

Canadian Rail

THE MAGAZINE OF CANADA'S RAILWAY HISTORY

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A C.N.R. 4-6-2 ON THE COVER OF ISSUE No. 462



TRAIN 606 AT ST. LAMBERT QUE. MAY 1951

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|--|---------------------------|----|
| BEYOND CANAAN TO WATERLOO..... | LORNE C. PERRY..... | 3 |
| WHAT'S COOKING IN THE ARCHIVES..... | JEAN-PAUL VIAUD..... | 9 |
| THE MONTREAL AND LACHINE RAILROAD REVISITED..... | FRED F. ANGUS..... | 10 |
| RAPTURE FROM THE ASHES OF ST. CLAIR STATION..... | MARCO & ROBERT MARRONE.. | 14 |
| "ON TO THE BAY" - 1924..... | | 18 |
| BOOK REVIEW, TURMOIL AND TRIUMPH, BY IAN BICKLE..... | A. STEPHEN WALBRIDGE..... | 24 |
| THE BUSINESS CAR..... | | 25 |

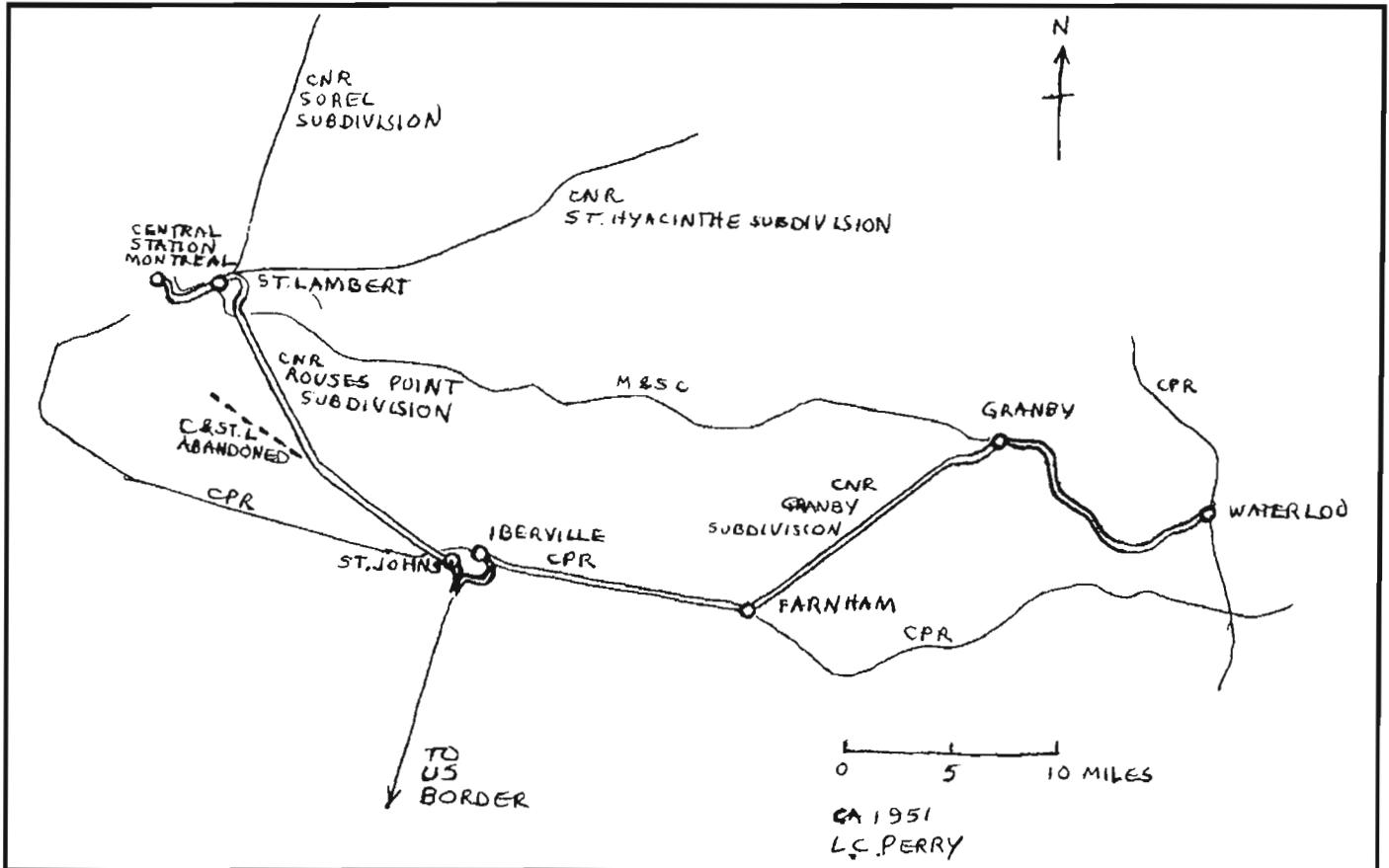
FRONT COVER: In the years around mid-century, the last of CN's tiniest Pacifics were customarily assigned to the Waterloo - Montreal local. The K-1 class, numbering 43 locomotives, was built between 1905 and 1911, several units surviving until 1956-57. In May, 1951, at St. Lambert, Quebec, train 606 departs on its morning run to Waterloo.

BELOW: A map, drawn by Lorne Perry, showing the route of the train from Montreal to Waterloo Que. in 1951.

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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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Beyond Canaan to Waterloo

By Lorne Perry



A winter scene in 1951 shows 5535 near St. Lambert station on the double-track route to St. Johns, Que. The train is still in CTC territory, but in a few miles will shift to train order operation.

All photos, except the one on page 8, by the author.

Forty-five years ago a network of branch lines south of Montreal provided passenger service over some fascinating routes. Most of these are gone now. This is a recollection of travelling on one such route and the classic little train that served it, away back then.

The year was 1951. My journey started at St.Lambert station, just east of the Victoria Bridge over the St.Lawrence River. This was the junction of three Canadian National Railways subdivisions, First in order of traffic density was the former Grand Trunk / Intercolonial main line eastward, called the St.Hyacinthe Subdivision. The Sorel Subdivision branched northeastward, a single track line of Montreal and Sorel Railway (later Delaware and Hudson) ancestry. The third was the Rouses Point Subdivision heading south towards the US border, the path my train followed that day.

Nine fifteen AM, Eastern Standard Time (in the language of the public and employee timetables of the day). Morning was always a busy time around St.Lambert station. Agent-Operator Hughie O'Connor sat in the big bay window working the telegraph key as he reported train movements to dispatchers down the line. Harry Hartley, the baggage agent, deputized as ticket agent at the wicket, to serve passengers taking a mid-morning train into Montreal. Joe Massé, the express agent, loaded his truck in preparation for deliveries around the town.

The phone rang and Hartley answered a query about the on time performance of number 11, the train from Coaticook to Montreal due at 9:29. If the train was anywhere within shooting distance of the schedule, Harry's rejoinder was: "Never late, it's a CNR train!"

That response given once again, O'Connor took over the phone and wicket while Harry prepared the express and baggage wagon for the next outbound train, number 606 for St.Johns, Granby and Waterloo. And that's the train around which this story is woven. Normally comprising a small steam locomotive, a combine and a coach, it meandered four times daily over a complicated route covering five historic sections of track.

The first was the former Grand Trunk Railway eastward out of Montreal across the Victoria Bridge, which had opened in 1860. The second was the double-track line from St.Lambert south to St.Johns (now known as St-Jean sur Richelieu). For some distance it followed the route of Canada's first public railway, the Champlain and St.Lawrence. Dating from 1836, the original 14-mile line connected Laprairie with St.Johns, providing an efficient link between the Montreal-Laprairie steam ferry, and a canal and lake system connecting St.Johns to New York City.

In addition to the rambling local train, the rails of this part of the route were polished daily by the Washingtonian / Montrealer. and the Ambassador connecting Montreal, New York



View from train 606 as it backs around the wye surrounding the station at St. John's and an ancient wooden water tank.

City and other U.S. points. The Rutland Railroad also brought two trains into Montreal over this line; the Mount Royal and the Green Mountain Flyer. Additional locals, several international freight trains, plus a couple of way-freights completed the tally.

Even the Central Vermont was covered on this run; the bridge between St. John's and Iberville being part of the CV.

Between Iberville and the CPR connection was a tiny piece of track named the Lemoyne Subdivision, over which all passenger trains operated in reverse! All four.

The fourth stretch was Canadian Pacific's main line between St. John's and Farnham, the first CPR division point east of Montreal. The line continued on through Maine to New Brunswick. The fifth and last stage was a CNR branch line, part of the Granby Subdivision, from the outskirts of Farnham to Waterloo. This was originally Vermont Central for the 28 miles into Waterloo.

While waiting on the platform at St. Lambert, train 11 came rushing in from the east, picked up passengers and blasted off towards Victoria Bridge. On the bridge, it met and passed number 606 which departed Montreal's Central Station at 9:10 daily except Sunday.

While number 606 was rushing down the slope of Victoria Bridge, Harry Hartley trundled his high-wheeled baggage wagon up the platform to the usual position of the train's baggage door. The engineer brought loco 5535 and its train to a halt in almost perfect position for loading Express.

This locomotive deserves some comment. A Pacific type, of 4-6-2 wheel arrangement, it was assembled in 1908 in east-end Montreal at the plant of Montreal Locomotive Works. Three years earlier, the first Canadian order for Pacifics had been placed, to be followed in the next few years by others almost identical as to design and specifications for a total of 43 locomotives. 5535 was

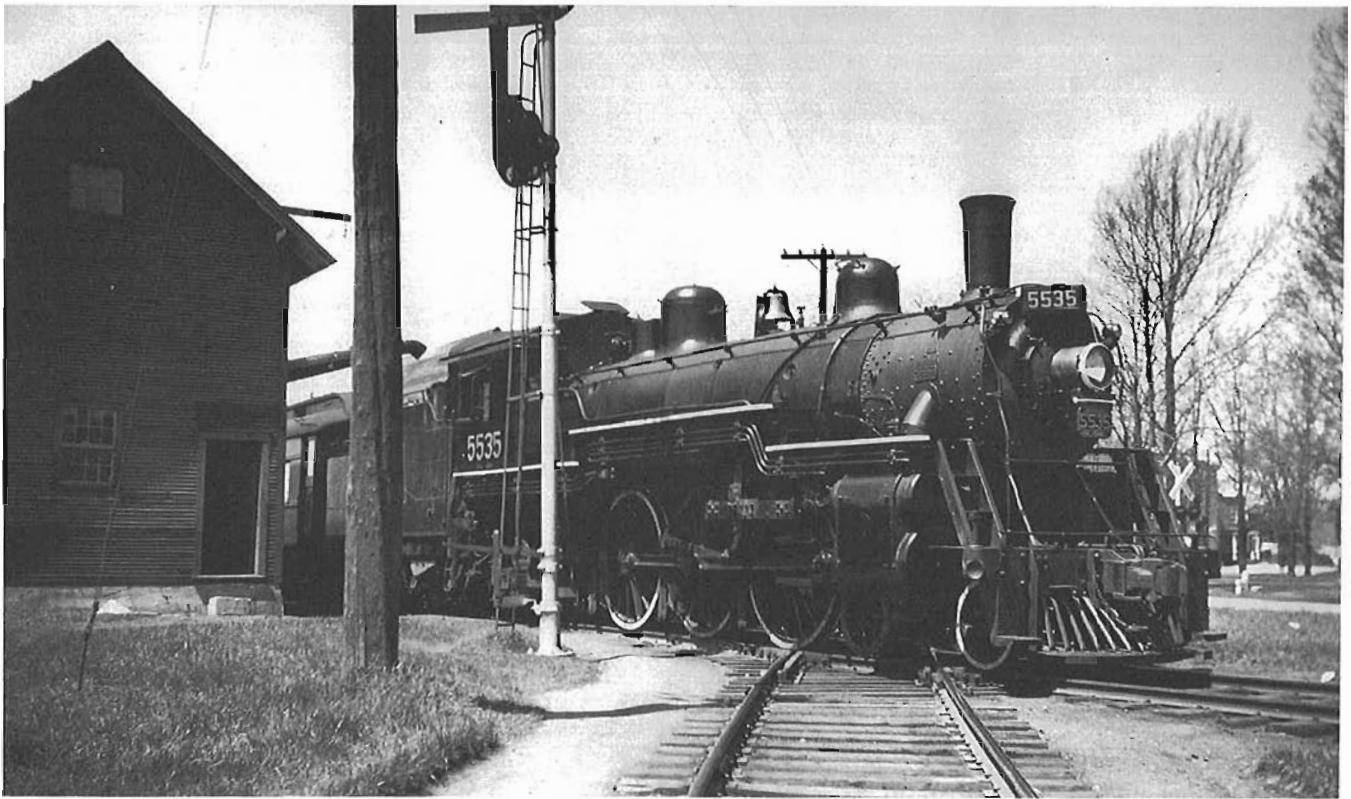
one of the last set. Canada missed being the first on the continent to order this type of locomotive by only three years. Appropriately enough, it was Missouri Pacific that led the way with the first production order for Pacific type locomotives for North American railways.

The purchaser of the first Pacific types in Canada was the Canadian Government Railways, successor to the Intercolonial and later part of Canadian National Railways. Its main route was from Quebec City to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Locomotives 5500 to 5542 were originally numbered 401 - 443. On CNR the sub-class was K-1-a to e. intended for passenger duty in light rail territory, the design was an improvement on the 4-6-0 (Ten-Wheeler) type because it provided additional power combined with reasonable axle loadings and a wide firebox for easy steaming. 5535 weighed only 187,000 pounds (93.5 tons) and weight per driving axle did not exceed 43,000 pounds.

Most Pacifics were built to handle moderate to heavy trains on heavyweight rail, but some were designed for light trains on light rail. For instance, part of Canadian Pacific's last large order for steam locomotives, placed in 1948, was for light Pacifics to serve branch line trains.

Number 5535 was long, lithe, high-wheeled and antique in appearance. As built, it had Stephenson valve motion, was handfired and had a tall Johnson Bar in the cab to operate the reversing gear. Rebuilding in 1924 resulted in Walschaerts valve motion and a Franklin air-operated fire door. Driving wheel diameter was 72 inches, boiler pressure, 200 pounds and maximum tractive effort, 29,200 pounds.

Train 606's elderly single coach was of twelve-wheeled design with a smoking compartment at one end. The green plush seats, of the walk-over type, permitted a trainman to quickly reverse their direction at the end of the line as he moved down the



Water tank filled, 5535 moves its train across the diamond at Waterloo in preparation for turning the train for its next trip into Montreal.

aisle. Windows were double-glazed, with the outer frames in the up position all summer. This allowed passengers to open the inner frames for added air (and cinder) flow. The second car was a combination coach and baggage car, the coach part usually reserved for the train crew and any cronies they found among the passengers.

Precisely at 9:30, with train orders collected, express and passengers aboard, locomotive 5535 chuffed softly as it accelerated out of St.Lambert station and round the curve towards St.Johns. The suburban landscape soon gave way to farm and market garden country. The home terminus of the train was Waterloo. It made a morning run into Montreal, returning after an hour as train 606 and then started another round trip after a two hour layover. The service wound up at 8:20 pm, at which time the little four-stall roundhouse at Waterloo prepared to house 5535 for the night.

This type of train was common throughout North America from 1860 until 1960, by which time railway managements at last understood just what good public highways had done to their local passenger services. Public perception of the branch line train had changed from daily necessity to awkward obsolescence.

In 1951, what kind of passenger load could be found on train 606? Two ladies of a certain age off to visit country relatives, one priest in long black robes on his way to a new parish, one CNR internal auditor enroute to a country station, one travelling salesman plus sample cases for Granby and one railway enthusiast adding to his list of obscure branch lines. This run was not popular with the passenger revenue department, but the first and last runs of the day were better patronized since they gave country people the chance of a full day in the city. Twenty-five years earlier, when this was the only sensible mode of travel, more than fifty people patronized each trip.

**Table 72 — MONTREAL (Central Station)-
ST. JOHNS-FARNHAM - WATERLOO.**

| 608 | 606 | Ms. | November 27, 1949. | 605 | 607 |
|------|--------|------|-------------------------------|---------|---------|
| P M | A M | ... | (Central Station.) | A M | P M |
| †640 | †1010 | 0 | lve. + Montreal, Que. ▲ | 940 | 555 |
| 652 | 10 22 | 1.9 | + Bridge Street □ | - | - |
| 700 | 10 30 | 4.0 | + St. Lambert | 921 | 535 |
| †709 | †1039 | 9.1 | + Brosseau | †911 | †526 |
| †720 | †1050 | 17.0 | + Lacadie | †900 | †515 |
| 730 | 11 00 | 23.2 | arr. + St. Johns | 850 | 505 |
| 735 | 11 05 | 23.2 | lve. St. Johns | 847 | 502 |
| 740 | 11 10 | 23.9 | arr. + Iberville (O. V. Sta.) | 842 | 457 |
| 750 | 11 20 | 25.3 | lve. Iberville | 830 | 445 |
| 815 | 11 44 | 38.2 | arr. + Farnham } C.P.Ry. lve. | 805 | 420 |
| 815 | 11 44 | 38.2 | lve. (Union Sta.) | 805 | 420 |
| †827 | †1155 | 43.0 | Rang Casimir | †754 | †409 |
| †833 | †12 01 | 45.2 | + Angeline | †749 | †404 |
| †840 | †1208 | 49.1 | Canaan | †740 | †355 |
| 850 | 12 20 | 53.6 | + Granby | 730 | 345 |
| †906 | †1233 | 61.4 | West Shefford | †712 | †327 |
| 920 | 12 45 | 67.2 | + Waterloo, Que. | †700 | †315 |
| P M | P M | | ARRIVE] | [LEAVE | A M P M |

This timetable for the Waterloo service is dated November 1949, about a year and a half before the trip described here.

The half-hour run to St.John's allowed for two flag stops, Brosseau, and Lacadie, which often went unrequested. There was a five-minute stop at St.Johns for major express working.

A word here about the Express Division. CNR, in common with other railways, operated an important parcels business carrying shipments aboard special cars at the head end of its passenger trains. The Company provided pick-up and delivery service in all the communities it served. Even in the year 1969, long after the heyday of CN Express, there were 11 million shipments



Train 606 is in the process of being switched at Waterloo; the diamond (plus a spare) in the foreground, roundhouse lead at the right.



Waterloo sits in afternoon somnolence as the local awaits its next run, as train 607. The roundhouse will not be used until 5535 returns in the evening.



The local freight engine, 2622, a 2-8-0 Consolidation, was built in 1911 for the Grand Trunk and was scrapped in 1958.

carried. At the peak, railway express services were the only way to ship parcels larger than the post office permitted. In the pre-Christmas period there was hardly room to move in the major express sorting terminals. Whole industries, such as the mail order catalogue business and the auto parts market, depended on express to reach their customers.

On trains like the Waterloo local, shipments might include almost anything. For example there could be live baby chicks, a bicycle, printed forms, an auto tail pipe, parcels of clothing from the Eaton's catalogue, crates of mushrooms destined for Montreal and Toronto markets and anything else that, country folk needed from the big city or vice versa.

Train 606 also carried supplies for railway station staffs down the line; they included such things as a new operator's chair, oil for the train order signal lamps, a new shovel in anticipation of next winter's snow, a barrel of track spikes, and a multiplicity of office supplies. These were labelled O.C.S. (On Company Service). There was also a small bundle of railway mail carried in the baggage compartment, mostly in reusable envelopes, addressed to agents at country stations. The designation was R.R.B., or Rail Road Business. The Royal Mail, which was not handled on the Waterloo local, had a completely separate railway distribution system.

While express was unloaded and loaded, 5535 sat quietly, panting softly while the safety valve sizzled. A steam locomotive didn't "idle" when at rest, for a number of its inner processes kept on working. The distinctive panting sound came from exhaust steam after its use in the air pumps; generally active for a few minutes after each stop to replenish the air used in braking.

At 10:25 the train got underway and puffed slowly past the antique wooden water tank, along the track which goes to Rouses Point, coming to a halt just past the wye switch. It was

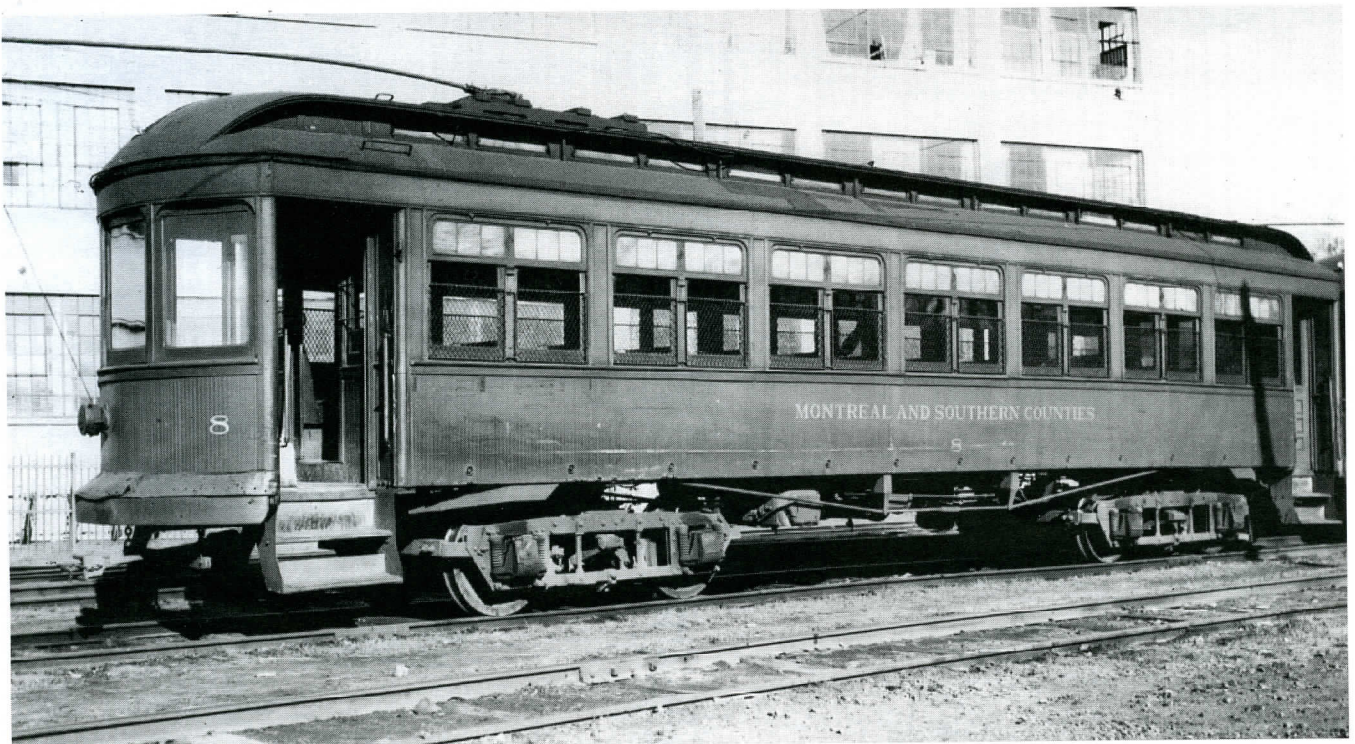
time to begin an unusual part of the trip; two miles in reverse, backing across the bridge to Irberville and the connection with the CPR. This was due to the limitations of the CNR-CPR interconnections at Irberville. A trainman took position on the rear platform, having earlier connected a special piece of hose to the brake pipe below the coupler. It snaked up to hook onto the gate across the end of the vestibule. The upper end of it was capped by a valve capable of releasing air through a brass whistle to sound a very shrill note of warning on the approach to level crossings.

It was also possible for the trainman to use this device to bring the train to an emergency stop. The man with eyes on the road ahead needed to have ultimate control. He also had access to the communication cord. Pulling it produced a high pitched note in the locomotive cab, and a set of standard signals conveyed his messages. Two tugs, one second apart, meant OK to proceed forward. There was such a cord in each vestibule and the conductor used it at every station stop to give the authority to proceed. Two tugs when in motion meant stop at once.

The trainman gave three tugs as the instruction to proceed in reverse, and the train began to move gingerly across the Richelieu River Bridge to Irberville, stopping at a station belonging to Central Vermont Railway, a CN subsidiary. After a few minutes spent attending to express work, there was another mile in reverse until the CPR main line was reached.

As Train 606 ambled slowly backwards, the rail enthusiast was privileged to observe the view ahead, not an everyday rail travel event. A friendly trainman usually didn't mind a companion on the platform, but even from inside the door, the experience of acting as apprentice engineer was fine.

On the north edge of Irberville the train backed slowly onto CPR tracks and the trainman's responsibilities went back to normal. Next came ten miles of foreign line operation.



One of the original cars of the Montreal & Southern Counties was number 8, seen here on May 3, 1948. It was in service from 1909 to 1955. Photo by R.F. Corley.

After three flag stop stations and no untoward incidents Farnham Union Station was reached. This is a big name for an ordinary division point. It shared "Union" billing with such railway cathedrals as Toronto and Ottawa Union Stations. A modern brick building of modest proportions, Farnham Station served only the CPR main line, including the Saint John and Boston trains, and the four-times-daily-except-Sunday CNR locals.

The next bit to Granby was on CVR lines through Rang Casimil (Rang being the French-language term for concession line road), Angeline, St. Alphonse de Granby (to distinguish it from other places named for the same Saint) and Canaan; flag stops all. Each of the level crossings along the line drew a long, mournful wail from 5535's five-chime whistle — two longs and two shorts "to be prolonged or repeated until crossing is reached", said the rule book.

There was trolley wire overhead as train 606 rolled into Granby station at 11:40. Granby marked the end of the line for an interurban electric railway belonging to CNR but keeping its original name; the Montreal & Southern Counties Railway. Several of the heavy wooden cars dated from opening day in 1909 [it reached Granby in 1916. Ed.], and a few of these original cars ran faithfully until a year before service ended in 1956. Close to Montreal it was a commuter line, but farther out it served rural territory as a true interurban.

Granby was a centre for textile manufacturing, a source of civic pride. Lots of express was unloaded, leaving the baggage and express half of the car nearly empty.

After one more flag stop, West Shefford, the train slowed for Waterloo, obeying the semaphore signal protecting the diamond crossing over the CPR branch line from Drummondville to Sutton. With a final shudder of brakes and a sigh of released air, the train stopped at 12: 05 PM, right on time.

Waterloo "Terminal" consisted of the station, a water tank enclosed in a clapboard building for winter protection, the turntable and four-stall roundhouse, a freight house, a few sidings and manicured green grass.

Once 5535 had its tender refilled with water and performed train shuffling duties to be ready for the next departure at 2:15, the place went into siesta mode. No sound except the birds and crickets. No one seemed to have any business to do around the terminal at this hour in spite of Waterloo's reputation as the major mushroom producer in eastern Canada.

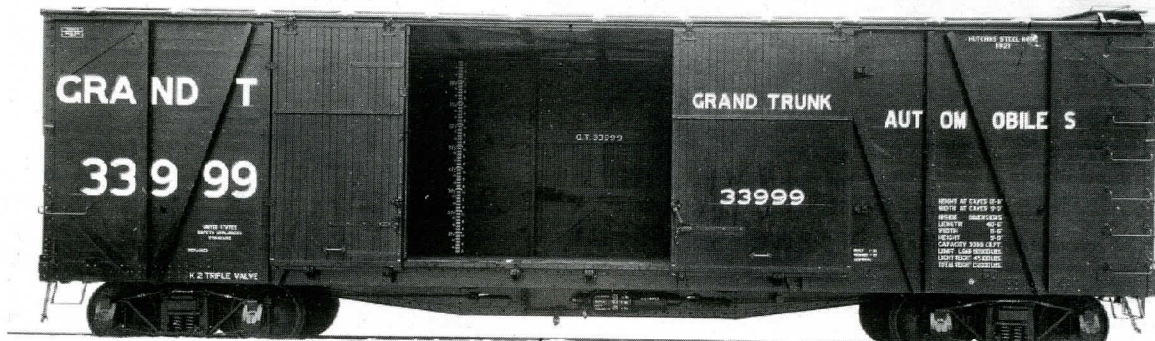
The mood seemed to be in tune with the relaxed performance of the Waterloo local. Sixty-seven miles in two hours and 35 minutes works out to 26 miles per hour. There was no fanfare, no excitement, no frantic haste. Just the reliable performance of a duty; still a useful duty in 1951, if only appreciated by a few.

Forty-five years later, just about the only examples of branch line passenger trains in Canada are a few so-called "Essential Services" provided by VIA Rail Canada at the behest of its owner, the Government of Canada. None of these is in the southern tier of Quebec Province where the Waterloo local ran. The service as described here was discontinued later in 1951 and even its replacement, the Montreal - Waterloo diesel powered train (which ran over the Montreal and Southern Counties route between Cannon Junction and Granby) has disappeared without a trace.

But one member of the K-1 class remains. You will have to go to St. Louis, Missouri, to see it. At the Museum of Transportation, 20 miles west of the city centre, CNR locomotive 5529 is displayed in its black and white livery, with bright red and gold CNR trademark. It was often a pinch-hitter for 5535, so think of it trundling through Canaan, whistle blowing for the crossing, and then easing to a stop in Waterloo. The end of the line.

What's cooking in the Archives!

By Jean Paul Viaud



One of the many thousands of photos in the Archives. Grand Trunk automobile car 33999 photographed new at the Canadian Car and Foundry plant in January, 1921. CRHA Archives, CanCar Collection, Photo No. C-1275.

I think that many people are wondering what is happening on the top floor of the Hays building since I began working here last December.

Like a cook in a new kitchen, I had to find where the pots and pans were, located the ingredients and clean up the counters so that I could start cooking, in other words to work on the many different fonds that the CRHA has accumulated over the last several decades. For those of you who wonder what a fonds is (it is an English word by the way, check it out in your dictionary), it is a donation from a person or a company, and in the world of archives, it is the way in which that we preserve collections of documents. We do not put artifacts on the same subject together; this would hopelessly scatter documents thus destroying the identity of the donation, the donor and the historical value of the fonds.

For the first few months I worked with the books and periodicals, and placed extra copies in storage boxes and prepared listings. This freed up some space for all the boxes and bags that had been accumulating on the floor. At the same time I explored the nooks and crannies of a very full larder in order to get a feel for what was stored in the archives, and discovered many indexes for drawings, photographs, books, etc...

After finding all the ingredients (phase 1, as any good cook knows), I was ready to start cooking up the "guide de dépôt" (a full course meal with all the settings, cutlery, hors d'oeuvres, entrees, main course, dessert, cheeses, aperitifs, wines, and digestifs). My entree was to begin the guide with the fonds from MLW because it coincided with a request for some of their drawings and I thought that it was as good a place as any to start. What I found out was, that in this case, we had two different fonds and not one. The next fonds that I set out to describe were the photos and correspondence donated to the CRHA by the Plomer estate. The task was a relatively easy one in that the documents were untouched and has not been scattered to the four winds.

Then I broached a somewhat elaborate task, I went through all the minutes of the meetings of the Association, all the correspondence, and indexes. After which I prepared a listing of all the donations, with the date of the donation and localization.

Unfortunately, I discovered that the fonds were scattered and were found to have their integrity compromised in the simple fact that many documents have been dispersed from the archives building, some having been lent to or by members. But this unfortunate situation will soon be over, documents are slowly be-

ing repatriated to their proper home in the archival rooms of the Hays Building. It is very important to understand that in order for Association to present a serious and valid guide we must have all the fonds described and most importantly, in the same building.

This exercise will also enable us to gain official accreditation by the government of Quebec, which will afford us the opportunity to receive a grant every year for the operation of the archives of the Association. In order to do so, we must absolutely respect a specific operational frame work, such as having all the documents classified by fonds or collection, preparing a guide, answering requests from researchers, preparing an acquisition policy, and preparing policy for the day to day operations of the archives.

Today, the main archives room floor is full of small boxes containing all the different fonds. Dr. Nicholls is working on the classification of the books in the library section, and also providing me from time to time with valuable information on the donor or the donation.

Before November we will clear the Mail-Express car CPR3618, sort the periodicals and preserve only the copies which are in good condition and relevant to the mandate of the CRHA.

If all goes well, the "guide de dépôt" should be ready for the month of April. The outcome of this exercise will enable us to know exactly what we have in the archives. We will also be able to start on other projects, such as ensuring that the fonds are preserved in accordance with the appropriate conservation policies, and preparing other tools for the future researchers that will consult the very rich and significant collection that we are fortunate enough to have preserved.

On an other subject, I would like to take the opportunity to tell members, that while classifying the fonds and collections, I realized that we have some "holes" in the photograph department. Most of the photos that we possess are of locomotives. As you are well aware, a railroad is a very complex entity, where many other types of vehicles, structures, and most importantly people played a role. So, if anyone has photos of these or other railway related subjects (not of locomotives!), and you are willing to make a donation, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are also interested in any paper documents that you may have.

A list of the new prices for reproductions and services offered by the archives will appear in the next issue of Canadian Rail.

The Montreal & Lachine Railroad Revisited

(On its 150th Anniversary)

By Fred F. Angus

As described in the November-December 1997 issue of Canadian Rail, November 19, 1997 was the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Montreal & Lachine Railroad; Montreal's first rail line. Since there was no official commemoration of the date, your editor decided to do a bit of commemoration on his own. This consisted of walking and photographing significant portions of the line, on the exact 150th anniversary, and sharing some of these photos with the members.

The obvious place to start was the site of the former Bonaventure Station, and the old freight office building on which is the 1947 plaque depicted in the last issue. The day was overcast and cold with a few snow flurries, quite nasty in fact, and almost exactly like it was on November 19, 1847.

The former terminal yard at Bonaventure is still vacant awaiting some yet-to-be-defined development, perhaps a sports stadium (wouldn't it have been a great place for a railway museum!). Further west, the line is less definite as it has been almost completely built upon. The clue is, of course, the age of the houses; the post-1981 buildings are on the old right of way. At the present Lionel Groulx Metro station the line takes a slight bend and there the site of the old roadbed has been made into a very nice park. Here was the most pleasant surprise of the day; the park is called "Parc du Premier Chemin de Fer", and the signs indicate that this is in honour of the first railway on the Island of Montreal.



ABOVE: The former passenger and freight yards at Bonaventure. This view is in roughly the same direction as the 1886 photo on page 161 of the last Canadian Rail. On the other side of the building in the background is the plaque shown on page 154 of the same article.

RIGHT: Some of the new houses that have been built on the old right-of-way.

All photos by Fred Angus, and all taken on November 19, 1997.

The end of the park is very near the St. Henri Metro station, and just south of this, the old roadbed joins the present CN (and VIA) main line and becomes an active railway again. Here I cheated a bit and took a bus to Ville St. Pierre because: 1. This part of the line is still active. 2. There is no proper sidewalk for much of the way. 3. The bus exactly parallels the line and, 4. The weather was just too bad!

Resuming the walk at Ville St. Pierre, the old M&L was now an industrial siding. Although a road has covered much of the former second track, there is still some evidence of it in places, including rotting fragments of ties, unused since 1961. Past the former Rockfield, the line enters the city of Lachine and passes under the CPR bridge. This point was reached about 12:30 P.M. almost the exact time when the inaugural train passed the same place, exactly 150 years before. Soon the track passed the plant of Canadian Allied Diesel where former CP locomotive 8024 was busy shunting. On the old M&L track was a cut of freight cars including box car SLGG 10239 which has just been rebuilt by CAD, one of a number of former Southern Railway box cars being rebuilt and leased to CN.

A short distance beyond these cars, at 10th Avenue in Lachine, is the present end of track, marked by a large buffer. Beyond that, the roadbed has been made into a walking and bicycle trail, and a few blocks further is plainly visible the place where the 1888 cutoff headed to Dorval; this line is now an extension of Victoria Avenue. Near here the old line makes a gradual turn to the left and, near 30th Ave., reaches the lake at Lachine wharf, just eight miles from its origin in Montreal.

We hope you will enjoy these photos of what is left of this historic line, exactly 150 years after it opened. Perhaps you will consider walking it too (preferably in the summer) and see it for yourself.





ABOVE AND TWO PHOTOS TO RIGHT: Views of "Parc du Premier Chemin de Fer", commemorating this pioneer railway.



LEFT: The east end of the stub that branches off the present main line at St. Henri. This is all that is left of the line that used to run east to Bonaventure - the M&L main line.

BELOW: Along the line through the eastern part of Lachine. The road on the left covers the former second track. In the distance the CPR bridge passes overhead. This photo was taken at about 12:30 P.M., exactly (as close as can be determined) 150 years after the first train passed this same spot.



1847



1997

RIGHT: Former CPR 8024 switching at Canadian Allied Diesel.



LEFT: Newly-rebuilt ex-Southern Railway box car, now renumbered SLGG 10239, sitting on the old M&L line awaiting pickup by CN.

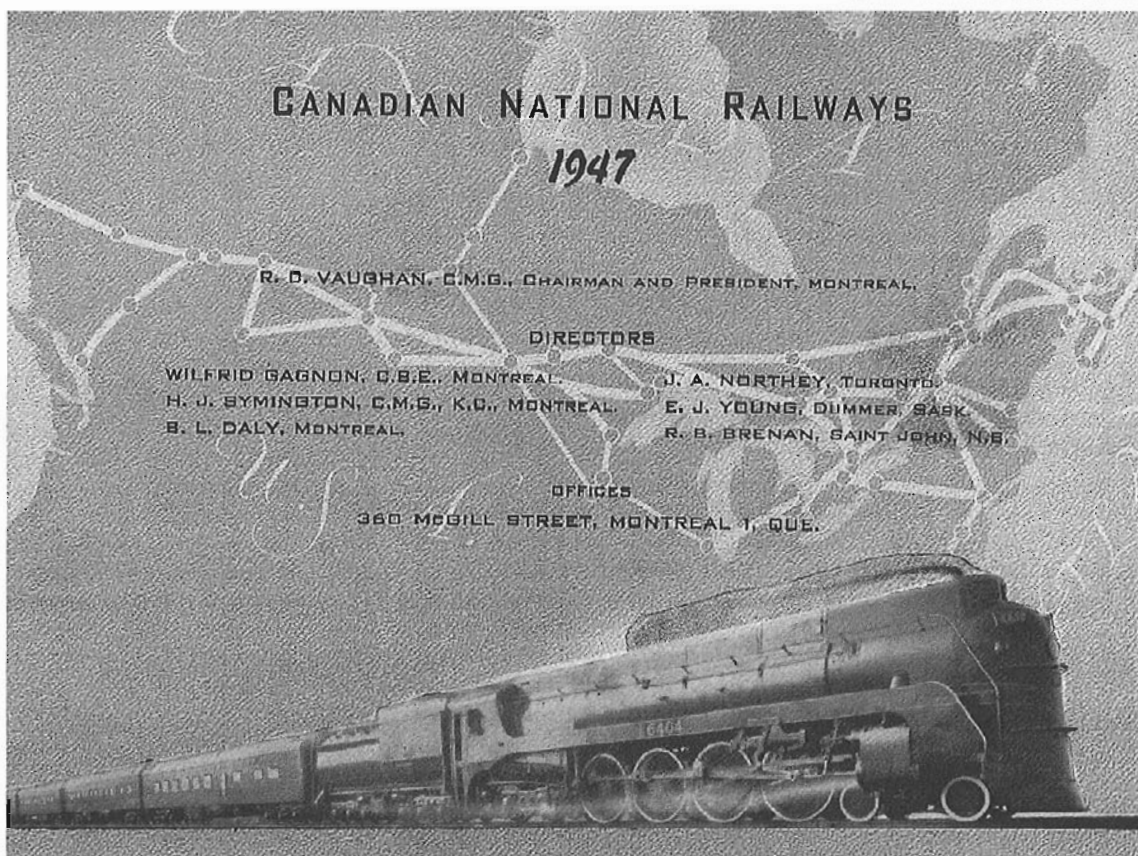
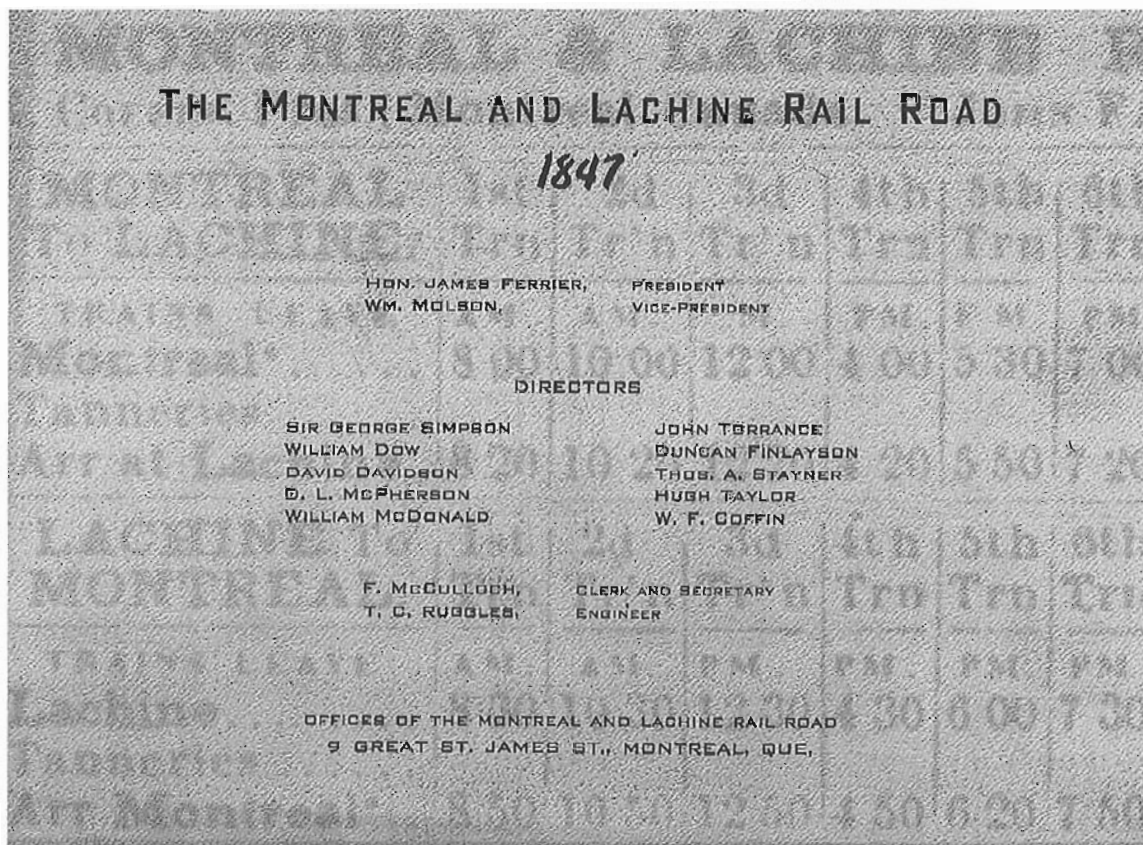
RIGHT: The present end of the line - 10th Avenue in Lachine.



BELOW LEFT: The curve towards Lachine wharf is still plainly visible.

BELOW RIGHT: Lachine wharf, the former end of the line. In the background the CPR bridge across the St. Lawrence is visible.





Both covers of the menu for the "Luncheon tendered by the City of Montreal to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the Montreal and Lachine Rail Road, the first railway on the Island of Montreal, now part of the Canadian National Railways System". The background of the "1847" page shows an early M&L schedule, while that for "1947" bears a map of the main lines of the CNR, as well as a streamlined passenger train hauled by locomotive 6404. In 1947 steam was still king on the CNR, although some diesels were in service.

A Rapture From The Ashes Of St. Clair Station

By Marco and Robert Marrone



Front entrance to the station — Circa 1990.

When passing by an abandoned railway depot it usually stands in mournful silence. Aside from showing the scars of its age, the signs of a bygone era, it rarely speaks to us about our mutual past. However, once in a while, like a madrigal, it regales those of us who are willing to listen — such was the sound from the station in this chronicle.

In the 1970s, as the traditional face of Canadian railways changed, so too did the social environment in which Canadians travelled; gone were many railway stations, especially smaller depots that were in or close to large urban areas. Becoming redundant, they were usually abandoned and, in many cases, demolished.

It was in these years that the authors experienced train travel for the first time. At the Christmas season the family always took the train to Sudbury to visit relatives for the holidays. The starting point of our journeys wasn't the Illustrious Union Station in downtown Toronto, but a far more unassuming depot that was then in the twilight of its era - The St. Clair Avenue Station.

The CN St. Clair Ave. Station was built in 1931, and was located where the CNR line crosses St. Clair Avenue at Caledonia Road in the Toronto area once known as the community of Carlton. It replaced the much older Davenport Station, constructed in 1853

along with Ontario's first railway: The Ontario, Simcoe and Huron. The line eventually became part of the Canadian National system.

The railway depot on St. Clair Ave. was a modest looking structure and didn't possess the fanciful architecture of its predecessor. In fact, the Davenport Station was such a handsome edifice, built in an English style with decorative gables, that it was featured in many Toronto area publications in the late 1800s. Although quite plain looking, simplicity, practicality and durability were the architecture characteristics of the replacing depot. The main floor had a waiting room, baggage room and agent's office; the interior was predominately maple. The basement had several rooms of roughly equal size that were used as office space and storage areas. These rooms enclosed an oil - burning furnace that had initially run on coal.

Throughout its history the station provided considerable support to the community: passenger rail service (including trans-continental and commuter), freight and express service, and, until the late 1960s, telegraph service. However, business steadily declined by the 1970s.

In 1978, Canadian National officially got out of the passenger rail business. This coincided with many station closures, including St. Clair.



Rear and side of the station as seen from St. Clair Ave.—circa 1990. The message scrawled on the side says “Dont nuke the dead cats”! We do not know about the dead cats, but the station was burned down.

The station’s fate was unlike those of other stations in this part of Toronto. Not far away, in the West Toronto Junction area, stood the historic CP West Toronto Station that closed about the same time. Efforts by the community to save this building from demolition and turn it into a farmers market and museum were lost when in the early hours of a November morning in 1982, a CP wrecking crew quietly moved in and smashed the Tudoresque structure to rubble. Even closer to St. Clair is the CN West Toronto Station. Still standing, it has not aged gracefully. The object of repeated vandalism, severe deterioration and neglect, it has unravelled into a dilapidated eyesore.

Weathering from the natural elements had detracted little from St. Clair’s external appearance. However, it fell victim to occasional graffiti, and became a sort of refuge for neighbourhood kids and drunkards who frequently broke in.

On the night of February 19, 1997, fire destroyed the building. The next morning just the brick skeleton remained. It laid there for three months before a wrecking crew pulverised the holdover and buried the empty hole.

During these three months, the authors, with the help of some friends and family, frequented the burnt remains in hopes of finding some tokens of remembrance that weren’t ruined by the

fire. We found door hinges, a lamp, pieces of unburnt maple and, to our amazement, an old ledger, in pristine shape, containing an old memo with the name of the station agent — Nick Hretchka.

On a whim, we looked up the name in the Toronto phone book and, sure enough, it was there. So, we called. The genteel voice on the other end confirmed that, indeed, he was the station agent. We met Nick in person a few weeks later at a restaurant on St. Clair Ave. where we got to know the man and his station.

The man, who hails from Melford, Saskatchewan, is very much a reflection of the station he managed — with silver hair and modest de-



TONY COSTA PHOTO

HISTORIC STATION BURNS

Firefighters battle a blaze at a historic train station at St. Clair Ave. and Caledonia Rd. last night. Traffic in the area was tied up when roads were closed. The cause of the fire is still unknown.

The Toronto Star — The day after the fire.

meanour, he is polite and humble. He was 19 years old when he first moved from the west in search of a job; he met with the chief dispatcher at Union Station, “Toots” Harrison, who found him a position near London, Ontario. Nick Hretchka began his career with CN in 1943, at Hagersville, Ontario slugging freight as an assistant agent. Six months later, after learning Morse code and gaining measured experience, he became an operator. What followed was a seven year stint at Welland Junction. Then, coming back to Toronto in 1951, he worked at Union Station and, for one day a week, at the St. Clair Ave. station.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

DNF 172

YOUR FILE SUBJECT OUR FILE

Express Money Order DF-918200-918240
 Kelly 24 - To April 29 67

Express Money Order DF-454000-454040
 April 29 - To June 16 67

Express Money Order DF-562160-562200
 June 12-64 to

Express Money Order DF-769840-769880 ✓

✓ ✓ DF 894800 ✓ 894840 ✓

✓ ✓ DK 522800 ✓ 522840 ✓

✓ ✓ DK 642920 642960 ✓

✓ ✓ DK 735120 735160

✓ ✓ DK 817400-817440

✓ ✓ DK 878280-878340

✓ ✓ DK 920760-920800

✓ ✓ DK 196400-196800

Page from the recovered ledger.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

DNF 171

St. Clair Ave Dec 6 67

YOUR FILE SUBJECT OUR FILE

Have received five
 keys to station

M. Hretchka

A note with Nick Hretchka's signature, also recovered from the fire.

In 1953 his position at St. Clair became permanent, and it is there that he spent the next 25 years. He remembers that business was good at the station in those days. "I sold a lot of tickets in that time, lots of express and customer service... we had our share". He worked alone in the daytime, then was relieved about 3:30 in the afternoon by another operator who would close up at midnight after train 47 — for Kirkland Lake / North Bay — departed. His years at St. Clair involved numerous colleagues — "they were so many that I don't recall." There was one pipe-smoking operator in particular who the authors vividly remember while awaiting the Super continental to Sudbury. "That was Ed Dobson, he smoked a pipe, he loaded it up and puffed on it". Ed Dobson was about 15 years older than Nick; they had a close rapport. "Oh yeah, we were good friends, he passed on about 10 years ago".

The Train crews were also great guys. They often stopped over, particularly when the cold weather came. "They used to come round especially in wintertime, park their backs against the water radiator, heat-up and have a little snooze". When reflecting upon the people and the company he worked with, he warmly reflects, "we were just one big happy family".

The corporate climate was a far cry from today's lean-and-mean business environment at CN. When asked about how the company treated him, he replies enthusiastically "very well. When I was at St. Clair I was my own boss; I didn't even know who my boss was. I kept my nose clean, everything up and up."

CN stations functioned very autonomously; company officials seldom interfered with daily operations. Nick recalls "The ticket supervisors were Fred Webster and Ed Pratt, they used to come around to see me, maybe once a year ... I looked after the accounting, passenger work and all that. I used to do the book work for express once a week and once a month for the tickets, and any money I got I deposited it in the Bank of Montreal.

On average, St. Clair's revenue was about \$20,000 per month, sometimes during peak seasons it ranged between \$40,000 and \$50,000 per month. Indeed, Christmas was the busiest time of the year. When business became that hectic, a package would periodically make its way to the wrong destination. Nick says veraciously, "Christmas was very busy, especially express — a lot of gifts and parcels ... Mistakes were made". The number of telegrams also increased during Christmas, primarily those sent by Italians that lived in the neighbourhood. Another peak time was early Autumn — grape season. The station facilitated sev-

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS
 Passenger Sales

Toronto Ont.
 File: 8600 :MHS
 Date: Dec.10/70

- N.H.Bechthold, Terminal Traffic Manager, Brampton
- R.J.MacDonald, Depot Agent, Burlington
- L.H.Archer, Depot Agent, Dundas
- J.A.Elliott, Depot Agent, Georgetown
- Box 131 West Hill, Guildwood Ont.
- E.M.Swinimer, Dity Ticket Agent, Hamilton
- L.K.Gilchrist, Branch Manager, Hamilton
- F. Sherriff, Supv. Psgr.Stn.Evcs. Hamilton
- D.A.Liddle Depot Agent, Malton
- J.A.Boyd Depot Agent, Newmarket
- D. Withey, Oakville
- S. Mundry, Supv. Service Centre, Oshawa
- C.Leitch, Sub Agent, Parkdale
- A.E.Visentin, Depot Agent, 78 Queen St.E. Port Credit
- N.K.Hretchka, Sub Agent, St.Clair Ave.
- W.R.Gurney, Depot Agent, Stouffville
- G.A.Soul, City Ticket Agent, Toronto
- E.R.Knight, Depot Ticket Agent, Toronto
- M.Beauchesne Depot Agent, Weston
- R.J.Franklin, Sub Agent, West Toronto
- T.R.Hughes, City Ticket Agent, 424 Main St. Buffalo 14202 NY B
- A. McKellar, Gen.Stn.Master & Baggage Agent, Union Station.

Subject: Ticket Requisition forms 1750 & 1758

Receipt of all tickets secured from the Ticket Bureau or direct from the printers, should be sent direct to our Area Comptroller.

Recent survey indicates the procedure has not been adopted by all.

Suggest you post this letter in your stock book, or Revenue Accounting Instructions manual, where all under your jurisdiction will be governed and guided accordingly.

H. J. Fry
 Passenger Sales Manager

cc: J.J.Menary, Regional Passenger Sales Manager, Toronto File:E-124
 R.H.Newcombe, Passenger Sales Manager, London
 G.A.Gallipo, Passenger Sales, Caprol
 S.J.Curreri, Area Comptroller, Toronto Attn: Mr. Cantafio.

CNR memo to station agents that was found in the ledger.

| TRANSCONTINENTAL SERVICE | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--|
| TORONTO — WASHAGO — PARRY SOUND — SUDBURY — CAPREOL | | | | | | | | | |
| WEST—READ DOWN | | | | | EAST—READ UP | | | | |
| REFERENCE MARKS—TABLES 130-131 | | | | | | | | | |
| Ⓜ Meal Station. Ⓜ Rent-a-Car Service. Ⓜ Stops Saturdays only. Ⓜ Stops for revenue passengers from Winnipeg and beyond. Ⓜ Stops Tuesdays only. Ⓜ Stops on signal. Ⓜ Mixed Train. | | | | | | | | | |
| North-land 49 ex. Sat. | Continental 53 Daily | Super Continental 51 Daily | Miles from Toronto | TABLE 131 Eastern Time | | Super Continental 52 Daily | Continental 54 Daily | North-land 50 ex. Sun. | |
| P.M. | P.M. | P.M. | | | | P.M. | A.M. | A.M. | |
| 6:15 | 11:30 | 6:10 | 0.0 | Lv | TORONTO, Ont. | 2:50 | 7:00 | 8:10 | |
| .. | 11:43 | .. | 2.4 | .. | Union Station Ⓜ | .. | .. | .. | |
| .. | 11:53 | 6:28 | 5.2 | .. | Parkdale | 2:33 | .. | .. | |
| .. | .. | 7:01 | 34.1 | .. | St. Clair Avenue | C 1:57 | .. | .. | |
| Via | .. | 7:40 | 63.0 | Ar | Newmarket | 1:20 | Via | Via | |
| Beaver-ton | 1:10 | .. | 64.1 | Lv | Allandale | 1:20 | Beaverton | Beaverton | |
| .. | 1:25 | 7:40 | 63.0 | Lv | (Tables 86, 87, 90) | .. | .. | .. | |
| .. | 1:30 | .. | 64.1 | .. | Barrie | 12:48 | .. | .. | |
| .. | 2:02 | 8:10 | 98.8 | Ar | Orillia | 12:28 | .. | .. | |
| .. | 2:22 | 8:35 | 98.8 | Lv | Washago | .. | .. | .. | |

CNR transcontinental timetable from the 1960s — Note St. Clair 5.2 miles from Union Station.



Nick Hretchka with the authors at the station site.

eral local grape and wine-juice distributors. “We used to have Culotta, Meschino and Caledonia grape. We had Mr. Vic Anderson, he was the fella that handled the grapes ... he had his office downstairs”. Early Autumn was also the season for sportsmen. “Hunters and fishermen would go use the train. Many times they had a lot of baggage — Oh Christ. sometimes the train would be held up 10 minutes just to get the baggage on”!

By the mid-1970s, uncertainty about cutbacks were on the minds of all station employees. Nick recalls the mood as being very apprehensive. “Well, what happened was we got a letter from the union saying that they heard the railway was cutting staff and stations, but they didn’t tell us which ones. So, they kept us guessing for about two years, and all of a sudden we got another letter from the union saying St. Clair was going to be closed, Parkdale and West Toronto were also going to be closed; other stations too”.

It was Nick Hretchka who officially closed the doors of the St. Clair Ave. Station in 1978. CN continued to rent out one of the basement offices to a fuelling company [Bell Fuel] until the early 1980s. CN boarded up the building shortly afterwards.

Nick worked at the Mimico Crew Centre until his retirement in 1988; the year also marked his 45th year with the CNR. When asked if he is still keen about CN’s business nowadays, he smiles and cheekily admits, “No. I just Wait for their pension cheque”. He’s got other interests in mind, which include his wife, daughter, and two grandchildren.

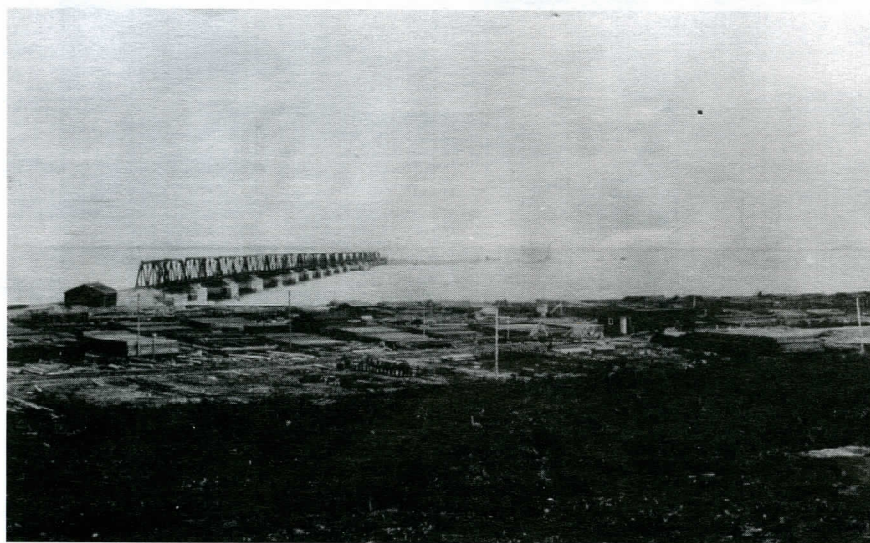
After talking in the restaurant, the three of us walked down the street to where the station used to be. As the station agent paced around the conspicuously solemn and barren place, he pointed to remnants and regaled us about their significance. Throughout, the authors couldn’t help think that the raptures of this place and others like it across Canada are forever fleeting.

“On To The Bay” - 1924

The railway line to Churchill Manitoba has recently been sold by Canadian National Railways and is now operated independently as a “short line” [not very short! Ed.]. The history of this line has been very interesting, construction starting in 1909, being suspended in 1918, when only 92 miles from its intended terminus at Nelson, a later change of terminus to Churchill and consequent abrupt swing north, and finally completion to Churchill in 1929. During the hiatus in construction an association was formed, in 1924, called the On-To-The-Bay Association. This group strongly urged the completion to the line to Hudson Bay, favouring the terminus at Nelson, perhaps because it was much shorter and more likely to be completed than Churchill.

About this time (1924) the On-To-The-Bay Association produced a very interesting pamphlet, now very rare, called “The Story of the Hudson Bay Railway”. In view of the present-day interest in this railway we reprint this document in full. In addition we have included a number of photos showing the construction of the line. All are from the National Archives of Canada and identified by their reference number.

It should be noted that Arthur Meighen was Prime Minister of Canada from 1920 to 1921 and from 1925 to 1926, while Sir Wilfrid Laurier was Prime Minister from 1896 to 1911. The completion of the line occurred during the ministry of W.L. MacKenzie King. The W.A. Bowden referred to in the article is commemorated by the town of Wabowden, a divisional point on the line.



*The Hudson Bay Railway bridge from the mainland, Port Nelson, Manitoba.
PA-41504.*

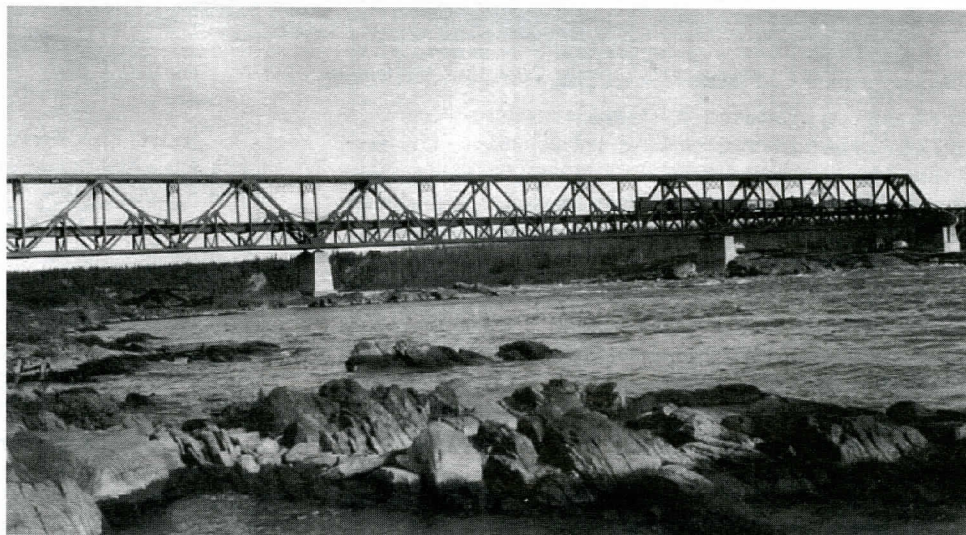
THE STORY OF THE HUDSON BAY RAILWAY

The beginning of our Western Canadian civilization reached the banks of the Red River via Hudson Strait, Hudson Bay, Port Nelson and Lake Winnipeg. The Selkirk settlers established the feasibility and advantages of the Hudson Bay route, but it remained for Mr. Hugh Sutherland, of Winnipeg, who later became Chief Executive Agent for the Canadian Northern Railway, to take the first step toward constructing a Railway from Winnipeg to Hudson Bay.

Early in the Year 1881 Mr. Sutherland applied to the Dominion Government for a Charter granting him power to build “The Winnipeg and Hudson Bay Railway.” Having secured his Charter the following year he applied to Parliament for a

Land Grant, and the Dominion authorized a Land Grant for the Railway to the extent of 6,400 acres for all mileage to be built within the then boundaries of the Province of Manitoba, and a grant of 12,800 acres per mile of line built throughout the Northwest Territories, now Saskatchewan and Alberta. Subsequently a Charter was granted to other parties promoting the “Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Company,” the survey of which line practically paralleled the projected Bay line from Portage to Lake Winnipegosis.

Several attempts were made in connection with the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway from 1884 and onwards, but serious mishaps occurred to stop construction, notably the Northwest Rebellion in 1885. The Land Grants were kept alive through intermittent construction, orders-in-council and Acts of Parliament until 1896, when Mr. Sutherland sold a controlling interest in his “Winnipeg and Hudson Bay Railway” to Mackenzie and Mann, and from that date Mr. Sutherland became associated with them in their Western enterprises as a minority stockholder.



*The first train to cross the bridge over the Nelson River at Kettle Rapids.
PA-41505.*

In addition to the Land Grant, Parliament later authorized a cash subsidy of \$80,000 per annum to be paid on construction of that part of the line from Gladstone to the Saskatchewan River. When it came to financing the construction of that undertaking it was found desirable not to associate with it the name of the Hudson Bay Railway, so that at this juncture takes place the birth of the Canadian Northern Railway, and with it all grants, subsidies and privileges of the Winnipeg and Hudson Bay Railway and the Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Company, which was also acquired by the C.N.R.

The astute builders of the C.N.R. were deft at financing even in those early days and Mr. Sutherland was successful in selling on the London market Land Grant Bonds for the Canadian Northern Railway to the extent of Two Million Dollars, pledging as security the yearly cash subsidy of \$880,000 per annum for 20 years sufficient to pay interest on the bonds.

From this starting point the C.N.R. opened up new territory north, south and west and every mile was built on the original Land Grants and subsidy carried by the original Hudson Bay Railway Charter. In the years from 1904 until 1908 there was strong agitation in favor of the Railway from The Pas to Hudson Bay being built and controlled by the Dominion Government. Under this pressure the Laurier Government concluded a binding agreement with the C.N.R. that if the C.N.R. would relinquish the Land Grant of 12,800 acres per mile for the 424 miles from The Pas to Port Nelson the Government would build the road and make arrangements for the C.N.R. to operate it for the Government.

This agreement completed, Hon. Frank Oliver, then Minister of the Interior, brought the matter before the House at Ottawa in 1908, showing that on the Statutes of the Dominion of Canada there still remained a Land Grant of 12,800 acres per mile for this Railway. Having concluded the above agreement he advised the House to pass a measure eliminating this Land Grant and place in lieu thereof a new source of revenue to the Dominion Treasury adequate to meet the responsibilities which would be assumed by the construction of a Railway to the Hudson Bay by the Dominion Government.

The new source suggested by Mr. Oliver and approved by Parliament in 1908 was the sale of homestead and pre-emption lands in Western Canada. This took the place of the statutory Land Grant to the Hudson Bay Railway, and Parliament set aside and sold some 9,000,000 acres of Western lands. The lands actually sold under this plan yielded a fund of about \$28,000,000. Of this amount the sum of \$19,130,556.73 has been actually collected, \$14,459,941.26 was spent between 1910 and 1918 on actual construction, completing the railway grade from The Pas to the Port of Nelson and laying steel with bridges at the necessary crossings for a distance of 332 miles from The Pas to Nelson, leaving only 92 miles of steel to complete the Hudson Bay Railway.

At this point construction and all other work stopped. There is nothing which can give a shadow of justification for its having been stopped.



Unloading supplies from an early snowmobile at the Hudson's Bay Company shed at Churchill on April 15, 1928. C-86606.

Here we have a new mortgage against Western lands, creating a Trust Fund with a binding agreement as between the Government and the Canadian Northern Railway, all for the specific purpose, acknowledged by three Parliaments, of building the Hudson Bay Railway.

The present Minister of Railways, the Hon. George P. Graham, turned the first sod in connection with the Railway in 1910, and the Government of Sir Robert Borden, and afterwards the Union Government, carried on construction through years of war and strife. But on the return of an era of peace construction was stopped, when all difficulties had disappeared and the main object of this Railway in sight, namely, a seaport for Western Canada at Port Nelson.

The early Lord Selkirk settlers knew well the feasibility and advantages of the Hudson Bay route. Mr. Hugh Sutherland had absolute faith in the Hudson Bay route when he formed the Winnipeg and Hudson Bay Railway Company. The farmers throughout the West who purchased the greater proportion of 9,000,000 acres of the land sold to provide a fund for the building of this road, paid their money under the Dominion guarantee that it was promoting the construction of the Railway to the Bay; and Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen took this view as his principal justification for supporting the Hudson Bay Railway when the matter was up for discussion in the House during the 1922-1923 session.

Strong advocates of the Hudson Bay route have included the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the late Hon. Frank Cochrane, Sir Robert Borden, the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, the Hon. George P. Graham, men who had every facility for investigating the reports of engineers and traders using the Hudson Bay route for the past 300 years. Sir John A. Macdonald granted the original Charter.

Our Association believes that there is in Ottawa and other Eastern centres a determination to place before the public, even to the extent of misinforming the press, every scrap of evidence, truthful and otherwise, which can be read as injurious to the route.

It has been commonly and unjustifiably stated that this Railway is built on muskeg; a very recent report from Brig. General W. Paterson and Mr. Fred C. Hamilton, of Winnipeg, disproves such statements and shows the road-bed as being well built and in good condition at the present time.

The total cost of completing the Hudson Bay Railway to tidewater has been given by the Hon. Mr. Graham as \$2,000,000, while information brought down from time to time shows that the



A tractor train, with supplies from Nelson, arrives at Churchill on April 24, 1928. C-86610.

Government still has on hand from land sales receipts covered by the Trust Fund approximately \$5,000,000 in cash and about \$8,000,000 yet to be collected under the land sales contracts.

Evidence of a substantial nature as to the advantage of Port Nelson over Churchill as a harbour establishes that while Churchill is a land-locked harbour, it is also an ice-bound harbour for six or seven months in the year. The Churchill harbour is small, according to the evidence of the late Mr. W. A. Bowden, Chief Engineer of the Department of Railways and Canals (page 52, Senate Report, 1920), "so small that not more than three vessels at one time could anchor in the harbour." On the other hand, at Nelson the harbour would look after a fleet of such vessels. Further, Churchill would require 150 miles of extra railway building at a cost of over \$4,000,000.

Page 53 of the Senate Report states "that the Railway has an advantage of \$4,000,000 and operating preference is all in favor of Nelson." On the same page we find Mr. Bowden made this statement: "There is no reason why a vessel of a certain type, namely, 400 to 410 feet in length, about 8,500 tons capacity, cannot run as safely to Port Nelson as you can to Montreal. Insurance rates should be no higher to Nelson than to Montreal." Again, "I would say that navigation to Port Nelson is as safe as to Montreal." Mr. Bowden gives very important evidence further down in the report: "Our experience with regard to insurance was this, we put 38 vessels through the Straits during the season of 1914 and had no serious accidents of any kind. In 1913 two vessels were lost; their loss had nothing whatever to do with the ice or the merits or demerits of the harbour. One of them was several miles out of her course; the other was deliberately run aground." Further down: "Through the Straits themselves there is no menace to navigation whatever. The Straits are free from navigation difficulties."

On page 51 Mr. Bowden says: "An unprotected steamer had no difficulty in making the Straits, leaving Port Nelson on

October 22nd. This was an ordinary single deck tramp steamer without any ice strengthening whatever, 290 feet long, 3,400 tons, named 'The Sheba.' I purposely did not strengthen the three ships which we purchased, 'The Sheba,' 'The Sharon' and 'The Durley Chine.' I decided that it was desirable in the interests of the project as a whole that they should know what an ordinary vessel could do. These vessels made a number of voyages to the Bay without any trouble, going early and coming late."

On page 53 Mr. Bowden makes this statement: "This route is not adding to our congestion on the seaboard, but is really giving us an addition to the spout from the Western provinces. It is of real advantage to the West and relieves the Transcontinental roads of a substantial



Returning to Nelson after an unsuccessful attempt at one more trip to Churchill; May, 1928. C-86611.

amount of traffic during the season of congestion. A very moderate volume of traffic would pay operating expenses if the full existing through rate was equitably divided between the Railway and the Steamships."

Mr. D. W. McLachlan, then engineer in charge Hudson Bay Terminals, on oath before the Senate Committee stated:

"Last winter we knew that the chart which was prepared and published was not right, and we went back and thoroughly surveyed the entrance to Port Nelson all over again, with the result that we got the channel in a different place from the one shown on the chart. The result is that we effected a great improvement in the entrance to Port Nelson. "We have a channel there that has 20 feet of water at low tide. That means that when you have the height of the least tide to be expected you get a channel that is 33.7 feet deep. You can come into Port Nelson at any time. The new channel is a natural channel without any dredging. The depth is 20 feet at low tide, 33.7 at high tide and about 40 feet at spring tide. The great advantage of the new channel is that at first it leads towards one shore and then towards the other shore and finally up the centre of the estuary.

The width of the channel at the narrowest point is 1,200 feet. I will not say that there is no silt coming down the river, because the whole place is muddy, but I do not believe there is any change occurring in that estuary; I believe, now, it is the same as it has been and will be the same 100 years from now. It is my judgment that ships will not have any difficulty from a north-east wind in lying against the wharf.

The present channel between the ocean and Quebec is 1,000 feet wide”.

Please note that the width of the Nelson channel at its narrowest point is 1,200 feet wide, and let us hear what Mr. McLachlan says on oath regarding the ice conditions of the harbour: “From the head of the deep hole out to perhaps where the Clearance lies, or perhaps a good many miles beyond, it may remain open all winter. At Port Nelson we have a dry dock 200 feet long and 46 feet wide,” and, again, My opinion is that Nelson can be made deep enough for all purposes.”

Let us turn back the page to glance at Mr. McLachlan’s evidence regarding Churchill: “The branch to Churchill would be about 150 miles long. The area of deep water inside of Churchill harbour is small,” and again, “Churchill really consists of a small harbour at the mouth, deep enough to provide swinging room for three ships, anchored by the bow, and then a large lagoon-like area back of it, that fills and empties with the tide. The whole place is covered with enormous boulders; on the land, in the water, everywhere. The Churchill River is two miles wide on average. I was never more than 100 feet away from a boulder on the trip.”

Returning to Nelson, his evidence on oath proceeds: “We have a bridge about two-thirds of a mile long, built from the shore out towards the natural channel at Nelson. Then we have an island built there about one-half mile long and about 400 to 500 feet wide for deep-water wharves. Parallel to the natural channel and about eight feet from it, there is a natural channel running up and down the axis of the estuary. The bridge itself is carried on a cluster of piles 12 by 12 timbers, driven down deep in the hardpan.” The reason for quoting this part of the evidence is that a very recent report by this engineer says: “In 1923 it was found that the artificial island built there as a base for operations, and the bridge connecting it with the shore had splendidly stood the test of ice action, storms and tides. Surveys made in 1918 had proved that it will be feasible to provide for the accommodation of ships up to 26-foot draft.”



Laying track in the snow; April 1, 1929.

C-86607.



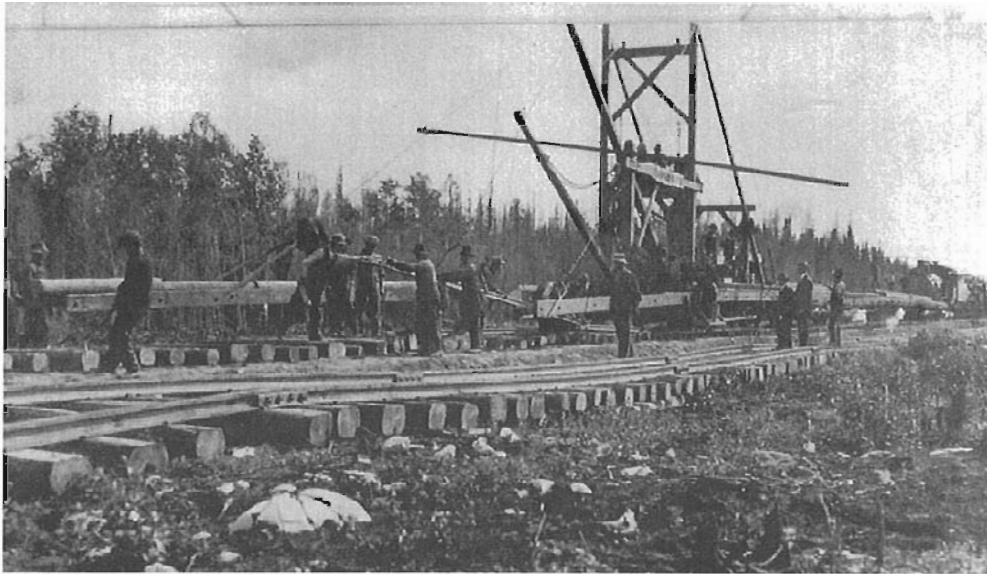
“Pioneer” laying track at Mile 510 on the Churchill line; April 1, 1929.

PA-147454.

Before submitting further evidence let us look for a few moments to the findings of the Senate Committee, dated Friday, June 4, 1920: It states “The consensus of opinion is that the Hudson Bay remains open all the year through and that the ice does not extend beyond 30 or 40 miles from the shore. The strait is open for the greater part of the year, and would be open all the time probably, except for the ice which comes down late in the autumn from Fox channel.”

“It was generally conceded by the eight witnesses who gave evidence on this point that the aids to navigation which could be installed along the straits would greatly facilitate the passage and considerably extend the season of navigability.”

Regarding the natural resources of the area: “No doubt as soon as the Hudson Bay route is established a very large and lucrative fishing industry will be established there. Recent discoveries have shown the country surrounding Hudson Bay is strongly and richly mineralized, particularly in gold and copper,” and the findings:



The "Pioneer" laying track in the spring of 1929 after the snow has gone. PA-41319.

"Your committee makes the following findings upon the evidence adduced before them, in part, as follows:

That the Hudson Bay route is feasible.

That the mines already discovered in the Hudson Bay district are of sufficient number and richness to indicate the existence of great potential mineral wealth.

That those lands which were looked upon as barren and utterly worthless will eventually be a valuable asset to Canada.

In the meantime the laying of the rails could be completed to Nelson, and the Port could be used for the present in its present state."

After such a finding, can anyone imagine a country having an intelligent parliament, responsible to the people, leaving a trust fund, a binding agreement, pledges by three or more successive governments, in the condition that the Hudson Bay Railway lies since 1918 for the matter of \$32,000,000. This sum and much more is in the Government coffers from the sale of Western lands to complete the work.

The Hudson Bay Railway issue ends for many thousands party affiliations and is instilling a strong sense of citizenship which will bear forth real fruit in the upbuilding of this Dominion.

There is no mistaking the temper of the farmer, the business man, the miner, or any other who have been interested in the completion of the Hudson Bay route. This is the opportune time for our elected representatives to cement all parts of the Dominion by turning the key and unlocking the door of prosperity by completing the Hudson Bay Railway.

We are indebted to Captain Wakeham for his evidence that on July 20 he passed out through the straits and saw no ice, while Captain Webb says: "There is a 20-foot channel at Nelson at low tide. Navigation in the channel is perfectly safe." Captain Davis says: "The Port of Nelson has many advantages as the channel for fully nine miles is perfectly straight south 37 degrees-magnetic, and the ground good holding." Mr. W. J. Stewart, of the Naval Service, says: "The entrance to the Nelson River does not generally freeze up, and occasionally remains open all winter." Captain Frederick Anderson, Naval Service, says: "In 1912, on the Minto, we left Port Burwell on the 6th of November, and there

was no ice in sight anywhere. We went through the straits at full speed, the distance through the straits is 500 miles. The distance to Port Burwell from Port Nelson is 1,000 miles. We made ten knots per hour [sic], or a four days run at 240 miles per day."

Commander Gordon says: "There is a current along the north shore of Hudson Straits to the West and a current along the south shore to the East coming out. Port Nelson is as good a port as you can get there. Port Nelson is the better place for a harbour, because the conditions which prevail at Churchill are Arctic conditions. Port Nelson is more temperate, and down there at the mouth of the Nelson River there is the possibility of water communication

through to Lake Winnipeg and right through the country. There are a number of points to be considered about Port Nelson.

"A boat with 20-foot draft will go into Nelson. You could take a ship drawing more than 20 feet into the terminal at Port Nelson. Hudson Straits are never frozen over. I was off the entrance to the Nelson Harbour in 1913. The wind blew about 75 to 90 miles per hour - a blizzard - and there was not very much sea around there, just the usual slop from the wind blowing hard. There was no very big sea."

Now let us turn to the evidence of Mr. V. Stefansson, Arctic 'Explorer. "I have a good deal of faith in Hudson Strait. Our critics have completely undervalued the resources of the North. At Melville Island we had two camps, 90 miles apart, both located at coal mines, one a bituminous shale, the other good quality similar to Ladysmith coal we carried on the ships."

"The people who tell me about the difficulties of navigation up North commonly exaggerate them. I have seen coal in nearly every island north of Canada."

Then we proceed to the evidence of Captain J. E. Bernier, Arctic Explorer: "I found coal on mostly all the islands. At Baffin Land there is a large deposit of coal, a vein seven feet thick. I took enough to coal my ship back. It burns equally as well as Sidney coal. You could mine it in the winter time. Any ordinary vessel the size of a ship could navigate in Hudson Bay and Strait. The size would not matter."

Then we have the interesting evidence of Col. Wm. P. Anderson, of the Marine Department: "Personally I feel satisfied that there is going to be quite a large trade in Hudson Bay itself, independently of the Strait, from fish and pulpwood and possibly minerals."

The evidence would be far from complete without the opinion of the late Hon. Frank Cochrane, P.C., M.P.: "When I was Minister of Railways for the Government of Canada I visited Port Nelson, and it was during my term of office that it was selected as terminal for the Hudson Bay Railway. The selection was finally decided by me from the report of engineers. I went myself to both places, Nelson and Churchill, The Port of Nelson was nearer and the railroad would be shorter. The tenders shewed a difference of four millions in favor of Nelson.

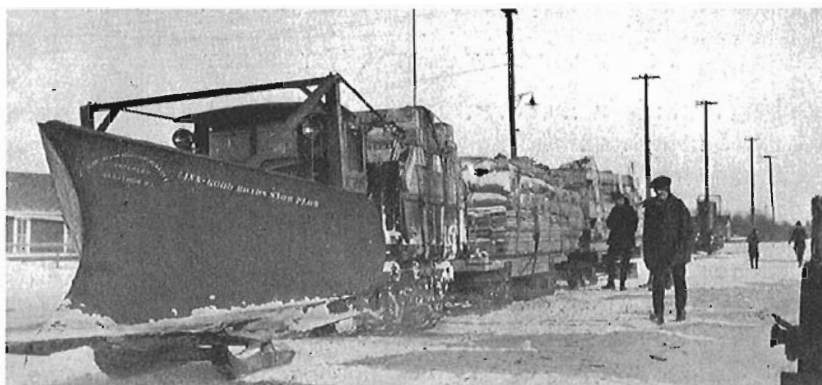
"Before I visited Nelson a boat drawing 20 feet of water went up to Nelson to where the harbor has been developed. You will find from Hansard that Mr. Graham, my predecessor, said his records from the engineer had been in favor of Nelson, the same as mine. I questioned the engineer and satisfied myself. The item of 90 miles more road is quite an item in building and in hauling in freights. I feel that with proper aids to navigation the straits can be used longer than most people at the present time think, both longer and more effectively."

No one would think of closing the mass of evidence submitted without quoting from Mr. J. B. Tyrell's answers: "I have the utmost confidence in the railway to Hudson Bay being of a definite economic value to the country, having made a study of the matter for a great many years, I firmly believe that when the railroad is completed to the Bay and a harbour is constructed, either at Nelson or Churchill, or at both, it will be of great service in both export from and import to the North-west.

It is largely due to the fact that the railway was under construction that new mining areas were discovered to the west of the road, and it looks as if branches might have to be built from the road before the road itself is completed to the terminals. The minerals already discovered are gold, copper and zinc. Thirty miles northward from The Pas stretching for 200 miles is beautiful clay land, just as fine land, as far as I could see, as any in Manitoba, partly wooded. I think there is coal in this district. I estimated the area of arable land adjacent to this railway at 5,000 square miles and Mr. Wm. McInnes, of the Geological Survey, reported that my estimate might be raised to 10,000 square miles. That is land fit for settlement."

Now, in the last place, we will return for a moment to the evidence of the late Mr. Bowden to page 52 Senate report: "There have been no lands acquired along the route of the Hudson Bay Railway or Port Nelson terminals by private parties. An area of two miles by ten was reserved at Port Nelson." The land at Nelson being nationally owned and the fact that no private interest can gain by the completion of the line to that port should of itself stand as an irresistible argument against any Government sacrificing an invaluable asset of the whole of the people or delaying the completion of the road while considering other ports not so favored.

This association will not regard its objects as being fulfilled with the mere completion of the railway, but will continue an active interest in the development of the territory and resources which the railway is intended to serve. It will continue to do its utmost toward the development of the coming city, of Port Nelson as a tidewater terminus for Western Canada, both as an inlet for imports and immigration and as an outlet for the vast products of this western land. The association will do all possible to stimulate and encourage the establishment of industries and mines in the Hudson Bay territory. It will maintain an active interest in the securing of equitable freight and insurance rates for the traffic, both by land and sea, and will endeavor at all times to obtain the active interest of British finance for the utmost development of the country, so that our population may be materially increased, our mineral and forest wealth turned into the currency of trade, employment provided for the thousands and hundreds of thousands that are to come, and the route developed to its utmost capacity for the transport of wheat from the granary of the Empire to the markets of the world.



A snow plow on a tractor train at The Pas during the winter of 1929.

SOME SALIENT FACTS

The feasibility of the Hudson Bay route is adequately shown by the facts and authorities cited in this booklet. In addition, the On-to-the-Bay Association earnestly invites attention to the following salient facts and conditions warranting the immediate completion of the Railway:

The original land grant and subsidy was made for the construction of a Railway to the Bay. That land grant and subsidy was used as a basis for financing the construction of all other prairie lines of the Canadian Northern and the very purpose of that land grant and subsidy has yet to be fulfilled.

The road would provide a central tidewater terminus, virtually equi-distant for various parts of Central and Western Canada, with a big saving in distance to the sea, for exports from the prairies, parts of Ontario and the Northern United States.

It would serve to equalize transportation charges for Canada's products to world markets.

It would contribute enormously to the development of new industries and provide investment opportunity for capital and employment for labor.

It would satisfy a demand that in Western Canada is insuppressible.

Construction was started and left unfinished - just as though the Canadian Pacific Railway had stopped 92 miles short of Montreal at the one end or Vancouver at the other.

Three successive Canadian Governments have pledged the people completion of the road.

In addition to Government pledges, a contract was made with the Canadian Northern, in wiping out the land grant, that the Government would build the road, from The Pas to Tidewater.

Western lands have been sold, creating a trust fund of \$28,000,000 for the specific purpose of building the road.

Over \$14,000,000 of that fund has been expended in construction left uncompleted.

The unused portion of the Government's collections on those Western lands is more than sufficient to complete the road to tidewater, without further charge upon the public.

Failure to complete the line as promised, pledged and paid for would constitute a breach of faith by the Dominion of Canada.

Turmoil and Triumph

By Ian Bickle

A book review by A.S. Walbridge

Having just read some of the controversy and the difficulties involved in building the railway to Churchill, we are pleased to present a review of a new book that tells the whole story. "Turmoil and Triumph", published in 1995, won the CRHA award for the best book on Canadian railway history published during the year.

TURMOIL AND TRIUMPH

The controversial railway to Hudson Bay

By: Ian Bickle

Published by:

Detselig Enterprises Ltd.,

210 - 1220 Kensington Road, N.W.,
Calgary, AB. T2N 3P5 Canada.

Order through your local book store ~
C\$29.95

QUESTION: Why would anyone want to build a railway away up to Hudson Bay?

ANSWER: To transport Canada's growing grain crops from Prairie fields toward their market in Europe more efficiently.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, land-hungry people from Britain, Germany, Iceland, Ukraine, the United States and other countries were flocking to Canada's Prairie Provinces to cultivate the almost endless acres of fertile soil to grow grain. The 1900 wheat crop amounted to 50 mm bushels. By 1905, 107,000,000 bushels were grown; and by 1915, the total was 394,000,000 bushels.

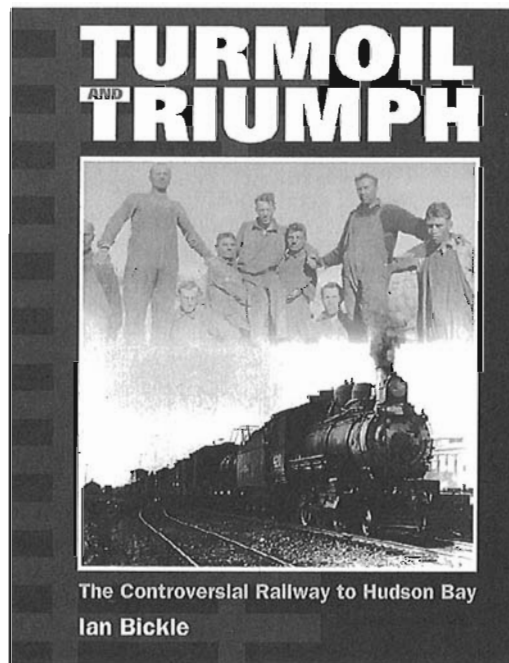
The only available transportation of the crop was by box car via Canadian Pacific from the prairies to Fort William, Ontario. There, it was transhipped to lake steamers to Montreal for a second transshipping to steamers to Europe. This route was ice-bound from December to April.

Active groups of prairie farmers and merchants advocated the building of a railway from the prairies to Hudson Bay - a considerably shorter distance to Britain than via Montreal. However, they were having a lot of difficulty in rousing the Federal Governments of the day to the point of commencing construction.

By 1908, Canadian Northern Railway had built a network of connecting railways through the northern part of the Prairies, and had reached The Pas, Manitoba. There remained but 500 miles of railway to be built through level country consisting mainly of muskeg, and over permafrost.

A viable port had to be built to handle the transshipping of grain from box cars to cargo vessels on Hudson Bay. Port Nelson was selected, and millions were spent on its development, before being abandoned in favor of Churchill.

One of the major problems in making Hudson Bay part of a viable shipping route from Canada to Britain were the 500 miles



of navigation hazards presented by Hudson Strait, between Hudson Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The Strait was ice-bound usually from November to June. Navigation aids were non-existent. Radio was in its infancy; and radar had not yet been invented.

The author has thoroughly researched, and presented the economics of the case for a railway. Now for the down-to-earth facts leading to the completion of the railway.

The people who are so heavily involved in the surveying and construction of a railway are often hardly mentioned in many histories of Canadian railroads. Ian Bickle doesn't make this mistake, as he emphasizes the hardships of surveying during winter in -50 degrees F weather; and in endless muskeg the rest of the year while black flies gnaw the men's bodies and morale, - Intestinal fortitude such as we seldom think about today were a must from every man and animal involved in the process 24 hours of every day.

The survey was in charge of J.L. Charles, who also took many of the pictures presented in this book. The accompanying aerial photo of the type of terrain through which the railway was built tells much about the difficulties of surveying and construction.

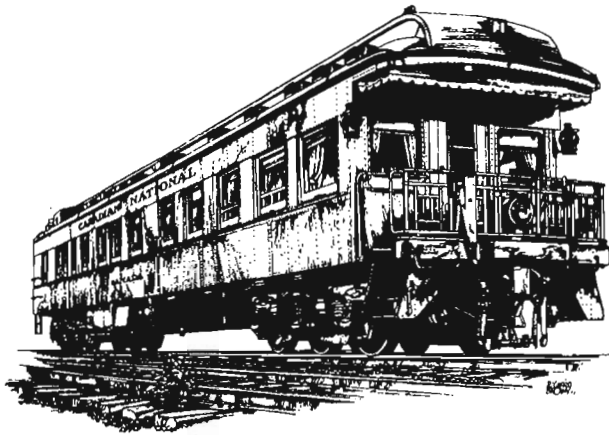
The supply of every item required by the survey crews had to be planned and obtained months before the survey crews assembled; then distributed along the probable line of the survey. Transportation of these supplies of fuel, clothing, food, "housing" of whatever type was practical for the situation, survey equipment - an endless list, was a major problem. In winter, dog teams, horses, snowshoes and toboggans, tractor trains, and walking through snow; In other seasons, canoes, trump lines on men's foreheads while walking, And year around, steam locomotives to the then end of steel. And steam locomotives required crews, fuel and maintenance under difficult conditions for men and machine.

Construction during winter involved the laying of track on top of frozen muskeg and permafrost, while the roadbed was built after the gravel pits thawed out in spring. Backbreaking work by men using wheelbarrows is shown in the photographs. Wages paid were pathetically low.

The railway, and the Port of Churchill were finally completed in 1929.

This book provides very worthwhile reading for enthusiasts of Canadian railway history.

The Business Car



POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT OF VIA SERVICE TO KITCHENER

Via Rail still wants to run a commuter service out of Kitchener, if it can find the equipment to do it feasibly, a company spokesman says. But it's hard to say when that will happen.

"We haven't forgotten, we're still interested, we just haven't got there yet," said Dianne Graham, a spokeswoman for Via's southwestern Ontario and western Canada operations. "There will not be any change for the fall schedule."

Last March, when Via ended a four month-long experiment operating a Danish-built Flexliner train between Kitchener and Toronto, the rail company said it would think about re-introducing a commuter service in the fall.

Kitchener is currently a stop on Via's twice-daily Sarnia-to-Toronto run. The morning train of that run leaves Kitchener shortly after 9 a.m., arriving in Toronto at 10:35 a.m. Trains from Toronto arrive in Kitchener at 9:32 a.m. and 7.01 pm. Flexliner service was more convenient for typical commuters, leaving Kitchener just after 7 a.m. to pull into Toronto at 8:45 a.m. The round-trip fare was \$38 or \$22 booked in advance - the same rates as the regular service. The Flexliner service offered a \$175 package of 10 round-trip tickets.

Equipment, not the market, is the problem, Graham said. For the Kitchener-Toronto run, Via wants a train that blends the efficiency of short-haul commuter trains with the comfort of long haul travelling trains, and the Flexliner didn't meet Via's needs. Fares covered little more than half the operating costs, and the equipment broke down a number of times, forcing commuters to take buses.

"You have to bear with us," Graham said. "Our subsidies (Via receives some support from the federal government) are ever-falling. We cannot afford to operate a service if we cannot, at the very least, break even or make a little money."

Kitchener is listed as the 16th busiest Via stop in Canada. In 1996, 73,635 passengers left or came to Kitchener by train. Graham said Via is also "continuing to look at scenarios" using existing rolling stock. Meanwhile, local politicians are keeping the issue on the rails.

Liberal MPs Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre) and Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener-Waterloo) were among the signatories of a letter asking federal Transportation Minister David Collenette to press Via for better morning service all along the Sarnia-Toronto

line. They sent the letter Nov. 24 and expect to hear back after Christmas, Telegdi said. "What we're looking at is if (Via) can rejig the schedule on the trains so we get the service," he said. The Kitchener-area MPs suggest having the train adopt the timing of the short-lived Flexliner.

Kitchener resident George Bechtel, past president of the lobby group Transport 2000, is encouraged by recent developments, including the letter signed by local MPs. "I'm optimistic the train will be reinstated," he says. "It makes too much sense to not do it [sic!, Ed.]. (A Kitchener-Toronto run) has the greatest potential for growth of any service that VIA operates. But it's really up to the minister of transport."

Source: Kitchener - Waterloo Record, Wednesday, December 10, 1997.

LONDON AND PORT STANLEY RAILWAY ELECTRIC MOTOR CAR PICTURED ON ST. THOMAS, ONTARIO \$2.00 MUNICIPAL TOKEN



The London and Port Stanley Railway Electric Motor Car No. 14 is pictured on the obverse side of the 1997 St. Thomas, Ontario \$2.00 municipal token, issued by On Track of St. Thomas. On Track's objective is: "A Strong Future Linked to Our Heritage and Our Partners Commitment to Making St. Thomas the Railway Capital of Canada."

Car 14 was purchased from the Jewett Car Co. of Newark, Ohio and is 71 feet 7 inches long. It was delivered in 1917 and saw continuous service until the end of passenger service on February 1st, 1957.

"1856/1967" is inscribed on the token above the car. "London & Port Stanley Railway / Value Two Dollars In St. Thomas, Ont. / Expires Dec. 31/97" is around the outer part. "L.& P.S. Electric Motor Car" is inscribed below the car.

An artist's rendering of the former London and Port Stanley Station, located at Talbot Street in St. Thomas is pictured on the reverse side. This station was built to replace an existing wood station located just north, on Kains Street, after electrification of the line. The attractive brick building with red roof tiles was officially opened by Sir Adam Beck on April 23, 1920.

"L.&P.S. Railway / Station - St. Thomas" is inscribed on the token near the bottom. "St. Thomas Ontario / Railway Capital of Canada" is around the outer part of the token.

Paul Corriveau of St. Thomas and Glenn Trenchard of Lawrence Medallie Art of Mississauga, Ont. designed the token. That firm struck 10,000 of these tokens on 33 mm milled edge blanks in the following metallic finishes: nickel bonded steel (NBS) 9,850, gold plated NBS 50, antiqued silver plated NBS (50), antiqued bronze plated NBS 50.

Specimens of the 1997 token are available postpaid as follows: NBS (\$2.75), gold plated NBS (\$10.50), silver plated NBS (\$9.50), and bronze plated NBS (\$8.50), plus GST for Canadians, from Jim Quinn, PO Box 291, Miramichi, NB, E1V 3M4, telephone (506) 622-1914 (days).

Specimens of On Track's first token, dated 1996 and showing a ten wheeler steam locomotive built in St. Thomas in 1900, are available in the same metals and at the same postpaid prices from Jim Quinn.

The London and Port Stanley Railway was the first railway to operate in St. Thomas. This railway began service in September 1856, although 500 people rode the first train from London to Port Stanley on July 8, 1856.

Source: The Canadian Numismatic Journal, November, 1997.

Editor's Note: L&PS car No. 14 is owned by the CRHA and is at the Canadian Railway Museum, along with car No. 10 of the same railway. No. 14, and its sister No. 12, were the largest interurban cars to operate in Canada.

JAPANESE TRAIN HITS 531 KM / HR

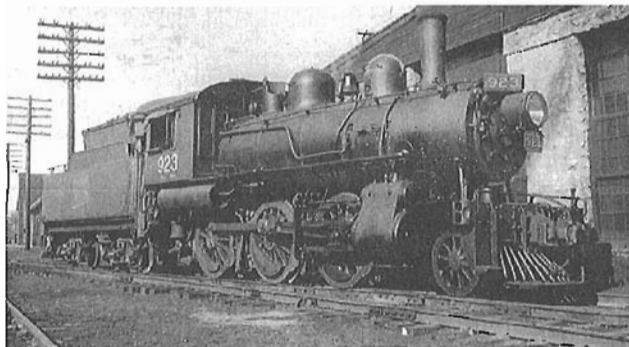
Tokyo - Japanese-train builders claimed a world speed record yesterday [December 12, 1997] when a futuristic prototype hurtled centimetres above a magnetic track at 531 kilometres per hour [330 mph].

The magnetically levitated, or "maglev," train was developed by the Central Japan Railway Co. and the Railway Technical Research Institute, and ran on a special 18.4-kilometre track in Yamanashi Prefecture, west of Tokyo. The train carried seven people during the high-speed run, though it was controlled automatically.

The developers said the run beat the previous record for a manned train: 515 kilometres per hour set by the French TGV in 1991. That record was set using regular iron [sic] tracks that were part of the national rail system.

Source: Montreal Gazette, December 13, 1997.

THE 24TH ANNUAL LINDSAY MODEL RAILWAY SHOW



CNR E-10 No. 923 March 1950 Photo by Ken Baines

Victoria Park Armoury, April 4 & 5, 1998

Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Admission: Adults: \$4.00, Seniors: \$2.00, Students: \$2.00, Children: \$1.00.

Information: George Morgan (705) 887-5892 or Eric Potter (705) 328-3749.

c/o Lindsay & District Model Engineers

P.O. Box 452,

Lindsay, Ont.

K9V 4S5

B.C. ELECTRIC CAR 1231, PROGRESS REPORT



Further to our recent story of the restoration of former British Columbia Electric Railway car No. 1231 (Canadian Rail No. 460, September-October 1997), the restoration is now complete and the car has been moved to Vancouver. The two interior photos were taken on September 16, the view on the flat-bed truck was on October 21, while the photo of the car on the barge, en route to the mainland, was taken on October 22. We thank Mr. William Bailey for taking these photos and sending them to us.

HALIFAX EXPLOSION POST CARD

After the article on the Halifax Explosion appeared in our last issue, a post card turned up showing the trainshed of the North Street station after the explosion. The card was produced by the Novelty Manufacturing and Arts Company Ltd. of Montreal, and likely went on sale late in 1917 or early in 1918. The caption reads: "Halifax railroad station, in which 60 persons were killed by falling roof". In this photo we see the work of clearing up the debris from the collapsed roof, and gondola cars, with the ends open, are being used to carry the wreckage. In the distance is a steam crane used to lift the heavier pieces. The remains of the roof-support beams are still visible, leaning against the side walls. On the right-hand track a baggage car and several passenger cars, showing that service had already been resumed.



VIA'S NEW TIMETABLE DEPARTS FROM TRADITION

In a move to make travelling by train in Canada even more convenient, VIA Rail Canada has totally redesigned the content, presentation and format of its national timetable. The new winter-spring schedules went into effect November 23, 1997.

Since the beginning of passenger train services, public timetables around the world have essentially been a shortened version of the operating timetable. This traditional linear 'read down on the left and up on the right' style of train schedule, covering all points on a train's journey, was at one time widely understood. This however has changed with other modes, e.g. airlines, introducing "simplified" public timetables.

The new timetable offers customers the ease of schedules in a straightforward departure-to-destination format, which has become the accepted industry norm. It also has the traditional route schedules, but these are now 'read down' only.

Also new for VIA customers is a convenient train-by-train guide to classes of service, holiday periods exceptions and on-board amenities such as meals and baggage services. In addition, VIA has improved and expanded its list of connecting bus, train and ferry schedules.

This latest initiative follows on the heels of the launch of VIA Resernet, introduced last February. With its arrival, VIA became the world's first railway and Canada's first transportation company to offer a complete self-reservation service via the Internet. VIA Resernet can be accessed along with full details on routings, fares and schedules at VIA's simple-to-navigate Web site: <http://www.viarail.ca>.

VIA information, reservations and tickets are also available at some 25,000 travel agencies around the world or by calling or visiting your local VIA station.

NEW BOOK ON NEWFOUNDLAND RAILWAY

Clayton D. Cook announces: My new book titled "TALES OF THE RAILS" VOLUME THREE, a special souvenir edition, will be available soon. The book is in an 8 1/2 x 11 inch format soft cover, and contains approximately 130 pages of outstanding historic photographs from 1881 up to 1988, of land and sea operations of the Newfoundland Railway, which was abandoned on September 30th, 1988.

To obtain a copy of this book, which is in a limited supply, please send cheque or money order for \$19.95 plus \$3.50 for shipping charges (\$5.20 shipping charge to the U.S.A.) to the address below:

CLAYTON D. COOK PUBLISHING
P.O. Box 88 Lethbridge, NF Canada A0C 1V0
Phone: (709) 467-2371 or (709) 368-4680

CRHA CONVENTION

All members are urged to attend the annual convention of the CRHA which will be held in Winnipeg on the Victoria Day weekend. Full particulars will be sent with CRHA Communications. Reserve the date now!

THE ICE STORM OF '98

This Canadian Rail is late because of the effects of the disastrous ice storm which struck Quebec and eastern Ontario during the week of January 4, 1998. Estimates of damage extend to a billion dollars or more, and millions of people had no electric power in their houses. Train service was greatly curtailed, and often cancelled. For a time the Halifax-bound "Ocean" was rerouted via Hervey Junction! In some cases, locomotives were moved by road and used as generators to provide electric power to hard-hit areas. It is hoped to have a feature article on the railways and the ice storm of 1998 in a future issue of Canadian Rail.

BACK COVER, TOP: *The first trainload of wheat arriving at Churchill on August 26, 1931. The wheat was from the government elevator at Saskatoon. CNR locomotive 2163 was, appropriately enough, former Canadian Northern 2-8-0 No. 2163, built by Kingston (builder's number 1156) in 1913. Although it was scrapped in 1961, the next locomotive in the series, No. 2164, has been saved and, relettered "T&NO 137", is now at Cochrane, Ontario. PA-88582.*

BACK COVER, BOTTOM: *Sixty-four years later, the weekly mixed train from Wabowden arrives at Churchill, 3 1/2 hours late, at about 9:00 P.M. on July 24, 1995. That day the train had more than fifty cars as it was carrying supplies to be shipped from Churchill to Rankine Inlet. The 1919 vintage combine is the oldest car on the VIA roster. Despite the change of ownership of the line, this service still runs. Photo by Fred Angus.*

Canadian Rail

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