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TRANSIT SYSTEMS

1935 - 1945

20-4750

The tables in this report were compiled from the records of the Transit Controller, which were transferred to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics last November when control of transit systems was concluded. Monthly reports of traffic carried are now made to the Bureau.

Since its inception the Bureau has compiled statistics of electric railways and previously the statistics were compiled by the Department of Railways and Canals (now Department of Transport), but as electric cars were displaced by motor buses, the statistics of such systems were dropped from the annual electric railway report. The first such transfer was in 1926 when the St. Thomas electric railway ceased operation. This was followed in 1927 by the Peterborough railway, in 1928 by the Yarmouth railway, in 1930 by the Kingston system and in 1931 four railways ceased operation, namely, in Moncton, Sarnia, Sherbrooke, and the Toronto Suburban. In 1932 the Moose Jaw railway ceased operation, in 1933 the Three Rivers railway and in 1939 the Calais Street railway, which operated in St. Stephen on the New Brunswick side of the River St. Croix, ceased operation, and the Windsor system transferred to buses. In 1940 the Brantford Municipal and the London Street railway also ceased operating street cars and substituted motor buses, and the Oshawa (1) system also substituted buses for its street cars but continues to operate electric locomotives for its freight business, and in 1941 the electric railway in Sault Ste. Marie and across the bridge to the city in Michigan ceased operation. This was the last street railway to give way to motor buses but several systems are installing trackless trolley buses in place of electric street cars. During the past 25 years twelve interurban electric railways have ceased operating, and the Nipissing Central ceased operating electric cars and operated its entire business with steam locomotives.

The Transit Controller secured certain statistics for 1933 and subsequent years from electric railways and motor bus systems operating during the war years. Consequently these data for the urban systems present a better picture of the urban transportation than the report on electric railways for the same period.

Passenger traffic on urban systems is shown in Table 1. There were only small increases in each of the geographical groups up to 1939, but extraordinary increases were recorded for the war years. In the Maritime Provinces the increase between 1939 and 1945 was 323 per cent, the principal carriers being the Halifax and St. John systems. In Ontario the increase was 362,463,096 passengers or 155 per cent, in the Prairie Provinces 140 per cent, in British Columbia 113 per cent and in Quebec 97 per cent. The largest annual increase was in 1942 when the total of all systems increased by 27.53 per cent. The shortage of gasoline and tires for private automobiles was undoubtedly an important factor in this and the further reduction in gasoline rations in 1943 probably diverted still more traffic to the public carriers which, with increasing activities of war industries, created an unprecedented situation for urban transit systems. The vehicle miles showed substantial increases during these war years but not nearly as great as the number of passengers carried. In all the groups except the Maritimes and Quebec, the increase in vehicle miles was less than half the increase in passengers

(1) Data for Oshawa Railway are included in Electric Railway Statistics.

carried. This does not necessarily mean that twice as many passengers were crowded into the vehicles because no allowance is made for the average miles each passenger travelled; data on passenger miles are not compiled. Table 3 shows the number of vehicles available for service as compiled by the Transit Controller. The number of electric cars is slightly less than recorded in the electric railway report as vehicles owned, and the difference would be accounted for by vehicles out of service for repairs. The supply of electric cars, trolley buses and motor buses was short and additional equipment could not be secured. The Transit Controller had control of the distribution and he distributed the vehicles where he considered they were most urgently needed; practically every system was attempting to secure more equipment.

The data indicate that average mileage per vehicle was increased from 27,879 in 1939 to 32,987 miles in 1945 or by 18.3 per cent, and that the average number of passengers carried per vehicle increased from 147,178 to 238,264 or by 61.9 per cent. It should be noted that these vehicles vary considerably in capacities and that the largest increase in number was in motor buses which have smaller capacities than electric cars. Tables 4 and 5 show the monthly fluctuations in passengers carried and vehicle miles for the years 1940-1945. In each of these years the urban traffic showed a marked rise in March and declined during the summer months. The walking conditions and the summer driving of private automobiles undoubtedly were factors in these fluctuations. The interurban traffic showed opposite trends, the increases being gradual up to the summer months and peaks being reached in July and August.

Statistics for interurban motor buses are shown in tables 6 and 7. These data do not include the interurban electric railways and were not compiled prior to 1941. The bus miles during 1941-1945 increased from 61,089,787 to 84,604,067 or by 38.5 per cent, and the number of passengers carried increased from 34,435,018 to 80,323,265 or by 133 per cent. The annual increase in passengers carried was 57.4 per cent during 1942 and it was fairly evenly spread throughout the year, and the rate of increase declined to 8.9 per cent in 1945 when over half the increase over 1944 traffic was made in August, September and December. The increase in motor bus miles in 1945 reflects the improvement in the supply of vehicles, gasoline and tires and the removal of restrictions in the length of trips and other regulations.

Checking these totals against the passengers reported by electric railways and motor carriers to the Bureau for the years 1941-1944 shows some differences, but they were insignificant in 1942, less than half of one per cent in 1944 and only 3.4 per cent in 1941 when the Bureau's motor carrier report was inaugurated. This first report was admittedly incomplete for small carriers. There are also some differences in distribution between urban and interurban traffic, due mainly to city systems breaking down their traffic in Bureau reports into urban and interurban.

Table 1

URBAN TRANSPORTATION IN CANADA

PASSENGERS

Year	British Columbia	Prairie Provinces	Ontario	Quebec	Maritimes	Total Passenger	Annual Increase	
							Number	P. C.
1933	62,745,422	70,774,608	216,407,386	217,940,238	14,724,148	582,591,802	-	-
1934	64,230,040	70,582,632	222,264,362	212,132,146	15,452,974	584,662,154	2,070,352	0.36
1935	66,213,225	73,689,391	225,713,664	217,045,032	15,843,756	598,505,068	13,842,914	2.36
1936	69,841,059	76,894,591	224,900,902	219,865,686	15,822,058	607,324,296	8,819,228	1.47
1937	71,794,258	78,750,302	230,652,450	231,302,758	16,351,211	628,830,979	21,506,683	3.54
1938	71,535,721	77,528,193	227,877,702	232,657,557	16,423,625	626,022,798	- 2,808,181	- 0.45
1939	70,789,370	81,258,514	234,410,879	235,180,077	17,996,749	639,635,589	13,612,781	2.17
1940	76,462,858	88,004,614	277,945,143	256,865,546	26,413,455	727,689,618	88,054,027	13.77
1941	85,171,703	101,127,415	332,517,678	301,180,857	36,723,496	850,721,149	129,031,533	17.73
1942	108,520,176	124,782,171	436,209,442	369,629,944	53,408,365	1,092,560,125	235,838,976	27.53
1943	134,085,562	158,705,907	536,184,508	416,800,819	69,373,614	1,315,150,410	222,589,285	20.37
1944	145,909,710	175,002,549	577,220,992	432,868,631	75,574,552	1,404,576,434	89,426,024	6.80
1945	150,811,709	191,719,245	596,873,975	463,940,783	76,146,355	1,477,472,067	72,895,633	5.19
Increase 1939-45 No.	80,022,339	110,460,731	362,463,096	228,760,706	58,149,606	657,836,478		
P.C.	113	140	152	97	323	131		

Table 2

VEHICLE MILES

1933	14,876,872	16,635,654	43,154,721	30,435,257	3,423,315	114,527,619	-	-
1934	14,995,449	16,654,029	43,501,166	33,812,025	3,477,648	112,440,377	- 2,087,442	- 1.82
1935	15,209,062	16,878,265	43,594,984	35,764,888	3,493,685	114,940,862	2,500,505	2.22
1936	15,813,791	16,834,452	43,733,227	34,321,157	3,398,447	114,201,074	- 739,808	- 0.64
1937	16,405,970	17,272,799	43,836,570	38,209,955	3,594,425	119,321,719	5,120,645	4.48
1938	16,797,289	17,081,790	43,800,184	38,146,281	3,692,084	119,525,584	203,865	0.17
1939	15,974,995	17,635,428	45,561,441	38,033,364	3,967,503	121,162,529	1,636,945	1.37
1940	16,968,691	18,935,056	50,560,024	39,801,320	7,809,920	133,613,522	12,450,793	10.28
1941	17,843,291	20,167,681	56,154,903	43,482,276	8,642,566	146,297,777	12,684,455	9.49
1942	19,782,887	21,813,430	67,056,303	50,535,604	10,425,610	169,614,034	23,316,257	15.94
1943	21,860,065	24,217,349	75,571,679	53,840,091	12,600,104	188,089,288	18,475,254	10.89
1944	22,629,800	25,277,530	78,517,255	55,120,684	13,391,055	194,945,324	6,856,036	3.65
1945	24,128,649	26,212,146	80,102,364	57,993,005	13,088,699	201,524,863	6,579,539	3.38
Increase 1939-45 No.	8,153,656	8,576,712	34,550,923	19,959,641	9,121,596	80,562,334		
P.C.	51	49	76	52	230	66		

Table 3

ELECTRIC CAR AND BUS OPERATION

	Revenue Passengers		Mileage Operated		Equipment Available for Service				
	Number	P. C.	Number	P. C.	Electric Car	Trolley Bus	Gas Bus	Total	P. C.
1939	639,835,569	100.0	121,162,529	100.0	3,190	28	1,126	4,346	100.0
1940	727,689,616	114.0	136,613,322	110.0	3,141	29	1,354	4,504	104.0
1941	856,721,149	134.2	146,297,777	120.8	3,148	29	1,718	4,895	113.0
1942	1,092,560,125	171.0	169,614,034	140.0	3,222	33	2,095	5,350	123.5
1943	1,315,150,410	206.0	188,089,288	155.0	3,275	41	2,302	5,618	129.8
1944	1,404,576,434	220.0	194,945,324	161.0	3,317	49	2,602	5,968	137.6
1945	1,477,472,067	230.9	201,524,863	166.3					

Table 4

URBAN TRANSIT SYSTEMS
PASSENGERS CARRIED

Month	1 9 4 0	1 9 4 1	1 9 4 2	1 9 4 3	1 9 4 4	1 9 4 5
January	62,272,117	72,121,429	85,941,464	110,542,230	118,357,125	123,576,164
February	59,584,636	68,241,296	82,703,238	103,918,022	113,973,382	120,091,531
March	63,529,181	74,040,844	89,651,216	113,430,897	123,643,513	128,579,695
April	59,692,765	68,182,314	87,922,965	110,421,680	117,574,110	121,522,730
May	58,739,410	69,065,300	88,776,608	110,208,291	118,048,079	123,078,379
June	55,522,192	65,758,335	86,699,186	106,734,279	113,995,478	119,626,917
July	54,834,614	65,997,034	86,888,311	105,406,552	108,981,415	114,255,736
August	56,899,799	67,813,496	87,813,834	104,863,536	101,298,091	117,970,790
September	57,994,403	70,409,182	90,635,802	106,700,518	113,891,837	117,753,714
October	63,189,748	76,452,326	99,320,395	114,053,534	119,888,621	127,946,677
November	66,851,579	77,872,031	101,348,508	116,242,256	123,782,243	130,659,711
December	74,059,367	86,686,439	112,755,020	122,783,955	129,117,822	133,076,535
TOTAL	733,169,851	862,640,026	1,100,456,547	1,325,305,748	1,402,552,006	1,477,472,067

Table 5

VEHICLE MILES RUN

	1 9 4 0	1 9 4 1	1 9 4 2	1 9 4 3	1 9 4 4	1 9 4 5
January	11,414,915	12,364,901	13,678,831	15,482,615	16,429,006	16,221,911
February	10,858,897	11,409,036	12,712,161	14,455,550	15,546,182	15,504,415
March	11,393,517	12,612,901	14,257,137	15,905,652	16,797,926	17,200,188
April	11,116,771	12,158,342	14,071,044	15,760,867	16,164,956	16,606,832
May	11,288,818	12,432,881	14,554,053	16,283,210	16,835,295	17,084,494
June	10,911,543	12,062,469	14,236,134	15,887,821	16,400,866	16,806,135
July	11,242,745	12,496,482	14,585,214	16,321,668	16,584,126	16,280,131
August	11,338,046	12,417,650	14,409,308	16,059,411	15,338,786	16,975,707
September	10,914,961	12,261,254	14,163,989	15,753,394	16,162,913	16,554,126
October	11,480,679	12,815,299	15,031,084	16,211,313	16,545,103	17,226,316
November	11,497,331	12,708,592	14,754,883	16,133,871	16,563,187	17,072,102
December	12,320,722	12,739,002	15,685,072	16,768,344	16,841,247	17,421,872
TOTAL	135,778,945	148,478,809	172,138,910	191,023,915	196,389,083	201,524,863

Table 6

INTERURBAN TRANSIT SYSTEMS

PASSENGERS CARRIED

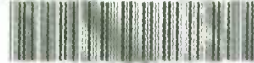
Month	1 9 4 1	1 9 4 2	1 9 4 3	1 9 4 4	1 9 4 5
January	2,426,277	3,398,676	4,962,077	5,778,314	5,915,973
February	2,326,579	3,336,220	4,600,895	5,445,524	5,658,972
March	2,497,612	3,651,217	4,757,922	5,682,109	6,166,566
April	2,398,594	3,757,803	5,070,784	5,636,013	5,813,007
May	2,670,319	4,153,024	5,375,381	5,905,794	6,335,724
June	2,894,103	4,251,912	5,507,113	6,199,871	6,571,275
July	3,292,071	4,851,008	6,198,572	7,010,710	7,479,841
August	3,524,290	5,005,091	6,120,060	6,875,800	7,605,928
September	3,050,564	4,515,690	5,668,616	6,382,181	7,661,950
October	3,033,818	4,720,851	5,774,368	6,264,097	6,506,400
November	3,061,119	4,567,264	5,655,662	6,093,355	6,760,163
December	3,259,672	4,590,874	5,823,366	6,101,548	7,849,466
TOTAL	34,455,018	50,759,610	65,519,816	73,375,316	80,323,265
Increase - No.		16,324,592	14,760,206	7,855,500	6,947,949
P.C.		57.4	29.1	12.0	8.9

Table 7

VEHICLE MILES RUN

January	4,229,190	4,939,840	4,699,077	5,403,951	5,784,524
February	3,852,524	4,557,421	4,162,934	5,069,622	5,458,067
March	4,151,383	4,808,611	4,375,488	5,357,066	5,980,198
April	4,146,736	4,646,903	4,626,332	5,389,834	5,824,543
May	4,853,009	5,580,842	5,472,444	5,912,118	6,553,730
June	5,380,738	5,722,853	5,718,624	6,248,827	7,116,257
July	6,233,515	6,472,971	6,364,055	7,023,420	8,312,107
August	6,565,554	6,792,118	6,349,626	7,024,101	8,590,217
September	5,642,992	6,136,579	5,904,414	6,654,077	8,448,743
October	5,509,696	5,957,124	5,991,885	6,627,865	7,590,501
November	5,252,935	5,473,427	5,725,219	6,252,674	7,423,453
December	5,271,517	4,862,699	5,673,302	6,088,379	7,521,727
TOTAL	61,089,787	66,151,588	65,063,696	73,051,954	84,004,067
Increase - No.		5,061,601	- 1,087,692	7,988,238	11,552,133
P.C.		8.1	- 1.6	12.3	15.8

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