

parallel. This continuously settled area covers about 0.3% of the area of Canada, but contains somewhat less than 0.6% of the country's population.

There is continuity of settlement throughout the southern half of British Columbia, but the continuity is in the form of narrow interconnecting strips following mountain valleys and coastal plains. Between the valleys large areas are empty of permanent settlement. The settled strips occupy about 0.7% of the area of Canada and contain 9.5% of its population. More than 4.0% of the national population is located in the Lower Fraser Valley, principally in the Vancouver metropolitan area.

North of the areas already described there are a number of disjunct settlements, the most notable of which, in regard to size, are in Ontario and Quebec in a band confined by the 47th and 50th parallels. From east to west these are: the Lac St-Jean Lowland some 100 miles north of Quebec City, the Clay Belts astride the Ontario-Quebec border, the Lakehead, and the Dryden and Fort Frances areas in Ontario near the Manitoba boundary. Collectively these blocks of continuous settlement account for about 0.4% of the area of Canada, and approximately 3.6% of its population.

Outside these urban-rural blocks of settlement there are numerous settlements related to mining, forest industries, transportation, administration, defence, hunting, and fishing but with little or no agricultural base. The largest of these isolated settlements, with their 1971 populations, are as follows: Thompson, Man., 19,001; Whitehorse, YT, 11,217; Labrador City and Wabush, Labrador, 11,009; Kenora, Ont., 10,952; Chibougamau, Que., 9,701; Flin Flon, Man. and Sask., 9,344; Fort McMurray, Alta., 6,847; Yellowknife, NWT, 6,122; The Pas, Man., 6,062; Atikokan, Ont., 6,007.

The geographical knowledge of Canada is reasonably complete considering its size and its large areas of difficult access. The whole country has been surveyed and mapped at a scale of 1:250,000, which is very close to four miles to the inch, allowing a detailed depiction of relief, river systems, transportation facilities, forest cover and centres of population. Comparisons of different features and areas can be made, as all map sheets of the series are drawn to the same specifications. In addition, all settled areas and regions of northern development have been mapped at larger scales, in particular at 1:50,000 or approximately one and a quarter inches to the mile, and vertical air photographs showing still more details of the terrain are available for the whole country, varying in scale from about one inch to the mile in the Arctic to four inches, or larger, to the mile in settled areas.

Politically, Canada is divided into 10 provinces and two territories. Each province is sovereign in its own sphere and administers its own natural resources and upon such resources, as related to topography, position and climate, is based the economy of the province. The resources (except for game) of the Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories, because of their remoteness, the great extent and the meagre and scattered populations of these areas, are administered by the federal government. The approximate land and fresh-water areas of the provinces and territories are given in Table 1.1.

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, administered by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, deals with all questions of geographical nomenclature affecting Canada and undertakes research and investigation into the origin and usage of geographical names. The Committee is composed of representatives of the federal mapping agencies and other federal agencies concerned with nomenclature and a representative appointed by each province.

1.1.1 Mountains and other heights

The great Cordilleran mountain system is Canada's most impressive physical feature. Many peaks in the various ranges embodied in the Canadian Cordillera are over 15,000 ft in height, and a total of 576.4 sq miles of territory lies above the 10,000-ft mark. Mount Logan in the St. Elias Mountains of Yukon Territory, which rises 19,850 ft above sea level, is the highest point in Canada.

The highest points in each province are: Newfoundland, 5,232 ft; Prince Edward Island, 465 ft; Nova Scotia, 1,747 ft; New Brunswick, 2,690 ft; Quebec, 5,210 ft; Ontario, 2,275 ft; Manitoba, 2,729 ft; Saskatchewan, 4,567 ft; Alberta, 12,294 ft; British Columbia, 15,300 ft; Yukon Territory, 19,850 ft; and the Northwest Territories, 9,062 ft.