

Just A. Ferronut's July 1995

Railway Archaeology

Art Clowes

We will blame the heat of summer for a change in plans for this month's Column. Last month, I mentioned that we would be looking at some construction details on the Deux-Montagnes commuter service this month, but as you can see, we aren't, the change was really caused by the thing called work, not the heat. Of course we can always wish!

CNR Sparrow Lake Station

In our May Column, we carried a question from Ms. Clark enquiring about photos of the Sparrow Lake Station in Port Stanton, Ontario. Well, Mr. George R. Corrin, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan has advised that there is a photograph of this former Canadian Northern station at Port Stanton on page 153 of Richard Tatley's book "*Steam Boating on the Trent-Severn*".

Mr. Corrin advises that this photograph supplied courtesy of Ontario Archives is a trifle indistinct. He adds, "... it was taken on a busy day, for there is a great mob of people on the platform, obviously waiting for the train. The "Stanton House" Hotel referred to in the query is shown in the background of this photo. The photo caption mentions that this station would have been built about 1906 and that it replaced Severn Bridge as the main gateway to this resort area."

June Equipment Questions

Last month we carried a couple of questions that had been asked about railway locomotives.

The first, from our member Bill Reddy, was about a US Army 0-6-0 locomotive that he believed had wound up here in Québec after being owned for a period by Pacific Coast Terminals Railway. Well Canada's "Mr. Railway Equipment", Ray Corley, has come to our rescue, by confirming this and supplying the following. Ray advises that this Army workhorse had been purchased by the Laurentide Forest Products Company. When Laurentide was taken over by Consolidated Paper this locomotive became No. 1 of their Laurentide Division, at Grand Mere, Quebec, and was still operating in the summer of 1953.

The second question was raised by Keith Pratt, a former Prince Edward Island railroader, concerning the fate of some of PEIR's narrow gauge locomotives following the standard gauging of the island lines in the 1920s. This question reminded both Ray Corley and Doug Brown of an earlier transfer of locomotives from Prince Edward Island to Newfoundland. These gentlemen forwarded data concerning this early transfer that took place in 1881. The data from Ray on this transfer pointed out that there are some unanswered questions about it. So it was time to dig out a few books on these railways. A skim through Omer Lavallée's "*Narrow Gauge Railways of Canada*"; A. R. Penny's "*A History of the Newfoundland Railway, Volume I (1881-1923)*", and Canadian National Railway's "*Synoptical History of Canadian National Railways*" helped round out the story, but didn't answer the questions raised by Mr. Corley. While we haven't solved the puzzle, the story of the early days of the Newfoundland Railway may help put it in perspective and will perhaps help solve it sometime.

First, a little background of events in and around Newfoundland. During this period, Newfoundland, of course was not part of Canada, but a separate British colony. By 1880, the concept of a railway across the jagged contours of

Newfoundland was not new. As early as 1865, Sir Sandford Fleming, the Scottish-Canadian railway engineer had eyed Newfoundland as part of his proposed "All-Red-Route". To Fleming, Newfoundland, the remote island lost in the North Atlantic fog, was to be the centre of a vast system of imperial communications, that would join the global British Empire of the day, hence the name, since the British Empire was usually shown red of the globes of the period. Fleming's concept was based on the fact of the day, that land travel by rail was faster than water travel. Fleming could not get this plan off the ground because he could not get the needed financial backing.

Fleming's name again came to Newfoundland railroading in the mid-1870s, when the government voted funds to undertake a survey for a railway across Newfoundland from St. John's to the west coast. While the government's choice was Fleming because of his earlier proposals and fame, other commitments kept him from personally undertaking this survey. However, arrangements were made for one of Fleming's engineers to head up the survey. As was often the case, the estimated cost versus available funds, changes in government delayed the start of construction. There were also charges of politics and charges of political patriotism.

Friday, April 29, 1881 was the turning point for the establishment of railways in Newfoundland. The Government spent 16 hours arguing as to whether an agreement, dated April 20, 1881, should be entered into with the Blackman Company for the formation and construction of the Newfoundland Railway Company. Construction started on August 16, 1881. Since the Prime Minister was away, there was no sod-turning ceremony.

Work continued, and about 8 to 10 miles was graded ready for ties, rail and ballast by October, 1881. This distance was extended to about 15 miles by the end of the season. Mr. Penney reports that the first vessel-load of ties arrived from Nova Scotia on October 19, 1881. Three days later, October 22, the S. S. *Standard* arrived from Cardiff, Wales with a cargo of rails. A tender call on October 31, was issued for the supply of thousands of locally cut ties. This construction was culminated on December 5, 1881 when the S. S. *Merlin* arrived delivering the first locomotive along with other materials for the railway. Mr. Penney continues ... "This was the first of five locomotives obtained from Prince Edward Island Railway, which employed the same gauge as the Newfoundland Railway. The locomotive was assembled at the skating rink at Fort Williams and quickly put in working order to convey rails and other track material westward along the line."

Now let's look at Mr. Corley's information on the supply of locomotives and how it fits into this story. All parties agree that 5 locomotives were transferred to Newfoundland, but research to date has not been able to definitely identify these locomotives. There are 4 conflicting "reports" involved in trying to establish them.

1) Prince Edward Island Railway Nos. 2 to 6 (4-4-0T, Hunslet serial numbers 85 - 89) were said to have been sold to the Harbour Grace Railway (this was the local term for what became the Newfoundland Railway's Southern Division, also Harbour Grace became the western terminus of the first railway)

in 1881. This report indicated that the first locomotive shipped was lost overboard at sea. The ship with the first locomotive was scheduled to arrive in St. John's on October 24, 1881, (definitely in the time frame of deliveries of railway material in St. John's). The missing engine (in group of Nos. 2 of 6) was said to be "made up" by a locomotive purchased from New Brunswick Railway (either NBR No. 9 or No. 10). These NBR engines were 2-6-0's!!

2) Prince Edward Island Railway Nos. 2 to 6 as above were sold, and one engine was lost at sea. However, this report indicated that the "lost" locomotive was not replaced, but that the number was left vacant. The Newfoundland Railway purchased New Brunswick Railway No. 9 or No. 10, but this locomotive became Newfoundland No. 12.

3) Report Number 1) (above) is correct in that one PEIR locomotive was lost at sea, and report 4) (below) is also correct in that New Brunswick Railway No. 9 was also lost at sea.

4) Report Number 1) (above) is in error. Locomotives which first arrived were ex-New Brunswick Railway, (not PEIR) and No. 9 lost at sea, No. 10 delivered & became Newfoundland No. 12 (or vice versa).

Ray concludes that Report 3) is the most credible followed by Report 4). The Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island railways both had a gauge of 3'-6" while the New Brunswick Railway was 3'-0" gauge.

Now a look based on the data as supplied by Doug Brown from material originally researched by his father, the late R. R. Brown. While Mr. Lavallée's work also questions as to whether there may be one or more New Brunswick Railway locomotives included in the early Newfoundland Railway roster, both Mr. Brown and Mr. Penney point to them all being from Prince Edward Island Railway. Mr. Brown's data also indicates that these five locomotives were scrapped about 1898. So, it back into the job jar for some more research and digging.

Meanwhile in Newfoundland, it was October 11, 1884 before the last spike was driven to more or less complete the 84 miles of track from St. John's to Harbour Grace via Harbour Grace Junction (now Whitbourne). This spike was driven by Prince George who was later King George V. At the time he was visiting Newfoundland as a midshipman aboard the H.M.S. *Cumberland*. By this time the Blackman Company was out of the Newfoundland Railway scene, but it would appear from a photograph in both Penney's and Lavallée's books that at least one more locomotive had been added to the roster. This photograph shows the "A. L. Blackman", a Hunslet built 0-6-0 engine of a very British design. Unlike the early PEIR locomotives, this one doesn't have a cowcatcher, bell or fret work around the cab, only the British style end buffers. This engine was built in 1882 with serial number 284.

The Newfoundland Railway has an intriguing history, and it appears we have added a little more in regards to their early locomotives.

To complete the confusing picture of the early Newfoundland Railway, we should mention that Railway's first station in St. John's was in an old stone building that had made up part of Fort William. This military garrison located in the east end of St. John's (near the former CN Newfoundland Hotel) and had been abandoned about 1870. The first non-work train from this station was ran on January 16, 1882 for about 82 miles out to Donovans (about where the present Trans-Canada Highway

crossed the railway). The citizens of St. John's and the area along the line celebrated early in June 1882 as regular passenger service to Topsail was started. A month later the service was extended to Upper Gullies, about 20 miles from St. John's.

So, as we leave this period on the Newfoundland Railway, it can be said that the transplanted Canadian locomotives probably weren't overworked in their first two or three years on the Rock.

Now let's look a little closer to Keith's original question, about PEIR engine transferred to Newfoundland in the 1920's.

For this, Doug Brown has forwarded the following from his records. Five 4-4-0's with 15" x 20" cylinders, and one 0-4-0T with 8" x 16" cylinders were sold to the Armstrong, Whitworth and Company of Corner Brook, Newfoundland in 1923. This company was the predecessor of what became Bowater's Newfoundland Pulp and Paper Company in 1938. The five 4-4-0's were all built by Kingston Locomotive Works. The tank engine, PEIR # 37, had 24 inch drivers and was built in 1910 by Davenport and became Armstrong, Whitworth's # 1. The other locomotives were: PEIR # 19, with 54" drivers was built in 1904 with builder's number 625; PEIR # second 20, had 48" drivers, weighed 65,000 lbs., and was built in 1899 with builder's number 471; PEIR # 23, had 48" drivers, weighed 69,750 lbs., and was built in 1900 with builder's number 496; PEIR # 24, had 54" drivers, weighed 69,750 lbs., was built in 1901 as number 520; and PEIR # 27, had 54" drivers, weighed 69,750 lbs., and was built in 1904 with builder's number 619. Armstrong, Whitworth and Company kept the PEIR numbers, but made them into a 200 series, i.e. # PEIR 19 became AWC # 219.

"*Narrow Gauge Railways of Canada*" list the five PEIR 4-4-0's as being sold to Lamoreaux-Kelly, a Montréal contractor in November 1923 for use in the construction of the mill that was to become Bowater's Newfoundland Pulp and Paper Company in Corner Brook, Newfoundland.

A Circle Tour for Stations Spotters

I was ambitious a couple of weeks ago, and went out to scout some rail lines including a number of abandoned ones. My goal was to get a general lay of the country for future articles, but found a reasonable number of stations on this trip.

For those of you unfamiliar with the western part of Quebec, or don't have a detailed map, may want to dig out the map on Page 11 of the January 1995, *Rail and Transit*. This map doesn't show all the lines I covered, but it does give a relationship of the key points. I made the loop from Montréal to Hull along the Quebec (north) side of the Ottawa River. From Hull I went north on Route 105 that basically follows the former CPR line to Maniwaki, QC. I then drove across to Mont-Laurier, the north end of the former CPR Ste-Agathe Subdivision. I then worked my way back to Montréal along this CPR line and the nearby, but shorter CN Montfort Subdivision.

This loop is about 650 km, and depending on the amount of nosing around one does, can be done as a one or two day outing. I haven't included any of the stations on Île Montréal or Île Jesus (Laval) islands, nor on the Deux-Montagnes Commuter line or in Ottawa-Hull.

From Montréal, I picked up Route 148 in Saint-Eustache and headed for Lachute, on CP's Lachute Subdivision that extends from Ste-Thérèse to Laman (Hull). Laman, is made from the first letters of names of the two subdivisions that join

there, Lachute and Maniwaki. We mentioned the brick, with stone trim station at Lachute, the single storey brick station at Marelan, and the large log station at Montebello, QC in our November 1994 Column. On this trip I went into the Montebello station, and they have a number of interesting displays of activities around railway stations.

A couple of other CP stations on the Lachute Subdivision that still exist are at Calumet and Buckingham Junction. These stations, both wood frame are closed and boarded up. They are both long and narrow with quite steep pitched roofs and a single gable over the operator's bay window. These two stations appear quite identical except are mirror layouts of each other. Their doors and windows have extensive, yet simple-line trim, similar to most Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa & Occidental Railway stations. The station at Calumet has an interesting feature near the main freight shed door, but I am not sure of its exact use. It is what appears to be a set of small doors about 3 feet off the shed floor and about 3½ feet square. To me, it would appear to be for handling something like milk cans or other small containers from wagons. Does anyone have any comments, or ideas? This gives 5 stations in about 60 miles.

While the Hull, Chelsea and Wakefield Railroad's equipment was sitting in their yard at Hull, I didn't go in, since their operation wouldn't start for another few hours. The station-cum-restaurant at Wakefield was busy with the brunch crowd. The water tank and "armstrong" powered turntable are in place a few metres north of the station near the end of the present line, waiting to serve the excursion train from Hull.

Nine miles north of Wakefield, at Farrellton, a former section building is sitting in a back yard a short distance from the abandoned road bed. Many sections of the road bed of CP's abandoned Maniwaki Subdivision are still very evident all the way to Maniwaki. In Maniwaki, the site of the old rail yard is getting gradually re-developed with a mix of commercial and housing complexes.

As indicated, I drove from Maniwaki over to Mont-Laurier, the north end of the former CP Ste-Agathe Subdivision. This abandoned rail line is now the miles long Parc linéaire des Laurentides for hikers and cyclists. The typical frame CP station is still on its original site in Mont-Laurier.

The north 50 or 60 kilometres of the former Ste-Agathe Subdivision south of Mont-Laurier swings west around the various lake in the area. I did not check this area for stations. Forty-five miles south of Mont-Laurier, is the village of L'Annonciation. The small single storey frame station in this community is still in its original location and is now used as a tourist information centre. The road bed in front of the station is part of the lineal park.

Thirty-three miles south of L'Annonciation one arrives at St-Jovite. Here the one and a half storey CP station has been relocated a few block to the west side of the main street. In its new location, the station has been restored and remodelled into a restaurant. It has been repainted buff with a darker brown trim.

With these three CP stations on film, I headed west on Route 323 to Lac Rémi, the former northern terminus of CN's Montfort Subdivision, fifty-five miles northwest of St-Jérôme.

Both CP's Ste-Agathe and CN's Montfort subdivisions were built to penetrate the Laurentian Mountains north of Montréal. These two lines travelled along different valley systems, except that they both served St-Jérôme. The

route of CN's line north of that community through narrow valleys with steep grades reveal its narrow gauge beginning. As an example, the summit of the line, 24 miles north of St-Jérôme is 1054 feet higher than in St-Jérôme.

The station at Lac Rémi is still in its original location, with a street replacing the rail line in front of it. The opposite side of the street reveals the results of years of cinder accumulation on the road bed of the rail yard. The Lac Rémi station is a single storey frame structure with the south half of the floor area raised to platform height for handling freight and express. It has been divided into accommodations for two families and appears that they use them as summer cottages.

Canada has countless recycled stations used as residents, restaurants or information centres, but CN's small single storey frame station at Arundel has a unique use – the village Post Office. This small village, forty miles northwest of St-Jérôme has expended considerable energy in converting their station to its new use. The station, about 18 by 22 feet is painted in CN's maroon and cream and has a display of railway memorabilia in front of it. The station platform sports a baggage cart and of course a mail box. The length or so of rail in front of the station has a set of wheel stops at one end, a high switch stand, a four-man hand-pump car and trailer to remind people of the post office's heritage.

A display to the side of the parking lot reveals the community's enthusiasm towards its railway heritage. They have a model 2-4-0 built from local cast-offs. This model, 12 or so feet long, was built with a tow bar for parades. The boiler is made of a 200 gallon furnace oil tank and a 45 gallon oil drum. The domes and smoke stack are various style recycled milk cans, cream separator bowls, etc. The bell is a standard cow bell (from the farm). The cab (large enough for a crew during the parades) and the frame are of wood. The wheels are metal spoke wheels from old farm implements. The cylinders are again, milk cans, set horizontal, and this engine even has working connecting rods. These are pieces of wood connected with eccentric cranks to the trailing wheels and the front end of the rods sits free in the mouth of the milk can cylinders. So as the wheels go around, the connecting rods can move back and forth in the milk cans.

This engine, Number 4, is black with red trim, and even has a cowcatcher. It is made of wood strips and connected to the tow bar so is always raised clear of obstructions when towed.

I continued southward paralleling the abandoned road bed. It was getting late on a Sunday afternoon when I reached St-Sauveur-des-Monts, 13 miles north of St-Jérôme. CN had abandoned it's Montfort Subdivision north of St-Jérôme in 1962 to permit the Quebec Autoroute authority to use this 13 miles to extend it divided highway north of that city. I had to smile as I crossed the Autoroute at St-Sauveur-des-Monts, for it was a multi-lane parking lot as far as the eye could see. Except for the pleasure of sitting in your own compartment (car) and burning your share of gasoline, the radio traffic reports indicated that the trip to Montreal was probably no faster than what we used to think as the "old slow train" ride. Needless to say I kept clear of the parking lot and continued along the secondary roads.

The single storey buff brick CP station in St-Jérôme is still in place although boarded-up. This building with its hip roof, has wide overhangs on all four sides.

While I didn't stop at Ste-Thérèse this trip, the CP station as described in our November 1994 Column is still in

place.

So, this wraps up a circle tour that still permits one to see at least 12 railway stations. There are perhaps a few others, especially on the parts of the CN Montfort and CP Ste-Agathe Subdivision that I didn't cover.

The Railway Book Market

Following my comments on books in our May Column, a few more books have been brought to my attention. My comments about the recent books from the British Railway Modellers of North America, (BRMNA) of Calgary, resulted in being reminded that this publisher had two other recently released books. While, these books pre-date the ones we covered in May, there are perhaps enthusiasts who may be interested in the topics that are not regular followers of this publisher.

The first, is the second book on the topic of Toronto, Ontario railways. This book titled *THE RAILWAYS OF TORONTO - The First Hundred Years* - (Volume Two) – By John Riddell. This book is a natural and expanded extension of Mr. Riddell's first. This book, like the first, includes a number of maps and schematics of trackage around Toronto. The overview photos from various public agencies add to the portrayal of the railways prior to and during the development of the Toronto Terminal Railways. These overview photographs are supported with numerous action photos, again spanning the changing railway scene around Toronto. These type of photographs are, of course my favourite, since they can fill in many details about the infrastructure around a railway's operation.

The descriptions associated with the photos are descriptive and generally well explain the scene and the related operation. This book, especially in company with the first volume, provides a good insight into the Toronto railway scene over the first hundred years.

So, this recent book by Mr. Riddell, is a worthwhile addition to the published information on Canadian Railways, and especially valuable to any student of Toronto railways.

Volume Two sells for \$12.00 plus GST in Canada and \$1.00 postage and handling and is available from British Railway Modellers of North America.

The second BRMNA book brought to my attention is *ENTER DIESEL - EXIT STEAM (Railways in Transition in Eastern Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes)* – By Ian Donaldson. My bias will probably show since over half the photographs in this book depicts Maritime train operation. This book has a map of the area from Toronto to the eastern tip of Cape Breton, with an insert of the Montreal area; good for orientation, but to me, is a tad inconsistent for the branch lines and station names. Mr. Donaldson captures the feeling of the changing scene as the railways phased out steam and introduced diesel. The early competition between the General Motors Corporation, American Locomotive Company and Fairbanks-Morse as the supplier of "covered-wagons" to lead Canadian trains is also evident. The author, who uses all his own photographs for this book, has caught a number of interesting views to add to the common stereotype three-quarters train photographs. These include one of passengers boarding an RDC at Kentville, NS; a pool train being led by CN 6513 past CP's Westmount, QC station. Another interesting shot is of a pair of CNR FPA-2s leading the VIP-Press Special in 1957 to the official opening of the then new line to the Heath Steele Mine in east central New Brunswick.

Mr. Donaldson surrounds his photographs with

capsule accounts of the scene and snippets of railway history.

Perhaps the photo of a pair of CPR RS10s pulling out of the smoke stained Ottawa Union Station in 1959 best reminds one of the ever changing rail scene. Again it is good to see Canadian Railway history being recorded for ourselves and future generations. Mr. Donaldson's book is available for \$9.00 plus GST in Canada and \$1.00 postage and handling. Both this book as well as Mr. Riddell's is available from British Railway Modellers of North America, 5124 - 33rd Street N.W., Calgary, Alberta T2L 1V4.

I was recently reviewing a 1925 issue of *Canadian Railway & Marine World* for information on the Deux-Montagnes line, when an article on a trip made by a CN Oil-Electric caught my eye, especially since it made reference to travel times. Comparison of travel times seems to be a favourite pastime for many rail enthusiasts. This article was about a trip from Montreal to Vancouver made in November 1925 by CN Oil-Electric No. 15820. While probably not the most comfortable vehicle for a 2,921.8 mile trip, the 71 hour 55 minutes of elapsed running time was good enough to get a discussion going on the subject of train performance. Without getting into the details of the discussion, the speeds of transcontinental silk trains was brought up for comparison. I short while later a copy of *SILK TRAINS - The Romance of Canadian Silk Trains or "The Silks"*, By Bernard Webber showed up on my desk. I haven't had a chance to read this 1993 book from "cover to cover." However, from a few glances, Mr. Webber appears to have taken the time to dig through various archival sources to round out his material on these trains and the transportation of silk to the factories around New York City. As indicated in the book, silk transportation was a secretive business because of its value, and therefore there are not great records on this interesting aspect of transcontinental railroading.

This book is a couple of years old and I don't know its price, however, I expect it is still available. The book indicates that orders and inquires should be sent to the author, Mr. Bernard Webber, 6205 - 91st Street, R.R. 1, Osoyoos, BC, Canada V0H 1V0.