

Prince Rupert Today on Threshold of Greatest Development

CELLULOSE AND ALUMINUM ARE ADDING NEW IMPETUS

Prince Rupert feels that it is on the threshold of its greatest development. The news started a feverish pitch on the townsite was first put on the market in 1909.

As his Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad came nearer and nearer to Prince Rupert, interest rose to a feverish pitch. Then in 1912, Hays perished aboard the liner Titanic which was sunk in the North Atlantic after collision with an iceberg. The railway continued to go through, but when it arrived in Rupert two years later it seemed like a ghost train without Hays at the throttle. Business on the line dropped steadily through World War I until 1922 when the railroad collapsed and was taken

into the Canadian National Railways. Punctured hopes and dreams settled over Prince Rupert like a pall. Men and women who had rushed in on the first news of the "boom" left, and the town drifted inexorably back into the quiet place it had been before. The seasonal activity of fishing again became the principal occupation.

With the outbreak of World War II, new elements came to the fore. The Canadian Army in 1940 started construction of army camps in the Prince Rupert area, and the following year there was a large influx of workers to the Canadian National Railways dry-dock and shipyard to build minesweepers. Liberty ships and China coasters. Construction of

a highway through the interior was another major development.

Early in 1942 United States Army appeared on the scene and developed plans for the construction of a dock on Watson Island and camp at Port Edward, eight miles distant, which would be used as a military port for the shipment of supplies to the Aleutian Islands, Alaska and the South Pacific. Construction of the dock started in November and, by dint of around-the-clock activity, was completed in August of the following year.

All this military activity, of course, brought about considerable turbulence in the social and economic life of the community. Housing was at a premium, retail sales soared and bank deposits mounted. Population zoomed

from approximately 6,500 in 1940 to 27,000 in 1945.

However, with the end of the war in August 1945, service personnel began the inevitable exodus. By the summer of 1946 there were left in the town only a few hundred service people and a civilian population of approximately 7,500.

With the bursting of the war bubble, Prince Rupert took inventory, and surprisingly enough found that the appraisal was not too unfavorable. It found itself in the best position to handle Alaska's shipping as it was situated as the Pacific Coast terminus of a transcontinental highway and railway system, and it was 500 miles closer to Alaska than Seattle which had dominated Alaska shipping. It was

handling hundreds of carloads of fish annually, and was now able to handle regular shipments of perishable refrigerated products from the Central U.S.A. to Alaska by CNR for transshipment by barge and truck.

It was the gateway to the vast, relatively undeveloped area of central British Columbia reaching inland to the Prince George district. This area has been described as containing, among other things, the largest uncut timber reserves on the continent.

The annual income from fishing was about \$10 million; there was storage capacity for 1,250,000 bushels of grain that could be marketed in the Orient. Bank clearings reached about \$1 million per month. Mining in the

area had produced about \$15 million to date; the fur trade earned about \$200,000 annually. Rupert boasted the largest fresh halibut business in the world, the largest fish cold storage plants and one of the heaviest concentrations of salmon canning plants.

In addition to rail and highway facilities, Prince Rupert could offer one of the finest all-year harbors, deep-sea docking facilities, shipyards, a \$10 million seaplane base and frequent air service.

It did not come as too much of a surprise, then, when early in 1947 Harold Blanche, president of Celanese Corporation of America, came into town. Prudent in his movements, it was

soon announced that the world's largest producer of acetate yarns would erect a dissolving pulp plant at Watson Island.

The business pulse of Prince Rupert and the surrounding communities quickened when the preliminary moves were undertaken and continued to rise throughout the various phases of the building program.

Other industries have eyed the general area with interest, also. So much so that Kitimat has been selected for the site of the proposed \$500 million Aluminum Company of Canada's huge development. Kitimat is only 80 miles south of Rupert. This development will further revolutionize the whole economy of the area.

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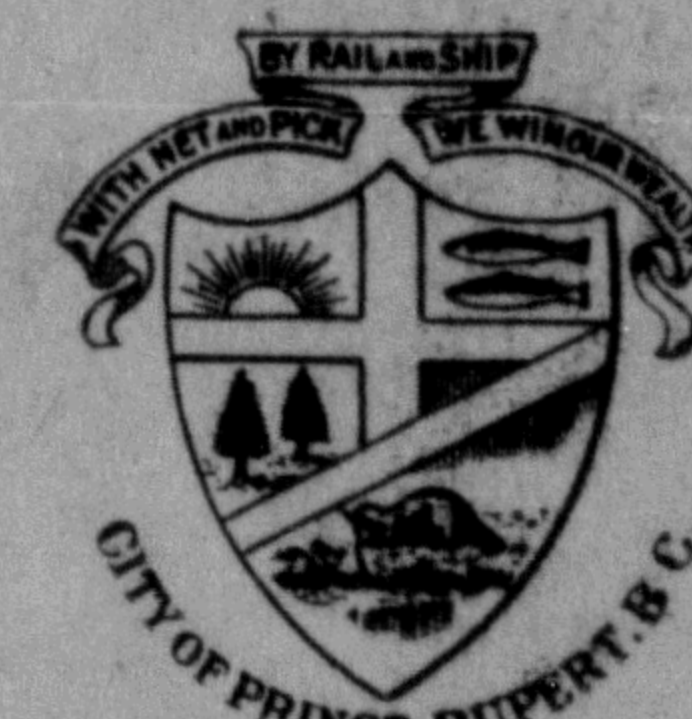


MAYOR G. W. RUDDERHAM

GREETINGS!

The City of **PRINCE RUPERT** takes this opportunity to **CONGRATULATE** **COLUMBIA CELLULOSE COMPANY** and all who are connected with the

construction and opening of their new pulp mill at Watson Island. We appreciate the vital role which this new industry will play in the economy of Prince Rupert and North-Central British Columbia as a whole and wish the company, its management and staff every measure of success.



I wish to commend the people of Prince Rupert. In spite of obstacles which continuously have been placed in the way of progress here by interests working against us, Prince Rupert today is on the threshold of a stable industrial era for the first time. And this is so, because you, the people, have kept pounding out the facts of this city's potentialities. But we must pound out these facts even harder. Prince Rupert as a port should have no "Load-line limit." There are no shipping hazards here. There is no ice, ever; no fog and no tide rips. The approaches are easy and safe. Prince Rupert ranks third in the world of ports. It is the terminus of a transcontinental railroad. It has a hinterland of agricultural, mining, and lumbering resources surpassed nowhere. We have the resources, so let's keep giving the facts!

G. W. RUDDERHAM

The first to take a chance on Prince Rupert's potential resources for industry, Columbia Cellulose Company has taken advantage of this rich country which pioneers for forty years have tried in vain to push forward. Now that the initial step has been taken we feel confident that much more industry will follow.

For complete information about Prince Rupert, it's facilities for big and secondary industries, write to the civic operated **PUBLIC RELATIONS COUNCIL**, City Hall, Prince Rupert, B.C.

THE CITY OF PRINCE RUPERT

British Columbia