

MILLSTONE RIVER VALLEY

By
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*The Immigrants' Mecca
The Settlers' Paradise*

"There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills;
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the
glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to
pine,
And loiters slowly drawn. On either hand

greatest profusion. Oats often attain the
height of 6½ feet, while all varieties of hay
have the same heavy growth. Wheat has not
been raised to any extent but it is thought
that its cultivation would meet with equal
success. The following figures show what
crops can be raised in almost any part of the

totally disregarded but circumstances indi-
cate that this phase of agriculture is now com-
ing into its own in this district. Those who
have now undertaken this especial work, have
met with great success and they can exhibit
fruit which is second to none in British Col-
umbia. Inspector Wilson in comparing the
land here with the famous Okanagan, stated
that "equally good if not better fruit can be
grown in the district around Nanaimo."

For fruit raising, as well as other classes of
agriculture, the climate is par excellence. Here
one enjoys the most equable climate on Van-
couver Island, the rainfall being 33 inches per
annum, just half that of Vancouver. Snow is
the exception rather than the rule, and then
falling but to disappear rapidly. The mercury
rarely drops below freezing point. In summer
the heat is never excessive although the
land is bathed in sunshine from the first of
April to the middle of October. Cradled in
such a balmy air, it is little surprising that the
most tender fruits such as strawberries, pears,
peaches, apricots, grapes, melons and tomatoes
can be raised in profusion.

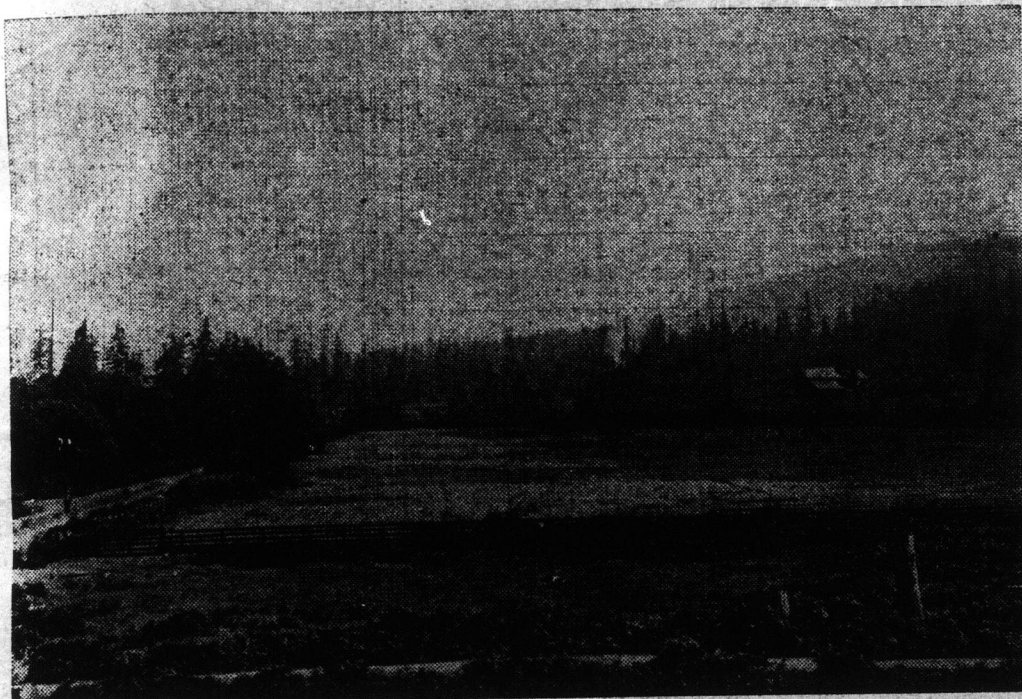
The other avenues for profitable industry
lie open in dairying and poultry-raising. In
Nanaimo a poultry society exists which holds
a high class show every year and there are
several prize-stocked ranches in the valley.
For dairying there are all the advantages
which could be desired. There is an unlimited
range, while in Nanaimo is situated the Na-
naimo Creamery which is controlled by the
Farmers' Association. Despite its consider-
able output, it cannot nearly supply the local
demand, the price of butter ranging from 35
to 45 cents per pound.

This district partakes as fairly of commer-
cial as of natural advantages. At the distance
of a few miles, ready markets lie open for all
the farm produce which is available. In Na-
naimo, only two and one-half miles distant,
the demand is much greater than the local supply.
Farm produce is shipped in from mainland
points nearly all the year round. Hay, oats

via the E. & N. railway which passes only a
mile from the valley, while daily connection
can be made via Nanaimo with the extensive
markets in Vancouver where the highest prices
prevail.

Millstone River Valley, however, can boast
of more than one industry. At the valley set-

finest coal has been struck and actual ship-
ments have been made by means of a road en-
gine for a considerable length of time. In this
mine places are now working, all in 6-ft. of
solid coal. The company have also put in a
switch to connect their mine with the Lady-
smith Lumber company's railroad which



Scene Looking South—East Wellington, Millstone River Valley

The lawns and meadow ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them
runs
The long brook falling through the clov'n
ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
Stands up and takes the morning."

To one who traces, from the outlet where
the Millstone River flows into the placid
waters of Nanaimo Bay, the meandering course
of this boisterous stream and emerges by
many a winding way into the broad reaches
of the valley, the mind's eye finds in the beau-
tiful vistas beyond a counterpart of the
fabled vale of Ida which is pictured so beau-
tifully in the appended lines. Two and a half
miles from Nanaimo opens out this Millstone
River Valley which in ever widening expanse
extends thirteen miles in length from the out-
skirts of Nanaimo to the head of Nanaimo
Bay. Although within such a short distance
of Nanaimo, a city of 8,000 inhabitants, it has
been practically undeveloped, except at its
southern extremity. Here through the bot-
tom land, the stream winds its way through
fields heaving with plenty. On the eastern
side, a low-lying ridge of hills throw up their
verdure clad crest against the chilly blasts of
the Gulf of Georgia. To the west, the bottom
lands are crowned with up-land dales where
fields of grain and orchards lie embosomed in
groves of fir and pine. Higher and further
back, the bench-lands, forest-clad, extend and
erect themselves as bulwarks about the but-
tresses of Mt. Benson, which lifts its twin
peaks to the golden portals of the setting sun.

There is no more stable foundation for the
prosperity of a country than that found in
the resources of its arable land and it is in such
valleys as the above described Millstone River
Valley that is hidden the wealth that will
make the future of Vancouver Island great.
For many years, owing to the absence of an
agricultural class and lack of progressive de-
velopment and enterprise, the wealth of such
rich land has lain dormant although possessing
such great commercial and natural advantages.
Having long passed through the rugged days of
pioneer life, there has yet hung about it
the vague, enticing glamour of antiquity and
an indescribable touch of the Arcadian. For
many years it has lain in a condition such as
some poet has called

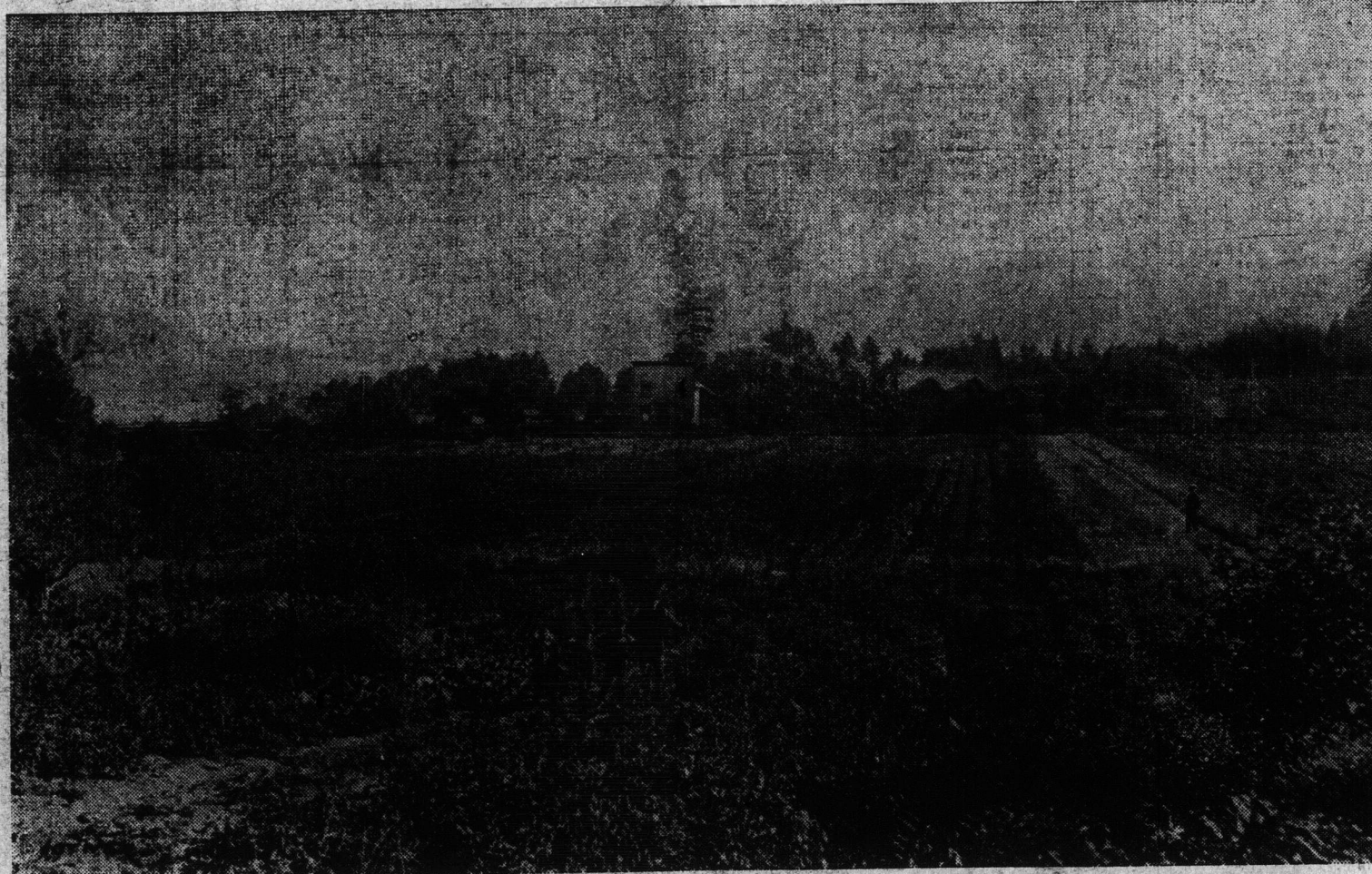
"* * * Two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born."

However it has now emerged from that
peaceful condition which heralds the dawn of
rapid development and enterprise. It is as
one writer has put it, rapidly entering into the
throes of being "discovered." The general in-
dustrial expansion which is being felt through-
out Vancouver Island, has in no small degree
attracted attention to the farming possibilities
of the Island in general and this district in
particular. Taking into consideration the fact
that a 50-acre Vancouver Island farm is the
equal of a 200-acre farm in the middle west,
price and productivity considered, and the fact
that thousands of acres of land in this valley
are still available, it can easily be seen that a
marvellous future awaits this district.

Heretofore, mixed farming has been the
chief agricultural pursuit, but considerable at-
tention is now being directed to dairying, and
fruit and poultry raising. The soil of the
valley is suitable for nearly all phases of agri-
cultural life. In the bottom-lands, a deep,
rich loam prevails, which produces grains and
roots, it is believed, unsurpassed in any part
of the world. In the higher reaches of the val-
ley, which sweeps upward to the more heavily
wooded bench lands, the soil becomes some-
what lighter and loses its heavy nature—a
condition better adapted for fruit raising, al-
though producing grain and all roots in the

valley: Potatoes, 8 to 10 tons per acre; hay, 3
tons per acre; turnips and mangles, 35 tons
per acre; oats, 70 bushels per acre; oat hay,
2½ tons per acre.

Furthermore, all agriculture is carried on
without the aid or trouble of irrigation, though
if that were desired, ample supply could be



Truck Garden Scene—East Wellington, Millstone River Valley

obtained. Through the district settlement at
East Wellington, above the valley, runs a
stream which by means of a dam, could easily
supply all the farming land around. For this
work the energetic Development League of
this district are about to petition the provin-
cial government's assistance, and if such work
were undertaken, the town of East Wellin-
gton might easily install their own water works
system.

Hitherto, fruit-raising has been almost

and wheat can hardly be obtained; butter and
eggs are imported in large quantities, while
most of the fruit placed on the market is
either from California or mainland points. The
following figures show the general prices
which obtain throughout the district: Hay, \$20
per ton; oats, \$35 per ton, potatoes, \$20 per
ton; butter, 30c to 40c per pound; eggs, 25c to
65c per dozen; milk, 10c per quart.

With increased production, markets could
as readily be found at Ladysmith and Victoria

rough and dressed lumber throughout the dis-
trict, at Nanaimo and Ladysmith, while their
export trade reaches the entire breadth of the
continent.

Another industry, which though in its in-
ception, means much to this valley, is the coal
mining trade. At the southern extremity of
the valley is located the Little Mountain coal
mine on which the Vancouver-Nanaimo Coal
company has been energetically pushing work
for the past two years. A 6-ft. seam of the

ford tips on a liberal scale, and want to make
sure of value for their money.

"Could you lend me a sharp knife?" asked
a customer, in the cafe of a big hotel near the
Grand Central Station, as he sipped "some-
thing long and cool." The knife being forth-
coming, the customer took a new two-dollar
bill from his pocket, folded it carefully in the
middle, and cut it neatly in two, placing the
halves in his wallet.

"You want to know why I did that, don't
you?" he remarked to the mysterious bar-
tender. "Well, that's part of a little scheme
of mine. I'm going over pretty soon to put
my wife on a train for Chicago. One-half of
that bill I'll give to my wife and the other
half to the porter. If the colored man is at-
tentive, and courteous throughout the trip my
wife will give him her half of the bill in Chi-
cago. If he's slow and grumpy he gets only
the piece I gave him. Of course I lose my
\$2 either way."

crosses the valley only half a mile distant.
Thus they are now able to ship direct by the
carload from their bunkers by means of a
ferry ship which has lately been built at Na-
naimo. They have also made application
to erect their own bunkers and wharf on
Nanaimo Bay. What this industry may mean
in the near future to the valley can hardly be
estimated as it is believed very extensive coal
beds underlie this section of the district.

But combined with the industrial possibi-
lities, which all the settlers confidently believe
this valley has in store, are all the advantages
which go to delight the heart of a nimrod or
a disciple of Izaak Walton. Fish abound in
lake and stream. Feathered game are plenti-
ful, while farther back in the interior a verita-
ble sportsman's paradise exists. Here the
fleet-footed deer will test the hunter's aim,
while bears, panthers and wolves will try his
nerve.

The valley can also boast of its educational
and religious institutions. A splendid public
school is situated at East Wellington, while
church service is held there every Sunday.
There is a good high school in Nanaimo at
which all advanced pupils can be accommo-
dated.

With the attention which is now being paid
to this district, the number of prospective set-
tlers who are enquiring regarding it, the land
clearing in operation and in contemplation by
the C. P. R. company and the opening up of
timber limits, the gradually increasing exodus
of people from the prairie provinces to take
up their residence in the smiling valleys of
British Columbia, with the general industrial
expansion which is now taking place in Na-
naimo, the settlers of this valley, blessed with
an equable climate, richly endowed with nat-
ural beauties, look forward with confidence to
the time when Millstone River Valley will not
only be an agricultural suburb of Nanaimo,
but an industrial centre as well.

A COLLEGE FOR DOGS

The most unique "college" in the United
States is the training school at Ridgely for
hunting dogs. This "dog college," as the wags
have it, it known over the greater portion of
the United States, and its principal is recog-
nized as the most successful trainer in the
country. The principal is rather a remarka-
ble man, possessing those rare qualities which
give a human being power over the brute kind-
dom. Just as the college professor teaches
the "young idea to shoot," so the principal of
this training school for dogs teaches his setters
to "set" and his pointers to "point." The
course of instruction extends from four to six
months.

AMBUSHED

The motor car had reached a nice level
stretch of road, and the man in the goggles
was preparing for a scorch when an honest
eyed old farmer stepped from the hillside and
held up his hand. "Reckon you was jes' goin'
to slip along tidy fast!" he observed when the
car came to a standstill.

The motorist gave no denial to the state-
ment.

"What made you ask?" he inquired.
The farmer produced a pair of battered
field-glasses. "Clap your eyes to these 'ere,"
he remarked, "and look up that there tree along
the road. Happen you'll change your mind."

"Great Scott. A police trap," exclaimed
the motorist, as he discerned a blue-trousered
figure perched on a branch. "Thanks, old
friend," and the clink of coins was heard.

A minute later a motor car was crawling
past the tree at six-miles-an-hour pace, while
the farmer was counting his wealth and smil-
ing. "That idea of carting the scarecrow from
the pea-field an' fixing it into the tree," he
chuckled, "wasn't so bad."

THE FLY ON MR. GLADSTONE'S NOSE

I remember once, says Harry Furniss in
the Strand Magazine, when I was giving a
lecture on "Portraiture: Past and Present,"
and illustrating the portraits on medals with
the aid of a lantern, I came to some near the
bottom of the screen. "Here," said I, "we
have the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress
of London, 1300 A.D." At that moment the
Mayor and Mayoress of the town, who, for ef-
fect, I suppose, had come in a quarter of an
hour late to the seats reserved for them in
the centre of the hall, walked past the rays of
the lantern, and were, of course, shown on
the screen, and, as can be supposed, caused
an effect that had not been anticipated.

On another occasion a fly was an offender
while I was giving a lecture with the aid of
a lantern. I was showing some portraits of
Mr. Gladstone in my entertainment, "The
Humours of Parliament." I was telling my

audience, as I pointed to the pictures on the
screen, that one moment he looks like this and
at another he looks like that, when there was
a great burst of laughter. I proceeded to
speak about Gladstone's flashing eye and noble
brow, and by the time I mentioned something
about his aquiline nose my audience seemed
to be in hysterics. Thinking that by some
mischance the wrong picture was being thrown
on the screen, I turned round, and was at first
horror-stricken to see a gigantic fly apparently
walking about on the nose of the Grand Old
Man. It appeared that the fly had got into
the lantern, had been caught between the
lenses, and was being magnified a hundredfold
on to the screen.

A NEW TIPPING IDEA

The New York Tribune tells the following
story, which illustrates the usefulness of a
small paper currency—to those who can af-