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## Mineral Production of British Columbia in 1915

**Preliminary Review and Estimate of Provincial Mineral Production for 1915, by William Fleet Robertson, Provincial Mineralogist.**

Mr. William Fleet Robertson, Provincial Mineralogist, has given out a preliminary review and estimate of the mineral production of British Columbia for the year 1915. This review is published in the form of a bulletin just issued from the Government press.

This bulletin has been prepared before the receipt of the official reports for the year 1915 of the Gold Commissioners and Mining Recorders of the Province, and the customary returns of mineral production annually made by managers of mines and reduction-works; consequently, it must necessarily be regarded as being simply a preliminary review of the progress of the past year, together with an estimate of the quantities and value of the several mineral products of the Province, which it is believed will prove to be approximately correct.

The accompanying table shows an estimated mineral production during 1915 of a total of \$29,299,584. It will be seen that the total value of the production of 1915 as estimated is some \$2,910,739 greater than that of 1914, which, considering the times, must be regarded as a very encouraging showing.

The year 1915 opened under very inauspicious conditions as far as mining was concerned; the war had only gotten fairly started, and at that time the final issue was in doubt, while the duration of the conflict was then quite unknown.

Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the metal market was so uncertain that producers felt timid as to the future, particularly as the opening months of the year saw the prices of all the metals, except zinc, much below normal.

Apparently no one foresaw or appreciated the trend of modern warfare, with its unprecedented use of artillery, nor realized the tremendous amounts of metal that would be consumed thereby.

How great this consumption of the metals has been can scarcely be appreciated when expressed in figures, but some conception of the enormous expenditure of metals can be obtained from a calculation published by the Mining and Scientific Press, and based upon French official state-

ments, that 4,500,000 shells were used by the section of the French Army in Champagne during a four days' bombardment along a twenty-mile front.

The editor, T. A. Rickard, calculates that these shells contained about 18,000,000 lb. of copper, 30,000,000 lb. of lead, and 8,000,000 lb. of zinc. To apply these quantities to the total output of British Columbia made during the year 1914, it will be seen that the year's output of copper would have lasted that small section of the French Army about ten days, the lead-output for seven days, and the zinc-output for slightly less than four days.

The close of the year 1914 found many of the mines closed down and most of the large producers restricting their output under a common agreement to so do.

Then came the enormous demand for shells of all sorts, from all the Allies, necessitating the use of an amount of copper, lead, zinc, and other metals which soon depleted the stocks, so that by May and June the prices of the metals began to soar, and all the mines that were in a position promptly to supply the demand were pushed to make as great an output as possible.

These higher prices for metals continuing throughout the remainder of the year, stimulated the mineral production very greatly and rendered the margin of profit on production much higher.

It seems to have been generally considered that these higher prices were only war prices, and that, at the close of hostilities, the value of metals would drop at least to normal, if not below. Consequently, as the

duration of the war was not expected to be very long, those mines not prepared to make a production in the near future could not expect to profit by higher prices, and, as capital was in demand for other purposes, the amount available for development was very slight.

The result has been that actual producers increased their outputs, but few new ones began a production, so that the amount of new development done throughout the year has been less than normal.

In British Columbia the recruiting sergeant has found such ready response from the prospectors and miners that prospecting is practically at a standstill and is left to those too old to be accepted for military service or otherwise disqualified.

MINERAL PRODUCTION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA IN 1915.
COMPREHENSIVE TAXATION IN DOMINION BUDGET.
CANADIAN IMMIGRATION POLICY. Two Contributors.
NORTH PACIFIC LUMBER EXPORTS FOR 1915.
RECENT ANNUAL REPORTS.
MINING THROUGHOUT BRITISH COLUMBIA.
TRUST COMPANY NOTES, COMPANY NOTES, INSURANCE, MUNICIPAL, LUMBER, MINING, AND OTHER INFORMATION.