

# Business in Timmins – Then and Now

Written by Jack Brovender, Porcupine Quill, 1935

In the year 1909, prospectors began to flock into what is now known as “The Porcupine”. After the discovery of gold at the Dome, Golden City and South Porcupine towns of about 3,000 became chief commercial centers. In 1910, there was a rich find at the Hollinger. The Hollinger then formed a town site and lots were sold by auction.

The first store in Timmins was begun in a tent. It was a general store situated on the Hollinger Property and was owned by Mr. Charles Pierce. Mr. Pierce soon moved to a wooden structure. Near him Mr. McLaughlin also had his general store. Mr. Charles See built a drug store.



How did these early stores get their supplies from the larger cities? At first, all goods had to be hauled on wagons or sleighs from South Porcupine. In 1911 tracks were laid to Timmins, but were not used until the following year as the road bed was not solid.

In 1912, the Bank of Ottawa opened a branch. Later the Imperial Bank of Canada established itself.

What did the people do for amusement? In 1912, “King’s Amusement Parlor” was established. This had a dancing floor upstairs and a billiard hall downstairs. A silent movie was started by Mr. Leo Mascioli in 1913.

The population of 1,000 in 1912 has increased to over 16,000 in 1935. From virgin forest, Timmins has become a beautiful town with a fine hospital, good educational institutions and a business district that in this time of depression is the mecca of travelling salesmen.



Photograph of Street in Timmins, 1935 Quill