1903 The Year Book of British Columbia R.E. Gosnell

THE YEAR BOOK

- OF -

BRITISH COLUMBIA

- AND -

Manual of Provincial Information

- BY -

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VICTORIA, B. C.
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locations which may be close together, that it is hard to estimate figures of valuation.

Labour — Whites scarce in summer at $2 to $2.50 per day, plentiful in winter at $25 to $30 per month; Chinese plentiful in summer at $1 per day, winter 75c. per day or $12 to $15 per month; Japanese $5 to $15 per month in winter; Indians plentiful at good wages, but will seldom work except on contract or berry-picking. White labour in harvest time is somewhat scarce, and cannot be procured except at high wages.

George W. Beebe, Agassiz: Kent Municipality is located 62 miles east of Vancouver; Harrison River Station is located at the mouth of the Harrison River, where it empties into the Fraser. A large sawmill, a shingle mill, two general stores, etc., comprise the settlement, with an Indian reserve. Ruby Creek, the eastern boundary, is an Indian reserve, with one store and a station. Agassiz is the principal station in the municipality, and the most important along the Canadian Pacific Railway for many miles. The Dominion Government Experimental Farm is located directly opposite the C. P. R. station. Six miles northwest is the Harrison Hot Springs, hotel and pleasure resort, with Harrison Lake, nearly 30 miles long. Here is located one of the largest hotels in the province. Agassiz Valley proper is a fine farming district of very limited area, almost entirely closed in on three sides by low mountains. Six or seven miles distant and across the Fraser River is the snow-capped peak of Cheam Mountain, that rises some 7,000 or more feet from the Fraser.

Cereals, root crops and grasses as in other districts on this side of the river. Considerable quantities of hops are grown here, and averaged in 1900 about three-quarters of a ton to the acre; the crop is shipped partly directly to England, and the balance to Eastern points.

Some very high mountain land, I am told, to be had; small quantities of timber lands to be pre-empted within ten to fifteen miles, good for farming purposes, I am informed.

Labour — Whites, generally at $1.50 per day; Chinese, plentiful at $1 per day; Japanese, a few at 50 cents to $1 per day; Indians, a good many, but usually work by the job and hop-picking. Chinamen are in preponderance.

THE NORTHWEST COAST OF THE MAINLAND.

Including the various settlements at Howe Sound, Squamish, Froek, Bute Inlet, Bella Coola, etc. Communication with these settlements is maintained altogether by steamers, there being no roads, and the character of the country being of such a nature that their construction is all but impossible, and must of necessity remain in abeyance until the population is sufficient to justify it. The country is, without exception, thickly wooded, principally with Douglas fir, spruce, hemlock, red cedar, balsam fir, maple, alder, birch and other woods, and a great variety of underbrush. The coast line is indented along its whole length with deep fiords, which run many miles into the interior, and at the heads of which are large streams. The shores of these fiords are, except where rivers debouch, almost invariably precipitous. At the mouths of the streams and along their valleys are generally flats, fit for agricultural purposes after they are cleared of timber. As may be imagined from the description given, the precipitation is excessive, consisting almost entirely of rain, the snowfall, owing to the influence of the sea, being comparatively small, and the temperature, from the same cause, never very low. The markets of this part consist mostly of loggers' camps and Indians.

Howe Sound includes all that part at the entrance of the Sound, including Anvil, Gambier, Keat's and Bowen Islands, where there are a good many settlers, principally engaged in fruit culture, for which this part is well suited. Communication is maintained altogether by water, the country being too mountainous for making a road to Burrard Inlet. The distance from the Sound to Vancouver by water is 10

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miles, and to Nanaimo about 23 miles; these are the nearest markets. Very fine fruit is produced in this section, which finds a good market in Vancouver.

Squamish is a settlement in the valley of the river of that name, at the head of Howe Sound, about 40 miles by water from Vancouver. It is comparatively a sparsely settled district, and as it is heavily timbered, necessitates much clearing, and cereals are not produced to any extent; fruit-raising and hop-growing are found more profitable. The hops produced here are of excellent quality, and the land is well adapted to that purpose.

Mr. A. G. Deighton and Mr. N. Frolander, Froek, which is a settlement at Malaspina Strait, about 65 miles from Vancouver: There are no roads, trails or railroads. Fish and game in abundance. Potatoes are grown in fair quantities, the price being about $25 per ton. Timothy and red clover are grown for home stock; yield, about 3 tons of hay per acre. Fruits succeed well if attended to. Labour — Whites, $2.50 to $3 per day; Chinese, 90 cents; Japanese, $1; Indians, $3 — all without board.

Bute Inlet is about 130 miles to the northward of Vancouver. The climate is described by those who have visited the district as quite equable and the soil of excellent quality, but it is timbered in some parts heavily. The Southgate and Homalko Rivers empty into the head of the Inlet, and it was the valley of the latter which was originally selected as the route of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and later for the proposed British Pacific. The settlers who have taken up land are well satisfied with their lot, and anticipate that a thriving town will spring up in the future. The land is wooded with alder, maple, cedar and a few fir trees. It costs from $30 to $40 per acre to clear and leave it ready for planting, not including the removal of stumps. There are some bottom lands up the Homalko River Valley, which would cost but $15 per acre to clear.

Bella Coola is at the head of Bentinck Arm, about 400 miles to the northwest of Victoria, with which communication is maintained by the coasting steamers, which all call there. A fine wharf has been constructed by the Government, and there is every facility for loading and discharging. Bella Coola has been established by a thriving colony of Norwegian settlers.

Mr. G. A. Gibson: The Bella Coola colony is situated inland a distance of about 60 miles from the coast line, and running eastward about 30 miles, with a gradual rise from the sea to an altitude of about 900 feet at the head of the valley. It has a climate very different from what is generally found upon the coast, the humidity, even at the mouth of the river, being much less than on the coast, and as the valley is ascended it quickly changes to a drier climate, a marked difference being found even a few miles up from the head of the inlet.

With regard to crops grown here, it has been fully demonstrated by the few settlers who were here for several years previous to the advent of the Norwegian colonists, that the various roots, vegetables and corn can be successfully raised, and of excellent quality. Wheat and oats have also been tried and proved very satisfactory.

The timber of this valley is varied, principally cedar, fir, spruce, cottonwood, alder, maple, birch and willow.

Winter sets in generally the latter part of December. The winters are not severe, although the temperature has been as low as 10 degrees below zero, but as a rule it seldom reaches lower than 12 degrees above — that is, 20 degrees of frost. Two or three feet of snow usually falls, chiefly in January. Sleighing lasts from six to nine weeks. From information gleaned, the winters are sometimes very open, with frequent rains. Spring sets in about the beginning of April, sometimes earlier.

B. Brynildson, Bella Coola: Potatoes yield 300 bushels per acre; price, $20 per ton. Timothy is mostly grown for hay; I estimate the production to be 2½ tons per acre. Red Top production, 3½ tons per acre; price, $12 per ton. The soil and weather seem to be favourable for all kinds of small fruits.

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