

More Settlement of Interior Farm Lands Due

Industrial Development Presents Great Market for District Growers

Agriculture in the Bulkley and Skeena Valleys of Diversified Type

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District Agriculturist, Smithers

The Bulkley and Skeena Valley lend themselves well to a program of mixed farming and this, in fact, is the type of agriculture that is carried on in the Skeena Valley, particularly in the vicinity of Terrace the soil and climate is well suited to growing and market gardening. Here the farms are much smaller than in the Bulkley Valley but, with the market of Prince Rupert at their doorstep, farmers in this valley are able to carry on a more intensive type of agriculture than is possible farther west where the rainfall is less and the growing season much shorter.

The Bulkley Valley is well suited to mixed farming and is the most common practice. However, within recent years there has been some development of more specialized types of farming, such as the production of whole milk, poultry products and vegetable seed.

Specializing in the production of whole milk developed in the Bulkley Valley of the demand for this product in Prince Rupert. Presently these dairy farms are increasing in number due largely to the increased investment in building and equipment necessary to produce this highly perishable product. Increased labor needs on these farms is another factor to be taken into consideration, although expected immigration of farm workers from the north should alleviate this situation to some extent. The Bulkley and Skeena milk houses on these farms are inspected annually by Dairy Inspectors and must conform with rigid regulations. In addition all farms selling whole milk are visited periodically by Dairy Inspectors, who check in general handling of the product, including sanitation and other facilities. It is expected that as more farm labor becomes available and as more premises are brought up to the necessary standard, the volume of milk shipped to Prince Rupert will increase very considerably.

EGGS AND POULTRY
The bulk of the eggs and poultry products produced in the Bulkley Valley come from the Bulkley Valley where the poultry project is only one of the many farm enterprises. However, in several cases, the major source of farm income comes from the poultry flock and today there are a few farms specializing in commercial egg production.

In the vicinity of Houston a number of farmers are supplying the income of their farms by the growing of turnip and rutabaga seed. While the growing of these vegetable crops cannot be recommended in the whole district, due to the danger of early fall frosts and the winter killing of the turnips, yet where it is not on by experienced farmers it forms a valuable side line to general livestock and farming.

An average farm in this district, hay, timothy and clover and grain form the most important crops. Some of the Bulkley Valley's fine timothy is sold locally to sawmills logging camps but most of hay and grain is marketed through the Bulkley Valley.

Because the proportion of farm to farm population is high, the local markets for produce are good. During the fall of the year a few herds of beef cattle must

A creamery at Telkwa provides a market for all cream shippers in the valley and many farmers find the cream cheque to be a very reliable source of income. Where cream is sold the skim milk is utilized to advantage by hogs and poultry on the farm.

For many years the Bulkley Valley has been famous for the quality of its timothy seed and this is still the important cash crop on many farms. On others, alfalfa and red clover have been found more profitable and in addition the growing of clover helps materially in building up the organic matter of the soil. Most of the clover and timothy seed grown in the Bulkley Valley is marketed through a co-operative seed cleaning plant in Telkwa.

For many years agricultural development in the Bulkley Valley was slow. This was due

mainly to two factors. The first being the high cost of bringing the forested land under cultivation and the second, the high shipping costs from the area. Shipping costs are still comparatively high but farmers whose acreage of cleared land was below the minimum necessary for a satisfactory farm unit, have been helped materially since 1947 under the Farmers' Land Clearing Assistance Act.

Machine clearing of land in the Bulkley Valley started in the fall of 1947 at Topley. Three large caterpillar type tractors were used, operating as a unit with one machine cutting and the other two piling the brush and rooting out the stumps.

NEW LAND OPENED

During 1948 land clearing work was done on 62 farms between Houston and Smithers

and a total of 1148 acres was cleared. Much of this new land will be brought under cultivation this year and this increased acreage should help considerably towards the agricultural development of the whole district.

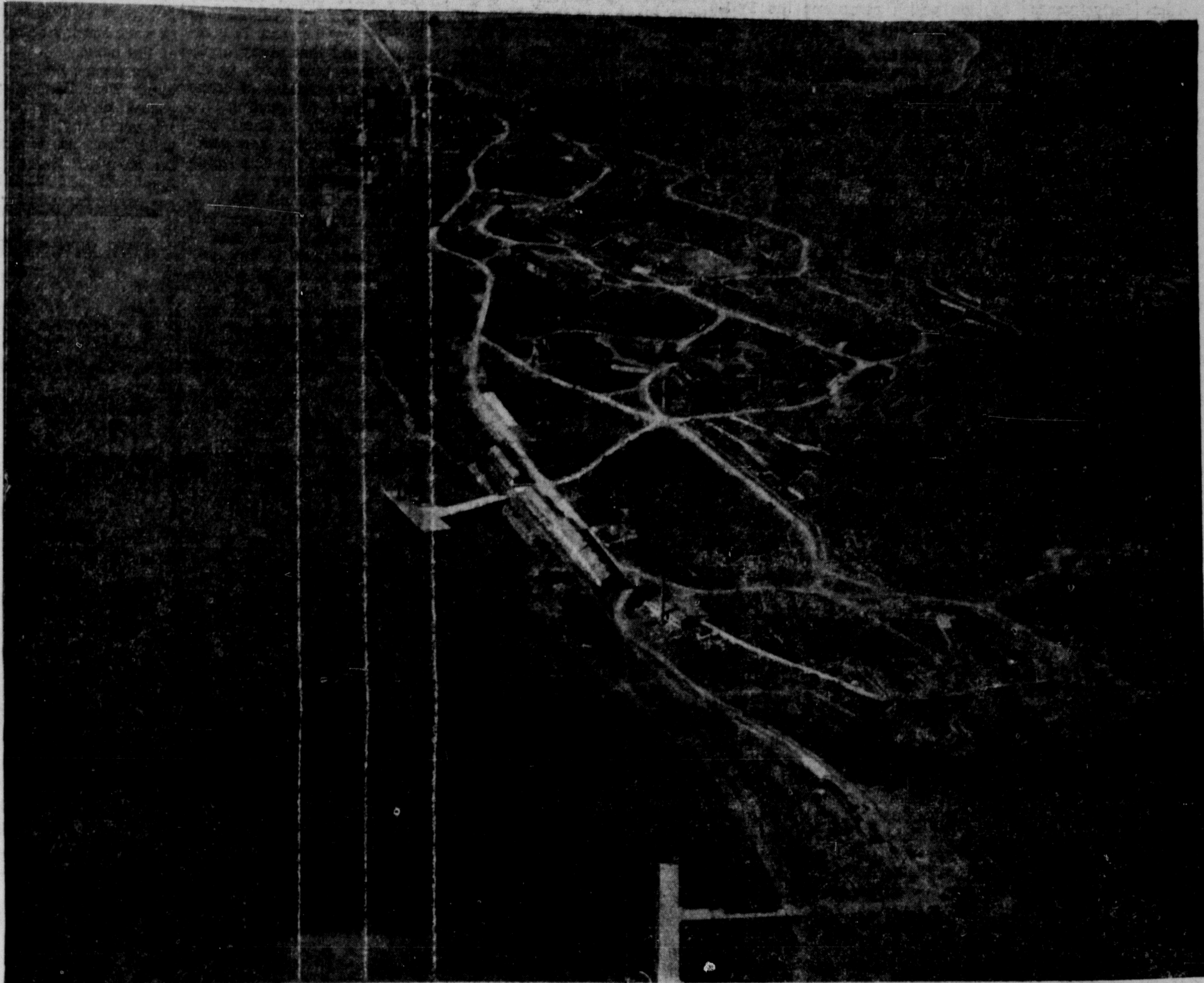
Land clearing plans for this year include work in the Skeena Valley as well as finishing up that part of the Bulkley Valley between Smithers and Hazelton.

Throughout the Bulkley and Skeena Valleys there is still a fair acreage of good land available for settlement. However, land available for pre-emption is situated for the most part at a considerable distance from local markets and community facilities, and for this reason there has been little demand for these Crown lands within the past few years. Furthermore, most recent settlers

have been in a position to purchase improved farm lands and where this is possible it is without doubt the wiser policy. Nevertheless, the area of potential farm land still available for settlement in British Columbia is very limited and it is highly probable that much of the better land in this district will be settled within the next few years.

CELANESE STARTS CAMP AT SALVUS

Camp is being erected alongside the Skeena River near Salvus to house a crew which will shortly be engaged in driving of logs down the river from the Terrace district to the big celanese plant at Port Edward. A number of Terrace men have been employed by the company for this and other work.



CELANESE MILL SITE—Aerial view of Port Edward, seven miles from Prince Rupert where Celanese Corporation of America is building its \$35,000,000 pulp mill.

Power For Aluminum

VICTORIA—The provincial legislature has been asked by the government for blanket powers to arrange for the establishment of an aluminum industry in British Columbia. The bill, to this effect, was introduced in the Legislature by Hon. E. T. Kenney, Minister of Lands and Forests, and passed.

There is no mention of the Aluminum Company of Canada, which is the chief concern back of the bill. It gives the Minister of Lands authority to execute an agreement. Blanket powers would enable the government to over-ride any other statutes. No loans or subsidies to the industry will be allowed, and it is laid down that any agreement must give fisheries protection, in the event of such being necessary.

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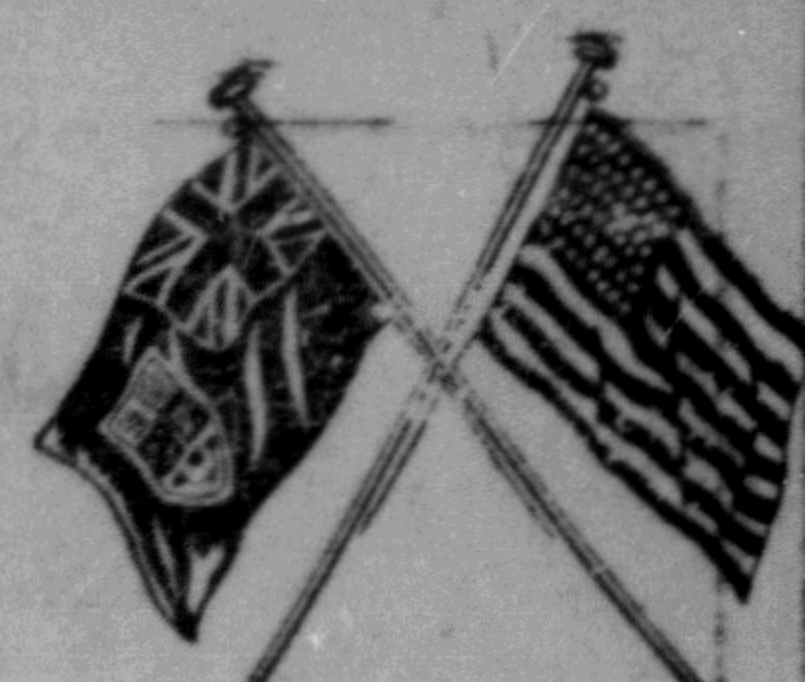
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