

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Scope

This Department has under its direct control not only such public works as roads, bridges, wharves and ferries, but also all construction work in connection with court houses, gaols, prison-farms, mental hospitals, and numerous schools.

In addition, this Department supervises the inspection of machinery, factories, dyking and electrical energy.

The fact that approximately one-fifth of the total estimated expenditure of the Province for the fiscal year is accounted for by the Works Department in itself emphasizes the important position it occupies in the affairs of the Province, and the great responsibilities placed upon its Executive and Administrative Officials under its capable Minister.

Extent

Embracing an area of approximately 373,000 square miles, it is natural to expect widely varying physical and climatic conditions throughout the Province. Physically it holds a unique position in the Dominion, rendering the construction and maintenance of roads, trails and bridges a most difficult and proportionately expensive undertaking, in its efforts to construct trunk roads to link up the centres of population, in addition to reasonably accommodating the widely scattered settlers and pre-emptors with serviceable wagon roads and trails. The mileage of roads, trails and bridges constructed to date are as follows:—

Roads	16,000 miles
Trails	14,000 miles
Bridges	52

As roads generally must be maintained in fairly passable condition, and bridges require regular repairs and frequent renewal, the maintenance of such public works in itself constitutes a serious financial problem involving in its current year an expenditure of approximately \$1,400,000.

Organization

With such large expenditures under its control, there is apparent need for close and careful supervision with a view