

a vivid inspiration to those who would hold aloft the torch for which they forfeited their lives.

In thanking the Robert Simpson Company for their munificent gesture, the Commissioner declared that the splendid gift would be warmly appreciated by every member of the Force and accepted as another indication of that high regard in which the Company has always held the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The *Quarterly* is confident that this fine instrument will be highly prized not only now, but for all time, by recruits who pass through the "Depot". As its rich solemn notes peal forth filling the Force's historic place of worship with the harmony of prayerful interlude, it will fittingly blend the past with the present; reach forward into the future extolling the valiant deeds of past, present and future heroes.

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On February 15, 1941, the Canadian Pacific Railway celebrated its Diamond Jubilee. The promotion and completion of the great trunk line was a stupendous undertaking, an achievement of the highest importance in the life and unity of our country.

### **Railway Triumph**

Threescore years have passed since Sir John A. Macdonald, then Prime Minister, entertained his vision of the Atlantic and Pacific being linked by rails of steel through Canada. Financiers in England and Captain Palliser, sent out by the Imperial Government, saw only the physical obstacles of the North Shore, the countless miles of unbroken and unsettled prairies, the impassable Rockies, and insurmountable difficulties facing such a task.

But the United States had launched a railway toward the Pacific that threatened to affect all North American trade. There had even been a whispered suggestion of annexation of the western Canadian prairies by the United States; in case of attack these prairies were in a position of helpless vulnerability.

Sir Sanford Fleming, as master pathfinder, planned the actual work through highly efficient survey parties. Despite much opposition and criticism, two companies were formed, one under Sir Hugh Allan, of Montreal, the other under D. L. Macpherson of Toronto. When the former was granted a charter such a political storm broke that Allan threw up his hands; the Government was forced to resign. In the election which followed, the Honourable Alexander Mackenzie swept the country.

British Columbia, which had consented to a place in the Canadian Confederation only upon receiving a pledge that a transcontinental railway would be built, was becoming acutely restless.

In 1878, the Macdonald Government was returned to power. The North West Mounted Police had been functioning four years, the prairies were enjoying publicity; and people were beginning to look westward. Two years later, construction contracts resulted in 700 miles of steel from Lake Superior and the International Boundary at Emerson, Man., to Winnipeg, and from Yale, B.C., for a hundred miles up the Fraser River Canyon. The cost was \$32,000,000.

When English financiers refused to provide badly-needed funds, the Prime Minister turned to a group of men on this side of the Atlantic.