

**HOUSING UPSURGE:** Swelled by a 65.5% boost in December completions, the number of new dwelling units built in Canada surged to an all-time peak of 96,839 last year, 23,752 or nearly a third more than in 1952 and 7,824 or 9% more than in 1950, the previous high year, according to advance figures released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

Counting 3,824 units added by the conversion of existing dwellings the total 1953 supply of new housing units was 100,663 as compared with 76,338 in 1952 when 3,251 units were added by conversions.

There were more new dwelling units of all types constructed last year, but a smaller proportion were one-family houses. Of the total, 68,916 or 71% were one-family houses as compared with 55,967 or almost 77% of the total in 1952. Apartments or flats numbered 19,837 against 11,707 and accounted for 20% as against 16% a year earlier. Two-family houses numbered 7,714 against 5,314 and represented 8% as compared with 7%. The number of row or terrace units was 372 as against 99 in 1952.

The 1953 construction upsurge was common to all parts of the country.

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**NAMING SMALL SHIPS:** Most smaller vessels of the Royal Canadian Navy will henceforth be known by name rather than by number. Familiar names of ships which were in service during the Second World War are being used in the naming of the navy's smaller craft.

HMC Ships Cougar, Beaver, Moose, Reindeer, Wolf and Raccoon are the names assigned to six Fairmile motor launches allotted to Great Lakes training.

New to the RCN will be the bird names assigned to the seaward defence patrol craft now under construction - the Loon, Cormorant, Blue Heron, Mallard, Arctic Tern, Sandpiper, Herring Gull and Kingfisher. These are the names of "water" birds which commonly nest in Canada.

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**TV BUYING JUMPS:** Producers' sales of television receivers climbed steeply again in October, and exceeded the sales of radio receivers which declined from a year earlier. In the January-October period, TV sales more than tripled while radio sales advanced 15%. TV sales in October rose to 59,277 units from 23,020, and the value advanced to \$23,318,865 from \$9,798,156. In the ten-month period the sales were up to 259,721 units valued at \$105,112,199 as compared with 85,704 units valued at \$38,761,092.

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The number of pig iron blast furnaces in operation increased by one to 15 in 1952 and rated capacity totalled 3,450,000 net tons, nearly one-fifth more than in 1951.

**WHEAT AND FLOUR EXPORTS:** Exports of Canadian wheat and wheat flour in terms of wheat in December amounted to 17,800,000 bushels, a considerable decline from November's 24,400,000 bushels, but only six per cent below the 1943-44 - 1952-53 average of 19,000,000 bushels. This brought the cumulative total for August 1 - December 31 period to 120,600,000 bushels as compared with 168,100,000 for the comparable period of 1952.

December's exports of wheat as grain totalled 13,700,000 bushels, a decrease of one-third from those of the preceding month, and August-December exports dropped to 101,900,000 bushels from 143,000,000. Preliminary customs returns indicate that 4,100,000 bushels of wheat flour in terms of wheat equivalent were exported in December, unchanged from November, but down from the adjusted total of 5,100,000 a year earlier. In the five months, August-December, exports totalled 18,600,000 bushels compared with 25,200,000.

The United Kingdom took some 32,500,000 bushels of Canadian wheat during the August-January period. Other major markets were as follows: Japan, 20,100,000 bushels; the Federal Republic of Germany, 8,900,000; Belgium, 7,000,000; Switzerland, 4,300,000; India, 4,300,000; the Netherlands, 3,400,000; Spain, 3,400,000; United States, 3,400,000 (of which 1,400,000 was for milling in bond); Israel, 2,200,000; Union of South Africa, 2,200,000; Ireland, 1,800,000; and Peru, 1,100,000.

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**RECORD CHEQUES CASHED:** Topping all previous annual totals, the value of cheques cashed in 35 clearing centres of Canada in the year 1953 climbed to \$137,417,000,000, a gain of 10% over the high 1952 total of \$125,197,000,000. December's total was up to \$12,468,000,000 from \$12,386,000,000 in the same 1952 month.

Advances were general throughout Canada in the year, Ontario showing the largest regional gain of 12%. Debits in the Atlantic Provinces advanced nearly 11%, and the Prairie region by almost 10%. Quebec's increase was 7.5%, and British Columbia's, 6.1%.

Among the clearing centres, London and Kitchener showed the largest relative increases over 1952 with gains of 26% and 24%, respectively. Payments in Toronto rose more than 16%, Montreal by nearly 8%, Vancouver 6.5%, and Winnipeg 4.9%.

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**BRIGADE REINFORCEMENTS:** Nearly 300 officers and men of the Canadian Army will sail from Saint John, New Brunswick, about February 17 aboard the Empress of France for service in Europe and the United Kingdom, it was announced February 10 by Army Headquarters.

Most of the soldiers are bound for West Germany as reinforcements for various units of the 1st Canadian Infantry Brigade.