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Huron

Historical Notes



Fate of the Railway Stations in Huron County

1) C.P.R. Line from Goderich To Guelph.

This line began operating both passenger and freight service in 1907. From 1907 to 1930 the CPR ran four passenger trains daily from Goderich to Guelph and beyond as well as separate freight runs. From 1930 - 1955 passenger service was reduced to one daily round trip.

In 1960 CPR cut back service to one freight train each way daily from Guelph to Goderich and this train included a passenger coach. Shortly thereafter there was no passenger service at all.

Freight service was stopped in 1989. The rail lines were removed in 1990, ending an 80 year service to mid-Huron County. Only one of the seven stations built remains at its original site.

Goderich Station. This brick structure of magnificent architecture is still standing in the Goderich dock area, on the site where it was first built in 1906. In 1990 it was purchased by the Town of Goderich, including seven acres of land. The building is now slowly being refurbished by local senior residents, members of the Menesetung Bridge Association. The station's future is not assured but it is

hoped it will become a heritage building, a showplace for residents and visitors, in the same manner that the nearby Menesetung railway bridge across the Maitland river, which was saved from demolition.

Meneset Station. This was a small flag station used by the local area residents. It was shut down in 1955 and moved to a cottage site on Lake Huron.

McGaw Station. This station was torn down in 1964, and where there was once a cluster of buildings associated with the station operation, nothing remains today at the site where the line crossed country road no. 1. Mr. Norm Hoy, now a senior resident of Goderich, who is working on the Goderich C.P.R. station refurbishing as a volunteer, was one of nine children born at McGaw, where his father was section foreman. Norm's car licence is McGaw - 9.

Auburn Station. The station was located 1 km. south of the village. It was a typical wood constructed building which included telegraph service, freight shed, weigh scales, stock yards, grain elevator, and tool shed. In 1958 the station house was sold for \$150 to Mr. Little of Goderich, who dismantled it and moved it away.

Blyth Station. The original station was located off Westmoreland Street in town near Bainton's Old Mill. The large station provided living accommodation for the station agent's family as most of the larger stations did. About 10 years ago the station was moved without dismantling 2 km. south on Hwy. No. 4 to the Old Mill leather goods store site, where it is now used as a storage and sales outlet building. The building is in excellent condition through the care of the owners, and is an excellent visible reminder of the railway's glorious past.

Walton Station. The station was sold in 1967 to a local farmer Alex Gulutzen and moved to his farm 2 km. east of town for general use. The station had a waiting room, office and living quarters for the station agent.

McNaught Station. This was a flag station located on Lot 26, Concession 1, Grey Township, a farm property owned by John McNaught. The location was near the hamlet of Carmuncock at the east end of Huron county. The station was moved to a garage near Moncton.

Moncton Station (Perth County). This station was moved in its assembled form a few blocks north to the Machon Construction Company site and is used as a storage shed. It can be seen on the west side of Hwy. No. 23 at the north end of town.

2) CPR Line from Teeswater to Toronto via Orangeville. This line was built in 1874 by the Toronto Grey and Bruce Railway Company using (3' - 6") narrow gauge. In 1882 it was changed to standard gauge (4' - 8 1/2"). Teeswater was the Western terminal and layover point for the line. In the early days there were two passenger and two freight trains to Toronto daily. Separate passenger service ended in 1932. Mixed freight and passenger service continued until 1957 and then freight only until early 1980's when all service stopped. The rail lines were removed in 1987. None of the CPR stations on their line which served Huron County's northern area for over 100 years remain today.

Wingham Station. Until 1887 a stage coach was running daily from Wingham to the CPR siding at Glennanon. Then a spur line was built from Glennanon to Wingham including a bridge across the Maitland River. Teeswater continued to be the main CPR terminal point however a flood in 1948 destroyed the CPR bridge. It was temporarily fixed but in 1954 when repairs were again needed CPR decided against it and by 1957 abandoned the right of way between the north and south branches of the Maitland River. The bridge was removed in 1959. The property was sold to the Town of Wingham and Riverside Park was created at the site. The station house was used as the Scout's clubhouse but later torn down to build the Centennial swimming pool. The station house built in 1957 just south of North St. was moved and converted to a home on Scott Street.

Glennanon Station. This small station had a WYE connection with a branch line going south into Wingham and the main line continuing north to the Teeswater terminal. The station was moved to Wingham and used as a

shed. Nothing remains at the site except on a shed nearby hangs the station sign "Glennanon".

Wroxeter Station. The station located north of town was torn down. There was a spur line into town down to the river to serve the various mills and industry located at that point. In the 1870's there originally was one station between Wroxeter and Gorrie serving both towns but in 1882 each town had its own station.

Gorrie Station. The station was torn down.

Fordwich Station. The first station was relocated to north of town and used as a shed. The second station was made into a residence in town.

3) The Wellington, Grey and Bruce Railway Company. (Later acquired by CNR) - This line serving the North Huron region ran between Palmerston and Kincardine. The line was originally built in 1874 and provided both freight and passenger service. In the 1940's passenger service was dropped. Freight service continued until recently to Wingham. The rail line from Kincardine to Wingham has been removed. The line from Wingham to Palmerston is still in place but grown over with weeds and will probably be lifted shortly. Sections over main roadways have already been lifted. The Township of Elma in Perth County has acquired the CNR line right of way within their area from Listowel to Grey Township line. Only one of the five original stations along this line in Huron County remains in place (Wingham).

Lucknow (Bruce County) Station. This station was torn down in the 1970's.

Whitechurch (Bruce County) Station. This station was also torn down in the 1970's.

Wingham Station. This wooden constructed station built in 1889 replacing the first one built in 1872, remains in place but is at present unused and forlorn looking waiting for a new use and sprucing up. This station also served the (CNR) North South London Huron and Bruce Railway system which arrived in town in 1876. There was a WYE junction 3 km. east of Wingham where the L-H&B joined the W-G&B line to get into Wingham.

Bluevale Station. This station was closed in 1956 and removed.

Brussels Station. This station was moved a short distance from the original site and is presently used as the town's lawn bowling club headquarters on Turnberry Street. It retains its original look and may be seen on the west side of County Road 12 at the north end of Brussels. It is unfortunate that many of the other stations were not put to similar use serving the community.

Ethel Station. This originally located station 1 km. south of the town was torn down and nothing more remains at the site, except the unused rail line.

Henfryn Station. This station was torn down and the materials used to build a drive shed on a local farm.

Atwood Station (Perth County). This station was torn down but the unused rail lines remain in place.

Listowel Station (Perth County). This station was acquired by the Kinsmen Club and is now used as a Seniors Centre.

4) The Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway Company

which became part of the Grand Trunk system in 1875 and the CNR in 1923. The line was built in 1858 running from Buffalo via Stratford to Goderich, and continues in freight service today, 135 years later. Passenger service continued for 112 years until June 1970. Freight service by CNR lasted until 1990 at which time the system from Stratford to Goderich and Clinton to Centralia was sold to the Goderich, Exeter, Railway Company (Railtex Inc. USA) who continue to provide freight service to Central Huron.

Goderich Station. The present imposing brick constructed station located on Maitland Street was built in 1925. It continues to be used by the Goderich and Exeter Railway Company as a headquarters and Western terminal. The original station at Goderich, built in 1858, was located closer to the Huron Road (No. 8 Hwy.). The second station was built in 1872 on Maitland St. and demolished in 1925. The material from the second station was used to build two homes in Goderich at that time.

Holmesville Station. The first station was built in 1879 upon a petition from local residents who wanted a flag station. The first station burned and was replaced. The second station remained until 1958 when it was removed from the site for other town services but it also eventually burned down.

Clinton Station. The final station was carefully dismantled in 1974 after being vacant for four years when passenger service was discontinued. The material was used to construct two houses. - *The separate story prepared by Doris Batkin on the history of Clinton Stations.*

Seaforth Station. This station was dismantled in the 1970's by a Mr. Whittacker.

St. Columban (Perth County). This hamlet never had a station. However, incoming and outgoing mail was dropped and picked up on the fly by the postmaster in town.

Dublin Station (Perth County). This station was dismantled and the material used by a local farmer for a building on his land.

London, Huron and Bruce Railway Stations

Wingham – A single station served the Wellington, Grey and Bruce and the London Huron and Bruce both operated by the same company Great Western. The first station was erected in 1872 and replaced in 1889 and 1906. This frame building on Main Street is still in place, with an uncertain future.

Belgrave – Closed in 1941. The frame station sat unused for two years before being purchased by N. Keating and J. G. Anderson. The office and waiting room sections were torn down and the material used in building an addition onto Anderson's house in Belgrave.

Blyth – First built in 1875, burned in 1904, rebuilt, closed in 1941. Purchased by a local citizen and sat unused for some time. M. Siertsema used it as a residence for a time.

In 1982 sold to Jean and Paul Yanchus who made extensive renovations to the interior and exterior residence including bricking. In 1989 it was sold to Virs who use it as a Bed and Breakfast facility.

Londesboro – The station was sold in 1941 to a Mr. Sturdy of Goderich and dismantled for the quality building materials. Two years after the station closed the weigh scales were sold to Watson Bros. The Londesboro station was one of the more eye appealing depots complete with dormer windows (refer to photo in article by E. Kettlewell).

Clinton – The station was built in 1858 by the Buffalo and Lake Huron Line 18 years before the London Huron and Bruce line was installed. After being used as a freight office for several years the frame C.N. station was razed in 1974. The freight shed was sold to a farmer at Auburn for use as an equipment shed.

Brucefield – It had a 30 x 50 ft. frame building with board and batten exterior painted the usual railroad green and was similar in design and construction to dozens of other stations of the era. There was an agent's office containing a pot bellied stove, a waiting room adjacent and across the north end taking up approximately three-quarters of the layout. After the ending of passenger service in 1956 the station was sold and moved to Clinton in 1959 where it now houses the Murphy Orange Lodge on Albert Street.

Kippen – Beside the usual office space waiting room and express/freight section the station had living quarters for the agent and his family under the same roof. The station was sold around 1967 to a buyer from London. The station sat on three 14-inch square timbers 40 ft. in length with laterals between; as there were no basements in these stations.

Hensall – The station was constructed in 1875 and was somewhat of an oddity by the usual standards. It was a two storey frame building erected on posts and beams with the platform level with the box car doors and a ramp at one end for the passengers' convenience. The ticket office and waiting room were up seven or eight steps and the freight and express goods were stored in the lower part. The small waiting room featured benches alongside the walls; the ever present pot bellied stove and a small railed platform at the top of the steps. As most stations had only two or three steps to the agent's office and waiting room one can only wonder why the deviation from the more or less standard plan. The station was dismantled many years ago.

Exeter – The station was erected in 1875 of frame construction. It was quite large and including the freight room was 24 ft. by 96 ft. and 12 1/2 ft. high. Adjacent was a timber platform plus a passenger platform and a small wagon platform. Two livestock pens and a two-holer completed the structure. The first station was destroyed by fire in 1911. A new station was built on the east side of the tracks and further north. Until 1993 the station had one end modified as a truck loading dock and the station part used by the section crews as an office and lunch room. The building outlived its usefulness to CN and was sold to a doctor who moved it to Grand Bend for use as an office where this eye appealing and historic structure will be preserved.

Centralia – The frame station which was typical of the railway design of the era rests on its original site but sits abandoned and forlorn as the structure is surrounded by a farm supply dealer, stack of lumber, etc.

Clandeboye (Middlesex County) – Originally called Flanagan's Corners. The original frame station built in 1875 burned in 1919. Within two months a new station was erected by the Grand Trunk which accommodated the agent's living quarters, freight shed and ticket office all under one roof. The station operated until 1958 and was later sold to James Haye of Parkhill, who tore down the station and used the material for house construction. The tracks were removed in 1989.

Lucan Crossing (Middlesex County) – The L. H. & B. and Grand Trunk rail lines crossed at this point on different levels. The East-West Grand Trunk line was on a high enough embankment to allow the L. H. & B. north south line to go through in an underpass. A long and fairly steep ramp allowed passengers changing lines to walk from one to the other. Initially Lucan Crossing was not a stop but later time tables include it. There was a small frame station at the transfer point but no agent. The station contained a waiting room and a residence for the caretaker. The station was razed by the CNR in 1972.

Denfield (Brecon (Middlesex County)) – Opposite the station on the east side of the tracks the Railway Co. erected a house for the section foreman and his family. It was used for many years and then moved to Front Street where it is still used as a residence. The frame station built in 1875 was sold in 1958 to Ronald and Adolphies Allen area farmers. They dismantled the station and used the materials to erect a farm implement shed which unfortunately burned down soon after construction. The original station had previously escaped destruction in 1925 when the nearby Orr Hotel burned in a fire that destroyed several nearby residences. Due to a spring fed creek a few

hundred feet north of the station Denfield became a water stop with a tall wooden "skyscraper" tower. The tower is also now gone along with the tracks, livestock, pens, etc. eliminating traces of Denfield's railroading days.

Ilderton (Middlesex County) – On three separate occasions the 1875 built Ilderton station escaped destruction by fire which occurred in close proximity to feed mill and elevator complex in 1920, 1934 and 1960. The station was closed by CNR July 1, 1967 and sold to Walloy Construction who removed the building. The tracks from Ilderton north to Centralia were lifted in 1989.

Ettrick (Middlesex County) – This station never had an agent at the small frame waiting room depot. The small station was destroyed by fire on Halloween night 1955 and was not replaced. When the station was gone Ettrick was wiped off the map as there were no other buildings at the location. From 1877 up until 1947 there was a post office located in a residence at Ettrick but it was moved to Arva.

Hyde Park Junction (Middlesex County) – The first station was built in 1854 on the east side of the Hyde Park sideroad one mile south of the Hyde Park settlement. It was known as the Hyde Park station and was on the main east west line of the Great Western Railway Co. It became known as the Hyde Park Junction when the L. H. & B. branched off the main line to head north in 1875. The station was moved on the west side of the road and down to the floor of the cut level with the tracks. The station had the usual office, freight and express areas. The station closed in 1967 and was razed shortly thereafter.

The above information on the railway stations was obtained from the book "Stories and Memories of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway 1870-1990" by Calvin M. Patrick, published in Penticton, B.C. 1990. Mr. Patrick grew up in the Ilderton area and is now retired and living in Penticton.

– Article prepared by Doris Batkin and Ron Latham

Status of Huron County Railway Stations and Lines

– Prepared by R. Latham Aug. '93

RAIL LINE	No. ORIGINAL STATIONS BUILT	No. STATION STILL IN ORIGINAL PLACE TODAY	No. STATION IN USE TODAY	ORIGINAL RAIL LINE KM. INSTALLED	RAIL LINE KM. STILL IN PLACE	RAIL LINE KM. STILL IN USE
1) London Huron & Bruce (CNR)	9	2	NIL	75	37	37
2) CPR Goderich to Guelph	7	1	NIL	55	NIL	NIL
3) Toronto - Grey & Bruce (CPR) Teeswater to Orangeville	5	NIL	NIL	35	NIL	NIL
4) Wellington Grey & Bruce CNR Kincardine - Palmerston	5	1	NIL	40	33	NIL
5) Buffalo and Lake Huron CNR Goderich - Stratford	4	1	1	40	40	40
6) Ontario West Shore Railway Goderich - Kintail	1	NIL	NIL	22	NIL	NIL
7) CNR Harriston - Southampton	NIL	NIL	NIL	4	4	NIL
TOTALS	31	5	1	271	114	77
% OF ORIGINAL		17%	3%		42%	28%