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Silver-Lead-Zinc Mining & Cominco (5 of 5)

St. Eugene Mine at Moyie

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Today all that remains of the St. Eugene Mine along the shore of beautiful Moyie Lake are piles of mine tailings and concrete foundations from several large structures. The small community of Moyie, 20 miles (32 km) by rail west of Cranbrook, is highlighted by its picturesque firehall and several other heritage buildings. Along the lake shore is the Canadian Pacific Railway. This was once the site of a major mine, one of the most important in southern British Columbia and the community was called Moyie City. In 1907-08 the mine was described by the Canadian Department of Mines as "...the most important silver-lead mine in Canada."

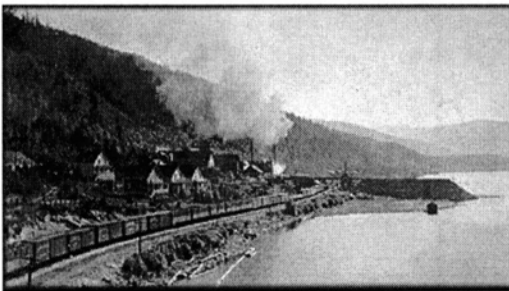


St. Eugene Mine, near Moyie, B. C.
Canada on Line of Canadian Pacific Railway.

The silver-lead ore (galena) deposits were recorded in 1893 by James Cronin who was told of the ores by the Ktunaxa (Kootenai) people living in the area. Apparently a Ktunaxa man named Pierre found the deposits and the sale of the claims was organized by Father Coccoia of the St. Eugene Mission. Early development work led to the formation of the St. Eugene Consolidated Mining Company and in 1905 it was taken over by the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company. The

mine produced steadily with some interruptions until 1923 and in 1925 a new concentrator was built to process the tailings of the older operations to recover zinc. A dredge was also used to recover tailings that had been dumped into the lake. After the recovery work was completed, the operations were closed.

Ore from the mine, after milling and concentration, was shipped over the CPR to Trail for smelting.



The fortunes of the community of Moyie fluctuated with the production of the mine. At the time of the construction of the Crowsnest Pass railway, Moyie City was touted as having a rich and prosperous future. In fact, the CPR's new steamer *Moyie* was named for the city; other vessels had been named *Rossland*, *Trail*, *Nelson* and *Nakusp* for the major centres in the Southern Interior. The early enthusiasm seemed justified for a few years: in 1900 the population was about 300 and by 1909 it had reached

approximately 1,200 with about 450 employed in the mine and concentrator. However, by 1920 it had fallen to just 100 people and the mine employed only 20 men and the community never recovered the prosperity of the boom years.

By 1930, total production had reached 1,017,106 tons (922 718 tonnes) of ore which contained 5,365,232 ounces (152 104 kg) of silver and 229,305,721 pounds (104 013 070 kg) of lead with a total value of \$10,626,608. Underground development work included nearly 20 miles (32 km) of tunneling.

Archival Photos

- D-01327 Moyie. Kootenay Hotel, 1898
C-00580 Moyie from the South, 1900
D-06790 Moyie. St. Eugene Consolidated Mining Co. Concentrator, 1901
B-00648 CPR Train Passing through Moyie, c. 1901
B-00644 Moyie, c. 1904
B-00649 Moyie. Concentrator of St. Eugene Consolidated Mining Company, c. 1908
B-00646 Moyie, c. 1920
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