

The earliest mention of canals in Canada is in connection with the Lachine Canal, begun by early French settlers in 1700. Only after the conquest of Canada by the British, however, were improvements of the main water routes made. 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-St. Lawrence River route, are playing a minor part in the transportation activities of the country.

The principal canals of Canada are under the jurisdiction of the Dominion Department of Transport and each is accessible from the Atlantic Ocean. They serve six routes: (1) Montreal to Port Arthur and Fort William, via the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes; (2) Montreal to the International Boundary near Lake Champlain, via the Richelieu River; (3) Montreal to Ottawa, via the Ottawa River; (4) Ottawa to Perth and Kingston, via the Rideau and Cataraqui Rivers; (5) Trenton, at the mouth of the Trent River on Lake Ontario, to the mouth of the Severn River on Lake Huron; and (6) St. Peters, Nova Scotia, on the Atlantic Ocean, to the Bras d'Or Lakes. The aggregate length of these six routes is 1,890 miles, the total of actual canal being 509 miles.

The names of the various canals along these routes, their locations and lengths, together with the number and dimensions of the locks thereon and other information will be found at pp. 626-629 of the 1926 edition of the Year Book, and in the pamphlet of the Department of Transport "Canals of Canada". A table showing the length and lock dimensions of canals as at the end of 1941 will be found at p. 583 of the 1941 edition of the Year Book.

Under the jurisdiction of the Dominion Department of Public Works are St. Andrews Lock (length, width and draft, respectively, 215, 45 and 17 feet) at Selkirk on the Red River, Man., and two or three smaller and widely separated locks in other provinces. There are also a few small isolated locks, each controlled under the authority of the province in which it is situated.

Subsection 4.—Harbours

Water transportation cannot be studied with any degree of completeness without taking into consideration the co-ordination of land and water transportation at many of the ports. Equipment designed to facilitate interchange movements includes the necessary docks and wharves, some for passenger traffic but most of them for freight, warehouses for the handling of general cargo, and special equipment for such bulk freight as lumber, coal, oil, grain, etc. Equipment may include cold-storage warehouses, harbour railway and switching connections, grain elevators, coal bunkers, oil storage tanks and, in the chief harbours, dry-dock accommodation.

Eight of the principal harbours of Canada are administered by the National Harbours Board; seven others by commissions that include municipal as well as Dominion Government appointees; and the remainder by harbour masters directly under the authority of the Department of Transport.