

The St. Lawrence Seaway

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river for deepwater navigation and of harnessing its power for the development of vast new supplies of hydroelectric energy. Thousands of men were engaged in one of the most incredible engineering and construction jobs ever attempted, and in some ways the hardest. Historic communities on both sides of the St. Lawrence had to be moved to new locations as the neighbouring nations worked in close partnership in the lowlands across which they had exchanged insult and salvo in earlier days.

The work on the Seaway was carried on in Canada by the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, and in the United States by the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation. The accompanying power project was carried out co-operatively by the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario and the Power Authority of the State of New York.

Vessels from the four corners of the world can now sail from the Atlantic Ocean unimpeded through the system of channels and locks to the Canadian Lakehead. Canadian grain from the prairies can be carried direct from the elevators at Port Arthur and Fort William, as no longer will trans-shipment be necessary. Iron ore from Sept-Îles, Quebec, can be transported inexpensively by water to the large ore-consuming areas in Central Canada and the United States, where approximately 80 per cent of North American steel is produced. The markets of Central Canada will be more accessible for the Atlantic Provinces. Thus benefits will accrue to all parts of Canada from this new waterway.

The St. Lawrence Seaway was formally opened at Montreal, June 26, 1959, by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of Canada and President Dwight D. Eisenhower of the United States of America. This ceremony marked the completion of five years of intensive work on the 191-mile section between Montreal and Lake Ontario which has seen great locks and deep channels replace the older, much smaller ones which denied ocean-going vessels access to the heartland of North America.

Navigation through the new Seaway had been inaugurated at Montreal, April 25, when the Canadian Government ice breaker "d'Iberville" led a group of inland and ocean ships into St. Lambert Lock, the Seaway's easternmost gate. The Hon. George Hees, Minister of Transport, and a large group of Members of Parliament and Senators were aboard the Canadian vessel. Simultaneously, a flotilla of vessels entered the Iroquois Lock at the western end to begin the first east-bound passage through the newly completed channel.

Thus has been brought to reality the dream of a deep waterway from the Atlantic Ocean to the head of the Great Lakes, which has been of concern to Canadians since Jacques Cartier, in the early part of the 16th century, was blocked in his attempt to find a north-west passage to the Orient.

In one of the most ambitious construction ventures since the Panama Canal, Canada and the United States poured more than a billion dollars in all into the task of preparing the mighty

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