

Hazelton Post



Hazelton Post - Ca 1911 British Columbia Archives

Hazelton Post was built in 1866 at Hagwilget close to Hazelton. The post closed two years later when trading became unprofitable. In 1880 the Hudson's Bay Company took over the premises of an independent operator that was located at the forks of the Skeena and Agwilget (Bulkley) Rivers.

By the fall of 1890, the post was situated on the south side of the Skeena River about one and a half miles from the junction of the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers. It became a major trading center for First Nations people and a supply depot for miners and the railway of the Omenica region.

After 1900, Hazelton Post held the distinction of being a very important transportation hub for the distribution of goods and services to inland posts. In 1936 a massive flood washed away parts of the post; the post was subsequently moved to Government Street. However, after the completion of the railroad in 1914, the post had greatly diminished in value. It seems that the Hazelton Post maintained a presence in the area right up to 1970.

Today, one can take a walk through old Hazelton and visit many preserved historical buildings. Then visit the 'Ksan Historic Village, which displays seven traditional Gitksan longhouses and many totem poles, plus hundreds of Native artifacts in the First Nations Museum.



Plaque, Hazelton Post - 2004



Hudson's Bay Company Post - Ca 1910

Fort Hope

Fort Hope - Ca 1860 British Columbia Archives

Henry Newsham Piers established Fort Hope in 1848–49 near the bend of the Fraser River close to an Indian village at the south end of town. The establishment of this fort was largely due to the settlement of the 1846 border treaty, which was fixed at the forty-ninth parallel. Today, the local visitor info center and museum and an old restored sawmill occupy this site. The location selected coincided with the proposed brigade trail route that ended at the rivers edge.

Over the years, Fort Hope became a major terminus for the fur trade particularly for the HBC horse brigades and later on for the gold rush period. In 1880 an HBC office was erected, and by 1889 a company store was built on Main Street close to the main trail that bordered the Hudson's Bay Company Reserve.

By 1891 business fell into decline due to a route shift. The great pack trains had been redirected to Sicamous on the Canadian Pacific Railway line near Revelstoke. HBC Clerk James Fraser transferred to Fort Yale with the bulk of the supplies.





Hudson's Bay Company Store - Ca 1911



Port Hope Cairn - 2003



When the boundary of 1846 determined that the mouth of the Columbia would be American territory, the river became impractical as a supply route for the Hudson's Bay Company. Instead, goods were brought up the Fraser from Fort Langley to the head of navigation, where Fort Hope was built in 1848–1849. From thence to Alexandria for distribution by water to the posts in New Caledonia. This complex system was used until gold discoveries stimulated road construction after 1860.