

# Bygone Days of British Columbia

## Building of Dewdney Trail

As Told by the Builder.

BY R. E. GOSNELL

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I regret that there has been a lapse in the "Bygone Days of British Columbia." For the past five weeks, owing to the demands imposed by the holding of the Simon Fraser Centenary Exhibition at New Westminster, and its subsequent holding and putting up in the Carnegie Library Museum at Vancouver, and the city hall, Victoria, I have been steeped in and completely saturated with old-timers. I have been present with them in daguerrotype, carbon cabinets, sepia enlargements, cartes de visite, panels, plaques, water colors, oils, full length, three quarters, busts, heads, vignettes, Rembrandts, Vandycks, and in the actual flesh and blood. I cannot truthfully say that I have "drawn" or "quartered," but I have "hung" nearly 2,000 of them. I have talked with them or their descendants—lived in an atmosphere of the past by day and by night. I have dreamed dreams in which figures of a century and over have crowded on an imagination favored with an excess of pioneer life—waking or sleeping I can see myriads of faces looking from frames and cardboard mounts, early people in all walks of life in the West, old men and young, fair women of fifty and sixty years ago, native boys and girls, men stern and resolute, beaming and benign, navigators, explorers, Hudson's Bay Company officials, the very earliest settlers, judges, politicians, missionaries, bankers, brewers, railway promoters—a human medley, yet true to life, the story of

The Province in Picture.  
The story I have to tell to-day is the building of the Dewdney trail, which has never been told before, at least in

owned by Mr. Wm. Armstrong. From there it went on to Rock creek, thence to Midway through Kettle River valley, up Boundary creek, and along the present road to Grand Forks, past Christina lake up to the summit of Sheep creek, down Sheep creek to Trail, thence to Fort Shepherd, and so on via Moyle and Cranbrook to Wild Horse creek. It was travelled for many years and still is in parts. For a long time it formed the main highway for miners and prospectors west of Rossland and through the Boundary country. Mr. Dewdney told me the story as follows:

Spence's Bridge.  
"In the spring of 1885 the bridge over the Thompson river at what is known as Spence's Bridge, was completed. Tom Spence, who built it, was a bit of a character, very active, enterprising, honest and respected by all the old-timers of his day. He was a contractor, and helped to build the old Cariboo road and carry out other works before Confederation. After that he secured contracts from the Dominion government, and did considerable work in the interior harbor of Victoria for them. He fell down the stairs of one of our Victoria hotels many years ago and was killed. In March of 1885 I was asked by the chief commissioner of lands and works to go up and inspect the bridge on its completion for the government. I left in a canoe from New Westminster, it being too early for the steamers as the ice had not run out of the river. On getting as far as Hatzie, a few miles below Fort Langley, I had to leave my canoe, and I returned to New Westminster overland, crossing the Hatzie prairie, with its slough frozen (luckily for me), and Pitt river by boat, walked over the road to New

through the Selkirk. I was held at New Westminster for about a week, when I again started up the Fraser to inspect Spence's bridge.

Had Two Experiences  
on that trip. The first was a few miles below Hope at Italian Bar Bluff. Night came on as we reached this bad piece of water. I had in my canoe one of the Evans brothers, two of whom were carrying on a mercantile business in the upper country, and were nephews of that celebrated and kindly old missionary of those days, Dr. Evans. In another canoe accompanying us up the river was Mr. David Oppenheimer and Mr. Barnard, father of our two respected citizens in Victoria, Frank and Henry. A gale of wind started as we reached the bad water of the Bluff. Luckily for the other canoe they had not crossed the river, and were enabled to land on a good beach and make a settler's house for shelter. We were blown against the bluff and were not move. It became quite dark. One of our Indians, who knew the locality well, piloted us up along the bluff, and virtually placing our feet in the crevices of the rock where we had a foothold. (It was so dark you could see nothing, and the wind blowing a hurricane) got us on some large slabs of ice, which had been driven ashore on the rocky slide just above the bluff, and then managed to get the canoe on to the same ice. I, luckily, had my blankets. We dare not move from this icy bed, and were obliged to remain there until daylight. The Indians knew of a hole in the rocks, which is there to-day, and crept into it, and were thus sheltered from the wind. We, that is myself and Evans, had to make the best of it in the open—luckily the wind was a warm one, comparatively. I got my bundle of blankets, laid out one on the ice and put the other one over us. Poor Evans, who was not accustomed to roughing it much, was a very stout man, weighing at least 250 pounds, suffered severely, his teeth chattering, and he was in great agony. He wanted to get from under the blankets, but I would not let him, and persuaded him to remain where he was, where, at any rate, he could get a little warmth from me. If he got up I believe he would have perished. He remained in one spot, until moving, and when the anxiously looked for daylight came and the Indians appeared, we got up. I must

knocking at the door. Alec went down, when we heard a great 'wa-wa.' A couple of Indians had arrived, greatly excited, with their heads bound up in rage and blood all over them. They were two of a party of Indians who were assisting Mr. Ned Wadham and his wife through the canyons. The wife being delicate, and it being absolutely necessary that she be taken down to a doctor. They had come all the way from Lightning creek, where Ned Wadham had been clerking for a merchant of the name of Beede, and besides packing his wife down, he had \$25,000 of gold dust with him bringing it down for Beede. We called down to Alec, and asked what was up. He said there has been a big snowslide up the road, and Ned Wadham has been carried into the Fraser—his wife, who was being carried in a chair with poles lashed to either side, had skidded down on top of the snow within a few feet of the Fraser, where the poles held her to the chair was also tied the gold dust. The Indians were on their way to Yale to request the magistrate there (then Mr. Sanders) to send up a constable to take charge of the gold dust and arrange for the forwarding of Mrs. Wadham. We felt very deeply the loss of poor Wadham—we all knew him intimately—but we could do nothing at that time of night, so we turned in again after dispatching the Indians to Yale. We were all tired and slept soundly until about 4 a. m., when another racket at the door awoke us. Up we all jumped expecting to hear of another catastrophe. This was two more Indians of the same party who were sent down to inform the magistrate that Ned Wadham had turned up all right. Of course, we were greatly overjoyed at this, and I have no doubt we took several refreshers while the Indians related the whole story of the slide.

Story of the Rescue.  
"It had been snowing freely that day, and the bluffs were covered with fresh snow. As Wadham's party came along a wind sprang up and down the loose snow same like a flash. Some of the Indians jumped behind a big boulder on the outside edge of the road and received the cuts about the head. They declared they saw Wadham swept into the Fraser. The woman they rescued, as well as the gold dust as soon as the slide had settled, and took her to the road foreman's house, which was not as well as the gold dust as soon as the far from where the slide took place. The Indians were sent off to Yale with the news.

"We made a hurried breakfast and started on our journey. I was first at the hole where Wadham had lain. We lost no time in getting to Ryan's cabin, where we found both Mr. and Mrs. Wadham none the worse for the wonderful experience they had gone through in the last twenty-four hours. Wadham was found in this way: Pat Ryan, who was foreman, knowing how excited Indians become on an occasion of that kind, said: 'These fellows may



ANGUS McDONALD, IN CHARGE OF H. B. CO. POST, COLVILLE.

own experience of that, to him, most memorable trip.  
"I reached Spence's Bridge in due course, and was not long in getting there after getting out of the snow, which almost disappeared a few miles below Lytton, and entirely along the Thompson river. I found Mr. Spence anxiously awaiting my arrival. I inspected the work the day of my arrival, found the bridge a good substantial structure, and it proved to be so. The Thompson river, which was not as well as the gold dust as soon as the far from where the slide took place. The Indians were sent off to Yale with the news.

from Hope to Wild Horse without having to pass through American territory; at present they cannot do so, and when our pack trains cross the boundary line they are either seized or put to the expense and inconvenience of taking an American custom house officer to where the goods are delivered and return, charging \$4 a day and food for same. If you take charge of this work you can select your own men, and I will instruct the Hudson's Bay Company officers at the several posts along the line of your work, and the government officials to advance to you from time to time what you may require. What I want is that we will be able to send our goods through without detention this autumn." With this understanding I agreed to take charge of the work.

Conditions in East Kootenay.

"The mines on Wild Horse creek were discovered by some American prospectors in 1884. They came into our country from Montana, and their friends followed them, and as the richness of the creek became known, merchants from Montana naturally followed the miners and got in with their goods almost before we realized that we had a gold country there. But soon the news spread, and many crossed the Hope mountain, followed down the Similkameen, and worked their way along the boundary, sometimes south and at others north. Our merchants endeavored to get goods through the same way, but the delays and expense of being held up by the customs officer were such that they could not compete with the American merchants. Upon this being represented to Mr. Seymour he determined to endeavor to get a road through our own country, and thus secure some of the trade, which was expected to be an increasing one from the very favorable reports which continually reached the coast of Wild Horse creek diggings. I immediately, on coming to an understanding with Mr. Seymour, commenced to pick out my men. A good many of those belonging to the Royal Engineers and Sappers and Miners also, who came over with Colonel Moody in 1888, had taken their discharge, and I knew them all, having been brought in contact with them while they were engaged on the works in different parts of the colony, and I had

A Splendid Lot of Men  
to choose from. I selected as my assistants Mr. George Turner, now of the public works department at New Westminster. After forming my party and purchasing supplies sufficient to take me into the Similkameen country, I left for Hope, where I engaged Indians to pack our supplies and outfit over the Hope mountain. I picked out eighteen some men and some women. The old Indians were quite as good, if not better, than the young ones. One couple, "Polies," which means "powder," and his wife, each at least sixty years old, were two of my best. The old woman packed a barrel of sugar, which weighed 125 pounds, and she was a small woman and weighed very little more, if as much, as the sugar. We had a splendid trip, over the trail that I built in 1889 over a summit of some 6,000 feet. For about a quarter of the way we had snow, and made our snow shoes in the evenings out of vine maple, for bows, and rawhide cut into strips for the lacing. The Indians called them bear's feet, being nearly round, but well suited for the snow in these parts. On the summit it froze hard at night, and it was then we travelled so as to take advantage of the crust. I shall never forget what pleasure and enjoyment I had when walking over the frozen summits of a bright, sunning, early morning, the sun dazzling in the snow which seemed to give fresh life to every breath you drew. We reached Similkameen, having travelled on an average about seven miles a day, which meant about ten days. There I paid off the Indians, and they returned to Hope. There were a very few settlers in Similkameen in those days. Mr. Allison was settled at Princeton, and was almost the only one. The district was then, as it is now, a fine cattle country with bush grass knee high all over the ranges. Mr. Allison, with whom subsequently I became very intimate (he and I having married two sisters), gave me every assistance. As there was a fairly Indian trail down the valley of the Similkameen, I secured from him a dozen horses, which we packed and kept with us as long as we could use them. On the way down the valley I met Mr. Angus McDonald on his way into Hope. He was an old Hudson's Bay Company officer, who was in charge of Fort Colville, situated some forty-five miles south of the boundary line on the Columbia river.

(Continued Next Week.)



HON. EDGAR DEWDNEY IN 1885

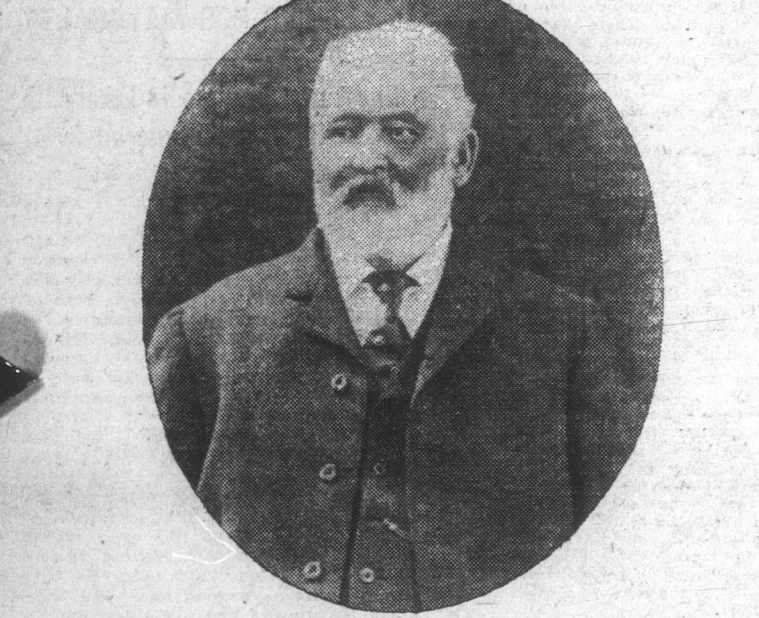
WOMEN FOR ARMY.

French Woman Physician Advocates Military Service.

Mme. Madeleine Pelletier, a Parisian physician, demands of the French government that women be compelled to do military service just the same as men.

"In public meetings," says Mme. Pelletier, "when the claim is made for women to have the right to vote, very often some one will rise and shout: 'You wish to vote; then do your military service!'"  
"I wish to furnish a response to this sort of person. It is objected that the guns are too heavy, the marches too long for women. Well, lighter guns can be made, and she doesn't need to march as much as men. Besides, women don't need to be soldiers; they can be nurses in the hospital and assist in secretarial work. But they must have uniforms. The uniforms give one prestige. Nuns are respected on account of their uniforms."  
"In military education," women will learn the necessity of violence. Women fear to inflict pain. They are wrong. Let them use violence. It alone will make our cause triumphant."

Sharks were almost unknown in the Adriatic until the Suez canal was opened. Now the harbors of Fiume and Pola are so infested with them that residents dare no longer bathe in the open sea.



JAS. WORDLE, POSTMASTER HOPE, WHO CARRIED MAIL FOR MANY YEARS ON DEWDNEY TRAIL.

a complete way. It is in the words of the man who built it, Hon. Edgar Dewdney. The old Hope trail to Similkameen was built by Mr. Dewdney in 1860. A very slight change has been made in its location since that time. It was built to give access to the mines of the southern interior. It had been the intention to complete it to Rock Creek, but the mining excitement there was short-lived and the project was abandoned.

Sir James Douglas was a great road-builder, and it was part of his plan to have made a wagon road through the mountains to connect with one from the East. The actual building of the trail from Similkameen to Wild Horse creek was left to Governor Seymour to undertake, and was the outcome of the mining excitement which took place at the latter point. From Princeton it followed down Similkameen river past where Keremeos now is. The Hudson's Bay Company had a farm there, now

Westminster, and reported to the government that it was impossible to get up the river on account of ice. The springs in those days, it appears to me, were later and more severe than now. I have walked from Hope to New Westminster on the ice late in February, and not got off the river except to camp. I have seen the Fraser frozen solid at New Westminster for six weeks with excellent skating on the river. It was in that year that Walter Moberly performed an unusual feat while skating, of dropping through one air hole and being carried some distance under the ice, struck another and bobbed up serenely, and was thus enabled to continue the good work he had undertaken, viz: assist in the development of the province. He was subsequently surveyor-general of the province. He discovered and named the Tagle Pass, explored the Illecillewaet valley, and was the means of Rogers finding the pass which now bears his name.



HON. PETER O'REILLY, GOLD COMMISSIONER WILD HORSE CREEK.

have had considerable heat in my body. For I left a full-sized impression on the ice, which surprised me when rolling up my blankets. I have never fainted in my life, and the nearest it was when I had tumbled my blankets into the canoe and followed them. I felt I was going to faint.

but I picked up, and made up my mind I would not, and was able to direct the Indians who were working for all they were worth to get us over the ridge to land us on a sandy bar, which at that stage of water extended almost to Hope, about three miles. When we got on shore we soon recovered our circulation, and were only too glad to get into John Worth's comfortable hotel at Hope, where we found our friends of the other canoe, and took a rest there for the balance of the day. The following day we left for Yale, some thirteen miles up the river, remained the night there, secured snowshoes, and left for Spence's Bridge. The snowfall had been very heavy on the canons that winter; I am sure there has never been so heavy a one since. The wagon road around the bluff was snowed under and was not visible. To get around Jackass mountain we had to cut holes in the snow to get a foothold, and it was anything but pleasant to crawl round these bluffs with a sheer 1,500 feet drop below you. Not many miles from Yale we met an old squaw carrying a heavy pack. The snow-slides were coming down the mountain continuously, and she warned us not to go on. She said the So-called Tyhee (God) was very angry and sending lots of snow down the mountain; but we had to make the Chapman's Bar to put in the night, where 'Alec' kept a wayside house, and a very good one it was. We were all pretty tired after a thirteen-mile walk through very soft and deep snow, so, after making a good meal, turned in.

Buried in a Snowslide.  
About 10 o'clock there came a great

HOPE IN EARLY DAYS.

be mistaken. Wadham may be in the snow and was not swept into the river." So he took all his men to the spot where the accident happened, and set them to work digging. It was several hundred feet between the road and the water, and they worked until they became exhausted, and returned to the cabin for a cup of tea. While there Pat Ryan, who was foreman, knowing how pretty well between the road and the water, but we have not looked in the road itself; let's go down there." So off they went, and after working only a few minutes came on Wadham's boot. You can fancy their sensations. They quickly uncovered him, and there he lay quite comfortable, and he said, warm, with about eighteen inches of snow packed tightly about him. He had a small scratch on his right wrist, all the damage he had to show from the slide. Luckily it was fresh snow and they travelled a short distance before it enveloped him. He must have been

Kept in Cold Storage  
for about six hours. He could hear the men walking over him, but he could not make himself heard. This was one of my many British Columbia stories which I used to tell when in Ottawa attending the session, and I could not help but see that on some occasions I was thought to be romancing when telling this one, but while being minister of the interior a deputation from the canners and fishermen of British Columbia came to interview the government in respect to some concessions they wanted, and my friend, Ned Wadham, was of the party. I was thus enabled to present my friend in the flesh, and at a dinner which I gave to some of the ingredients got him to relate his

extraordinary high water of that year carried it away. It has been replaced by another more substantial bridge than the first, under the immediate supervision of Mr. Stevenson, for so many years the bridge had been in the upper country.

The Dewdney Trail.  
"The day after my return from Spence's Bridge I was sent for by Governor Seymour, who was at that time governor of British Columbia, with headquarters at New Westminster. Colonel Kennedy, being governor of Vancouver Island, Governor Seymour informed me that he was most anxious to construct a pack trail from Similkameen to Wild Horse creek (now Fort Steel), that he had been informed by Mr. O'Reilly that I had constructed the road from Hope to Similkameen a few years before, and he would like a similar one built from where I had left off to the new diggings at Wild Horse creek, and he would be glad if I would take charge of it, look out the route and have it finished by August or September, so that our own goods might be taken in from the coast through our own territory. Mr. O'Reilly had informed me previously of what had transpired between himself and the governor, so I had given some little thought to it before meeting the governor. I had come to the conclusion it was a pretty big job, particularly as I knew nothing of the country between the Similkameen and Wild Horse creek, but I determined to tackle it on conditions, one of which was that I might choose my own men, and the other was that I should be assured of a good money to pay as work progressed, and so I told the governor. He replied: 'I am very desirous that our own pack trains should be able to transport goods

from Hope to Wild Horse without having to pass through American territory; at present they cannot do so, and when our pack trains cross the boundary line they are either seized or put to the expense and inconvenience of taking an American custom house officer to where the goods are delivered and return, charging \$4 a day and food for same. If you take charge of this work you can select your own men, and I will instruct the Hudson's Bay Company officers at the several posts along the line of your work, and the government officials to advance to you from time to time what you may require. What I want is that we will be able to send our goods through without detention this autumn." With this understanding I agreed to take charge of the work.

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GOVERNOR SEYMOUR.

## NEEDS OF TO BE

BOARD OF TRADE HAVE DATA

The Position of the Made Clear to Temple

(From Saturday)  
The board of trade has the necessities of the day, especially in view of the shipping trade of the day, and the committees to collect information available in an important subject. The committees will be the only matters of the only meeting of the committee. Hon. Wm. Templeman, on occasion to correct a mistaken impression on government has made a naval yard. The committee were Simon Leese, Wm. Templeman, Mr. Revenue and of Mr. cross, J. A. Mara, C. W. Knight, D. H. H. A. Munn, F. W. Wilson, Walter Hall, T. D. Veltch, H. Macklin, H. Thomson, M. P. F. V. Secretary Fred Elbow.

A Committee  
C. H. Lugin, who by the council of the discussion, said rather more narrow mind. What he had not so much dry-dock, moderation, important the general question of water. These railway systems already others, the G. T. P. Northern, were on all of these it was Victoria should have board of trade should collecting - such trustworthy information of assistance in connection. As an value of such matter Lugin said the unwelcome. R. to the business men laid a the management as work being undertaken should be appointed a whole subject of the tentatilities of Vancouver in connection therewith facilities for handling would give it a roving, let it take its own conclusion by moving of a committee.

J. A. Mara heartily Lugin should look J. J. Shallcross pot single committee with two matters no money. All boards of Island could unite on of the island but Vi expect rival ports to development as a port. spoke of the development of this port in he had known it, wh in large measure to port had been supplied in advance of its There should always a gin of facilities in a p he said. If a steamer elsewhere to-day beo facilities here for expected that it w three or four years facilities had been st ping trade once lost possible to recover should consider whether we could not as a repairing port, he great advantage the ships are to Victoria bunkers could not be Esquimalt or the out tract vessels and wh not develop as a port.

"If we wait until the ly in excess of our fa until, in the course we provide the facilities are not prepared to expect other people to mercial undertaking demand."

Committee to b George Carter agree posal for a committee. Victorians might thin fully entered into the but they had not beg yet. Yokohama and twenty to thirty of ers in port every day of this trade was it would be of immen Island and to the city place.

H. B. Thomson, M. two committees, one development of this harbor that of the Island. doubt that such an immense amount of Lugin amending his mities," Mr. Thomson it was unanimously ad J. J. Shallcross ask a committee dealing of dry-dock fac mail and in reply M memorial forwarded from Wm. Pugsley, m works, pointing out the accommodation of this as follows:  
SIR—The Victoria, Board of Trade, asked draw your attention facts:  
On March 18, 1905, the honor of submitting minister of public works memorandum:  
1. That the Esquimalt is not of sufficient size