

where we made a Dock for building the ship we wanted for our Voyage. . . . The 26th, the Keel of the Ship and some other Pieces being ready, M. La Salle sent the Master Carpenter to desire me to drive in the first Pin; but my profession obliging me to decline that honour, he did it himself and promis'd Ten Louis d'Or, to encourage the Carpenter and further the Work."

The ship, built to sail down the Mississippi, had a griffon, a beast with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion, emblazoned on its transom. La Salle had persuaded King Louis XIV of France that this mighty river must run south to the Gulf of Mexico and that he should traverse it and claim the rich lands which flanked it for more than a thousand miles.

First, the *Griffon* sailed across Lake Erie to the calm waters of Michilimackinac and then to an island (now called Washington) in Green Bay. There it was loaded with furs and sent back to Niagara under the charge of an unreliable pilot named Lucas with a crew of five. It never came back.

Some 276 years later, in July 1955, a fisherman named Orrie Vail told a Toronto newspaperman named Harrison John MacLean about the "old wood" he'd found off Russell Island in Georgian Bay, two miles from Tobermory, Ontario.

It had been there a long, long time; Vail's grandfather had told Vail's father about it

and Vail's father had taken Vail to the cove when he was ten.

"There's a lot left," he told MacLean, "the entire keel, bow, stern, thirteen ribs and quite a bit of planking on the port side." He took MacLean to see the wreck and a few days later MacLean ran into his old city editor, Fred Baker, who suggested that the wreck in the cove might be the *Griffon*.

It took MacLean almost a month to prove to his own satisfaction, and to the satisfaction of C. M. J. Snider, dean of Canada's nautical historians, that Orrie had indeed found La Salle's old ship.

La Salle had tried to build another barque after the loss of the *Griffon* but in his absence the carpenters deserted. The King had given him five years to complete his explorations and finally, after two more years of delay, he started down the Mississippi in canoes, accompanied by thirty Frenchmen, "all good men without reckoning such as I cannot trust," and more than a hundred Indians. They made it to the Gulf in a little more than two months.

They paddled back up the river, against the current, made a triumphant trip to France and returned to the Gulf below the Mississippi with a 36-gun naval ship and three smaller vessels, a hundred soldiers, and a large group of colonists. But they missed the Mississippi by four hundred miles and found instead the Lavaca River. Subse-

quently some discontented members of an exploring party shot him in 1687, near the Trinity River.

If the *Griffon* had survived and made the first long trip down the great river, La Salle

would have gained two years — time to build a fort and to chart the waters of the Gulf. France did gain an empire, though only temporarily, but La Salle, in terms of his dreams, had lost.

The Argus Has A Hundred Eyes

Last February 6th, Jacko Onalik and Martin Senigak left their Labrador village of Nain in a blue snowmobile, intending to trap foxes on Dog Island a few miles offshore. When they failed to return by the next day, the Nain Royal Canadian Mounted Police detachment radioed the Canadian Forces' Maritime Command at Halifax and a coordinated search and rescue operation began.

In the village, every family has a snowmobile and these fanned out onto the ice-covered edge of the North Atlantic. They were soon joined by a helicopter from Squadron 413 at Summerside, Prince Edward Island.

A patrol plane from the Canadian Forces Base in Greenwood, Nova Scotia, joined the search while making its regular run. The chance was slight but real—the hunters could have survived, floating on an ice pan which had broken off from the shore ice.

The Argus aircraft took off from the Nova Scotia base at 7:20 a.m. with 16 military

crewmembers and a photographer aboard (plus a journalist, Al Purdy, from the *Toronto Globe and Mail*).

The Argus was an example of 20th century technology but by no means the latest thing. It had been in service since 1958 and was scheduled to be replaced, but it was reliable. (Only one Argus has ever been lost; fifteen men were killed when one went into the sea off Puerto Rico while looking for a submarine during a naval exercise.)

The Argus is big, 187,000 pounds, 128 feet long, with four Pratt and Whitney prop engines and wide wings. It is slow, cruising at between 180 and 220 miles an hour, and it can stay up for twenty-four hours (carrying three pilots on patrol). It is as fully furnished as a suburban bungalow; the galley is complete with an electric stove and frying pan, toaster and refrigerator. It also has a chemical toilet and bunks.

It flies four types of missions: Northern Patrols, Fisheries Patrols, Search and Rescue

Patrols and Ocean Surveillance Patrols. (Helicopters, Buffalos and the amphibious Albatross help carry the load but the Argus is the workhorse.)

In mythology, Argus had a hundred eyes and these planes are watchers. They fly from two bases, Greenwood in the east, Comox in British Columbia, and they meet at Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories.

Through windows in the nose and on both sides the observers look down at millions of square miles of ice and rock, sea and muskeg, looking for foreign fishing trawlers, which are photographed and which may or may not be illegally working in Canadian waters, and for anyone in need of help. They make caribou head counts, whale counts in the Beaufort Sea and note the movement of Indian and Inuit peoples.

This Argus flew north at 8,000 feet, above the Strait of Belle Isle between Newfoundland and Labrador, to Nain, the village of the missing men, fifty prefab houses surrounded by cliffs and mountains, three hundred miles north of Newfoundland. There the search really began. The plane first flew east

to the sea, then along the coast thirty miles in one direction and then thirty miles back. The parallel legs were four miles apart and the observers scanned the ice below for any sign of life.

They saw ice in mosaic patterns, pressure ridges and black daggers of water. They saw three small groups of caribou hunting for moss and lichens. They flew low, five hundred feet up, and slowly; in three-and-a-half hours they gave close scrutiny to two thousand square miles of the earth. If the hunters were alive, they would have been within that vast space. They were not found.

Over the years the search and rescue planes have found more than they have missed. Captain Mike Gibbons of London, Ontario, the navigator, remembers picking up a man named Albert Muse, the only survivor of a foundering trawler in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, who had lashed himself to the mast. Muse's first words to his rescuers were, "Well jeez, boy, I'll tell ye, it's some wet down there."

But this time there was nothing for anyone to say.

Wagon Wheels Roll Slowly Toward A Very Big Ranch In The West

Some Canadians tried last summer to take a trip into the past. The Great Canadian

Wagon Train left Toronto for northern Alberta April 1 (though most of the travellers

(left) Freight movement north of the 60th parallel is subsidized by federal and provincial governments. Pacific Western, for example, is owned by the Province of Alberta. (right) Joseph-Armand Bombardier (inset) built the first snowmobile in 1922.

(left) First there was the bush and then, after eons, the bush pilots. None were more intrepid than C. H. "Punch" Dickins and Barney Day, shown beside a Canadian Airways Ltd., Junkers W-34 at Cameron Bay, Northwest Territories in 1933. (right) The first jet airliner designed and built in North America was Avro Canada's C-102 which flew for the first time one August day in 1949.

(left) The remote lands can be tamed, briefly, by the wings of man and the wheels of tractors. These busy men are government geologists about to fly north from Nova Scotia.

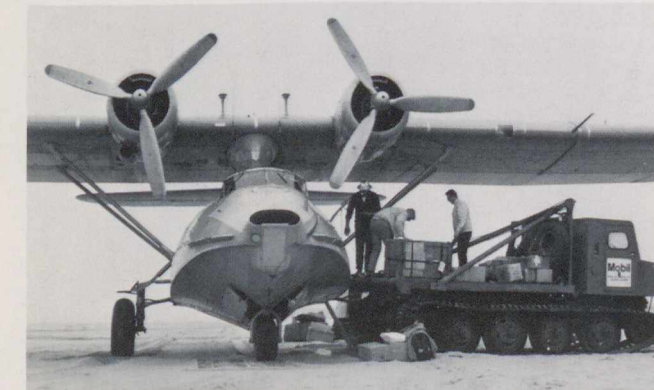
(right) A water bomber drops 12,000 pounds of water on forest fires below, which it scoops up from any convenient ocean or large lake. It is made by Canadair of Montréal and has drenched fires all over the world, including a notable number in California.



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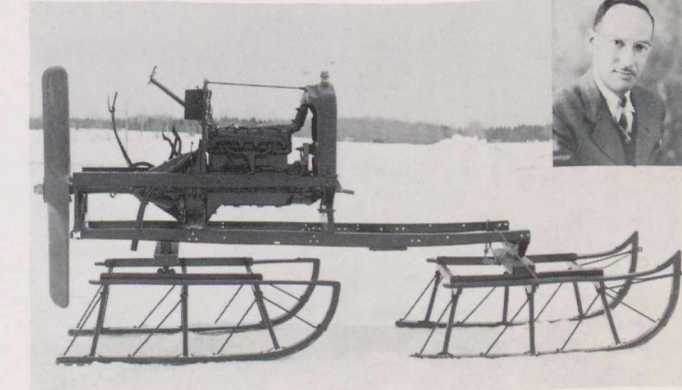
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weren't fooling), with thirty-eight men, women and children and twelve horse-drawn wagons, led by Paul Bradley and Gord and Margaret Roberts.

The trek was inspired when Mr. Bradley, an actor, said on a CBC TV talk show, that he intended to drive a wagon west and acquire enough cheap land for a "very big ranch." Five thousand persons wrote him asking for more information, and the Roberts, who owned several covered wagons which they'd formerly rented to film makers, and seventy-five other varied city dwellers signed up. More than a third soon dropped out but thirty-eight, including a Toronto commercial artist, a teen-age bank clerk and an ex-truck driver, were aboard when the voyage began. Some wagons began falling apart immediately and the train averaged

only seven miles a day instead of the twenty averaged by the original 19th century wagons. A month after the start, seven wagons left the train to try a different, less hilly route. By that time, the prospect of covering the 2,960 miles to Alberta by the first chill days of the fall was dim, and problems other than the lack of swift transportation loomed ahead.

The Alberta government said cheap land (at \$15 to \$50 an acre) is sold only to persons who have lived in the province for at least a year. Mr. Roberts said that presented no problem since the travellers could spend a year waiting on the Little Red River Indian Reservation. A spokesman for the Indians said, "We'll worry about how to react to them if they get here." By early fall they had not arrived.

Walking Across The Rockies

NOTES FROM SANFORD FLEMING AND PARTY, SURVEYING POSSIBLE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAIL ROUTE IN 1872

"We halt very frequently for rest. Our advance is varied by ascending rocky slopes and slippery masses and again descending to a lower level. We wade through alder swamps and tread down skunk cabbage and the prickly arialias and so we continue until half past four when the tired-out men are

unable to go further. . . . We camp for the night on a high bank overlooking the Ille Celle Waet [the famous glacier]. . . . Our advance on a direct line we estimate at four miles. Not much to show for a long and hard day's work."

(left) The model below served in World War II. There are snowmobiles for families, built for comfort and extra stability, and there are snowmobiles built for speed and sport. There are also snowmobiles which are neither purely utilitarian nor purely for sport. (right) This one took part in the Plaisted Polar Expedition.