

Section 14.—The Topographical Survey.¹

The Topographical Survey, Department of the Interior, is engaged in publishing the national topographic series of map sheets of Canada. It is also the central agency for the recording and indexing of all aerial photographs taken by the Dominion Government Services, thus preserving their use for all purposes for which they may hereafter be required, with particular regard to their utilization in connection with the development of the natural resources of the country.

The information shown upon the map sheets issued is obtained from original ground surveys, supplemented by material from all other available sources and from aerial photographs, the photographs for this purpose being taken in co-operation with the Royal Canadian Air Force of the Department of National Defence. The sheets are generally published on scales of one mile, two miles, and four miles to the inch, the scale depending on the amount of available information to be depicted and also on the economic possibilities of the area mapped. Mosaic maps on larger scales, prepared from vertical aerial photographs and covering areas of special interest, are also issued.

In its earliest history this branch had control of the survey and administration of all the resources of Dominion lands, but as the work increased other branches were formed in the Department to take over the administration of Dominion lands and the development of special natural resources, while the Topographical Survey concentrated on surveys and the publication of maps and plans. Up to the outbreak of the Great War the demand for land surveys was so insistent that little attention could be devoted to the publication of topographic maps, but all the time a control system for those maps was being laid down in the system of survey of Dominion lands, whereby an area of 180,000,000 acres of land has been surveyed. Since that time good progress has been made in the publication of topographic maps, and the work has extended to the eastern as well as the western provinces. Since 1921 the science of map-making from aerial photographs has been developed by officials of the Branch and is now largely used in conjunction with ground methods for the production of topographic maps.

In addition to the publication of topographic map sheets and to the aerial photographic work carried on, other activities include the cadastral survey of Dominion lands, photo-topographic surveys of mountainous areas, control traverse surveys of waterway systems in the newer parts of the country, exploration surveys in the northern part of Canada, the delimitation of interprovincial boundaries wherever Dominion lands are affected, surveys of mineral claims, timber berths and townsites wherever Dominion interests are concerned, the classification of land for settlement purposes, and magnetic surveys for determining the declination of the magnetic needle and the march of the compass for the whole country. There is also maintained a physical testing laboratory for standardizing measures of length, for testing thermometers, optical instruments and other instruments of precision used in surveying or engineering work.

Section 15.—The Dominion Observatories.

The Dominion Observatory, Ottawa, was founded in 1902, and completed and organized in 1905 as a branch of the Department of the Interior. It was an outgrowth of the astronomical surveys of the Department, which began in 1884

¹ For a list of the publications of the Topographical Survey, see p. 1011.
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