

Subsection 1.—Mileage and Equipment

Although construction was begun in 1835 on the first railway in Canada—the short link of 16 miles between Laprairie and St. Johns, Que.—there were only 66 miles of railway in operation by 1850. The first great period of construction was in the 1850's when the Grand Trunk and Great Western Railways, as well as numerous smaller lines, were built. The building of the Intercolonial and the Canadian Pacific Railways contributed to another period of rapid expansion in the 1870's and 1880's. In the last period of extensive railway building from 1900 to 1917, the Grand Trunk Pacific, National Transcontinental and Canadian Northern Railways were constructed.

1.—Steam-Railway Mileage, 1900-49

NOTE.—Corresponding figures of total mileage of single track for the years 1835 to 1899 are given at p. 546 of the 1941 Year Book.

Total Mileage (Single Track)						Mileage, by Provinces					
Year	Miles in Operation	Year	Miles in Operation	Year	Miles in Operation	Type of Track and Province	1931	1936	1941	1948	1949
	No.		No.		No.		No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
1900	17,657	1917	38,369	1933	42,336	Single—					
1901	18,140	1918	38,252	1934	42,270	Newfoundland.	705
1902	18,714	1919 ¹	38,329	1935	42,916	P.E.I.	286	286	286	286	286
1903	18,988	1919 ²	38,495	1936	42,552	N.S.	1,418	1,397	1,396	1,396	1,396
1904	19,431	1920	38,805	1937	42,727	N.B.	1,934	1,871	1,836	1,835	1,835
						Que.	4,926	4,777	4,789	4,765	4,791
						Ont.	10,905	10,746	10,476	10,464	10,463
1905	20,487	1921	39,191	1938	42,742	Man.	4,419	4,860	4,854	4,836	4,836
1906	21,423	1922	39,358	1939	42,637	Sask.	8,268	8,624	8,777	8,738	8,739
1907	22,446	1923	39,654	1940	42,565	Alta.	5,630	5,687	5,747	5,643	5,643
1908	22,966	1924	40,059	1941	42,441	B.C.	4,097	3,907	3,883	3,888	3,888
1909	24,104	1925	40,350	1942	42,339	Yukon.	58	58	58	58	58
						In U.S.A.	339	339	339	339	339
1910	24,731	1926	40,350	1943	42,346	Totals	42,280	42,552	42,441	42,248	42,979
1911	25,400	1927	40,570	1944	42,336	Second.	2,688	2,500	2,499	2,495	2,494
1912	26,840	1928	41,022	1945	42,352	Industrial	1,606	1,401	1,551	1,822	1,925
1913	29,304	1929	41,380	1946	42,335	Yard and sidings.	10,277	10,239	10,210	10,370	10,436
1914	30,795	1930	42,047	1947	42,322						
1915	34,882	1931	42,280	1948	42,248						
1916	36,985	1932	42,409	1949	42,979	Grand Totals.	56,851	56,692	56,701	57,005	57,834

¹ As at June 30 for this and previous years.

² As at Dec. 31 for this and later years.

Construction of the Newfoundland Railway was begun in 1881 but it was not until 1896 after many difficulties that the transprovincial line from St. John's to Port aux Basques was completed. The railroad now extends over about 705 miles of narrow gauge track—3'6" compared with the standard gauge of 4'8½" in use in the other provinces. Its operations also include coastal steamer service and a dry dock. The railway and steamship services were taken over from private interests by the Government in 1923 in return for a lump settlement of \$2,000,000. The provision of rail and steamship services for the widely scattered population has rarely been profitable, except during the recent war years. When Newfoundland became a province of Canada, Mar. 31, 1949, the Canadian National Railways was entrusted with the operation of the Newfoundland railway facilities and thus added about 4,200 personnel to its payroll.

During the past decade, there has been a tendency for railway mileages to decline slightly because of the abandonment of unprofitable lines. Of the 42,979 miles of single track operated in 1949, over half were Canadian National Railway lines.