Normally, in this column, we talk about contemporary people and events. Then we happened onto a Review article of 1946 about a remarkable man named Tom Montgomery. And, abandoning the traditional Review-in-Review for this issue, we asked staff writer Mike Jacott to drop in on Montgomery in Sarina. Jacott’s main Sarina assignment was to research a piece on petrochemicals, as Futurist a subject as you’ll find anywhere. “Petrochemists” wasn’t even in the dictionary when Montgomery joined Imperial in 1879.

Yet Tom Montgomery in his 45 years with the company accomplished feats that were as startling in his time as those of the petrochemical scientists today. For 42 years he bore the title of chief engineer. In simpler terms, Tom Montgomery was a builder. His monuments are refineries all over Canada and in a few other corners of the world.

In 1895, at 21, he was already showing signs of his lifetime vocation when he helped build what may have been Canada’s first car, a three-wheeler, propelled by a huge spring. The hand-wound spring drove the car about one block per winding. Montgomery and co-inventor Tom Doherty went on to dabble with a two-cylinder gasoline engine car. A young mechanic named Harry Ford used to visit them occasionally. Ford was “fussing around” with a car of his own.

Montgomery went on to Imperial where his first job was to move the Petrolia refinery to Sarina, and expand it and an existing Sarina plant. During this period he built the first prefabricated buildings of his time.

Montgomery was a builder in the grand tradition. During one period in Sarina he had 2,000 men working for him. In 1914 he went to Vancouver, hired a motley bunch of Chinese, Japanese, Poles, Hindus and native Canadians, cleaned timber and built loco refinery. He moved on to Regina. Montgomery advertised for 1,000 men in newspapers all over North America, got them in two weeks and built a refinery in three months—still a record.

He went on to build Imperial refineries at Halifax, Calgary, Norman Wells and Montreal. Then he went on a refinery-building binge around the world: Peru, Columbia, Singapore and Sumatra. In Sumatra he did what the locals said was impossible: raised the site a necessary two feet by hiring hundreds of coolies to dredge up mud from a nearby river bottom.

Montgomery was a builder of men, too. He hired or trained such former company presidents as Henry Hewston, George Stewart and John R. White. In later years he could have been a special advisor to the board but Montgomery was never much interested in sitting around meeting tables. He still isn’t. Jacott found him now, 88, in retirement with his wife, Wystreda. He was just back from his daily walk; puffing at a battery of pipes, sipping a glass of whiskey and setting his watch by the Dominion Observatory’s Time signal as he does each day. He goes to the Barbados every winter and to Burnt River, Ont., each summer. Montgomery is distressed with modern business (“still too many meetings and committees”) and with the state of the world.

“If someone doesn’t do something fast,” he said, “we’re going to blow ourselves to bits.” Which is a prospect nobody likes to think about, least of all a builder like Tom Montgomery.

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Cover: Ray Nicholls’ photograph of colored pavement being laid at an Imperial station. See also pages 14-15.

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More for your money

While oil companies today engage in the fiercest competition of modern times, one figure is happily emerging a winner: the customer. Never has the motorist had it so good.

So far, Toronto motorists are the only ones in Canada to literally get the red carpet treatment in a service station (see pages 14-15) but all over North America they’re being wooed, enticed and generally treated like kings. Where once the service station was an uninviting place you visited of necessity but not by choice, it’s now becoming what the teenagers and the hipsters might call a fun place.

Take Imperial’s stations, for example. The gasoline itself—infinitely complex, the product of the biggest oil company research effort in Canada—is as good a bargain as you’ll find in any commodity. When you buy it, you get the usual free services: oil-battery-electrifier check, windshield washing, road maps. Some dealers even hand out free-coffee.

But that’s just the beginning. At Imperial stations in 15 Canadian cities you can also buy everything from camp stoves to barbecues to fishing rods. The company is introducing restaurants, food vending machines and coin-operated laundry and dry cleaning machines at some stations. It’s trying out repair centres, where dealers can sell customers’ cars for repair jobs that they can’t handle for lack of equipment or space.

And, for a hint of things that might come in Canada, consider the United States. There, some service stations sell cosmetics, drugs and clothing. Some have drive-in banks on the premises. One chain of stations has added a twist to the road map service: an automatic machine that provides travel information. Press a button and the machine tells you the best route to a given city, or the location of the nearest good hotel or restaurant.

Certain U.S. stations have added refinements to the car repair centre, too. One group has an entertainment area at its repair centre. Parents road magazines or watch TV in a air-conditioned lounge, and children play with toys, swings and sandpiles, while mechanics fix the car.

Surely the most ingenious gimmick in North America is in one southern U.S. station where the proprietor, a qualified notary public, will perform a free marriage ceremony with every five gallons of gasoline sold. (We can see it all now: the bride and groom stand solemnly on the pump island while the pump ticks softly and the attendant says, “I now pronounce you man and wife.”) That’s $13.99 (including road tax— . . . )

There are no plans afoot for cut-rate weddings around Imperial pumps. But there’s no doubt that the “service” in service stations means more today than ever before.
Oil scientists are helping unravel the great mystery of the universe: is there life in outer space?

There was—and perhaps still is—animal and plant life on another planet. Men on earth have examined remnants of that life.

This is not science fiction. It is the contention of an oil scientist and two university colleagues, based on physical evidence they found in the tiny granules of a lump of matter from outer space: a fragment of a meteorite that fell in France 98 years ago.

The scientists—Dr. Warren Meinschein of Esso Research and Engineering, and Drs. Bartholomew Nagy and Douglas Hennessy of Fordham University—gave the news to a New York Academy of Sciences meeting last year.

Since then there has been further evidence. Because the tools and techniques used are those of the oil industry in its search for oil-bearing rock, oil scientists have been particularly useful in checking the evidence. An Imperial Oil scientist, Dr. Frank Staplin of Calgary, one of the continent’s top paleontologists, has examined the 98-year-old meteorite and confirmed certain of the findings.

It means that other worlds had—and still may have—seas on them in which living things could breed. It could mean that “earth man” may no longer consider himself unique.

What Nagy, Hennessy and Meinschein did was analyse organic compounds in the meteorite which fell at Orgueil in 1864. They used such advanced techniques as infra-red and ultra-violet spectroscopy, and high molecular weight mass spectroscopy, all of which are used
The discovery of fossilized organisms in the Orgueil meteorite spelled "life to scientists by oil scientists to determine the composition of organic matter in rocks. They detected hydrocarbons — which are molecules composed of hydrogen and carbon — similar to those found in living matter on earth.

In November last year I interviewed Dr. Meinheiser at the Esso Research and Engineering lab in Linden, N.J. Meinheiser is 40, looks a little like the late Humphrey Bogart, has a soft southern accent, amber eyes and the precise diction of a trained scientist (B.S. Michigan, Ph.D. Texas). He has been engaged in geological research for 10 years. His present main work has to do with the origin of discovery of oil. He shares a modest office at Esso Research and Engineering with a colleague. "We believe that wherever this meteorite originated, something lived," he told me.

"What sort of life? Bugs, animals, or something more sophisticated?"

"We don't know specifically what sort of plant or animal life it was. Would you find these molecules in terrestrial animals? Yes, of course."

"Yes. The distribution of these molecules in terrestrial life is very distinctive. Certain molecules are made up mainly of odd numbers of carbon atoms..."

Meinheiser shook his head. "No. At least there is only one chance in a billion that they could. It would be a sort of fluke."

"Not even in some atmosphere unlike ours?"

"Not that we are aware of."

Meinheiser got up from his desk and looked out at the powdering snow on the lawn in front of the labs. "We have always looked at this negatively," he said. "We have assumed there aren't things in outer space, and we have ignored limited evidence to the contrary. Most scientists today — and many theologians — feel that the universe wasn't created just for us to look at."

It was this positive attitude which sparked Dr. Nog's initial investigations of the meteorite. Meinheiser, who had gone deeply into the origins of animal matter in rocks while studying oil, which contains hydrocarbons. No one is entirely sure how oil is made but we do know that it was formed millions of years ago and represents in part the accumulation of hydrocarbons made by once-living things.

Meinheiser agreed to take on the meteorite work as a sideline, doing most of it late at night on weekends. Two major questions confronted the scientists. Was the story meteorite found near Orgueil and on earth...25,000 years old, or was it originally from Mars or Jupiter? In 1967, a chunk of barren rock and metal, more as big as a man's head, was plucked from the meteorite. The results were almost identical. But Meinheiser is reserved. "These hydrocarbons are certainly traces of other life," he said, "but there is a lot of work to be done yet."

"Is it possible that the meteorites you examined could have come off the earth and then came back onto it?"

"I don't think so. We know of no natural forces on earth that could have placed a stone in orbit. Furthermore, the metal contents of a meteorite differ significantly from those of terrestrial matter."

"Where do meteorites come from?"

"They are thought to have come from the asteroid belt, a ringed area between Mars and Jupiter. In it, chunks of barren rock and metal, some as big as a man's head, others as small as peas. They travel about endlessly. Some scientists believe that these fragments are from a dead planet that was completely free of laboratory contaminants. The meteorite is a mass spectrometer, at the Esso labs in Linden, N.J. (a prototype used in World War II to separate the rare uranium-U-235 needed for nuclear weapons), which was refined to separate infinitesimally small molecular masses which differ only microscopically."

"We don't know if they were a part of a planet or were by-products of the meteorite, Menheiser speculated by the American Museum of Natural History, in the mass spectrometer."

The results were disappointing. There was so much water in the meteorite that they could not analyze the hydrocarbons. Meinheiser devised a special process for distilling off this water from outside. It was not like earth water; it had high hydrogen in it.

But when the extraterrestrial hydrocarbons were next subjected to analysis, the equipment reported them to be similar to those being made on earth by living things and was discharged with the rank of captain. After the war he specialized in real estate and insurance in the comptroller's department and later in treasurer's when the comptroller was appointed assistant general secretary, a position he held until his present appointment.

Mr. Crichton is from the company's traffic department in 1922. He moved up through various positions in marketing and by 1949 was general secretary. At such he has paid particular attention to shareholder relations and to developing the annual meeting, which he delivers every year to the company's shareholders and to the company's annual meeting.
by Thelma Dickman

The blue-uniformed young man suddenly slammed his 30-foot open boat into neutral and squinted into the blackness of a stormy Toronto night. Lightning glittered briefly on the shoulder braid that spelled out THP—Toronto Harbor Police. There was just enough light in the flash to give the young man the break he needed.

"Over there," he shouted to the seaman standing beside him, "put the searchlight over there."

The powerful light picked up the overturned hull of a motorboat, rolling helplessly in the water. Knifing and twisting through the leaping waves like a
Grey Cup halfback, the police boat manoeuvred alongside. Swiftly the two sailors pulled three shivering, exhausted, frightened people from the patent boat—and hit the stern as they roared for shore.

Half an hour later, with survivors in an ambulance on their way to hospital, the young man sipped hot coffee and rainwater from a can, habitually in his log. "Reported boat capsized off Dufferin Street. Rescued three men. All okay."

For the Toronto Harbor Police, it was all in a day's (or night's) work.

Housed in a small, grey, corrugated huddle of undistinguishable buildings on Toronto's waterfront, these waterfront constables are specialists in preventing people from making statistics of themselves on the tricky water of Lake Ontario.

Superintendent George Ragen, a man with no great tenure even the squirrels lines around his eyes are brown, has been with the Harbor Police more than 30 years. He's had time to acquire a healthy respect for the tenacity of the lake."The real bad storms," he says, "happen on absolutely perfect days—brilliant sunshine and no cloud. If you know what you're doing and you're fit, you can run out in a boat, any amount of water if you don't have an eye on the northwest, and you'll likely see clouds gathering. When they get close, there might be a ribbons of blackness in the sky, hanging from dirty cotton-wool clouds. That means you've got about half an hour to get to shore before the storm hits. That's enough warning for anyone."

He paused and grinned wryly. "At least, it should be enough warning for anyone. You'd be surprised how many men, who drive with absolute caution on a highway, run right into a storm. Youll see a warning only applies to all the other boats on a lake.

"One day when a small plane crashed in the bay, we were dragging for bodies and the sea. All kinds of small boats were kibitzing around the area. We told them over loud speakers to head for shore, that a storm was coming. Even so, when the squall hit, we had to fish over 40 people out of the drink, as well as enough cushions, chairs and dinghies to furnish a small yacht club."

"Terrible. Toronto Harbor Police, unlike most other North American port police, is a triumvirate of activity. It is police, lifesaving and accident prevention force in one. Its only boat is the Toronto Harbor Commission, governing body of the Toronto waterfront."

Each miner of the 23-man THP force is a bona fide seaman. But none of them carries a gun (they don't own guns). The force has no jail for the few criminals it catches (last year it arrested only two suspects although 40 convictions were obtained on summons cases). And each summer the force sails to 147, with the addition of 115 lifeguards who go to sea in swan-sounding trunks. The service has jurisdiction over 30 square miles of water, 11 miles of dock area and, including Toronto Islands, a total of 40 miles of shoreline. Every year more than a million people use Toronto beaches, a large number of them seemingly beret on self-destruction by one method or another.

Head cop George Ragen, who consistently refuses to allow water skiers in Toronto harbor, has his hands full during summer months chasing these sports off the water. "People simply won't accept rules which are in force for their own safety," he says. "It's a known fact, for instance, that water skiers should have two people in a towboat—one to hold the boat to watch the skier. You'd have to have four pairs of eyes to watch where you're going and also make sure your water skier was still with you. And yet, at Grand Bend on Lake Huron last summer, one man went to the trouble of building a damblock after a Sunday evening might read something like this.

7:00 pm Took four Island police to York St, from Centre Island.

7:30 pm Patrol rescued man capsized in kayak. Towed kayak back to station.

8:05 pm Outboard reported out of gas. Towed boat and four passengers back to station.

8:30 pm First aid call to beach, woman with cut left foot.

8:55 pm Drowning at Sunnyside Beach. On arrival woman pulled from water and resuscitated. Ambulance took her to hospital.

9:30 pm Toronto Island emergency call, woman with nervous breakdown. Took doctor over to attend her. Returned doctor to mainland.

9:45 pm Reported sailboat tilted over in bay. On arrival rescued two men and a girl. Towed boat to station.

10:15 pm Call from Island lifeguard, water skiers interfering with swimmers. Checked outboard operator. He had no fire extinguisher and no operator's permit. Issued summons on two counts.

Port authorities in Toronto and Hamilton harbors grew weary some years ago of the backyard boatbuilder who is great on theory but weak on the practical side of boating. Time and again, in past summers, a bookbound mariner would build a powerboat with loving care and lots of theory. Then he'd rush to the harbor, turn his book of operating instructions to page

Practice diving sessions are held weekly in different parts of the lake. For safety reasons they never dive alone.

Imperial Oil Review, August 1962
seven, and plow cleanly into the first hull he met.

Now, in these two harbors at least, powerboat operators must be licensed. Operators get a beginner’s license for 30 days before writing a 24-question test on “rules of the waves” —and the test is tough. The applicant must take his boat to the Harbor Patrol station for his operating test where the boat is checked out for flaws at the same time as the operator.

One boy who’d been given one of the highest marks possible on the written and theory test, neglected to tell Harbor Police he’d never actually operated a boat. They’d no sooner left the dock than he shoved the gears into reverse and the boat shot backward through the seawall, narrowly missing two other boats on the way.

In ’61 more than 300,000 pleasure boats were kicking up spray in the Great Lakes. Vessels ranging from wooden rowboats to sleek, steel oil tankers used Toronto harbor in increasing numbers, and people jammed its beaches to capacity. Toronto’s Harbor Police answered 866 calls for help, rescued 445 from drowning and provided first aid to 822 swimmers and boaters. Amid all this frenetic aquatic activity, only five people lost their lives through accidental drowning.

An enviable record for Toronto’s waterfront cops.

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He flew through pea-soup fog, ploughed through soggy roads, bounced on choppy coastal waters and hobnobbed with an angry moose—all to sell oil products in northern B.C.

Just before freeze-up one morning last October, two Imperial Oil salesmen set out from Prince George, B.C., to visit a lumber camp and bid on its diesel fuel account. It was 75 miles away; in nearly any other part of Canada it would have been an easy two-hour drive. But this was northern B.C., the last 25 miles were over bush roads, and sales representative Bob Roblin, and his supervisor, Doug Johnstone, knew they’d be lucky to get home in time for dinner.

They weren’t lucky. By trial and error they finally found the right bush road, but they got stuck three times, and the third time lost the oil-pan plug on Johnstone’s car. It took the rest of the day to get a tow back to a logging camp and improvise a new plug. They finally reached the customer (and won the account) the next day. For Imperial’s sales representatives in northern B.C., it was a routine call. Each member of the seven-man team thinks nothing of spending two days to reach one customer. Such is the lot of these modern traveling salesmen.

There was a time when the travelling salesman was a figure of fun; a plump pink man in patent leather shoes and loud-check suit, who spent his days cracking jokes with the customers around the pot-belly stove, and always caught the early train home on Friday.

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by Jean Danard

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After tossing 16 hours on Lake Ontario in a sailboat, these survivors were picked up last May, 10 miles offshore.
Maybe, in some places, there are still such "traveling men."

But new supervisor Charlie Hayles and his six stalwart travelers, vintage 1962, are tanned, ingenious young men who travel by boat, plane or dust-oaked car; frequently wear heavy boots and parkas and spend much of their time coping with mud, snow, cold and the occasional angry moose. They like to get home on Friday, too, but never count on it.

Each man is Mr. Imperial to loggers, ranchers, farmers, oil drillers, miners, paper mill operators and sea captains in one of the toughest, most varied, fastest-growing sales beats in Canada, extending from Ocean Falls and Kamloops to the province's northern boundary. Sprinkled over this vast area are 245,000 oil users. Already each person in this part of B.C. uses an average 735 gallons of oil per year, 11 more than the average Canadian.

The sales reps supply the customers' growing oil needs, loan storage tanks to bush-bound loggers, help establish dealers and agents in business, audit agents' books, solve problems and, between times, grapple with Nature in the field.

Doug Johnstone, who returned to his native Vancouver last May after an eight-year stint in the north, faced up to his liveliest spot of trouble on a 260-mile drive out of Dawson Creek. It was Friday, the day he was going home.

"The weather 'probs' were good but snow started just as I hit a 60-mile mountain pass," Johnstone recalls. "The flurry became a blizzard with drifts up to four feet on the road. On top of that, a moose blocked my way for 40 minutes. He came at the car snorting, head-down. He was mad and scared. So was I." The moose and Johnstone eventually moved on to their respective homes.

Doug Woodley, of Vancouver, an ex-accountant, drove 40 miles out of Chetwynd, near Dawson Creek, one November Friday 13, to sell lube oil and diesel fuel to a sawmill. As he drove 20 mph in low gear over the snow-packed one-track road, a truckloom up around a curve. There was a 50-foot drop on one side, a four-foot ditch on the other. The trucker braked sharply but Woodley couldn't prevent his car from plowing into the heavy vehicle. When the trip was over he totaled up his credits—a lube oil sale to the sawmill—and his debts—bruised knees, $1,200 worth of damage to his car and no diesel oil sale. Hardly a lucrative trip.

Another rep received a hurry-up call to investigate a fire at a drilling rig 186 miles from Dawson Creek. The operator charged that the fire was caused by contaminated oil products. For 28 hours the rep slogged over muddy roads and dug himself out of potholes. He averaged seven miles an hour but had reached the rig, disproved the charge and left the customer satisfied.

A Prince Rupert salesman started a 60-mile drive home one November evening in falling snow. Halfway home he drove over a rock, blanketed in white; it knocked off his gas tank and left him stranded in zero weather. Four hours later another traveler happened along. They got to Prince Rupert in time for breakfast.

Such experiences are as predictable as spring breakup which starts in March each year, lasts three to six weeks, and turns a bush road into a morass. Fuel trucks often carry only 25 percent of their capacity, when they can move at all. At times only bulldozers can navigate the mud-sogged roads. Freeze-up brings similar delivery problems in the fall. One trucker chanced one more trip and couldn't free his mud and frost-bound vehicle until after breakup the following spring.

A veteran sales rep, however, dredged most of the never-ending summer dust on the gravel roads. (The vast territory has only 300 miles of pavement.) "For six months of the year dust seeps into your car," says Johnstone. "It gets up your nose, in your hair and ruins a white shirt. My car had to be vacuumed after each trip."

Dry weather also brings forest fires between May and October. In one month last summer fires around Prince George used up 66,000 gallons of fuel for trucks, water-bombing aircraft and caterpillar tractors working around the clock. Sales reps fight fires, too—digg ing trenches, mowing hedges, cutting trees and brush. The sales reps are the first to admit that there are easier ways and places to make a living. But the B.C. frontier is not without its rewards. For those who are a rare breed worth knowing—people like Don Peck who sells as much gasoline a month at Mile 7 of the Alaska Highway as many large city operators do in a year. A former supervisor of a grain elevator, Peck's a big game guide each fall for moose, elk, bear, wolves or stone sheep.

Then there's Oscar Reineke, a logger from Williams Lake who one day loaded his wife, three children and their furniture onto a truck and headed north. He picked out a mountain country site for a service station, approached Imperial for an Equipment Franchise and financing, and got blueprints and money for a two-bay, well-equipped station. He built it himself and today his station between old and new Hazelton (90 miles from Terrace) offers every motoring service, including repairs.

"It's a pleasure doing business with a man like that," says Hayles. "I'm glad we could help him get started."

The Reinkes are not unique. In 10 years northern and central B.C.'s scattered population (now 230,000) has more than doubled, compared to a 40 percent growth for the province as a whole. Yet the total wealth of the area has barely been tapped, according to a 1960 technical-economic study by the Battelle Memorial Institute of Columbus, Ohio. Within 20 years, predicted the Institute, the present population would double and the value of produce would quadruple. Oil discoveries will do the most to enrich the area but tourism will run a close second as 250 million visitors flock to the area with vacation dollars.

To keep up with the mushrooming demand for oil's easily-transported and stored heat and energy, Charlie Hayles and his cohorts don't rely on cars alone. When Roger Crossy was in Prince Rupert he faced a two-headed choice each month on his one-day call at Stewart, 150 miles away. He had to take a fishing boat, 24 hours each way, or charter a plane, both expensive items on his travel budget. On one flight to Stewart, heavy fog forced his pilot so low they were barely skimming the coastal waters (a common occurrence which the reps dub "motorboating"). Finally they landed and tried to taxi 75 miles to shore. Poor visibility had almost forced them to a standstill when they caught up to a fishing boat. It was bound for Stewart so Crossy gracefully climbed aboard.

This is not to say that boat trips are more comfortable. On one trip—as his stomach heaved in unison with the waves—Crossy turned to the skipper: "We'll never make it, captain. I think we should turn back."

"I do, too," was the curt reply, "but we can't. It's too rough."

All of this is slightly unnerving for new men but after a while the sales reps take it in stride. They get used to trips like the one to the mountain mine works of Stewart, where planes sometimes put down on a glacier. And they shrug off flights like the one to a B.C. cannery where, one day, the pilot began to ease through clouds as thick as canned soup.

"Can you see anything?" the sales rep asked uneasily.

"Don't worry," said the pilot cheerfully.

"I know we're over the canneries because there's smoke rising up."

And there was smoke, and it was the cannery, and they did land safely. The cannery brewed 500 gallons of diesel fuel and Imperial's traveling salesman flew home with another satisfied customer, checked in his log book.

13
A motorist turning into Jim Elborn's Imperial Esso station in Toronto these days feels a little like visiting royalty. He wheels up for gas on a "carpet" of red plastic material that encircles each pump island. Elsewhere around him, the service station lot is blue. It all marks the beginning of a colorful new era in pavement.

You can now lay a gold-colored driveway, to match your solid gold Cadillac; or a blue and white patio to match the colors of your house, or a blue tennis court with white marker lines. You can even make a green-pavement lawn and check out the lawn mower. The trick is in mixing Viadon, a colored petrochemical plastic binder handled by Imperial, with the usual paving aggregate (stone and gravel). The whiter the aggregate, the cleaner the color.

So far, the new material comes in the aforementioned red, blue, green, gold and white. So far, it is fairly expensive (about $3 a square yard) for a one-inch topping laid over regular concrete or asphalt.

When the cost comes down, contrasting colors will probably appear on streets, sidewalks, airport runways and aprons, highway speed zones, cloverleaves and dangerous curves.

Elborn's is the first service station in Canada to use permanent colored pavement. (Others have used painted.) In several other ways, his place is—hopefully—the typical service station of the future. On one pump island he is using new, neat, compact gasoline dispensers. The station-proper, freshly painted and very clean, is trimmed with stone on the outside; and inside, in some places, with wood paneling. It is more than a "gasoline" station; in addition to the usual motor products and accessories, it sells barbecues, cooler chests, lanterns, camp cots, sleeping bags, light bulbs.

Elborn himself looks like any well-groomed businessman with his close-cropped grey hair, pressed slacks and necktie, but he's quick to man a gas pump when his attendants are busy.

So far, Elborn's recent compliment on the "colored" station has come from his neighbors. The station is in Don Mills, one of the first and best planned communities in Canada. Don Mills people wage a running battle with the untidy and unsightly; they like things neat and modern. And one of them gracefully told Elborn, "You've done us proud."
![Big Bend, always a highway horror](image)

Fred Beruschi was behind the desk when I pushed through the doors of his Regent Hotel in Revelstoke, B.C., some time after midnight on November 1, 1960. He took one look at my haggard appearance and peered out the window at my car. Its red finish was barely detectable under a generous coat of dust and mud; the "white-walls" were "brown-walls" and my Manitoba plates were all but obliterated.

"Did you come by Big Bend Highway?" He was sympathetic.

I scratched a shaky signature on a registration card and took the key.

"You call that a highway?" I was a house octave higher than normal. He shook his head reproachfully: "It was closed for the season yesterday. You drove it at your own risk."

I shuddered and headed for a hot bath. Save for four brief stops, I'd been glued to the wheel for eight long dark hours and 190 incredibly long miles from Golden to Revelstoke—my attention rivets to a roadway that has curled the hair of many a more intrepid motorist for 200-old years.

For much of the way I'd guided, by my tall-tails, a honeymoon couple who were stranded 80 miles out of Golden when a pothole jured their headlights out of commission.

I'd churned through yards of muddy gravel, ford ed mountain "run-offs" the size of small streams, bounced over teeth-rattling washboard and potholes, dodged rocks from slides, haggled cliffs where the road hung over roaring water far below, inched up and down steep tortuous grades and over cracking wooden bridges—and whizzed at 40 over serrenely smooth and gently-curved stretches that ended as abruptly as they began.

I passed such comfortable place names as Death Rapids, Sucker Creek, Surprise Rapids, Help Lake, Yellow Creek Rapids, Bighorn River, Fissure Creek, Rocky Point.

I was conscious of a dark brooding sky looming shadows of mountains, huge trees, showering mist from steep ranging falls, black water boiled in white caps by rapids and eddies, faint flickers from lanterns in only two or three windows in all the 190 miles.

And I was thankful when I hit hardtop four miles out of Revelstoke and cruised peacefully into town.

I felt like the American girl who late one night burgled off Big Bend into Fred Beruschi's hotel, went straight to the lobby phone and called South Carolina. Her first breathless words: "Mother—

But under the grim, and despite an awesome beating, my car was surprisingly intact—and I'd joined a motoring fraternity whose Big Bend stories improve with age.

They're stories of broken springs, shock absorbers, axles and nerves; cracked windshields, lights, sumps and compressors; lost tail-pipes, mufflers, hub-caps and reason.

Skeletons of cars, stripped of worth while parts and abandoned after major misadventures, lie forlornly at intervals by the roadside; others that went over steep embankments lie where they came to rest, battered wrecks.

Yet Big Bend has taken few lives. In recent years, a man was killed when a bus went over the side; two Americans died when their car toppled over and the body of a woman accident victim was found in the river. Its low mortality rate is laid to the fact that Big Bend motorists freeze into prayerful attention to their driving as soon as they bounce on the road.

Jim Corrigan, Revelstoke city clerk, was driving Big Bend with his brother, Jack, one day when a U.S. car passed them on an open stretch. They caught up within a few miles.

The driver was picking himself up off the road, dazed and hurt. He'd hit a pothole, bounced off a deadfall, tumbled completely around and fallen out the door. He was inches away from a long drop to the river.

"I want no part of mountain roads after that," he told the Corrigan's. Jack drove his car into Revelstoke where he got patched up—then drove him all the way to Vancouver since he was going there anyway. "That man was in a state of shock," Jim Corrigan says.

Big Bend was much easier on David Thompson, who blazed our trail in 1807 while seeking a fur-trading route for the North West Company; he canoed on the Columbia River most of the way.

We Big Bend motorists have fearlessly tackled the land route. It's graduated since Thompson's day from a pony trail beside the river to a wagon road in the Nineties and then, after years of agitation and unfulfilled political promises and conniving, to a gravel highway in the Thirties.

The highway got its name from the sweeping elbow in the Columbia between Revelstoke, near the head of Upper Arrow Lake, and Golden, where Kicking Horse River joins the Columbia and the Trans-Canada Highway tumbles out of the Rocky Mountains from Lake Louise in Alberta. Revelstoke and Golden are only 57 miles apart as crows fly.

Big Bend was part of the Trans-Canada—"it is now officially lost that privilege as the federal and provincial governments prepare to formally open their new short cut through Rogers Pass in Glacier National Park. Rogers' 92 miles—built in six years against formidable odds and for nearly $300 million—rises to 4,400 feet amid majestic peaks and scenery of the Selkirk Mountains and sweeps gracefully down a gradual grade from Albert Canyon through lovely Ellice Valley into Revelstoke.

Steel and concrete snowsheds—some more than 1,000 feet in length—will help protect the new highway against snow slides at eight bad spots. It was the snow slide problem that forced the CPR in 1913 to abandon track and bridges in Rogers Pass (remains are still there) and build its famed five-mile Connought tunnel through the mountains.

I drove the Rogers Pass highway in May. The last two bridges—one over Quartz Creek, the other over the Columbia at Donald—were nearing completion. Highway paving, though, won't be finished until September.

The new highway is an engineering achievement; it marks as well completion of the 4,459-mile Trans-Canada. And so it's to be the site of a memorial commemorating official inauguration of Canals's ocean-to-ocean highway. Government ceremonies will take place in the Pass this fall.

On the opening of Rogers Pass rides hopes of a business revival in Revelstoke. The city—born of the railroad and a rip-roaring mining, logging and river-boatting heyday—has watched its fortunes fall with the demise of steam. Now it's poised, with new facilities being built, for an expected 5,000 cars a day over Rogers and a boost in tourist trade.

But Rogers Pass tolls the end for Big Bend; only loggers, miners, sportsmen and the adventurous and foolhardy will use it after this year.

The Columbia River power project will deliver the coup de grace. A 600-foot dam is to be built across the Columbia 90 miles north of Revelstoke near Mica Creek. Engineers are already test-boring at Mica and a few years hence the dam will hold back the Columbia and create a lake 40 miles wide and 80 miles long. Beneath it will be the eastern leg of Big Bend. The western leg below the dam will survive as a likely access road for Mica's construction and, perhaps, as an improved scenic drive to the dam when it's finished.

But Big Bend Highway—historical, controversial, cursed and abused—will
Through the Thirties, workmen plowed away steadily, carving Big Bend out of the wilderness with pickaxes, shovels, hand-drawn equipment and bulldozers.

$200,000 and $250,000 toward Big Bend construction. In all, it took little more than 50 years for workmen of a particularly tough mile of highway in Raguero Pass.

"The Big Bend is not a good road," says Fred Beruschi. "I've heard it cursed every day. An American woman told me the scenery was beautiful, but she couldn't see it for dust."

Beruschi ran a grocery during Big Bend days. And when he was a student, he used to take his class to the river and show them how to catch fish. And he remembered the town of Big Bend. And on March 10, 1939, the highways people had their first real assignment—filling 100,000 tons of sand and gravel to make the road. A big winter storm came, and the town was buried.

But the town of Big Bend was more than a memory. It was a place where people could find work. And it was a place where people could find hope. And it was a place where people could find love.

In the end, though, the town of Big Bend was a place where people could find the things that mattered most. And that's why we remember it today.

The Review recalled in 1940: "For 11 years, crews of men with modern power and horse-drawn equipment have been plowing steadily away on this last western link.

"Much of it, though, was pick-and-shovel work, by hundreds of Depression relief workers whose camps are still faintly discernible up Big Bend. Top gym, everything found, was $90 a month for powerdome, $20 for laborers.

Each year a succession of works ministers rose in the federal or provincial house and pledged that Big Bend would be finished "next year."

"They were particularly vocal during elections," says Lusenberg.

And each year Ottawa voted between (that's a lucrae business for stations in Revelstoke and Golden)."
"Watching the opposition" is fair game in industry these days. It's part of the job of the scholarly marketing researcher who's trying to find out why you buy and why rival companies sell their refrigerators as a shelf. It's one of the few handy shelves in the average home that children can't reach.

The soap industry, after World War II, was faced with several unknowns in its markets. It wanted to know exactly why women chose soaps, what soaps men were looking for, how people would react to detergents, how to produce a "family" soap and how to produce a soap for new-fangled automatic washing machines.

They found out through surveys that most women don't buy soap merely to be clean and "feminine"; they are most influenced by such extraneous items as a fancy wrapper. The surveys showed that men, far from wanting a "healthy" deodorized soap, were using their wives' scented soap whenever they could sneak it away. These and dozens of other surveys brought about such innovations as fancier wrappers, "family size" cakes of soap, low-suds soaps for automatic washers and scented toiletries for men.

A U.S. soap institute wanted to increase flagging sales. A survey revealed that men thought tea an effeminate flat-tasting drink. A change to a "Make it hefty and hearty! Take tea and see!" campaign brought the desired sales increase.

Oil companies got on the bandwagon too. One small English oil company couldn't understand why sales were falling off at its service stations when other companies were gaining increases. Marketing research reported that something about the stations repelled people. Psychologists then pinned the problem down to the stations' yellow paint. It was the same color that had been used during the war on poison gas warning posts (the paint was designed to blister in the presence of poison gas). The company dubiously changed colors at a few outlets. Sales improved so dramatically that it quickly redecorated all its stations.

When certain U.S. oil companies began giving away coupons and premiums (redeemable for gifts) their rivals wanted to find out the effect on sales. One rival hired a survey organization, which put watchers in a second-story rooming house opposite one of the premium-giving stations.

The watchers spent a week and a half hours. The station immediately blocked their view of its pumps with a truck. The watchers paced up and down the street trying to read the pumps with binoculars. The station employees started "watching back" with binoculars and attracting crowds to embarrass the watchers. The station called the police. But the watchers were bona-fide survey people, doing nothing illegal. They completed the two-week survey and the service station manager still didn't know which of his rivals had hired them.
A similar case in Canada had all the elements of an old Keystone Cops movie. One oil company put up a service station with attached restaurant on a major highway. A rival company, anxious to know how sales were going, called in the marketing researchers. The research team parked a test in a field across the road and watched day and night with binoculars, checking sales figures on the gas pumps and counting the cars that turned in. The service station manager grew suspicious and hid his gas pump meters under strips of brown paper.

The spotters tried a new tactic: one at a time, they drove their cars down the road, circled back to the service station and asked for gas. They asked for the attendant to check the oil, or, sometimes, to check a "motor noise." While he was under the hood, they noted the figures on the gas pumps.

Next the service station manager sent two police cruisers over to the field. The survey team said, truthfully, that they had permission to be in the field, and were doing a traffic survey. The police went away.

The service station called in a bevy of head office executives. The top brass examined the survey team through bino-
collars, crossed over to the gas pumps, and threatened to photograph the spotters and expose them in the press. The re-
searchers promptly resigned. "National bird watchers and save our birds—bigger and better sparrow!" The idea of an ex-
posed espionage became ludicrous, and was abandoned.

By the end of two weeks the research-
ners had collected the desired information—but not without mishap. One of them fell in a ravine, while moving equipment in the dark. A dispatcher at the center threatened to go down in the darkness and like the Arabs we will silently away…Teaching is a pretty dull pastime!"

In that case, as in most others, abso-
lute secrecy was maintained. The market-
ing research team knew nothing of the oil company's. Even sometimes the survey company doesn't know; negotiations may be made through a third party. The people or establishments being watched are really confused, although they're pretty sure that some rival company is watching them.

There was the time, for example, when researchers set up their vigil at a city intersection occupied by two service stations, a bank and a vacant lot. They were observing the bigger service station. Their client, a third oil company, was contemplating building a station on the vacant lot and had hired them to find out how much business the opposition was doing.

The spotters parked in front of the bank and began to watch the large sta-

The station manager grew suspici-

And, when they went to lunch,

The spotters drove across the street to the smaller service station, where the manager greeted them with open arms.

"Stay here and watch as long as you like," he said. "I'd like to know how much business that guy does, too."

Meanwhile, the manager of the large station placed his head office and

"I've found out who's hired those spotters. It's the station across the street!"

Researchers on these assignments are hand picked. They must have absolutely no personal interest in the project at hand, must be trained for the job, and, if necessary, disguised. Some companies use their own employees for interviewing but usually without success. A company may even unintentionally reveal the employer's identity, and in any case his bias towards the company may mean he will not give an objective report.

Of course, not all marketing research is "undercover" stuff. Much of it is in-

by Bill Arnold

A chap who tests applicants for driv-

by Frank Rasky

ing licences gets to see all the foibles of our drivers. The slower, the speeder, the spokewise, the highway man-

ter and the same man behind the wheel. I have seen them all.

For 27 years, I was an examiner for the Motor Vehicle Branch of the Ontario Department of Highways. During that time, I tested 80,000 would-be car drivers of whom perhaps four percent failed their exam. Those that passed my scrutiny included truck drivers and ambassadors, Whisper Billy Watson, the wrestler, and Red Ryan, the bank robber.

During that time also, I risked my neck in many accidents. I was in the hospital emergency ward five times, ploughed in to milk wagons and garbage trucks, carried through the gate of a convert, and was jailed on a charge of riding in a stolen car—all in the line of duty.

What I learned may perhaps prevent you from becoming one of the candidates who will smash up in a car accident this year.

What makes a good driver examiner? Well, you must be physically healthy and alert. You need steady nerves in a crisis. And you must want to encourage even the most hopeless of failures.

I felt I had these requirements back in 1920 when I started as an office boy with the Motor Vehicle Branch in Toronto. I had come from Oshawa, Ont., where my father worked for General Motors. Making buggies and wagons. Curiously, although I had a job with GM for 30 years, he never owned a car in his life.

On my part, I acquired a chauffeur's licence to drive when I was 21. A friend gave me a couple of lessons and then I borrowed my father's Ford Tin Lizzie in order to take my test. It was a rat-strap of a touring car, worth $700 new, with black mica curtains and a squawky horn. I paid for it with a five-dollar bill I had in those days when being tested by a private examiner—and I passed easily.

When I became an official examiner in
I have seen all the foibles of car drivers

1928, the Department of Highways had just introduced operators' licenses. Before then, there was a "chauffeur's license" use by people who drove for hire, and a "non-professional license" for others. The speed limit in the city was 20 miles per hour, and 35 on the highway. And the driver's test was not as thorough as it is today.

There was no vision test, no written test, no sign recognition, no test in parking. I questioned them on traffic regulations, tested them on making left turns, and especially in backing out of lanes. But I had to take it easy in the latter test, because too many applicants were knocking down fences. What's more, I found too many people were swaying out my lane route, and practicing there the day before they took their test.

Ultimately, of course, the requirements for passing became more rigid. It also became more nerve-wracking to examine my usual 20 applicants a day—especially as we didn't have shutter-proof glass in windshields then. Nevertheless, I was able to keep my skin intact by learning how to size up the temperament of an applicant after sitting beside him in the back seat. Although it's not entirely fair to generalize when talking about beginning drivers, I found that the typical type of nervousness a boy exhibited toward his car, or that his attitude toward his car, or to his instructor, or even his instructor toward the boy, was a criticism of the boy himself. It was rare to hear a boy say, "I don't need lessons." Instead, he'd talk on and on about his car, and his instructor, and himself. Of course, his instructor would try to change the subject back to the car.

For example, one of the most common arguments I heard was about the type of car and the type of engine. A boy would say, "I have a Ford," or "I have a Buick," or "I have a Cadillac," and then go on to discuss the merits of the car. The instructor would usually try to change the subject back to the boy, but the boy would always return to the car. The only way to stop him was to tell him that he was talking too much, and that he should be more calm.

Another common argument was about the type of gasoline. A boy would say, "I use only regular gasoline," or "I use only premium gasoline," and then go on to discuss the merits of the two types of gasoline. The instructor would usually try to change the subject back to the boy, but the boy would always return to the car. The only way to stop him was to tell him that he was talking too much, and that he should be more calm.

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Somewhere in the forest, perhaps at this moment, an idly-tossed match or a half-extinguished campfire is flaring up. And then? ROBERT CHILDEROSE remembers what it is like to fight a forest fire.

Thirty yards is what you try for; 30 yards of fire break. You'd like it wider and longer, with more bare dirt showing. But you haven't enough men, or enough time. The thunder on the ridge tells you that. Ten men and you need 50. Five men. really, but 10 with the Indian kids and old Max, who's 70 and boot-tough.

No talking now. Those are the sounds: the rising scream, shriek and fade of the chain saws. The gut-grambling of your one bulldozer. The droll of an axe and the scrape of a shovel on burned rock. And the muted drum roll of a marching fire.

A chain saw dies—broken, or out of gas. The red cal is empty and the dead saw joins it on the truck bed. Scrape and claw the underbrush away. Leave the deafening.

At the district fire office, news flows in from firefighters, orders and camp supplies go out.

wind steals your sweat. Two hours, three, go by unnoticed... and the fire still marches.

(The fires always march. Nine thousand of them charred nine million acres of Canadian forest last season.)

The ridge is gone now and the tall red soldiers move line abreast down the hill toward you. The sounds change. The drums are louder and the hot winds whip the white trestles; somewhere a pine tree dies, explodes, a fizzle, cock-like pop. You'd be scared if you weren't so tired.

"Boat?" Wed watery eyes, foot smears; brakes. "The doz-er's bust."

"How much left?"

"Two hundred yards, give or take."

"Will she move? No! Then leave it. Go get the truck."

He's gone, and out of the muck and stinking haze they gather: the men, the Indian kids and Max. Defeat has the taste of smoke.
The truck arrives and the men climb up. You pause at the tailgate to look at eight tired faces looking at you. Not expectantly, just looking. They warm your sweaty back.

"We'll try it at three-mile road."

"The faces don't change. They're beat, used up, finished."

"Sure, says Max. "Why not?"

The truck lights flash across your no-man's-land to where the low flickering flames cut along the edge. Behind them, in the white smoke and darkness, tall stakes burn.

"She's whipped, boss."

It's eight miles back to the bunkhouse. And eight yards more to the kitchen.

"What time do we get up, boss?"

"Five is okay. We'll go back to clean it up then."

One phone call; then the paper war. Your squinned bucket chair accepts your weight with customary plaint. The pencil is heavy and the desk lamp dim . . .

"Boss, wake up. I brought some tea."

The pencil rolls, rolls, nose-dives to the floor.

"Thanks, Cooker. The boys?"

"At breakfast."

Two fried eggs and eight miles later you see the new sun through the mists of smoke rising from a dying land, a charred battleground littered with spindly corpses. You begin to clean up, stamp out, kill the smouldering embers with mud, water or sand.

"Look at it," says Max, and suddenly he is a very old man. His 70 years show, in the creases of cheek and jaw, and in the tired hand holding a sodden burley bag.

"They're gone," he says. "The trees are gone."

"Six thousand acres is all. They'll grow."

"But I won't see them . . . will I, now?"