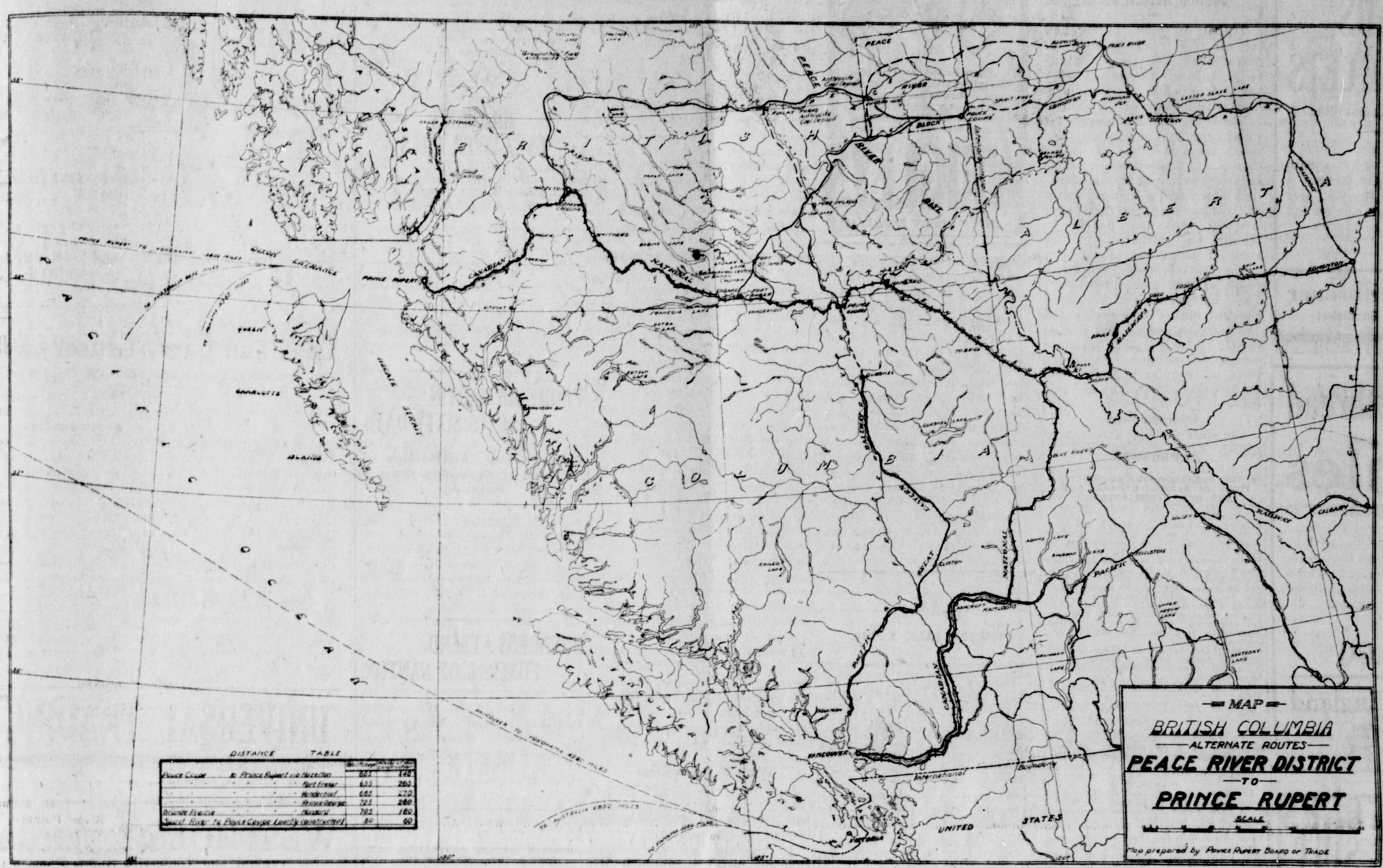
Prince Rupert, the Logical Outlet for Peace River District



THE policy of publicity in connection with the Peace River outlet undertaken by the Board of Trade and City Council has commenced. Not only have booklets been published dealing with the question but articles on the subject are appearing in influential publications. One of these, written by John Dybhavn accompanied by a map showing the advantageous position of Prince Rupert was recently published on the front page of the commercial section of the Toronto Saturday Night. The article, entitled "Prince Rupert—The Logical Outlet For Peace River," follows:

In your valuable paper for February 7 there was an article on the Peace River Railway problem, from which the casual reader would invariably come to the conclusion that there is only one Pacific Coast outlet available, namely that of Vancouver.

It may be permissible in this connection to state that the Canadian National Railways have a terminal port at Prince Rupert, and it may not be out of the way at this time to point out at least some of the advantages of this port as an outlet for the vast Peace River country.

The Prince Rupert Board of Trade has had the above map prepared to illustrate this situation, and showing the proposed routes.

Different Routes

The Grande Prairie—Hansard route offers the shortest mileage of new construction. But in our opinion it does not solve the transportation problems from the Peace River country as a whole, and if constructed will not open up the great undeveloped and fertile Peace River lands of British Columbia. And it runs through a country whose chief resources is that of timber. The distance from Grande Prairie to Prince Rupert via Hansard is 705 miles, of which about 180 miles is new construction.

The Pouce Coupe route to Vanderhoof or Fort Fraser via the Pine Pass requires only about 85 miles of new construction more than the Hansard route. But this route traverses immense areas of agricultural lands, easily brought under cultivation if served by transportation. The distance from Pouce Coupe to tide water at Prince Rupert via this route is 635 miles, of which 265 miles is new construction. In 1920 a reconnaissance survey was made by V. H. Williams, C.E., for the Department of Railways across this portion of British Columbia. He reported as follows:

No Serious Difficulty

"The result of my reconnaissance is that it is quite practical to build a standard guage railway through this section of British Columbia, and in no case will any serious difficulties be encountered. Construction for the most part will be extremely light; a gradient not exceeding one per cent can be obtained; very little solid rock exists; good crossings of all rivers and streams were found; and an abundance of gravel for both ballast and concrete work is to be had practically throughout the entire line." In his report Mr. Williams also refers to the various areas of agricultural lands that this railway would open up, to wit: At Ocock and Tsilcoh River about 50,000 acres have been surveyed; the Nation Lake Plateau, where surveyors consider at least 250,000 acres are eminently suited for agricultural settlement; the Parsnip and Finlay Valley, with upwards of 600,000 acres suitable for agriculture. In Omineca Valley some 80,000 acres are suitable for agriculture, in Osilinka Valley 20,000 acres, in Mesilinka Valley about 40,000 acres, in addition to the very considerable acreage of the Peace River District.

The shortest and most direct route from the Peace River country to Prince Rupert is the one via Peace Pass, Finlay Fork and Hazelton. Via this route Pouce Coupe is brought within a distance of 605 miles from Prince Rupert. This route, according to reports of persons who have been over the ground, traverses a rich and fertile area, and passess within a distance of 20 miles of the well known Ground Hog anthracite coal fields.

Open up This Province

The Prince Rupert Board of Trade is strongly of the opinion that the proposed railway to tap the Peace River should at the same time open up as much as possible of the natural resources of British Columbia. The geographical centre of British Columbia is situate about 30 miles north of the C.N.R. at Burns Lake. The country to the north of the Canadian National Railway in this province is so vast, that without proper transportation it cannot be developed. Prince Rupert is at present using great quantities of Alberta coal, the cost of which must necessarily be high, due to the long transportation, while the immense Ground Hog coal fields are less than 300 miles away.

To the Peace River people this question is also a very important one. The cost of transportation of their products to the seaboard is generally based on the distance of haul, and thus the shortest route is the most economical. The people of that district are entitled to a fair consideration in these matters, so as to enable them to bring their products to the markets at the best possible rates.

Spend Money Right

This project involves a good deal of money. But we suggest that when the money has to be spent it should be of service to the most people possible and serve the greatest possible area. This can only be accomplished by adopting a route through Central British Columbia.

JOHN DYBHAVN,
Chairman Joint Publicity Committee
Prince Rupert Board of Trade and City Council.

SMITHERS

Ed. Eby, the local agent for the Dodge motors received his first carload of the season on Monday.

T. G. Martin, forest ranger, came down from Burns Lake on Sunday and shipped his household effects to that town on Monday, he left again on Tuesday morning accompanied by Mrs. Martin and children.

L. H. Brawand, a trainman with the C.N.R. arrived in town last week accompanied by his family and has moved into the Hotel cottage vacated by the Martin's.

John Currie, of Mitchell & Currie, contractors, Prince Rupert spent Monday and Tuesday in town looking over the plans for the new Government buildings, compiling data for a tender.

W. J. Larkworthy of New Hazelton, was a business visitor in town on Tuesday.

Six local contractors have amalgamated and will put in a joint tender for the building of the Government offices. They have formed a company to be known as the Bulkley Valley Construction Co., with Fred Cook as their president.

The tennis season was opened this week with the courts in excellent condition, this is earlier than former years, thanks to the dry weather of the last few weeks and plenty of pleasant breezes.

The Provincial police of the district intend to strictly enforce the regulations of the "Motor Vehicle Act" this year, and to show that they are in earnest, issued a number of summonses for infraction of the regulations, such as driving without plates or with only one plate, and driving at night without proper lights.

Seven of the offenders appeared before Magistrate Hoskins on Monday and Tuesday mornings and each contributed a small amount to the Provincial funds.

PRINCE GEORGE

For the month of March the total log scale in Prince George district was 9,397,551 board feet bringing the scale for the first quarter of the year up to 17,194,959 feet. This is compared with a scale of 12,282,206 feet for the month of March 1924 and a total scale for the first quarter of that year of 31,267,551 feet. Forestry officials predict that the total scale for 1925 will exceed that of 1924.

The provincial public works department has closed the Prince George-Quesnel highway. The road is still very soft and considerable damage has already resulted from two or three trips made over it. The highway remains open for light teams and will be reopened for automobiles as soon as it is deemed adviseable.

Mrs. H. G. Perry, who has been seriously ill in the Prince George Hospital, is making a satisfactory recovery.

S. W. George, city clerk, assessor and collector, has tendered his resignation to the city council, the same to take effect on June 30. Mr. George is to enter the insurance business.

BURNS LAKE

The Burns Lake and District Farmers' Institute has elected officers as follows: President, Neil Van de Veen; secretary, H. D. MacNeil; directors, Gordon B. Robb, James Clark and P. Brunnel; auditors, V. Schelderup and S. Godwin.

Frank Carroll has been appointed assistant forest ranger with headquarters at Topley. Pete Hult has been given a similar position with headpuarters in Burns Lake.

A report is current that the Lake View Hotel at Francois Lake has been sold through Barney Mulvaney to a party in Prince Rupert.

VANDERHOOF

A. E. Richards of the experimental station at Summerland paid his first visit of the year to the local illustration station last week. He expects to be here monthly during the summer and fall.

F. L. Murphy who has been residing in the district for the past year left on Sunday for Vancouver.

Jack Hoskins is spending a vacation in Prince Rupert.

At an executive meeting of the Vanderhoof Conservative Association last week delegates were appointed to attend the federal nomination convention to be held on May 11 in Kamloops.

R. D. Lovesey has returned to his farm in the Ellisby district after spending the winter months in England.

Ralph Telford has rented his farm in the Prairiedale district to William Smith of Milestone, Saskatchewan, for one year.

News is received from Snoqualmie Falls, Wash., of the death there recently of Henry R. Taylor, a former resident of the Chileo district.

Ferries along the Nechako River, which have been laid up during the winter, are being put back in the water this week.

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