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Not Very Good Taste

King Edward had met the storm of opposition from practically all officialdom in Britain, had yielded to the pressure, had given up a throne for a woman and during that time only one of the bishops seems to have been prominent in the controversy and he did it unintentionally.

Now that all the unpleasant work has been done and the former king has gone into voluntary exile, along comes the Archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Church in England, and gives the ex-king another smack. Without knowing all the circumstances it seems as if it were an unnecessary blow and one that will be resented by very many church people.

The only possible excuse seems to have been that, owing to the policy of silence through the virtual suppression of the press, there had been little opportunity to discuss the former king's actions prior to his retirement from the throne and that the silence of the church in a case of this kind might have been misconstrued. Even this, however, does not seem to justify the objection to the king choosing his "own social circle" especially when the king had already given up practically everything and the archbishop and his social circle had given up nothing.

Even without this incident the church had come in for some quiet criticism among people in England in connection with this affair and it seems a pity that this opportunity should have been given the scoffers.

The Slenderest Thread

Ireland has been straining at the leash, threatening to leave the British Empire, campaigning for it and discussing it and yet the Emerald Isle remains a bright stone in the Imperial chain. Possibly now it has been shown that there is no particular desire to retain Ireland against her will, we shall find that this will be one of the most loyal of all the Dominions. We all like the Irish people, no matter where we meet them except when the Irish policeman catches us doing something which is contrary to the regulations. There seems no good reason why the Irish at home should not be able to get on well with the Irish of Canada, Australia, South Africa and the other Empire countries.

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RIVER BOATS ON SKEENA

Interesting Article on Early Navigation in This District

Old Boats Recalled

Remains of Steamers Port Simpson and Hazelton Inspire Writer

Mrs. C. G. Stevens, formerly of Prince Rupert, writes in "The Beaver," quarterly magazine of the Hudson's Bay Co., an article based on the early days of this district before the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway reached the Pacific Coast at Prince Rupert in 1912, when the Hudson's Bay Company stern wheelers worked up the turbulent Skeena to Hazelton. It will be of interest to the old timers of this district and is therefore being reprinted as follows:

"A very interesting reminder of the early life of the Hudson's Bay Company lies in Prince Rupert Harbor, British Columbia. This is the remains of the river boat, Hazelton, a stern-wheel steamer. This old boat could tell many interesting and romantic stories of the early adventures and struggles to maintain an existence along the Skeena River. The hull of the old Port Simpson, sister ship to the Hazelton, also lies near Prince Rupert, on Digby Island.

"In the early days the Hudson's Bay Company found it very difficult and expensive to supply their interior posts from Port Simpson, which at that time was the headquarters and main distributing point for New Caledonia, as the northern district of British Columbia was then called. All goods had to be taken by canoe up the Skeena River and all raw furs brought out the same way. This was not only a very dangerous means of transportation, owing to the treacherous river and the hostile Indians encountered along the way, but was expensive and wasted a great deal of time. About the year 1889, on the recommendation of John Flewin, who was then government agent of the district, R. H. Hall, chief factor of Port Simpson trading post, decided to investigate the possibilities of running a stern-wheeler steamer on the Skeena River as a means of lessening this expense as well as the hazards of distributing supplies to the interior.

As a result Captain George Oden, of New Westminster, a well known river steamer man, thoroughly investigated the possibilities of negotiating the treacherous Kitselas canyon on the Skeena River. Under his instructions the first Hudson's Bay Company stern-wheeler river steamer was built in New Westminster in 1890. This boat was about one hundred feet in length and was called the Caledonia. Captain Oden successfully negotiated the Skeena River to Hazelton with her in 1891, and then carried on a successful trade up and down the river till the spring of 1898, when the boat was towed back to Victoria and her engines transferred to the new Caledonia, a larger vessel. This new steamer plied on the Skeena River for a number of years and also made one trip a year up the Stikine River. Captain Oden was succeeded by Captain Bonsor, a capable, well known river man.

Build More Boats

"At the time of the Yukon gold rush, and also because fish canneries were opening along the northwestern coast, the Hudson's Bay Company found they had to have more boats to handle the rush of business on the rivers; so the steamer Strathcona was built in Victoria and ran in 1900. This boat travelled in conjunction with the Caledonia until 1902, when the Mount Royal, a much larger and more beautiful vessel, joined them. This latter boat was also built in Victoria by Alex Watson, one of the finest ship-builders known.

At this time it was only natural that other companies should see the advantages of the river trading, and the steamer Hazelton was one of the first boats to be built in Victoria (in 1900). It was built for George Cunningham, of Port Essington, and operated by him on the Skeena River. Later it was sold to the Hudson's Bay Company about 1903. The Hazelton then ran with the Mount Royal and the two smaller boats were laid off. The Mount Royal was unfortunate in bridging the canyon at Kitselas in July 1907. It turned over and drowned several of the crew, including the purser.

The old Caledonia was brought into service again for the rest of that year and then the large new Port Simpson took the place of the Mount Royal in 1908. This boat was also built in Victoria by Mr. Watson.

There was constant rivalry among all the different captains and companies on the river as to who could make the best trips. Great difficulties had to be overcome all the way. The Skeena River was very treacherous at any time, and with the continually shifting sand bars, difficult turns, narrow canyons and rushing waters, the captains and their crews had to be on their toes always. In spite of these difficulties, one boat would try to outwit another, usually playing tricks on each other—anything to delay the other captain's schedule—as for instance picking up extra supplies of wood along the way so that the ship behind would not be able to get her fuel. These events all added to the excitement on board the steamers, and as the same captain was seldom on the same boat two years in succession it made it all the more interesting as the captains were so well known by everyone travelling on the river. Even among the Hudson's Bay Company's own captains there was great rivalry, especially between Captain Johnson of the Mount Royal and Captain Bonsor of the Hazelton. They even went so far one time as to stage a small naval battle and fired shots at each other, but no damage was done. They also tried to ram their boats once in the middle of the river. Their rivalry ran beyond a joke several times but it certainly held the interest of their passengers. The captains on the various steamers were also always trying to see who could make the fastest trip up the river to Hazelton and back. Captain Johnson made one trip in fifty-six hours with the Mount Royal, and then Captain Gardner made it in forty-seven hours with the Hazelton a little later the same season.

Kitselas Difficult

The Kitselas canyon was the greatest difficulty along the Skeena River, and after the loss of the Mount Royal, during the season when the waters were particularly high, the Hudson's Bay Company would usually keep one of their steamers above the canyon and the other below and portage all freight across from one vessel to the other. They usually kept the Hazelton on the upper part of the river as it was the smaller boat and was more easily handled. The waters of the Skeena would rise very quickly and at Hazelton it was often known to rise seventeen feet at the wharf in one day. Right in the Kitselas canyon there was a rise of sixty feet in the high water season, so it can be readily understood the captains of these river boats had no easy tasks.

In the early days the Hudson's Bay Company river boats made their regular trips from Port Simpson up the Skeena whenever enough freight and passengers warranted them doing so. However, as there was a great deal of rough water between Port Essington and Port Simpson, the boats soon made their headquarters at Port Essington and travelled regularly between there and Hazelton, generally about once a week. Their first trips of the year were always exciting and usually made about the beginning of May. Any other trips

earlier in the season had to be made by canoe. It was a great thrill to the people of the interior to get their first supply of fresh fruit, mail, etc., after being shut in all winter. The last trip of the season was generally made about the end of October, so it was naturally a time of great rejoicing when the first boat of the next spring arrived. At the end of the season, with the exception of the Mount Royal, which returned to Victoria every fall, the boats were pulled ashore until the next spring.

The Hazelton and the Port Simpson were the only two Hudson's Bay Company steamers that ran on the river after 1908. They both carried sixty to eighty cabin passengers and from sixty to one hundred tons of freight, the Port Simpson being considerably the larger boat. It would usually take them about three or four days to go up the Skeena to Hazelton and about one or two to come back. In addition to their regular journeys up and down the Skeena, these steamers made at least two trips up the Stikine River as well as numerous side trips to different canneries. In 1908 they also began excursions trips to Prince Rupert and sometimes around Kaien Island.

Their Last Days

The steamer Hazelton was engaged in river trading until about 1911, and the Port Simpson for a year longer, till the completion of the Grand Trunk railway in 1912. After lying at Port Simpson, the hull of the Port Simpson was finally sold to M. M. Stephens, of Prince Rupert, about 1915, and now it lies a wreck near the city. The engines of these two boats were taken by the Hudson's Bay Company and installed in transport boats built for the McKenzie River.

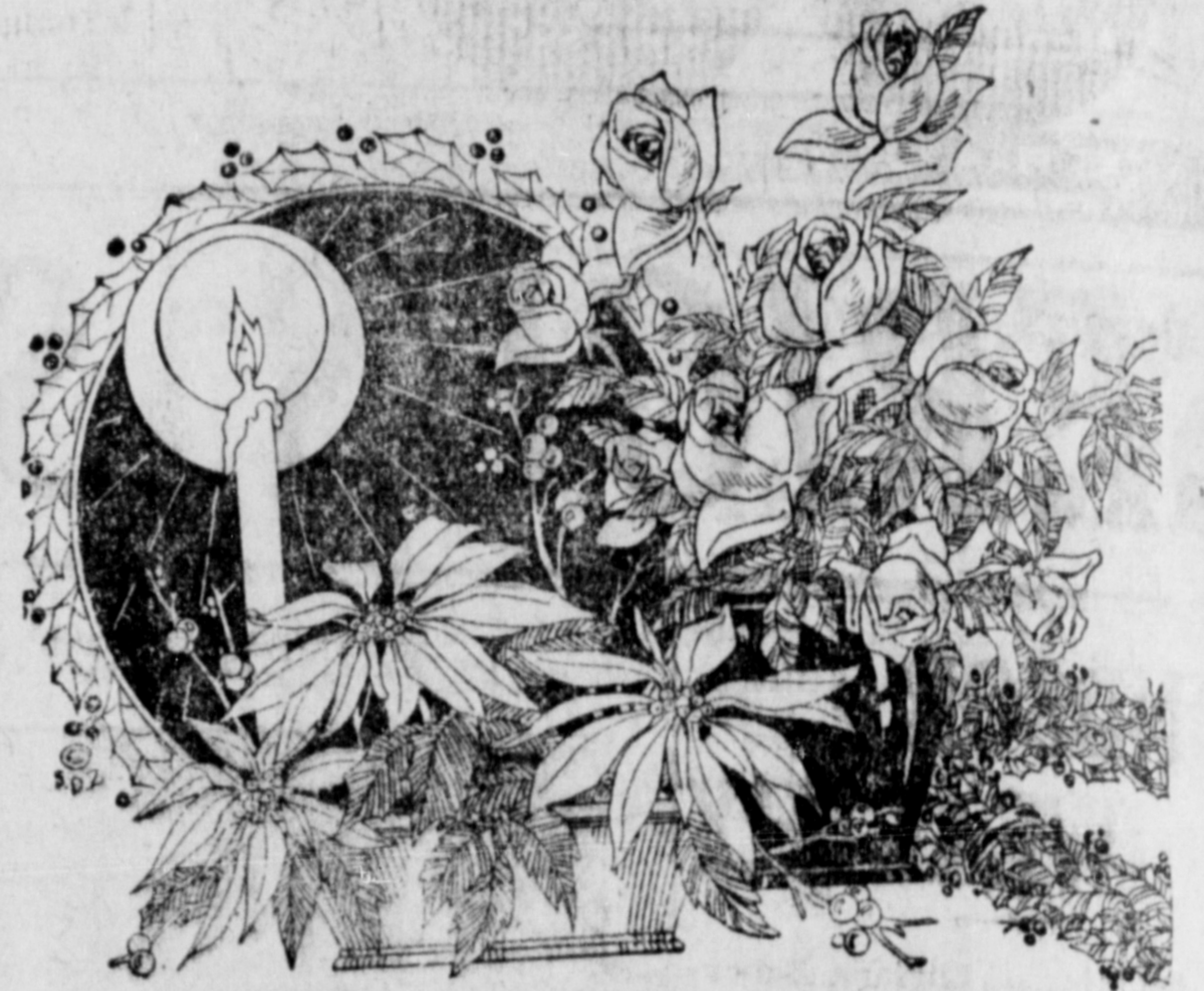
The hull of the Hazelton was sold to the Prince Rupert Yacht Club in 1912 and used for a club house for years until it was finally abandoned in 1924. Thus we find its remains lying in Prince Rupert Harbor, a vivid reminder of the interesting and romantic bygone days along the Northern British Columbia coast.

NEW PACT IS SIGNED

Peace and Security for Twenty-One Nations Pledged

BUENOS AIRES, Dec. 15.—Representatives of twenty-one nations at the inter-American Peace conference in Buenos Aires Saturday appended their signatures to the "New World Republic peace pact" which is designed to provide peace and security of all the signatory nations. The pact will come up for approval at the final meeting of the conference to be held today.

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