

The engineering tasks have been monumental. After work began in 1950, motorists witnessed the spectacle of the greatest array of heavy power-shovels, bull-dozers, graders, dump-trucks and other earth-moving machines ever assembled for a single road-building project in Canada. Muskeg presented special construction problems in Northern Ontario, Newfoundland and elsewhere. In some places, the muskeg was as much as 50 feet deep. Then there was the Prairie "gumbo", a treacherous, heavy clay soil covering 25 to 30 per cent of the route across the western plains. In Quebec, the Highway has been pushed through the heart of Canada's largest city, Montreal, by means of such complex projects as a 19,000-foot bridge-tunnel crossing of the St. Lawrence River. In British Columbia, the road-crews had literally to move mountains. Work was extremely hazardous in the Fraser and Kicking Horse Canyons, where hardrock miners blasted away mountain walls 500 to 1,000 feet above turbulent rivers. Landslides were frequent. Since in most places the railway ran below the new Highway, great care had to be taken to protect the tracks, and tons of rubble had to be carried away truckload by truckload. In a single nine-mile stretch between Field and Golden, two million tons of rock and an equal amount of dirt had to be moved, a job requiring 5,000 tons of explosive.

To combat snowslides through Rogers Pass in Glacier National Park, the Department of Public Works devised an elaborate system of avalanche defences. A one-mile section consists almost exclusively of snow-sheds, the most effective type of defence.

On September 3, 1962, a ceremony held in Rogers Pass in Glacier National Park marked the opening of the last major physical gap in the route, making it possible to travel on the Trans-Canada Highway from coast to coast.

The Trans-Canada Highway ranks with the great transportation achievements of the past. The new transcontinental roadway is making a large contribution to Canada's development, besides offering Canadians and visitors one of the great scenic drives of the world.

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