

FREIGHT TRAFFIC AND SOME COMMODITY MOVEMENTS

As already mentioned most of the freight traffic on the Great Lakes consists of bulk shipments of commodities. The following figures, published by the Lake Carriers' Association, indicate the steady increase since 1900 in the movement of the four most important of these commodities—iron ore, grain, coal and limestone:—

	<i>Net tons</i>		<i>Net tons</i>
1900.....	35,297,624	1940.....	145,216,410
1910.....	80,014,591	1950.....	177,952,946
1920.....	106,518,531	1953.....	199,696,932
1930.....	112,528,927	1954.....	151,297,789

These shipments reached a record level in 1953. The decline of about 48,000,000 tons in 1954 was partly the result of smaller shipments of industrial products, particularly of iron ore, and partly of smaller movements of Canadian wheat and other grains. Of the 151,300,000 tons shipped in 1954, 68,000,000 tons (45 p.c.) were iron ore, 46,000,000 tons (30.5 p.c.) coal, 12,000,000 tons (8 p.c.) grain, and 25,000,000 tons (16.5 p.c.) limestone. Some indication of the movements of these and other commodities is given in the following statistics of freight movements through the canals in the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence.* These figures however do not include shipments that do not pass through any of the canals. Most of the limestone shipped on the Great Lakes to the steel industries does not pass through the canals and much of the soft coal shipped from Lake Erie goes to other ports on the Great Lakes between the Welland and Sault Ste. Marie Canals.

Tonnages of commodities moving through the Sault Ste. Marie, Welland and St. Lawrence canals in 1954 were as follows:—

	<i>Sault Ste. Marie¹</i>	<i>Welland</i>	<i>St. Lawrence</i>
	(millions of net tons)		
Wheat.....	6.30	2.86	2.37
Other grain.....	4.40	2.45	1.76
Flour.....	0.10	0.02	0.02
Other mill products.....	—	0.01	0.02
Iron ore.....	62.58	2.30	0.30
Pig iron.....	0.22	0.02	—
Manufactured iron and steel.....	0.22	0.15	0.05
Paper.....	—	0.42	0.23
Wood pulp.....	—	0.05	0.04
Pulpwood.....	0.46	0.52	0.50
Lumber.....	—	—	0.03
Anthracite coal.....	0.05	—	0.01
Soft coal and coke.....	7.39	4.98	1.47
Gasoline.....	0.65	0.37	0.12
Other petroleum.....	0.63	1.93	1.00
Sand, gravel and stone.....	1.22	0.17	0.21
All other.....	1.19	1.26	1.51
TOTALS.....	85.41	17.51	9.84

¹ Including U.S. locks.

The above figures include all traffic passing through the canals, that is, traffic to and from all Canadian and American ports in vessels wherever registered. No tolls are levied for passage through the canals, which are currently available to all vessels able to pass through the locks.

Total cargo tonnage passing through the Sault Ste. Marie, Welland and St. Lawrence canals reached a record level in 1953. The 1954 total marks a decline from 1953 of about 30 p.c. to 101,900,000 tons. Approximately 87,000,000 tons of this traffic was downbound, only 14,000,000 tons moving in a westward direction. (Duplications are excluded as far as possible.) The most striking feature of the freight traffic picture is the volume passing through the Sault Ste. Marie canals compared with that going down the River through the St. Lawrence canals. This emphasizes again the difference in the volume

* DBS Canal Statistics.