

Production of Copper in British Columbia in 1918

Growing Importance of Copper Metal Production in Province is shown by an Amount Equal to 55 per cent. of Entire Metallic Output—Good Prospects for Increased Production.

The provincial mineralogist, Mr. Wm. Flett Robertson, in the Annual Report of the Minister of Mines recently issued by the King's Printer, Victoria, states that the amount of copper produced in 1918 shows, as compared with the previous year, an increase in quantity, but, owing to the lower market selling price, a decrease in value. The production was 61,483,754 lb., which is 2,476,189 lb. greater than the 1917 output; the value for this year is \$15,143,449, which, compared with \$16,038,256 made in 1917, shows a decrease of \$894,807. It is most encouraging, however, that, notwithstanding lowered market prices, the Provincial production of copper shows an increase in the quantity of metal produced of about 4.2 per cent. over the previous year.

During the whole of 1918 the price of copper in the United States was controlled by the maximum price fixed by the United States War Industries Board. From January to July the fixed price was 23.5 cents a pound, and from July until the end of the year it was 26 cents, the average for the year being 24.63 cents.

The following table shows the production of copper according to districts:

	Lb.
Skeena Division	30,190,606
Southern Coast District	18,475,013
Boundary-Yale District	9,940,125
Trail Creek Division	1,654,356
Omineca Division	643,843
All others	579,811
Total	61,483,754

The Hidden Creek mines and the smelter at Anyox of the Granby Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company were operated practically continuously throughout the year, although closed for a short time by a strike, which was soon settled. A larger tonnage was treated than in 1917, amounting to approximately 858,000 tons, together with quartz and limestone flux to the extent of some 73,000 tons. With the increased tonnage handled there was a corresponding increase in the output of copper, 29,692,376 lb. being produced, as compared with 27,661,301 lb. in 1917.

In the Boundary District the Granby Company's mines at Phoenix were able to supply the smelter at Grand Forks

with sufficient ore to run the smelter at capacity. The ore reserves of these mines are approaching exhaustion, so that the large-scale production of former years cannot be maintained. Also the high operating costs during 1918 left but little margin of profit in working the low-grade ores at Phoenix. Or, to quote the Granby Company's annual report: "The old Phoenix mine has been run more from patriotism than hope of profits." The tonnage mined and smelted was approximately 444,000 tons, containing 7,347,273 lb. copper (recovered content), which is an increase of 488,555 lb. over the production figures of 1917; the 1917 output was only about one-half of former years.

The Canada Copper Corporation, operating the Mother Lode mine and smelter at Greenwood, treated a slightly smaller tonnage than in 1917. About 154,000 tons was handled, from which 1,832,382 lb. of copper was recovered, together with low gold and silver contents. Towards the end of the year the smelter was closed, the ore reserves of the Mother Lode mine being exhausted.

The Britannia mine had a very successful year, approximately 731,000 tons of ore being milled, the production of copper from which was 17,548,127 lb. This is nearly 1,767,297 lb. greater than the 1917 production.

The Marble Bay mine, on Texada Island, made about the same production as in 1917, the output being 626,442 lb.

Half a dozen smaller shippers are listed from the Southern Coast District, but the total copper from this source only amounts to 300,000 lb.

The Omineca Division produced less copper than in 1917, the output being 643,843 lb.

Copper-mining is now firmly established as the most important form of mining in the province, and from all indications it should maintain this place for years to come. In 1918 the value of the copper mined exceeded by over \$2,000,000 the combined values of all other metals mined, and it formed 55 per cent. of the total value of the metallic mineral production for the year.

It is also to be noted that about 80 per cent. of the copper output is produced on the Coast, which has become the centre of the copper-mining industry, thus replacing the Boundary District, the old centre.

On Vancouver Island the amount of copper produced has been very small comparatively, but there are under development at present at Jordan River and near Quatsino Sound two properties on which active development has been carried on with such success as to indicate a large production within a few years.

Sir John Aird Considers Canadian Business Sound

Sir John Aird, general manager of the Canadian Bank of Commerce was in Vancouver recently and while here met Sir Edmund Walker, president of the Bank, Mr. S. H. Logan in charge of the foreign department, Mr. Grange V. Holt, manager of the Vancouver branch and Mr. Bruce Heathcote, manager of the San Francisco agency, returning from a trip to the Orient where they investigated conditions with a view to increasing Canadian business across the Pacific.

In conversation with Sir John, he stated that the financial position of Canada was undoubtedly sound and business was on a firm foundation ready for increased activity when the conditions arose. The labor situation was something yet to handle but though menacing at times the spirit of co-operation of the business interests of Canada would he thought solve this problem and insure industrial peace necessary to development.

The crop situation Sir John stated was on the whole not without some considerable elements of satisfaction. The

Maritime provinces, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba would raise large crops and this was true also of eastern Saskatchewan. Western Saskatchewan and Alberta would have shortened crops but he did not think that they would be as serious as had been stated. Alberta has not yet become a great wheat producing country and with a shortened crop there its effect upon the total output would not be very serious. The recent rains in that province had helped out the feed situation and with aid from other territories winter could be weathered without serious general hardship. Alberta is yet essentially a live stock province. Western Saskatchewan being a larger producer of wheat, has also been adversely affected. It looks generally in Sir John's opinion that Canada would raise average crops, heavy production of the East off-setting the shortened production in the West with every prospect of Manitoba enjoying very favourable yields.