



used by the construction crews to fill in the cuts. Rough boards had been placed along the sides to the heights of about six feet, held in place by upright stakes in sockets. There was no roof and the wind and snow blew in through the crevices between the planks. Rough benches ran lengthwise and here the men sat, each with his two issue blankets, packed tightly together or huddled lengthwise on the floor. . . ."

The journey was to take eight days, less than ten as promised by Van Horne. For some, the cavalry, the last was the worst, skidding, slipping, sliding across a frozen lake, miles of glare ice that sent the sun blistering back, "with snow and drifts everywhere and no track of any kind. The permanent surface was obscured by a crust under which two or three inches of water lay concealed. . . . At Jackfish Bay the soldiers, badly sunburned and frostbitten — their faces masses of blisters, their feet bruised and swollen — were billeted in shanties, freight houses and empty

transport cars."

At last they got to Red Rock and the stretch of track that would take them the rest of the way.

"When Red Rock was finally reached, the men were like zombies. They stood, uncomprehending, in ice-water, ankle-deep, waiting for the trains; and when these arrived they tumbled into cars — not flat cars this time but real passenger cars — and dropped in their tracks, lying on the floor, twisted on the seats all of a heap. . . ."

The journey was the thing. The Metis and the Indians, outnumbered four to one, won the battles and lost the rebellion.

The whole of the epic journey was more than the sum of its parts. The reluctant militiamen from Halifax who thought of the west as a foreign country found in their startled eyes and tired and frozen bones that they were part of a broad, beautiful, terrifying land.

The journey cost the CP money, a couple of hundred thousand probably and the railroad was

on the edge of bankruptcy. But it saved the road in the end. The road became the symbol of the country, and it was a symbol which the country could not let die.

[ANOTHER]

The people of Canada are still separate people. Their differences are softly emphasized in *Volvox* — *Poetry from the unofficial languages of Canada*, edited by J. Michael Yates, The Sono Nis Press.

The poems were written in a dozen different tongues — the tongues of the immigrants. They are all translated into English.

One from the Icelandic: "She worked as a housemaid, then as a laundress/ in small town Winnipeg, full of emigres speaking/ every language except her own: She was Icelandic/ and as she worked she sang the old Icelandic hymns and songs; the songs had all her joy, they brought/ all her peace. She kept reaching for the language

that got lost in her life. She could never speak it again, though it always measured her breath.

"Late one summer, as she lay dying, she sang again/ the Icelandic hymns, sang in her mother tongue,/ an other tongue for us; and as we lay her/ in a foreign grave, we, who know no Icelandic,/ who know then almost nothing of what she loved/ and lived by, say our prayers over her in English."

[SPACE AGE, STILL]

Canada is the people in the land and the land without people. *Wilderness Canada* is edited by Borden Spears, published by Clarke, Irwin & Co., Ltd.

". . . Ugly little towns prosper, all calling themselves cities and all looking like faithful copies of Omaha, Nebraska. This is not a Canada to call forth any man's love. But just north of it still lies a different kind of land — too barren ever to be thickly settled, too bleak to be popular