



The Canadian Immigration Historical Society  
La Société Historique de l'immigration canadienne  
C.P./P.O. Box 9502, Terminal "T" /Terminus Postale "T", Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 3V2

# C.I.H.S. **BULLETIN** S.H.I.C

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ISSUE NO. 16 (MARCH 1994)

## DATES TO REMEMBER:

Uganda Symp: Apr. 29-30, 1994

Hungarian Symposium Book  
Launch: March 24, 1994

CIHS Directors meet:

Mar. 17, 1994

Apr. 21, 1994

May 19, 1994

## FROM THE EDITOR

Is it just me, or does everyone else feel that time is always passing so quickly. We just finish one Bulletin, when it seems like in no time at all, it is time to prepare another one.

The Board of Directors has been extremely busy putting the final touches on the Ugandan symposium. Looks like it is going to be a truly great event. We really hope many of you will find an excuse to be in Ottawa at that time so you can attend.

The new (or for many of you it will seem like the old) department of Citizenship and Immigration is taking shape.

For those of us in the Department, we are all very busy designing

and implementing the necessary changes, and simply keeping up with the volumes in our workload as well. Even though it may be along way off for some of us, retirement is sure looking attractive....

As always, if you have ideas or articles, please call me at 819-953-0923.

Bye for now!

Carrie Hunter

## BOOK LAUNCH

Everyone is welcome to attend this event which is organized by the CIHS but sponsored in part by several branches within the new department of Citizenship and Immigration.

You may recall the Hungarian Symposium held a number of years ago by Ottawa University and the CIHS. Well, York University has recently published a book which compiles the papers and discussions of that important symposium.

So come out and renew old acquaintances and meet many of the senior managers and staff of

Citizenship and Immigration. We're even hoping the Minister will stop by.

So if you're able to, please join us on March 24th at 4:00 p.m. on the 12th Floor of Phase I (the former Consumer & Corporate Affairs tower) of Place du Portage on Victoria Street in Hull. Parking is available on the street (by meter), also in an outdoor lot next door, as well as underground beneath Phase 2 by entering the garage underpass behind Maison du Citoyen found on Victoria St.

## MORE ABOUT VICTORIA...

-by Fenton Crosman

Many thanks to Jim Cross, our loyal representative on the Pacific Rim, for sending us an interesting article that appeared in a local publication, "The Island Magazine", which recalls the early days in Victoria when the harbour was filled with ships and was surrounded by numerous industries.

In describing the vast changes in the local scene, the writer of the article refers especially to one of

our most interesting landmarks, the old Immigration Building, which was described in a recent issue of the CIHS Bulletin and I am taking the liberty of quoting this additional information to add to that which we already have on file.

"Farther along Dallas Road, where the Kamel Point Apartments are located opposite the Coast Guard Station, once was the site of the imposing Dallas Hotel, which operated from 1891 to 1915. Its opening coincided with the construction of Rithet's Pier and it was intended to serve ship passengers. The hotel even had a lookout tower.

One of the Dallas Road's most distinctive landmarks at Simcoe and Ontario Streets disappeared in 1978. The Immigration Building operated here from the late 1800s until 1958 when it was boarded up and left vacant for 20 years. The structure itself was designed to be imposing, consisting of two-storey red brick walls, sandstone Tuscan columns supporting a classical pediment over the main entrance, bay windows, and turret-like chimneys at each corner. In addition, the grounds consisted of well-tended lawns and flower beds surrounded by masonry and railing wall, the only feature still surviving.

Many people believe the Immigration building was built as a detention centre for Oriental immigrants. In later years it served such a purpose, but originally was intended for more

humanitarian ends as an excerpt from an 1890 diary written by Hugh Campbell, a Scottish immigrant, will attest: *'We...drove to the Immigrant Home...where we have two rooms with empty bedsteads standing in one room, our mats and rugs, etc. comes in very handy. We have a good cooking stove in the kitchen below stairs and plenty of timber on the beach for the carrying up and sawing. We pay nothing and can stay here until the house fill up with Emigrants -it holds 50.'*

Later, however, conditions in the Immigration Building became unpleasant, especially for the thousands of Chinese and Japanese immigrants who were detained there while they waited for the examination which would determine whether they could remain in Canada. During demolition in 1978 Dr. David Lai of the University of Victoria discovered graffiti on the walls where new arrivals were housed. The horrors they faced were described in part by this excerpt: *'I have always yearned to go to the Gold Mountain (B.C.) But instead it is hell, full of hardships. I was detained in a prison and tears rolled down my cheeks. My wife at home si longing for my letter. Who can foretell when I will be able to return home? I cannot sleep because my head is filled with hate. When I think of the foreign barbarians, my anger will rise sky high. They put me in jail and make me suffer this misery. I moan until the early dawn. But who will console me here?'*

## A WOMAN IMMIGRATION OFFICER'S MEMOIR

- by Edna Whinney

Ed. Note: Edna Whinney, our oldest member (an honour she says she shares with every other organization to which she belongs) now lives in Ottawa as a 93-year old great-great grandmother. Edna was one of the first post-WW II Immigration representatives, and the first woman officer, in London. At the age of 87 she wrote the following short reminiscence of her pre- and postwar experience.

In 1922 I arrived in England carrying a letter of introduction to Col. J. Obed Smith, representative in London of the Immigration Branch, Canadian Department of Mines & Resources. He was a small distinguished gentleman with a pointed beard who welcomed me warmly at his office in Lower Regent Street. Invited to monthly tea parties for expatriate Canadians at the Smith family home in Richmond, Surrey I met the Colonel's wife and two daughters. Col. Smith found temporary employment for me with the Canadian Trade Commissioner. His eldest daughter, Doris, a graduate in Household Science, University of London, was resident Bursar of King's College for Women, Campden Hill, Kensington. She arranged accommodation for me in a large Victorian house which had been converted to a student residence, and Doris and I became fast friends and remain so to this day. Little could it be imagined that more than 20 years later I would be linked with immigration whilst

serving with the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service and later still as an officer in the Immigration Department. In the intervening years I married in England, and in 1927 emigrated to Southern Rhodesia on the wave of tobacco growing. Lacking sufficient capital and experience we failed to become established and returned to England in 1929. In 1936 I divorced my husband and rejoined my parents in Ottawa, where I had been born in 1900.

When the Womens' Royal Canadian Naval Service was formed in 1942 I joined as a Probationary Wren. Because of a need for mature recruits who could set up the basic ureaucracy, promotion to Sub. Lieut. followed shortly, and I was posted to Toronto as a Staff Officer, Wren Recruiting. Early 1944, I was delighted with an appointment to the Canadian Naval Mission in London, England. I represented the Navy on the Passage Priority Committee which met in the office of the Director of Immigration (Guy Congdon), Sackville Street, Picadilly. There was one other woman member, Helen Davidson, MBE who, I believe was the only woman officer in the Immigration Service. Representatives of the Navy, Army and Air Force were allotted the limited berths available in merchant ships plying the Atlantic in war time, for the

use of dependents of their servicemen.

When the European war ended, RCN Rehabilitation Officer, for the United Kingdom. The Civil Service Commission set up a London Office to recruit ex-service men and women who had priority. Lists of vacancies were circulated to ships and shore bases and those interested were interviewed and informed of benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In February 1946 I returned to Canada for demobilization as a Lieut. Commander, having been awarded an MBE for my service as Staff Recruiting Officer. I joined the Department of Veterans Affairs as an Occupational Counsellor for women. When saying farewell to my friends at the Immigration office, I mentioned to the Director that I would be interested in working with his department.

In May, 1946, Guy Congdon telephoned me in Ottawa to tell me about an opportunity to join a group of six women who would tour the European Displaced Persons' camps to select domestic workers for placement in Canada. If I would be prepared to remain in London so that Helen Davidson could take charge of this group, this might lead to permanent employment. We sailed for England two weeks later.

Life in London was even more restrictive than in war time. Food, clothing and gasoline continued to be scarce and accommodation was in very short supply. Building restrictions were enforced rigidly; no brick could be laid, nor door painted without a permit. Construction was concentrated on rebuilding bombed out areas and repairing damaged homes.

The Sackville Street office was a drab background for the swarms of war weary Britains who were looking to Canada as the promised land; flaky walls, shabby furniture, stacks of files roughly held together with brassy spikes on limp cardboard. Dingy halls lead to rabbit-warren offices, manned by the recently augmented staff. Blackout curtains remained hanging in the windows.

As a Woman Officer I dealt only with women and children, the department having adopted a high moral tone in dealing with problems left behind by the Canadian armed forces. For example, a First World War widow presented her three year old, explaining "I made a silly of meself with them Canadians". Cases of women going to Canada with children had to be referred to officers in the area to which they would be destined, to check and report on the arrangements for their settlement. In cases of separation or divorce, applicants were required to produce evidence

that there was no legal impediment to the children leaving the country.

I believe it was two or three years before the office was moved to the renovated and more spacious quarters in Welbeck Street, Marylebone, a building which had housed doctors' offices during the war.

Someone in Ottawa was inspired to supplement our food rations with a pre-Christmas shipment of a turkey and a ham for each employee. We staggered home (sometimes literally) from the Yuletide party, carrying these trophies. We paid for them but I believe they were shipped at government expense. Considering that a tin of Canadian salmon was cause for celebration, we were more than welcome guests at the homes of friends and relations.

With continued expansion we moved again in the early fifties, to 61 Green Street, Mayfair. This was the former town house of the Duke of Sutherland. There was a foyer with marble floors and pillars, a ballroom with floor-to-ceiling windows and an ornate plaster ceiling which was decorated lavishly with gold leaf. A former garden at the back was converted to a parking lot.

In 1952, I returned to Canada, became a permanent Civil Servant and lead a women-only group (3) on a training tour which had become mandatory for immigration officers serving abroad, and for the influx of

young university graduates who were designated Foreign Service Officers. The training tour and home leave kept me at home for six months.

There were other important changes. Women had now attained equal status with men and dealt with applicants of both sexes. We all received living and rent allowances and paid Canadian income taxes, and were granted "diplomatic privileges" such as duty free liquor and cigarettes. Newly appointed Foreign Service Officers joined the London staff. The normal tour of duty abroad was two or three years, but eventually I remained in London 15 years, probably because I was known at headquarters and because I was approaching retirement.

We found ourselves taking on a public relations program. A flood of material from Ottawa kept us aware of current employment needs in Canada. Touring southern England in my Morris Minor was pleasant because there were few cars on the roads, and the country was returning to normal. Starting from the office, in the morning having picked up films, forms and pamphlets, a drive of anywhere from 100 to 250 miles lead to checking in at a hotel and at a local travel agency whose manager would have advertised the film show and lecture for 7:30 p.m. The locale could be anything from a school room, church hall or cinema.

It was difficult to find time to because hotel meal hours were rigid -e.g. dinner 7 to 9 p.m. It was necessary to be at the film show locale at least half an hour prior to opening and to remain after the meeting to talk to the participants. At 9 a.m. the next day we were expected to start interviewing prospective immigrants in the travel agent's office. Often we conducted interviews through to early afternoon and drove back to London the same day. I learned to carry a paper bag lunch and a thermos. Driving along a "dual carriageway" I could turn in at an attractive "lay-by" for a snack and to enjoy the scenery.

We were expected to undertake speaking engagements at the request of service organizations such as women's clubs, the National Council of Women, etc.

Immigration Officers were eligible to compete for transfer to Foreign Service status, but I failed the brief "Intelligence Test" for lack - I assumed, of academic qualifications, and my age. I remembered the wartime syndrome - "there'll be no promotion this side of the ocean".

The workload in the London office was eased by a hardworking "locally-engaged" staff, some of whom had spent their entire working lives in the service of Canada. They helped also the constantly rotating Canadian to adapt to English ways.

Living conditions in London improved and life in England provided many pleasures. Nearness to the continent gave access to other countries and driving a car was blissful compared to present crowded thoroughfares.

Canadian staff were invited to Royal Garden Parties and, having been awarded an MBE whilst in London during the war, I had the honour of receiving my medal from the hands of His Majesty, George VI at an investiture. (An Ottawa newspaper reported, wrongly, that I was the first woman to be decorated by the King!) The Palace had been stripped of precious pictures and ornaments, leaving conspicuous blank spaces. The Palace chapel had been bombed and the garden showed signs of neglect. At a garden party a few years later it was obvious that elegance had been restored and, on the site of the former Chapel, the Queen's Art Gallery had been built and was open to the public.

Late in the 1950's it was great news to hear that Canadian Government Departments which were scattered about London's west end, would be housed together in the former U.S. Embassy in Grosvenor Square - an edifice erected specifically as an office building. Included in the building were reception

rooms, a small cinema for the National Film Board, etc.

In 1962 I returned to Ottawa, working at Headquarters until retirement in 1964.  
(E.W., November 2, 1987)

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### MONEY, MONEY AND MONEY!

-by our Treasurer, Al Troy

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I am pleased to thank all of those who have sent in their outstanding dues. Your speedy action enables us to continue our work and maintaining you on our distribution.

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### LETTERS

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Dear CIHS;

I am enclosing an article, entitled "From Boom to Exclusion, Asian Immigration to British Columbia at the Turn of the Century" which appeared in the York University publication "Avancer".

The subject matter itself will probably interest many of our members particularly those who have served in India, Hong Kong and China and it is primarily for this reason that I am sending it.

The fact that I happen to be a very close relative of the author, of whom I am very proud, is a secondary matter, and should not be considered. He wrote the paper in connection with his third year studies at York, and in the continuing vein of "chip off the old block" he is pursuing research for a major paper this year on the Immigration Act 1976. For those who were in any way a part of that Act, you may empathize with me in how ancient I feel to have my son now preparing a treatise on a subject which is still recent in memory. I hope to be able to share that piece with the society as well. Best regards to all,  
Charles A. Godfrey, Hong Kong.

(Ed. Note: We are delighted to reprint Steven Godfrey's article over the next two issues, and sincerely thank Charles for thinking about us and forwarding us this interesting work. We also look forward to hearing more about his son's work.)

Dear C.I.H.S.;

Any former immigration personnel who worked at Pier 21 circa early 1950s, who might be interested in providing information to the Immigration Department is asked to contact me, Rick Morrison at 819-953-1781. Thanks.

Dear CIHS;

You and your colleagues are doing a terrific job producing the

Bulletin which is interesting and informative and keeps members in touch. Recently Art Arnold and I organized a luncheon in Toronto, attended by thirty-one retirees and wives. We had a great little reunion and we recommend it to others as it is very worthwhile.

I was interested to read Roger St. Vincent's book on the Ugandan affair. Roger deserves credit for his very detailed and factual account and for the great job he did on the movement. I was particularly interested in his assignment to Toronto as District Administrator and the fact that IMM HQ was unable to locate a "better qualified person for the job" -because Roger replaced me in that slot. I had been acting D/A for a year during the late Dunc Lalonde's absence on sick leave. So I had the privilege of working with Roger for those 8 months. I think he was glad to get out of there as that was a rough time in Toronto. Actually there were probably 5 or 6 qualified people in Ontario Region at the time...but that is another story. Keep up the good work! Terence Delaney

(ED NOTE: We appreciate the feedback and congratulate you on taking the initiative to arrange a luncheon...we hope your story will encourage others to do the same thing in their area.)

DEAR CIHS;

Any former Immigration or Foreign Service Officer who worked at an European post during the 1950s and who is

interested in helping the Department of Citizenship and Immigration and the Department of Justice in investigating possible war criminals please contact Joseph Rikhov at 819-997-9862. He is particularly interested in hearing from persons who can recall procedures in place at the time, for interviewing any immigration candidates.

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### SOME PERSONAL THOUGHTS ON REFUGEES!

-by Al Troy

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A piece on the editorial page of the Ottawa Citizen, November 23, 1993 started off with this little gem "Imagine yourself as a refugee, landing in Canada in flight from some horror, fearing for your life and your children. Now try and understand the arbitrary...etc,"

This fits in very nicely with every do-gooder and bleeding heart's notion that every person claiming to be refugee is actually in deadly fear of losing his life and that Canada is the only place in the world that is duty bound to offer sanctuary. I would like to tell a story that will point out that not everyone claiming refugee status is deserving of that consideration.

In the early 1980's I was Immigration Counsellor at one of our Western European posts which had excellent air connections with all parts of the world and especially with Eastern European countries. This naturally made

this a popular destination for Eastern European nationals. The host country also had a comparatively relaxed policy regarding refugee claimants. We had people coming straight from the airport to our office seeking to make an application for refugee status in Canada. After a brief chat they would be informed we did not accept applications abroad and that the individual should contact the national authorities if they wished to pursue their claim. We even furnished them with a copy of a street map with the route marked and the name of the person with whom they should speak. You can be assured I was not usually considered to be one of their favourite people.

I had a couple from Poland ("in" country at the time) come to see me. They had driven to Western Europe in their own car and were in possession of valid Polish exit visas, for the purpose of a holiday. Their tale was that times were had in Poland and money tight so they wished they could make a new start in Canada. I explained they could not meet our requirements as independent applicants and immediately they requested consideration as refugees. Their only reason for being in danger of arrest or harassment was their claim they had delivered underground newspapers for the Solidarity Movement and would have been in trouble if they had been caught. Their request was turned down but they told they could leave their local address in case there was a change in our Regulations, which they

were also advised was highly unlikely.

About a month or six weeks later I got a telex from HQ asking that I contact this couple and have them submit a formal application, as that phantom character "Mr. Representations" had contacted HQ and jump-started the process. I tried to contact the couple, but was advised by the landlady that the couple had gone back to Poland to sell their car but she would have them contact me as soon as they returned. This certainly didn't seem to me to be the actions of persons who were in fear of their life or freedom and I telexed Ottawa this new information, along with my negative comments...No acknowledgement was received.

Approximately three weeks later, our so-called refugees turned up and I proceeded to interview them in depth and discovered a friend had given them the address of the Canadian-Polish Association in Canada, who were the ones now making representations on their behalf. After a long interview I could establish no reason why they could be considered under the U.N. definition of a refugee and therefore refused their application. I advised I would be reporting back to my HQ and would be calling them in again, when I had a reply.

In about ten days I received another telex stating the case had been reviewed and that I was to commence processing. I phoned the local address and was told our friends had again returned to Poland to get rid of their apartment and sell their furniture. This information was telexed to Ottawa along with my recommendation that this couple should be considered only as "economic refugees". It was amazing how quickly the word had spread that welfare in Canada paid three to four times as much as full employment did in Poland.

I had a phone call from my couple a few days later and asked them to come in for a further interview. They did so and admitted quite frankly why they had gone back to Poland the second time but still insisted they were in danger of arrest and punishment. I told them I was waiting for a final decision from my HQ and would be in touch as soon as possible. I also suggested they remain where they were and they agreed to do so. Another telex to HQ bringing them up to date and repeating my view these were not bone-fide refugees was sent. By this time however, I was becoming quite friendly with the couple, and was beginning to think of them as very nice people caught in unfortunate circumstances. A week later a telex was received that basically said "shut up and visa", and I had been around long enough to know

when to back off and stop rocking the boat, so we immediately started processing and issued the necessary visas in due course. Our couple came to the office the day before they were about to leave to shake hands with all the staff and thank everyone for being so kind and helpful. The husband presented us with a sort of Polish fruit cake specially made by his wife. We wished them the best of luck and that was the end of the tale, except of course advising Ottawa the visa number and travel arrangements.

A final word was received several months later when we got a Xmas card postmarked Ottawa advising how much they were enjoying life in Canada and again thanking us for our kindness and help. I must say it made us all feel kind of good inside.

My thinking behind this article was, to express my understanding of the Department's position, which regularly gets hammered by the media for being a) too hard and bureaucratic and entirely without pity for the poor unfortunate refugee claimants from around the world or b) being too soft and allowing unqualified, unskilled, unhealthy and unreliable security risks to enter Canada at a time of great economic crises and adding to our zooming welfare costs and unemployment figures. Sometimes I have noted both views expressed in the same paper

on the same day. Now you can't have it both ways, can you? Having spent almost 30 years of my service abroad, I must also make a point for those of us who were strictly bound by the Immigration Act and Regulations with little or no authority to use common sense and forced to "go by the book". We were caught in a trap and on many occasions were left dangling in the wind by our political masters and had to take the rap for many decisions we did not agree with, but nonetheless forced to implement. That was all part of the job but I must say it hurt to see our overseas officers portrayed as unfeeling, stupid and overpaid louts when we were only trying to do our job in the best way possible, given the constraints we were operating under.

### "BOOKS NOTED FOR YOU" -by George Bonavia

(Ed Note: Reprinted with permission from George Bonavia, who distributes a monthly newsletter to ethnic media, libraries and organizations interested in ethnocultural affairs.)

**BEYOND BORDERS: REFUGEES, MIGRANTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA** by Elizabeth G. Ferris - World Council Of Churches, P.O. Box 2100, 150 route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland, \$25.00 p.b.

Millions of people on all continents have fled their homes. The social, economic and political

factors behind these mass movements - war and persecution, drought and hunger, joblessness and hopelessness, environmental devastation - seem certain to continue in the years ahead, but pressure is growing in many countries to close doors to those fleeing. In this thoroughly researched volume, the author analyzes current movements of people in their global and regional contexts and suggests how the international system might respond better to the needs of migrants and refugees. She concludes with a vision and plan of action for churches and non-governmental organizations.

Elizabeth Ferris is a research director of the Life & Peace Institute, Uppsala, Sweden. From 1985 to 1991 she was responsible for research and analysis of refugee issues and for ecumenical Latin America refugee programmes in the refugee service of the World Council of Churches.

**CANADA 125 - CONSTITUTIONS: Evolution of a democracy** by J. Fernand Tanguay -CCG Publishing, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0S9, 1992, \$85.00 plus shipping, handling and GST, hardcover.

This book was published to commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the Canadian federation and provides the reader with the evolution of Canadian democracy from 1763 to the present. From its status as a colony to that of a fully independent country and a world

power, member of the G7 nations, Canada, despite its relatively small population (1% of the world population), is the second largest sovereign territory in the world.

The book contains 32 colour illustrations representing memories for Canadians of all walks of life from all provinces and territories as well as the constitutional documents starting with the Royal proclamation (1763), the Quebec Act (1774), the Constitutional Acts (1791 and 1840), Canada Act 1982, and the Constitution Act (1982).

**CATHOLICS AT THE 'GATHERING PLACE': Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto 1841** edited by Mark G. McCowman and Brian P. Clarke -Dundurn Press, Toronto, Ontario, 1993, 352 pages, \$18.99 paperback.

These seventeen original, innovative studies reinterpret the social and institutional development of one of Canada's largest Catholic dioceses. Beginning with the exploration of Irish Catholic settlement in the 1820s and concluding with the ever-growing ethnic mosaic of the present day, this volume examines the evolution of lay confraternities, clerical formation and discipline, religious education, immigrant adjustment, the life and contribution of women's religious orders, the Catholic response to conscription and fascism during war and the Catholic struggle for social justice in the context of

Toronto's rapid industrialization and urbanization. The book is published by the Canadian Catholic Historical Association.

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## HOLD YOUR FIRE OFFICER!

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The following is taken from a letter written by Malcolm Reid, Dominion Immigration Inspector for B.C., Immigration Branch, Department of the Interior, dated March 14, 1916 to his Inspector-in-Charge located at Pacific Highway..

"Dear Sir, With Reference to our conversation a few days ago, will you please inform the members of our staff that the firing of a gun at the Pacific Highway as a signal to anyone passing over the Boundary Road to stop, must immediately cease.

Whilst this course is taken by the American Immigration and Canadian Customs Officers at the Highway, as far as this Service is concerned, will not be tolerated. You can well understand that the firing of a gun might precipitate trouble for our own officers, as should the party signalled to be seeking to surreptitiously enter Canada, might take the stand that he had been fired on and return the fire under the plea of self-defense, so I think you will appreciate both the danger and

inadvisability, especially in time of war, of having it said that our Officers at the Border signal with guns.

If our Officers are busily engaged in examining occupants of automobiles and should notice anyone proceeding through the bush, surely it would be more effective to take the number of the car and run after the offender."

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## "FROM BOOM TO EXCLUSION, Asian Immigration to B.C. at the Turn of the Century"

-by Steven Godfrey

(Ed Note: This is part I of an article which appeared in Vol. 1, Issue 1 of "Avancer", the Undergraduate Journal of the Study of Canada, a publication of the Canadian Studies Students Association in conjunction with Vanier College, York University, Toronto. Be sure to catch part II in the next Bulletin!) Our apologies, due to limitations of space we have not reprinted the endnotes in their entirety, but we will gladly forward interested persons a copy of the complete endnotes upon request.)

"Canada's population has traditionally been composed of a large percentage of immigrants. Today, immigrants represent 16 per cent of Canada's population, and more than 14 per cent of those immigrants came to Canada from the Asian continent<sup>1</sup>. between 1901 and 1931, as a result of unparalleled levels of per capita immigration, Canada's population

nearly doubled from 5.3 to 10.3 million in a scant thirty years. Of the total population increase during that thirty year period over 92 per cent were immigrants<sup>2</sup>. Although most of the immigrants came from the United Kingdom and France many Asians also immigrated to Canada, most of whom settled in British Columbia. The population of Canada's westernmost province grew at an astounding rate during the immigration boom while the levels of racism and xenophobia grew equally as fast. The arrival and presence of Chinese, Japanese and East Indian immigrants in British Columbia not only caused a great deal of unrest and turmoil in B.C. but also led to the creation of highly racist policies by the federal government, eventually resulting in the ambiguous exclusion then implicit prohibition of these groups from British Columbia.

The first Chinese to come to Canada in large numbers arrived between 1881 and 1884 to work on the completion of the Canadian Pacific railway. They were exploited, underpaid, and often placed in unsafe and dangerous situations. At least 600 Chinese labourers died building the railroad in B.C. and it is estimated that "for every foot of railroad through the Fraser Canyon, a Chinese worker died"<sup>3</sup>. Nearly all of the more than 15,000 railway workers were adult males who had left

their wives and children behind while they saved what they could, in the hopes of bringing their meagre fortunes back to their families.

Upon completion of the Railway most Chinese drifted to the west coast or to the United States to find work. Those who stayed in the interior and who were fortunate enough opened restaurants and laundries. On the coast some continued their work as labourers, finding employment in mines (where unions were not as yet able to exclude them), logging camps and fisheries. However, the majority entered domestic service, such as laundering, restaurant-keeping and shop-keeping in Vancouver and Victoria. The wages they were able to earn were appallingly low. Most Chinese were forced to live in shared accommodation in single story primitive boarding houses which became a common sight in Vancouver's Chinatown.<sup>4</sup>

The Chinatowns of Vancouver and Victoria were created as a result of the other residents, namely the whites, who were reluctant to associate with the Chinese in any form except as employees, and even then only because the Chinese were employable at ridiculously low wages for long hours, often under poor conditions. The residents of B.C. felt no remorse in exploiting the Chinese labourers for they viewed them as strange and uncivilized from the outset: their appearance, dress, customs, manners, food, habits, social

system, and language were all completely different and foreign to westerners. 'Above all they were the most numerous people on earth who could swamp any country, especially a relatively empty one like Canada.'<sup>5</sup>

The whites of B.C. saw in 'John Chinaman' a filthy and disease-ridden victim of the prevalence of gambling and opium<sup>6</sup> in the Chinatowns viewed as places of mystery and menace to the uninformed Occidentals, places of refuge and mutual support to the Chinese<sup>7</sup>. To improve the lives of some of these vagabonds within their own society the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA) was organized in 1884, doing its best to care for the innocent victims of the extortionists who sprang up from within the Chinese community. The need for the CBA and the existence of such conditions in the Chinatowns only reinforced the white attitudes of hate and malicious intent towards the Chinese. Author Anthony Chan stressed the importance of the CBA *'The CBA was essential for the survival of the Chinese people in Canada. Without it destitute Chinese labourers had nowhere to turn for help; the sick would be left to die, corpses unattended to, lawlessness would have been the norm and racists would be unopposed. Further immigration would have remained unorganized and subject to even greater abuse....By taking over the functions of the consul-general, the CBA became a de facto Chinese government in Canada.'*<sup>8</sup>

Especially with the constant chaos of the Chinese community to remedy its internal chaos, the demeanour of the majority of the B.C. population leaned frequently towards some form of restriction on Chinese immigration. Margaret Ormsby, one of the foremost authorities on British Columbia's history, outlined the situation after the completion of the railroad and the ensuing strife: *'When the \$50 head tax, imposed in 1885, did little to check immigration from Hong Kong, the whole province began to throb with rumours concerning the Chinese peril, and the pressure for limitations of numbers and for restriction of employment became insistent.'*<sup>9</sup>

The head taxes were increased to \$100 in 1900 and reached their peak of \$500 in 1903. With the exception of the few Chinese who had managed enough savings to bring over their wives and children, the head tax imposed by the 1903 Chinese Immigration Act effectively halted Chinese immigration as the typical labourer earned only \$25 a month<sup>10</sup>.

Following the 1903 Act and the prospect of witnessing the gradual demise of the Chinese population, the vigilance of the whites, with regard to the Chinese in British Columbia, seemed to relax. However, this was only because there was a new group of immigrants "threatening" the white inhabitants. The immigrants East Indians (the East Indian were nearly 100% Sikh and the two terms will be henceforth used interchangeably) increased

dramatically after 1905. This was due primarily to the fact that many steamship companies aggressively pursued the prospective immigrants in their native provinces in India. The companies distributed propaganda which exaggerated the employment possibilities in Canada and painted a very seductive picture of Canadian life. These were the findings of a 1907 Royal Commission headed by then Deputy Minister of Labaaour William Lyon Mackenzie King.

Perhaps more important as a stimulus for East INdian immigration was the inaugeration of direct steamship service from Hong Kong to Vancouver by the CPR in 1891. It was not difficult for the East Indians to reach Hong Kong and they were able to use it as transit point because they, like residents of Hong Kong, were British subjects. The campaign was also motivated by a few wealthy East Indian residents of British Columbia who wished to secure cheap East Indian labour for themselves. "However, given the trans-Pacific steamer service, and the fact that Australaia had closed its doors, Sikh migrants were bound to find North America on theri own."

However, it was not until 1 April 1904 that a significant number of East Indians took advantage of the CPR service and arrived in

Vancouver. Between 1904 and 1908, more than 5,000 Indian men, aged primarily between 20 and 29, landed in British Columbia. Even though this number was relatively small in a province with a population approaching 400,000, this sudden arrival of a new group of people brought Sikh immigration into the public eye. On some occasions whole boatloads of Sikhs would arrive in Vancouver, such was the case in the fall of 1906 when 270 arrived on a single ship. This prompted the Vancouver and Victoria Trades and Labour Councils, as well as the city governments, to send formal resolutions to the federal government denouncing the allowance of Sikh immigratons.

The situation grew worse as the resource sector of the B.C. economy shut down in the winter of 1906, forcing the labourers, the majority of whom were immigrants including Sikhs, to find work in the cities. Furthermore, Sikhs contineud to arrive by the boatload, hundreds at a time, creating fear and panic among the whwites. The fear was fostered by the wretched appearance of the Sikhs who disembarked from the boats. Their dirty and dishevelled appearance could only be expected after the long and exhausting journey in the cramped quarters of the vessels. The whites judged tham by this first image, as is evident in the following account:

"They were a forlorn looking lot, sad-eyed and silent...They wore only cotton clothing, the rain dripping from their soaked turbans and falling on the pathetic bundles beside them which contained all they possessed....Most people who saw them were quite convinced that they would sicken and die very quickly in a climate so different from the heat of the Punjab."

The government passed legislation in 1908 requiring that all Sikh immigrants have at least \$200 in their possession upon arrival in Canada; the comparable sum for European immigrants was only \$25. The federal govermennt also placed a continuous barrier of immigration agents at all points of entry along the Canada-U.S. border to ensure the new requirements were adhered to. The 1908 Order-in-Council also included the "continuous journey" provision which stated that any immigrant arriving at a Canadian port of entry must have come on a continuous journey from their country of origin. As there were no direct links between India and Canada this effectively banned Sikh immigraton to Canada.

Nevertheless, the continuous journey regulation was not to go untested. On 23 May 1914 the Komagatu Maru, a Japanese-owned steamship chartered by Gurdit Singh, arrived in Vancouver with 376 East Indians

on board. Singh had chartered the ship with explicit intent of testing the Canadian government's regulations or, at the very least, to embarrass the British and Canadian authorities. The Vancouver area had heard of the ship's impending arrival and, supported by local press, had begun a barrage of opposition to send the passengers back to their own land. The Komagatu Maru anchored in the harbour was watched around the clock by patrol boats so that no passengers could secretly go ashore. Regardless of the local opposition, the passengers were British subjects and were entitled to enter Canada if the law allowed them to do so; legality was the only principle involved.

Thus it was the responsibility of the Supreme Court to interpret the Orders-in-Council and assess their validity. As some passengers on the Komagatu Maru had previously entered Canada before the above mentioned legislation took effect, they were permitted to disembark. A further 90 passengers were declared medically unfit to enter Canada. The affair dragged on for months when finally, on July 21 the cruiser H.M.C.S. Rainbow arrived as a show of military strength. As an incentive the Canadian government also gave the Komagatu Maru enough food and provisions for the return journey. Two days later the ship set sail for the Far East. In spite of the many sacrifices already endured, the Canadian government flatly refused to financially reimburse the passengers even though it was

a pretext of the ship's departure. According to Canadian officials, the passengers of the Komagatu Maru "had no equitable or other grounds for asking repayment by the Dominion Government, as most of them had been actuated by dishonest and seditious motives."

The Komagatu Maru affair ingratiated the government to the residents of Vancouver who cheered the ship's departure. In the meantime it enraged the Sikh community, who were becoming increasingly militant, and gave impetus to the Hopkinson Affair which resulted in the death of seven members of the Sikh community and an immigration official. Already viewed as a dissolute group of people by the majority of the B.C. population, the Sikh community was further degraded by the events of 1914. "For years afterward they were widely regarded in the receiving society as little better than a collection of thugs."

Another group of immigrants also incurring the wrath of the white population of British Columbia; the Japanese. The first major wave of Japanese immigration to Canada occurred between 1896 and 1900, when over 12,000 arrived in British Columbia. Although most of these either moved on the United States or returned to Japan, a further 13,000 came to British Columbia to settle in the first decade of the twentieth century.

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**THIS CONCLUDES THE SIXTEENTH ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN. WE CONTINUE TO LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU WITH YOUR COMMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.**

