusion that the Kicking Horse was the natural pass down the western slope of the Rockies. He failed in this first effort. He forced his way indeed through the Eagle Pass, and succeeded in getting up the eastern branch of the Ille-cille-waut, into the heart of the Selkirks, and on May 29th climbed a mountain near Syndicate Peak and saw that there was an opening down the other side of the range, and "snow-clad desolation" everywhere else. But provisions were running short, and it was impossible to advance farther. Turning back to the Columbia, he dismissed his Shuswaps, and rafted down the river to Fort Colville. From that point he got round to the Vermilion Pass, and on July 16th he met on the Bow near Padmore's his Rocky Mountain parties. The rest of that season was spent in exploring everything bearing the name of a pass in the main range—the Kananaskis, Vermilion, White Man's, Kicking Horse and Howse. In May, 1882, he made another attempt to find a pass through the Selkirks, beginning this time from the eastern side. Starting from the mouth of the Kicking Horse with a small party he struggled up the south bank of the Beaver till he reached a point where he saw Bear Creek joining it, and coming evidently from the right direction. The Beaver was in flood. He tried to cross that he might follow up Bear Creek; but though he felled trees on its bank by the dozen, they either broke as they fell or they were too short and the torrent swept them away. Failing in his attempts, and provisions running short, he pushed southerly along the Beaver, and then struck across the divide into the valley of the Spillamacheen, and got back to the Kicking Horse Cache on June 16th. The men with him had kept his birthday by sweetening their tea; but tea and everything else as well as sugar were exhausted before they reached the Cache, and had they not found a canoe that enabled them to cross the Columbia it would have gone hard with them. A month later, he started on a third effort to discover the Pass, taking with him Carroll and D. Bellhouse as assistants, and three Indians, Louis, Charlie Mountain and Pete. Every man carried his pack, and the brush was so dense that they travelled only from two to four miles a day. It rained almost every day, and when it did not rain the black flies, mosquitoes and sandflies made it hot for them. Cutting their way up the north bank of the Beaver they crossed Mountain Creek and Bear Creek, and discovered the Pass on July 24th. But the Major was not satisfied. Every spot had to be explored. There might be a connection between the headwaters of the North Fork of the Ille-cille-waut and of Bear or Mountain Creek; so, sending Bellhouse and an Indian back to a point where he had cached some provisions, and instructing them to push up Mountain Creek, he and the rest went down the Ille-cille-waut to the Forks, and then pushed up the North Fork. "Each day," said Carroll, "was a repetition of its predecessor, with this exception, that our packs were becoming lighter, and we were able to make better time. Finding that there was no prospect of a Pass by the North Fork, we concluded to cross from where we were, and try and strike Mountain Creek. It took us a whole day to climb from the valley to snow-line, about 7,500 feet high, where we camped, melting snow to make our tea. A high wind was blowing. Our clothing was wet. Our blanket—for the Major and I had only one between us—was wet also. We could not get enough wood to make a big fire. Our supper had been limited, as there was little grub left. Altogether, it was a night to be remembered. The next day we crossed the main divide, but for some time could not find any water running in the direction of Mountain Creek. At last we struck it, and also a good cariboo trail which followed the stream about sixteen miles and proved invaluable to us in our almost famished state. At one place near the trail we saw eleven large cariboo, quite tame, but we had no gun. Soon after, we met Bellhouse, and we then made for the Kicking Horse cache. Two of our Indians were worn out, and one of them has not been able to do much since. Major Rogers suffered severely from mosquitoes and black flies. His forehead and ears swelled so, that they shook as he walked, and he declared that they felt just like a piece of liver."

This sketch is sufficient to show how important were Mr. Moberly's contributions to a Canadian Pacific Railway, and how much credit he is entitled to in connection with the discovery of the Selkirk Pass. It may also enable even casual readers to understand somewhat of the phenomenal energy and pluck of Major Rogers. Not one engineer in a hundred would have risked, again and again, health and life as he did. Certainly he deserved success. Few can understand the difficulties that have to be