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More than the Sum of Its Business Accomplishments

Imperial has been a successful corporation for 125 years. While it has grown and changed over the years, the values on which it was founded have remained constant.

September 8, Imperial will mark its 125th anniversary. As I reflect on this milestone, and the 38 years I have been with the company, what comes to mind is pride—pride in having been part of a corporation whose business performance has been strong and consistent throughout the years, a corporation that has contributed and will continue to contribute to the overall development of this country (see “Bringing Energy to Canada for 125 Years,” page 4), and, perhaps most important, that is underpinned by sound values that have endured throughout its long history, ensuring that integrity and foresight are integral to all its actions.

The fact that Imperial has remained profitable throughout its history—even through the Great Depression—is remarkable considering the business environment of that time. It means that Imperial has continued to invest in our society, yet without profitability, no business enterprise can survive. Profit results from business growing people with products they value and are willing to pay for. It is what enables us to continue to develop resources, manufacture products, employ people, pay taxes, contribute to social programs and invest in Canada’s future. It also provides shareholders with returns, which can then be invested in other companies, helping to create new jobs and generate prosperity across the breadth of our economy. The fact is, profit plays a major role in enabling progress in all areas of society and life.

But certainly, when the quest for profit is not guided by a strong moral compass, the consequences can be dire. To me, a corporation must be judged not only by the results it achieves, but also by the way in which it achieves them. Imperial has always been more than the sum of its business accomplishments. From the very beginning, the company embraced and embodied values that have stood the test of time. Included among these are a commitment to a safe and healthy workplace for employees and contractors. Imperial was the first company in Canada to hire a full-time industrial hygienist to provide advice on ways to prevent injuries and occupational health problems, fair and equitable employment policies (Imperial helped pioneer paid leave-insurance and sickness benefits for employees and, at a time when it was the norm to work six days a week, introduced the five-day work week); environmental responsibility (Imperial has been investing in research to produce cleaner products since the 1960s, when it retained a chemist named Herman Fraser to find a way to remove sulphur from kerosene); and an unwavering commitment to conduct all affairs and transactions in accordance with the highest standards of ethics and integrity (in 2003, Canadian Business magazine named Imperial one of Canada’s top 10 companies of all time, commending it for its belief that success lies in doing one’s job well and for operating with “integrity, sensitivity and concern” for both people and the environment). These values have been, and remain, the cornerstones of Imperial’s ethos, or culture: they are ingrained in our way of life, and they guide our behaviour in every area, at every level of the organization.

Of course, behind these enduring values are the many people over the years who have embraced and passed on these values. I have always believed that Imperial’s employees are special. When I joined the company in 1967 as a marketing representative in Western Canada, I was drawn to it not only by the prospect of interesting, worthwhile work with attractive career opportunities, but also by the individuals I met during my interviews.

I had a strong sense that I was joining a team of highly capable and dedicated individuals—people of integrity who were working cooperatively to achieve common goals. What struck me particularly was that their competitiveness was directed outward to the marketplace, rather than toward one another. As a young man, I had played most team sports, and being part of a team was important to me. In these sports, what is important is not how a person performs as an individual but how the team as a whole performs and the results that are achieved collectively. By joining Imperial, I felt I was joining a team—each one, even as a junior member, my contribution would be valued and encouraged. And all these years later, I still feel that I am very much a part of a team, one whose abilities are far greater than the sum of the individual abilities of its members.

This ability to work as a team has played a significant role in enabling the company to take a long-term perspective, which is vital in a business that is itself very long-range in nature. The overall challenge to our industry is to continue to supply needed energy and products not only in the near term but well into the future. Major resource-development projects can take decades to plan, execute and bring to reality. Today, the plans we are putting in place extend all the way to the middle of this century. This is to say that in the years immediately and near-term challenges to be faced, of course, but at the same time we have a responsibility to help ensure that energy and products will be available for our children and their children. In a sense, to be an employee of Imperial is — for that matter, to be a shareholder or anyone else with an interest in the company’s affairs — to be part of a continuum that stretches back 125 years and extends forward for perhaps that long again. The benefits we enjoy today are the direct result of the foresight, planning and execution by the people who have gone before us in the company.

The development of the oil sands of Western Canada is a prime example. The oil sands are one of the three largest deposits of crude oil in the world, but for many years it was thought that it would be impossible to develop them commercially because of both the nature of the oil and the difficulty of recovering it. Yet Imperial persisted in believing that commercial development would be possible one day and was prepared to invest heavily in making this belief a reality. The company won a prime mover in the creation of the Syncrude oil-sands mining project near Fort McMurray, Alberta, in 1964 and completed by those who will come after us. As individuals, each of us can make a contribution, but in the end, it is the work of the evolving team that is important.

For the last 125 years, Imperial has grown and prospered by meeting the energy needs of Canadians as well as their expectations for good corporate citizenship. As we look to the future, I am confident that this company will continue to make a valuable contribution toward the meeting of Canada’s energy needs for many years to come, playing a major role not just by providing energy but by helping to sustain the country’s economic well-being.

Tim Hearn is chairman, president and chief executive officer of Imperial Oil.
Bringing Energy to Canada for 125 Years

Imperial has been a part of Canada since the country was in its infancy. From its discovery of major oil supplies to its development of innovative products, it has played a role in shaping the story of Canada.

BY RUSSELL FELTON

In the sepia-toned photographs, the bearded gentlemen pose formally. Unsmiling in tight-fitting coats and starched collars, they appear to be men of probity, solemnity and four-square Victorian conservatism—prudent boardroom stewards of their investors’ hard-earned funds. Yet it’s likely that they were, in reality, as much savvy entrepreneurs as austere-sided bookkeepers, as much innovators as organized administrators.

These are the 16 southwestern Ontario businesses who were, in London, Ont., on September 8, 1880, to form the Imperial Oil Company. They were younger than one might assume. The new company’s president, Frederick A. Fitzgerald, was 43, its vice-president, J.L. “Jake” Englehart, was 33, and its corporate secretary, William M. Spencer, was 28. All 16 founders had been active in the oilfield, sometimes despicably and almost always competitively.

business of petroleum refining, Englehart from the age of 19.

Canada’s oil industry was young at the time. It had started in the late 1850s, when James Miller Williams had sunk the first successful oil well in North America at Black Creek, Ont., not far from London. Over the next 20 years, using rickety wooden derricks and primitive cable tools and chains, dozens of other people had punched shallow but successful wells in other places in southwestern Ontario—Oil Springs, Bothwell and Petrolia, to name a few. The entire region earned the cognomen “Canada’s Oil Lands.”

Refineries (which were then essential) h varied widely where crude oil was boiled in order to “break” it into its various hydrocarbon components (or “fractions”) had also sprung up [willy-nilly] as entrepreneurs looked to the region to search for “black gold” wealth. At one point, there were 32 refineries in London alone.

The most useful fraction at the time was kerosene, or “coal oil,” as it was also known. Cheap and plentiful, it had replaced whale oil as the primary fuel for lighting the homes of the day, even though its less-than-pleasant smell caused it to be dubbed “skunk oil.” Waxes for candles and greases for axles and other uses were marginally profitable by-products of the refining process. Another fraction, known as gasoline, was considered relatively useless.

COURTESY FROM TOP LEFT: RESEARCH IN THE MID-1940s; CRAFTSMAN TEST LINK IN THE 1920s; CELEBRATING THE LONDON DECENCY, 1947.

[Image]
By the late 1870s, the bubble had burst for Canada's Oil Lands and its enterprising drillers and refiners. Higher-quality, "sweeter" crude oil had been discovered in Pennsylvania, and it quickly came to dominate and then glut the market. The price of kerosene fell from more than 20 cents a litre to less than three cents. Many aspiring Canadian oilmen moved on to other pursuits.

It was against this bleak business background that Imperial's 16 founders saw fit to join forces. Seeing more security in cooperation than competition, they got together $25,000 and formed the company with refineries in London and Petrolia. Total capitalization was $500,000, an enormous sum for the time. The practicality and straightforwardness that had led the men to join forces also inspired the Imperial Oil Company's original mission as outlined in its charter: To find, produce, refine and distribute petroleum and its products throughout the Dominion of Canada.

One hundred and twenty-five years later, it's remarkable to say that the company those 16 young men founded has been successfully fulfilling that original mission — and then some. And lofty though it may sound, it's also reasonable to say that Imperial has played a role in the development of this country. Without the oil Imperial found and refined and without the petroleum products it distributed throughout the country, Canada would not have developed as it has. Progress and development would have come, certainly, but perhaps not in quite the same way or at the same pace.

Assessing the contributions of a single corporation to an entire nation over a period of 125 years is perhaps best approached through a series of "what if" questions. For example, what if the Imperial Oil Company had never been formed? What if its founders had not elected to assume a national mandate? What if their successors had taken a less expansive view?

A watershed was reached in 1988, when Imperial, needing capital for further expansion and unable to raise it in Canada, turned to the Standard Oil Company (later Exxon Corporation and now Exxon Mobil Corporation). In exchange for a majority interest, Imperial acquired Standard's Canadian assets, which included refineries in the Maritime provinces and in Starnia, as well as marketing operations in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. The vision of a truly national petroleum company had become a reality.

would reduce the sulphur content of Imperial's refined products, making them more pleasant for consumers and more competitive with relatively odourless U.S. products. If he had failed, imported U.S. petroleum would likely have driven Canadian products off the market altogether, and the Imperial Oil Company might have been no more than a historical footnote.

As it happened, Frank succeeded, thus allowing the company to follow through on its vision of supplying petroleum throughout the Dominion. Imperial hired an agent, H.E. Sharp, to scout for markets in Western Canada and another, Edward Hewitt, to develop markets in Quebec. Sharp established an office in Winnipeg — population 8,000 — and hired an assistant to cover a sales territory from Lake Superior to the West Coast. By the mid-1880s, oil barrels of kerosene, paraffins, greases and other petroleum products were transshipping across the Prairies by rail on their journey to remote Hudson's Bay Company outposts and logging camps in the interior of British Columbia.

In 1881, after Imperial's London refinery was struck by lightning and burned down, the company consolidated its operations in the Petrolia refinery, which soon employed 500 people, covered 26 hectares and shipped products across the country in barrels made of its own cooperage with wood from its own woodlots. By 1893, the company had 23 branch offices from coast to coast, and its products were helping to open up Canada's vast wilderness areas, to build homes and to develop farmland and industries. A watershed was reached in 1988, when Imperial, needing capital for further expansion and unable to raise it in Canada, turned to the Standard Oil Company (later Exxon Corporation and now Exxon Mobil Corporation). In exchange for a majority interest, Imperial acquired Standard's Canadian assets, which included refineries in the Maritime provinces and in Starnia, as well as marketing operations in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. The vision of a truly national petroleum company had become a reality.

For decades after Drake's breakthrough in 1859, through most of the first half of the 20th century, the major obstacles the oil industry had to overcome were the lack of pipelines, the transportation of refined oil products, and the distribution and sale of those products. The widespread adoption of the automobile, combined with the increasing use of electricity, would eventually change all of that. The development of the automobile, and the widespread adoption of the internal combustion engine, would eventually change all of that. The development of the automobile, and the widespread adoption of the internal combustion engine, would eventually change all of that.
At the same time, Imperial’s management continued to believe in the potential of the oil industry. In 1914, Imperial sent a team to Alberta to investigate a promising oil discovery at Turner Valley, near Calgary. The field was short-lived, and the First World War presented other priorities. Another Turner Valley “oil boom” would come in 1924, but it too would peter out. In the meantime, a geological survey would see an Imperial drilling party journey 1,700 kilometres north along the Mackenzie River to Fort Norman (now Norman Wells), NWT. Here, under the direction of the legendary oil geologist Ted Link, the party would map the first significant oil fi

In addition, the industry has given rise to a world-scale petrochemical industry, which supplies Canadians with chemical feedstocks for a multitude of products that have become indispensable to virtually all aspects of modern life, including medical care, education, food services, communications, housing and clothing.

Again, Imperial’s determination to continue to supply Canadians with needed petroleum products and to free domestic oil and gas production did not end at Leduc, or with the later discoveries of so-called “conventional” crude oil. As early as the late 1950s, the company’s management recognized that the oil sands of Western Canada, with some 1.7 trillion to 2.4 trillion barrels of oil in place, represented one of the three largest potential sources of oil in the world. Even if only a small proportion of this resource could be economically developed, Canada’s long-term future as a significant oil-producing nation would be secured.

With that goal in view, Imperial became a pioneer in the in situ Suncor project in Fort McMurray, Alta. The largest oil sands mining operation in the world, Suncor currently produces 240,000 barrels of crude oil a day, which will increase to 350,000 barrels a day in mid-2006, when an expansion comes into operation. And starting in 1960, at Cold Lake, Alta, the company pioneered technologies and processes for the so-called “in situ” recovery of bitumen; the process would enable bitumen to be recovered from oil-saturated sand beds 500 metres underground without removing the sand. Today, Imperial’s Cold Lake operation is producing about 150,000 barrels of bitumen a day.

But the company is not resting on these laurels. Recognizing that further development of the oil sands must be both economically viable and environmentally acceptable, Imperial recently committed to donate $10 million to the University of Alberta for research into new and innovative technologies that will allow these dual objectives to be achieved.

Investing in innovative research has long been a tradition at Imperial. In 1934 it established the first research facility in the Canadian petroleum industry, which over the years has been responsible for major improvements in fuel quality and instrument in the development of lower-emission gasolines. In 1978, Imperial became the first company in Canada to introduce premium unleaded gasoline. And today Eko gasolene has one of the lowest sulphur content in the world.

Imperial’s 16 co-founders, like any other people of their generation, would no doubt be struck with wonder at today’s world of computers and instant communication, supercomputers and space travel, towering cities and gleaming pylons. But they might also be pleased to know that the company they created has been fulfilling its vision over the last 125 years and is proud of the mastery in which it has done so.

They might even ask themselves, “What if we hadn’t?”
Comic Books, Jeet Heer and the New Canada

In the Canada of today, traditional barriers are disappearing, bringing new and interesting perspectives to both academia and the arts.

By Robert Fulford

People who read the ingenious and imaginative articles of Jeet Heer, or have the pleasure of seeing him engage in intellectual debate, find it difficult to believe that as a little boy he was no star of the classroom. We can accept that Albert Einstein, an accredited genius and therefore an oddball, had trouble learning arithmetic, but we tend to assume that the merely clever and talented people among us were clever and talented from the start.

Jeet wasn’t, so far as anyone could tell. Today, a 38-year-old scholar and journalist, he writes for publications as different as the Boston Globe, the Literary Review of Canada, the National Post, Slate.com and the Comics Journal. But he didn’t learn to read till he was nearly eight years old, and his primary-school teachers thought he needed remedial English. This was partly because English was his second language, and perhaps also because he was working out his attitude to the unfamiliar society into which fate and his parents had dropped him in his sixth year.

As it turned out, he learned English in a way that foretold some of his future concerns as a writer — by reading comic books. Parents have traditionally feared that comics would undermine literacy among the young, but Jeet became a reader by picking his way through stories about superheroes and evil scientists. They were among his best teachers as well as a source of pleasure. He calls them his “bridge to literacy.”

His life and career embody two big changes on the Canadian landscape in recent times. The first is the appearance of intellectuals from non-European countries as cultural leaders, people like Neil Bissoondath, a Trinidadian-Canadian who has published much-admired books and now teaches creative writing at Leeds University in Quebec City, and Ishid Mungu, who grew up in Richmond, B.C. (because Ishid Amin expelled her family from Uganda), and has now become famous around the world as an analyst of her religion, Islam. The second change is the emergence of popular culture, including comics, as a subject studied by intellectuals.

Jeet (I call him that because I’ve never heard him called anything else) was born in 1967 to a Sikh farming family in the Punjabi town of Dadial. Seeking to improve his family’s prospects, Jeet’s father, Mohan, followed the path by which many earlier immigrants from India and elsewhere reached Canada: he set off by himself to find a more promising home, sending for his wife, Simar, and two sons once he was settled in Toronto. In the 1970s, Mohan ran a convenience store, and later he became the driver of an airport limousine as well as a promoter of Punjabi music in Canada. He died two years ago.

The Heers were relatively secular. On religious holidays the family went to a Sikh temple, a modest storefront arrangement in a strip mall in suburban Rexdale. Mohan didn’t wear a turban until the last few years of his life, and Jeet has worn a turban only on special occasions, such as a cousin’s wedding.

But the family didn’t leave the Punjabi behind. Jeet liked the music his father helped to import and often watched movies from India with his parents. He learned some of his Sikh history from comic books published in India, another early sign of his future interests. Comics also play a large part in the life of his younger brother, Bob, who runs a Web site for Dragon Lady, a store on College Street in Toronto that sells rare comic books. The family spoke Punjabi at home. Today, having been immersed in Canadian English for three decades, Jeet speaks his first language in a way that makes him feel like an immigrant to the Punjabi, groaning for vocabulary.

In high school, having finally established an amicable relationship with the English language, he made up for lost time by reading much more than his contemporaries. By necessity, he also became a student of the world around him. Everything he encountered seemed to demand analysis. “People would say things I wouldn’t get,” like, “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,” and I’d have to figure out what they meant. It made me into a real nerd, looking up everything in dictionaries.” It also made him a
critic. He was studying North American culture from both the outside and inside. He couldn’t let a reference slip by him. "I remember a kid speaking of James Bond. I had no idea who he was. I had to look it up.

His local high school turned out to be a splendid anachronism in the new Canada of the 1980s. Thistlewood Collegiate Institute, a proud centre of Scottish tradition. Intramural sport was organized according to Scottish clubs, and the yearbook was — and still is — called The Clansman. Unfortunately, there seemed to be no Scots on the premises. There were Caribbean students, South Asians, and whites of no noticeable cultural affiliation. But Jeet never met even one student who had a direct contact with Scotland.

No one objected. It was just one more mysterious aspect of this mysterious country where people from all over the world came together. For Jeet, it was another cultural puzzle that required sorting out.

Jean is a hearty, genial man who seems to belong in a good mood. His smile makes one think of someone who has just won a modest prize in a lottery or even scored a minor victory. But now, he’s highly articulate, as you might expect, but his conversational style takes some getting used to. If you offer an opinion, he may usually answer in a way that would baffle the uninstructed. He replies always begin something like, “Yes, yes, yes, yes.” No, yeah, yeah, yeah.

This is not to be taken, obviously, as his response to what has been said. It indicates a certain degree of nervousness, perhaps, but it’s also the way he clears his throat, or his mind, as he prepares what he wants to say.

What he says usually indicates intellectual poise, curiosity and knowledge. This is at least partly because he and the Canadians in which he grew up have learned to accommodate each other. While he was using mass culture to find his way through the New World, Canadian academic life was unconsciously preparing a place for thinkers like him. For generations, some of our most talented historians had been studying mass culture. At the University of Toronto, Marshall McLuhan, who’d grown up in Winnipeg, had become famous for his theories of media. Hugh Keenleyside, who was born in Peterborough, Ont., and was a top student at one of the world’s leading literary critics, worked with McLuhan as a University of Toronto student and absorbed his views.

In the 1960s, Jeet read a Toronto Star piece about Kenner and knew of the word’s idea. Although the works of Marshall McLuhan (who died in 1980) were not particularly popular among his professors, Jeet pursued his interest. He came upon Philip Mar- chuk’s biography, McLuhan: the Medium and the Message.

"Marchand was an eye-opener," Jeet remembers. Through Marchand, he became a student of McLuhan and much else; the biography helped make Jeet a writer on popular culture. He wrote to McLuhan’s daughter (McLuhan had died ever since then he was tracking the McLuhans, examining their ideas and extending them. He loves finding unnoticed or forgotten themes in McLuhan; he points out, for instance, that McLuhan’s first book, The Medium is the Message, was written in 1964; at that point, the only book people were aware of was McLuhan’s. "And then the only thing I could think of was the media were turning women into machines. McLuhan, Jeet says, outlined theories about women that feminists didn’t know till the 1970s.

Jeet’s curiosity, intensified by his outsider status, makes him attentive to everyday culture that others take for granted. When he writes or talks about phenomena in the popular arts, he typically examines something familiar in a way that makes it new and freshly exciting. The fact that he consciously worked his way into Canadian life makes his work an integral part of the school of communications that McLuhan had founded.

Meanwhile, international culture was also preparing a place for Jeet. The comic books of his childhood were turning into the graphic novels we now think of as standard. The first American novel Maus, whose two parts appeared in 1986 and 1991, Art Spiegelman did what everyone till then considered impossible: he made a brilliant, searing and profoundly engaging graphic novel about the most sensitive of subjects, the Holocaust. A comic book on genocide? It couldn’t be, yet great reviews rolled in. Maus cracked open the field of graphic novels, attracting the attention of serious artists and serious readers. Jeet among them.

But a graphic novel is the sort of thing that trained academics like Jeet Heer should be studying? Should he be (as he now is) writing his Ph.D. dissertation at Toronto’s York University on the way comic strips reflect American politics? Is there really a place for all this in universities? These questions aren’t yet entirely answered.

The late Northrop Frye, Canada’s most eminent scholar in the humanities, argued in 1973 that the academic world needed to be broader and more open. He acknowledged the existence of interdisciplinary courses, where different departments met, "politic but suspiciously, like, highbrow country for a cow.” But the future would require much more, the recognition by academics that knowledge has no limits. Like God as defined by St. Augustine, it “has its centre everywhere and its circumference nowhere.”

This is roughly what has happened, though perhaps not in the way Frye envisaged. Certainly Kenner, who died at the age of 80 in 2003, believed scholars had lost their boundaries and that he had to invent on anything to which he could bring both competence and enthusiasm. An authority on James Joyce and Samuel Beckett, he also wrote a book on Chuck Jones, who made cartoons about Dada. A Yorkshireman, his books also谈谈Backminister Fuller, the engineer who created the geodesic dome.

Today, it’s no longer uncommon for professors to study material that was considered only a generation ago, to be beneath contempt. At York University, the works of Braverman and the theories of postcards on Backminister Fuller, the engineer who created the geodesic dome.

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A Contributions Chronicle

From sponsoring hockey and ballet to supporting research and education, Imperial has been contributing to the Canadian community for more than a century.

BY CATHERINE TEASDALE

Imperial's association with hockey began in 1936, when it started sponsoring Hockey Night in Canada radio broadcasts.

It wasn't easy to find, but it's there. A reference to the Imperial Oil archives to the company's first corporate donation, a grant given in 1934 to help Sir Wilfred Grenfell establish a "seamen's mission" to serve fishing communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. Providing medical services, schooling and care for orphans, the Grenfell mission not only helped improve the lives of suffering families in the region, but marked the beginning of a tradition of giving at Imperial that has continued through the years.

Tracking the story of Imperial's contributions is a fascinating endeavour, for it is in many ways a reflection of an evolving Canada. As the needs and priorities of the nation changed with the times, so too did Imperial's contributions. In yellowed ledgers, fading photographs, handwritten correspondence, board minutes spanning more than a century, and various other items, the story unfolds. A letter from 1923 thanks the company for helping the northern Ontario town of Cochrane during a typhoid epidemic by providing nurses and fresh milk. A plaque commemorates a trust fund set up by Imperial employees in the early days of the Depression to be "devoted to humanitarian purposes" beyond the company.

Bob Taylor-Vaughan, Imperial's archivist, recalls other company contributions that speak of different stages in Canada's collective past. In 1953, when the country's attention was focused on enriching the cultural life of Canada, now that the Second World War was long over, Imperial provided funds, for example, to help establish the Stratford Festival. A decade later, when the environment was emerging as a key public issue, the company supported the founding of the National-Provincial Parks Association.

Over the years, Imperial has contributed to thousands of charitable and non-profit initiatives in almost every area of Canadian life. "Supporting Canadian communities, helping them to meet important needs, has helped define Imperial," says Barbara Heydok, president of the Imperial Oil Foundation. "The company has had the privilege of being involved in the development of so many tremendous undertakings that have played a role in shaping and enriching Canadian life. And it's not just the corporation itself that has provided support, but also employees and landscapers, through thousands of hours of volunteer work in as much as financial contributions."

Last year, of Imperial's $2.5 million contribution to the United Way, Heydok points out, $1.7 million was contributed directly by employees and landscapers, many of whom also volunteer with organizations supported by the United Way.

The following is a sample of Imperial's giving over the years:

**The Halifax Explosion**

On December 6, 1917, two ships collided in Halifax Harbour, causing a devastating explosion that killed more than 1,900 people and destroyed more than 1,500 homes. At the time, Imperial was building a refinery in nearby Dartmouth, and 800 company workers were living in temporary camps near the building site. Many rushed to the city to help in the rescue effort. A number of the camps were turned into temporary hospitals, more than 150 injured or homeless people were cared for. The company also provided an immediate $10,000 to support the relief work.

**Sarnia Road Construction**

In 1918, Imperial constructed a paved road for the city of Sarnia, Ont. At the time, and roads were the norm but were proving a challenge for the automobile. City residents came out en masse to the opening ceremony, where the mayor announced that Sarnia now had "a stretch of pavement that is second to none on the continent of America."

**Imperial Oil Hour of Fine Music**

In 1928, at a time when families gathered around the radio to listen to favourite pro-

To perform the concerts, the company formed a symphony orchestra, which featured many of the country's most accomplished musicians.
To bring a touch of home to Canadian troops stationed in England, the company sponsored the making of special recordings of hockey broadcasts.
acquire the Crow's swamp and bg, a wetland near Peterbor
ough, Ont. In 2004, Imperial committed to contribute
$140,000 to the organization over four years to support the
educational component of a project aimed at conserving 100
islands in the St. Lawrence River.

Shaw Festival
By the 1970s, the Shaw Festival, which had been founded
in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., in 1962, had outgrown its first
venue, the 385-seat Town Hall theatre. A $25,000 contribu-
tion from Imperial supported the construction of the Festival
Theatre, which opened in 1973 and was able to accommo-
date not only larger audiences but large-scale productions.

Amateur Swimming
Imperial became an Olympic trailblazer in 1978, when it
announced it would provide $1 million in sponsorship funds for amateur swimming in
Canada. This sponsorship played a significant role in helping Canada’s Olympic swim team,
which included Alex Baumann, Victor Wins and Anne Ottenbrite, reach its potential
and win 10 medals (including four gold) at the 1984 Olympics.

Newcomers
To mark its 100th anniversary in 1980, Imperial commissioned a television series, a
book and a ball, all of which shared the title Newcomers and celebrated Canada’s
immigrant past. The National Ballet of
Canada created and presented the ballet
version. Imperial has continued to support
the National Ballet through the years, today
through Esso Kids Tours and Open Houses.

Esso Medals and Certificates of Achievement
Believing that Canada’s favourite sport could help develop
positive personal qualities, Imperial introduced the Esso
Medals and Certificates of Achievement program in 1981.
The medals and certificates honour minor league players
throughout Canada for sportsmanship, dedication and
improvement as well as achievement. Over the years, more
than two million medals and certificates have been given out.

The Learning Partnership
With the aim of channelling widespread business support for
public education into focused programs for schools, The
Learning Partnership was founded in 1993 by 25 Canadian
business, education and community leaders, including Robert
Peterson, a former chairman of Imperial. The organization
currently sponsors 10 dozen programs, ranging from Words on
Work, which brings successful professional women into
schools to talk to students about education and life choices,
to the Imperial-sponsored ‘Investigate/Invent/Innovate’,
through which grade 7 and 8 students design and create a
working model of a device that has useful application.

Safe Communities Foundation
A national organization “dedicated to making Canada the
safer country in which to live, learn, work and play,” the
Safe Communities Foundation was established in 1996.
Imperial has been supporting the organization since its early
days, and currently Jim Levine, former director of safety,
health and environment for Imperial, is chair of the Safe
Communities Foundation.

Canadian Hockey Association
In 1998, Imperial began its sponsorship of the Canadian Hockey
Association (now Hockey Canada) and through it
Canada’s national men’s and women’s hockey teams, which
won gold medals at the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City. The
company continues to support Hockey Canada and the coun-
try’s national hockey teams today.

Ice Storm
In January 1998, a devastating ice storm struck southwestern
Quebec and parts of eastern Ontario, leaving many areas
without power for days. Emergency shelters were set up, and
volunteers fanned out in action. To support their efforts, Impe-
rial provided $10,000 in Esso gift certificates to be given out
by local mayors to volunteers using their own vehicles to help
in the relief effort. The company also provided $10,000 to
the Red Cross to support relief efforts in eastern Ontario.

SARS
When SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) broke out
in Toronto in 2003, visitors stayed away and businesses suf-
fered. In May, after the initial outbreak was over, Imperial
launched the weekend-long Celebrate Toronto campaign to
help bring visitors to the city and revitalize business. The
price of regular unleaded gasoline was reduced 4.9 cents
a litre for the weekend at all participating Esso service
centres, and five cents for every litre sold (a total of
$250,000 was contributed to the Ontario Hospital
Association to fund research into improved protec-
tive wear for health-care workers.

Imperial Oil Centre for Oil Sands Research
In 2004, the company announced its largest-ever contribution, a $10 million grant to the University of
Alberta to establish a new research facility called the Imperial Oil
Centre for Oil Sands Innovation. The num-
date of the centre, which is administered by
the university’s faculty of engineers, is to find
more efficient, economically viable and environmentally responsible ways to develop
Canada’s oil sands resources, one of the
largest crude oil deposits in the world.

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Of Olympians, Writers and Politicians

Canada's Aboriginal peoples have a record of accomplishment that is long and growing. In fields ranging from medicine to filmmaking, their many achievements have garnered international recognition.

BY MARCIA KAYE

The history of Aboriginal achievement in this country goes back far beyond the birth of Canada itself. For at least 10,000 years, the accomplishments of indigenous people have been many, varied and often remarkable. The original citizens managed to live in harmony with seemingly inhospitable environments, build richly vibrant cultures, and develop sophisticated political systems that are believed to be the model for the first concepts of North American federal governments.

According to the most recent (2001) census, nearly one million people in Canada identify themselves as belonging to one of the three Aboriginal groups: First Nations, Inuit or Metis. That represents one in 30 people, up from one in 36 in the previous census. Their accomplishments today are wide-rangin, as demonstrated by musicians Shamas Twain and Susan Aglukark, political leaders Roberta Jamieson, Ethel Blondin-Andrew and Thelma Chalifoux; elite athletes Jordin Tootoo and Alvin Morris; actors Graham Greene, Tom Jackson, Tantoo Cardinal and Tino Keppler; world-renowned kidney surgeon Martin Gale McLoughlin; and many more.

Here are five individuals who have made significant contributions, often against astonishing odds, in very different fields. All have succeeded in making their cultures strong while making an impact locally, nationally and internationally.

ZACHARIA KUNUK

As a boy, Zacharias Kunuk used to make one soapstone carving each week, which he'd sell for a quarter so he could get into the weekly movie night at the community hall in Igloolik in what is now Nunavut. Thirty years later, his own movie, Atanarjuat, the Fast Runner, the first ever dramatic feature film in Inuktitut, would be screened in 30 countries, win many awards, including a top prize at Cannes, and bring jobs and millions of dollars to Kunuk's tiny community.

The fourth of 12 children, Kunuk was born in a round red house on the land. His father hunted walrus, caribou, seals and polar bears. At night, Kunuk loved stealing to the men's stories, told over cups of tea by the light of a seal-oil lamp.

It was after Kunuk was sent away to school, at the age of nine, that he began using the meager earnings from his carvings to support his weekly movie habit. He left school after grade 8 and became more and more adept at carving. Wanting to capture his father's hunting stories on film, he sold several carvings to a Montreal art gallery, used the proceeds to buy a video camera, and started making movies.

Kunuk had to be innovative to deal with the northern challenges. "When it's -30 outside and you take a frozen camera into a warm house, there's so much condensation it takes hours for the lens to clear up," he says. "But we found that if you put a plastic bag over the camera when you're taking it inside, the lens is fine."

After spending several years making documentaries, dramas and a TV series for the Igloolik Inuktitut production company, which he co-founded in 1990, Kunuk wanted to make a feature film based on "Atanarjuat," a 1,000-year-old Inuit legend of a small nomadic community under the spell of a shaman's curse. Kunuk, who was producer, director, co-writer and co-editor, shot the three-hour epic on location in Nunavut, using an all-Inuit cast. Props, costumes and sets, from igloos to dog sleds to caribou-skin coats, were absolutely authentic, handmade by local people. Since there could be no catering trucks on the Arctic tundra, hunters were hired to feed the cast and crew.

The $2 million movie, funded partly by the National Film Board's Aboriginal Filmmaking Program, created 20 full-time and 60 part-time jobs in the 1,200-member community.

The extraordinarily beautiful, powerful film won the Camera d'Or for best first feature at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival, top awards at festivals in Belgium and Scotland, six Genies and many other prizes. Although the movie is in Inuktitut (with English subtitles), Kunuk says that the thrilling story of love, loss, jealousy and revenge transcends language. "We may be from all different cultures, but everybody gets hurt, everybody bleeds, everybody laughs. We're all breathing the same air."

Kunuk, 47, and a father of five, will soon be releasing his second feature, based on the journals of the early 20th-century Arctic explorer Knud Rasmussen of Greenland. Says Kunuk: "After all these years of watching Hollywood movies, we want to tell our own stories."
CARRYING all her possessions in a pillowcase, three-year-old Cornelia Wieman was led into a strange house by a social worker who introduced her to an unfamiliar man and woman by saying, "This is your new family." Wieman, 40, is one of the "scoop kids," a generation of Aboriginal children who were removed from their homes, largely during the 1960s and 1970s, to be raised predominantly by white families. The experience prompted her to explore issues of loss and identity, which in turn motivated her to become Canada's first female Aboriginal psychiatrist.

Born on the reserve of Little Grand Rapids in northern Manitoba, Wieman was adopted by a market gardener and his wife who had emigrated from the Netherlands to Thunder Bay, Ont., and had previously adopted a little girl from Poland. Wieman and her sister used to ride the school bus that took children from the white part of town to and from school. Another bus transported the native children. But with her dark skin, dark hair and brown eyes, Wieman says, "I always felt that I was on the wrong bus.

As a teenager, Wieman was a prize-winning track star with Olympic aspirations. But at 17 she was hit by a truck and broke several bones, ending her track career. During her convalescence, despite her caring family, she began to feel losing her identity.

At the University of Waterloo, while earning a bachelor of science degree in kinesiology and then a master's in biomechanics, Wieman experienced two defining moments. The first occurred when she met a young Aboriginal woman who was proud of her heritage—something Wieman had not experienced before. The second happened when, during a research placement, she had a run-in with an arrogant physician. "I'm going to be a doctor," she told herself. "And a way better doctor."

In her first year of medical school, Wieman was asked to join a new association of Aboriginal physicians. "All of a sudden, there was an exponential development in my sense of belonging to a community," she says. Originally planning to study rehabilitative medicine, she quickly became more aware of mental health issues in Aboriginal communities, and she decided to study psychiatry.

Director of the Native Students Health Sciences Program at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont., from 2002 to 2006, Wieman is now co-director of the Indigenous Health Research Development Program at the University of Toronto and continues to work two days a week at St. Nations Mental Health Services clinic near Brampton, Ont.

When Wieman was asked to speak at both Canadian and international conferences, Wieman says, "We're learning to develop collaborative relationships with traditional healers. Even western medicine is moving toward a biopsychosocial, patient-centered care with an emphasis on the mind-body connection, which has always been a part of Aboriginal healing."

JOHN BORROWS

Whenever John Borrows asked questions of Anishinabe Elders, he wasn't given answers; he was told stories—stories of ancestors or animals or Nanabush the trickster. Today, as Canada's leading indigenous legal scholar, Borrows says stories are the common ground in any kind of law-making, whether it's a story in traditional Aboriginal law of a bear talking to a fish or a story in Canadian common law of two people in a dispute before a judge. "You can reconcile these two systems by getting each side to see that the other side is about storytelling," says Borrows, 42, a law professor at the University of Victoria and holder of the Law Foundation Chair in Aboriginal Justice and Governance.

As a teenager, Borrows had no intention of going into law. He grew up on a small farm near Barrie, Ont., spending summers on the Cape Croker Reserve on Ontario's Bruce Peninsula. His parents had had limited schooling: this mother had run away from her home on the reserve in grade 8 to avoid being sent to residential school, but they recognized the value of education and made their son see it.

Having been an average student in elementary and high school, Borrows began to excel in university. While completing his bachelor's degree, he got married and had the first of two children. He finished his initial law degree in 1991 and then went on to do graduate degrees in law, writing his doctoral thesis on the legal history of Manitoba Indian. In 1992, while working on his master's in law, Borrows became director of the First Nations Law Program at the University of British Columbia and two years later became director of the Intensive Program in Land, Resources and First Nations Governments at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto. He returned to Vancouver in 1996, resuming his role at the University of British Columbia. In 1998, he invited to Toronto to teach law at the University of Toronto, where he remained until his appointment to the University of Victoria in 2001. Borrows has authored award-winning books on Aboriginal law, edited a book on Canadian constitutional law, and been a visiting professor at universities in the United States and Australia. He has taught at least 500 Aboriginal law students in Canada, including some in Iqaluit, where he spent four months in 2001; the Iqaluit students graduated this year with law degrees from the University of Victoria. "Teaching these students was especially interesting," says Borrows, "because it combined common law and traditional law approaches to prepare students to practice in a northern context."

Borrows's work is helping to reconcile Aboriginal and common-law traditions. For instance, in land-claim cases, courts are gradually paying more attention to oral histories. "I'm excited about participating in this wonderful renaissance, bringing back the best of the traditions that were interrupted and making them live to answer questions here and now."

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Waneek Horn-Miller was put into swimming lessons because her mother thought that a pool was one place where her very active child couldn’t hurt herself. At age 10, Horn-Miller was winning provincial swimming championships, at 23 she was on the Canadian women’s water polo team that won gold at the 1999 Pan-Am Games, and at 24 she was co-captain of the Canadian team that placed fifth at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney.

Born in Montreld, Horn-Miller was the third of four girls raised by a single mother. Kahn-reena Horn, a Mohawk from Kahnawake, Que. The family became front-page news during the Oka crisis of 1990, when a soldier’s bayonet stabbed the 14-year-old Horn-Miller, who was holding her four-year-old sister. Her sternum, deflected the blade, but she wasn’t able to get medical treatment for 22 hours, by which time the wound was infected. The resulting scar was both physical and emotional. “I got a pretty good case of post-traumatic stress disorder,” she says. “I dealt with it by becoming addicted to sports.”

Horn-Miller trained almost obsessively over the next several years, winning 20 gold medals at the Indigenous Games between 1990 and 1997, including one for rifle-shooting. At 15, she participated in Sacred Run Canada, which began in Victoria and ended in Kahnawake, followed the next year by Sacred Run North America, which went from Fairbanks, Alaska, to Santa Fe, New Mexico. While earning a degree in political science at Ottawa’s Carleton University, from which she graduated in 2000, Horn-Miller became the first woman to be named Carleton’s Athlete of the Year three consecutive times.

The higher she rose in the world of sport, the more attention she received. “The elite level of sport in Canada is not a multicultural world,” she says. “Someone of colour is highly promoted, but also tends to stand out like a sore thumb.” At the Sydney Olympics and later, playing on professional teams in Batekoua and Naples, she continued her path to responsibility. “It’s the players who make the rules, not the coach. I try to make players feel comfortable.” Now 29, retired from professional sport and living in Kahnawake, Horn-Miller does motivational speaking across the country. During the first three months of this year, she spoke at 41 high schools in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. She’s currently developing a workshop on self-esteem for Aboriginal teen girls, encouraging them to pursue a healthy lifestyle. Says Horn-Miller: “I want young people to look outside of what’s around them and to dream big.”

While earning a degree in political science at Ottawa’s Carleton University, Horn-Miller became the first woman to be named Carleton’s Athlete of the Year three consecutive times.

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Nellie Courtnoyea is one of the most powerful women in Canada. For 10 years, Courtnoyea, a former premier of the Northwest Territories, has been chair and chief executive officer of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, which has assets of $360 million. She is also a founding board member of the Aboriginal Pipeline Group, which is a partner in the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project. Courtnoyea was born near Akavik, N.W.T., close to the shores of the Arctic Ocean. As the second of 12 children and the older girl, she was kept busy with the day-to-day basics of survival, such as helping to prepare the fish or seal meat, picking berries, setting nets for fish and traps for small game, and skinning muskrats. With no television and only limited radio (“We didn’t want to burn out the batteries,” she says), Courtnoyea learned to love reading. She received her formal education, including high school, through the Alberta Correspondence School Branch.

Courtnoyea’s ambitions were limited. “With the focus on survival, there was not much room to think of grandioses things,” she says. But once or twice a year, when her family went into town, she would sit in on community meetings, listening intently to the discussions. Courtnoyea moved to Imlay, and after a stint working in a general store, got a job as a CBC announcer, where her voice became familiar throughout the region. In 1973, she began working as a land claim fieldworker and then was elected as a member of the Northwest Territories legislative assembly. She held a number of minority positions before being elected leader of the Northwest Territories in 1991, becoming the first elected female premier in Canadian history.

Once of Courtnoyea’s most significant accomplishments was her involvement in the 1984 land-claim settlement in which the Inuvialuit, the Inuit of the Western Arctic, established specific rights regarding wildlife and environmental management, ownership of land and financial compensation. The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation was created to administer those rights and benefits. Under Courtnoyea’s leadership, it has made major investments in oil and gas and transportation companies.

The Aboriginal Pipeline Group, formed in 2000, aims, for example, to advance Aboriginal ownership of a future Mackenzie Valley Pipeline and has formed a partnership with the Mackenzie Valley Producers Group, of which Imperial Oil is a member. At 65, Courtnoyea, a mother of two and a grandmother of two, continues to work 14-hour days and has no plans to retire anytime soon. In fact, she says, she may one day run for mayor of Inuvik. “To me, it’s not a matter of what level of politics you’re at, but what you do,” she comments. “And I’m very interested in community. I’ve never forgotten where I’m from or why I’m doing this work.”

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The Canada of 1880

BY SELwyn P. GRIFFIN

IN 1880 THE DOMINION OF CANADA WAS thirteen years old. The enthusiasm of the Confederation period had given place to a determination to save the union and to bind it together. The provinces were not yet quite used to living, as it were, under one roof. Nova Scotia was still half-hearted and doubtful; Ontario and Quebec were apt to fly at each other's throats; British Columbia had just been saved to the Dominion by the persuasive eloquence of the recent Governor General, Lord Dufferin, who with his Countess had made a tour in 1876, and by the assurance two years later from the Federal Government that it would redeem its promise of 1871 and provide a transcontinental railway. The memory of Louis Riel and of the Red River troubles of 1870 was still alive—and Quebec had sympathized with Riel. In the main, however, the Union was holding, for the Fathers of Confederation had well and truly done their work, and there was a canny navigator at the helm.

Sir John A. Macdonald's intention had been in 1867 that the "residue of power" should rest with the Dominion Government. That is to say that everything that was undefined in the British North America Act, and all matters that should arise later, should come under the administration of the Parliament at Ottawa. Already in 1880 the strength of the provincial position in law was becoming clear. The fight between Sir Oliver Mavor, Prime Minister of Ontario, and Sir John A. Macdonald over Ontario's western boundary was looming on the horizon. Ontario was to win that case before the Privy Council and also the one that grew out of it, the question of the administration of the Crown lands in the dist
THE HORSE still shared the land supremacy with the “iron steed,” but the roads were shocking quagmires in spring and autumn

We should never think of going about shouting “I am an Ontario man,” or “I am a Saskatchewan man,” but we do not mind shouting “I am a Canadian.”

A CANADA WITHOUT A CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY seems to us today almost an anomaly. To our fathers it seemed a frustrated country, and yet they dreaded the colonial cost. The building of the Canadian Pacific saved to Canada, not only British Columbia, but the vast middle west as well. In 1880 the Canadian Pacific was just being born. Communication with British Columbia was by way of United States railways. The young Dominion, still struggling with political difficulties which were very threatening, was, however, buckling down to the greatest of the tasks that faced her, the herculean task of binding together the vast area which, with magnificent vision, she had reached out to seize, with those steel ribbons of transportation which alone would be adequate to the strain. Not only was the Government drawing up the Canadian Pacific Railway bill this year, but the small cities, towns and even villages of Ontario and Quebec were vying with one another in subsidizing, often far beyond their means, scores of local railways, some of which were only a few miles long—some only nine. It was the great Canadian railway age. In a country so vast, held by a population so sparse—there were not many more than four million people in Canada—transportation was, as it still is, one of the prime considerations, and we can pardon our fathers if in their anxiety to hasten the development of the country, they burdened their children and grandchildren with public debts.

Transportation in general in the 1880s is a fascinating recollection. The horse still shared the land supremacy with the “iron steed,” but the roads, except those built and maintained by toll-companies, were shocking, mere earthen tracks, deep in choking dust in summer, quagmires in spring and autumn. Such “roads” have not entirely disappeared from the map of Canada, and the antiquarian can still find specimens without too exhausting a search. Winter was by far the best time for them, as it had been from the time when roads were first opened in the land. We of 1920, of course, are “spoiled,” for we are well on in Canada’s great road-building age, and in the last ten years more has been done in the making of first class roads than in all the years of our history before.

The saddle was no curiosity in 1880 as it is in danger of becoming today. Hundreds of business men rode daily to and from their offices in the city and in towns, and were proud of their “seat.” There were no slippery pavements, no electric cars (the horse-car was not a speed-limit breaker), and no
IT WAS THE HEY-DAY of horsehair furniture, antimacassars, musty parlours that were never used, brown stone house-fronts, formal "calling" and returning formal "calls"

motorcars to frighten one's mount. It might be added that there were comparatively few straightwire or bundled-wire fences to ruin the sport of hunt clubs. "Having up with the Joneses" was a matter of high-stepping boys or roans and brilliantly painted and more brilliantly polished "victorians," "lanadas," "phantoms," or "coaches." In the country every kind of vehicle was to be seen, from os-car to "democrat" and "carry-all," but let us not bewail the passing of that ugly and now too comfortable "buggy," which was ubiquitous, as we cannot help but bewail the passing of the charming "cutter."

Afloat, the canoe was master of the wilderness, while today, just fifty years after, both fur-trader and prospector have taken to the aeroplane. Schooners, brigantines, "windjammers" crowded the inland waters with interesting sail. They are gone, and we can see the long vistas of the Great Lakes for a few days in summer without a glimpse of canoes, save perhaps the white of a racing yacht. Crowds of steamers plied the lakes and rivers—old-fashioned side-wheelers for the most part, with some stern-wheelers for variety. Most of them are gone. A few of the more palatial twin-screw ships linger on, as it were on suspension, to smooth the horizon along with the grain-carriers. Oil, gas, and coal, the internal combustion engine have done this thing; but the water is not entirely forsaken, as one may gather from the roar of the speed-boats on any summer afternoon.

The Canada of 1980 was turning from absorption in politics to intense application to material development. But politics were not yet seriously neglected, though "the old guard" were passing from the scene. William Lyon Mackenzie was dead nearly twenty years; Bishop Strachan was dead thirteen; Dr. Egerton Ryerson, his great opponent, was on the brink of the grave. Sir John Beverley Robinson, chief-ornament of the old Family Compact, had gone seventeen years before. Of the Fathers of Confederation, John Sandfield Macdonald, George Brown, Sir George Cartier, D'Arcy McGee were gone. Joseph Howe, the great opponent in Nova Scotia of Confederation, was also gone. Most of the others were in retirement, although Sir John Macdonald still dominated the political stage, and Sir Charles Tupper and Sir Leonard Tilley ably supported him. The Hon. Edward Blake was at the height of his power, and his successor, Laurier, was a young member who had once been in the Cabinet for a moment, but who was for the time being a disappointment to those who had built high hopes on the earlier promise he had shown. He was to get his opportunity five years later.

Victorian manners, dress, habits of thought and furniture had reached their most characteristic phase in 1880. Fashions for men were at their worst, as were those for children, while women's dresses, in all their swaddling fullness, had for a moment achieved a certain charm, which was soon to vanish before the attractiveness of the nineties. It was the hey-day of horsetail furniture, antimacassars, many parlours that were never used, brown stone house-fronts, formal "calling" and returning formal "calls."

In fact, in many ways it was a period of which we to a period of which we of 1930 do not look back with any fault, fond regret, notwithstanding the fact that there was more leisure then and less noise.

But it was a period of intense activity in Canada, and of tremendous development in every direction, material and intellectual. The telephone had just been successfully demonstrated at Boston, and, on the 1st of October, the first transcontinental engine have done this thing; but the water is not entirely forsaken, as one may gather from the roar of the speed-boats on any summer afternoon.

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