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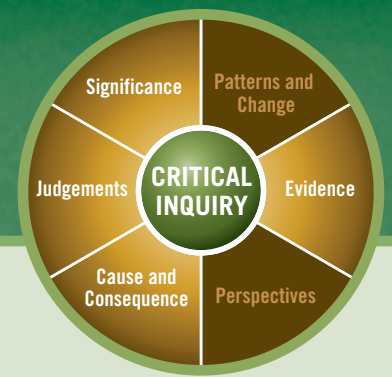
# The Development of British Columbia

## Chapter Outcomes

In this chapter, you will study the development of the province of British Columbia during the 19th century. By the end of the chapter, you will

- assess the impact of the Cariboo Gold Rush on the development of British Columbia
- identify factors that led to the expansion of Canada to include British Columbia, including issues involving the Oregon Territory
- describe the shift in British Columbia's trade patterns from north-south and overseas to east-west within Canada
- evaluate the influence of immigration on the society of British Columbia, and relate the status of ethnic minorities to societal attitudes of the time
- discuss the contributions of immigrants to Canada's development
- describe the components of the British Columbia provincial government





## What led British Columbia to become a Canadian province?

The Pacific Northwest was the last part of North America to be explored and settled by Europeans. What path did British Columbia follow compared with the other colonies in British North America? Who or what had the most influence on its development—individuals, groups, or environmental factors?

### Key Terms

Oregon Territory  
Aboriginal title  
gold rush  
annexation



Imagine being in the place of James Douglas, who in 1848 was appointed governor of the colony of Vancouver Island. Read his quote below, and discuss what his job might have included. How might he have related to the different people in his colony—the Chinese, for example, or the Songish, shown above? What challenges would he have faced?

*...to create a great social organization, with all its civil, judicial, and military establishments, in a wilderness of forests and mountains, is a Herculean task.*

—James Douglas, 1858

# The Oregon Territory

**Oregon Territory** an area in the Pacific Northwest occupied by both British and American colonists, also called the Columbia District by the British

## TIMELINE

- 1792** • Captain George Vancouver enters Burrard Inlet
- 1843** • James Douglas begins construction of Fort Victoria
- 1846** • United States takes possession of the Oregon Territory south of the 49th parallel
- 1858** • Colony of British Columbia is formed  
• Fraser Canyon War
- 1860** • Cariboo Gold Rush begins
- 1862** • Construction of Cariboo Road begins  
• Smallpox epidemic
- 1864** • Tsilhqot'in Uprising
- 1866** • Vancouver Island and British Columbia are joined
- 1868** • Victoria is declared the capital of British Columbia
- 1871** • British Columbia joins Confederation
- 1884** • Vancouver is chosen as the CPR terminus
- 1885** • Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration to British Columbia

## ► What were the causes and consequences of negotiating the boundary between southern British Columbia and the United States?

What was British Columbia like prior to the 1800s? There were no roads, boundary lines, cities, bridges, or ferries, although the territory was inhabited by 80 000 to 100 000 First Nations people. Then, throughout the 19th century, the area was home to an intense and lucrative fur trade. This trade would bring about dramatic changes in the region.

In 1819, the British and American governments agreed that the boundary separating their territories between Lake of the Woods, in what is now western Ontario, and the eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains would be set at 49° N latitude (also called the 49th parallel). What remained westward was the region between the Rockies and the Pacific Ocean, called the **Oregon Territory**. Because this territory was sparsely populated by Europeans in 1819, the decision as to who should eventually control the area had not been made. As was usual in those times, no one considered the interests of the First Nations inhabitants.

## Different Plans for the Territory

The United States and Britain both wanted to use the Oregon Territory to their advantage. The Hudson's Bay Company, already operating in the region, had no real interest in encouraging settlement, since they preferred to leave the region open for the rich fur trade.

However, at that time, the eastern United States was facing a rapidly increasing population. New areas for expansion became necessary. In 1803, the United States purchased territory west of the Mississippi from France. Most Americans were now convinced that they were fated to control all of North America, an idea they called Manifest Destiny. This belief and the need for more land prompted an aggressive settlement policy in the Oregon Territory. The United States government actively encouraged people from the eastern states to move to the area. Most settled south of the Columbia River near what is now Portland, Oregon, and by the 1830s, the population of this area was growing rapidly.

## The Hudson's Bay Company in the Oregon Territory

In 1824, Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) manager George Simpson toured the HBC's Oregon Territory posts. He felt that the company was not making the best use of the region's resources, so he decided to build a new trading post on the north bank of the Columbia River, calling it Fort Vancouver.

Fort Vancouver became the HBC's main trading post in the Oregon Territory. John McLoughlin, a French Canadian, was put in charge. He was directed to expand the fur trade along the Pacific coast to offset the dwindling fur stocks in the Northwest.

McLoughlin was a capable and efficient administrator. He was also a realist. Because he knew that Americans were going to take up homesteads in the region, he decided to take action to limit American competition with the HBC's trade. He encouraged American colonists to settle south of the Columbia River, instead of on the north side. He even offered them supplies and money to get established.

By the end of the 1830s, there was a strong American presence south of the Columbia River. Since the fur trade was still going well, neither the HBC nor the British government paid much attention to this development.

The HBC did have competition from the Russians, who had a number of fur-trading posts along the northern part of the coast. By 1839, the HBC and the Russians had agreed that the Russians would not operate south of 54°40' N latitude (about where Prince Rupert is today). In exchange, the HBC would supply the Russians with food from their farms around Fort Vancouver and on Puget Sound.

In 1841, George Simpson revisited the HBC posts in the Pacific coast region. Disappointed that the coastal fur trade had not expanded as much as he had hoped, he decided to cut costs. All trading posts along the coast were to be closed, with the exception of Fort Simpson. The steamship *Beaver* would be used to trade with coastal First Nations communities.

### WEB LINK

Visit the Pearson Web site to learn more about Fort Vancouver and John McLoughlin.



**FIGURE 6-1** The Oregon Territory in the 1830s. Find the Columbia River on the map and follow its course to the Pacific. Why did it seem to be a natural boundary between the fur traders and the colonists?

### Did You Know...

John McLoughlin retired from the HBC in 1846 and settled in Oregon City on the Willamette River. He became an American citizen in 1849. Because of his assistance to American settlers, he is known today as “The Father of Oregon.”

McLoughlin was furious. Suddenly, 15 years of hard work were undone. He believed that the chain of forts along the coast were an asset to the HBC. Even worse, when McLoughlin’s son was killed in a brawl in 1842, Simpson recommended a charge of “justifiable homicide” against his killer. Grief stricken and feeling betrayed, McLoughlin developed an active hatred for both Simpson and the HBC. He continued to promote American settlement south of the Columbia River and discouraged all newcomers from settling north of the river.

## Zoom In ➤ The Pacific Coast’s First Steamer



Significance

During the coastal fur trade, one of the problems faced by the Hudson’s Bay Company was inaccessibility. Without roads or safe rivers to travel, most places along the coast could be reached only by sea. In order to supply the coastal trading posts, the company decided to build a steamship. The *Beaver*, which arrived in 1836, was the first of

its kind to work along the British Columbia coast. For the next 50 years the steamer was a familiar sight.

The *Beaver* supplied HBC trading posts until 1862. From 1863 to 1870, it was chartered by the Royal Navy as a survey vessel. Sold in 1874, the *Beaver* operated as a tugboat until it was wrecked in 1888 on Prospect

Point at Vancouver Harbour. The wreck became a popular tourist destination until 1892, when what was left of the *Beaver* sank.

- Why was the *Beaver* essential to the fur trade?
- How would the arrival of the *Beaver* have changed people’s lives?



**FIGURE 6–2** *The Arrival of the Beaver*. This 1915 painting of the *Beaver* is by Canadian artist John Innes. What questions would you ask to determine if this painting is a reliable source? How reliable do you think it is?

## An Official Boundary

The rising population of Americans in the Oregon Territory eventually got the attention of both George Simpson and the British government. Both Britain and the United States now recognized that a permanent boundary was necessary. However, if the 49th parallel was extended from the Rockies to the Pacific, Fort Vancouver would be in American territory.

In 1843, Simpson ordered Fort Vancouver's chief factor, James Douglas, to build a new trading post on Vancouver Island, inside what would likely become British territory. Douglas found a suitable site at the south end of Vancouver Island and named it Fort Victoria.

Simpson's decision was a smart one. In 1844, Democrat James Polk won the United States presidential election, in part because of his campaign slogan: "54 40 or fight." Polk wanted to obtain all of the Oregon Territory up to its northern boundary of 54° 40' N latitude.

However, despite his tough talk, Polk never intended to go to war with the British Empire. Negotiations in 1845 and 1846 simply extended the 49th parallel boundary west, with one exception—all of Vancouver Island remained in British hands. Fort Vancouver and the HBC's farms on Puget Sound were now in American territory, which was a loss for the company. James Douglas spent the next several years transferring the company's operations from Fort Vancouver to Fort Victoria. Fort Vancouver was officially closed in 1849.

### *Did You Know...*

The rock band 54·40, from Tsawwassen, British Columbia, takes its name from the phrase, "54 40 or fight."



**FIGURE 6-3** Fort Vancouver. Research to find out what became of the fort after the HBC left. What does it look like today?

## ACTIVITIES

1. Think about a piece of information from this section that captured your attention. Explain what you found interesting and why.
2. Use an organizer to compare and contrast the American and British attitudes toward the Oregon Territory.

# The Colony of Vancouver Island

## ► How and why did a colony develop on Vancouver Island?

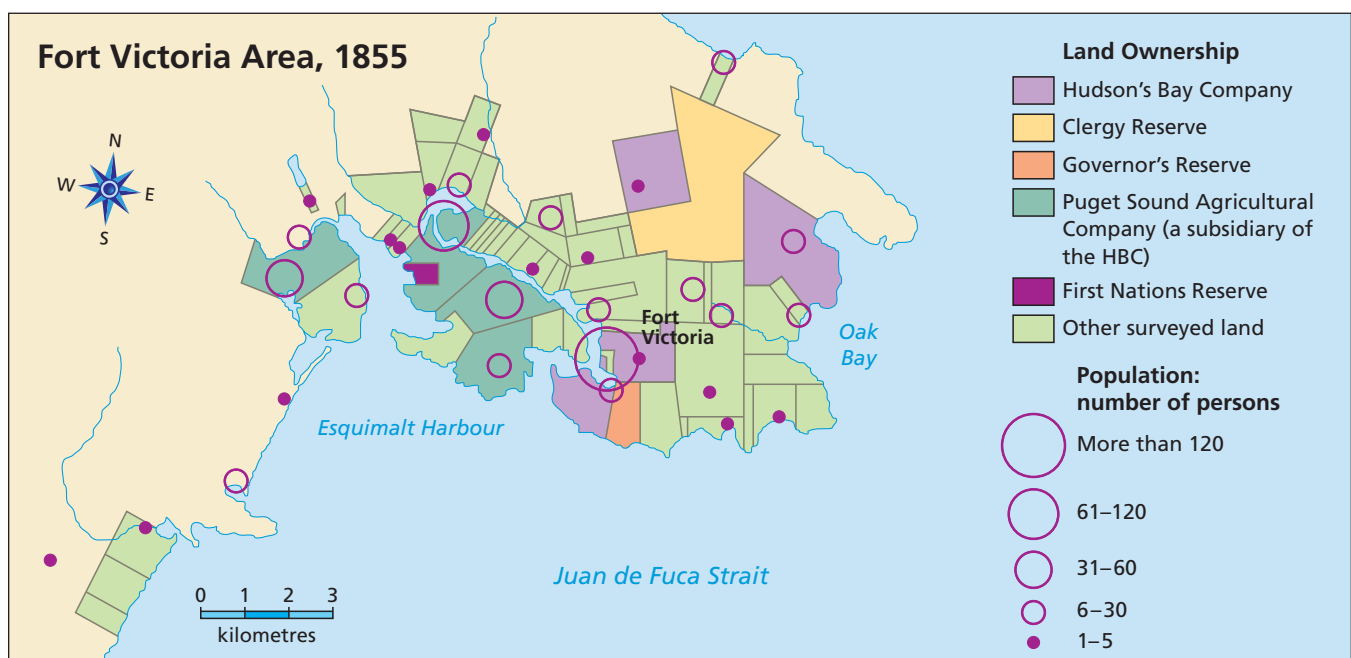
In 1848, the British government realized that a more official British presence on the Pacific coast was necessary. To solidify its claim on the region, the government created the Crown colony of Vancouver Island. Britain also gave a trade monopoly to the Hudson's Bay Company, which could sell land to Europeans or Americans who immigrated to the colony.

James Douglas was appointed governor. For 10 years, he was also chief factor of Fort Victoria. Douglas wanted to encourage settlement, so he suggested that free land be offered to colonists. The British government decided to charge for land at a rate of about \$5 per acre, with a minimum purchase of 20 acres. However, most of the best land around Fort Victoria had already been purchased by the HBC or its employees, including Douglas himself.

During the 1850s, the economy of the Vancouver Island colony grew rapidly. Coal was discovered, and mines were developed near Nanaimo and Cumberland. Douglas convinced the British to put a naval base near Fort Victoria, with nearby coal as a fuel supply for the ships.

The Royal Navy soon became important to the emerging social life of Fort Victoria, since the aristocratic naval officers were always in demand at social functions, such as balls. Douglas encouraged these activities, but he was not always impressed with the colony's new upper class. Douglas and most of the HBC employees who had settled in the colony had Métis or First Nations wives. They were often shunned by the prejudiced and class-conscious newcomers.

**FIGURE 6-4** This map shows the extent of landholdings and population concentrations around Victoria by 1855. What patterns can you find?



## Zoom In ➤ James and Amelia Douglas

James Douglas was born in 1803 in Guyana, the son of a Scottish merchant and a free Black woman. Educated in Scotland, he began to work for the North West Company when he was 16. He went on to work for the new Hudson's Bay Company after the merger. While on his first visit to Fort Vancouver, he met Amelia Connolly, the Métis daughter of Chief Factor William Connolly. They married in 1828.

Respected for his abilities, Douglas was also known for his quick temper. Nevertheless, he moved up the ranks and was given command of Fort Vancouver, and then Fort Victoria.

In 1851, Douglas became the governor of the newly formed colony of Vancouver Island. His new position soon led to a conflict of interest, possibly because it was difficult to address the needs of both his company and the colony. He was eventually asked to end his connections to the fur trade.

Douglas made decisions that affected the development of not only Vancouver Island but the future colony of British Columbia. His actions to protect British sovereignty, his decisions regarding the First Nations and their lands, and his foresight in the building of the Cariboo Road earned him the title "Father of British Columbia."

Amelia Douglas was the daughter of a North West Company factor and a Cree woman. She married James Douglas when she was 16.

Amelia Douglas was self-reliant. Because her husband was often away on HBC business, she was largely responsible for raising their 13 children.

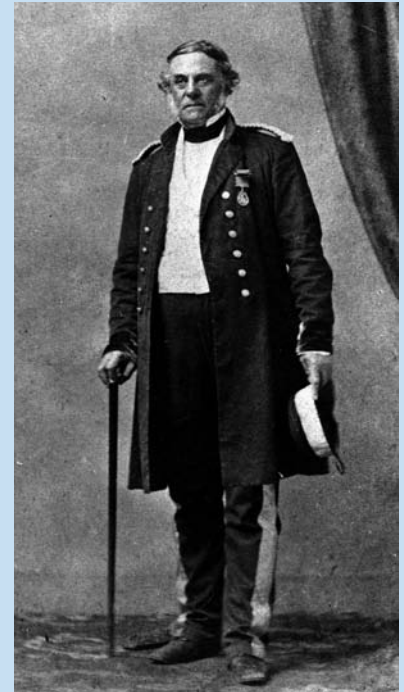
Well known in fur-trade circles, Amelia Douglas' diplomatic talents often came into play when her husband dealt with First Nations and Métis. In 1828, for example, James Douglas learned that a suspected murderer of two HBC men had taken refuge in a Dakelh First Nation village. Douglas took some men, found the suspect in the chief's house, and had him dragged out and killed.

Unfortunately, Douglas had violated the **sanctity** of the chief's house. The chief was about to kill him in retribution when Amelia Douglas, knowing the customs of the country, offered trade goods to the outraged chief as compensation. The goods were accepted, and James Douglas' life was spared.

Amelia Douglas was the head of one of the most powerful families in the colony. However, although she lived in Victoria for 40 years, she rarely took part in its social scene. This could be a sign that despite her family's position, the society of the time did not accept people of Métis heritage.

**sanctity** considered sacred

- How might the Douglas' background and experiences prepare them for their role as leaders? Explain.



**FIGURE 6-5** Why did the British government choose Douglas, an HBC factor, to be governor of the colony?



**FIGURE 6-6** Why was Amelia Douglas essential to James Douglas' success as an employee of the HBC?

When the colony of Vancouver Island was created, the First Nations population of the island far outnumbered the European colonists. There were no reserves, and First Nations freely hunted, fished, and built communities. James Douglas thought that if European immigration to the colony was to succeed, he had to officially gain title to land occupied by the First Nations.

Douglas decided to negotiate treaties in which First Nations would surrender land title to the government. Fourteen treaties were negotiated between 1850 and 1854. Douglas decided that the First Nations could choose where their reserves would be, and he instructed surveyors to make sure to include already established First Nations villages. The size of the reserves was also left up to the First Nations. Range lands for cattle and horses were included, and First Nations were able to keep their traditional hunting and fishing rights.

When Douglas paid for the land surrendered by the First Nations in the treaties, this act acknowledged **Aboriginal title** to

the land. This acknowledgement had tremendous significance in the late 20th century during treaty negotiations in British Columbia.

However, once Douglas was out of power, those who took over the government chose to interpret the agreements their own way. Much of the land in the treaties was taken away. Joseph Trutch, Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works for the colony, refused to honour agreements appearing in some of the Douglas Treaties. Trutch openly disliked the First Nations, and he reversed Douglas' policies, even making some of the already established reserves smaller.

After the last Douglas Treaty was signed, there were no other treaties in the rest of the region until 150 years later, when the Nisga'a First Nation signed a treaty with the province of British Columbia.

- Read the following excerpt and discuss what consequences each condition might have in the future.
- Could the colony have developed as it had without the Douglas Treaties? Do we owe a debt to Douglas? Why or why not?

**Aboriginal title** the claim by Aboriginal peoples that they have ownership of the land because they were the first to occupy it

*The condition of, or understanding of, this sale is this, that our village sites and enclosed fields are to be kept for our own use and the use of our children, and for those who may follow after us; and the land shall be properly surveyed hereafter. It is understood, however, that the land itself, with these small exceptions, becomes the entire property of the white people forever; it is also understood that we are at liberty to hunt over the unoccupied lands, and to carry on our fisheries as formerly.*

*We have received, in payment...*

—Common text of the Douglas Treaties, 1850–1854

## ACTIVITIES

1. James Douglas was both chief factor of the HBC and governor of Vancouver Island. Discuss how holding both positions could have been seen as a conflict of interest.

### Cause and Consequence

2. Explain how the Douglas Treaties with the First Nations of Vancouver Island were significant. Give evidence that supports your answer.

# The Cariboo Gold Rush

## ► How did the Cariboo Gold Rush have an impact on the development of British Columbia?

Do you want to “get rich quick?” Many people would like to, and they often take part in schemes that will let them easily obtain the finer things in life. Lottery ticket sales are always higher when the jackpot grows, and although the odds of instant wealth are low, many people want to believe otherwise.

In the 19th century, people were just as influenced by the dream of instant wealth. Thousands had immigrated to Canada or the United States with the hope of finding a better life. Why not also become wealthy? At that time, this optimism was fueled by the **gold rushes** in North America, South America, Australia, and New Zealand. Gold was an exceptionally valuable metal, and when it was found, the rush to claim land and mine its gold led to intense activity. One of these gold rushes was directly responsible for the early development of British Columbia.

## The California Gold Rush

In 1848, gold was discovered along the Sacramento River in California. By the following year, thousands of people had travelled to the area. The vast majority of these gold seekers never struck it rich, and many never returned home. Although the gold was real, the gold rush was a fantasy. While many believed that all anyone had to do was walk along a creek picking up gold nuggets, the reality was quite different.

**Prospecting** for gold was a difficult and often disappointing task. Miners searched for gold deposits by digging up gravel at the side of the creek and swirling it in a wide, shallow pan to expose the gold. A pan of gold valued from 25 cents to a dollar might signal a worthwhile deposit in the area. Miners then **staked a claim** along the creek bank and dug a mine shaft down to the bedrock below. Gold-bearing clay and sand were brought to the surface and washed to reveal the gold. Prospecting and mining gold were time-consuming and back-breaking tasks—not an easy way to strike it rich.

In fact, most of the best claims in California had already been staked by people who were there in 1848. By the time other gold seekers arrived, they often ended up working as labourers to make a living. By the mid-1850s, the gold along the Sacramento River had been mined out, and San Francisco was filled with unemployed former miners who had no way to get home.

### *Did You Know...*

The odds of winning the 6/49 lottery jackpot are approximately 14 million to one. The odds of being struck by lightning are only 500 000 to one!

**gold rush** a period of intense migration of people to an area where gold has been discovered

**prospecting** searching for gold

**stake a claim** declare mining rights in a specific area

### *Did You Know...*

Gold is a very heavy metal and is usually found in seams far below the surface. In most 19th century gold rushes, the gold was washed downstream from a single deposit called the motherlode. If you could find the motherlode, you would be wealthy beyond your wildest dreams. In most cases, the motherlode was never found.

## The Fraser River Gold Rush

In late 1857, an HBC trader arrived in Fort Victoria carrying gold dust and nuggets he had panned along the banks of the Thompson River. He presented what he found to Governor Douglas. Douglas was aware of the social disruption caused by the California Gold Rush. He feared that if news of another gold strike became known, the colony of Vancouver Island might be invaded by thousands of American miners on the way to the mainland to seek their fortune. Also, the mainland, which at that time fell under no political jurisdiction, would be more vulnerable to American **annexation**. Aside from a squadron of Royal Navy warships at Esquimalt, Douglas had no army or militia to call on if serious trouble arose. He communicated his concerns to the Colonial Office in London.

Douglas' fears came true during the winter of 1857–1858. Prospectors in Washington and Oregon began moving north to the banks of the Fraser and Thompson rivers. They discovered gold on the sandbars of both rivers. Word swiftly reached San Francisco, and 450 unemployed miners arrived at Fort Victoria on April 25, 1858. Immediately they went to the mainland using anything that would float, including homemade rafts. More ships arrived as the summer progressed, and by the end of the summer, over 10 000 men, mostly American, were working claims along the Fraser Canyon.

### The Fraser Canyon War

While Douglas made an effort to control the number of miners entering the Fraser Canyon, he could never have been completely successful. Determined miners on their way to a gold rush could not be stopped, and eventually, the rush of newcomers into the area led to conflict.

Already living in the Fraser Canyon were the Nlaka'pamux First Nation, also called the Thompson River Salish. Some sources say that trouble began with an attack on a young Nlaka'pamux woman in the fall of 1858. Several gold miners were killed, apparently in retaliation, and the

**annexation** the act of adding another territory to one's own

**FIGURE 6–7** A Stó:lô family uses sluice boxes to wash out gold from gravel on a sand bar on the Fraser River, 1858. First Nations were the first to mine gold on the Fraser, and they remained active during the gold rush. What was the impact of the gold rush on the culture of local First Nations?



discovery of their bodies started a panic. Informal militias, made up of armed miners, were quickly formed. However, leaders of different militias were soon arguing over how to resolve the situation—one wanted a peaceful solution, while another advocated the complete destruction of the Nlaka’pamux.

As the militias moved up the river, a message of peace was sent to Camchin, a village located where the Thompson and Fraser rivers meet (now called Lytton). Nlaka’pamux leaders, along with representatives of the Secwepemc and Okanagan First Nations, came together in Camchin to discuss what to do. It is said that a leader named Cxpentlum (Spintlum), who trusted James Douglas, argued for peace. When the militias entered Camchin, they were greeted peacefully, and soon the conflict was at an end. Douglas, however, was concerned because the miners had organized themselves and had acted on their own.



**FIGURE 6-8** The Lytton Bridge was renamed the Chief Spintlum Bridge in honour of Cxpentlum.

## Zoom In ➤ 1859: Ned McGowan's War

British control of the mainland would soon be challenged again. Gold miners from San Francisco had come to the Fraser Canyon split into two opposing camps: the Vigilance Committee and the Law and Order Party. Both groups had a long history of conflict with each other.

The leader of the Law and Order Party was Ned McGowan. Battles with the Vigilance Party in San Francisco had ruined him financially, so he travelled to the Fraser Canyon to renew his fortune. He soon found old friends and supporters, and became their leader. They kept a wary eye on the Vigilance Party branch headquartered a few kilometres away.

McGowan became frustrated with a local official named Richard Hicks, who had been appointed by James Douglas. Hicks was corrupt, taking bribes in exchange for permits and claims.

McGowan wanted Hicks gone. Douglas compromised by sending Justice of the Peace Peter Whannell to keep an eye on Hicks. Unfortunately, Whannell was intensely disliked; he was considered corrupt, foolish, and vain.

Events came to a head when a British man was shot by an American in a fight. The American fled to McGowan for protection, and tension erupted as the Vigilance Committee—McGowan's old enemies—suggested it was time for them to take control. When Whannell issued arrest warrants for two of McGowan's men, McGowan persuaded another justice of the peace to arrest Whannell for contempt instead. Although only fined, Whannell was humiliated. He quickly wrote to Douglas, asking that a military force be sent to put down what he called a "rebellion," suggesting that the colony

was in danger. Douglas sent in a group of soldiers, as well as Judge Matthew Begbie and Colonel Richard Moody. McGowan told his own men to ask the American military for help if fighting broke out. If this had happened, American soldiers might have marched into the colony, and the area could have been annexed by the United States.

Luckily, cooler heads prevailed. Moody and Begbie entered the area, calmly settled the dispute without violence, and fired Hicks. The presence of the soldiers calmed all sides, and British rule was kept. The threat of annexation quickly passed.

- Discuss the challenges faced by Douglas in his attempts to control the mainland. Could he have done anything else to prevent this conflict?

### WEB LINK

On the Pearson Web site, read letters sent by the people involved in McGowan's War.

## The Colony of British Columbia

In 1858, the colony of British Columbia was created on the mainland, extending from the 49th parallel to 54° 40' N. Douglas was made governor, and the Colonial Office sent a contingent of Royal Engineers. The engineers, who arrived in 1859, were to provide a military presence, survey the region, and assist in laying out new towns and roads. Matthew Begbie was to be chief justice for the new colony. Begbie, known to be tough but fair, was to ensure that the rule of law was upheld.

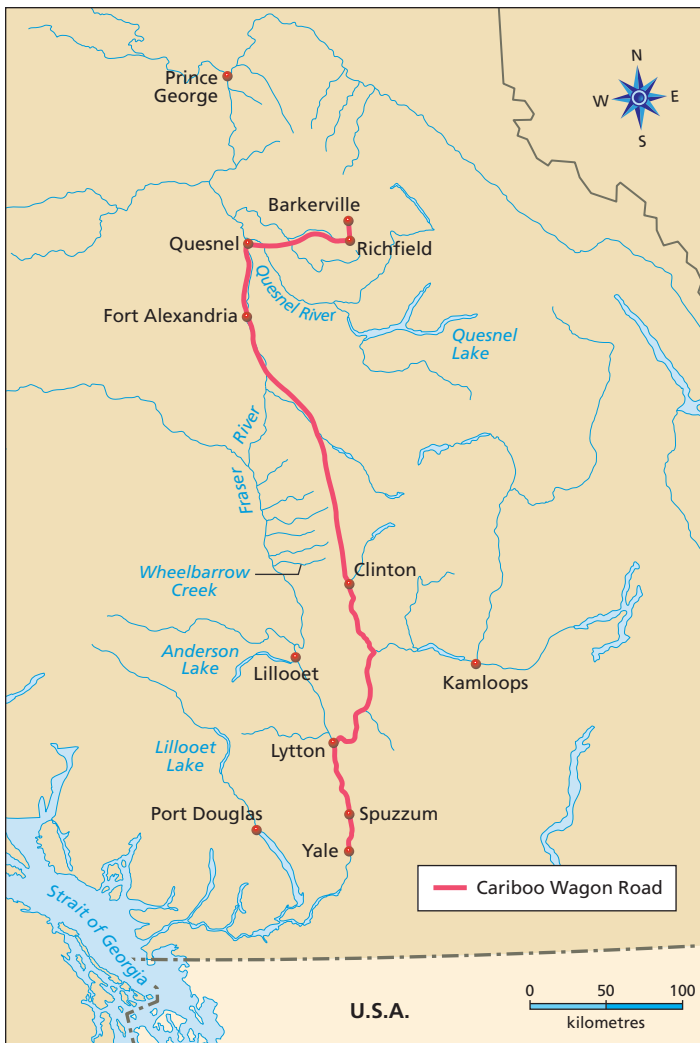
Gold miners soon began working their way up the Fraser, searching for the motherlode. By 1860, the leading edge of this northward movement had reached the Quesnel River. Several miners discovered large deposits of gold in the creeks flowing into the Quesnel, and the richness of the deposits convinced them that the motherlode was nearby. The Cariboo Gold Rush was underway.

### The Cariboo Wagon Road

Getting to the goldfields was extremely difficult in the early 1860s because there were no easy routes inland. Most miners carried their supplies on their backs, or used pack horses over old HBC trails. In 1858, James Douglas hired miners to widen an old HBC trail that bypassed the rapids of the Fraser River. This trail ran from the head of Harrison Lake to Lillooet, and because it was actually a combination of trails and water routes, it was hard to maintain. A better route was needed, both to ease travel and to provide effective government presence.

In 1862, Douglas ordered the construction of the Cariboo Wagon Road. It began at Yale, running northward along the steep walls of the Fraser Canyon to Lytton. There it went directly overland to Quesnel and eventually to Barkerville. Almost 650 km long, the Cariboo Road took three years to build and cost the colonial government \$750 000.

Ironically, by the time the Cariboo Road was finished in 1865, the gold rush was already in decline. The hoped-for tax revenues to offset building costs were far lower than anticipated. The colony of British Columbia was left deeply in debt.



**FIGURE 6-9** The route of the Cariboo Wagon Road. Why did such a difficult undertaking seem necessary to the colonial government?

## Barkerville

The main town of the Cariboo Gold Rush was Barkerville, the largest of three communities on Williams Creek. It was named after Billy Barker, an Englishman who came north in 1858 after the California Gold Rush. Barker struck gold on Williams Creek in 1862, and other miners quickly followed. By the end of the year, Williams Creek was completely staked, and several small communities had developed around the mines.

Initially, life in the area was hard. Bringing in supplies by pack animals was slow and difficult, and the small loads meant that only the “bare necessities” were affordable. Many everyday items, like fresh eggs, were very expensive.

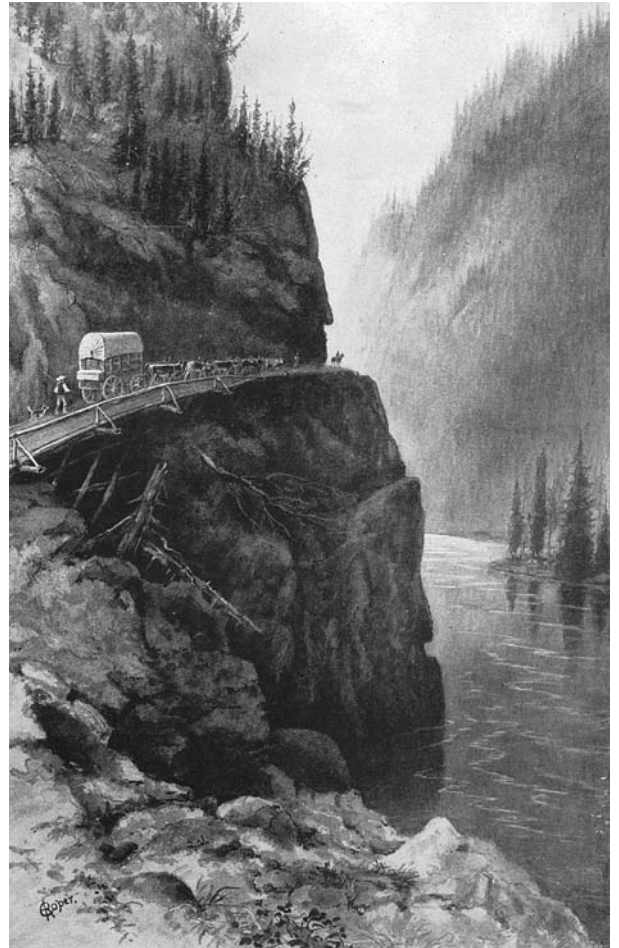
Barkerville consisted of two streets next to Williams Creek, with wood-frame buildings touching each other. The town was surrounded by miners’ shacks and by a network of **flumes**. Water carried by the flumes was used to rinse the gold from the mines.

By the mid-1860s, about 5000 to 10 000 people lived in Barkerville. When the Cariboo Wagon Road opened, business thrived, and the town soon had general stores, boarding houses, a post office, a drugstore, a barbershop, the Theatre Royal, and the Cariboo Literary Society.

### The People of Barkerville

The gold rush attracted people from all over the world, including Black and Chinese settlers who opened businesses or mined in the area. For example, a Chinese business called the Kwong Lee Company ran a general store. Wellington Moses, part of a group of Black settlers from San Francisco, opened the town’s barbershop. One product Moses offered was his “hair invigorator,” a tonic that promised to cure baldness. As an observant recorder of events in the town, Moses even managed to solve the murder of a friend.

Barkerville also had a vibrant night life. The Hurdy Gurdy Girls were dancers brought “direct from Germany” by enterprising saloon keepers in 1866. They were employed to dance with miners and got a percentage of every drink they sold.



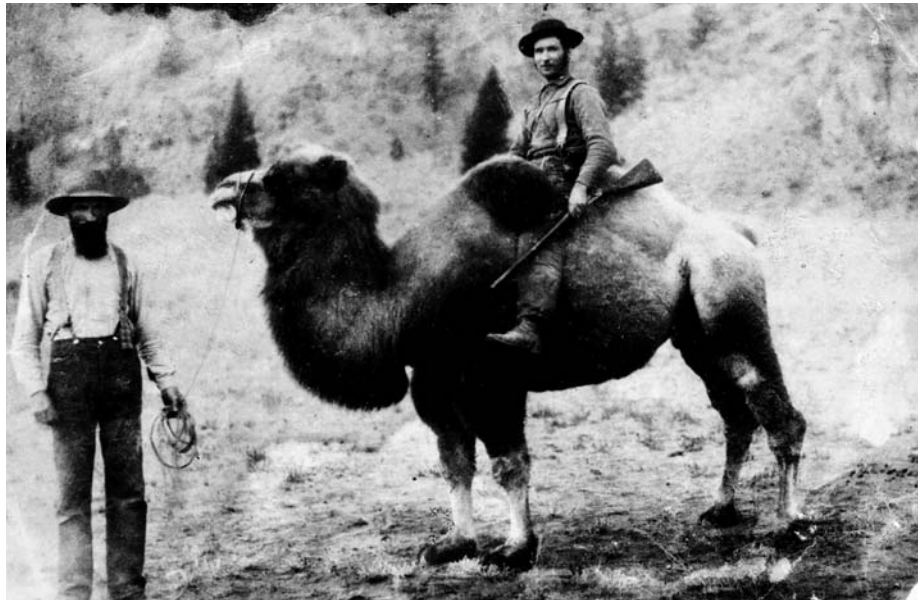
**FIGURE 6-10** Compare the Cariboo Road, shown here, with modern roads in British Columbia. What environmental impact did the Cariboo Road have?

**flume** an artificial water channel

#### WEB LINK

Visit the Pearson Web site for more information about Barkerville.

**FIGURE 6-11** In 1862, freight operator Frank Laumeister imported 23 camels to carry supplies on the Cariboo Road to Barkerville. With the ability to carry huge loads, the camels should have been a success. In fact, they were unsuited to the rocky ground and cold weather. They also terrified horses and mules. Eventually the camels were sold. Some escaped and continued to frighten locals for years. Could a similar situation happen today?



## The End of the Gold

On September 16, 1868, most of Barkerville was destroyed by fire. The damage was extensive, and many businesses suffered. However, within three months, the town was rebuilt. Efforts were taken to avoid a second fire, including shipping a fire engine in from San Francisco.

By the early 1870s, most of the easily mined gold had been removed, and only large mining outfits with hydraulic equipment were able to stay in business. By the 1880s, the population was dwindling, and by the 1920s Barkerville was almost a ghost town.

In 1958, on British Columbia's centennial, the provincial government decided to restore the town as a tourist attraction. Today, Barkerville looks a lot like it did at the end of the 1860s, with displays and guides who bring a vanished era to life.

**FIGURE 6-12** Barkerville before 1868. Look closely at the image. What was the environmental impact of building the town?



## The Tsilhqot'in Uprising

The arrival of thousands of miners and the development of towns, mines, and roads were not a welcome sight to everyone. First Nations in the Cariboo region, already deeply affected by European settlement, famine, and disease, knew that more people in the area would put pressure on food resources, such as game and fish. Roads were cut through traditional lands without permission. What the colonists saw as progress and development, First Nations saw as a radical change to their world and the loss of their lands and lifestyle. Some felt so threatened they took up arms.

In 1862, a businessman from Victoria named Alfred Waddington proposed an alternate route to the Cariboo. His road, which began at Bute Inlet, would cut two weeks' travel time to the gold-fields. Although the Cariboo Road was still being built, he was given permission by the colonial government to build his road.

The route Waddington chose crossed the lands of the Tsilhqot'in (Chilcotin) Nation. Already facing famine, and fearing the threat of smallpox, the Tsilhqot'in decided that the road would only bring more trouble. In April of 1864, a group of Tsilhqot'in attacked the road builders, killing 14 men. Three escaped, bringing news of the attack to the authorities. In the meantime, the group and their leader, Klatsassin, found and killed five more Europeans.

The colonial government responded by sending a search

party after Klatsassin and his men. They were not found until Klatsassin surrendered, believing he had been promised immunity.

Klatsassin and his men were charged with murder, despite their claim that they had only fought to defend themselves and their land. Klatsassin and four others were found guilty and executed.

### WEB LINK

View resources about the Tsilhqot'in uprising on the Pearson Web site.

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Consider the role of the media (i.e. newspapers) during this time. What coverage of the uprising would you expect? Explain your thinking.
2. Using the Web Link, assess the primary documents provided to develop a historical perspective of the incident. Do the documents change your opinion on what happened?

## ACTIVITIES

1. How did the reality of the gold rushes differ from the fantasy?
2. How did the British government act to ensure that mainland British Columbia did not become annexed by the United States?
3. In what ways were the Royal Engineers important to the development of infrastructure in British Columbia?
4. How did the Cariboo Gold Rush impact First Nations people?

### Judgements

5. Why was building the Cariboo Wagon Road so essential to the Cariboo Gold Rush and to the development of British Columbia?

# The Creation of British Columbia

## ► What events from 1856–1871 played a role in shaping British Columbia?

Imagine having almost exclusive control of the new colonies on the Pacific coast. Until 1856, James Douglas was in that position. There was no elected legislative assembly, and the legislative and executive councils were appointed by him. Douglas even made his brother-in-law chief justice. As the population grew, this **autocratic** approach led to protests.

**autocrat** a person who rules like a dictator

In 1856, Douglas was ordered to create a seven-member legislative assembly for Vancouver Island. Douglas insisted that only those who owned property could vote, which included about 40 of the colony's male citizens. Douglas still retained control; while the legislative assembly could pass resolutions, it had no authority to enforce them. The governor could (and did) ignore resolutions he did not like.

## Changes in Population

A census of the population of Vancouver Island was taken in 1855. It showed a non-First Nations population of 774 and a First Nations population of at least 30 000. The total First Nations population along the coast was at least 60 000.

### WEB LINK

Find out more about the smallpox epidemic in Victoria on the Pearson Web site.

## The Smallpox Epidemic

In the spring of 1862, a San Francisco miner brought smallpox to Victoria. The disease spread quickly, especially to First Nations communities nearby, where it caused an epidemic. While colonists were vaccinated, local First Nations villages were quarantined.

**FIGURE 6–13** Victoria in 1863. How did the community change as a result of the discovery of gold?



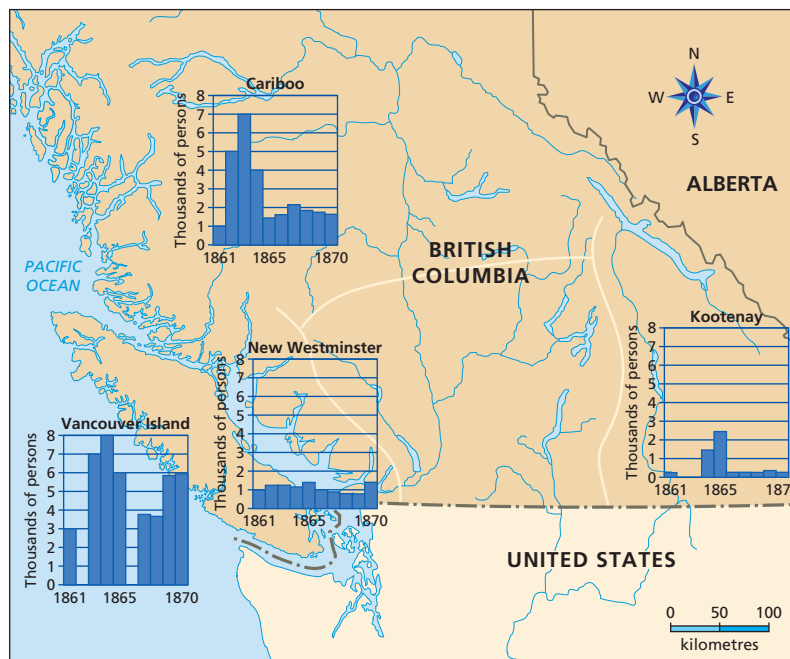
Many First Nations from outside southern Vancouver Island had come to Victoria hoping to find work in the gold rush, but they were now ordered to go home. As they travelled north, the smallpox went with them, and the disease spread. On Haida Gwaii, over 70 percent of the population died in the summer of 1862, and villages that had existed for thousands of years were suddenly empty. It is estimated that by the time the smallpox epidemic had run its course, over half of the coastal First Nations population had died.

## Immigration

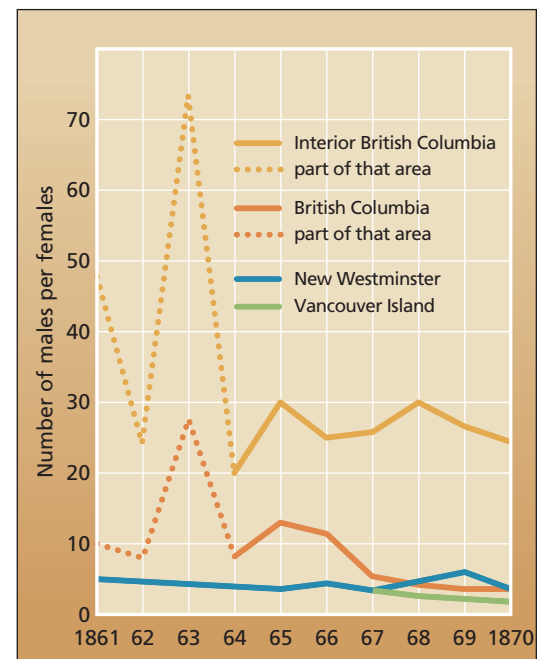
During the Fraser and Cariboo Gold Rushes, more than 35 000 people arrived from all over the world to seek their fortunes. This increase was only temporary; by the middle of the 1860s, the gold was running out and the miners were leaving. The population of both colonies dwindled to less than 10 000 people.

With fewer people to pay taxes, government revenue dropped. By 1865, the colony of Vancouver Island was \$300 000 in debt, and the colony of British Columbia owed more than one million dollars. In 1866, both colonies sought loans from local banks to pay their employees, but the banks refused.

The only solution was to unite the colonies. The British Colonial Office agreed, not wanting to subsidize two colonial governments. On August 6, 1866, the two colonies were officially united as the colony of British Columbia.



**FIGURE 6-14** Great shifts in the population of some areas in British Columbia took place during the 1860s. What caused these changes?



**FIGURE 6-15** Ratio of males to females in British Columbia during the 1860s

In 1856, James Douglas was directed to create a legislative assembly to add to Douglas' appointed legislative council. Only those who owned property worth £300 could hold office or vote, which created an **electorate** of just 40 men. They elected seven members to that first assembly.

When the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia joined in 1866, a legislative council of 23 members was created. Only nine were elected (five from the mainland and four from Vancouver Island). Victoria was selected as the capital of the new colony, much to the dismay of the population of New Westminster.

When British Columbia joined Confederation in 1871, a provincial legislative assembly of 25 members was created, with a Lieutenant-Governor appointed by the Crown. Until 1903, there were no political parties in the legislative assembly. As a result, there was little political stability in government—no less than 15 premiers held office during those years.

Today, the legislature of British Columbia is made up of the Lieutenant-Governor and 85 elected Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs). Each MLA

represents a **constituency**, and Canadian citizens over the age of 18 who have lived in the province for at least six months are able to vote and run for office. Like Members of Parliament (MPs) at the federal level, MLAs are responsible for debating and voting on proposed laws and approving the provincial budget. Since 2001, elections in British Columbia are held every four years.

The Lieutenant-Governor asks the leader of the provincial party with the most seats in the legislature to form a government. Like the Governor General, the Lieutenant-Governor is appointed by the Crown on the advice of the prime minister. The leader of the second-largest party in the legislature becomes the leader of the opposition. The premier chooses elected members to form a cabinet of ministers who are in charge of various ministries, such as education and finance.

**electorate** the group of persons entitled to vote

**constituency** a district that is represented by an elected person



**FIGURE 6-16** The British Columbia legislative buildings opened in 1898. Francis Rattenbury, the architect, was only 25 years old when his design was chosen. What styles are reflected in these buildings? Why do you think this design was chosen?

## Did You Know...

Women and Chinese Canadians were officially denied the right to vote in 1874; First Nations in 1872. Women gained the right to vote provincially in 1917, Chinese citizens in 1949, and First Nations in 1960.

## WEB LINK

Find out more about the elections process in British Columbia on the Pearson Web site.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Conduct some research to learn about your MLA. Generate a list of questions that will help you better understand who this person is, what he or she believes in, and what actions he or she has taken as a member of the Legislative Assembly. Share your findings with the class.
2. Investigate recent changes in the government of British Columbia. What issues are important to British Columbians, and how have provincial political parties responded to these issues?

On the Northwest coast, where the challenges of a mountainous geography often isolated Aboriginal communities from one another, distinct language groups developed among the Aboriginal peoples. (Check the map on page 38 to see the various language groups in British Columbia.)

Speaking different languages often made communication difficult. As a result, a common language evolved. Called Chinook, or Chinook jargon, Chinook included vocabulary from various groups.

The fur trade solidified Chinook as the common language of the coast. When Europeans arrived, French and English words were added. Some European traders also learned Chinook, so by the early 19th century, Chinook became the common trade language on the coast, spoken from northern California to Alaska.

Simple and easy to learn, Chinook dealt with daily activities. Even during the gold rush, Chinook survived and prospered. By the 1880s, more than one third of the total population of the area could speak Chinook.

However, with the arrival of the CPR and rapid population growth, Chinook soon declined. By 1962, fewer than 100 people in British Columbia could still speak it. However, Chinook words have survived in place names and in common expressions.

### Some Chinook words

*cheechako*: newcomer

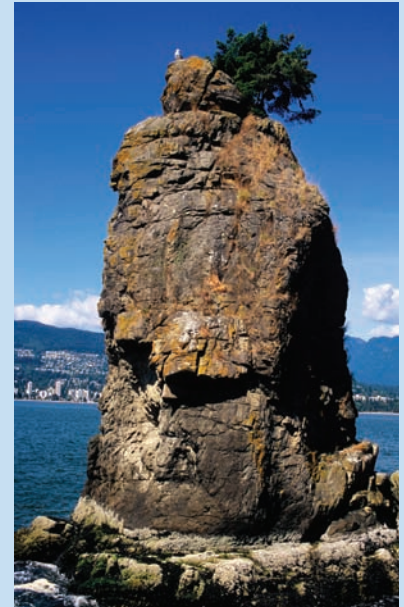
*chuck*: water

*saltchuck*: ocean

*muckamuck*: food

*potlatch*: give

- What does the emergence and decline of Chinook reveal to us about British Columbia's past?



**FIGURE 6-17** Siwash Rock in Stanley Park. *Siwash* is a Chinook word meaning “a person of Aboriginal heritage.” Research place names in British Columbia. How many come from Chinook?

## ACTIVITIES

1. Explain the significance of the smallpox epidemic for First Nations populations in British Columbia.
2. Describe how the emergence of the Chinook language was essential to the development of British Columbia. Provide an explanation for the decline of this language.
3. Is loss of language linked to loss of culture? Relate this question to your own experience. Consider your family's roots, language, and culture.

### Evidence

4. Examine Figures 6-14 and 6-15.
  - a) Which areas had the most significant population decline between 1864 and 1870? Which had the least? With a partner, discuss possible explanations.
  - b) What does Figure 6-14 tell you about the population of Cariboo compared with the rest of British Columbia?

## SKILLBUILDER • Judging Geographic Importance

Part of critical thinking in geography is understanding that we do not always get all of the information we need.

For example, is it possible for a map to contain all of the information about a certain area?

How does a map's purpose reflect geographic importance?

### Ask Questions

Look at these two maps of Victoria.

- What do the maps show?
- How are they similar or different?
- What purpose is implied in each map?
- What does the map-maker think is important to show?
- Who is the audience for each map, and why is that information important to them?
- Does each map help explain something significant about the past or the present?



FIGURE 6-18 Map 1



FIGURE 6-19 Map 2

### APPLY IT

1. You have been asked for a report on how geography influenced the development of British Columbia. The report must include a map. Plan your map by deciding what features you wish to

discuss, and use a chart to organize your ideas. Consider what should be included and what should be left out. Rank the features by importance, and explain your decisions.

# The Confederation Debate

## ► What advantages would joining Confederation bring to British Columbia?

The populations of the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia were in decline, and financial losses had prompted the colonies to unite. However, union did little to solve their economic woes—the colony still needed more people, more money, and better access to markets. Joining Confederation might help solve those problems. But did everyone agree?

Colonies in other areas of Canada had their doubts about Confederation, and British Columbia was no exception. Debate was frequent and often bitter. Elected representatives on the mainland were strongly in favour of Confederation, and members from Vancouver Island were equally opposed. A third group, mostly Victoria merchants, favoured annexation by the United States.

## Arguments For and Against

In 1868, the mainland representatives, called **confederationists**, adopted resolutions that described how and why British Columbia should join Canada. They wanted the Dominion government to become responsible for British Columbia's debt. They also wanted a wagon road to be built from Lake Superior to New Westminster, providing a crucial trade link to the rest of Canada. In addition, they demanded responsible government. Although their resolutions were defeated in the legislative assembly, they continued to promote their ideas in the press.

Those in favour of joining the United States felt it was a better economic deal for British Columbia. Canada was far away, but nearby Washington and Oregon were prospering, and annexation would ensure permanent links to this market. The **anti-confederationists** wanted to maintain ties to Britain, and generally mistrusted Canadians. The First Nations in the region were not asked their opinion.

In late 1868, a new election created a balance of anti- and pro-confederationists in the assembly. Then, in 1869, Governor Seymour died suddenly. The British Colonial Office appointed Anthony Musgrave as his replacement. Musgrave was a personal friend of John A. Macdonald. The British government, tired of supporting the colony, was in favour of Confederation. Musgrave's instructions were simple—get British Columbia to join Confederation as quickly as possible.

**confederationist** someone in favour of joining Confederation

**anti-confederationist** someone opposed to joining Confederation



**FIGURE 6–20** Governor Seymour with his wife. Seymour was not in favour of joining Confederation, and his sudden death upset the balance in the Confederation debate.

**annexationist** someone in favour of annexation with the United States

**co-opt** to win over or to bring someone into a group by capitalizing on their strengths, even if they disagree with the group

The **annexationists** quickly circulated a petition in favour of joining the U.S. However, in Victoria, a town of 3000 people, they collected only 125 signatures. Turning his attention to the anti-confederationists, Musgrave subtly **co-opted** their support by asking them to work with him on a policy of union. They agreed by writing out a “wish list” of terms, adding a few clauses they were sure would be rejected.

However, when the delegation arrived in Ottawa, the Canadian government agreed with virtually all of the terms—even promising a railway to British Columbia within 10 years. When the delegation returned, the Canadian proposal was unanimously accepted. On July 20, 1871, British Columbia officially joined Canada.

## Zoom In ➤ Amor De Cosmos



Born William Smith in Nova Scotia, Amor De Cosmos was a photographer during the California Gold Rush. In 1854, proclaiming his “love of order, beauty, the world, the universe,” he changed his name to Amor De Cosmos.

In 1858, De Cosmos moved to Victoria for the Fraser River Gold Rush. There, he started a newspaper—the *British Colonist*.

A supporter of responsible government, De Cosmos started attacking James Douglas. He considered Douglas a tyrant; Douglas responded by trying

to shut down the *Colonist*. De Cosmos supported Confederation, which made him somewhat unpopular. In 1868, De Cosmos helped organize the Confederation League, a group that actively campaigned in favour of Confederation and responsible government. Members of the league organized speeches and assemblies to promote their ideas and perfect their demands.

Elected as one of British Columbia’s first Members of Parliament, De Cosmos also served in the provincial legislature, and later became British Columbia’s second premier.

De Cosmos believed that First Nations and Chinese people were inferior. He disagreed with

Aboriginal land title, calling the land “unoccupied,” and he recommended severe punishment if First Nations trespassed on colonial property. Still, it was an even more openly prejudiced opponent, Noah Shakespeare, who eventually defeated De Cosmos at the polls.

After retiring, De Cosmos became a paranoid recluse, afraid of anything run by electricity. He died in 1897.

- What significance did Amor De Cosmos have for the development of British Columbia?
- How did he influence the formation of the province?

### WEB LINK

Listen to a biography of Amor De Cosmos on the Pearson Web site.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Identify the main reason for the union of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. Did the union solve the region’s problems? Explain.
2. Create a poster to advertise the cause of the annexationists, the confederationists, or the anti-confederationists. Focus on the advantages each group thought their cause would bring to British Columbia.

# The Emergence of Vancouver

## ► What factors contributed to the development of Vancouver?

Vancouver is the youngest major community in British Columbia. Almost all other major centres in the province can trace their beginnings to either the fur trade or the gold rush. However, Burrard Inlet is not fed by a main river, and the peninsula was originally covered by thick forests. During the fur trade and the Cariboo Gold Rush, these factors discouraged people from settling there.

When Colonel Moody arrived in New Westminster, he was impressed by the potential of Burrard Inlet, both as an ice-free port and as a harbour with naval advantages. He had the Royal Engineers cut trails through the forest to join the inlet to New Westminster.

## Industry Brings Development

In 1860, the future site of Vancouver appeared much as it had for thousands of years. But by 1865, the area had changed. Captain Edward Stamp built Hastings Mill on the south side of the inlet. On the north side of the inlet, American entrepreneur Sewell Moody also built a sawmill. The mill and its surrounding community were known as Moodyville. Both mills specialized in selectively logging “B.C. toothpicks”—timber from trees so large that logs measured 18 metres long and 1 metre in diameter. They were prized as masts for sailing ships and were exported around the world.

Both Hastings Mill and Moodyville were officially **dry** until John “Gassy Jack” Deighton appeared in Burrard Inlet in 1867, with his family and a barrel of whisky. Gassy Jack’s saloon became a popular meeting place, especially after payday. Soon, other saloons and stores opened, and buildings appeared along the shores of Burrard Inlet. Officially known as Granville, the village was better known as Gastown, after Gassy Jack.

**dry** forbidding the selling or drinking of alcohol



**FIGURE 6–21** Hastings Mill in the 1880s. Considering raw resources, workers, and the export of products, why might a lumber mill be successful in this area?

## The Railway Arrives

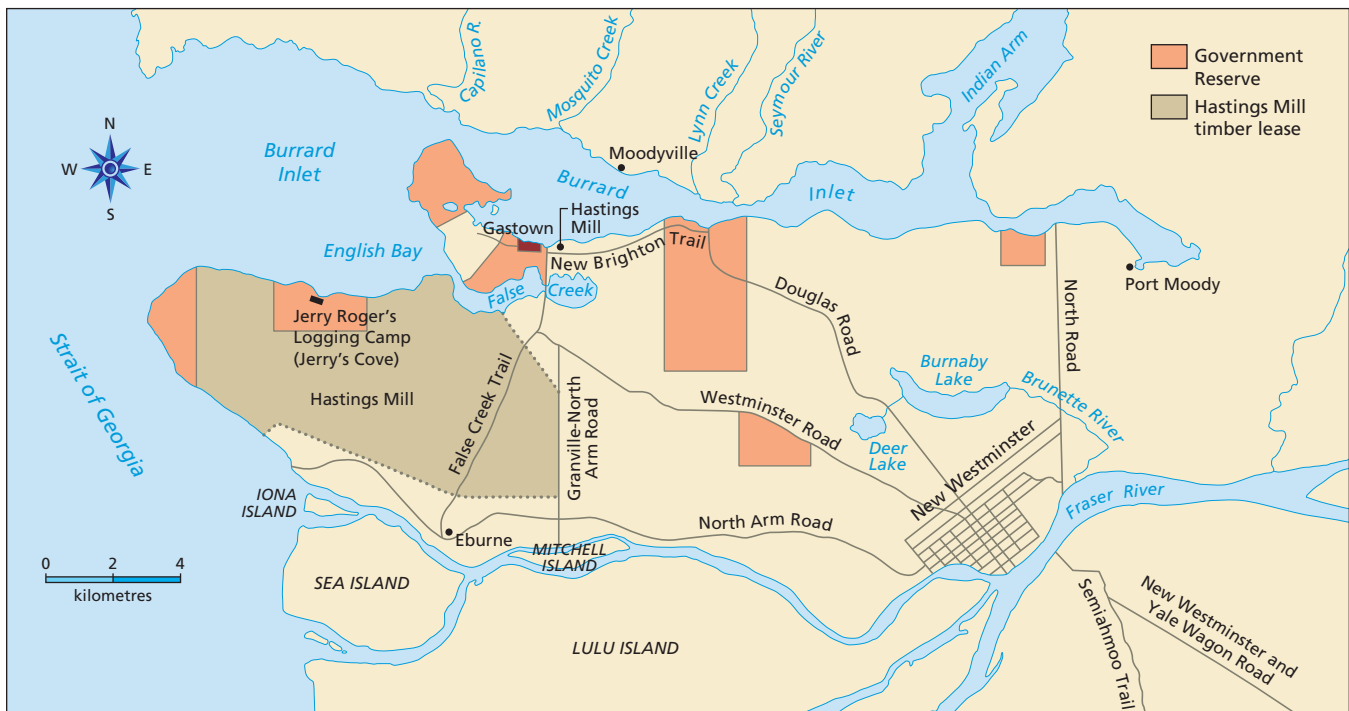


**FIGURE 6-22** Deighton was known as “Gassy Jack” because of his talkative nature. What is Gastown like today?

For the next decade, life in Burrard Inlet continued as before. Then, in 1881, Port Moody was named the terminus, or end, of the Canadian Pacific Railway line. The focus of activity shifted to the eastern end of the inlet, with speculators buying up land, eager to cash in on what could only be a great future metropolis.

In 1884, William Van Horne arrived at Port Moody to establish the exact location of the CPR terminus. He found the site utterly unsuitable. The harbour was shallow, and there was not enough flat land in Port Moody to accommodate the rail yards the CPR would need. Travelling farther down the inlet, he found what he was looking for—deep-water anchorages close to shore, and wide expanses of flat land perfect for rail yards. Delighted, he named the site Vancouver, announcing it would be the CPR terminus. The speculators of Port Moody were outraged, but there was nothing they could do.

By the spring of 1886, the CPR had been completed and the new city of Vancouver incorporated. By 1890, the city had a population of over 5000; within 10 years, it was more than 20 000.



**FIGURE 6-23** Burrard Inlet around 1880. Compare this map to a map of Vancouver today. How many modern features began as part of the original layout of the city?

Throughout its history, the Port of Vancouver has dominated the west coast of the Americas as the primary port for exports and imports. It has been the busiest port in Canada for much of its existence, playing a big role in the development of Vancouver as a global city. Since the arrival of the CPR, Vancouver has been Canada's "Gateway to the Pacific."

In 1887, the Port of Vancouver quickly gained world prominence with the arrival of the *SS Abyssinia* and its cargo of tea, silk, and mail bound for London, England. The *Abyssinia* was part of a record-setting, 29-day around-the-world delivery. It took the ship 13 days to take the cargo from Japan to Vancouver. The cargo then travelled by rail across Canada in 8 days, and it took another 8 days to go across the Atlantic to London. This route beat the previous record by 16 days! It was the beginning of a modern trade route that made Vancouver a major shipment point.

When the Panama Canal opened in 1914, Vancouver's port became even busier. Grain and forest products were shipped not only to Asia and Canada, but also to the eastern United States and Europe via the Panama Canal. An influx of imports led to the construction of piers, large rail yards, and warehouses. Facilities for passengers were also improved.

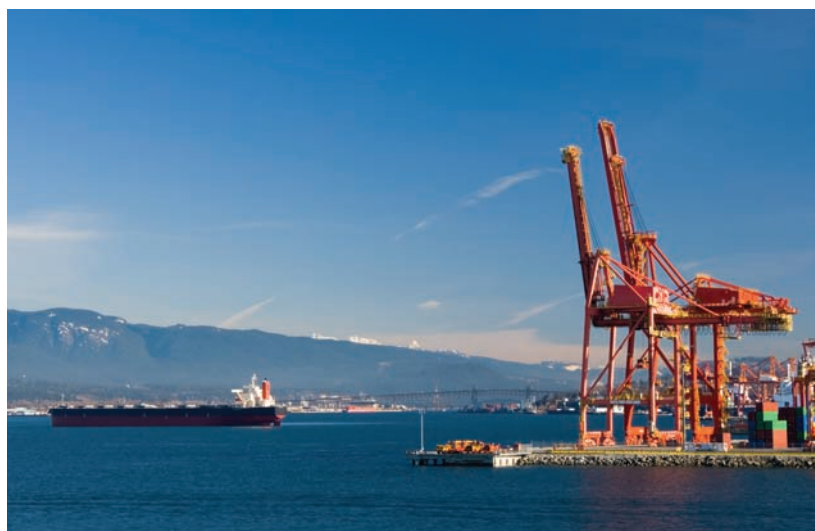
After the Second World War, the Port of Vancouver became

more specialized. Besides grain and forest products, the port now handled coal, potash, sulphur, copper, and raw sugar. In the 1970s and 1980s, Vancouver's port expanded with the construction of its first container terminals and facilities for Alaskan cruise ships.

In 2006, the federal government created the Asia Pacific

Gateway and Corridor Initiative (APGCI). Billions of dollars were targeted for building infrastructure to improve economic connections to the Asia Pacific and the rest of North America. With these vast improvements, ties to Asia were strengthened.

The Port of Vancouver will continue to develop throughout the 21st century.



**FIGURE 6-24** The infrastructure of Vancouver's port is continually being developed. Why might these upgrades be important?

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Do you agree or disagree that the Port of Vancouver is still primarily an export-oriented port facility? Explain with examples.
2. How does the Port of Vancouver affect the economy of the Lower Mainland region of British Columbia? Explain why specific businesses choose to locate near major ports like Vancouver.
3. Complete a Web search of the Port Authorities of Vancouver and Prince Rupert, and check current statistics and updates about the port facilities. Did the APGCI succeed in its plan to upgrade the facilities and encourage more trade with the Asia Pacific?

## New Economic Opportunities for British Columbia

With Confederation and the coming of the railway, British Columbia was no longer isolated from the rest of Canada. While earlier trade had focused on north–south trade with the United States, it was now clear that other provinces in Canada were vast potential markets, and this immediately drew the attention of producers and business owners eastward.

Exports of natural resources, in particular, saw an increase following the completion of the railway. For example, the immigration boom in the Prairies created a high demand for lumber to build new homes. The population of British Columbia also began to grow, as the railway made travel through the mountains easier. A greater population meant a larger workforce, and the economy soon prospered. Travel for leisure was also now an option, and the CPR also became a mode of transportation for Canadian tourists drawn to the majestic beauty of the Rocky Mountains.

Goods could now flow easily through the province, both to and from the rest of Canada and to Asian markets. As you have read, Vancouver would develop into an international port, vital to the import and export of goods to and from Canada, as a result of its location and the railway link to the rest of the continent.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Explain why Vancouver developed later than other areas of British Columbia?
2. Describe how geography and the coming of the railway influenced changes in the flow of goods in and out of British Columbia.
3. “Historical figures like Gassy Jack are colourful, but not significant.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Share your opinion with a partner.
4. Examine Van Horne’s decision regarding the relocation of the CPR terminus.
  - a) Why did Van Horne relocate the terminus?
  - b) Imagine you are a land speculator in Port Moody in 1884. Write a letter to William Van Horne explaining why you think his decision is wrong.
5. Did Vancouver earn the title “Gateway to the Pacific”? Explain.

# A Province of Diversity

## ► How did British Columbia develop as a multi-ethnic province?

While society in 19th century British Columbia was dominated by Europeans, especially the British, newcomers from other countries came to work, raise families, and contribute to the province's development.

## The Kanakas

The first non-European immigrants to British Columbia were the **Kanakas**, who travelled to the west coast of North America from the Hawaiian Islands in the early 19th century. The first Europeans to visit the Hawaiian Islands were Captain James Cook and his crew. Despite the fact that Cook was killed there in 1779, British and American vessels continued to visit the Hawaiian Islands, which were conveniently located halfway between North America and Asia. Ships were often short of crewmen, so Hawaiians were hired to fill the gaps. The new sailors quickly impressed their shipmates with their hard work and their excellent sailing and swimming skills.

By the 1820s, the Hudson's Bay Company was regularly hiring Kanakas to work at HBC posts in the Oregon Territory, especially around Fort Vancouver. By the 1840s, there were more than 200 Kanakas working near Fort Vancouver, mostly as farmers. Many more lived and worked at Fort Nisqually and Fort Langley. They married First Nations women and started families.

**Kanaka** a person of Hawaiian descent who immigrated to British Columbia to work; many were contracted to work with the HBC

### *Did You Know...*

Unlike other non-European immigrants, Kanakas were regarded as British subjects and retained the right to vote and hold public office.



**FIGURE 6–25** William Nahanee (holding a bag), a Kanaka, is seen in this 1889 photo with a group of longshoremen at the dock of the Moodyville sawmill. Describe this photo in your own words. What can be learned about this group of workers from the photo?

**FIGURE 6–26** Isabella Point School class photo, 1905. What conclusions can you draw about the Salt Spring Island community to which these students belonged?



After the border between the United States and Canada was established, the HBC wound up its affairs south of the border and moved its people north. Many HBC employees, including some Kanakas, were encouraged to leave the company and start lives on their own in British Columbia.

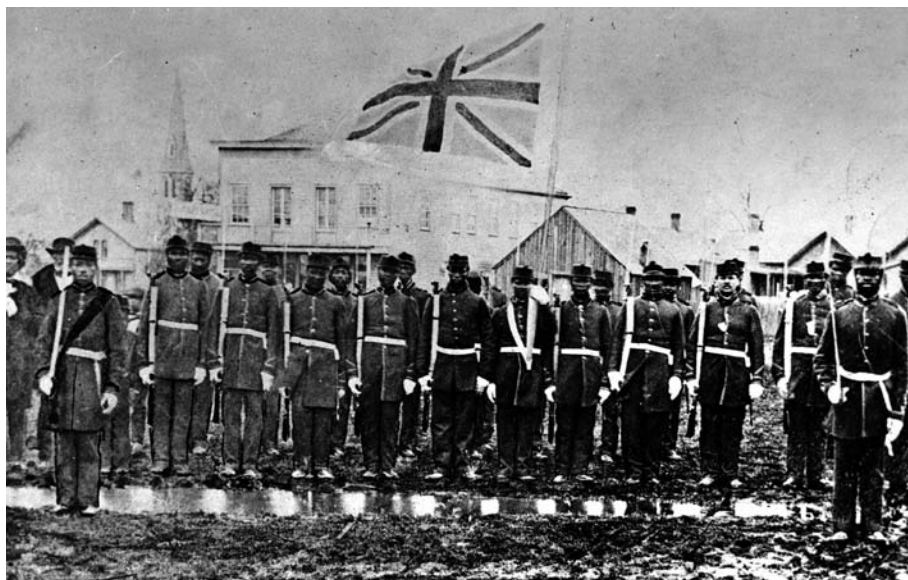
Some Kanakas settled in Burrard Inlet, where they established a community in Coal Harbour near what is now Stanley Park and found employment at the Hastings Mill. The “Kanakan Ranch” survived until the 1890s. The descendants of this community still live in the area, mainly in North Vancouver.

The largest Kanaka community was centred on Salt Spring Island in the Gulf Islands, where the Kanaka community continued into the 20th century. In 1994, over 300 Kanaka descendants gathered on Salt Spring Island to hold a family reunion luau.

## Black Immigrants

In the spring of 1858, news of the Fraser River Gold Rush reached California. Some Black citizens of San Francisco, who knew that slavery was illegal in the British Empire, travelled north to Victoria to petition James Douglas for permission to settle on Vancouver Island. Douglas agreed, and by the end of the summer, several hundred Black Americans had left California for the relative freedom of Vancouver Island.

Douglas encouraged and assisted the newcomers, even finding some members of the Black community employment. The colony of Vancouver Island had no military force to speak of at the time, so when members of the Black community expressed an interest in forming a militia unit to help defend their new home, Douglas authorized the creation of the Victoria Pioneer Rifle Corps.



**FIGURE 6–27** The Victoria Pioneer Rifle Corps, around 1858. Why do you think these men found it necessary to form a militia unit of their own?

Although slavery was illegal in the British Empire, Black immigrants in Victoria faced discrimination. The gold rush had caused property values in Victoria to rise, and as a result, many Black immigrants moved north to farm on Salt Spring Island.

## Zoom In ➤ Joe Fortes



Significance

The most noted Black immigrant to British Columbia in the 19th century was not part of a group; he arrived by himself, almost by accident.

Seraphim Fortes was a crewman on a freighter that docked at Hastings Mill in late 1884. When his ship sailed, Fortes decided to stay behind, working as a bartender at a local saloon.

Fortes quickly became known among locals and customers as Joe. A man of strong morals, he disapproved of public drunkenness and often cut off patrons when they had too much to drink.

In the early 1890s, Fortes discovered English Bay and its beaches. Enthralled, he quit his steady job, built a small house on the shore, and established

himself as the unofficial guardian of the beach.

For the next 30 years, Joe Fortes was Vancouver's most popular citizen. He taught virtually every child in town to swim. Joe also saved many lives. At night, he patrolled English Bay, keeping it safe for everyone.

As the city grew, the need for a paid lifeguard became apparent, and the city council hired Fortes, making him a special constable.

In 1922, Joe Fortes died of pneumonia. Thousands of Vancouverites attended his funeral. A memorial to Joe Fortes stands today at English Bay.

- Why are people like Fortes important to the history of our communities?



**FIGURE 6–28** Joe Fortes. Discuss the contributions Fortes made to Vancouver and its people.

## Jewish Immigrants

### Did You Know...

The synagogue built in Victoria, Congregation Emanu-El, is the oldest synagogue in continuous operation in Canada.

The first Jewish immigrants arrived in British Columbia in 1858. They came primarily from England and Europe, and many had already participated in the California Gold Rush. Rather than seeking gold themselves, many went into business, selling supplies to gold miners on both Vancouver Island and on the mainland. By 1863, the Jewish community in Victoria was well established. A synagogue was built, and members became active in community affairs.

## Zoom In ➤ The Oppenheims

The five Oppenheimer brothers, Charles, Meyer, Isaac, Godfrey, and David, had emigrated with their family from Germany in 1848. In California, they opened several supply stores. Ten years later, the family moved to Vancouver Island, starting a trading company with outlets in Victoria, Yale, and Barkerville.

In the early 1860s, David Oppenheimer led the campaign to persuade James Douglas that the Cariboo Road should go all the way to Barkerville. Oppenheimer also believed that one day Burrard Inlet would become a seaport, especially after the completion of the CPR, which he was sure would end there. He bought a lot of land, and opened a store just west of Gastown.

When William Van Horne arrived in 1884, Oppenheimer knew that the CPR would need a great deal of space, but most of the land in the area was already owned. He offered half of his land in Burrard Inlet, and half of the property of other landowners, to the CPR free of charge. Van Horne readily agreed. It was a shrewd deal. Oppenheimer knew

his remaining land would increase in value once the railway was completed.

In 1888, Oppenheimer was chosen as Vancouver's second mayor. In his four terms as mayor, he established most of the city's infrastructure. Pipes were laid under Burrard Inlet to bring a clean supply of water from the North Shore. Oppenheimer bankrolled the new electric street-car system (the third in North

America), built a sewage system, donated land for schools and parks, and established Stanley Park. Fittingly, he is known as the "Father of Vancouver."

- It can be said that the Oppenheimers were responsible opportunists. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Provide evidence to support your answer.



**FIGURE 6–29** David Oppenheimer (third from right) taking civic dignitaries on a tour of Vancouver Harbour, around 1890. How does this family's success reflect the overall development of British Columbia?

## The Chinese

The largest group of non-European immigrants to British Columbia in the 19th century were the Chinese. They also faced some of the most brutal forms of discrimination.

The first Chinese immigrants to North America came to California in the 1850s, and like so many others, they moved north in response to news of the Fraser River Gold Rush. As in California, they faced discrimination from other miners. Realizing that their opportunities were limited, Chinese miners started by reworking claims abandoned by European and American miners. Such claims were less expensive to buy, and if worked patiently, usually produced a reasonable amount of gold. By the 1870s, most of the small claims still being worked in British Columbia were operated by Chinese miners.

Other Chinese immigrants helped develop the economy of the province by starting service industries—stores, restaurants, and laundries—in frontier mining towns. They also operated vegetable farms both in the interior and near coastal communities.

## The Railway Builders

Part of the railway in British Columbia was built by an American named Andrew Onderdonk, who was under contract with the CPR. The line through the Fraser Canyon was incredibly difficult and expensive to build, and by 1881, Onderdonk was short of both money and workers. He solved his problem by hiring Chinese men at low wages. Between 1881 and 1885, more than 17 000 Chinese immigrants came to British Columbia to work on the railway. They were paid just a dollar a day, less than half the rate paid to European workers. They generally lived in separate camps and paid for food and lodging. Their work was dangerous and difficult; it is estimated that more than 600 Chinese workers lost their lives through accident and illness. According to some sources, the number of deaths reached 1200.

When the railway was completed in 1885, many Chinese workers could not afford to travel back to China, as they had originally planned. They had been misled about deductions from their wages and the cost of their food and equipment. Most moved to Vancouver and Victoria in search of work.



**FIGURE 6-30** A street scene in the Chinese section of Victoria in 1886. Did immigration to British Columbia help the local economy? If so, why would any group have been prevented from entering the province?

## A Mountain of Grief

During the second half of the 19th century, living conditions in southern China were harsh. The land was overcrowded, and farmers were heavily taxed. Most families struggled to survive. In the 1850s and 1860s, political turmoil in China made matters worse.

Chinese farmers began to hear rumours of the riches to be made on the “Golden Mountain.” Thousands journeyed across the Pacific to seek their fortunes and to find a better life. The reality, however, was quite different from the stories they heard.



It was mostly young Chinese men who immigrated to British Columbia at this time. They hoped to support their families back home. For many years the Chinese community was largely made up of young men. What effect did this situation have on society?



The conditions of the railway camps were basic, with only tents or wooden shacks for shelter. Chinese workers found British Columbia very cold. Snow was a new experience for many. The weather, along with poor food and living conditions, caused outbreaks of illness. What kinds of living conditions can you see in this image? What would living here be like in winter?





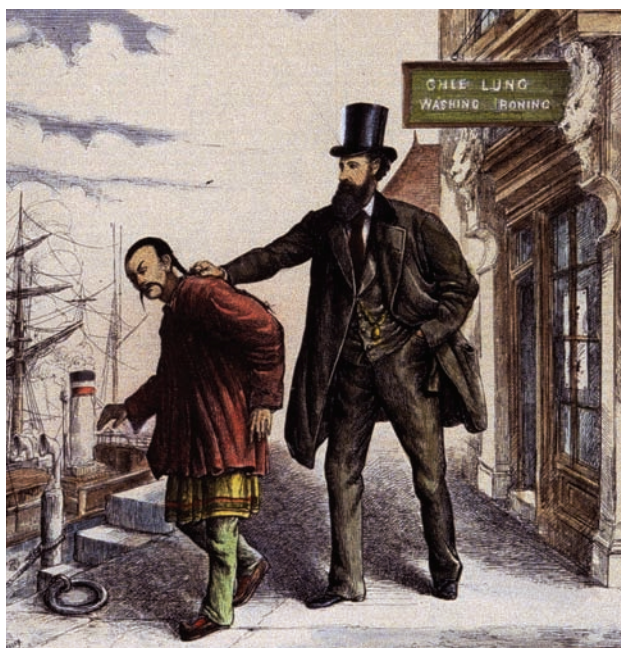
The mountainous landscape meant that using explosives was the only way to build the railway. The blasts threw rocks and debris into the air and caused landslides. Without warning, workers were hurt or killed. The CPR estimated that four Chinese workers were killed for every mile of track (1.6 km). What types of jobs are this dangerous today?



Wooden trestles were built to span rivers, ravines, and valleys. Many Chinese workers built these vital trestles without safety procedures or proper equipment. How is this type of work different today? How is it similar?



Some Chinese workers spent years on the railway. Unfortunately, when they collected their wages, they found themselves with much less than they expected. Deductions from their wages included fees for travel, food, clothing, housing, and tools. How might the workers respond to this treatment? What would workers do today?



**FIGURE 6–31** This 1879 editorial cartoon shows a confrontation between Amor De Cosmos and a “heathen Chinese.” Examine it carefully. Try to assess the cartoonist’s point of view. Is the cartoonist anti-Chinese, or is he objecting to De Cosmos’ behaviour?

### Did You Know...

The Chinese head tax was increased to \$100 in 1900 and \$500 in 1903. In 1923, the Canadian government banned all Chinese immigration. By today’s standards, the government had collected millions of dollars in head taxes.

## Discrimination

Include information for the major groups explaining how each contributed to the development of the province. The Knights of Labour, for example, pressed the government to have all Chinese people removed from Vancouver; some of their members physically forced Chinese residents out of town. Businesses selling to Chinese customers often found themselves targets of boycotts.

Chinese workers usually performed heavy manual labour. They were often hired by an English-speaking Chinese contractor who would bid on a job (e.g., land clearing or road building) and then recruit workers. To increase profits, most contractors cheated the Chinese workers. In 1900, the combined fortunes of the two largest Chinese contractors, Loo Gee Wing and Sam Kee, approached \$1 million.

By 1900, the ethnic composition of British Columbia was changing. Most newcomers to the province were British, and they wanted to create a British society. Non-Europeans were depicted as being inferior and dangerous. Amor De Cosmos openly stated that he believed

Chinese people were a threat because they “did not assimilate.”

After a Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration, the government legalized discrimination. In 1885, with the railway finished, Canada no longer needed Chinese labour, so the government decided to limit Chinese immigration. Each Chinese immigrant was required to pay a \$50 head tax for entry to Canada, and ships were allowed to carry only one Chinese passenger per 50 tonnes of cargo. As most ships could carry about 2000 tonnes, no more than 40 Chinese immigrants per ship could enter the country at a time. These provisions slowed Chinese immigration and made it almost impossible for families to come to Canada together.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Hawaiian and Black immigrants arrived early in the development of British Columbia, yet they do not form distinct communities today. Explain.
2. Create a map depicting the immigration routes of British Columbian immigrants from 1800–1900. As more Chinese immigrants came to British Columbia, discrimination against them also increased.
3. Read the Window on Canada (pages 236–237). Using the photos as evidence, write a “story” for each image.
4. Examine the editorial cartoon in Figure 6–31. Create a political cartoon that counters the message you think the artist is making.

# Explore the Big Ideas

The development of British Columbia in the 19th century was driven primarily by the exploitation of natural resources, especially furs and gold. In the 1850s and 1860s, the impact of the gold rushes included political changes and the founding of communities. When the gold ran out, the resulting political crisis led to the creation of the province of British Columbia. As the 19th century ended, British Columbia became home to a population of British immigrants. The province also experienced an upsurge in racial discrimination.

1. Who or what created British Columbia? Was the development of the province a result of individuals, groups of people, or factors like geography? How are these components related to each other? Use the following chart to track the causes and consequences of events taking place in British Columbia during the 19th century. Consider the suggested topics below.

Individuals: James Douglas, Matthew Begbie, Amor De Cosmos, Cxpentlum (Spintlum)

Groups: First Nations, immigrants, gold miners, confederationists

Factors: Oregon Territory, gold rush, smallpox, railway

| Cause | Immediate Consequence | Later Consequence Connections to | Other Events |
|-------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
|       |                       |                                  |              |
|       |                       |                                  |              |

1. Assess the contributions of James Douglas to the creation of British Columbia.
2. Use the chart above to discuss the impact of the gold rush on the people and the land of British Columbia.
3. Hold a class debate to discuss how societal attitudes of the time influenced events during the smallpox epidemic and the gold rush.
4. Why is Victoria the capital of British Columbia? Relate your answer to political and geographical factors.

5. How would you characterize the relationships between First Nations of British Columbia and government leaders during the 19th century? Explain your thinking using specific examples from that time period.
6. a) Investigate the history of the community you live in today. How, when, and why was your community founded? Are the current economic activities of your local region the same as they were in the past? Why or why not?  
b) Visit your local museum, or invite a historian to speak to your class. Create displays to raise awareness of the importance of local history.

## Cause and Consequence

7. Do some research to discover how the Canadian government was able to pass restrictive legislation regarding Chinese immigration. Describe the consequences of this act today.