

FOR TEACHERS

Each of the paintings in this portfolio includes a description about what the scene depicts. These images and the descriptions can be used as a focus for an investigation into HBC activities and how they are related to Canada's history.

Information about the Paintings

The Hudson's Bay Company commissioned renowned artists to produce original paintings illustrating notable events drawn from its rich and dynamic past. These images created a unique documentary and artistic record of the Company's history. The paintings graced HBC's annual calendars from 1913 to 1970. Information and images for the entire collection are available at <http://www.hbcheritage.ca/hbcheritage/collections/art/calendar/>.



1. Hudson's Bay Company York Boats at Norway House
Walter J. Phillips, 1928



2. The Prince Albert and the Prince Rupert in Hudson Bay, 1845
John Robert Charles Spurling, 1926



3. Chief Factor Barnston and R.M. Ballantyne at Tadoussac, 1846
Charles Fraser Comfort, 1941



4. Last Dog Train Leaving Lower Fort Garry, 1909
Charles Fraser Comfort, 1927



5. Fort Prince of Wales, 1734
A.H. Hider, 1921



6. John McLean at Grand Falls (The Discovery of Grand Falls), 1839
Walter J. Phillips, 1934



7. Governor Douglas Leaving Fort Langley, 1858
George Franklin Arbuckle, 1957



8. S.S. Beaver Anchored off Fort Victoria, 1846
Adam Sherriff Scott, 1932

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- As part of a larger study, these paintings or a selection from them could initiate interest and help students make connections with the geography of Canada, the fur trade, and HBC's role in opening exploration into our country.

In a class discussion, use the paintings and the descriptions to support the students as they make these connections. As a class, create questions for further investigation and reflection.

Working in pairs or small groups, students choose one painting to learn more about the early days of Canada and the fur trade.

- As a starting point for their study, they use the **Think About and Respond** questions and add other questions they have about the scene.

They decide on a creative way for sharing their information and thinking, (e.g., a vignette, a visual presentation, a re-creation, diagrams, maps, etc.)



1. **Hudson's Bay Company York Boats at Norway House,**

Walter J. Phillips, 1928

For over a century the York boat was the main mode of transportation between the inland trading posts and York Factory, on the shores of Hudson Bay. Named for their ultimate destination, York boats could carry more than 3 tons of goods, about three times the payload of the largest birch bark canoe. First introduced in the 1740s, the York boat was based on an old Orkney design that in turn, derived from the Viking long ship. Flat-bottomed, its pointed bow and stern angled upwards at forty-five degrees, which made it easy to beach or backwater off a sandbar. It was propelled by six or eight oarsmen working twenty-foot oars. For open water, the York boat was equipped with a large square sail, which also served as a tent at night. The painting depicts the arrival of a York Boat brigade at Norway House, at the northern end of Lake Winnipeg, around the year 1867.

Think About and Respond

The canoe was designed for river travel and large ships for ocean travel. Why do you think the York Boat was a suitable vessel for use in the fur trade? Give 3 reasons to support your thinking.



2. *The Prince Albert and the Prince Rupert in Hudson Bay, 1845*

John Robert Charles Spurling, 1926

The barques *Prince Albert* and *Prince Rupert* fly the Company's colours while parting company off Mansel Island at the northern end of Hudson Bay. Every year the vessels sailed in tandem from England on a voyage of re-supply. At Mansel Island the *Prince Albert* departed for Moose Factory and the *Prince Rupert* set off for York Factory, carrying goods and supplies for the Hudson Bay forts. Their cargoes included the staples of the fur trade - guns, ironmongery, earthenware, combs, feathers, stationery, vinegar, kettles, potatoes, tobacco, beads and other articles. In 1845, the *Prince Albert* endured a very difficult journey onward to Moose Factory. Her log constantly

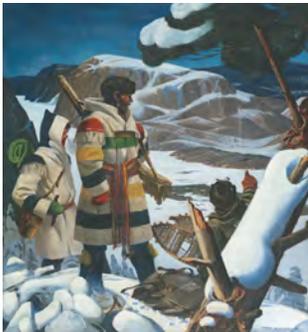
records ice, which caused long delays. In the end, it took her 37 days to reach Moose Factory, about 800 miles south of Mansel Island, while it took only 10 days for the *Prince Rupert* to travel the 600 miles southwest to York Factory.

Think About and Respond

What does each of the following words mean when talking about the fur trading process?

- barques
- re-supply
- staples
- log

Categorize the staples listed into those that the HBC factors would use for trading and those they would use for living at the posts. Which ones did you put in both categories? Why?



3. *Chief Factor Barnston and R.M. Ballantyne at Tadoussac, 1846*

Charles Fraser Comfort, 1941

Winter was the favoured season for staff movements, making travelling much easier because of the down time. This painting depicts three traders arriving at the Hudson's Bay Company trading post of Tadoussac, their new assignment. The central figure is Chief Factor George Barnston. R. M. Ballantyne is the figure on the left carrying the copper kettle and green blanket. In the last period of his employment with HBC, Ballantyne started to write a journal. Although his Intent was to describe his experiences to his mother, "The Record", as it was called, ultimately led Ballantyne to what would become his life's work. His novel,

Hudson's Bay or The Life in the Wilds of North America, which recounts his youth and adventures during his seven-year employment with HBC was published in 1848.

Think About and Respond

Ballantyne titled his novel, "The Life in the Wilds of North America." What types of adventures do you think he might include?

If you were living in England during this time and hearing stories about the fur trade in Canada, what images do you think you might have of North America?



4. Last Dog Train Leaving Lower Fort Garry, 1909

Charles Fraser Comfort, 1927

Lower Fort Garry was built in 1831 by Rupert's Land Governor George Simpson to avoid the periodic devastating floods that occurred at Upper Fort Garry. Known as the "Stone Fort", its walls were constructed of limestone 3 feet thick, about 7.5 feet high and encompassed over 4.5 acres. The main role of dog sleds was to carry goods, furs, meat, and messages to forts in the winter. Dogs were less expensive than horses, so every man could afford two or three to pull a sled. Drivers vied with one another in the smart appearance, speed, and stamina of their huskies. Dog trains usually comprised several sleds, travelling in file

one after the other. By the early 20th c. other modes of transportation - primarily rail - were starting to penetrate areas previously accessible only by traditional means. In 1910 work began on a rail line from The Pas to Churchill, Manitoba.

Think About and Respond

Why do you think dog-driven sleds were used to transport the trading goods inland?

Find out more about the journey that dog trains made in transporting trading goods. Identify some of the goods and tell why each item would be included.



5. Fort Prince of Wales, 1734

A.H. Hider, 1921

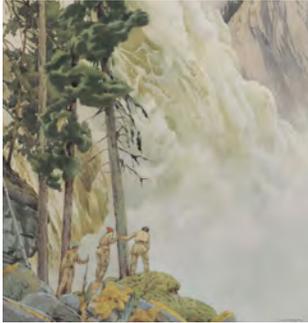
A trapper arriving at Fort Prince of Wales was a common sight during the dreary winters along the Hudson Bay shore. Soon after the treaty of Utrecht in 1713 it became clear that a new fort was needed at the mouth of the Churchill River to protect the Company's assets in the event of a new war. Construction began in 1732. Intended to replace the earlier fort that had been built on the opposite shore, its design was based on the popular European 'star' configuration with four protruding bastions, but its massive size and small construction crew made for slow progress: the fort took almost forty years to complete. Fort Prince of Wales saw action only once, in 1782, when Chief Factor Samuel Hearne, the famous explorer, surrendered it to the French admiral de la Pérouse

without firing a shot. After the victorious French spiked the guns and blew up the magazines HBC abandoned the fort forever.

Think About and Respond

Learn about the European 'star' architecture. What materials would be used in constructing this type of building at the mouth of the Churchill River in the 1800s?

What challenges other than the size of the fort and lack of workers would contribute to the many years it took to complete the construction?



6. John McLean at Grand Falls (*The Discovery of Grand Falls*), 1839

Walter J. Phillips, 1934

The Grand Falls on the Hamilton River in Labrador were discovered in 1839 by Hudson's Bay Company Clerk, John McLean. In charge at Fort Chimo on Ungava Bay (modern Kuujjuak, QC), McLean journeyed overland to the Labrador coast. He was looking for an overland annual supply route via Hamilton Inlet, or Esquimaux Bay as it was then called, which would be safer and more reliable than the sea route into Ungava Bay. McLean recorded his impressions in his journal: "... one evening, the roar of a mighty cataract burst upon our ears, warning us that danger was at hand. We soon reached the spot, which presented to us

one of the grandest spectacles in the world, but put an end to all hopes of success in our enterprise." The following season McLean learned from natives of an alternate route via a chain of lakes that bypassed the mighty falls; this other route was eventually developed for the annual brigades. Grand Falls was re-christened Churchill Falls in 1965.

Think About and Respond

What were the environmental challenges that the traders faced in finding an overland route? Why do you think the natives' alternate route was a good solution?

On a map, trace a possible route that the traders could take.



7. Governor Douglas Leaving Fort Langley, 1858

George Franklin Arbuckle, 1957

On November 19th, 1858 the proclamation of the new mainland Colony of British Columbia was held at Fort Langley. Originally planned to be held out of doors, driving rain all day long forced the ceremony inside into the "big house" of the Fort. James Douglas, already Governor of the Vancouver Island colony and HBC's Chief Factor at Fort Victoria, was sworn in by Matthew Baillie Begbie, Chief Justice of the island colony. The following day the official party sailed back to Fort Victoria.

The painting depicts the departure from the Fort Langley dock. Chief Justice Begbie as well as Admiral Baynes and Capt. J.M. Grant look on as Douglas shakes hands with a native chieftain.

Think About and Respond

What clues in the painting suggest that this was an important event? Who was involved? What role did these people have? Explain your thinking.



8. S.S. Beaver Anchored off Fort Victoria, 1846

Adam Sherriff Scott, 1932

The S.S. *Beaver* lies off of Fort Victoria in the summer of 1846, three years after the fort's founding. One of the most famous Hudson's Bay Company ships, S.S. *Beaver* was the first steamship in the Pacific Northwest. She was launched on the 2nd of May 1835, the 165th anniversary of Hudson's Bay Company. Though designed for steam, *Beaver* made the transatlantic crossing via Cape Horn under sail. She had not the room to carry sufficient coal for the entire crossing, and instead carried her engines with her to be installed upon reaching her destination. During her heyday the *Beaver* regularly sailed between

the southern and northern B.C. coasts, as far as Fort Simpson on the Nass River (near modern Prince Rupert). She typically made four round trips in a year, stopping at native communities and trading directly with the local inhabitants. Over time Victoria became her home port.

Think About and Respond

Why do you think the S.S. Beaver was a suitable vessel for trading along the B.C. coast? Give reasons.

Do you think having the S.S. Beaver stop at native communities to trade was a wise decision? Explain your thinking.