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DULUTH, MINNESOTA

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Duluth, the Zenith City of the Unsalted Sea, is at the head of navigation on the Great Lakes. From the standpoint of shipping tonnage, its harbor is second only to that of New York. Duluth is 988 water route miles from Buffalo, New York, and 468 rail route miles north by west of Chicago.

Duluth, named for an early (1679) French explorer, started as a fur trading post, where the Chippewa Indians traded furs for novelty items and beverages that were not generally available in their mobile villages and social centers.

At the time (1783) Benjamin Franklin negotiated the treaty of Paris to establish the Canadian boundary, he was especially interested in securing the suspected copper deposits of Isle Royal to transmit the electricity he was currently capturing with his kites. To do this, it was necessary to shift the proposed boundary from the St. Louis River, northeastward along the north shore of Lake Superior, and make the Pigeon River the boundary line. Smart trader that he was, and thoroughly understanding the skillful use of aromatic beverages as a lubrication in a horse-trade, Franklin was able to convince the treaty makers that the Pigeon River was the logical and proper location for the boundary line.

This shift of the boundary, while it has never resulted in much copper from Isle Royal, did place Duluth and the fabulous Mesabi Iron Range just inside of the United States.

Before fur trading ceased as the basic industry of the area, Duluth became the growing center of the vast pine and hardwood timber operations. The water front of the harbor became one vast sawmill operation which furnished structural and furniture lumber over an extended period of years for a large area of the country.

As the dense forests slowly vanished under the impact of Paul Bunyan's broad ax, modest shipments of iron ore from

northeast Minnesota started in 1884 and expanded, as the timber dwindled, to the point where shipments of ore in 1951 were just under 80,000,000 tons. The mineral extraction industry, together with its necessary complement of beneficiation and transportation, is, and has been, the economic support of the area for the past thirty-five years.

The Duluth Steam Corporation system, constructed in 1932, has served the downtown and adjacent fringe area with high-pressure steam service for heating, industrial, and railroad uses since September of that year.

The company operates a modern, coal-fired, high-pressure boiler plant with a capacity of 360,000 pounds of steam per hour. Steam is distributed through about ten miles of pipe lines to 412 customers to serve the heating and process needs of office and commercial buildings, schools, churches, hospitals, breweries, laundries and hotels.

The company struggled through its first ten years, the deep depression years of the 1930's, not without financial problems, but without benefit of receivership. As the business climate improved on the local and national levels after 1940, the company's business also improved. During the past twelve years the company has been able to liquidate its deficit earnings of its development years. For the past three years it has been able to distribute some long overdue dividends to its stockholders in gradually increasing amounts.

The Duluth Steam Corporation is unique in that it is exclusively in the steam business and not an affiliate, associate, department, or subsidiary of any other business or company.

The aerial view on the magazine cover shows the canal entrance to the Port of Duluth, with its famous Aerial Lift Bridge, and a portion of the city's downtown district in the background.

* Vice-President and General Manager, Duluth Steam Corporation, and Past President of NDHA