

Social Studies, Geography & History

The Sikh Heritage Museum of Canada - OESSA

The Komagata Maru and Political Cartoons

James Steeves

History, Grade 8: Canada, a Changing Society, 1890-1914

B1. Application: analyse key similarities and differences between Canada in 1890–1914 and in the present day, with reference to the experiences of and major challenges facing different groups and/or individuals, and to some of the actions Canadians have taken to improve their lives (FOCUS ON: Continuity and Change; Historical Perspective)

B2. Inquiry: use the historical inquiry process to investigate perspectives of different groups on some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or Canadians between 1890 and 1914 (FOCUS ON: Historical Perspective; Historical Significance)

B3. Understanding Historical Context: describe various significant events, developments, and people in Canada between 1890 and 1914, and explain their impact (FOCUS ON: Historical Significance; Cause and Consequence)

Minds On

Arrange students in three groups. Provide each group with a piece of chart paper and markers (a different colour for each group). Assign one of the following concepts to each group and have them write the word in the center:

- Citizenship
- Immigration
- Culture

Ask students to write down words and ideas related to their assigned concept. After about 4 minutes, have groups rotate to another chart paper and add to the previous group's words and ideas. Continue this process until groups are back where they started. Ask each group to share some of the words and ideas that are most common, and any interesting observations that they notice.

Assessment: make sure that all students have an opportunity to share their ideas. It might help to discuss small group norms before the activity.

Action

Provide each group with the images of the Komagata Maru. Ask students to create a chart with the four sections:

- What do I observe?
- What do I infer?
- What do I know?
- What questions do I have?

Explain to students the difference between an observation and an inference. Observations are based only what they can actually see in the images. Inferences are guesses that students make based on their observations and prior experience. Students should write down their responses on post-it notes so that they can move them around during the process.

After each group has shared their predictions, allow students time to explore the 3D image of the ship (available at <https://sketchfab.com/models/a402fea192f244e1b247cf40fa7e6628>) and the Komagata Journey website at <http://komagatamarujourney.ca/>). Students can begin to move post-its into the “What do I know?” section of their chart paper, and they should start adding their own questions as well. Have groups share their charts with the class, and share any questions that they have developed.

Tell students that they will be analyzing continuities and changes in how immigration is perceived in Canada, with a focus on how Sikh Canadians have been depicted in political cartoons from 1914 and from present day. Provide students with the worksheet “Techniques of Cartooning”, and review the features found in the “Child Canada Takes her First Steps” cartoon.

Explain that political cartoons express a particular point of view which will often be controversial. While these cartoons are intended to pose new ideas or criticize a point of view, there are some things that are inappropriate in political cartoons. Ask students what they think are some things that should not be in a political cartoon. Record their responses on chart paper. Some things that they might consider are:

- discriminatory ideas or images
- inaccurate information
- offensive and inappropriate words or symbols

Have students look over the Komagata Maru cartoons. Students should choose one of the cartoons and identify the features of political cartoons using the worksheet “Features of Political Cartoons”. Have students add comments about whether or not the cartoon involves any of the inappropriate things mentioned earlier. Students should then join others who worked on the same cartoon and share their responses, and then share their results as a group to the rest of the class.

Now have students choose one of the three modern cartoons. What are some of the issues raised by the cartoon (intentionally or unintentionally)? Have students conduct research about the cartoon and any issues related to it, and apply the same questions that they used for the other cartoons. They should use a copy of “Features of Political Cartoons” as well as the “Continuity and Change” worksheet.

Have students stand in groups according to the cartoon that they looked at. Create new groups of 3, so that all 3 looked at a different cartoon, and have them share their findings in turn with the group (or groups of two if the three groups are not the same size).

As a culminating task, ask students to reconsider the chart paper that they created at the beginning for Citizenship, Immigration, and Culture. Ask students to create a political cartoon about their point of view related to an issue raised during the unit, either about the Sikh immigration, Sikh culture, or other issues raised about being Canadian, immigration, and culture. Have students apply the same questions about features and appropriate content that they have applied to the other cartoons, using the “Features of Political Cartoons” worksheet.

Assessment: keep anecdotal notes and have students keep a two-way reflection journal or ideas notebook, recording their inferences and inquiries. Provide feedback in their journals. Look for detailed notes about their topic, accurate application of features of cartooning, and analysis of continuities and changes.

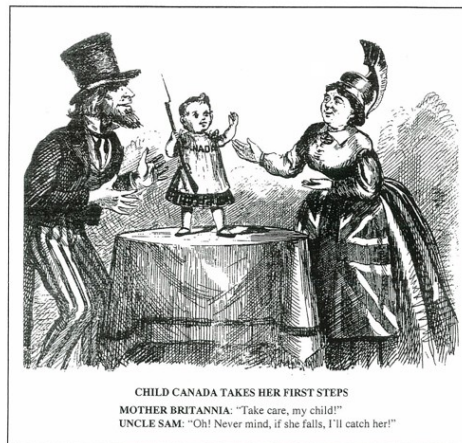
Note: the various political cartoons may be offensive to some students; take time to consider how students might be affected by cartoons, and perhaps seek the advice of community members. You could also choose other examples that are more relevant for your community.

Consolidation/Debrief

Display student cartoons in a long hallway or around the classroom. Conduct a gallery walk of their work. Split the class in half and have one half of the students stand by their cartoon and share their ideas, while the other half looks at the cartoons around the room. Then have students switch roles. Then have students write a short reflection of their work using a reflection journal.

Assessment: students reflect on their work in their reflection journal; teachers use the rubric to assess the culminating task.

Techniques of Cartooning



Canadian Illustrated News, Toronto, June 1870

Cartoon from Charles and Cynthia Hou (1997), *Great Canadian Political Cartoons, 1820-1914*. Moody's Lookout Press, Vancouver.

Caption: A sentence or phrase that is the title for the cartoon.

Examples: "Child Canada Takes Her First Steps." Mother Britannia is granting independence to a young Canada, while Uncle Sam (the United States) waits to take control.

Label: Words in the drawing to identify people or objects.

Examples: "Canada" is written across the child's dress to identify the child as Canada.

Relative Size: Figures are drawn much larger or much smaller than others.

Examples: Uncle Sam (The United States) and Mother Britannia (England) are both much larger than the child (Canada) to indicate their power and maturity as nations.

Light and Dark: Use of dark shading and white space to create an effect.

Examples: the dark figures of Uncle Same and Mother Britannia contrast with the white space above the child, creating focus and tension.

Composition: The arrangement or location of figures or objects in the cartoon.

Examples: Uncle Same and Mother Britannia act as 'book ends' to the table and the child, so that one directs one's eyes towards the middle.

Symbolism: A sign or object to represent something else.

Examples: Uncle Sam has long been a symbol of the United States; Mother Britannia is often a symbol for England at this time. Canada at the time is often symbolized by a young child or a young woman.

Caricature: A distorted, oversimplified or exaggerated representation of a figure.

Examples: Uncle Sam is usually drawn as tall and lanky, with a tall hat and long beard; Mother Britannia is shown as a large, motherly character. Canada is shown as a small child.

Features of Political Cartoons

Name:

Cartoon Title:

A. Techniques of Cartooning

Caption: *A sentence or phrase that is the title for the cartoon.*

Examples:

Label: *Words in the drawing to identify people or objects.*

Examples:

Relative Size: *Figures are drawn much larger or much smaller than others.*

Examples:

Light and Dark: *Use of dark shading and white space to create an effect.*

Examples:

Composition: *The arrangement or location of figures or objects in the cartoon.*

Examples:

Symbolism: *A sign or object to represent something else.*

Examples:

Caricature: *A distorted, oversimplified or exaggerated representation of a figure.*

Examples:

B. Meaning of Cartoon

1. What is the main message of the cartoon? Refer to the techniques of cartooning as evidence for your claims.

2. What is the central tension or problem highlighted by the cartoon?

3. What are some issues related to the cartoon? Include any research that you have conducted.

4. Is the cartoon inappropriate in any of the ways discussed earlier? Use the class criteria in your answer.

5. What are some other ways that the artist could have made the same point?

Continuity and Change

Student:

Cartoon:

Class:

1. What are some issues related to the cartoon?
2. What are some of the significant systems, ideas, or values that have stayed the same or changed over time?
3. Why have these systems, ideas, or values stayed the same or changed?
4. Which people or groups benefit from these continuities or changes?
5. What do these continuities or changes tell us about the past? What larger themes, stories, or issues do they suggest?

Political Cartoon Check-Bric

Student:

Group:

Class:

1. Basic Requirements

Does the cartoon include ...	Met	Not Yet
... sufficient accurate details and ideas about the time period?		
... effective use of the features of political cartoons (<i>caption, label, relative size, light and dark, composition, symbolism, caricature</i>)?		
... a completed "Features of Political Cartoons" worksheet, with descriptions of issues involved?		
... a completed "Continuity and Change" worksheet, with analysis of continuities and changes with respect to citizenship, immigration, and culture in Canada?		

2. History

Do you demonstrate ...	Rating Scale	Comments/suggestions
... knowledge and understanding of concepts and vocabulary related to Canada (1890-1914?)	1 2 3 4	
... an ability to communicate historical information clearly and effectively?	1 2 3 4	
... an ability to analyze and interpret historical cartoons and draw conclusions?	1 2 3 4	
... an ability to apply the concept of continuity and change to a variety of cartoons effectively?	1 2 3 4	

FINAL MARK (HISTORY):

3. Media Literacy

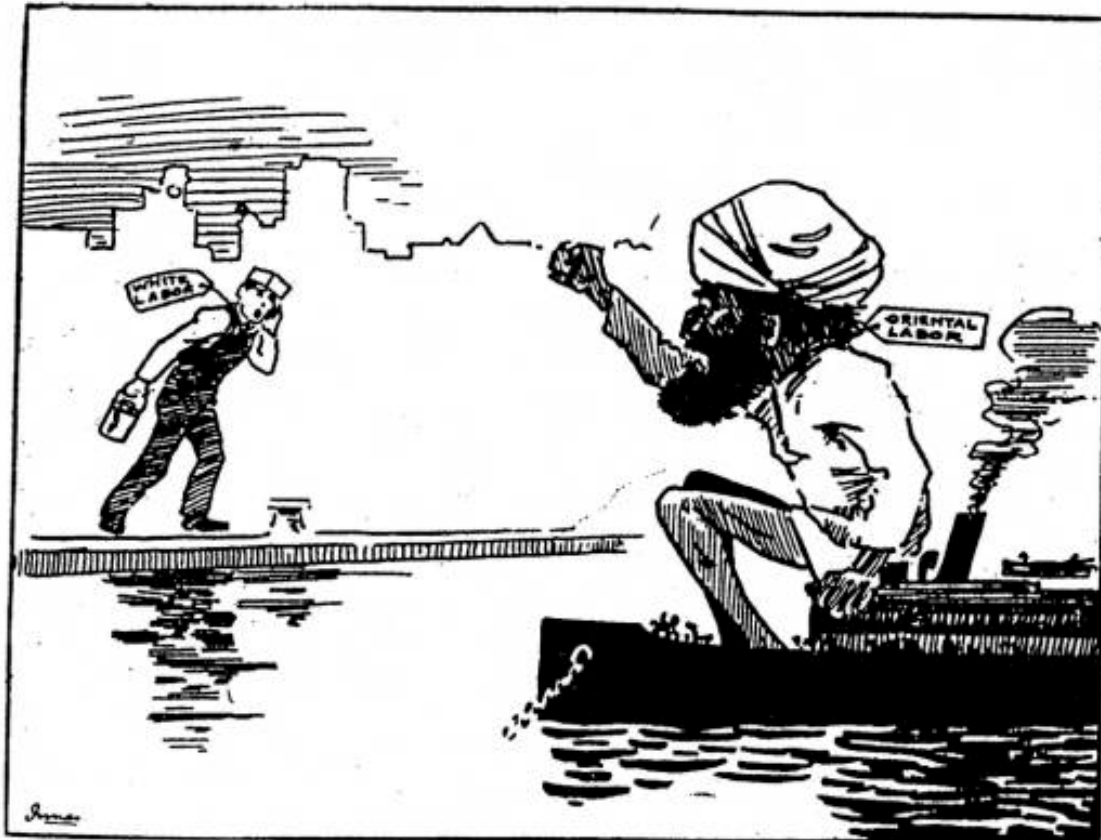
Do you demonstrate ...	Rating Scale	Comments/suggestions
... knowledge of the features of cartooning (<i>caption, labels, relative size, dark and light, composition, symbolism, caricature</i>)?	1 2 3 4	
... an ability to communicate ideas clearly and effectively, using strategies and techniques or cartooning?	1 2 3 4	
... an ability to organize information and elements within their cartoon effectively?	1 2 3 4	
... an ability to apply techniques of cartooning to new contexts?	1 2 3 4	

FINAL MARK (DRAMA):

Cartoons from 1914

Vancouver, B. C., Friday, June 5, 1914

Such Is Life



Oriental Labor:—If you don't let me ashore I'll refuse to take anything to eat.
White Labor:—And if we do let you ashore I won't be able to get anything to eat anyway.

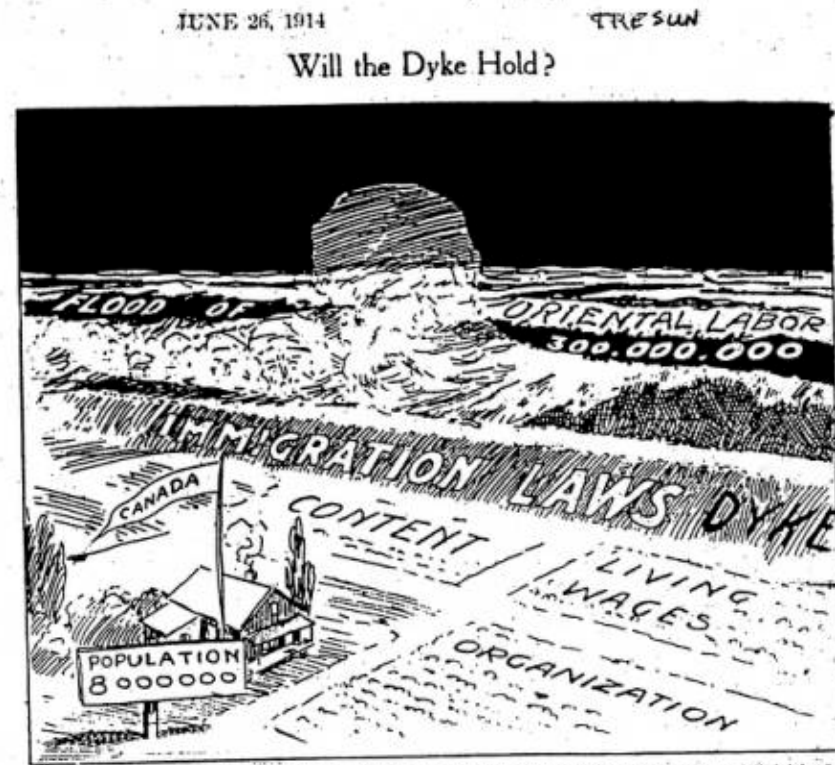
Cartoons from 1914



Capt. Vancouver: "Go Back, my labor market is glutted. Do you expect me to allow you to take the bread from the mouths of my own?"

BC SATURDAY SUNSET MAY 30, 1914

Cartoons from 1914



"We will certain interests, under the guise of imperial needs, flood our country with cheap and unskilled labor."

Cartoons from 1914



Modern Cartoon Worksheet

Choose one of the following cartoons to work with and follow the instructions.

Modern Cartoon #1

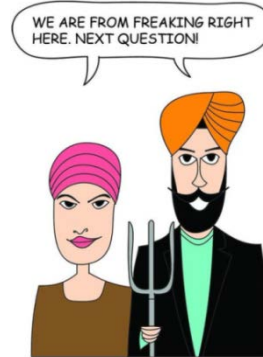
Tim Dolighan, published in the Vancouver Sun, May, 2017, about National Defence Minister Harjit Singh Sajjan.



1. Conduct some research about this cartoon depicting National Defence Minister Harjit Singh Sajjan. Who was he? What was the cartoon about, and why did it upset so many people?
2. What does the cartoon suggest about continuities and changes in how Sikhs are perceived in Canada ?
3. Complete a "Features of Political Cartoons" worksheet.

Modern Cartoon #2:

Vishavjit Singh, from Sikhtoons.com (obtained from <https://www.flowjournal.org/2016/12/shake-my-turban/>)



1. This cartoon is a parody of the famous painting by Grant Wood called "American Gothic." Look up the painting and list some of the traditional American values portrayed by the painting.
2. Now look at the cartoon by Vishavjit Singh. What is the artist saying about the role of Sikhs in American culture? Does this cartoon show any continuities or changes in how Sikhs are perceived today (compared to 1914)? Complete a "Features of Political Cartoons" worksheet.

Modern Cartoon #3:

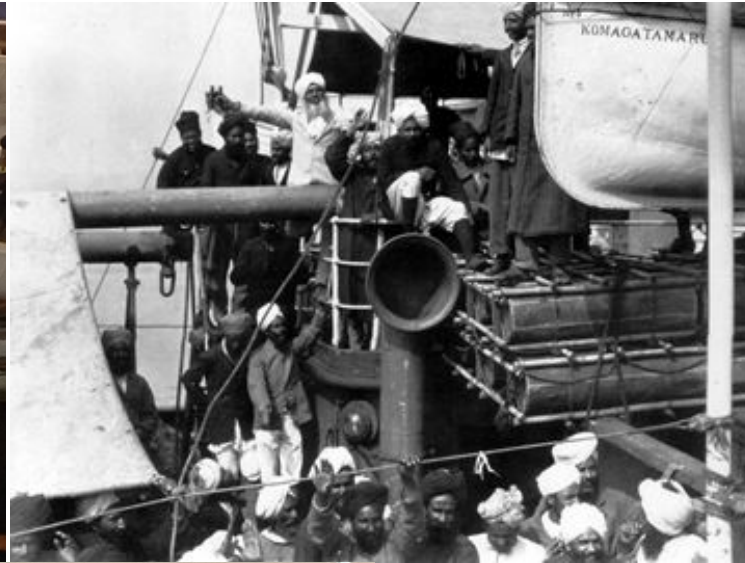
Dalbir Singh, Sikhpark.

<https://mashable.com/2015/12/07/sikh-park-south-park/#6tbyvnex85qU>



1. This cartoon is one of many by Dalbir Singh in his parody of the popular series, *South Park*, by Trey Parker and Matt Stone. What is the artist saying about Sikh culture in Canada and the United States?
2. Does this cartoon show any continuities or changes in how Sikhs are perceived today (compared to 1914)?
3. Complete a "Features of Political Cartoons" worksheet.

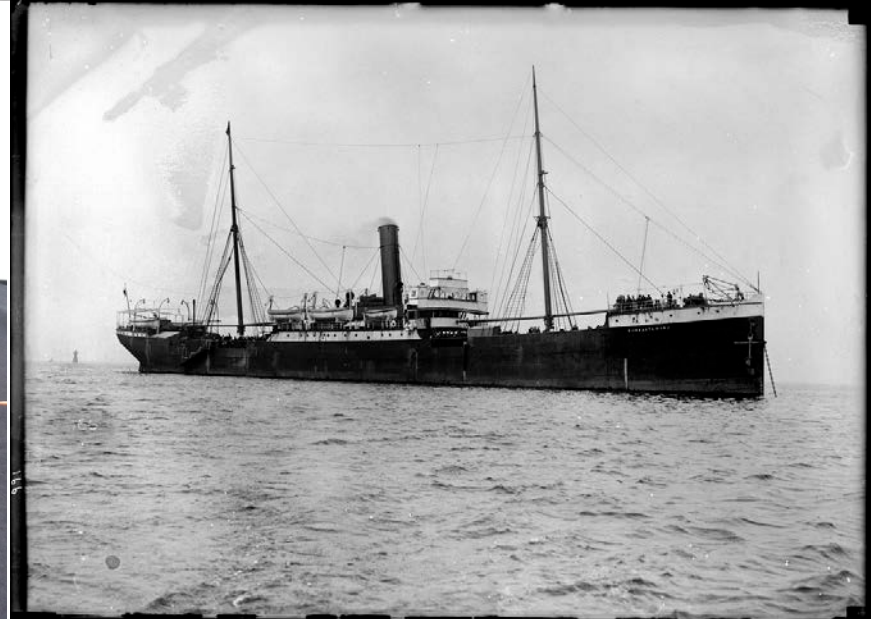
Komagata Maru Images (from the model, and from the Vancouver Public Library archives)



Komagata Maru Images (from the model, and from the Vancouver Public Library archives)



Komagata Maru Images (from the model, and from the Vancouver Public Library archives)



Primary Sources about the Komagata Maru

MANIFEST

INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSERS. Each passenger should be given a card indicating the number of sheet and line on sheet on which name is to be found. Columns 5, 7, and 8 are to be filled in by the Immigration Agent at the Port of Landing.

VESSELS NAME	MASTER'S NAME	TONNAGE	Total number of superficial feet in the several compartments set apart for passengers, other than Cabin Passengers	Total number of Adult Passengers, including all Males, Crew and Cabin Passengers, which the vessel can legally carry	PORT OF EMBARKATION	DATE OF SAILING	WHERE BOUND
Komagata Maru	T. Yamamoto	1918.1 tons	1st 2007 1/2 ft 2 207 1/2 ft 3 191 ft 4 113 ft 5 172 ft	14 dec 16. 302 - 546	1st Hong Kong 111 Shanghai 86 Moji 14 Yokohama	29 May 1914	Vancouver

SUMMARY

	Number of Souls	Number of Adults to which they are equal under the Immigration Act
Adults	371	371
Children under 14 years of age	5	5
Total	376	376

I hereby Certify that the above is a correct description of the Steam Ship
Komagata Maru, and correct list of all the Passengers on board the same at the time of her departure from
Yokohama, and that all the particulars therein mentioned are true.
T. Yamamoto
 Captain of Ship
 Dated this 24 day of May 1914

Certificate of Ship's Surgeon

I hereby Certify that I have daily during the present passage made a general inspection of the passengers on this vessel, and that I have at least once during the passage made a detailed individual examination of each immigrant on board, and that I have seen no passenger thereon who I have reason to believe is, or is likely to become, insane, epileptic or consumption, or who is idiotic, feeble-minded or afflicted with a contagious infectious or loathsome disease; or who is deaf, dumb or blind or otherwise physically defective or whose present appearance would lead me to believe that he or she might be debilitated from coming under the "Immigration Act" and the names of the persons whose names are enumerated on the "Ship Surgeon's List for Medical Examining Officers" which I have prepared for such officers, giving my medical opinion on the cases therein dealt with; and that there were no deaths or births during the passage except those mentioned on the said list.
Refined
 Surgeon of Ship
 Dated this 24 day of May 1914

This space to be filled in by Immigration Agent at Port of Landing

S.S. Komagata Maru Line Shimonoseki
 Sailed from Hong Kong on 5 May 1914
 Arrived at Vancouver on 29 May 1914 at 7 o'clock P.M.
 Landed at 4 o'clock A.M. Saloon 41 and Cabin 41 Steerage 376 Total 376
 Bill of Health Free No held at Quarantine 41 detained on board

2nd CABIN INSPECTION.

Medical Examiners <u>A. L. Brown</u>	began at <u>4</u>	completed at <u>4</u>
No detained by Medical Examiners for Canada <u>41</u>	for United States <u>41</u>	Total <u>41</u>
Civil Examiners <u>A. L. Brown</u>	began at <u>4</u>	completed at <u>4</u>
No detained by Civil Examiners for Canada <u>41</u>	for United States <u>41</u>	Total <u>41</u>

STEERAGE INSPECTION.

Medical Examiners <u>A. L. Brown</u>	began at <u>1 p.m.</u>	completed at <u>6 p.m. 27</u>
No detained by Medical Examiners for Canada <u>88</u>	for United States <u>41</u>	Total <u>86</u>
Civil Examiners <u>A. L. Brown</u>	began at <u>1 p.m.</u>	completed at <u>6 p.m.</u>
No detained by Civil Examiners for Canada <u>266</u>	for United States <u>41</u>	Total <u>266</u> (pending inquiry)
C.P.R. passengers left by <u>Remained on board</u>	train at <u>✓</u>	
G.T.R. passengers left by <u>✓</u>	train at <u>✓</u>	
I.C.R. passengers left by <u>✓</u>	train at <u>✓</u>	

Richard J. R. R.
 Immigration Agent

Primary Sources about the Komagata Maru

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INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSERS.—Each passenger should be given a card indicating the number of sheet and line on sheet on which name is to be found. Columns 3, 29 and 30 are to be filled in by the Immigration Agent at the Port of Landing.

This sheet is to be used for "STOWAGE" passengers only.

No. of Passenger	No. of Sheet	No. of Line	NAME IN FULL	AGE OF PASSENGER	SEX	RELIGION	EDUCATION	IF SO, STATE	COUNTRY OF BIRTH	RACE OF PEOPLE	DESTINATION		WHAT WAS YOUR OCCUPATION IN COUNTRY FROM WHICH YOU CAME?	WHAT IS YOUR INTENDED OCCUPATION IN CANADA?	IF SO, STATE	RELIGION	EDUCATION	IF SO, STATE
											Port of Origin	Port of Destination						
189	193	141	Madan Singh	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
190	193	142	Mt	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
191	193	143	Mt	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
192	193	144	Sanjay	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
193	193	145	Bela	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
194	193	146	Cher	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
195	193	147	Madan	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
196	193	148	Kishan	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
197	193	149	Kakar	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
198	193	150	Manu	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
199	193	151	Parth	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
200	193	152	Maya	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
201	193	153	Jahid	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
202	193	154	Gandhi	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
203	193	155	Chaman	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
204	193	156	Sanjay	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
205	193	157	Paran	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
206	193	158	Gurmat	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
207	193	159	Parth	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
208	193	160	Bachan	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
209	193	161	Sanjay	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
210	193	162	Atishy	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
211	193	163	Matt Kaniel Singh	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
212	193	164	Thakur	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
213	193	165	S. Gurdit Singh (Chetand)	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
214	193	166	Baal Singh (Safabhai)	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child
215	193	167	Sanjay Singh	25	M	S			India	Indian	Vancouver	BC	Farmer	Farmer	Yes	Farmer	Indian	Child

Primary Sources about the Komagata Maru

Page No. 2

INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSERS.—Each passenger should be given a card indicating the number of sheet and line on sheet on which name is to be found. Columns 3, 22 and 30 are to be filled in by the Immigration Agent at the Port of Landing.

This sheet is to be used for "STERILE" passengers only

LINE	AGE	SEX	NAME IN FULL	AGE OF CHILDREN				IF SO				COUNTRY OF BIRTH	RACE OF PEOPLE	IMMIGRATION		WHAT WAS YOUR OCCUPATION IN COUNTRY FROM WHICH YOU CAME?	WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION IN CANADA?	IF SO				RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	EDUCATION	REMARKS
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			9	10			11	12	13	14			
4	265		Daljit Singh	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
363	50		Bhan Singh	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
-	60		Bhan Singh	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
-	420		Raghunath Singh	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
-	-		wife of above	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
-	-		Nihal	64	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
94	50		Karter Singh	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
46	15		Harnam Singh	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
167	4		Guram Singh	38	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
88	25		Teg Singh	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
149	35		Kishan Singh	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
241	-		Rattan Singh	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
134	-		Lal Singh	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
113	-		Parsihal	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
305	-		Bhag Singh	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
168	10		Narain Singh	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
8	25		Ram Singh	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
10	-		Bawa Singh	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
224	10		Dalip Singh	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
75	20		Abdulla Singh	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
116	5		Ram Singh	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	India	India	Vancouver	B.C.	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes	Farmer	Trader	yes
56	10		Gurdit Singh	21	-	-	-	-																

Primary Sources about the Komagata Maru

FOREIGN COMMENT

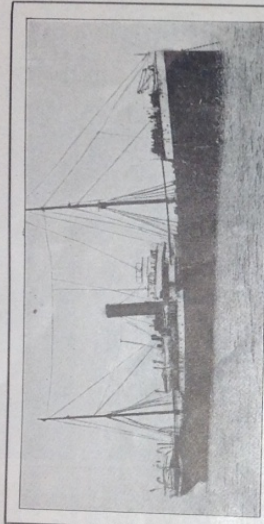
SIKHS BESIEGING CANADA

THE LAPPINGS of the Asiatic tide upon our western shores remind some writers that almost every country on earth has at some time been overrun by a great racial migration, and that even our own presence here is the result of such a movement. California and British Columbia seem to have no desire to be the scenes of another event of this sort, and are feverishly raising the barriers as Holland fought the sea.

The Asiatics are attempting to move upon South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand as well as upon North America, and in the British possessions the case is complicated by the fact that the immigrants from India are British subjects. Disaffection in India is rampant. Will Canada, as a loyal colony, inquire the power of the Hindus and thus deepening their hatred of the British raj? Canada tried to solve the problem by providing that the Hindus could not enter unless they came direct from India, there being no direct steamship line to bring them; but a body of some 350 Sikhs tried to meet the issue by sailing direct from India to Vancouver in the Japanese steamer *Komagata Maru*, led by Gurdit Singh. They arrived on May 23, but were forbidden to land, and since that date have been living on their ship in the harbor, amid great excitement and tension, as we read in the Vancouver papers. A hunger-strike was started, but abandoned, as the Canadians failed to be impressed by its fatal possibilities. A threat was made to burn the ship, on the idea that the people would rescue the passengers; but that, too, seemed uncertain. For several nights a lookout was maintained on the waterfront, to rouse the city to arms if a rumored plan to land should be attempted. On Monday of last week the Court of Appeal decided they could not enter Canada, but this

is not expected to end the Hindu efforts to invade the Dominion. The well-known Sikh journalist of London, Mr. Saint Nihal Singh, presents the situation as follows, in the London *Graphic*:

"I am of the belief that the Sikh settlers in British Columbia have been subjected to hostility through no fault of their own, but simply because they came when British Columbians were in an angry mood toward the Japanese and Chinese immigrants. Being Oriental, the Indians were at once denigrated as being as undesirable as the Japanese and Chinese, and the fact that Indians were British subjects was lost sight of. From an imperial point of view the incident must be deplored by all well-wishers of the Empire. A provocative policy assumed by Canada is bound to feed the flames of sedition in India."



THE JAPANESE STEAMER WITH ITS UNWELCOME PASSENGERS FROM INDIA, BEING IN VANCOUVER HARBOR. THE CANADIAN COURTS HAVE DECIDED THEY CANNOT LAND.

in justification of the Canadian exclusion of visitors from India, remarks:

"The claims of those who chartered the *Komagata Maru* are based on the assertion that 'British citizenship involves the right of unrestricted entry into any and every part of the British Dominions. That is the kind of catch-logs which may easily beguile the uninstructed. It should not for a moment mislead any intelligent person who will be at the trouble to think out the meaning of words. It is preposterous because it ignores the facts. The facts are that free peoples have a right to say whom they will admit into their country, just as free men have a right to say whom they will admit into their house. This right is exercised in practice; it is not merely a theoretical right. It operates quite irrespective of color, so that there are numbers of men—white, and subjects of the Crown—who are excluded from the Dominions. It is useless to say that this should not be. It is."

The feeling of the Vancouver people over this intrusion of Asiatics upon their shores may be seen from the following resolutions passed at a crowded meeting of the citizens:

"That whereas the steamer *Komagata Maru* has been lying in the port of Vancouver from



GURDIT SINGH (IN GRAY) AND SOME OF HIS STEERS ON BOARD THEIR SHIP.

Primary Sources about the Komagata Maru

Canadian Life and Resources

ANOTHER TYPE OF NEW CITIZEN

A GLANCE AT THE SPIRITED SIKHS OF INDIA WHO ARE BECOMING
A FEATURE OF THE INDUSTRIAL LIFE OF OUR PACIFIC COAST

TO those who are interested in the development of our country every type of new settler is a subject for study.

The English and the Americans we know and the Irish and the Scotch, and of most of the people of Europe who are coming to us we have some broad idea. But there are arriving now on our Pacific coast men of a nation about whom most Canadians have only a very shadowy idea—the Sikhs of the Punjab.

Of the two hundred and ninety millions of people of India who owe allegiance to Great Britain, none offered more stubborn resistance to their conquerors, or when once subdued have been more loyal to their European masters than the Sikhs.

Their home is in the north-eastern part of India, in the native state of Punjab and its dependencies, and they form fully six per cent of the population of that country. Originally they were a religious sect founded in the fifteenth century. The sect rejected the institution of caste, idolatry and superstition, preached the existence of one spiritual ruler of the universe, and inculcated a higher moral life. As time went on the adherents of the sect, gradually becoming conscious of their numbers and their growing power, began to adopt something of a military organization, and in the end converted themselves into a powerful military community.

About the middle of the eighteenth century the Sikhs formed themselves into a number of tribal and territorial confederacies, which a few years later was welded into one organic whole. The consolidated Sikh confederacy made conquests on all sides except to the east, where then lay the frontier of Britain's Indian Empire. Having built up an army of 125,000 men, organized and trained on the European system, in 1845 they invaded British territory on a war of conquest, and then began one of the fiercest conflicts that Britain has ever waged in India. One of its most memorable battles was that of Chillianwala, fought in 1849, which was left undecided in spite of very heavy losses on the British side. But one month later General Sir Hugh Gough finally crushed the Sikhs and effectually broke their power. The Punjab was then annexed to British India, and so successfully was its government organized and administered that on the outbreak of the Mutiny in 1857 the Sikhs not only refrained from joining the rebel Sepoys, but lent material assistance in quelling that formidable outbreak. From that day to this the Sikhs have loyally fought side by side with Britain's European troops in defence of the Indian Empire.

A few months ago a number of these people left their homes

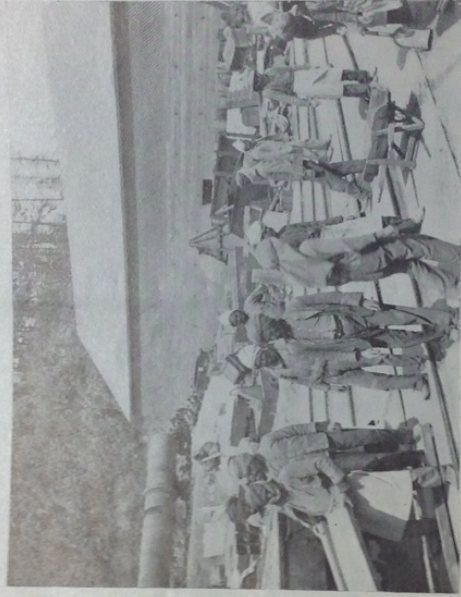
in Northern India to try their fortunes on the western coast of Canada, and the writer has lately had an opportunity of seeing them at their work in British Columbia.

On Vancouver Island, forty miles distant by water from Victoria or fourteen miles by land, are situated the Vancouver Cement Works, an extensive plant, employing a large force of men and producing great quantities of that form of building material that every year is coming into more general use. The trip to the works by water from Victoria is not without interest. A considerable portion of the journey is among islands which suggest to an Easterner a combination of the beauty and picturesque-ness of the Thousand Islands and of Muskoka. Beyond

lay the shores of Vancouver Island, for the most part covered with the dark forest that greeted the eyes of George Vancouver more than a century ago. But commerce has already made one inroad into Nature's domain. Suddenly rounding a point the cement works came into view. Behind them rose a hill composed of clay and limestone, the material which industry is turning to commercial use. At the wharf lay a vessel taking on cement, and here we saw the first of our fellow British subjects—the Sikhs from the distant Punjab. They were trucking the bags of cement up the wharf to the chute leading to the ship's hold—heavy work indeed, but they seemed to perform it with ease.

They were fairly tall men, bearded as is their wont, with heads and faces protected from the inquisitive camera by many a wrap of cotton or muslin, which to a considerable extent also shut out the dust that continuously rose from the moving bags of cement. Most of them were men in middle life, but not a few were on the wrong side of fifty, and here and there was a beardless youth. We watched them with interest as they worked moving the big trucks and sending a steady stream of bags down the chute to the every hungry hold. Far from their native Indian homes they seemed cheerful and contented.

They are employed in the various processes of cement manufacturing, and about two hundred Chinese and fifty whites work with them, but the Sikhs keep quietly to themselves, for in houses built by the company they have their own cooking and living quarters. At first Mohammedans were also employed, but this mixing of Orientals of different creeds was not a success. There was the difficulty of caste, and then each class demanded its own cooks and its own peculiar dishes and kinds of food. The Mohammedans were allowed to go and the Sikhs remained.



SIKHS AT THE CEMENT WORKS

The muslin turban of the East protects their heads and faces from the heat and the dust.

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They have been here now for a full year, and having given perfect satisfaction they are looked upon as a factor of industrial life that may assist in solving the difficult labor problem that confronts British Columbia. At first, it may be, the Sikhs are a little difficult to "break in," but once that is accomplished they prove to be good workmen. Between them and the Chinese no trouble has arisen, nor is any likely to arise, for the two races let each other absolutely alone. There is no intercourse between them, and Sikh and Celestial seldom speak. Among these Sikhs at the cement works there are no women. Death finds these Sikhs far as they have wandered from the land of their forefathers, and already the lives of some of them have come to a close in this strange land between which and their native India rolls the broad expanse of the Pacific Ocean. But the customs of their forefathers are not forgotten, and the bodies of their dead are committed to the flames of the funeral pyre. They religiously adhere to the practise of cremation, and the simple form they follow reminds one of the honorable mode of sepulture practised in the heroic age of Greece and which is so often described in detail in the immortal poems of Homer and of which frequent mention is also made in the history of the Roman Republic. Cremation is still practised generally in India, but without suttee or burning of the living widow with the corpse of the husband.

The smoke of the funeral pyre has already arisen on several occasions from the shores of British Columbia. There is something weird and pathetic in the ceremony performed by this little band of Sikhs on the forest-covered shores of Vancouver Island. The mourners are few, for the relatives and friends of the departed are thousands of miles away and many months would elapse before they would hear of his departure for the "unknown land." His comrades in toil and fellow-adventurers into the western world performed the last rites — gathered the wood, erected the pyre, applied the torch and offered up the funeral prayer.

A few days previous to my visit the body of a departed Sikh had been cremated and an officer of the company that had em-

ployed him and who had witnessed the strangely solemn scene, gave me an account of this Oriental practice now transferred to the shores of the New World.

The body had been carefully washed, wrapped in linen, perfumed and laid in a coffin, but with face exposed.

Over the coffin was reared the funeral pile consisting of pieces of firwood orderly arranged. Three fellow Sikhs superintended the funeral ceremony. Heads bowed and chanting a solemn dirge they applied the torch. The crackling flames mounted high, soon licked up the pyre and the coffin and reduced the body to a few handfuls of ashes. Then the white spectators were asked to withdraw as only Sikhs could witness the remaining ceremony, which must be promptly carried out for evening was coming on and all must be done before the setting of the sun.

An old Sikh, the leader of the little band of exiles, addressed them, speaking in low, solemn tones; prayers were offered and another hymn sung. Then the faithful swept up the ashes and collected the teeth, which the fire had not destroyed. These remains were put into a little box, which was carried back to the Sikh headquarters. At the first opportunity it would be sent across the Pacific to the faraway homeland in the Punjab.

The Rev. W. A. Wilson, missionary to India, referred to these Sikhs in the course of an address delivered at the meeting of the Presbyterian General Assembly held recently in Montreal. On his journey to Montreal he stayed for a few days on the Pacific Coast, and there he met a little party of expatriated Sikhs. He went among them and in their own language told them he had just come from India. In a frank, friendly manner they shook his hand, but when he said he was a missionary—"a father," as the Sikhs call the Christian teacher—they all shook his hand again, and this time with greater heartiness and warmth. They welcomed the missionary not only as a man from the homeland, but as a sincere friend, although they were Sikhs both by blood and religion.

What will be the outcome of this migration from crowded India to sparsely settled Western Canada? What success will these Sikhs have in a strange land and what part will they play in the industrial life of this country? These questions the future alone can answer.



SIKHS TRUCKING BAGS OF CEMENT

These willing workers from India may become a factor in the labor problem of British Columbia.



SIKHS WATCHING A FUNERAL PYRE

The pile of wood heaped over the remains of their late comrade is ready for the torch.

