

and Becker, Canada was for many years the first country in the world in the quantity of freight carried by air.

To-day, scheduled airlines run from Edmonton into the Yukon and beyond, and from the same booming centre of air transport to Yellowknife and to the towns of the Mackenzie Valley as far north as Aklavik. In addition, aircraft owned by individuals, corporations or governments are readily available at many posts in the Canadian North, and nowhere in that great expanse is there a spot that cannot be reached within a few hours flying. Yet it was less than a generation ago that even the simplest trip into our northern lands involved weeks of preparation and months of back-straining toil.

Other forms of Arctic transport are being slowly but stubbornly developed. The Alaska Highway, constructed as a war measure, now joins together the airports of the northwest staging route and provides permanent land access to Alaska. The Atlin district, famous in the history of gold, is being linked to Whitehorse by road, and from legendary Dawson City and the Klondike another road is working south to Whitehorse, tying in on the way the mineral areas in the Mayo district. North from Alberta a highway now stretches over the tundra to Hay River, with a winter road providing ground access to Yellowknife. In addition, scientific study and experiment are pushing forward the development of more and more efficient types of snow-mobiles - machines that will eventually supersede the Husky and the Samoyede as the motor car has supplanted the horse and mule.

By sea small vessels sailing out of Aklavik and Tuktoyaktuk service the weather stations and other scientific and trading posts that are spreading rapidly across the Arctic islands.

In 1950 a new vessel, constructed by the Government, will take the place of the wrecked NASCOPIE in carrying scientists, doctors, missionaries and administrators every year into the most isolated and barren areas of the eastern Arctic.

If the base metal discoveries on Great Slave Lake develop as is now expected, a railway will within a few years reach the shores of that inland sea.

But the air will always remain the chief means of transport in the Canadian North.

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It is the progress made in air travel and the recognition that the shortest routes between the major modern concentrations of human activity and power pass over Arctic lands and waters that have caused most of the dramatic and headline attention that has been focussed on the North in recent years.

During the war it is known that Canada and the United States worked together in the development of northern air supply routes, both to the United Kingdom and to Siberian Russia. The northwest staging route, the development of which was started by Canada before the war and completely paid for by this country, was the line along which thousands of air-craft were sent to reinforce the Russian front. Similarly, from the central and eastern parts of the continent bombing and fighting machines were flown to embattled Britain by way of Labrador and Greenland. To-day these routes are for the most part still available for commercial travel. In addition, post-war planes can fly directly and non-stop across the roof of the world from Nanking to Ottawa or from Vancouver to Moscow. In the event of another war the bombers will cross the icecaps, not the open seas.