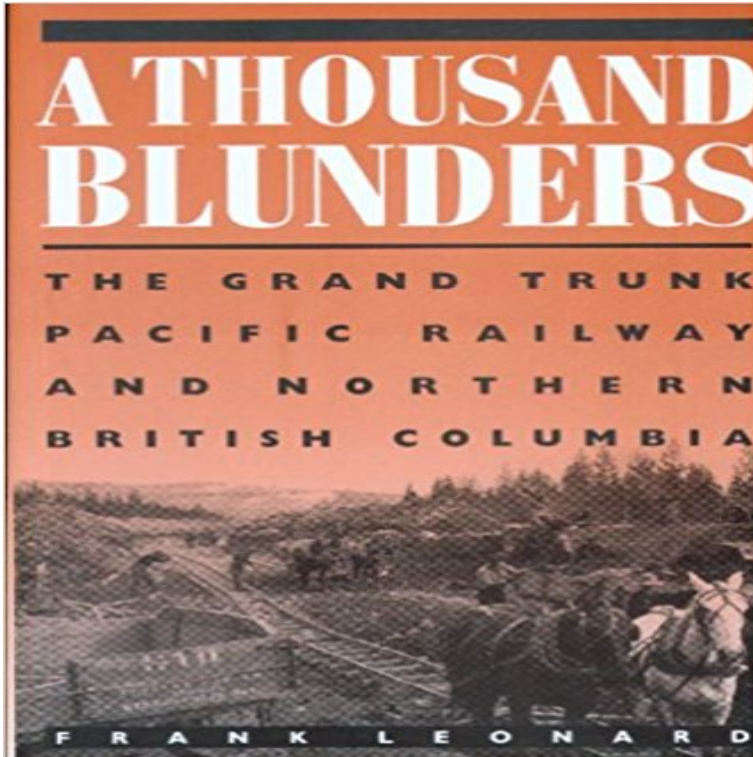


A Thousand Blunders: The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and Northern British Columbia



During the first two decades of this century, the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway played an important part in the development of the north-central corridor of British Columbia. The GTP, which ran from Winnipeg via the Yellowhead Pass and Edmonton to Prince Rupert on the northwest coast, was built to supplant the Canadian Pacific line to Vancouver. The B.C. line was the most expensive and least remunerative of its sections and contributed ultimately to the company's collapse in 1919. In *A Thousand Blunders*, Frank Leonard looks at why the Road of a Thousand Wonders failed to live up to the expectations forecast by company president Charles M. Hays and other senior managers. Not only was the railway built through a sparsely settled region, which generated little immediate traffic, but its economic difficulties were also compounded by the numerous mistakes made by managers at all levels: for example, their failure to respond adequately to labour shortages caused serious delays and prevented the company from proving Prince Rupert as an effective alternative harbour before World War I broke out. For this book, Frank Leonard had access to a wealth of original documents, among them the GTP legal department files, providing him with insights into the decisions that formed the basis for policies in townsites and on Indian reserves. *A Thousand Blunders* is a provocative account of one of the greatest failures in Canadian entrepreneurial history. Richly detailed and thoroughly documented, it makes an important contribution to the fields of railway and business history, as well as to the study of the history of northern British Columbia.

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