

Canadian Rail



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ACROSS NIAGARA'S GORGE

S.S. Worthen,

The story of the first three bridges across the Niagara Gorge, - between the then Province of Upper Canada and the State of New York (one of the United States of America) is contained in the Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers, Volume XL, December, 1898, no. 636, in an article presented by R.S. Buck, M. Am. Soc. C. E., on 18 May 1898, entitled "The Niagara Railway Arch Bridge". The following report is based on that article and supplemented by material from other sources.

The first plan for a suspension bridge over the Niagara River Gorge, near Queenston, Upper Canada, was suggested to the Honorable William Hamilton Merritt of the town of St. Catharines, by a description of the Freiburg (Germany) Suspension Bridge, in a letter from a friend, written in 1844. Two years later, due solely to Mr. Merritt's efforts, charters to build a bridge were obtained in the State of New York and from the British Government in Canada, for the construction of the first bridge across the Gorge. The scope of the work, however, was not determined. At that time, there was no railway from Niagara Falls to the west. The Great Western Railway of Canada, - which was later to play an important part in the crossing of the Gorge, was in the process of reorganization, the original charter of 1834 for the London and Gore Railroad Company being revised in 1845. At that time, the corporate name of the undertaking was changed to the Great Western Railway Company. Subsequently, the appendix "of Canada" was often added, to distinguish the Canadian line from its famous English counterpart.

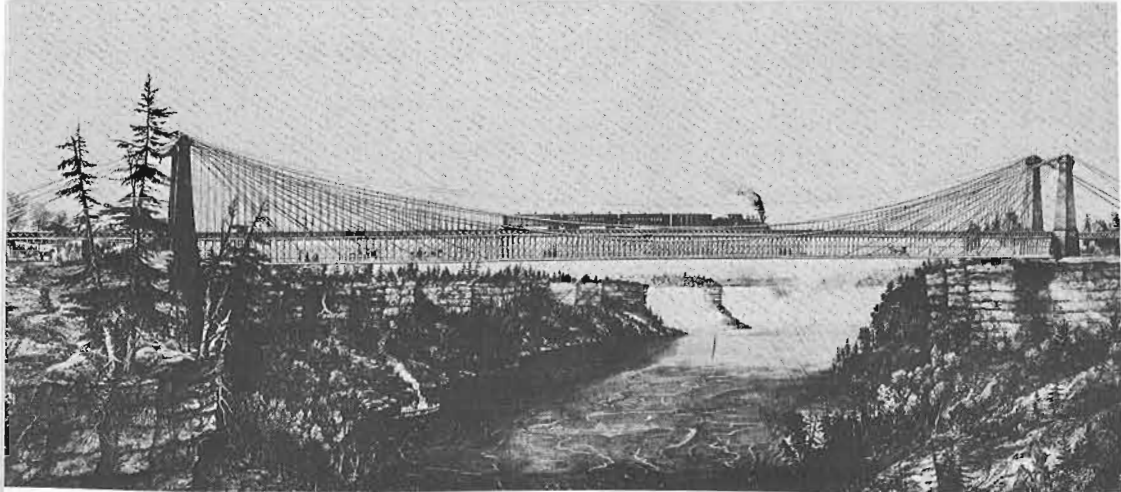
THE FIRST SUSPENSION BRIDGE.

In the winter of 1847, the Niagara Gorge Bridge Company made a contract with Mr. Charles Ellett, to construct a bridge on the site later occupied by the steel arch bridge, in 1945. The purpose was to build a railroad bridge, but the plans were delayed temporarily, due to the unsettled political conditions, a consequent inability to raise the necessary capital and the sheer magnitude of the proposed work. Nevertheless, Mr. Ellett did finally throw across the Gorge a cable of thirty-six number 9 wires, on which a light iron carriage was run, for about a year and which was used for subsequent work and for passenger service. From this first strand was developed the earliest bridge which was completed in 1848.



↙ Dramatic enough to decorate any cover, Canadian National's bullet-nosed no. 6062 stamps out of Montréal West, Qué., on the "International Limited" Train 15, westbound for Toronto, on a March day in 1957.

Photo from E.A. Toohy Collection, C.R.H.A.



The accompanying photograph, courtesy of Canadian National Railways, shows the first railway suspension bridge across Niagara's gorge in 1855. It had two decks - the railway running on the topmost.



THE SECOND SUSPENSION BRIDGE.

If Mr. Ellett's cable-way, with the light iron carriage, can be considered as the first suspension bridge across the Gorge, its successor, - or rather, its "offspring" was therefore the second. By a process of adding additional wires, which were slung over wooden post towers at each end, a road bridge was built. It did not boast any stiffening trusses and was soon superceded by a sturdier type.

THE THIRD SUSPENSION BRIDGE.

Mr. Ellett, despite his extraordinary pioneering efforts, had no connection with the construction of the next bridge, which took place in the period 1853-1855. This was to be a railway suspension bridge, and the concept, development and execution of this remarkable structure were entirely the work of Mr. John A. Roebling M. Am. Soc. C. E. Mr. Roebling had previously built six road suspension bridges with unqualified success. The Niagara Suspension Bridge was the first and only suspension bridge built across the Niagara Gorge for railway traffic. It has been described as "quite successful", - an understatement, indeed, if one considers the date of construction and the "state of the art" of bridge engineering, at that time. The original stone towers for the cables had to be replaced by steel towers in 1886 and repairs to some of the wires in the cables were undertaken in 1877.

THE FOURTH NIAGARA GORGE BRIDGE.

The fourth bridge spanning the more-than-300 feet-deep chasm was a steel arch bridge, the construction of which began on April 9 1896, with the excavations for the foundations for the stone piers. The bridge was tested for strength and resistance to loads on 29 July 1897, and was completed on August 27th, 1897. The new Steel Arch Bridge was built around and enveloping the old Roebling Suspension Bridge and, although it was hoped to preserve the latter, and re-erect it on another site, the expense connected with the removal was so great that the idea was abandoned and all of the material from the old bridge was scrapped.

Charles Ellett's "Ropeway" across the Gorge might quite fairly be

reckoned as the first bridge to span the Niagara River, as it carried passengers for about one year, - albeit in a rather primitive iron carriage. Logically, it must have been Charles Ellett and not John A. Roebling who, according to tradition, made the boy to fly his kite across the Gorge, carrying a light cord which was then used to carry across the first wire. Roebling would have had the use of Ellett's bridge and would therefore not have needed the services of the youthful kite-flyer.

It is also unlikely that the first train passed over the third (Roebling Railway Suspension) Bridge on March 8th., 1855, as has been stated in some reports. On that day, the light engine ELK of the Great Western Railway Company, driven by Engineer Harrison, did make the crossing. The bridge had yet to be tested, and only after this process could the bridge be used for traffic.

The account of the testing of the railway suspension bridge is contained in a letter written by John A. Roebling of John A. Roebling and Sons Company, of Trenton, New Jersey, U.S.A., and dated two days after the opening of the bridge:

"Last Sunday I opened the bridge for regular traffic of trains. The first one was the heaviest freight train that will ever pass and was made up on purpose to test the bridge. With an engine of 28 tons, we pushed over from Canada to New York 20 double cars, each loaded with 10 tons, the cars weighing 7 tons, making a gross weight of 368 tons; this train very nearly covered the whole length of the floor of the bridge between the towers. Owing to the heavy ascent on the New York terminus and the great roughness of the track just laid down, it took two assistant engines in front to get up this grade.

The bridge settled under this large train 10 inches, with a uniform reduction of camber. The rollers under the saddles at the tops of the towers moved one-half an inch forward, but everything returned to its place after the bridge was relieved.

Yesterday the first passenger train from the east, with three crowded cars, inside and on top, went over in great style; altogether we passed about 20 trains within the last 24 hours. Every train, after unloading, returned to the opposite side; this makes about 20 trips necessary every day. No one is afraid to cross and the passage of the trains is a great sight and worth seeing."

Messrs. Roebling of New Jersey also said in their letter of February 26, 1932, that:

"The bridge, when completed, consisted of two decks, the upper of which had a single track railroad and the lower deck, consisting of a highway and a sidewalk. Evidently there was only a single railroad track over the bridge and this we know definitely was already laid when the bridge was opened for traffic on March the 18th., 1855."

The term "double cars", used in the letter of John A. Roebling, is interpreted to mean flat cars with a 4-wheeled truck at each end,



↑ The magnificent Steel Arch Bridge was completed on August 27, 1897. It too was a double-decker, but had a double-track railway line on the top with a roadway and sidewalk below. The calamity of the automobile was about to ensue.



similar to the modern flat car, as distinct from a car with two axles, - one at each end, similar to the freight wagons used at the time in England. Also from Mr. Roebling's letter, we can conclude that it was necessary for trains crossing the bridge from Canada to the United States, to return immediately, since there were no storage sidings available there for the broad-gauge (5 feet 6 inches) rolling stock of the Great Western.

Mr. Roebling says in his letter that one engine, - a 28 tonner, was used to move the test train from the Canadian side onto the bridge and over it to New York State. However, to move the same train back again, two assisting engines were required. It is thought that the engineer on the first engine of the southbound test train was a Mr. Thomas Horton. The first passenger train which crossed the bridge on March 18th., 1855, is said to have had Mr. Patterson Hall as engineer and Mr. Pheimster as fireman.

The Great Western Railway - Time Card - Rules and Regulations (These Rules are a part of the Time Card. Any employee connected with the running of Trains, not having them in his possession while on duty, will be guilty of an UNPARDONABLE OFFENSE) for 1873, has the following pertinent sections:

116. It is imperative that no Engine or Train be run across the Suspension Bridge at a greater rate of speed than 5 miles per hour, occupying two minutes passing from tower to tower, and no Engine or Cars shall be brought to a stand on the Bridge during the passage across. Only Eight Cars of Stock, Twelve of Freight, or Thirty empty Cars will be taken at one time. (See Rule No. 128)
126. Conductors and Trainmen of Through Express Trains must join and leave their Trains at the N.Y.C. Depot, Suspension Bridge, and must assist in directing Passengers from one Train to the other, and at starting see that they are comfortably seated.
127. Conductors of Through Passenger Trains must notify Train Dispatcher on reaching London of all delays

up to that point, and of other delays at the end of the trip, by telegraph.

128. The Bell rope must be attached to the Engine which hauls Passenger Trains ACROSS the Suspension Bridge.
39. The CLOCK in the Passenger Depot at HAMILTON is the STANDARD time, which is 31 minutes faster than Chicago or Michigan Central Time, and 24 minutes slower than New York or N.Y.C. and Erie Railroads Time. The correct time is telegraphed daily to the principal Stations, and the clocks at Windsor, London, Suspension Bridge and Harrisburgh are the standard for those who cannot regulate by the Hamilton clock.
51. ALL TRAINS ON MAIN LINE going TOWARD LONDON, in EITHER direction, have the absolute right to the road against trains of the same or inferior class. Trains going in EITHER DIRECTION FROM LONDON, will WAIT INDEFINITELY, for trains of same or superior class that may be behind time, unless special orders are received from proper authorities to proceed; in like manner all trains on AIR LINE, going towards ST. THOMAS in EITHER direction have the right to the Road over Trains bound in opposite direction; those on ALLANBURG & WELLAND RAIL-

WAY approaching WELLAND JUNCTION, have right to the road over those going from WELLAND JUNCTION to ALLENBURG, CLIFTON and MERRITON JUNCTIONS; those on TORONTO BRANCH approaching HAMILTON have the right to the Road over those going from HAMILTON to TORONTO; those on WELLINGTON, GREY & BRUCE Branch approaching HARRISBURG have the right to the Road over those going from HARRISBURG; and those on the SARNIA BRANCH approaching LONDON have the right to the Road over those going from LONDON; those on LONDON and PORT STANLEY BRANCH, approaching LONDON, have right to the Road over those going from LONDON; but no train running under this right will leave a station or passing place where it should meet a train of the same class UNTIL FIVE MINUTES AFTER the card time, unless the train it should have met has arrived; and this five minutes must be observed at every succeeding station, until it shall have met the delayed train, unless distinct telegraph train orders are given to the contrary, and Dispatcher will be careful about giving these. When one passenger train overtakes another, they must be kept a safe distance apart.



TWO ACCIDENTAL DISCOVERIES

A Description of Two Private Railways in Québec.

Sanborn S. Worthen.

Strange indeed, are the ways of chance. Tradition has it that when the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway, - today's Ontario Northland, - was being constructed, an ordinary blasting operation one day uncovered a very rich vein of cobalt ore.

At this site, the city of Cobalt, Ontario, was afterwards constructed. In the Eastern Townships of the Province of Québec, about one hundred miles east of Montréal, a forest fire and railway building combined to uncover a valuable mineral find. It is said that, during the construction of the Sherbrooke, Eastern Townships and Kennebec Railway, an ancestor of today's Québec Central, a routine blasting operation laid bare a vein of fuzzy, frizzy rock, now generally known as chrysotile asbestos.

Since the 1870's, the Québec Central Railway has become a part of Canadian Pacific and today, of CP RAIL. The accidentally discovered asbestos deposits have been developed and expanded and, prior to World War II, this locality produced 85% of the world's supply of the fireproof mineral. Elementary school geography books record the names of Thetford Mines, Asbestos, Black Lake and East Broughton. What they do not describe, however, is the railway activity connected with these place-names and mining operations.

After the founding of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association in 1932 and when the subsequent celebrations marking Canada's railway centenary in 1936 had been concluded, the members of the Association began to look around for other interesting things to do. Thus it was that the members quite by chance hit upon the idea of visiting the mine, mill and private railway operations of the Canadian Johns-Manville Company, of Asbestos, Qué., for investigation. The necessary formalities having been completed, the members set off one fine Sunday in July to explore this Eastern Townships community. The late Mr. T.C.H. Smith, then Secretary of the Association, recorded the great event in the following entry in the official Minute Book:

"The members of the C.R.H.A. and their friends made a very interesting excursion on Sunday, July 9, 1939, to visit the private railway and asbestos mine of the Canadian Johns-Manville Company at Asbestos, Qué. The party went from Montréal by the regular morning train of the Canadian Nat-

ional Railways to Richmond,Qué. Here,the party changed to a bus to travel the remaining 14 miles to Asbestos,Qué. After dinner at the Staff House,the party boarded a flat car,pushed by (steam) engine no. 23 of the Asbestos & Danville Railway,to enter the open-pit mine. This mine is an immense pit,about half-a mile across and two hundred and fifty feet deep. The standard-gauge track descends into the pit by spiralling around the sides and,after a couple of turns,reaches the low level where the ore is scooped out by an immense Marion electric shovel. After leaving the pit,the "Special" train traversed the six miles of private railway to Danville,the junction with the Canadian National line from Richmond to Charney,Qué.,near Québec.

On the return from Danville,the party examined the engine house and a number of steam and electric locomotives. The Company owns 14 steam and 3 electric locomotives. Afterwards,the mill was visited, where the serpentine ore is crushed and the asbestos fibre extracted. The party then returned by bus to Richmond where they visited the 18-stall roundhouse (of the C.N.R.),after which they boarded the late afternoon train for Montréal."

Thirty years later,in 1969,you too can make an accidental discovery if you are in this section of Québec. Walking through these rolling hills and dales,you may suddenly find yourself walking along a railway right-of-way. The Asbestos & Danville is still delivering carloads of bagged asbestos fibre to the CN's interchange at Danville,Qué.,but that line's steam and electric engines have long since been replaced by six MLW diesel switchers. Mining methods have also changed and,in most cases,the huge open-pit mines are now served by mammoth diesel-engined electric-motored dump trucks,some as powerful as the diesel switchers themselves. The rails and with them the locomotives and dump-cars disappeared from the pits in the late 1940's.

In other operations however,rail transportation is used by two other asbestos-mining companies for hauling waste or barren rock from the pits and mills to the waste dumps. Underground, two other mines have subterranean railways to haul the asbestos-bearing ore from the stopes to the hoists.

Interesting variations on the rail transport theme can be seen at Lake Asbestos of Québec Corporation,at Black Lake,Qué., as well as at Bell Asbestos Mines at Thetford Mines and Carey-Canadian Mines at East Broughton,- all on Québec Central's main line from Sherbrooke to Québec City. Here,there are switching locomotives equipped with interchangeable road-rail wheels,so that they can move empty and loaded cars on Company-leased spur lines.

Ten miles southwest of Thetford Mines, the largest city in the county and six miles north of the Quebec Central's main line at Coleraine, Qué., is the world's largest independent asbestos fibre producer, - Asbestos Corporation Limited. The Company has two mines in this rugged district, the Vimy Ridge and Normandie. Back in 1917, these mines were owned by the Bennett-Martin Asbestos and Chrome Mines and were under development. A steeply-graded and sharply-curved railway was built from Coleraine to ship in necessary construction materials and machinery. Later, in 1926, the Company was re-incorporated as the Asbestos Corporation Limited and, from then on until the early 1950's, steam power hauled the machinery in and the asbestos fibre out over the private railway.

The Vimy Ridge Mine was phased out of production in the early 1950's and development started on the adjacent Normandie open pit mine and mill. Again, the railway was called upon to transport the essential heavy machinery and equipment, together with all of the other necessary supplies. The new mill came into production in early 1955.

Nowadays, the Asbestos Corporation's Normandie railway has grown to a total length of eight miles, including sidings, with one 470 hp. diesel-electric switcher, - a twin engined unit made by General Electric Company. There is also an essential snow-plow, which saw much service during the hard winter of 1968-69 and other track maintenance equipment. The railway logically owns no freight cars and illogically, no caboose! The A.C.N. (for Asbestos Corporation-Normandie) employs a "driver" (otherwise, an engineer), a brakeman, a track foreman and four trackmen. The track crew is engaged in a year-'round programme of tie replacement at the rate of 6,000 per year, an annual renewal rate of 16%. The old 60 lb. steel is being replaced by 85 lb. rail at the rate of 125 lengths per year.



2 In the following sequence, Asbestos Corporation Limited Normandie no. 1 pulls out of the Normandie Mine yard, getting her teeth into the grade on the six-and-a-half mile, twenty-five minute run to the interchange with the Quebec Central Railway at Coleraine, Qué.

It is all that the 470-horsepower unit can do to lift the loads up the hill, over the road that was built in 1917 to serve a now-defunct mine. With its string of loaded cars, Number 1 approaches Coleraine and the Quebec Central, where a cut of empties waits on the siding. They were spotted there by the way-freight.

After delivering the loads to the Q.C. at Coleraine, Number 1 picks up the cut of empties for the return trip to the Normandie Mine. Engineer Gardner has to push the empties back, since there's no wye or passing siding at the Mine.

Engineman Albéric Gardner approaches each of the four grade-crossings on the line with bell ringing and air-horn blasting. The train slows to a walking pace as it crosses these crossings.

Photos courtesy of CANADIAN ASBESTOS PRODUCER.







The six-and-a-half miles of main line from the mill to the Québec Central interchange are heavily graded southbound, with a mile and a half of 5% grade against the "current of traffic". In addition, there are four grade crossings which have to be flagged, which makes the daily operation more difficult. The 65-ton G.E. diesel can handle seven loads up the hill to the Q.C.R.

The A.C.N. operates two services daily from the mill to Coleraine. The tonnage coming out is normally much greater than that represented by the bulky or heavy equipment, moving in to the mine, but in the last analysis, the rail facility is always there to handle these important shipments. When the A.C.N.'s no. 1 has a full load, she can make about 15 mph. on the six-mile run. As there is no wye at either end of the A.C.N.'s main line, Number 1 pulls the loads up the hill to the Coleraine interchange with the Q.C.R. and pushes (if, indeed it can be so described) the empty box-cars back down the 5% to the Normandie Mill.

It would require a good deal of money to construct a car-loading facility at Coleraine and even more to upgrade the present road from the mill, to carry the weight of semi-trailer trucks. Raw asbestos fibre is bulky to ship and railway box cars are, at present, the best way to transport this commodity. From these considerations, it would seem likely that the Asbestos Corporation's mine, mill and railway will be working happily, hand in hand, for a number of years to come.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR AND PRODUCTION MANAGER:

CANADIAN RAIL's "Summer Issue-1970" - a whopping 48 pages - somewhat depleted the magazine's 1970 budget.

As a result, issues of our magazine in the last quarter of the year have been a little "thin" - in pages, perhaps, but not in quality.

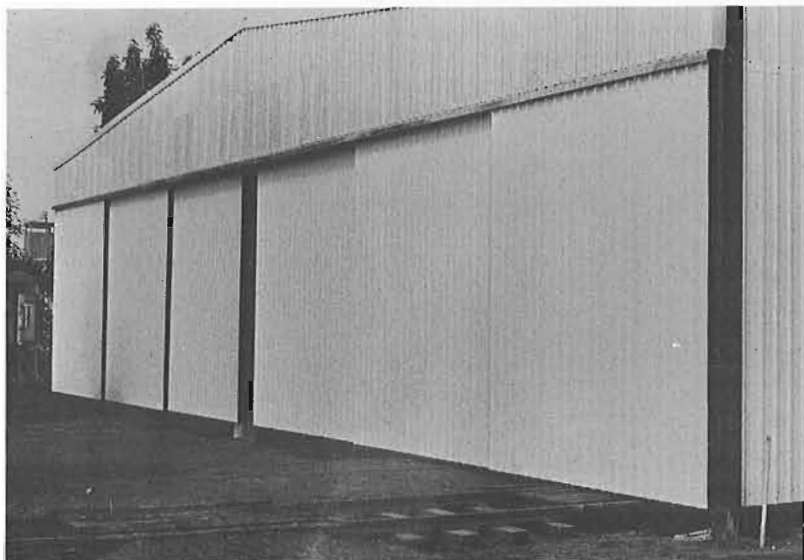
Nevertheless, the prompt renewal of your present membership and the substantial increase in new members, which we confidently anticipate, will soon replenish our funds and will permit a resumption of the size of CANADIAN RAIL which you are accustomed to enjoy.

It should be emphasized that the more members we have, the more pages of CANADIAN RAIL can be produced for you to read.

With this in mind, it will be to your advantage, as well as the Association's, to enlarge our present membership. Let's get some new members in 1971!



Bob Linney and Ian Stropach, the summer editors, regret that the author's name did not appear with the article THE C.P.R. "MOTOR CAR" OF 1906. Mr. Fred. Angus was the author of this excellent story.



ROLL UP THE DOORS

Members will be very pleased to learn that contributions to the "DOORS FUND" for the Canadian Railway Museum have reached the GRAND TOTAL of \$ 4,215.00 . The Museum Commission and the Association's Directors and Officers are very grateful to those members who so generously supported this campaign. Here is a supplementary list of contributors:

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MORE OBSERVATIONS with F.A.Kemp.

TRAINS OFF (THE TRACK) ALTOGETHER -

Derailments continued to plague Canadian railways during the long, hot summer. Canadian National's Train 10 (Prince Rupert, B.C.-Jasper, Alta.) consisting of a diesel unit, steam-generator car, baggage car, dormitory car, two coaches, a diner, sleepers and a sleeper-observation was derailed on July 20 on a sharp curve beside the Skeena River in British Columbia. There were no fatalities but some passengers suffered injuries.

CP RAIL had two "happenings" in the east and two in the west. At Windsor, Ont., on July 10, switcher 6705 was working the car-ferry slip that handles N. & W. interchange traffic from Detroit. A cut of 40 freight cars got loose down the mile-long grade through a cutting to the ferry slip and smacked the cab-end of 6705, which was derailed and heavily damaged. The last car of the cut being switched by 6705 was shoved over the bumper of the N. & W. car-barge into the river. Damage was estimated at \$ 100,000 and 6705 took the long trip to the repair shops.

Out west, unit coal trains and grain trains decorated the landscape near Hope, B.C. and elsewhere.

CN's events were at Brockville and Port Hope, Ont. The scene of the derailment at Port Hope was the high stone viaduct and the date was August 7. Eleven cars from the centre portion of an east-bound freight were derailed at the west end of the viaduct and fell into the valley beside Port Hope's harbour, rupturing tank cars and allowing chemicals to seep into the harbour. The city's water supply was threatened, since the intake from Lake Ontario is nearby.

However, although the water was shut off for several hours, the effluent from the cars was checked and confined and water intake and distribution was resumed. Morning passenger trains from Montréal and Toronto were delayed several hours, since parallel CP RAIL main line was unavailable due to a wreck at Cobourg, which maintenance-of-way crews were just cleaning up.

Canadian Transport Commission, highly incensed at these unwarranted goings-on, announced that a thorough public inquiry would be conducted into the Cobourg, Port Hope and Brockville (RAPIDO hit a track motor-car with 1 fatality) accidents. Statistics for the first 6 months of 1970 show that 142 derailments had occurred on Canadian tracks. This suggests 284 by year-end, compared to 224 in 1969, 217 in 1968 and 190 in 1967.

TRAINS OFF - WAY OFF -

Bankrupt Penn Central dropped a big bombshell (big corporation = big bombshell) into the puzzling passenger picture by applying to discontinue all passenger service west of Harrisburg, Pa. and Buffalo, N.Y., 34 trains in all. The only exceptions would be the two Chicago-Valparaiso, Ind. commuter trains. In New England, the money-troubled corporation has also applied for two round-trip runs from Worcester, Mass. to New London, Conn. The I.C.C. will have a fun thing with this submission!



BOOK REVIEW

Bob Tennant jr.

GOLD RUSH NARROW GAUGE Cy Martin 1969 US \$ 6.95
Trans-Anglo Books, P.O. Box 1771, Costa Mesa, Calif. 96 pp. Illus. 8x11

Pleasing it indeed is to see that another Canadian railway has become the subject of a book. At last, North America's only modern narrow-gauge railway has been accorded this treatment. Cy Martin unfolds some of the saga of the White Pass & Yukon Route in an engaging 25,000-word text entitled GOLD RUSH NARROW GAUGE. A fine selection of photographs, some maps and a few other illustrations of a miscellaneous nature complement the text in an attractive layout.

In the discovery of gold in the Klondike area of the Yukon Territory in 1896 lay the need for the building of a railroad. Over a tortuous and scenic route through Alaska, British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, engineers and labourers wrought a narrow-gauge railway for 111 miles from Skagway, Alaska, U.S.A. to Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada. The Company's little trains were to face the challenge of 3.9% grades, heavy snowfalls, very sub-zero temperatures and rights-of-way which appeared to be painted on the mountain walls.

Read about how the infamous Soapy Smith, the chief of Skagway's crime syndicate, earned the wrath of the railroaders, who were instrumental in his eventual downfall.

To detail the problems of building the White Pass & Yukon Route over the mountains and to describe its operations are the book's two objectives. Towards these ends, it relates the difficulties of construction, the inestimable importance of World War II and the building of the Al-Can Highway and the arrival of containerization. Particularly noteworthy about the WP&YR is the fact that it pioneered the container method of intermodal transportation in the era of the 1950's. The prominence and discussion of that development, (containerized cargo and its handling required a reorganization of the Company's marine, rail and trucking divisions) is not to be found.

Since its incorporation, the White Pass Company has run the total gamut of transportation media: pack-trains, dog-teams, stage-coaches, inland water and ocean steamers, buses, trucks, aeroplanes, as well as railways and pipelines. While the marine and rail media receive considerable attention, the others do not. Consequently, one forms an incomplete picture of the Company's operations.

At times, one is left with the impression that the WP&YR is basically a United States company, which is, of course, untrue, but after stepping off the ship at Skagway's wharf, it is easy to understand why this misconception is possible. Skagway, Alaska, has the distinction of being the only United States community wholly dependent upon a viable Canadian enterprise.

Despite its shortcomings, the handsomely lithographed GOLD RUSH NARROW GAUGE makes for an interesting, albeit brief, arm-chair trip to the storied Yukon.

EDITORIAL

(The following editorial appeared recently in the editorial pages of the Ottawa, Ontario JOURNAL. It is presented in these pages by kind permission of the Editor, THE OTTAWA JOURNAL.)

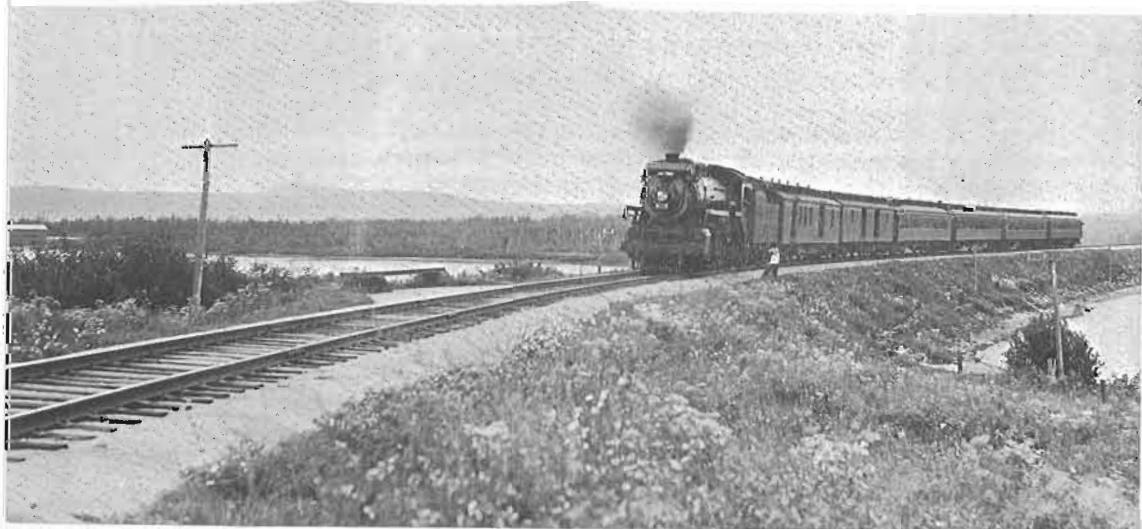
This is an editorial in favour of trains. And in criticism of the very successful and deliberate efforts of the Canadian National and the Canadian Pacific to make trains so shoddy and inefficient that the Canadian public is being forced to drive bumper to bumper on crowded highways or commit itself to the efficient pace of air travel.

A train trip used to be a joy. Trains ran on schedules that met the public's desire; one could make connections without waiting half a day; the seats and bunks were clean, the porters and conductors were agreeable and helpful, meals were served, not hurled and the waiters didn't start closing the place an hour before arrival so they could wash their dishes and be first off and the clerks in the offices did not regard an effort to purchase tickets as an intrusion.

But that's nostalgia. There's more than nostalgia to our wish for a return of a decent train service. The country is going to tie itself into channels of hurtling confusion, ill temper and economic unreason if we let the trains go.

In France to widen their highways they're having to cut down those lovely avenues of trees that for centuries have given character to the French countryside. Their airways too are in some areas approaching danger densities. But in France they are re-discovering trains. In an article in France in the latest Manchester GUARDIAN, Nesta Roberts mentions a train trip this way:

"In the Good Old Summer Time", a Canadian Pacific Railway passenger train wends its way through the lower levels of the Laurentian Mountains with a cargo of happy holidaymakers. Photo courtesy Canadian Pacific.



"It was easier to think beautiful thoughts like that, because the train in which I was scudding towards Lyon, smooth and level as if over ice, was one of our cracks, the Lyonnais, sister to the Mistral which goes on farther south. France has realized that, with bigger and bigger aircraft, taking more and more people faster and faster to airports farther and farther away from anywhere they may possibly want to be, it is the railways which are going to supply the luxury travel of the near future. The Lyonnais gets one from city to city in three hours and 45 minutes flat and in superb comfort, with air conditioning and seats shaped to the human frame and Perspex doors in the corridors that open at your approach, so that you do not risk dislocating a shoulder heaving at them.

If you are a businessman or woman working to a tight schedule, you can dictate your letters on board or get your hair done. The restaurant car offers relatively lush and very ample meals, but there is provision also for the more frugal. A buffet serves decent cold cuts, with salads and fresh fruit, quickly and pleasantly. You can buy books and tobacco and presents for those you have left behind or are going to meet. True, they do play music at you while waiting in stations - at the moment of writing, on the return journey, it is "Londonderry Air" - but at least there is in every compartment a button which enables you to tone it down, which is more than can be said for any aircraft in which I have yet travelled".

All right, the computer men with their hard eyes will now rise and say train travel has been proven unpopular for people don't use it. Statistics of the last decade do prove that use of trains fell off. But the novelty of air travel is going to wear off when we all have to pile into flying hotels and when the drive from town to airport will be the longest part of the journey. And the automobiles now breeding like rabbits are very soon going to make highway travel like trying to out-run a conveyor belt Charlie Chaplin style, seeing nothing, enjoying nothing and going like a bat IN hell.

Don't tear up those tracks, oh ye wise fools; don't sell out those right-of-ways to make room for more highways; don't run this lovely land of ours as though we were all idiots in too much of a hurry to live.



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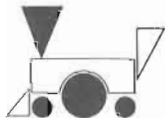
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