

## Just A. Ferronut's Railway Archaeology "Art Clowes"

October 1994

The season is showing as the number of pumpkins on the rural doorsteps and the newly ploughed dark brown fields with their multitude of seagulls become increasingly common. I won't comment on what will follow, but again the multi-coloured trees does make it pleasant to wander the countryside this time of the year.

After my trip to the east that I finished describing about last month, I have been doing a little more travelling around the Montréal area of Québec.

### **Contrecoeur, Québec**

One show that I didn't hear about until a few days before it closed was an all-summer exhibit at the Maison Lenoblet du Plessis in Contrecoeur. Contrecoeur is a small historic community on the south shore of the Saint Lawrence River about half-way between Montreal and Sorel. The Maison Lenoblet du Plessis was the home of a early notary of the area. It even has the remains of a tunnel that was originally constructed for access to the nearby St. Lawrence in the event of a Indian attack. So amid the setting of a nineteenth household, the Société québécoise d'histoire ferroviaire set up their display of photographs and memorabilia from railways of the area, mainly the Quebec, Montreal and Southern Railway.

The Quebec, Montreal and Southern Railway was incorporated in 1906 and was the final pre-Canadian National Railway company that combined the earlier efforts of The East Richelieu Valley Railway, The Great Eastern Railway, The Montreal and Sorel Railway, The Quebec Southern Railway, South Shore Railway and the United Counties Railway.

The Quebec, Montreal and Southern Railway lines extended from near the American border northward along the Richelieu River valley to Sorel, with a rail line along the south shore of the St. Lawrence River that eventually extended from St. Lambert (opposite Montréal) northeast to Fortierville (about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way from Montréal to Québec) where it connected with the Lotbinière and Mégantic Railway.

Like many Québec railways, the Quebec, Montreal and Southern Railway and its constituent companies had a history of varied alliances including being controlled by the Delaware and Hudson Railway. The D. & H., were going to use the Q.M. & S.R. as part of a third provincial railway system. Of course this didn't happen and in 1929 the Q.M. & S.R. became part of the Canadian National Railways.

The Société québécoise d'histoire ferroviaire's display included a sizeable number of working documents and track configurations of the Q.M. & S.R. including connections with other railways. In addition photographs of many the area's stations taken at various times from 1900 to 1994 adorned the walls and displays. This exhibit was rounded out by numerous small artefacts from earlier days of railway operation including lanterns, order hoops, and other items seen around stations.

Most of the photographs and artefacts of this display were from the collection of G. A. Pelletier, one of the founders of the Société québécoise d'histoire ferroviaire.

One extra point about Contrecoeur relates to its station. I wrote about this station in the November 1993 Column. At that time, I mentioned that the station was still in its original site and was being used as a youth centre. My visit in late August

1994 revealed that this station is gone! At this point, I have not been able to determine what has happened to it. Was it relocated or has it been destroyed. Hopefully, we can determine and report on its fate.

### **Trois-Rivières Show**

Another late summer model show was the "Expo Trains Miniatures 94" held in Trois-Rivières, Qu'ebec. This show held at the Université du Québec was an interesting mid-size show. Not much startling, but well done with a mix of operating models in several scales along with workshops. The needs of the modellers were supplied by a reasonable number of hobby shop sales booths as well as a couple with railway collectibles and photographs.

### **Shawinigan and Garneau**

After the Trois-Rivières Show, we drove north to Shawinigan and then over to Garneau before heading back to Montreal.

At Shawigan, both the CN and CP stations are still in existence. These stations are barely a good block apart and both have been designated as Federal Heritage Stations. CP is still using portions of its single storey red brick station for some of their staff. The CN station, also single storey, but of yellow brick, has one part used by VIA Rail. A substantial western portion, is used by the CN Pensioners' Association. Both buildings are in good condition.

Back in July (1994), I did an article covering the generalities of the rail lines along the north shore of the St. Lawrence between Montréal and Québec City. I had mentioned that I would try to fill in more details of the various urban areas. Well, I am beginning to understand the existing CP and CN main lines through Shawinigan. However, I am still not certain of all of the details of the trackage of the surrounding area. There has been relocations and abandonments, and as well there was the Shawinigan Falls Terminal Railway.

As we mentioned in July, the CP line was constructed by the St. Maurice Valley Railway and extends north from CP's line in Trois-Rivières along the west bank of the St. Maurice River for 21.7 miles to Shawinigan and a further 6.2 miles northeast to Grand Mere. CN's original line was constructed by the Great Northern Railway of Canada and on closer examination appears to have skirted north of Shawinigan with a 3.8 mile spur (Shawinigan Subdivision) into Shawinigan from Aldred Junction. Aldred Junction was located 3.6 miles west of Grand Mere. The Great Northern Railway of Canada and two other companies amalgamated in July, 1906 to become the Canadian Northern Quebec Railway. The Canadian Northern 1918 timetable indicates that the south 1.8 miles of the Shawinigan Subdivision was electrified for use by the Shawinigan Falls Terminal Railway.

Without getting into all of the legal niceties of the inclusion of the Canadian Northern into Canadian National and the impact of the Canadian National – Canadian Pacific Act of 1933 on this area, lets leave it for now that Canadian National had enough control in the 1920's to construct a new 7.9 mile line through Shawinigan that permitted the abandonment of 7.5 miles of the old northern alignment along with 3.59 miles of the 3.8 mile Aldred – Shawinigan line. This relocated line crossed the

CP line between Shawinigan and Grand Mere three times. This work was completed in November of 1929.

From Shawinigan we drove the 8.9 miles east CN's Garneau yard. Garneau, the site of a medium sized yard was, as noted in the July Column, the former junction with CN's St-Stanislas Subdivision. Again things have changes in the last few months. The site of VIA's shelter last spring has been regraded and now in the process of receiving several new tracks. These tracks appear long enough to be receiving and departure tracks. One oddity is the fencing that was under construction around a portion of the west end of these tracks. With the rumours floating that CN's Lac St-Jean Subdivision is a prime candidate for sale as a short line, one must wonder if these new tracks may be for future interchange purposes.

Following the home-made VIA Station signs led us the yard office at the east end of the yard, where the passenger facilities are presently located in some unused office space.

#### **Small World**

In last month's column I mentioned my visit with Keith Pratt on Prince Edward Island and his showing of a video tape of the two-foot gauge railways in New England and in particular a 1939 trip on Bridgton & Harrison Railroad. While at the library recently looking for some material on the Victoria Bridge, what I find but a 1940 article by Keith Pratt on his 1939 trip. Then, call it what you want, but a couple of weeks ago at our regular luncheon both Ron Ritchie and Doug Brown mentioned that they were at the same 1939 gathering on the Bridgton & Harrison Railroad in Maine. Small world – EH!

#### **Belleville Christmas Card**

I picked up a copy of Belleville *Intelligencer* the other day. While skimming through it, what do I spot but sketch of CN 6218 at speed. The caption reads that this pen and ink sketch adorned the City of Belleville's 1972 Christmas Card to commemorate the retirement of CN 6218 on July 4, 1971 as the last operating steam engine in Belleville. The card listed the Mayor and the 10 Alderpeople who just circled their name to indicate whom the card came from.

#### **Book on Montreal Island Railway Stations**

You may recall back in July 1993, I mentioned that Mike LeDuc, one of our Montreal luncheon crowd was working on a book about stations that have existed along the rail lines of the companies that now form Canadian National Railway on Montreal Island. Mike, an avid historian of Québec railway scene, has finished his book and has had it published. This soft-covered book is aimed mainly at the historian interested in understanding the relationship of and technical information on the 124 railway stations and station names that have existed at 89 different locations along the CN family of lines on Montreal Island.

The book, titled *Montreal Island Railway Stations - CN and Constituent Companies* is not a coffee table book, but does have a several photos and a number of plates of track layouts, etc. Mike has provided an interesting layman's introduction that briefly outlines the history of Montreal and its railways, followed by a few pages that provides a good basic insight into how the railway station fits into a railway's operation. Then it is into the hard facts of the stations. This portion of the book has been subdivided into six rail lines such as "Montreal East To Pointe aux Trembles", "Mount Royal Tunnel Line", etc., with the stations grouped as they existed along these routes.

The book closes with a series of tables that provides a comparison of the changing mileages of the stations over the years. This section also has an alphabetical list of the stations and a good Bibliography for those who may want to do some extra digging.

From my review, I would have to recommend *Montreal Island Railway Stations - CN and Constituent Companies* to anyone interested in the history of rail lines and their station on Montréal Island. To some there may be a couple of extra reasons for purchasing a copy of this book. First, Mike and his associates are serious discussing a companion book to cover the CP family of stations on Montréal Island, the second book is expected to follow the format of the first and be a companion volume. Secondly, Mike published this CN Station book himself, so it was a limited press run of 500 copies. So, need I say more to the serious collector of Canadian Railway books.

So, should you be interested, copies of *Montreal Island Railway Stations - CN and Constituent Companies*. By Michael Leduc can be ordered directly from him for \$15.50 per copy, shipping and handling included. American orders are at the same price but in US dollars. The address is Michael Leduc, 57 Roosevelt Drive, Dollard des Ormeaux, Québec, Canada H9G 1J1

#### **Actinolite, Ontario**

The Information Network of August 1994's *Rail & Transit* carried a question from Julien Bernard about the former 8½ mile rail line between Madoc (Bridgewater Junction) and Bridgewater (Actinolite) in Ontario about 40 kilometres (25 miles) north of the Belleville/Trenton area. We had nattered about this trackage back in the July 1990 column.

Julian was asking who built it and why.

This 8½ miles was built or at least started by the Toronto and Ottawa Railway Company that was incorporated March 2, 1877. The Toronto and Ottawa was the follow-up company to an earlier one with very ambitious plans. That earlier company was called The Huron and Quebec Railway Company and was incorporated March 24, 1874. The Huron and Quebec had, as its names imply, planned to construct a rail line from Goderich, Ontario (yes, the one on Lake Huron) through Huron, Perth, Wellington, Simcoe, York, Ontario, Victoria, Durham & Peterborough Counties to connect with the Ontario & Quebec Railway. The Huron and Quebec also had authority to construct branches to Sarnia, Fergus, Elora, Guelph, Toronto, etc.

The Ontario & Quebec Railway was incorporated in 1871, three years earlier than the Huron and Quebec. The Ontario & Quebec was authorized to construct by way of Madoc (in Hastings County) and Peterborough in Peterborough County). So the Madoc, Bridgewater (Actinolite) area is not that far east of the Peterborough County line and the planned area of connection with the Ontario and Quebec. The mining activities in the Madoc and Actinolite areas were no doubt an extra plum for the railways. However, since the Huron and Quebec didn't get out of the starting gate, the company was re-organized, renamed and re-incorporated as the Toronto and Ottawa Railway Company in 1877. This new company had reduced its horizons to the point where it was authorized to construct a rail line between the cities in its name via Peterborough.

The Toronto and Ottawa Railway barely broke ground in their effort to connect these two Ontario cities. They were responsible for building only 29.64 miles of railway. Not all of

this 29.64 miles was completed before being taken over by the Midland Railway of Canada in 1882. Besides the 8.75 miles from Bridgewater (Actinolite) to Bridgewater Junction (Madoc), the T&O started the 6.38 miles between Blackwater Junction and Manilla Junction and the 14.51 miles between Peterborough and Omemmee Junction.

Back in July 1990 with the help of Ray Corley and the few records I had we concluded and wrote that there is doubt as whether the east end of this T&O line was ever completed and operated. Just east of where the later Bay of Quinte line from Yarker, via Tweed and Bridgewater to Bannockburn crossed the T&O on the west bank of the Skootamatta River, there was a smelter. While Ray Corley noted and considered a pair of bridge abutments just north of the Highway #7 bridge over the Skootamatta River were probably part of the T&O, he could find no confirmation as to whether the T&O ever got east this smelter at the Skootamatta River.

The Right-of-way from Madoc (Bridgewater Junction) eastward for about 4½ miles is south of Highway #7 and parts are occupied by a pole line and a small part is used for a roadway. From the 4½ mile mark east to about the old BofQ line is now occupied by Highway #7.

The records indicate that this 82 mile line from the west end of Actinolite to Madoc was opened on July 1, 1882. However, as mentioned above, there is a question as to whether the east end into Actinolite was actually put into operation. The Toronto and Ottawa line between Actinolite and Madoc was only operated for 11 or 12 years, operations having ceased by 1894. But a June 30, 1897, railway inventory implies that the line was still in place but not operated.

Since the T&O was abandoned somewhere between 1894 and 1897, there could not have been any connection to the Bay of Quinte Railway at Actinolite, since the Bay of Quinte Railway's line through this village did not open until December 12, 1903, nine years after the abandonment of the T&O. The Bay of Quinte line through Actinolite lasted until July 29, 1935.

Bridgewater Junction, in Madoc was about ½ mile south of the old Madoc station on the Belleville and North Hastings Railway's line that extended from Madoc Junction through Madoc to Eldorado and was opened in 1878. This line, from the north end of Madoc to Eldorado, was abandoned in February 1893, but the rails were not removed until November 1913. The Bridgewater Junction switch was south of Seymour Street in Madoc with the line north of that street as it extended eastward. Signs of this line existed in 1990 and if my memory serves me correctly the road bed did extend through a ball park or school ground.

#### **CN Family Day - Taschereau Yard, Montréal**

Thanksgiving Day was also the date picked for CN's 1994 Family Days. This is the day that the bosses can be truly accused of feeding their staff baloney (in the form of hot dogs)! The weather was mostly sunny, but a bit cool as many of CN's staff took advantage to see numerous aspects of the Railway that they may not see during their normal work.

Shuttle passenger trains from Central Station were supplied for those who wanted a train ride to and from Taschereau Yard. I understand there were three train sets used. CN 7017 & 7919 was the power on one train. The coaches were a mix of heavy weight cars, mostly in blue and yellow although a couple of white and blacks were included. Shuttle buses moved

people around the yard. Considerable work had been undertaken not only to mount the various displays, but also to arrange games, and activities for the kids. And yes, really the various senior officers of the Company manned a number of booths serving, hot dogs, drinks, etc., to both the kids and the not so young kids.

Grand Trunk Western, Mogul 713 was brought up from Delson and placed nose to nose with CN 2440. GTW 713 was equipped with a steam line to provide some fake smoke, and both engines were set up for walk through inspections. A pair of freight units (9500s) were running a shuttle back and forth on the tracks south of the diesel shops to provide cab rides to the interested.

Many of the Railway departments had displays highlighting their contribution to today's Railway. The Track and Work Equipment people had an extensive display of hi-rail vehicles, including electronic track testing equipment, hi-rail cranes, prefab track panels, etc. Perhaps a rarity today, to show how things are changing was a caboose, set up for a walk through. The safety groups were represented with safety displays by CN Police and Emergency Response Units. Another car set up for a walk through that drew many comments was a dining service car of the type still used at derailments or other activities requiring a supply of many meals for the workers.

The influx of electronic and mechanized equipment that was on display provided an ample chance to see how railroading has changed over the last fifty or sixty years. This type of event proves that all on the railways is not doom and gloom as many would like us to believe. See you next month.