CNRS Abstracts (15 March 2021)

"The American Periodical Press: the Waterways of the Chilkoot Pass, the Dyea Inlet, and Canada's Transnational Pacific Gateway"
Caroline C. Evans Abbott

The discovery of gold in the Yukon in the final decade of the nineteenth century profoundly reshaped human relationships with the waterways of the North. Experiential, journalistic accounts of these waterways featured heavily in the American periodical presses of the late nineteenth century, but a satisfactory exploration of the way those representations shaped environmental history does not exist. Despite its value to current scholarship, the transnational periodical press is all but ignored for its role in commodifying an experience of nautical frontiersmanship. Similarly, the role of periodicals in shaping middle class relationships with environment is critically slight. The experiential accounts of northern gold prospecting featured in American periodicals at the turn of the century depend implicitly on sensationalized accounts of Canadian waterways. Thereby, those depictions offer a mode by which the role of international media in shaping Canadian environmental histories can be more thoroughly accounted for. This study will consider the periodical press itself as a shaper of nautical gateways to the Canadian Pacific and of its cultural landscape. With specific attention to portrayals of the waters of the Chilkoot Pass and Dyea Inlet, the transnational nature of this territory's comanagement today by the American National Park Service and Parks Canada offers culturally relevant geological placement for the subject of this study. It will analyse selections from popular American periodicals from the final decade of the nineteenth century with special attention to an account by divisive American Major General Frederick Funston published by *Scribner's Magazine* in 1896.

"Work, Life and Settlement on the Fraser: Kanaka Maoli Mobilities to British Columbia in the Nineteenth Century"
Naomi Calinitsky

This paper considers how Pacific Islanders came to establish themselves as labourers and, ultimately, settlers on the North American continent, establishing new and lasting connections to the land in the 19th century. My focus here is upon the emergence of one key site for Hawaiian labour, Fort Langley on the Fraser River, to examine the ways in which this locus of labour and export-driven commerce enabled Hawaiians to not only engage in the broader trans-Pacific economy that was becoming increasingly established in the mid-nineteenth century, but also to briefly explore the ways in which Hawaiians at Fort Langley would become enmeshed and embedded within broader British Columbian settler-colonial culture, taking up new colonial opportunities to own land and forming families with Native American women that would effectively help rewrite and transform the trajectory of the Pacific Islander labouring diaspora on the North American continent as the 19th century progressed.

“Reluctant Allies, Distant Enemies, Willing Partners: Evolving Naval Relations between Canada and Japan through Peace, War, and Uncertainty across the Pacific.”
Hugues Canuel

A review of the limited literature concerned with the history of Canada-Japan relations through the last century can lead to a simplistic characterisation: strained over the immigration issue before 1941 and dominated by trade after 1945, with virtually no military dimension to the framework. This paper adopts a naval lens to illustrate a relationship that is much more nuanced than it appears, evolving as it did through several stages that remain ignored in academic works today. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance made Canada and Japan reluctant allies during the First World War but growing interwar tensions turned them into distant enemies, while common interests eventually united them as willing partners, as illustrated today by their collaboration in the enforcement of United Nations sanctions against North Korea, another example of an interaction largely ignored by the public and in academic circles. Ultimately, this paper seeks to make an original contribution to an historiography that neglected a relevant dimension of Canada-Japan relations through decades of war, peace and uncertainty across the Pacific

“Pacific Perspective: why Canada had a special place in the maritime defence of the British Empire.”
Tim Döbler

With British Columbia joining the Canadian Confederation on 25 July 1871, Canada obtained a coast in the far west of the North American continent. From that day onwards, Canada not just commanded an Atlantic coast, but a Pacific coast as well. This provided the Dominion with access to important sea-lines of communication and opened a part of the world with special importance for all the great powers of the time.

This paper examines why Canada had a special place in the maritime defence of the British Empire. With two coastlines separated from each other geo-strategic questions that arise are, firstly, what was the Canadian opinion towards imperial maritime defence? Secondly, did Canada contribute to the maritime defence of the British Empire and how? Thirdly, how was Canada’s maritime defence arranged in general?

Canada was not the only dominion with coastlines on two different oceans, as for example Australia was surrounded by the Indian and Pacific Ocean, and South Africa had an Atlantic and Indic coastline. Unlike these colonies with their equally easily accessible coastlines, however, the Canadian coastlines were separated from each other, as the Northwest Passage yet had to be found.

Another difference between Canada and Australia was that the Canadian colonies were not just overwhelmingly inhabited by British settlers, but by a significant proportion of French settlers, too. These characteristics underline the special requirements British

politicians had to consider when arranging Imperial maritime defence and negotiating Canadian contributions.

"Development of the Pacific Gateway 1871-1940 in the era of Steam Globalization"
Jan Drent

It was the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1886 that truly made the BC coast Canada's Pacific gateway. Because steamships could provide more timely and rapid connections than sailing vessels, they came to predominate in the last quarter of the 19th century. Global trade boomed because of steam power and the rapid exchange of information through telegraph cables. Shipping companies now offered regular passenger and cargo service from BC. The systematic charting of the intricately indented British Columbia coastline by the Royal Navy—particularly between 1846 and 1910 (continued by Canadian hydrographers starting in the 1890s)—and pilotage services enabled safe navigation by larger and faster vessels. Growing marine traffic was supported by improved port infrastructure, and the creation of ship repair facilities. The opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 was a major boost to the Pacific Gateway, resulting in significantly increased traffic in the two decades between the World Wars. Vancouver had become the dominant BC port and was now competing with eastern Canada in the export of grain and other bulk cargoes. This paper will examine the main traffic flows through the Pacific Gateway and the development of its ports between 1871 and the start of the Second World War.

"All but Forgotten: Early Measures for Maritime Safety on Canada's West Coast"
Clay Evans

The colonial development of Canada, like its neighbour to the south, began in the east and spread westward over time. The distance between Canada's Atlantic and Pacific coasts remains vast even in today's era of jet travel, let alone during a time when it took several months to make a passage from east to west around Cape Horn. That said, there remained—and arguably still remains—a sense among British Columbians that, even though they were part of this new Canada, they were still being seen by those in the east as a far-flung fringe of the Dominion.

The exponential population and expansion of shipping from 1867 to 1914 in both British Columbia and the American Pacific Northwest led to marine disasters along the area known as "The Graveyard of the Pacific." This paper will examine local life-saving measures on Canada's Pacific Gateway and how Ottawa responded to such calls.

"The Pacific Impulse in Canadian Naval History"
Richard Gimblett

Canadian naval history generally has been portrayed as Atlantic-centric, what with that being the principle theatre of both World Wars and the Cold War. This presentation posits that, rather than being a backwater, the Pacific in fact has been the impetus for many of the major developments in the history of the Royal Canadian Navy. To illustrate this, I shall present a dozen vignettes, ranging from the Navy's origins in Jacky Fisher's Fleet Unit concept (which was intended to be based in Esquimalt), through "The First to Die" (our four midshipmen killed in action at Coronel) and the loss of *Galiano* (the only HMC Ship lost in the Great War), the epic voyage of *Thiepval* to Russia and Japan in 1924, the biasing of the interwar destroyer fleet on the BC coast, the "incidents" of 1949 as a West Coast phenomenon (the main lock-ins were aboard Esquimalt-based destroyers), the Korean War as the only "hot spot" of the Cold War, the re-balancing of the Canadian fleets in the 1980s to effect the USN Maritime Strategy, that experience as the groundwork for post-Cold War "interoperability" with the USN, to the 2014 constructive loss by fire of HMCS *Protecteur* as the final spur for an AOR replacement project.

"Canada's Pacific Gateway … to the Arctic"
Nigel Greenwood

"Pacific Gateway"—this term evokes the "All Red Route" of fashionable and elegant travel by CPR steamers or, less historically, global shipping patterns that have enabled Prince Rupert to post record growth as Canada's third largest port. But the Pacific Northwest is also notably associated with "White Routes"—forays into the polar wastes in search of knowledge or glory. While Arctic exploration often originated from the east many western approaches, from Vitus Bering's American explorations and the Third Voyage of Captain Cook to the present day, reflect accessibility and opportunity that contradict common notions of Arctic approaches. The western Arctic has also been the scene of technological exploitation and innovation. Most evident in the heyday of Beaufort Sea drilling of the 1980s, much development of purpose-built polar technology has emanated from the west coast. Recent concerns over global climate change have refocused attention on Arctic issues. While the morphing of the National Shipbuilding Strategy to include more east-coast yards suggests that icebreakers may not be built in BC, the west coast will nonetheless continue to be a key stepping-off point for Canada's Arctic strategy, supported by basing of CCG and RCN ice-capable ships and the seasonal variation of Arctic ice coverage that provides early access to most of Canada's Arctic estate from the west. More significantly, the geographic intersection of "Great Power" interests—of Arctic coastal nations and non-Arctic states—in the western Arctic will ensure that Canada's Pacific Gateway is significantly northern- as well as westward- focused.

"Strategy over Honour: The Pacific Naval Theatre and the Battle of Valparaiso in the War of 1812"
Nicholas James Kaizer

The naval war of 1812 featured a unique number of single-ship actions that had little strategic importance on the wider conflict. Captains engaged in these actions as matters of personal and collective honour, rather than out of any strategic considerations: in fact, in a few cases these actions were undertaken despite risks posed to the strategic interests of the British Royal Navy or the United States Navy. The public, too, were interested in these affairs as matters of honour. Losses were rationalized as contests where their naval heroes had been outgunned and outmanned. Victories were touted as triumphs of their naval heroes in evenly-matched actions, the most celebrated being the victory of HMS *Shannon* over USS *Chesapeake*, two closely-matched frigates.

One notable exception, on both counts, was the Battle of Valparaiso, fought between British and American frigates and a sloop of war consort on each side, after USS *Essex* sailed into the Pacific to prey on the British whaling fleet. The British, in this case, outgunned and outmanned their American opponents, and had a clear advantage over the enemy in the battle. Arguably, the battle also had important strategic implications, as evidenced by the impacts on the British whaling trade and a rushed response by the British Royal Navy. This paper examines these strategic implications and impact of the *Essex*'s cruise, as well as how the patriotic British and Haligonian press sought to rationalize this British victory against an inferior enemy as an honourable victory.

"The Invisible Strength and Heart Behind the Uniform: Experiences of Canadian Navy Officer's Wives since World War II Through Oral Histories"
Jordan Kerr

Oral histories are a quickly emerging field of historical inquiry aimed at capturing the unique experiences of people. While oral histories are not a new research method, their treatment as a significant source of information rather than supplemental anecdote is a new and beneficial practice for capturing the experiences of individuals and groups absent from past scholarship. One such population that would benefit from this practice are Canadian Navy officers' wives. Broadly defined as civilian or military personnel who are or were married, engaged, or in common-law relationships with any active-duty or retired member of the Canadian Navy, Canadian Navy wives are the heart behind the uniform. Using ten author-completed oral histories and cross-sectional secondary source literature, this paper explores the following questions: what are the experiences of Canadian Navy officer's wives since 1960, and how is their life course impacted by their husbands' positions in the Canadian Navy. Ultimately, the oral history-based findings show that, regardless what previous literature suggests, Canadian Navy officers' wives have overwhelmingly positive experiences, despite facing significant challenges in the areas of parenting, relocation and separation. The participants frequently stated "the good outweighed the bad," citing their independence, financial security, large network of friends, and travel abilities as positive aspects of their Navy wife lifestyle. Additionally, while these wives were differentially impacted by their husbands' positions in the Canadian Navy, changing professional goals, social networks, homes, and parenting styles for their spouse's job, they nevertheless lived the life they desired.

“Royal Navy’s Cole Island Ordnance Yard in Esquimalt Harbour from 1860-1910: a virtual tour”
Richard Linzey

The presence of the Royal Navy on the northwest coast underlined British (and by extension Canadian) sovereignty over the Pacific Gateway until 1910. Infrastructure to support warships stationed in local waters was developed in Esquimalt starting in the 1860s. This included an ordnance yard with ammunition magazines and workshops on a small, isolated island in the upper harbour that was finally abandoned for a more spacious location on the West Shore after the Second World War. Cole Island has since remained unoccupied and is now a Provincial and National Historic Site under the care of the Heritage Branch of the BC government. Evocative brick storehouses and a guard house remain as examples of typical infrastructure of the Victorian era. Heritage expert and branch director Richard Linzey, who has studied the early dockyard and outlying facilities in depth, will provide a virtual tour and interpretation of the site and the program of conservation works currently underway.

“Tactics and Experiential Learning on the Pacific Station: Captain Henry John May, C.B., R.N. in Esquimalt 1892-96”
Chris Madsen

In 1897, Captain Henry J. May presented a paper at the Royal United Service Institute titled *Notes on Tactics for Ships and Weapons of the Present Day*, which established his standing as one of the leading authorities on naval tactics in the Royal Navy. He went on to refine and impart his ideas on the subject while in command of a battleship in the Channel squadron and as first director of the war course at the Royal Naval College in Greenwich. The genesis for May’s new approach to naval tactics came from four years spent on the Pacific station, in command of the third-class cruiser HMS *Hyacinth*, when he had time to ponder, test, and practice his evolving thinking. This paper delves into the content of May’s sole known published work, situates the state of thinking about naval tactics in the late Victorian navy, compares the contemporary writings of American captains William Bainbridge-Hoff and Alfred Thayer Mahan, and provides context in the Pacific where May observed and interacted with the United States, imperial Russia, and imperial Japan navies, specifically naval operations during the 1894 Sino-Japanese war. Captain Henry May, sometimes referred to as the Royal Navy’s Mahan, demonstrated that innovation in naval tactics could emerge even from a distant backwater station like Esquimalt, far away from the main British fleets.

“Why Canada Must Embrace a Free and Open Indo-Pacific”
Dr Jonathan Berkshire Miller and Stephen Nagy

The Free and Open Indo-Pacific Vision (FOIP) is a template for Canadian Indo-Pacific engagement and a potential framework upon which to build a strategy. Critics advocate for a diverse and inclusive Canadian Indo-Pacific approach, but this overlooks the challenges associated with a revisionist power in the Indo-Pacific and the importance of creating an Indo-Pacific strategy that reflects the shared values that Canada and other partners in the region share and the trajectory of the Indo-Pacific.

“A dry dock to link land and water: the case of Prince Rupert, 1912-1951”
Michael Moir

The government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier was responsible for two initiatives that had significant impact on Canadian maritime affairs during the early 20th century. The first was the Naval Service Act of 1910, legislation that is very familiar to members of the Canadian Nautical Research Society. The second was a series of statutes intended to encourage the construction of dry docks passed between 1899 and 1908 that, while lesser known, nevertheless played a crucial role in creating the infrastructure needed to maintain naval and merchant vessels. This presentation will examine the impact of the dry dock acts upon Canada’s Pacific coast and in particular Prince Rupert, where a massive floating dry dock supported the connection between rail and steamships in the regional transportation network, as well as shipbuilding for peace and war.

“Discovering Nothing: Captain Cook and the Evolution of the Pacific Portal to the Northwest Passage”
David L. Nicandri

The British Admiralty, after two centuries’ worth of futility attempting to discover the Northwest Passage via the Atlantic, in 1776 dispatched Cook to the Pacific in the hopes that a productive corridor might be accessed from the west. For several generations, historians of the Pacific Northwest/Northwest Coast have faulted Cook for “missing” openings to the Great River of the West and Fuca’s Strait, without full appreciation for the fact that Cook’s instructions directed him to 65° N before he began his search in earnest. This parameter was established by the late-arriving cognizance from the Hudson Bay Company’s Samuel Hearne, who had reached the Arctic (it was thought at 71° 54' N) via the Coppermine River, northwest of Hudson Bay.

The interpretive corollary to this “fatigued explorer” hypothesis stipulates that Vancouver was ordered to the Northwest to compensate for some perceived shortcoming of Cook’s. In fact, Vancouver was directed to find a second-generation Northwest Passage, one popularized by maritime and terrestrial fur traders (notably John Meares and Peter Pond) and speculative geographer Alexander Dalrymple. This successor image was not the direct saltwater passage Cook sought but rather, through an imagined western analogue to Hudson Bay that conveniently lessened the extent of terrain between Atlantic and Pacific waters, a membranous “communication.”

The notion of the Northwest Passage was such an *idée fixe* that the successors to Pond and Dalrymple (Alexander Mackenzie and Thomas Jefferson) propagated the notion that a third- generation Northwest Passage (a network of rivers) was a suitable substitute.

"Canada and its Asia Pacific Trade Gateway"
Hugh Stephens

Canada's trade has traditionally gone south to the US or across the Atlantic to European trade partners, although in recent years, trade with Asia has grown significantly. China is our second-largest trade partner even though it takes only 4 percent of Canadian exports. Japan has also long been an important market for western Canada's resource-based and agri-food products. South Korea, Taiwan, and the ASEAN trade bloc also offer significant potential in certain sectors, along with India. While Canada has had a free trade agreement with the United States since the late 1980s, and an agreement in place with the EU (and now separately the UK) for the past several years, its trade structure in Asia is limited. However, Canada concluded a bilateral trade agreement with Korea in 2014 and is a founding member of the eleven-country Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). These two agreements provide the framework for a pan-Pacific trade architecture, of which Canada is a part by virtue of its CPTPP membership. The CPTPP, which came into force in December 2018, will likely undergo expansion beginning in 2021, offering Canada potentially broader opportunities. If Canada could reach a trade agreement with ASEAN (long in the works) this would potentially open the way to RCEP membership, firmly embedding Canada into important Asian supply chains. The challenge for Canada at the present time is to secure its place as an Asia Pacific trading country, through its BC gateway, by actively pursuing opportunities to expand our trade linkages across the Pacific.

"The Role of Canadian Pacific Coastal and Ocean Steamship Services in Developing the Gateway": An illustrated talk
Robert Turner

After the completion of the transcontinental railway in 1886, the Canadian Pacific Company established transpacific mail, passenger, and cargo service with the celebrated Empress liners. In addition, it created steamship services linking BC coastal ports as well as Seattle and Alaskan ports. These services had seminal roles in linking the west coast with Pacific markets and in transporting people and freight along the long BC coasts at a time when land links were largely absent. Although outside the scope of this talk, CP paddlewheel steamers on BC interior lakes extended the reach of railway lines. The CP coastal steamer service continued until 1958. Transpacific passenger service was not resumed after the Second World War, but CP cargo ships continued trading in the Pacific until the mid-1950s.

“Foot of Carrall: The Pacific Maritime Gateway of Gastown”
Trevor Williams
Many communities throughout Canada enjoy public water access through a municipal wharf. Vancouver, British Columbia, however, does not. The arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Coal Harbour in 1887 challenged the traditional public water access to the Burrard Inlet, as the central, street-end location at the foot of Carrall Street. This was the long-standing water access to the grubby community of Gastown. Vancouver City Wharf, the would-be public dock built in the Carrall Street carriageway in 1886, shared this favoured location with the float and boathouse belonging to pioneer boat-builder Andrew Linton. The culture of land squatting throughout Vancouver in the mid 1880s was mimicked on the water and foreshore, as both City Wharf and Linton Boatworks steadfastly refused to sign any form of lease with the CPR to legalize their occupation. After City Wharf was abruptly sold to Union Steamships in 1889, there was a mourning period for the loss of this valuable downtown location, and the idea of a public right to access the Burrard Inlet expired with the last legal appeal of the “Street-Ends Cases” in 1906. Union Steamships was always awake to the meaning of being at this critical historical node, because this pioneering company was originally composed of long-standing and established mariners of the Burrard Inlet, such as Captain Donald McPhaiden. The company heritage of Union Steamships is conjoined with that of Gastown through locating at the foot of Carrall.

“The Royal Canadian Navy and the Asia-Pacific Region in the Early Cold War, 1945 to 1965”
David Zimmerman

The 1994 White Paper on Defence contained a remarkably inaccurate assessment of the Canadian navy’s role in the Asia-Pacific Region since the end of the Second World War. It stated, “Canada's participation in Asia-Pacific security affairs since the end of the Second World War has been largely limited to the commitment of forces to various peacekeeping and observer missions,…along with participation in the ‘RIMPAC’ air and naval exercises with the United States, Japan, Australia, and, on occasion, other Asia-Pacific countries.” The reality is that the Royal Canadian Navy’s involvement in the region during the Early Cold War was far more extensive than was claimed in the White Paper. Remarkably, no mention was made of the ALCANUS defence agreements, which integrated Canadian Pacific maritime security planning with the United States. The RCN’s involvement in Pacific naval exercises was more extensive than the White Paper suggests. During these exercises, as well as annual training cruises of the region, Canadian sailors were exposed to what in the 1950s and 1960s must have seemed like strange and exotic cultures. RCN’s involvement in the Asia-Pacific did diminish after 1965, caused by the USN’s heavy commitment to the Vietnam War and the large reductions in the size of RCN. This paper will assess the RCN’s role in the wider Asia-Pacific world during the Early Cold War.