



Laurier and the Last Best West

May 9th, 2014

A Turning Point

- o 1896: The Conservative party reign came to an end after 20 years and a Liberal majority was elected.
- o Wilfrid Laurier, the Liberal leader, became Prime Minister. He was the first French Canadian Prime Minister.
- o He wanted to promote national unity and protect Canada's interests in the world.
- o He had to be careful with the topics of language and religion.

Manitoba Schools Question

- o 1870: Manitoba joined Canada and equal rights were given to schools of both languages and religions.
- o 1880s: More English speaking immigrants made the province have an English speaking majority.
- o Manitoba Schools Act: Removed support from Roman Catholic schools.

More Manitoba Schools

- o The Liberals gained the support of Quebec voters by promising to protect French/Roman Catholic Rights.
- o Their solution:
 - o French instruction would be allowed in schools with a minimum of 10 French speaking students.
 - o No government funding for Catholic school board.
 - o Catholic religious instruction allowed for 30 mins at end of school day.

Imperialism

- o English Canadians were proud of being part of the British Empire. They were called imperialists. French Canadians weren't interested in being part of the empire.
- o 1899: Britain controlled a lot of Africa. Diamonds and gold were discovered in South Africa so Britain wanted to control it more.
- o Descendants of Dutch settlers (Boers) resisted.
- o 1899: Boer War started leading to a split between French/English Canadians.

The Boer War

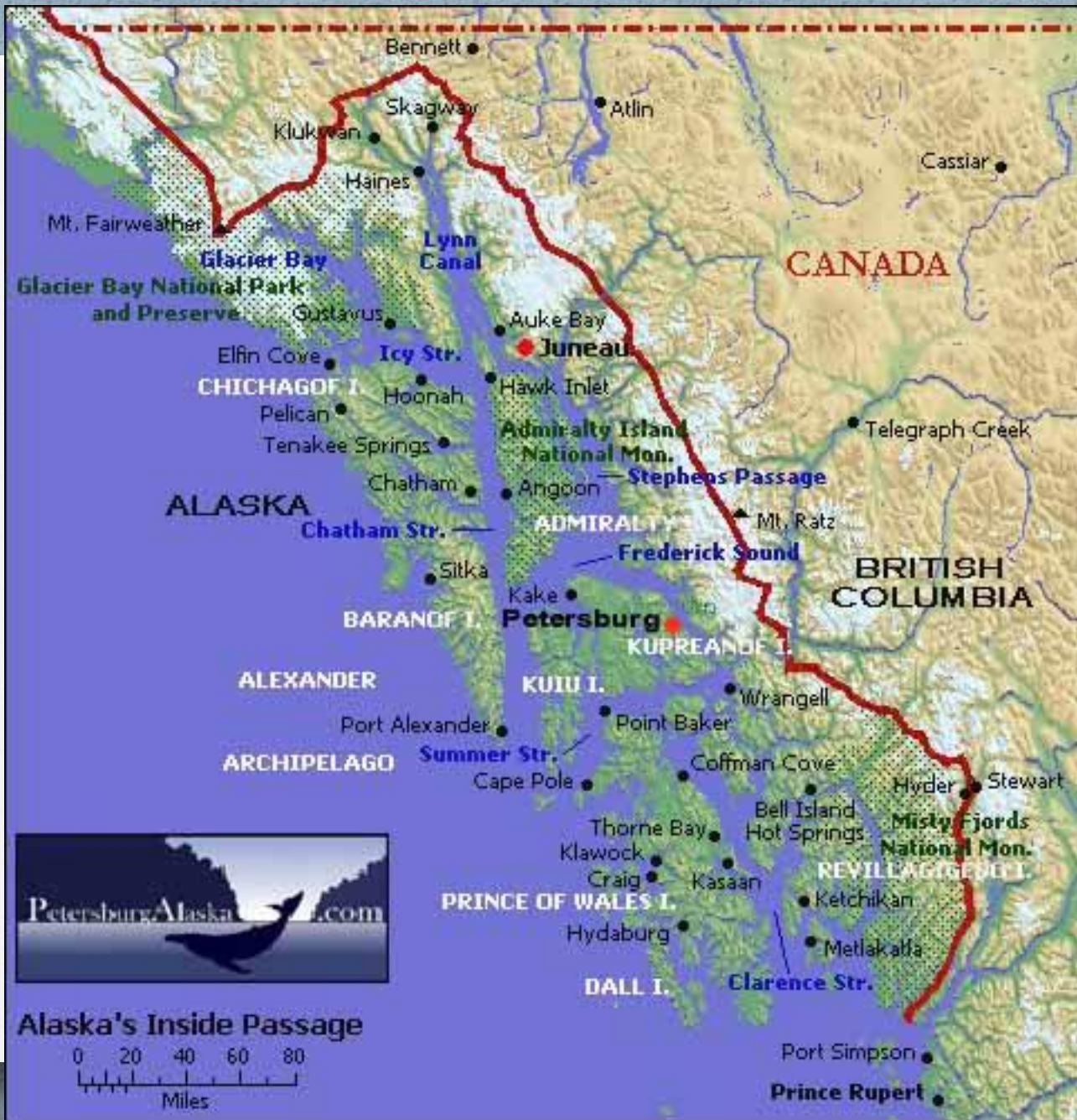
- o British gov't called to colonies for help.
- o English Canadians: For sending troops.
- o French Canadians: Against sending troops.
- o Laurier compromised: Volunteers only.



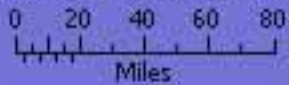
The Sleeping Elephant



- o Canada felt threatened living next to the growing USA.
- o Canadians united behind Laurier in the Alaska Boundary Dispute.
- o 1897: Gold was discovered and 100000 miners came to the Yukon.



Alaska's Inside Passage



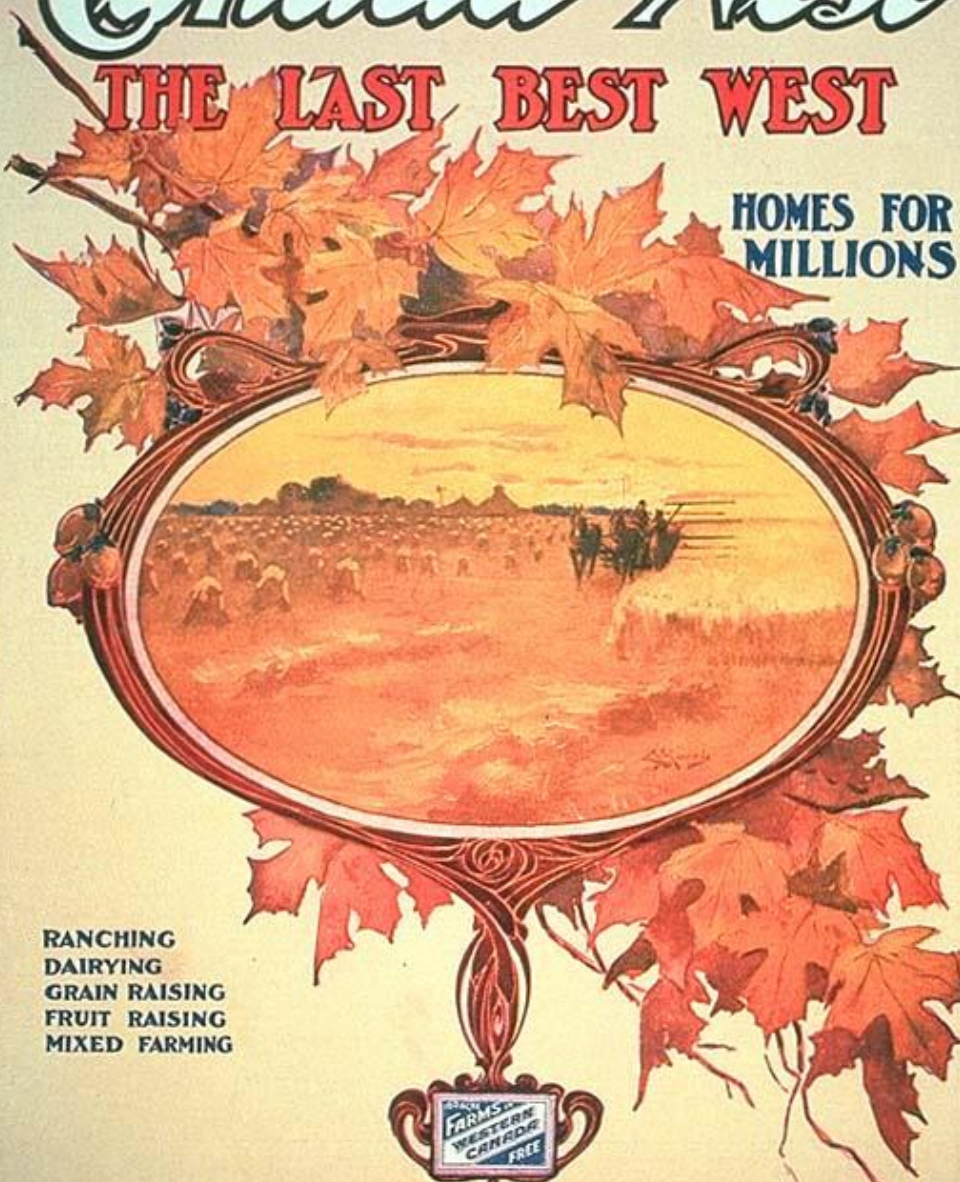
The Panhandle

- o The only way you could get to the goldfields in the Yukon was by crossing US territory.
- o To solve the border dispute, there was a Tribunal.
- o Theodore Roosevelt emphasised that he wanted the verdict to go his way.
- o In the end, the result was that Canada has to give up half of B.C's coastline. Britain had voted in favour.
- o This left Canada in an awkward place. We couldn't make our own international treaties and apparently we couldn't rely on Britain.

Canada West

THE LAST BEST WEST

HOMES FOR
MILLIONS



RANCHING
DAIRYING
GRAIN RAISING
FRUIT RAISING
MIXED FARMING



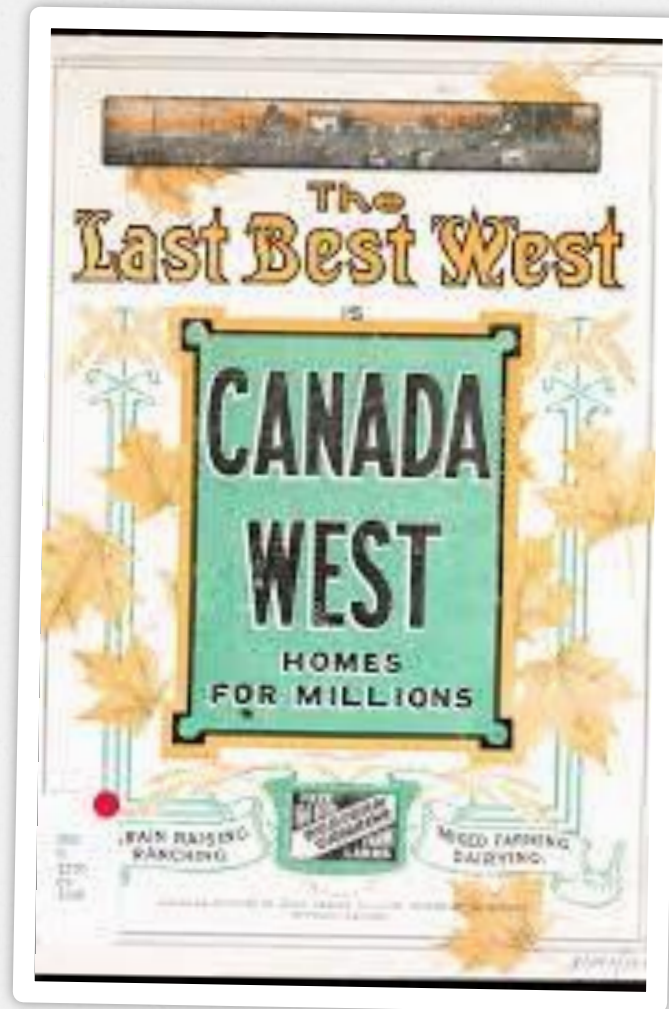
ISSUED BY DIRECTION OF HON. SYDNEY FISHER
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The Last Best West

- o The Laurier era featured an economic boom which attracted many immigrants to the Canadian West.
- o 1896-1914: Canada's gov't encouraged immigrants to come here.
- o Clifford Sifton (Minister of the Interior) was determined to bring settlers to the praries.
- o How? Advertising.

Advertising!

Canada attracted tens of thousands of immigrants to the west by offering free lands. In order to do this, Immigration Department sent out millions of pamphlets, newspaper ads, posters, lectures and bonuses for promoters.



Immigration

- o The three main sources of immigration to Canada were:
 - o Britain, USA, and Europe
- o Sifton encouraged Eastern European farmer immigrants. They were used to the climate and dry land farming.
- o Britons made up 1/3rd of the immigrants during this time.
- o American settlers were good at blending in to Canadian society.

The Praries

- o Each family was granted 160 acres of land. They needed to raise \$500 to get the basics: plow, wagon, horse, milk cow.
- o Living conditions were primitive. Hardships: cold winters, boring diet, mosquitos and various natural disasters.
- o Homes were built from wood or sod. Sod was the first choice. Sod homes were cramped, smelly and damp.

More Fun with Railways

- o The more people in the prairies the more need for railways and faster transportation.
- o People complained about the CPR monopoly and two companies asked for aid to build new ones.
- o Canadian Northern Railway: It would build on the Prairies to Quebec and to the Pacific.
- o Grand Trunk Railway: Went from coast to coast. Was to build railways in eastern Canada to cover areas not met by CPR. In the west it went through the Yellowhead Pass to Prince Rupert.