



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

An address by Mr. George Hees, Minister of Transport, at the first Annual Meeting of the Sundridge Chamber of Commerce, Sundridge, Ont., January 31, 1958.

It is a pleasure to be able to meet, through the Chamber of Commerce, so many representatives from throughout this very important district and to be able, as I propose to do, to talk to you on the part that transportation and communications have played in the development of this country of ours, and its responsibilities in the immediate future.

If you will bear with me for a while, I would like to turn back a few pages of Canadian history to give you a broad picture of the part that has been played hitherto by transportation and communication.

It is needless to remind you that sailing ships brought to our shores the early Viking explorers, the fishermen from England, France and Portugal and eventually our early settlers. With water the main vehicle of transportation, it is understandable that our coastal areas and the lower St. Lawrence River should have witnessed the first settlements and, later, to have seen such settlements extending further up-river and into the Great Lakes.

From the early days of the French regime, our waterways were developed in the promotion of the fur trade. French traders and explorers extended the lake and river routes as far afield as the foothills of the Rockies and the mouth of the Mississippi, while the "Gentlemen Adventurers Trading Into Hudson's Bay", as the Hudson's Bay Company was called when it was established in 1670, developed a network of fur trade routes extending from Hudson's Bay as far west as the Pacific Ocean. The accounts of the travels of these intrepid adventurers, explorers and traders, whether French or English, are filled with excitement and interest and are a fruitful source of Canadian history.