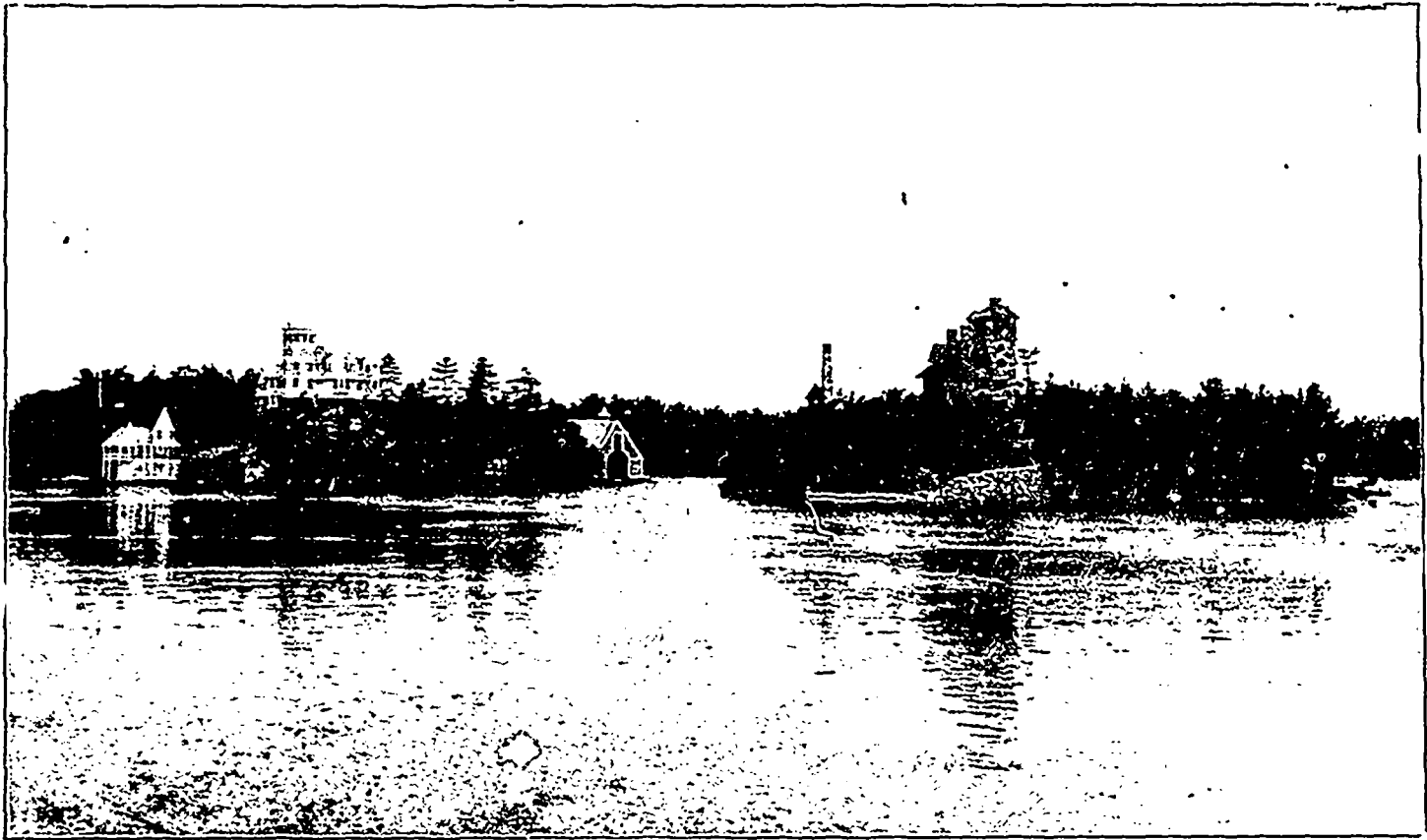


THE RICHELIEU & ONTARIO NAVIGATION COMPANY.

The company now operating as the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company was organized in 1849 under the name of the Richelieu Co. for passenger and freight carriage between Montreal, Three Rivers, Quebec and intermediate ports. As years went past the Richelieu absorbed another five companies. The La Prairie Navigation Co., owning one steamship, which ran between Montreal and La Prairie, the Richelieu River Navi-

gation Co., owning one steamship sailing between Montreal and Richelieu, the Longueuil Co., which, owning three vessels traded between Montreal and Longueuil; the St. Lawrence River Navigation Co., which, with four steamships ran from Montreal to Quebec, Murray Bay, Chicoutimi, etc., as at present, the Canadian Navigation Co., which, with five steamships, worked the river traffic from Toronto to Montreal.

The first period was one of virtual monopoly. There was no competition, which if it benefits the public often makes a company's business anything but profitable. This period, therefore, was one of great dividends, business being abundant and there being no cut rate and no railway competition. Passenger tickets, it is true, did not cost more than they do now, and for a time cost a great deal less under the first pressure of competition, but the mis-



IN THE THOUSAND ISLANDS

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The amalgamated company starting with

time of the Crimean war, 1856, because large fortunes were being made then in Montreal and elsewhere in Canada owing to the unprecedented demand and large prices given for wheat, but these facilities were never attempted to be supplied by the Richelieu and Ontario Co.

The history of the company divides itself into three chief periods, the first from 1848 to 1880, the second from 1880 to 1894, and the third from 1894 to the present time.

cellaneous freight such as that sent by wholesale houses to retail houses, and such as city merchants might send as the filling of country order was charged at about three times the present rates. Some materials were also cheaper than they are now, and wages of employees were very much easier paid, so that the first 30 years of the company's existence was quite a golden age in its history.

The old-time coach service was in full swing fifty years ago. One stage coach