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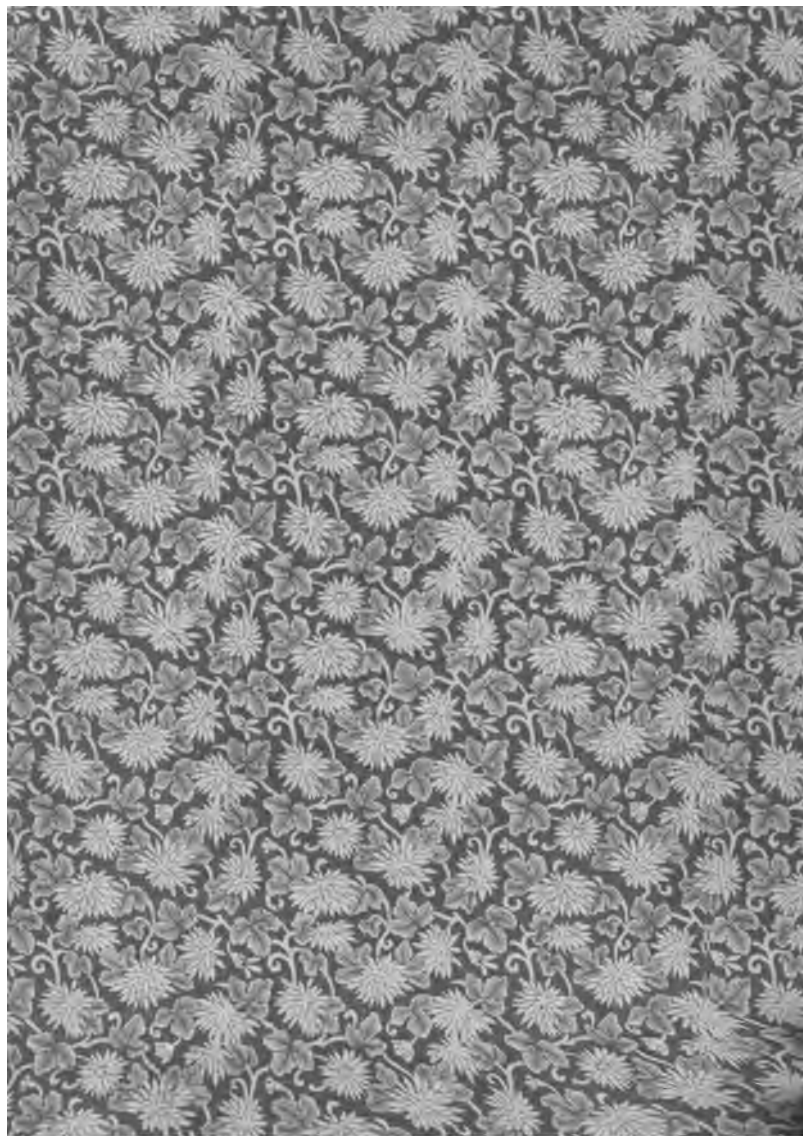
HISTORY
OF THE
HUDSON'S BAY CO'S
SS. BEAVER

A PIONEER OF THE SEAS



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= HISTORY =

— OF THE —

SS. "BEAVER"



Being a Graphic and Vivid Sketch of this Noted
Pioneer Steamer and her Romantic Cruise
for over Half a Century on the Placid
Island-Dotted Waters of
the North Pacific.



-- ALSO CONTAINING --

A Description of the Hudson's Bay Company from its formation
in 1670, down to the present time. Biography of Captain
McNeill. The Narrative of a Fraser River Prospector of
1859. Historical Mementoes of the Beaver's Copper Remains.
The sad ending of the Author's last trip in search of old-
time Naval Relics. Important Developments in Steam since
its introduction in 1769, Etc.



— COMPILED BY —

CHARLES W. McCAIN.



BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED.

Vancouver, B. C., 1894.

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TO THE PUBLIC.

FORSEEING the great interest which future generations must naturally take in any history relative to the pioneer steamer Beaver, which has played a most conspicuous part in the exploration, settlement and civilization of the Pacific North-West, and realizing how quickly unrecorded events drop out of existence, it has been deemed eminently essential to collect, as far as possible, all the facts associated with this most interesting steamer, and thereby retain a record of the historic craft.

As a result of persistence and extended effort, I have succeeded in arranging this concise work, after a careful comparison and research of leading histories and encyclopedias ; a thorough investigation of dust-covered maps, documents and manuscripts in the attic of the old peltry storehouse at the Hudson's Bay Company's headquarters in Victoria, B. C., and from much valuable information derived through personal conversation with some of the oldest residents of that capital. Particularly in this connection am I indebted to Mr. R. J. Horton, who, for many years, has been associated with the great corporation above mentioned, and also to Captain George Lewis, who came out to the Oregon Territory from London in 1846 in the H. B. Company's bark "Cowlitz." These gentlemen, as well as many others, have won my lasting gratitude for the patient manner in which they imparted to me all the information they possessed regarding my subject of inquiry, and the great interest which they manifested from first to last in the "Beaver's" history. Very important

knowledge has also been gained through correspondence with reliable persons familiar with data concerning this steamship, the most essential, perhaps, being letters from W. H. Darlington, manager for James Watt & Co. of Birmingham, England (late Boulton & Watt), and also from H. Hozier, secretary for the Messrs. Lloyds of London, as the result of a careful investigation of their famous marine records.

With the assistance of all this authentic matter there is little difficulty experienced in compiling this brief history independent of any statements not of the most reliable source heretofore published, some of which have been very faulty in their detail, and probably originated in some imaginative brain, thereby being very misleading, contradictory, unsatisfactory, and consequently utterly worthless as historical matter.

Although perfectly well aware that this little work does not possess the classical finish which a learned writer would have given it, still I hope, and am of the opinion that the statements herein contained harmonize with truth to a degree which will not only make it valuable to historians, but also worthy of a place among works of a more voluble nature. The public will find this book to contain the most authentic and complete history of the steamer "Beaver" yet published, and therefore I feel assured that it will be welcomed by many readers all over the land, especially on account of the large number of souvenirs of this celebrated old craft that have reached most, if not all, civilized countries since she met her fate on the rocks at the picturesque entrance to Burrard Inlet, British Columbia.

C. W. McC.

Vancouver, B. C., July 19, 1894.

The Governor and Company of Adventurers of
England, Trading into Hudson's Bay ;

— OR THE —

- HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY -

(INCORPORATED 1670.)

BEFORE proceeding with the romantic career of this staunch little steamer, we shall dwell for a short time on the formation and workings of the great corporation for which the *Beaver* was constructed. This corporation was and is yet known as the Hudson's Bay Company. It was erected in 1670, during the reign of King Charles II., and consisted principally of the King's cousin, Prince Rupert, and a few intimate friends. This Company was invested with the absolute proprietorship, subordinate sovereignty and exclusive traffic rights of Rupert's Land, which was the name then applied to all the region discovered or undiscovered lying within the entrance of Hudson Bay. Rupert's Land was at that time considered one of the most extensive dependencies under English rule, and was supposed to embrace all the lands drained by the Hudson Bay and its tributaries. Unmolested for more than a century, these adventurers carried on an extensive traffic—that of fur-trading being their principal occupation. But civilization, already working west along the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes, as might be expected, brought with it opposition. In 1783 a number of keen business men, who could not fail to see the enormous profits derived by the H. B. Company, organized the Northwest Company of Montreal. This company carried on the same traffic as the former, to which it became a formidable opponent, thus creating stubborn competition which lasted until 1821, when by terms of agreement the two companies consolidated.

During this long period of rivalry these companies struggled with untiring zeal to supersede each other in securing

territory, in fathoming the mysteries of an unknown country, and in establishing their posts in the best fur-producing regions. Their explorations were directed first in a north-westerly direction toward the Arctic Ocean, which they soon reached by way of the Coppermine and Mackenzie River basins, thence southwest toward the Pacific.

At regular intervals along the streams and lakes throughout the North-West Territory, these companies erected their forts or trading posts, in which were kept a supply of provisions, also guns and ammunition. To these forts came the red man of the plains, bringing with him valuable packs of furs, which he gladly exchanged for muskets, blankets, beads, tobacco and trinkets of various sorts.

But these great corporations, which might well be termed at that time the sovereigns of the western world, were not content or destined to remain long within the limits of the "Indian Territory." Nor were they discouraged by encountering so formidable a barrier as the Rocky Mountains. Penetrating these through Nature's gateways, they descended the Pacific Slope, carefully defining their course by planting forts, each of which was left in charge of a Chief Trader, with several servants, the same as through the Territories, until they finally reached the Pacific Coast early in the present century.

Simon Fraser, a hardy Scotchman who joined his fortunes to the Northwest Company about the year 1792, appears to have been the first white man to cross the Canadian Rockies in charge of an expedition. He discovered the river that still bears his name, and which he followed down to the Pacific Coast in 1806-7. Several years previous to this, however, Alexander Mackenzie had reached the coast by an overland journey.

As soon as the seaboard was gained, work was prosecuted with more systematic energy. Fortifications were erected along the water front, as well as in the interior, and the foundation laid for the carrying on of an immense fur traffic with the aborigines.

It seems almost incredible, but nevertheless true, that provisions for stations in the Oregon Territory—which name in those days applied to all the region lying north of California and west of the Rockies—were carried all the way from Mont-

real, a distance of nearly 4,000 miles, over the same trail by which the fur companies first reached the Pacific. But this mode of transportation was too costly to last long, consequently in a short time the supplies for the fur stations west of the Rockies were brought in sailing ships direct from England around Cape Horn, while those to the east of the mountains were supplied from the original source.

A trade language, called the "Chinook jargon," was speedily introduced among the natives. This language was a mixture of Chinook, French-Canadian, English and Spanish words, was quite simple and easily learned by both natives and Europeans, and had the effect of greatly facilitating communication between the two distinct races.

It took some years to establish a foothold in these western wilds, and as few incidents worthy of note transpired, we will come to that period, 1821, when the two companies consolidated, hereafter to be known as the "Hudson's Bay Company." Opposition being thus overcome, the Company concentrated its efforts in the establishment of fur posts in localities best calculated to suit its purpose.

Fort Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia River, was then one of the oldest and the chief station on the North Pacific Coast, having been erected by J. J. Astor in the year 1811. John Jacob Astor was born in Germany in 1763. At the age of twenty he came to America, and shortly afterwards founded the "American Fur Company." By industry and economy he so increased his means that in a few years he succeeded in fitting out two expeditions to the Oregon Territory, and it is very probable that here was laid the corner-stone of the famous Astor fortunes. (See Washington Irving's "Astoria.")

John McLoughlin, Chief Factor and sole ruler of the Northwest Coast, arrived at this post in 1824, having crossed the mountains in charge of a small party of fur-traders, conspicuous among which was a lad named James Douglas, destined twenty-seven years later to become the Governor of England's most western colony. One of McLoughlin's first acts on reaching the Coast was to move the headquarters of the Company from Astoria to Fort Vancouver, some distance up the Columbia, and in the vicinity of the now flourishing city of Portland.

The Company had by this time realized that the day must come sooner or later when the great republic to the south would ask for a dividing line between its possessions and those of the Hudson's Bay Company. Might not the Columbia be agreed upon as the national boundary? Yes; everything considered, it appeared more than likely that such would be the case, at least so it seemed to the magnates of the Company. Should this eventually be the case, the new headquarters would still be in their own domain, as Fort Vancouver was situated on the north bank of the river, while Fort Astoria was on the south, consequently, in the face of this, the move was deemed advisable. Another advantage would be that ocean boats could ascend the Columbia with their cargoes as far as Fort Vancouver, and thereby lessen the distance of transportation to the Company's inland posts.

Besides these advantages, the new headquarters would not, as formerly, be so easily attacked by pirates, which was also a consideration, as these North Pacific waters were by this time often frequented by sailing craft of various nations under command of lawless crews, in search of plunder.

The line of communication between Montreal, Hudson Bay and the Arctic Ocean, with its tributaries connecting with the rivers and lakes to the Pacific, was now quite complete. In selecting this transportation highway the Company chose the most convenient streams having the greatest amount of navigable waters, and in doing so were often obliged to go considerably out of the direct route, but even this was preferable to land travel. Still in some localities long portages were unavoidable, and on some of these the servants of the Company were obliged to carry on their backs heavy packs for miles at a stretch, while cayuses—wild horses—were employed on the others. Twice every year over all these lines of transportation passed regular bands, or supply trains, carrying provisions and fort supplies to the most distant posts, then returning to headquarters laden with rich packs of furs which had been collected at the various subordinate stations along the route. It must have been a welcome sight to the little band of whites in charge of those lonely forts, hundreds of miles from civilization, to see the brigades advancing, winding their way around perpendicular rocks, through deep canyons, up rugged trails, bringing to them the necessities of life and *news from their homes across the sea.*

Sir George Simpson was Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company's affairs at this time, and consequently was at the head of all this great commercial enterprise in America. He had no fixed residence, and most of his time was occupied in travelling from one station to another. Part of his time was spent in Lower Canada, part at Red River and Athabasca, and the balance in Oregon, the Hawaiian Islands agency and England.

Whenever any changes of importance in the business affairs of the Company were considered advisable, the matter would be communicated by a Chief Trader—who was the one in charge of a Fort—to Governor Simpson, who in turn would bring it before the London management. The system employed in governing the workings of this great corporation was most complete, in fact we might venture still further and call it wonderful. Here was a territory, nearly equal in area to all Europe, being controlled by a company of adventurers, who went where they pleased, erected forts and established trade with some of the most daring and bloodthirsty Indians on the North American continent. Here was small picket enclosures, far removed from civilization, guarded by a dozen men in the midst of savage tribes that outnumbered them one hundred to one. Yet so perfect was the whole affair managed, everything considered, that history records but few incidents of bloodshed on either side.

As a general rule the fur-traders were honorable men, and when they made a promise to an Indian they usually kept it, even if it was to give a plug of tobacco in exchange for a bear skin. But what did the red man care, so long as the pale-face did as he agreed? The fur was of little or no use to him, while the tobacco would make him happy during the long winter nights.

We have many incidents of hostilities between the different tribes of these western wilds, terminating in horrible butchery; but even in the midst of these the Indians usually remained on friendly terms with the officers and servants of the Hudson's Bay Company. Perhaps an illustration of a little incident that happened at Beaver Harbor, in the fall of 1849, will best serve to give the reader an insight into the heartless character of these savages, and the dangers to which the fur-traders were constantly exposed.

* Beaver Harbor, situated at the northern extremity of

Vancouver Island, having been decided upon as a suitable location for a fur post, the steamer *Beaver*, with William McNeill as captain and George Blenkinsop as mate, was sent thither, accompanied by about forty men, to erect a stockade, together with the usual buildings characteristic of a fur-trader's habitation. While this work was being vigorously prosecuted, there arrived at Fort Rupert—which was the name assigned the new establishment—a Scotchman by the name of Muir, together with his wife and family.

Only a couple of days after the arrival of the Muirs, and while yet these new-comers were seriously wondering how they liked the "woolly west," there appeared in the harbor some fifteen war canoes filled with unusually happy savages, direct from the battlefield of a conquered native tribe. Effecting a landing, these barbarians at once planted a row of pickets, corresponding with the number of boats, and on the top of each of these was placed a human head, taken from the different canoes. Having learned that a white woman had landed on their shores, they invited Mrs. Muir to this ghastly spectacle and implored her to accept any two of these bloody trophies. Although this was regarded by them as a mark of high esteem, it must have left a very forcible impression upon the mind of the European lady thus introduced into savagism. It was just about this time that white women first made their appearance in these western solitudes, and as a sequel to this the old fashion of aboriginal wife-taking, which through lack of choice had long prevailed among the fur-traders, was to a great measure abolished.

A fur-trader's fort consisted of a small piece of ground enclosed by a palisade about fifteen feet in height. These poles were from eight to twelve inches in diameter, and were driven into the ground close together. In the interior, some distance from the base, was generally fixed a platform or gallery, and above this was a row of part-holes, which were used to fire muskets from in case of an attack. On one or more corners of this wooden wall was a tower of hewn logs, in which was mounted several pieces of ordnance, usually nine-pounders. Within the palisade were the buildings, which consisted of the postoffice and store, a carpenter and blacksmith shop, a storehouse for stowing combustibles in, besides three or four small buildings used as dwellings by the officers and *their attendants*. The entrance to the fort consisted of a

small opening through the pickets, which was usually closed after certain hours by means of a door from the inside. Although these forts differed considerably in magnitude, according to the importance of their station, there was little difference employed in their general construction.

According to "Forster's History of Voyages," the first of these posts was called Fort Charles, and was built for the English by Captain Gillam, in 1668, at the mouth of Rupert River on Hudson Bay. This was the commencement of a vast series of fur stations or forts, which rapidly spread from the Atlantic to the Pacific over the whole upper portion of North America, which vast tract of country now comprises the Dominion of Canada; also a number of the northern states. And on the site of many of these fur posts now stand large commercial cities and towns. As for instance, Pittsburgh, Penn., is built on the site of old Fort Pitt; Detroit, Mich., on the site of old Fort Detroit; Chicago, Ill., majestically towers above the mouldering ruins of the old fur post of Fort Dearborn; Winnipeg, Man. (originally Fort Garry), was for years the prairie haunt of many a roving redskin, over whose sombre cyclopean features played a broad smile as he stacked with pride his assorted furs, for barter, alongside the cold, fish-rod-like barrel of an old-time flint-lock. Of course, these musket barrels were very expensive, probably cost twelve shillings a yard, but then the honest fur-traders didn't begrudge the poor Indian a few extra feet of steel tubing, especially when he so willingly gave up the same number of feet in furs, which were only worth in London not more than twenty times the amount which the shrewd Indian had succeeded in disposing of them for to the unsuspecting white man. This, however, is more in accord with public opinion than with the Company's regular method of trade. Besides these flourishing trade centres, there are various others similarly situated, but which, through lack of space, we prefer not to mention in these pages.

After the coalition of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company in 1821, parliament, in view of the fact that the Company's territorial rights were without limit—according to the original charter granted by Charles II.—empowered the crown to issue a new license. By this Act the Hudson's Bay Company acquired absolute control of the "Indian Territories," which lands were expressly declared to be all that region of British North America to the west of

Rupert's Land. But instead of this new license being perpetual, as had the charter, it was only issued for short periods of 21 years each. This gave the British crown the privilege of allowing the license to expire without renewal, providing the home government deemed it advisable at any time to throw the country open to settlement.

Shortly after the renewal of the first license, the region to the south of the Indian territory, through the liberal policy of the United States government toward settlers, became the abode of many soil-tillers, and as there was no boundary existing, these settlers very naturally crowded northward into the Hudson's Bay Company's possessions. These encroachments on the part of home-seekers called for a dividing line, which was finally settled by the "Oregon Treaty" of June 15th, 1846, which treaty established the 49th parallel as the national partition between the United States and the British American domains. The result of this was that the fur company was obliged to abandon its fur stations to the south of this line and to confine operations within its now well-defined but still vast tract of country.

It now became apparent to the Hudson's Bay Company that it would soon be impossible to keep settlers out of this fertile region, and that its far-reaching game preserve was doomed. But in order to stave off the evil day as long as possible, the managers of the Company made a proposition to the British government to the effect that they were willing to undertake the colonization of Vancouver Island, providing parliament would invest them with the necessary power.

Accordingly, on January 13th, 1849, the Crown granted the said Island to the Hudson's Bay Company for the purpose of settlement at a yearly rental of seven shillings, reserving the right to recall the grant at the end of five years, or at the end of ten years to buy it back, providing no colony had been formed.

But as civilization is directly opposed and, consequently, very destructive to the fur traffic, it is not surprising that during the ten years which followed, this great monopoly did not use its utmost efforts in colonizing, for well it knew that sooner or later it only meant the complete overthrow of its own profitable vocation. Consequently, parliament, now fully satisfied that the colonization scheme in the hands of fur-traders was a failure, purchased the Island from the Company

at the expiration of the ten years' term, and at the same time allowed the Company's license of exclusive right to trade with the Indians to expire without renewal.

Small settlements, which seemed impossible to prevent, were now rapidly springing up in different parts of its territory, so rather than have trouble, the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1869, disposed of all its territorial claims to the British government, receiving £300,000 as indemnity, but reserving at the same time all its forts, with ten acres of land around each, besides numerous other small tracts.

The Hudson's Bay Company, although still in good working order, is no longer the great monopoly that reigned for two hundred years prior to July 1st, 1871, when the east and the west joined hands, as it were, in the celebration of their first union "Dominion Day."

The fur business has not only rapidly decreased during late years, but has also fallen largely into other hands, so that the Hudson's Bay Company of to-day maintains but a few forts, and depends more for profits on the sale of real estate and general merchandise to Europeans than exclusively on the fur trade with the aborigines, as in days past.

[P. S.—For more extended information we beg to refer the reader to the following volumes: Fitzgerald's "Examination of the Charter and Proceedings of the Hudson's Bay Company;" Montgomery Martin's "Hudson's Bay Company's Territories and Vancouver's Island;" also Hubert H. Bancroft's "History of British Columbia," "History of Oregon," and "History of the Northwest Coast" contain much interesting descriptive matter relating to the Company's operations on the Pacific Coast.]



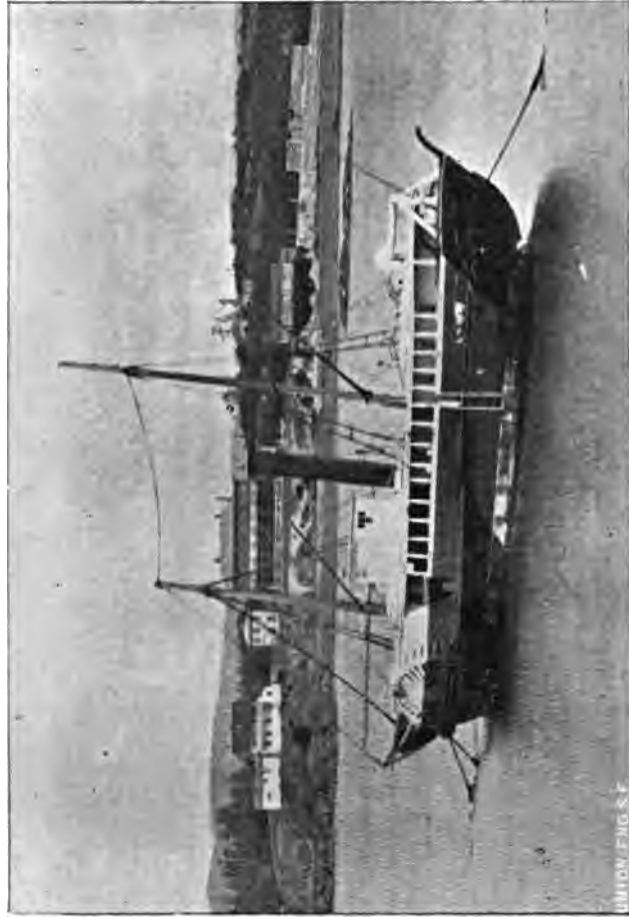
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**The Hudson's Bay Company's Steamer "Beaver" at Anchor in
James Bay, Victoria, B. C., Canada.**

Photograph taken during her early days.



THE STEAMER "BEAVER."

ONE OF THE greatest events that transpired during the career and reign of King William IV., and one which marked the beginning of a new era in commercial enterprises, was the introduction of the steam engine. With this, the same as with other great mechanical discoveries, all manner of obstacles tending to place a damper on the scheme were at once introduced by prejudiced persons, with the result that for nearly half a century this most important of all inventions made but little headway. Still, in the very nature of things, a motive power which was destined to revolutionize the commerce of the world could not long remain undeveloped. And perhaps the most important period, and the one which will ever stand out in bold relief as having accomplished the most essential achievements in furthering steam power, is the fourth decade of the present century. It was during this period that the shrill whistle of the "iron horse" first awoke the echoes of the American forest, and during this period that long wasting lines arched the Atlantic, connecting, as it were, the Old and the New World, as thick, sooty clouds of smoke belched from the funnels of the first transatlantic steamships. In those days freight steamers were called "steam packets," and their build and equipment varied so essentially from the system now generally employed, that in the present advanced stage of naval architecture these old-time packets would be considered a great curiosity.

It was an interesting day among shipbuilders, and the English people generally, when the keel of their first transatlantic steamship was laid upon the slipway at Blackwall, a suburban town of London. The Hudson's Bay Company, for which this steam-packet was built, evidently intended from the start that their craft should be "A 1" in every respect, and that only the best materials that money could procure should be used in her construction. That they succeeded in producing such a craft is best instanced by the fact that for fifty-three

years this staunch little steamer remained in actual service. She was built by Messrs. Green, Nigrams & Greens, as appears by a certificate under their own hand, dated May 7th, 1835. The exact cost of her construction we have been unable to ascertain, but judging from the class of material used, it must have been something enormous for a craft of her dimensions. The elm keel was of unusual size and strength, as was also the British oak stem and stern-post. Along the keel were placed the frames, or ribs, at about 2 feet centres. These were of the best oak and greenheart, carefully dressed and of large proportions. The spaces between the frames were filled in solid, to a level above the water line, with curved timbers of the same material and thickness. The outside planking was of oak and African teak, especially thick at the wales, and was securely fastened to the frames with copper bolts and oak treenails. This was covered with a thick layer of tarred paper, over which was placed a planking of fir, securely held in position with spikes of a bronze composition. Then to preserve the woodwork from the ravages of the destructive teredo, and also from the attacks of barnacles, a sheathing of copper was tack-fastened all over the exterior of the hull, with the exception of a narrow strip just below the gunwale. The inside lining of the frame consisted also of oak and teak planking, across which on either side ran diagonally heavy iron straps, which were fastened to the frames with rivetted copper bolts.

The main keelson was a massive stick of greenheart, 12 inches square, extending the entire length of the keel, to which it was securely bolted with stout copper bolts, which passed entirely through both timbers. Parallel to this, on either side, were the sister keelsons, of the same material, only not quite so heavy; these were also bolted in a substantial manner on the floor planks, and through into the floor timbers. Across the keelsons were fastened large greenheart timbers, which formed the bed for the engines as well as the foundation for the furnaces. The deck was supported by a series of stout beams, mostly of greenheart, the remainder being African oak, or, as it is more commonly called, African teak. These were placed at frequent intervals across the hull, to which they were fastened, their supports being oak knees and massive angle irons. In addition to these were two oak beams, about 10 inches by 14, which crossed at the points where the two spars penetrated the deck.

Copper was usually employed for all fastenings, and where this was the case we found, on working about the wreck, that the wood around the bolts was almost as sound as the day the bolts had been driven nearly sixty years previous. But where iron had been used the wood about the bolts was badly decayed, and even the bolts themselves, in some cases an inch in diameter, had almost entirely been eaten away by the rust.

At the time this steamer was constructed, the Hudson's Bay Company was in the prime of its existence, and being a great power its movements were consequently watched with nearly the same eagerness as national undertakings. Thus the interest manifest at the laying of the vessel's keel rapidly increased as the work of construction advanced, until all London was astir as the day dawned on which the little adventurer should be entrusted to the care of the briny deep. Thousands were focussed to the scene at the Blackwall shipyards, where soon mingled a motley throng, in which aristocracy and peasantry combined to witness an event long to be remembered in the history of marine navigation.

According to accounts published in several newspapers, it appears that King William IV. then on the throne, together with several members of the Royal family, attended the launching, while a lady, bearing the title of "Duchess," performed the christening ceremony. But there must have been another christening going on behind some of the piles of timber about that same time, or else the reporter got too near the bottle, and thereby had his sight affected by the fumes from the vintage as it broke over the little vessel's prow, for he goes on to say that 160,000 of the king's loyal subjects graced the occasion. This seems to me like too many people, and I am of the opinion that this portion of these accounts is very much exaggerated.

As the little craft which had attracted so much attention plunged into the mighty Thames, her banners were unfurled to the breeze, when through that vast assemblage echoed the appropriate and long to be remembered name *Beaver*.

Next in order came the placing of the boiler and machinery, which had been ordered about a year previous from the old reliable establishment of Boulton & Watt, which firm was the first that ever manufactured steam engines.

Mathew Boulton, the senior member of this firm, at the death of his father, undertook the business of a large steel

manufactory, which his father had established at Birmingham, Eng. This he greatly extended by the purchase, in 1762, of a tract of land at Soho, situated a short distance beyond the city, and to this he moved his entire plant, which at this writing is still in operation as one of the largest of its kind in the country. In 1774 he formed a partnership with James Watt, who by this time was fast coming to the front as the inventor of the steam engine. To Boulton & Watt the world will ever be indebted for numerous important inventions, the most essential being improvements in steam engines, coining machinery and inlaying steel. The celebrated Watt gave up his interest in the extensive business to his two sons, and died a few years afterward at Heathfield in his 84th year.

The *Beaver's* engines, when packed at the works for shipment to London, weighed $63\frac{1}{2}$ tons. This included the boiler and also the gearing for the paddle-wheels, the cost being £4,500 sterling (over \$22,000), or nearly ten times the weight and cost of engines of like power at the present day.

These engines, of which there were two of the same design, were termed 35 nominal horse-power each, and were of the side-lever type, which, in the earliest experiments of steam marine navigation, was the style universally favored; but this has long since become obsolete.

The cylinders stood vertical and had a diameter of 42 inches, with a 36-inch stroke. The piston-rod projected through the top of the cylinder to the centre of a sliding cross-head, at the ends of which linked rods ran down on either side of the cylinder to a pair of horizontal beams, or levers, which oscillated on a fixed gudgeon at the middle of their length. The opposite ends of these beams were joined by means of a crosstail, from which connecting rods led up to the crank shaft above. This shaft, six inches in diameter, was in three sections, and was thus supplied with four cranks, each of which was 18 inches in length. At each extremity of the outer portions of this shaft was a paddle-wheel 13 feet in diameter, made up of 11 radial arms 5 feet in width.

The low-pressure boiler, which rested on brick furnaces, and from which steam was carried through large copper tubes to the steam chests, was situated about midship, but still some distance aft of the engines. This arrangement crowded the paddle-wheels far forward, like the fins of a seal, thus giving the little steamer a very unique appearance.

As soon as the machinery was in position a trial trip was made, when, according to Lloyd's records, the *Beaver* attained a speed of $9\frac{3}{4}$ miles per hour, which must have been exceedingly gratifying to her builders as well as to her owners, for in those days this would be considered a very good rate of speed.

During the time this steamer was under construction, the Hudson's Bay Company was also having a bark built which should accompany the *Beaver* across the seas to her destination. This bark was called the *Columbia*, and was of 310 tons burden, carried 6 pieces of artillery and 24 men.

The *Beaver's* dimensions were: Length over all, $101\frac{1}{2}$ feet; breadth, inside of paddle-boxes, 20 feet; outside, 33 feet; depth, $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet; her register was $109\frac{1}{8}$ tons burden; she was armed with 5 guns—nine-pounders—and carried a crew of 26 men.

Built and equipped at a period when the problem of steam marine navigation was about to be solved, is it any wonder that the little steamer, which was destined to traverse two oceans—one of them scarcely known outside of books of travel—should be an object of deep and engrossing interest from the day that her keel was first laid until she passed out of sight on her long voyage to the North Pacific sea?

It was on the 29th day of August, 1835, that the *Beaver*, amid the encouraging cheers from a throng of well-wishers, the waving of banners and the boom of artillery, glided down the Thames into the English Channel, and thence out into the open trackless sea. Thus from the shores of Old England passed forever a steamer which in after years should become famous in the annals of the West.

The *Beaver* and her escort, the *Columbia*, proceeded by way of Cape Horn, and after a very successful and rapid run of fifteen weeks, put into Juan Fernandez on December 17th, 1835.

Juan Fernandez, or "Robinson Crusoe's Island," as it is often termed, lies in the Southern Pacific, about 400 miles due west of Valparaiso, the chief commercial city of Chili. This island—mostly rocky—is about 18 miles in length, by 6 miles in breadth, and is inhabited at the present time by a few Chilians. It was here that Alexander Selkirk, a buccaneer, whose native place was the Scotch fishing village of Largs, lived in solitude between the years 1704 and 1708. And

was the story told of his experience on this island that is supposed to have originated the famous "Robinson Crusoe" of De Foe.

I regret to state that we are unable to furnish more extended reminiscences of the *Beaver's* initial trip, owing to our unsuccessful efforts to locate the log-book of this voyage.

This log-book, from which I hoped to glean much information of interest relative to this passage, appears to have disappeared under very mysterious circumstances, the incidents associated therewith, as related to me by an old pioneer settler, being quite romantic, but through his request I am obliged to keep the matter a secret.

On account of this serious loss of valuable records, I am unable to state what portion of this passage was made under steam, or whether any of it was or not after the *Beaver* got fairly at sea, as statements regarding this are too diverse to be relied upon. Owing to the uncertainty felt in those days regarding steam power, especially for so great a passage, the *Beaver* was supplied with considerable canvas, and was therefore not entirely at the mercy of her engines. Nevertheless, it is quite possible that she might have been under steam a considerable portion of the way, and even possible that a quantity of her fuel was carried in the *Columbia*, which ship is registered as having accompanied her the entire passage.

Still I feel justified in saying that the *Beaver* did not steam the entire distance owing to the evidence, and also to recorded statements made by Dr. Lardner—an authority on marine matters—shortly after the *Great Western* crossed the Atlantic in 1838, and to which steamer he refers, places the longest continuous steam passage up to that date at about 2,000 miles. (See "Encyclopedia Britannica," p. 815.)

Nearly four months pass by, during which time the movements of the *Beaver* and her convoy are to us entirely unknown, as they traverse the great Southern seas, cruise under the burning suns of the equator, and then speed onward through the peaceful waters of the North Pacific to their far distant haven.

It was not until April 4th, 1836, that the *Beaver*, together with her faithful companion, the *Columbia* (Capt. Darby), arrived at the old historical fort of Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia river in Oregon. From thence the *Beaver* proceeded some 115 miles up the great stream to Fort

Vancouver, then the Hudson's Bay Company's headquarters on the North Pacific coast. Here a warm reception greeted her jolly crew by John McLoughlin, governor of Northwest Coast affairs; Chief Factor D. Finlayson, James Douglas, John Dunn and several others, who composed the little band of whites then inhabiting these lonely regions. And as the lordly savages gazed in wild bewilderment upon the "fire-spitting demon of the deep," cannons roared, congratulations went their rounds, and festivities became the order of the day.

Capt. David Home was first officer in command of the *Beaver*, and one can well imagine the feeling of pride with which he bestrode the deck of his brave little steamer which had so successfully made the perilous voyage around Cape Horn, and thus attained the proud distinction of being the first steamer to cross the Atlantic to America, the first to round Cape Horn, and the first to ripple the waters of the broad Pacific.

No doubt, many persons not familiar with the true facts relating to early steam navigation, will be surprised to learn this, for I must confess that I was. Nevertheless, it seems to be founded on the best of authority, and after a careful research of marine records, it has been shown that the *Beaver* is justly entitled to the honor set forth in this claim.

Soon after the little black steamer arrived at Fort Vancouver, Capt. W. H. McNeill took command, while Capt. Home retired to one of the Company's posts, and subsequently perished in 1837 by the upsetting of a small boat while crossing the Columbia river, some say, at "Death Rapids," while others state that the accident happened at Baker's Bay.

In those days Oregon included all the country north of California, all the region drained by the twin rivers of the West, and was, says Bancroft, the historian, "a mystic land, a region of weird imagery and fable, without, in 1832, a single United States settler in all the territory."

But now that a steamer had arrived, swift flowing rivers, circuitous inlets, and intricate bays were to be navigated for the first time by a craft other than the native "dug-out," and consequently this vast and fertile region of the Pacific Northwest could not long be expected to remain uncivilized.

The principal northern settlement, or fur station, at this time was Fort Simpson, while next in importance came Fort McLoughlin, on Milbank Sound, and later Fort Taku, on the

Tako river. Besides these, there were several others of minor importance.

Still, the duties of the *Beaver* were not confined alone to waiting on the Hudson's Bay Company's fur posts, for we have abundant proof that during her early history she made frequent trips to Sitka, Alaska.

Probably one of the most important events in the career of this historic steamer, and one for which she will long be remembered, was the part she bore in the first discovery of the now famous coal-fields of Vancouver Island.

It appears that just previous to the *Beaver's* arrival on the Columbia river, a party of Indians, from the north end of Vancouver Island, strolled into the blacksmith shop inside the stockade at Fort McLoughlin.

In a very short time these savages became curiously interested in the movements of the smith, and finally their curiosity led them to asking questions.

"What is that?" they queried, as the smith shoveled fresh coals on the glowing fire.

"Stuff to make the fire burn," replied the man at the anvil.

"What do you call it?"

"Coal," was the answer.

"How is it made?"

"It is dug out of the ground."

"Where do you get it?"

After the smith had answered this last question by telling them that it was brought in ships many miles across the great water, he left his work and called in W. F. Tolmie, together with several other officers of the Fort. And to these gentlemen the redskins explained that in many places in their country there was plenty of this same kind of stone.

Word was shortly afterward sent to Fort Vancouver, with the result that about the month of July, 1836, Chief Factor John McLoughlin issued orders for the *Beaver* to proceed to the north end of Vancouver Island and ascertain if coal did actually exist in this western region, as reported by the Indians.

As Mr. John Dunn was one of the party sent thither, I will permit him to make his own report. "Mr. Finlayson,

with a part of the crew, went on shore, leaving me in the ship to conduct the trade, and after some inquiries and a small distribution of rewards, found from the natives that the original account given at Fort McLoughlin was true. The coal turned out to be of excellent quality, running in extensive fields, and even in clumpy mounds, and most easily worked all along that part of the country."

In honor of her captain, the small bay where the steamer first cast anchor was called McNeill Harbor, but later Beaver Harbor, after the little craft herself. (See Dunn's "History of the Oregon Territory," published in London 1844; also Bancroft's "History of British Columbia.")

Thus was the bituminous coal-fields of the North Pacific coast made known to the world, and their worth first tested in the *Beaver's* furnace. Indeed, there was no other use for coal in these western confines at this time, except a small quantity which the Hudson's Bay Company required for use in the blacksmith shops at its various forts, and even then it was only partially used for fuel in the little steamer, as will be seen by the following quoted paragraph from an entry made by Mr. Dunn during the steamer's first voyage to Fort Simpson in 1836. "At Fort McLoughlin we took on board about twenty-six cords of wood for fuel, which was ready cut for us. This generally lasted us when running on between three and four days."

It would appear that the Hudson's Bay Company about this time were anxious to establish a saw and grist mill in some convenient locality on the North Pacific coast, and in consequence of this, we find the *Beaver* engaged during the following year in the very important work of discovery. Says the Fort Simpson *Journal*, under date August 10th, 1837: "On his way to the southward, Capt. McNeill explored the south end of Vancouver Island and found an excellent harbor and a fine open country along the sea-shore, apparently well adapted for both tillage and pasturage, but saw no river sufficiently extensive for mills."

This clearly shows that the harbor of Esquimalt—now the famous naval station where floats the formidable war-ships of Her Majesty's North Pacific squadron—was first entered by the *Beaver* fifty-seven years ago, as was also, at the same time, Camosun Bay, now Victoria Harbor.

As much of the information contained herein has been gathered from Fort journals, it might be well to state that at each of the Company's forts a journal was kept, after the fashion of a minute-book, and from day to day any happenings worthy of note were recorded. They thus furnish history which can be relied upon as quite correct.

In May, 1840, James Douglas proceeded in the steamer *Beaver* to Sitka, Alaska, where he counseled with Etholin, the Russian governor, with the result that the Hudson's Bay Company acquired the right to occupy certain southern portions of Alaska in exchange for cattle and provisions.

During this same voyage the Tako and Stakeen rivers were explored and Fort Tako erected on the bank of the former, while Fort Stakeen, started some five years previous, was completed by the assistance of the *Beaver's* crew.

It was also during this year that Fort Langley, on the Fraser, was totally destroyed by fire, but at once rebuilt by men landed from the little steamer.

Sir George Simpson, in his "Narrative of a Journey Around the World During the Years 1841-2," speaks of a cruise in the *Beaver* through the labyrinth of still, sparkling waters between Fort Nisqually, on Puget Sound, and Sitka, Alaska, at which latter place he and James Douglas spent a most enjoyable time—toward the end of September, 1841—with Etholin, the governor, who visited the little vessel in full uniform, and was loyally welcomed by a grand salute from the *Beaver's* guns.

The next important event in the career of this renowned craft was the founding of Camosun, or Fort Victoria.

About the first of March, 1843, an expedition, consisting of some fifteen men, left Fort Vancouver and crossed the Cowlitz country to Fort Nisqually, situated at the head of Puget Sound, near where now stands the city of Olympia.

It was not until the ninth of the month that they succeeded in reaching this place of embarkment, but as they found the *Beaver* here awaiting them, it was not long before all their utensils and provisions were carefully stowed on board. Soon all arrangements for the voyage were complete, and after a prolonged scream, the natives' sea phantom swung off from her moorings and pointed her nose for the north. Away she went, steadily buffeting her way through the merry ripple

of Puget Sound and Admiralty Inlet, then across the more turbulent waters of Juan de Fuca Strait, until about 4 o'clock in the afternoon of March 14th, when, with a splash, an iron claw sank into the sea; this was followed by the rattle of chains, then all was still, for the little steamer was gently riding at cable's length on the calm, peaceful bosom of Camosun Bay.

At the head of this enterprise was James Douglas; still John McLoughlin, Captain McNeill and several others are also entitled to due recognition in the establishment of this most important of all posts.

The expedition had been sent thither for the purpose of erecting, on the south end of Vancouver Island, a substantial fort, suitable for the Company's headquarters, as the abandonment of Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia, had been determined.

At the discharge of a cannon from the deck of the *Beaver*, savages in almost countless numbers swarmed upon the banks. But as no serious encounter followed, it is quite evident that these barbarous natives made up their minds then and there to give these strange, bleached men and their thundering water machine all the room they required without argument.

Next morning the little force of fort-builders was landed opposite the Indian village of Camosun, and operations at once commenced on the stockade, bastions and dwelling-houses, which continued for several months. Meanwhile the *Beaver* had been dispatched to the northern posts, calling at Stakeen, Forts Tako and McLoughlin, from whence she brought a number of men to assist the force at Camosun.

Subsequently, late in the season, Douglas departed with the *Beaver* to Fort Nisqually for a cargo of cattle, to be forwarded to the new establishment, in charge of which, during his absence, he had placed Mr. Charles Ross.

It is hardly likely that these fur-traders realized at that time that they were laying the foundation of a new colonial empire.

But such they were; for on the site of old Fort Camosun now stands the flourishing capital city of Victoria, and where, just fifty years ago, there toiled in the midst of savage tribes a few fort-builders, now may be seen the enlightened sons of civilization busily engaged in the erection of Provincial Parliament buildings at the cost of nearly a million dollars.

For several years after this event the *Beaver* was kept constantly on the move, as the fur-stations had now become quite numerous, besides extending over a vast territory. The provisions and supplies for these stations were brought in ships direct from England, around Cape Horn, to the Company's Pacific headquarters, at first Fort Astoria, then Fort Vancouver, and later Fort Victoria. These cargoes consisted of general provisions, clothing, muskets, ammunition, tobacco, knives, beads and trinkets of various devices for trade with the natives.

It then devolved upon the *Beaver* and the little schooner *Cadboro* to distribute these at the various stations along the coast, and at the same time collect the furs accumulated at these posts and carry them back to headquarters. From thence these furs would be taken in the Company's sailing ships to London.

Where there were no forts erected, the *Beaver* would steam up to the Indian villages and lay at anchor, while the natives would paddle out with canoe-loads of valuable furs to exchange for such notions as suited their peculiar fancy. And thus it was that the *Beaver* was usually engaged during the time that intervenes between the more important events, which alone is all that is really necessary to mention in this history.

No man-of-war ever maintained stricter discipline along the coast of civilization, much less of savagedom, than did this little black steamer, which, manned by an ever-watchful crew, was never taken by surprise, as she plied her paddles through the glistening waters of cold, placid sea from the Columbia river, around Vancouver Island, and far up to the northward, watching, distributing, gathering.

In 1849, just three years after the 49th parallel of latitude had been established as the national boundary between the United States and the Hudson's Bay Company's domains, the *Beaver* was engaged in the removal of effects from Fort Vancouver to Fort Victoria, which henceforth became the Company's Pacific headquarters, and consequently the home port of the steamer herself.

About the 1st of May, 1850, the little craft carried J. W. McKay, together with a party of prospectors, from Fort Victoria to the native hamlet of Nanaimo. It seems that Mr. McKay, while engaged in the Company's service at the for-

mer place the previous autumn. was shown samples of coal by a Nanaimo Indian, and hence the present expedition, which had the good fortune to find coal in abundance, and thus to discover the celebrated coal mines of Nanaimo.

It was the steamer *Beaver* that conveyed Governor Douglas to Nanaimo, then only an Indian village, in January, 1853, when, after considerable parley, in which bloodshed was narrowly averted, two Indians were surrendered by their tribe for the murder of Peter Brown, an employee of the H. B. Company, near Fort Victoria the month previous. These savages were taken back to headquarters, given a trial, and then followed their execution, which appears to be the first recorded in the history of British Columbia, or rather of Vancouver Island, as the Province of British Columbia was then unformed.

Five years later, in 1858, came the famous "Fraser river gold excitement," which shook with monetary ague the financial centres of the world, and caused thousands of men to rush pell-mell over plain and mountain in a mad desire to search for hidden treasure in the Fraser canyons.

It was during this period that the "little black steamer," as the *Beaver* was often termed, became widely known to the travelling public; and of the estimated 23,000 miners landed at Victoria, B. C., in the early spring of '58, for passage up the Fraser, no doubt many hundreds still remain, though scattered in different parts of the world, whose minds will wander back to times long since past as they recognize the illustrations herein given. And perhaps, also, a few of the old "Forty-niners" still survive who took passage in the *Beaver* during the long-to-be-remembered California gold fever of 1849, and who will be carried back, as they recall to mind the subject of this sketch, to the scenes of romantic incidents in days long ago. During these periods of wild excitement, many a pound of the precious metal found place on the *Beaver's* deck.

In 1859 the San Juan Island difficulty, which threatened several times to involve the United States and Britain in open hostilities, neared a crisis. And in this, the same as in most every important event in the early history of Pacific Northwest affairs, the little steamer figured quite conspicuously.

The facts of the case appear to be these : A United States settler, by the name of L. A. Cutler, took up his abode on the island, which at that time was somewhat in dispute between the American authorities and the Hudson's Bay Company.

On the 15th of June, 1859, this man Cutler shot a pig, which it seems was destroying his garden, and which was the property of the Hudson's Bay Company, then occupying a considerable portion of the island. Mr. Cutler, as atonement for his rash act, then offered the officer in charge of the island post a small sum as payment for the animal, but when informed that, owing to its superior make up, \$100 was the value placed on the rooter, he concluded to let the bill stand. Word was quickly sent to Fort Victoria, and very soon the *Beaver*, well armed, was puffing toward the scene of the disturbance.

On board the miniature war-steamer were several officers of the colonial council, including A. G. Dallas, Tolmie and Fraser, which gentlemen, on landing, declared the Island of San Juan to be British soil.

It then seems that Cutler was given the choice of paying for the hog, or in default be taken to Fort Victoria, where a trial would be held and the matter thoroughly investigated. But Mr. Cutler couldn't see it in this light, and, nervously fingering his rifle, threatened to shoot the first man that should lay forcible hands upon him.

This was the commencement of the famous San Juan hostilities, and during the long, tedious litigation which followed, the steamer *Beaver*, on many occasions, came prominently before the public.

After dragging along for a number of years, the island was finally ceded to the United States on October 21st, 1872, by the award allowed by the arbitrator, Emperor William I. of Germany.

For fifteen years subsequent to 1859, the *Beaver* continued to serve the various posts without anything unusual transpiring, except that settlers were rapidly taking the place of the native redskins, and consequently the huge cargoes of furs, once so common, were each year growing lighter ; while at the same time steamships of modern design had arrived in the field, and now the queen of the North Pacific must come down from her exalted position and struggle along in the rear ranks.

The famous Hudson's Bay Company (organized in 1670), to which she belonged, having been divested of its power by the Imperial authorities in 1859, was now in its decline, and therefore the services of the faithful little steamer were no longer required in the fur business.

Accordingly, on October 13th, 1874, the *Beaver* was sold, her purchasers being Messrs. Stafford, Saunders, Morton & Co., of Victoria, B. C., who afterward utilized her as a general freight and tow-boat, in which capacity she remained until the last, with the exception of a short period in which she was employed by the Imperial hydrographers in the preparation of charts of the North Pacific coast.

Although the *Beaver* was old-fashioned and out of date when offered for sale by the H. B. Company, she was still considered in perfect order, and it cost the new company just \$17,500 to gain possession of this pioneer craft.

In recent years the Company experienced much difficulty in securing engineers who understood her engines, or who were willing to handle them, owing to the many important changes in marine engines which have taken place since her's were built in 1834-5.

One would naturally suppose that these old engines would be constantly needing repairs; but such was not the case, and although in use over half a century, they ran remarkably well right up until the night when Dave Symmons pulled the throttle which stopped them for the last time. These engines seemed to be composed almost solely of a complicated series of jointed levers, and were constantly getting "on centre," which was their worst feature.

In conversation recently with one of her late engineers, he remarked: "You should have seen us fellows jump when we got the signals to go ahead. Why, at times our whole force below were obliged to climb here and there over her engines, which we had to humor for an age, it seemed, before they would condescend to strike out for themselves."

At about 10 o'clock on Thursday night, July 26th, 1888, the poor old *Beaver*, in steaming out of Burrard Inlet—the harbor of Vancouver, B. C.—with a small cargo of provisions for a logging-camp on Thurlow Island, was carried upon the rocks just under the lofty cliff at the right of the entrance.

Her crew at this time consisted of ten men, as follows: George Merchant, captain; Charles Morris, mate; Thomas

Evans, deck-hand ; David Symmons, chief engineer ; William Evans, assistant engineer ; John Brownlee and Benjamin Collis, firemen ; P. Clitto and Thomas Smith, coal-passers, while "One Lung" was the somewhat common appellation assigned the Chinese cook.

Owing to the several attempts which were then made to float the little steamer being unsuccessful, she was allowed to remain upon the rock-bound shore for well-nigh four years, attracting the curiosity of world-circling tourists and the travelling public, who, filled with admiration and wonder, honored her with their visits, while at the same time the journalist's pencil, the artist's brush and the poet's pen gladly paid tribute to this pioneer of western seas.

But although several Pacific Coast papers, from time to time, published articles setting forth the many good reasons why the old *Beaver* should be secured and placed in some public park as an historical relic, no very important move was made in this direction until the early spring of 1892.

At this time a joint-stock company, composed principally of San Francisco capitalists, was formed for the purpose of sending this remnant of ancient marine architecture to the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago.

But while these negotiations were pending, the swell from the side-wheel steamer *Yosemite*, in passing close to the stranded vessel at low tide on June 26th, 1892, caused the boiler to work loose, when with a crash it fell outward into the channel carrying with it a large portion of the hull.

This was the death-blow to the famous old craft, and, by a strange coincidence, happened just one hundred years after the celebrated explorer, George Vancouver, passed the same spot in the ship *Discovery* in June, 1792, at which time he named the silent harbor "Burrard Inlet," after Sir Harry Burrard of the British navy.

The news that the poor old *Beaver* was now an abandoned wreck at Vancouver very quickly spread, and soon throughout these western confines might often be heard the sentimental remark, "What a pity." Then once more, after a lapse of 57 years, rushed a curious throng—a new generation—to the scene ; but this time not to witness the staunch little steamer plunge proudly into the briny deep, but to haggle to pieces

the faithful old craft, as with stilled pulse and silent paddle she lay wrapped in a sheet of troubled water, with head calmly resting on a huge barnacle-clad boulder, crippled, helpless and forsaken.

The anxiety became so great to secure relics of this ancient vessel, that at certain low tides one's life was considerably endangered by the scores of axes which flew thick and fast in every quarter of the ship, and at these times it was quite a common occurrence to meet men there that had come long distances expressly to get, as they said, "a relic of the old *Beaver*." The preference then was almost entirely for the woodwork, the most of which appeared to be nearly as sound as the day on which it had been put together. Consequently, her engines suffered but little damage while the woodwork lasted, but finally some parties wanted the foundation timbers on which they stood; then a few shots of dynamite lifted them, in a broken mass, out of the bed in which they had rested for nearly three-score years. Most of the cast-iron was then purchased by the local foundries and soon mingled with other metal in building new machinery.

In the meantime I had been busily engaged in securing the copper fastenings of the hull, and also the brass and bronze portions of her machinery, which to my mind were far more valuable than the timber as lasting mementoes. But before purchasing any of this metal, I had decided to manufacture it into souvenir medals, as it was plainly to be seen that every vestige of the old *Beaver* would soon pass into oblivion, unless in some way identified. And it is but fair to expect that these medals, relics of this famous steamer, will exist through ages as historical souvenirs of this progressive steam era. As a short chapter elsewhere in this work has been devoted to a description of these medals, further allusion to them in this connection is unnecessary.

The wood of the old boat has been worked up into numerous useful ornaments, such as walking-canes, jewelry caskets, writing-desks, picture frames, vases, clock cases, chairs, etc., and many of these have found a welcome place in distant lands, as the various newspaper accounts go to prove. A society of Foresters in this city (Vancouver) is named "Court Beaver," after this pioneer vessel, and has its gavels, ballot-box, charter frame, etc., made of wood of this veteran steamer. The dark variegated colors of this wood, caused by

the action of the salt water coming in contact with the copper fastenings, makes it extremely handsome, and besides it is susceptible to a very high polish. The greenheart, which formed a large bulk of this woodwork, was imported expressly into England from British Guiana, where it grows to the height of from 75 to 100 feet. In color it resembles beechwood, but in texture is more like *lignum vitæ*. It is extremely valuable for shipbuilding, and is almost entirely free from the attacks of the teredo, which fact we particularly noted while working about the old steamer's hull. This wood is also very heavy, and unless thoroughly seasoned will readily sink in water.

The loss of the steamer *Beaver* seemed to elicit as much sympathy from the two nations on the western slope of America's great mountain chain as would the death of some beloved statesman. But not until the old craft had disappeared did they seem fully to realize or appreciate the valuable services rendered in days past by this nautical pioneer. I will venture to say that there is not a city on the Pacific Coast today, scarcely one in America, and very few, if any, in the civilized world but what would now readily give much more than it would have cost to preserve this historic craft to have her on exhibition in their public park or floating in their harbor, if perchance a seaport. But the chance of securing her is now gone, departed, lost forever, and henceforth the steamer *Beaver* shall live in name only. No other craft can ever have the same record, no other the same interesting history.

Great changes have taken place since first the *Beaver* kised the waters of the stormy Atlantic. Large commercial centres, then almost unknown, have since sprung into existence on both sides of that mighty ocean, whose heaving crest is now lashed into a constant foam by hundreds of floating palaces, then hardly dreamed of. A network of steel, then scarcely started, has since been woven from east to west, from north to south, backward and forward in almost every conceivable direction over Europe, over America, and now sings its ceaseless note as the oiled wheels of commerce glide with surprising rapidity over its metallic strings.

But a still more remarkable change has taken place in the silent wilderness of the Pacific Slope. From the Spanish Mission of St. Francis, containing only a few Indians when

the *Beaver* first rippled the waters of the broad Pacific, has developed the busy metropolis of San Francisco, with its 325,000 human ants.

Next in importance comes the city of Portland, Oregon, with 70,000 of a population, on the site of which the fur-traders of the Hudson's Bay Company shot wild ducks and geese for many years after the steamer *Beaver* first set in motion the waters of the Columbia. Then follow the Puget Sound cities of Seattle, Tacoma and Olympia, besides numerous other thriving trade centres.

The densely wooded low-lands, where roamed in search of prey the dusky children of the forest, have become, since first the *Beaver* panted up their shaded streams, the productive and celebrated valleys of the west.

The great chain of rugged mountains which echoed greetings to the *Beaver*, as with shrill voice she spoke the startled savage, and seeks to blot you out, together with your legends and traditions," has since yielded up a hoard of precious minerals to the extent of over two billions of dollars. And since first the steamer *Beaver* commenced to devour the virgin forests of this Pacific domain, the valuable States of California, Oregon and Washington have been hewn out and added to the great American Republic.

While from the then silent wilderness has been reared the flourishing Province of British Columbia, from whence proceed the ships of many nations laden with its metals, timber, coal and salmon products. The commercial centres of this fair, new province include the cities of Victoria, Nanaimo, New Westminster, Kamloops, and "last but not least," the busy mart of Vancouver, at the gate of which city the *Beaver* chose as her last resting place, a most beautiful and befitting spot.

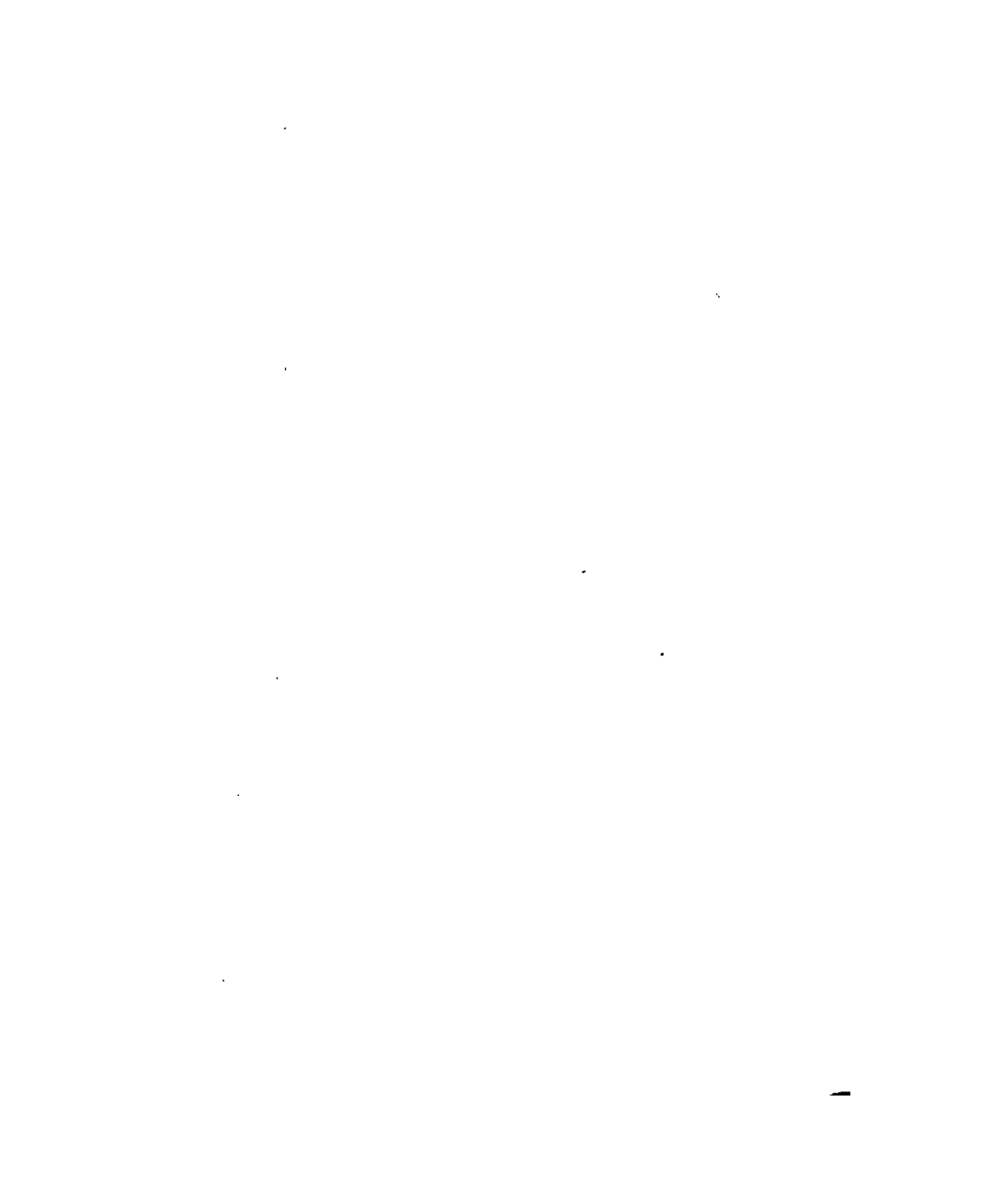
The Hudson's Bay Company, which for 200 years reigned resplendent over a large portion of North America as the greatest monopoly in history, is now, comparatively speaking, a figure in past events. That the steamer *Beaver* lived long enough to witness all this great overturning of affairs seems hard to believe, but it is true nevertheless. Surely the present period can well be termed the "Progressive Steam Era," for who at this enlightened age, and in the face of the many important mechanical discoveries now being made, would dare

predict that before the elapse of the next century the steam engine will not be entirely superseded by electric or other motive power and be a thing of the past.

In all histories of the North Pacific States and of the Province of British Columbia the name *Beaver* must ever stand as a glittering jewel ; indeed, they would be very incomplete if such was not the case, for in this steamer is wrapped much early inseparable history of the North Pacific Slope.

What a striking comparison between this steamer and the great ocean-racers of to-day, many of which are five and some even six times the length of this pioneer of by-gone days.







CAPT. WM. H. McNEILL.

Biography of Capt. McNeill.

TO MR. AND MRS. JANE, of Savonas, B. C., I am indebted for many favors in connection with this brief biography of William McNeill. The photograph from which the accompanying illustration was taken, was also cheerfully furnished by Mrs. Jane, who is a daughter of the late Captain.

W. H. McNeill, the subject of this sketch, was born in Boston, Mass., in the year 1800. During his early boyhood he attended the public schools, and, being naturally clever, soon obtained a very fair education. But while yet a mere lad a desire to follow the sea threw its fascinating arms about the young Bostonian, who, after spending several years on the waters of Massachusetts Bay, concluded to seek fame and fortune in the wilds of the faraway Oregon Territory.

Accordingly, as the year 1830 was drawing to a close, he bid farewell to his native home and stepped as commander aboard the brig *Llama*, then about to sail on a fur-trading expedition to the North Pacific coast. This vessel was owned by Bryant & Sturgis, a firm of Boston merchants, and her cargo consisted of a varied assortment of cheap, highly-colored trinkets, such as would attract the fancy of the unsuspecting savages.

For many weeks the *Llama* traversed the great seas, and it was not until twelve thousand miles of trackless passage lay astern the little brig that she landed her captain and crew of fortune-seekers safe upon the shores of the Oregon Territory, then a wild region teeming with all the richest furs peculiar to an undisturbed wilderness. The *Llama*, shortly after arriving in these North Pacific waters, was purchased, together with her contents, by the Hudson's Bay Company, who must have seen something uncommonly clever in her commander, for he was retained as captain of the vessel and at once admitted into the Company's service, a somewhat unusual occurrence for an American citizen.

Some three years later, in the spring of 1834, word reached Fort Vancouver that a Japanese junk was lying

stranded off Cape Flattery and being pillaged by the natives. Captain McNeill at once undertook the dangerous task of rescuing the crew, and with this determination in view sailed thither in the *Llama*. He had scarcely reached the wreck when his vessel was boarded by the savages, but being familiar with their tactics, he soon overpowered them and took a number prisoners. These he held as hostages until the survivors of the ill-fated craft were delivered to him. There proved to be but three remaining alive. These were taken back to Fort Vancouver, and shortly afterward sent home in one of the Company's ships by way of England.

Captain McNeill continued in the *Llama* until the arrival of the steamer *Beaver* at Fort Vancouver in the spring of 1836, when he succeeded Captain Home, and thus gained the distinction of being the second captain of the pioneer steamer, which position he most judiciously filled for many years with the exception of several brief intervals. In a short time Captain McNeill and his little black steamer became important factors all along the North Pacific coast, so much so that their names have become inseparably connected with the early records of this vast region.

In 1851 Captain McNeill assumed command of the Company's ship *Una*, which later was burned by the Indians at Neah Bay. He was also for a time in command of the H. B. Company's ship *Nereid*, during which time she made a voyage to London and return.

Ever ready for an opportunity to rise in the world, he soon find Captain McNeill in charge of several northern posts, and finally at the head of affairs at the important station of Fort Simpson, which position he continued to fill until, after a long and faithful association with the Hudson's Bay Company, he retired from active business life and severed his connection with the great monopoly in the year 1861. After leaving the Company's service he retired to his farm on Point Jonzalo, Vancouver Island, where he built a fine residence and passed the remainder of his days surrounded by his large family and all the comforts which his life's work well merited.

Captain McNeill was a man of sterling qualities, just and honorable in his dealings with his fellow man, and the absence of that dominating spirit which so frequently characterizes men in less prominent positions, made him a general favorite not only among his inferiors, but also among men of higher

station. He was a man of rather large stature, and was possessed of a very strong constitution, which carried him safely through the many hardships with which the pioneer whites of this western domain had to battle until 1875. Then after an illness of only two days—the result of a severe cold—the old pioneer captain was piloted across the dark river from whence no voyager returns. Bancroft, in his “History of the North-west Coast,” speaks thus of the captain: “Besides being an able seaman and a sharp trader, McNeill was a thoroughly honest inan, and he served the Company well and faithfully.”

The people of the North Pacific coast, especially of British Columbia, must ever be indebted to Captain McNeill for many important events as the result of his long and useful life among the fur-traders and Indians of the North Pacific Slope. Not only is he associated with the first discovery of the North Pacific coal-fields; the disclosure of Victoria and Esquimalt harbors; the founding of British Columbia's capital, but also with the first discovery of gold, which a few years later led to the famous Fraser river excitement.

It is very probable that Captain McNeill headed the first party of prospectors in search of gold in British Columbia, and my belief in this is strengthened by the contents of two letters written by the captain to James Douglas (later Sir James Douglas, governor of British Columbia), which chanced to come under my notice when engaged in collecting material for this work, and from which the following extracts have been copied. Although it has been generally understood that the first discovery of gold was made at Queen Charlotte Island, still the facts relating thereto have heretofore been very meagre, but as these letters are the original manuscript they can safely be relied upon as containing a correct account of this earliest discovery.

“FORT SIMPSON, 20th November, 1851.

“JAMES DOUGLAS, ESQ.

“SIR—After leaving Victoria, I proceeded with the *Una* to fulfill your instructions of 4th October, 1851. We had a fair run of four days to Q. C. I., after which a gale of wind came on and detained us off Cape Henry eight days, consequently we did not anchor in Mitchell's Harbor until the 20th Oct. On the second day after we arrived we commenced blasting the rock at the old place. We commenced in a vein

of quartz and were very successful. The rock proved to be rich with gold, as you will see by the specimens now forwarded per Doctor Kennedy. We followed the seam or vein and found it deeply impregnated with gold. The vein seems to take a direction up the mountain, in fact our men went half way to the top, say 300 feet above the water, and found quartz rock. In my opinion, gold will be found in many places hereafter on the west side of the island, as quartz rock can be found in every direction. We found it in four different places in Mitchell's Harbor, but had no time to examine it.

"I am sorry to say that we had to leave off blasting and quit the place for Fort Simpson, on account of annoyance we experienced from the natives. They arrived in large numbers, say 30 canoes, and were much pleased to see us on first arrival, but when they saw us blaring and turning out so much gold they became excited and commenced depredations on us, stealing the tools and taking at least one-half of the gold that was thrown out by the blast. They would be concealed until the report of the blast was heard and then make a rush for the ore. A regular scramble between them and our men would then take place; they would take our men by the legs and haul them away from the gold. Some blows were struck on those occasions, and the Indians drew their knives on our men often, who finally took fright and would not remain longer.

"The natives afterward brought a quantity of gold to me, for which I traded, and now forward per the *Una*, together with that obtained by ourselves through blasting.

"Your faithful servant,

"W. H. McNEILL."

In the other letter, which is quite lengthy, but contains little else of interest on this subject, he writes thus: "The gold obtained by us at Q. C. I. through blasting weighed 59 pounds 10 oz. The men wished it to be valued at Victoria by you, as they were afraid if divided here that some of them would get more than his own share of the rock."

Although nearly twenty years have passed since the hand that wrote these lines extended a last farewell to earthly friends; and although one by one the pioneers of the Pacific Coast have since passed away, so that now but few is left of all his old companions, yet the name of Captain McNeill remains the same, securely locked in the pages of history.

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including "Mr. J. H. Smith, 123 Main St., New York, N. Y." and "Mrs. A. B. Jones, 456 Elm St., Boston, Mass."

2. The second part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including "Mr. C. D. Brown, 789 Oak St., Chicago, Ill." and "Mr. E. F. Green, 101 Pine St., Philadelphia, Pa."

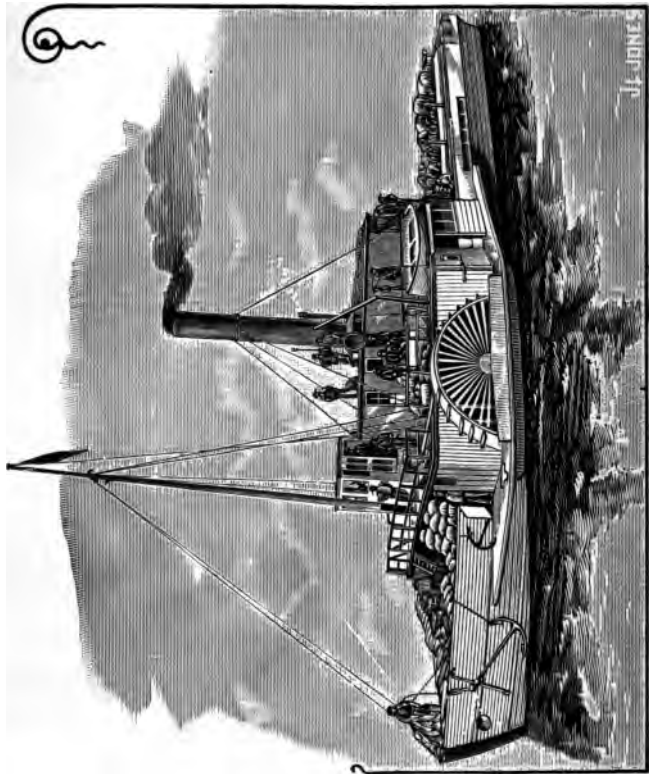
3. The third part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including "Mr. G. H. White, 234 Cedar St., San Francisco, Cal." and "Mr. I. J. Black, 567 Birch St., Los Angeles, Cal."

4. The fourth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including "Mr. K. L. Gray, 890 Spruce St., Portland, Ore." and "Mr. M. N. Blue, 123 Maple St., Seattle, Wash."

5. The fifth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including "Mr. O. P. Red, 456 Elm St., Denver, Colo." and "Mr. Q. R. Purple, 789 Oak St., Salt Lake City, Utah."

6. The sixth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including "Mr. S. T. Yellow, 101 Pine St., Phoenix, Ariz." and "Mr. U. V. Green, 234 Cedar St., Tucson, Ariz."

7. The seventh part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including "Mr. W. X. Blue, 567 Birch St., Albuquerque, N. M." and "Mr. Y. Z. Purple, 890 Spruce St., Santa Fe, N. M."



The Steamer "Beaver" leaving Burrard Inlet, heavily laden with Cattle and Provisions, for a Logging Camp, as she appeared after her Upper Portions had been Remodeled.

From a Photograph taken in 1887.

(For the following interesting narrative I am exceedingly grateful to Mr. Charles H. Woodard, a prominent citizen of Portland, Oregon, also senior member of the old established firm of Woodard, Clark & Co., wholesale druggists, of that city. It was received from the writer in response to communications which I directed to him, as to numerous others, when engaged in collecting information for this history.)

What I Know About the "Beaver"

— OR —

The Narrative of a Fraser River Prospector of 1859.

THE SPIRIT of adventure which had been inspired in the American public by the discovery of gold in California had, at the period of which we write, subsided, but was not wholly extinguished. Like the smouldering ember, which needs but a breath to fan into new life, so the latent elements of restless desire for new fields to explore and prospect needed but the least encouragement to supply the motive force. That encouragement came in little less than a decade, and though reports at first were but meagre, yet as "The hills are always green far away," so the scene of this discovery, though yet farther remote than that of the earlier Californian gold fields, was more alluring. Those subtle agencies by which stories are magnified in proportion to the distance of transmission, and the number of times repeated, were a potent agency in inaugurating what became known as the Fraser river excitement of 1857 and '58.

The location of this new El Dorado was upwards of 7,000 miles distant from the Atlantic seaboard by the most direct route of travel at that time available. Such news as had been received in the "States" was of that character which interested transportation companies were desirous of disseminating; and that the public pulse responded to the agencies employed is best attested by the extent to which the Fraser river fever extended, testing, as it did, the capacity of the transportation companies to their utmost to accommodate the exodus of fortune-hunters.

The price of tickets from New York to San Francisco rose to \$300 and \$350 for first cabin ; \$250 for second cabin, and \$150 for steerage. It was in the month of August, 1858, that a party of four young and inexperienced boys—of which the writer was one—under the guidance of a man of middle age, arrived in New York en route to this faraway Fraser river. The fifth and eldest of our party had been to California during the palmy days of '49, and enjoyed the proud distinction of being called an old California miner, which, to our youthful minds, constituted him high authority not only on all subjects pertaining to gold mining, but nearly all other matters, and in consequence our veneration for so much experience and wisdom was at the beginning well nigh supreme.

On arrival at New York we found the rush for tickets so great as likely to involve standing in line a whole day waiting our turn to be served. Many bogus offices were offering at reduced rates tickets which might be good enough so far as they went, but were liable to leave the purchaser stranded on the Isthmus with insufficient means either to proceed upon his journey or return. Pickpockets, bunco-steerers, and all sorts of methods to swindle the unsophisticated were abundant, and being worked with an energy worthy a better cause. The danger of bogus tickets being foisted upon the unwary brought ticket-brokers into requisition, who, for a commission, would negotiate purchases ; and all in all, tickets were on sale in so many different offices that the poor boy from the country, unused to the mob and racket of a great city, often became so bewildered that he knew not which way to turn nor whom to avoid to escape robbery. In the face of such disparaging conditions, I suggested to our party that as I had letters to a prominent gentleman in the city—this was Charles R. Tilton, Esq., a merchant, resident agent, correspondent and partner of the well-known banking house of Ladd & Tilton, Portland, Oregon—who had very kindly offered to do anything he could for me, that we should ask him to secure our tickets for us ; but the old California miner declared himself equal to the emergency, and would listen to no scheme which tended to disparage his ability to cope with the myriad of sharpers that abounded at every turn. The other members of our party were awed into acquiescence, while I remained painfully in the minority. This constituted my first act of insubordination against the superior intelligence of the old Forty-niner.

However, it was arranged that the two factions should proceed independently, agreeing to meet in the evening at French's hotel to compare notes, which we did. I confess that my heart was heavy when the fact developed that while my ticket was by the steamship *Star of the West*, sailing direct for Aspinwall, their's were all by the *Granada*, to sail on the same day, but to proceed *via* New Orleans and pick up passengers there awaiting transportation, thence direct to Aspinwall. There is said to be no loneliness equal to that of a stranger in a great city, and I pictured my own isolation among a throng of more than a thousand passengers, among whom there would not be one solitary familiar face; but as there is said never to be any great loss without some slight gain, so my loss in this instance was not without its compensating features, for, through the influence of Mr. Tilton's agency, I had saved \$25 in the price of my ticket, and with even better accommodations, as I afterwards learned, than furnished on the *Granada*. Twenty-five dollars saved to a poor boy was a large sum, and to my practical ideas, I computed it as equivalent to being *paid* about a dollar a day wages for the voyage, which I regarded as rather a good omen under which to begin the new life and experiences that were opening out before me.

On the 20th of August, 1858, the two steamers sailed from New York, ours having 1,100 passengers, the other 700, after taking on the New Orleans complement. These were exclusive of the respective crews—the statutes regulating cubic air space, or limiting numbers, being alike inoperative and a dead letter. At Aspinwall we awaited the *Granada*, and then all proceeded by railway to Panama, where upon arrival, to our consternation, we found but *one* steamer provided to take the combined aggregation of passengers from the other two. The problem of transportation became one fraught with great danger, but as but few of us had means sufficient to enable us to await the arrival at Panama of the next steamer a month later, and if we had, even then there was no assurance that she too would not be loaded beyond her capacity, there was no alternative but to proceed. The cupidity of the steamship company saw in the rich harvest that would result, if they could but land this vast cargo of human freight safely at its destination, money enough to either compromise or pay damages in any suit for violation of passenger laws, and they decided to push us forward at all hazards.

The *Sonora* was one of the old side-wheel steamers of those days, and even at that date was regarded as belonging to that genus of aquatic architecture christened by the old Forty-niners as a "traveling coffin." Altogether the auspices under which that voyage was undertaken were not encouraging. It affords a striking illustration of the risks and dangers to which men will expose themselves, more especially that class of men who embarked in those days in the mad rush for fortunes in the gold mines.

At length we were all aboard. The order "heave anchor" had been given, and as we moved slowly out of the roadstead the gun was fired announcing our departure. A few moments served to demonstrate the peril which threatened us should we encounter a rough sea; as the crowd of passengers moved to the starboard side to view the receding shore, the old steamer came nigh turning a somersault, a catastrophe which was for the moment averted by the prompt action of the officer of the deck, who, in stentorian tones, ordered us to "trim ship," a process which was accomplished by directing us first to port and then to starboard. This manœuvre became a necessary exercise during the daytime for the whole of that voyage in order to maintain an even keel; in other words, to avoid turning clear over. During the daytime the ever varying position of such a vast deck-load presented a problem in gravitation which employed the untiring vigilance of the officer on deck.

There was seating capacity for but little more than half the passengers, and baggage, boxes, and everything that would serve the purpose was brought into requisition, while many reclined at full length upon the deck. At night every available device seemed to be employed to supply sleeping places. "Standee" berths were erected wherever a niche afforded space, while on top and underneath the tables in the dining saloon every foot of space was in demand as a bed. The cabins were so oppressively hot at night that as many as could were glad to spread their blankets and bunk on the upper deck, where we lay like candles in a box; in fact, it was almost impossible to even cross the deck, except at the regular alleyways, which, for the convenience of the officers, had to be maintained. During the quietude of night the vessel was able to accomplish fair headway, owing to the fact that an even keel allowed the wheels to do about equal work, while

during the day, owing to the constant rolling motion, but one was in the water at a time.

At Acapulco we took aboard, in addition to our regular requirements, 150 tons of coal for ballast, which for a day or two served somewhat to steady us, but as consumption gradually reduced this weight we again took on our rolling motion, which was never overcome until we were finally moored to the dock in San Francisco. Fortunately for all parties, the weather was fine and the sea smooth, otherwise no one might have been left to tell the story of that voyage, which, in other respects, was uneventful but for two incidents, one of which being that we brought to California the first news of the successful working of the Atlantic cable, which, two weeks later, was made the occasion for the greatest public demonstration in San Francisco which up to that time had occurred in her history. The other was that ours was the largest single shipload of passengers ever landed on the Pacific shore of North America. There were over 1,800 souls, exclusive of crew, and for many years "shipmates" upon that voyage were to be met frequently and in nearly every section of the Coast, no matter how remote.

We landed at 'Frisco September 16, 1858. About 250 of the passengers immediately instituted damage suits against the steamship company for violation of passenger laws, which, after dragging along for months, were finally compromised, some getting their full fare returned, others a small amount. I think mine netted me \$25. Here we learned the first disparaging reports from the Fraser river mines. However, as we had come so far and were then so near our objective point, it was decided by the old Forty-niner, captain of our party, to accept the statements of no one, but to proceed and make our own investigations. I was to remain in San Francisco to await advices from the other four. Another purpose of my remaining was that in event of disaster to the miners, I might be able to contribute funds to relieve them. In a few days they embarked by steamer for Victoria, from whence they went as far as Hill's Bar, two miles below Fort Yale, where they decided to go to mining. I received occasional letters from them, but as the expressage, if my memory serves me correctly, was then fifty cents to a dollar on each letter, as opportunity offered for its transmission, and the mining operations of my friends not very remunerative, letters were few, and such as reached me

not very encouraging. They had resolved to winter on Hill's Bar and in the spring move on to the Thompson river, a long way by the tedious methods of travel, further up the Fraser. I was to come on in the spring and join them.

In the spring of 1859 I had formed the acquaintance of three old California miners who had come down from Amador county on their way to the same region. Of this party was one Charley Posey—I never knew his correct name, but learned this was a nickname given him in the mines by reason of his having hailed from Posey county, Indiana, which appellation ever after followed him—another was Frank Vincent, and the third Charles Spaight. The latter was a man of small stature, of middle age, mild mannered, and much given during his leisure moments to literary reading and the science of assaying. His mild manner, coupled with the fact that he neither indulged in profanity, whisky nor tobacco, inspired in me sentiments of respect which ripened into regard and finally culminated in my joining his party to the mines. We were detained some time in 'Frisco waiting for the season to open on the Fraser river, and finally in the month of March we sailed for Victoria on the steamer *Northerner*—since wrecked in the vicinity of Mendicino. Upon reaching that port later news from the Fraser river was that it was yet too early to enter the mines, so we remained some days at Victoria, and at length took passage on the old Hudson's Bay Company's steamer *Beaver* for Fort Langley, a trading post some forty miles from the mouth of the Fraser, and an intermediate base of supplies between Victoria and Fort Yale.

The *Beaver* was one of the earliest experiments in marine steamship architecture, constructed apparently more with a view to carrying freight than passengers. At all events, if there were any comfortable cabin accommodations, none of my party were fortunate enough to gain access, much less to occupy them. We stood huddled together for mutual warmth on the afterdeck like cattle, and indeed with less provision for our comfort than is nowadays provided for cattle. A small awning covered but half the deck passengers, and afforded but little protection against a heavy driving storm of sleet and snow which followed us from start to finish, while those unable to get positions under it had no protection. Fortunately the only redeeming feature of the trip was its brevity, but it was long enough to impress a lasting memory

of its discomforts, and it stands unrivalled as the smallest voyage with the largest amount of discomfort in all my experience on salt water. However, the little steamer possessed the merit of staunchness, and she certainly proved as industrious as her patronymic, for she kept steadily buffeting head winds and a heavy sea until she landed us, drenched, cold and hungry, but withal thankful, at Fort Langley.

Here we found, as at Victoria, large numbers of miners waiting for the season to open up; but though too early, we decided to push on as soon as we could procure a suitable Indian canoe and pilot. I was especially anxious to proceed lest my friends should leave Hill's Bar before our arrival, so, after some days' delay at Langley, we secured a large dug-out and an Indian pilot, and added such other things to our outfit as had not been procured at Victoria. We had a tent, flour, bacon, beans, sugar, a case of books belonging to Spaight's, and a keg of whisky.

Our party had here been augmented by four persons besides the pilot, which, with all our outfit, required a very large canoe. This secured, the process of loading engrossed about as much attention as a stevedore usually bestows on a clipper ship. At length everything was in readiness, and a large crowd of idle men had assembled on the bank to witness our departure. We were ranged four on either side, each with an Indian paddle, while the pilot took his position at the helm with another paddle as a rudder. At the word we pushed off.

Providence has wisely ordained that we cannot look into the future. Were it otherwise, many of our joys and much of our unhappiness and misery would be unanticipated. If on that inclement March morning we could have "crossed the bridge before we came to it," I am certain that the number of prospectors in that canoe would have been diminished at least to the extent of *one*.

Hence it was undoubtedly better that we could not then realize that the many previous discomforts encountered since leaving home were but mere child's play in comparison to the real hardships which were yet in store for us. Whether any of the others had an intuition of this I cannot say, but if there had been any exuberance of feeling it must in a great measure have been dispelled by the parting salutations from the idle crowd that had assembled on the bank to witness our departure. They seemed one and all to predict the wreck of our craft ere we should proceed many days on our journey. Sev-

eral of them went so far as to designate this or that article of the cargo to which he would lay claim when the wreckaged should come drifting down the stream. The preference seemed largely for the keg of whisky, which was a notable index to the character of the crowd. But there was one, apparently of a higher scale of intellect, who singled out the library as the object of his special quest.

The setting out, taken as a whole, was not of a character calculated to inspire us with particularly bright hopes. Whether others of our party had any misgivings I know not ; to me, however, the laws of compensation brought some relief in the thought that in encountering new dangers which might be in store for us, we were leaving behind others which might be lurking in that promiscuous crowd. We had hardly proceeded a dozen boat-lengths ere we came near capsizing, a catastrophe which was only prevented by the utmost vigilance and dexterity of our Indian pilot, and as soon as we reached a favorable landing, beyond the range of vision of that jeering crowd, we beached our canoe and began the process of discharging and re-stowage of cargo. We had stowed all our plunder amidships and too high above the gunwales, in order to give ample room and more comfort to each man with his paddle. This rendered our craft cranky or top heavy, and it became necessary, in order to avoid capsizing, to stow all our heavier goods well along the bottom of the canoe. In so doing we discovered to our dismay a check or split extending along the grain of the wood of the canoe, well below the water line, which became a menace to such goods as would be ruined by getting wet. Caulking would only serve to distend the check and increase the difficulty, and as we had no means at hand for patching, we must either return to Langley for another canoe or proceed as best we could, bailing the water out whenever it should encroach too far upon our cargo. One horn of the dilemma thus involved our personal safety ; the other the loss of the goods. After due deliberation, we determined to relieve the overburdened craft by taking alternate turns of walking along the river bank, so that, for instance, four should walk while four should remain aboard ; but as the very swift current made it necessary to cross and recross the river frequently, in order to avail ourselves of the numerous eddies, this must at such crossings make the embarkation of the entire party absolutely imperative. Finally all was rearranged, and we proceeded on our way until approaching night-

fall, when we pitched our tent and came to camp on a projecting point of land amid the heaviest snowstorm which I have ever experienced. The snow of the previous winter was yet remaining to the depth of two feet. Upon this we piled up fir boughs, upon which we spread our blankets, which, by the way, were so saturated that it became necessary to wring the water out of them before turning in. Such was camp life on the Fraser, and this my first night's experience in that nomadic style of life, the thoughts of which, after the lapse of nearly two score years, are far from being cheerful.

To the balance of our party—all old miners inured to hardships—this phase of life was not, perhaps, quite so trying. At any rate they had the advantage(?) of Spaight and myself, for they sought consolation in the contents of "that keg," while we relied upon the recuperative powers of nature. The following day, stiff and aching in every joint, we resumed our weary journey. The river was low and the current so rapid that in places where it was necessary to cross to the opposite shore we would take our places, head for some point far above and across the stream, and then strike out, every man bending to the task with a strength born of desperation, often landing half a mile below and opposite our starting point. At others, where the current was so strong that we could make no headway against it with our paddles, all except the Indian would man the tow-line, which, being several hundred feet in length, admitted of our clambering along far in advance, sometimes wading in the cold snow water from the mountain peaks which ascended abruptly from the river on either side to great height, again scaling projecting points of rock, climbing over rocks and fallen trees, at others over bars that were covered with boulders worn so smooth and round that we were continually slipping and falling. In this manner we would make a few miles, when weary and almost famished we would camp for the night.

Some days of this sort of life finally brought us to Hill's Bar, only to find that my companions had been gone some ten days on their pilgrimage to the Thompson river—100 miles farther up the Fraser. I thanked God, however, that I had reached a human habitation where I could at least recuperate from the bruises and lameness occasioned by that trip.

There were probably a hundred or two of miners on Hill's Bar, among them many old friends of our party, which was now divided and parceled out among a number of miners

cabins. I was assigned to that of Captain Bowen, who had a very comfortable log hut in which he was living by himself. He had in former days been a sea captain, and true to the instincts of a sailor, was a whole-souled generous man. He made me quite welcome and comfortable. It was yet too early to do prospecting, as the snow was too deep. Some old established mines that were well opened were able to work two or three hours at midday. After recovery from the hardships of the trip, I tried my hand at prospecting, but as all the good mining ground had already been located, there was little to be gained in this direction, and the old captain, who seemed to have taken quite a fancy to me, not only generously permitted me to work his ground, but also loaned me a rocker and instructed me in its use. But I could make but poor pay, and, after a few weeks with but indifferent results, was glad enough to join my party, who had returned discouraged from the upper country. So, bidding adieu to the good captain, Mr. Spaight and the others, we embarked in another canoe voyage, retracing the course of the former. The downward voyage was as full of pleasure as the other had been of misery, and we were sorry when it was so soon over.

This proved to be the extent of my mining operations and prospecting. The only souvenir that I retain of that experience is one solitary gold finger ring of my own mining, and, perhaps, a few twinges of rheumatic pains. More recently I have received from Messrs. McCain & Menzies, Vancouver, B. C., a medal made from the copper of the old *Beaver*; and this recalls me to my subject. Of the old *Beaver* others may be in a position to supply more extended reminiscences of her life and history. For me and thousands of others, who ever grateful to the "bridge that carries us safely o'er," she will always have a green place in our memories. Peace to her ashes.

C. H. WOODARD.







View Looking Northeast, Showing the Entrance to Burrard Inlet, British Columbia. Lying in the foreground, stranded upon the rocks beneath Observation Point, is the STEAMER "BEAVER."

Photograph taken in 1891.

(Lest the reader, after perusing this chapter, might question the propriety of its insertion, it is but fair to say, in justice to myself as well as regard for the reader's feelings, that it has very little connection with the rest of this work, and perhaps, therefore, will be found interesting to such persons only as are already concerned, or who may become concerned, in the subject of which it treats.)

- Historical Mementoes -

- OF THE -

“Beaver’s” Copper Remains.

THIS IDEA of making medals of metal of the steamer *Beaver* is entirely original, and it is my belief that nothing of the kind has existed heretofore. We have no record or knowledge of any medals in time past being stamped out of metal having historical connections, which fact of itself tends greatly to enhance the value of these *Beaver* souvenirs.

A relic such as this, whose worth, on account of its historical relations, increases with age, is of little or no value unless its identity is assured; and in order to accomplish this it must be marked and an authentic record also preserved. In the British and other leading museums of the world there are relics from nearly every quarter of the globe, upon some of which has been placed an almost priceless value simply because their identity has been satisfactorily proven. Therefore, I fully realized from the start that in order to gain, or even hope to gain, the confidence of the public in respect to these souvenir medals, it would be necessary to give some proof that they were genuine. But how was this best to be accomplished, was a subject for earnest thought, in order to answer the perfectly justifiable questions: “How do we know that these medals are made of copper of the steamer *Beaver*?” “What guarantee have we got that they are genuine?” After seriously considering this matter, it seemed the only course to

pursue was to produce all the evidence in my power that would tend to prove that these medals were as represented. In the first place, as a protection to myself as well as to the interested public, it was necessary that the manufacture of them should be controlled, and for this purpose patent and copyrights were secured and the designs also registered. In addition to this, it seemed most essential that my name should be stamped on the face of each medal, as persons securing them would very naturally wish to know who was responsible for the statements made thereon. Another commendable feature, and one which no doubt will be met with favor, is the fact that each medal has a private number of its own stamped upon its edge in sunken figures.

For the manufacture of these medals a heavy screw press was constructed, and with this I am enabled to do the stamping myself, or have it done under my own instructions, and can therefore conscientiously warrant these medals as real relics of the steamer *Beaver*. As no process has yet been discovered by which copper can be perfectly cast, the method of turning out these medals is similar to that employed at mints in making coins. First the metal is cast into flat bars, after which it is placed between hardened steel rollers and rolled out. As the metal passes between these rollers it becomes hard and brittle, and requires annealing several times before it is finally rolled down to the desired thickness. These sheets of metal are then placed under a punch, which cuts them up into circular pieces as near the size of the medals as possible. These blank medals, or coins, so to speak, are then placed singly between highly tempered steel dies, which are set under the press, and a pressure of about 100 tons or upwards per square inch of surface is required to force the cold metal into the recesses of the finely engraved steel which transfers the impression and completes the medal. Steel dies of the nature of these are very costly, and no doubt to the great majority of persons their cost would seem most excessive. They are engraved by practical die-sinkers, special skill being required in tempering them, especially for these medals, which is owing to the unusual hardness of the metal, caused by mixing the brass or bronze portions of the machinery with the copper fastenings. This blending not only places a quantity of both metals in these souvenirs, but imparts to the medals themselves a hardness which will preserve the impressions much longer than if made solely of the copper.

The first of these medal relics of the *Beaver* issued measured 1 11-16 inches in diameter and weighed about 1¼ ounces each. While these were being stamped an accident was met with in which the dies were spoiled, and owing to the belief that smaller ones would give equal, if not better satisfaction, it was decided to not make any more this size, as the saving of metal was an important consideration. These large medals contain an illustration of the wrecked steamer *Beaver*, also appropriate wording around the periphery on the one side, while on the other is a telling inscription. These were numbered from 1 to 12 consecutively, then the figures 3, 6 and 9 were left out entirely, after which the numbering continued thus: 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 40, 41, etc., the last one bearing No. 548. As there were only 226 medals in this issue they sold very quickly, first at \$1 each, then at \$1.25, and it seems that some of them have since changed hands at prices ranging from \$1.50 to \$5 each.

The second and next size measured 1 3⁄8 inches in diameter and weighed three-quarters of an ounce each. Besides being relics of the steamer *Beaver*, these were intended as souvenirs commemorative of America's four hundredth anniversary. On the reverse side from the one showing the wrecked steamer is a reproduction of the *Santa Maria*, Columbus' ship of 1492, signifying the first famous sailing vessel to America and the first steamer. In addition to the illustrations, both sides of this medal contains a suitable inscription, and it is scarcely necessary to say that in all probability these will command a high price in the near future; for of all the different styles of World's Fair souvenirs that were issued during the years 1892 and 1893—and I feel sure many will agree with me in this—none can compare with these from an historical point of view, which fact, in the very nature of things, must sooner or later place a high premium on this special design. These, after being minted, are stamped consecutively from No. 1 upwards. The selling price for the present is fixed at 75 cents each.

It will always be found very gratifying to those securing these souvenirs to be able to tell at a glance just how many of them have been stamped before the one which they have gained possession of. A record of the numbers is kept as the medals are stamped, and never are two of the same design issued with corresponding numbers. Perhaps the most important question relating to these relics, and one which is repeatedly asked, is: "How many of these medals are you

going to manufacture?" As this will depend on the demand for the present issue, as well as on the demand for the next anticipated issue of smaller dimensions, it is impossible to state at this writing the exact number. Still it may be pleasing to the interested public to know that the output is limited to 1,050 pounds. When this amount of metal has been worked up, or otherwise disposed of, it is my intention to notify the public of the fact through the press, stating at the same time the exact number of medals in each separate issue.

The total amount of copper and composition metal of the Hudson's Bay Company's steamer *Beaver* which I secured weighed just about 1,085 pounds, and consisted of a vast assortment of copper bolts, which formed her fastenings; several sets of main shaft bearings, which weigh about 45 pounds per pair; various other sets or smaller dimensions, a variety of copper tubing, several brass plungers, a number of valves and numerous small devices belonging to the ship's machinery, besides two large bronze condenser valves, which are exceptionally fine curiosities of old-time marine engines. Of this 1,085 pounds it is very probable that some of the pieces may be disposed of as they are, which of course would reduce the number of medals accordingly. But in the event of the entire lot being used for the medals there will be, as above stated, not more than 1,050 pounds of these relics, as the amount of waste in recasting and manufacturing will be considerable.

As there is a great probability that the demand for these medals will be enormous, and wishing to extend the metal as far as possible, I intend to issue another size, which will only weigh about one-quarter of an ounce each and be, in diameter, somewhat smaller than a twenty-five cent silver coin. In general design these will be somewhat similar to the first issue, but in addition to these being interesting relics, they will be found exceedingly well adapted for brooches, bracelet bangles, watch-guard charms, cuff buttons, and various other useful ornaments of apparel, and owing to this special pains will be exercised in their manufacture. It is quite likely that two styles of this size will be issued. Should this be the case, and no others introduced, which is most probable, the output of these medals will thus include the three different sizes above described, and these will contain four slightly varied designs.

In all likelihood the lovers of curiosities—and they are legion—have never before had such a splendid opportunity of *acquiring so valuable a relic at so small a cost, and that they*

are not slow in perceiving this is shown by the fact that these medals—although their existence is as yet scarcely known to the public—have already found their way into China, Japan, Australia, the United States of America and various parts of Canada. Many thrilling and romantic associations hang round these historic medals, which no doubt will always prove a source of interesting pleasure to their possessors, who, through generations to come, will treasure with a strange fascinating interest these mementoes made of copper of the first steamship to cross the Atlantic to America, the first to round Cape Horn, and the first to ruffle the waters of the great Pacific. Perhaps, also, many will prize them highly owing to the fact that the metal of which they are made has been to that lonely isle in the far Southern Pacific famous the world over as “Robinson Crusoe’s Island.” In addition to these interesting connections, these medals have other special charms, for they contain metal of machinery made by the first firm that ever manufactured practical steam engines, and are therefore inseparably connected with the celebrated name of Watt. Their relation also to the famous Hudson’s Bay Company makes them valuable souvenirs of lasting historical interest. But as this chapter is not intended altogether as an advertisement, but rather as a method of describing as nearly and clearly as possible all particulars relating to the manufacture, etc., of these medals, I shall conclude this article by saying that my earnest hope is that every person who may secure one or more of these mementoes will regard them as true relics of the steamer *Beaver*, and be as sanguine that such is the case as if they had gone to the wreck, secured the copper and made the medals themselves. All that I can say is that these medals are genuine, and that to the best of my ability they have been honestly represented, which statement, it is most gratifying to know, has already been received by many as a truthful assertion. And as an example of this, following is a copy of the first order for these medals which we had the pleasure to receive, and which, coming as it did from the highest institution in the Dominion of Canada, cannot fail to give some idea of the valuable manner in which these historical medals are prized. A long list of orders since received from various quarters, also letters expressive of gratitude from persons who deem themselves fortunate in acquiring so fine a relic, could also be published, but such a move would be entirely too commonplace in this connection.

Although it is scarcely probable that it would pay anyone to go to the expense and risk of counterfeiting these medals, still before purchasing it will be well to see that the author's name (C. W. McCain) is stamped on the face of each one, otherwise you will be perfectly justified in regarding them as false imitations. Therefore beware of any medals not bearing this imprint, but claiming that the metal is of the steamer *Beaver*. The above name, in the case of the two first sizes, appears quite conspicuously in raised letters near the periphery of the medals, but in the case of the small ones it will be found embossed in very fine lettering upon that portion of the medal representing the rocky cliff.

(This copy of an order, heretofore mentioned, from the Library Department of the House of Commons, requires a word of explanation owing to the address. I may state that the address is that of my father, who, by the way, has not only kindly assisted in bringing forward these medals, but also in collecting some important information for this history; and the Librarian, as will be seen, having previously learned that he might secure these souvenirs through him directed the communication thither.)

LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT, }
DOMINION OF CANADA. }

OTTAWA, 31st Dec , 1892.

D. W. MCCAIN, Esq.,
Port Colborne, Ont.

MY DEAR SIR—I have received your address from Mr. J. J. Murphy, of Toronto, and herewith enclose to you a money order for (\$5.00) five dollars, for which you will please send to me five copies or specimens of your medal (*Beaver*) by Canadian express.

When you have your pamphlet on the medal ready for issue please send two (2) copies of it to this Library, with invoice of same in duplicate.

I am, my dear sir, yours sincerely,

L. J. CASALT, pro.

(Shortly after the "Beaver" collapsed in 1892, the city of Vancouver purchased her mast, which has since been erected as a flag staff and memorial at the entrance to Stanley Park. But deeming the city's collection of office curiosities very incomplete without a metal relic of the historic vessel, I presented the Council with one of the medals soon after they were issued, and in reply received this letter of thanks.)

CITY OF VANCOUVER, }
BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA. }

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE,
VANCOUVER, Feb. 18th, 1893.

C. W. MCCAIN, Esq.,
Vancouver, B. C.

DEAR SIR—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your souvenir medal made of copper of the SS. *Beaver*, and have presented same to Council as per your request.

I have been instructed to thank you on their behalf for the handsome donation, and they trust that you will be successful in your business venture.

Yours truly,

THOS. F. MCGUIGAN,

City Clerk.







The Sad Ending of the Author's Last Trip in Search of Old-Time Naval Relics.

THERE IS ALWAYS something strangely impressive about the closing hours of each year, a something which seems to penetrate to the very soul, imbuing man with a seriousness seldom experienced at any other time. To me these hours will ever have a double significance, as the result of my last unfortunate trip to the scene of the wrecked steamer *Beaver*.

The hands of the little table clock on the stand indicated the hour of seven on the evening of December 31st, 1892, as the office door suddenly opened and a laughing voice exclaimed :

“ Hello ! not ready yet ? ”

Looking up, I beheld my old friend E. A. Brown standing in the doorway with his arms filled with parcels. The yellow, webbed feet protruding from one of these bespoke its contents, revealing the fact that the family festive board would be amply provided for on New Year's Day. Little did the poor fellow realize that never again in this life should he look upon the faces of his dear ones. Little did he realize that he was now leaving behind a few holiday gifts as the last token of a father's love, and that before another sun should blot out the old year his spirit would be with its Maker.

Laying his parcels on a table, he stood talking for a few minutes and then left the room, saying, “ I've forgotten the children's candy.”

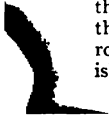
After a lapse of probably fifteen minutes he again reappeared, and by this time everything was in readiness for the start. Our kit consisted of a lantern, two axes, a saw, two crowbars, a piece of rope, a sledge-hammer and a wedge. Throwing these over our shoulders, we started on our fatal errand.

A few minutes' walk down a side avenue brought us to Linton's boat house, at the foot of Carrall street. Here everything was silent as the grave, save the dull, ceaseless ripple of the sea in the chinks of the log-float on which the boat-house is constructed. We found the place entirely deserted by the boatman and his attendants, but as we had engaged a boat for this occasion on our return from the wreck the previous evening, we decided to select one for ourselves from the large number that was lying on the float. Our mutual choice was the *Alice*, a four-oared cedar skiff, sharp at both ends, but with ample seating accommodation for at least three persons. Our reason for selecting this boat in preference to a larger one which we had been in the habit of using on similar occasions was that it was much lighter, and therefore we would be able to make better headway, as we wished to return before midnight, on account of this being Saturday evening.

Launching the skiff, we stowed our luggage carefully below the seats, and then went in search of the necessary complement of oars. This proved a more laborious task than had the finding of a boat, as the apartments in which the oars were kept were all locked, and in consequence of this we were obliged to resort to a large pile of culled oars and paddles at a corner of the boat-house. However, after sorting and re-sorting this pile, we managed to get four oars, which, although slivered and cracked and otherwise imperfect, we concluded would answer our purpose.

Returning to the boat, we tied each of the rowlocks with a cord to the gunwale so as to prevent their loss in case they should happen to jump out of place. This accomplished, we took our positions in the boat, Mr. Brown at stroke, while I manned the forward oars. As we pushed from the dock the musical strains of a brass band floated over the waters, lending apparently new zeal to the oars as they cut the water with quickening stroke, sending phosphoric, glowing eddies whirling in rapid succession along the sides of our little craft.

The night air was clear and cold, yet we plied our oars with a vengeance that soon sent the hot blood coursing through our veins, and that made our frail skiff seem like a thing of life as it bounded out into the darkness. One by one the dim lights of the city faded from our view, until we rounded Brockton Point, when suddenly the entire undulating island of glittering arc-lights vanished from our view.



A description of Vancouver's harbor and adjacent waters at this juncture will best serve—unless already familiar with the place—to give the reader a clearer understanding of the course we took, and of our perilous situation on the occasion of which I write.

Opening off the Gulf of Georgia, five miles north of the Fraser's mouth, is a large, squarely-formed sheet of water known as English Bay. The southern boundary of this bay is formed by a wooded promontory of the mainland projecting out into the gulf a distance of some seven miles, where it suddenly terminates in a rounded bluff called Point Grey. The northern boundary—slightly concave—runs parallel to the southern, which in appearance it closely resembles, except that the land rapidly ascends from the water-line, until, only a few miles back, it terminates in snow-capped peaks 4,700 feet above the sea. The square face of the peninsula, on which stands the city of Vancouver, extends nearly across the bay at right angles to its sides, thus supplying its eastern boundary and forming a bay five miles by seven in extent.

At the southeast corner of this bay the waters creep through a narrow channel to the east a distance of some three miles, forming a beautiful lagoon known as False Creek, while at the northeast corner lies the entrance to the magnificent land-locked harbor of Burrard Inlet. This harbor, or sound, extends twelve miles eastward with an average breadth of about two miles, while eight miles from its mouth, along the north shore, a channel a mile in width runs four leagues to the northward among jutting rocks and steep mountains, which in places plunge almost perpendicularly into ninety-five fathoms of cold, calm sea, remarkable for its transparency and mirror-like surface.

The principal bays of the Inlet are situated on the south shore, as the main channel and currents follow along the north bank, rendering the coast line on that side comparatively straight.

The waters enter Burrard Inlet through a narrow pass scarcely a quarter of a mile in breadth, which gradually increases until Brockton Point is reached, half a league beyond. Here the narrow neck of water suddenly becomes a spacious bay, reaching nearly through the land to the south, and almost unites with the waters of False Creek, thus forming the peninsula on which the city proper is erected. Just inside of

Brockton Point lies Dead Man's Island, while beyond this slender arm of the Inlet, known as Coal Harbor, forces its way west toward English Bay, almost severing the triangular point from the mainland. This small pear-shaped peninsula comprises the famous Stanley Park, covering in extent some nine hundred and fifty acres; also the Brockton Point athletic grounds, situated at its eastern extremity, and which on state occasions are connected with the city by means of a steam ferry.

The waters of Burrard Inlet, including the North Arm, cover an area of about thirty-five square miles, and being tide-water, are raised and lowered twice each day through the narrow channel that opens from English Bay. During the shortest days of the year the tides are exceedingly low about midnight; then again during midsummer, when the days are the longest, the tide reaches its lowest mark about noonday. At these two periods of the year the rise and fall of the tide in this harbor is close to fourteen feet, which causes the water as it nears low mark to rush through the gateway with terrific force for a couple of hours at each long tide. But during the remainder of the twelve months, the variation being considerably less, the current is much reduced.

During the low tides in the midsummer of 1892, the hull of the old *Beaver* rapidly disappeared as relic-seekers from far and near visited the wreck, eager to possess a souvenir of the pioneer steamer. Also, during the month of December, when on many nights James Menzies, Edward Brown and myself rowed to the wreck and succeeded in getting almost everything which then remained worth carrying away, even to the walking-beams, or oscillating levers. So that by the end of the year nothing could be seen of the historic steamer *Beaver* save at very low tide, as the hull had all been cut away except a section of the bottom, on which rested a few chunks of iron and a promiscuous pile of old furnace brick.

Included among these pieces of iron was the centre portion of the main shaft, a piece of forging about seven and a half feet in length by six inches in diameter, with an 18-inch crank at each end. This shaft my companion, Mr. Brown, regarded as one of the finest and most valuable relics in the whole craft, and he desired very much to secure it as an interesting ornament to place on the lawn in front of his fine new residence on Mount Pleasant, a suburb of the city.

Consequently, it was arranged that we should go out on New Year's eve and free this piece from the rest of the wreckage and get it in shape to fasten under a large boat, which we intended to take out on the Monday night following. All pieces of iron that were too heavy to put aboard the boat we would fasten underneath by means of ropes passed around over the top of the gunwale. Then as the tide would raise the boat, the iron below would be floated, after which we could row to the city, carrying in this way, with comparative ease, pieces weighing many hundreds of pounds. We had also decided to totally abandon the wreck after Monday night, as there would then be very little left worth going after, especially at midnight, when the trips were always accompanied by more or less hardship.

Strange to say, we never realized that our lives were in danger, or at least I never did, although we had worked about the wreck scores of times, when at certain stages of the tide the waters would rush past us with awful force, then at other times they would appear almost motionless.

The spot where the *Beaver* was wrecked is at the north-west corner of Stanley Park, just at the point where the waters of English Bay enter Burrard Inlet, and where the channel at very low tide is scarcely more than two hundred yards in width, while at its eastern extremity, opposite Brockton Point, it is nearly a mile across. This water pass is called Lion Gate, or the First Narrows.

If you can picture the effect of thirty-five square miles of water, fourteen feet in thickness, flowing through this channel in six hours, then you will be able to grasp in a slight degree the force of the current—especially opposite the point where the remains of the *Beaver* lay—in which we struggled on the night in question.

As we rounded Brockton Point and entered the Narrows, our boat at each stroke of the oars seemed to fairly rise from the water as it glided along in the strong tide. Despite the fact that the night was dark, the centre of the channel appeared quite light when compared with the inky blackness on either side, which was occasioned by the heavy, dark foliage of the overhanging trees along the park side of the stream casting a lurid reflection over the channel, which completely destroyed the water-line. This being obliterated, we were unable to determine our rate of speed, as objects on the shore

were undiscernible ; had it been otherwise, it is very probable that we would have seen our danger and ran the boat ashore, where, by waiting until about the turn of the tide, we could have continued our voyage with comparative safety.

A fine shell-paved driveway follows on the brow of the bank around Coal Harbor to Brockton Point ; thence west along the Narrows to its mouth ; thence south along the shore of English Bay back to the city. As it skirts the Narrows many little ravines have been filled and small knolls leveled, giving a graceful ascent to this magnificent road, as it gradually rises from the coiling waters, until, at an elevation of two hundred and sixteen feet, directly above the spot where the *Beaver* met her fate, Observation Point is gained. The vertical rocky face of this sheer precipice forms a most befitting monument in the background of the many photographs which have been produced of this faithful old steamer—once the pride of the great Hudson's Bay Company—as she quietly reposed in her last resting place.

As our boat shot down the stream, the gently rising ground on our right made it appear almost as though we were sliding down a bank of water. Suddenly there was an opening in the trees, in the midst of which stood a small frame building. This, although scarcely discernible, we at once recognized as the storehouse at the south end of the submerged city water pipe lines. As we swept past this clearing, which at once gave us our bearings, and revealed the fact that only a few hundred yards of the channel yet remained, a feeling of uneasiness stole over me as I now fully realized that we were in the clutch of a most terrific current.

Never before had we visited the wreck with lighter hearts. "Like the swan that singeth before its death," my companion had on this occasion seemed unusually cheerful and happy. But the dawn of the transformation scene was already visible, and as the curtain gradually lifted, a sense of seriousness rapidly dispelled all merriment. Our conversation, which during most of the trip had been about the World's Columbian Fair and the pleasant times we would spend together among our friends and relatives in the East during the coming summer, was brought to a speedy termination as a rushing mass of encircling foam struck the side of our little craft and whirled it clear around before we were able to again head it down the channel. This was the first time that our *Alice*

had been untrue to the oars, and, although no words were spoken, I believe the sense of our perilous situation became mutually apparent as we plunged on through the maddened eddies.

Just ahead was the Gateway, and on our right, like a giant's keep, the dark, frowning cliff of Observation Point towered far above the object of our quest, while out beyond and away to the westward glittered the spray-decked waters of the Gulf, as an indication that the moon had at last pierced the heavy storm clouds that banked high the eastern horizon. As we neared the fatal point, a gust of chilling sea-breeze swept around the rocky bluff and lingered on our burning cheeks. Turning my head slightly I cast an anxious glance across the port bow in the direction of the wrecked steamer, but it was only for an instant. I grasped the oars with a firmer hand as I noticed a snowy wall of hissing foam—the dreaded tide-rip—suddenly rise from the turbulent deep, as though some unseen hand had, at a single sweep, gathered in all the angry waves, and with these erected a formidable living breastwork.

The boat gave a sudden lurch to starboard, and as I turned round I was startled to see my companion lying on his back against the gunwale, struggling to free himself from his left oar, which had been accidentally caught in the whirling tide, forcing the handle against his breast and thus holding him in an almost helpless condition. Quick as thought I jumped to the opposite side, in order to right the craft, but without avail.

The boat shot broadside under the foaming bank, and probably not more than a minute elapsed from the time it listed until we had sunk completely beneath the tide, barely giving me time to exclaim, "Hang on to the boat!" I shall never, never forget the chilling, indescribable sensation that passed over me as the stinging, breath-stealing water engulfed us on that cold December night.

The brain at such times must indeed be very active. A thousand different things appeared to rush through it at almost the same time; but despite all this confusion, something kept telling me to hold on to the boat, and this I at once determined to do at all hazard.

In an instant the unbroken panorama of childhood scenes was floating across my vision. As a boy I had often listened

with deep interest to my father—a man experienced in boating and sailing—relate stories of how different men had lost their lives in the many lake disasters through attempting to swim ashore, instead of clinging to the floating wreck. The most striking of these which I now recall to mind was in connection with the loss of the schooner *Mary Ann Rankin*, which was wrecked on Sugar Loaf reef, Lake Erie, about a league west of Port Colborne light, on October 31st, 1870.

It was a stormy day, he used to tell us, and the wind fairly screamed in the rigging of the fleet of storm-bound ships that huddled together in the little harbor. Many a mariner's glass scanned cautiously the foaming lake, and many a fervent prayer, no doubt, was borne away by the chilling gusts, as they swept through the little village. But soon intense excitement prevailed; villagers and seamen alike faced the sand-driving storm and hurried westward along the surf-ridden shore. There on the reef in the offing, a prey to the wind and the waves, lay a helpless ship, with here and there about the spray-wrapped hulk the clinging form of a seaman. We couldn't see the poor boys perish out there without an attempt to save them, so though the sea ran wild and high, I called for volunteers to man the lifeboat, said my father, and at once four trusty-looking chaps stepped to the front. These were John Cooke, Walter Evans, John Stanhouse and Alexander McGregor.

How anxiously every movement of the boat was watched as we beat our way through the cold surf toward the fated ship. But it was all to no purpose, and after making the second attempt we gave up in despair, for, do our best, we couldn't force the swamped boat against the broken sea which swept over us. Soon, however, the lifeboat was again seen to leave the shore and plunge wildly through the foaming billows, but this time it was manned by a fresh crew, Alexander McGregor alone excepted. Right into the teeth of the freezing gale they forced the little craft, but the wreck they never reached. And as the southwest storm at length tossed the upturned boat upon the shore, about a mile to leeward, it brought back but one of its crew—he alone had stuck by it and was saved. Of the vessel's crew all except the woman cook, who had been washed overboard before the vessel struck the reef, were rescued, for they bravely clung to their stranded ship until she went to pieces, then they sought refuge on a

portion of the hull, which finally drifted over the rocks into the bay, where, the sea being less boisterous, they were soon reached with a yawl.

Just west of the quaint old village of Port Colborne, upon a little mound of sand, protected from the storms by a cluster of scraggy cedars and spreading shrubs of juniper, stands, or did when the writer used to bat ball round the old stone schoolhouse, a neatly carved slab of marble, erected by grateful people to the memory of E. H. Samuelson, Alexander McGregor and another whose name I've forgotten—three heroic lads who gave their lives for their fellows.

At such times a man who can swim is apt to take chances and to place too much confidence in his ability as a swimmer, and this is probably the greatest reason why so many good swimmers lose their lives by drowning. So although I had learned to swim when a mere child and was always considered a fair swimmer by the boys at the port where I was reared, I now regarded my situation as fatal should I even attempt it. To let go of the boat meant that I could not hope to again catch it, as the eddies were almost sure to take it in one direction while I would be forced in another.

The boat sank very rapidly and seemed to be forced by a down current, and although it turned upside down, which allowed all the luggage to fall out, with the exception of a crowbar, which was afterwards found sticking under the seats, it was some time before it rose to the surface. As we neared the top I could just make out that my friend was standing upright on the bottom of the boat. Like myself, no doubt, the poor fellow thought that we were being carried along in the under-current, and that possibly by standing on the boat he might be able to reach his head above water and thus find relief. Fully realizing that this was a most dangerous position, and that at any time he was apt to be swept away by the rushing waters, I endeavored to catch hold of him, but before I could crawl along the keel to where he stood the boat came to the surface. As it did Mr. Brown dropped down and caught hold of it. There was no time to speak, scarcely to gasp, then we were a second time submerged beneath the roaring torrent. By the transparency and feel of the water I fancied that this time we were being forced up stream by a back current at no great distance below the surface.

* * * * *

In my boyhood days I used to practice diving a great deal, and often had my playmates time me to see how long I could remain under the water without breathing, little dreaming that the time was coming when my life would depend upon it. Perhaps an explanation of how, in my estimation, this is best accomplished might be the means of saving some one's life, although I trust the reader may never have occasion to practically require this advice. Should you fall into the water, draw in all the air your lungs are capable of holding, then close your mouth, and as you sink below the surface be as sparing of your breath as possible, allowing it to escape through the nose by degrees only as necessity compels. Keep the lips tightly compressed so as not to admit any water, and work your throat as though in the act of swallowing. When the lungs are inflated, or even partly so, it is comparatively an easy matter to rise to the surface, and this in most instances may be accomplished by simply pawing with the hands and treading with the feet, then gasp a fresh breath and you are prepared for the next struggle. My opinion is that a person, although unable to swim, might exist some time in the water by carrying out this plan, and much longer than under ordinary circumstances.

It was on this particular point that the celebrated English swimmer, Captain James Webb, placed so much reliance in his bold attempt to pass through the Niagara whirlpool rapids in the summer of 1883. In conversation with a gentleman just before he started, he is claimed to have said: "If I can only manage to come to the surface at intervals of not more than five minutes, I think I shall have no difficulty in getting through." If Captain Webb could remain under the water five minutes without breathing, he must have been an extraordinary man, as the great majority of people, according to my experience, would find three minutes quite sufficient. Still, we are told that such a thing is possible, as some of the pearl-fishers have accomplished it. However, whether the great swimmer overrated his staying qualities, or was dashed to death against sunken rocks, no person can truthfully say, yet the fact remains that some time later his lifeless body was rescued from the river below.

I might also say, before resuming my narrative, that many persons are of the opinion that a boat will sink as soon as it fills with water. But this is a mistake, as a wooden boat will not sink unless it is forced down by an eddy or something of

the like, and even then it will rise to the surface sooner or later. Of course, should the boat contain a cargo, ballast, or machinery of a sinkable nature, it would undoubtedly go to the bottom unless it should happen to turn over and dump its burden. If a small boat containing two persons should capsize, in most cases it would be safest for its occupants to crawl to the opposite ends, as there they would have better control and not be so apt to lose their hold by the boat rolling over. They should also, in most instances, endeavor to keep the boat upside down, as a certain amount of air nearly always remains under a craft when in this position, which serves materially to counteract their own weight when resting on the boat's bottom.

* * * * *

It seemed as though our little skiff would never rise. Still, although my breath was about exhausted and I thought my last hour had come, I resolved to drown clinging to the boat, as holding to this seemed my only possible chance of escape. But, to my intense relief, the boat at last rose to the surface, when to my utter disappointment I discovered that my friend was missing. Sweeping a longing glance in every direction, my sight was suddenly arrested by the struggles of my companion in an eddy a short distance away, only still nearer the centre of the wild flood. There was something so heartrending, so intensely sad about the ghastly pale face as it struggled for life in the midst of that awful current that for many months after it haunted me in my dreams.

He seemed to realize that I was powerless to assist him and to prefer spending his last moments in silent supplication, rather than waste them in shouting for aid; for no doubt he well realized that his moments in this life were rapidly drawing to a close, and that it would be madness to expect human help to reach him in that secluded spot before the spark of life had fled.

No beseeching cry for help escaped his lips, only the simple question: "Have you got the boat?" This I answered in the affirmative, and endeavored to cheer him up as best I could by offering encouraging words, while at the same time I did all in my power to take the upturned boat to him by laying flat down and using my hands as paddles. He then seemed to put forth an almost superhuman effort to reach it, but with little effect, as the effort only appeared to kindle the

anger of the elements in their fiendish purpose. The breeze now blowing against the whirling tide lashed it into a foam, in which, without assistance, no ordinary man, much less one little accustomed to the sea, could long expect to survive, especially when he had on a long pair of heavy rubber boots and unusually heavy clothing.

As the heartless waters forced him back an exclamation of utter hopelessness broke in trembling, choking accents from his lips. My very blood seemed to freeze and reason itself to almost depart, as this last despairing cry, "Oh my! oh my!" pierced the night and awoke the echoes of that dismal place. Then the merciless sea swallowed up my dear friend, to never again be seen in life, nor yet scarcely in death; for a strange mystery lurks about the deep, ever-changing waters of this channel, which suggests the sad thought to ever prey upon the minds of the bereaved friends that, in all likelihood, the remains of the lost and loved one must ever wander in its watery shroud, tossed and restless in the cradle of the deep, until that great day when the sea and the earth shall give up their dead. Seldom, very seldom, is the body of an unfortunate who sinks into the cold embrace of these waters to meet death at ebb tide ever recovered. And within the memory of the oldest white inhabitant on these shores a number of Europeans have lost their lives here, while many a poor Indian has been snatched by the coiling waters from his chiseled canoe and hurried away to the "happy hunting ground."

'Tis hard to see one's friend perishing almost within reach and be powerless to help him; and I think now how truthfully I speak when I say that reason almost forsook me, because several times I was on the very verge of leaving that which I realized as my only safety, if even such it was, and swimming to the assistance of my struggling friend. And once when I noticed how fruitless my attempts to reach him were, I raised partly up on the boat and stretched out my hands to make the plunge, and had my friend at that moment called to me for help I believe that I would no longer have listened to reason, but have gone to his aid, in which case the world, in all probability, would never have known the true story of our fate.

Was it to relieve me from the terrible scene that an eddy at this moment seized the boat and dragged me beneath the surface, restoring to no small degree the sense of my own perilous situation? I was now left alone to battle single-

handed with the cruel waves, which, as I once more rose to the surface, seemed to laughingly congregate and dance with heartless glee about the spot where my companion had succumbed. Several times after this the boat was forced down, but I always managed to retain my hold until it again came to the top.

Although probably not more than a hundred feet off the land and wrecked steamer when the boat first swamped, I had at once been swept out into the bay, where soon the eddies ceased to be. Then, as I lay there astride the upturned boat, gazing longingly at the fast receding shore, my situation, I assure you, was far from pleasant and one not easily pictured.

Little fleecy clouds scudded across the grey distant moon as it looked down in pity upon the desolate scene. Above the roar of the waters the only sounds that at first reached my ear were the mocking echoes of my own frantic cries for help; but presently these were joined by the low pitiful wail of a foxhound on the mountain side. Gradually the sounds weakened until they were finally lost in the murmuring surf. I knew that it would be several hours before I could hope to be driven ashore by the return tide, and as my blood had already become chilled, I fully realized that unless assistance came I must soon perish in the torturing icy waves which ever and anon broke over me.

Just as the last hope was dying in my heart, a surging breaker swept past, and as I struggled to retain my numbing grasp on the boat it was turned over, when, to my great surprise, I discovered an oar still hanging in one of the loose rowlocks. How it was that I did not notice this when the boat was right side up before, and how that forked piece of iron managed to retain its slender hold on the oar until then is a mystery which to me will possibly never be satisfactorily explained. As I thankfully seized the oar and climbed inside the boat it sank until the gunwale was some little distance below the surface, but by standing a trifle past the centre the bow rose above the water and served as a helm. Thus with the water to my waist, and using the welcome oar for a paddle, which also served to keep my blood in circulation, I headed for the nearest land, and if ever a fellow worked to save his life I did.

As the joyful sound of the keel grating on the rocks at length reached my ear I bounded into the water and dragged

the boat after me until I reached the shore. My legs had become deadened with the cold, and as I staggered out on the bank it was with the greatest difficulty that I at first managed to stand. But as long as there is hope there seems to be strength, so, determined on not giving up, I groped my way over rough boulders and driftwood until the home of John Thomas, a rancher on the north shore of English Bay, was finally reached. As I approached the gate the savage bark of a watch-dog aroused the family, and as the door opened a cheerful gleam of warm light pierced the gloomy darkness.

Reeling through the doorway, the most welcome I had ever seen, I fell exhausted into a large arm chair, just as the unspoken word "safe" buzzed in my ear. All through the remainder of that long night I laid in a semi-conscious condition, with cold drops of perspiration creeping over my feverish body, ready to start at the sea-gull's momentary scream, which at intervals rang out above the ceaseless moaning surf; and often as those unearthly yells would sound on the still night I would partly awake only to find myself upon a couch, in a half-sitting posture, staring wildly into the darkness, and not until I had looked for some length into the grate of smouldering embers by my side, and around at the dim walls of the cozy apartment, could I be convinced that I had not heard my friend's beseeching cry.

As the first sun of the New Year shed its gladdening radiance across the jewel-crowned Cascades, flooding with grandeur the opulent valleys of the West, I bade the kind people adieu with a grateful heart, and embarked once more in the *Alice*, which had been brought up to the landing and provided with an additional oar. It was now flood tide, and as I rowed along the shore, telling those I chanced to meet of the sad accident and requesting a search for the body, everything seemed transformed; the flurried bay was now a calm expanse of sparkling sea, while the tempestuous gorge had become a tranquil strait, beautiful beyond compare. Yet a shudder stole over me as I passed through the deceitful, treacherous waters into the harbor.

The chiming church bells pealed forth their pathetic note of welcome just as I delivered to the city and my lost companion's bereaved and crushed family the sad missive which sent with lightning flash across the continent a fatality to head the press casualty column for 1893. Yes, a message to

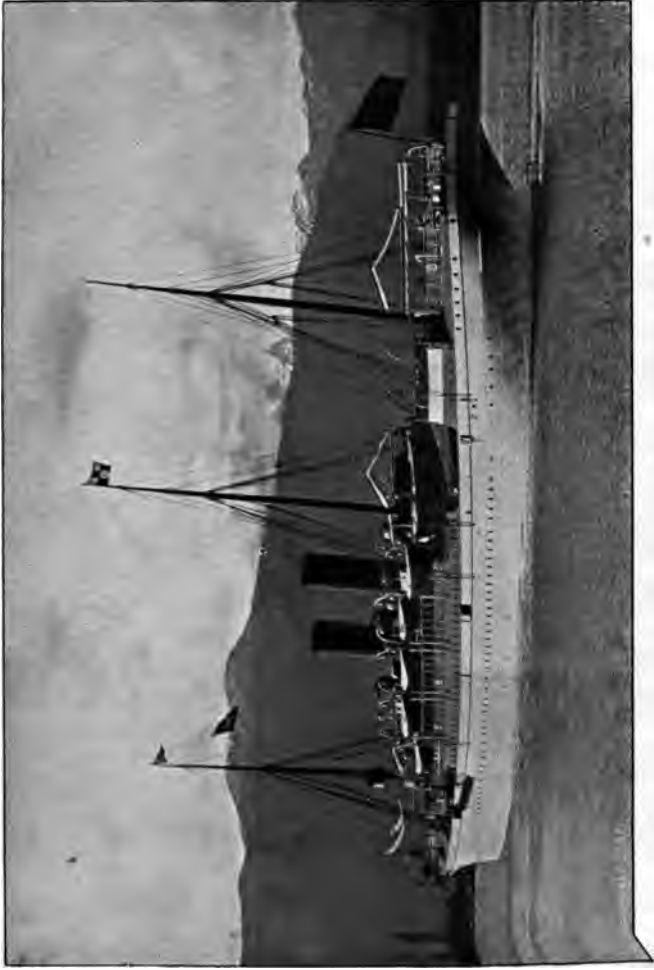
tick into the little way station of Hewitt, Ont., then enter an old farm homestead by the Chippawa, there to hush the merriment of the festive season and cause the eyes of an aged mother to grow heavy beneath the weight of unshed tears.

In the drowning of poor Ed. Brown I lost one of the best friends I ever had, a brother except by kin, and only death itself can erase the memories of that true mutual friendship. We were born and reared only a few miles apart, almost within roar of old Niagara, and since meeting in the West had, quite naturally, become fast friends.

I still keep as a treasure the faithful old oar which so mysteriously appeared to rescue my life on that memorable New Year's eve, and as I write this true narrative it is looking down from the wall as a witness to my experience on that fatal night.







Looking North across Burrard Inlet, showing the SS. "EMPERESS OF JAPAN." Some twenty miles distant are visible the two Snow-Capped Peaks, "Sleeping Lions." The land off the Steamer's Bow is Brockton Point, between which and the Mountains lies the Narrows, or entrance to Vancouver's Harbor.

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Important Developments in Steam Since Its Introduction in 1769.

(Carefully Compiled from Various Authentic Records.)

IT IS NOW universally acknowledged that the history of the practical steam engine dates from James Watt's improvements and inventions in 1769. There are, however, many instances of experiments with steam prior to this date, but for these the world is little wiser.

Perhaps the first event in this connection worthy of note took place on October 14th, 1788, when Messrs. Miller & Taylor exhibited a small double boat, with a paddle-wheel in the interspace, on a lake on Miller's estate in Scotland. The boat, it appears, was driven by a steam engine with 4-inch brass cylinders. This experiment demonstrated the fact that steam as a motive power might be successfully employed in large craft.

In 1803 Mr. Symington built a steam-tug called the *Charlotte Dundas*, which he intended to use as a tow-boat on the Forth and Clyde canal, but the agitation of the water caused by the large paddle-wheels was so injurious to the clay banks that the vessel was tied up and the scheme designated as a failure. There seems to be a difference of opinion regarding this vessel. Some authorities claim that she had a large stern-wheel; still the preponderance of evidence would seem to indicate that she was propelled by side paddle-wheels.

In 1804 Richard Trevethick exhibited a steam carriage on the Mertyr-Tydvil tramway in Wales. The wheels of this locomotive were provided with a cogged rim to work on a corresponding track along the rails, and with this contrivance he managed to haul some ten tons of bar-iron loaded in wagons at the rate of about five miles per hour. Trevethick's locomotive carriage appears to be the first of which there is any record, and although the experiment seems to have been quite successful, there was but little accomplished in steam railroading until 1829.

Robert Fulton, an American citizen, and a man of splendid practical ideas, while on a tour abroad visited the unfortunate *Charlotte Dundas*, it seems, and obtained drawings of her machinery. He shortly afterwards returned home with a 20-horse power engine, made by the English firm of Boulton & Watt, and, with the assistance of Robert Livingstone, constructed a vessel at New York called the *Clermont*.

In 1807 this steamer made a passage up the Hudson river from New York to Albany, which is regarded as the first successful voyage by steamer, and as a result the name of Robert Fulton has been immortalized.

In 1812 Robert Bell, a Scotchman, ran a small steamer called the *Comet* as a pleasure boat between Glasgow and Greenock, on the Clyde. This side-wheel steamer was propelled by a lever engine of 4-horse power, and attained a speed of about six miles an hour. Bell is thus looked upon as the father of steam navigation in Britain.

In 1814 John Walter, proprietor of the London *Times* newspaper, concluded to try steam printing. Two presses, that could be worked by steam, were consequently placed on the premises adjoining the main press-rooms. These presses were capable of turning out some 1,100 impressions per hour, instead of 250 as formerly, and were the invention of Frederick Koenig, a German. The trial was successful, and accordingly, on November 28th, 1814, the public were informed that the *Times* of that date was the first newspaper ever printed by steam-propelled machinery.

In 1820, it seems, a service of steam packets was established for the first time between Holyhead and Dublin.

In 1825 George Stephenson ran his famous "Rocket" locomotive over a line of railway just completed between Liverpool and Manchester. This event marked the beginning of great achievements for the steam engine.

In 1833 a line of railway was constructed in America, between Charleston and Hamburg, South Carolina, when over this road, it seems, the United States mail was for the first time transmitted by steam. At the end of this same year some 380 miles of steam railroad had been constructed in the United States, where some of the earliest experiments to utilize steam instead of animal power on short railroads were made.

On August 29th, 1835, the Hudson's Bay Company's steam packet *Beaver* left London for the Columbia river, on the west coast of America. This vessel, equipped with two lever engines of 35 horse-power each, was under command of Captain David Home, and was accompanied by the bark *Columbia*, which also belonged to the same Company. Proceeding by way of Cape Horn, they put into Juan Fernandez on December 17th of the same year, and then headed for the North Pacific, arriving together safely at their destination on April 4th, 1836. (See Lloyd's Records for 1835-6.)

On July 23rd, 1836, the Champlain & St. Lawrence Railway—the first in Canada—was formally opened by Earl Gosford. The line extended from St. Johns to La Prairie, a distance of some fourteen miles, over which the first train passed on July 24th of the same year.

On April 4th, 1838, the *Sirius* sailed from Cork, and on the 8th of the same month the steamship *Great Western* left Bristol. Both vessels were bound for the American seaport of New York, where they arrived at nearly the same time on April 23rd. The year 1838 is thus a notable one, as from it dates the history proper of the Atlantic steam ferry, of which the side-wheel steamers *Sirius* and *Great Western* are generally regarded as the pioneers, and to the latter apparently is due the honor of being the first to make nearly, if not quite, the entire transatlantic passage under steam.

In 1841-3 the *Rattler* was constructed for the British Admiralty, and was the first ship-of-war equipped with a screw propeller. This ship was constructed under the superintendency of Sir I. K. Brunel, who was at the same time overseeing the construction of the *Great Britain*, the first vessel of serviceable dimensions built of iron, and also one of the first to be fitted with a screw propeller. The screw propeller seems to have been first introduced in 1837, when Captain Ericsson, with a small steam vessel propelled by a screw of his own invention, towed the Admiralty barge *Toronto* from Somerset House to Blackwall on the Thames.

In 1843 Mr. Nasmyth, proprietor of the Bridgewater Foundry, near Manchester, England, built a steam hammer, as the result of an increasing demand for heavy forgings for use in steamships, then fast taking the place of sailing vessels. After testing this new invention, it was found that a contriv-

ance other than the ordinary slide-valve and lever was required, in order to secure complete command over the power of the blow. Mr. Nasmyth, after making several unsuccessful attempts to overcome this difficulty, was about to abandon the hammer scheme when Mr. Robert Wilson, his engineering manager, came to his relief with a beautiful mechanical motion. This invention was attached to the hammer and found to work admirably, as every variety of blow could be given without further difficulty. In developing the great resources of the iron trade, the steam hammer as an invention has doubtless contributed more than any other of modern times.

On May 10th, 1853, the *Genova*, of 350 tons burden, from Liverpool, steamed up the St. Lawrence river and entered the port of Montreal, Canada. This vessel was the property of the Canadian Steam Navigation Company, which was the first company to run a line of ocean steamships into Montreal.

On January 31st, 1858, the *Great Eastern* slid down the ways into the Thames river. This vessel was built for the Eastern Steam Navigation Company, to be used as a passenger and freight steamer between England and Australia, and was constructed with a view to carrying 2,000 passengers, 5,000 tons of merchandise and 15,000 tons of coal for fuel. The ship was planned by Sir I. K. Brunel and built by Mr. Scott Russell, her dimensions being as follows: Length, 680 feet between perpendiculars, or 692 feet over all; breadth, 83 feet, or 118 over paddle-boxes; height of hull, 60 feet, or 70 to top of bulwarks. This massive steamship was provided with side paddle-wheels 56 feet in diameter, while at the end of a shaft 160 feet in length, by 24 inches in thickness, was a screw propeller with a swing of 24 feet. The paddle engines, four in number, had cylinders of 14 feet stroke and 74 inches diameter, while the four screw engines (Boulton & Watt's make) had cylinders of 4 feet stroke and 84 inches in diameter. Four funnels, 100 feet in height, penetrated her decks from the ten boilers below, while the masts, six in number, carried about 7,000 yards of canvas as auxiliary to the steam power. Her directors concluded to send her across the Atlantic on a trial trip, and accordingly, on September 8th, 1859, this great leviathan moved seaward from the Thames. But before proceeding far an explosion of steam-pipes took place in which *seven persons* were killed, and thus ended the first trip. After

remaining in port several months receiving extensive repairs, a second attempt was made. Leaving Southampton on June 17th, 1860, the *Great Eastern* again pointed her nose westward, and, after eleven days' steaming, reached New York in safety on the 28th. The only bright spot in the history of the *Great Eastern* was the laying of the first really serviceable Atlantic cable between Valentia Bay and Newfoundland, which she successfully accomplished on July 27th, 1866.

In 1873 the screw steamer *City of Richmond*, of 4,780 tons register, was constructed; length, 440 feet; breadth, 43 feet, with engines of 700 nominal horse-power. This steamship cut the Atlantic passage down to a little less than eight days, which at that time was considered quite phenomenal. Since then the growth of the Atlantic ferry has been marvelous. Year after year the arrival of some new steamship would be reported as having clipped a few hours off the record of any previous passage, until the press of September 1st, 1894, announced to the world that the big ocean greyhound *Lucania* had arrived in New York from Queenstown, having made the run between the two points, Daunt's Rock and Sandy Hook, in 5 days, 8 hours and 38 minutes, thus breaking the record of any previous voyage.

Perhaps the first attempt to navigate the outside waters of the Atlantic with a vessel propelled by steam was made in 1818 or 1819, when the American ship *Savannah* sailed from New York to Savannah, or possibly New Orleans. Apparently, the vessel was a three-masted full-rigged sailing ship of about 350 tons burden, and was constructed at New York in 1818 to be used as a sailing packet between that city and Havre, France. But through the influence of her commander, it seems, a firm of Southern merchants were induced to purchase the ship and to place an engine on board, together with a pair of small detachable paddle-wheels, which might be put out and used to advantage in case of light or head winds. The vessel then made a cruise south along the American seaboard, during which it is quite evident the engine was used to some extent as a means of propulsion, and owing to this it would seem the *Savannah* has by some been called a steamship—a somewhat comprehensive term for a craft of her type. Soon afterwards the vessel made a passage from Savannah to England and return, during which the paddle-wheels may

possibly have been used on one or more occasions to assist the sails, although there seems to be no authentic records to substantiate this.

That this attempt to utilize steam as an auxiliary motive power on board ocean sailing ships was only an experiment, and that the experiment was a failure, is quite apparent, as it seems the steam apparatus was taken ashore and applied to other purposes after being aboard the vessel but a short time. The *Savannah* then continued to run as a sailing packet between New York and southern American ports until wrecked some three years later. Doubtless the fact that this attempt to employ steam in such a temporary manner was at that time not considered an event of much importance accounts for their not now being in existence, so far as known, any reliable drawings or descriptions of the craft. But some patriotic enthusiasts have recently endeavored to supply this deficiency by having an illustration of a steamship engraved to correspond with their idea of what the *Savannah* was, or at least should have been. And it is to be regretted that anyone who attempts to write for public enlightenment should perform the task so poorly and with so little regard for the truth, as has been exhibited of late in accounts pertaining to this vessel. One of these articles, accompanied by an imaginary steamship, recently published in several newspapers, shows clearly the object for which it was written, namely, to claim for the United States the honor of being the first country to inaugurate a transatlantic steamship line. The *Savannah* did not cross the Atlantic under steam from New York. But that the American people as a nation do not regard the *Savannah's* history as of any special interest, or, quite probably, do not regard her as a steamship at all, especially in connection with the transatlantic passage, and have, therefore, no wish to claim any such honor, is quite obvious, as it seems no record of the event or of the vessel's history has been preserved in the national archives.

Following this experiment, some twelve years later, in 1830-1, the *Royal William*, a three-masted schooner, was built at the city of Quebec, Canada. This vessel, after being equipped some time later with engines and paddle-wheels at the port of Montreal, made a voyage in 1833 across the Atlantic to Europe, where she ever after remained. It would seem that the steam was applied as a means of propulsion for

a portion of the ocean trip, and until a break-down in the machinery, when only a short time at sea, necessitated, in all probability, the entire use of the sails for the remainder of the voyage. After her arrival in Europe she underwent some important changes, which, when completed, sent her afloat as a steamer of war.

In searching through a journal, entitled *The People's Magazine*, which had its branch publishing house in Quebec at the time the *Royal William* left, we find that no reference whatever is made to this vessel in any of its numbers—a full set of which we have from February of that year, 1833. This would seem to indicate that the *Royal William's* steam-gearing was only regarded as auxiliary when she sailed from Quebec for England, as otherwise more importance would have been attached to such an event as the Atlantic being crossed for the first time by a steamship, and the occurrence should undoubtedly, and I think would have been, noted in this journal, as much information of a like nature is to be found in its pages. But as the engines and paddle-wheels of the *Royal William* appear to have been of a somewhat permanent character, and to have served the vessel as a means of propulsion after her arrival in Europe, she is undoubtedly entitled to some degree of recognition in connection with the Atlantic passage.

After an elapse of two more years we find another ship navigating Atlantic waters with, apparently, steam as an auxiliary. This ship was called the *Cape Breton*, and it seems she sailed from Sydney, Cape Breton, and arrived at Plymouth on August 2nd, 1835, according to Lloyd's list of entries for that year.

Just here I wish to say that at the time the first *Beaver* medals were issued the evidence then possessed concerning early ocean voyages of vessels classified as steamships was of such a reliable character as seemingly to justify the claim made thereon, that "the *Beaver* was the first steamer to cross the Atlantic." But previous to getting out the next design, information had been collected relative to the *Royal William*, which, although meagre, was of such a nature that it was deemed best to state only the date on which the *Beaver* crossed—preferring to be on the safe side—and to issue the medals in this way until full authentic data concerning the *Royal William* could be procured.

Shortly afterwards the Canadian authorities and historical

societies took steps in the matter, which finally resulted in the placing of a brass tablet in the corridor leading from the House of Commons reading-room to the Library. This commemorative tablet was formally unveiled on June 28th, 1894, just at the close of the first day's session of the great Intercolonial Conference, which was held at the city of Ottawa at that time. As the large assemblage was about to disperse, His Excellency the Governor-General read the following letter, which he had received from the secretary of the Royal Society :

“OTTAWA, ONT., June 26th, 1894.

“TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL :

“MY LORD—The two houses of the Canadian Parliament have ordered that a brass tablet should be placed in the wall of the corridor leading to the library of Parliament, with a suitable inscription, ‘commemorating the departure of the *Royal William* from the port of Quebec in 1833—the first vessel to cross the ocean by means of steam.’

“Your Excellency is already familiar with the leading circumstances connected with this interesting historical fact. The brass plate ordered by Parliament is now ready to be put in place, and it is felt that no more fitting time could be chosen than at the close of the opening meeting of the colonial conference. On behalf of the Royal Society and associated societies—who were the first to move in doing honor to the builders and navigators of the *Royal William*—I express the hope that your Excellency will be pleased to place the commemorative plate in its permanent position. If it be agreeable to your Excellency, I enclose the list of gentlemen who it is thought desirable should witness the proceedings :

“The delegates to the conference, the speakers of the Senate and Commons, Cabinet ministers, Mr. Gustavus Wicksteed, who saw the *Royal William* launched 63 years ago and took passage in her during the trial trip ; Mr. Horace Wicksteed, who boarded the *Royal William* on her arrival in England and dined with the captain ; representatives of the Royal Society and associated societies. I have the honor to be,

“Your Excellency's most faithful servant,

“ . G. BOURINOT.”

This concluded, the National Anthem was sung, after which the gathering dispersed, the invited guests immediately

repairing to the corridor, where His Excellency Lord Aberdeen, Governor-General of Canada, performed the ceremony. Before unveiling the tablet His Excellency remarked that he hoped the colonial visitors would not begrudge Canadians a little self-gratification to-day. It was a matter of pride to Canadians that the first ocean steamship was built in Canada. The occasion was all the more memorable through the presence with them of Mr. G. Wicksteed, who was present at the launching of the *Royal William* and was on board of her on the trial trip. Mr. Wicksteed was born in the closing years of the last century, and he might safely be called "the man of the century." He hoped Mr. Wicksteed might live until the twentieth century. His brother, Major Wicksteed, was in England at the time the *Royal William* arrived there, and was acquainted with the captain and officers. It was a great pleasure to him to greet these gentlemen and ask them to address the gathering.

Mr. G. Wicksteed then briefly spoke, recalling pleasant reminiscences connected with the launch of the vessel. As he concluded his remarks, three hearty cheers for the Queen brought the meeting to a close.

Concerning the *Royal William's* history, I have to thank Dr. Bourinot, C. M. G., D. C. L., Clerk of the House of Commons, for favoring me with the following extract copied from the report of the Library Committee, which report was presented to the Canadian House of Parliament in June, 1894.

1. "The first steamship to cross the Atlantic was built by a joint stock company at the yard of Campbell & Black, in Quebec, in the year 1830-1.
2. "The designer of the ship and superintendent of its construction was Mr. James Goudie, born in Quebec 1809, and who died 1892.
3. "This ship was launched in the spring of 1831 with more than ordinary ceremony. The governor of the Province, Lord Aylmer, was present with his staff, the military authorities and the band of the 32nd Regiment. The event was further honored by the presence of Lady Aylmer, who, in the customary manner, gave the vessel the name of the *Royal William*, after King William IV., then on the throne.
4. "The ship was towed to Montreal to receive her machinery, and on being fitted for sea her first voyage was to Halifax. Before setting out for England she traded between

Quebec, Halifax and Boston. She was the first British steamer to arrive at the latter port.

5. "In the list of owners appear the names of the three brothers, Joseph, Henry and Samuel Cunard of Halifax.

6. "Her dimensions were: Length, 160 feet; hold, 17 feet 9 inches; breadth outside, 44 feet; breadth between paddle-boxes, 28 feet. She had three masts, schooner-rigged; builder's measurement, 1,370 tons, with accommodation for 60 passengers.

7. "She left Quebec for London August 5th, 1833, called at Pictou, Nova Scotia, to receive coal and overhaul machinery. She re-started from Pictou August 18th with seven passengers, 254 chaldrons of coal and a light cargo. She encountered a terrific gale on the banks of Newfoundland which disabled one of her engines. The passage from Pictou to London occupied 25 days.

8. "Ten days after her arrival in London she was chartered by the Portuguese government to enter the service of Dom Pedro as a troopship.

9. "In 1834 she was sold to the Spanish government, and converted into a war steamer, and under the new name of *Isabel Secunda* was employed against Dom Carlos. A letter from the well-known Alexander Somerville, who, as he tells us, joined the British Legion and became a color-sergeant, appeared in the *Toronto Globe* May 15th, 1876. This letter describes an incident which came under his own observation May 5th, 1836, off St. Sebastian, Bay of Biscay. Mr. Somerville remarks that the Canadian-built ship *Isabel Secunda* (originally the *Royal William*) 'was the first steamer-of-war in the history of nations to deliver a hostile shot.'

10. "After an eventful service for some years, she was sent to Bordeaux for repairs, when her timbers were found to be somewhat decayed. The engines, however, were in serviceable condition, and were transferred to a new vessel, a second *Isabel Secunda*, to form part of the Spanish navy. What was left of the original *Royal William* remained a hulk in the French port."

Thus it seems the *Royal William* crossed the Atlantic nearly two years previous to the *Beaver's* departure from England. Still the question as to whether or not she was classed as a steamship at that time seems to be a point for *argument*. But as stated heretofore, I have no wish to claim

anything more for the *Beaver* than is justly due her, and as this technical point is and perhaps always will remain in dispute, rather than appear prejudiced, I prefer to add to the claim that “the *Beaver* was the first steamer to cross the Atlantic” the words, “to America,” which will perhaps be more satisfactory to all concerned, as the claim will then be beyond question. From the following clippings from a couple of recent newspapers it would seem that Europeans, or at least some of them, maintain that the *Beaver* was the first steamer to cross the Atlantic. But perhaps this is not very reliable authority, as they say 163 days was the time occupied in the passage, when in reality some 219 days elapsed from the time the *Beaver* left England until she arrived at her destination. This, however, includes all stops.

LE PREMIER STEAMER TRANSATLANTIQUE.—Il y a pres de soixante ans que le steamer *Beaver*, construit par la Hudson's Bay Company anglaise, descendait la Tamise pour entreprendre la traversee de l'Ocean. C'etait le premiere navire qui osait hasarder la traversee de l'Ocean pour l'Amerique. La duree du trajet fut de cent toixante-trois jours. Il aborda heureusement a Astoria, dans l'Oregon.

Le navire mesurait 101 pieds de long sur 20 de large ; son tirant d'eau etait de 11½ pieds de profondeur et son tonnage mesurait 109¾. Les chaudieres avaient ete construites a Birmingham. Les machines avaient coute 4,500 livres st. et avaient un poids de 52 tonnes.—*Paris Le Temps*.

THE FIRST TRANSATLANTIC STEAMER.—About sixty years ago the steamer *Beaver*, built by the Hudson's Bay Company, steamed down the Thames on its ocean voyage. It was the first steamer that dared to attempt to cross the ocean to America. The time occupied in the passage was 163 days. It landed safely at Astoria, in Oregon.

She measured 101 feet in length by 20 feet beam ; its draught was 11½ feet, and its tonnage 109¾. The boilers were made in Birmingham. The engines cost £4,500, and weighed fifty-two tons.—*London Tit-Bits*.

Then again we find that even the *Beaver*, as well as the *Royal William*, is overlooked and entirely neglected in connection with the transatlantic passage, as instance the following extract from a very extensive work, published in 1850 by Blackie & Sons, London, England. This work is called “The

Engineer and Machinist's Assistant," and contains much information of interest on subjects akin to its title, besides giving accounts of nearly all the experimental testing in steam navigation in the British navy previous to the year 1850.

(Vol. I, page 20.) "The applicability of steam both for river and sea navigation was now thoroughly established, and steamers rapidly increased in size, power and numbers."

Great Western, A.D. 1838. "The only step which now remained to be accomplished was to cross the Atlantic, which was first effected in 1838 by the *Great Western*."

Now it is not a little singular that this emphatic statement should be found in a work compiled by men apparently well versed in the early history of steam navigation, and published, too, so soon after these events transpired, and consequently at a time when it would have been comparatively easy to ascertain all the true facts associated therewith.

The reason why the *Beaver* might not have been considered in relation to the Atlantic passage is quite obvious, owing to the fact that in reaching America she did not cross to the Atlantic seaboard, but sailed directly around Cape Horn to the North Pacific, during which voyage her engines may not have been used to any great extent.

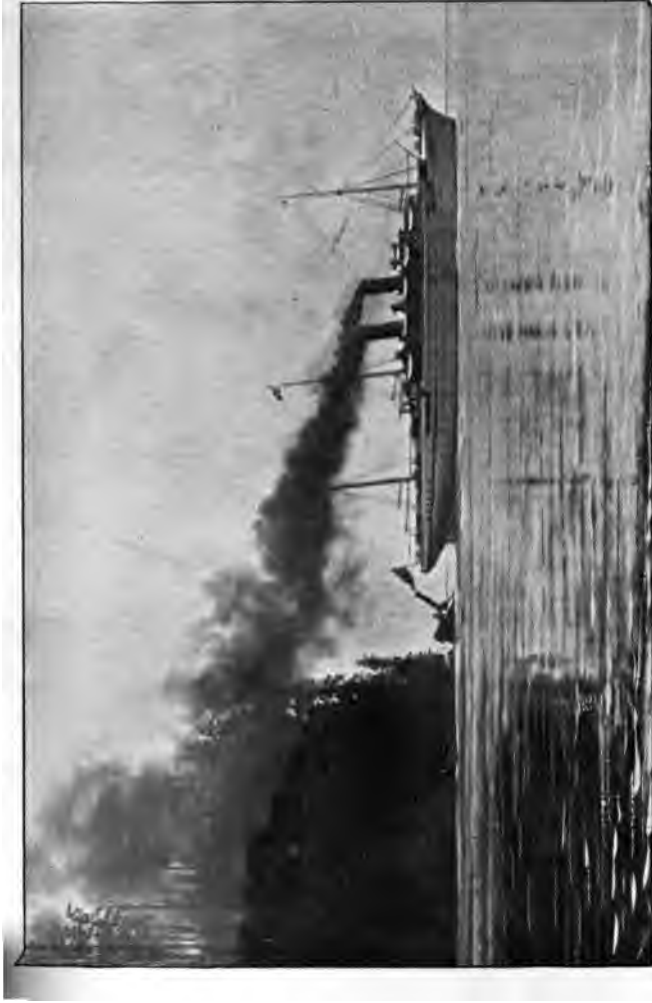
But it seems difficult to understand or assign any positive reason why the *Royal William* was overlooked by this as well as other very good authorities of still earlier date, and the real cause for this can only be conjectured.

It should be remembered that the *Beaver* was designed, constructed and equipped with a view to being propelled exclusively by steam, and that the canvas provided for the ocean voyage was only intended to bear, or help bear, the little steam packet safely over the 14,000 miles of stormy waters which separated her from her remote destination.

In this brief chapter the writer has endeavored to give prominence to the different vessels according to their real merit, and it is to be hoped that credit has been given where credit is justly due, and that nothing has been said calculated to leave a wrong impression regarding any of the subjects herein treated.







View from the North Shore of the Narrows, overlooking to the Southwest English Bay and the Gulf of Georgia at Flood Tide. The SS. "EMPERESS OF CHINA" is leaving port for the Orient, while under Observation Point is visible the Prow of the STEAMER "BEAVER."

Photomonth taken in 1900

From the “Beaver” to the “Empresses.”

Plying Pacific waters since 1891, between British Columbia, Japan and China, are the Royal Mail steamships *Empress of China*, *Empress of India* and *Empress of Japan*. These white ocean-racers are the property of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and are of exactly the same construction, each being of 6,000 tons burden, 485 feet in length, 51 feet in breadth, and capable of steaming 20 miles per hour. Although considerably smaller than some of the Atlantic liners, these floating palaces may properly be termed perfect models of modern marine architecture, and are the ones referred to in the following pathetic poem, in which the steamer *Beaver* is represented as speaking to a passing ship from her helpless position on the rocky ledge:

MORITURA TE SALUTAT.

(From the Vancouver “Daily World.”)

A broken hulk, forlorn and lost am I,
Above me frown the cliffs in ramparts high,
Beneath on rocky ledge
 I stranded lie.

Around, the hungry waves await their prey,
They surge above my head, and day by day
I crumble as they steal
 My life away.

Yet not alone despoiled by wind and wave,
But Man, whom I have served, disdains to save,
And robs me as I sink
 Into my grave.

