

British Columbia Northland Large Treasure Chest

By LARRY STANWOOD
Canadian Press Staff Writer
VANCOUVER, April 20 (AP)—The treasure chest of British Columbia's northland—mysterious, elusive, and challenging—continues to dare man to rip off its lid and clutch the wealth within.

The pounding on the strong-box of natural resources is growing louder:

1. A billion-dollar plan to develop a 40,000 square mile tract known as the Rocky Mountain trench, stretching from Prince George in the middle of the province to the Yukon boundary, announced recently by Swedish financier Axel Wenner-Gren.

2. Agreement by the federal government to share the cost of a 12-million dollar highway in a point near the Yukon border, opening the western half of the north.

A few corners of the strong-box have been pried apart and some of the riches have spilled out. But nature fights back the invaders with the same resources that contain her wealth: rocky peaks and glaciers; muskety and rampaging rivers.

Farms, Fish, Forests Pay Off

British Columbia reaps from agriculture, fishing, forestry and mining—developed mostly in the southern portion—an annual income of more than \$1,350,000,000. Of the total, more than 60 per cent comes from the forest.

In addition, about 30 million dollars worth of aluminum a year is produced at the Kitimat smelter of Aluminum Co. of Canada. By 1959, production is expected to be 150 million annually.

Only since the second World War has industry focused acute attention north of the 53rd Parallel. A 10-million dollar Columbia Cellulose Co. pulp mill was built at Prince Rupert in 1949.

The second industrial venture was Alcan's vast Kitimat project. More than 500 million dollars was spent in five years and the aluminum plant is still expanding. A model city of more than 12,000 has mushroomed in the wilderness, 40 miles to the nearest civilization.

New Towns Planned in NW

On the heels of Kitimat, in 1952, Frohisher-backed interests came up with plans for a 700-million-dollar metallurgical-chemical-forestry center in northwest British Columbia.

The ambitious plan hit snags. Surveys are still going on in the Atlin area for the project, but no work has been started. Attention shifted south until the Wenner-Gren proposal was made public.

Estimated to cost an ultimate two billion dollars, this plan calls for construction of a monorail railway up the Rocky Mountain Trench to join the B.C.-owned Pacific Great Eastern Railway with the Yukon border; pulp mills, steel mills and other metallurgical industries; and model communities complete with schools, hospitals and technical institutes. The area embraces 40,000 acres of uninhabited country from 10 to 20 miles wide, described as a huge geological fault running north of Prince George into the Yukon.

Received With Mixed Enthusiasm

It includes an estimated 100 million dollars worth of timber, 750 million dollars worth of hydroelectric potential and unknown mineral resources.

Wenner-Gren B.C. Development Co. has deposited \$500,000 with the B.C. government for the right to survey the area for its industrial potential. Cost of the survey, mostly aerial, is estimated at five million dollars. Results will determine further action.

The proposal has been received with mixed enthusiasm. Some members of Parliament called it a give-away.

Premier Bennett says the government has given Wenner-Gren "nothing... and we have \$500,000 in the treasury."

While the proposal was being debated in the Legislature, the federal government announced it would split costs with C. on a 12-million dollar highway into the north from Stewart at the head of Portland Canal, the northernmost part of the province.

The 200-mile road would run through an area of potential mineral wealth to Cassiar, a company town of 800 near the Yukon border, which is supported by a productive asbestos mine.

Search Seeks Missing Son Of Diplomat

CHICAGO, April 20 (AP)—Ten thousand posters describing the missing son of an Italian diplomat Friday were sent to police departments throughout the nation.

The circulars describe Vittorio Barattieri, 14, son of Count Ludovico Barattieri di San Pietro, Italian consul general in Chicago. The boy has been missing since Tuesday.

The boy's father said Vittorio had developed a keen interest in cowboys, rural life, animals and oil fields while living in the United States.

For this reason a search was directed to the Southwest, in the oilfields of Oklahoma and Texas.

The boy is described as slender, dark blond and 5 feet 11. He speaks English with a slight accent. He disappeared after leaving home Tuesday morning. He failed to report at his school, Loyola Academy.

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Size 20x20; available in all above patterns 79¢

Reg. \$1.95-\$2.25 Cannon Bath Towel
24x46 size; white, pink, yellow, rose, green, aqua, red, beige \$1.25

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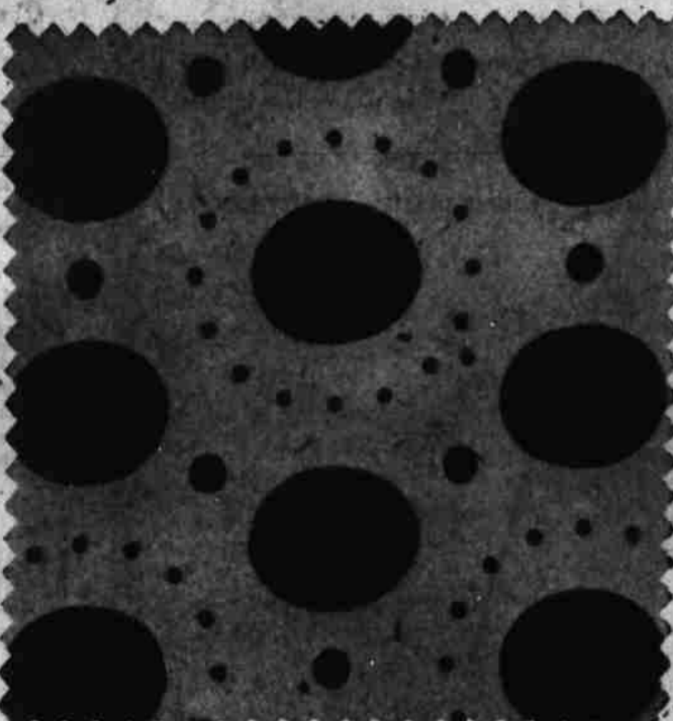
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