

NAMED ALPHABETICALLY

Growing railway created towns

As the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway moved westward across Canada, the company established stations every few miles along the route to offer farmers easy access.

As each station was established, names were given in alphabetic order, starting over when Z was reached.

Some of the names were in honor of company officials, work crew members, or prominent settlers in the districts.

Many of the original names still linger. Others were lost as mills ceased operating, communities died out or settlers changed the names to suit their preferences.

The first contract for the B.C. section of rail was for the 170 miles from Wolf Creek, start of the western division, to Tete Jaune Cache.

Tete Jaune Cache is named after the blond trapper credited with discovering a route through the mountains to the lush B.C. Central Interior.

Confusion exists over who Tete Jaune (Yellowhead) really was. Two choices are recorded: Francois Decoigne, who worked for the Hudson Bay Company in 1814, or Pierre Hatsinaton, a guide who travelled westward in 1820.

Whoever he was, from Winnipeg westward, the Yellowhead Highway honors his name.

It was through the Yellowhead pass the Canadian Pacific Railway once considered making its westward route, but abandoned it for a more southern route.

When GTPR reached Tete Jaune Cache, a city of tents sprang up. Not only was this instant town building a railway, it was also the place from which supplies were shipped ahead to Fort George, where other rail work was being done.

Flotillas of river craft were built during the winter, to be ready to deliver cargo after break-up.

Downstream from Tete Jaune Cache were many hazards, including the dangerous rapids near Giscome, named after a gold-seeker who plied the Fraser River in the mid-1980s.

Once the railway was built and started operating in 1914, Giscome became another way station, a post office being established Oct. 1, 1915.

Giscome and almost all other small stations which opened along the line were sawmill towns, some of which sprang up as new industries because the railway came.

Post offices were established to provide mail service to all these communities.

As in the case of Giscome, many of the stations were named after current residents or pioneers whose names outlived their owners. Others were named after railway officials or after the sawmills along the route.

Some, like Giscome, survived changes wrought by needs of a growing province. Others didn't—like Newlands Station, which opened Dec. 1, 1914, and closed in 1950.

Aleza Lake was named after a native Indian woman. Its post office opened June 1, 1915.

Dewey, named after U.S. naval hero Admiral George Dewey, got its post office Feb. 1, 1915, but in 1956 Dewey's name was changed to Cornel Mills.

Handsard was named after the GTPR lawyer who worked on the incorporation of the community of Prince George. Its post office opened Aug. 1, 1924.

Longworth was named after Longworth, England. Its post office opened the same day as Giscome's.

Penny's name origin is lost, but records show its post office opened Feb. 1, 1916.

Shelley, named after a GTPR contractor, got its post office Dec. 1, 1923.

Although Prince George was a focal point for GTPR, it was not the only community along the line to get its name from the company or be named after those who worked to provide rail service.

Prince Rupert, the terminus which was believed to be the future "Gateway to the Orient", was named as a result of a company-sponsored contest in which \$250 was offered as a prize.

Charles Melville Hays, the railway's general manager and who had strong beliefs in the future of the line and Prince Rupert's future is remem-

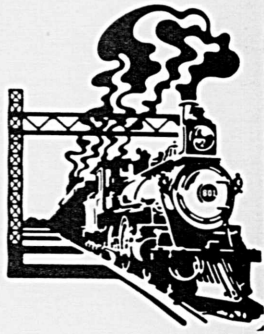
bered in that town by several geographical places named after him.

Capt. James Herrick McGregor, of Gore and McGregor surveying is remembered by four waterways: the McGregor River, Herrick River, Captain Creek and James Creek.

Smithers honors Alfred Smithers, a GTPR president and Vanderhoof is named after Herbert Vanderhoof, a company public relations man who helped attract investment capital to Canada's new railway, specifically to the B.C. operations.

McBride, originally known as GTPR's Mile 90, recalls the B.C. Premier, Sir Richard McBride, who struggled to get the Pacific and Great Eastern railway built. His vision saw connections extending from the Yukon to Mexico.

Terrace got its name as an alternate choice. George Little was promised he could name the railway station as part of a deal for granting the GTPR a route through his land. When postal authorities told him his first choice, Littleton, already existed in Canada he chose Terrace.



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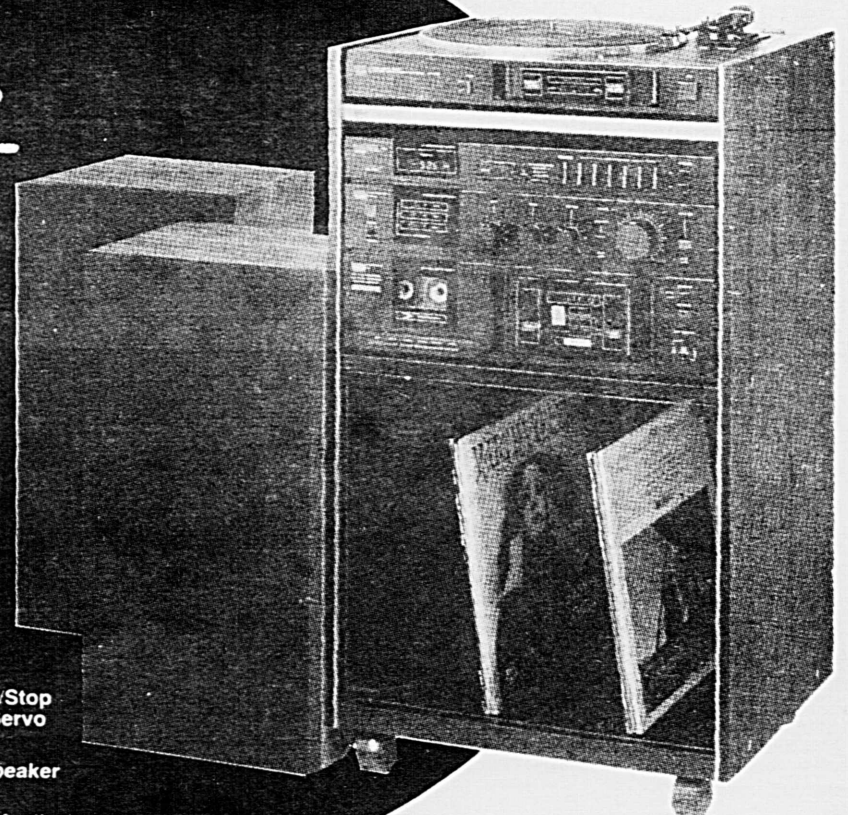
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