

# Mining Definitely on Upswing In Northwest B.C.

## Asbestos Latest Find— Activity on Silver And Gold Properties Seen

Atlin, Stewart, Alice Arm, Smithers, Hazelton,  
Lakes District All Attract Attention

Perhaps the biggest news from the northern mining district in 1950 was the discovery of high-grade asbestos ore on McDame Creek in the Cassiar area although big producers in silver and gold have attracted considerable attention to the entire district.

When Hiram Nelson of Fort Nelson, B.C., went out on his first prospecting trip after taking a mining course in Vancouver, he had little idea what was in store for him. With Vic Siltler and Ronald Kirk, also from Fort Nelson, and Bob Kirk of Lower Post, he came in on the find of the now famous McDame asbestos claims, in autumn 1949. Last summer Siltler went back to McDame to stake the claims on behalf of his partners. The four auctioned their properties to Conwest Exploration for \$125,000 and 16 per cent of capital shares when a company is formed. Nelson gets a quarter of it!

Conwest is expected to make extensive developments at McDame this summer and it is rumored other big eastern companies are highly interested. Sixteen hard-rock gold mines in the district either operated or made extensive developments and improvements during the past year. Polaris-Taku, on the Taku River, was the largest producer with 35,904 ounces of gold taken from 95,667 tons of ore. Siltler-Premier, on Salmon River, milled some 85,000 tons of ore. Indian Mines, across the river, have made a special agreement with Siltler who will mine and mill their ore, starting this summer.

Of the 11 placer developments, only one produced to any large extent—Knowland mines at Atlin with a production figure of 8250 ounces of gold and more than 1000 ounces of silver.

Silver played the most prominent part in all northern mining operations as far as production goes, with Torbit Mines, at Alice Arm, away in the lead. Their 1950 production figure was roughly 2,300,000 ounces of silver, 1,065,000 pounds of lead and 60,000 pounds of zinc.

Silver Standard Mines Ltd. have been making great gains in the past year at Hazelton where mill heads were the highest treated by any mill in the province due to high grade ore in one vein. More than 21,000 tons of ore were milled with production of 897,420 ounces of silver; 1,741,800 pounds of lead; zinc, 3439 pounds; cadmium, 44,470 pounds; and nearly 2000 ounces of gold.

Other recent and prominent developments soon hoped to go into production in the Hazelton-Smithers area are the Dorreen Gold Mines, Western Uranium Cobalt Mines, Glacier Gulch and Cronin Babine. A new mill has been installed at Dorreen, designed to treat 50 tons a day, and a mill is being installed at Cronin, where considerable amount of ore is ready for milling.

To most of these properties roads are being built with the view of heavy developments this summer. It is interesting to note

that at Tahtsa Lake, where Emerald Glacier Mines have been building a road from Francois Lake to their 6000-foot-elevation mine, Aluminum Company of Canada's huge tunnelling project will begin. Hence, it has undertaken to complete and improve this road which it will use for continual transport from construction headquarters at Burns Lake.

At Prince George, North West Exploration have opened an office and parties were out last summer prospecting the Omineca district.

### CONSOLIDATED ACTIVE

Consolidated Mining & Smelting Company have been showing continued interest in the northern areas. Offices were opened in Prince Rupert under C. N. Moore, engineer, and Dr. D. R. E. Whitmore, geologist. Three two-man prospecting parties were maintained in the field for a four-month period. One party worked in the Nadina Lake area of the Atlin mining division, and two parties worked in the area between Whitesall Lake and Gardner Canal. In addition, mining properties were examined in British Columbia, Yukon and Alaska. No options were taken and no claims staked.

CM&S has one party out so far this summer, headed by Dr. Whitmore, and further investigations of Nadina Lake area will be developed extensively in the near future.

Columbia Cellulose Company

opened a limestone quarry on Smith Island, eight miles from their pulp mill at Watson Island. The quarry is along the north shore of Tum Tsaida Inlet, a lagoon which affords safe anchorage for tugs and barges.

Coarse limestone will be used to manufacture calcium bisulphate, used in the pulp digesters. From 15,000 to 18,000 tons will be required annually. The 1950 production was stockpiled, awaiting completion of the pulp mill.

Summing up the mining activity, under provincial government administration at Prince Rupert, F. J. Hemsworth, until recently resident engineer here, feels both production and new developments are definitely on the upswing.

Much of this may have to do with improved government legislation which has encouraged more people to "take a chance" on mining again in the last two years. However, it is certain that new industry coming to the North will spark closer investigation of the possibility of economical mining and transportation of minerals.

The North is full of minerals. The problem has been to find means of transportation cheap enough to make mining pay. That, in itself, may determine whether or not the asbestos deposits at McDame Creek will be developed extensively in the near future.

## New Site Has Bloody History

Coming of the Aluminum Company of Canada to Kitimat is expected to open many parts of hitherto unknown wilderness for public travel. A major project expected to develop, a railroad from Terrace to the head of Douglas Channel, has a history of ancient warfare; of bloody battles; of the breath of gold-fever; of an empire-builder's dream and its frustration.

About 1,000 years ago, an offshoot of the Haida tribe of Indians established themselves at Kitimat. But they began looking for greener pastures and moved northward toward Kitselas, on the Skeena river.

But Kitselas was also the hunting ground of the Coast Indians and there followed numerous battles, endlessly drawn out between the Haidas at Kitimat and the tribe near the Skeena. A well-beaten trail through the valley, drained by Kitimat river, was established through to the mouth of the Copper river, and Kitselas Canyon, which became a regular battleground.

About 100 years ago, according to historians, a sailing-ship called at Kitimat and traded off gunpowder and lead which was taken over the same route again and used against the Kitselas

tribe. The Haidas won a decisive victory.

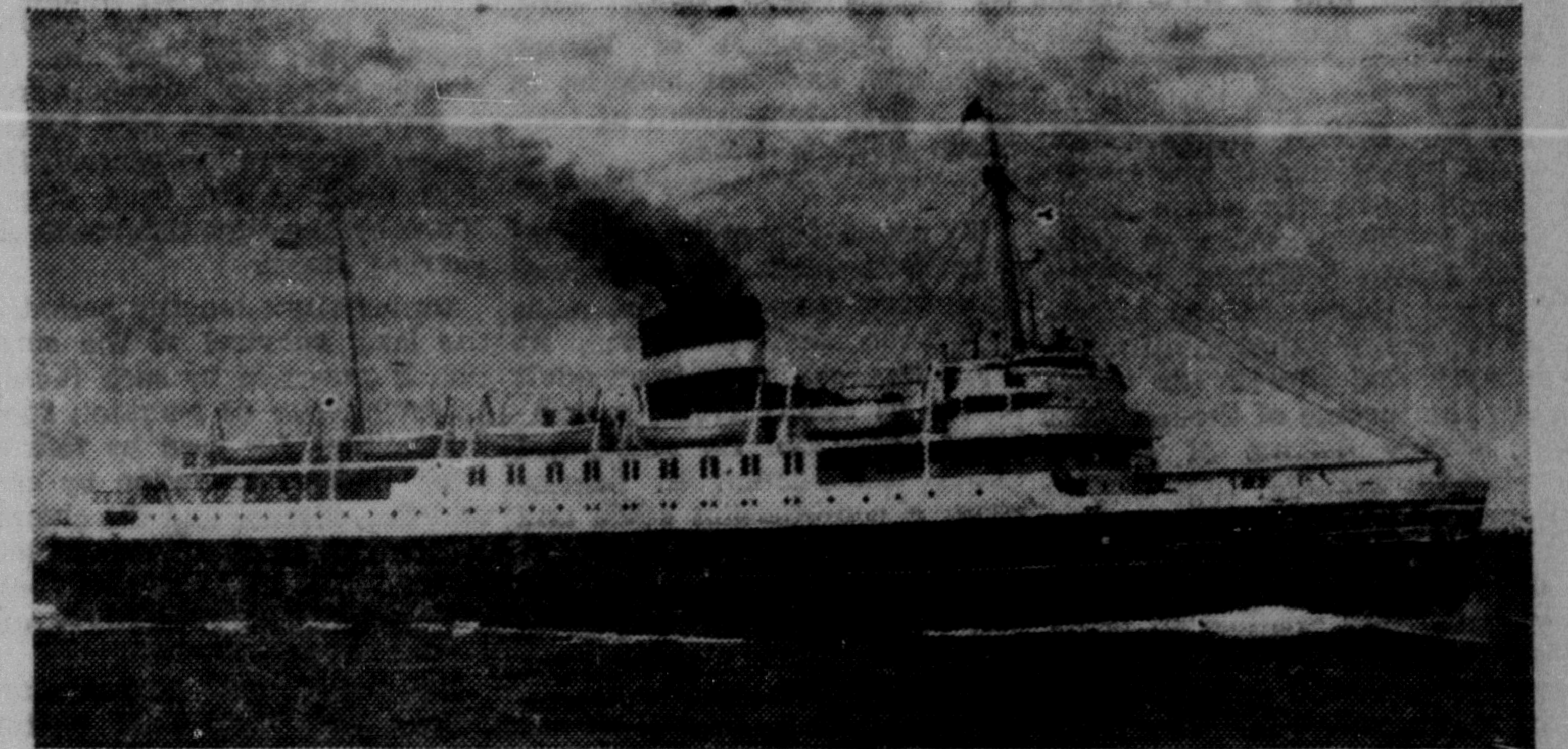
During the time of the Yukon gold rush, the trail was used to carry mail into the interior. Still today a well-defined trail runs all the way from Kitimat to the Yukon, following such waterways as Kitsungallum river, the Naas and Bell-Irving rivers and their

headwaters.

Then came the talk of a northern railway route, with much speculation as to where it should meet the Pacific. The Kitimat trail was surveyed and in the winter of 1907-08 considerable work was done to make it a proper tote road. Even though Prince Rupert had been decided as the railway terminus, possi-

bility of another terminal started

work on a right-of-way, beginning at the Skeena river. This route soon was abandoned, however, but the tote road is still travelled in parts. The perseverance of this trail, with its origin 1,000 years ago, has been dogged by only a few, but many have dreamed of riches to which it might one day lead.



S.S. PRINCE GEORGE, luxurious liner, one of two Canadian National steamships which call regularly at Prince Rupert. It is one of the most modern liners on the Pacific Coast, and is B.C.-built. She is here especially in connection with Columbia Cellulose opening.

## Indian Mines (1946) Ltd.

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## Congratulations

to Columbia Cellulose on the opening of a new plant from a mining company which will shortly commence production in Northern British Columbia.

## Indian Mines (1946) Ltd.

HEAD OFFICE  
709, 850 W. Hastings St., Vancouver, B.C.  
MINE LOCATION  
Near Stewart, B.C.



# british columbia today

Despite the tragedy of war, the past decade has been one of outstanding social and economic advance in Canada, and most particularly in the Province of British Columbia. Economic development coincident with an influx of capital for industrial and mercantile ventures, along with enlightened public investment in hydro-electric, highway, railway and related construction, have resulted in very substantial increases in wealth and population, and in social welfare, health and educational advances that go to make life for the people of British Columbia more complete.

Economic and social growth of the magnitude seen in this Province can only occur in a political area enjoying the rights and privileges of stable government operating on sound economic principles. In British Columbia we find the favourable conditions for such progress which cannot continue without financial assistance, both of a capital and current nature. It can truthfully be said that aided by great natural resources and a secure faith in the future, sound governmental financial administration has made these improvements possible without placing any undue strain upon the economic system. Given the opportunity in the coming years, by those factors of international economics and politics beyond provincial control, there is every indication that British Columbia will assume an even more important place in the industrial and social development of Canada.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE  
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA