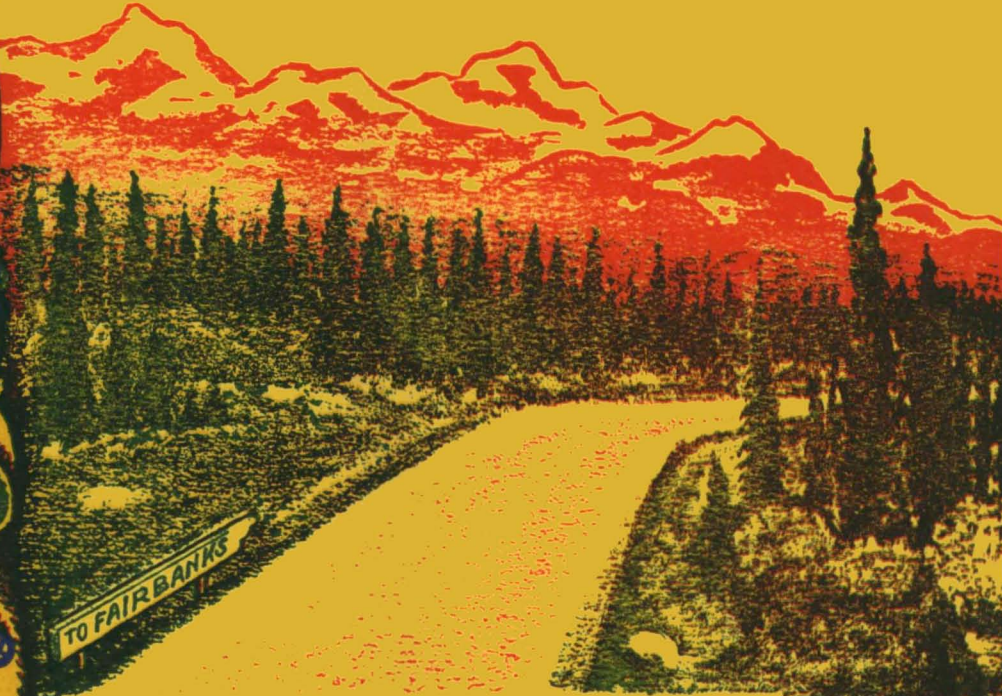


The Alaska Highway

Revised Edition



A SAGA OF THE NORTH

- The Totem Pole on the cover is a drawing of a genuine Alaskan Totem Pole. . . .

Revised Edition

Dedication . . .

THIS LITTLE BOOKLET
IS DEDICATED TO THE
MEN WHO BUILT THE
ALASKA HIGHWAY



Edited by
DON MENZIES

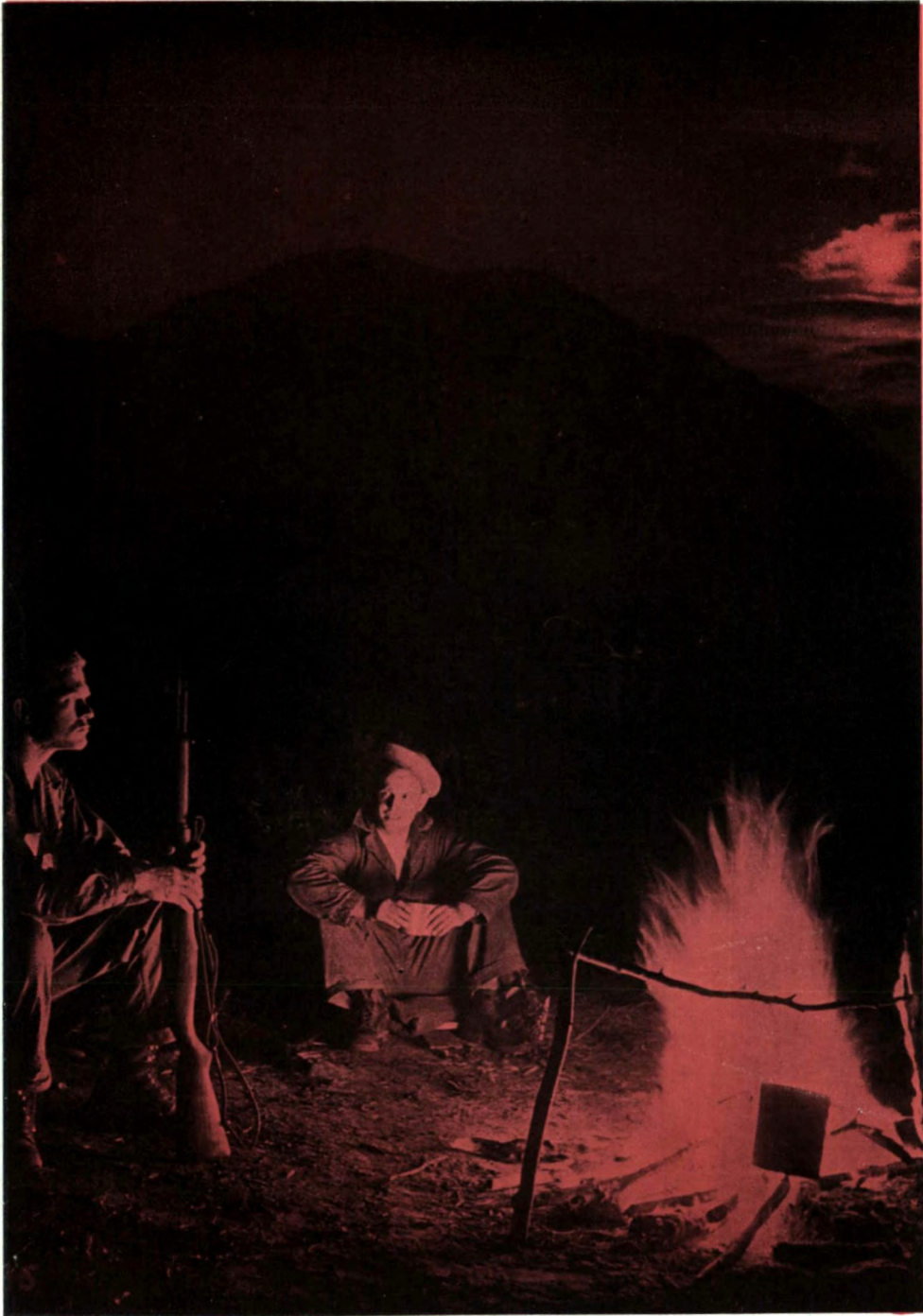
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The Alaska Highway



THOUGHTS OF HOME BY A CAMP FIRE

THE *Alaska Highway*

by Don Menzies



The building of the Alaska Highway is a mighty achievement. It is almost incredible.

It is an epic of engineering—not so much because of the muskeg, heavy timber or other difficulties encountered or the inaccessibility of the country through which it runs, but because of the unprecedented speed with which the 1,600-mile highway was built.

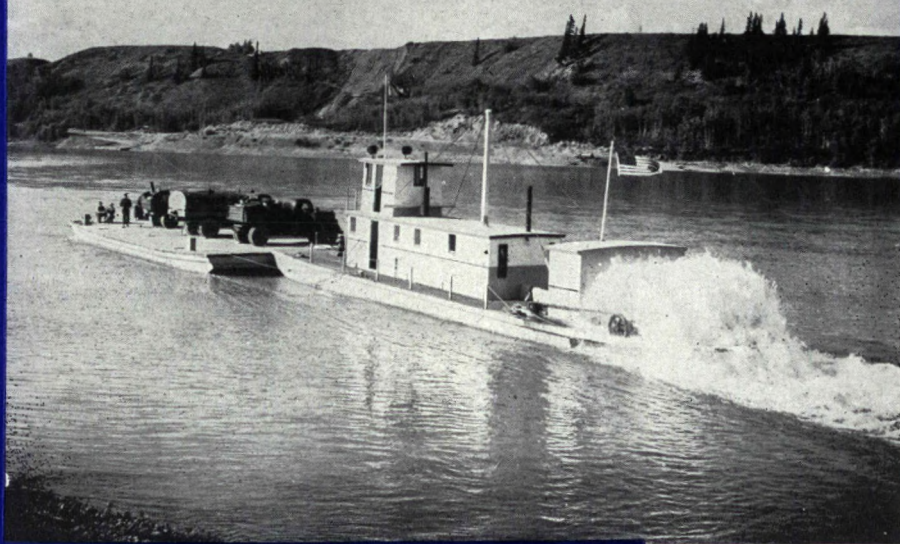
Someday, the story of the building of this great highway will be but a legend—a saga of the north.

It is an adventure story to tell friends around the hearth of an evening . . . a story of sturdy men with courage. It is a fighting story of fortitude and ingenuity . . . a tribute to the United States Army Corps of Engineers, American civilian workers and a few Canadians.

Construction of the highway will go down in history as one of the colossal achievements of man, working under the most difficult conditions in all kinds of weather. The highway as it stands is a real tribute to those men from every part of the continent who proved to themselves and the world that they have all the spirit and fight of their pioneer forefathers.

They smashed through a back door to Alaska in less than eight months. They built a military highway for the defence of the western hemisphere; for an offensive against the enemy.

The Alaska Highway



THE ROAD TAKES SHAPE

PUSH-FERRIES WERE USED

The Alaska Highway

Technically, the Alaska highway is known as the Alcan project—a coined word and an ugly one. Few like it. To the tough men who built it, the highway is known simply as The Road.

Strategically, The Road connects the industrial areas of the United States and Canada with Alaska. Supplies can go by air and sea, but now there is a great route by land that snakes over some of the wildest but most picturesque country on this continent.

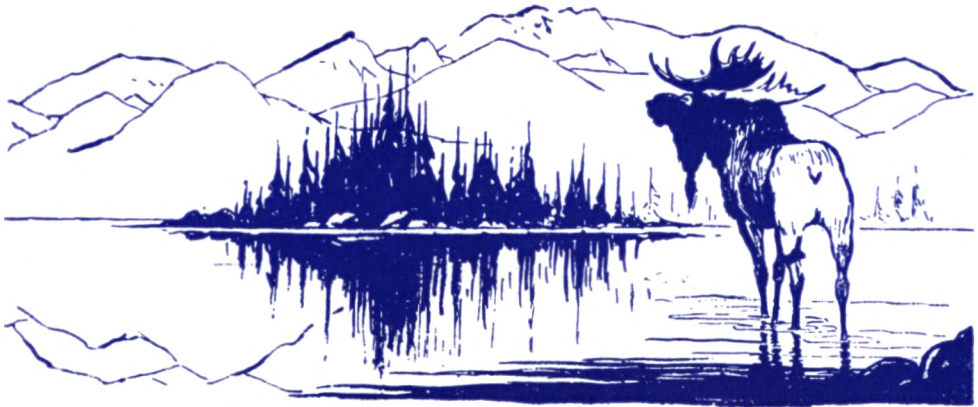
The Road is without parallel, some people say, in the history of friendship between nations. Built and paid for by the U.S., it will be turned over to Canada after the war, giving the Dominion a tourist attraction of wondrous beauty.

Streaking through the center of the greatest wild-animal region in Canada, The Road skirts Shangri-la valleys, dodges hot springs and opens a new world for the searching tourist—the world of the husky dog, the parka and the colorful gold rush days of '98.

It passes through stately pine and spruce forests, over roaring rivers and streams, across mountain passes, beside glimmering lakes and ancient glistening glaciers.

Canadians, especially those living in the West, are looking to the Alaska Highway and other northern projects as the means of opening millions of square miles of riches. The country is thick with minerals, and its potentialities in fur and timber are almost beyond imagination.

When the war is won and post-war problems of rehabilitation confront Canadian authorities, they may well turn their attention to the great northwest, where lies Canada's wealth. Just as the fertile prairies offered opportunities in the birth of the west, so may this untapped country be developed when the peace of the world is assured and men turn to the task of rebuilding the nation.



The Alaska Highway

"We Will Try We Will Dare"

"We will try; we will dare" is the motto of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, builders of the Panama Canal. They tried, they dared, they succeeded. But it was no cinch. They smashed the highway into being, thousands of them, using the finest road-building equipment ever assembled. They pushed through almost every conceivable type of country except desert.



CRIB, AFTER A DAY'S WORK

Long just a dream in the minds of men, The Road was brought about by the war. It took flaming battle fronts around the world to awaken both nations to the inestimable value of a link with America's "over-seas province."

The two governments forgot about red tape, the hypothetical boundary line between the two countries, and turned on the green light.

The men employed in building The Road were a true cross-section of Americans. There were cooks, clerks, farmers, merchants, lawyers, doctors, professional soldiers, sailors, truck drivers, miners, mechanics and accountants, in fact, men from nearly every trade and profession. Before they went north, most of them had only a rudimentary knowledge of road construction. Some of the units were white, others colored. Among them were a sprinkling of Mexicans, Chinese and Indians.

They came from Maine to California, and from Washington to Florida, representing all creeds and colors. Some came from camps located in the "deep south" and their slow southern drawls contrasted sharply with the close-clipped words of Canadians.

To these men, many of them in their twenties, construction of The Road savoured of high adventure. It was pioneering of the type their ancestors had done in the winning of the west. Adventure in the north had been dramatized in movies and pulp magazines.

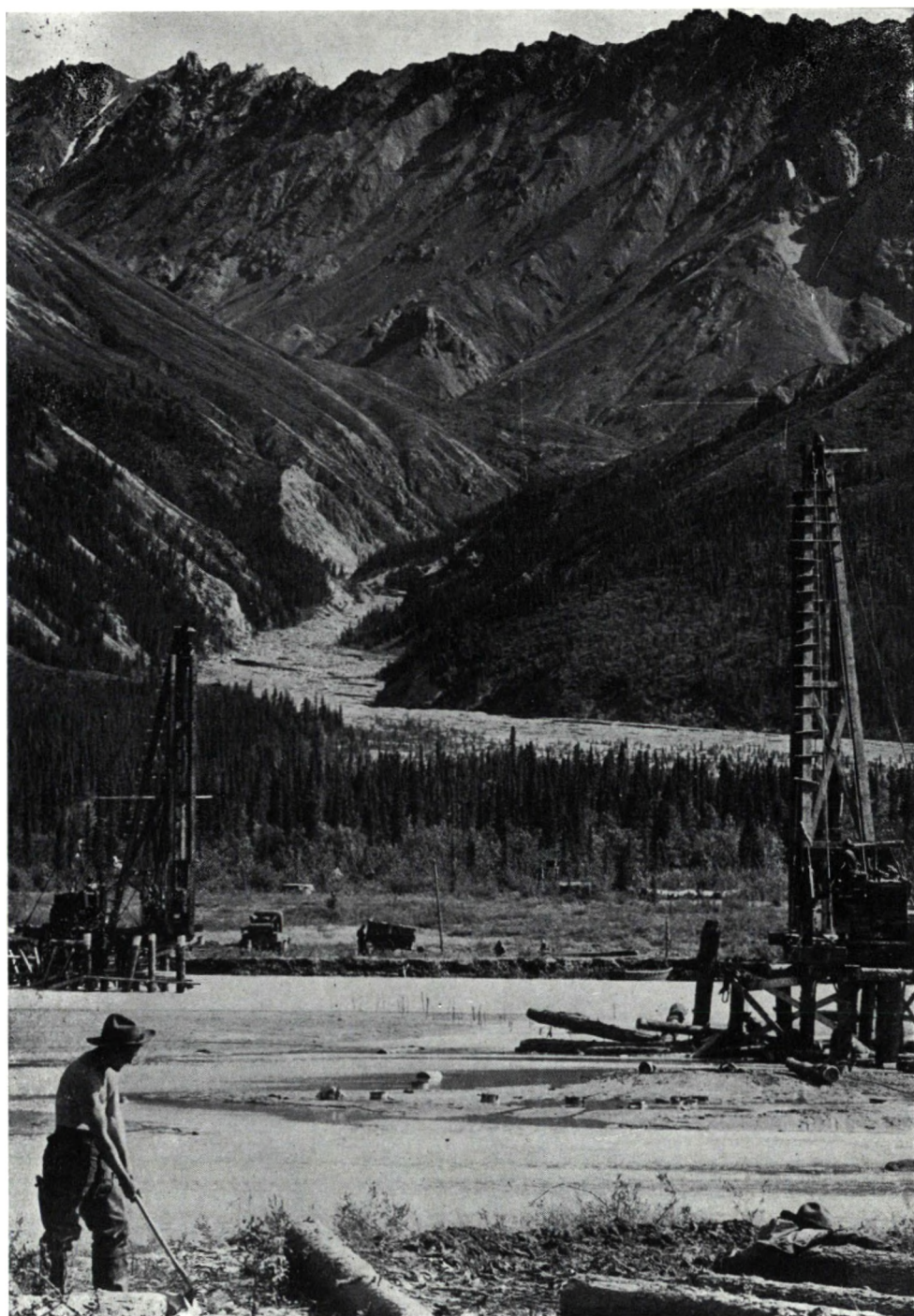


The Alaska Highway



IT'S COLD IN THE NORTH

The Alaska Highway



A BRIDGE IS ERECTED

The Alaska Highway

They pitched into the task with typical American enthusiasm, though many of them had little conception of the hardships and discomforts ahead. But in spite of all those hardships and the fact they lacked recreational facilities, they never wavered in their determination to finish the job.

Humor displayed itself everywhere. There was a lot of wisecracking. Road signs recalling familiar scenes back home were found around the camps. A pathway through the woods might be 42nd Street and Broadway; there were signs of well-known products; arrows showing the way to night clubs and road houses, and the usual Los Angeles city limits marker.

Cold Greets First Troops

On a bleak, sub-zero morning in March, 1942, the first American troops ever to set foot in this area, stepped from a troop train at Dawson Creek, B.C., end of the Northern Alberta Railways. They were the vanguard—quartermasters' troops charged with the responsibility of establishing a railhead camp for the thousands of engineer troops who would follow.

From the time they entered Canada, the soldiers were given a hearty welcome at stations where their train stopped for water or repairs. Though their coming was a secret, the news of an American troop train in town spread like wildfire. The Canadians gave them as best a western-Canadian welcome as possible under the circumstances.

The soldiers pitched their tents, and made ready to receive the engineers that started to arrive the next day. It was no picnic, setting up that camp in the cold along a wind-swept railway. Train after train arrived with soldiers and equipment, and soon heavy trucks and jeeps were familiar sights in Dawson Creek.

Similar advance parties came into Whitehorse, Yukon, through Skagway via the White Pass and Yukon Railway. A colored unit went in through Alaska and started work near the Yukon-Alaskan border.

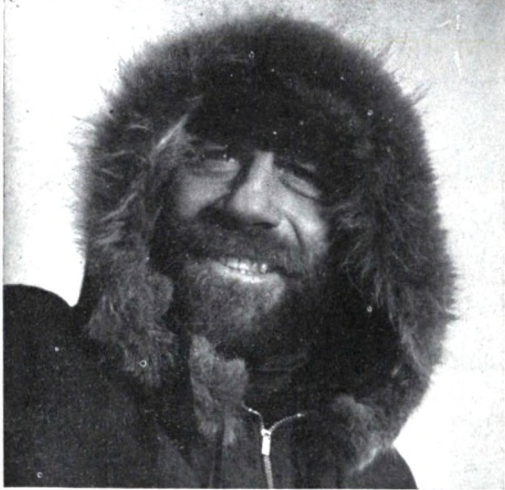
At Dawson Creek, the work of the soldiers became a race against time.

North of the town and across the frozen Peace River, there was a government-graded dirt highway. In winter, the road crossed the ice; in summer, travellers crossed by ferry. In between seasons when the river was freezing or when the ice was moving out, the river could not be crossed. The ice usually went out in April.



The engineers had a real problem on their hands. It was essential that they get all possible equipment and men across that river before the ice went out—a break-up which might last several weeks and prevent the engineers from getting an early start in building The Road.

Twenty miles on the other side of the Peace lay Fort St. John, a small settlement, which soon became a base camp for the engineers.



The Alaska Highway

Once across to the north side of the Peace, the engineers had another problem. North from Fort St. John and along a narrow winter road was Fort Nelson, a trading post. The winter road moved over scores of miles of muskeg, a kind of swamp. The road is all right in winter when the muskeg is frozen, but in summer it's soggy muck 10 and 20 feet deep.

There also were many streams and rivers, not bridged. The command wanted engineer units to start building the highway out of Fort Nelson, but the problem was to get them and their equipment over the winter road and into Fort Nelson before the muskeg thawed and rivers went out.

Between Fort St. John and Fort Nelson, it was nothing but a wild, desolate country, some of it unexplored.

So the race to Fort Nelson started.

Drivers wheeling multiple-tired trucks with trailers attached, began to shuttle back and forth over the bumpy 250 miles. Farmers' trucks and cartage companies were pressed into service. It was a race against the thaw—a tough, tiring race that taxed the stamina of the strongest.

The men working long shifts. Motors were seldom turned off. Drivers relieved one another but the trucks continued the long grind. Some men worked day and night; some for 60 hours at a stretch. Grades were steep, a few at 45-degree angles. Coming down the grades with several tons of equipment loaded behind proved tricky and hazardous.



A Saga of the North

The days became brighter and the thaw started, but they kept on, floundering in a sea of mud, shoving and winching their way north.

River ice began to heave. The engineers laid down sawdust and planks to prevent thawing where trucks crossed the rivers.

Just as rivers looked as though they were going to break up and muskeg become impassable, General Frost came along one night and froze the whole route tighter than an iceberg.

General Frost, incidentally, is a cousin of Russia's General Winter.

Ice cracks in rivers were cemented, the soggy muskeg froze stiff, and everyone danced with glee. It gave the soldiers an extra week to get their supplies north to Fort Nelson. Hundreds of trucks were used day and night.

A pilot who flew along the route one night said, "The stretch to Fort Nelson looked like Broadway. It seemed to be lit up all the way with the headlights of trucks."

Finally, rivers started to go out. But the engineers had won the first round.

There was still the airplane. Men, machines and food were flown to airports in the area.

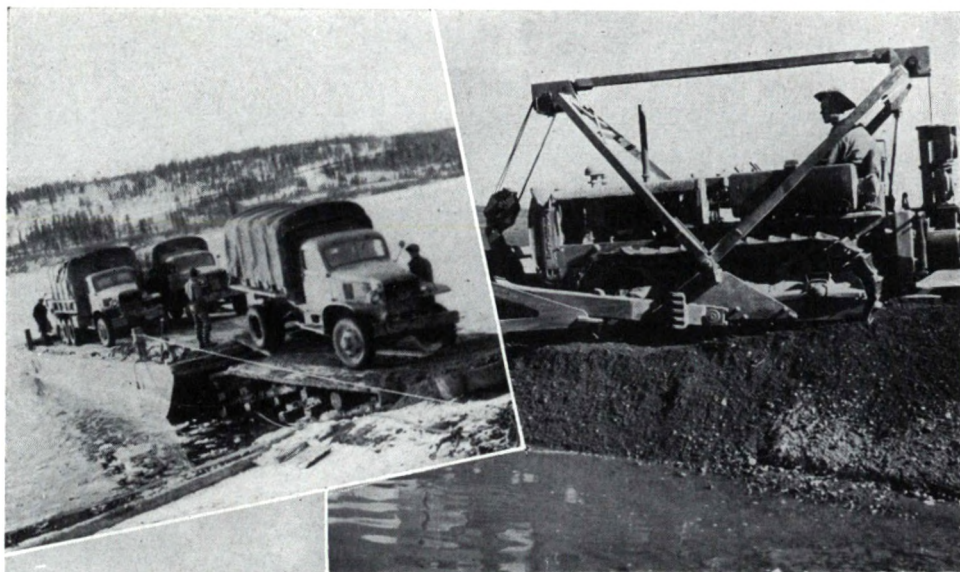
Bushmen Aid With Route

Almost immediately, work was started on America's "Burma" road. Air reconnaissance and ground survey parties aided by experienced Canadian bushmen established the approximate route. These survey parties were the first white men ever to set foot in parts of that little known hinterland.

At first, road construction was under the command of Brigadier-General William H. Hoge, but lack of



The Alaska Highway



BARGES FOR TRUCKS

RIVERS WERE SPANNED

THE BULLDOZER WAS KING

The Alaska Highway

communications between working points caused construction to be divided into two sectors. The Whitehorse or northern section was placed in charge of Brig.-Gen. Hoge, and the Fort St. John or southern sector under Colonel (now Brig.-Gen.) J. A. O'Connor.

Gen. Hoge had four engineer regiments in his sector and Gen. O'Connor had three regiments in the southern sector. There were, of course, attached ancillary troops.

When work got under way, there were units working north from Fort St. John; north and south from Fort Nelson; north and south from points in the Whitehorse area, and in Alaska itself.

Original plan for the soldiers was to build a "tote" road, over which equipment could be hauled and supply lines established. The "tote" road then would be widened, straightened, gravelled and generally brought up to road standards by civilian contractors working under the Public Roads Administration.

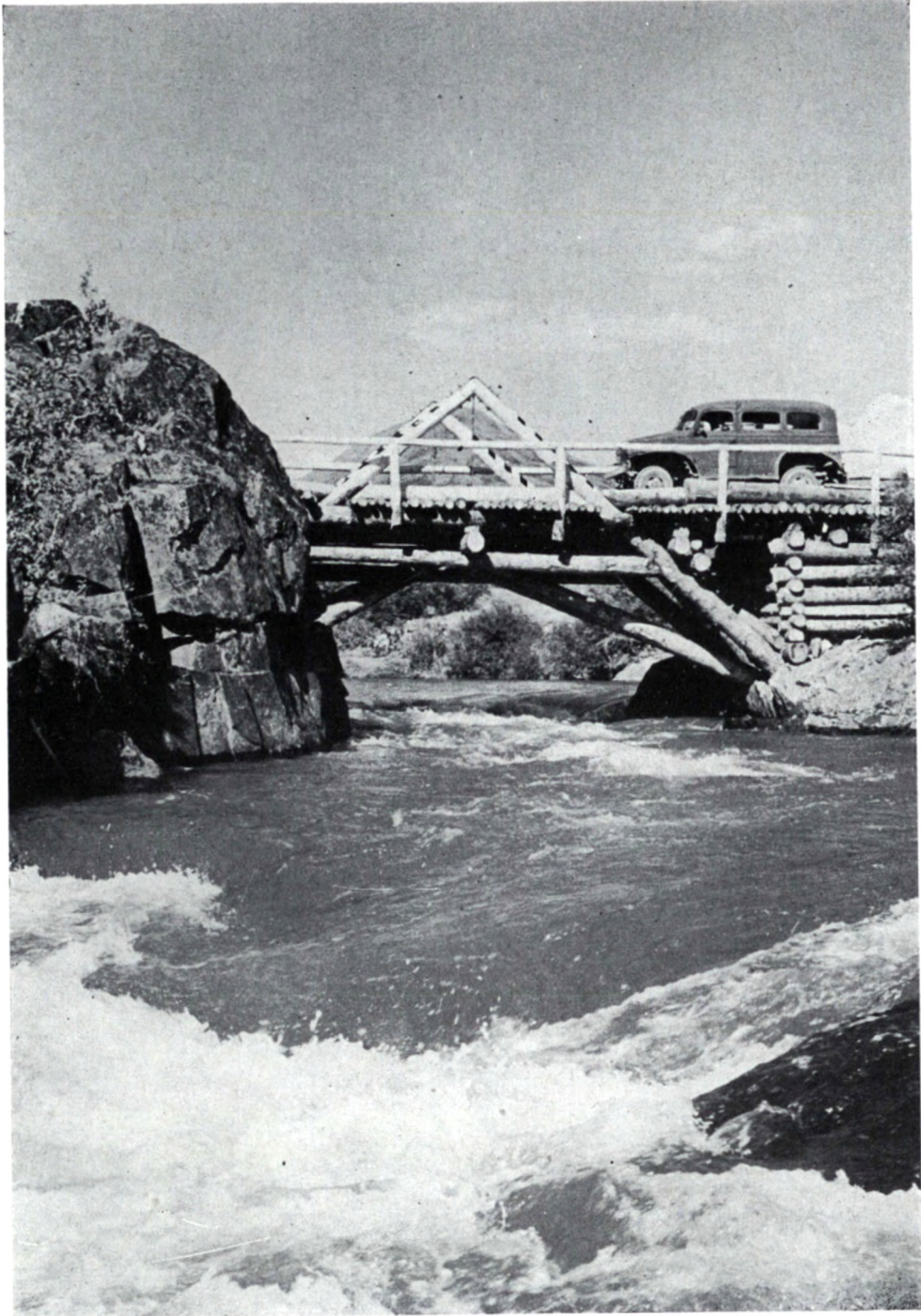
The original idea was abandoned, however, when it became certain that a uniting of all the forces, engineers and contractors, was needed to complete the assignment by the end of the year. War in the Pacific might not wait for the corps to finish its job and the P.R.A. its task.

Roughly, The Road followed this route:

1. Beginning at Dawson Creek, B.C., 400 miles northwest of Edmonton and end of the N.A.R., over a government dirt highway north to Fort St. John, 65 miles.
2. From Fort St. John, where the highway leaves a fairly well inhabited district and plunges into densely-wooded, rolling country, north to Fort Nelson, B.C., 250 miles.
3. From Fort Nelson, a trapper's paradise, past mountains northwest to Watson Lake, on the Yukon-British Columbia border, 360 miles.



The Alaska Highway



TROUT FISHING IS GOOD. TOO

The Alaska Highway

4. From Watson Lake through mountains west and then northwest to Whitehorse, Yukon gold-rush town, 275 miles.

5. From Whitehorse, past beautiful Kluane Lake and skirting St. Elias mountain range, crossing the Alaskan-Yukon border, northwest to Fairbanks, Alaska, 600 miles. The last 100 miles of this section is a part of the Richardson Highway which has been used for some time.



The whole totals nearly 1,600 miles, the vast majority of the way through rough, wild country, where brown bears and grizzlies had lived without man's interference.



TOURISTS' PARADISE

The Alaska Highway



A LAND FOR POETS

Swath is Cut Through Bush

The engineers took the lead, smashing down millions of trees and cutting a wide swath through the country. Every conceivable type of obstacle was met, but the highway had to be pushed through at all costs. Engineer officers were given a good deal of leeway and did not stick to formal road-building technique.



The accent was on drainage, and original specifications set down served only as a guide. As it stood in the spring of 1943, the highway was about 24 feet wide, sufficient for a two-lane road. Considerable work, such as permanent bridges, grading, gravelling and straightening, were in the plans for 1943.

Beyond Fort Nelson, The Road rises rapidly and mountains are in view most of the way. Five summits were met at elevations of between 3,200 and 4,200 feet above sea level.

The artery crosses many rivers with colorful Indian and northern names. These include the Cut Bank, Peace, Sikinni, Muskwa, Upper and Lower Liard, Teslin, Lewes, Tanana and others.

In some places, contracting outfits did pioneering work, but generally they followed in the wake of the engineers improving The Road and bringing it up to minimum requirements. Sometimes, the civilian companies by-passed one another as their section of the highway was completed.



● DOG TEAMS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN TRANSPORTATION IN THE NORTH

The Alaska Highway

In the far north, work did not get into full swing until June. One unit, leaving the White Pass and Yukon Railway at Carcross, started to build east to the highway, reaching it at a point known as Jakes Corners, about 50 miles south of Whitehorse. This unit then pushed southeast.

Another unit in the northern sector made its way by a fairly direct water route to a point 100 miles southeast of Whitehorse, where a base camp was established. Members of this engineer unit started work in both directions.

Striking south from Whitehorse, the Dowell Construction Company smashed through for about 50 miles. The engineers worked north from Whitehorse for 280 miles to near the Alaskan border.

Troops in Alaska were reinforced by civilians working for Lytle and Green, a construction firm. They worked in a southeasterly direction.

With many units working in both directions from base camps, it wasn't many months until they neared one another and finally bulldozer met bulldozer.

During all this time, the men worked under tough conditions. Frigid nights, mud, dust, rain that chilled to the bone, hot days, black flies, gnats and millions upon millions of thirsty mosquitoes were only a few of the hardships encountered.

It's a tough life in the north even for hardened trappers and Indians.

They cursed The Road into being in a dozen American accents.

A few men were lost in accidents, others

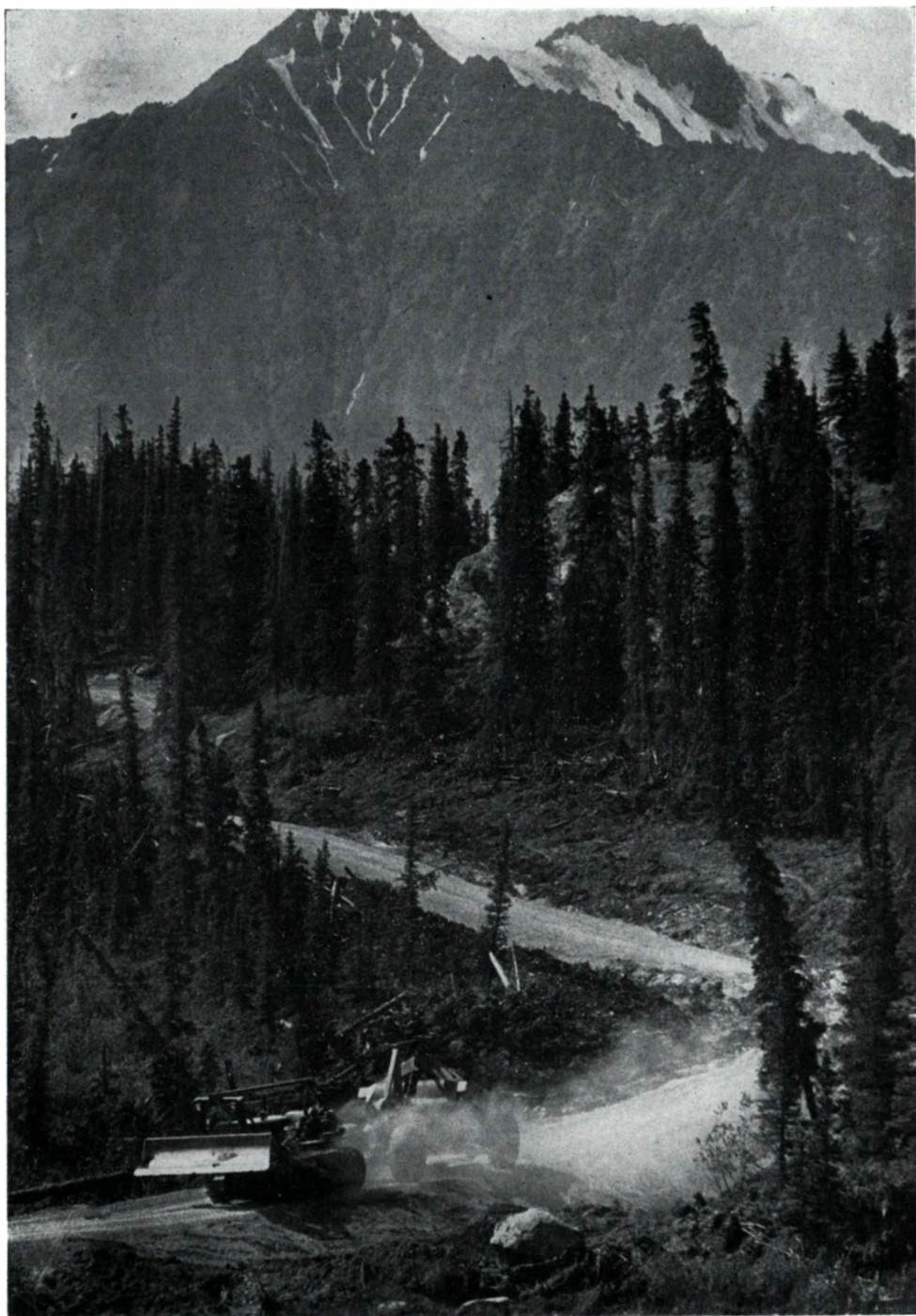


The Alaska Highway



THERE WAS TIME FOR HUMOR

The Alaska Highway



A NEW VIEW AT EVERY TURN

The Alaska Highway



BACK TO CAMP FOR SUPPER

The Alaska Highway

fell sick. But all of them worked with the greatest possible speed. Many of them were inexperienced bushmen or road-builders, but practical experience is the best teacher and it wasn't long before each of them became proficient in his special line.

The highway running over muskeg proved to be one of the biggest headaches. Long stretches had to be corduroied and equipment and men wallowed in the sea of slime. Rivers and streams were bridged with pontoon structures.

The bulldozer was a land battleship. "We just walk 'em down, shove 'em aside and let 'em lay," was the comment of one "cat" driver. He was talking about the endless miles of trees.

Behind the dozers came grading crews that roughed out the roadway with motor graders and pull blades. Then culverts were built and covered, drainage paths made and gravel thrown down. Scrapers built up the 24-foot road. There was plenty of gravel, although some of it had to be hauled long distances.

North Towns Boom in Rush

The Road passes through two important settlements, Fort St. John and Whitehorse.

With the influx of hundreds of civilians and engineer troops, these places boomed. But it was old stuff for Whitehorse, where grizzled prospectors of '98 once set their pokes on the bar after months of searching for "the muck called gold." The country around Whitehorse is dotted with the broken cabins of these get-rich-quick miners. A few of the cabins were put to use again by the men following the trail of '42.

The cabin of Sam McGee, whose cremation Robert W. Service described long before McGee had passed on, had been set aside as an historical monument. But it's back in use again.

Yukon steamers used in '98, pulled high and dry on the river bank at Whitehorse, were used as warehouses.

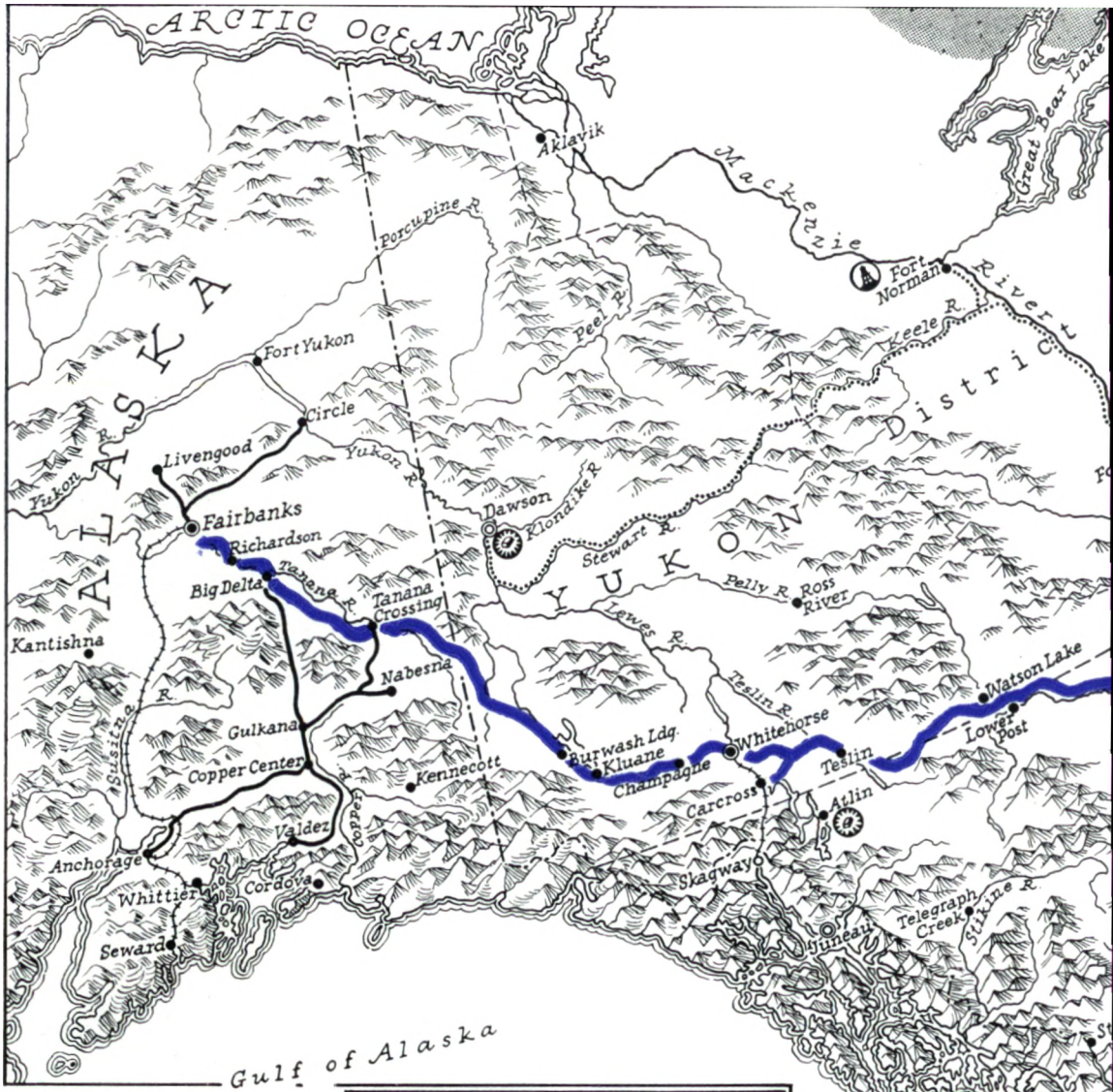


The Alaska Highway

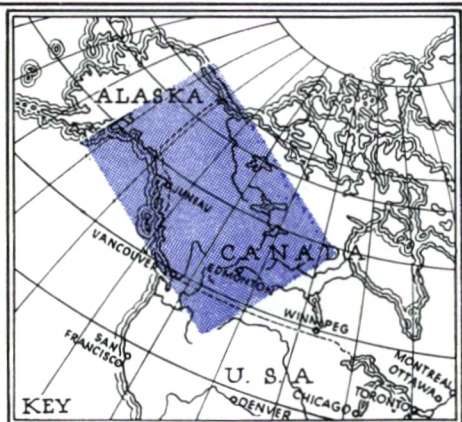


HORSES PLAYED THEIR PART

LOTS OF SNOW



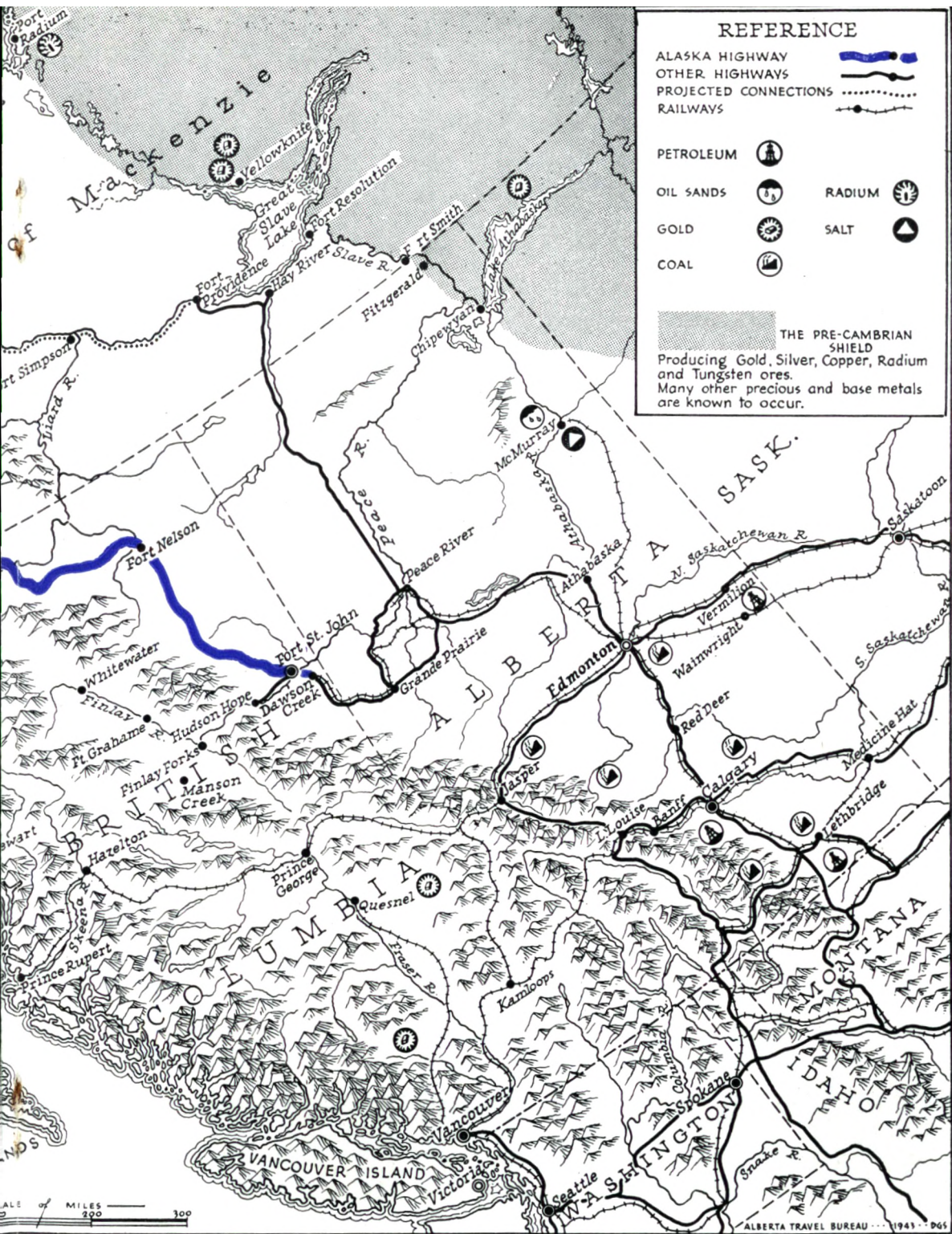
THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA
 in relation to the
 Alaska Highway
 and the natural resources
 of Northwestern Canada.



INFORMATION REGARDING CANADA'S GREAT NORTH-WEST WI

District Superintendent,
 Dept. Colonization & Agriculture,
 Canadian National Railways,
 10418 101st Street,
 EDMONTON, Alta.

District Superintendent,
 Dept. Immigration & Colonization,
 Canadian Pacific Railway Company,
 C. F. E. Building,
 EDMONTON, Alta.



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 VICTORIA, B. C.

The Alaska Highway

Boosted Road Before Start

A booster for the Alaska highway long before it became a reality was Hon. James A. MacKinnon, Minister of Trade and Commerce in the Canadian Government. Here is what he has to say about The Road:

"The new road known as the Alaska Highway, now being constructed through Canadian territory under U.S. auspices and to be turned over to Canada on the conclusion of hostilities, opens tremendous possibilities of usefulness; not only in wartime but in peacetime as well.

"This project undoubtedly will stimulate to a very great extent the development of adjacent natural resources in the spheres of mining, lumbering, fishing and oil production. After

the war, this road is bound to prove a magnet to tourists, making access to the most scenic portions of North America as well as to one of the world's most attractive big-game hunting areas.

"Of particular significance is the fact that the Alaska Highway will form an indispensable link in that great chain of connecting roads which constitute the master Pan-American highway, connecting the two continents of this hemisphere.

"This system will be the longest and most strategic in the world.

"When the war is won and opportunities for long-distance motoring become once more available to large numbers of people, it will be possible to travel by car from points in the Yukon, and in Alaska, to the most southerly communities of Latin America.

"This road will not only open up fresh avenues to trade and military co-operation, but also to international friendship and understanding. A reasonable discerning glance into the future will show that this same Alaska Highway is destined to form part of the land communication system which will follow the route of round-the-world airways. These airways will connect the larger centers in eastern Canada and U.S. through Edmonton to Alaska, Russia, Japan and the Far East."

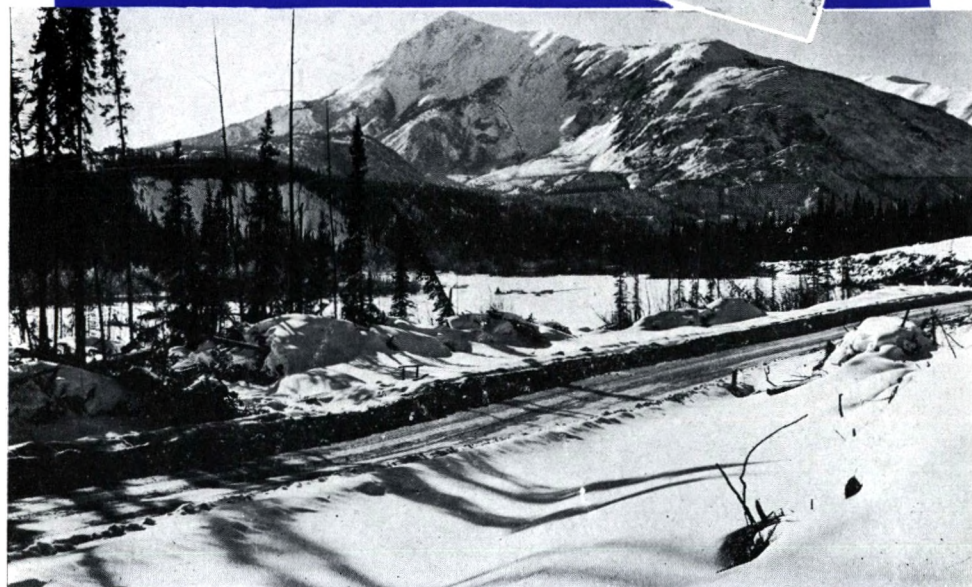


THE NIGHTS WERE FRIGID

Road Links Many Ports

The Road connects a number of airports which were under construction by Canadian authorities before the war. These airports were used for a commercial airline to Alaska by Yukon Southern Air Transport, Ltd.

The Alaska Highway



A WINTER WONDERLAND

The Alaska Highway



THE BEST EQUIPMENT WAS USED

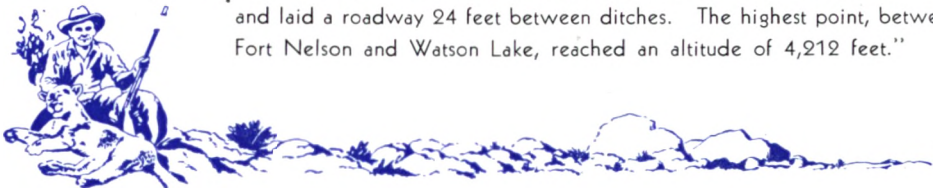
The Alaska Highway



OFFICIAL OPENING, NOVEMBER 20th, 1942

Before the opening dedication ceremonies, War Secretary Stimson summed up the achievement of The Road in these words:

"Ten thousand soldiers divided into seven army engineer regiments and 6,000 civilian workmen under the direction of the Public Roads Administration completed the job in slightly more than six months. They pushed forward at the rate of eight miles a day, bridged 200 streams and rivers and laid a roadway 24 feet between ditches. The highest point, between Fort Nelson and Watson Lake, reached an altitude of 4,212 feet."



The Alaska Highway



ROLLING HILLS, DENSELY WOODED

Truck Convoy Makes Trip

It was a 30-below zero day, November 20th, 1942, when The Road was opened with ceremony at Soldiers' Summit, overlooking Kluane Lake, amid a scene of great beauty. After the red, white and blue ribbon was cut, a convoy of trucks left for Fairbanks, the first trucks to travel over the highway from Dawson Creek to Fairbanks.

Hon. Ian Mackenzie, Canadian Minister of Pensions and National Health, and E. L. Bartlett, Acting Governor of Alaska, cut the ribbon, releasing for the northern front a flood of war supplies vital to the strength of the United Nations.

The ceremony concluded with a band playing the national anthems of Canada and the United States. Flags of the two nations were raised.

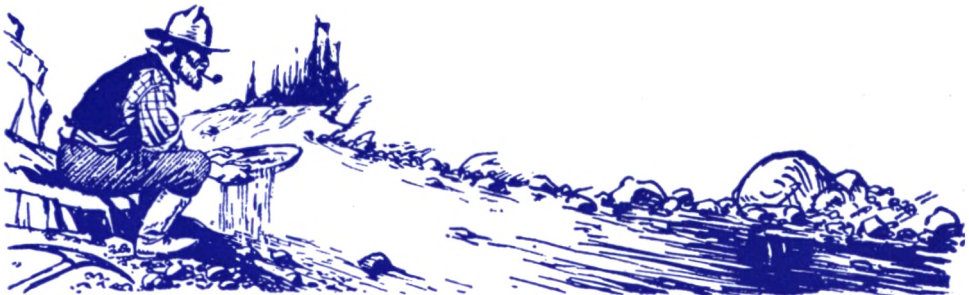
General O'Connor described the Road as a "unique tie" between the two countries and declared he hoped it would be "an unbreakable bond of understanding between our lands."

The ribbon was held by four enlisted men of the U.S. Engineers, Cpl. Refines Sims, Jr., a negro soldier from Philadelphia, and Pte. Alfred Jalufka, of Kennedy, Texas, representing the northern sector, and Master Sgt. Andrew E. Doyle, of Philadelphia, and Cpl. John T. Reilly, of Detroit, representing the southern sector.

There were many other officials present, including Maj.-Gen. G. R. Pearkes, V.C., officer commanding the Pacific Coast Command for the Canadian Army, and J. S. Bright, engineer in charge of the permanent road for the P.R.A. Scarlet-coated Royal Canadian Mounted Police from the Carcross and Dawson City detachments lent real color to the scene.

It was a great day for Dr Charles Camsell, Canadian Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, who was present. He said, "To no one does this highway mean more than it does to me. It traverses my own country, for I was born at a small trading post on the Liard River

"As a young man I tramped across this country on snowshoes in search for gold. I have canced down many of its rivers in the course of geological explorations. In later years, I have flown



The Alaska Highway

across it by airplanes. Its appeal to me, therefore, is strong, even though to you, the builders of this highway, it may have appeared harsh, forbidding and inhospitable."

It was a great day for all Canadians and Americans.

Civilian Help

Given Praise The work of civilian contractors under the Public Roads Administration deserves a great deal of praise. There were 55 of these companies, engaging 6,000 men, the largest civilian force ever to be employed on one road-building job.

The companies worked under the supervision of management contractors, and these included the following: Okes Construction Company, St. Paul, Minn.; R. Melville Smith Company, Ltd., Toronto; Dowell Construction Company, Seattle, Wash.; Lytle and Green, Sioux Falls and Des Moines, Iowa.

Independent contractors were: General Construction Company, Ltd., Granville Island, Vancouver, B.C.; E. W. Elliott Company, Seattle. Miller Construction Company, Edmonton, was awarded a contract for pole line construction, with Oman-Smith, Nashville, Tenn., as sub-contractor.

Road History

Is Interesting The history of The Road long before construction began is an interesting one.

In 1928, the subject of the building of a highway to Alaska was broached by an American, but he wanted the route to travel through British Columbia. His idea was given considerable publicity and eventually a commission was appointed by the U.S. to study its feasibility. Agitation for this B.C. route continued in spasms for a number of years.

However, it seemed that neither the American or the Canadian government was taking any serious note of the possibility of a highway through Canada to Alaska. Depression helped to kill talk.

In 1933, agitation again began to grow both north and south of the 49th parallel. The U.S. issued a report on its possibilities, and the Canadian government appointed a commission to consider the B.C. route. The commission was headed by an Albertan, Hon. Charles Stewart.

There was little thought at the time for a prairie route. All the talk was about a paradise for tourists, and that the route should go through the mountainous country of B.C., ideal for scenic beauty

As talk about a road increased, westerners began to point out the advisability of a route through the prairies. Possibility of attracting thousands of tourists was seen and more and more people took up the cry for the prairie route.

The Alaska Highway



SURVEYING A LINK

GENERAL AND AIDE

A STANDARD WAS KEPT

The Alaska Highway

In 1938, the U.S. government appointed the Alaskan International Highway Commission and the Canadian government co-operated by appointing another commission which became known as the British Columbia-Yukon-Alaska Highway Commission. Some work was accomplished.

All this time, prairie organizations were trying to get recognition for their proposed route.

Eventually, groups interested in the prairie route both in Canada and the U.S. formed an organization known as the United States-Canada-Alaska Prairie Highway association. This association was divided into two branches, a Canadian section under J. A. MacKenzie, of the Regina Board of Trade, and an American section, under H. L. Halvorson, of Minot, North Dakota.



BRIG.-GEN. O'CONNOR

The two groups made representations to Ottawa and to Washington, giving sound and constructive arguments for the prairie route.

Then war struck in the Pacific.

Another interesting feature of The Road is the simple agreement between Canada and the U.S.

1. The U.S. was to build The Road, using engineer troops for surveys and initial construction.
2. Canadian and American contractors were to be used, operating under the Public Roads Administration of the U.S., for follow-up contract work.
3. The U.S. was to maintain the highway until six months after the cessation of the war unless Canada desired a return of the Canadian portion of The Road before that time.
4. Canada was to waive import duties, tolls and other charges for traffic moving between U.S. and Alaska.
5. Canada also was to permit use of rock, gravel, timber and other materials along the highway.



The Road is Completed

An artery to new lands is completed. The finishing touches are to come. Probably they will be done in the spring of 1944.

It is a miracle that came true.

Their work done, their contracts completed, thousands of young and old American and Canadian workers have returned home, after spending nine months to a year on the job.

The workers, many of them with long beards, are glad the job is done. They are glad to get back to their loved ones. Some of them are spending only a short time at home. They have accepted other contracts on important projects.

The job of converting the original tote road into an all-weather military highway has been under the direction of Brigadier-General L. D. Worsham, Division Engineer for the Northwest Division, U.S. Engineers.

Will the road be a tourist attraction?

Nobody can answer this question. Some say "yes" but the majority disagree. Thousands of Americans, soldiers and civilians classify it as merely "a link to other fields." General Worsham can't even answer the question. He says, "I only am a humble army engineer, not a prophet."

Brig.-Gen. Worsham was one of the "leading hands" in the building of the road. He was respected and liked by all his men, and by the Canadians, with whom he worked side by side in creating a closer union between Canada and the United States.



BRIG.-GEN. WORSHAM



The Alaska Highway



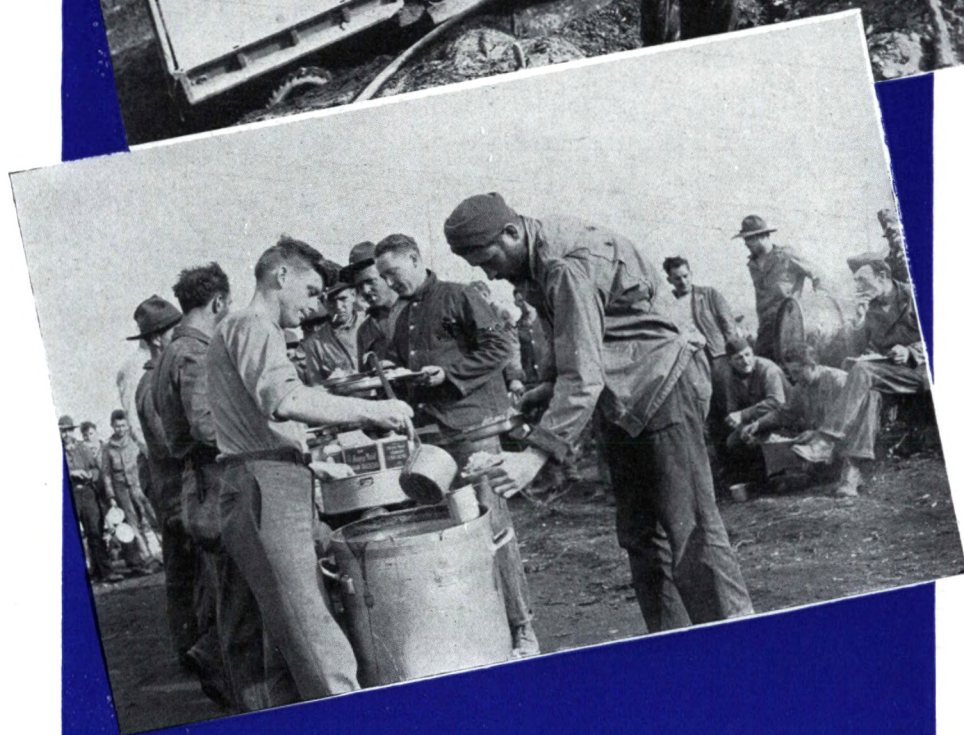
CUT ALONG MOUNTAIN BASE

The Alaska Highway



SNOW-CAPS THE YEAR ROUND

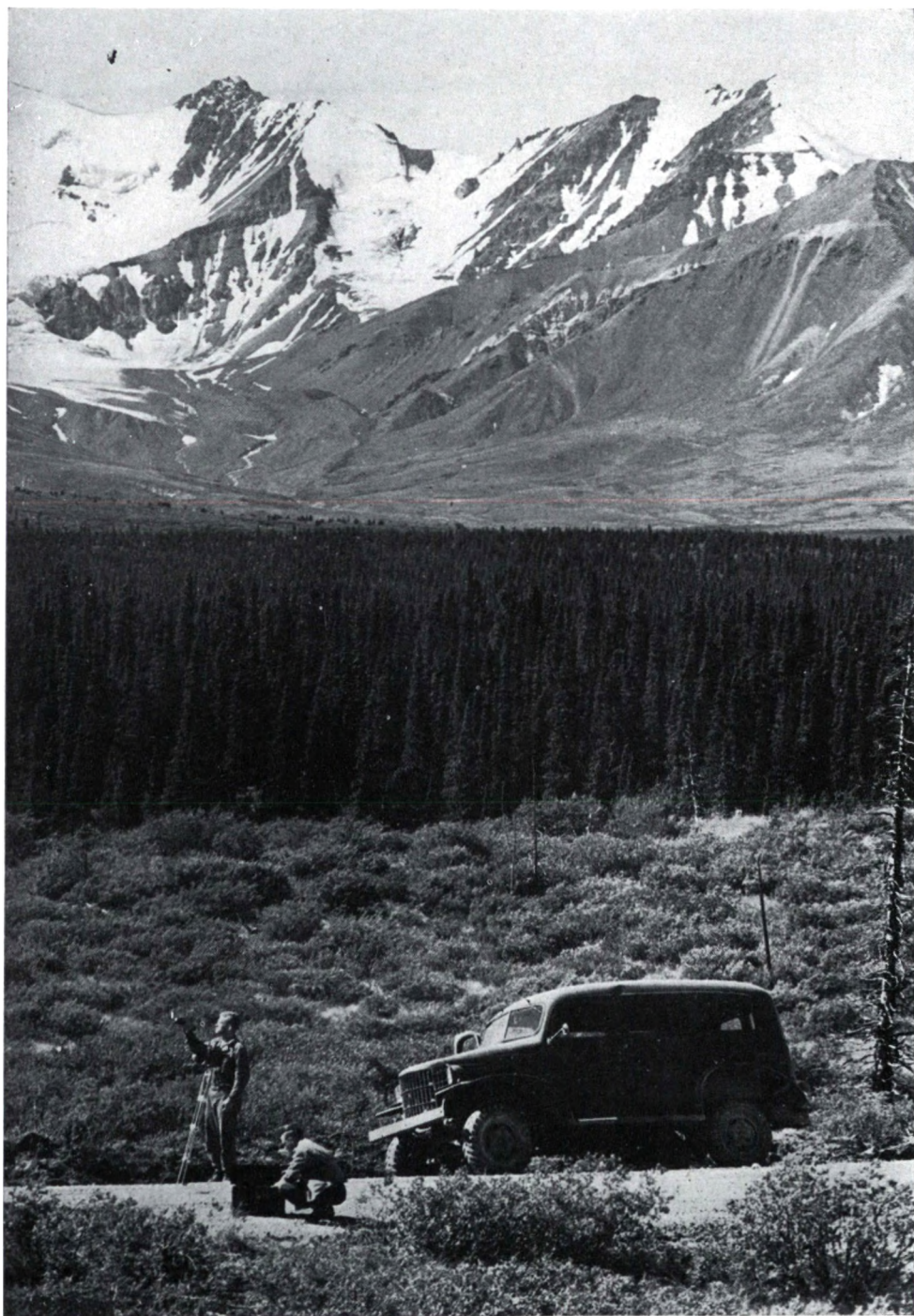
The Alaska Highway



KNOCKING DOWN GLACIAL CLIFF

CHOW TIME

The Alaska Highway



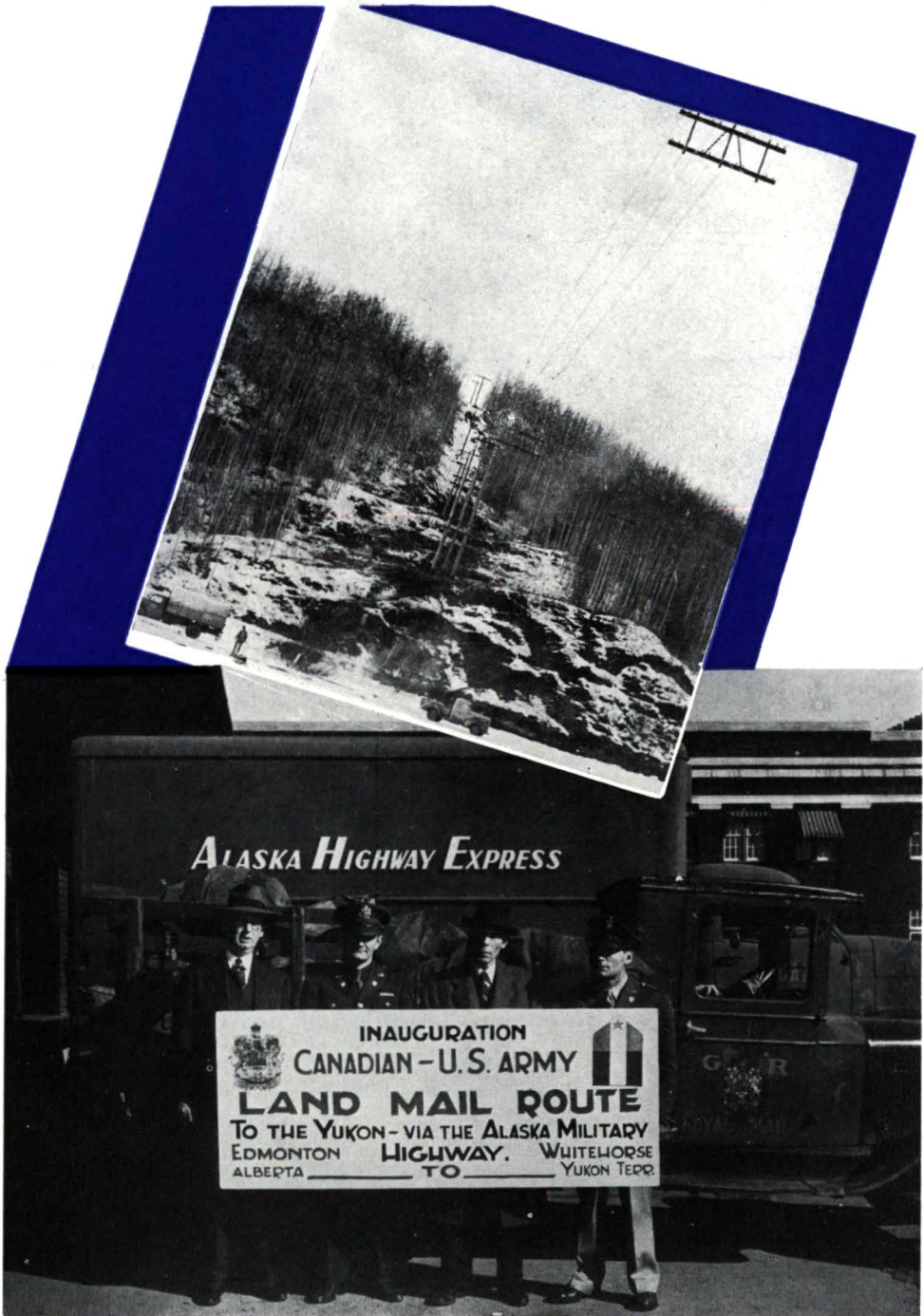
PHOTOGRAPHER'S HEAVEN

The Alaska Highway



TAKE YOUR CHOICE

The Alaska Highway

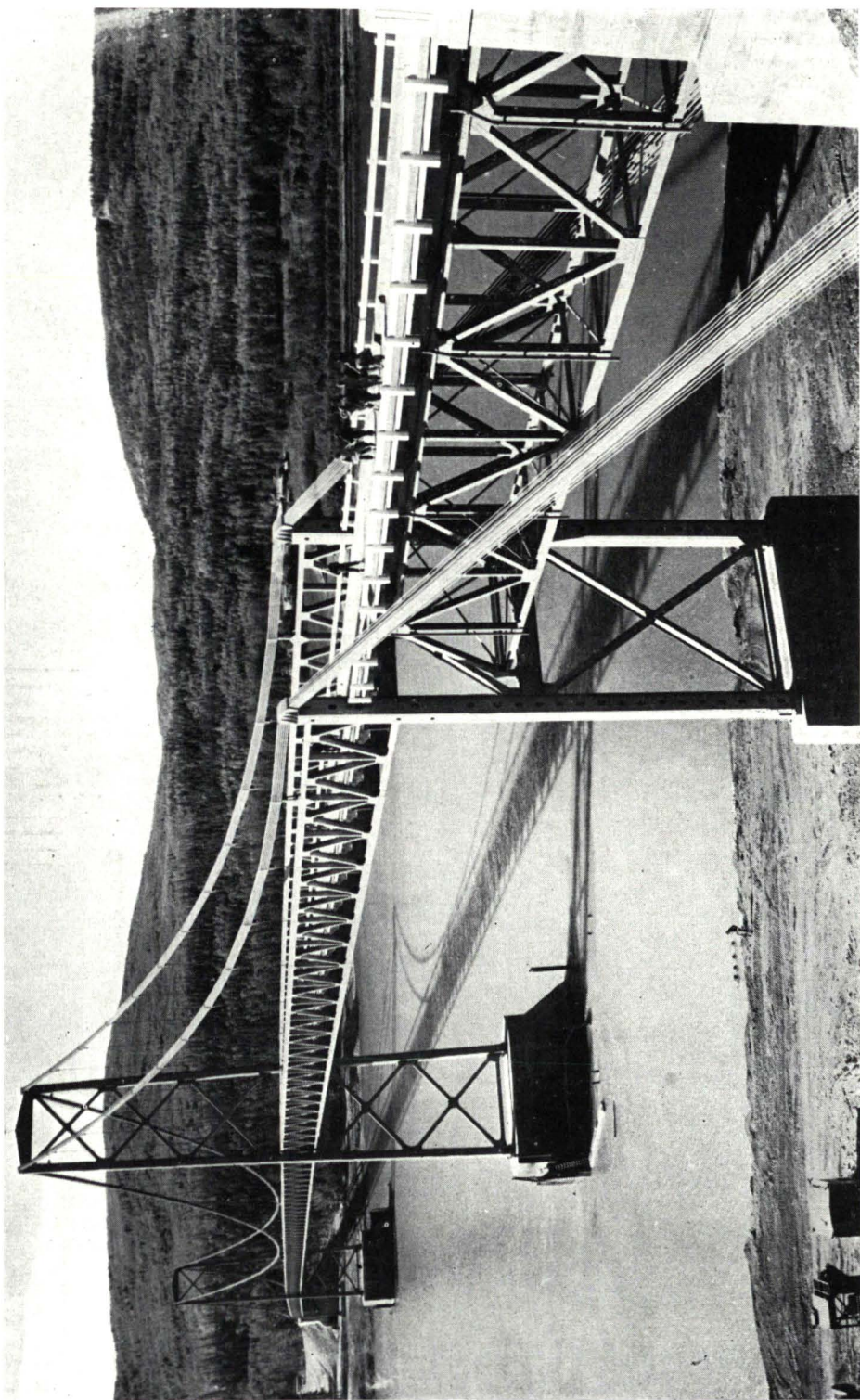


ALASKA HIGHWAY EXPRESS

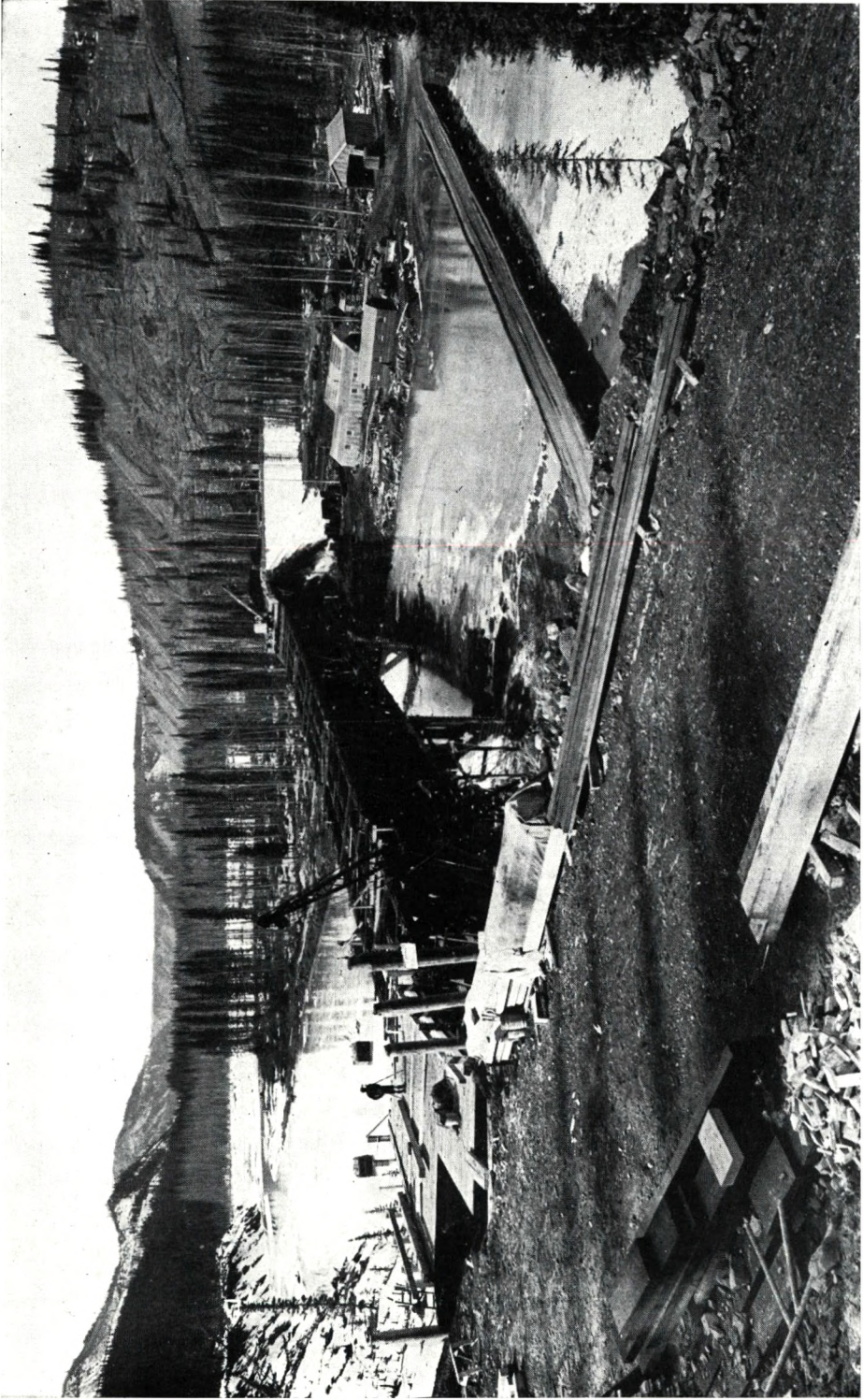
INAUGURATION
CANADIAN - U.S. ARMY
LAND MAIL ROUTE
TO THE YUKON - VIA THE ALASKA MILITARY
EDMONTON **HIGHWAY.** WHITEHORSE
ALBERTA TO YUKON TERR.

A TELEPHONE LINE WAS
BUILT

REGULAR MAIL AND EXPRESS
ESTABLISHED

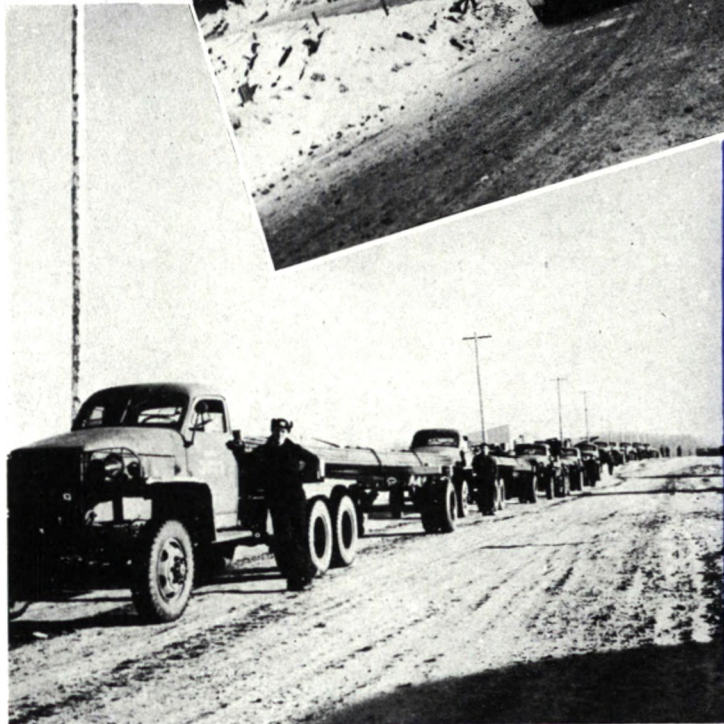


PEACE RIVER BRIDGE AT TAYLOR'S FLATS



A PERMANENT BRIDGE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The Alaska Highway



TO FAIRBANKS BY BUS

TRUCK CONVOY

The Alaska Highway



READY FOR ACTION

TALES *about the Road*



"COPPER JOE," OLDEST INDIAN
AT BURWASH LANDING

Soft wisps of gray smoke rose from the chimney of an isolated log cabin in the vast, uncharted wilderness north of Whitehorse, Yukon.

Mrs. Dorothy Mackintosh reflected as she watched the flames through the open door in her mountain stove leap and dodge. Sparks broke free, sputtered and died.

She was alone, a lone white woman in a wild, frozen hinterland.

She looked back on the days when she had graduated from Columbia University with the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. She and her husband had come to the Yukon seven years ago. He was a former member of the Northwest Mounted Police during the Klondike gold rush, and had returned to the country he loved to try and regain his health, taking his wife with him. They

settled at Bear Creek, 100 miles from Whitehorse.

Three years later in 1938, her husband died while the couple was on a visit to the outside. Life in the north was more attractive for her than her native California so Mrs. MacKintosh returned to Bear Creek.

She operates a little trading post, tending to the wants of Indians, trappers and prospectors.

She smiled as she relaxed in an easy chair. She smiled because civilization, from which she and her husband had fled, had been brought to her own front door.

Yes, construction of the Alaska Highway brought civilization to the door of Mrs. MacKintosh's trading post cabin. And it made her happy.

» » « «

Indians living in the sparsely-inhabited country through which The Road runs thought the white men who came to build the highway were crazy.

One of the chiefs in the Fort Nelson area came upon a huge bulldozer pushing its way through



The Alaska Highway

giant trees. Later, telling the story of meeting that "monster" the chief said, "I thought it was the old devil himself, kicking down trees and digging in the earth."

» » « «

Even-tempered and philosophical, the Indians couldn't grasp what all the speed was about. They understood that a road was being built, but why, they asked, was everybody in such a hurry?

When told about Hitler's plans for world conquest, one of them said, "What's he want all that land for; he sure die some day."

» » « «

U.S. Engineer soldiers arriving in Fort St. John about March 19th sat in pontoons towed behind trucks.

As they rode through the town they waved and cheered from their places in the pontoons, which eventually were used to bridge rivers and streams. It was a new wrinkle for folks in this trading post town.

"Imagine," one woman said as she watched them going through the town, "getting to St. John by boat."

» » « «

There's one Indian, George Johnston, of Teslin Bay, who thinks the Alaska Highway is a swell idea.

In 1933, George purchased an automobile after a good season on his trap line. The car was shipped by rail and water about the same time as George realized that cars need roads.



Undaunted, he cleared out three miles of road through the bush, decided to make the car pay for itself by operating it up and down his private road and charging his friends for pleasure rides.

The Alaska Highway may help George's business.

» » « «

American soldiers have cursed the pesky mosquitoes in a dozen dialects. The stories about these "dive-bombers" are many and varied. There's one about how two soldiers filled a huge mosquito with several hundred gallons of gasoline before they realized it wasn't a Douglas transport.

» » « «

Two mosquitoes in a tent were discussing the merits of two sleeping doughboys. One said, "Let's not eat them here. Let's drag them outside."

"Oh, no," the other replied, "if we do the big fellows will get them."





EDMONTON

Crossroads of the World

I was born in 1792.

I was conceived in the mind of a trader whose intrepid search for lovely, gleaming, luxurious furs to deck milady's shoulders at the King's Court in London, brought him far up the Saskatchewan River.

I found my first home in the fort which my creator built, sturdy and strong from the pines and spruce. I was nurtured among the Indians and a few whites who came to trade.

I remember the first ox cart. In the eyes of the man and woman it carried I saw reflected my own image. I saw more come by saddle, oxcart, covered wagon. Wives and children joined husbands and fathers.

Their products filled the granaries and the sheds. The railroad came . . . the immigrants came . . . for the land here is good land, the valleys are fertile, the rivers broad and stored beneath are the very riches of heaven—coal, oil, salt.

I sent my sons away in 1914 but when they returned, new life came to me. Strength was added to strength, and my vision grew wide as the great northland itself. Radium, gold, silver, zinc, lead, tungsten, iron.

I am getting along in years now. Soon I shall see my one hundred and fifty-second year. But I am not old. Rather, I am young again. The pride and vitality of youth flows through me.

I strove because I was earthbound. But now I have taken to the air and the world is on my doorstep.

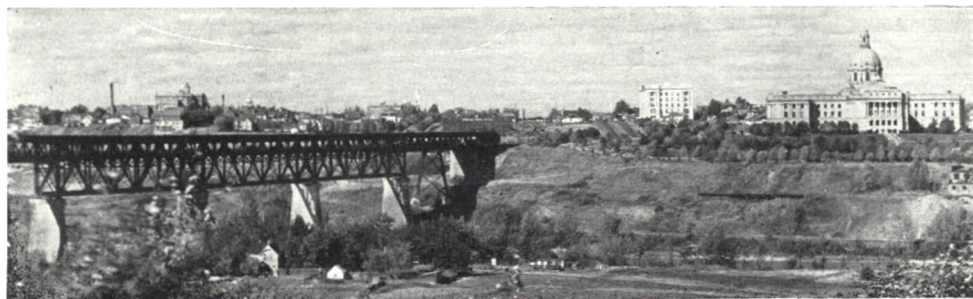
I see Russia, China, Japan, India, just over my borders, and to reach them you must come through my home.

I am not satisfied yet: I saw the fur trader come—I spurred him on, and his bundles are now even greater. I saw the farmer come—I inspired him, and his produce feeds the world of hungry people. I saw the pioneers come—merchant, minister, farmer, builder, newsman, industrialist, pilot. I challenged them all to achieve.

But I am not satisfied. Now I send them into fields they did not reach yesterday.

I am the spirit of a new world; I am the spirit of industry and enterprise.

I am the spirit of Edmonton.—R.T.R.





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