



January 1990 \$2.75

# Branchline

CANADA'S RAIL NEWSMAGAZINE



# Branchline

CANADA'S RAIL NEWSMAGAZINE

*Branchline* is published by the Bytown Railway Society Inc., an all-volunteer, non-profit organization incorporated under federal government statute to promote an interest in railways and railway history. The Society operates without federal, provincial, or municipal grants and it owns and operates a number of pieces of historic railway equipment, holds twice-monthly meetings, and arranges excursions and activities of railway interest.

*Branchline* is published monthly (July and August combined). Opinions expressed in *Branchline* are those of the author concerned and are not necessarily those of the Society. Information contained in *Branchline* may be copied or used in other publications provided that the author and *Branchline* are credited.

The membership/subscription rate for any 12-month period (11 issues) is: \$27.00 for addresses within Canada; \$27.00 in U.S. funds or \$31.00 in Canadian funds for addresses in the United States; and \$40.00 for addresses outside Canada and the United States. Please direct all membership/subscription correspondence to:

Membership Chairman  
Bytown Railway Society Inc.  
P.O. Box 141, Station A  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8V1

Please check your address label: the expiry date of your membership/subscription appears in the upper left corner of your mailing label. Notice of expiry will be stamped next to the address label on the second-to-last and last issues.

Articles, news items, letters, and photographs are welcomed and should be forwarded to one of the following:

Managing Editor and  
Motive Power Editor  
Earl Roberts  
33 Eastpark Drive  
Gloucester, Ontario  
K1B 3Z6

News Editor  
Philip Jago  
1133 Elmlea Drive  
Gloucester, Ontario  
K1J 6W1

Features Editor  
David Stremes  
214 Belford Crescent  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1Z 7B1

Photo Editor  
Bruce Ballantyne  
77 Shetland Way  
Kanata, Ontario  
K2M 1S7

The editors thank all those who have contributed articles, items, and photos for this issue. As well, they acknowledge the invaluable assistance of:

John Coleman - Graphics  
John Frayne - Memberships  
Marthe and Jack Scott -  
Distribution

Printed by EAS Illustrators and Printers Limited, Ottawa, Ontario

## ON SHEET

Information Line .....	3
TidBits .....	5
The Rise and Decline of Old Strathcona .....	7
Annual Branchline Photo Contest .....	14
Railpass '88 (Part III) .....	16
Gaspé Weekend .....	18
NTA Decisions .....	20
Letters to the Editor .....	21
Along The Right of Way .....	22
Motive Power Scene .....	22

**NOTICE OF MEETINGS:** Meetings are held in the auditorium of the National Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd., Ottawa, at 19:30 on the first and third Tuesdays of each month (except July and August).

**Tuesday, JANUARY 2** - Our Annual General Meeting at which the executive for 1990 will be elected. Have you considered letting your name stand for an executive position?

Following the election, Helmut Schade, outgoing photographer with Carleton University's School of Architecture, will present a narrated slide show on railway stations across Canada. Ray Farand and David Stremes will be providing coffee and doughnuts, for a small fee.

**Tuesday, JANUARY 16** - Our 'third Tuesday of the month informal slide night'. Bring out some of your current slides, or some oldies, and share your experiences and skills.

**Every Saturday** - Restoration/maintenance activities continue at the rear of the National Museum of Science and Technology. There's always plenty to keep one busy year round - e.g. washing, painting, chipping, filing, sanding, etc. Come on out.

**COVER PHOTOS SOUGHT:** The Publications Committee is looking for a suitable cover photograph for the upcoming *Canadian Trackside Guide*. Our preference is for a striking colour slide of a Canadian locomotive in a vertical format, or a horizontal shot that would, through cropping, lend to a vertical format. Deadline is our 'informal slide night' on January 16, 1990. If you have a suitable entry and cannot attend the January 16 meeting, kindly forward your entry to our mailing address.

## ON THE COVER

*Ex-CN 4-8-4 6060 simmers outside CP's South Edmonton station on August 15, 1989 prior to ten days of running back and forth on ¼ mile of track for the Fringe Theatre Festival. Photo by R.F.M. McInnis,*

*The first train into South Edmonton on July 25, 1891. Note the link-and-pin coupler pocket on the Calgary and Edmonton caboose. Prov. Archives of Alta. B6204*

-- DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY ISSUE IS JANUARY 13 --

## Information Line

**VIA RAIL TO OFFER DISCOUNT FARES:** On December 6, VIA Rail announced a new fare structure, effective January 15, the day its services will be cut by half.

VIA will offer discounts to passengers who buy tickets in advance or who will travel on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Saturday.

The new fare structure is called market-specific pricing and is supposed to let VIA charge what the market will bear. VIA's fares are presently based solely on distance travelled. VIA has been losing business to buses because rail fares are too high.

The new structure will mean higher fares on trains between Toronto and Vancouver, some increases on trains in the Quebec City to Windsor corridor, and essentially the same ticket prices on trains between Montreal and Halifax.

There will be 40% discounts on tickets bought in advance, and 10% for seniors and students.

In the corridor, fares will rise by an average of 9% on the busiest days, while there will be 40% discounts for off-day travel if tickets are purchased five days in advance. Peak fares for a one-way trip between Montreal and Toronto will be \$65 (presently \$60), while tickets bought in advance will cost \$39. Between Toronto and Windsor the peak fare will be \$49 and off peak \$24. (Canadian Press, 07/12/89)

**INCOME FOR CN RAIL SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN 1988:** Net income for CN Rail's first three quarters of 1989 is \$186.9 million, down \$72.5 million from 1988's record of \$282.7 million.

The sudden downturn has been blamed on a slump in demand for commodities such as coal, sulphur, potash, lumber, wood products and pulp and paper.

Coupled to the impact of lower revenues was a \$62.7 million writedown of CN's assets in its CNCP Telecommunications partnership.

Although earnings are down, the corporation's debt load has also been reduced. Interest expenses have declined \$81.9 million from 1988. (The Ottawa Citizen, 17/11/89)

**RAIL MUSEUM FOR PEMBROKE WATERFRONT:** Approval in principle has been given by Pembroke city council to establish a rail museum along the city's waterfront. Consisting of a baggage car, dining car and observation, as well as one locomotive, the display would be located near the Council for the Champlain Waterway tourist office at the city's Centenary Park.

According to Zolo Demeter of the Rail Road Heritage Association of Pembroke, the display would be a major tourist draw in addition to enhancing the waterfront in the vicinity of Canadian Pacific's Chalk River Subdivision which hugs the west shore of the Ottawa River as it passes through Pembroke.

During the next phase of the project, contacts will be made as to the availability of suitable equipment for display. (Pembroke Observer, 08/11/89, thanks to Ray Farand)

**NEWSPAPER SEES MERIT IN MAKING RAILWAYS A MAJOR ISSUE IN THE NEXT ELECTION:** Alarmed by comments by newly appointed CN Chairman Brian Smith that he "was asked to do [the] job because the prime minister wanted a westerner and a British Columbian and wanted to emphasize to the country that Canadian National, while its corporate brain might be in Montreal, its body and its soul and its heart is in

western Canada and the Pacific", the Halifax Daily News has claimed in an editorial that Atlantic Canada is being "slighted by such inappropriate comments" which appear to shift the focus of the country's rails to the west at the expense of the east coast. According to the paper, the "time is at hand when railways and their constitutional value - certainly their economic value - becomes an election issue once again." (Halifax Daily News, 23/10/89)

**BUSES HURTING IN NEW BRUNSWICK:** In what should be a familiar story to supporters of Canada's battered passenger rail network, SMT bus lines, which links communities in New Brunswick, has announced that it wishes to drop its money losing routes on secondary roads in the province. This year, it is forecasting a loss of \$839,000 while rationalization would trim the deficit to \$452,000 in 1990.

Appearing in front of a Public Utilities Board hearing into SMT's application, one witness blasted the company which is owned by the large Irving Corporation for seeking permission "to dump people off the highways." (Canadian Press, 31/10/89)

**STUDY TO DETERMINE WHETHER ADIRONDACK LINE TO BE RETAINED:** The Adirondack North Country Association is spending \$30,000 to determine whether the former New York Central branch line between Utica and Lake Placid, New York, should be retained. With the exception of a brief period during the late-seventies and early-eighties when the State attempted to operate the 122-mile line as a common carrier short line, the route has not been operated since 1972 when it was closed by the now-defunct Penn Central Railroad.

Environmental groups are pushing to have the tracks removed and the road bed converted into a hiking trail. (Canadian Press, 30/10/89)

**CN LINE SOLD TO CONRAIL:** Conrail and Canadian National have reached agreement on the sale, operation and lease of portions of CN's Massena Subdivision. Three segments of the line between Massena, New York, and Beauharnois, Quebec, are involved. CN's 38.9 mile Massena-Huntingdon line will be sold to Conrail for approximately \$15 million. The agreement also involves the extension of a leasing agreement involving the St. Lawrence and Adirondack Railway, a Conrail Subsidiary. As a condition of the sale, CN will continue to maintain trackage rights. (Daily Traffic World, 23/10/89)

**NEW LINE FOR SASKATCHEWAN:** Canadian Pacific is constructing a 20.9-km line between Fosston, on its Tisdale Subdivision, and Kelvington.

Built with assistance from the federal government's 1984 Branch Line Rehabilitation Agreement, the new line will allow Canadian National to abandon 65 km of line between Kelvington and Preeceville. Construction of the new line was deemed to be cheaper than the cost of rehabilitating the CN trackage which was in extremely bad shape.

The new line should yield a traffic potential of between 60,000 and 100,000 tonnes of grain annually. (CP Rail News, November 1989)

**MONUMENT DEDICATED TO CHINESE WORKERS WHO PLAYED KEY ROLE IN CONSTRUCTION OF C.P.R.:** During September, ceremonies were held in Toronto to dedicate a special monument which honours the memories of the 17,000 Chinese labourers who were instrumental in the construction of Canadian Pacific's transcontinental line through

the Rocky Mountains.

Located just to the west of Toronto's Skydome stadium and adjacent to Canadian National's Oakville Subdivision, the memorial depicts the construction of a railway trestle in rough terrain by Chinese workers. The monument is 12.8 metres high, 10.7 metres wide and 4.6 metres deep.

The inspiration of the Toronto-based Foundation to Commemorate the Chinese Railway Workers in Canada, the monument's completion was assisted in no small way by a variety of corporate donations from a number of Canadian firms including Canadian Pacific.

Indeed, enthusiasm for the memorial was such that it was oversubscribed, thereby making it possible for a Canadian history studies scholarship open to all Canadian students to be established.

In conjunction with the monument and the scholarship, the Chinese Railway Workers Foundation will also set up a special display room in the proposed New Heritage Railroad Museum which is to be located in CP Rail's former John Street Roundhouse. (CP Rail News, November 1989)

**THUMBS DOWN ON PLAN FOR TOURIST LINE:** Plans to convert a portion of Canadian Pacific's Waterford Subdivision (nee Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo) into a steam tourist railway have been cancelled by the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority. The Authority had wanted to set up a steam tourist operation to run scenic tours to its Dundas Valley trail centre which is a former railway station.

The tourist railway idea was nixed after a consultant's study concluded that the ride would be unable to generate sufficient revenue to cover its operating costs. The Authority, moreover, balked at a CP Rail proposal to sell the 9-mile line for \$400,000. The company values the steel at \$500,000. Also inhibiting the project was the project of investing an additional \$1.5 million in the acquisition of equipment and the construction of maintenance and station facilities.

The Authority now wants to revisit the idea and investigate the possibility of turning the right-of-way into a hiking trail. (Hamilton Spectator, thanks to Clive Spate)

**LIGHT RAIL LINE PROPOSED FOR MONTREAL:** During the closing days of the recent Quebec election campaign, provincial transport minister Marc-Yvan Cote announced that a 13 km (8 miles)-long bus link between a \$500,000 terminal in the South Shore city of Brossard and a \$27 million underground bus terminal in Montreal will be completed by the spring of 1993. Costing a total of \$85 million, the main feature of the proposal is a bus-only path on an existing ice-breaking structure located upstream of the Champlain Bridge over the St. Lawrence River and Seaway.

This path would avoid the St. Lawrence Seaway channel by means of a 1.4 km (4/5 mile)-long tunnel. Minister Cote pointed out that the bridge-tunnel could eventually accommodate light rail rapid transit trains (LRTs). The existing reserved lane for buses on the Champlain Bridge is now used by about 200 bus trips hauling more than 12,000 passengers, an increase of 150% since the lane was designated in 1978. This is about 1/3 of the daily number of passengers crossing the St. Lawrence each day. Most of the others use Line 4 of the Montreal Metro.

No doubt the announcement will exacerbate an ideological war between the provincial government and the STCUM arising from the fact that the former has long resisted providing further funds for the necessarily-underground (and, at \$40 million + per

kilometre, prohibitively expensive) extensions of the runner-tired Metro, preferring instead to fund steel-wheel-on-steel-rail options such as the commuter trains on the West Island. Incidentally, construction of a new commuter line to the western sector of the South Shore using CP Rail to Adirondack Junction, and Conrail thence to Chateauguay, was also announced during the campaign. The route proposed was served by New York Central RR commuter trains until the mid-1950s. (Omer Lavallée)

**GREMLINS:** A few gremlins crept into the December issue -

On Page 14 it was mentioned that CN's boxcab electric 9180-9188 were renumbered 180-188 in 1949 and 6716-6724 in 1949. The latter renumbering took place in 1969;

A line was omitted from Rolland Lafleur's Christmas story on Page 17 regarding the lighting of Pintsch-gas fixtures which left the reader with the impression that the coach would blow up. It should have read .. the trainman activated each fixture individually by opening the gas valve, then rotating the rod swiftly to thrust the wick into the globe and ignite the jet. The gas line was concealed inside the tubing of one of the four legs of the bracket.

And a line of VIA's Toronto-Sarnia schedule (Page 10) was omitted. The schedule effective January 15, 1990 will be:

87	181	81		80	88	188
DAILY	SUN	EXC		DAILY	EXC	SUN
		SUN			SUN	
1810	1215	0725	TORONTO	1110	2025	2305
2115	1505	1035	LONDON	0810	1735	2015
2235	1614	1145	SARNIA	0700	1635	1915

**SCHEDULE FINE-TUNING:** Shortly after the December issue went to press, VIA made some minor adjustments to the planned January 15 schedules as printed on Page 10:

\* Train 74 will leave Windsor at 12:05 (not 12:10 as printed);

\* Train 1 ("Super Continental") will leave Winnipeg at 12:30 (not 12:00); leave Edmonton at 07:50 (not 07:45); and leave Jasper at 14:05 (not 15:00);

\* Train 12 ("Atlantic") will leave Montreal at 19:00 on Monday, Thursday and Saturday (not Tuesday, Friday and Sunday);

\* Train 14 ("Ocean") will leave Montreal at 18:45 on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday (not Monday, Thursday and Saturday);

\* Train 16 ("Chaleur") will leave Montreal at 18:45 on Monday, Thursday and Saturday (not Tuesday, Friday and Sunday);

\* (Trains 11, 15 and 17 will operate on the days as printed);

**CN TO TEST 'ATCS' SYSTEM:** Automated Monitoring and Control International (AMCI) has signed Canadian National Railways to a pilot project to test AMCI's work order reporting system.

The system will enable CN train crews to report the status of car movements directly from a computer terminal on the locomotive. With this enhanced data reporting capability, CN will be able to provide realtime information to customers concerning the location and status of their shipments. The system also provides improved reporting accuracy.

CN joins Union Pacific, a part owner of AMCI, in using the system.

The work order reporting system, an ATCS application, transmits data from an on-train computer to a host computer via a data radio communications link.

The 15-month pilot project will be implemented over 120 miles of track in the Belleville, Ontario, area, and will involve three test trains. (Modern Railways, October 1989)

# TidBits

by DUNCAN DU FRESNE

## "One hell of a bang"

I think that everyone knows what a torpedo is. It is a fast moving, self-propelled, self-guided, high explosive underwater device used against enemy ships. Right? Of course!

But there is another form of torpedo, the railway torpedo. This is the one we are concerned with here. I've got a mild suspicion that many Branchline readers are, in all probability, not aware of its existence, let alone its intended purpose. It certainly isn't used as an offensive weapon against some other company's locomotives!

My favourite old rule book, the August 26, 1951 edition of the **Uniform Code of Operating Rules (UCOR)** does not, unfortunately, describe a torpedo, although it certainly prescribes its use. Let's examine the torpedo.

Similar to its naval counterpart, it is an explosive device. But there the similarity ends. It looks a little bit like a crab when viewed from the side. Flat on the bottom, humped on top, about 3 inches long and the width of the head of a rail. It is equipped with a wire clip at each end that gives our crab lookalike "legs". These wire legs permit the device to be clipped onto the top of a rail.

Well, that's all very nice you say - so what? What now? Run a locomotive over it and you'll soon find out - it will explode with what can best be described as "one hell of a bang." This bang can be easily heard over the noise of the noisiest locomotive. It's a bang which will get the attention of any engine crew (probably even a deaf one) which of course is the purpose of the torpedo in the first place. In effect, the railway torpedo is a (very) audible signalling device.

So much for what the torpedo is. When and how is it used? Let's go back to my old rule book and find out.

Under rule number 31, it says, in part, that: [engine whistle] "Signal 14(m) must also be sounded immediately a train stops when trainman is required, under rules 41(c) or 44(d) to replace torpedoes exploded."

A 14(m) whistle signal is one extended long blast, the contents of rules 41(c) and 44(d) are not of any great importance for our purposes here. The key words in my out of context extract from rule 31 is "to replace torpedoes exploded".

The torpedoes were exploded in this case because a track gang had put them out as protection for a section of track upon which they were working. Once a train proceeds (under the direction of the foreman in charge or the flagman), the replaced torpedoes will be in the correct location for the next approaching train.

By the way, the flagman who was out there was equipped with:

a) by day: a red flag on a staff as well as at least 8 torpedoes and 5 red fuses.

b) by night or when weather or other conditions obscured day signals: a red light; a white light; a supply of matches; as well as at least 8 torpedoes and 5 red fuses.

Let's examine another situation. Rather than paraphrase, I'll give you rule 99 verbatim from the 1951 UCOR. It says:

When a train is moving under circumstances in which it may be overtaken by another train, lighted fuses must be dropped off at proper intervals and such other action taken as may be necessary to ensure full protection.

When a train stops under circumstances in which it may be overtaken by another train, a flagman must go back immediately with flagman's signals a sufficient distance to ensure full protection, at least:

In day time, if there is no down grade within one mile of its rear and there is a clear view of rear of 2000 yards from an approaching train - - - - 1000 yards.

At other times and places, if there is no down grade toward train within one mile of its rear - - - - 1500 yards.

If there is a down grade toward train within one mile of its rear - - - - 2000 yards.

Except that when trains are operating under automatic block signal system rules, with signals in operation, and with at least two automatic block signals in the direction of movement immediately to the rear, flagman must go back a sufficient distance to provide full protection against trains moving at restricted speed.

When a train stops under circumstances in which it may be overtaken by another train, the engineer will immediately signal the flagman to protect the rear. When ready to proceed he will recall the flagman.

The flagman must, after going back a sufficient distance from the train to ensure full protection, take up a position where there will be an unobstructed view of him from an approaching train of, if possible, 500 yards, first placing torpedoes not more than 100 nor less than 50 yards apart to cause two explosions at least 200 yards beyond such position and, when necessary, in addition, displaying lighted fuses, and must not return until recalled or relieved and safety of the train will permit. If necessary to go beyond the required distance he will leave the torpedoes at the required distance as an indication of the location of his train, but must, under such conditions, also place torpedoes at the point at which an approaching train is flagged.

If recalled before another train arrives he must, in addition to the torpedoes, leave a fusee burning red at the point from which he returns and while returning to his train a fusee burning red must be placed at such points or times as may be necessary to ensure full protection. When curvature, weather or other conditions require, or when snow plows or flangers may be running, extra precaution must be taken.

There is more to this rule, but enough already! You will be interested in knowing that the 1962 UCOR (still in use), while somewhat updated, prescribes essentially the same actions as the 1951 version.

By the way, when I was railroading, we had a "tongue-in-cheek" unofficial version of the foregoing. It went like this: "Give them all the room you think they'll need, then add a half a mile."

To wind up, let's look at a tid bit of torpedo humour. Mr. Herbert Stitt, a Toronto-based CPR locomotive engineer who retired in 1962, recalls an incident which goes like this:

One day, he was called for a helper engine out of Lambton to assist freight trains upgrade from Leaside to Agincourt. Sometime after midnight, he got orders to return to Lambton. After passing North Toronto station, he and his fireman saw the red marker lamps of the van of a stationary freight train up ahead.

Mr. Stitt pulled the engine up to within a car length of the van and stopped. He and his mate discovered that there was yet another freight ahead of the one they were standing behind and that they were going to be there for two or three hours.

It was an excellent opportunity for some sleep but one had to know when the train ahead moved or you could find yourself in a rather awkward situation.

Mr. Stitt instructed his fireman to sneak up ahead and place a couple of torpedoes just ahead of the wheels of the van. He also told him to be careful and not get caught by the

conductor or brakeman on the van.

The fireman did as instructed and returned to his engine whereupon he and Mr. Stitt settled down for some shut-eye.

Sometime later they were awakened by the explosion of torpedoes under the wheels of the van. They then waited for the freight train to move a few car lengths before following. They hadn't moved a foot when they heard the most deafening roar of a series of explosions.

Up ahead, two men stood on the platform of the van, killing themselves laughing. Stitt and his mate saw the humour of it and laughed too. Obviously the boys on the van had spotted the fireman doing the deed and decided to get their licks too. They'd placed every torpedo they had under the tender wheels of the helper engine.

Mr. Stitt recalled that the lights in nearby houses started coming on and blinds were going up all around them. The occupants must have thought that war had been declared.

As Mr. Stitt concluded, "Incidents like this made railroading an even greater pleasure."

---

## Restored "Varnish" on Display at Heritage Park

[The following, written by Omer Lavallée, Corporate Historian Emeritus, CP Rail, originally appeared in the October 1989 issue of *CP Rail News*.]

During its annual "Railroad Days" in July, Calgary's Heritage Park unveiled its latest restored exhibit; Canadian Pacific No. 141, a 1907-era wooden suburban passenger car, fully restored externally to its as-built varnished natural wood finish, complete with gold lettering and ornamentation. Work on restoration of the interior to return it to its original cane-upholstered 'walkover' seating is still under way.

The car's exterior appearance is somewhat startling to viewers who are unaware that this was the CPR's standard finish for most wooden passenger train cars between the mid-1880s and the First World War. To see No. 141 is to appreciate why old-time railroad men gave the nickname 'the varnish' to passenger trains. I can recall personally seeing only one car finished in this way; official car No. 8 assigned to the Laurentian Division which used to be kept at Montreal's Place Viger Station. I was only six or seven years old at the time (early 1930s).

### EARLY YEARS

During its early years, the CPR painted its passenger equipment in a varnished ochre colour used throughout North America. In 1884, the company adopted a varnished mahogany finish for new sleeping cars built that year. The story goes that Van Horne elected this treatment after seeing the beautiful grain in the woodwork of newly-finished, but unpainted, cars in the shop of Barney & Smith in Dayton, Ohio.

Thereafter, all passenger train cars got this treatment, the only exception being second-hand cars whose exterior surfaces were not of good enough quality. These remained yellow until about 1890 when they were painted to match the varnished cars.

When the company acquired its first steel passenger cars in 1912, the mahogany-coloured paint was applied to them as well. The long-lived rich shade of maroon (designated officially, but incorrectly, as 'tuscan red') was adapted in 1917 at the suggestion of the CPR-controlled Soo Line, whose standard it

had been for many years.

Because replacing and refinishing varnished surfaces was expensive, the CPR, as an economy measure, started painting wooden cars in a maroon colour, beginning about 1916. However, wooden official and business cars were excepted from this provision until the 1930s, when Depression belt-tightening resulted in an order that those cars be painted as well.

Many old-time officers resented this policy and made sure that their local shops kept the exterior of their varnished cars in good condition. One such officer, who resisted painting his own car, appealed to CPR's then-chairman, Sir Edward Beatty, threatening to resign. His request was granted, but his former car went into the paint shop within days of his retirement, around 1936.

### QUIRK OF FATE

It is a quirk of fate that No. 141, the car owned by the Calgary Heritage Park, survived and is now being restored. Used in passenger service, this wooden open-platformed coach was one of many assigned in later years to seasonal services, such as Montreal's Laurentian ski trains and Winnipeg's summer trains to 'The Beach'. Removed from service in 1951, all of these cars were converted into service equipment as boarding and related cars. Most had been retired and scrapped by 1972 when the company was faced with the challenge of finding early-appearance equipment for use in the CBC television documentary 'The National Dream'.

Ex-No. 141 was still in existence in work service in Atlantic Canada. It was quickly drafted for use in the documentary and was repainted in CPR maroon with 1880s style lettering and ornamentation. Following its TV role, the car became part of CP Rail's community centennial train in 1974.

Retired from this role around 1980, the car was presented to the Heritage Park in Calgary along with the boxcar and flatcar also used in the documentary. It was stored until financial resources became available to restore it properly. For those readers in the Calgary area, it is worth a visit to the Park to see No. 141, which will be exhibited under cover in the roundhouse.

# The Rise and Decline of Old Strathcona via Railway History

by R.F.M. MCINNIS

August 1989

In Old Strathcona, or South Edmonton in Canadian Pacific parlance, the sound of the steam engine had not been heard for many years. Yet this was the "End of Steel" for the erstwhile Calgary and Edmonton Railway.

The tracks had long since been torn up. There is little to mark the importance of the railway's role in the creation of the community almost one hundred years ago. Recently though, the three block strip of open city property where once the tracks had lain, reverberated again to the sound and shake of steam power and the shrill whistle of a locomotive whistle. Was this to be the beginning of something new? This three block area is a piece of land the developers would love to get their hands on. They have in fact tried. It is the last piece of open vista from which the City of Edmonton can be viewed as one comes driving from the south and into the city. The railway gave us that, at least, and the diligent citizens, along with the local historical foundation, successfully fought development off.

At the head of this three block area, which lies just north of the Canadian Pacific's South Edmonton station, are two concrete blocks and a sign which marks it as the spot where the Calgary and Edmonton Railway track ended, on a lip of land, overlooking the cliffs of the North Saskatchewan River. Today this is a little noticed tourist site.

On this day in August, ex-CN 4-8-2 No. 6060, under the watchful eye and capable hand of locomotive engineer Harry Home of Jasper, Alberta, peered down past those concrete blocks, past the sign that proclaims "End of Steel", past the cliffs overlooking scenic Saskatchewan Drive and the river below, as if saying - "I reclaim this spot for the railways - notice me!"

-----

## Early Settlement

The settlement of South Edmonton, as it was originally called, or Strathcona as it became to be known, or Old Strathcona as it is currently known, began as part of the settling of the land around the Hudson's Bay post of Fort Edmonton in the 1870s. With the railway's arrival, stores, hotels and other facilities began developing to meet the needs of newcomers and settlers that began pouring into the community by train. Prior, a five-day stage coach trip was necessary to bring people from the south along the old rutted Calgary Trail, or from the east via the equally rough Carleton Trail. Eventually limited York boat, and stern paddle wheeler service was offered along the North Saskatchewan River. Eventually there was a primitive cable ferry across from the south bank of the river to the Fort on the north side.

This small, later developing community, divided as it was by the winding, twisting, high cliffed river, from the earlier established Edmonton on the other side, was never quite able to compete. Though it tried. Mightily it tried. And it was through the railways that it tried. And it was the railways that played the major role in both their growths.

Today, like all major cities of Canada, much of what was

is gone. And even that which we now have is going. Little is being done to mark the railway's place of importance.

-----

## Calgary and Edmonton Railway

In 1890 the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company (C&ER) received a charter and land grants to build a railway from a point along the Canadian Pacific main line at Calgary running in a straight northerly direction to Edmonton. The principals in this railway were none other than William MacKenzie and Donald Mann, along with a handful of other entrepreneurs who were less interested in railway building than they were in the profits that the land grants could offer through sales to settlers. Thus, immediately upon completion of the hurriedly built and cheaply laid track, the line was leased to the CPR for operation.

The C&ER had no intention of running a line over the river to Edmonton at the time. But, because they had established a rail link with the outside world to the south side of the river, they fully intended to build here, establish a community, and usurp the position of the Fort community to the north and quickly went about planning the town site with surveys, buying up land, building roads, naming streets and constructing the first buildings, all focused from and directed toward, of course, the land grants they had secured from the Federal Government.

Securing the land in the community for railway facilities meant purchasing already owned property. In 1891, having accomplished this, most of the land between present day 102 Street and 104 Street from 76 Avenue to Saskatchewan Drive at the top of the 250-foot banks of the river, had become railway property. On this land was built a station, section house, engine house, coal shed, water tower and hotel. In this way the C&ER and the CPR began to have complete impact and control over the direction in which the community could grow.

The first station was built just south of Whyte Avenue at 103 Street, just north of where the present day station stands. From there passengers had to go on foot or by wagon or coach to the river to catch the ferry to cross to Edmonton.

The station was typical of the kind built along CP's leased lines of the 1890s. Constructed according to a standard plan (10 of this type were built between Calgary and Edmonton) the station served as railway office, living quarters and public waiting area, as well as baggage and freight depot.

It was eventually removed to serve as a residence, moved again, and being beyond restoration possibilities, a replica was designed and built, which now stands near the track at 104 Street and 86 Avenue and serves as headquarters for the Junior League of Edmonton, and meeting place, as well as housing a display of railway artifacts and photographs of Strathcona at the turn of the century.

## Importance of the Railway to the Community

The importance of the railway to the community is evident

in its very name, Strathcona, named for Lord Strathcona, Donald A. Smith, who drove the last spike at Craigellachie, B.C., on the CPR's transcontinental line in 1885. Whyte Avenue (82 Avenue) was named for Sir William Whyte, Superintendent at the time and eventually Vice President of the railway. Other CP officials are also remembered in street names.

The present day Strathcona Hotel was built by the C&ER and was opened in December of 1891 as the Edmonton Hotel. For a short time owned by the CPR, it is one of the oldest wood frame buildings still in its original use in Edmonton.

The railway registered the surveys of the townsite and graded the main streets, mainly those from the track along Whyte Avenue to 104 Street, and 104 Street to Saskatchewan Drive, causing much of the business and residential development to take place in a predetermined direction - all leading to the station and the CPR due to the road improvements in those particular areas.

The arrival of the railway not only brought in new settlers, but set off somewhat of a building boom as well. The train trip from Calgary was only 12 hours, a big improvement over the five days by stage coach. Eventually several hotels were built to accommodate the influx and Whyte Avenue soon proliferated with new shops, many of which still exist to this day in their original appearance.

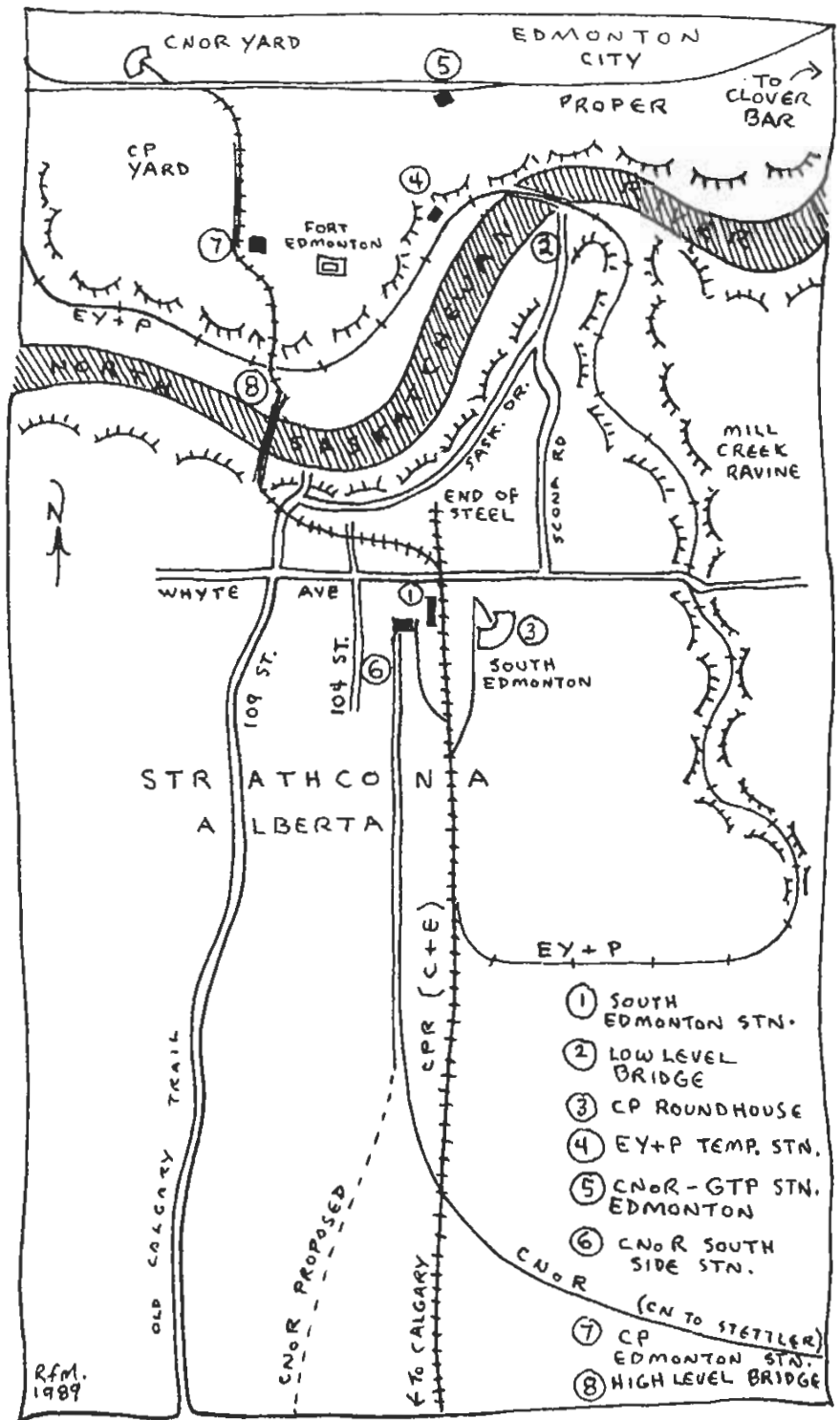
In 1893, the C&ER built new roads into the river valley to replace the old Fort Road down to the ferry. This road would readily wash out in a typical prairie storm, or was rutted in mud in the spring. It was steep and rutted most of the time causing hardship to travellers approaching the Fort. The new road followed a grade into the valley leading to the cable ferry to Edmonton. Edmonton, two years earlier, had obtained city status.

#### C&ER Acquired by CPR

The CPR sensed that William MacKenzie and Donald Mann of the Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR), were eyeing the line from Calgary, which the CPR was leasing only on a short term basis. In 1894 the CPR outbid MacKenzie and Mann and purchased the line outright. The line was sold to the CPR along with the Edmonton Hotel which the railway quickly sold to a private interest.

The first bridge link over the North Saskatchewan River was the building of the interurban bridge in 1898. Now known as the Low Level bridge, it meant the end for the cable ferry service as well as the end for the steam boat service as goods could now be transported directly into the city from the rail head by transport.

The first bridge link over the North Saskatchewan River was the building of the interurban bridge in 1898. Now known as the Low Level bridge, it meant the end for the cable ferry service as well as the end for the steam boat service as goods could now be transported directly into the city from the rail head by transport.



#### Edmonton Yukon and Pacific

It was not long before MacKenzie and Mann were at it again. In 1898 they acquired the Edmonton Yukon and Pacific Railway (EY&P), a line chartered in 1896 under a Dominion statute, but never built, by a group of Edmonton entrepreneurs with the idea of building lines to serve the surrounding settlements including South Edmonton. MacKenzie and Mann



wasted no time in constructing the Edmonton to Strathcona section, laying track on the south side from 68th Avenue to Mill Creek, down the ravine and over the Dominion Government built interurban bridge to a small temporary station on the flats below the City of Edmonton. This line was later extended west along the base of the banks and up another ravine to 124 Street, before curving back into the downtown area.

The majority of this route today is used as a bicycle and walking trail. A small portion of it, near the High Level Bridge supports the tunnel entrance where the incomplete south leg of the LRT line emerges to cross the river.

The link, however, with the CPR line on the south side had not yet been made. When they went to do so on October 8, 1902, the old rivalries that had developed between the communities really began to show.

During the years of construction of the EY&P line, South Edmonton had been incorporated as The Town of Strathcona (15 June 1899).

No longer was a railway in control of the town, rather, its citizens. However, railways continued to be important factors in the making or breaking of Strathcona in its bid for importance next to the City of Edmonton. Now here was Edmonton about to get a rail link with the outside world and Strathcona was not about to allow that.

Just as the EY&P track crews were about to make the connection, a CP locomotive came along. Stepping aside to let it pass, the workers were a little shocked when the train stopped right over the spot where they were about to do their work. What else could they do but retire from the job and wait. Wait they did. EY&P Manager W.J. Pace, in charge of the track laying work, ordered the men to work on other projects for the day, given that Strathcona had sent a police constable with orders to arrest Pace if he tampered with the CPR's line. EY&P's charter meant that once the two lines were connected, the CPR was bound by law to allow EY&P trains to pass over its lines, and the CPR was intent on not allowing that to happen.

Word spread of the delay, and soon a small army of angry Edmontonians were on the scene, having crossed the bridge and clamoured up the hill to complain. Nothing happened, however, until 5:30 P.M. when the regular train from Calgary arrived, as the EY&P crew knew it would.

The CP locomotive blocking connection work had to move to let the regular through. When the train had passed, the EY&P foreman threw out his red flag stopping all further movement. Signalling his men out of hiding, the connection was made within the hour. Edmonton had its first rail link with the outside world.

The first train to pass over this line was on October 20, 1902, when CNoR engine No. 26, a 4-6-0, pulled a consist of two flat cars, a box car and a coach through the route carrying a load of dignitaries and guests to Edmonton as the first train to cross over the bridge and touch the soil of that city. Once across, the train stopped while the photographer took his historic shots before proceeding further along the line about one half mile to the temporary station below McDougall Hill and 101 Street where more photographs were taken recording the historic event. The bridge it crossed is now the west half of the two span vehicle-only Low Level Bridge.

This new line was instrumental in changing the physical growth of the community, reflecting the EY&P's role in providing transportation facilities. Two meat packing plants, Vogel and Gainer's, built on the right of way of the EY&P in Mill Creek ravine. Gainer Ltd. was until that time located on and stinking up prime "downtown" Strathcona property, right behind the Edmonton Hotel.

Other relocations and changes are reflected in the growth of Strathcona in an eastward direction from the CPR station, as well as in Mill Creek Ravine and Cloverdale Flats below the ravine. Here coal mines, brick works, iron works, gold dredging facilities and lumber companies established, all on the new line.

The now derelict Gainer's plant sits perched on the ravine embankment, idle and empty. Canadian Pacific diesel locomotives made their last runs to the plant in the late 1960s. All that is left of the EY&P line today is a wye-shaped junction running off toward the east between 68 and 69 Avenues between two industrial complexes, where the connection had been made in 1902.

### Transcontinental Line into Edmonton

The banks of the North Saskatchewan River are about 250 feet high and the valley some 2000 feet wide. The river is quite narrow and snake like, but wide enough to cause a division that forced the creation of two self reliant communities on opposite sides.

As early as 1882 it was thought that the transcontinental CPR main line through Canada's North West to the Yellowhead pass, and on to Vancouver, would pass this way. A survey to that effect was done on both sides of the river, to prove ownership.

But, on some quirk of Sir William C. Van Horne's, the building of the CPR from East to West was redirected from Winnipeg following a straight line some 200 miles further south toward the unsurveyed Kicking Horse Pass.

The arrival of the C&ER line into South Edmonton from Calgary brought the first rail link north, creating the most northerly railway terminal on the continent. But still there was no transcontinental line into Edmonton or Strathcona.

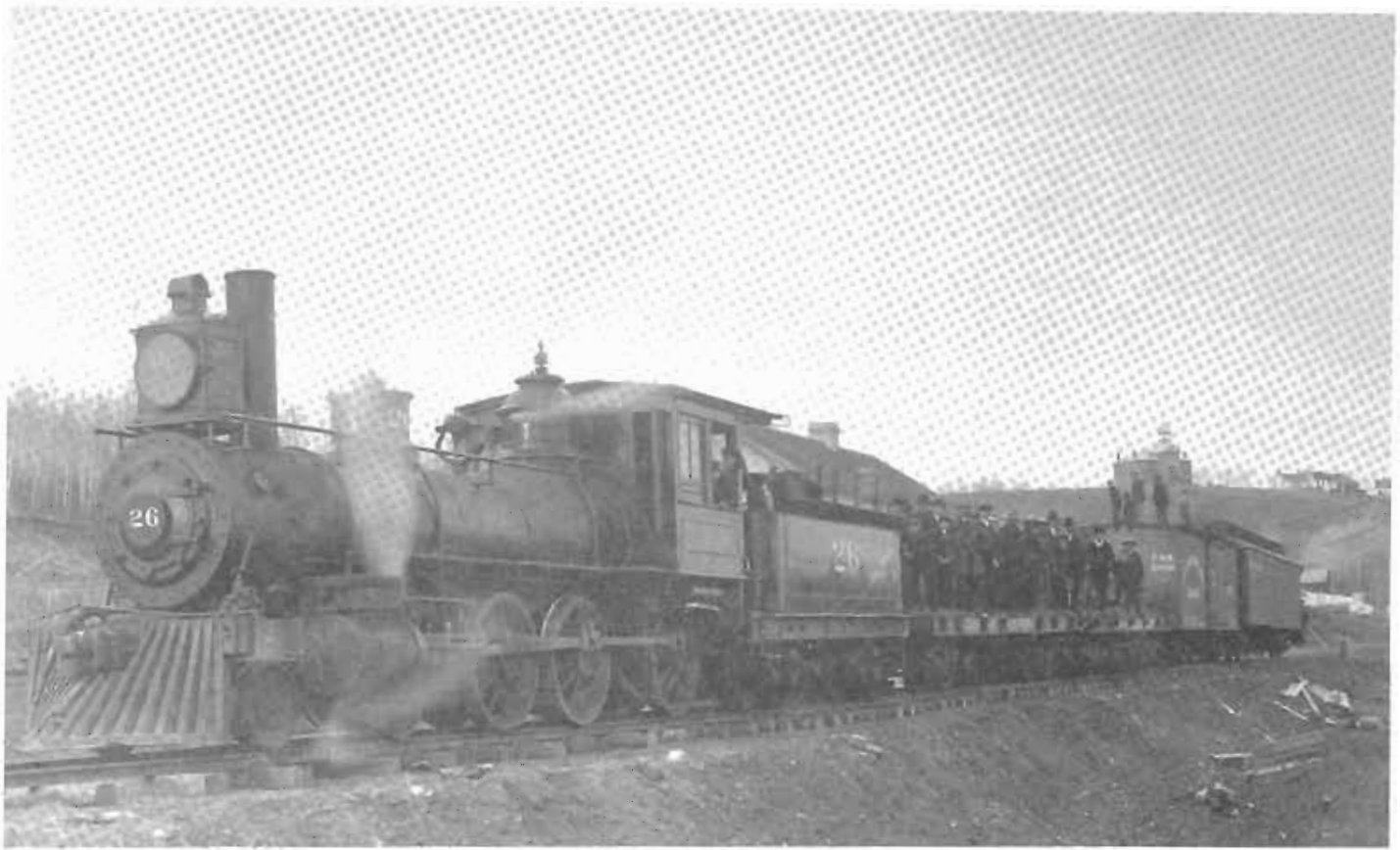
In 1901 MacKenzie and Mann of the CNoR were making deals with the City of Edmonton and the Hudson's Bay Company for land upon which to develop a terminus and shipping centre. It would appear that Strathcona was never considered as a possible location for such facilities, nor does it appear that Strathcona did anything to influence the course of events of CNoR. The CNoR was building a new transcontinental line on the route similar to that proposed for the CPR in the original survey. It did not include Strathcona, rather, it came in from the north-east, crossing the North Saskatchewan River at Fort Saskatchewan, which also had made deals with the CNoR. Had MacKenzie and Mann managed to out-bid the CPR for the C&ER line from Calgary, Strathcona's position as a railway terminus on the CNoR might have been a different story.

### Grand Trunk Pacific

Strathcona, it seems, was hedging its bets on the Grand Trunk Pacific, another transcontinental line coming in from the east and being surveyed in 1903.

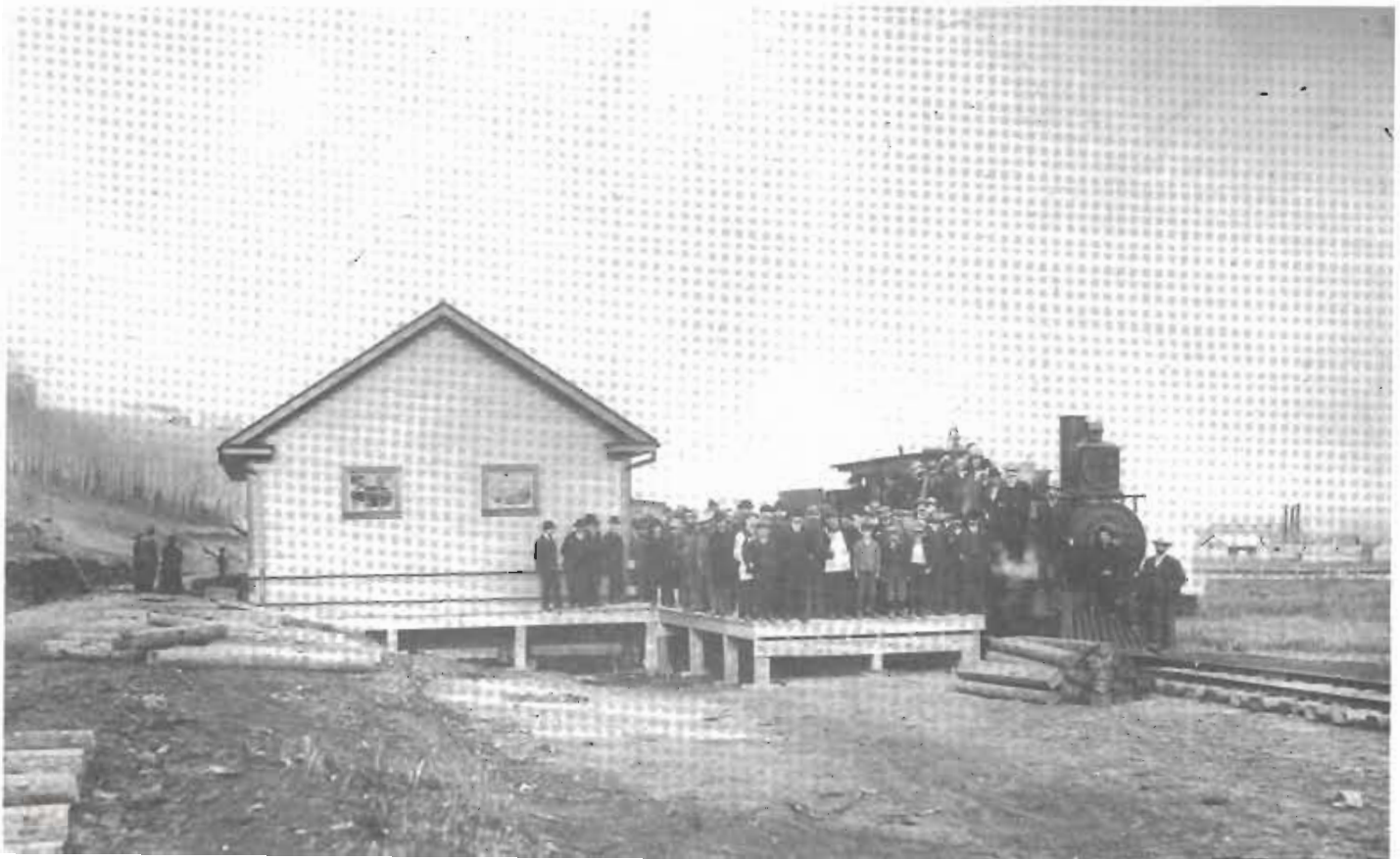
Canadian Pacific, as the outright owners of the C&ER line, were by this time more willing to put their full weight behind competition with the EY&P/CNoR links into Edmonton. Plans were drawn up to build a high level bridge over the river from the high banks of Strathcona to the high banks of Edmonton. Until this time CP had left its track in sad neglect due to the short lease.

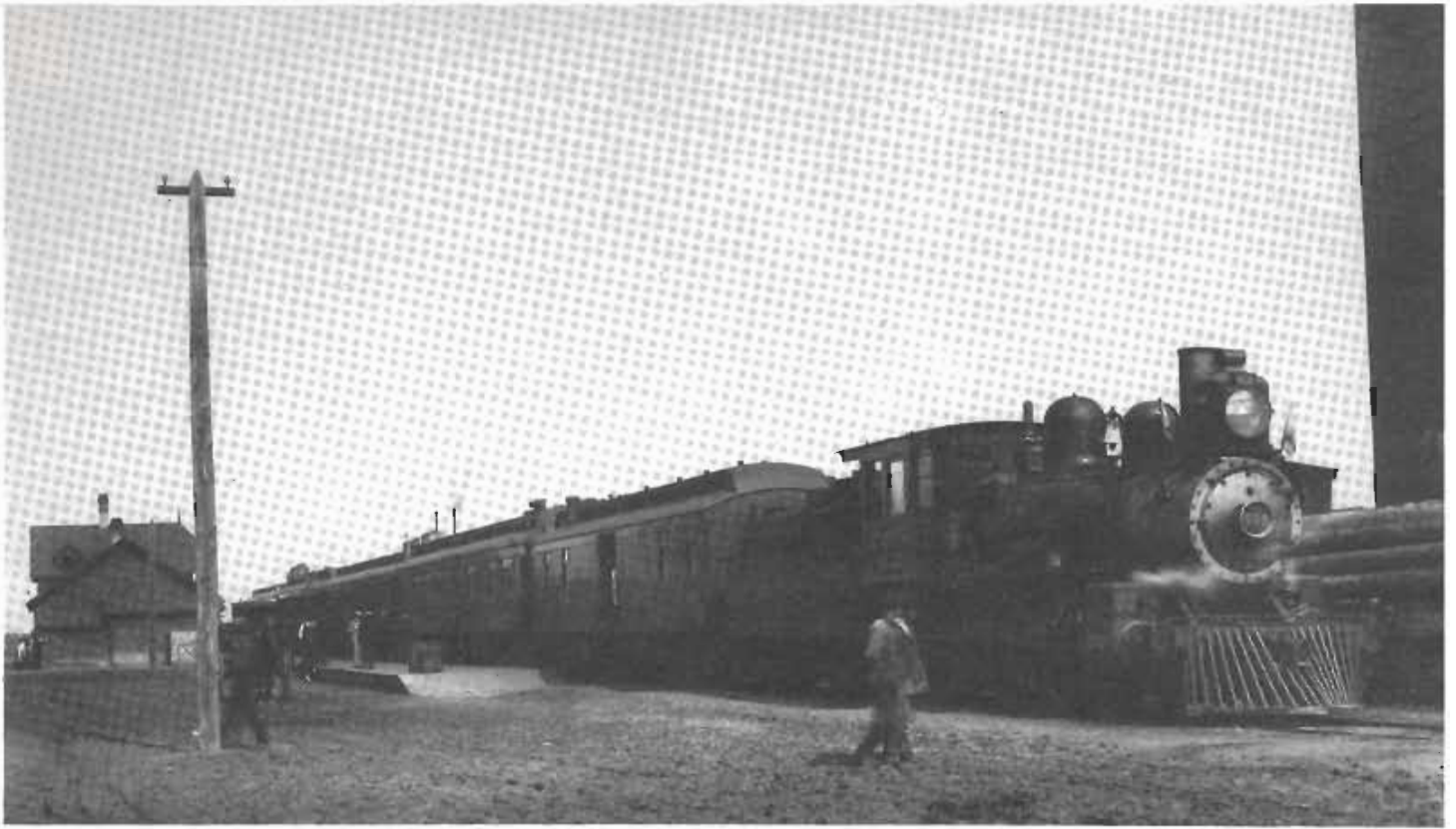
Strathcona suggested to the government that the bridge be built for use by one or more of the transcontinental lines as well as by the CPR. It had become necessary for Strathcona to get in on the transcontinental business in order to maintain its



**THE FIRST TRAIN INTO EDMONTON:** CNoR 4-6-0 No. 26 powers the first train to touch Edmonton soil, as it arrives at the temporary station, on the other side of the interurban low level bridge, on October 20, 1902. Photo courtesy of City Of Edmonton Archives, EA-10-1284.

**OCTOBER 20, 1902:** Dignitaries, officials and guests pose for the photographer at Edmonton Station at the foot of the embankment at what is now 101 Street on the inaugural run of the EY&P from Strathcona to Edmonton. To the right of CNoR No. 26 can be seen the low level bridge. Photo courtesy of Provincial Archives of Alberta, B6203.





*ABOVE: South Edmonton's first station. Whyte Avenue runs just behind the last passenger car. The present-day 1907-built station occupies the location from where this photograph was taken. Canadian Pacific 4-6-0 No. 658 is facing south on the Calgary and Edmonton line with a train of GTP officials in August 1904. Photo courtesy Provincial Archives of Alberta, B6219.*



*LEFT: Former CN 4-8-4 6060 doing its run in Edmonton's Old Strathcona on August 18, 1989. Its arrival meant nothing but many were willing to pay \$3.00 to ride back and forth on the quarter mile or track to "End of Steel". Photo by R.F.M. McInnis.*

position and growth. But in 1905, four years after negotiating its agreement with the City of Edmonton and the Hudson's Bay Company, the CNoR track arrived into Edmonton giving that city a major boost in its efforts at being Canada's most northerly metropolitan area.

When it appeared that the GTP was not aiming its projected line toward Strathcona in 1905, as early survey parties would have indicated, Strathcona complained to the Federal Government and appealed for intervention on its behalf.

The CPR had a definite location for its High Level Bridge by this time and suggestions were once again made by Strathcona of running rights over this bridge if the GTP could be directed this way instead of crossing the river at Clover Bar, east of the City of Edmonton. More surveys were ordered. Inspections of the routes were made but to no avail. The best, cheapest, most practical route from the point of view of keeping to grade, was the Clover Bar crossing. And that was the route adopted by the GTP in January of 1906. Strathcona was effectively cut off from any main line route.

### CPR Expansion

The CPR was, however, reorganizing its operations. Strathcona would be significantly upgraded in its role as northern Terminus.

An agreement had been reached between the Town of Strathcona and the railway for land and tax exemptions in return for making Strathcona the chief divisional point in Northern Alberta. The railway had promised to build the 12 stall roundhouse, a new coal shed, and other related buildings to house the increased number of employees that would be stationed in Strathcona due to its role as a divisional point. That same year, the CPR negotiated with the EY&P for running rights into Edmonton over the Mill Creek, Low Level Bridge route on a short term basis until their own bridge was built.

In February of 1907, a month before Strathcona was incorporated as a city, CPR Vice-President William Whyte, for whom Whyte Avenue was named, arrived in the community and met with the mayor. In light of the bonuses and land grants that the ratepayers had given the CPR in 1906, certain benefits were expected from the railway. CPR plans in 1907 were for a right of way running from its mainline in the south (near Regina) in an angle projected toward the north west. The western terminus of this line was Strathcona, offering the newly formed city one more chance at equal footing in its competition with Edmonton.

In addition to the roundhouse and coal shed complex, Whyte promised to make Strathcona a "CPR town" by building a section house, payroll office, ticket office in town, establish a superintendent for northern Alberta who would reside in Strathcona, build a 20 stall roundhouse, and a new \$60,000 station to replace the small branch line type station then in use. Building began immediately.

The new 1907 station still stands at 81 Avenue along 103 Street. Built in the Queen Anne style, it also incorporated elements of the French and Scottish architectural origins. The large two-tiered hipped roof with wide bell cast eaves shows the French antecedents, while the octagonal tower is of Scottish ancestry. It is likely this design reflected the Scottish origins of many of the CPR's own directors. Today the station houses the Edmonton offices of CPR's Calgary Division. The 20 stall roundhouse was never built, nor was the westward line of the CPR. Little changed for Strathcona following Whyte's visit.

Today there remains a rail yard, engine facilities, and four of the 12 stalls of the roundhouse. But Strathcona was never to become the "CPR town" that Whyte promised.

### CNoR Expansion

In the meantime, CNoR was further extending its claim in Strathcona. Between 1910 and 1912 a station was constructed, located on 80 Avenue between 103 and 104 Street. A right of way located just west of the CPR track was laid south from this station connecting with the Mill Creek line. The station was to serve two projected lines south, one to Calgary following a route paralleling the CPR's and another veering east from Strathcona toward Camrose, Stettler, Drumheller and then to Calgary.

The first planned line was never built due to objections from the CPR and from several communities along the route, including Strathcona itself. The second line was built. A 100 mile portion of it, from below Camrose, to above Drumheller, abandoned by Canadian National Railways four years ago, was purchased by and is now operated as the Central Western Railway, Canada's newest short line railway.

Not much remains of the Strathcona right of way today. However, a portion of the old CNoR station still exists. The eaves brackets can be seen supporting the south wall of the carpenter shop of Prudham's Hardware store which now occupies the site. The station floor forms part of the upstairs of the store, and the boilers are still used in the basement. South of Prudham's there are still faint signs of track bed among the back lanes and behind the buildings on the east side of 104 Street. Track rolled in 1909 bearing the name DI&S Co. make up part of the CNR track in the area south of 71 Avenue where small industries are serviced by rail on what remains of this line.

### High Level Bridge

As early as 1903 there was talk of building a high level bridge across the river valley to the City of Edmonton. Canadian Pacific long desired such a connection even though the C&ER had not planned for it back in 1891.

The building of the Low Level Bridge greatly improved communications between the two separate communities of Strathcona and Edmonton, as did telephone service and an interurban streetcar system in 1909. The building of the Low Level Bridge also gave a toe hold to CPR's main rival, the Canadian Northern Railway and allowed Edmonton a rail link at the same time.

Seeing the need to build into what was obviously becoming the major centre, CPR realized that it required its own bridge. Alberta had become a province in 1905 with Edmonton being named provincial capital. Strathcona surely was not going to attract the industry and capital that the CPR could tap. Its own link into the city was necessary.

By 1909 Canadian Pacific had completed its own land deals with the City of Edmonton. The railway had bought enough land on the north side to build a right of way, yard trackage and a station. Although entry into Edmonton by the CPR was a controversial move to the people of Strathcona, they did not petition their council to provide funds to incorporate a road deck into the design of the High Level Bridge.

Railways have always tended to divide as well as provide in the communities to which they attend. The Canadian Pacific in Strathcona was no different. In order to facilitate building the southern approach to the bridge site it was necessary to build a spur line right through the existing built-up residential district to the north and west of the CP station.

Construction was progressing well by 1910, and by June of 1911 two large digging machines were removing some 58,000 cubic yards of earth for the deep cut for the southern approach. Piers on the south side were underway. By November, the spur

line was laid and was being used for hauling construction materials by rail to the bridge. The steel work was started from the south side and was being pushed north by use of a huge steam erecting crane which ran on rails as the deck construction advanced. The great steel beams used in the construction were hoisted with precision and regularity from flat cars which were pushed in on the standard gauge track at the centre of the bridge. These tracks eventually became the main line.

The bridge was supported by as many as 32 piers and pedestals and four large massive central piers made of concrete. The top of the rails were almost 160 feet above the water. The final girders were put into place in early 1913.

On either side of the central main line track were the additional rails for the street car railway which Strathcona had wanted. Forty feet below was the traffic and pedestrian deck.

A CPR work train was the first to cross the bridge on June 2nd. It is possible that a passenger train of dignitaries crossed as the "first train" the next day. The first official passenger train was the morning train of June 20. On August 11, the first street car went across initiating regular 15 minute service. By September 13, vehicle and foot traffic was using the bridge.

Today the traffic level of the bridge is widely used as the main route south out of the city, whereas rail traffic is now dormant pending NTA decisions.

With the opening of the High Level Bridge, Strathcona began a slow decline. Not only was it on the wrong side of the tracks so to speak, but it was also on the wrong side of the bridge. All the major rail lines had full links into Edmonton. What was left to do but amalgamate with their big sister.

Even amalgamation which followed did little to move Strathcona ahead. It merely sank into a backwater community attached to Edmonton. As the railways built communities, so are they responsible for their decline. By the mid-1970s Strathcona was decaying into a slum.

### Shrinking Rail Links

Today the track to the end of steel is long gone. For a while during the 1970s a preserved 0-8-0, ex-CP No. 6947, and some vintage railway cars occupied the short piece of track that marked end of steel. They have since been removed and now form part of the display at the Alberta Pioneer Railway Association Museum north of the city, once again leaving a gap in the local recognition of the railway's vital heritage to the Old Strathcona area.

The track to the High Level Bridge remains, still arching through the residential area, indeed running underneath one modern apartment building before reaching the bridge. But for how long?

The CN interchange downtown is now gone, having been ripped up in the summer of 1989 to make way for more development, with interchange now taking place at Clover Bar.

Edmonton's prosperity and development meant the eventual loss of most of its early day charm, as redevelopment saw most of the older buildings come down.

Strathcona's lack of development in a perverse way saved its quaint old buildings and streets, many of which have been restored to past glory due much to the efforts of the Old Strathcona Historical Foundation.

Those same trains and bridges which once drew people away from Strathcona are now the vital link in attracting and bringing people into the community with its trendy shops and restaurants. Thus 4-8-2 6060 came to town in August 1989 to aid in that effort. But still there is no monument to the importance of the railways.

### Enter Another Railway Into Old Strathcona

Although without track or running rights into the community, the Central Western Railway (CWR) set up its Corporate offices, first in one room of an old historical building on Whyte Avenue, and then as the railway grew, in a more modern and larger office on the corner of 104 Street and Whyte Avenue.

Having purchased Canadian National's Stettler Subdivision four years ago, most of CWR's employees live in Edmonton or Strathcona, commuting to Stettler as work requires.

Hardly making its presence known in the community, CWR has expanded its office space four times in its short existence as more staff and services are added.

Since operations are out of Stettler, some 200 miles to the south, there is little chance the CWR will impact on Old Strathcona. However, it was an initial meeting on July 20, 1989 between CWR officials and members of the Fringe Theatre Festival that the possibilities of bringing 6060 in for the 10 day festival, which attracts upwards to 300,000 people into the community, were discussed.

On August 9, ties were placed along the three block area after some grading had been done. The next day some 15,000 feet of rail was laid. On the morning of August 15 a shiny 6060 sat in front of the CPR's 1907 station, having arrived the night before, with a Central Western passenger car in tow.

No. 6060's arrival on the tracks on the south side did not signal a revival of any kind. Merely 10 days of running back and forth on a quarter mile of track at "End of Track" as one more exciting feature of an already popular festival.

With the Fringe over for another year, the track is once again gone from the "End of Steel". The line to the High Level Bridge once again joined, though no trains will run there. But for one brief moment 6060 showed us what it could be like if we were to remember the trains.

### Bibliography

Gilpin, John - The History of Strathcona from 1891 to 1913 - 1979 University of Alberta

Monto, Tom - Strathcona, The End of Steel - 1989 Crang Publishing

The Strathcona Plain Dealer, VI. VII Fall 1984

McLaughlin, Brian F. - Canadian Pacific from Calgary to Edmonton Vol. 1 - BRMNA 1988

Junior League of Edmonton - Touching Lives - Tourist Sheet

Kosma, Lcs - A Bed of Rails - Canadian Rail, May-June 1983

Love, J.A. - Canadian National in the West, Vol. 2 - BRMNA 1981

Historical Walking and Driving Tour; Strathcona OSF, Alberta Culture

### THANKS TO:

City of Edmonton Archives and Provincial Archives for photos; John Gilpin; CP Rail South Edmonton; Old Strathcona Foundation; Norm Corness; Harry Home; Central Western Railway; Prudham's Hardware; and Doug Jamha, for answering questions.

## Annual 'Branchline' Photo Contest

The black and white photo contest provides our members and friends a chance to demonstrate their photographic skills as well as compete for free subscriptions to **Branchline**. The contest is also intended to assist in the development of a photo inventory for not only **Branchline** but also other

publications produced by the Society.

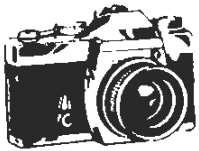
The number of entries for this year's contest was a little disappointing. We appreciate the efforts of those who did contribute. The editors have selected the following winners:

***ARTISTIC:** A VIA Rail RDC-1, still carrying CP Rail livery, stops at the CP station in Gatineau, Quebec, to detrain passengers. Pierre Ozorak was on the platform on a cold and snowy December 1979 evening to capture this well composed scene. Alas, the Montreal to Ottawa service was a victim of the cutbacks imposed on VIA Rail in November of 1981. While the order boards have been removed, the station remains to this day.*

*This photograph was deemed by the editors to be the grand prize winner.*



**MOUNTAIN  
RAILROADING:**  
Newton Rossitor  
captured Canadian  
Pacific Train 950  
about to enter the  
Connaught Tunnel  
at Glacier, B.C. on  
July 12, 1971. Note  
the maroon and grey  
livery on two of the  
four SD40 units.



**ARTISTIC USE OF  
POLES:** Ross  
Harrison captured  
the commuter lineup  
at Glen Yard in  
Westmount, Quebec,  
on August 14, 1989.  
On the left are  
STCUM FP7As  
1305, 1301 and  
1302, all former CP  
Rail units. Framed  
by the poles is  
leased VIA F40PH-2  
6422 heading up a  
train of ten brand-  
new Bombardier-  
built coaches.



# Railpass '88

(PART III)

By JOHN CORBY

To date we have travelled with John to England's south coast and the islands off the west coast of Scotland. Last month, after leaving the sights of Glasgow, our explorer visited the Lake District of England before going on to Wales. We join our hero waiting at Minffordd station.

## Along the Welsh Coast

Minffordd "station" is of a most rudimentary kind and I share it with just one other passenger. The sun has now decided to shine but the air is chilly and I'm glad when the four-car trainset shows up. This route differs from the others in that for most of its 53 miles between Pwelli in the north and Dovey Junction in the south it hugs the shore of Cardigan Bay and the rivers flowing into it. There is a stiff breeze blowing across the Irish Sea this afternoon, and while the tide is on the ebb, sizeable breakers are pounding the beaches of golden sand. There's not a human being in sight, but ugly trailer parks intruding on the scenery at all-too-frequent intervals give evidence that this might be a busy place during the holiday season.

The train stops at every station and glancing at the place names I consider myself fortunate that I don't have to ask for directions! (try Dyffryn Ardudwy or Llynngwrl on for size). I have to change trains at Dovey Junction for this one is basically a shuttle feeding the main line to Aberystwyth. The Junction is a bleak spot set in low-lying land on the banks of the River Dovey. About twenty of us are waiting for the Shrewsbury train, the sole entertainment from the railfan's point of view being the activities inside the signalbox. Eventually the connection shows up. Unlike most of the equipment I've been riding in over the last few days this one has first-class accommodation of which I'm the sole occupant.

## Go West Young Man

Monday morning I join the commuters heading to the daily grind in Birmingham. New Street Station bears a strong resemblance to the Place Ville Marie complex in Montreal, with several layers of shopping precinct above the concourse. It is a busy place, and baggage in hand I elbow my way down to the tracks to await the train for Bristol. This is an InterCity 125 service and we don't waste any time, although progress is not as rapid as elsewhere due to a scheduled 12 minute stop enroute to make a connection to another train. In Bristol I'm in Brunel country, for it was Isambard Kingdom Brunel who first linked the cities of London and Bristol with his Great Western Railway.

Brunel was a flamboyant character who had the indefinable quality called "style", and as I walk out of Temple Meads station, I divert to have another look at the original GWR trainshed, now a covered car park. The 74 foot span seems to be a reversion to the hammerbeam construction of the late Middle Ages but the roof is actually held together with concealed tie bars, the hammerbeams being purely decorative. It is said that Brunel did it this way because some of the directors of the company were worried that the roof wouldn't be strong enough: 150 years and several German air raids later it's still standing.

My next stop is Exeter, 75 miles to the south-west for a peek at the Quayside restoration and the Maritime Museum



associated with it. I shall also stop in at the Cathedral, one of the world's finest examples of Gothic architecture, to see the 13th century clock and memorial tablet to John Graves Simcoe, the first Governor of Upper Canada.

## BR's Budd

The train to Exeter is one of the "Sprinters" recently introduced on BR for service in the lesser-used lines and in off-peak periods elsewhere. These two-car sets have been very successful and an improved version will be introduced this year, with the deluxe version appearing in 1990. The Sprinters have wide sliding doors, baggage accommodation (including bicycles), wheelchair accessible toilets, facilities for serving drinks and snacks and a PA system. They are in effect a much-modernized



BR version of the Budd car. Seating capacity, all in one class, is 150. I find that the seats, though comfortable enough, are a mite short of knee-room for my long legs. The maximum speed of the current models is 70 mph, but the acceleration is quite remarkable. This enables the trains to keep a fast schedule despite being used on routes with frequent stops. There are only four stops between Bristol and Exeter and we arrive at St. David's Station at 16:39 on the dot.

St. David's has been thoroughly "BR'd" but the GWR monogram is still very much in evidence in the stonework surrounding the entrance, and I'm pleased to note the Great Western Hotel, although featuring a disco and "happy hour", still retains the old name. However, its tariff is more than I am prepared to pay, so I check into a nearby B&B establishment.

## D-Day Minus One

Tuesday, September 27, 1988. Tomorrow at midnight my pass expires so I've decided to travel to the "end of the line" at Penzance. This is as far west as you can go on BR, to a part of the country I got to know very well during the war years. At 12:46 I board the "Cornish Riviera", one of the most famous of British "named" trains whose memory has rightly been retained by the marketing people at BR. In steam days the London (Paddington) to Penzance run (305 miles) was the prerogative of the GWR's most powerful passenger locomotives, the celebrated "Kings". Their tractive effort of 40,300 lbs was needed to haul trains of twelve or so cars up the steep grade between Totnes and Plymouth without assistance.

How different it is today! This morning's Cornish Riviera, an InterCity 125 service, has covered the 174 miles from Paddington to Exeter in well under two hours non-stop, although from here on there will be several stops for we are approaching resort country. The line follows the River Exe to its mouth, then turns westward, running almost along the beach in places and snaking in and out of tunnels cut in the cliffs of red Devon sandstone. Picturesque indeed, but for me the highlight of this trip is when shortly after passing through the Dockyard station at Devonport, the Royal Albert bridge comes into view around the curve.

Spanning the River Tamar, this twin-span tied arch structure, its upper members composed of giant rivetted wrought iron tubes, is considered by many to be Brunel's masterpiece. It was also his last as he died from overwork and exhaustion shortly after the opening in 1859. No modest bronze plaque replete with the names of consultants, contractors and puny politicians adorns this span. Cast on the porticos in letters several feet in height, brilliant red against the grey paint are the words "I.K. Brunel, Engineer, 1859", a last magnificent tribute to one of the great minds of the past century.

## Cornwall - the Far West

Crossing the bridge one finds oneself in Cornwall. The Cornish landscape has two features unique unto itself: the giant remains of the engine houses from the tin-mining industry that flourished here 150 years ago; and the dazzling white pyramids of china clay, the principal export from the Duchy. Much of this activity is visible from the train especially around Par and St. Austell. It is showery when we draw into Penzance, and I quickly become aware that there's no roof on the station. Being replaced, we're informed.

I dash over to the tourist bureau outside and in no time have secured a room in a charming small hotel about a mile away.

A roofless terminal is no place to be trainwatching on a wet evening so I put on my nautical hat, figuratively speaking, and head for the harbour. Here I'm intrigued by a small yacht. Two blue sweated types appear to be dismantling the interior, but my attempts to start conversation are rebuffed. Next morning the "Western Mail" carries the headline: "Half-ton of cannabis on yacht arrested off Penzance - three in custody". I'd just seen HM Customs at work!

My room overlooks Mount's Bay, a strong wind is sending waves dashing over the seawall and I'm lulled to sleep with the noise of rain spattering against the window. In the morning, though, the skies have cleared. By juggling my schedule I find I've got time to take a side trip to St. Ives on the north coast about ten miles away. Except for commuters, it's evident that not too many use this train at this time of year.

St. Ives is charming, an artist's paradise with most of its inhabitants making their living from tourism. I stroll through the steep and narrow streets and out to the cliffs. Thankful that most of this beauty has been preserved for future generations I suddenly realise that I have lingered too long and get back to the station just in time to see my train pulling out. Luckily there is an alternative bus service to get me back to Penzance in time to catch my London-bound express; I make the connection with only minutes to spare. Once again I change at Exeter, this time to ride over what was once Southern Railway's main line to the West of England via Salisbury.

## Final Journey

This line was operating territory for Bulleid's Merchant Navy Class Pacifics, locomotives that were criticized as much for their appearance as for their mechanical innovations. Chief among these was the chain-driven valve gear enclosed in an oilbath, and it was trouble with this, above all else, that caused BR to rebuild the engines in the late 50s to a more conventional configuration. At least two of them survive, No. 35029 "Ellerman Lines", shown sectioned at the National Railway Museum in York, and No. 35028 "Clan Line".

All of this no more, and today the line has been relegated to secondary status, much of it single track. Nevertheless it makes for an interesting alternative way to return to London, although on this occasion I bail out at Woking, 25 miles short of the terminus. From here I backtrack one stop to Brookwood where my second cousin collects me. The next morning I hand over my expired pass to his son to add to his collection of railroadiana.

## Was It Worth It?

So ended my first but probably not my last experience with the pass system. Was it worth it? You can travel at any time; if you see something from the window that strikes your fancy (inanimate of course) you can backtrack at the next stop and no-one will say you nay. You can change plans on the spur of the moment and not have to bother about getting refunds or missing a connection through having to line up for tickets. The long distance buses are cheaper and I'm told quite comfortable but take up to 30% longer to get there. Rent a car? Well traffic in the urban areas is horrendous and the motorways, at least in the South, are fit only for madmen and European truck drivers. Besides, gasoline was the equivalent of 80 cents a litre at the time of my visit, and you've got to learn quickly to drive on the "wrong" side of the road.

Think about it, then get your pass and go and have fun. I did!

# Gaspé Weekend

by JOHN D. GODFREY

'Okay pour proceder, no. 14'.

I looked at my watch: 18:10.

A glance out the window revealed the first traces of movement.

"Hmmm... right on time," I thought.

It was January 13th, 1989; a Friday. Not being the superstitious type, I decided that this was as good a day as any to begin my travels. Those 'travels' consisted of a number of round trips out of Montreal on a 22-day VIA Rail Youth Canrail pass to celebrate having recently attained a BA from Concordia University in Montreal. Once positive that my transcript didn't hold any jarring surprises, I poured over the then-current VIA timetable and came up with a relaxed itinerary that would permit me to see a good bit of railroad from Gaspé (Quebec) to Joliet (Illinois), taking into account a couple of on-going personal obligations, as well as roll up 4,574 intercity miles and 8.6 suburban ones, in addition to an unknown number of miles aboard PCCs and ALRVs in Toronto and Chicago Transit Authority El trains in the Windy City.

And so, with the obligatory 'you-can't-be-doing-this-because-you-want-to' remarks, VIA ticket agent Noel Paquin cheerfully helped me finalize plans during the week of January 9th.

Montreal is one of North America's nicer cities to arrive or depart from by rail. Unless there is an overcast, the sun always seems to be at the right angle. At night, its lights are a comforting sight from window, dutch door, rear platform, or locomotive cab. Tonight was especially nice, as outside the temperature hovered around -18°C, while inside coach 5558, the mercury read about 22°C.

Four minutes out of Central Station's track 13, we rolled through Cape, and onto CN's St. Hyacinthe Sub. for the run to Montbec Jct. Station work at St. Lambert took all of one minute. Having cleared the George V crossing east of the station, the engineer widened out on the throttle, and No. 14 sprinted off for St. Hyacinthe.

At 18:37, a VIA employee (it's hard to tell who's who now that everyone's in grey) walked through the train announcing the first call for dinner. I elected to pass, having grabbed something before leaving home, and so, settled-in for the ride.

East of St. Hyacinthe on the Drummondville Sub., we met CN No. 305 at St. Eduoard, VIA No. 27 east of Drummondville and CN No. 233 at Laurier. The eight miles from Charny and Levis were spent surveying the view from both sides of the train, as we wound our way along the south shore of the St. Lawrence River, Quebec City's upper and lower towns clearly delineated against the night sky across the river. I took advantage of the 22-minute stop in Levis to fire-off a couple of time exposures of the train in the station; quite a contrast, with a HEP-equipped F40PH-2 (wreathed in steam, no less!), streamliner-era equipment, and station building from the early-20th century.

I had heard that a number of people use Nos. 14 and 15 for travel between Quebec City and Montreal, and this certainly held true tonight; as out of Levis my coach, which had been only half full, was now even more sparsely populated.

With the provincial capital receding into the night sky behind us, I settled down for some rest, only to be awakened at Rivière-du-Loup and again at Rimouski by a yokel two seats back trying to force the seat behind me around so that he could

stretch out.

The next thing I know it's 04:54 and we are at Matapedia, Quebec, having traversed the entirety of the Montmagny Sub. and all but 12.8 miles of the Mont Joli Sub. since having left Levis. For those who don't know, this is where No. 14, the "Ocean", splits. The bulk of the train goes on to Moncton, New Brunswick, while five cars head for the Gaspé coast. The crew on No. 14 (Passenger Extra VIA 6422 East from Rivière du Loup) made the split and spotted the Gaspé cut behind the depot without the slightest jolt. As the head end of No. 14 went to rejoin its train, our power, FPA-4 6786, coupled-up, again without the slightest jolt.

While the carman tended to his duties, our crew took a cursory look around their charge. Some excitement erupted after the brakeman flushed the hopper in the men's room of my coach: though the trap did close, the water kept coming. As the washroom began to fill a cry went out to the carman who saved the day by closing a valve behind the hopper itself. With order restored, I again settled in. At 05:16 No. 14 headed for Moncton. At 05:18 No. 16 and I left for the Gaspé coast on the Cascapedia Sub.

At 07:29, deciding it was time to stay awake, I threw up the blind to reveal a vista of frozen ocean and barren white coastline. Two minutes later we called at Caplan, Quebec. Here, as at other stops along the line, we had to wait for time.

At 08:02, having called at Bonaventure, we arrived at New Carlisle 13 minutes ahead of schedule. I decided to take the obligatory "train-in-the-station" photo while the crews changed, and find out first hand how cold it was. Well, it wasn't. Travelling with that 'hope-for-the-best-but-expect-the-worst' mentality, I was surprised at how nice it was. No wind, and low humidity made the winter chill quite tolerable.

We rolled out on the rails of the Chandler Sub. at 08:25, ten minutes late. Between New Carlisle and Gaspé, the rails basically follow the profile of the coast. It had recently snowed and the roads were freshly plowed. At each level crossing, the train barrelled through high mounds of snow left in the plows' wake, sending clumps of the white stuff in every direction, including onto the roof of the steam generator behind the unit.

Besides the scenery, another highlight of both the Chandler and Cascapedia Subs. is the condition of the various stations along the right-of-way: nothing short of immaculate. Even at some of the more nocturnal stops, snow had been removed from the platforms and each building was pristine, not a trace of faded paint, shattered windows, broken name boards and the like.

Almost without fail, passengers from outside the region crane their necks to catch a glimpse at one of the area's premier tourist attractions, Perce Rock. Though Perce Rock can be seen from the vicinity of Perce and east, perhaps the best view can be had to the east of Barachois. From this point, both 'the Rock' and Bonaventure Island can be readily seen and photographed.

At 11:31, we arrived in the town of Gaspé, four minutes early. The station is located across an expanse of water from the town itself. In order to find nourishment, a short walk was in order. A small shopping centre across the water from the station made the expedition a simple one.

After a hearty reasonably priced meal and a quick trip through town, it was back to the station for the trip home on

No. 17 with the same consist from No. 16 earlier in the day. It had been turned on a wye west of town, cleaned and serviced. Once again I boarded coach 5558 and settled in for the trip west to Montreal. We departed Gaspé promptly at 15:00, and as with the trip east, we had to wait time at every station.

The Atlantic Region crews were excellent. The line also operates on Atlantic Time, one hour ahead of the rest of Quebec, as it is dispatched from Campbelltown, New Brunswick. In fact the only bad points about the trip west was the joining of Nos. 15 and 17 at Matapedia, and the return of my 'buddy'. At least the train was too full for him to fool around with the seats. But the incident at Matapedia was something else.

No. 17 arrived at 21:17, and No. 15 pulled up on the other side of the depot at 21:28. No. 17 backed up so that the unit and steam generator could clear the switch and head for the wye. The units and baggage car of No. 15 cut off and backed onto us. So far so good. Now the brakeman, riding the grab irons on my car (the last one on No. 17's cut) directed us onto the rest of No. 15. I don't know if he was a trainee or what, but someone must give him an idea exactly how long half a car really is. At 21:42, fifteen cars came together at a speed approaching 10 mph. CRASH!! No one even came around to see if anyone, especially seniors or the young, was shaken by the impact. At 22:00, we were on the move, and after an uneventful night, we arrived in Montreal on January 15th, early as well; we rolled to a stop on Track 15, two minutes ahead of the advertised 08:38.

I wanted to use my pass to see things and places I had not seen before. This trip to Gaspé was the beginning. There would be more to come.

Consist of No. 14-16 on January 13, 1989. (Returned west on No. 15-17 on January 14, 1989)

6422	F40PH-2	Montreal-Moncton
6861	FPB-4	Montreal-Moncton
15460	Steam Gen	Montreal-Moncton
6786	FPA-4	Matapedia-Gaspé
15473	Steam Gen	Matapedia-Gaspé
9618	Baggage	Montreal-Moncton
9480	Bag-Slpr	Montreal-Gaspé
1167	Sleeper	Montreal-Gaspé
	'Green Cabin'	
1172	Sleeper	Montreal-Gaspé
	'Green Hill'	
2503	Cafe Bar	Montreal-Gaspé
5558	Coach	Montreal-Gaspé
5473	Coach	Montreal-Moncton
5706	Daynighter	Montreal-Moncton
760	Cafe-Lounge	Montreal-Moncton
1092	Slpr-Buffer	Montreal-Moncton
	'Resplendant'	
1340	Diner	Montreal-Moncton
	(deadhead east only)	

(Ed. - Effective January 15, 1990 the "Chaleur" will operate as a tri-weekly train between Montreal and Gaspé, leaving Montreal at 18:45 on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The "Ocean" will operate as a tri-weekly train between Montreal and Halifax, leaving Montreal at 18:45 on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Thus, the Montreal to Matapedia segment will receive six day a week service.)

### TIME TO RE-ADJUST OUR FOCUS?

The results of our third annual black and white photo contest appear on Pages 14 and 15. And, although we thank all those who have invested their time and shared their experiences with us, we are somewhat mystified.

For some reason, this year's response to the notification of the contest has been understated - to say the least. Indeed, the light response this year has continued a trend which we had thought would be just the opposite.

During the first year, we garnered entries from 17 - modest but not bad considering it was in its infancy. Last year, an even dozen participated. This year, we're into the single digits.

I guess that the questions which we now ask are why the poor showing and should there be a fourth annual photo contest or should we look to another way of encouraging reader participation?

Maybe we should stretch things beyond the question of the photo contest and throw everything out for discussion. Are you happy with Branchline? Does it meet your needs? What do you like about it? What do you dislike? How can it be improved? What can you do to help improve it?

This issue signals the kickoff for a new decade. What about it? Should we re-adjust our focus?

We welcome your input. Oh, and by the way, what about the photo contest for next year? (Philip B. Jago)

### MORE ON G5 ASSIGNMENTS

In regard to F.H. Howard's letter in the November issue, where he mentions some CPR G5 assignments out of Toronto, I would like to add a little to this which may be of interest.

One of the more outstanding services these 70-inch driver light Pacifics were called upon to operate, albeit for a short time in early-1947, were the fast afternoon and morning London Trains, Nos. 629 and 630. The schedule for the 115 mile run with six station stops and the tough Milton hill was 2 hours, 20 minutes. These trains were almost the exclusive domain of Jubilee (4-4-4) Class F2 Nos. 3000 and 3002, with 80-inch drivers. The F2s at this time were working the night Chicago Trains, Nos. 19 and 20 when they were not too heavy. No doubt the G5 would do better on the Milton hill.

Other assignments were Nos. 25 and 26, the Sudbury locals, and Nos. 27 and 28, the night Soo trains. On the east end, Nos. 35 and 36, the Toronto-Montreal locals which ran over the Havelock line, saw G5s for many years, including the all welded boiler No. 1231 which was a Glen Yard (Montreal) engine. Occasionally a G5 would draw First No. 22 when it was a light train. They also saw some service on the Toronto-Hamilton locals. (Signed ... Newton Rossiter)

**MORE CALLERS NEEDED:** Terry Duggan, the Society's Telephone Committee Chairman, would appreciate the assistance of a few additional helpers to call Ottawa-area members each month. Can you spare half an hour per month? Please call Terry at 745-4960 if you can help out. Thank you.

Canadian Tire money is eagerly sought to help defray the Society's restoration expenses.



**AMENDMENT MEANS THAT SOME GRANBY SUBDIVISION TRACKAGE TO BE ABANDONED:** The National Transportation Agency (NTA) has amended an earlier decision denying CN permission to abandon its Granby Subdivision between Granby and Chambly, Quebec, by amending it to permit CN to abandon that portion between Granby and mileage 15.57. The remainder of the line through to Chambly (mileage 44.0) will remain. The amendment was made following a request from the City of Granby.

A brief description of the Granby pike, formerly the Montreal and Southern Counties Railway Company, appeared in the February 1989 issue of *Branchline*. (13/10/89)

**STAY OF EXECUTION FOR ABANDONMENT OF RENFREW SUBDIVISION:** An earlier decision authorizing the total abandonment of Canadian National's Renfrew Subdivision (Ontario) between Nepean (mileage 0.00) and Renfrew (mileage 43.78), effective December 30, 1989, has been modified. The effect of the modification is to permit the abandonment of that portion between mileage 27.2 and the end of the line while keeping open that portion between mileage 27.2 and Nepean for an additional year.

The modification arises from a joint request from Canadian National and the major on-line shipper BASF Fibers of Arnprior that sufficient time be allocated for the industrial facility to complete a major capital program to convert its facilities and operation to use intermodal service.

At the time of the original decision authorizing the abandonment of the Renfrew Subdivision, one of the concerns had been that BASF would continue to have rail access for the receipt of raw materials. Two options had been presented. One of these involved the establishment of some form of connection with Canadian Pacific whose Chalk River Subdivision passes in the vicinity of the BASF plant. The other would have seen CN retain BASF as a customer via its intermodal system. Obviously terms could not be agreed upon with CP.

The Renfrew Subdivision is the former Ottawa, Arnprior & Parry Sound Railway and was built by Ottawa Valley lumber baron John Rudolphus Booth. (07/11/89)

**PERMISSION TO ABANDON FORMER GRAND TRUNK PACIFIC LINE:** Canadian National has received permission to abandon its Porter Subdivision (Saskatchewan) between Oban Junction (mileage 0.00) and Cando (mileage 18.00). During 1988, the branch sustained a loss of just under \$200,000.

Succeeding portions of the Porter Subdivision have been abandoned, commencing in 1974 when authority was received to do away with the section between mileage 43.85 and mileage 48.17. One year later, permission was secured to abandon that portion between mileage 43.85 and mileage 18.00.

The line was built between the years 1910 and 1912 by the Grand Trunk Pacific Branch Lines Company and was originally known as the "Battleford Branch". Service commenced on October 22, 1912. The GTP was absorbed into Canadian National in 1919. (14/11/89)

**PASSENGER PRICING POLICY INQUIRY OFFICIALLY LAID TO REST:** Acting upon a request by the Minister of Transport, the NTA has officially abolished its inquiry into VIA Rail Canada's pricing policies.

Held in major cities throughout Canada, the inquiry was abruptly adjourned on May 8, 1989 "in order to provide Counsel for VIA time to consult with and obtain instructions from the new management of VIA." (14/11/89)

**END OF THE LINE FOR CORNING SUBDIVISION:** Canadian National has received permission to abandon the Corning Subdivision (Saskatchewan) between Peebles (mileage 0.00) and Corning (mileage 14.40). Although posting a profit of \$68,109 during 1987, the line recorded a slight loss during 1988 and losses are expected to increase significantly in the coming years as the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool has ceased operations at Corning, thereby reducing originating traffic there by 45%. (14/11/89)

**ABANDONMENT FILE RE-OPENED FOR GASPE LINE:** The NTA has given notice that it is reconsidering an earlier Canadian National application to abandon that portion of the Chandler Subdivision (Quebec) between Ste-Adelaide (mileage 48.10) and Gaspé (mileage 104.23).

During 1986, freight traffic over the segment amounted to 245 cars, for an actual loss of \$963,987.

In addition to freight service, the line also hosts VIA Rail's "Chaleur" (Nos. 16 and 17). The "Chaleur" is one of the survivors of the recent spate of cutbacks due to be implemented by VIA Rail on January 15 although the service will now be on a tri-weekly basis. (21/11/89)

**PERMISSION TO ABANDON SHAMROCK SUBDIVISION:** Canadian Pacific has received permission to abandon its Shamrock Subdivision (Saskatchewan) from Archive (mileage 0.00) to Tyson (mileage 70.30). During 1988, the line suffered an actual loss of \$388,311 although it had posted an overall profit of just under a quarter-of-a-million dollars during the preceding year. (21/11/89)

**CANADIAN PACIFIC EXITS DRUMMONDVILLE:** Canadian Pacific has received permission to abandon its Drummondville Subdivision (Quebec) from Foster (mileage 0.00) to Drummondville (mileage 46.70). The order also includes the Drummondville Spur (mileage 46.50) and the L'Avenir Spur (mileage 46.60).

During 1988, the line incurred an actual loss of \$57,945, handling only 725 carloads. Future traffic is estimated to be little to non-existent following a successful move by CN - which also services Drummondville via its main line from Montreal to the Maritimes - to win over CP's major customer in Drummondville, Celanese Canada Inc. CN was able to convince Celanese to utilize its Cargo-Flo method which is a road/rail combination as opposed to CP's all-rail offering. (21/11/89)

**PRAIRIE LINE ABANDONMENT ORDERS MODIFIED:** Canadian Pacific has received permission to abandon the operation of its Altawin Subdivision, running in Saskatchewan and Alberta, between mileage 65.7 and mileage 122.2, as well as the Kisbey Subdivision (Saskatchewan) between mileage 43.6 and mileage 60.9.

Previously in 1987, the NTA's predecessor, the Railway Transport Committee, had denied CP's petition to abandon operations on the two segments. (23/11/89)

# Letters to the Editor

## WRITER STANDS BY HIS OPINIONS

I supposed that my letter in the September **Branchline** would provoke some response to which I respectfully counter with my own.

To Duuc duFresne's remarks (**Branchline**, October 1989), I'm delighted to know that Bytown isn't a mirror image of Transport 2000. I don't think that it should be critical. I had wished only that it sometimes might be; I had detected a rather supportive position, fortified by a delegate getting up at one of our meetings and urging us to follow him, as well as their handing out leaflets at a 1201 excursion. I was trying, by the way, to show support for John Clark and his more factual material. Anything Dunc duFresne says is authority enough for me.

John Godfrey's comments, questions and criticisms (**Branchline**, October 1989) are most constructive but I hadn't seen them in **Branchline** before, nor from anyone else. I don't want to protest too much that Jack Pickersgill isn't my "hero" but I do enjoy his company from time to time. In my opinion, he was one of the best Ministers of Transport, in my time. His views on VIA, which can be seen in op-ed pieces in certain **Globes**, tend to coincide with mine.

As for Paul Sheppard (**Branchline**, October 1989), I agree that BRS and many other parallel activities constitute a hobby. I don't reject any, let alone much of what BRS stands for except that I detected that it stood for what Transport 2000 stands for, without examination. As a member in good (?) standing, I protested this particular feature of Society policy, no more. I anticipated, and have discovered, that BRS would and does extend my hobby, which I've enjoyed for 50 years. I was also lucky enough to have worked in and around the source of this interest wherein I, once again luckily, acquired a deeper affection than the already deep one I developed from taking Kodak 116 pictures (the Program Chairman has a bunch that I offered to turn into a presentation, if he wants it). Included in this good fortune was some time developing modern equipment and operations to displace the old. The relevance of gold with J.W. Pickersgill eludes me, unless it refers to my quoting him. It wasn't made to me, nor in my hearing, nor in this context. It was years ago, likely with tolls on the Welland Canal (which I favoured). A more pertinent passenger train quotation might be that of Jim Hill, founder of the Great Northern.

I welcome Darrell Richard's exposure of facts and opinions (**Branchline**, October 1989) which aren't sentimental, but usually not visible elsewhere. I did, however, attend the Standing Committee hearings when Transport 2000 appeared, and thought their presentation was cogent and cool, although I didn't necessarily agree with all of it. It was very well presented and, I detected, well received. ... Later on, one is sad to say, Transport 2000 is reported as mourning the possible loss of airline bargains and low fares, as if Canadians had a sacred and inalienable right to below-cost fares on money-losing (even though subsidized) airlines.

Talking of cars [and the Amtrak experience], I'm sure that a new one, or locomotive, will cost less to maintain than an old one, but it will eventually require brake shoes, wheels, air brake inspection, etc. However, one thing it will NOT require is steam heat maintenance, but costs will mount up as years go by. When Riley of Amtrak said that the new ones reduced maintenance by 50%, did he mean "under their immediately preceding old ones"

or "over the whole fleet." One notes that Amtrak has over 400 rejuvenated Heritage Cars, presumably comfortable, safe and satisfactory on all those eastern runs, including to Florida. Are our cars not amenable to such attention, especially since so many are of stainless steel? As for the relative handful of double-deck cars, there are no passengers on the lower deck where there are no windows; perhaps the increase in capacity is the removal of the washrooms to downstairs. It's too bad their great cars aren't in the east; maybe it's because of the overhead wire and the New York tunnels.

Let me conclude with my experience at the Mayor's etc, appearance before the Committee the day after Transport 2000 was finished. I asked an old friend, representing an "outlying" province with daily service, if he had come via VIA; he just laughed pleasantly in my face. [signed ... F.H. Howard]

## "DOWN UNDER" UPDATE - THE AUSTRALIAN SCENE

The inauguration of electric passenger service between Brisbane and Rockhampton on July 3, 1989, marked the completion of the largest main line electrification project every undertaken in Australia.

The six-year project has entailed the upgrading and electrification of 2,085 single track kilometers of 3' 6" gauge line, as well as significant deviations and bridgeworks. A total of 166 electric locomotives and 20 multiple-unit intercity express passenger cars were purchased.

The system has been electrified overhead at 50kV/25kV, 50Hz single phase ac, similar to the Brisbane suburban network. By using electricity generated from local coal resources, the Queensland Railway will save an estimated 128 million litres of diesel fuel annually, reducing its total energy bill by at least \$17 million and reducing locomotive maintenance by 50%.

The MU intercity trains provide fast service along the north coast to Rockhampton, cutting travel time from 14 hours to 9.25 hours. By the end of 1989, the 166 electric locomotives will be hauling 1.3 million tonnes of coal per week to Dalrymple Bay, Hay Point and Gladstone as well as north coast freight and long distance passenger trains.

Work is underway on electrification of Perth's existing 3' 6" gauge suburban railway. Considerable trackwork has been completed, new electric trains are being built and catenary has been strung for most of the 31 km Perth-Armadale line. In addition to the 16 km Perth-Midland line and the 19 km Perth-Fremantle line, a new 26 km line is to be built northward from Perth to Joondalup.

The big news is the run by Gresley A3 Pacific LNER 4472 ("Flying Scotsman") from Melbourne to Alice Springs. Alice Springs is in the centre of Australia, well over 2,000 miles from Melbourne. This summer 4472 ran non-stop from Parkes to Broken Hill (424 miles) and broke the existing world record for a non-stop run by a steam locomotive for an entry in the Guinness Book of Records.

The 4472 is going to saddle up again for the epic trip; a transcontinental journey from Sydney to Perth. Here it will meet ex-GWR 4079 "Pendennis Castle" for the first time since the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. ["Pendennis Castle" lives in the North West on an isolated iron ore railway and will be trucked 1,000 miles to make it!] (Ray McDermott)

# Along the Right of Way



**FARFROM HOME:** Edmonton-based GP38-24712 passed through Ottawa on November 14 enroute to Montreal.

On November 25, Saskatoon-based GMD1 1082 headed west through Ottawa, followed by Saskatoon-based GMD1u 1402 on December 2. (Martin Berube)

**WHERE TO?:** On November 3, retired 'comboose' 78969 (formerly Northern Alberta Railways 307) departed Dunvegan Yard in Edmonton, destination unknown. The car was built by Canadian Pacific in 1912 as coach No. 1542.

**HEAVY LOAD:** On November 21, a large transformer on six-axle depressed flatcar 672004 arrived at Walkley Yard in Ottawa for interchange to CP Rail. The transformer was enroute from Pickering, Ontario, to Carleton University in Ottawa.

The car, with a gross weight of 353,400 pounds, was pushed to a rarely-used siding at the university the next day by CP RS-18u 1813. Access to the siding was achieved by shifting the mainline rails. (Ross Harrison)

**GRADE CROSSING TANGLE DISRUPTS "SKEENA" SERVICE:** A grade crossing argument on November 8 between a 110-car CN grain train and a tanker truck loaded with diesel fuel at Houston, British Columbia, lead to the destruction of the truck, as well as the ditching of thirteen cars and two locomotives. In the ensuing melee, some 700 metres of track were torn up. The closure of the line meant that passengers on the westbound "Skeena" were taken off their train at Smithers and transferred by bus for the rest of the journey to Prince Rupert. (Canadian Press, 09/11/89)

**LINE PURCHASED:** CN has purchased the CSX line from the Walkerville depot (near Windsor) to Oldcastle (mileage 8, south of Pelton). The purchase will allow CN to run a track into the Chrysler auto-loading compound without having to contend with CP Rail traffic. CP has handled the Chrysler traffic for many years, however, CN will soon take over this business.

The Pelton diamond is controlled by the CSX dispatcher at St. Thomas. It appears that control of the diamond will soon be taken over by CN. (Semaphore, December 1989)

**LONELY UNIT:** GMD1 1070 is the only piece of railway equipment remaining at Point Ellice in Victoria, B.C. Borden Mercantile on Quadra Street at the end of the Lakehill spur occasionally receives a car of grain.

The barge slip at Point Ellice has been dismantled, but the one at Ogden Point remains operable. All cars are brought to Vancouver Island via Nanaimo and conveyed to Victoria by CP Rail. No. 1070 traverses the same route when due inspection. (WCRA News, December 1989)

## CP Rail

**RAZED:** The station at Oshawa, Ontario, was demolished on November 3. (Bruce Chapman)

### AMTRAK

**F69PHs TO TOUR:** Amtrak planned to have F69PH prototypes 450 and 451 tour the United States commencing in December 1989. The new units will familiarize U.S. railroads with the new AC motor technology and its inherent cost savings and other advantages. (WCRA News, December 1989)

## Trackside Guide update

# MOTIVE POWER NEWS

INCLUDING EQUIPMENT ITEMS

Many thanks to Ken Ardinger, Bruce Chapman, Paul Crozier Smith, Ken Garber, Michael Iveson, Gord McOuat, Geoffrey Peters, Daniel Poirier, Flagstop, and WCRA News.

**Note:** Additions, retirements, rebuilds, sales, etc. are referenced with the applicable page(s) of the 1989 Canadian Trackside Guide, eg. (p1-78).



**REMANUFACTURED:** (p1-15, 1-16) The following GP9 units have been remanufactured into GP9u road switchers and assigned for maintenance to MacMillan Yard in Toronto:

NEW No.	FORMER NOS.	SERIAL NO.
4123	4596,2	A1335
4124	4530	A1005
4125	4406; 1730:1	A649
4126	4345	A1780
4127	4331	A1688
4128	4272	A1629

**FOR SALE:** Three baggage cars (Nos. 7855 to 7857) and two coaches (Nos. 5095 and 5099), rendered surplus with the October 28, 1989 demise of passenger service between Waterways and Edmonton, Alberta, have been advertized for sale. Deadline for bids is December 20.

**SIGNIFICANT UNIT:** In the November Branchline, mention was made of SD60F 5535 being present for EMD's 60th birthday celebration at La Grange, Illinois, on September 12. No. 5535 is significant in that it was the 5,000th unit produced by Diesel Division - General Motors of Canada at their London (Ontario) plant.

Sister 5563, the last of the 40-unit order built in 1989, has been delivered. All 64 SD60Fs are assigned to Calder Yard in Edmonton.

**TO DEALERS:** Retired S-13 switchers 8500, 8507 and 8509, and F7Au 9162 (without cab which was transplanted onto VIA FP9A 6516), were noted at Century Locomotive (dealer) in Lachine, Quebec, on December 4.

The following units have been moved to M4 Holdings at Namao (Edmonton), Alberta, likely for scrapping: F7Aum 9107; F7Au's 9153, 9169 and 9172; F7Bu's 9191, 9192, 9194, 9195 and 9196. Keeping them company were GP35 9300 (to be rebuilt for Burlington Northern), Jordan spreaders 51086 and 51093, and caboose 79203.

## CP Rail

**REMANUFACTURED:** (p1-50) The following GP9 units have been remanufactured into GP9u road switchers:

NEW NO.	FORMER NO.	SERIAL NO.
8230	8696	A1152
8231	8816	A1468
8232	8666	A1122
8233	8680	A1136
8249	8830	A1721

**INTO ANGUS FOR 1990 REBUILD PROGRAM:** GP9 8650 has entered Angus Shops in Montreal for conversion to an 8200-series GP9u road switcher in 1990, leaving only four unrebuilt GP9 units (8665, 8669, 8674 and 8681). All four have been tied up pending their date with Angus Shops in early-1990.

**TIED UP:** Fifteen large MLW units (4500 and 4700 series) have been tied up serviceable due to a downturn in traffic.

**BACK IN SERVICE:** SW1200RS 8159 has returned to service following repairs resulting from an accident in the Windsor (Ontario) yard in March 1989.

**LEASED OUT:** On November 2, SW8 6708 was leased to Canadian Fertilizer Industries at Medicine Hat, Alberta.



**REMAINS TO LONDON:** The remains of FP9A 6537, wrecked in a head-on collision with a CN freight train at Ingersoll, Ontario, in 1982, arrived at London East on a flat car on October 16. Only about two-thirds of the carbody remains.

## **BCRAIL**

**NUMBERS ASSIGNED:** The 22 General Electric Dash 8-40C units to be delivered early in 1990 will be numbered 4601-4622, Class GEF-40. The first 12 will be built at GE's Erie (Pennsylvania) plant. The other 10 are scheduled to be constructed at GE Canada's former Bombardier plant in east-end Montreal.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

**ORE HAULERS ON THE MOVE:** (p1-74, 1-76) Quebec Cartier Mining GP9 No. 59 (GMD Serial A1822, built 1960 as Quebec Cartier Mining No. 9) has been acquired by the Essex Terminal Railway. It was delivered to Windsor by ship on November 25.

Sisters 51, 53, 55 and 56 (nee Nos. 1, 3, 5 and 6) have been delivered to Century Locomotive (dealer) in Lachine, Quebec.

(Nine GP9s were built for QCM (Nos. 1 to 9, renumbered 51 to 59). Nos. 54 and 57 were sold to Fer & Titaine at Havre St. Pierre, Quebec, in 1988, and Nos. 52 and 58 were demolished in an accident on May 31, 1972)

### **INDUSTRIALS AND SHORTLINES**

**ADDITION:** (p2-1) Northwood Pulp & Timber at Fraserview (Prince George), B.C. has acquired a former Milwaukee SW1200 unit. New number is 103. Details to follow.

**LOCATION CONFIRMED:** In the November issue, it was reported that United Grain Growers in Saskatchewan had acquired former Houston Belt & Terminal SW1200 No. 35 (EMD Serial 31685, built 4/66) via National Railway Equipment. The unit has been renumbered 3 for service at UGG's Vancouver (B.C.) terminal facility.

**NEW HOME:** (p2-12) Novacor (formerly Union Carbide) at Sarnia, Ontario, has acquired a blue and white EMD switcher, numbered 417A, via Ontario Locomotive of Niagara Falls, New York. The unit, which is equipped with a platform on the cab roof, was delivered on October 11.

### **ON THE PRESERVED SCENE**

**DONATED:** (p3-10, 6-11) CP Rail has donated wooden caboose 437092 to the Nelson Electric Tramway Society (NETS) in Nelson, B.C.

The NETS is an organization presently restoring Nelson Streetcar Railway System Car No. 23 to service. Car 23 was decommissioned in 1949 and became a kennel for the provincial veterinarian and a storage shed before being rescued in the 1980s.

**TO MUSEUM:** (p3-11, 3-12) The Prince George Railway Museum in Prince George, B.C. has acquired B.C. Government 'Counter Diner' "Endeavour". The car was built by Bethlehem Steel in 1920 as Reading Company baggage-coach 592. After a stint on the 1976 American Freedom Train, it was acquired by the B.C. Government for North Vancouver to Squamish excursion service.

**COACH ACQUIRED:** (p3-10, 3-15) During the summer of 1988 and 1989, Canadian Forest Products (Canfor) at Woss Camp, B.C., operated excursions with their 2-8-2 No. 113 and a flatcar over eight miles of their Englewood Railway.

Canfor has acquired former CP Rail coach 2297 from the B.C. government. The coach, still bearing CP Rail markings, was recently moved from Squamish to Woss Camp for restoration. Canfor hopes to have the coach serviceable for trips behind No. 113 for the summer of 1990.

**ACQUIRED FOR PROPOSED TOURIST LINE:** (p2-7, 3-26) Ontario Locomotive & Car has purchased Babcock & Wilcox DT-2 No. V-90 (CLC Serial 3002, built 5/59 as CP No. 17) for use on the proposed Grand Valley Railway Company. The unit will remain in Cambridge (Ontario) for the short term. The Grand River Railway Company recently received provincial railway status.

**HELP:** A heavyweight passenger car is being refitted in the disused Grand River Railway shops in Preston, Ontario, apparently for a stationary restaurant. Might any of our readers know the history of the car?

**RETURNED TO C.R.M.:** (p3-16, 3-45) Former Montreal Tramways Open Observation Car No. 3 has returned to the Canadian Railway Museum in Delson, Quebec, after seeing service at Heritage Park in Calgary since 1977. The 65-year-old car departed Calgary on November 7.

**IN STORAGE:** (p3-17, 3-20) Former CN 4-8-2 6060 journeyed from Edmonton to Calgary on October 28 and 29 for storage in an unused process building at the Comonco Nitrogen Plant on Heritage Drive S.E. in Calgary.

**YOUR HELP IS REQUESTED:** With the VIA Rail network scheduled to be cut in half on January 15, 1990, many trains and many pieces of rolling stock will 'ride into the sunset' after the Christmas rush.

For posterity, your editors would appreciate receiving details of the motive power and rolling stock used on trains over the holidays and on each 'last run'. And please take along your camera - black and white photographs would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

**INFORMATION SOUGHT:** John Chruch, 284 Tudor Court, Pointe Claire, Quebec H9P 1Z5, is seeking information on the Drummondville County Railway which ran between St. Hyacinthe and Charny (Quebec) in the late-1880s. The line eventually became part of CN's main line between Montreal and Quebec City.



*LAST ONE: CP Rail SD40-2 5690 greets the new year as she lays over at Windsor, Ontario, in the wee hours of January 1, 1989. No. 5690 is the last of CP's almost 1300 units to carry the 5-inch stripes, a scheme last applied in the late-1970s. Since then, 8-inch stripes have been applied. Note that the door on the fireman's side has been replaced. Photo by Ross Harrison.*

---

### **Bytown Railway Society**

P.O. BOX 141, STATION A  
OTTAWA, ONTARIO  
K1N 8V1

9101  
David Stremes  
214 Belford Crescent  
OTTAWA, Ont.  
K1Z 7B1

---