

HISTORY.

The growth and expansion of the districts in and around Victoria, which are wholly dependent on the British Columbia Electric Railway Company for street railway service, light and power, have been phenomenal, and the demand for electrical energy has been doubled and re-doubled several times within the past 7 years. In 1907 power was being furnished by a 2,000 k.w. hydro-electric plant at Goldstream and an 800 k.w. steam plant in Victoria, but it was realized at that time that a material increase would be required in order to meet the demands of the near future. It was therefore decided to look into the available water-power possibilities within a radius of commercially feasible power transmission to the city of Victoria. This investigation was continued for over a year, and practically all of the sources of water power around Victoria were examined. The exploration was carried on only under exceptional difficulties. Within a very short distance of Victoria the country was practically unmapped and unexplored. The mountains and valleys are densely covered with a growth of heavy timber, both standing and fallen, and the underbrush is of such a nature as to make it almost impenetrable. These conditions can be properly appreciated only by those who have experienced them.

The preliminary surveys of Jordan River were started the latter part of 1907, but on account of the winter setting in, it was impossible to finish this work until the following summer. A gauging station was, however, established near the mouth of the river and a series of records of rainfall and runoff were started. The surveys and records determined the fact that the watershed with the runoff observed, and the use of certain of the reservoir sites which had been discovered, would, with the available head, warrant the development of the system. It was also considered that the Jordan River project was better suited to the needs of the Company than any of the other projects investigated.

In October 1909, a party of engineers and a few workmen landed near the mouth of Jordan River and established a temporary camp. This camp was used as a base while other camps of a more permanent nature were being built, and in a very short time construction work was started all along the line as determined by the surveys.

The original installation was completed early in 1912, but in the meantime the demand for power had increased so rapidly that work was started immediately on the installation of the second unit in the power house. This unit was put into operation in the fall