



*The*  
COLUMBIA  
UNVEILED

*by*  
M. J. LORRAINE

With the regards of the author  
M. Lorrain

\*250.

Smith 6170

signed

(2102)



THE OLD VOYAGER, AGE 69

# THE COLUMBIA UNVEILED

*Being the story of a trip, alone, in  
a rowboat from the source  
to the mouth of the*

COLUMBIA RIVER

*Together with a full description of the country  
traversed, and the rapids battled.*

By an old voyager  
and whitewater man

M. J. LORRAINE, C.E.

M. AM. SOC. C.E.

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"Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound, save  
his own dashings."

—*Bryant.*

Swiftly pitching adown Columbia's mighty steps  
I go,

Midst black, forbidding rocks, and waves white-  
crested and distress'd;

Past beetling cliffs, tree-clad lands and bare, and  
mountains white with snow;

Until the goal is reach'd and my wave-toss'd  
craft is brought to rest."

—*Lorraine.*

## P R E F A C E

In submitting the story of my trip down the Columbia River I do not do so as a writer but as a traveler, and in a sense as an explorer. It is a narrative mainly of personal experiences and impressions, and is intended to be instructive rather than merely entertaining. I trust it will in some small measure prove so.

The information presented has largely been obtained from personal observations and contact. Considerable is due to those I met along the way, or to those who put the information in writing; and to whom credit has generally been given in the body of the story. What little is said about the early history of the River has been obtained, and sorted, from various public and private sources. The facts about the different cities and towns have mainly been furnished by the Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce of the places; and those about Fort Vancouver were secured from the Commandant of the Fort. I am indebted to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the plat of Canal Flat, and the descriptions of the summit tunnels in the Rocky Mountains and the Selkirk Range. Photographs were taken of almost everything of interest along the River, but many of them were failures due to defective films obtained in the small towns along the way; and to the mistiness of the atmosphere after the autumnal rains set in. I was able to obtain some substitute photographs and am indebted for

them to Ellis Morigeau, J. P. Forde, and T. W. Saunders.

At the outset of my trip I had no definite intention of writing a description of the Columbia River. The idea was one of growth that developed as I proceeded. I found that to residents of both British Columbia and the United States the location, course, and character of the Columbia and its valley was almost universally veiled in obscurity. The descriptions given by others were incomplete as the writers of them had never traveled its full course as I did. The Columbia is one of the great rivers of North America, and I determined to lift the veil of ignorance that covered it, and make everyone who reads my story acquainted with it in detail from its source to its mouth. Hence the title I have selected.

I was in my sixty-eighth year when the trip was made, and it is admittedly a remarkable one for any lone man to accomplish. In view of this fact, I hereby record my protest against the present unjust, as well as senseless, commercialized system of the world which upholds the theory that men are no longer efficient after forty-five or fifty years of age—an age when many men are at the height of their mental and physical powers. I ask my readers, both young and old, in all fairness, would they classify a man, of any age, in any class but the efficient who is capable of battling successfully the turbulent waters of the Columbia River? I know many men, of fifty and over, forced to be "bystanders" because of the "age limit," who will join me in my protest against its injustice. Men should not be judged by their age, but by their capacity.



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## FOREWORD

During the twelve years in which I have been a resident of the Windermere District of British Columbia, where rises the "River of the West," the mighty Columbia, it has ever been one of my chief delights to paddle my canoe on its waters and to theorize and to dream and to wish that I had the power, the strength, and the time to paddle leisurely down the River to the sea. Years have crept by and the hope has gone from me as one which can not be realized.

All the literature regarding the River, which has come my way I have read and re-read until the River with its myths, its history, and its lore has become part of my life. The names of the more important voyageurs, traders, explorers, and surveyors who have been over its waters, or traversed its banks, are familiar to me together with their experiences and of these, as far as I have learned, the only person who covered the full length from source to mouth by water was that intrepid voyageur, explorer, astronomer, and surveyor of the Northwest Company, of Canada, David Thompson, who discovered its source in 1807 and completed its navigation in 1811. Not until 1921 when M. J. Lorraine, a civil engineer, broke the record has anyone else done this. Others have traversed the River in part, and in various crafts, but as far as my knowledge goes, not excepting David Thompson, Mr. Lorraine is the first and only one who has

made the continuous journey in the one craft. His experiences and his impressions of the River and the country traversed are recorded in the story of the trip he made.

I can recall the time I first met Mr. Lorraine, and the manner in which he impressed me. He came to my home as a complete stranger, a man well-built, stocky, muscular, alert, and active. Though long past middle age every action betokened experience and self-reliance, and he was every inch an outdoor man. Although well aware of the many treacherous rapids that encumber the course of the Columbia he was fully determined to brave their dangers and make the trip to Astoria alone. Then, there was the staunch little craft, the COLUMBIA, which he had designed and had fashioned with his own hands. To watch him handle her was a pleasure. It was with feelings of sorrow and regret that I shook his hand and wished him *bon voyage* at Athalmer in the morning of Sunday, the 19th day of June, as he re-started on his long, difficult and dangerous journey to the sea. I appreciated the hazards of the rapids, and it was with much relief that I learned of his safe arrival at his destination.

Mr. Lorraine's unique feat was remarkable for a lone man to accomplish, and shows what can be done when backed by experience and determination. Up to the present time the annals of the Columbia River record nothing of a similar nature that equals it.

The narrative he has penned of the trip and the descriptions relative to the Columbia should be instructive as well as interesting to students and lovers of adventure.

BASIL G. HAMILTON.

*Kootenai Lodge, Invermere, B. C., October 27, 1922.*