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Herbert Marshall

W. H. Losee

C. H. McDonald

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MONTHLY INDEXES OF RETAIL SALES IN CANADA, MARCH, 1947

(1935-1939=100)

The trend of consumer expenditures in Canada's retail stores remained upward during March when sales increased 6 per cent over March a year ago. While the level of trading remains high and continues on the upgrade, a tendency for retail business to level off has been in evidence in recent months, sales in January and February having shown increases of 13 and 10 per cent respectively. The average gain in sales for the first quarter of this year over last amounted to 9 per cent.

Consumer reaction to increasing prices may be cited as a partial explanation for the loss in momentum of retail sales, but the fact that government payments in the form of grants and gratuities to ex-service personnel were more substantial at this time last year is also an important factor to be considered.

Unadjusted indexes of sales (on the base, 1935-1939=100) stood at 223.2 for March, 1947, 210.3 for March, 1946 and 183.2 for February, 1947.

Five of the fourteen trades comprising the monthly series showed sales declines in March of this year compared with last. It is remarkable, too, that some of the five are among those which should normally benefit from Easter trade of which a larger portion was attributable to March this year than last because of the earlier date of Easter. Thus, three of the four apparel trades did a smaller volume of business this year, while the fourth, men's wear stores, enjoyed only a fractional margin of increase. Weather conditions in March a year ago were generally more favourable for retail shopping than was the case this year, which may account partially for the moderation in sales expansion. Restaurants and jewellery stores, whose sales volumes have shown noticeable signs of weakening in recent months, were others which reported reduced sales this March compared with last.

Although the general index of sales in the Maritime Provinces fell 1 per cent below that for March, 1946, other sections of the country reported increases in the general level of retail trading. British Columbia was in the lead with an 11 per cent increase, while the remaining divisions had increases which were in the vicinity of the overall 6 per cent increase for the country.

Declines were prominent among the percentage changes for individual trades in various parts of the country. In the Maritime Provinces, department stores and durable household goods stores reported fairly large increases in volume of business, but most other specialty stores lost ground and decreases ran as high as 31 per cent for jewellery stores. Sizable reductions in dollar sales of the apparel trades were apparent. In British Columbia, apparel trades did not experience the same reductions as elsewhere, and the increases for certain other trades such as country general stores, variety stores and hardware stores were more substantial than in other areas.

Price 10 cents

Chain candy stores reported an increase of 12 per cent in sales for March, 1947 over the same month a year ago, and were up by 11 per cent in the quarterly comparison. Sales of furriers increased 12 per cent in March of this year over last.

Department Store Sales for Selected Departments

Department store sales of all types of merchandise were higher in March this year than last and, for certain departments such as home furnishings, household appliances, radio and music, and stationery, increases exceeded 20 per cent. Sales of food departments have been expanding steadily in recent months and the gain reached 15 per cent in March, the price factor doubtless accounting for much of this increase. Gains were considerably reduced in March for the apparel, footwear, furniture and hardware departments.

The quarterly comparison of sales by departments is included in this issue.

Comparison of Retail Sales in Canada, and for Regions, by Kinds of Business
 (Comparisons are based on dollar sales. No corrections have been made for price changes.)

Kind of Business	March, 1947 Compared With								Jan.-Mar., 1947 Compared With					
	March, 1947	Feb. 1947	March, 1946						Jan.-Mar., 1946					
	CANADA	CAN.	Mar. Prov.	Que.	Ont.	Pr. Prov.	Br. Col.	CAN.	Mar. Prov.	Que.	Ont.	Pr. Prov.	Br. Col.	
GENERAL INDEX	+ 90.3	+21.8	+ 6.1	- 1	+ 8	+ 5	+ 7	+11	+ 9.3	+ 3	+12	+10	+ 8	+12
General Merchandise Group:														
Country General Stores	+ 87.8	+18.1	+ 5.6	+ 1	+ 4	+ 5	+ 8	+15	+ 7.2	+ 6	+ 8	+ 9	+ 6	+11
Department Stores	+123.8	+31.7	+12.4	+ 9	+18	+10	+13	+14	+15.9	+ 9	+23	+16	+15	+15
Variety Stores	+ 71.9	+22.4	+ 4.1	- 9	+ 8	+ 3	+ 3	+15	+ 7.2	- 2	+11	+ 7	+ 5	+13
Food Group:														
Food Stores	+ 69.3	+15.2	+ 6.8	+ 1	+ 7	+ 8	+ 6	+ 9	+ 8.5	+ 3	+ 9	+ 9	+ 8	+ 9
Restaurants	+ 79.6	+11.8	- 2.3	- 9	- 4	- 1	- 4	+ 4	+ 0.4	- 7	(a)	+ 1	- 2	+ 6
Clothing Group:														
Family Clothing Stores	+118.1	+34.7	- 2.4	-16	+ 1	- 4	- 5	+16	+ 6.4	- 1	+ 9	+ 6	+ 4	+13
Men's Clothing Stores	+111.8	+33.2	+ 0.7	-18	+ 8	(a)	- 3	+14	+ 4.3	-12	+13	+ 6	- 6	+10
Women's Clothing Stores	+116.7	+46.0	- 2.1	- 3	+ 3	- 7	(a)	+12	+ 8.5	+ 5	+12	+ 6	+ 6	+19
Shoe Stores	+ 93.5	+57.8	-13.5	-16	-11	-18	-18	+ 6	- 1.2	- 2	(a)	- 3	- 5	+ 6
Household and Personal Effects Group:														
Drug Stores	+ 70.5	+10.2	+ 5.5	- 1	+ 6	+ 5	+ 9	+ 8	+ 4.2	- 1	+ 4	+ 4	+ 5	+ 7
Furniture Stores	+ 84.5	+21.8	+12.8	+12	+20	+14	- 2	+ 4	+17.3	+20	+25	+18	(a)	+11
Hardware Stores	+143.8	+26.7	+ 7.9	+ 8	+15	+ 1	+ 7	+19	+12.7	+13	+19	+11	+ 8	+18
Jewellery Stores (b).....	+ 77.8	+14.3	-12.7	-31	+10	-18	-17	-13	- 8.0	-19	+10	-13	-13	- 7
Radio and Electrical Stores	+125.9	+15.5	+40.6	+37	+35	+46	+39	+37	+50.6	+53	+45	+57	+41	+57

(a) Change of less than 0.5 per cent.

(b) Based on sales including the Federal Tax introduced in June, 1942.

DEPARTMENT STORE SALES IN CANADA, BY SELECTED DEPARTMENTS

March, 1946 and March, 1947⁽¹⁾

These figures are derived from a sample of reporting companies and are not to be interpreted as total department store sales.

	March, 1946	March, 1947	% Change, 1947/1946
	\$	\$	
TOTAL SALES, ALL DEPARTMENTS	41,320,211	46,354,357	+12.2
1. Women's dresses, coats and suits	5,424,558	5,765,206	+ 6.3
2. Girls' and infants' wear	1,951,499	2,112,326	+ 8.2
3. Hosiery and gloves	1,439,692	1,602,143	+11.3
4. Lingerie and corsets	1,531,641	1,702,535	+11.2
5. Millinery	564,331	617,017	+ 9.3
6. Women's and children's apparel - (Total, 1-5)	10,911,721	11,799,227	+ 8.1
7. Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings	4,665,922	5,106,848	+ 9.4
8. Drugs and toilet articles and preparations ...	1,007,800	1,029,859	+ 2.2
9. Piece goods	3,230,946	3,703,433	+14.6
10. Smallwares	1,306,616	1,525,354	+16.7
11. Food and kindred products	2,895,144	3,326,096	+14.9
12. Furniture (including mattresses and springs) .	2,808,961	3,105,476	+10.6
13. Home furnishings	2,915,531	3,620,354	+24.2
14. Household appliances and electrical supplies .	1,096,891	1,579,168	+44.0
15. Hardware and kitchen utensils	2,112,806	2,253,827	+ 6.7
16. Radios, musical instruments and supplies	558,077	848,733	+52.1
17. Shoes and other footwear	2,948,965	3,117,138	+ 5.7
18. Stationery, books and magazines	612,299	743,823	+21.5
19. All other departments, total	4,248,532	4,595,021	+ 8.2

(1) Revised since publication of the preliminary report on department store sales.

CANADA - Indexes of Retail Sales - (Average for 1935-1939 = 100)

A. Unadjusted. B. Adjusted for Number of Business Days and Seasonal Variations.
(Figures for the current year are subject to final revision)

Year and Month	General Index		Country General		Department		Variety	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
March, 1941	117.3	126.5	95.0	111.8	111.6	125.0	121.0	150.9
March, 1943	149.0	163.9	123.7	145.4	145.4	164.3	153.5	198.8
March, 1945	194.3	201.9	158.2	179.6	200.5	215.5	208.6	234.4
March, 1946	210.3	229.2	168.9	197.3	222.2	258.7	199.9	247.4
February, 1947	183.2	233.4	151.1	203.0	189.7	252.2	169.9	251.6
March, 1947	223.2	238.6	178.4	209.3	249.8	274.5	208.0	255.1

Year and Month	Food		Restaurants		Family Clothing		Men's(a) Clothing	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
March, 1941	134.7	126.9	114.2	115.9	102.6	122.9	105.0	130.6
March, 1943	166.1	163.3	171.2	172.7	135.0	169.3	137.0	170.6
March, 1945	201.2	188.3	196.0	196.4	217.1	228.6	207.0	218.8
March, 1946	213.5	197.6	209.7	213.7	229.3	278.1	220.9	262.1
February, 1947	198.0	215.6	183.3	207.5	166.1	256.7	167.0	265.8
March, 1947	228.1	215.0	204.9	209.4	223.8	252.0	222.4	242.4

Year and Month	Women's Clothing		Shoes		Drugs		Furniture	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
March, 1941	114.7	135.7	96.2	127.8	123.7	125.6	119.8	139.6
March, 1943	155.6	189.2	135.3	192.9	159.6	162.6	111.8	130.3
March, 1945	259.5	260.7	226.0	243.2	188.4	186.5	144.0	166.5
March, 1946	253.8	302.8	215.2	284.6	199.7	200.9	195.9	224.9
February, 1947	170.2	270.8	117.9	199.4	191.4	212.3	181.4	232.5
March, 1947	248.5	275.8	186.1	227.1	210.9	212.8	221.0	254.6

Year and Month	Hardware		(b) Jewellery		Radio and Electrical	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
March, 1941	96.3	134.9	108.5	141.8	119.1	139.1
March, 1943	117.7	161.3	144.6	182.1	111.2	125.0
March, 1945	167.4	230.1	204.3	267.2	111.7	130.4
March, 1946	217.7	300.4	220.9	288.9	191.3	223.3
February, 1947	185.3	339.5	168.8	242.4	232.8	301.7
March, 1947	234.8	321.6	192.9	252.2	269.0	314.0

(a) Includes men's furnishings.

(b) Based on sales including the Federal Tax introduced in June, 1942.

Unadjusted Indexes of Retail Sales by Regions - (Average for 1935 - 1939 = 100)
 (Figures for the current year are subject to final revision)

Year and Month	General Index	Country General	Department	Variety	Food	Restaurant	Family Clothing
Maritime Provinces							
March, 1941	123.2	98.1	115.9	156.0	129.6	162.9	105.1
March, 1946	235.7	189.3	263.5	230.4	227.7	250.2	264.4
February, 1947	196.9	179.7	188.2	176.1	211.6	201.1	186.8
March, 1947	233.3	191.4	287.6	210.3	229.6	228.5	222.9
Quebec							
March, 1941	121.6	104.4	116.1	122.2	137.7	115.5	105.9
March, 1946	217.9	182.7	253.2	233.6	219.0	208.2	261.1
February, 1947	186.0	148.3	204.9	199.7	203.3	182.5	174.7
March, 1947	235.7	189.4	297.7	251.9	234.9	199.8	263.4
Ontario							
March, 1941	120.8	97.0	112.1	117.5	139.3	114.8	106.6
March, 1946	203.9	165.3	202.4	186.2	211.4	203.4	190.7
February, 1947	181.5	152.7	193.4	158.9	197.4	180.6	136.8
March, 1947	214.7	173.1	223.2	192.4	227.9	201.3	183.2
Prairie Provinces							
March, 1941	102.9	85.2	104.3	116.2	118.5	106.5	85.2
March, 1946	204.6	151.2	224.5	191.7	205.5	221.3	240.3
February, 1947	172.7	137.0	174.2	158.5	186.2	182.5	190.9
March, 1947	218.5	162.6	252.6	197.2	217.5	212.7	228.9
British Columbia							
March, 1941	117.6	98.8	119.6	105.6	131.0	96.0	100.7
March, 1946	211.0	178.1	221.5	152.0	202.1	195.4	189.2
February, 1947	196.3	164.5	196.9	150.6	186.4	186.0	183.9
March, 1947	234.6	205.0	251.8	174.8	220.4	202.4	218.7

Unadjusted Indexes of Retail Sales by Regions - (Average for 1935 - 1939 = 100)
 (Figures for the current year are subject to final revision)

Men's(a) Clothing	Women's Clothing	Shoes	Drugs	Furniture	Hardware	(b) Jewellery	Radio and Electrical
Maritime Provinces							
128.5	123.0	96.4	138.3	110.7	87.4	145.3	130.9
288.1	285.0	239.0	229.7	264.0	205.6	324.4	190.7
193.2	200.5	142.0	211.5	236.3	167.3	237.3	256.5
237.7	275.4	200.2	226.5	296.6	222.2	225.4	261.0
Quebec							
100.4	105.9	85.2	126.0	126.2	103.5	103.3	123.8
197.7	229.6	199.0	202.3	173.4	221.8	195.7	210.4
137.8	149.1	88.7	194.9	160.3	195.7	156.8	250.8
213.1	235.3	177.0	214.0	208.8	255.4	215.8	283.2
Ontario							
110.6	115.5	99.2	124.9	122.0	93.2	110.7	116.0
226.1	272.1	214.7	187.5	182.0	198.1	203.9	162.0
167.6	176.3	110.9	179.9	179.2	159.9	161.7	203.6
225.8	252.9	177.0	197.0	207.0	199.9	167.1	237.1
Prairie Provinces							
90.6	110.1	95.2	115.3	97.1	88.3	102.1	118.3
220.2	233.1	213.5	204.3	229.8	231.3	267.0	246.4
169.5	160.5	129.4	192.7	185.8	194.5	171.8	269.7
214.3	233.8	175.2	222.3	224.5	246.4	220.8	342.9
British Columbia							
89.1	138.9	117.0	116.8	115.3	123.8	93.9	119.3
202.9	246.1	249.9	230.4	258.5	278.7	221.2	206.2
222.8	201.2	218.0	230.8	226.0	276.5	177.6	264.3
230.2	274.4	264.2	247.7	268.4	330.3	191.8	283.1

(a) Includes men's furnishings.

(b) Based on sales including the Federal Tax introduced in June, 1942.



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DEPARTMENT STORE SALES IN CANADA, BY SELECTED DEPARTMENTS

Jan.-Mar., 1946 and Jan.-Mar., 1947

These figures are derived from a sample of reporting companies and are not to be interpreted as total department store sales.

	Jan.-Mar., 1946	Jan.-Mar., 1947	% Change. 1947/1946
TOTAL SALES, ALL DEPARTMENTS	94,913,677	109,688,265	+15.6
1. Women's dresses, coats and suits	11,026,077	12,556,839	+13.9
2. Girls' and infants' wear	3,608,527	4,043,178	+12.0
3. Hosiery and gloves	3,334,409	3,955,839	+18.6
4. Lingerie and corsets	3,703,539	4,107,860	+10.9
5. Millinery	1,005,295	1,097,888	+ 9.2
6. Women's and children's apparel - (Total,1-5)	22,677,847	25,761,604	+13.6
7. Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings ...	9,870,816	10,934,411	+10.8
8. Drugs and toilet articles and preparations .	2,733,399	2,828,236	+ 3.5
9. Piece goods	8,350,098	9,705,394	+16.2
10. Smallwares	3,337,459	3,853,629	+15.5
11. Food and kindred products	7,906,170	8,899,906	+12.6
12. Furniture (including mattresses and springs)	6,788,855	7,781,143	+14.6
13. Home furnishings	6,897,081	8,662,840	+25.6
14. Household appliances and electrical supplies	2,603,530	3,824,115	+46.9
15. Hardware and kitchen utensils	4,398,307	5,066,835	+15.2
16. Radios, musical instruments and supplies ...	1,416,499	2,381,551	+68.1
17. Shoes and other footwear	6,034,641	6,707,758	+11.2
18. Stationery, books and magazines	1,762,584	1,920,451	+ 9.0
19. All other departments, total	10,136,391	11,360,392	+12.1