

JOHN TOD



John Tod led an extraordinary life. He was born a little over 200 years ago. When only 16 he left his home in Scotland bound for the wilds of Rupert's Land (now Western Canada). Tod spent the next 40 years in the fur trade, exploring the vast wilderness from Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Fur region then named "New Caledonia". In his 87 years, he'd seen it all. He'd witnessed first hand the bloodshed between rival companies the Hudson's Bay and

North West Companies and had endured unspeakable hardships. He'd known four wives, raised ten children, and along the way taught himself both fiddle and flute. Upon retiring from the fur trade John Tod was elected a member of British Columbia's first legislature. John Tod became Victoria's very first retiree and the house he built at Oak Bay 150 years ago is the oldest residence in our province.

*Late last evening I had a dream
I met John Tod on the Oak Bay Road
The weathered old ghost of a Hudson's Bay Trader
With lop-sided grin and old tattered clothes*

*He'd left his home on the Vale of Leven
Left Stornawa' on the Edward & Ann
He crossed the great ocean in 1811
Through Hudson's Bay and to Rupert's Land*

*It's hard imagine the span of a lifetime
As riddled with peril or moulded by change
Yet he would recall in fondest reflection
The youthful adventures of his former days*

*Where are ye now, my Hudson's Bay brothers?
And where are ye now, my comrades of old?
W' James Murray Yale or Edward Ermatinger
We lived with the Cayuse & Carriers bold*

*He told how they fought the valiant Nor'Westers
Along the Saskatchewan, long, long ago
And came to this place called "New Caledonia"
A land of promise and riches untold*

*And as the dream ends, I turned to look back
I see the procession advance down the road
Twenty-eight carriages draped in black crepe
As the world bids adieu to old John Tod.*

STEAMBOATIN' JAMIESONS

Steamboats were first introduced to our North West waters in the 1830s with the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company's trading vessel "The SS Beaver" The Jamiesons were five brothers who came from Brodick, Scotland in the 1850's to pursue careers as steamboat pilots. Although a popular means of transport, steamboat travel was fraught with peril and within the short span of seven years, each of the brothers had met untimely fates in boiler explosions.

*There were five Brothers Jamiesons, pride of the great Northwest
When it came to steamboat piloting, the Jamiesons were best
There's stories told of captains bold who plied the Northwest chuck
The Steamboatin' Jamiesons had the hardest luck!*

*It's said the trouble all began in 1854
The first of the fated Jamiesons was standing on the wharf
Canemah town heard a frightening sound with a great horrific roar
The "Gazelle" was flung to "Kingdom Come" and that left only four*

*Four Steamboat Jamiesons, pride of the great Northwest
When it came to steamboat piloting, the Jamiesons were best!
'Twas on the steamer "Portland", Willamette River run
That poor Mother Jamieson, she lost another son
The Portland stalls above the falls and amidst the ship's debris
Was the lifeless frame of Robert J. and now there's only three*

*Three Steamboat Jamiesons, pride of the great Northwest
When it came to steamboat piloting, the Jamiesons were best!
"The Best Swiftwater Pilot" Smith Jamieson was hailed
As he skippered on the Fraser, New Westminster up to Yale
He'd come as far as Union Bar when the boiler up and blew
There Smith, he met his maker, with Jamiesons at two*

*And then in 1861, late one August night
The folks around Victoria beheld a horrid sight
As the "Cariboo" was splintered through and scattered o'er the foam*



TWENTY-THREE CAMELS



By 1860, Fraser River gold had been traced to its source in a region known as The Cariboo. On Williams Creek, three towns sprung up around the richest claims: Barkerville, Richfield and Camerontown. The greatest challenge was the transporting of goods and provisions from the head of

navigation at Yale some 600 miles inland to the Cariboo. Many schemes were tried: pack mules, oxen, horses, and so on. Still, transport costs were prohibitive. Then, a Victoria merchant launched a most amazing scheme. Frank Laumeister imported twenty-three Bactrian Camels for use as beasts of burden on the Cariboo Road.

*Well it came about on a month of May
That twenty-three Camels sailed away
Twenty-three Camels bound for Yale
And the road to the Cariboo*

*Where the Camels came from, no one knew
From the U.S. Army or old Manchu?
From Arizona on a railway crew
All the way to the Cariboo*

*But twenty-three camels - that's a twist
Oh you've never seen such a sight as this
Run like a devil when the camels hiss
On the Road to the Cariboo*

*"Ships of the Desert" was the camel's fame
They could carry a half-of-a-ton was claimed
Till their feet went tender and they all took lame
They were auctioned off away*

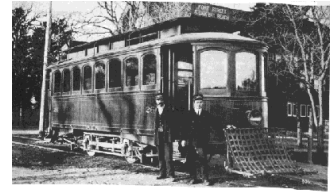
*But twenty-three camels, that's a sight
Where the donkey brays and the horse takes flight
It's a wonder everybody didn't die of fright
On the road to the Cariboo*

*They kicked and bit at everything that moved
They smelled so bad that they scared the mules
Causin' so much trouble that the teamsters sued
Their disruptions to curtail*

*But twenty-three Camels, that's a sight
When the donkey brays and the horse takes flight
It's a wonder everybody didn't die of fright
On the Road to the Cariboo*

THE ELECTRIC RAILWAY

The British Columbia Electric Railway Company was formed in 1897, an amalgamation of separate interurban and street railway systems in Vancouver, New Westminster and Victoria.



In 1910, the south side of the Fraser was connected to Vancouver by the B.C. Electric "Inter-Urban" railway, bringing people and produce within easy reach of the larger coastal cities. This service became known as the "milk run." The BCER could at one time boast the largest electric railway in Canada. Passenger service through the Fraser Valley to Chilliwack ended in 1950 when the BCER went to diesel fuel and became a freight-only carrier.

*Climbed aboard the old 1402
On the Electric Railway Line
Thirteen cents in cash fare paid
Got my transfer and receipt
It took no time to take my seat
Kicked off my shoes
Kicked up my feet
On the Electric Railway Line*

*From Yarrow, Stewart & Sinclair
Along the Interurban Line
Then through Bellerose, Kidd, Reclaim
Stopped in Jackman, County Line
Through Coghlan, Warwhoop and Jardine
Meridian, Sullivan, Hyland, Kings
On the Electric Railway Line*

*All along the Interurban Line
You could hear that motors wail and whine
Clicking down the track and she's right on time*

*You can smoke "Wills' Capstan Cigarettes"
Out on the Observation Car
You know they're just ten cents a packet
By the Hastings depot yard
You can read the Buzzer in the vestibule
Or you can thumb through the Farm Service News
Well I'm telling you, you just can't lose
On the Electric Railway Line*

*I took a ride on the Flying Dutchman once
Along the Interurban Line
Met a little girl from Jubilee
If you've got the price of fare
Well then the BCE can get you there
They just take a little more time and care*

VOYAGEUR



The first Europeans to cross the continent of North America travelled from East to West. They were the fur trade explorers of the North West and Hudson's Bay trading companies. Travelling in birch bark canoes, they explored west from Hudson's Bay or Lachine, Quebec. Following the inland river and lake systems, and led by explorers MacKenzie, Fraser and Thompson, they built trading posts, explored the waterways and created the first maps of those regions. These were the Voyageurs!

*They came by here, those voyageurs over water sweet as wine
Those bold adventurers of a long forgotten time
Long before the riverboats, before the pioneers
Their chansons echoed through the wilderness frontier*

*On the first of May the spring brigades
Would depart from old Lachine
With sweat and blood
They'd muscled through the hellish terrain
Over rocks or through white water or the miles of cursed mire
To winter in the Chipywan, cold and huddled by a fire*

*Those nights went on forever with the cruel wind howling
When each man prayed to hear the bells
Of sweet Saint Anne's once more
To die in the Harlot's Tavern! in tassels, sash and plume
Fol da, diddle di, re fol dadin-o*

*Rise up you bold Nor'wester, this hour before the dawn
The sun will set again before your toil is done*

*If you were here brave Voyageur, what stories you could tell
Of Fraser and MacKenzie, and Thompson as well
When you pulled upstream 'till your back was bent
The weight on the tumpline, did it twist your neck?
If you don't lie in an unmarked grave
Along the killing portages*

*You died in the Harlot's Tavern, a worn-out twisted wretch
Fol da, diddle di, re fol dadin-o
Rise up now bold Nor'wester, this hour before the dawn
Your song shall rise again before this day is done*

THE GHOST OF SIMON FRASER

*He started out, into the wild Nechako River
One morning, early, all in the month of May
With Jules Quesnel and dauntless John Stuart
Nineteen Nor'westers, and two guides to lead the way*

*The work was hard, and the river, unforgiving
A desperate undertaking, to test the will of men
At times they passed, where no human being should venture
O'er precipice and mountain, through a harsh, forbidding land*

*Oh, Mighty Fraser! Oh, you rolling river
What bold adventurers have traced your rocky shores
And oh, you rambling river, how your restless waters
Echo with the voices of all those who've been before*

*Their journey lay, through the proud and mighty nations
The cradle of the ancients, both bountiful and grand
They'd never seen, an equal to this country
Where people, kind and gentle, extend an open hand*

*Oh, Mighty Fraser! Oh, you rolling river
Pride of all who've made their lives, upon your shores
Oh, you rambling river, how your restless waters
Echo with the voices of all who've been before*

*They swore an oath, each, to him and to their maker
Sooner perish than forsake, they stood as brothers, side by side
They followed him, straight through the gates of Hades
And cast their souls upon the mercy of the tide*



*I stare alone, across a span of centuries
The Ghost of Simon Fraser, still haunts me in his way
In thirty-six days, he changed the face of history
Unravelling the mystery of who we are today*

Oh, Mighty Fraser! Oh, you rolling river

*The pride of all who've made their lives, upon your shores
Oh, you rambling river, how your restless waters
Echo with the voices of all who've been before
Still echo with the voices of all those who've been before*

He started out, into the wild Nechako River

MCCULLOCH'S WONDER



The story of the Kettle Valley Railway is an amazing piece of Canadian history. The railway served the people and of southern British Columbia from 1916 to 1964 linking the mineral rich

interior of the Province to the Pacific coast. Recently, parts of the old KVR have been preserved as heritage sites. Many sections of the old "Tin Whistle's" right-of-way are enjoying renewed popularity with "Eco-tourists" as hiking and mountain biking trails. A marvel of engineering, the KVR owes its very existence to the genius and perseverance of one man: Andrew McCulloch.

*It was back in nineteen-sixteen they laid the last rail down
On the Coast-to-Kootenay Railway from Hope to Midway town
Over three mountain ranges lay the greatest challenge
Any engineer could find
Two ribbons of steel they called The Kettle Valley Railway Line*

*Andrew McCulloch, just look what you have done
You've built a railway*

*Where they said a railway was never meant to run
Where other men would have said "die"
You'd take a second look 'cause you never know until you try
Now it's called McCulloch's Wonder; the old Tin Whistle Line*

*What dreams inspired your trestled spans
Along the Myra Canyon?
Or drove Othello Tunnels
Through Hope's forbidding gate?*

*Copper, gold, cattle & coal From across the southern vales
Avalanches ice & snow, through driving wind and hail
Chief Engineer for twenty years,
Kept watchful eye on the marvel he'd designed
Called McCulloch's Wonder: The Kettle Valley Railway Line*

*Aboard a helper engine, up Carmi's steeper grades
The fireman's back was breaking
He shoveled eighteen tons a day
Now everything is still, no smoke, no steam
Or rumble in the rails
Water towers, stations gone
And few folks left to tell the tale
But buried in these silent hills
Along the roadside stands a lonely highway sign
Here lies McCulloch's Wonder: The Kettle Valley Railway Line
It was called McCulloch's Wonder The old "Tin Whistle" Line*

SPANISH BANKS

Where the City of Vancouver reaches westward into the Gulf of Georgia there is a place called Spanish Banks. The name commemorates the meeting in 1792 of English explorer George Vancouver with Spanish explorers Galiano & Valdes. The two parties worked in tandem up the Discovery Pass, exchanging information and at times socializing. These were the first Europeans to contact many of the indigenous peoples whose villages for eons have lined these pristine waters. Many of the Pacific Northwest place names date back to this historic exploration.

*I walked the road to Spanish Banks
Where the cliffs rise o'er the sandy shoals below
And wondered, how it appeared to them
Two hundred years ago
In wooden ships the iron men
Braved the oceans from half the world away
Venturing on to each new horizon
And charting as they sailed
What if they had seen the years unfolding?
Would they have believed a world so changed?
Could they have foreseen in all their wildest fantasies
The place that bares their names?
George Vancouver crossed the bay
There met the Spaniards; Galiano & Valdes
Names that leap from my atlas pages
Were present on that day
In tandem up the coast they fared
Through Salish, the Nootka Kwakwak'l & Haida Guaii
The ancient people saw them pass and they knew
Their world would never be the same
What if they had seen the years unfolding
Would they have believed a world so changed?
Could they have foreseen in all their wildest fantasies?
The place that bares their names?
I walked the sand at Spanish Banks
And where the cliffs rise o'er the sandy shoals below
I wondered how it felt to be alive*

Two

