

Ben Self Hits Jackpot—

WELL KNOWN PIONEER SPORTSMAN OF PRINCE RUPERT IS RETIRING AFTER CLEANING UP BIG FORTUNE

Ben Self, well known pioneer restaurateur and sportsman of Prince Rupert, has made a fortune at the northern Quebec mining town of Val D'Or, where he served as alderman, and retired. True to form he is now embarked on a vacation trip to the United States with the World Series as his immediate objective. Then he will visit his birthtown at Claremore, Oklahoma, before attending the Mardi Gras in New Orleans.

Ben is written up in "Time" and it makes interesting reading for old friends here: "When Benjamin Self and his stout, hearty wife Viola arrived in Val D'Or, Quebec, eleven years ago, they had \$4 in cash and \$267 worth of hardware. When the Selfs retired last week and headed for a U.S. vacation (the World Series, Ben's birthplace at Claremore, Okla., the Mardi Gras at New Orleans, then the warm sun of Florida and Cuba), they had \$20,000 cash—the price they got for their hardware store—\$100,000 in Val D'Or real estate, and an estimated 100,000 shares of 32c-a-share stock in a promising but yet-to-be-developed gold mine.

"No gold miners themselves, the Selfs had cashed in on one of the fastest-growing gold booms in Canada's golden history.

Haircuts and Gold
"The first traces of gold were found in the Val D'Or area, in the heart of Quebec's wild northwestern bush country, as early as 1909, but the town of Val D'Or itself was not really born until 1933, when a peripatetic barber set up a stool on a flat rock and started to work on hairy prospectors. In 1934, the year the Selfs arrived, the town's official population was five.

Then things began to hum. The great Lamaque and Sigma mines were discovered (1939 aggregate production value: nearly \$7,000,000). Get-rich-quickers swarmed northward to pick up the nuggets in the wilderness. They stayed because the stories were not too far wrong.

"For a while Val D'Or lived, as boom towns do, at a dizzy pace. In 1936 it had a population of 4,000 and was a hell-roaring mining camp in the middle of nowhere. Beer was \$1 a bottle. A town census registered 46 different nationalities. Shady characters prospered like green bay trees. In 1936 the first year that Val D'Or had a police force, Chief Leo Therien led a raid through the town's 300 unpainted board-and-tar-paper shacks, arrested 112 prostitutes, gamblers and bootleggers.

"The town today (pop. 7,500) is still mushrooming—4,000 of its inhabitants work in its mines, and there are hundreds of untested claims. But now trains of the Canadian National streak past its back doors. Val D'Or's dowdiness is gone.

Curfew Sends Kids Home Early
"A shrill curfew whistle sends Val D'Or's moppets kiting home at 9 p.m. The town's Third Avenue (the main stem) has nine hotels (including a Ritz and a Continental), sandwich shoppes and beauty salons, four furniture stores, taxis, even such accoutrements of civilization as a nightclub and a stock exchange (one recent day's business: 29,000 shares, representing \$50,000). Val D'Or's drug stores sell barrels of pop. Miners get ice cream sodas at the Splendid Sweets.

"And Val D'Or's boom may not be over. The legend of devout, childlike Pierrette Regimbal (Time, Aug. 27) is bringing

tourists by the thousands. Moreover, Val D'Or's buried treasure seems scarcely touched. Geologists, who know more about the area's minerals than anyone else, guess that some day, despite its frigid winters, Val D'Or may be one of the greatest mining cities in Canada. Mayor Joseph Eugene Berard last week solemnly predicted a population of 25,000 within three more years. He said that Val D'Or's six big producing mines (Sullivan, Siscoe, Lamaque, Sigma, Perron, and Golden Manitou) and potential new ones would hire 5,300 new hands now if there were houses for them. To solve the problem, he announced a new mile-square subdivision on which some 2,000 houses will be built."

**Belgium—
PROGRESS IS BEING HELD BY ROYALTY**

Recovery Made in Many Spheres but Coal and Food Situation Still Serious

BRUSSELS, Sept. 27 (AP)—Belgium, although known for its capacity to work whatever the circumstances, will need months if not years to recover economically.

Recovery efforts are being made in all spheres and optimistic views are expressed that industry and commerce will soon enjoy more normal conditions. But the question of royalty which has troubled the country since the war ended has considerably hampered government action and has caused considerable delay in the solution of many national problems.

Several industries, such as clothmaking, have made a start, but full production will be impossible until there is an adequate supply of coal. Belgian coal production has risen from 30,000 tons a month to over 50,000 but even that is not sufficient for domestic and industrial needs. A level of 80,000 tons a month must be reached if Belgium is to face next winter confidently.

The food situation has improved. Most Belgians now are well fed, although enjoying none or few of the pre-war luxuries. Bread is plentiful and fats available at lower prices, but meat remains very scarce. The tinned meat provided by the Allies is not to everybody's liking. Still, with improving transport and continued Allied help, it is apparent that there will be more food.

Want Early Aid
Before V-E Day some bitterness was expressed that Belgium, starved during five years of German occupation, was not getting aid quickly and extensively enough. But many understood that priority had to be given military transport. Now these people ask only that a big effort be made to feed them properly before the Allies feed the people in occupied enemy territory.

Politically Belgium remains adverse to big and troublesome experiments. The present royal crisis, which in other countries

Called Home By Father's Illness

SMITHERS, Sept. 27 — Pte. Stanley Howell arrived at his home in Quick a few days ago from overseas in response to urgent representations to the military authorities that he was badly needed at home on account of the serious illness of his father, W. J. Howells, who had undergone two major operations in the Bulkley Valley Hospital at Smithers recently. Pte. Howell was given rapid transportation by being placed on a plane and flown from England to Canada. W. J. Howell is now improving in health but will be convalescent for a considerable length of time.

Whifflets From The Waterfront

Steamship and dry dock officials are at present at Ketchikan to inspect the broken and burned hull of the steamer Prince George which was destroyed by fire at the Alaskan port last Saturday. They will recommend what disposal should be made of the twisted ruin which was once one of the coast's finest passenger liners. Among those at Ketchikan in this connection are G. A. McMillan, superintendent, Canadian National Steamships, Vancouver; W. G. Jordan, superintendent, Pacific Salvage Co.; Bernard Allen, manager of the local dry dock; Robert Cameron, dry dock superintendent, and Harry Workman, Lloyds surveyor.

might have brought about big upheavals, has left the average Belgian calm.

The traditional Catholic, Liberal and Socialist parties retain the upper hand. A swing leftward may develop in the next election but as the Socialist are wary in their dealings with the Communists, it seems that the right wing will still be powerful enough to maintain the balance. The resistance movements have proved very divided and it appears that they will not carry the weight such forces did in France.

During the German occupation, resistance movements were supported morally and financially by the exiled government. Most groups now are aligned with some political party.

Timely Topics from Terrace

ANOTHER ORE COMPANY, TERRACE; POLICE CORPORAL IS MOVING SOUTH

R. D. Baker of Vancouver and R. G. Sutherland of Prince Rupert, who are both with the Standard Oil Co. of Canada, spent the week-end in Terrace. It is expected that the Standard Oil Co. will establish a branch at Terrace.

Constable William Richmond of the B.C. Police at Terrace, accompanied by Staff Sergeant Johnson, N.C.O. in charge of the Prince Rupert detachment, drove up from Prince Rupert on Tuesday afternoon.

Corporal T. D. Brunton of the B.C. Police at Terrace will be moving to Courtney as soon as there is accommodation available for him and his family.

June Warner left on Tuesday evening for Saskatoon where she will attend the Bethel Bible Institute. Her course will last three years but she expects to get home for holidays.

D. C. Warner and daughter, Laverna, returned on Monday night from Prince Rupert.

Captain and Mrs. G. Newell of Victoria are spending a few days in Terrace. Mrs. Newell is a sister of Hon. E. T. Kenney. They drove down from Smithers with L. H. Kenney on Sunday and have nearly completed a six month's trip to Nova Scotia and eastern points. This morning they left for Prince Rupert.

William Christie and Alvin Jones spent Sunday in Prince Rupert where Mr. Christie visited his wife who has been quite ill in the Prince Rupert Hospital. She is reported on the road to recovery and will be returning home in about ten days.

Sergeant and Mrs. George Lachapelle spent Wednesday in Terrace as the guests of Sergeant and Mrs. Prior.

Sergeant-Major Müller and a party of Royal Canadian Corps of Signals spent the week-end at Terrace.

Mrs. J. R. Fair and her mother left Friday night for Meeting Lake, Sask., after spending a holiday with Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Warner.

WAS PIONEER OF HAZELTON

HAZELTON, Sept. 27—One of the pioneers of the Hazelton district passed away on Monday when Edgar McLearn collapsed and died suddenly at that place. Mr. McLearn was a native of Hants County, Nova Scotia and was well known to everyone in the district. He was a carpenter by trade and during the past summer he had built a fishery overseer's house for the Department of Fisheries at Moricetown and also one at Babine Lake. He was very popular with a large number of friends.

Mr. McLearn was unmarried and had no relatives in this part of the country but leaves one brother, Putnam McLearn, at Selmah, Hants County, Nova Scotia, and a niece, Mrs. Woolaver, in Swampscott, Mass.

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