



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

I.S.S.N. 0843-8242

ISSUE NO. 17 (JUNE 1994)

## **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

CIHS Directors meet:  
Sept. 15, 1994

Annual General Meeting:  
October 15, 1994

## **FROM THE EDITOR**

Summer is finally here and we can relax and enjoy the fine weather! It's been a busy year for the CIHS and we're proud of a number of things that have been accomplished, including: i) the design and printing of our very own brochure (kudos go out to Darlene Bergeron, the graphic artist who volunteered her time and talent for this project); ii) the Ugandan Symposium ( by all accounts a huge success); iii) the book launch of the publication resulting from our previous Hungarian Symposium and iv) assisting the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in the planning and implementation of a number of projects to recognize the 125th anniversary of the first Immigration Act.

On a sadder note, it is with deep sorrow we inform you of the passing away of H.O. (Viggi) Ring, one of our original

members and certainly one of our strongest supporters. Viggi will be remembered fondly by her friends and colleagues.

As well, I regret to tell you that Joyce has received notice about her next posting and will soon be leaving us. Although definitely a hard act to follow, we hope there might be those among you who might come forward to replace her as President, or to take up some other duty on the Board of Directors. We still have more ideas than we do people to carry them out, so please consider it carefully and call if you think you might spare a bit of your time.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer and as always, if you have ideas or articles, please call me at 819-953-0923.

Carrie Hunter

## **PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

by Joyce Cavanagh-Wood

It is with considerable regret that I bid you a premature farewell. The "exigencies of the service" see me off on a posting to Trinidad this summer, so I am entrusting the sceptre of power to Carrie until the AGM this fall, when a duly

elected replacement must be found.

It has certainly been a rewarding experience to work with the Society. It has given me a greater appreciation for the lore of our service (under whatever name it has operated), and for the genuine warmth that people have for their job and their colleagues.

We undertook a rather ambitious program of activities this year, including a book launch and a symposium. Both were highly successful (my viewpoint) and I believe the Society can take pride in these initiatives. We also enjoyed a dinner in June which was co-organized by the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers, and which gave the younger Foreign Service officers a chance to listen to the tall tales and adventure stories spun by those of us who are more "mature".

Viggi Ring, who died in June after a brief illness, will be missed by many. As one of the first women to work in Immigration, first in settlement. then overseas, she was a role model and a genuine character. Most of us have amusing stories that feature Viggi in the starring role, and I have no

doubt that she wishes to be remembered with a smile.

I encourage those of you with a little free time to consider devoting it to the Society, whether by standing for office, contributing articles to the Bulletin, or agreeing to be interviewed as part of our efforts to collect oral history. You will certainly enjoy the experience, and you can be sure that your efforts will be sincerely appreciated by the Society.

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## THOUGHTS ON QUARANTINES...

-by J.P. Leblanc

The following notes have been drawn from a recently published book by Allan Marble titled "Surgeons, Smallpox and the Poor". The text is a history of medicine and social conditions in N.S. from 1749 to 1799.

Quarantine in the days prior to Confederation and Lawlor's Island was surely a hit and miss method of treating contagious diseases.

*As England was preparing to colonize Nova Scotia, the population consisted of about 11,000 Acadians, 1,000 Micmac Indians and about 2,300 civilians and military personnel of English origin.*

*The London Gazette, in March 1749, carried an ad directed to former officers and men with military or naval service. Edward Cornwallis arrived in May. By July 1st, thirteen ships with 2,500*

*passengers reached Chebucto safely.*

*Fear of attack by the Acadians and Indians kept the settlers aboard the ships anchored in the harbour for up to eight weeks. A number were transferred to George's Island, a small island facing the location of the sea wall and Pier 21. Confusion and chaos existed. Many of the settlers left for New England. A hospital ship rode anchor. A small frame hospital was set up on land on the site of the present day Government House, the Lieutenant Governor's residence.*

*Three emigrant ships arrived in the summer of 1750. Many of the passengers on the Ann were sick; a number died. An illness of epidemic proportion likely existed. On ships crossing from Rotterdam, the mortality ranged from four to twelve percent.*

*By April 1752, passengers were not allowed to proceed ashore until they had been examined. Those found with an infectious disease were placed in a Lazaretto or building away from the settlement. By 1758, the settlement included over 20,000 soldiers and sailors. Many brought smallpox, which led to epidemics in 1755 and 1757. All ships suspect of carrying the plague or epidemic disease were to anchor before passing by George's Island. The time had been reached to set up a formal quarantine procedure to reduce the spread of disease. Pressures from England were to reduce staff*

*and expenses associated with the caring for the ill.*

*In December 1759, the Council in Halifax decreed that all ships had to be stopped at George's Island. This came about because ships had arrived with smallpox aboard. In 1763, the only case of a ship with smallpox had to anchor near the Dartmouth shore, where it was washed down with vinegar.*

*By 1776, a hospital was set up on George's Island to quarantine soldiers with smallpox. The site later became a defended establishment.*

*The Act of 1761 was to prevent the spreading of contagious disease in N.S. "Every ship coming into the port of Halifax with persons on board infected with any plague, smallpox, malignant fever, or other contagious distemper, shall anchor at least two miles below the Town of Halifax, towards the sea, and on her anchoring shall hoist an ensign with the union downwards at the main-top mast head". Legislation was also introduced "to prevent importing impotent, lame and infirm persons into this province".*

*In August 1796, "a fever of a malignant and infectious kind" made its appearance on the HM Dover. Fear that patients at the naval hospital might be afflicted, the sick sailors were remove into tents set up on the Dartmouth Shore.*

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I'm sure that there's more at the Provincial Archives covering the period from 1799 until 1847. Many locations were used to hold patients in quarantine, including Melville Island, now the site of the Armdale Yacht Club. Far more research is needed for a comprehensive understanding of how quarantine of arrivals was handled. The approach to the practise was far different then. Was it not the era when the practice of barber-surgeon became separate fields of endeavour?

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### FISCAL YEAR CONFUSION!

-by our Treasurer, Al Troy

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The fact that our fiscal year commences on May 1st and ends the following April 30th causes some confusion regarding the payment of annual dues and some members are often in arrears because of this factor. We have been asked on many occasions why we do not follow the calendar year Jan. 1st to Dec. 31st. Unfortunately the Constitution of our Society (paragraph 10) says the fiscal year will start each May 1st. The Charter under which we operate as a charitable organization makes it very difficult to change any section of our Constitution and we have neither the staff nor the resources to begin such a process. Therefore our May to April fiscal year dates must unfortunately

remain as is. We apologize if this causes some of our members frustration.

There are two ways in which members can check their membership status. Firstly, each of you received a membership card along with your income tax receipt showing the date on which your membership expires. Secondly on any correspondence you receive from the Society you will note a number in brackets after your name i.e. (4). This means your membership expires on April 30, 1994. If a (3) appears, then your expiry date was April 30, 1993, putting you a whole year in arrears. Our next fiscal year has started and we would appreciate your cheques to enable us to keep the Society on a sound financial footing. Those of you who note that your expiry date was 1993 might wish to consider sending in a cheque for \$20.00 which will bring you up to date until April 30, 1995 (i.e. 1993/94 and 1994/95).

We know it has been partly our fault that some of you are in arrears and we apologize for the confusion. We hope that this explanation will sort out the problem. We look forward to continuing our association with you for many years to come.

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### PIER 21 UPDATE

-by Bill Marks

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I thought I would bring you up to date on the activities of the Pier 21 Society and the Pier 21 Exhibition that we will be holding at the Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery in May and June of this year.

First, enclosed is a copy of the final wording of the plaque which will be unveiled on July 1, 1994 near the Pier 21 site. You will note that the final wording was approved by the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board in Nov. 1993. The Pier 21 Society thanks the Canadian Immigration Historical Society for its assistance in having this project come to a successful conclusion.

The July 1, 1994 ceremony will be a gala affair with many dignitaries invited, including the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and his Parliamentary Secretary. The Premier of Nova Scotia and the Mayor of Halifax, both of whom came to Canada as immigrants, will also be invited by Parks Canada who are arranging for the ceremony. The Pier 21 Society is an official party at the ceremony and we have been asked to submit a list of nominations for guests. We have included Bill Burton and Fenton Crosman on the guest list, as a tribute to their assistance in this project.

In addition to the plaque, Parks Canada is preparing an Interpretive Panel on which will be photographic and text commemorating the arrival and departure of groups of people through Pier 21. This panel will be approximately 3 ft by 5 ft and will be manufactured in a permanent acrylic-type material. The preliminary mock-up which we had an opportunity to view contained photographs of immigrants, refugees, immigration staff, war brides, soldiers coming and going from the Pier during WWII, social service workers and British children evacuees.

The planning for the Exhibition at the art gallery is going well. Our designer has come up with a plan to have the display laid out in a maple leaf format. Each of the "points" of the maple leaf would hold a display depicting the same groups as mentioned in the Parks Canada Panel above.

In the centre of the display would be a raised platform (approx 9") which would have a central wire mesh section over sound equipment which would be playing customary sounds of a marine port of entry e.g. ships horns and whistles, the din and babble of voices of immigrants awaiting examination, children crying and the sounds of the boat trains etc. Leading up and down from the centre platform would be ramps which would be symbolic of the ramps leading the persons on to their vessels and disembarking them at Pier 21 or some overseas port. The designer

has made scale drawings of this set-up and has also made a scale model of the gallery and the display. I have had the opportunity to use these at a few meetings with interested parties and prospective sponsors.

Speaking of sponsors, you will no doubt recall a copy of a message that was sent to you by Mary Sparling in January, requesting funding from the Bronfman Family Foundation. I am pleased to inform you that the Foundation is granting us \$5000. Mary is following up on the lead you gave us re Heritage Canada and we believe that the Halifax Port Corporation will be granting us a couple of thousand dollars.

I wish all news regarding grants was as favourable. I told you that we had high hopes of getting funding for our pre-feasibility study. The Provincial Minister had made a commitment to fund about \$8000 of the estimated \$18000 estimated cost and he promised to contact the Federal side for \$8000 if we could contact the City of Halifax for \$2000. We did the latter and received a positive response. However the Provincial Minister has not come through! He stated that the feds (A.C.O.A.) would not support a pre-feasibility study and that we should really be seeking assistance from private entrepreneurial investors. We are not taking this lying down - we intend to follow up with other political connections or perhaps a private sector investor.

Let's keep in touch.....Bill Marks

NOTE: The plaque will have the following wording.....

**POSTWAR IMMIGRATION  
L'IMMIGRATION DE L'APRES-  
GUERRE**

*In the decade immediately following the Second World War, Canada received about one and a quarter million immigrants from Europe. The newcomers consisted of dependents of returning Canadian servicemen and people dislocated by the conflict and its aftermath in their homelands. Most of them arrived by sea, with Halifax serving as the major port of entry. Here at Pier 21, reception facilities served the immigrants as the first point of contact with their new country. The successful integration of these new Canadians was at once a cause and a consequence of Canada's postwar prosperity.*

*Au cours de la décennie qui suivit la Seconde Guerre mondiale, le Canada accueillit environ 1,25 million d'immigrants européens: les familles des soldats canadiens tout d'abord, puis les personnes déplacées par le conflit et ses suites dans leur pays d'origine. La plupart de ces immigrants, arrivés par bateau, débarquèrent à Halifax, et le centre d'accueil du quai 21 fut leur premier point de contact avec leur pays d'adoption. Le succès de leur intégration à la société canadienne fut à la fois une cause et un effet de la*

*prospérité que connut le Canada après la guerre.*

## SECRETS OF 35 YEARS MISSPENT IN GOV'T SERVICE!

-by Al Troy

The fact that I have recently passed my 74th birthday sort of triggered my wandering mind about my early days in the Department. Immigration has had a half dozen different titles in my 35 years of service plus 10 years of retirement so I shall simply refer to it as being the "Department" and leave it at that.

I commenced employment as an Immigration Inspector Grade 1 at Woodstock, New Brunswick on June 2, 1950 as a seasonal officer but with the unofficial assurance that this job would be extended into a fulltime position by the time my October 31st layoff date came around. I gave up a pretty good full time job to take this plunge so you can readily see that my intelligence was a few bricks short of a full load. (I think the starting salary was an annual \$1860, before any statutory deductions. Unofficial assurances fit into the category of accepting what you are told over the phone when everyone knows that "you can't file a phone call".)

Things were not working out as planned but then a vacancy opened up at the Perth-Andover, N.B. office and I was offered this position. This meant moving house and proved to be the first of 22 family moves during service to the department. In November 1951 I was sent to Saint John, N.B. for the winter season as Canadian Pacific Steamships operated through Saint John during the period the Saint Lawrence River was frozen. We were allowed two weeks on full expenses and then were given the magnificent living allowance of \$3.00 per day (Actually it was \$90 per month and you lost \$3 when it was a 31 day month!) I had to pay \$60 a month for a room which left \$30 for meals, etc. Pretty slim pickings wouldn't you say? However there are more ways of killing a cow than kissing it to death. (Ed Note: Who would ever think of bringing a cow or any such beast to it's timely end by this method?) We used to check crew lists and issue immigration clearances for the Customs on board freighters which saved the agents having to come to our office. You always made sure you went on board around lunch time. By being Mr. Nice Guy, the Captain always asked you to have lunch with him and being a polite person you simply had to accept. Starvation averted for yet another day.

Saint John Airport did not exist in those days and they used the old

wartime training base at Pennfield Ridge, N.B. about 60 miles from the city. They had one flight from Boston daily and Air Canada (I think it was T.C.A. in those days) would send their limo service to the Immigration Office to pick up our officer, as well as a Customs Officer and drive to Pennfield. You would check the passengers and be brought back into the city. If the plane was more than a half hour late T.C.A. were to provide a chit for an evening meal. As the plane was due at 6:00 p.m. we usually managed to score a free meal as the aircraft was always late. I can't remember the exact details but in certain circumstances, such as weekends, you were entitled to claim two hours overtime at the fantastic rate of \$1.87 per hour paid by the airline. Most of the local officers would rather be home in the evening so I would volunteer to take their Pennfield run. At the end of each month I would make up my overtime account and take it to the TCA District Office and the cashier would give me the money owed. Every little bit helped keep the wolf from the door.

One day, after I had been in Saint John for about four months, the Officer-in-Charge casually mentioned I could collect overtime for my TCA attendance. I said I knew that and had been collecting it all along. He turned pale and said he hadn't seen any accounts

for his approval. I informed him that as he had never mentioned the subject before I assumed I should look after it myself. It seemed I had broken all the rules re overtime and that I should have given him my account each month for port approval, he would send it to District HQ in Halifax for their approval who in turn sent it on to Maritime HQ for TCA who would pass it to TCA HQ in Winnipeg Central accounts for payment direct to me. When I told poor Charlie what I had been doing, he near passed out because he was one of those "go by the book" types. There wasn't anything he could do as I was paid up to date. Since I only had another month to go, by mutual agreement, we decided the subject was closed. Actually I collected my last months overtime in the same manner, as I had been doing all along.

Back on the border I mentioned to Jeff Christie, the Atlantic Assistant Superintendent that I would be willing to move if an opening came up at a larger port. New Brunswick had recently been moved from the Eastern District headquartered in Montreal to the Atlantic District, based in Halifax. In November of 1952 I was offered a posting to Halifax as it was felt it would be useful to have a New Brunswicker in Halifax, sort of as an N.B. representative. In early December I moved the family to Halifax and soon got settled into the routine of a large organization. With District HQ, Port of Halifax, detention quarters and medical

facilities, there were 75 to 80 persons on staff. I must say I learned more about immigration in the next six months than officers on the border would learn in their entire career. Some names spring to mind such as Hugh Grant (Superintendent), Jeff Christie, Fenton Crosman (District Inspector), Stew Grant (Accountant), Andrew Maladeck, Gordy Thomas, Reg Barron, Leo Campbell, Andy Anderson, Max Purchase, Tom Flanagan and to me, the prince of them all, Jack O'Connor, the Senior Officer of the Port of Halifax. Jack was the original "Mr. Fixit". No matter what sort of a jam you were in or what problems you had, Jack always had the right answer at the right time and never once could I recall him letting down any member of the staff. Jack was truly one of a kind. Halifax was a very busy port of entry in those days with 10 to 25 ships per month making regular calls especially in the winter season. I can remember working around the clock clearing passengers as some of these vessels carried up to 2000 immigrants. One would be tied up at Pier 21 and another anchored off Georges Island waiting to take its turn to berth. Those were great days.

At this time Canada didn't actually have an overseas service but sent selected officers from the Canadian service on overseas posting for single assignments of approximately four years. These postings could be extended if necessary. In January of 1955 a notice was circulated asking for

anyone interested in this type of work to submit a request to their Officer-in-Charge who would pass it on to District HQ and, if the Superintendent approved, to Ottawa HQ for a final culling and decision. This invitation was open to all officers and although I don't remember if there was a minimum standard, I applied, as I was an Immigration Officer Grade 4 and was keen to get abroad. Money was a powerful incentive as you would jump from a Grade 4 (\$3660.00) to an Acting Grade 6 (\$5450.00). My name went forward and soon after I was called to Ottawa for an interview with a Selection Board. This meant a 20 hour train journey from Halifax to Ottawa via Montreal. No air travel in those days as all immigration people travelled by rail (... we got free railway passes).

I remember arriving in Ottawa around noon and reporting to the Woods Building (where either Confederation Park or the Ontario Court Building now sits). I was ushered into the Board Room to face Phyl Turnbull, Les Voisey and Gene Beasley. A formidable group if there ever was one. Bud Curry sat in the back of the room with a note pad and I have always suspected his job was to shoot anyone who tried to escape. The questions started about your knowledge of the Immigration Act and Regs, personal background, why did you want to go abroad, what did your family think of such a move and on and on. They knew far more about me than I knew about myself by the time

they were finished. At the end, I was thanked for coming and told that my District Superintendent would be advised as to the outcome of this interview. I went straight back to the railway station and was soon on the return 20 hour trip to Halifax. There was no wasting government money on hotels in those days.

On March 17th I received a phone call from Mr. Grant informing me that I had been selected for an overseas posting and would be going to Dublin on the successful completion of a cross-Canada training tour which would last approximately four months. I was to report to Ottawa for a briefing in early April and then embark on the usual cross-Canada training tour which would last until about the end of July. The Selectees would be made up into groups of three and spend approximately three weeks in each of the five districts (Atlantic, Eastern, Central, Western and Pacific). I was told my group would consist of Clare Scatchard from Rossland, B.C., Daniel Mundy from Quebec City and myself.

Well, my friends, this is all I have to say in this issue but further fascinating tales of dare and danger will be forthcoming in future issues of the Bulletin... unless of course the Editor finds she cannot stomach any more of this idiotic dribble and cuts me

off in mid-stream. Bye for now.  
(Ed Note: Never! I hang on every word...)

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### SAD NEWS

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It is with profound regret we announce the sudden death of one of our original life members, Jean Jacques Vinette who died in hospital on Thursday, March 31st at the age of 72 years. Jacques had had health problems but was well on the way to complete recovery when the unexpected happened. The Society wishes to express their heartfelt sympathy to his wife Rossana Brasca, and children Suzanne, Francine, Danielle and Marisa and grandchildren Tanya and Emilia. Jacques was a gentleman in every sense of the word and a true friend to all who had the privilege of knowing him. We shall all miss him. A mass was held in Clarence Creek, Ontario.

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### THE EMPIRE'S MAIN MAN:

#### COL. J. OBED SMITH in LONDON 1908-1924

-by Bob Keyserlingk with notes  
from Edna Whinney

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Who today still remembers Col. J. O. Smith, Canada's immigration man in London during the heyday of agricultural settlement? An immigrant himself to Canada, Smith carved out a career for

himself both in Manitoba and London.

In both places, he considered himself to be a faithful servant, like Cecile Rhodes, of the British Empire. "Replenishing the British Empire" was how the good (honourable) colonel, assistant and then superintendent of immigration for Canada in London, phrased his task.

Born in Birmingham in 1864, Smith started work as a clerk in a cotton broker's office in Liverpool. In 1882 at the age of 17 he moved to Canada to work on a farm. In those days, the railway only went a few miles beyond Winnipeg, and he had to tramp for five days, often sleeping in the snow, before reaching the farm where he was to work.

He continued to find employment on farms, in the woods as a mail carrier, and was eventually called to the Manitoba bar. In 1900 Senator Watson, a member of the Manitoba government, gave him his first job in the public service. He became private secretary to two attorney generals (one of them Clifford Sifton), Lands Commissioner, Railways Commissioner, Clerk of the House and Deputy Minister of Public Works.

Canada was in the process of becoming one of the great bread baskets for Britain, 75% of whose



grain was imported. More farmers were needed. Clifford Sifton appointed him superintendent of immigration in Western Canada. In his eight years as superintendent, a massive wave of 860,000 settlers came out to Canada and 216,000 homesteads were granted.

In 1908, Smith went to London as assistant Dominion immigration commissioner for Europe. His task was to send more European farmers to Canada and to stem the flow of British immigrants to the United States. Within three years he shifted the British numbers in Canada's favour; 134,784 as compared to 49,741 to the United States. During WW1 he acted for the British Admiralty in charge of civilian transportation across the North Atlantic. After the war, he helped to repatriate Canadian soldiers and their new dependents, and administered the huge 1920s rise in immigration to Canada. The empire was to be peopled.

During the 1920s, Canada named Smith Canadian representative to League of Nations Commissions dealing with international traffic in women and children, migration and international labour. He retired in 1924, although continued to act afterwards as overseas advisor to the Hudson's Bay Company.

The colonel lived a prosperous life in Surrey, leading an active public life in England. An honorary colonel in the Canadian militia, he was also a member of the British Territorial Army's

Council, a magistrate of the county of London, councillor of the borough of Richmond, governor of Charing Cross Hospital and two other hospitals and member of three masonic lodges.

When Smith retired in 1924, a magnificent dinner was organized at which Viscount Burnham proposed the main toast. Later during the banquet, speaking of Smith's years of immigration activity, the British secretary of state humorously compared Smith to Nebuchadnezzar, who shifted populations from Palestine to Iraq. Whereas Nebuchadnezzar's immigrants sat down and wept by the waters of Babylon, Smith's rejoiced in song and dance on the banks of the Saskatchewan.

Smith died in 1937 in Yokohama, Japan, while on a world tour aboard, fittingly, the Canadian Pacific liner Empress of Britain.

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

-by Steven Godfrey

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(Ed Note: This is the 2nd and final part of an article which originally 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. 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.)

For the most part, the immigrants were from farming and fishing backgrounds, forced to leave their homeland because of grim economic conditions. They sought to make their money in Canada and return home to Japan. In fact, by the late 1930's one in three of all Japanese who had come to Canada had returned to Japan. Because of the fact they were willing to work for lower wages, in poor conditions, for the sole purpose of amassing a savings, they were viewed by the British Columbians as money-grubbing labourers, who were "sinister and untrustworthy, lived in ethnic concentrations, and lived at a lower standard of living to undercut the Occidental wage-earners".

The Japanese who first arrived in B.C. were known as Issei, the first generation of Japanese immigrants. Their descendants, the Nisei, were born in Canada, with few ties to Japan as they had been raised like most other Canadians of their age. Being the first to arrive, the Issei were quickly attracted to the work force of a labour hungry B.C. economy. They always remained separate from B.C. society; socialized with the whites only at a professional level; established friendships and marriages solely within their own cultural group. Like the Chinese, they established benevolent societies to aid the new immigrants and improve their own community. The Canadian Japanese Association (CJA) was formed in 1897 and by the 1930s it was one of the leading



community organizations in British Columbia.

The whites had demanded a halt to Japanese immigration almost as soon as it had begun. Attempts to impose a head tax started in 1891 and in 1895 the Japanese were disenfranchised. However, it was not until 1907, when the largest annual arrival of Japanese immigrants occurred, that the Japanese came to the forefront of British Columbia politics. The problem for British Columbia was that its fate was more or less in the hands of the federal government, who was subsequently bound by bi-lateral treaties made by Great Britain with Japan. In 1905 the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902 was extended to strengthen the bond between the two countries, pledging mutual assistance in times of war or territorial defence. According to author and journalist Ken Adachi, "the anti-Japanese elements in British Columbia saw that the treaties deprived Canada of the right to control entry of aliens into her own territory, giving Japan a more favoured position than any other nation.

Therefore, the conflict was never directly between Canada and Japan. Thus, when in the spring of 1907 the B.C. legislature passed yet another Natal Act based on language tests to exclude Japanese from Canada, which defied the federal government's

veto; the Governor-General was thoroughly embarrassed. British Columbia had begun to take the "Yellow Peril" problem into their own hands.

Regardless of the increase of Orientals in British Columbia - in July 1907, 2,300 Japanese immigrants arrived in B.C; they still only numbered approximately 9 per cent of the total population. Yet these relatively small demographic changes had little impact on white perceptions of Asian immigrants. The following editorial appeared in the Vancouver Daily Province on 9 September 1907, indicating the virulent attitude of the white community:

*"We are all of the opinion that this province must be a white man's country...We do not wish to look forward to a day when our descendants will be dominated by Japanese, Chinese or any colour but our own...We are an outpost of the Empire, and that outpost we have to hold against all comers."*

On that very evening, with rumours of another boatload of immigrants in the air, nearly ten thousand people paraded through downtown Vancouver. Spurred on by the newly formed Asiatic Exclusion League, they chanted and waved banners denouncing the Asian presence. Meanwhile, with many of the paraders inside City Hall, the municipal government

passed resolutions demanding an immediate end to all immigration from Asia. Soon after, much of the crowd drifted into nearby Chinatown and "Little Tokyo", and proceeded to smash windows, hurl various objects at stores and residences, and destroy any evidence of an Oriental appearance. It took the Vancouver police more than four hours to control the mob, who left behind thousands of dollars in damage and thousands of Chinese and Japanese in states alternating between fear and rage.

The origins of the riot were obvious enough; there had been a longstanding racial cleavage in Vancouver and throughout British Columbia. Yet many agree that the riot itself was a "spontaneous outburst, one which asserted west coast racialism in a clear and emphatic way". The events of 1907 forced the Canadian government into a more rigorous policy of Oriental exclusion. Canada and Japan concluded a Gentleman's Agreement in which Japan agreed to voluntarily limit the numbers of immigrants to Canada. Together with the previously mentioned "Continuous Journey" regulation, the Chinese Head Tax, and the restrictions on minimum financial solvency, Canada was well on the way to Oriental exclusion.

As of 1921, the Chinese accounted for 4.5 per cent of the total

population of British Columbia; the Japanese accounted for 2.9 per cent; and the East Indians accounted for less than 0.2 per cent. Even though World War 1 had brought immigration to all of Canada to a virtual standstill, the white population of B.C. still found the need to strive for the complete exclusion of Asians from "their" province.

Furthermore, they had the complete support of the provincial government in their endeavours.

For the Sikh population of British Columbia, which by 1921 numbered less than one thousand, the government required that all East Indians residing outside Canada hold a registering-out certificate if they wished to enter Canada. The following year the government added that they could not stay outside of Canada for longer than three years or they would lose their ability to re-enter the country, registering-out certificate or not. These measures were enacted to prevent the Sikhs, who remained mainly single males, from returning to their native land to visit their families or find wives and then returning to Canada. Once they were out they had to stay out, was the policy of the government.

Moreover, additional restrictions were placed on the entrance of those wives and children who wished to venture into the hostile climate of a province that had no use for them. Primarily, the Sikh men living in B.C. were reluctant to go to India to get their families for fear of not being allowed back

in again. As well the "Continuous Journey" restriction made it impossible for any young immigrants to enter B.C.

Therefore, by 1925, 90 per cent of the East Indian male contingent in B.C. was over forty, further complicating family life. "On average, one man lived with his family for every thirty men who did not."

The Vancouver Khalsa Diwan Society, the Sikh equivalent of the CBA and the CJA, did its best to ease conditions, and had spent nearly \$300,000 caring for the community by 1920. For all the restrictions and hardships suffered by the East Indian families and residents of B.C., the government might as well have made their exclusion official. However, during the Great Depression it became easier for immigrants to enter illegally. The government was simply too concerned with the economic situation to concentrate its efforts on the immigration problem. In 1939 the Canadian government recognized the futility of its restrictions, which were increasingly susceptible to legal loopholes, and legally allowed all East Indians residing in Canada at the time to remain.

Because the Chinese were the most numerous Asian group in British Columbia, they faced even greater hardships during the 1920's. The Asiatic Exclusion League in B.C. was becoming ever more popular while gaining political clout. They had successfully pushed for the virtual exclusion of the Chinese, granted

by the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923. The stage had been set for the Act in the previous decade. Such was the mentality of the whites that in 1914 they convinced the B.C. government to pass one of the more ludicrous pieces of legislation in Canadian history. The 1914 statute banned the hiring of white women by Chinese businesses for fear of corrupting the women. With such a pervasive attitude as evident in the 1914 statute, it is no wonder that the Chinese were banned from Canada as of 1923. In fact, the only class of immigrants allowed were those merchants with a capital greater than \$2,500. Not only did few have that kind of money, but the interpretative aspect of the 1923 Act was such that the government could exclude almost any prospective immigrant depending on how it construed its meaning.

The only substantial group of Asians left in British Columbia were the Japanese. They would not survive long. First of all, in 1920 the Japanese were disenfranchised, a right not returned to them until 1949. Secondly, by 1931 the United Church of Canada had claimed nearly 30 per cent of all Japanese as converts from Buddhists to Christianity. Those who remained Buddhists retained a cultural link with Japan, and were therefore targets of the Asiatic Exclusion League. Finally, the Japanese had created their own schools, to reaffirm the Japanese language and culture for the children. This

refusal to assimilate further angered the whites.

British Columbia wanted nothing less than an exclusion act for the Japanese. Again the problem must be seen in a global context. Japan was emerging as the power of the Pacific, and Canada's trade with Japan was growing annually and handsomely benefitting Canada's raw material industry. Prime Minister King "walked the slippery diplomatic tightrope of attempting to appease British Columbia and of not offending Japan." As a result, anti-Oriental sentiment persisted throughout the 1920's, though after the Chinese Immigration Act its intensity was somewhat abated. Because of the need for peaceful relations between Japan and Canada, the former again voluntarily agreed to limit the emigration of its people to Canada. In 1928 the Japanese government limited the number of emigrants bound for Canada to 150 per year, and ended the movement of picture brides, which for a population that was largely adult male, was a significant blow.

Interestingly enough, during the Great Depression, anti-Oriental sentiment remained quite peaceful, demonstrating once again that the roots of racism were not economic. "Not once during these years, even at the depths of the depression, did west

coast whites launch a concerted drive against the Asian."

In the late 1930's, when anti-Oriental sentiments rose anew, it was again the political situation involving Japan and Canada that dictated the flow of immigration after the depression. The advance of the Japanese armies throughout Asia and the Pacific foretold a grim prospect for the Japanese Canadians. Beginning in 1937 anti-orientalism spiralled out of control, all of it directed solely at the Japanese. Following the attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941, Japanese Canadians were rounded up and confined in internment camps in the interior of British Columbia.

The aftermath of the Second World War returned many of the rights to the Chinese, Japanese and East Indians of British Columbia and throughout Canada. The East Indians, once "stigmatized, legally restricted, and socially isolated" were granted landed immigrant status in 1947. The Chinese Immigration Act was repealed in 1947, mainly due to the fact that having survived Japanese aggression and atrocities during the war, the Chinese were seen in a sympathetic light. The Japanese were given the right to vote in 1949, one year after the Chinese and two years after the East Indians, but had to wait until 1988 for a formal apology by the

Canadian government for their wartime internment.

The Chinese, Japanese and East Indian immigrants who arrived on the shores of British Columbia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century hoped for a better economic outlook; one which would later enable their wives and children to join them in their new country. However, the residents of British Columbia were adamant in their refusal of their province becoming "yellow". Numerous forms of legislation and countless resolutions were enacted to tighten immigration restrictions, to prevent any more than a handful of entrants, and eventually the almost total exclusion of Asian immigrants by the 1920's. The 1907 Vancouver Riot and the Komagatu Maru episode epitomized the white attitude towards the Asians. The Chinese, Japanese and East Indians were faced with an immeasurable intensity of racism, causing enormous social and economic hardship, destroying their hopes and dreams of life in a new country. For Canada, a nation built upon immigration, boastful of its open-door policy and lenient approach towards newcomers, the period of Asian immigration to British Columbia is an era one wishes history did not record.

**IMMIGRATION IS FOR THE BIRDS....**

(Ed. Note: This delightful article comes to you courtesy of Jim Cross, who forwarded us a placemat he recently came across in a restaurant at Matticks farm on Cordova Bay. Jim noted that one of his last duties before he retired was to chair a committee that drafted the refugee regulations. They wanted to give claimants the benefit of the doubt but they had not anticipated that there would be enough claims to warrant a full time review body - they expected perhaps three or four cases a month. Although in hindsight Jim notes their nievity, he does admit to giving rise to an entire new class of immigration lawyers and refugees, both genuine and false. Jim suggests that perhaps the story of Heroun, while written in good humour may be indicative of how the public sometimes views the refugee process.

Anyway, following his meal at Matticks, Jim interviewed Haroun in his private quarters and suggested to him that he had not been entirely honest. Although Jim wasn't positive what the bird's screamed replies were exactly, he did think he caught the word "racist". )

"Those of you who have been to the clubhouse will no doubt have noticed our noisier staff member, the one in the cage. Haroun can speak for himself, but while he is further building up his vocabulary, let us offer a brief introduction.

Haroun is a mynah bird, a Greater India Hill Mynah to be exact. He immigrated from India, arriving in Cordova Bay in late February, 1992. He is the grand nephew, on the father's side, of Akbar, the mynah bird who entertained the visitors at Mattick's Market during the early 60s. Akbar was a big draw at the Market, ranking right

up there with the miniature train and Bill Mattick himself.

Finding him and getting him here was a real struggle. We found Akbar's address in India from one of his old letters in the attic of the Tea House behind the Garden Centre. Akbar himself died several years ago so we wrote to the village elder, Balbir and asked if there were any descendants of Akbar still living in the region. Balbir was very helpful and put us on a trail that ultimately led to Meerut, not far from Delhi, where we found not one, but four, direct descendants of Akbar. We interviewed each of them. They were all excited about the prospect of moving to Canada and expressed a strong emotional bond for dear old Akbar. How does one choose? There was one sure-fired way of separating the imposters from the genuine. We asked each of them to do a wolf whistle and sure enough Haroun was the only one who could match Akbar's pitch and clarity. We found our bird, but there was more to come.

Haroun did not have any relatives to sponsor him or the \$250,000 to qualify as an immigrant investor. We consulted an immigration lawyer in Vancouver who raised the possibility of refugee status. How could we bring him into this category? Unfortunately for us, Haroun just happened to be living in one of the few areas where there was no civil strife or liberation movements underway. There was nothing to fear in Haroun's village, except hawks. That's it, hawks! Haroun was

threatened by those bloodthirsty hawks.

Haroun flew to Mirabel Airport where we met him and made his claim for refugee status. Haroun was shivering right through the interview and the immigration officer took this as a reaction to his narrow escape from those bloodthirsty hawks. It was actually a reaction to the frigid weather. The interview went well. Haroun responded to each question with a blood-curdling squeal and we did not need to interpret the answer. Haroun was granted landed immigrant status immediately and we gently led him out of the security area, breaking into a run as we reached the door.

Now here he is in Cordova Bay, safely ensconced in pleasant surroundings. No work, no worries, just like everyone else. No hawks to worry about, nothing life threatening, except perhaps the staff person who cleans the cage....."

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



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# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/SUBSCRIPTION/ CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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