

and at about the same time, the Commission built a short transmission line and a substation to serve Port Arthur with power purchased from the Kaministiquia Power Company. These two pioneer systems eventually grew into the Southern Ontario and Thunder Bay Systems, respectively.

In 1911 the Severn System was established and, in the years following, other systems were established to serve groups of municipalities in various sections of the Province. By 1919 the number of systems had reached eleven, where it remained until 1924 when the Severn and two other systems reached were consolidated to form the Georgian Bay System. In 1929-30 a further consolidation of four systems created the Eastern Ontario System. During the 1930's the Commission undertook to operate, in trust for the Provincial Government, what have been known as the Northern Ontario Properties. These were a group of systems which mainly served mining and pulp and paper industries but which were not interconnected. In 1944 the Southern Ontario System came into being through the consolidation of the former Niagara, Georgian Bay and Eastern Ontario Systems.

In 1914 the Commission purchased its first generating station, Big Chute on the Severn River. Later in the same year, the first Commission-built generating station at Wasdells Falls, also on the Severn River, was placed in service. The program of purchase and construction of generating stations thus launched reached its climax between 1917 and 1925 in the construction of the great Queenston-Chippawa development, recently renamed Sir Adam Beck-Niagara Generating Station No. 1, which first delivered power early in 1922. Yet, commencing four years later, the Commission found it necessary to negotiate for the extensive purchase of power from large Quebec suppliers in order to satisfy Ontario's steadily growing demand.

During the three decades between 1921 and 1951 the population of Ontario, as measured at decennial censuses, increased by 17 p.c., 10.4 p.c. and 21.4 p.c. Measured against these very satisfactory rates of increase, the growth of Ontario Hydro has been phenomenal. In 1921 the capital investment of the Commission and its member municipalities was about \$151,000,000. By 1931, it had more than doubled; by 1941, it exceeded \$481,000,000; and by 1951, midway in the current program of expansion, it exceeded \$1,200,000,000. In 1931, the Commission generated and purchased 4,600,000,000 kwh. of electric energy. Corresponding totals for 1941 and 1951 were 10,700,000,000 kwh. and 18,800,000,000 kwh. The dependable peak capacity of the generating stations owned or operated by the Commission rose from 314,400 kw. in 1921, to 820,500 kw. in 1931, to 1,054,800 kw. in 1941, and to 2,237,550 kw. in 1951.

June 1, 1951, was the thirtieth anniversary of the coming into force of the Rural Hydro-Electric Distribution Act. Since 1921 the Commission has vigorously pressed its rural electrification program, assisted by Provincial Government grants in aid of construction of rural distribution facilities. In 1931 the Commission served 54,280 rural customers, in 1941 it served 131,254 and at the close of 1951 it served 318,606. The introduction in 1944 of a uniform rate plan for rural service throughout the Province was a significant event in the latter decade. The number of farms served during 1951 was 85 p.c. of the total number of Ontario farms as calculated on 1951 Census returns. In 1951 the Commission spent \$20,300,000 on its rural program, of which the Provincial Government's share was \$10,000,000.

The rapid growth in power demand that has marked the past decade has taxed the power resources of the Commission to the full. It has been matched by remarkable achievements in the construction of new, and the extension of existing