

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

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The perennial complaint about summer has been that it is too short! For years, I joined the standard chorus on the subject, but as time marches on, I am coming to a different conclusion to complain about – too many things to fit in the 24 hour day, no matter what the season. Summer does add a few extra pressures, besides all those things to do, there is the matter of how am I able to indulge in all the fresh farm produce, (including the real whip-cream on strawberry shortcake), while they are available. However, such problems mix nicely with one's hobby as one scoots around the countryside.

A couple of extra items to tack onto last month's column, or at least that's what my computer tells me. I didn't mention them last month since I thought, I had mentioned them earlier. Anyway, there are two interesting stations along CP's Trois-Rivières Subdivision existing from the days prior to CP coming on the scene in 1885. The first is about twenty miles east of Trois-Rivières in the community of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade, (CP La Pérade, Mile 107.2 Trois-Rivières Subdivision). This station is a 1½ storey long narrow frame station. It is quite different in that it has a medium pitched gable roof. However, the single dormers, one facing the track and on the back side have very steep roofs. While these dormers are quite narrow, their peaks is the same elevation as the main roof. The roof overhangs are quite wide and extend about the same on all sides. The original depot was a plain rectangle with a single bay window on the track side. The small extension under the overhang at a back corner looks like it was added to permit a couple of indoor washrooms. While the rear dormer has a small balcony there is no sign of a stairway access, one would expect that the second floor rooms were probably used more for bunking crews than actual living quarters. This station is still mostly clad in clapboards, that appear to be showing their original light brown paint. Like many small community stations, this one had space at one end for baggage and express.

The second station, also of the same generation on this CP line is at CP Lanoraie, Mile 35.7 Trois-Rivières Subdivision. As pointed out in last month's column, this is the junction with CP's line to Joliette and Saint-Félix-de-Valois. The railway junction is a couple of kilometres north of Autoroute 40 or about a half a dozen kilometres north of the community of Lanoraie.

This station is slightly longer but otherwise generally very similar to the one at La Pérade. The Lanoraie station however, has two steep-roofed dormers on the front and back. It has a balcony similar to La Pérade, but the Lanoraie station has a set of stairs to access the second floor at the back of the station. The Lanoraie station has had a couple of small additions over the years. The one at the back, like the one at its eastern counterpart appears to be for washrooms, while the single storey windowless one on the west end is a puzzle.

While neither a station or on the rail lines between Montréal and Québec, it does tie into major events in railway construction in Québec. It is located on rue de l'église in St-Romuald, QC. Puzzled? Does August 29, 1907 or September 11, 1916 mean anything? These are the dates of the collapses at the Quebec Bridge and the item is the monument to the workers who lost their lives in these collapse. While I haven't researched the

details on this monument, a friend, who family plot is located in this same cemetery across the river from Québec City tells me that it was built from metal from the original bridge and was mainly in remembrance of the German bridge workers who were lost in the 1907 collapse. His description was to look for a monument that reminds one of the Eiffel Tower. The four-sided monument, some twenty odd feet high sets on a concrete base. The bottom portion has sculptured (fabricated from rolled shapes) with a tall slender pyramid above topped with ornamental decorations and a cross. The east side of the pyramid section has a series of rungs like a bridge inspection ladder. The monument was fabricated using rivets and is now painted aluminium.

It is too bad that this monument is missing any plaque or on-site information as to what it is. The bridge collapse of August 29, 1907 took at least 65 bridge workers to their deaths. The failure of the lifting mechanism on September 11, 1916 took the centre (suspended) span and 10 or 12 workmen to their deaths. Thirteen months after this second accident, the first train passed over the bridge, on October 17, 1917. Regular rail traffic started using the bridge on December 3, 1917.

While I am certain we all still marvel at this great bridge either as we travel over it or watch a train cross it, however, if you are in a area, go the mile or so east to rue de l'église in St-Romuald and have a look at a less known part of the Québec Bridge.

Eastern Sojourn

Like most summers, I travelled to New Brunswick in early July to visit family and to spend some time tracking down Maritime railway history. While I probably have a weak spot for many of the small, lesser known eastern railways, I also keep the railways of my home town high on the list. The Saint John and Quebec Railway (locally known as the "Valley Railway") was the last major railway to pass through Woodstock, NB. While it had been discussed and proposed in many formats since the earliest days of railways, it was not until the beginning of World War I that this railway was finally constructed and put in operation. Politics definitely played a major role in this railway, as no doubt did the expectations in the form of business promises from the Canadian Northern Railway organization. As I have mentioned previously in this column (January 1993), the "Valley Railway", coupled with Canadian Northern's plans would have fulfilled the original concept of the 1830's for an intercolonial line through what is now northern Maine. Also, many people around 1900 strongly believed and argued that communities needed a second railway to ensure competitive freight rates. Had the plans to join the Saint John and Quebec with the Canadian Northern through Maine been completed, this would have provided a competitive parallel route to C.P.R.'s "Short Line".

The Saint John River provided the first communication line through western New Brunswick. Canoes in summer and sleds in winter were the first vehicles, followed by horse (oxen) drawn tow boats and finally steam-powered river boats before railways came on the scene.

While the river only permitted the seasonal boat operation, the portion north of Fredericton posed extra problems especially with the larger steam-powered river boats. The

problems of rapids, low water and shifting sand bars were given a lower priority as the New Brunswick and Canada Railway and the New Brunswick Railway constructed lines to access Woodstock. They then joined forces and continued their march up the river to eventually serve Edmundston. Limited river boat traffic continued into Woodstock until about 1906.

A trip along the Saint John River between Fredericton and Saint John reveals, even today, numerous concrete wharfs, especially in the villages, served the river boat traffic that continued on this portion of the river well into this century. The last river boat, the "*D. J. Purdy*" operated until about the end of the Second World War. The portion of the river south of Fredericton is very different from that to the north. Both the river and valley widens with much more interval land as you proceed south. Except for the spring freshet, the water levels are more consistent, partially helped by the effect of the Bay of Fundy tides.

These physical characteristics helped the river boats, but hindered railway construction. This area had no rail service until the "Valley Railway" arrived in the World War I era. The 31.70 miles from Fredericton south to Gagetown was opened on March 2, 1915, but the 37.76 miles south of Gagetown and access to Saint John didn't go into operation until March 31, 1920.

The first plans for the Saint John and Quebec Railway envisaged the railway crossing from the west bank of the Saint John River south of Gagetown to the east side and then south and across the Kennebecasis River to connect with what is now the C.N.R.'s Saint John – Moncton line at Rothesay, 9 miles east of Saint John. While this route would have been shorter, it would have been very expensive since provisions would have to been incorporated in the bridges to permit passage of boats. The flat terrain would have made high level bridges very expensive and difficult to construct. Lift or swing spans in low level bridges would have a continual disruption to both modes of traffic. The railway's limited bank account along with the changes during World War I, solved the problems and forced it to stick to the west bank of the river and even fall short of its goal of Saint John. The line as indicated above got 37.76 miles south of Gagetown, but this only reached Westfield Beach, but did permit a connection with the C.P.R.'s "Short Line". Trains of the "Valley Railway" used running rights over the 14 miles of the C.P.R. to enter Saint John.

Of the original 157.86 miles of the Saint John and Quebec Railway, only the approximately 14 miles between Fredericton and Camp Gagetown (Oromocto) remains and CN has applied to the National Transportation Agency for permission to abandon even that.

However, this summer's wanderings led me to three former stations of the "Valley Railway", all different and all interesting. Visiting these three stations definitely drove home the limitations of the federal legislation towards heritage railway stations. Two of the three fall into a group that appears to be generally absent from the "Heritage Station" lists. They are very small, yet these small stations once dotted the Canadian landscape.

The first of these has been relocated about a half mile from its original site at Lakeville, CN Mile 149.42 Centreville Subdivision. Lakeville, as indicated by the mileage is about 8 miles south of Centreville and north-west of Woodstock. The 1921 Canadian National Timetable indicated the existence of a

water tank and a 32 car passing track as well as others sidings capable to handle an additional 10 cars. This frame station that is about 10 by 18 feet or so is now setting in a homeowner's yard and used for storage. The new owner has painted the clapboards of this low hipped roof structure a deep maroon with black window and door trim as well as the corner boards. This station was divided into two rooms. The track side had a standard door for passengers, as well as a larger door for the sectionmen's hand or motor car or perhaps a baggage section. There was a chimney in about the centre of the building which would permit a stove in the waiting room and this room had a window in the end of the building that permitted patrons to at least look down the track in one direction.

A few days latter, at Queenstown, south of Fredericton, I passed a home made sign indicating a photo display. I almost went by, but then I decided to stop for a few minutes. The roadside building was typical of the frame community halls of the type built a hundred or so years ago to serve the various local lodges, women's groups and as a place for community gatherings. On entering I was greeted by two friendly ladies, and we were soon discussing their photo displays and local history including, of course, railways. In small communities like Queenstown, all aspects of community life are intertwined. In addition to looking over the photos of the railway construction and operation, those of the river boats and community businesses are interesting to obtain a better overview of the impact of the railway on the community. While finishing our discussion on the photographs and the characteristics of the hall, one of the ladies' husband came by. When we started discussing the village's station, I was advised that it still existed and that Mr. Page was willing to take me up the hill to see it. The station had been relocated several hundred feet up the hill from the community hall and had been used for a number of years as the change house/locker room for the local outdoor ice rink. With changing social patterns as well as the age and interest of the village's children, it had not been used for a number of years.

The Queenstown station is a boxy frame structure like Lakeville, but slightly larger. Its low-pitched hip roof has been covered with galvanized iron roofing. The Queenstown station was divided about two-thirds for passenger service and one third for either baggage or use of sectionmen. The track side elevation had a larger baggage/hand car door near one end, with the passenger section being symmetrical about the front patron's door. First, the station has shaped clapboards cladding up from the bottom for about three feet with shingles cladding on the upper portion. The front door from the clapboards up have a three pane sidelight window each side of it. In addition the front elevation had another window each side of the door, about centred on the remaining wall space of the waiting room. The back side of the station had a single door from the waiting room area as well as a window. Again, like Lakeville, this station had a window in the end wall of the waiting room facing down the track. Neither this or the Lakeville station offered patrons any protection in the form of an enlarged roof overhang. Since as I mentioned the rink is not being used, the local farmer's cattle have found this station a convenience shelter away from some of the flies and summer storms.

Queenstown is shown as C.N.R. mile 29.29 Centreville Subdivision in the 1921 Timetable with a 35 car passing siding and 7 car spots on other trackage.

The third station on this line that I visited was Grand-View, (south end of what the highway maps define as Browns Flat), about 20 miles south of Queenstown. It like the other two stations is a frame structure, but considerably larger and with an operator's bay window. This station appears to have been moved back about 75 feet from its original site and placed on a concrete foundation. It like the one at Queenstown has the bottom portion of the exterior walls clad with clapboards and the top portion done with shingles. The front of the station has the equivalent to a chair rail strip between the clapboards and shingle, and as the present owner has it painted white to match the trim it really stands out against the dark brown of the exterior walls. The name Grand-View still shows stencilled to one end, therefore, it must be assumed that this station was painted dark brown. This is interesting since Queenstown also has its name stencilled on one end, but is painted standard station red. Grand-View also has a low hip roof. The south or baggage room end of this station is windowless except for one small window on the back side. The trackside door to the waiting room, like the one at Queenstown has side lights above the bottom clapboards. While the back of the waiting room had two sizable windows as well as one on the north end, there is no indication that there ever was more than one entrance. Keeping in mind my comment about the money situation for this railway, the roof overhangs and brackets are interesting. This station only has an overhang along the front of the building with a limited return at each end, but the sides and back have nothing. The roof brackets are made of straight squared timber, but the addition of slightly longer sections behind the main bracket detracts a little from their pure plainness.

The year following the opening of the total "Valley Railway", the 1921 CNR Timetable shows one passenger train each way 6 days a week. The down train would leave Centreville at 6:00 A.M., arriving in Saint John at 2:05 P.M.. The up train left Saint John at 12:55 P.M. and was expected to reach Centreville at 9:00 P.M. In addition there was a tri-weekly, way-freight service, but it was run in two sections, one covering Saint John to Fredericton and the other from Fredericton to Centreville. While indicating these trains could handle passengers, the schedule and connections definitely didn't encourage them.

Honestly, I didn't plan on taking this much space on these three stations.

Heading on into Saint John, I stopped briefly at the Tourist Information Caboose at Grand Bay. This former CP wooden caboose is sitting where the original station sat. The second station was a few yards farther west and across the track on the north side. The track through Grand Bay, now listed as CP Mile 9.9 McAdam Subdivision was constructed by the Western Extension Railroad (part of the European & North American Railroad). This line from Saint John to Bangor, Maine was opened in October 1871 and except for the crossing of the river at Saint John provided a continuous rail line from Shediac, NB to Bangor, ME.

Having time after leaving Saint John, I stopped by Rothesay to view the station there. This station now occupied by an art galley has been nicely maintained with numerous features restored. The building is a relatively large two and one half storey structure with a gable roof. While the building is a basic box with an operator's bay and one dormer projecting on the side away from the track, the treatment of the trim, etc., changes its

character to that distinguished look. The main feature is the all-around bracketed canopy. The brackets for this are curved and detailed. Similar though smaller brackets are placed under the eaves of the main roof. The windows have a substantial treatment of trim to give a mullion effect and the wide trim over them give the appearance of a small canopy. Adjacent to the station, a former CN caboose has been placed to act as the Galley's Frame Shop. It, like the main station is painted station red with cream trim.

Since I have been collecting data on the St. Martins and Upham Railway, I decided to stop at Hampton, the northern terminus of this railway and its junction point with CN's Saint John – Moncton line.

While discussions with the young lady at the library first seemed to indicate they may not have much railway information, things changed when she mentioned that a local resident had presented them with a number of scrap books of new clipping. While many topics were covered, these books did reveal several interesting stories on railways around the province.

In addition to the information gleaned at the library, a trip down to the station revealed activities as the Town's Information Centre was in the process of relocation into the building. The Town has purchased this station from its former owners, CN Rail. This single storey mid-sized station with a hip roof and wide roof overhangs remains in its original site next to CN's Sussex Subdivision. This station has a bay window on the track side and a similar protrusion on the back side, but this one contains a entrance door to form a foyer.

When I started this column, I was worried whether enough had happened on this trip to even half fill it. Now it appears the reverse is true.

Follow-up on the June's Bridge Collapse

Rail & Transit's article the last issue about a bridge collapse on the Harvey and Salisbury Railway. A visit to the site via the local papers reveal a couple of extra interesting items. The collapse caused the locomotives to be switched, the locomotive that wound up on the east or Harvey/Alma side was the engine normally used on the passenger run between Salisbury, Albert and Harvey. However, as luck would have it, a Albert Southern engine was in Albert at the time of the collapse so that it was able to handle the regular train to Salisbury and back.

The collapsed bridge also created a minor problem for the approximate 200 excursions from Alma who were going to Riverside for the glorious Orange Celebrations on July 12. Apparently no one thought to have a train on the west side of the collapsed bridge to take the passengers the couple of miles to Riverside, so they had to walk. However, there was a train available to return them to the bridge for their return journey.

Other Tidbits

Discussions are under way in Sioux Lookout, Ontario as to whether the CNR station there, presently designated as heritage, should be demolished to make way for a new commercial complex. This should be an interesting case to follow.

It is expected that the official documentation that will permit the sale of the Jasper Railway station to Parks Canada will be approved shortly. It again is a heritage station.

River ferry's
PEI miniature

Books

Early Excursions

Nakina Station
Tillsonburg