



AUSTRALIAN RANCH, 199 MILES FROM ASHCROFT

elevations, clinging to the face of frowning precipices, or continued by crazy bridges over profound gorges." He further speaks of the difficulties and dangers of the canyon as being incomparably greater than anything encountered before in all his wide experience as a traveler, saying in his diary: "As for the road by land, we could scarcely make our way even with only our guns—we had to pass where no human being should venture." Later on, through the determination of Sir James Douglas, British Columbia's first governor, a road through this pass became an accomplished fact.

With the discovery of gold in the Cariboo, a road to connect the interior and the coast became a vital necessity. In 1861 the route from Yale (the head of navigation) to Lytton was examined by Captain Grant and a small force from the R. E., and work commenced in the following May.

In 1863 Sir J. Trutch constructed the suspension bridge at Chapman's Bar (removed this year) and connected to the road built down from Lytton, giving a magnificent highway from Yale to Alexandria, an unprecedented achievement for any colony, and a splendid tribute to those who not only overcame enormous physical difficulties, but had courage and confidence enough

in the potentialities of the young colony to use up all its available cash resources in trunk road construction.

Many absorbing tales are told of coaching days between Yale and Cariboo from 1864 to the early eighties, and a host of names may be called to mind of men now prominent in the affairs of the province who were then associated with deeds of romance and daring intimately connected with the history of this province.

With the advent of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company the road between Yale and Ashcroft, a section 104 miles in length of the most costly and dangerous nature, fell into disuse, and when a few years later a suggestion was made to re-establish it at a cost of one hundred thousand dollars, it was decided to abandon it entirely. Later on rock and snowslides, in conjunction with the railroad construction in progress, resulted in the obliteration of sections many miles in length, so that now, at a conservative estimate, the cost of constructing a standard road through the canyon east of Yale to North Bend would cost no less than one million dollars.

With this route up the Fraser out of the question, every available pass in the Hope Mountains was closely examined, and