

Just A. Ferronut's *September 1995*

## Railway Archaeology

Art Clowes

Well! It looks like our clock is a little out of sync with nature's. It a little hard to convince anyone that this is September, when we have had our first snow and most of the fall railway shows have been held. I guess this is one of the things that happen in our modern society, where business wants to work on a 30 hour day, but they have not changed the clocks or calendars yet.

As noted elsewhere, this issue celebrates 50 years of the Upper Canada Railway Society's publication of a formal newsletter. Prior to this, your Society had published a number of news sheets, starting with its first, in October 1941, that followed the Society's first meeting on October 17, 1941. While the main theme of this issue is a look at many of the changes over this fifty years, to me, that is really railway archaeology, so I will attempt to add a few more tidbits.

While September, 1945 was an important date for the Upper Canada Railway Society, other important rail and transit events had also picked September as revealed in the following list from the September, 1927 issue of *Canadian Railway and Marine World*:

The Canada Atlantic Railway, including bridge over St. Lawrence River at Coteau, Québec, transferred to Grand Trunk Railway on September 1, 1905.

On the 7<sup>th</sup>, 1815, the steamboat Frontenac, the first on the British side of Lake Ontario, launched at Ernestown, Upper Canada.

Toronto's first street railway began operation on September 11, 1861.

On this date, a few years earlier, in 1833, the steamship Royal William, built at Québec, QC, reached Gravesend, England, having left Pictou, Nova Scotia, August, 18. She was the first ship to cross the Atlantic under her own steam.

September 11<sup>th</sup>, must of been a well liked date, for it was on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1904 that bandits stole a large amount of money from a Canadian Pacific Railway express train at Mission, BC. Some of the robbers were captured and convicted, and several years later part of the money was recovered.

And before we leave the 11<sup>th</sup>, it was on this date in 1916 that the centre span of Quebec Bridge fell while being hoisted.

At least a couple of first sods were turned during September. On the 12<sup>th</sup>, in 1905, Sir Wilfred Laurier turned first sod of Grand Trunk Pacific Railway at Fort William, Ontario. In 1853, on the 14<sup>th</sup>, the first sod turned for the European and North American Railway to connect Saint John and Moncton, New Brunswick.

Still in the east, it was on September 29, 1879, that the Yarmouth and Annapolis Railway between Yarmouth and Digby, Nova Scotia, latter a part of Dominion Atlantic Railway, was opened for rail traffic.

The article finished with the statement that a Toronto newspaper of September 30, 1856 reported:— "Freight is being shipped over the Grand Trunk Railway, from Toronto to Oshawa, Ontario."

### The Homefront

Here in Montréal, while the modifications at Central Station, in the area to the north of the main concourse continues, those that impact the Deux-Montagnes commuter service are starting to show. The stairway at the very north end of the commuter platforms, about under the south side of René-Lévesque (Dorchester) Boulevard, like stairway 7 & 8 in the main station concourse was closed after rail service was suspended last spring. The Deux-Montagnes commuter traffic is now using the two platforms served by tracks Nos. 9, 10, 11 & 12. To help with the flow of commuters exiting the platforms, new stairways have been constructed farther south on the platform. These stairways exit on the north side of de La Gauchetière east of CN's Headquarters's building. The renovations north of the main station concourse have reached the point where much of the construction hoarding has been removed. This reveals two other set of exit stairs from the commuter platforms. These stairways are just slightly north of the main concourse. I will now wait until the new shops, etc., in the station area are finished before giving a further update on that work.

### More Eastern Stories

While I mentioned parts of my summer trip east and visit with the Pratt's, on Prince Edward Island, in last month's column, I am going to bore you with a few more details this month. While I came back with what I thought was a fairly finite list of stories I wanted to develop, other people seem to have other ideas. The Pratts' have forwarded extra material including an audio tape done with their folk-singer friend, John Cousins. In addition to a number of extra stories, this tape has Mr. Cousins singing the song that Keith Pratt had written concerning the 1932 P.E.I. train wreck, that I mentioned last month. Mr. Cousins did a second song about local politics. It seems one party had lost and election, but not wanting to loss the money from doing some bridge repairs, went out in the middle of the night and did the work before the government changed. Sounds very much like Maritime politics of a few decades ago.

Another eastern project has come in from our member Peter Shergold of Guelph, ON. He came across a station-like building in Glassville, NB, and was wondering if this could be a relocated station. So, a project for the next visit east, and we will keep you posted.

A couple of other letters have arrived reminding me of the number of rail lines in eastern Quebec that I haven't written about yet.

### Cabeese on the Saint John & Quebec Railway

This summer, as I often do, I took the east side of the St. John River to travel from Woodstock, NB to Fredericton. You can image my surprise, when about 20 miles south of Woodstock, I spotted a pair of CN cabooses on the west bank of the river. I drove a few more miles to Nackawic, where I decided to stop at a grocery store for a cold drink. Surprise number two of the morning, who's there, but the store owner, a chap, Ronnie Faulkner, that I went to school with. I knew Ronnie was a rail fan, but hadn't seen him in years, so we had many things to discuss. One question of course was about the cabooses I had seen. Ronnie then told me that he also has one down river at his

place. I had to tease him about owning a CN van, since his father was a life-long C.P.R. employee in Woodstock.

Ron defended himself, by telling me that he collected mostly CP items, but ended up with the CN cabooses, mainly because he got an all inclusive deal from CN. He went on to admit that he was pleased that he chose a CN caboose, because the windows are bigger and the corner windows make for a great view across the water at his place.

We talked briefly about these cabooses, and I mentioned that all three must be very close to the alignment of CN's old Centreville Subdivision. Ronnie told me that the two cabooses upriver, owned by Lanslo Owen-Fekete, an employee of the pulp and paper mill in Nackawic, are located on the old road bed of the Saint John & Quebec.

The Saint John and Quebec Railway was incorporated with grand ideas as its name implies. In its earlier days, some believed that the Canadian Northern would extend its system eastward providing a connection into Quebec. As that fizzled, pressure was applied for a federal government take over and an extension to connect with the National Transcontinental Railway at Grand Falls, NB. In reality, the railway constructed less than 160 miles. The 89 miles from Fredericton along the west bank of the St. John river to Woodstock and then towards the American border at Centreville, NB, was opened January 1, 1915. Lack of money kept the railway from even reaching its starting point in Saint John. In 1920 it connected with the C.P.R. at Westfield Beach, and used their line for the last 14 miles into Saint John. In 1929, the C.N.R. purchased this line from Westfield Beach to Centreville and operated it as their Centreville Subdivision.

In the early 1960s a new hydro-electric power dam was constructed on the St. John river 14 miles upstream of Fredericton. This resulted in CN abandoning its Centreville Subdivision between Fredericton and Woodstock. CN continued to serve the north end of this line until the early 1980s by operating over the CPR 'Gibson' line from Fredericton to Woodstock.

After discussing the location of Ronnie's van, we agreed the old roadbed in that area was on the lower interval land that was flooded and that his van would be a hundred feet or so from the old railway alignment.

Of course it is the lake that resulted from this hydro project that makes it a great location for these cabooses.

Ronnie told me that the three cabooses were purchased in October 1994 through CANAC International Incorporated, a division of CN. The vans came from Edmonton, Alberta, and all arrangements for the move, etc., were handled by CANAC. They came in by rail to Devon, NB, (across the river from Fredericton), and then moved by flatbed to their present locations. Ronnie's, CN 79423, now lettered RONX, was moved early in December 1994. This van is presently located about 4 miles north of former CN Long Creek, (mile 102.5).

I later visited Ron's caboose. It was in the final stages of renovation. The hardwood floors, clear lacquered cabinets and roll out beds, etc., would I am certain make its former railway tenants slightly envious.

A couple of weeks after I get home, I read that Ron as a good will gesture for the area's CPR pensioners reunion had put as a prize, a dinner in his caboose with him and Mrs. Faulkner, along with a night's stay in the caboose.

Mr. Owen-Fekete's cabooses, CN 79750 and 79532, now lettered LOFX, were delivered about two weeks after Ronnie's

or about the middle of December, 1994. These vans would be located very near the old CN Temple station that was at mile 130.7 Centreville Subdivision.

The Railway may have abandoned the rail line, but the equipment came back!

#### **A Cape Breton Puzzle**

I came across an article in a 1929 newspaper, about a mine and town in Cape Breton being sold for \$25,000. Not much money even for 1929! This article went on to state that English capitalists had formed the Broughton Coal and Railway Company, and sank a coal shaft at Broughton, Cape Breton, before World War I. They had installed expensive mining machinery, streets were made and houses built. The project failed, and by 1929, Broughton was a deserted "ghost" town, with a caretaker as its only inhabitant. The complete town, mine, etc., was sold by auction to Hanson Brothers Incorporated, of Montreal for \$25,000, on Saturday, July 13, 1929.

Broughton is about 7 miles south of Glace Bay, and half way between Glace Bay and Louisbourg and about two miles west of the former Sydney and Louisbourg Railway.

Broughton shows up in our *Newsletters* about 1960. In February 1958, there is reference to a colliery at Broughton acquiring a steam engine from the Old Sydney Collieries, as this colliery had switched from truck to rail to haul its coal.

Again in December 1962 an article states that the Four Star Colliery, Broughton, NS, has acquired a second engine from the Old Sydney Collieries, for its operation. The 1962 reported concluded with: "... As some switching moves at Broughton require the train to negotiate a rather sharp grade in the yard and the sander on the locomotive does not function properly, one of the crewmen attends this duty in a rather unusual way. Equipped with a small nail keg full of sand, he positions himself on the front footboard of the engine and distributes the sand on the rails as it is required! ...."

These three articles raise some questions, that perhaps some of our readers can help with. First, is the Four Star Colliery the descendent of the Broughton Coal and Railway Company? Secondly, was there any rail operation when the Broughton Coal and Railway Company first developed the mine. If so, how long did it last, and were there other periods of operation prior to 1929?

#### **Rumoured Abandonments**

While no one has given me any written confirmation, my spies tell me that two pieces of historic track in Ontario are in the process of being abandoned. CN Rail is working with the Town of Port Hope to make changes to John Street under the CN's Port Hope viaduct. Apparently these changes will result in the isolation and therefore, the abandonment of the last portion of The Port Hope, Lindsay and Beaverton Railway between the business district and the waterfront in the town.

The second CN abandonment is a short piece of the Buffalo, Brantford and Goderich Railway in Fort Erie, Ontario. This removal was to permit the elimination of some railway crossings in the community. This section of the B,B&G had been used as spur since the abandonment of the Dunnville Subdivision west of Fort Erie in 1987.

Negotiations between CN Rail and the road authorities have been completed to remove a little more of CN's Belleville North Spur, again to eliminate the need for a couple of highway crossings. This line was CN's Campbellford

Subdivision and of course had been built by the Grand Junction Railway.

### **Iron Monsters for the Twentieth Century**

Near the end of the twentieth century the introduction of double stack container cars and trains caused numerous problems requiring railways to scramble to increase the vertical clearances on their main lines. These ranged from simply undercutting the track under a grade separation to massive projects like CN's new Sarnia Tunnel.

Similar problems faced the Grand Trunk Railway as they introduced larger equipment to lead them into the twentieth century. Cornwall newspapers during the spring of 1899 published a series of items providing the pieces for the following little story. Late in April 1899, the Grand Trunk announced the completion of the first of a new class of locomotives at its Point St. Charles shops. It was a 10 wheeler, 14 feet 9 inches high and 64 feet in length, which could haul 65 loaded freight cars, or about double the number of cars the older engines could handle. The railway was confident these locomotives would completely revolutionize railroading.

Perhaps, it was planned and known, but since these locomotives were to be assigned to the Belleville division, they had to get there. A report in mid-May states that they would not fit through the covered bridge over the Ottawa River at St. Anne's (west end of Montréal Island) on account of their height, so they were taken via the south shore to Valleyfield and then across the Canada Atlantic Railway line and bridge to Coteau.

A week later, the Grand Trunk Railway announced that it had decided to replace the bridge over the Ottawa River at St. Anne's with a more modern structure. The principal reason was to get rid of the low vertical clearance of the covered (tubular) bridge. These early through-truss railway bridges by today's standards were rather small. The present Victoria Bridge in Montréal, was built in 1898 was built around the original tubular or covered bridge. Yes, the present bridge is doubled track whereas the original one was single track, but in height the top bracing of the new bridge was placed over and above the top of the old bridge.

It wasn't long before Grand Trunk's firemen were complaining about their big new engines. Their beef, these engines required more work, as the result of their appetite for coal to keep up the steam.

We will close our little tale with the some facts from the news column of May 26, 1899. The new big G.T.R. locomotives assigned to Belleville weighed 277,990 pounds. These iron monsters were assigned to run between Belleville and Coteau. Since there were no turn tables on the line large enough to turn them, they had to be turned on the wyes at Coteau and Belleville.

While some of the very heavy cars currently in use almost cause the steel to become plastic, what will rail operation be like in another hundred years.

### **An Equipment Question**

A while ago, during a discussion, about local history, with a chap in Cornwall, Ontario, he asked what I knew about Courtaulds Industries in Cornwall and their railway operations. I had to admit that my knowledge was limited to knowing that they existed and a few of the generalities about their rail connection in the latter years to Canadian National. He told me that he was interested in their history, and wanted to know if I

knew what happened to their locomotives. Presently, I have not been able to track down more details beyond the fact that they had 2 Plymouth ML6's that these had been purchased second-hand from the Telephone City Sand and Gravel Company. Can perhaps some of our equipment specialists tell us what happened to these locomotives?

### **Kamloops Restaurant**

While details are sketchy, I had a note passed to me in early summer that a young couple was opening a new cafe in Kamloops, BC, with a railway theme. This new restaurant was to be called the Victoria Street Station, and operated by a Mr. & Mrs. Bremner. Should anyone go to Kamloops, perhaps they can give us an update on this restaurant.

### **The Railway Book Market - Ketchum's Folly**

While at the Keillor Museum, last summer, its manager, Mrs. Phyllis Stopps mentioned that a new book on the Chignecto Marine Transport Railway Company, Limited, and its chief mover and shaker, Mr. Henry G. C. Ketchum had been recently published. Mrs. Stopps has since sent me a copy of the book titled *Ketchum's Folly* by Jay Underwood. The 130 page soft cover book was published by Lancelot Press Limited, PO Box 425, Hantsport, NS, B0P 1P0, and listed at \$8.95.

While, a worthwhile addition to the library of any student of Canadian Railway history, I do have a several minor complaints. At the end of Mr. Underwood's Introduction, I was looking forward to a well written and researched publication. However, it only took a few pages before I had to question that view. It started when Sandford Fleming's name was spelled with the "d" in Sandford missing and a second "m" in Fleming. If that was the end, I would have blamed it on the "spell checker" on the computer. I was really shaking my head when I found Mr. Underwood state "... The line which became Ketchum's classroom had opened with great ceremony in Saint John, September 14, 1853 ..." To Canadian rail enthusiasts, as mentioned above, this was the date of the sod turning for the E&NA in Saint John. There are at least two or three other statements that causes one to ask questions.

My other complaint, perhaps relates more to my style of reading – a few pages at a time. While many of the zooms in the book are needed to put the subjects in perspective, a note pad is needed to keep track as the author zooms to various projects and people around the globe.

While Mr. Underwood, has made limited reference to construction, the main pluses for this book come from its broader look at the Canadian politics surrounding this project and the comparison with similar proposed projects around the world.

The noted errors on the rail side may make me check other dates and facts in the book. However, I believe Mr. Underwood's book is valuable, since its sets the Chignecto ship railway in the context of the global thinking of the time. While there is more meat in the book, this alone makes its worth its price to anyone who is interested in the general history of Canadian transportation.

### **For October, 1995**

#### **DEUX-MONTAGNES RECONSTRUCTION**

While much has been written about this former

Canadian Northern Line, and its operation, but a presentation made by CN's Jack Davis on the current three year reconstruction

**Abandonment News**

Chatham abandon in a year  
Cayuaga abandonment applied for  
Newmarket accepted as application

CP Highgate, QC station

**Other topics**

NYC line Finch to Cornwall

**Ottawa, Northern & Western Railway**

O,N&WR (CP) - Hull to Maniwaki, QC

**Ottawa, Northern & Western Railway**

O,N&WR (CP) - Mattawa to Angliers, QC

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**Future Months:**

CP LaSalle station still standing  
Newburgh CNOR Station exists in town as a house –  
Dan McConnachie.  
Dog at Boston Bar

July 16, 1995 Trip:

12 hours approximately 700 KM Montreal - LaChute, Hull,  
Maniwaki, Mont-Laurier, Lac Remi, Montreal  
220 KM to Hull Train Shed  
400 KM to Junction with Highway 117 (North of  
Mont Laurier  
Wakefield Station is light blue

CBC-FM 98.1 & 91.5

Cornwall Diamond

**Ottawa, Northern & Western Railway**

O,N&WR (CP) - Hull to Maniwaki, QC

**Ottawa, Northern & Western Railway**

O,N&WR (CP) - Mattawa to Angliers, QC