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Moosonee History Many Centuries Old

Discovered by Henry Hudson 282 Years Ago. Taken Possession of for France in 1672. Other Interesting Historical Notes.

Just at the present moment with the formal opening of the new townsite of Moosonee in the James Bay area last week, there is very special interest in the district north of Cochrane through which the T. & N. O. now provides service. At the formal opening of the townsite and the driving of the last spikes in the railway on Friday last, the official addresses touched upon the history of Moosonee. In this regard the addresses by Hon. F. R. Latchford, Chief Justice of Ontario, and Hon. Geo. S. Henry, Premier of Ontario, were particularly informative, but even these addresses did not deal as fully as an interestingly article in The Toronto Mail and Empire on Saturday last. The article was by Fred Williams who has become justly famous for his articles on historic subjects, these articles commencing, "Do You Know?" The following is Mr. Williams' article with heading and all:—

Moosonee is the Oldest Ontario
DO YOU KNOW that when Premier Henry stood on the shores of James Bay yesterday and formally opened our provincial railway to tide water he was standing very close to the spot upon which Albalen, the Jesuit priest, stood 260 years before and "took possession" of the country in the name of the King of France?

Twenty-two years before, however, the bay had been discovered by Henry Hudson, who wintered there in 1610-11, when he was set afloat in a small boat and sent to his death among the ice-fields of the sea of the north. And 20 years after Hudson's death the bay was visited by Captain Thomas James, of Bristol, after whom it was named, so that there is a link between our northern seaport and the great city in the west of England, the cradle of so many explorers and gallant seamen. The current belief that the bay was named after Prince James (later James II) is not well founded.

It was early in 1672 that the Hudson's Bay Company erected its first post on the bay and named it Moose Factory, because there came the Indians from the interior who had a moose for their totem. Within a few months the knowledge of that fact had reached Quebec—how, the historians do not tell us, but the Indians must have had some remarkably rapid mode of carrying news for such a thing to have happened—and Albalen went up to block the visitors and prevent the "invasion" of what was claimed as French territory. From that time on for nearly half a century England and France warred for possession of the bay. The English were handicapped by the fact that they were not woodsmen; they were as they are now, the world's best sailors, but in the landed wilderness they were at a disadvantage as compared with the French.

This is illustrated by the daring expedition of the LeMoynes in 1688. The elder Pierre, and his two sons, Iberville and Charles, were asked by Governor Denonville to wrest the north from the English invaders. With about 100 men they tramped up the Ottawa on snowshoes, passed Lake Temiskaming and crossed the height of land. When the ice moved from the northern rivers they made themselves birchbark canoes and set out on a quick raid on the bay. They fell upon Moose Factory "like a bolt of summer lightning" (to use the apt phrase of Professor Chester Martin). Rupert House and Fort Albany fell in rapid succession and the Frenchmen returned to Quebec with the good news and a vast plunder of furs.

It was not until the signing of the treaty of Utrecht in 1713, that Hudson's Bay and James Bay became definitely British. Since then the H.B.C. has held sway, far from the madding crowd. If your newspaper memory is good (which I'll bet it isn't) you will recall that The Mail and Empire of August 8, last year published a layout of pictures from Moose Factory, which were in themselves a vision of history. They included the forge, erected in 1740, and therefore the oldest building in Ontario; a "true picture" of Captain Thomas James; a volume of Johnson's dictionary, in use at the post since 1785; and two of the old guns which now roar out the news that the ice has broken in June, and which some people like to believe are those used in battle with the French in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries; and of the Factory buildings, only 110 years

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old, but built of native timber, as sound today as when first put together. And now one can board a sleeper at Toronto at night and be at Moosonee in less than 36 hours later. Who can tell the potentialities of that attraction to the tourist? Not perhaps this year, but soon. Ontario's seaport will be the magnet which will draw thousands of visitors from all parts of the world. It is to be hoped that care will be taken to prevent looting; else many of the precious relics of the adventurous past may become "souvenirs" to turn up in a home far inland, perhaps in a section whose people never heard of those gallant sailors and soldiers and fur traders whose ghosts must wonder as they see the steam engine and the palatial sleeper come where the canoe and the snowshoe long held sway.

Will Aid Progress of Mining in Canada

Editor of London, England, Mining Journal, Hundred Years Old, Looks to Notable Benefit from the Imperial Conference.

With its usual enterprise and its invariable patriotic thought, The Toronto Globe has issued a special Imperial Conference number with the purpose of furthering Empire trade. In this excellent special number The Globe is simply following the policy that it has consistently advocated for many years. The Globe has been a leader in the Empire in urging the platform of preferential trade within the Empire. There can be no question of the value of the special number issued in honour of the Imperial Conference which opens at Ottawa to-day. Again, as so often before in its history, The Globe performs a notable public service.

The special number is filled with excellent articles on Empire trade written by men in authority. A brief article by E. Ballou Scott, editor of The Mining Journal, London, England, should be of special interest in this part of the North. Mr. Scott is the editor of a journal nearly a hundred years old and enjoying the esteem and respect of large circles of readers for close to a century. Mr. Scott believes that the Imperial Conference will aid mining progress in Canada and so will benefit not only this Dominion but the whole Empire. Mr. Scott's article in full is as follows:—

"I learn with great pleasure of the deep importance which is being attached by Canadian public opinion to the success of the forthcoming Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa.

"Throughout the world we see nations being shaken to their foundation, and threatening disintegration, and even internal separation. The British Empire alone gives evidence of the desire and possibility of co-operation and closer union.

"The task is great and the time is short, but, inspired with great ideals, and recognizing that individual sacrifices alone can achieve that general advance in which all will participate, we in Great Britain believe that if we approach the task with a common measure of good-will primary developments may be achieved upon which a new era in the progress of the Empire may be well and truly founded.

"As the editor of a mining paper which has completed nearly 100 years of its existence, I feel naturally that it is the domain of the mineral industry to-day—the most primary and essential form of human productivity—that the greatest progress may be looked for. The immense advance which Canada has made in recent years as a gold producer must command the attention of every one who is visiting the country for the conference. Gold is to-day the one commodity of universal acceptance, and its primary importance as the foundation of exchange and as the measure of international values coincides so remarkably with Canadian expansion in this field that whatever may be the measure of success in other directions I believe that as an impulse to the recovery and development of the Dominion mineral industry the conference will be an historic landmark."

Moosonee Townsite and Its Prospects

Ideally Situated for Townsite Purposes. Level and Adaptable. Some Historical Notes. Buildings Under Way. Elegant Summer Hotel.

Elsewhere in this issue will be found a report of the formal opening of Moosonee, the townsite that is the terminus at James Bay of the T. & N. O. Railway. Particular reference to the townsite itself may not be out of place. Moosonee is on the Moose River, three miles from Mission Island where Moose Factory is situated, and 186 miles from Cochrane. One of the speakers at the opening ceremony said that the famous explorer, Capt. James, first gave the name Moosonee to the territory on which he landed at James Bay, and that the naming of the new townsite is simply a revival of the original name for the area.

The townsite is ideally situated, being perfectly level. At the same time it is on much higher level than the river by which it is built. This assures good drainage. There is a creek nearby from which the town water supply is being secured. The soil is of the muskeg variety for three or four feet with rich loam below that. There is not a rock to be seen in the townsite. All of this means economy in the installation of waterworks and sewers. The town already has electric lights available. There is a handsome and well equipped station building of medium size already erected. Other railway buildings are in course of erection. Streets have been laid out, Ferguson Road and Henry Boulevard being among the street names displayed. From the station to the river, a distance of three-quarters of a mile, there are board sidewalks on each side of the road. The cement foundation is already built for a Catholic church and work is proceeding on the construction of the building. A Chamandy, of Cochrane, has a frame store structure in use as a store building, with a large store structure on the next lot nearing completion. An enterprising barber has also opened a tonsorial parlour in the new townsite. A gentleman, formerly resident in Ansonville, has also pioneered in this far north town and on Friday last was busy selling candies, tobaccos, ice cream, and novelties. Then there is the Revillon Freres store, established these many years. Revillon Freres and the Hudson's Bay store at Moose Factory both closed up on Friday last in honour of the historic occasion of the formal opening of Moosonee. They opened for a short time for the convenience of the visitors. All the stores did well but would have done much better had they carried a larger variety of goods suitable for souvenirs.

The visitors were very anxious to secure souvenirs, especially articles that were made in the locality. There was a big run on Indian-made moccasins and fancy work.

The Imperial Bank of Canada, which has pioneered so many of the new camps of this North, has a branch at Moosonee. The bank premises are at the rear of the store building of the



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Revillon Freres, fur dealers and merchants.

The visitors were particularly impressed with the handsome and well-equipped hotel now nearing completion. It will be a T. & N. O. hotel and will be under the management of the genial Jas. Kingston, noted in the North as an hotel man, and successfully conducting hotels at Iroquois Falls and other centres in the North. Mr. Kingston is a genuine pioneer of the North and with his gifts as a host will prove the ideal manager for a hotel that will be close to ideal.

The hotel is situated close to the bank of the Moose River. There is a natural lawn running from the hotel to the waters' edge. The hotel is designed for tourist trade and will accommodate from twenty to thirty people. The intention is to provide cabin accommodation for any visitors for whom the hotel may not have room during the vacation, hunting or fishing seasons.

Not only is the hotel ideally situated on the bank of the Moose River, but the air and the view more than rival Temagami. The equipment and arrangement of the hotel and the finish of the building place it in a class by itself. There are eighteen bedrooms, all equipped with running water, electric light, and to be well furnished. There is a plenitude of baths, toilets, etc. A feature of the large sitting room is the quaint and attractive stone fireplace. The sitting room is to be furnished with wicker furniture throughout, all richly upholstered. All the rooms in a up-to-date hotel—dining room, kitchen, pantry, serving room, etc.—are here. A modern touch is given by the electric refrigerator built in.

There is a remarkably fine beach at Moosonee, and canoes, motor boats and a passenger service are available. The T. & N. O. has arranged a number of boat trips at remarkably low rates to various places along the coast.

One of the landmarks at Moosonee that is sure to attract attention is the monument erected by Mr. McLean, of the Dominion Construction Co., to those who worked and died in the area during construction days. Reference is made to this elsewhere in this issue.

It is expected that Moosonee will attract much trade as a tourist's paradise. There is great bathing, boating, fishing, etc., available. One of the visitors last Friday, Aaron Sweet, of Ottawa, who in his seventy odd years, has battled in the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Baltic the North Sea, the Mediterranean, and other of the waters of the globe, went swimming in Moose River last Friday. He said the water was great. Dr. Paul Poisson, of Tesoumseh, caught a trout, 21 lbs., fishing from the bank not far from the hotel.

Moosonee is expected to be the base for fishing fleets to operate in James and Hudson Bays.

Game is also very plentiful in the Moosonee area, especially moose and deer, while ducks and geese are there by the hundreds of thousand on the islands of James Bay.

Those who have faith in Moosonee look for it to be the centre to receive iron ore from the Balcher Islands and lignite coal from Onakawana, some sixty miles away. Fire clay, china clay and other minerals are known to be available in the James Bay area. In addition it is thought that Moosonee will be the base for prospectors exploring the country to the north where mineral wealth of many kinds is reported by all who are in position to know.

Moosonee was a busy place on Friday last. In addition to the 150 visitors gathered for the driving of the spikes to mark the completion of the railway extension, there were fully 400 Indians, men, women and children assembling from Moose Factory and the other sections of the district. In their picturesque costumes the Indians attracted much attention. There were hundreds of Indian children, all of whom were notable for their well-nourished appearance and their evident health and contentment. Scores of boys and girls spoken to could answer in good English and all told of attending school, most of them at Moose Factory, but some at other centres, while one lad said he had just returned from attending school at North Bay. The Indian women carried their babies on their backs in Indian cradles, Indian fashion. The papooses attracted much attention from the visitors. Some of the women gave illustration of how they soothed the babies when fretful, by shaking the shoulders and hips, the baskets responding to the rhythmic motion and the child being comforted. When the dance started on the wide bridge to the hotel some of the women set the cradles upright on the ground and left them thus while they enjoyed the dance. One woman simply hung the basket or cradle on the branch of a tree nearby.

The dance on the bridge was a colourful affair. The music was supplied by three Indian fiddlers and another native playing the Indian drum. Still another Indian "called off" the dance steps in rhyming style.

Another feature of interest during the day was the regatta enjoyed by Indian competitors. There were keen contests, especially in the canoe races. The women appeared as good as the men in some of the canoe races.

The Indians also played softball on the green below the hotel and showed themselves up-to-date in this modern sport.

Friday was an ideal day at Moosonee. It was sunny and warm but a happy breeze kept the weather comfortable. There was not a mosquito or black fly noted, but there were apparently millions of moose flies. The moose flies are something on the style of hornets

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Geo. Pavich Ready to Take on Bussineau or Others

Last week there was a reference to the cancelled boxing programme planned to be held here as an added attraction to the Church of the Nativity Bazaar, and it was suggested that the public had the idea that cold feet might have had something to do with the non-appearance here of Geo. Pavich, heavyweight, of Kirkland Lake, who was advertised to meet Henry Bussineau. Geo. Pavich was in Timmins himself this week and points out that the reference is not fair to him. "As a matter of fact," he said, "the reason I didn't come here to fight Bussineau was and are said to kick in their stings after the hornet fashion, but not a visitor could be found with experience to this effect, though the insects were being constantly brushed away all day.

The showing of vegetables, grain and flowers at Moose Factory indicate the possibilities for agriculture and horticulture in the Moosonee area. The soil seems good, and success has been won in its cultivation at Moose Factory. Premier Henry was presented Friday morning with a beautiful bouquet of flowers grown at Moose Factory.

The country is well wooded and seems to have resources in pulp and timber.

Recently a number of Cobalt people have taken down their houses in the "best old town of all," and moved the material to the Englehart district, where the houses were re-erected on farms taken up there. The Cobalt people referred to are thus "going back to the farm," and their enterprise and faith fairly entitle them to the large measure of success on the farm that all will wish them.



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