

BULLETIN
OF THE
CANADIAN RAILROAD HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION



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Chateau De Ramezay
Montreal

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THE ERIE AND ONTARIO RAIL ROAD

by

R.V.V. Nicholls

First opened in 1839 as a horse-operated tramway the Erie and Ontario Rail Road is the oldest line in what is now Ontario. Reopened in 1854 it became the third oldest steam railway being alone antedated by the Ontario, Simco and Huron, and by the Great Western. We celebrate its 100th Anniversary this year.

During the decade 1830 to 1839 no less than nineteen groups of citizens petitioned to the legislature of Upper Canada for charters of incorporation as railway companies.

Eight of these petitions received the royal assent, as listed below:¹

<u>Railway</u>	<u>Incorporated</u>
Cobourg to Rice Lake	1833
London and Gore R.R.	1834
Hamilton and Port Dover R.R.	1835
Erie and Ontario R.R.	1836
Niagara River to Detroit River	1836
Toronto to Lake Huron	1836
Wellington Square to Goderich	1836
London to Devonport	1837

However, the mortality rate among these infant lines was very high due no doubt to the severe financial crisis that overtook Canada and the United States in 1837 and only one, The Erie and Ontario Rail Road Co., reached maturity.

Though the Welland Canal between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie had been opened in 1829 yet there was a band of men to be found sufficiently courageous to advocate the building of a competing line of railway. Led by John and Alexander Hamilton, sons of Hon. Robert Hamilton, the contractor for the original Niagara portage road, they petitioned the legislature of Upper Canada for in-

corporation in 1831 and again in 1832, but without success. Needless to say the officers of the Welland Canal Company such as Herritt fought the proposal bitterly. Later when it was evident that the legislature was sympathetic they suggested a cooperative scheme but in this they were themselves rebuffed². It was intended that the line should run inland between Chippawa and Queenston and naturally Niagara Town was anything but enthusiastic³. Finally the anxious years of 1812 had not been forgotten and the military authorities had to be satisfied that the line would not impede their strategic plans. Accordingly throughout the State Papers of Upper Canada for 1834-35 and 36 there is to be found an extended correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Lieutenant-Governor, and the Board of Ordnance relating to this matter⁴. Indeed in 1834 the royal assent was reserved until the wishes of the Board of Ordnance could be made known; the Company was instructed not to intrude on lands less than 1000 yards from military fortifications. Yet at long last the assent was given on April 16th, 1835.

The incorporators of the Erie and Ontario were John and Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Clark, David Thorburn, Robert Grant and Humphrey Tench of Queenston, Samuel Steet of Niagara Falls, James Cummins of Chippawa, James Gordon and Malcolm Laing. The capital stock was limited to £75,000 sterling at \$12-10 s. a share; the construction was to be finished in five years; the shareholders were to meet in Stamford⁵, at the old Whirlpool Hotel. The line was far from complete in 1837 and a provincial loan of \$5,000 was arranged⁶. Indeed the question still remains as to when it was actually opened for traffic. The line is shown on Coventry's map of 1838 and De Veaux⁷ states that it was operating between Chippawa and the Falls in 1839. Green's suggestion that each section was operated as completed is probably correct⁸. It is of importance to notice, however, that an extension of time was sought after, and granted in 1840⁹, and that some work was going on later. Indeed Sir Richard Bonnycastle in his book, "The Canadas in 1846" seems to suggest that the railway did not have a wharf at Queenston until that year. He had already taken the occasion¹⁰ to deplore the necessity of importing an engineer from the United States to lay out the line, to wit John B. Jarvis. James Archibald was later in charge of construction¹¹.

Though it is true that Queenston and Chippawa in the 1830's were not towns of great importance - indeed even in 1851 their populations numbered only 200 and 1000 respectively - yet there can be no doubt that the building of a railway between the Lakes to supplement the Portage Road (first used in 1789) and the Welland Canal (opened in 1829) was justified. Such a means of transportation was particularly fitted for passenger traffic and it is likely that in the summer months many tourists and immigrants passed for it on their travels between Toronto and Buffalo.

The rails were of timber strapped

with iron and the motive power was two or three horses hitched one ahead of the other, trotting horses for passenger cars, draught horses for the freight cars. The line began at a terminal station and warehouse on the terrace at Queenston - a wharf was later built below - and mounted on a long incline up the face of the escarpment to the Heights near where the Brock Monument now stands. It then turned due south along the west side of the Second Concession Road of Stamford (Stanley Street of Niagara Falls) until it reached what is now Ferry Street, passed southeasterly through a cutting, and came out on the bluff at Falls View. Then it followed the Portage Road as far as "Clark Hill" and finally ran straight into Chippawa to a steamboat wharf near the present bridge site. A reference to the map will make this description clear. Information as to the gauge of the line is not available. Bonnycastle in 1846¹² stated that the Company owned three carriages and an open cart. Green relates in his monograph on The Niagara Portage Road⁸ - to whom grateful acknowledgement is made - an interview he was privileged to have about 1925 with Mr. H.J. Cambie, C.E., of Vancouver. Mr. Cambie then a man of eighty-eight years clearly remembered how in his teens he had travelled over the line on May 29th, 1852. Thus we possess an accurate picture of the tramway as it was just two years before it was converted to the use of steam power. "The passenger carriages were exactly similar to those used on the Stockton and Darlington railway in England ten years earlier". That is to say they were of the four-wheel variety with three carriage-like compartments, side doors and a running-board; they could accommodate about twenty-four passengers. The "enginedriver" and the baggage were carried on the roof; the engine was of one, two, or three "horsepower". Traffic being light

Niagara
on the
Lake

ERIE AND ONTARIO R.R.
1835 - 1863

- - -

ERIE AND NIAGARA RY.
1863 - 1873

- - -

CANADA SOUTHERN RY.
(Michigan Central R.R.)
(New York Central R.R.)
1873 -

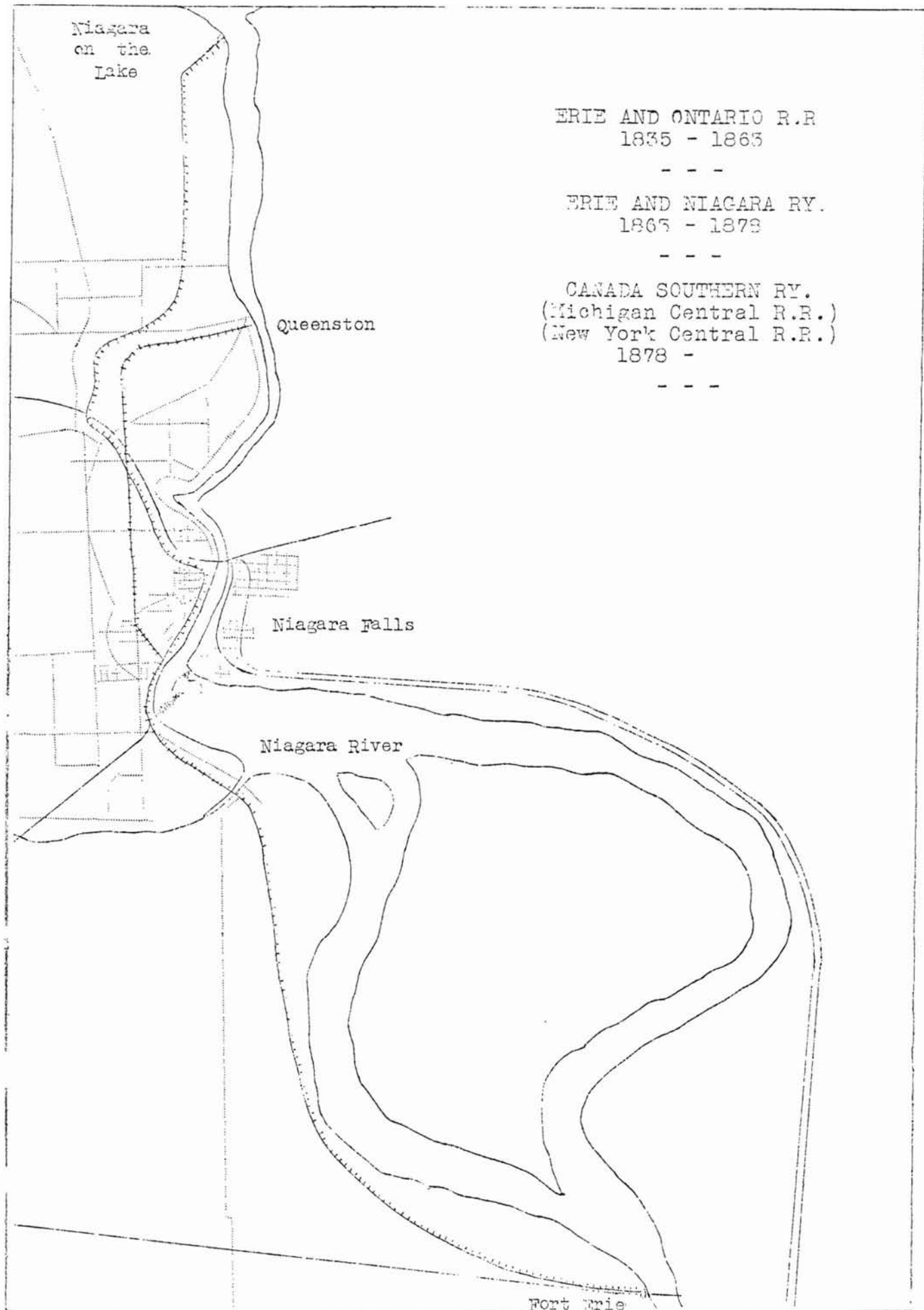
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Queenston

Niagara Falls

Niagara River

Fort Erie



and the cost of snow removal prohibitive the Erie and Ontario was not operated in the winter.

In 1852 the Company secured from the Provincial Legislature a revision of its charter whereby it was permitted to reconstruct the railway and operate it by steam locomotives. The reconstruction involved the realignment of the roadbed up Queenston Heights so that an easier grade was secured through St. David's embayment and the following of the newly built Great Western as far as the Suspension Bridge. The original roadbed was regained near the Falls. The present Michigan Central takes the same route. An extension was at the same time made to Niagara-on-the-lake and the line was opened between that place and Chippawa on July 3rd, 1854. In accordance with the law of 1851 the line was doubtless broadgauge.

Apparently the well-known railway contractor, Samuel Zimmerman, was in charge of constructing for it was in his name that the one and only locomotive the railway possessed was bought. The "Clifton" was a 4-4-0 built by the Amoskeag Company of Manchester, N.H., in 1854; it was numbered 169 on their list. This locomotive had 16x20 in. cylinders and 60 in. drivers¹³.

The later history of the Erie and Ontario was not without its interest. In 1857 a company was incorporated under the title, Fort Erie Railway Co., with power to build a line from Fort Erie to Chippawa and to purchase or lease that portion of the Erie and Ontario between Chippawa and Clifton (Niagara Falls). It appears that shortly afterwards the latter railroad got into financial difficulties for in 1862 the Town of Niagara was given power to sell it on account of advances made to the Company. The purchaser was William A. Thomson. A year later it was purchased from him by the Fort Erie and the amalgamated lines became known as the Erie and Niagara Railway. Thus lake-to-lake

communication was established by the time of the Fenian Raid in 1866¹⁴.

Let us now follow the fortunes of the Erie and Niagara. At a meeting of the shareholders of the Great Western Railway of Canada held in April, 1865, in London, England, the President, Thomas Dakin, announced that an agreement had been entered into for twenty-one years by which the Erie and Niagara with its 31 miles of line on its completion in the autumn(?) would be operated by that Company. The advantages of this scheme were that the G.W.R. would not have a direct line into Buffalo and of the broadgauge, 5 ft. 6 in., and that the route between Buffalo and Detroit would be shortened by twelve miles. In 1872 the directors further proposed that the line should be purchased outright for £75,000. It was their intention to achieve thereby a junction between the eastern end of the Main Line and the Glencoe Loop Line. But the negotiations fell through on account of disagreements between the several owners of the railway. Accordingly the Great Western turned its attention to the Welland Railway and entered into an agreement with it. It is interesting to note that the last cars of the G.W.R. to be converted from broad to narrow gauge were some nineteen that had been reserved in 1871 for use on the Erie and Niagara¹⁵.

As a result of this fiasco, between 1875 and 1878 the Erie and Niagara fell into the arms of the Great Western's great rival, the Canada Southern. The Canada Southern in its turn was leased to the Michigan Central in 1904 after being operated by it for some ten years, and in 1929 leased by it to the New York Central. And this brings up to date the history of the oldest railway in Upper Canada. The route of the horse-operated tramway can still be traced.

References:

1. General Index, Journals of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada, 1825-39, Montreal, 1848.
2. Niagara Gleaner, November 16th, 1833.
3. Niagara Gleaner, December 14th, 1833.
4. State Papers, Upper Canada, Calendar of the Q Series, Canadian Archives Report, 1898, Calendar of the G Series, Canadian Archives Report, 1937.
5. Statutes of Upper Canada, 5 Wm. IV, Cap. 19, 1835.
6. Statutes of Upper Canada, 7 Wm. IV, Cap. 68, 1837.
7. "The Falls of Niagara", S. De Veaux, 1839.
8. "The Niagara Portage Road", Earnest Green, pp. 260-311 inclus., Papers and Records, Ontario Historical Society, Vol. 23, 1926.
9. Statutes of Upper Canada, 3 Vic., Cap. 49, 1840.
10. "The Canadas in 1841", Sir Richard Bonnycastle.
11. Papers of Lieut.-Col. Rorback.
12. "The Canadas in 1846", Sir Richard Bonnycastle.
13. Personal communication from Mr. Robert R. Brown
14. A Statutory History of the Steam and Electric Railways of Canada, 1836-1937, Robert Dorman, Department of Transport, Ottawa, 1938.
15. Extracts from the half-yearly reports of the Great Western Railway, now in the possession of Mr. W. M. Spriggs.

NEWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Address all correspondence to the Secretary,
200 Desaulniers Boulevard, St. Lambert, Que.

Resumé of the Minutes

Executive Meeting of June 29th:

"It was moved by Dr. Nicholls, seconded by Mrs. Bevington that - at some future date the Canadian Railroad Historical Association will remove its material from the Chateau de Ramezay and deposit it with Mr. C. L. Terroux for temporary safe keeping. Carried."

"Moved by Mr. Terroux, seconded by Mr. T. C. H. Smith that there shall be taken an inventory of the material of the Association now at the Chateau de Ramezay, and that the work of inventory be entrusted to the hands of Dr. Nicholls. Carried."

Executive Meeting of July 19th:

The inventory prepared by Dr. Nicholls, Mrs. Bevington, and Mr. Terroux was tabled. "Moved by Mr. Loye, seconded by Dr. Nicholls, that an approach be made to Mr. Victor Morin informing him of our intention to remove our material from the Chateau de Ramezay, and that action be then taken according to his pleasure. Carried."

Regular Meeting of September 20th:

Mr. Terroux reported that the Association's collections had been transferred from the Chateau de Ramezay to his home at 48 Rutland Road, St. Lambert, where they would be avail-

able for inspection by the members and for cataloguing. The action of the Executive in transferring the headquarters of the Association was approved. It was agreed that the Association should remain affiliated with the Antiquarian and Numismatic Society. The following donations were received: rail chair of the Carillon and Grenville Ry., excursion ticket of the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington Ry., and meal tickets furnished by the C.N.R. to survivors of the S.S. Athenia. The following persons were elected to membership; regular members, Messrs. A. Mattinely and Alon Clark, and out-of-town member, Miss M.C. Betts of Halifax, N.S. Dr. Nicholls reported that due to the apathy of the management the display of documents and photographs relative to the South Pictou Railroad, he had sent to the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition, had not been shown. This meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Terroux.

Meeting of October 11th: Much attention was given to the question of finding a suitable place of meeting and as a repository for the Association's collections. The following donations were received: bonds, tickets, bills of lading, etc. of the Wiscasset, Waterville, & Farmington Ry., relics from the Adirondack excursion, and numerous photographs taken by the members during their summer travels. Dr. Nicholls proposed that the Association co-operate with the Montreal Tercentenary Celebration Committee. He also exhibited the material collected to portray "One Hundred Years of Railways in the Maritimes" at the N.S. Provincial Exhibition. This meeting was held at the Railroad Y.M.C.A., Montreal.

Meeting of November 8th: Reports were received from those members delegated to canvass the possible places of meeting for the Association. The following donations were

received: a collection of twenty Canadian railroad passes issued in 1905, photographic copy of a pass issued to Mr. George McNichol, secretary to the General Manager of the G.T.R., in 1901 on the occasion of the Canadian tour of the Duke and Duchess of York, and a number of books including the C.N.R.'s "The Royal Tour". Correspondence was read relative to the preservation of the locomotive, "Duchess", now at Taku, Yukon Territory. Copies of an inventory of the historical articles in the complete file of "The C.N.R. Magazine" were tabled by the Secretary. This meeting was held in the Railroad Y.M.C.A.

Excursions

Adirondack Excursion of October 8th-9th: Five members of the Association in two cars made a two day trip to Northeastern New York State and the Adirondack Mountains to inspect the short lines and abandoned railways in that area. They passed the night at Blue Mountain Lake. The following railways were examined: Ottawa and New York, Paul Smith, Grass River, Raquette River, Norwood and St. Lawrence. Many relics were brought home.

Vermont Excursion of November 11th-12th: A party of five members and one guest took part in a motor-bus-train excursion in Northern Vermont over the lines of the Montpelier and Wells River, and St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain. Mr. Elwin Heath of Barre accompanied the party between Montpelier, Jct. and Woodville. The night was spent at St. Johnsbury. The highlight of the excursion was the day spent on the St. J. & L. C. with the train crew as impressarios. Several abandoned lines were examined near Swanton and Alburg. A valuable switch lamp was obtained.

The Executive of the Association
and The Editorial Committee of the Bulletin

Wish All the Members and Their Friends

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



Locomotive List, VI

Locomotives of the

Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Railroad
Hamilton and North Western Railway
and
Northern and North Western Railway

Compiled by Robert R. Brown

Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Railroad (broad gauge)

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Cylinders</u>	<u>Drivers</u>	<u>Built</u>	<u>Builder</u>	<u>Builders No.</u>
1	Lady Elgin	4-4-0	14x20	60"	1852	Portland	33
2	Toronto	4-4-0	16x22	54	1853	James Good	1
3	Josephine	4-4-0	17x20	72	1853	New Jersey	
4	Huron	4-4-0	17x20	60	1853	New Jersey	
5	Ontario	4-4-0	17x20	60	1853	New Jersey	
6	Simcoe	4-4-0	16x22	66	1853	James Good	2
7	Collingwood	4-4-0	17x20	60	1853	New Jersey	
8	Seymour	4-4-0	17x20	60	1853	New Jersey	
9	Hercules	4-6-0	18x20	54	1854	James Good	3
10	Sanson	4-6-0	18x20	54	1854	James Good	4
11	J.C.Morrison	4-4-0	16x20	60	1855	James Good	7
12	Chamberland	4-4-0	17x20	66	1855	James Good	8
13		0-6-0	18x20	54	1855	James Good	9
14		4-4-0	17x20	66	1855	New Jersey	
15		4-4-0	17x20	60	1855	New Jersey	
16		4-4-0	17x20	66	1855	James Good	10
17		0-6-0	18x20	54	1855	James Good	11
18					1862		
19		4-4-0	16x24	60	1868	Kingston	73
20		4-4-0	16x24	60	1868	Kingston	74

Hamilton and North Western Railway

							<u>Remarks</u>
1	John Scott	2-6-0	17x24	54	1874	Baldwin	
2	Rufluent Waye	2-6-0	17x24	54	1874	Baldwin	Re J.M. Williams in 1876
3	Lucy Turner	4-4-0			1847	Kinmond.	Bought 1872 fr.C.& St.L. ex Lady Molson renamed Erie in 1876.
4	{ Colonel McGivern	4-4-0	16x24	60	1853	Schenectady	(^{OX} G.W.R.)
5	Halton	4-4-0			1878	Kingston	
6	Peel	4-4-0			1878	Kingston	
7	Norfolk	4-4-0			1878	Kingston	
8	Simcoe	4-4-0			1878	Kingston	
9	Hamilton	4-4-0			1878	Kingston	
10	Barrie	4-4-0			1878	Kingston	
11	Collingwood	4-4-0			1878	Kingston	
12	Port Dover	4-4-0	16x22	66	1860	Rogers	
13		4-4-0				Taunton	
14	Alliston	4-4-0				Penn.R.R.	Altoona
15	Cookstown	4-4-0				Penn.R.R.	Altoona
91		0-4-4T	13x20	54	1853	Souther	Ex G.W.R.
92		0-4-4T	13x20	54	1853	Souther	Ex G.W.R.

The Ontario, Simcoe & Huron Union R.R. became the Northern Ry. of Can. in 1856 and in 1881 The Northern Ry. and the Hamilton & North Western Ry. amalgamated as the Northern & North Western Junction Ry. The last was absorbed by the Grand Trunk Ry. in 1888.

Northern and North Western Railway

N&NW GTR

No	No.	Type	Cylinders	Drivers	Built	Builder & No.	Remarks
4	641	0-4-4T	13x20	54"	1853	Souther	ExH&NW ExGWR
5	642	0-4-4T	13x20	54	1853	Souther	ExH&NW ExGWR
6	643	0-4-2T	14x24	48	1873	Baldwin	
20	644	4-4-0	16x24	60	1868	Kingston No.73	Ex NOR. 20
21	645	4-4-0	16x24	60	1875	Northern Ry	Ex NOR.
22	646	4-4-0	16x24	60	1884	Northern Ry	Ex NOR.
23	647	4-4-0	17x24	60	1880	Northern Ry	Ex NOR.
24	648	4-4-0	16x24	60	1868	Kingston No.74	Ex NOR. 19
28	649	4-4-0	16x22	60	1878	DUBS	
29	650	4-4-0	16x22	60	1878	Kingston No.197	
30	651	4-4-0	16x22	68	1878	G.W.R.	ExGWR44 Reindeer
31	652	4-4-0	16x22	68	1878	G.W.R.	45 Elk
32	653	4-4-0	16x22	68	1878	G.W.R.	46 Gazelle
33	654	4-4-0	16x22	68	1878	G.W.R.	47 Stag
34	655	4-4-0	16x22	68	1878	G.W.R.	48 Antelope
35	656	4-4-0	16x24	68	1870	Northern Ry	
36	657	4-4-0	16x22	68	1869	G.W.R.	49 Greyhound
38	658	4-4-0	16x22	66	1860	Rogers	
41	659	2-6-0	17x24	54	1874	Baldwin	
42	660	2-6-0	17x24	54	1874	Baldwin	
43	661	2-6-0	17x24	54	1873	Baldwin	
44	662	2-6-0	17x24	54	1873	Baldwin	
45	663	4-4-0	16x24	60	1878	Kingston	
46	664	4-4-0	16x24	60	1878	Kingston	
47	665	4-4-0	16x24	60	1878	Kingston	
48	666	4-4-0	16x24	60	1878	Kingston	
49	667	4-4-0	16x24	60	1878	Kingston	
50	668	4-4-0	16x24	60	1878	Kingston	
51	669	4-4-0	16x24	60	1878	Kingston	
61	670	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
62	671	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
63	672	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
64	673	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
65	674	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
66	675	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
67	676	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
68	677	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
69	678	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
70	679	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
71	680	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
72	681	4-4-0	17x24	60	1881	Brooks	
73	682	4-4-0	18x24	60	1888	Kingston No.333	
74	683	4-4-0	18x24	60	1888	Kingston No.334	
81	684	4-4-0	18x24	60	1886	Kingston No.310	
82	685	4-4-0	18x24	60	1886	Kingston No.311	
83	686	4-4-0	18x24	60	1886	Kingston No.312	
84	687	4-4-0	18x24	60	1886	Kingston No.313	
85	688	4-4-0	18x24	60	1886	Kingston No.314	
86	689	4-4-0	18x24	60	1886	Kingston No.315	
87	690	4-4-0	18x24	60	1886	Kingston No.316	
88	691	4-4-0	18x24	60	1886	Kingston No.317	