

4.—Duration of the Season of Open Navigation in the St. Lawrence Ship Channel, calendar years 1911-37.

NOTE.—For the years 1882-1910, see Canada Year Book, 1934-35, p. 756.

Calendar Year.	Channel Open, Quebec to Montreal. ¹	First Arrival from Sea, Montreal Harbour.	Last Departure for Sea, Montreal Harbour.	Calendar Year.	Channel Open, Quebec to Montreal. ¹	First Arrival from Sea, Montreal Harbour.	Last Departure for Sea, Montreal Harbour.
1911.....	Apr. 25	Apr. 26	Dec. 3	1924.....	Apr. 17	Apr. 24	Dec. 3
1912.....	" 29	" 30	" 3	1925.....	" 10	" 22	" 9
1913.....	" 14	" 19	Nov. 29	1926.....	May 1	May 3	" 6
1914.....	" 25	" 29	Dec. 4	1927.....	Apr. 11	Apr. 12	" 6
1915.....	" 14	" 30	" 11	1928.....	" 26	" 26	" 9
1916.....	" 22	May 1	" 3	1929.....	" 10	" 20	" 7
1917.....	" 22	" 1	" 7	1930.....	" 12	" 21	" 12
1918.....	" 22	" 7	" 14	1931.....	Mar. 19	" 15	" 11
1919.....	" 16	Apr. 22	" 10	1932.....	" 27	" 14	" 8
1920.....	" 18	" 25	" 7	1933.....	" 23	" 14	" 6
1921.....	Mar. 29	" 21	" 8	1934.....	" 28	" 26	" 8
1922.....	Apr. 13	" 24	" 2	1935.....	" 30	" 15	" 9
1923.....	" 29	May 3	" 2	1936.....	" 28	" 13	" 11
				1937.....	Apr. 9	" 19	" 8

¹ "Channel open" means it can be navigated although there may be floating ice still in the river.

Subsection 3.—Canals.

Before the period of extensive railway construction which commenced for Canada in the 1850's, the water routes, more especially the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes and the Ottawa, were the chief avenues of transportation. These routes were interrupted at certain points, necessitating portages, and to eliminate the toil of unloading, transporting and reloading at the portages the canals of Canada were constructed.

The earliest mention of canals in Canada is in connection with the Lachine canal, begun by early French settlers in 1700, but only after the conquest of Canada by the British were improvements of the main water routes made, and in the early part of the 19th century increased internal and foreign trade and the introduction of steam navigation resulted in more attention being given to this work. Although some of the early canals were constructed primarily for military purposes they soon became essential to the commercial life of the country. However, since the development of railways in Canada, and even more since the growth of motor vehicle traffic, the canals, with the exception of those on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence river, are playing a minor part in the transportation activities of the country.

There are in Canada six canal systems, under the control of the Dominion Department of Transport, which are connected with the Atlantic ocean by navigable routes, in addition to a number of other minor locks and canals, under the control of the Dominion Department of Public Works or other authority, to facilitate local navigation on disconnected lakes and rivers. The six main systems consist of the canals: (1) between Port Arthur or Fort William and Montreal; (2) from Montreal to the International Boundary near lake Champlain; (3) from Montreal to Ottawa; (4) from Ottawa to Kingston and Perth; (5) from Trenton, lake Ontario, to lake Huron (not completed); and (6) from the Atlantic ocean to Bras d'Or lakes, Cape Breton. By means of these canals, total waterways of 1,890 miles have been opened to navigation, the actual mileage of canals being 508.67.

A detailed description of the individual canals was given on pp. 626-629 of the 1926 Year Book. Summary statistics of their length and lock dimensions are given in Table 5.