

# Copper Production in British Columbia in 1917

Decrease of output from 65,379,364 pounds in 1916 to 59,007,565 pounds—Due chiefly to a decrease of over seven million pounds in the production of Boundary District and a serious decrease of Rossland—Anyox shows large gain—Minister of Mines Report, 1917.

The amount of copper produced during the year 1917 shows somewhat of a decrease as compared with the previous year, but considering the industrial troubles of 1917 the showing made is very satisfactory. A production of 59,007,565 pounds, worth \$16,038,256, is recorded, as compared with 65,379,364 pounds, worth \$17,784,494, in the preceding year. The 1917 output, however, is higher than any other year excepting 1916.

The market price of copper was subject to considerable fluctuations during the year. The New York average price for January was 28.673 cents a pound, and rose in February to 31.750 cents, thereafter gradually declining to 25.073 in September. On September 21st, 1917, the War Industries Board of the United States, with the sanction of the President, officially fixed the market price of copper at 23.5 cents a pound. This price has ruled ever since and apparently is satisfactory, as, according to the leading authorities on the copper market, the supply at present just about equals the demand. The average price of copper for the year 1917 was 27.18 cents, as compared with 27.202 in 1916.

The copper production from the several districts was as follows:

	Pounds
Skeena Division .....	27,978,015
Southern Coast District .....	17,256,534
Boundary-Yale District .....	11,117,290
Trail Creek Division .....	1,730,088
Omineca Division .....	852,373
All other districts .....	73,265
Total .....	59,007,565

The Hidden Creek mines and the smelter at Anyox of the Granby Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company were operated continuously throughout the year, even although at times some difficulty was experienced from shortage of coke and labor. A larger tonnage was treated than in 1916, amounting to approximately 784,000 tons of ore, and in addition 38,000 tons of quartz flux and 53,000 tons of limestone flux. With the increased tonnage handled there was a corresponding increase in the output of copper, 27,661,301 pounds (recovered copper), being produced, as compared with 23,890,896 pounds in 1916.

In the Boundary District the Granby Company's mines at Phoenix and smelter at Grand Forks were not operated continuously nor to full capacity throughout the year owing to the strike in the Crows Nest coalfield shutting off the supply of coke. Only a little over half the 1916 tonnage was handled, and, as the grade of ore remained practically the same, the copper output shows a proportionate decrease. An output of 6,858,718 pounds was made, as compared with 13,795,151 pounds in 1916. Similarly, the British Columbia Copper Company (now absorbed by the Canada Copper Corporation) treated a smaller tonnage during the past year than in 1916, with consequent decrease in copper output.

The Britannia mine had a very successful year, the tonnage of ore mined and milled being 662,000 tons, containing 15,780,830 pounds copper, 86,925 ounces silver and 980 ounces gold. The ore reserves at this mine are large—claimed to be about 17,000,000 tons—and it is expected the yearly tonnage treated will increase still further, as the ultimate plans of the company are to have milling capacity to handle 4,000 tons a day.

The copper mines on Texada Island made about the same output as in 1916; the most important producer was again the Marble Bay.

Several small shipments of copper ore were made from Vancouver Island and along the Coast. The high price of copper has stimulated the work of developing copper showings on the Coast, and while this has not resulted in any great quantity of ore being shipped in 1917, it is likely that a considerable increase of production will take place in 1918.

The encouraging feature as regards copper in the Southern Coast District is the very satisfactory results being obtained from serious development, which as yet has not found expression in actual production, but argues well for substantial output in the near future. Development, to be successful, would seem to be so extensive as to be out of reach of any but strong companies.

The production of copper from Nelson Division during 1917 was very low, amounting to about 50,946 pounds, mainly from the Eureka mine.

The Omineca Division produced less copper in 1917 than in 1916, due mainly to suspension of shipments from the Rocher Deboile mine during the early months of the year.

During the last three years copper mining has attained the position of being the most important form of mining in the province, and from all indications it should maintain this prominent place for years to come, as last year the value of the copper mined exceeded the total value of all other metalliferous minerals mined in the province, and was also nearly double the combined value of coal and coke production. It formed about 60 per cent. of the total value of the metalliferous mines and 43 per cent. of the total mineral production. In the working of the large, low-grade copper deposits and the subsequent smelting of the ores produced, a great number of men are employed and a large proportion of the money value is retained in the country in the payment of wages and purchase of supplies.

All the copper ores carry small amounts of the precious metals, and therefore any increase in the copper production also increases the output of gold and silver. The high price of copper during the past year has stimulated prospecting and the development of copper claims, and there is no doubt that the provincial output will steadily grow in future years.

The following table shows the production of the various districts for the years 1914, 1915, 1916 and 1917:

	1914 Lb.	1915 Lb.	1916 Lb.	1917 Lb.
Boundary District .....	16,428,959	17,402,662	17,626,623	10,329,765
Rossland District .....	3,779,830	4,651,681	4,200,745	1,730,088
Coast, Omineca, and Cassiar Dist.	24,199,621	34,516,957	42,457,332	46,086,922
Yale-Kamloops District .....	14,525	295,164	819,227	700,199
Nelson and other Districts.....	586,764	51,941	185,437	160,591
Totals .....	45,009,699	56,918,405	65,379,364	59,007,565

## CHANGE OF RECEIVERS.

Upon the application of C. B. Macneill, K.C., acting for the bondholders of E. H. Heaps & Co., Ltd., principally resident in Great Britain, the supreme court of British Columbia has appointed James Thompson Tighe Paxton as receiver and manager of the property and assets in place of Arthur W. Stevenson, who is taking up military duty. Mr. Paxton is already well known as the custodian of the interests of other considerable British investors in this province.

The Massachusetts Bonding Company and the St. Paul Fire & Marine Insurance Company have arranged to issue a joint automobile policy in the Pacific Coast field, the former taking the liability and property damage lines, and the latter the fire, theft and collision hazards.

Mr. F. C. Wade, K.C., Vancouver, was appointed by Premier Oliver to the position of Agent General for British Columbia at London, England. Mr. Wade will proceed shortly overseas to take up his new duties.