

public documents and other records and endeavoring to show the various views that have been held upon this subject, some of which are in striking contrast to one another. I propose to avoid advocating any particular view of my own regarding the question of Indian title in this Province.

“ Before the territory which now forms the Province of British Columbia became part of the British dominions, the Indian tribes were not only the owners of the various districts of the Province, but were also the sovereign owners of them. When, in 1579, British sovereignty began on this coast, with the establishing of ‘New Albion’ by Sir Francis Drake, you will find that this principle was applied: the sovereignty was changed, but the ownership was considered as unchanged. The Indian tribes, on their part, accepted the sovereignty of Great Britain, but the Sovereign of Great Britain recognized the Indians’ right of occupation. British sovereignty on the Pacific coast commenced with the establishing of the British Colony of New Albion at a point to the south of the present international boundary, and from time to time that sovereignty was extended northward and also extended westward from the eastern part of Canada, until we find it including the territory which is now known as British Columbia. Historical records show that when Sir Francis Drake landed, the ownership of the native tribes was recognized, and that before Drake proclaimed the sovereignty of Great Britain he secured from the natives a free surrender of their sovereignty.

“ That leads me to speak of a document of outstanding importance, a proclamation issued by King George the Third, in 1763. This proclamation states the general principle that when British dominions have not been ceded to or purchased by the Sovereign of Great Britain they are to be considered as reserved for the Indians. I will read the paragraph of that proclamation upon which the Indians of British Columbia are relying in support of their claim: ‘And we do further declare it to be our royal will and pleasure, for the present, as aforesaid, to reserve under our sovereignty, protection and dominion for the use of the said Indians