

The Branch Line

Vol. 2 No. 4 January 1967



RAILROADING has always been a lucrative avenue for writers. Since the demise of the steam locomotive particularly, there have been more hard covered books published on this subject than any other form of writing, with the exception of fiction and "who was who" in the last war. While too many of the former books read like carbon copies, a few do stand out and have become good sellers, such as "Canadian Steam" by Dave Morgan now in its second printing.

A recent publication which will undoubtedly become a must on railroaders' shelves is *Some Classic Trains*, by Arthur Dubin, published by Kalmbach. The importance of this well illustrated book to this column is that Dubin included two Canadian trains — CN's The International Limited and CP's Mountaineer.

Existing in an era once known as the Golden Age of Railroading in North America, The International Limited was inaugurated May 25, 1900 by the GTR because of an increase of passenger traffic between Montreal — Toronto and the United States.

Proving that "train travel can be fun", the Limited featured electric lighting operated by a belt driven dynamo and storage batteries under the cars, "the same that were installed on the Royal Train of King Edward VII". Advertised as Canada's train of superior service and "an extra fine train without extra fare", the Limited perpetuated the former GT traditions after it was taken over by the CN, such as Pullman sleeping cars and observation cars, and former GT arch windows and diners.

In 1929 the train represented a trend to "quiet luxury and refinement". The coaches and dining and parlour cars were railway-owned but the sleeping and solarium observation cars were furnished by Pullman. Popular features of the train then were a soda fountain, valet and maid services, and (hold your hat) a Vista-glassed sun-room "where in perfect ease and comfort you view river and lake and verdant valley as you wing your way along, the while you reap in full the health-giving benefits of the rays of the sun, the world's greatest doctor".

Incidentally, the GTR was one

of Pullman's earliest customers — some of the cars were built in the railway's Montreal Point St. Charles shops.

Originally numbered 14 and 15, the limiteds were changed in the 30's to nos. 6 and 15. To these trains were assigned various types of motive power — from Pacific's to Hudson's, to Mountains and finally Northerns, which included the famed 5700 and 6400's.

The CP's Mountaineer supplemented the year round Pacific coast service. Soo Line and the CP inaugurated this classic example of superb varnish June 10, 1923, as a new transcontinental train scheduled for summer months. It was routed from Chicago to Vancouver to the resorts of Banff and Lake Louise.

Except for richly appointed wooden observation cars and tourist sleepers, the consist of this train was new heavy-weight steel.

Because of the constant use of The Mountaineer, it became an all sleeping car operation which the railways said that the train would handle neither "extra nor special

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The Continental Limited — another Canadian classic train.

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THE TRAIN LINE

by Bruce Chapman

cars nor coach passengers".

In 1929 the train was equipped with men's and women's baths, valet and maid service. On August 23, 1960, the Mountaineer ceased its grand style and extent of operation.

It has been said that if rail-roading was a model monopoly, there was abundant competition within the industry and the rolling symbol of a carrier's size and strength was its crack trains. One wonders then what these crack trains of yesteryear would have looked like if Pullman hadn't risen to the height it did. The dictionary describes it as a noun, "connotating luxury, comfort, and safety in over-land transportation."

Today the name Pullman in Canada is a byword, but what it represents is still being applied in the railway car shops. The only avenue which seems to be forgotten is the opulence once associated with crack trains. But never mind, as Pierre Delagrave of the CN said "we'll prove that trains can be as modern as this minute." And after all, that's the important thing.

By J. Norman Lowe

CP had wreck near Jack Fish Nov 21st... train ran into rock-slide previously warned by red ABS signals. Units 8767-4408-8751 were in on it. When train hit slide, whole mountain came down on the train. 8767-8751 to be repaired, 4408 to be rebuilt... a boxcar had landed on top of it, and it caught fire. There were rumours that CPR was tempted to give the unit a shove... into Lake Superior.

CN's new units... two 6-630's, #2000-2001, as they expect to have all units of the 2200 series to be retired by next year. Eight SD-40's, #5000-5007. Also the usual C-424's and GP-40's, #3222-3240 and 4012-4017.

CP will have more GM units in the east, due to the present purchase of 65 units from GM of SD-40's, those assigned Winnipeg from Calgary are 4029-4031, 4034-4040, 4441-4443 (all F-7's) and GP-9's 8483-8506; 8530-8535; and 8614-8619.

There are boilers in all above units, serviceable, but the boilers in the 4400 "B" units are to be removed with the next shopping, if not already done... these units were all formerly 1900's, passenger units, and thus kills all hopes of getting the "Dominion" back on. Units in the series 4438-4445 (formerly 1912-1919) will lose boilers, as well as 4446 and 4447, which never did become 1900's. Those already done are 4439, 4440, 4445 and 4446.

CP has received six more DM & IR units for the winter in addition to the three already in service. Ones received were 143, 147, 152, 156, 170 and 173. Already here were 124, 137 and 150. Will be quite awkward if the dispatcher has to issue a meet between CGW 150 and DM&IR 150, same with the two 156's.

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Membership Chairman, CRHA,
PO Box 352, Term. "A", Ottawa

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CP has received up to 5525 of its order to end at 5531 on December 31st. Another order for 35 comes in 1967, to be delivered by July 1st, that will boost the SD-40 population up to 66, ending at 5564... something screwy there. I know the last unit is 5564, so they get 34 of them in 1967. Hurdman Tower was burned down by the NCC Nov. 8th, and the signalman's shack next door got the same treatment Nov. 9th. Obituary dates... apparently are July 21st 1898 ... November 8th, 1966. Ottawa West is scheduled to move to Walkley yard Sunday April 30th, 1967. The CPR will take over the CNR yard and yard office, and the CNR will move into their new yard now being built immediately south of the present yard. There will be separate yard offices and car rip tracks for both railways, the new CNR facilities now being built.

Passengers don't think much of CNR's 24 hour system. Rumors going around the CPR that it will adopt it in April. Whether it will be the 0001 system of the 24.01 system is another question... the latter in use west of Fort William. The last train to leave the old Union Station was the engine CP 8578 on September 26th. He lifted the last 3 gondolas into which A. Merilee had been loading track, ties and other railroad supplies. These gondolas were 340715; 345561 and 345562.... the last two being brand-new. Tenders have been called for removal of CPR trackage from old Union Station through to St. Henri Street in Hull.... which is the first crossing with flashing warning lights. This stub track will permit yard engines to get into Levinsons siding, across from Hull Beamer station, without building any more trackage, which will be lifted entirely about April 30th, 1967.

GENERAL MEETING Tuesday

January 24

8 PM

NORMAN LOW

TALK ON CNR OPERATIONS - 1967

COLOUR FILMS ON CNR OPERATIONS - 1966 AND CN STEAM IN ACTION

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