Little is known about life in the railway camps to which the Chinese were sent because almost no Chinese records or diaries have been found that survive from that time. Perhaps the misery of their conditions precluded the workers from speaking much about them after they returned to China or settled elsewhere in Canada ….

Today the Chinese in Canada have a saying that a Chinese worker died for every foot of railroad through the canyons. While this is, of course, an exaggeration, Lee estimates that at least 600 Chinese died during railroad construction, more than 4 for every mile. This is probably a conservative estimate, since it is based on Onderdonk’s testimony to the Royal Commission.