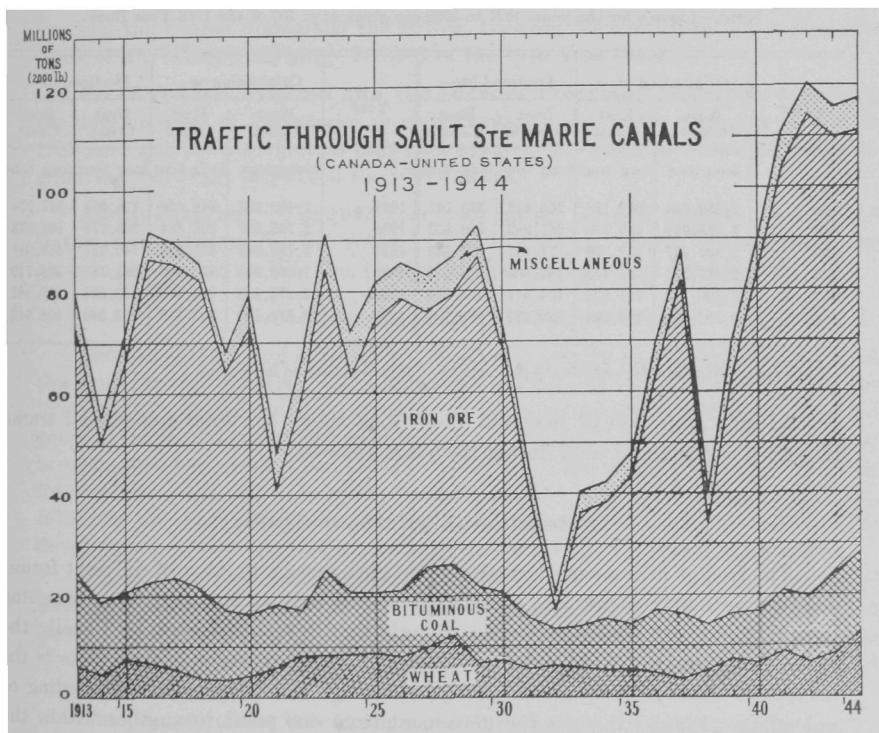


50,000,000 tons in the 1920's to a total of 94,326,578 tons in 1944. Although wheat has ranged as low as only 7 p.c. of the iron-ore tonnage, its value has generally been greater than that of the iron-ore traffic, and has been the most valuable single commodity passed through the canals; in 1928 the value of wheat passed through the canals was 40 p.c. of the value of all traffic. Other grains have been about a quarter to a fifth of the wheat tonnage and a smaller ratio of the value.

Bituminous coal has generally been second in tonnage to iron ore and a large part of it is carried by the ore vessels when returning for a cargo of ore.

The tonnage of the three principal commodities and the tonnage of all freight passed through the canals for the years 1913 to 1944, inclusive, are plotted in the following chart.



**The Panama Canal.\***—The Panama Canal, which was opened to commercial traffic on Aug. 15, 1914, has been a waterway of great importance to British Columbian ports, from which vessels leave direct for British and European ports throughout the year. As an alternative route to that of the transcontinental railway lines, such a passage by water is of vital importance in the solution of the larger transportation problems of the continent, and while its influence is perhaps more potential than actual, such a check on transcontinental rail rates is a valuable one. During the War of 1914-18 the great expectations based upon the opening of the Canal were not realized, owing to the scarcity of shipping. However, with the

\* Information supplied by the Governor of the Panama Canal Zone.