

in 1932, which was less than the Panama traffic, to 111,792,230 tons in 1957. The dominant traffic from a tonnage aspect is iron ore which fluctuated from a low of 3,607,000 tons in 1932 to a high of 98,657,591 tons in 1953. In 1955 this tonnage amounted to 89,396,865, but dropped to 86,509,714 in 1957.

Soft coal has usually been second in volume to iron ore, increasing from 8,676,297 tons during the 1949 season to 13,301,048 tons in 1950; volume in succeeding years amounted to 7,397,623 tons in 1954, 9,053,769 tons in 1955, 10,238,048 tons in 1956 and 8,970,640 tons in 1957.

Although wheat ranks third in tonnage, its value over the past quarter-century has been greater generally than that of either iron ore or coal. Other grains have been about one-quarter to one-fifth of the wheat tonnage and a smaller ratio of the value.

The Panama Canal.—The Panama Canal was opened to commercial traffic on Aug. 15, 1914, and has since been a waterway of great importance to the ports of British Columbia, from which vessels leave direct for United Kingdom and other European ports throughout the year. As an alternative route to that of the transcontinental railway lines, this water passage is of vital importance in the solution of the bulk transportation problems of the Continent. During World War I the great expectations based upon the opening of the Canal were not realized because of the scarcity of shipping. However, with the postwar decline in ocean freight rates, an increase in traffic between Canada's Pacific ports and Europe took place and, while the proportion carried in vessels of Canadian registry was comparatively small, the cargo tonnage nevertheless assumed considerable proportions. During World War II the volume of Canadian traffic through the Canal was again reduced but has since increased considerably. A distinctive feature of this traffic is that most of the tonnage westbound is destined for Canadian West Coast ports, while only a small percentage of the freight originating on the West Coast is unloaded in Eastern Canada.

15.—Traffic to and from the East and West Coasts of Canada via the Panama Canal, Years Ended June 30, 1949-58

NOTE.—Figures from 1921 are given in the corresponding table of previous Year Books beginning with the 1938 edition.

Year	Originating on—		Destined for—		Year	Originating on—		Destined for—	
	West Coast	East Coast	West Coast	East Coast		West Coast	East Coast	West Coast	East Coast
	long tons	long tons	long tons	long tons		long tons	long tons	long tons	long tons
1949.....	2,298,492	188,506	154,524	145,477	1954.....	4,153,577	398,778	402,335	230,295
1950.....	2,707,047	185,076	226,673	143,395	1955.....	4,109,456	301,450	427,825	303,585
1951.....	2,910,246	240,904	372,534	142,741	1956.....	3,636,245	362,740	601,345	313,440
1952.....	3,644,888	287,872	281,960	114,319	1957.....	3,501,015	470,115	760,142	194,225
1953.....	3,560,925	532,810	341,548	219,567	1958.....	4,577,256	334,385	632,385	210,485