

CANADIAN RAILROAD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED.

NEWS REPORT #50

NOVEMBER 1954

Montreal, Canada.

NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Association will be held in the Transportation Building, 159 Craig Street West, Montreal, at 8:00 PM on Wednesday, November 10th.

The Entertainment Committee Chairman, Mr. Worthen, would like to invite each member who takes 35-mm. colour slides to contact him by telephone at WE.4358 with the object in mind that each such member might assemble a series of twenty-five slides on some particular aspect of transportation. Several of these series have been assembled and will be shown at the next meeting, and others will be shown from time to time. Some of the members have expressed the feeling that picture displays should cover some particular subject or subjects and it is with this object in mind that the members are invited to prepare slide programmes.

COMING BULLETINS

October 25th, 1854 was a day fore-ordained to be significant in the history of the world. At that time, the Crimean War was running its course in Europe, and on that day, the decisive battle of Balaclava took place, the scene of one of the most heroic, albeit suicidal military skirmishes in recent times -- who has not heard of the "Charge of the Light Brigade"? On that day, overshadowed by exploits of the glorious "six hundred", there occurred an event of somewhat less significance in comparison, yet of interest to the student of Canadian rail transportation, for within a few hours after the Light Brigade charged at Balaclava, the locomotive "Ottawa" pulled the first train over the Montreal & Bytown Railway, better known by its later designation -- Carillon & Grenville Railway.

The subject of the Carillon & Grenville, "Canada's Last Broad Gauge" has been treated by Mr. Robert R. Brown in another of his excellent histories, which will appear, in commemoration of the centenary of the opening of the line, as our Bulletin No.18.

Bulletin No. 19, to appear early in 1955, will be a comprehensive all-time roster of all business, special and official cars of the Canadian Pacific Railway, from 1881 to date, which has been assembled by the Editor, Mr. O.S.A. Lavallee. The Canadian Pacific has owned some one hundred and twenty five official cars since its inception, and many of the earlier ones are still in use with the more modern cars. A number of photographs and plans will be included.

Also scheduled for publication next year will be another electric railway bulletin, probably treating the Montreal Park & Island Railway, and a bulletin on Canadian self-propelled steam, gas and diesel cars, both illustrated with plans and photographs.

The fourth
in a series on the
CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY
by Anthony Clegg.

CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY

Winnipeg, Manitoba,
December 17, 1904.

This, I presume, will be my last letter from the West. Early in the new year we shall be leaving for the new Canadian Northern Headquarters in Toronto. The railway offices at King & Toronto Streets are now being enlarged, and I shall soon be once again with Mr. Hanna, who was transferred to the East two years ago. He was promoted to Third Vice-President, an appointment thoroughly deserved by one who worked so hard during the early years of the System. You would think we had been operating for the last half century to hear me talk, -- but I feel that we are now out of the pioneer category and are firmly established as one of the great railroads of the continent.

During the past two years our system has grown considerably, not only in mileage but also in the scope of its operations. Since acquiring the lines of the Great Northern Railway of Canada, the Chateauguy and Northern Railway, and the Central Railway, last year, our activities have become really widespread. The Central Ry. as in New Scotia and together with the Caledonia Branch gives us ninetyseven miles in the Atlantic Coast Province. The Great Northern Railway of Canada and the Chateauguy and Northern are in Quebec, and extend from Hawkesbury on the Ottawa River to Riviere a Pierre, north of Quebec City, as well as from Montreal to Joliette and a number of smaller branch lines. These lines, which were built as colonization roads, have been in poor financial condition for some years, and the story goes that many a time the train for the north has not been able to leave Quebec until the passenger receipts had paid for the fuel bill. That part of our System in Quebec Province will be known as the Canadian Northern Quebec Railway. We shall be in closer touch with the operation of these acquisitions from our central office in Toronto.

The Western picture continues to take shape. Our Prairie mileage of 1588.5 miles extends as far as Melfort and Kamsack, and includes the isolated segment of the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Ry. -- 7.8 miles in length. This line (sometimes facetiously called the Edmonton, Yukon and Aurora Borealis) holds a tremendous area by charter but has not progressed much past the City Limits of the Alberta Capital. It runs from the Village of Strathcona down into the valley of the North Saskatchewan, and across the river to the small frame station building at the foot of Ross's Grade. Next summer the line will be continued along the river bank, and up to the central part of the City. Like our first line in the East, it is a sort of one-man affair, with a Mr. Entwistle filling the role of Locomotive Engineer as well as general mechanic and superintendent.

The projection for our line to connect Edmonton with the Manitoba section has now been settled. Although the original plans were for it to go through Prince Albert, Mr. MacLeod's opinion that it should follow the original C.P. Ry. projection from Grandview has held, and construction of that line is now proceeding westward from Kamsack. This is the largest single extension under construction at the present but numerous other lines of not inconsequential length and importance also are being pushed to completion. We shall go over the 2000 mile mark before the end of next summer.

Now, of course, don't think that all this mileage is first class railway --- in fact, many of the branch lines are far from it! But we have adopted the policy of constructing our track quickly and economically to serve the country as soon as possible, and then gradually improve the lines as traffic builds up.

Just a few months ago we were looking over one of the branches, which is still officially "under construction" although mixed trains are being operated. The weather was damp, and the roadbed soft, as we rattled along at a speed of something like fifteen miles per hour. All of a sudden, one of the box cars of lumber in the middle of the train settled too far into the unballasted roadbed, and off the track she went. Luckily, the rest of the train stayed on the rails, but no amount of pushing or pulling would budge the derailed car, a corner of which was afoul of the line. Our resourceful train crew were not that easily stopped, however, and they, together with a small construction gang and those passengers who were able, set to work and moved the track a foot further south. When we were finished, the Canadian Northern rails were lined up with one more gentle curve in them -- the train was coupled together -- and the engine again moved cautiously forward. Another example of the ingenuity that characterizes the men who operate the trains on our pioneer lines. On some of the well-established sections, however, I believe a growing tendency can be detected to do no more than the rules require. Hope the trend does not go too far!

The following statistics that we have assembled may be of interest -- showing as they do the tremendous growth of the System during the past year or so.

<u>CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY</u>	<u>July 1, 1902 to June 30, 1903</u>	<u>July 1, 1903 to June 30, 1904</u>
Miles of railway operated	1276	1349
Number of locomotives	73	98
Number of passenger train cars	36 ★	55 ★
Passengers carried	281,801	358,133
Passenger train miles	452,891	645,253
Tons of freight carried	901,608	1,109,585
Freight train miles	990,174	1,052,733
Earnings (thousands of \$)	2,449	3,243

Types of passenger train cars

First class coaches	11	15
Second class coaches	11	17
Combination cars	4	4
Baggage and Express cars	6	9
Dining coaches	1	2
Business cars	3	3
Sleeping cars	-	3
Tourist cars	-	2

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NOTES
AND
NEWS

On October 5th, the first of thirty eight new passenger road diesels went into service on the Canadian National's Ocean Limited between Montreal and Halifax. Thirteen A units and twelve B units are being built at London by General Motors Diesel Limited, and six A units and six B units by the Canadian Locomotive Company at Kingston. GMDL locomotives are rated at 1750 HP, while the Kingston units are 1600 HP. There are geared for 90 mph.

Canadian National has ordered two further RDC cars from the Budd Company of Philadelphia, to operate in service between Quebec and Chicoutimi in the Lake Saint John area.

Railway services in the Toronto area were seriously affected in the aftermath of a hurricane which caused a considerable death and property damage toll on Friday, October 15th. Most serious damage was caused by flash flooding of rivers and streams in the afflicted districts. Canadian National Railways suffered 143 recorded washouts on eighteen subdivisions. Canadian Pacific suffered comparable damage. Both railways cancelled many trains while others were rerouted. Traffic between Toronto and Western Canada was diverted by both systems, that on the CNR via Napanee and Ottawa, while CPR trains were routed through North Bay, Carleton Place and Smiths Falls.

A recent press announcement by a Vice President of the Union Pacific RR discloses that that railroad has been considering a possible extension for some time. The extension would extend from Seattle to Seward, Alaska -- via British Columbia.

Recent inauguration of the automobile "ferry" service by the Newfoundland District of the Canadian National Railways saw a train of seventeen flat cars operate between Glareville and Gander. On the return journey, the accomodation was booked to capacity. There is no trans-island highway in Newfoundland; the rail service bridges the gap in the road systems between the eastern and western sections of the island.

PACIFIC GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY

During October, the first sod was turned in building of the PGE Vancouver-Squamish link, in the section extending $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Squamish, along Howe Sound. All contracts have been called for the southern route, except that for a viaduct at Britannia Beach and ten trestles in North Vancouver. Laying of the first track will start in December or January on the Vancouver-Britannia section, while rail on the Squamish end will be laid in the spring. Preparations are going forward for the boring of a 1,600-foot tunnel north of Fury Creek.

At the same time, the railway is preparing to construct further into the northern parts of the Province, beyond Prince George, and it is said that a start will be made in 1955 by laying at least 70 miles of track northward from the Prince George terminus, which was reached two years ago.

Provincial Railway Minister Ralph Chetwynd has made a bet that the first train out of Horseshoe Bay for the full run from West Vancouver to Prince George will leave at 4:15 PM on July 11th, 1956.

Since the line was extended from Quesnel to Prince George two years ago, traffic volume has increased to the point where the railway, once derisively known as the "Province's Greatest Expense" is now showing an operating profit.

MARINE NEWS

Canadian National Railways in October announced the sale of the floating drydock section of the Prince Rupert shipyard to the Puget Sound Bridge & Dredging Company, of Seattle.

It was reported in October that the Canadian National Railways' new diesel-powered ferry, the WILLIAM CARSON, being prepared for service between Fort-aux-Basques and North Sydney, NS developed engine trouble in a trial run up the Saguenay River; one of the two 5000 horsepower engines had failed.

The new Yarmouth - Bar Harbor ferry, to be put into operation next year at a cost of some four million dollars, will perpetuate the name of Nova Scotia's most famous fishing schooners. On November 9, when the vessel is christened by Mme. St. Laurent, wife of the Prime Minister, at Lauzon, Que., it will be given the name BLUENOSE. It is scheduled to go into operation on or about May 15th.

The recent opening, on September 26th, 1954, of the new bridge between Valleyfield, Que. and Coteau, brought to an end the ferry service connecting those points, on which the little steamboat BEAUHARNOIS has operated for the past twenty eight years. This little vessel is the last survivor of the great fleet of market boats which once served the towns along the banks of the Saint Lawrence River and its tributaries; it was the last paddle-wheel steamer on the Saint Lawrence, probably the last one in Canada, though several sternwheelers remain in service in the West. Its chief claim to fame however, rests on the fact that it has been plying the waters of the Richelieu and Saint Lawrence Rivers for ONE HUNDRED AND NINE years, a record that no other vessel can match. Its long life was due chiefly to the fact that the hull is constructed of the very best quality of wrought iron, fabricated in Scotland and put together at Sorel. It was the second iron steamboat in Canada. Although valued recently at \$85,000.00, it was sold a few weeks ago for the paltry sum of \$2,000.00 and it is going to be converted into a floating restaurant and dance hall. What an ignominious end!

(a brief history of the BEAUHARNOIS appeared in the News Report issue of May 1952.)

LAST M.T.C. TRAILING UNIT
RETIRED FROM SERVICE.

On Saturday, October 30th, 1954, several members met at the Montreal Transportation Commission St. Denis carhouse, where they boarded a two car "train" of equipment, consisting of motor car #1555 and trailer #1664. The route extended from the carhouse to the wye in Montreal Nord, with many photograph stops en route. Returning, the cars were taken to Youville shop, where No. 1664 was uncoupled and placed on the shop lead, preparatory to conversion as a one-man motor car. It had been built in 1917 by J.G. Brill Company, and the trip marked the end of the era of two-car trolley "trains" in Montreal.

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