

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

September 1994

Did you hear about the baggagemen who were storing the baggage they had just removed from a train. As they sat down this one animal cage they noticed, since the cover was a bit loose, that the cat in it was dead! Not wanting to get blamed for such action, they immediately started looking for a cat about the same size and colour. Luckily, after considerable effort they found one and following a few scratches got it in the cage. Later that day an elderly lady came in to claim her baggage which included the cat cage. She lifted the cover and immediately went over to the baggageman and said "Young man that is not my cat"! The baggageman said, "Are you sure madame?" Yes, said the lady, you see my cat had died and I was bringing it home for burial.

### Completion of Eastern Sojourn

Last month, I was mentioning some of the railway findings from my summer trip to New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. This trip was barely two weeks, and when one counts family obligations, one says they didn't get much time for hobby activities, but as I indicated last month when you start writing you realize how much you can cram in a short time! As I closed last month I was wandering around Hampton, New Brunswick on CN's Saint John – Moncton line. This was also the northern terminus of the St. Martins and Upham Railway.

After visiting the library and the station, I visited the Kings County Museum. It, like most Canadian Museum's is staffed with interesting and knowledgeable people. As I have said many times, the more I get involved in railway history the more I realize how the various aspects of history are all intertwined.

While, discussing railway history, and in particular the St. Martins and Upham, one of the Assistants asked when I had or had seen Ruby M. Cusack's booklet "*Yesteryear – THE ST. MARTINS TRAIN*"? They had one copy of this 40-page booklet that was published in 1988 and needless to say I purchased it. The booklet contains many snapshots from this small 30-mile railway that operated up to the beginning of the Second World War. I am hoping I am going to be able to find out if this booklet is still in print, and if so, where it may be obtained. Will keep you posted on what I can find out.

Armed with a few dates from Hampton, a visit to the Sussex Town Library added a few more newspaper articles on New Brunswick railroading to the computer data bank.

With Moncton as a base for a few days, it was time for some more exploration of Albert County, south of the city, as well as what is becoming my "annual pilgrimage" to Prince Edward Island.

A trip to Alma, at the south-east entrance to Fundy National Park in Albert County revealed two interesting pieces on information on the Albert Southern Railway that terminated in this village. While the railway has been gone for 80 years or so, I was given a lead on what is apparently a recycled Albert Southern station. While I want better confirmation, the style and size of what is now a house fits that of an early station. While Alma looks at its history as being primarily related to ship construction, shipping and lumbering, the Village's Tourist Bureau has one early photo that clearly shows the Albert Southern's rail line curving around the south of the village to serve the shipping wharves along the east bank of the Salmon River.

Long time rail enthusiast, former railroader,

photographer, and writer Keith Pratt and his wife Jean had invited me again this year to come over to Prince Edward Island for a visit. So it was off to catch an early morning ferry at Cape Tormentine. As has been my luck for the last couple of years it been crossings on either the MV Holiday Island or MV Vacationland. Since many thought these ferries, designed for motor vehicles only, were quite radical from early ferry design, they were nicknamed during construction as "Fuddle" and "Duddle" in honour of the country's rather radical political leader of the day. Our arrival at Borden was greeted with the sight of the early stages of construction for the new fixed-link crossing to the mainland that had been officially commenced the previous day.

Heading west from Borden, I looped into Summerside to have a look at the former CNR Station that was converted into a Regional Library by the Rotary Club during 1990-91. The present station-come-library, measuring some 135 x 32 feet was constructed in 1927. This depot is mainly a single storey, although a central portion is a storey and one half. The building has a band of brick (a dado) around it from the foundation up about three-feet. Above the brickwork the exterior walls are stuccoed. The notes on its construction state that the height of the station to the peak of the roof was 30 feet, and the roof projected about 6 feet from the main building to protect passengers. The original Ladies and General Waiting rooms were both 26 x 30 feet. The station also had two offices to house the Western Union Telegraph Company. The west end of the station held space for the Express Offices and Baggage Room.

This depot on Water Street at the corner of Grenville Street was constructed to replace the earlier station that was moved across the tracks on July 18, 1927. A 1912 photo of this earlier station reveals a smaller 2½ storey building with a gable roof and three track-side dormers. It had a single storey flat roofed ell or extension on the east end. The notes about moving this building indicate that the work was started on a Sunday night and was only completed after a strenuous period which lasted all night due to delays caused by lack of proper equipment and chains that kept parting. The notes continued that the building was not quite clear of the tracks when the Western Train arrived at 6:30 a.m., and this train was held up a matter of about 20 minutes.

Amongst other notes in the library about the earlier days around the station included an article dated August 12, 1925 that stated that the water to the station and the waiting room was shut off due to contamination. This action was taken by the Board of Health, following the death by typhoid fever of the janitress who lived in the station. The water was supplied by railway's own wooden tank, some half mile from the station. How things have changed.

### 1994 Passenger Train Service on Prince Edward Island

Honest, I photographed passenger trains on Prince Edward Island in July 1994. If you promise not to tell VIA Rail, I'll give you the details. After leaving Summerside I drove to just outside Alberton where I visited the Prince Edward Island Miniature Railway. This endeavour, that has been operating here for about 15 years, is a very interesting attraction for both the rail fan and family alike. This railway presently has over 1½ miles of track complete with a tunnel, a 200 foot long trestle with 2 Howe trusses, one spanning a stream and another spanning the railway

where it passes over itself. The railway consists of two loops with diamond crossings and interlockers. The railway is a 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inch gauge line and the route passes through fields, woodland and along a stream. The forest portion has numerous curves. The people at the PEIMR were telling me that was because the owner, Mr. B. J. Maloney tried to avoid cutting any more trees than he absolutely had to. However, based on my knowledge of the alignment of the original Island Railway, I must wonder if perhaps he was not trying to follow the same Island tradition. While Alberton is west of the Island's more popular tourist areas, to me the Prince Edward Island Miniature Railway was worth the visit.

#### **A Few Hours of Railway Reminiscing**

As I mentioned Keith Pratt and his wife Jean had invited me to come over again this summer. This is an invitation that one can't turn down for besides being able to listen to Keith talk about his years of being involved in railroading, etc., his wife is a great cook.

I goofed in trying to tape some of Keith's stories, but will get them pieced together eventually. In one case he was showing me a photo of a string of cars on the siding at Bloomfield Station and telling me that typically strings were stored over the summer for the fall shipment of potatoes at many different locations. This one chap at Bloomfield had for several years always spent considerable time getting "his" cars ready for the local potato shippers. However, one year after cleaning and readying 19 or 20 cars, the message came from "down the line" to ship most of them out for their use. The result was one unhappy railway worker.

Then there was the story about the snow-bound crew. I may confuse a few of the details, but basically a local way freight from Tignish (the western terminal of the line) had been ordered late one afternoon to head east to about Alberton (15 miles or so) to pick up a few cars. As they headed out it started to snow and blow. They got east and were switching the siding, but it was becoming harder and harder to operate. The switches were filling in as fast as the crew could shovel them out. They finally got their cars and got back on the main line to head west. Then they got into a snow-filled cut and there they were! They tried to work the train back and forth, but they were packing the wind driven snow in harder and harder into the drift in the cut until they finally couldn't move the train. It was now morning and they telegraphed the dispatcher in Charlottetown to send out a double-header and crew to get the train out of the snow drift. The dispatcher tried to convince them that they were daff, for it was a clear, sunny day in Charlottetown and if they were stuck, the dispatcher was certain that a switcher from Summerside could clear them with no problem. They argued some more, and finally, while the dispatcher figured this was some kind of a hoax, he reluctantly sent out the double header. It was a couple of more days before they got the stuck train shovelled out enough to get it out of the cut and headed for home.

Keith had brought with him a video tape of probably his second most favourite railroads, the Maine Two-Footers and the Edaville Railroad. These operations with diminutive equipment were probably the lines that got me interested in this hobby. This tape contained a lot of historical footage and what does one 1939 scene show but Mr. Pratt standing on the cow-catcher of a Bridgton & Harrison engine.

Mrs. Pratt was concerned over the afternoon because their range was on the blink and she couldn't prepare one of her great fresh fish dinners. Being a Herring Choker, fish dinners is

always great, however, the broken stove proved beneficial, as it introduced me to a new way of having pasta. It was pasta, served white, with a little oil, butter and sharp grated cheese. I have found it great for making myself a single serving.

Prior to my leaving, Keith introduced me to another new book, "*Remembering Railroading on Prince Edward Island*". This is a 100 page soft-covered book by Island Railroader, Harold Gaudet. It is a series on railroading annotated both from fellow railroaders and as Mr. Gaudet remembered from his years of railroading that started in the mid 1930's. While, I didn't know most of the people mentioned, I do remember a few, and definitely many of the relationships between the "Island Division" and "Regional Headquarters", in Moncton. Anyway, thanks to the Pratts I now have a copy of this interesting book in my collection.

As I leave the Island for my trip back to Montreal, I have a query on behalf of Keith who is trying to locate the following photos for his collection on island railroading:

Harmony Junction Station and yard.

Elmira Yard looking both East and West and showing the railway buildings and wye.

Murray Harbour Yard.

Georgetown Yard.

Should anyone be able to help in this photo search, a note to me would be appreciated.

#### **Back in Quebec**

As I wander around the southern parts of Quebec in an effort to get a better understanding of the myriad of railways and their lines, the most obvious thing that surfaces first are their remaining stations, so I little more about them.

Back in the June, 1994 Column, I mentioned CPR's Cookshire station on their main line between Sherbrooke and Megantic. At the time I was questioning whether the present configuration is a modified version of the station shown in the 1914 photo from CP's Corporate Archives in J. D. Booth's book "*Railways of Southern Quebec*".

As the result of my question, our member Michael Shirlaw sent along a letter with some extra comments about the stations at Cookshire. In commenting about the above mentioned photo, Michael referred to the 1890 photo is same book that shows the earlier station in this community.

Based on Michael's comments and closer examination of the photographs and the station, I would now conclude that the present station is probably a modified version of the one that existed in 1914. It was the "hatchet job" removal of the west portion that caused my original question. However, an explanation is that perhaps the bay window was extended and the east end modified at an earlier date when money and care were available to be able match the earlier station. On this basis the present station would be the community's second depot on CP's line.

After nearly a year of looking, I finally found the relocated and restored South Durham (Durham Sud) station. The village South Durham, named in 1878, is about 10 miles west on Richmond on the old St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad (GTR Montréal – Portland, line). The post office was located in the station a few years after this portion of the line was opened in 1851. The original station was destroyed by fire in 1891 and a new brick depot was constructed. This brick structure was destroyed by fire in 1902 and the present frame structure was built. The nearby station agent's house was demolished in 1964. Five years later in 1969, the station was closed. In 1970, the Bonanni family purchased the station and moved it to Melbourne Vallée to become

part of a motel complex. However, except for moving the station and placing it on a concrete foundation, nothing was done to it. As a real derelict in 1989 it was moved again by new owners and first apparently used as a restaurant and then in 1992 total restoration was undertaken by the new owner and a local historical group. Today, it sits on a full basement on a hillside overlooking the St. Francis valley some 9 kilometres east of South Durham. It was this distance that caused my problem in locating it. On my recent visit the basement which has the concrete walls covered with soft bricks was one of the galleries for a weekend art show. The hillside lot permits a ground level entrance to the basement.

The station's exterior has been fully restored with a open verandah along the front to represent the passenger platform. It is painted back in its earlier colours of cream with green trim. The building, a single storey station with a hip roof is broken into roughly four equal parts. In the main station, the operator's office, etc., is in the middle with the ladies' waiting room on one end and the men's on the other next to the baggage room. Entrance today is through the baggage room, but all four rooms contains extensive displays of railway memorabilia. The baggage room and operator's area contain many artefacts normally found in those areas while the waiting rooms have collections of more general nature including many letters, bills of lading, posters, etc.

This restored station is about 9 km east of Durham Sud, on the Melbourne Vallée Road, just south of Route 116. Its well worth a visit.

Another station that still exists in its original location on the old Montréal – Portland GTR line is the one at Coaticook. Coaticook is a town about 20 miles south of Sherbrooke. This station was either designed or built by a committee. The south end is a single storey building with a slightly flattened witch's hat type conical roof. The north two-thirds of the station is a full two storeys with one gable ended roof setting across the station while the most northerly portion has a gable with a north-south peak. The operator's bay window is duplicated on the second floor. The main entrance on the side away from the track is under the crossway central gable roof. However, the entrance has half a conical roof over it to form a portico complete with a large fancy wooden column each side of the door. This station is painted in standard ochre red with cream trim and is presently used by lodge. Coaticook was also the site of a large railway ballast pit that was located across from the station and just slightly south.

When I had problems finding the South Durham station that was only moved about 9 km, imagine my surprise when I found a station that was moved about 30 km as the crow flies. Looking at the roads and routes this would probably be in the order of 30 miles or about 50 km in route distance. I found it on a hill overlooking a valley, the Vermont border and hills about 5 km east of Stanstead. This station is the GTR station from Compton. Compton is 8 miles north of Coaticook and the birthplace of Louis S. St-Laurent, one time Prime Minister of Canada. The original station site at Compton was about a mile west of the village. A visit to the Compton station site today reveals one the original section men's houses still in use as a private dwelling.

The relocated Compton station, like Coaticook, is painted in CN's earlier paint scheme. The station has been reversed with its turret and waiting room facing southward. The new owner appears to have kept all the original exterior features of this single storey frame station.

The last Québec station that I will bore you with this month is at North Hatley, on CP's abandoned Beebe Subdivision.

This line was also mentioned in the June Column. The line was built by the Massawippi Valley Railway Company and connected with Grand Trunk Railway at Lennoxville. The North Hatley station is a storey and half frame structure with a gable roof. It and its low-pitched gable roofed connected freight shed have been converted into the Town Offices. One interesting feature is that, at least today, the operators bay has a single slope lean-to roof on it. This shingle clad structure is painted light green and probably sports two other features that were not in the original design, shutters and window boxes for flowers. In the main village a couple of hundred metres north of the station the old rail line crossed a stream on a small wooden trestle. The south span of this trestle has been removed, railings added along the sides and a gazebo built on it to form a wharf-like walk over the water.

#### **More Heritage Stations**

The federal Minister of Communications has added the following stations on CN Rail lines to the list of Heritage stations in Canada: In Ontario, CN stations at Kingston, Casselman and Grimsby, and VIA/CN stations at Alexandria, Georgetown and Niagara Falls. In Quebec the VIA/CN stations at Matapedia and New-Carlisle have been declared heritage. The stations at Chandler, Carleton, Charney and Hervey-Junction and Caplan in Quebec and Port Colborne, Washago, Merriton, Caledonia, Gananoque and Maxville in Ontario have been turned down.

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Sending a few extra notes to Gord Webster on Hamilton Station, Abandonments of the Marmora and other lines as well as a line the status of the sale of the Murray Bay Subdivision to QRCI