

## The Alaska Highway

### Truck Convoy Makes Trip

It was a 30-below zero day, November 20th, 1942, when The Road was opened with ceremony at Soldiers' Summit, overlooking Kluane Lake, amid a scene of great beauty. After the red, white and blue ribbon was cut, a convoy of trucks left for Fairbanks, the first trucks to travel over the highway from Dawson Creek to Fairbanks.

Hon. Ian Mackenzie, Canadian Minister of Pensions and National Health, and E. L. Bartlett, Acting Governor of Alaska, cut the ribbon, releasing for the northern front a flood of war supplies vital to the strength of the United Nations.

The ceremony concluded with a band playing the national anthems of Canada and the U.S. Flags of the two nations were raised.

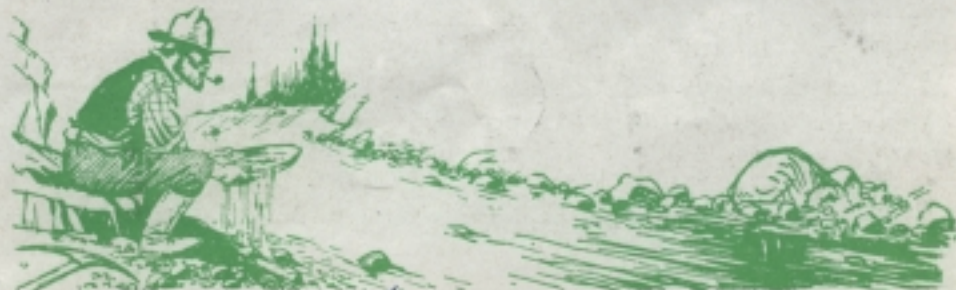
General O'Connor described the Road as a "unique tie" between the two countries and declared he hoped it would be "an unbreakable bond of understanding between our lands."

The ribbon was held by four enlisted men of the U.S. Engineers, Cpl. Refines Sims, Jr., a negro soldier from Philadelphia, and Pte. Alfred Jalufka, of Kennedy, Texas, representing the northern sector, and Master Sgt. Andrew E. Doyle, of Philadelphia, and Cpl. John T. Reilly, of Detroit, representing the southern sector.

There were many other officials present, including Maj.-Gen. G. R. Pearkes, V.C., officer commanding the Pacific Coast Command for the Canadian Army, and J. S. Bright, engineer in charge of the permanent road for the P.R.A. Scarlet-coated Royal Canadian Mounted Police from the Carcross and Dawson City detachments lent real color to the scene.

It was a great day for Dr. Charles Cansell, Canadian Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, who was present. He said, "To no one does this highway mean more than it does to me. It traverses my own country, for I was born at a small trading post on the Liard River.

"As a young man I tramped across this country on snowshoes in search for gold. I have canoed down many of its rivers in the course of geological explorations. In later years, I have flown



(29)

Keith J. Coagre  
Philadelphia  
New York

"Here's to the girl in the little green phase"  
This is an open invitation to look up  
H. Shelton & Dorothy Jean Coagre whenever  
you come to the states. A good time is promised.



It's really been grand  
knowing you.  
Bernice DeLoach  
Lawrence, Kansas - U. S. A.  
The Alaska Highway

across it by airplanes. Its appeal to me, therefore, is strong, even though to you, the builders of this highway, it may have appeared harsh, forbidding and inhospitable."

It was a great day for all Canadians and Americans.

### Civilian Help Given Praise

The work of civilian contractors under the Public Roads Administration deserves a great deal of praise. There were 55 of these companies, engaging 6,000 men, the largest civilian force ever to be employed on one road-building job.

The companies worked under the supervision of management contractors, and these included the following: Okes Construction Company, St. Paul, Minn.; R. Melville Smith Company, Ltd., Toronto; Dowell Construction Company, Seattle, Wash.; Lytle and Green, Sioux Falls and Des Moines, Iowa.

Independent contractors were: General Construction Company, Ltd., Granville Island, Vancouver, B.C.; E. W. Elliott Company, Seattle. Miller Construction Company, Edmonton, was awarded a contract for pole line construction, with Oman-Smith, Nashville, Tenn., as sub-contractor.

### Road History Is Interesting

The history of The Road long before construction began is an interesting one.

In 1928, the subject of the building of a highway to Alaska was broached by an American, but he wanted the route to travel through British Columbia. His idea was given considerable publicity and eventually a commission was appointed by the U.S. to study its feasibility. Agitation for this B.C. route continued in spasms for a number of years.

However, it seemed that neither the American or the Canadian government was taking any serious note of the possibility of a highway through Canada to Alaska. Depression helped to kill talk.

In 1933, agitation again began to grow both north and south of the 49th parallel. The U.S. issued a report on its possibilities, and the Canadian government appointed a commission to consider the B.C. route. The commission was headed by an Albertan, Hon. Charles Stewart.

There was little thought at the time for a prairie route. All the talk was about a paradise for tourists, and that the route should go through the mountainous country of B.C., ideal for scenic beauty.

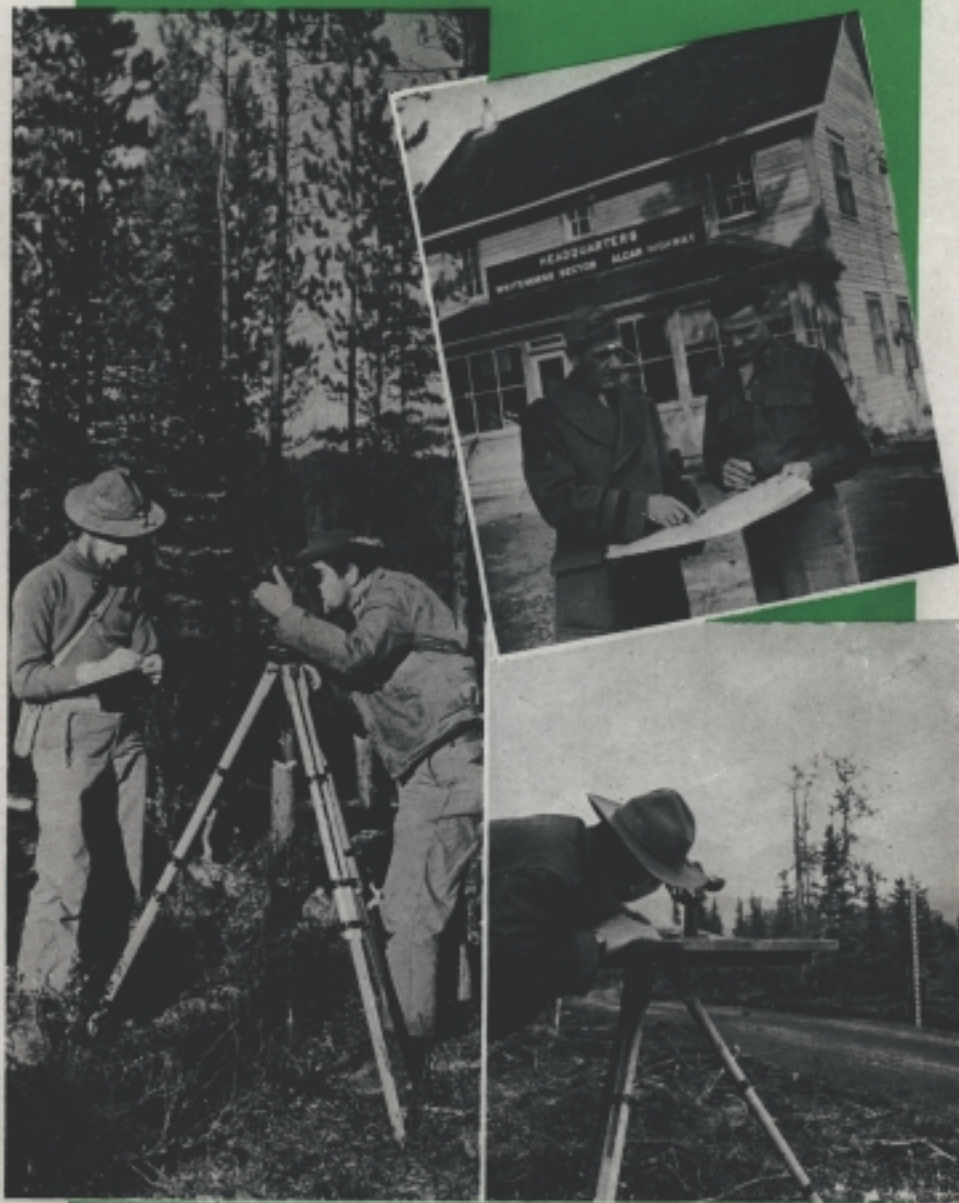
As talk about a road increased, westerners began to point out the advisability of a route through the prairies. Possibility of attracting thousands of tourists was seen and more and more people took up the cry for the prairie route.

Good Luck - wanda - (30)  
It has been nice knowing you -  
Best Regards - always -  
Ed. V. Alstrom - Minneapolis



And what does  
on do think kids remind  
you of?  
Hatchie Netteland  
St. Paul, Minnesota

Best of luck to my  
"Gus on Sal"  
Bruce Bailey



31

SURVEYING A LINK

GENERAL AND AIDE

A STANDARD WAS KEPT

Chas L Staple  
4234 W 51<sup>st</sup> Terrace  
Mission Kansas.



## The Alaska Highway

*Louise M. Easton  
305 Tweed Avenue  
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Toronto, Ontario*

In 1938, the U.S. government appointed the Alaskan International Highway Commission and the Canadian government co-operated by appointing another commission which became known as the British Columbia-Yukon-Alaska Highway Commission. Some work was accomplished.

All this time, prairie organizations were trying to get recognition for their proposed route.

Eventually, groups interested in the prairie route both in Canada and the U.S. formed an organization known as the United States-Canada-Alaska Prairie Highway association. This association was divided into two branches, a Canadian section under J. A. MacKenzie, of the Regina Board of Trade, and an American section, under H. Halverson, of Minot, North Dakota.



BRIG. GEN. O'CONNOR

The two groups made representations to Ottawa and to Washington, giving sound and constructive arguments for the prairie route.

Then war struck in the Pacific.

Another interesting feature of The Road is the simple agreement between Canada and the U.S.

1. The U.S. was to build The Road, using engineer troops for surveys and initial construction.
2. Canadian and American contractors were to be used, operating under the Public Roads Administration of the U.S., for follow-up contract work.
3. The U.S. was to maintain the highway until six months after the cessation of the war unless Canada desired a return of the Canadian portion of The Road before that time.
4. Canada was to waive import duties, tolls and other charges for traffic moving between U.S. and Alaska.
5. Canada also was to permit use of rock, gravel, timber and other materials along the highway.





Best of everything  
Kanda's even  
if you don't  
deserve it.

Everett Kincaid  
708 Main Street  
Jackson, Jack.



(33)

SNOW CAPS THE YEAR ROUND