

operating a transcontinental railway supported by a national telecommunications system with connections throughout the world, a large fleet of inland, coastal and ocean-going vessels, a chain of year-round and resort hotels, a domestic airline servicing points in British Columbia, Alberta and Yukon Territory, a transpacific airline service to the Orient and the Antipodes, air services to Mexico, Peru, Chile and Argentina, a transpolar air route connecting Vancouver and Amsterdam, a transatlantic service to Portugal, Spain and Italy, and a limited (one flight daily each way) transcontinental air service between Vancouver and Montreal. Also included in the company's operations are a world-wide express service and a domestic truck and bus network.

The Pacific Great Eastern Railway, owned by the British Columbia Government, operates over a 789.5-mile route from North Vancouver to Fort St. John in the Peace River area of northeastern British Columbia, with a branch line from Chetwynd to Dawson Creek. The completion in 1958 of the northern section of this line opened up to development the vast interior of the province and brought to an end the largest railway construction job undertaken in North America for two decades. With the completion in May 1959 of the last link in the microwave system, the PGE became the first railway on the Continent to be operated entirely by means of radio communication.

The statistics in Subsections 1 to 3 of this Section cover the combined railway facilities of all companies operating in Canada, including intercity freight and passenger services of electric railway companies. Details relating to the Canadian National Railway System are dealt with separately in Subsection 4. A special article covering the consolidation and organization of the CNR appears in the 1955 Year Book at pp. 840-847.

Subsection 1.—Milage and Equipment

Construction was begun in 1835 on the first railway in Canada—the short link of 14.5 miles between Laprairie and St. Johns, Que.—but only 66 miles were in operation by 1850. The first great period of construction was in the 1850's when the Grand Trunk and the Great Western Railways were built as well as numerous smaller lines. 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 (1900-17), the Grand Trunk Pacific, National Transcontinental and Canadian Northern Railways were constructed.

There has been little change in total track milage since the late 1920's, although in recent years the development of a number of large projects in districts far removed from transport facilities and the opening up of the Northwest Territories has necessitated the building of branch lines. Those completed up to 1956 are listed in the 1957-58 Year Book, p. 815, and those completed from that year to 1961 are mentioned in subsequent editions. During 1962, the first section of the 430-mile Great Slave Railway, being built by the CNR for the Federal Government, went into operation. By the end of October, track had reached Manning, Alta., a distance of 56 miles, and rail grain shipments began moving out of this northerly agricultural area. At year-end, 73.5 miles of track had been completed and clearing, grading, bridge and trestle work progressed on the remainder of the right-of-way. Also in Alberta, a 23-mile rail extension was constructed from Whitecourt to Windfall to carry sulphur shipments from the Windfall gas fields. Track-laying was two thirds completed on the 61-mile branch line to the Matagami Lake region in northern Quebec and construction was started on an eight-mile extension from Chisel Lake to a new mining development at Stall Lake in northern Manitoba. Preparatory work was undertaken for the construction of a 15-mile branch line from Nepisiguit Junction, near