

# Canadian Rail



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# CANADIAN RAIL

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Canadian Rail is continually in need of news, stories, historical data, photos, maps and other material. Please send all contributions to the editor: Fred F. Angus, 3021 Trafalgar Ave. Montreal, P.Q. H3Y 1H3. No payment can be made for contributions, but the contributor will be given credit for material submitted. Material will be returned to the contributor if requested. Remember "Knowledge is of little value unless it is shared with others".

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*FRONT COVER: For Members Day in June 1989, a number of pieces of equipment, generally stored inside, were brought out for display at the Canadian Railway Museum. Basking in the day's sunshine were the CP M-235, a 1938 Buick sedan converted to a rail inspection vehicle; CP 8905, a Trainmaster built by the Canadian Locomotive Company in 1956; and CP 7077, an S-2 switcher built by the Montreal Locomotive works in 1948. The latter was the first production diesel built by MLW. Photo by Douglas N.W. Smith.*

As part of its activities, the CRHA operates the Canadian Railway Museum at Delson / St. Constant, Que. which is about 14 miles (23 Km.) from downtown Montreal. It is open from late May to early October (daily until Labour Day). Members, and their immediate families, are admitted free of charge.

# Canadian Pacific's First Steamers

By Douglas N.W. Smith

For many years, Canadian Pacific advertised itself as "The World's Greatest Travel System". Passengers and freight shippers could avail themselves of an network of trains, ships, trucks and planes which spanned much of the globe.

The first attempt by the company to provide non-rail service was the acquisition of three steamers built for use on the Great Lakes. An article, by an anonymous reporter, in the April 18, 1884 issue of "The Globe" of Toronto, describing these vessels, recently came to light. As a relatively limited amount of material has been published on these three steamers, this article has been used as the starting point for a review of these early vessels.

## THE C.P. STEAMERS<sup>1</sup>

### *The Finest Vessels on the Great Lakes*

*Port Colborne, April 12 - It is not very long since vessel owners used to consider that any old hulk which had passed its usefulness on the lower lakes of the chain of great unsalted seas on which this Province borders, was quite good enough for service on the Upper Lakes and the Georgian Bay. Wall-sided, flat-bottomed tubs with square ends, on which marine underwriters were doubtful about taking risks, were shipped off to travel on the Upper Lakes. They were altogether unfitted, both in model and construction, to battle with the rolling seas of the Georgian Bay, and Lakes Huron, Michigan and Superior. The terrible results of the policy are still fresh in the minds of the reading public, and much more so in hundreds of homes along our shores. Loaded far beyond their capacity, with much of their cargo on the main deck, carrying thousands of bushels of grain in bulk without shifting boards or bulkheads, craft after craft went down on the Northern Lakes. Their shape made them bad steerers in heavy sea. The first great wave that struck them swung them around, and the waves that followed crashed into the vessels before they could be put before them. With the cargo once shifted, especially a grain cargo, not one craft in a thousand could be righted again in a storm, and the bottoms of Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, and Lake Erie are strewn with the corpses of brave sailors sent afloat in such coffins.*

*The evil has brought its remedy and men have come to see that battered old hulks are not the craft that should navigate the upper lakes. With the opening of the new Welland Canal, and the introduction of such vessels as the "United Empire" and the "Campana", a new era began. The highest point has been reached with the placing of the Canadian Pacific steam ships on the route to Lake Superior. These vessels are now fitting out at Port Colborne for the season's business. These is a missing link in the route through Canada by the Canadian Pacific Railway from the older Provinces to the North-West. The traveller, say from Toronto, goes to Owen Sound by the Toronto, Grey & Bruce*

*Railway<sup>2</sup>. The other end of the Canadian Pacific is at Port Arthur on Lake Superior. To reach Port Arthur, it is necessary to take passage from Owen Sound, crossing the Georgian Bay outside the Manitoulin Islands, up the Sault River and through the Sault Ste Marie Canal into Lake Superior. It is this link that the new boats will supply, and they are well worthy of a visit and extended comment, not only as part of this road which has cost the people of Canada so much, but as the grandest additions yet to the Lake marine.*

## THE NEW LINE

*The line consists of the three steamships, "Athabasca", "Algoma", and "Alberta". They were built last year by Aitken & Mansell, and Chas. Connell & Co of Glasgow, Scotland, especially for this route, and under the personal supervision of the manager of the line. They were delivered at Montreal by their builders, having made the trip across the ocean in excellent time, and weathering splendidly storms more severe than had been met by the regular ocean steamers for several years previously<sup>3</sup>. The test was a thorough one, but the steamships went through it successfully.*

*At Montreal they were cut in two, and then towed through the St Lawrence Canals and up Lake Ontario to Buffalo<sup>4</sup>. They were put together again, and steamed thence to Port Colborne. The steamers are lying in the Welland Canal, and the army of shipjoiners, painters, carpenters, rivetters, plumbers, and other mechanics at work on them makes Port Colborne quite a busy place.*

*The vessels are exactly alike in model and dimensions, and a description of one will apply to all. There is something so very different from ordinary lake steamers in the plain, black hulls with rows of opened gangways and the pronounced rake aft of their tall steel masts and red banded funnels that they will be sure to attract attention at every port they enter. The model is admirable, not a hollow line about the bows, and without the tendency to sit down by the stern so noticeable in many of the old style. The graceful run of the lines indicates strength, seaworthiness, and adaptability for speed even to the eye unlearned in the science of shipbuilding.*

*The hulls are built of steel plates of varying thickness: the frame has a moulded depth of 23 feet 3 inches. Each vessel is 270 feet long by 38 feet beam, and has a depth of hold of 15 feet. The Plimsoll mark, a white circle with a black band through it, is a novelty on the lakes, but every sailor knows that it points out the line beyond which no vessel shall be loaded, thus preventing overloading. The Plimsoll marks on the C.P.R. vessels will allow them to load to 15 feet of water, on which they could carry 2,000 tons dead weight of freight, but as a rule they will only be loaded to 13 feet. The hold is divided into compartments by six water-tight steel bulkheads.*

"There is no discount on their being water-tight," said Mr Beatty, manager of the line, "because when the steamers were cut in halves they were towed up the lake against the bulk-heads, and that is a pretty severe test."

There is no communication whatever between the compartments, and 20 feet of the bow might be knocked off without affecting the seaworthiness of the vessel.

#### PROPELLING POWER

The motive power is supplied by compound engines driving a screw 13 feet 6 inches in diameter and having a pitch of 21 feet. The cylinders are 35 and 70 inches, with a stroke of 4 feet. The boilers, two in number, are each 12 feet 3 inches long, and are made of Siemens-Martin steel, 15-16 inch thick, and tested to a cold water pressure of 210 pounds. The furnaces are the latest improvement, being built of corrugated iron. The indicated horse-power is 1,700. The screw is not cast in one piece, but the blades are bolted to the centre-piece, so that an injury to one blade does not necessitate the renewal of the whole screw. These vessels are steamships in reality as well as in name.

Each carries two steel masts, with such a spread of fore and aft canvas as to be quite easily handled in case of a breakdown of the steam power. They were at first intended to be square-rigged, but Mr Beatty's knowledge of the lakes convinced him that the fore and aft rig was the better for the trade in which the steamers will engage. Besides the main engine each vessel has auxiliary donkey and hoisting engines, steam pumps, and siphons. The anchors, windlasses, and capstan are handled by steam, and all freight is taken in and out by a hoisting engine on the main deck running the four hatches.

#### STEERING APPARATUS

The equipment is in keeping with the superior hull and motive power. These vessels are steered by steam, and large as they are, their course can be directed by a touch of the little finger. There is no top-heavy texas [sic] as is usually seen on lake boats, but instead there is a spacious bridge above the wheelhouse and extending the whole beam of the vessel. In the wheelhouse, a small wheel, not three feet in diameter, stands before a regulated compass. Under the feet of the wheelsman is a small but exceedingly beautiful steam engine, controlling the wire cables, which serve as tiller-chains.

On the bridge is another similar wheel facing one of Sir William Thompson's patent compasses. The Thompson compass is the one in general use on ocean vessels, and is worthy of more than a passing notice on account of its perfection and the ingenuity

of its mechanism . . . The steering apparatus is not completed by the two wheels already mentioned. There is another wheel aft, to be used in case of accident to the others. It is a large hand-wheel, on the shaft of which are right and left handscrews, with a binnacle compass in front of it.

#### MODE OF SIGNALLING

Instead of the bells and whistle as signals to the engine room, there is a self-acting telegraph from the bridge. On a good-sized dial are marked all the signals used to control the engine. A touch of a small handle swings the hand of the dial around to the signal intended to be given, say "stop!" A bell rings in the engine room, the engineer looks up and sees the hand on his corresponding dial pointing "stop". There can be no mistake there, no dispute as to whether the officer in command of the deck rang one bell or two. The communication between the bridge and the engine room is perfect, the engineer being able to repeat the signals to the bridge.

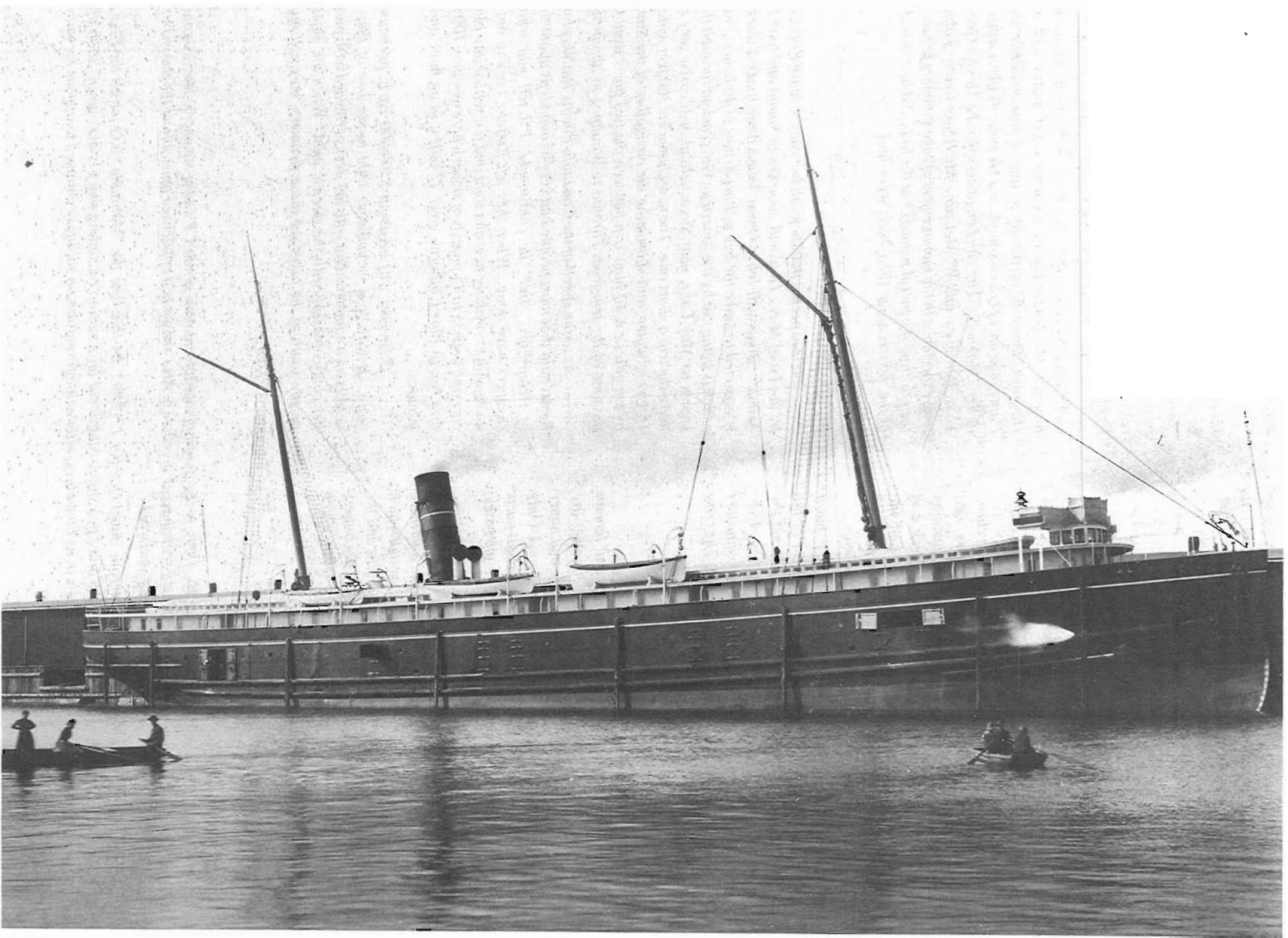
Each steamer carries six large lifeboats and about 600 life-preservers, with a liberal allowance of life buoys about the decks. Of chain and steel wire cables, and patent anchors, handled by steam, there is also a good supply. The steamers were built and equipped according to the English Board of Trade regulations, and are well found in every respect.

#### THE ELECTRIC LIGHT

Large as these vessels are they will be without oil lamps, unless it is deemed to use oil for the masthead and port and starboard lights. The Canadian Edison Electric Light Company, of Hamilton, will illuminate them in a style never before seen on the lakes. Each vessel will have a 6.5 by 8 Amington & Sims engine of 330 revolutions driving an Edison dynamo supplying 110 lights of sixteen candle power each, and having all the regular attachments and details as used by the Edison Company in steamships. The fixtures, which are more elaborate than usual, have been imported from New York, but with this exception all the apparatus is of Canadian manufacture.

The engine is manufactured by Dady, of Toronto; the dynamo by the Osborne Killley Company, of Hamilton; and the other apparatus by the Edison Company at Hamilton. The lamps can be controlled by the engineer of the dynamo, or each single lamp can be turned on or off by a key attached to its socket. The electroliers are so arranged that alternate lights can be turned off by a switch in the main saloon. Every light is provided with a safety plug, which instantly cuts off the current through any branch in which there is a short circuit or a disarrangement of the wire.

OPPOSITE PAGE: With curious spectators out in their skiffs for a recreational paddle, the "Alberta" awaits a new cargo in this view which shows the vessel in its original condition in the 1880's. Careful inspection of the photograph will reveal five sets of doors in the lower portion of the hull. These gave freight handlers at Owen Sound, Port Arthur and Fort William ready access to the storage areas of the ships. During this period, grain shipments were handled in bags.



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*A novel and exceedingly useful feature of the lighting of these vessels is an electric lamp with a long flexible conductor. It can be taken from the boat and carried up dark decks, or can be used in the examination of the screw, rudder, or any submerged part of the hull. It is of course enclosed in an air-tight glass globe, and sheds its light when under the surface of the water as well as when in the air. Matches will not be used on board, not even for lighting pipes or cigars, electric cigar-lighters being provided for that purpose. The boats are the first on the lakes to be lighted by any system of electric appliances.*

#### PASSENGER ACCOMMODATION

*The passenger accommodation will be of the highest class. Single berths are provided for 180 first-class passengers, and steerage bunks for 200, with room to increase steerage accommodation sufficient for 1,000 persons. The steerage is on the main deck, and is roomy and well lighted. All the bunks are single, and the steerage is supplied with hot and cold water. Closets are numerous, and steerage passengers are well provided for in every way.*

*The furniture of the main saloon is not yet in place, but it must be first-class to accord with the general equipment of the steamers. Bathrooms and smoking rooms are provided, and the steward's room is on the upper deck instead of on the main deck. The engineer's, porter's, purser's, and express messenger's quarters are on the main deck, which is well lighted by dead lights. The crew will have a very comfortable fore-castle.*

#### FIREPROOF VESSELS

*The protection against fire is the most ample that human ingenuity can devise. In the first place, the vessels themselves are of steel, and the hull, of course, cannot burn. The main and upper decks are steel, though they have an extra flooring of wood. Only the cabins or the cargo can burn. The cabins, and in fact all parts of the boat are furnished with cold water pipes for fire purposes, the water being supplied by a donkey engine.*

*The hold being divided by fireproof bulkheads, fire can not spread beyond the compartment in which it originates, and there it can be controlled by the steam pipes in each hold, through which steam can be blown to extinguish it. The cook's quarters and the oil-room are encased in steel, and a steel casting about the boilers and funnel runs clear to the crown deck. The engine work, which is seen in the main saloon, is encased in teak.*

#### OPPOSITE PAGE:

*On the left, from the CPR timetable of November 19, 1888, is the diagram and information about CP's lake steamers. The "Algoma" had been lost three years before, so only the "Alberta" and "Athabasca" are shown. Also shown is a condensed timetable of the transcontinental rail service which was then less than two and a half years old.*

*On the right is a somewhat later timetable and diagram, dated October 17, 1892. By this time the "Manitoba" had joined the fleet, and is shown as 300 feet long compared to 270 feet for the other two ships. Additional information on sailing times is also given. Soon after this time, CP stopped printing the diagrams of the vessels in its timetables, although information on sailings continued to appear for many more years.*

*Collection of Fred Angus.*

#### RIGHT GOOD CAPTAINS TOO

*The command of these vessels, the finest on the American Inland waters, is an office of which any sailor might feel proud, and as a result the management has had the choice of the master marines of the lakes. The captains that have been appointed are men of long experience on the Upper Lakes, and of the highest capabilities as to seamanship. Capt Ed. Anderson of Oakville, formerly in command of the "Campana", will take charge of one, and Capt Jas. Foote, of Owen Sound, formerly of the "Pacific", and Capt Moore, of the "Quebec", will be the masters of the others<sup>5</sup>. Associated with them as chief mates will be Capt Hastings, formerly of the Allan line of trans-Atlantic steamers, Capt Simpson, of Owen Sound, and Mr Peter Telfer, formerly mate of the "Magnet". The chief engineers will be Messrs George and Thos. Pettigrew and W. McLean. Mr Henry Beatty's ability and long experience in the management of lake steamers fit him well for the position of general manager of the line, and he has had charge of the vessels since their keels were laid<sup>6</sup>.*

#### READY FOR SEA

*It is expected that they will be ready to leave Port Colborne by the 1st of May. They will go to Owen Sound and load for Port Arthur<sup>7</sup>. Boats will leave Owen Sound three times a week, and it is expected to make the trip to Port Arthur in 40 hours. A channel which is being cut by the American Government through the reach known as May Lake, near Sugar Island, will assist very much to make the trip a short one. The new channel is 300 feet wide, giving 16 feet of water, and shortening the navigation of the Sault River by ten miles. A 40 hour trip between the two ports would reduce the time of the trip from Toronto to Winnipeg to about 65 hours.*

*As to the speed of the Canadian Pacific Railway boats, Mr Beatty said that most people had very wrong ideas about the speed of steamships, "but" he continued, "I'll tell you what these steamers have done. When they left Buffalo, coming out of dry-dock, with everything new and tight and not settled into place, and carrying only 35 to 45 pounds of steam where we carry 100 pounds, they ran to Port Colborne, over 22 miles, in an hour and twenty minutes."*

*Their cost will be about \$300,000 each, perhaps a little more. It will be a magnificent sight to see one of these grand vessels on a summer night with her decks crowded with people and her cabins blazing with the electric light. When the enterprising people south of the lakes see these steamers, they will open their*

## CONDENSED THROUGH TIME TABLE—TRANSCONTINENTAL ROUTE.

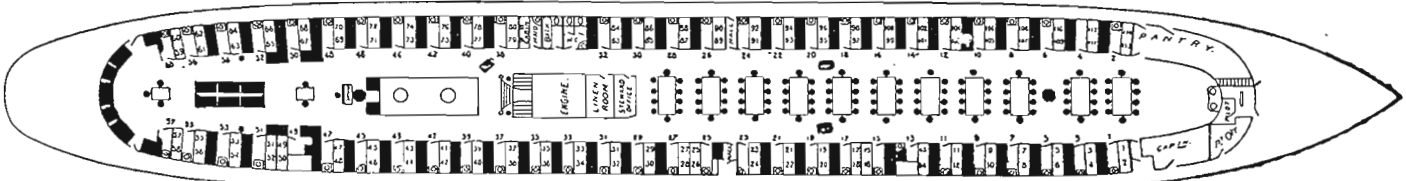
PACIFIC EXPRESS TIME—WESTBOUND.							ATLANTIC EXPRESS TIME—EASTBOUND.											
Lv. New York, (via Montreal).....	N.Y.C.	6.30 P.M.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Lv. Victoria.....	C.P.R.	2.00	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
" Boston.....	B. & M.	6.00 A.M.	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	" Vancouver.....	"	13.00	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
" Quebec.....	C.P.R.	1.30 P.M.	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	" New Westminster.....	"	13.26	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
" Montreal.....	"	8.20 "	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	" Banff.....	"	23.18	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
" Toronto.....	"	12.01 A.M.	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	"	" Calgary.....	"	3.15	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
" North Bay.....	C.T.R.	11.00 P.M.	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	" Winnipeg.....	"	11.45	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
" Port Arthur.....	C.P.R.	9.55 A.M.	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	"	" Port Arthur.....	"	18.00	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
" Winnipeg.....	"	14.25	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Ar. North Bay.....	"	2.15 P.M.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
" Brandon.....	"	10.25	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	"	" Toronto.....	G.T.R.	5.00 A.M.	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Ar. Calgary.....	"	13.20	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	"	" Montreal.....	C.P.R.	8.00	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
" Banff.....	"	24.45	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	"	" Quebec.....	"	2.30 P.M.	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
" New Westminster.....	"	6.50	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	"	" Boston.....	"	8.47	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
" Vancouver.....	"	13.30	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	"	" New York (via Montreal).....	B. & M.	8.47	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
" Victoria.....	"	20.00	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	"	"	N.Y.C.	6.45 A.M.	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun

For full details of Transcontinental Time, see inside folder. 24 hours time west of Port Arthur. Time changes one hour at Port Arthur, Brandon and Donald.

## Canadian Pacific Steamship Line

CONSISTING OF THE CLYDE-BUILT STEEL STEAMSHIPS "ALBERTA" and "ATHABASCA"

Will, during Season of Lake Navigation (from about 1st May to 15th Nov.), make bi-weekly trips in either direction between OWEN SOUND, SAULT STE. MARIE and PORT ARTHUR.



PLAN OF SALOON AND UPPER-DECK CABINS STEAMSHIPS "ALBERTA" AND "ATHABASCA."

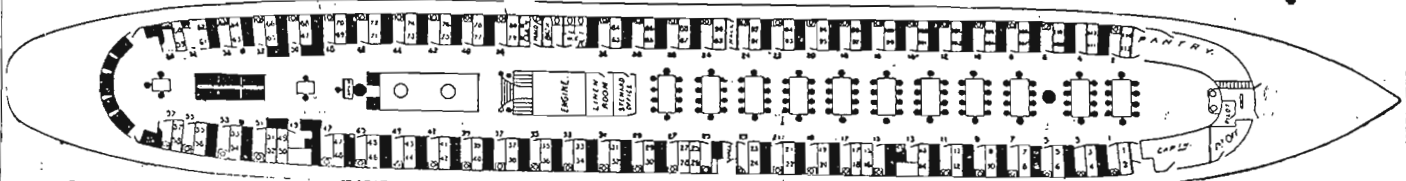
These Steamships are Electric lighted and fitted up with every modern appliance for speed, comfort and safety—they are unrivalled on the lakes. They are 270 feet from stem to stern; 2000 tons burden. Each stateroom has an upper and lower berth, and a sofa which can be converted into an additional berth. The odd numbers on above diagram represent upper berths, the darkened part in stateroom represents the sofa.

## CONDENSED THROUGH TIME TABLE—Transcontinental Lake and Rail Route, via Owen Sound and Steamship Line.

PACIFIC EXPRESS—WESTBOUND				ATLANTIC EXPRESS—EASTBOUND					
Lv. New York, via Montreal.....	7.00 pm	Sat	Thur	Lv. Victoria.....	C.P.N.Co.	2.00	Sun	Tues	Fri
" Boston.....	10.30 am	Sun	Fri	" Vancouver.....	C.P.R.	14.20	Sun	Tues	Fri
" Halifax.....	9.00 am	Sat	Tues	" Banff Hot Springs.....	"	22.28	Mon	Wed	Sat
" St. John.....	12.20 pm	Fri	Mon	" Calgary.....	"	2.20	Tues	Thur	Sun
" Quebec.....	1.10 "	Sun	Tues	" Winnipeg.....	"	17.45	Wed	Fri	Mon
" Montreal, W'd'r St.....	9.00 "	Sun	Fri	Ar. Fort William.....	C.P.S.S.	12.30	Thur	Sat	Tues
" Ottawa.....	10.45 pm	Sun	Tues	Lv. Port Arthur.....	"	2.05 pm	Thur	Sat	Tues
" Toronto.....	7.35 am	Mon	Wed	Ar. S.S. Marie (Mich.).....	"	12.00 p'm	Fri	Sun	Thur
" Owen Sound.....	2.00 pm	Mon	Wed	Ar. Owen Sound.....	"	10.00 am	Sat	Mon	Thur
Ar. Port Arthur.....	11.00 am	Tues	Thur	" Toronto.....	C.P.R.	8.35 pm	Sat	Mon	Thur
" S.S. Marie (Mich.).....	"	Wed	Fri	" Ottawa.....	"	6.00 am	Sun	Tues	Fri
Ar. Fort William.....	10.00 am	Wed	Fri	" Montreal, W'd'r St.....	"	8.00 am	Sun	Tues	Fri
Lv. Port Arthur.....	15.10	Wed	Fri	" Quebec.....	"	10.00 pm	Sun	Tues	Fri
Lv. Winnipeg.....	10.10	Thur	Sat	" St. John.....	"	1.20 "	Mon	Wed	Sat
" Calgary.....	2.20	Sat	Mon	" Halifax.....	L.C.Ry.	11.00	Mon	Wed	Sat
" Banff Hot Springs.....	6.30	Sat	Mon	" Boston.....	B. & L.	8.50 pm	Mon	Tues	Fri
" Vancouver.....	12.50	Sun	Tues	" New York, via N'ak. Fls.....	"	10.00 am	Sun	Tues	Fri
" Victoria.....	18.00	Sun	Tues	" New York, via Montreal.....	"	6.40 am	Mon	Wed	Sat

Saturday time is 7.15 p.m.; Sunday time is 9.55 p.m.; Monday time is 8.05 a.m. e Calls only when passengers to land. u Called at by Strs. of G. N. T. Co'y only.

Canadian Pacific Steamship Line, consisting of the Express Steel Steamships, "Alberta," "Athabasca" and "Manitoba," are intended, during Season of Lake Navigation (from about 1st May to 15th November), to make tri-weekly trips in either direction (weather and water permitting) between Owen Sound, S. Ste. Marie, Port Arthur and Port William, as above. Steamer *Cambria* will leave Port Arthur for Duluth at 7.00 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, arriving Duluth 1.00 p.m. following days, returning will leave Duluth 7.30 p.m. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, and arrive Port Arthur 1.30 p.m. following days.

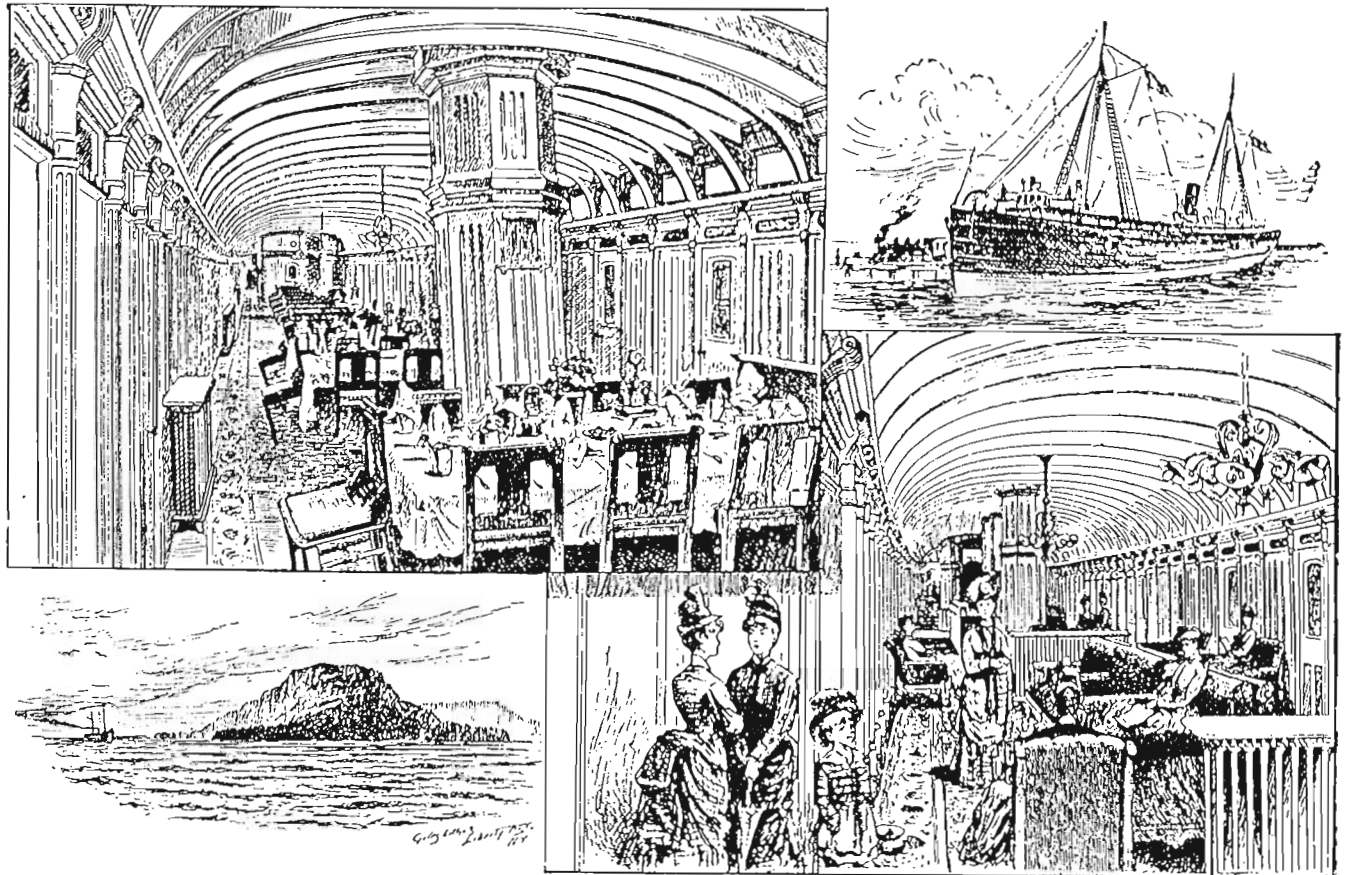


Steamships are fitted with every modern appliance for speed, comfort and safety—they are unrivalled on the lakes. The *Manitoba* is 300 feet long, 3500 tons; the *Alberta* and *Athabasca* are 270 feet long, 2000 tons. Each stateroom is electric lighted. The odd numbers on above diagram represent upper berths, the darkened part in stateroom represents the sofa.

First-Class, Round Trip and Tourist's Tickets include meals and berths; Second Class, Colonist and Emigrant Tickets, deck passage only.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

Plan of Saloon and Upper-Deck Cabin Steamships Alberta, Athabasca and Manitoba, Sault Ste. Marie, S.S. Marie, Port Arthur, Port William, Duluth, Minn., U.S.A.



### INTERIOR CANADIAN PACIFIC STEAMSHIPS, ETC.

*A montage of drawings showing the interior and exterior of the CPR lake steamers. Published in "Summer Tours by the Canadian Pacific Railway, No. 3", printed in 1888.*

*Collection of Fred Angus.*

*eyes and acknowledge that they can learn from Canada in the matter of marine equipment. No such vessels have ever been seen on the great lakes, but their excellence lies, not in the gorgeousness of their furniture or the gingerbread work of decoration, but in their superiority over all other lake craft in model, construction, and equipment, and in their thorough adaptability for the business in which they will engage.*

Owen Sound became a major steamer port following the conversion of the Toronto, Grey & Bruce Railway (TG&B) from narrow to standard gauge in 1883. In the spring of 1883, the TG&B entered into an arrangement to have the vessels "Spartan", "Magnet" and "Africa" run out of Owen Sound in conjunction with the railway service. The first two vessels, which were iron side-wheel steamers, were to run between Owen Sound and Lake Superior ports. The last was a propeller driven vessel which would operate only as far as Sault Ste Marie<sup>8</sup>.

Business during this first season threatened to overwhelm the vessels of the Owen Sound Steam Ship Company. "The

Advertiser", an Owen Sound newspaper, reported in the fall of 1883 that the amount of freight to be moved far exceeded the expectations of the steam ship company. The steamship company had to add vessels to its fleet "to move the freight so freely sent forward since the change in management of the TG&B". By the month of November, the company had engaged eight vessels to accommodate the flow of traffic from the CPR<sup>9</sup>.

The three CP-owned vessels entered service in May 1884. The "Algoma" inaugurated the new service. It sailed from Owen Sound for Port Arthur with 1,100 passengers on May 11th<sup>10</sup>. During their first season of operation, they were only the link between CP's lines in southern Ontario and the railhead at Port Arthur<sup>11</sup>.

Even after the rail line to the west was completed, many passengers preferred to travel on the steamers which offered a more comfortable ride and bigger quarters. Each vessel made one round trip per week. Train and steamer schedules were arranged to provide convenient connections at either end of the lake voyage.



The following schedule for the steamer "Alberta" during the 1884 season is typical of the easy connections available to the traveller<sup>12</sup>.

Train	Toronto	Dep. 10:45	Tuesday
Train	Owen Sound	Arr. 15:05	Tuesday
Steamer	Owen Sound	Dep. 16:00	Tuesday
Steamer	Port Arthur	Arr. 08:00	Thursday
Train	Port Arthur	Dep. 09:15	Thursday
Train	Winnipeg	Arr. 07:00	Friday

The vessels were an immediate success. The completion of grain elevators in Owen Sound and Port Arthur in 1884 permitted the grain trade begin in earnest over the CP route. In the fall of 1884, the local Owen Sound newspaper reported that the "Athabasca" and "Algoma" had each brought down 30,000 bushels of wheat on their most recent sailing from the lake head<sup>13</sup>.

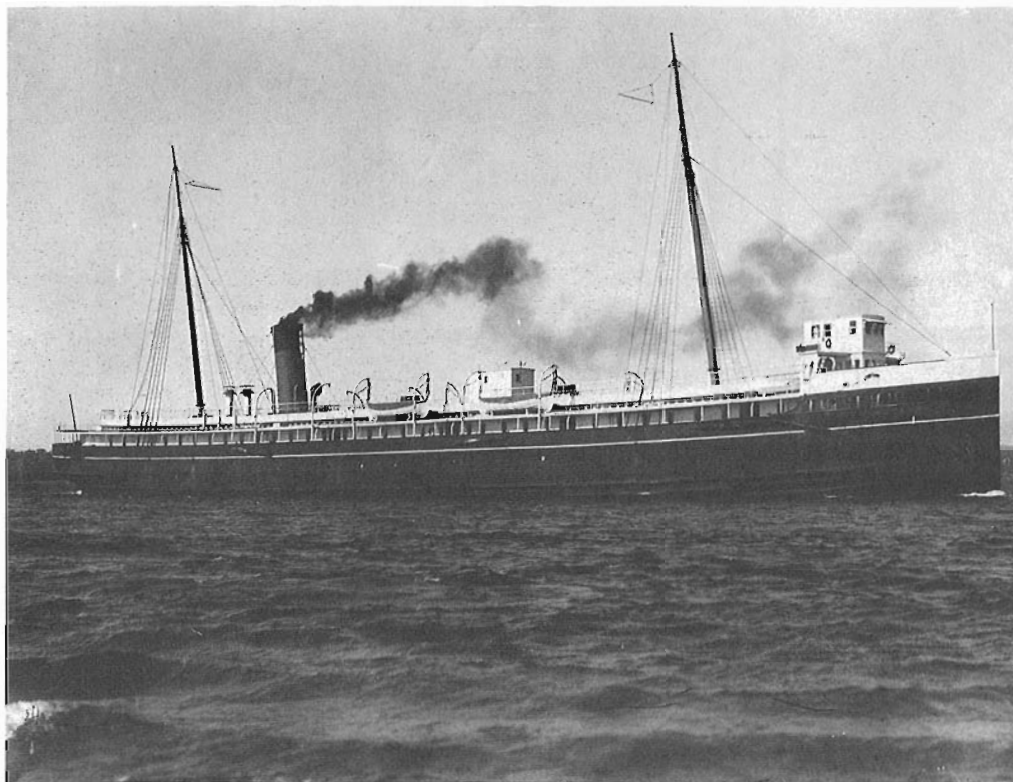
Tragically, the "Algoma" was wrecked in a severe gale on Lake Superior on November 7, 1885 [by coincidence the same day that the Last Spike was driven at Craigellachie B.C. on CP's main line]. In order to maintain the schedule of three round trips per week between Owen Sound and Port Arthur, CP chartered the "Campana" for several seasons.

While the "Algoma" was a complete wreck, her engines were salvaged. They were placed in the "Manitoba", a steamer built for CP by the Polson Iron Works shipyard in Owen Sound. The "Manitoba" was placed into service in 1889 to replace the "Algoma".

The low cost of water transport over the long distance between southern Ontario and the head of Lake Superior made this the preferred way to move bulky, low value goods. The CP service proved to be particularly attractive as it offered an integrated package to the shipper as it operated both the rail and lake service. Their main competitor, the Grand Trunk, relied upon outside steamship companies to provide the service from Lake Huron and Georgian Bay ports to the lakehead.

In 1893, freight shipments through Owen Sound carried by CP's vessels amounted to 54,983 tons moving westward and 50,745 tons moving eastward. In addition, the three steamers brought 2.4 million bushels of grain from the lakehead. It required 233 trains to move this mountain of grain from Owen Sound to eastern markets<sup>14</sup>.

A decade later, CP's traffic through Owen Sound had more than doubled. Package freight shipments amounted to 99,430 tons moving westward and 148,500 tons moving eastward. Grain receipts increased to 3.2 million bushels<sup>15</sup>.



*In order to cope with increased freight shipments, CP lengthened the "Athabasca" from 263 feet to 299 feet in 1910 and "Alberta" from 264 feet to 310 feet in 1911. This 1914 view taken near Sault Ste Marie shows the "Alberta". A number of changes are readily apparent such as the new bridge, the built up bow, and different paint scheme on the funnel. While it is more difficult to detect the 46 foot addition to the vessel, the keen eyed reader will note that an extra set of freight doors in the lower hull.*

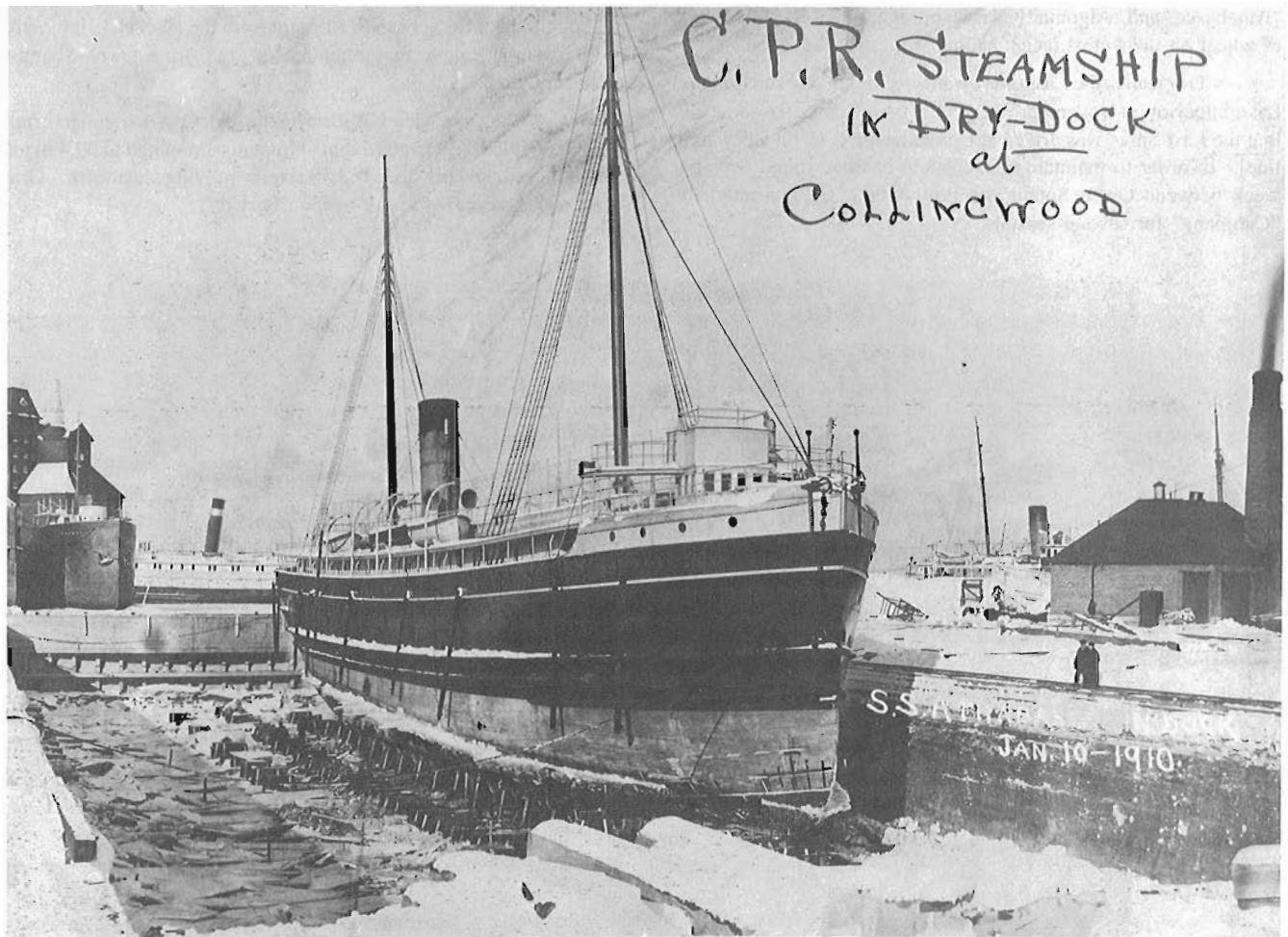
*National Archives of Canada/PA-151890*

To cope with the rising tide of freight traffic, CP placed two new steamers, the "Keewatin" and "Assiniboia", in service in 1908. In addition, the "Alberta" and "Athabasca" were lengthened at Collingwood in 1910 and 1911. In 1916, two of the steamers ceased to handle passengers and were only to handle freight traffic.

After periods of inactivity during the early 1930's, they were placed on a new service between Port McNicoll and the Lake Michigan ports of Milwaukee and Chicago. The new service began on May 2, 1938 with the departure of the "Alberta" from Port McNicoll. The steamers were scheduled to depart from Port McNicoll Monday and Friday and arrive at Milwaukee Wednesday and Saturday and at Chicago Thursday and Monday.

The service was established following CP's successful application to the Interstate Commerce Commission to establish the Canadian Pacific Great Lakes Line and to maintain differential rates<sup>16</sup>. The CP application was supported by commercial interests in New England, New York, Chicago, Milwaukee and across the American Midwest who would benefit from the lower rates to ship their products. This service replaced one previously offered by the Great Lakes Transit Corporation which had discontinued its service between Windsor and Lake Michigan ports early in 1937<sup>17</sup>.

They remained fixtures on the Great Lakes until 1946 when they were sold to American interests for service in the Gulf of Mexico. With their sale, one of the few remaining links with the early days of the CPR passed from active service.



ABOVE: This picture shows the "Athabasca" in the dry dock at the Collingwood shipyard on January 10, 1910 prior to being lengthened. National Archives of Canada/C-6759.

OPPOSITE: An artist's conception of one of the CPR lake steamships from "Summer Tours by the Canadian Pacific Railway", 1888.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> "The Globe", Toronto, April 18, 1884.

<sup>2</sup> CP acquired the Toronto, Grey & Bruce Railway on July 26, 1883. Its reason for the purchase was to provide a link between its lines in eastern Canada and the transcontinental line being built across northern Ontario and the western territory. In 1883 the TG&B converted its lines from narrow to standard gauge.

<sup>3</sup> The three vessels were launched in July 1883. They arrived in Montreal in November 1883.

<sup>4</sup> It was necessary to cut each vessel in two as they were too long for the locks on the St Lawrence and Welland Canals. The locks at Sault Ste Marie was substantially longer than the locks east of Port Colborne.

The "Athabasca" was the first vessel to arrive in Montreal. The Owen Sound "Advertiser" of November 9, 1883 reported that the movement of the steamers to Buffalo was proving more difficult than had been planned. It had been thought that the two sections of the vessel would float and thus could be easily towed to Buffalo. It was found that pontoons would be necessary. The tug "Conqueror", which had been hired to tow the steamer, struck a rock and sank while on the way to Montreal, further delaying the movement through the canals.

<sup>5</sup> These three vessels formed part of the Northwest Transportation Company line of steamboats. Beatty had been manager of this company prior to accepting a similar position managing CP's new steamboats on the Great Lakes.

<sup>6</sup> Beatty was appointed manager of the CP's great lakes steamship service in 1882. CP sent Beatty to Scotland to supervise the construction of the three lake steamers.

<sup>7</sup> The "Algoma" inaugurated the new service between Owen Sound and Port Arthur. It sailed on May 11, 1884 with over 1,000 passengers and a considerable quantity of freight.

<sup>8</sup> "The Advertiser", Owen Sound, March 8, 1883.

<sup>9</sup> "The Advertiser", Owen Sound, November 9, 1883.

<sup>10</sup> Barry, J. P. Ships of the Great Lakes, Howell-North, Berkeley, California, 1973.

<sup>11</sup> Rails were laid between Port Arthur and Winnipeg and this job was completed in June 1882. However, delays in bringing the trackage up to a useable standard precluded the operation of revenue trains until the summer of 1883. The transcontinental was not completed between Carleton Place and Port Arthur until May 16, 1885.

<sup>12</sup> CPR Timetable, September 9, 1884.

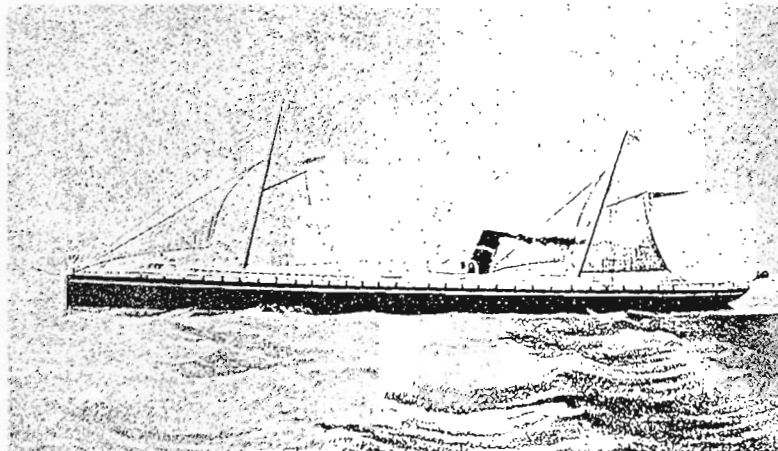
<sup>13</sup> "The Advertiser", Owen Sound, October 23, 1884.

<sup>14</sup> Owen Sound Times, December 14, 1893.

<sup>15</sup> Owen Sound Times, June 3, 1904.

<sup>16</sup> Differential rates were set at levels below regular railway rates. The differential rates compensated for circuitous rail routes or slower combined intermodal rail and water routes. The Interstate Commerce Commission had to approve these special rates. If the rates had not been granted, CP would not have inaugurated the service as the rates it would have had to charge would have been the same as for through freight service offered between New England and the Midwest by such lines as the New York Central Railroad.

<sup>17</sup> "Canadian Pacific Staff Bulletin", May 1, 1938, page 1.



# L'"Ontarien"

## Un Train Populaire Maintenant Disparu

Par Hugues W. Bonin

(Toutes les photos par l'auteur)

## The "Ontarian" : A Dear Friend Now Gone

By Hugues W. Bonin

(All photos by the author)

Le 15 janvier 1990 va être retenu par tous comme un jour noir où la moitié des services de VIA Rail a cessé d'être offerte aux contribuables Canadiens. Parmi les trains disparus figurent les "Ontariens", soient les trains 651 et 652 qui reliaient six jours par semaine les villes de Kingston et de Toronto. Alors que ces trains n'étaient qu'un service de plus à l'horaire de VIA Rail, il est évident qu'ils étaient considérés comme un fardeau pour les gérants de VIA; par contre, ils avaient certes une valeur sentimentale pour leurs équipages et leurs usagers. L'"Ontarien" procurait un excellent service pour les gens de Kingston, et des villes et villages sur son parcours. On pouvait le prendre à des heures raisonnables et arriver à temps à Toronto pour des réunions d'affaires, ou encore profiter de toute la journée pour visiter ou magasiner, puis prendre le temps d'un dîner tranquille à Toronto avant de reprendre le train #625 à 2015 pour le retour, le tout en relaxant. Par conséquent, les "Ontariens" avaient beaucoup de clientèle et je me souviens qu'à plusieurs occasions, des voyageurs faisaient le trajet Cobourg-Toronto debout, faute de place.

Les "Ontariens" étaient bien plus que de simples trains: ils avaient toujours des équipages amicaux: conducteurs polis, assistants-conducteurs affables (l'un d'eux était même un modéliste ferroviaire (HO)), un préposé à la cuisinette toujours souriant, et ces conductrices à la superbe allure... Même les passagers étaient plus enclins à la conversation que d'habitude.

Une journée typique voyait quelques 25 à 30 personnes monter dans le train à 0700 à Kingston, auxquels se joignaient 5 ou 6 à Napanee, et une autre vingtaine à Belleville, plus 6 à 10 autres à Trenton Junction. Souvent le train se remplissait complètement à Cobourg ou à Port Hope. Après le début du service de GO à Whitby, on ne voyait que quelques passagers monter à bord à Oshawa, mais avant, il n'était pas rare d'y voir monter plus de deux douzaines. Après Oshawa, le train effectuait un arrêt à Guildwood pour y laisser descendre des passagers seulement. Personnellement, j'utilisais ce train de douze à quinze fois par an, et je ne suis arrivé en retard à Toronto qu'une seule fois. En ce jour d'hiver 1983, trois des quatre petits moteurs diesel du train alors formé de deux autorail Budd rendirent l'âme, et moteur restant fut tout juste suffisant pour mouvoir le train jusqu'à la prochain voie garage près

January 15th 1990 will be remembered by all as a black day: this is the day when 50% of VIA services ceased to be offered to the Canadian tax payers. Among the many casualties were the "Ontarians", alias trains 651 and 652 providing service six days a week between Kingston and Toronto. While this particular train was just another train in the VIA schedule, and obviously a burden to VIA management, it bore a sentimental value to most of its crews and patrons. It provided an excellent service at convenient times for the Ontarians of Kingston, Toronto and the cities and villages in between. One could take it and arrive in downtown Toronto in time for business meetings, or have a full day for shopping or sightseeing, then have dinner in Toronto and catch Train 652 at 2015 hours or so and return in the evening without having to hurry. As a consequence, it was a well patronized train and I remember having standees between Cobourg and Toronto on several occasions.

The "Ontarians" were more than just a train: they always had friendly crews: polite conductors and assistant conductors (one of them is an HO train modeller), an ever-smiling snack bar attendant, and those attractive young lady conductors. Even the passengers of these trains felt more open and would readily engage conversation with you.

On a typical weekday, about 25-30 persons would board train 651 at 0700 in Kingston, then joined by 5 or 6 in Napanee, another 20 or so in Belleville and 6 to 10 at Trenton Junction. Often the train would be filled at Cobourg or Port Hope. Since the GO Transit service at Whitby, only a handful of passengers would board there. The train used to stop at Guildwood and, finally, Toronto Union Station only to detrain passengers. Personally, I used train 651 about 12-15 times a year, and only once I arrived late in Toronto. On that winter day in 1983, three of the four small diesel engines on the 2-car RDC (Rail Diesel Car) train managed to quit, and the last engine was just enough for the train to crawl to the next siding near Newtonville. Help arrived in the form of one of the CN SW1200RS switchers assigned to Oshawa, and this little loco hauled the RDCs to Union Station at a quick pace exceeding 60 mph.

de Newtonville. De l'aide fut envoyée d'Oshawa, sous la forme d'une des locomotives de manoeuvre du CN, et il fut plutôt surprenant de voir cette SW1200RS tirer les deux autorails vers la gare Union de Toronto à des vitesses de quelques 60 miles à l'heure (100 km/h).

Pour l'amateur de trains, les "Ontariens" furent toujours intéressants, bien que difficiles à photographier les matinées ensoleillées, avec le soleil derrière le train. Même l'exploitation du train était particulière, car les trains circulaient pour la moitié du parcours sur la voie de gauche de la ligne principale de CN, afin d'accomoder les passagers pour qu'ils montent ou descendant du train sur le quai de côté de la gare. Par exemple, le train 651 voyageait comme suit: il paraît de la vieille gare du Grand Tronc de Kingston (où le train passait le nuit) jusqu'à la gare de VIA sur la voie de gauche, pour s'arrêter à la gare sur la voie de droite après avoir changé de voie juste avant la rue Counter. Le train

circulait sur la voie de droite et changeait de voie à Erneston et continuait sur la voie de gauche pour desservir les gares de Napanee et de Bellville, puis revenait sur la voie de droite avant de s'arrêter à Trenton Junction. Il continuait sur cette voie jusqu'à près de Cobourg, où il changeait encore de voie avant d'atteindre la gare. Le trajet se faisait sur la voie de gauche pour desservir la ville de Port Hope, et le train changeait encore de voie pour revenir sur celle de droite pour l'arrêt d'Oshawa. Le reste du voyage était normalement sur la voie de droite jusqu'à la gare Union de Toronto.

Les sièges près des fenêtres de gauche offraient le plus d'action pour l'amateur de trains, surtout à cause de la présence de la voie principale du CP Rail juste au sud de celle du CN entre Trenton et Cobourg. Cependant, lors d'un voyage typique, on n'y voyait aucun train du CP, mais certains jours, on pouvait y voir trois trains. Une des lois de Murphy voulait que lorsque l'"Ontarien" rattrapait un des trains de marchandises du CP, les locomotives de celui-ci disparaissaient derrière les arbres ou des petites collines juste au moment où vous alliez en prendre une ou deux photos... Les triages d'Oshawa et de Don étaient toujours intéressants, et, rarement, une des locomotives de l'acière LASCO à Whitby



*Le train #651 quitte la vieille gare du Grand Tronc de Kingston à 0640 le matin du 2 mai 1981. Il arrivera à la gare de VIA Rail vers 0655 et partira pour son périple vers Toronto à 0700. Ce matin-là, le train était constitué des autorails RDC1 #6118 (aux couleurs du CN), RDC2 #6005, et RDC2 #6204.*

*Train 651 leaves the old GT outer station at around 0640 in the morning of 2 May 1981. It will arrive at the new VIA station in Kingston at 0655 and depart for Toronto at 0700. The equipment of the day consisted of RDC-1 6118 (in CN colours), RDC-9 6005 and RDC-2 6204.*

For the train buff, the "Ontarians" were always interesting, albeit hard to photograph on sunny days, with the sun behind the train. Even its operation was unusual, as the trains ran half the time on the left-hand track on the CN mainline, to stop on the station-side track. For example, Train 651 would travel as follows: from the old Kingston station to Counter Street on the left track, then switch on the right track before stopping at the VIA station. It would then remain on the right hand side track until Ernestown, then move onto the left track to serve Napanee and Belleville, then go back to the right track for stopping at Trenton Jct., until Cobourg where it would switch to the left track just before entering town. It would then stop at Cobourg and the Port Hope Stations, and most often cross to the right track around Newtonville in order to stop at Oshawa. Then, it remains on the right track until Toronto.

The left hand side windows offered the most train action for the traveller, as between Toronto and Cobourg, the CP mainline was right beside the CN mainline. A typical day revealed no CP trains at all, but there were days when one could see three CP trains. Typically also, the train would catch up with a CP freight, just to have the freight train locos disappear behind trees or small hills



*L'“Ontarien” a connu une existence somme toute tranquille sans accident majeur et avec peu de pannes graves. Il a fait les manchettes des journaux une fois, lorsque sa locomotive FPA4 a connu la panne sèche à Collins Bay simplement pour la bonne raison que l'on avait oublié de faire le plein. La photo, prise le matin du 30 juillet 1987, montre la RDC1 #6104 et la RDC2 #6208 en route vers l'Est, toutes par deux grosses locomotives du Canadien National (M636 #2325 et GP40-2L(W) #9422), après que les autorails eurent rendu l'âme. Les passagers ont dû voyager en autobus (horreur!), et les autorails ont effectué leur trajet vers Toronto un peu plus tard derrière une GP40-2L(W) du CN.*

*The “Ontarian” had a rather quiet existence with no serious accidents and few breakdowns. Once it made the headlines of Kingston's Whig-Standard newspaper when its FPA-4 ran out of fuel at Collins Bay simply because someone forgot to fill her up. More recently, on the morning of 30 July 1987, RDC-1 6104 and RDC-2 6208 were heading EAST behind Canadian National M636 2325 and GP40-2L(W) 9422 after the RDC engines gave up the ghost. The passengers had to be bussed to their destinations, and the RDC's were hauled back to Toronto later behind a CN GP40-2L(W).*

s'approchait suffisamment de la ligne du CN pour permettre une photo prise sur le vif. Une attraction récente était celle d'un train local du CN rencontré près de Scarborough et tiré par une paire de locomotives hybrides SW1200RS/GP9 de la série 7100 du CN.

La plupart du temps, lorsque le train 652 (le 656 avant novembre 1981) arrivait à Kingston tard dans la soirée, il continuait simplement vers l'est et quitter la voie principale du CN à la rue Division pour passer la nuit à la vieille gare du Grand Tronc (maintenant un restaurant), sur la rue Montréal. Lorsque l'on avait besoin de retourner la train, ceci était effectué sur le “Y” du tirage Queen's de l'usine d'Alcan. Une fois retourné, le train reculait jusqu'à la vieille gare. Il était plutôt rare de faire la manoeuvre de retournement le matin de départ pour Toronto. L'intérêt majeur pour l'amateur de trains réside dans la variété exceptionnelle de l'équipement utilisé. Au cours des années, l'“Ontarien” a eu peu près tous les types de matériel roulant de VIA rail, sauf les wagons-

right at the time you were about to take a picture of them... The Oshawa yard and the Don Yard in Toronto were always interesting, and on rare occasions, one of the LASCO (Lake Ontario Steel) orange GE 70-tonners would be visible. A recent attraction was a local CN freight train usually met at Scarborough, hauled by a pair of 7100s, hybrid SW1299RS/GP9s.

Most often, when Train 652 (656 before Nov. 1981) arrived at Kingston late in the evening, it simply continued onto the old CN mainline to spend the night at the old “Grand Trunk Outer Station” on Montreal Street. The station has been preserved and was recently a restaurant called the “Pig and Whistle”. When the train needed turning, this was done around midnight at the wye at Queen's Yard, near the Alcan plant in Kingston. Once turned, the train backed all the way to the old station to spend the night. It was rare to have the train turned in the morning. For the rail fan, the “Ontarian” was super because of its varying equipment. Over the

lits, les trains Turbo et les voitures panoramiques à dome du "Canadien".

Il est permis de regretter que le Gouvernement Canadien n'ait pas eu la sagesse de respecter ses promesses de faire la promotion et le développement d'un service de trains de passagers viable et, en particulier, de garder l'"Ontarien". L'investissement d'un certain 1.5 million de dollars pour maintenir le service de l'"Ontarien" aurait été bien meilleur service à rendre aux contribuables que de gaspiller cette somme d'argent sur cette peinture stupide appelée "Stripes of Fire". D'après moi, les bandes bleu foncé et jaune que l'on voit sur les côtés d'inox des autorails Budd de VIA ont les mêmes qualités artistiques que "Stripes of Fire". Peut-on considérer les "RDCs" de l'"ontarien" comme des chef d'oeuvre ambulants?

Les photographes qui accompagnent ce texte couvrent les quelques dix dernières années de l'"Ontarien". Elles illustrent la variété du matériel roulant qui équipait ces trains, photographiés à différents endroits de leur parcours.

years it managed to have about every type of VIA equipment, except sleepers, the Turbo Trains and the Dome cars used on the Canadians.

One wishes that the Canadian government had been wise enough to respect its promises about promoting and developing a viable Canadian passenger train service and, in particular, maintaining the "Ontarians". Investing 1.5 million dollars in maintaining the "Ontarian" service would have been a better service to the tax payers than having spent this money on acquiring that silly painting called "Stripes of Fire". To me, the dark blue and yellow bands adorning the stainless steel side of the VIA RDCs have the same artistic value of "Stripes of Fire": May we consider the "Ontarians" RDC cars as rolling masterpieces?

The following photographs cover about the last 10 years of operation of the "Ontarians". They give an idea of the diversity of equipment used on the trains photographed in various surroundings.



*Une journée normale pour l'"Ontarien": après une arrivée ponctuelle à Toronto, le train #651 continue vers le centre d'entretien de VIA à Willowbrook. Les autorails RDC-1 #6107 et 6109 sortent lentement de la Gare Union et serpentent le dédale d'aiguillages au pied de la Tour CN, le 20 août 1987.*

*A normal day for the "Ontarian". After an on-time arrival at Union Station in Toronto, train 651 continues empty to the VIA Rail maintenance facility at Willowbrook. RDC-1's 6107 and 6109 crawl out of the station shed and snake their way in the maze of split switches at the foot of the famous CN tower on 20 August 1987.*



Assez souvent, l'«Ontarien» arrivait en Gare Union de Toronto juste à côté d'un autre train fameux: le «Northland» (#129) qui arrivait de Cochrane et de North Bay, et qui a été lui aussi éliminé par M. Bouchard. Ce train était exploité conjointement par VIA Rail et par l'Ontario Northland, et avait en principe une locomotive de l'ONR une journée sur deux. En ce 9 mars 1989, le «Northland» était mû par la FP7A #1520 de l'ONR et par une FP9A de VIA Rail, tandis que l'«Ontarien» avait l'autorail RDC1 #6120 à sa tête.

On several occasions, the «Ontarian» would pull up alongside another famous train, No. 128, the «Northland» operated jointly by VIA and Ontario Northland between Kapuskasing, Cochrane, North Bay and Toronto; this was another casualty of the Bouchard cuts. On this particular day, the «Ontarian» was headed by RDC-1 6120, and the «Northland» was hauled by Ontario Northland FP7A 1520 and a VIA FP9A.



Voici l'autorail RDC1 #6107 (inerte) toué par le train #651 à Bellville le 10 août 1988. L'autorail venait alors d'être reconstruit aux ateliers d'UTDC de Napanee.

Here we see RDC 6107 dead in transit at the end of train 651 in Belleville on 10 August 1988. The RDC has just been partly rebuilt at the UTDC shop in Napanee.





*Les jours ensoleillés, il est possible de réaliser de belles photos des trains dans la Gare Union de Toronto, comme le démontre cette vue de l' "Ontarien", tiré par la FP9A de VIA Rail, le 23 novembre 1988.*

*On sunny days, nice photos are possible in the train shed of Toronto Union Station. On such a day, 23 November 1988, VIA FP9A 6512 had just brought train 651 in from Kingston.*



*Un "Ontarien" en service en 1990 est vraiment une chose rare, puisque seulement onze paires de trains l'ont fait. Le dernier "Ontarien" pris par l'auteur attend le départ à la gare VIA de Kingston, le 10 janvier 1990. Le train de wagons conventionnelles était propulsé par la F40PH-2 #6442. Les ferrophiiles observateurs auront noté l'absence du logo "VIA" à l'avant de la locomotive: elle venait tout juste d'être réparée à la suite d'une altercation avec un camion à un passage à niveau.*

*An "Ontarian" running in 1990 was a rare event indeed, as only eleven pairs did so. The last train the author took is pictured here, on 10 January 1990. The conventional consist was hauled by F40PH-2 6442, shown at the VIA station in Kingston. Keen-eyed observers have noticed the absence of the VIA logo on the nose of the locomotive; it had been recently repaired after an altercation with a truck at a grade crossing some time before.*

# All Together Again

## The "Trans Canada Limited" at Cranbrook

By Mike Westren

A special milepost has been passed in this very important project of the Cranbrook Railway Museum; the complete train set, less the locomotive, of the "Trans Canada Limited" has been assembled in one place. This is what makes the collection unique, an example of a train purpose-built for a particular duty. What is more, it represents a most important piece of Canadian heritage.

Introduced in 1919 as a first class, sleeping cars only, train between Montreal and Vancouver, this train was re-equipped in 1929 with ten sets of new rolling stock specifically built for this service. Unfortunately that very year of 1929 saw the start of the Great Depression, and after only two seasons the train was discontinued and the rolling stock dispersed to lesser duties. The Cranbrook Railway Museum has been able to gather together one complete set of these cars, comprising a representative of each individual type of car used.

Four of these cars were restored in time for an appearance at Expo 86 in Vancouver, B.C. These were: a full baggage car 4481 (originally a combination baggage-sleeper), a 36-seat dining car "Argyle", an 8-2-1 sleeper "Rutherglen", and solarium-lounge car "River Rouge". The superintendent's car "British Columbia" (number 19 in later CPR days) accompanied the train on this odyssey. Combination baggage-sleeper 4489 joined the collection at Expo; five cars went, six came back. Since that time, the remaining two types of sleeper, 10-compartment "Glencassie" and 12-1 "Somerset", as well as 30-seat full parlour 6751 have joined the train. The overwhelming significance of this display is that the complete set was built for the "Trans Canada Limited". All these cars were built in Canada; steel frames and sides were assembled variously by National Steel Car and Canadian Car & Foundry, with all outfitting, carpentry, cabinet work, plumbing and electrical work undertaken in CP's own Angus Shops.

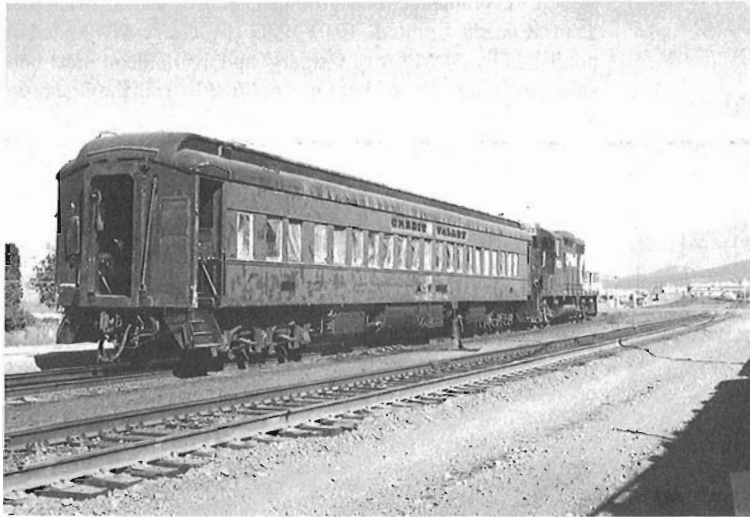
The 10-compartment sleeping car "Glencassie" was known to exist as a boarding car on the Coquitlam auxiliary. It was one of a batch of five built in 1928, with TCL service in view; in 1961 it was relegated to work train duty as No. 411660. The car was essentially complete and not too badly modernized, apart from liberal coatings



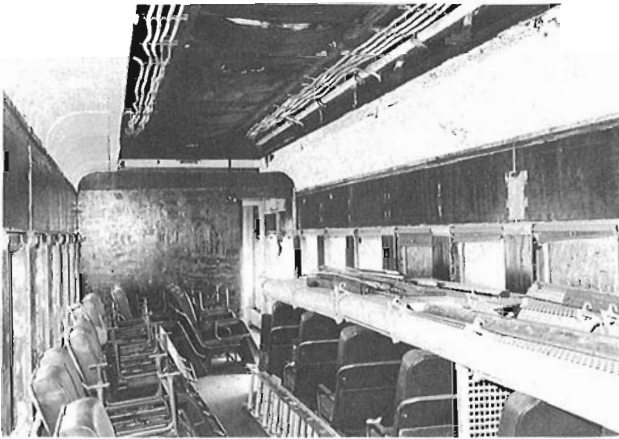
*The "Trans Canada Limited" sits, apparently poised to leave Elko station, in this early morning shot on March 11, 1992.*

of green paint over the Honduran mahogany veneers. Sash windows were intact, though outer sashes were later replaced with easier to maintain aluminum frames. One compartment was missing altogether, but otherwise the accommodations appeared to be intact. CP Rail released the "Glencassie" from the active list in mid-1989 and generously donated it to the Cranbrook collection. The years 1990 through early 1992 saw a major reversal of history. Layers of paint were painstakingly stripped, green in the compartments, deep mushroom and rust-brown in the corridor; in fact the brown was glued on vinyl. Mahogany surfaces were thoroughly cleansed and sanded. Eight coats of varnish have been rebuilt, so that the car is ready to receive one final fine sanding and finish varnish. The luxurious glow of the wood and striking grain patterns are once again a delight to behold. Inlays in this car were confined to a bold border set into the upper berths. Nevertheless, once reupholstering and finishing are completed in the fullness of time, this will indeed be a most handsome car. This will be the Museum's "hotel car" where the overnight experience will become available on a limited basis.

Both the S-class sleeper "Somerset" and the full parlour car 6751 were acquired through negotiations with the South Simcoe Heritage Railway Association, formerly Ontario Rail. These two cars, needed to complete the set, had been in storage at Tottenham, Ontario. They were promised a good home in B.C., close to their



*GP9u No. 1622 moves parlour car 6751 into a spur for exterior painting prior to bringing it onto the Museum site, October 6, 1989.*



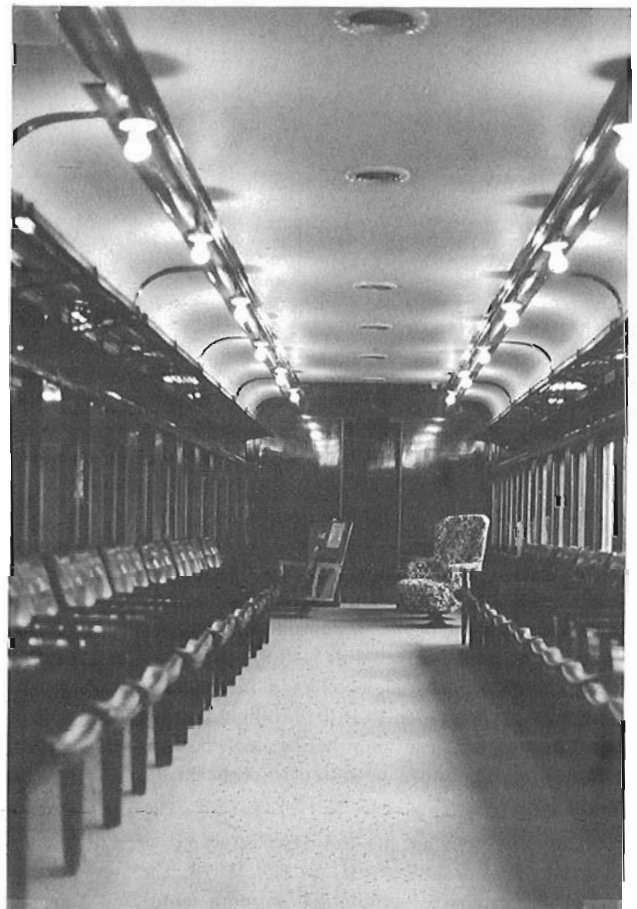
*Interior of car 6751 on August 5, 1989, before work was begun.*

immediate family. Rail connection had been severed in 1989, so the pair had to be trucked from Tottenham over to active tracks. Thence both were transported on their own wheels, courtesy of CP Rail, to Cranbrook.

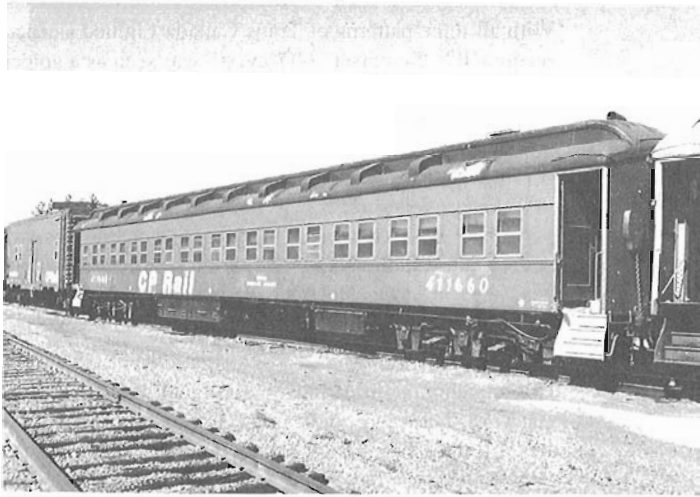
The "Somerset" was one of a batch constructed in 1930, and probably entered service just too late to actually run with its intended train. It was later (after World War II) modernized, sash window pairs replaced by single rectangular picture windows, ceilings were lowered to accommodate air-conditioning ducting, and the Honduran mahogany veneers and inlays obliterated with the almost universal green paint. Interestingly, the inlays found in this car, a delicate leaf motif, are identical to those in the R-class sleepers like "Rutherglen". In this 1948 rebuilding the car re-emerged as the "Travers". Faded silver paint bore mute witness to its duty, from 1968 to 1972, on CP Rail's "Atlantic Limited" between Montreal and Saint John, N.B. A service record card, found during restoration, showed this service in eastern Canada.

With all three patterns of Trans Canada Limited sleepers secured, the "Somerset" / "Travers" was seen as a golden interpretive opportunity. It is being restored to demonstrate the developments that these well-built heavyweights underwent. Thus the car is beginning to exhibit signs of severe schizophrenia, with one side being restored as built, the other as modernized. Thus one half is being returned to varnished inlaid mahogany grandeur including paired-sash windows, including re-riveting and welding the exterior, and so on. The opposite half will retain the later green paint treatment and large picture windows. Work is continuing with this car, and will for some while yet.

Considerable modifications had befallen the full parlour car 6751. This piece, built in 1930, was destined for day travel, exclusively for diplomatic and parliamentary use, between Ottawa and Montreal only. Thirty plush swivel chairs were arranged in two rows of 15 each down the length of the spacious open interior. This was in fact the largest room aboard the train, being about ten feet longer than the regal dining room in the "Argyle". During later years, relegated to day coach duty, the end walls had been moved in to provide enlarged men's and ladies' lounge and smoking rooms. The ubiquitous green paint had struck again over the inlaid Honduran mahogany, and even the brass racks! Obtained



*The interior of 6751 on March 19, 1992, after major restoration work had been completed.*



*"Glencassie" as it appeared in work train service, September 3, 1989.*



*"Somerset" / "Travers", still wearing faded silver paint, in Cranbrook yard on September 5, 1989.*

in 1972 by Ontario Rail, the car was used in Credit Valley service as 561, "Terra Cotta". No. 6751 now stands with its interior re-expanded to its former longer layout. So far, only five swivel chairs have been found. One has been re-upholstered in attractive floral plush, similar to the fabric it would have worn when new. The original wood once more glows quietly under fresh varnish. All 1930 light fixtures were long gone; basic lamp holders will have to suffice until funds can be raised to replicate the originals.

Previous coverage of the train has appeared in Canadian Rail as follows: issues 327 (1979) and 365 (1982) on car restoration and museum set-up, issues 393 (1986) and 396 (1987) describing the appearance at Expo 86, and issue 403 (1988), Elko

station. Recommended background reading is "Canadian Pacific's Trans Canada Limited, 1919-1930" by Garry W. Anderson, published by BRMNA of Calgary, and available at most book stores stocking railway literature, or directly from the Cranbrook Railway Museum.

The acquisition and preservation of the 1929 Trans Canada Limited truly constitutes a national heritage treasure. Locomotive 2341, a class G3d Pacific, from the Canadian Railway Museum collection, is designated to be transferred to Cranbrook and head up this fine train. Development plans call for expansion to five representative train sets, and constructing a large covered trainshed exhibition facility. The institution proposed a name change to "The Canadian Museum of Rail Travel", and plans to open in the new premises during 1998.



*Veneer repairs. Project worker Peter Heather carefully removes a patch, which had carried a later light fitting, in preparation for setting in a new piece of matching Honduran mahogany. Taken in car "Somerset" on January 7, 1992.*



*As this view, taken on December 13, 1991, of "Somerset" / "Travers" shows, the starting point can often be close to heartbreak!*



*ABOVE LEFT: A corner of a section in car "Somerset" undergoing cleaning and repair to the mahogany veneer, on February 8, 1992, before varnishing. Note the delicate inlaid leaf motif in the upper berth.*

*ABOVERIGHT: Schizoid treatment of gangway door in "Somerset" / "Travers". March 19, 1992.*

*LEFT: Detail of inlaid leaf motif in "Somerset". March 19, 1992.*

*NOTE: All photos were taken by the author.*

## The Newfoundland Railway : 1988 - 1991

By Claude Hoddinott

The Newfoundland Railway was abandoned in 1988, and the removal of the track was completed late in 1990. Yet a surprisingly large number of relics of the lines still remain in the province. Numerous pieces of equipment, and even sections of track have been preserved, and other structures have been converted to other uses. Our member Claude Hoddinott has sent us a number of photos taken between 1988 and 1991. We hope you will enjoy them.



*LEFT: One of the last trains to proceed east from Bishop's Falls to Gander on the Newfoundland Railway; April 23, 1990. A work train hauled by engines 917 and 924, this was the beginning of operations, in the spring of 1990, to dismantle the remaining sections of the railway in the former Clarenville Subdivision. Operations ceased in November, 1990, when the last of the main line rails were taken up at Bishop's Falls.*

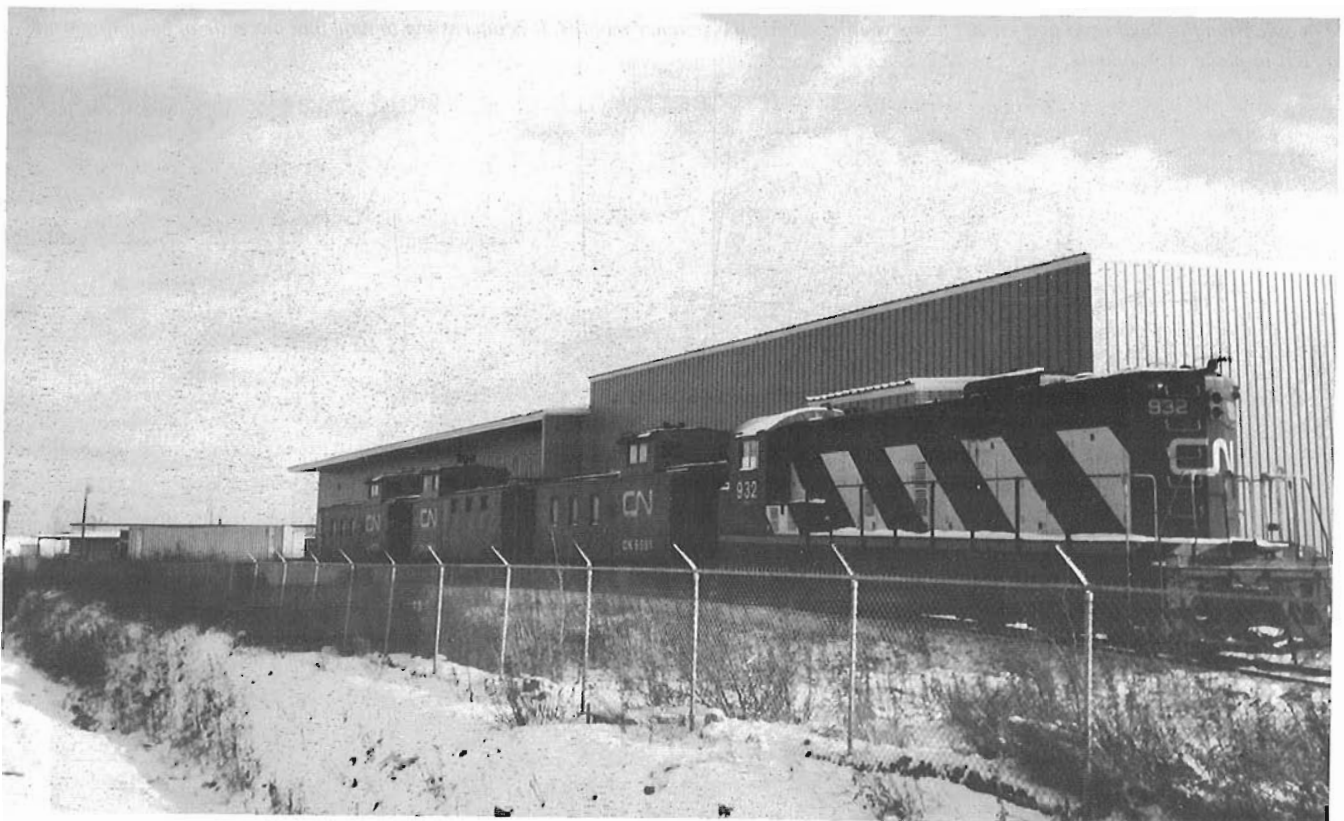
*BELOW: Train number 203, westbound to Corner Brook on August 21, 1988, photographed at the Summit near the Gaff Topsails. I had the opportunity to ride this train to Corner Brook, and managed to get a few interesting photos.*





*LEFT: The station at Gander on December 3, 1988, looking east on the rail line. This station was torn down during the summer of 1991.*

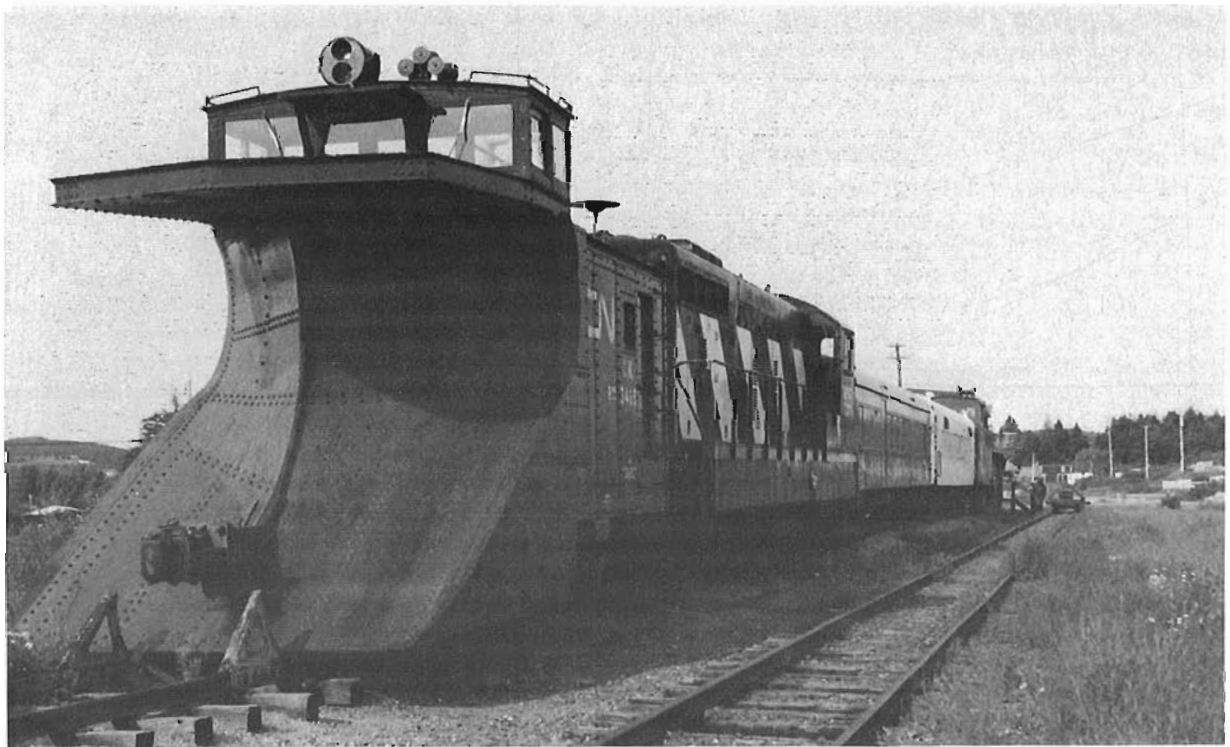
*BELOW: Locomotive 932, with three cabooses, all stored for the winter at Grand Falls, photographed on December 13, 1988. Engine 932 was used for hauling dismantled rails from the Gaff Topsail area during November and December 1988. Dismantling of the railway commenced on October 12, 1988.*





*ABOVE: Avondale station, the oldest station in Newfoundland, built about 1882, photographed on July 28, 1990. This historic structure has been refurbished as a tourist attraction. Avondale also boasts one of the better train displays in the province.*

*BELOW: The display train at Avondale, situated on Conception Bay, Newfoundland on July 28, 1990. These units are well cared for by the people from the local area and attract many visitors during the summer months. It is interesting to note that one mile of main line track was left in place at Avondale.*







*The last days of the Clarenville rail yard as seen on November 12, 1990. Shown here are locomotives 937, 932, 914, following the end of dismantling operations. All main line track has been removed in both directions.*

*The CN Rail bridge over the Exploits River at Bishop's Falls, Newfoundland on November 14, 1990. This structure, about 927 feet long, was the longest bridge on the Newfoundland Railway. It is now used by pedestrians and all-terrain vehicles.*



*RIGHT: Locomotive 917 at Bishop's Falls on April 15, 1990. This engine hauled the last scheduled westbound train to Corner Brook on September 30, 1988, and was later used for pulling dismantled rails from the rail bed.*



*BELOW: Old 932 makes its final move, on a tractor trailer rig, from the Clarendville yard to the town of Bonavista where a display train is to be set up. The motors and trucks have been removed from the locomotive in order to allow transportation by road. The complete diesel unit could never be moved in this manner. I thought this was a rare opportunity and a unique photograph. Taken on October 25, 1991.*



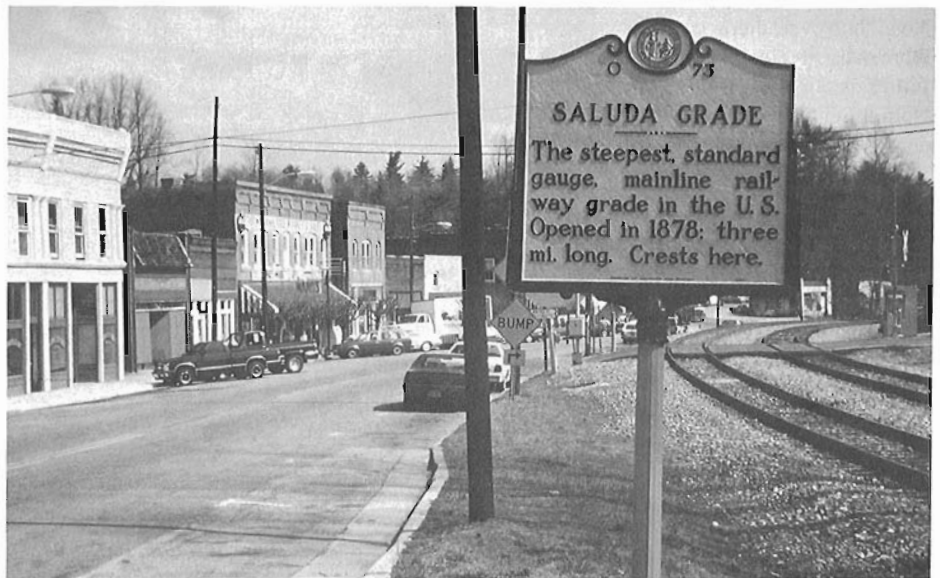
# The Railway on Saluda Mountain

By Fred Angus and Mark Gustafson

SALUDA! Very many North American railway enthusiasts have heard this name and know that it is something special. Those who are more knowledgeable know that the steepest grade on a class I railway in either the United States or Canada is that which ascends Saluda Mountain in North Carolina, via Norfolk Southern's route between Spartanburg South Carolina, on the former Southern Railway main line, and Asheville, in the mountains of North Carolina. This grade, completed in 1878, reaches a maximum of almost 5% and has been famous for generations. On March 21, 1992 occurred a rare event; for the first time in almost two decades a passenger train, on which the public could ride, ascended Saluda grade, and we had the privilege of being aboard this historic train.

The early settlements in the Carolinas and Virginia were close to the seacoast and were cut off from the interior by the formidable Blue Ridge which forms a very effective barrier to east-west travel. By the nineteenth century some roads crossed this range, and, in the second half of the century, railroads were projected in the area. At least three lines were planned to tackle the Blue Ridge and, in the years after 1865, the plans gradually turned to reality. Some plans involved curves, switchbacks and tunnels in order to lengthen the line and so reduce the grade. However, all these features require heavy expense, and the Spartanburg and Asheville Railroad did not have the funds to attempt this. Their approach was to build the shortest practicable line which meant a rise of more than 700 feet in less than three miles. This compares to a distance of thirteen miles employed by a rival railroad to surmount the same grade. Since the grade in this area is on the edge of an escarpment, there is no corresponding descent on the other side - once the line gets up it stays up. Hence a lengthy tunnel would be of no use even if the money was available to build one. During the 1870's construction of the Spartanburg & Asheville Railroad continued, and at 10:30 A.M. on July 4, 1878, the first regular train surmounted the Saluda grade and pulled into Pace's Gap, now the village of Saluda. In 1881, the company was reorganized as the Asheville & Spartanburg, and, in 1885, the line was finally completed to Asheville.

From the first there were problems negotiating the grade, both ascending and descending. In the steam era, helper engines were stationed at the foot of the grade to assist the upbound trains. There were numerous runaways, some of them very serious. One of the worst was in 1893 when a trainload of cattle got out of control and



*The historical marker indicating the crest of the grade, in the centre of Saluda village. Note the road sign that says "bump"!*

*Photo by Fred Angus.*

eventually derailed, with a horrendous crash, on a curve, in a cutting which is called "Slaughter Pen Cut" to this day. A number of crewmen have lost their lives in these incidents, but there was never a passenger fatality in more than 100 years. In 1903, the Southern Railway, which had taken over the S & A, installed two runaway tracks whose switches are normally set for the safety track and only changed to the main line when the train is known to be fully under control. In 1955, with dieselization and improved steep hill procedures, the upper safety switch was removed, but the lower one, at Melrose, is still in regular use. Although the grade extends for a dozen or more miles, it is the 2.9 mile section from Melrose to Saluda which constitutes the true Saluda grade.

One point that should be clarified is the term "Saluda Mountain". Although the term is frequently used, there is no such geographical feature; no mountain is called Saluda. In earlier times the grade was called Saluda Hill, but time has dignified it with the term mountain; geography notwithstanding.

Regular passenger service on this route ceased on December 5, 1968 when trains 27 and 28, the Carolina Special, made their last run. Freight service has continued until the present time, although all through freight schedules on the line were suspended on November 1, 1991, except the Belmont Coal Train (Appalachia Va. to Belmont N.C.) and its counterpart hopper train. There were strong rumours that the line was soon to be abandoned, but regular freights, consisting largely of woodchip cars, have resumed running on Saluda. Talk of abandoning the line has been around for almost

90 years, at least since the Rutherford (N.C.) Tribune reported in its issue of August 20, 1903, that "Freight traffic on the Asheville and Spartanburg Road may be wholly abandoned and all freight brought over the Knoxville and Augusta division". Now, however there is much more talk of closing, and the future is anything but clear. Norfolk Southern is now seriously considering adopting alternative routing for its freights, and may reach a final decision within a year, although it is said that all these alternatives also present problems. Meanwhile the freights still go up and down the famous grade, but who knows for how much longer.

The operation of trains on the grade is very interesting and fascinating to watch. Coming up, the usual method is to **triple** the hill, bringing one-third of the train up from Melrose to Saluda on each trip, and reassembling the train at the top. But it is the descent that is the most spectacular. Upon arriving from Asheville, the eastbound trains stop at Saluda and the air brake retainers are set on each car in order to assure that there is an uninterrupted application of brakes during the whole descent. Depending on the length and weight of the train, a compulsory stop is made near "Stop Board No. 1" (just below the crest) or "Stop Board No. 2" (about 2200 feet further down). Eastbound trains of 30 cars or less will stop just west of "Stop Board No. 1", while longer trains may pass the first stop board and proceed to a point between the two. This ensures that the train is balanced on the crest while crew members turn on the retainers and inspect the brakes. The Road Foreman of Engine always boards the locomotive, and he acts as pilot, or even operates the train. The train is not permitted to depart until the brake pipes have been charged to 100 lbs. pressure for at least 5 minutes. The dynamic brakes are turned on as the train starts down, and they remain on for the whole descent. While the dynamic brakes are important, they are not relied upon to be the only means of controlling the descent. As soon as the speed reaches 6 MPH, several applications and releases of the air brakes are made so that the brake cylinders and retaining valve pipes are charged. Thereafter, brake applications are made as often as necessary to maintain a speed that will permit a brake application of less than 8 pounds reduction to stop the train. Maximum permitted speed is 8 MPH, except for light engines (or engine with caboose only) which may reach 15 MPH (12 minutes from Saluda to Melrose). However trains consisting of 50% or more of loaded coal hoppers may not exceed 6 MPH and so must take at least 29 minutes for the descent. There is a timing device that records the time the train passes a



*The special train, March 21, 1992, at "Slaughter Pen Cut", below Melrose. Although before the start of the main grade, this is a spectacular location, the scene of the infamous wreck of 1893.*

*Photo by Fred Angus.*

fixed point and this automatically sets the safety switch for the main line after a given time. If the train arrives at the switch too soon, it is considered to be out of control and it will not be switched to the main line (which has a slight curve at that point), but will continue straight on to the safety track at Melrose. At this point it will, hopefully, be stopped by the 10% up grade at the end. One time a few years ago the train did go on to the safety track and was not able to back out on to the main line because of the weight of the train on the down grade behind it, so it had to be rescued by another locomotive pulling from the rear. The last true runaway occurred on November 14, 1971. By this time computers were on the scene, and the computer said that the train could make it safely down despite some problems that had been encountered earlier. Well, the computer had made a slight miscalculation and the train crashed at Melrose; however the crew jumped safely out at Sand Cut (the last safe place to bail out).

On March 9, 1992 we were at Saluda Mountain and walked a part of the line, including from the crest down to the site of long-gone Safety Track No. 1. That night we observed one of the most impressive examples of railroading that can be seen, as a freight descended Saluda just before midnight. We watched the retainers being set and the brakes being inspected, then we followed, by automobile, along a parallel road as the train went down, amid the distinctive sound of whining dynamic brakes, at a steady speed of about 8 miles an hour. The slightly misty, drizzly atmosphere reflected the light of the headlights and amplified the sound of the dynamic brakes. Truly a never to be forgotten experience that may soon be gone forever.

Twelve days later we were at Spartanburg, ready to board the "Saluda Special". Norfolk Southern 6-axle GE diesel locomotive 8651 hauled a five-car train consisting of gondola 65095 (used as an idler car), and private cars "Pine Tree State", "Clinchfield", "Cimarron River", "Caritas". Three of the cars have a Canadian connection, for the "Cimarron River" and the "Caritas" were, before being rebuilt as private cars, in service as sleepers on CN and later VIA. The "Pine Tree State" often came into Montreal on Amtrak's "Montrealer". On March 21, about 90 passengers rode the train which left Spartanburg at 10:00 A.M. Shortly after departing, there was an unfortunate incident when a woman drove her car into the side of the locomotive. Luckily there were no injuries, although the front of the automobile was demolished. Despite the delay, the full program was followed, and the lost time regained. There were several excellent runpasts including two on the famous grade itself. After reaching the summit at Saluda, lunch was served in a park adjacent to the tracks, before the train continued on to Asheville.

Although the future of the Saluda line is in doubt, one more event is planned. On October 24 and 25, 1992, the Piedmont Carolinas Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, in cooperation with Norfolk Southern Corporation, will run two "Autumn Leaf Excursions" from Charlotte N.C. to Asheville N.C., using former Norfolk and Western steam locomotive 611. The October 25 trip will go by way of Saluda, thus affording an opportunity to see and ride behind steam on this famous line, the first since 1972. Thus after a long hiatus, 1992 will see two passenger trips on Saluda, although the good news is partly tempered by the thought that the end may be near.

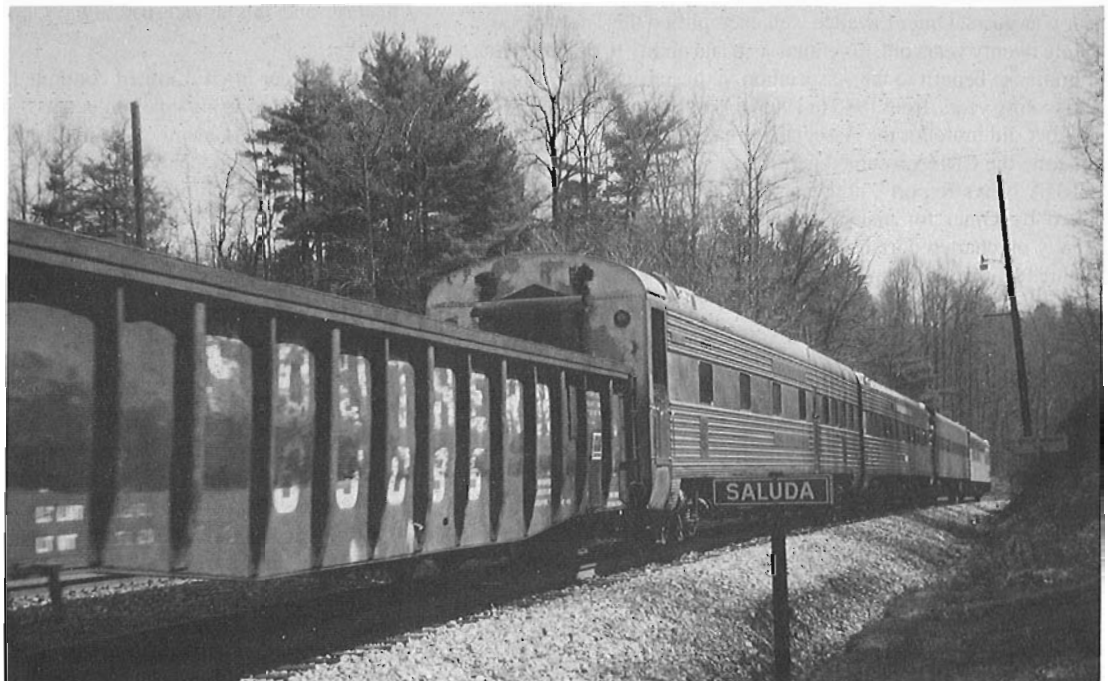
As the Saluda Signal (Jan-Feb 1992) aptly put it "Today, railroad buffs visit Saluda, many from distant places, to watch, and often photograph, the trains as they reach the top of the grade near Saluda's main street. Children run



*The special train ascending the grade near Stop Board No. 2, about half a mile from the crest.*

*Photo by Fred Angus.*

*to see the big engines and to count the cars. Both young and old pause along the way to wave back as the engineer waves and, sometimes, toots his whistle." Long may this 114 year old railroad epic continue.*



*The four passenger cars of the "Saluda Special", with the idler gondola, as the train reaches the "Saluda" nameboard just before the crest of the grade.*

*Photo by Fred Angus.*

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# In Memoriam

## Omer S.A. Lavallée - 1925 - 1992

By Fred F. Angus

The entire railway historical movement was shocked and saddened to learn of the death, on February 5 1992, of Omer Lavallée who was, without a doubt, the foremost railway historian in Canada.

Born on September 14, 1925, Omer Lavallée was the son of Joseph O. Lavallée and Florence O'Shaughnessy. Coming from a railroad family, his interest in trains began at a very early age and continued all his life. In 1942 he began work with Canadian Pacific Airlines, but soon transferred to the Canadian Pacific Railway (now CP Rail) and remained with the CP organization until his retirement in 1986. For many years he was in the Treasury department of the CPR, and one of his duties was paying the CP employees on the International of Maine division. Each pay period his home was Pay Car 52, that most welcome of all official cars to the employees from Jackman to Vanceboro in the State of Maine. In those days all payments were made in cash, and the exact amount for each employee was made up and placed in an envelope, to be handed out on pay day. As a symbolic gesture, some of the pay was in the form of U.S. silver dollars, recalling the pioneer days of railroading.

Omer's connection with the CRHA began in 1945 when he joined as member number 89. This was a time when the Association's activities and membership were at an all-time low after the severe curtailment of railway enthusiast's functions due to six years of war. However, by late 1945 the war was over, and "new blood" and new enthusiasm began to foretell a great revival of interest in the post-war years. Omer Lavallée well exemplified this "new blood". Barely twenty years old, his enthusiasm and ability to organize was of immense benefit to the Association in this critical time. For the next twenty years, from 1945 to 1965, it is safe to say that no CRHA member did more for the Association than Omer Lavallée. During this time the CRHA resumed publishing a periodical; this was the "CRHA News Report", now Canadian Rail, started in 1949 and edited by Omer for many years. Excursions resumed in 1949, usually on chartered trains and street cars, and these were a major feature of activities until recent times. At the same time the Association's interest was extended to include street railways. Omer was a leader of this movement, and it is significant that the first piece of rolling stock acquired by the CRHA was a street car, MSR 274, which is 100 years old this year. This led to the biggest and most significant CRHA event of these twenty years, the establishment of the Canadian Railway Museum. By 1950 it appeared that steam locomotives and street cars would soon disappear from service in most of Canada, and the CRHA began to consider whether its mandate to preserve railway history included the preservation of full size railway equipment. After the acquisition of 274 in 1951, the precedent was set and the formation of the collection was begun. At that time there was a great variety of equipment, still in service, from which to choose, and the selection of a representative collection was a formidable task. It is here that the expertise of Omer Lavallée showed to its highest as he used his vast knowledge of railway history to justify the decision to acquire, or to decline, the various pieces of equipment that were retired from service.

Having secured the beginnings of a collection, the major task was to find a place to keep and display it; no mean task when one considers the size of the exhibits. For this purpose a Museum Committee was set up and for more than five years it considered the pros and cons of the various possible locations, until the Delson - St. Constant site was acquired in 1961. Once the location was set, the work of construction began. All during the first half of the 'sixties, Omer led groups of volunteers in the various jobs of restoration, construction, tracklaying and maintenance. This was in addition to his work as editor of Canadian Rail and as a director of the Association; not to mention his "real life" work at the CPR. Many times his organizational capabilities and historical knowledge were called into use to solve some of the numerous problems with which the Association was confronted.

In 1965, the organization of the Museum was changed and, soon after, Omer ceased active participation in that phase of CRHA activities. In 1967 he left the Association altogether and concentrated his historical activities in publications as well as his new appointment in the Corporate Archives of CP Limited. I recall with sadness the departure of Omer Lavallée from the CRHA; it was truly the end of an era. However it was still reassuring to know that Omer was still there and was able and willing to help in historical matters. Since becoming Editor of Canadian Rail in 1980, I have often sought his advice and opinion regarding various points in railway history, and this advice has always been freely and cheerfully given.

Omer's career in CP Limited continued, and his true capabilities were realized upon his appointment, in 1973, as Corporate Archivist and Historian. As a member of a publishing company, he undertook the huge job of producing historical works such as "Van Horne's Road", "Canadian Pacific Steam Locomotives", and many others including some still unpublished which, it is hoped, will appear in the future. Upon retiring from CP he was made Emeritus Corporate Historian and Archivist and, in 1989, his lifelong work in the historical line was officially recognized by his being awarded the Order of Canada. In 1988 Omer had re-joined the CRHA, and had reassumed his old membership number 89. We all hoped for a further long association between him and the CRHA but, unfortunately this hope ended with his death.

For more than ten years, Omer had been in indifferent health, but did not appear to be in serious danger. He had been working on several new books, and their publication was eagerly awaited. Thus the news of his sudden passing came as a great shock to all who knew him. It is, perhaps a cliché to say that he was "cut off before his time", yet one cannot help but think of all the information that died with him, and all the historical works that will never be written by him. Had he been spared a few years more the railway history movement would have been the better. We have all suffered a loss, some as a friend, others as an acquaintance, but it is our duty to continue the preservation and recording of railway history as was done for so many years by Omer Lavallée.

## Book Reviews

Reviewed by Fred Angus

### A TRIO OF BOOKS ON EARLY ELECTRIC RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT

The year 1892 was an important year in the history of electric railways. It marks the close of the pioneer period, and the beginning of the quarter-century of unprecedented growth of what, by 1892, had become a well-tried practical technology. It was in this year that the two largest manufacturers of electric railway equipment, Edison General Electric and Thomson-Houston, amalgamated to form General Electric. In Canada, the year 1892 marked the commitment to electrification by the street railways in the Dominion's two largest cities, Montreal and Toronto. Before 1892 electric railways were looked on with some hesitation as something not fully proved. After 1892 the electric street railway was tried and true; it was a big business.

It is fortunate that on the centennial of this important year we have no less than three important books dealing with this pioneer period of electric railway development. This is all the more fortunate since the pioneer days have been neglected, or covered inadequately, in most histories of electric railways. Each of these three books covers an important segment and, together, they provide a detailed look at the history and technology that made the electric railway a practical proposition.

#### PIONEERS OF ELECTRIC RAILROADING: THEIR STORY IN WORDS AND PICTURES.

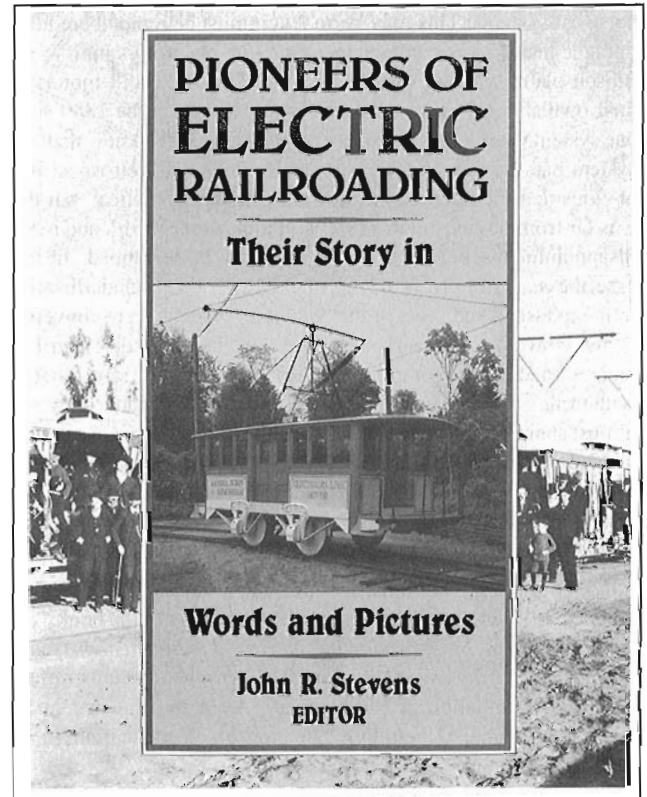
John H. Stevens, Editor.

Published by Electric Railroaders Association Inc.  
P.O. Box 6588, Grand Central Station, New York N.Y. 10163,  
U.S.A.

Available in both hard cover and soft cover editions.

This monumental book seems destined to be the definitive work on the history of the development of electric railway technology up to 1893. It consists of 240 pages, 8 1/2 by 11 inches, printed on high quality paper. There are more than 350 illustrations, photos, drawings and diagrams, most of them more than 100 years old, and many of extreme rarity. Despite the age of the pictorial material, the reproductions are of very high quality and clarity, and show a great deal of detail.

The main text of this book is made up of a series of articles dealing with the various aspects of early electric railway history. Each article is written by an authority on that particular subject. Most articles were written especially for this book, although one, an extremely interesting one on the pioneer system at St. Catharines Ontario, was written in 1893 and appeared in "The Electrical Engineer" of October 18 of that year. Following an introduction by John White Jr. of the Smithsonian, we learn "Some Traction



Prehistory" dealing of the earliest attempts at electric traction dating back to 1840 or even before. This is the period that is usually dismissed with a line or two in the usual texts; here it is a whole chapter, and a fascinating chapter it is, telling of the times when electricity was something new and with endless possibilities. Next we read of the experiments of the 1850's, in articles written in the 1880's when some eyewitnesses were still alive. It is apparent that these experimenters were on the right track (literally), but failed because of the lack of an economical power supply. Obviously primary batteries would not do, and the dynamo was not developed until the 1870's.

Starting in the 1870's, the story moves more rapidly. By 1879 Werner Von Siemens had built a practical electric locomotive, and in the 1880's electric railways became a reality. Some of the ideas and plans at that time were far reaching, and many failed because of financial rather than technical reasons. Some were successful and ran for many years; the Giant's Causeway line in Ireland ran from 1883 to 1949, while the smaller Volks Railway in Brighton, England began in 1883 and is still running. It is in this decade that engineers like Siemens, Edison, Sprague, Van Depoele, Daft and others made their contribution to the technology. However, there are lesser-known names like Bentley and Knight, and some persons, now almost unknown, such as Benson Bidwell, Cyril S.

Smeeton and Henry Bock Binko. All these people, and many others played important parts, so it can be seen that the electric railway was the end result of the work of many minds over a long period of time.

It is popularly supposed that Sprague's successful installation at Richmond Virginia in 1888 proved the practicality of electric traction and started the rush to electrify the already overloaded horse car systems. This may be so, but it must be remembered that Sprague had the great advantage of having his motors built at the Edison plant, whereas others, like Van Depoele, built motors in their own shops. It soon becomes apparent that, in the 1880's, no one system was clearly the winner, everything was so new that any system had the potential for success or failure. In retrospect it is obvious that the overhead trolley was the most practical, but this was far from obvious in the 1880's. It took a lot of work and many disappointments before the best system was developed. In any case, the years from 1888 to 1892 marked a period of standardization in the industry, and most of the "oddball" systems were converted to the conventional overhead trolley, or else were de-electrified and returned to horse or mule operation (usually to be re-electrified with trolley within a few years). By 1892, the overhead trolley was almost standard for city service, and the ensuing conversions were carried on at such a pace that by 1900 the horse car was almost extinct.

It can be seen that Canada played a considerable part in this story. The Toronto Exhibition had an electric railway as early as 1883; although this one was unsuccessful, its successor, built by Van Depoele in 1884, was, in the words of the authors of the book, "*not only a practical, but an eminently successful public demonstration of an electric railway in America*". This was the forerunner of the city-wide installation in Montgomery, Alabama (the first in the world) and others, including the pioneer electrification in St. Catharines, Ontario, started in 1887.

An entire chapter of this book is devoted to St. Catharines. Written in 1893, when the Van Depoele system was being converted to conventional trolley, it shows how fast the technology had advanced. An installation that was "state of the art" in 1887 was, only six years later, very old fashioned and obsolete. The author, Thomas C. Martin, makes this interesting observation: "*My respectful advice to the museum authorities in Canada is that they secure Mr. Symmes' [one of the proprietors of the St. Catharines system] scrap heap before the last traces of this early electric railway work in the Dominion are lost forever*". This was written ninety-nine years ago! Unfortunately, and typically, nothing was saved and by 1895 a search for some of this technology was fruitless. One wonders if museum authorities of 1992 would have been any more receptive to saving any of the equipment. St. Catharines seems to have been the last to go of the old technology, and before 1893 was out it had been converted to the trolley system. One Van Depoele locomotive has, miraculously, survived. The 1888 locomotive of the Derby Horse Railway in Connecticut, said to be the first successful freight locomotive in the world, has been preserved and is now at the Shoreline Trolley Museum in Connecticut.

Near the end of the book is a list, with descriptions and photos, of early equipment known to have been preserved. Most interesting are the forty-five passenger cars and three special-service cars built before the end of 1894 and still in existence. The criteria used

are that, to qualify, a car must have been used in electric service before the end of 1894. Thus a horse car used as a trailer would qualify, whereas a cable car, or a horse car retired at the time of electrification, would not. It is surprising that five of these passenger cars are in Canada, two of them (Montreal Street Railway cars 274 and 350, both of 1892) are at our own Canadian Railway Museum. Even more surprising is the fact that 13 of these 45 pre-1895 cars are still in regular service, one in Brighton England and 12 in the Isle of Man! (The Isle of Man has 35 pre-1900 electric cars in service, but the other 23 were built after 1894). Twelve pre-1900 electric locomotives are listed, but no Canadian ones here; our Cornwall No. 7, built in 1900, misses the cutoff date by a few months. The Ontario Electric Railway Historical Association has an Edison General Electric Co. single-reduction traction motor used by the Toronto Railway in 1892. Some other surprising facts come to light. For example, the oldest surviving electric street car outside of Europe is one, built in 1889, preserved at Americus Georgia. Your editor passed through that city in April 1992, and did not then know of the existence of that car. The book concludes with a chronology of experiments and development milestones in electric railway technology between 1835 and the end of 1888. There are also tables of electric railway statistics covering the period from 1885 to 1891 in America.

"Pioneers of Electric Railroading : Their Story in Words and Pictures" is a book that should be studied by anyone with even a mild interest in knowing how electric railways came to be.

#### **THE GLORY DAYS: A CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE DRAMATIC RISE OF THE ELECTRIC TROLLEY IN THE "GOLDEN DECADE", THE YEARS 1888-1897**

Compiled by A.W. Mankoff

Published by Railhead Publications.

P.O. Box 6579, Canton, Ohio 44706, U.S.A.

This 200-page book is a compilation of articles, dealing with electric railways, from the publication "Engineering News and American Railway Journal". All articles are exact facsimiles of the originals, and are taken from the actual publication, not from microfilm, thus they are quite clear despite the age and condition of the original century-old paper. They are arranged in chronological order from the earliest, January 28, 1888, to the latest, December 30, 1897. This is the decade in which the electric railway evolved from a few pioneer installations to spread into most cities and towns of North America, and much of the rest of the world.

Some articles are quite lengthy, describing details of new developments or particular installations, while others are made up of statistical tables relating to transit operations as of a particular date (e.g. May 23, 1891 and December 31, 1892). Statistics such as these show the growth of electric traction over the years, and the corresponding decline of other types of power. The greatest decline, of course, was in the horse car systems but, as the decade advanced, the cable technology, which showed such promise as late as 1890, also began its decline as the electric car took over.

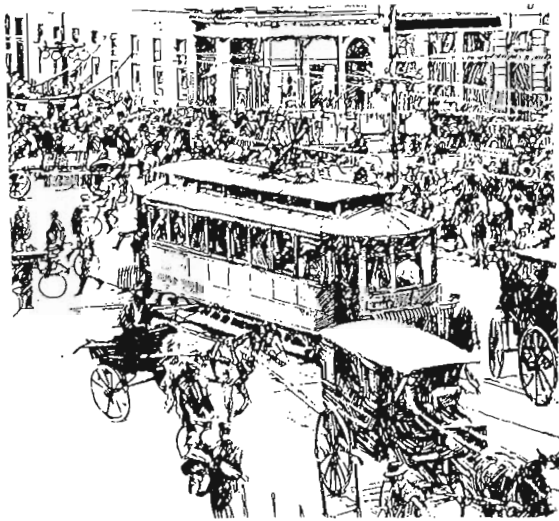
However the bulk of the book, and the most important from the historian's point of view, are the many thousands of small news items describing happenings, proposals, and even rumours, on the



## The Glory Days

A Chronological History of the  
Dramatic Rise of the Electric  
Trolley in the "golden decade"—  
the years 1888 - 1897.

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very numerous street railways (electric, horse, cable, steam dummy and even ammonia powered) throughout America and the world. While the very great majority of the articles are from the United States, there are enough from Canada to make the student of Canadian electric railway history very happy indeed. A few examples will prove this. Under date August 24, 1889 we read: "Niagara, Ont.- The St. Catharines, Niagara & Port Dalhousie Street Ry. Co. has been organized to build an electric line. President, Capt. P. Larkin". On November 23, 1889 was the report: "Montreal, Canada - An elevated cable road is projected on Craig St., from Lachine to Maisonneuve (sic)". July 19, 1890: "Electric Railways - Electricity has been adopted as a motive power on the lines at St. John, N.B.". February 16, 1893: "Halifax, N.S. - The Old Colony Trust Co. of Boston, Mass. will build an electric street railway". September 6, 1893: "Cacouna, Que. - A.J. Corriveau, Montreal, is interested in a proposed electric railway between this place and River (sic) du Loup". Finally we come to this gem from April 29, 1897: "Montreal Que. - The Montreal & Southern Counties Ry. Co. has been organized to build an electric railway about 150 miles long in the eastern townships at a cost of about \$2,000,000, according to reports. Albert J. Corriveau, Montreal, is interested".

"The Glory Days" thus gives a day to day picture, as read at the actual time, of the hopes, plans, actions and progress of an industry that was new, in great demand, and with seemingly endless possibilities ahead of it. As would be expected, many of the proposals were too visionary and never came to pass. Still, a great many were completed in this decade, long before automobile

competition became serious. The electric railway network built between 1888 and 1897 continued to expand in the early 20th century, but then the automobile and its side effects nearly wiped it out in the fifty years following 1914. Now, however, the electric transit industry is undergoing a renaissance, as it is more and more realized that mass transit is a better solution to traffic problems.

The one serious fault with this book is the lack of an index. Since there are so many articles, it is very difficult to extract those dealing with a particular line or region. A vast amount of information is there, but is hard to retrieve. The publishers have indicated that such an index is in preparation, and this should solve the problem and make this work even more valuable. They also hope to produce further volumes carrying the story forward from 1898. We sincerely hope that this will be done, and that "The Glory Days" will be the first of a series covering the day-to-day vicissitudes of the entire era of electric transit.

### STREET RAILWAYS - THEIR CONSTRUCTION OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

By C.B. Fairchild

Originally published by The Street Railway Publishing Company,  
New York N.Y. in 1892.

Reprinted in 1991 by Havelock House,  
5211 Lansdowne Drive, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 4L2

This 494 page book, containing more than 800 illustrations (760 in the text, plus 44 in contemporary advertisements), is a practical manual and text book for the operator of street railways in 1892. The author states: "*The work is not based on theory, but is the outcome of actual practice, and is designed to be helpful to street railwaymen and engineers in every department, whether mechanical or financial, and also to be of interest to the student of economic subjects, who may wish to inform himself regarding this particular industry, for it is the first and only work that covers the entire field. The book is not to be read through and laid aside; but as its name implies, it is designed as a handbook for those building or operating either electric, cable, horse or elevated lines, to which reference can be had as occasion demands*".

As previously noted, 1892 was a pivotal year, the time when electric traction had proved itself and was starting its unprecedented expansion. However, it should be remembered that, in 1892, the vast majority of street car systems were still horse operated, although it appeared that the days of horse traction were numbered. Hence, much of this book deals with horse operation, after all it was a practical book, and much of the street railway industry still involved horse cars. As the author says at the beginning of the chapter on Horse Traction: "*It is by no means a foregone conclusion, as is often stated, that mechanical power will eventually supersede animal power on all street railways. It will continue to increase, no doubt, till a majority of roads are operated under some form of mechanical power, but the living motor is in the field, new men are constantly coming into this branch of the street railway business, the veterans need sometimes to be reminded of things they already know; hence this chapter is of prime importance*". Nevertheless, horse traction was relegated to chapter 3, after electricity and cable traction. Clearly electricity was the way of the future.

The first chapter is on electric traction, and this begins with the first principles of electrical theory and progresses through the earliest experiments to the latest motors, generators and distribution and control systems of 1892. Also covered are truck designs, lighting, battery operation, overhead wire construction and power stations. Chapter 2 deals with cable car systems and all their ramifications, while, as previously noted, chapter 3 is on horse traction, then the most proven and easily understood system. Chapter 4 is concerned with steam, air and gas motors, while chapters 5, 6 and 7 deal with inclined planes, rack rail inclines and elevated roads respectively. Chapter 8 is on car building, and this is a most interesting section with scale drawings of many types of car bodies, trucks and related accessories which would be of great use to the model builder of today, as well as anyone restoring an actual car of the period. Electric, cable, horse and elevated railway cars are covered in this chapter.

Chapter 9 is devoted to track construction, and we find examples of all types of rail from flat horse car rail to the latest girder designs. Of course all types of roadbed are covered, as well as switches, curves and a great variety of special work which is necessary at locations such as car barns. Chapter 10 is all about discipline and rules, and covers everything from operation of equipment to fare collection and neatness of dress. In chapter 11 will be found financial information, including means of raising capital, stocks, bonds and such instruments. Chapter 12 concerns bookkeeping and classification of accounts, while chapter 13 illustrates leading types of cars (46 of them). Auxiliary appliances are fully illustrated in chapter 14, while there follows an appendix regarding up-to-date developments regarding electric railways. The book concludes with a 45-page section of advertisements by the leading car and equipment manufacturers. It is interesting to note that one of these advertisements shows a Brownell's "Accelerator" car (billed as "The most important improvement in street cars up to date") identical to Montreal Street Railway "Rocket" (later 350) delivered that same year.

The most serious shortcoming of this reprint is the quality of reproduction. Undoubtedly to save expense, the page size has been reduced from the original which was, evidently, somewhat larger. This has caused problems with some of the illustrations which come out rather muddy and with loss of detail, and in addition, the reduced-size print is not quite as easy to read. Of course the reviewer does not have access to an original copy, so it is difficult to say how much of the loss of detail is due to the reproduction and how much was in the original. It should be emphasized, however, that the great majority of the illustrations are quite clear and easy to follow, and the paper is acid-free and of very good quality. Nevertheless, one feels that an important work of this kind might have been reproduced in actual size even if the cost was substantially greater; after all this is an enduring work.

The republication of this book fills an important gap in the library of the student of electric railway history. It is one of the last to give detailed information on the practical features of horse car lines, a technology destined to be almost extinct within a decade. It also shows how well developed the electric traction technology was, and how it soon became almost universal. Together with the other two books reviewed herein, it gives a full insight into this important industry as it was in 1892, just a century ago.

## SHORT REVIEWS

### SIGNATURES IN STEEL

By Greg McDonald

Published by Boston Mills Press for Stoddard Publishing  
132 Main Street, Erin, Ontario NOB 1T0

Price: \$50.00.

This magnificent book, published late in 1991, is a photo story of Canada's railways covering the period from the 1940's to the present time. It is a large format (12 by 11 inch) hard cover volume of 208 pages containing 250 photos in colour. Geographically, this work covers from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the U.S. border to the sub-arctic. The drama of Canadian railroading is well captured, and the quality of the photos, as well as their reproduction, is superb. This book should be in the library of anyone with an interest in contemporary railroading in Canada.

### THE BRITANNIA COPPER MINE RAILWAY

By David Ll. Davies

Published by Pacific Coast Division, CRHA  
P.O. Box 1008, Station "A", Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2P1

Price: \$10.50 postpaid.

This book is the first of a series of publications planned by our Pacific Coast Division. It covers the history of the three-foot gauge electric mining railway that served the Britannia Copper Mine which operated near Howe Sound in British Columbia from 1905 until it closed in 1974. Today the site is an industrial museum, and some of the railway and equipment has been preserved. Also included is a brief outline of the two-foot gauge railway that existed at the site, some of which is also preserved. There are 32 pages containing 25 photos and five diagrams, together with text, locomotive rosters and other information on this interesting but little-known railway operation.

### CANADA SOUTHERN COUNTRY

By Robert D. Tennant Jr.

Published by Boston Mills Press  
132 Main Street, Erin, Ontario NOB 1T0

Price: \$35.00

This is an extremely interesting and informative history of The Canada Southern, a railway that was initially projected in the 1850's, planned in the 1860's and constructed in the 1870's. By 1875 controlling interest in the company was owned by the Vanderbilts, and soon after it was leased to the Michigan Central, a subsidiary of the Vanderbilt-owned New York Central. Control of the CSR by the New York Central and, more recently, its successors Penn Central and Conrail, continued until 1985 when the line was bought by Canadian National and Canadian Pacific.

This 208 page book has 220 photographs, many of them early and rare, in addition to numerous diagrams, maps and timetables. There are many stories of all types, including those of the construction of those great feats of engineering, the Niagara Cantilever bridge (1883) and the Windsor-Detroit tunnel (1907-1910). This volume is a welcome addition to the literature on the history of railways in Canada.

#### ST. CLAIR TUNNEL - RAILS BENEATH THE RIVER

By Clare Gilbert

Published by The Boston Mills Press  
132 Main Street, Erin, Ontario N0B 1T0

As most readers of Canadian Rail should know by now, last year marked the 100th anniversary of the completion of the St. Clair Tunnel, built by the Grand Trunk Railway, and connecting Sarnia, Ontario with Port Huron Michigan. This book is the history of the construction and operation of the tunnel from the first projection of the idea in the 1870's, until the centennial in 1991. There are 96 pages in this soft-cover book which contains 60 photographs and a number of maps and diagrams. This well researched and well written book adds considerably to the knowledge about this pioneer international tunnel.

#### LINE CLEAR FOR UP TRAINS - A HISTORY OF No. 1 CANADIAN RAILWAY OPERATING GRP. RCE 1943-1945

By Allin J. Mandar

Published by Museum Restoration Service  
P.O. Box 390, Bloomfield, Ontario K0K 1G0  
or: P.O. Box 70, Alexandria Bay, N.Y. 13607 U.S.A.

Price: \$26.22 in Canada, \$24.50 in U.S.A., 14.50 pounds in U.K.

Canadian railway technology has played a considerable part in wartime for more than 150 years. As early as 1836, the Champlain & St. Lawrence R.R. was used to move troops in the rebellion of 1837, and the use of the not-yet-completed CPR to transport the army to the Northwest Rebellion of 1885 is well known. More famous than these is the part played by Canadians in building and operation military railways near the front lines in France and Belgium during World War I. This book deals with World War II, and the Canadian Railway Operating Group of the Royal Canadian Engineers. This group was formed in March, 1943 and continued until it was disbanded in November, 1945, following the end of the war. It is a fascinating story which is, alas, little known by those of the present generation who were not brought up in wartime. This 112 page book has 35 photos, many of them rare and taken under very difficult wartime conditions, as well as maps and diagrams. An excellent account of one of Canada's many contributions to the war effort.

#### A HISTORY OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND RAILWAY, VOLUMES I AND II

By A.R. Penney

Published by Harry Cuff Publications Ltd.  
94 LeMarchant Road, St. John's, Newfoundland A1C 2H2

Price: \$9.95 for Volume I, \$11.95 for Volume II.

We had previously noted the appearance of Volume I (1881 to 1923) of this important history of the Newfoundland Railway. That volume appeared in 1988 just as the railway was being closed down. Mr. Penney, the author, died in 1990; however his work on Volume II was far advanced and it was completed by Fabian Kennedy. This volume carries the Newfoundland Railway story from the time of government takeover in 1923 until the final abandonment of the line in 1988. The two volumes together form an important contribution to Canadian railway history.

#### CLOSE TIES RAILWAYS, GOVERNMENT AND THE BOARD OF RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS, 1851-1933

By Ken Cruikshank

Published by McGill - Queen's University Press  
3400 McTavish Street, Montreal, Que. H3A 1X9

This is a scholarly work which focuses on the historic controversies surrounding high freight rates, and explores the ways in which Canadians tried to regulate the nation's first big business, its railways. Central to the study is the Board of Railway Commissioners which, from 1904 onwards, has been the centrepiece of the Canadian Government's regulatory strategy. This is a very comprehensive analysis and puts the whole concept of railway regulation in a better historic perspective.

#### WELLINGTON COUNTY HISTORY - RAILWAY ISSUE VOLUME 4, 1991

Published by Wellington County Historical Research Society  
Box 5, Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W7

The 1991 issue of this excellent historical publication is entirely devoted to the history of railways in and around Wellington County, Ontario. Included are "The Railway Age in Wellington County", "By Streetcar to Toronto, Commuting from Guelph the Electric Way", "Remembering Those Old-time CPR Branch Lines", "Wellington County's Train Robber", "A Look at Railway Schedules", "Reminiscences of the Railway in Wellington County", "Working on the Railway". For anyone interested in railways in that part of Canada, or, in fact, for anyone who likes good railway stories, this issue is recommended.

*BACK COVER. One day in October, 1954, newly-built diesel locomotive 908 was photographed alongside steam engine 305 outside the roundhouse at St. John's, Newfoundland. Another steam locomotive and another diesel appear at the extreme edges of the photo. CRHA Archives, Toohy Collection. Photo No. 54-141.*

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