

# CANADIAN RAILROAD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED.

NEWS REPORT #46

JUNE 1954

Montreal, Canada.

## NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Association will be held in room 920, Transportation Building, 159 Craig Street West, on Wednesday, June 9th, 1954, at 8:00 PM. After the business meeting, the entertainment will consist of a talk by Mr. Harry Whiteman, Terminal Express Agent, Canadian National Railways, Montreal. The subject of his talk will be "A Day in the Life of a Terminal Agent".

When Mr. Whiteman was invited to speak to the Association, he gave us an idea of the variety of the express shipments which come under his jurisdiction. On the day he spoke with Mr. Worthen, as an example, he had on his hands two 3-week old squirrels, and some snakes for a circus. Animal shipments are the most critical ones for an express company, and Mr. Whiteman has handled parakeets, lions, deer and polar bears for the Granby Zoo. He expects that the ultimate will be reached if Granby decides to acquire elephants -- no doubt they would be quite an armful -- even for a Terminal Express Agent. Mr. Whiteman has 42 years of experience to draw on, and as his talk promises to be amusing and instructive we would urge all of our members to try and attend this meeting; as usual, guests will be cordially welcomed.

- - - - -

## N.M.R.A. CONVENTION

As announced in last month's Report, the Spring Convention of the Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, was held in Montreal on Saturday and Sunday, May 15th and 16th. Approximately 130 delegates attended, and outside of those from the Montreal area, the greater majority were visitors from the New England area of the United States.

A very complete schedule had been arranged by the local host club, the Montreal HO Association. After registration on the Friday evening and Saturday morning, there was a trip made over the terminal lines of the Canadian National Railways using three of the National System's newest air-conditioned main line passenger coaches, nos. 5557, 5558 and 5559. One of the cars, just out of the shop, had never been used before in public service. The route followed was from Central Station, through the Mount Royal Tunnel to Val Royal. At this point, the run was made around the loop in the scrap and storage yard, and the train returned by way of Eastern Junction, Ville St. Laurent, Ballantyne to Turcot Yard, where an inspection of the roundhouse included moving engines out for photographs. In the evening, two model railroad "clinic" discussions were held, followed by moving pictures. On Sunday, the visitors enjoyed a Banquet at the Queens Hotel, and in the afternoon, participated in a sightseeing tour of the city using MTC cars 1325 and 1326. Included was a stop at Cote St. Paul car-house where the Association's rolling stock, car no. 274, performed for the visitors. Members of the MHOA Convention Committee included Mr. H.A. Calvin, Mr. Godfrey Bethune, and Mr. Howard Scodras, aided by many other members of the club.

Recently, the Assistant Editor, on a visit to Toronto, inspected the shop facilities of the Toronto Transit Commission Rapid Transit system, through the courtesy of the TTC. In the following article, Mr. Brown gives us a glimpse of the less familiar side of rapid transit operation.

DAVISVILLE SHOPS OF THE  
TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

by Douglas Brown

Now that the subway has been opened officially to the public and all of the excitement has more or less died down, it is most interesting to take a look behind the scenes in the operation of this rapid transit system.

During the Easter weekend, I had the pleasure of being taken on an inspection tour of the Davisville Shops located near the subway station of the same name. Upon entering the shops, I was introduced to Mr. Falla, representing the T.T.C. and who was to be my guide during the shop tour. The 69,000 square foot building is of brick, concrete and steel construction affording a pleasant view from the nearby residential district. Throughout the subway system one finds that the TTC has succeeded in blending the appearance of its buildings harmoniously with the surrounding area.

All running repairs are carried out at Davisville, such as small electrical repairs, etc. as well as maintenance in the form of car cleaning and servicing. Major repairs are done at the Hillcrest Shops. There are nine tracks in the Davisville building five of them "dead-end". As each track is assigned for a specific use, I shall explain them individually. In the Car Cleaning Section, there are two tracks; the Inspection Section has two, each equipped with pits, and the Wheel Control Section has two. The latter tracks are equipped with high-speed wheel grinding machines of TTC design and manufacture. In addition, the Repair Section consists of three tracks, two of which have pits 220 feet in length. The third track, at floor level, is used for wheel and axle storage, truck repairs, motor changing, etc. When a truck requires a major overhaul, it is taken from the body of the car and placed on a hydraulic lift which is located near a door large enough for a service transport to enter. The platform of the lift is flush with the shop floor so that the truck is moved into position, and by means of the hydraulic system it can be raised to the height of the waiting transport to be taken to Hillcrest Shops. The provision of this simple lift obviates the necessity of an overhead crane.

Underneath the shop floor is located two tracks for the storage of spare trucks to be used when needed. Access to these tracks is had by stairs or by drop table. The drop table installation consists of three table tops, one in each of the three repair pits. The table tops are raised and lowered by means of a screw type hoist mounted on a powerful carrier which, in turn, operates on a track laid beneath, and at right angles to, the running tracks. Also, in the basement section, there is a store room housing a complete inventory of spare parts.

The TTC employs a modern Car Cleaning Department at this shop. It consists of tracks, one for exterior washing, and the other for interior cleaning. The washing equipment is completely automatic, being operated by a "seeing-eye" unit. As the car moves along the track (under its own power) it passes through a detergent spray, it is then scrubbed by hand, and the final operation is a combination spray-rinse and scrubbing by large mechanically operated brushes. These brushes touch all parts of the car except the trucks. Later, the car is placed on an adjoining track for interior cleaning.

Located near the shop building is the storage yard, where the cars are kept when they are not in use. This storage yard is mainly concentrated in the lower end of the property on five tracks, each one six hundred feet long.

Through an expert maintenance staff, the trains are permitted to run with consistent "on-time" performance at all times. In off-peak periods, they exceed themselves. For an example, I shall conclude by listing a typical trip made on Friday, April 16th.

L. Eglinton	11:55 AM	A Wellesley	12:03 $\frac{1}{2}$ PM
A Davisville	11:56 $\frac{1}{2}$	L "	12:04
L "	11:57	A College	12:05
A St. Clair	11:58	L "	12:06
L "	11:58 $\frac{1}{2}$	A Dundas	12:06 $\frac{3}{4}$
A Summerhill	11:59 $\frac{1}{2}$	L "	12:07
L "	12:00 Noon	A Queen	12:07 $\frac{3}{4}$
A Rosedale	12:00 $\frac{1}{2}$ PM	L "	12:08
L "	12:01	A King	12:08 $\frac{3}{4}$
A Bloor	12:02	L "	12:09
L "	12:02 $\frac{3}{4}$	A Union Station	12:10

oooo00000000oooo

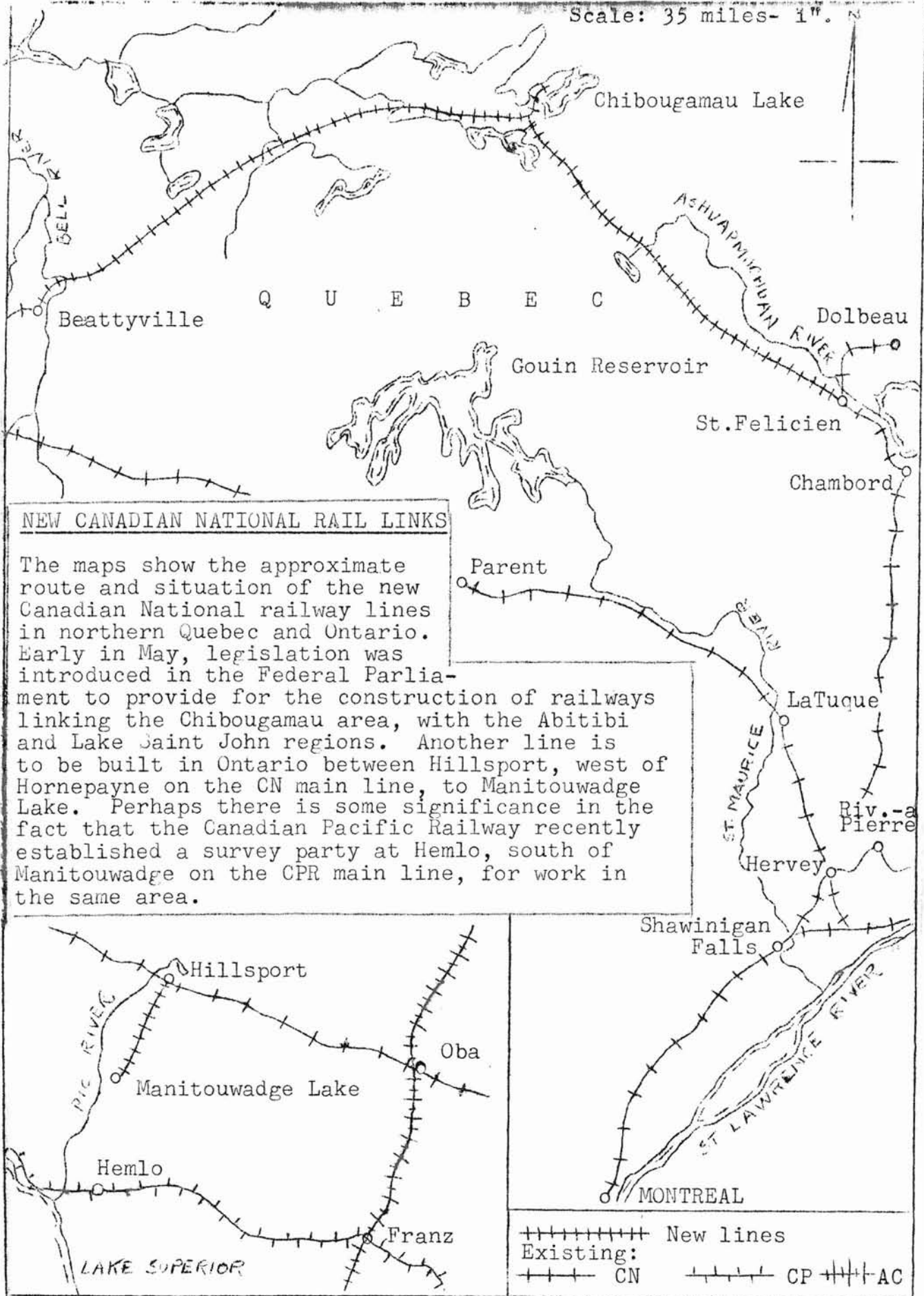
#### MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

During the month of May, the bell from Central Vermont Railway Locomotive No. 700 "Norwich University", a 2-10-4 type, was presented to the University which is situated at Northfield, Vermont. The engine, which was been retired preparatory to scrapping, was in use for 27 years. Four years ago, it had been christened with the University name as part of a celebration honouring Grenville M. Dodge.

Canadian National Railways has applied to the Board of Transport Commissioners to abandon the railway line from Scotia to Parry Sound, Ont., 50 miles. Claiming an operating loss of about \$55,000 per year for the past six or seven years, the CNR's action will remove one more segment of the once busy Canada Atlantic Railway main line across central Ontario. The line between Ottawa and Lake Huron has already been severed between Algonquin Park and Whitney, following a serious washout a number of years ago.

A new type of ceremony was seen in Edmonton at the end of April when Alberta's Lieutenant Governor Hon. J.J. Bowlen, drew the first spike heralding the start of the removal of the 9.2-mile former Edmonton, Yukon & Pacific Railway, in Edmonton. Boasting an optimistic name, the EY&P never got out of the city limits of Edmonton. Passenger service over the line was suspended 26 years ago.

Scale: 35 miles- 1". N





During the week preceding the timetable change on the 25th of April, the Canadian Pacific Railway's British Columbia Lake and River Service steamer "Minto" made its last run on the Arrow Lakes. With the commencement of the summer schedule, the Company withdrew from the Arrow Lakes service, inaugurated by a predecessor Company before the turn of the century. Service will be provided on the Lower Arrow Lake only, by an independent operator. The "Minto" was built in Toronto in 1898, and was shipped west by rail, crated in sections. Along with a sister ship "Moyie", which presumably is still in occasional service on Kootenay Lake, it was intended for service in the Yukon at the time of the gold rush. The Klondike strike had lost some popularity by the time the two crated vessels arrived in British Columbia, and they were diverted, assembled and placed in service, the "Minto" on the Arrow Lakes, and the "Moyie" on Kootenay Lake. The "Minto" and "Moyie" are among the last of a once numerically-strong breed of Canadian lake and river boats, and they are both sternwheelers. Disposition of the "Minto" has not yet been announced by CPR officials.

As a result of the operation of Budd RDC-3 car D-100 by the Canadian National Railways between Fredericton and Newcastle, the schedules have been speeded up, that of the Newcastle-Fredericton run by 35 minutes, while the Fredericton-Newcastle service has been improved by 45 minutes. It is understood that the car is not in service on the run at the present time, due to insufficient express shipment capacity. When the spring restrictions on the New Brunswick highways are removed, the express shipments will be moved by truck, permitting re-introduction of D-100 to service.

Canadian National has put into effect a new numbering system for sleeping and parlour cars. Like the Canadian Pacific, which adopted this system some time ago, initial digits in route numbers will incorporate the train number. Unlike the CPR however, it is the intention of the CNR to arrange the cars in numerical order in their trains, numbering from the rear of the train.

Chesapeake & Ohio Railway, installing a two-way radio system on switch engines in the Sarnia Terminal yards of their Canadian Division, Pere Marquette district, claim this as the first such installation in Canada. (We are subject to correction, but did the Canadian National not experiment with two-way radio on yard engines, at the Longue Pointe yard in Montreal some years ago? -Ed.)

Following on the heels of the opening of the railway to Lynn Lake in Manitoba, moves under way by the Manitoba provincial government may lead to early construction of a 100-mile rail line by the Canadian National Railways between Gypsumville and Grand Rapids, Man.

Dieselization of Montreal-Toronto trains by the Canadian Pacific has resulted in the utilization of an interesting operational pattern for the units. Each night, two units are assigned to each of two sections of trains 21 and 22 respectively, from Montreal and from Toronto. When the four units arrive in Toronto in the morning, two of them continue as far as Windsor, Ont. on the same train; one unit goes to Owen Sound on train 705. The last remaining unit returns to Montreal on day train 36. In the evening, the two units return on train #22 from Detroit, and continue with the train to Montreal. The unit which went to Owen Sound on train 705 returns on train 708, and combining with the unit arriving

from Montreal on day train #35, returns overnight to Montreal on the other section of train #22. With the arrival of both sections of #22 in Montreal in the morning, both units from one section and one unit from the other section combine, to handle train #354 to Quebec, while the remaining unit goes on train #36 to Toronto. In the evening, the units which went to Quebec on #354, return on #355, and combining with the unit arriving on day train #35 from Toronto, return overnight on both sections of #21 to Toronto, two units per section. (If this is not clear, we suggest that you get out your timetable and work it out. -Ed.)

It is reported that clearing of Pacific Great Eastern Railway's right of way between Squamish and North Vancouver is progressing rapidly, and it is said that survey work on the extension of the line from Prince George, the northern terminus, to the Peace River area will commence as soon as weather permits.

Checkers have been riding Montreal commuter trains recently, reportedly to assemble data with a view to study the possibilities of a pooled service by the CPR and CNR on the Montreal and Lakeshore suburban runs.

First units of the Canadian Pacific Railway multi-million dollar passenger equipment order from the Budd Company of Philadelphia, Pa. are expected to be delivered in June. It is expected that the first cars will be sleeping cars.

ooooo00000000ooooo

One hundred years ago, the Grand Trunk Railway commenced the construction of the Victoria Bridge across the Saint Lawrence River between Montreal and St. Lambert; a structure, which, for many years, was considered the eighth wonder of the modern world. The work was famous for the boldness of design, the ingenious methods of construction, the speedy completion and the famous men connected with it. So that these early engineering triumphs will not be forgotten, we are starting a series of articles entitled "Crossing the River" which will describe not only the Victoria Bridge itself but other projects to connect Montreal with the South Shore.

CROSSING THE RIVER  
Part I.

by Robert R. Brown

From time immemorial, the Saint Lawrence River has been the great highway of eastern Canada; for centuries, and perhaps millenii, carrying the canoes of Indians, and since the XVII

Century, the commerce of a growing nation. At the same time, it formed a barrier between the opposite shores and it was not until the advent of the steamboat that people ventured across to the other shore unless some very important reason compelled them to do so. Only in wintertime was it safe and easy to cross and even then sudden movements of the ice would often create serious hazards. During the early winter freezeup and during the spring debacle, crossing was particularly dangerous and the usual whaleboats and birch bark canoes could not be used because the sharp edges of the ice would cut through the sides in no time, and the occupants would soon find themselves floundering about in the icy water. To cross at such dangerous times, dugout canoes, made

...the single logs, were used, and well into the XIX century, too. A very fine specimen of one of the dugouts, which was used to take the mail across from Montreal to Longueuil, may be seen in the Chateau de Ramezay Museum.

During the winter months all navigation ceased and Montreal was cut off completely from the sea except by overland routes to Portland, Boston or New York. These routes terminated on the opposite shore and much thought was given to improve the means of crossing the river safely and easily. The two principal trans-fluvial ferries ran to Laprairie and to Longueuil; with a steamboat running to Laprairie as early as 1822, and a similar service beginning, to Longueuil, in 1829. After 1852, the Laprairie service was of little importance and served only local needs, but the Longueuil ferry was active until about 25 years ago, and for a brief period, from 1852 to 1863, the St. Lambert ferry was the most important of the lot.

Canada's first public carrier, the Champlain and Saint Lawrence Railroad, served as a portage line linking with the navigable waters of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Champlain and it reached the south shore of the Saint Lawrence at Laprairie in the summer of 1836. Its terminus was 7 miles from Montreal and the company had to build a specially-designed steamboat, the Princess Victoria, to navigate the treacherous waters of the shallow Laprairie Basin and the rapids which then existed off Pointe St. Charles. For a few years, the railway did not operate in winter, so the annual freeze-up did not matter very much, but even then the pattern of Canada's great future was beginning to unfold and it was realized that something better would soon be needed.

Early in 1852 the Champlain and St. Lawrence Railroad abandoned its original terminus at Laprairie and built a new line from Cote de la Bataille to St. Lambert, where it descended into a cutting, known until recently as the Gully, passed under Riverside Drive, and then ran out on to a long wharf which extended out to and beyond Moffats Island. The station at the end of the wharf was called South Montreal and ferry boats ran from there to the foot of Jacques Cartier Square. The wharf, in reality a sort of bridge, was a remarkable structure for 1851 when the art of bridgebuilding was little known in Canada. It was more than 1200 yards long and that made it about half as long as the Victoria Bridge. Between the St. Lambert shore and Moffats Island, and probably west of the Island too, there was a continuous cribwork structure, backfilled with stone and earth, which carried the track well above the high water mark. At intervals of 56 feet, centre to centre, there were sluiceways, 20 feet wide, to permit the water to flow through and, as part of the river was very shallow with comparatively little strong current, the obstruction, amounting to 64%, was of little consequence. Undoubtedly the structure was protected from the violence of the spring break-up by well-placed rip-rap but fortunately the worst ice-shoves occurred elsewhere. Beyond the island, the wharf extended 300 yards to deep water. The South Montreal terminus, and its peculiar bridge, was abandoned in 1864, after the Champlain trains began using the bridge.

---

With this issue, we are including a copy of the Royal Bank of Canada's current newsletter, dealing with Canadian Railways.

Editorial Office: 6959 De l'Epee Ave., Montreal.