



Newsletter

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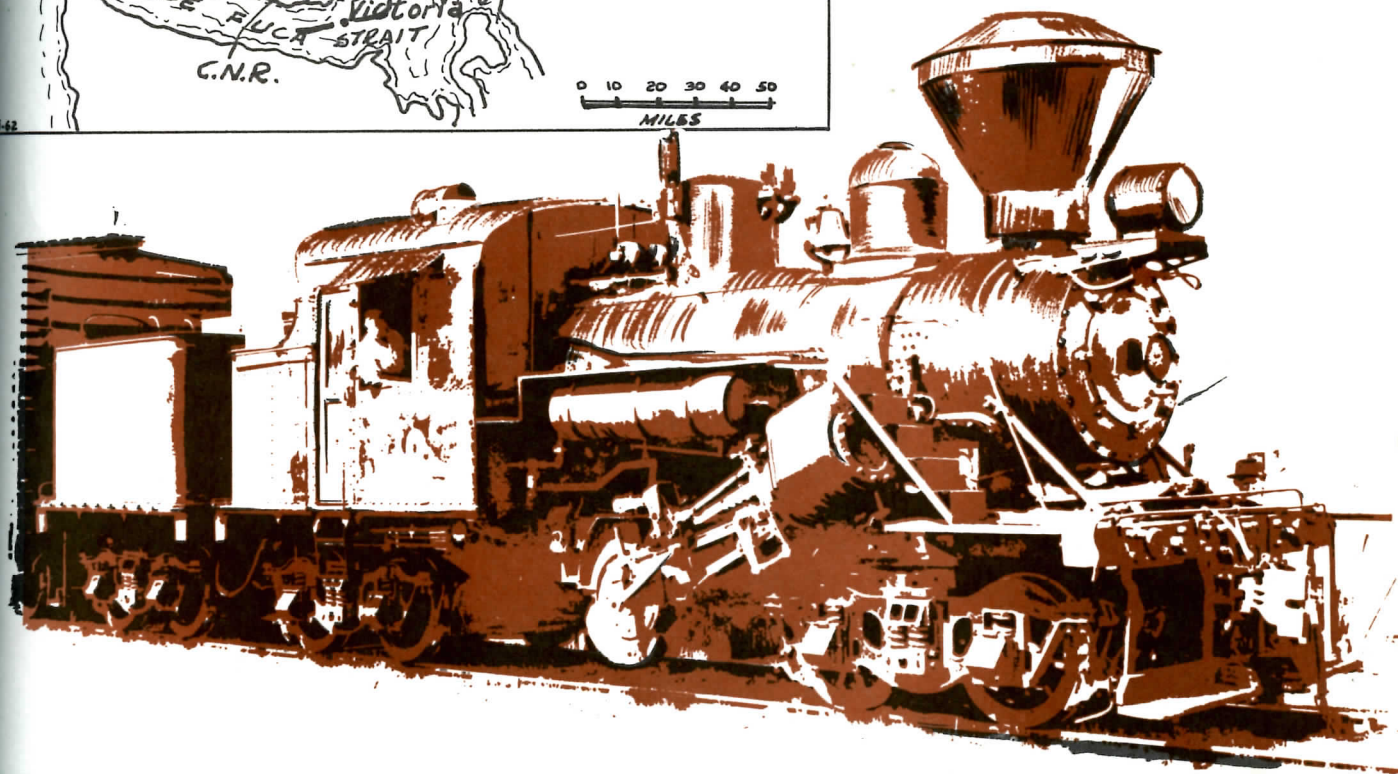
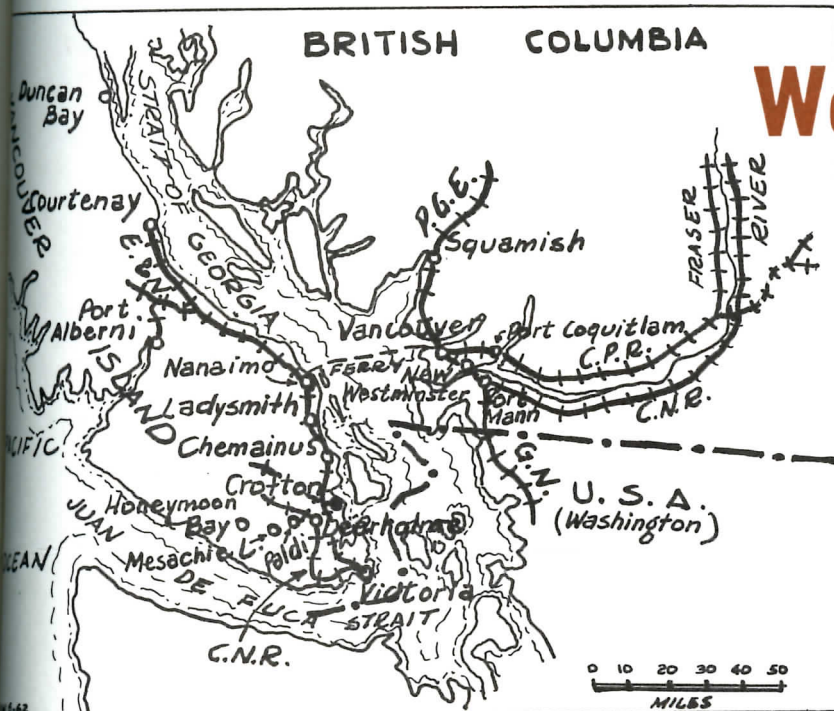
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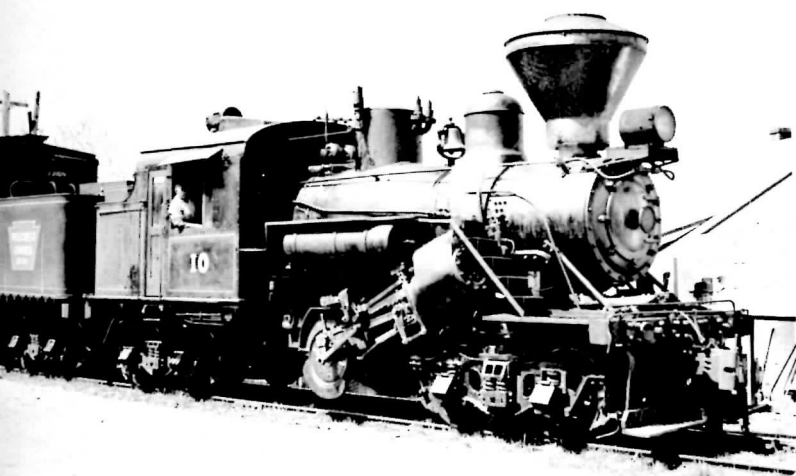
BRITISH COLUMBIA

West Coast Rail Tour

Photos and Text by PETER COX



UPPER CANADA RAILWAY SOCIETY
BOX 122 TERMINAL "A" TORONTO, ONTARIO



Hillcrest Lumber no. 10, probably the last operating 3-truck Climax in North America, is seen switching cars at Mesachie Lake, B.C.

Have you finalized your vacation plans for this summer? Good, I hope you have a grand time, and if railfanning activities are part of your plans, good hunting! Before you buy your tickets or load up your camera though, consider what may be in store for you on Canada's west coast. There is railroading galore, and much of it is steam, even in 1962!

For a start, consider Vancouver. After crossing the Lions Gate Bridge, if you look in the right place you will see smoke rising from the stack of a spic and span 3-truck Shay, busily shoving hopper cars to the unloader at Vancouver Wharves Ltd. Her lettering indicates the name of her newest owner, Railway Appliance Research Limited, and her number is 115 (see Newsletter 195, page 41). Right next door is the North Vancouver yard of Pacific Great Eastern, usually good for several MLW hood units and a Budd RDC or two, plus an interesting selection of passenger equipment gathered from all over the continent. A trip over this line is strongly recommended, for its scenery and operation must be seen to be appreciated. Grades, trestles, mountain gorges, tunnels, steel bridges and continual curvature make the trip a rewarding adventure. If you stop at Squamish, (40 miles from Vancouver) you can see the road's last steamer, Mikado no. 160, a CLC product of 1945, in storage, but still intact.



Mayo Lumber no. 3, a Lima product of 1924 (no. 3262), rusts in peace at Paldi, B.C.

Don't go too far away though, for there is more to cover in the Vancouver area. New Westminster (14 miles to the east) is the headquarters for British Columbia Electric's (recently renamed B.C. Hydro and Power Authority) freight operation, handled by 14 diesels of G.M. and G.E. manufacture. Within five minutes walking distance you will find Pacific Coast Terminals, whose two O-6-O's are without a doubt the best maintained and cleanest steamers in the country. As only one works at a time, you will see either 4012 or 4076, depending on when you arrive. The C.N. and C.P. are very much in evidence on the Lower Mainland, of course, but you must be a diesel fan to appreciate these roads, for steam packed up for good over four years ago. Port Mann and Vancouver are both good spots, photographically, for such items as C.N. Geeps festooned with mountain floodlights, (for seeing around curves), while on the C.P., Coquitlam boasts of Trainmasters and transfer engines, as well as the only Baldwins on the roster. Both it and the city yard are very good for camera work. Americana comes to town twice daily in the form of the Great Northern's Internationals, whose brilliant orange and green livery shows up well on Kodachrome II film.

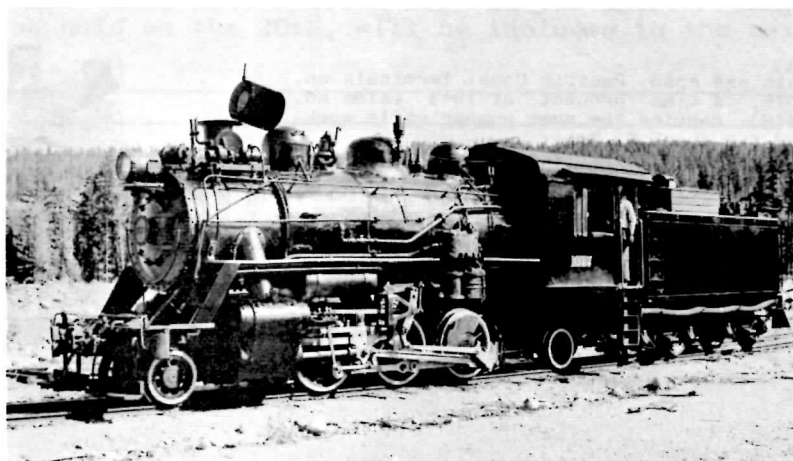
Traction fans need not despair for there is something for them as well; two G.E. steeple cab freight motors, for instance, BCE 960 and 961. You can always find one or the other at work, right in downtown Vancouver.

Don't let the arrow deceive you, BCE 960 can and does go in both directions while switching in Vancouver. This engine was former Oregon Electric no. 22, thus explaining its Alco 1912 origin (builder's no. 51070).



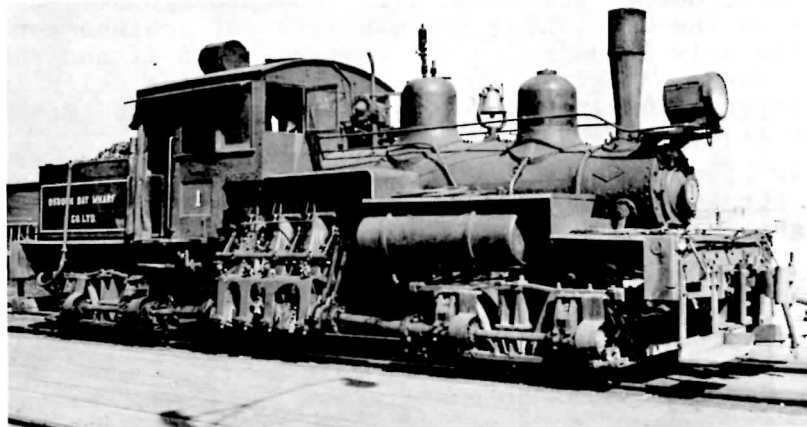
You have as yet but scratched the surface, and should continue westward to Vancouver Island for the most wonderful sights of all! Presuming you have taken the CPR ferry to Nanaimo, a short seven mile drive and a right turn at Cassidy will bring you within sight of tracks. Depending on weather and timber traffic these tracks can be quite busy, and most of the trains they support will be steamers. This is the Nanaimo Lakes run, operated by Comox Logging and McMillan Bloedel & Powell River, each one sending a string of log buggies up the 20-odd mile line, later branching off to their respective camps to pick up a load of the big sticks. Motive power varies, and here is what you might see: Comox Baldwin V0 no. 7128, 2-8-2 no. 11 or 2-8-2T no. 16, MB & PR 2-8-2 no. 1055 or 2-6-2 no. 1077. Comox favours the diesel, but since it is in the regular habit of breaking down, the steamers must come to the rescue. MB & PR alternates its power.

This sporty Prairie type, seen here at Nanaimo Lakes, is no. 1077 of McMillan Bloedel and Powell River. She was built by MLW in 1923 (no. 65377). Note the two generators mounted at the base of the stack.



If you retrace your steps to the highway and then go south seven miles to Ladysmith, you will find Comox's shops. Whatever is not up the line will be there, plus Shay no. 12 and 2-6-2TT (both tender and saddle tank) no. 7, both in storage. Eight miles farther south is Chemainus where a very pleasing 2-6-2T can be found switching. It is MB & PR no. 1044, while 2-8-2T no. 1066 is its standby.

If you want more, another five miles will bring you to Crofton and a tiny coal-burning Shay switching the pier of Osborn Bay Wharf Co. Ltd. Numbered 1, she weighs in at a modest 30 tons. Also at Crofton you will find Whitcomb diesel no. 9 of British Columbia Forest Products.

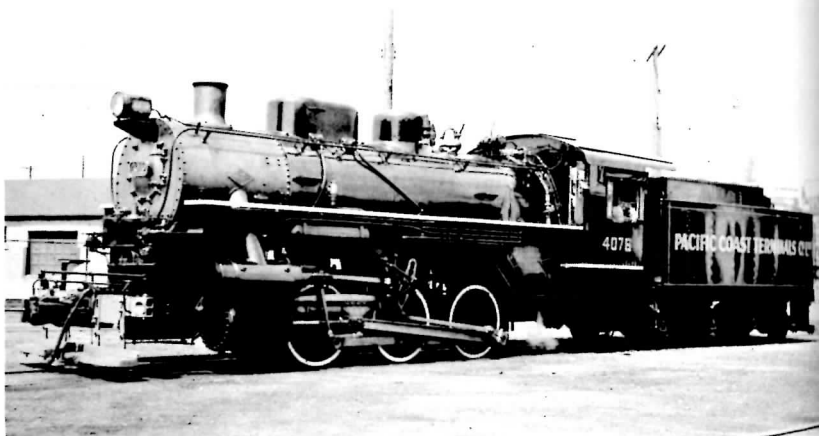


Diminutive Shay no. 1 of the Osborn Bay Wharf sits on the pier at Crofton, B. C. Prior to its duties here, it was Hillcrest Lumber no. 1 and its builders plate reads "Lima, no. 3147, Dec., 1920."

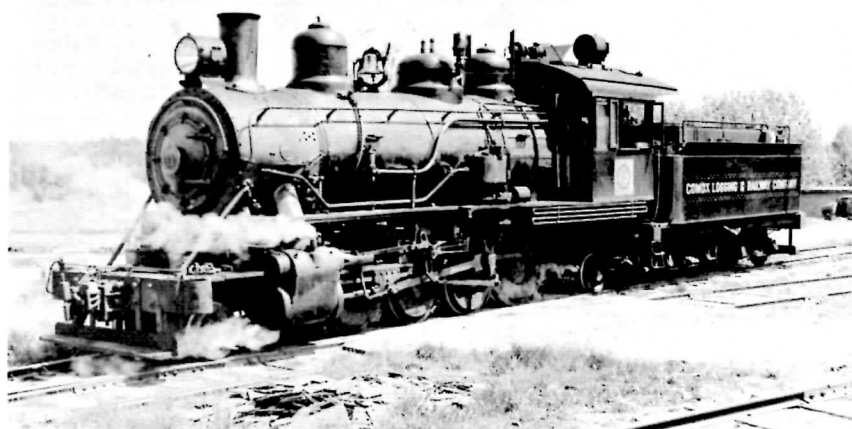
Now take time to change your films and catch a breath before inspecting the next treats in store for you. Continue south (12 miles) to Duncan, then west (1 mile) to Deerholme. McMillan and Bloedel Shay no. 1 is on display here in a private museum that operates two steamers on a narrow gauge pike. Deerholme is also the terminus of the C.N.'s Island lines, for which GMD-1 units 1000 to 1002 provide the motive power. Moving farther west to Paldi, the now abandoned logging railway of Mayo Lumber is represented by a wood-burning, balloon-stacked Shay no. 3 on display. At Mesachie Lake, Hillcrest Lumber uses Climax no. 10, but keeps no. 9, another Climax, as a standby, while at Honeymoon Bay, Western Forest Industries has stored Shay no. 5 (they may put her on display) but is content to let Hillcrest's famous Climaxes do their switching.

Elsewhere, a narrow gauge 0-6-OT, no. 19 of Wellington Colliery is on permanent display at Nanaimo. MB & PR's nearby Harmac pulp mill keeps G.E. diesel no. 1012 busy, while sister no. 1011 works on more MB & PR trackage at Port Alberni, the home of displayed Shay no. 2. Farther north, you will find Comox 2-6-2T no. 2 exhibited at Courtenay. If you do not feel up to driving that far (70 miles) north of Nanaimo, then take the CPR's Dayliner for a very relaxing and very scenic trip over the Esquimalt and Nanaimo. While you are at it, go 30 miles more to Duncan Bay (2 miles north of Campbell River) and examine Elk Falls no. 1, a two-truck Shay, quite small but quite alive!

Spic and span Pacific Coast Terminals no. 4076, a Lima product of 1944 (Lima no. 8410), carried the same number while working for the U.S. Army.



Comox Logging Mikado no. 11, built by Baldwin in 1923 (no. 57407), steams contentedly at Ladysmith, B.C.



That just about covers the story of railroading in the southwestern corner of British Columbia, with the exception of Canadian Forest Products, whose operation away up at Englewood is almost inaccessible except by chartered boat or plane. Three modified GMD-SW-1200's do most of the work, but steamers 112, a 2-6-2ST and 113, a 2-8-2, are in standby. Such unique locos as a diesel-powered Shay and Climax are also to be seen here. The Vancouver Wharves Shay came from this outfit, as have a variety of Shays and Climaxes which have been barged into Vancouver for scrapping over the last few years.

In case you are wondering why Canadian Collieries has not been mentioned, it is because they ceased rail operations in 1960, with 4-6-0 no. 14 and 2-6-2T no. 17 now residing in Seattle as the property of the Puget Sound Railway and Historical Society.

And what about Victoria? Like Vancouver, it too is all diesel. The C.P. uses CLC hydraulic no. 13 plus several conventional switchers. The C.N. unloads a weekly barge with G.E. engines 4 and 5 while ex-National Harbours Board G.E. no. 74 is assigned to the Ogden Point pier.

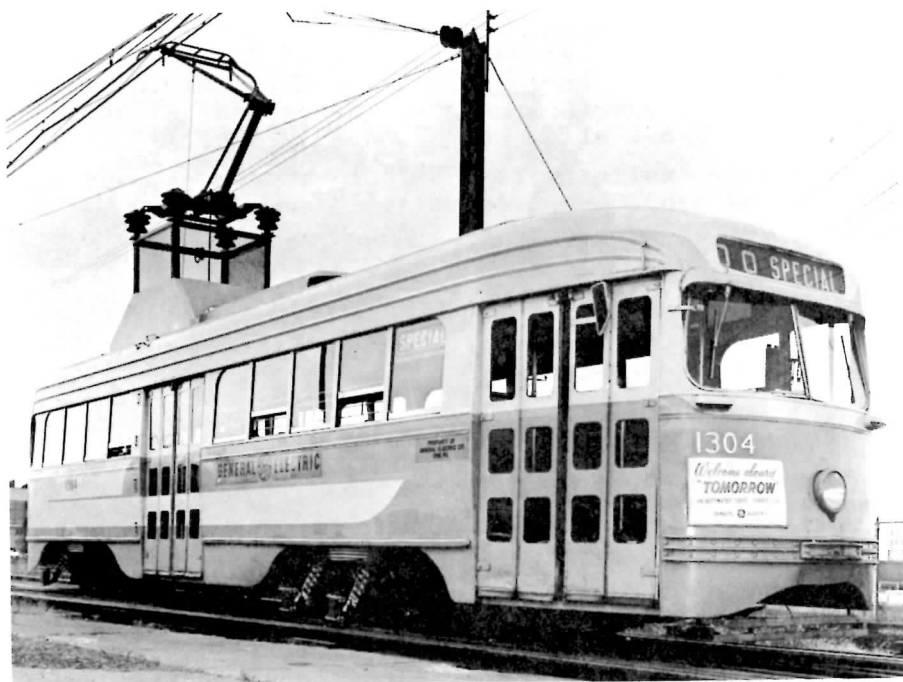
On your way home you might detour via Washington and Oregon, for there are still railways operating in these states which favour the many-wheeled engines that run by steam. They, however, are another story.

U.C.R.S. Announcements

The June meeting of the Society will be held on the 15th of that month in Room 486, Union Station, commencing at 8.30 pm. This will be the last regular meeting of the current season, there being none during the months of July and August, and all members should make an effort to attend. There will be the usual entertainment following the business part of the meeting.

Members are reminded that there will be no First Friday meetings during July and August, the outdoor meetings for those months being held on the third Friday. Details of the July meeting, to be held on the 20th, will be included in the next Newsletter.

The Society regrets to report the recent passing of Associate Member Rev. Donald C. Harry, latterly of Ottawa, and previously of Toronto and Owen Sound. Rev. Harry, U.C.R.S. member no. 339, was well known to Toronto resident members as he was a frequent attender at meetings, even during his period of residence at Owen Sound. He was a particular devotee of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and authored a number of articles on the operations of this system which were published in the Owen Sound Sun - Times.



While not distinctly Canadian, here is a development that may soon see exploitation here. The General Electric Co. is experimenting with the automatic remote control of rail-borne transit vehicles at their Erie, Pennsylvania plant. At present, they have ex - D. C. Transit (Washington, D. C.) air-electric PCC no. 1304 outfitted with a Stone-Faivley pantograph to operate on their existing overhead system and

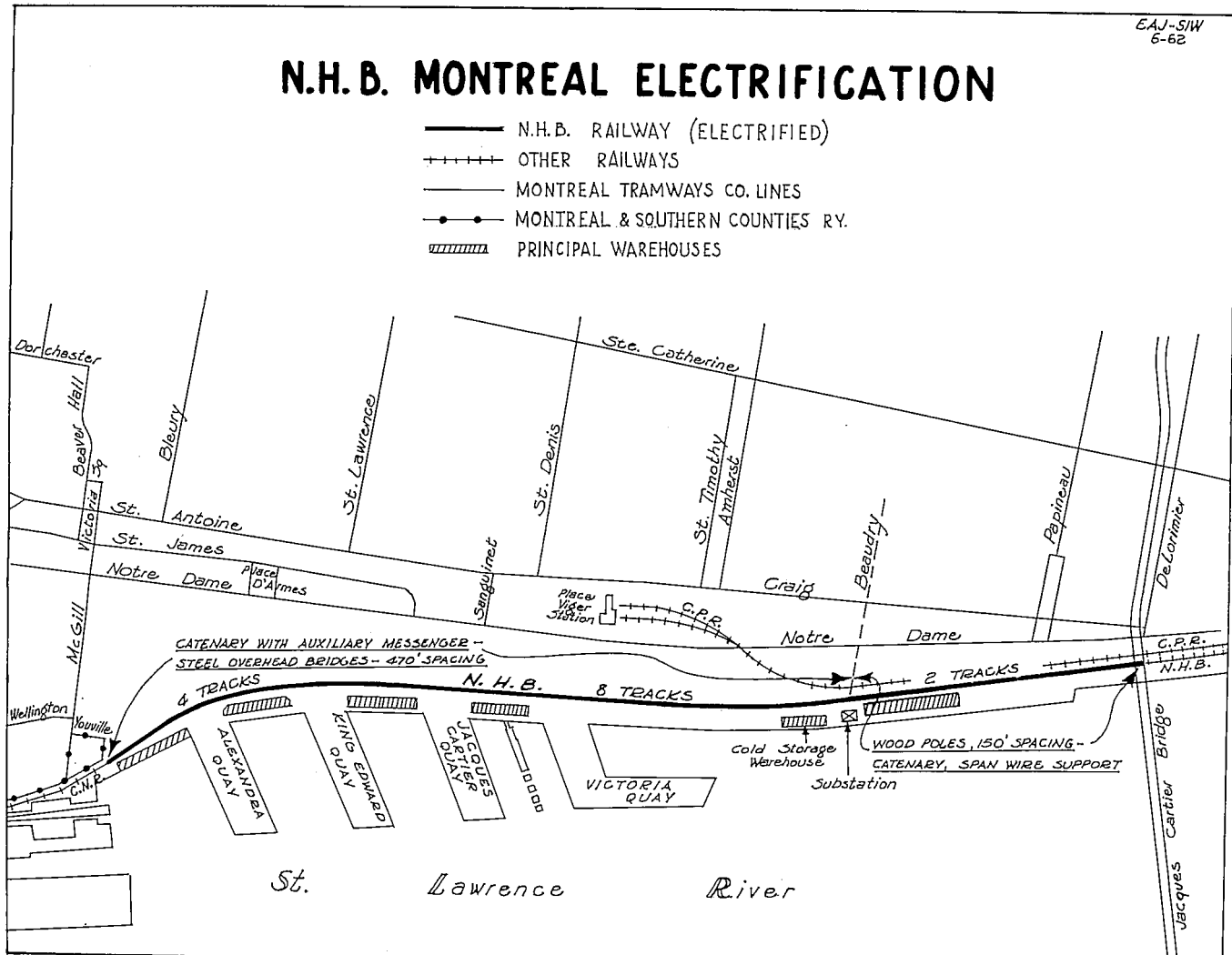
various pieces of control gear mounted inside the car body to control its movement. 1304 still carries the grey and green colours of the D.C. Transit and the interior of the car is reasonably unaltered, with the old advertising cards still in their usual places. There is even a notice near the operator's seat cautioning passengers against talking with the non-existent motorman!

Equipment aboard the car performs essentially the same functions as the human operator would in controlling the accelerating and braking of the car. While the operator receives his information to stop or start the car from lineside signals or the visual conditions of the track ahead, the automatic system receives this same data from stationary wayside control boxes. The information is transmitted to the car over an inductive cable system laid parallel to the track, the car picking up the signal from the cable, without touching it, via pick-ups mounted on the trucks. The wayside controls compare the track conditions and the normal operating procedure at that point (e.g. accelerate, maintain speed or brake, etc.) then send the control signal to the car or train.

Even casual observation of Toronto subway operating practices reveals that such a system might well be practical here. Motormen make few independent decisions on the control of their trains, being governed entirely by signal indications and wayside markers. Each start from a station is the same; the controller is quickly wound to its full-on position (often while the doors are still open) and the automatic notching-up of the control equipment governs the acceleration of the train. At a yellow "0" marker, the controller is closed and the train coasts. At the red numbered markers (4, 6 or 8 depending on the train length) the brakes are applied in full service application and the automatic lapping equipment ensures a smooth stop. Already then, automatic equipment does the majority of the work in controlling the train, the operator only translates signal indications or recognition of wayside markers into car control changes.

When can we expect automatic rapid transit? There are many objections to be overcome yet. Present operating unions would inevitably oppose such a scheme (as they have done in New York), and public confidence must be generated before the system would be accepted, although many sophisticated elevator control systems are used with little thought of the many troubles that can beset them. Then too, cost of new control equipment must be weighed against the savings in labour and maintenance costs that would be realised. However, maximum utilization of rapid transit lines can only be gained through the use of the most modern equipment and procedures available, and we are bound to hear much more of such automatic control techniques in the future.

* The TTC is giving consideration to the use of closed circuit television to watch passengers entering subway turnstiles on the Bloor-University line in lieu of station personnel. The cameras would be used in long stations such as St. George, where an operator would sit at one end observing the screens and using a loud-speaker system where necessary to direct passengers and reprimand would-be fare-evaders. The system has already been tested in the Yonge Subway and is reportedly successful.



The Montreal Harbour Terminal Railway, operated by the Harbour Commission of Montreal, is a switching railway serving the piers on the St. Lawrence River below the Lachine Canal. In 1918, the 55.35 miles of track operated by the Commission saw 30 trains per day, totalling between 1000 and 1800 cars, hauled by 9 steam locomotives. However, after visits to the electrified terminals of New York and Philadelphia in 1914, the Commissioners decided to electrify their lines, but the effort of World War I caused them to defer their plans until after 1918. At this time, plans were drawn up for a 2400 volt D.C. overhead pick-up system, the same as that being installed by the Canadian Northern in their Mount Royal tunnel project.

Bids were invited for the supply of the materials for the overhead supports, trolley wire and substation equipment until June 14th, 1919, allowing the actual work of erecting the wire to commence by September of that year. Work continued through the winter and by spring, only the bonding of the switch points and at crossovers remained to be completed before very limited electric operation could begin. In order to make use of the equipment installed, the Harbour Commission