

# CANADIAN RAILWAY STATIONS

ST JOHN, N.B. UNION STATION

NTR-CNR QUEBEC

CHAMPLAINSQUARE

CPR WINDSOR STATION

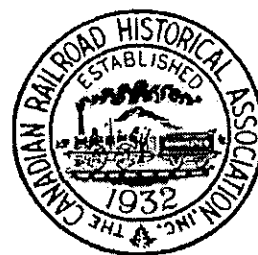
CPR PARK AVENUE STATION

CNR HAMILTON STATION

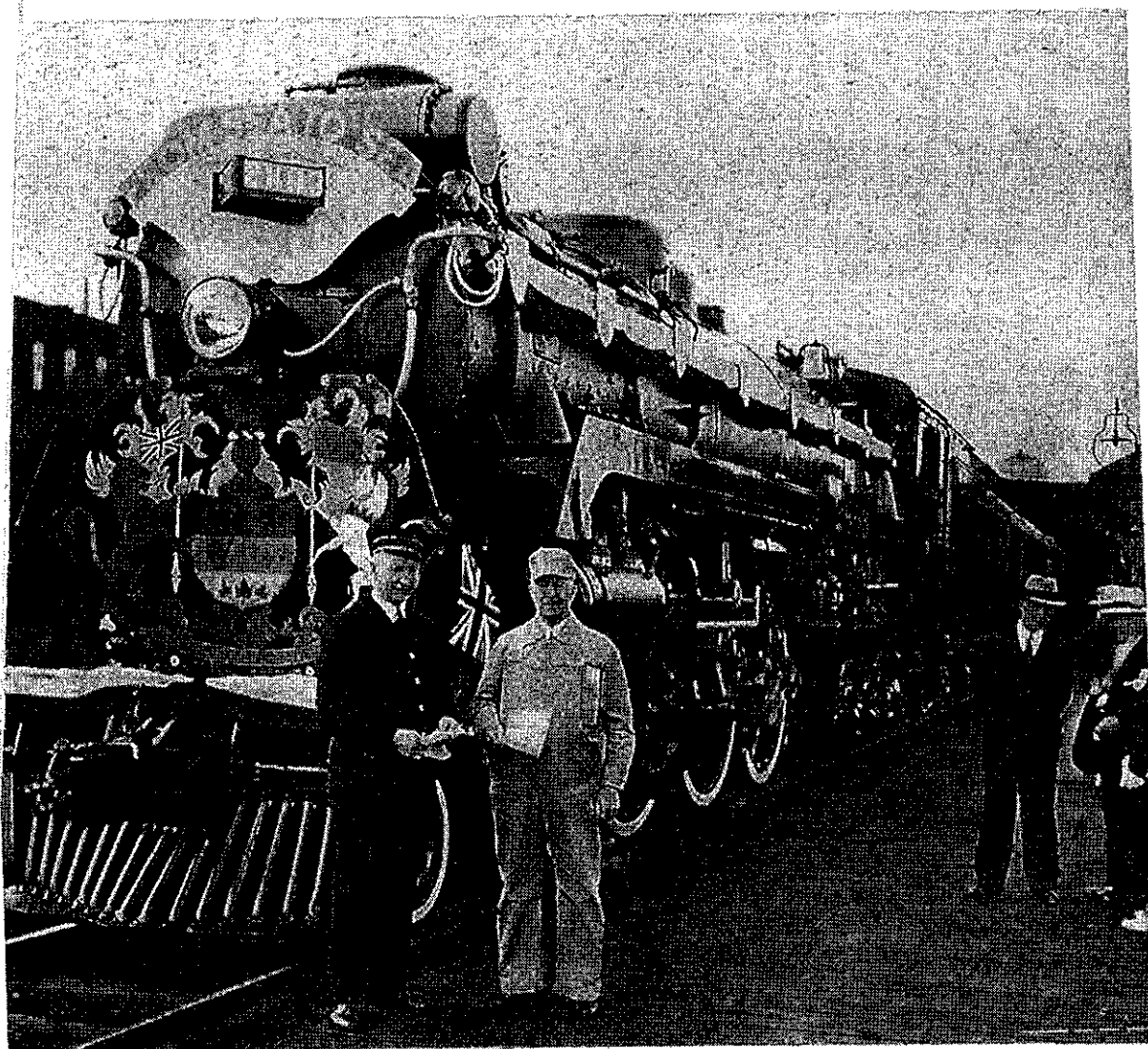
TH&B HAMILTON STATION

CNR LONDON STATION

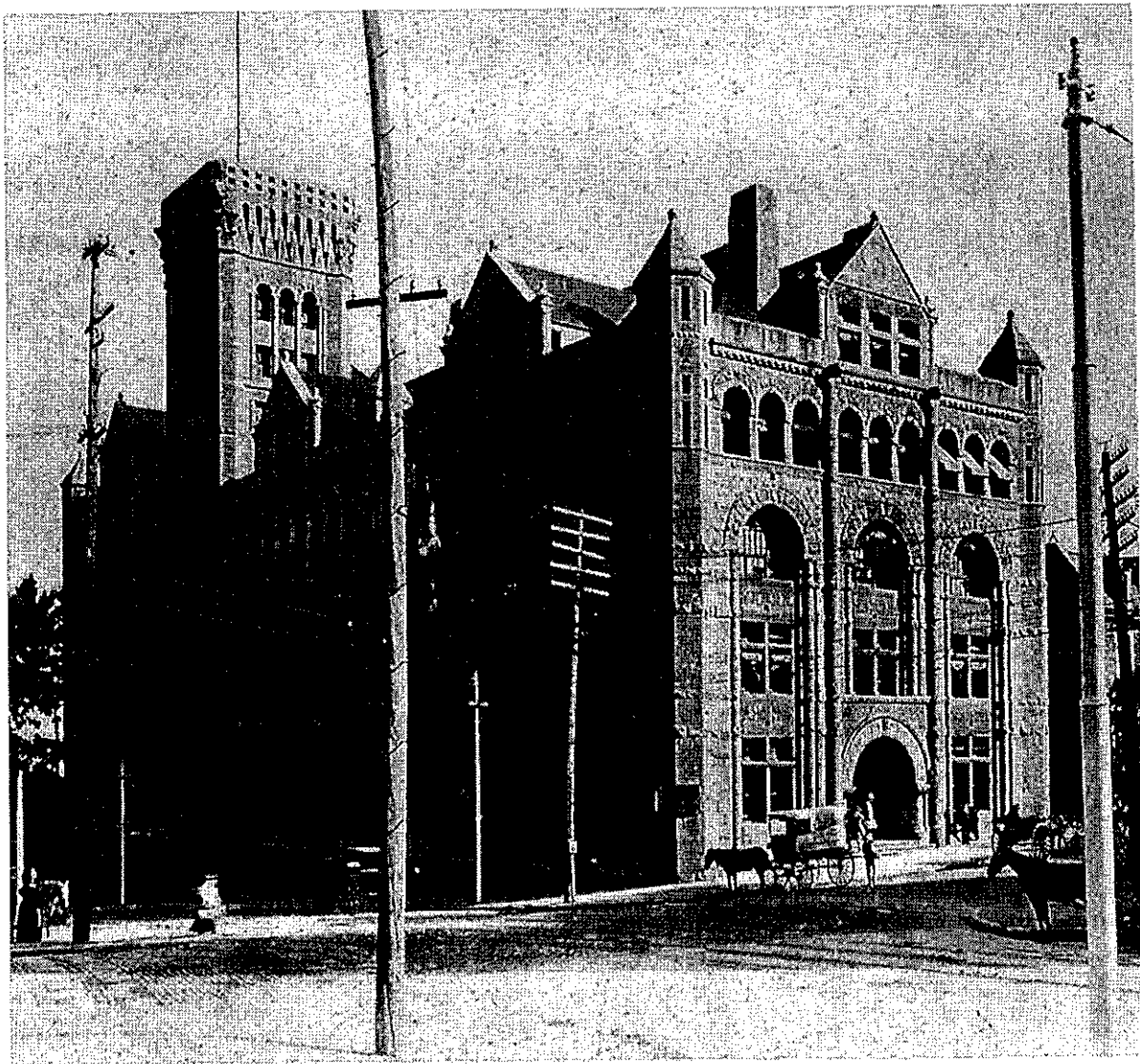
# Canadian Rail



Number 152 / February 1964



MANY INTERESTING EVENTS have punctuated the history of Canadian Pacific's Windsor Station in Montreal, which observes its seventy-fifth anniversary this month. Here, engineman and conductor compare orders beside the pilot of engine #2803, as Train No. 7, the "Dominion", prepares to leave Montreal on the fiftieth anniversary of transcontinental railway service, June 28th, 1936.



The original Windsor Station, as opened in 1889.

# WINDSOR STATION 1889-1964

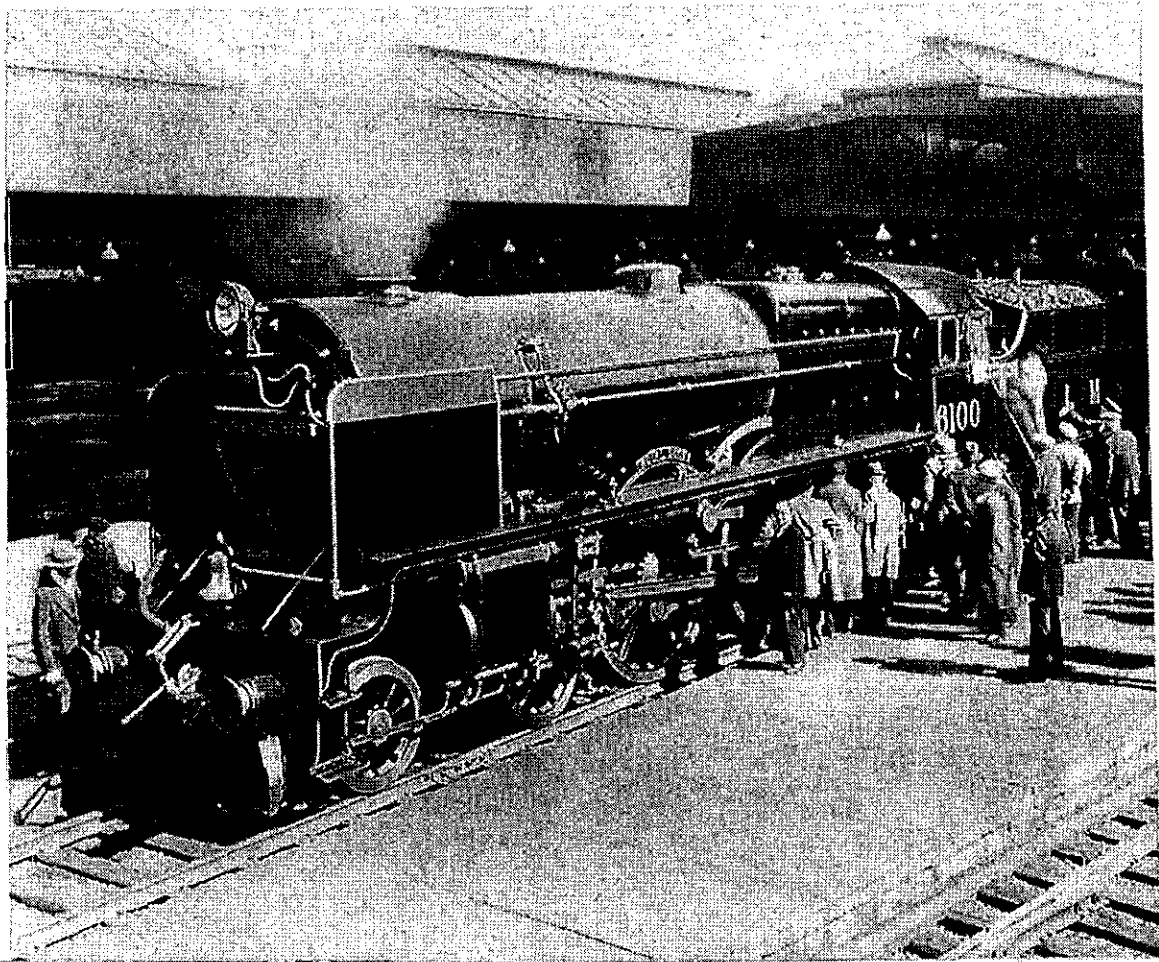
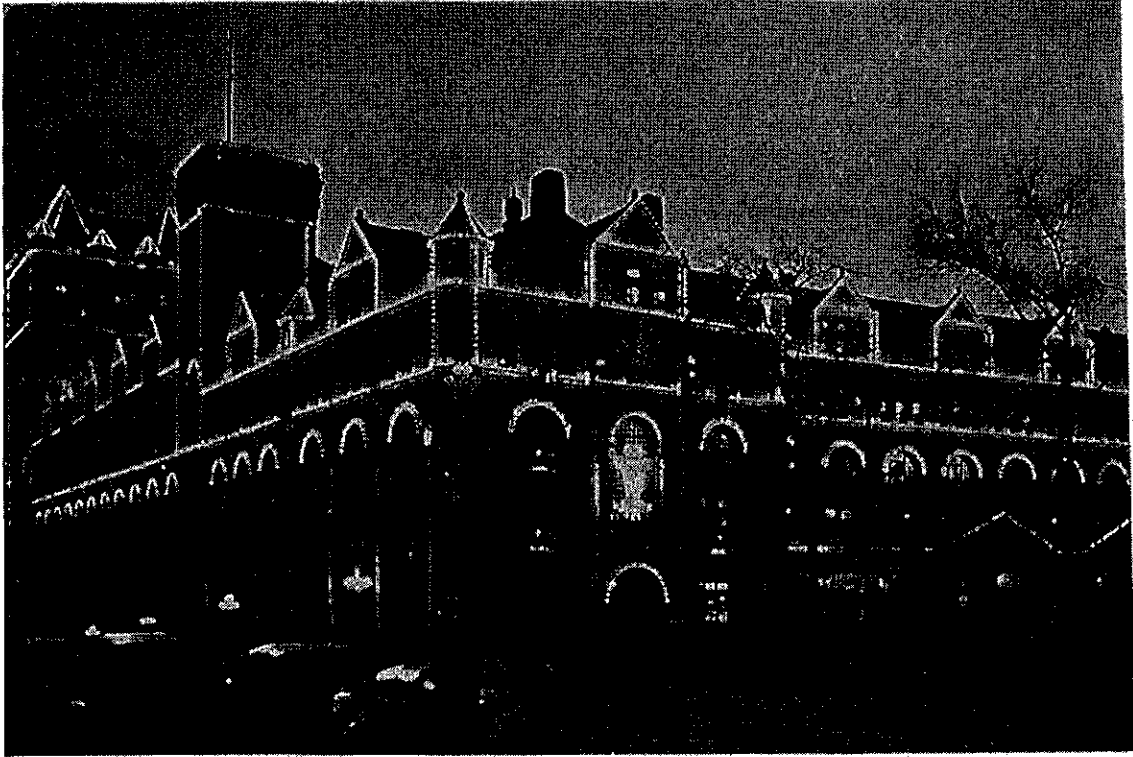
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by OMER LAVALLEE

**J**UST SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, early in 1889, the orderly Victorian composure of the inhabitants of Montreal was disturbed by the appearance of a garish signboard which had seemingly appeared overnight along the north side of St. Antoine Street; its inscription was there for all to see, in black letters six feet high on a white-painted board fence:

"BEATS ALL CREATION -- THE NEW  
C.P.R. STATION !"

It was, withal, sacrilegious in both spiritual and temporal con-

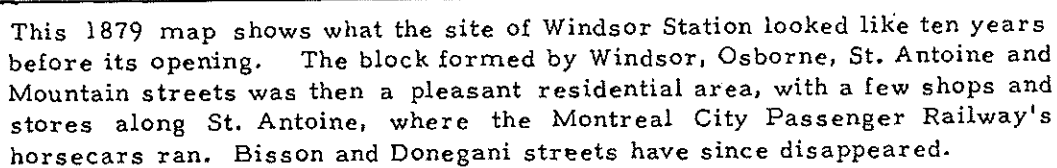


texts, repudiating the whole Book of Genesis and all that it implied, as well as the lesser accomplishments of mere man in the period of recorded civilization. In point of fact, the building could with difficulty compare with the Parthenon or the Temple of Baalbek much less with the Gothic cathedrals of the Renaissance, but the statement itself did reflect the enthusiasm of the infant Canadian Pacific Railway for the new headquarters and terminal which was then rising at the corner of Windsor and Osborne streets. More particularly, it portrayed the characteristic personal views of William C. Van Horne, to whose authorship this slogan is attributed.

Montrealers had watched with more than passing interest as the historic hillside orchards and farms along the south flank of the "little mountain" -- Westmount -- were bought up to be used as a railway right-of-way. Starting at what is now Montreal West, the four-and-a-half mile route eastward had an easy course initially lying generally to the south of the villages of Montreal Junction, Kensington and Notre-Dame-de-Grace, a bare quarter-mile or so from the edge of the escarpment which rose above Coteau Saint Pierre. As Montreal was approached, however, the hillside track took on a more tortuous aspect, ending up in a near two percent drop from Cote St. Antoine (now Westmount) along a man-made "shelf" whose southern exposure was faced with stone arches, into the four-track terminal at Windsor Street; and that's what they called it -- Windsor Street Station. In fact, the street named the station, though at a later date, the word "Street" was dropped and the building was called simply "Windsor Station".

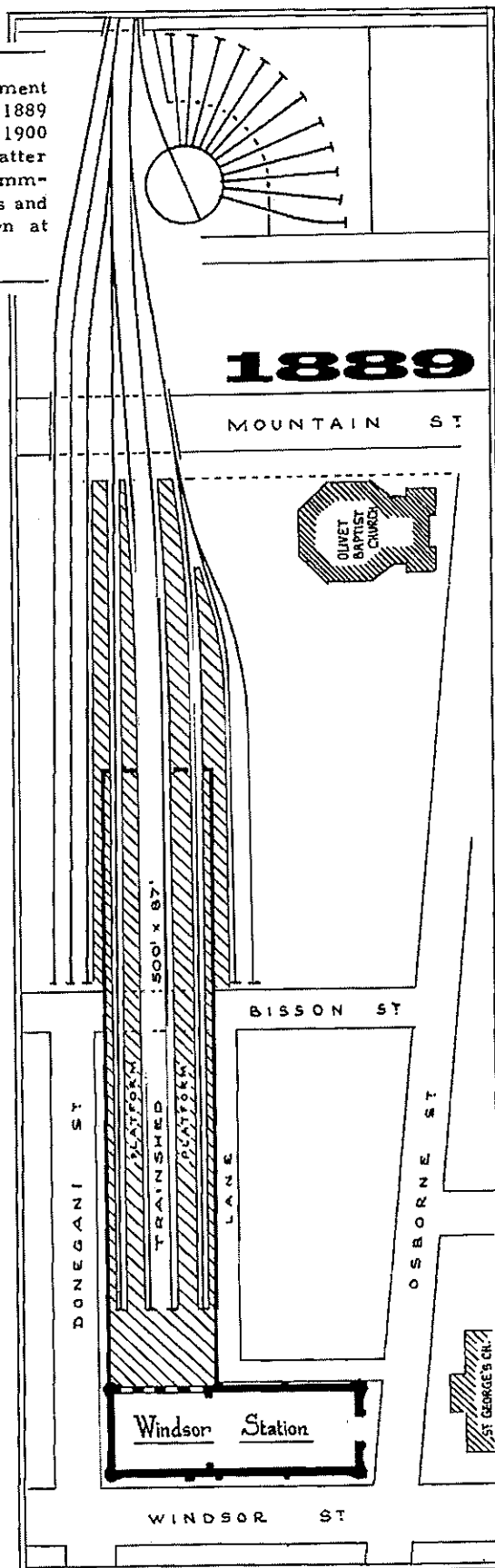
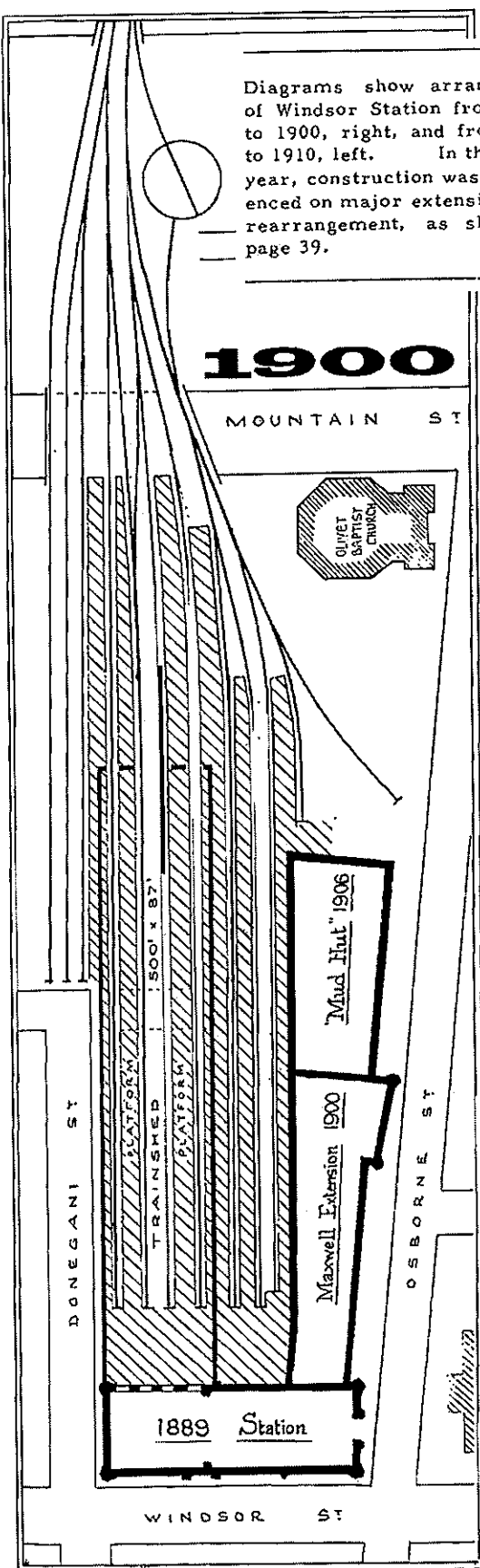
To design and construct the initial building, which was surmounted by a small tower mildly suggestive of Windsor Castle, the railway company engaged the services of the noted architect Bruce Price, gifted son of an equally-gifted mother, Emily Post. The site chosen was a commanding one, at the southwest corner of the old Catholic burying ground which by then had become Dominion Square. The land purchased for the building itself went back to the rear lot line on Windsor Street, bounded on the north by Osborne Street and on the south by Donegani Street. The stone terrace houses along the south side of Osborne west of the station remained undisturbed, and the four-track terminal access was in the rear of the backyards of these homes. The locale has some cultural interest for French-speaking Canadians in that it was the scene, more than half-a-century before the station was built, of the foundation of the Societe-Saint-Jean-Baptiste, whose initial meeting was held in 1834 in the garden of what was then the Belestre-McDonnell home.

The land for the site had been purchased in 1887, hard on the heels of the completion of the Lachine Bridge, which was the key in the development of the western terminal lines of the CPR on the Island of Montreal. Hitherto, Canadian Pacific had used the Dalhousie Square or Quebec Gate Barracks station, at Berri and Notre Dame streets, which had been inherited from the Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa & Occidental Railway, when the western division of that line had been acquired in 1882. All trains used this east-end station, including those bound for Ontario and western Canada. The only route out of Montreal for these services, until completion of the Winchester Subdivision in 1887, was via Ste. Therese, Lachute and Ottawa (Broad Street) to Carleton Place. There, western trains turned northward up the Ottawa valley, while Ontario trains turned south to Smiths Falls, then west through Perth and Peterboro to Toronto.

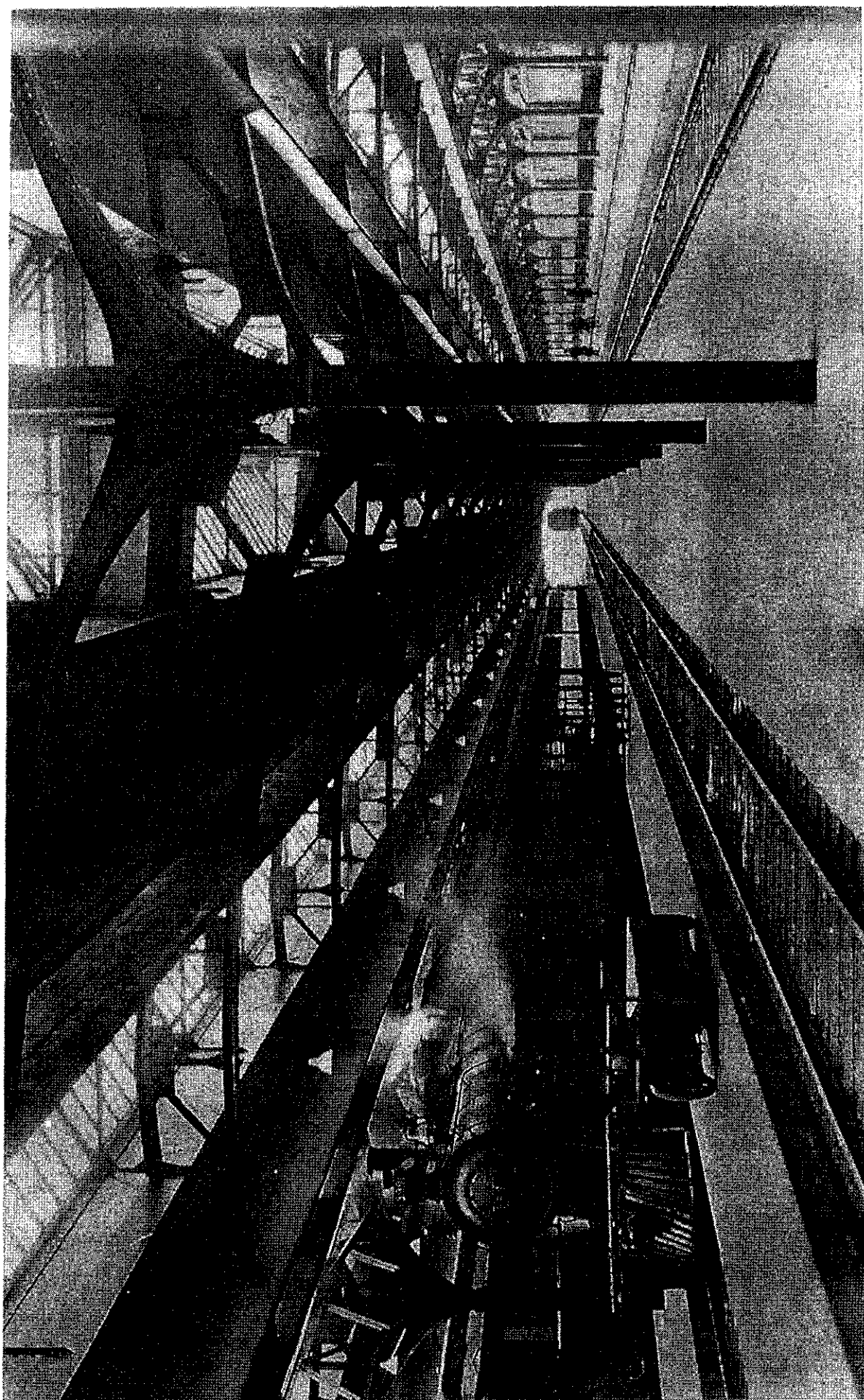


This 1879 map shows what the site of Windsor Station looked like ten years before its opening. The block formed by Windsor, Osborne, St. Antoine and Mountain streets was then a pleasant residential area, with a few shops and stores along St. Antoine, where the Montreal City Passenger Railway's horsecars ran. Bisson and Donegani streets have since disappeared.

Diagrams show arrangement of Windsor Station from 1889 to 1900, right, and from 1900 to 1910, left. In the latter year, construction was commenced on major extensions and rearrangement, as shown at page 39.









Only six years later, in 1906, further extensions were undertaken along Osborne Street, extending west of, and obliterating, Bisson Street. This new wing, unlike the original building and the 1900 extension, was finished in stucco, earning it the practical if uncomplimentary title of "The Mud Hut". This expression is still in the currency of conversation among older habitués of Windsor Station. At about the same time, a fourth floor was added to the "Maxwell" wing.

### The Accident

This was the arrangement of the station when, on March 17th, 1909, it was the scene of its one and only serious railway accident. On that day, the morning train from Boston went out of control just east of Montreal West, when a spring or spring hanger on the right-hand rear driver of 4-6-0 locomotive No. 902 failed, causing the engine to list slightly resulting in the driving wheel tire cutting the head from a staybolt. The resulting steam was deflected directly into the cab at the engineman's position; in vain did engineer Mark Cunningham try to stop the engine, scalding his hands badly in the process. He either jumped or fell from the engine, sustaining injuries from which he died almost instantly. The fireman fared rather better, jumping after the engineer and suffering only slight bruises. A following train from Point Fortune retrieved the fireman and the body of the engineer.

The train continued on its way toward the station, the train crew only suspecting something was amiss when it failed to stop at Westmount. The .8 of one percent downgrade from Westmount to Windsor Station served to accelerate the runaway, which was lined for the southernmost track in the trainshed. It is estimated that the train was doing 50 m.p.h. when it hit the stopblock, crossed the platform area, and burst through the walls of the station into the waiting room, killing a woman and three children. The engine came to rest in the waiting room, sinking partially through the floor into the basement. The passenger cars telescoped, the baggage car breaking through the south wall of the trainshed and overhanging Donegani Street. Miraculously, no one remaining on board the train was more than slightly injured.

The death toll might have been greater but for the great presence of mind of a ticket collector, Thomas Whelan, who realized what was wrong as the train came in sight, and at peril of his life pushed passengers, who had congregated at the end of the track to meet the train, out of the way. Mr. Whelan was the father of His Grace Bishop Lawrence Whelan, present Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal. The final touch of pathos was lent by the fact that the husband and father of the woman and two of the children killed was on board the train. On being told, at first, that there were no casualties, he went to his home in Verdun only to learn that his family had gone to meet him. He was apprised of the terrible news upon his return to the station.

Engine 902, formerly No. 853 (North British #6433, 1903), was repaired and, as No. 2102 after 1912, survived until 1938 when it was scrapped. It was a 70"-drivered 4-6-0 of Class E-5-e.

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LEFT: Beginning in June, 1902, a thrice-weekly "occasion" at Windsor Station was the departure of a new summer transcontinental service, the "Imperial Limited Express". Here, its varnish-and-gilt cars get under way smartly at the behest of a beautifully-proportioned E-5 4-6-0, No. 813, freshly outshopped (August 1902) from Delorimier Works.

## The Great Electrification Plan

New and further expansion of the station facility got under way in 1910, by acquisition of the remaining property in the block bounded by St. Antoine, Windsor, Osborne and Mountain streets. At this time, a firm of consulting engineers prepared a study on the feasibility of electrifying haulage of trains into and out of the station, as far as Westmount.

The object of this study was the elimination of the smoke and noise nuisance caused by the steam locomotives ascending the grade to Westmount. It was found that an average of 52 passenger trains and one freight train each day had to climb this grade. Average trailing weight of the trains was 200 tons, while the maximum load at that time was 600 tons. The report advocated three 40-ton B<sub>0</sub>-B<sub>0</sub> electric locomotives, working at a pressure of 1200 volts D.C. and they were designed to have sufficient capacity to handle 200-ton trains with a considerable margin, but that two units operating in multiple could handle the 600-ton train. Only three such locomotives were contemplated, and they would be capable of 25 m.p.h. with the maximum load. They were to be 700 h.p. units at the one hour rating.

The total cost of this installation, including a steam-operated power generating station, locomotives, overhead trolley and everything necessary was estimated to be \$376,000. Unfortunately, nothing came of this interesting proposal, which would have seen catenary strung in Windsor Station and at Glen Yard, and on the Green Avenue switchback down to St. Henry yard.

## Expansion Southward

Ground was broken in 1910 for the major extension to the station to the south of the original building. This extension, costing \$1,512,000, was more than double the expenditure made on the terminal up to that time. It embraced a prolongation of the original structure, varying, because of the hill on Windsor Street, between six and nine storeys in height, the fifteen-storey tower which is now the most prominent architectural feature of Windsor Station, and the eight-storey extension along St. Antoine Street. These works were two years in the building, and were completed in 1912. In 1913, the old 1889 trainshed was torn down and the new "Bush" type shed erected, spanning eleven terminal tracks. A major track relocation was carried out in connection with this work, the new arrangement bearing little relationship to the original one. The terminal tracks themselves were shortened by forty feet at the station end, in order to allow construction of a glass-roofed concourse between the ends of the tracks and the building proper. These works cost \$850,000. During this process, Donegani, and what was left of Bisson Street disappeared completely. More space was acquired on the railway approaches to the station, and the restriction occasioned by the fact that all of the lead tracks had been east of Aqueduct Street was obliterated in the new arrangement. The "fan" started just a little to the east of Seigneurs Street, and a new interlocking tower built between Guy and Aqueduct Streets. The track positioning of this time has been essentially retained to the present day, still controlled from Guy Street tower.

LEFT: The present trainshed as it appeared, when new, in 1914. Note the platform skylights which have since been removed and the roof closed. Train at left is a "Lakeshore" local, headed by 4-6-4T engine 5991.

A brochure issued shortly afterward could scarcely contain its enthusiasm for the newly-enlarged headquarters and terminal:

" In designing the new Windsor Station, the architects had to keep in mind the necessity of planning a structure which would not only favourably impress the new arrival, but which would also provide head offices worthy of such an immense organization. They did not fail. This huge grey castellated building is dignified and handsome. One or two American terminal stations may surpass Windsor Station in area, and perhaps in exterior elegance, but for noble architectural dignity, for expediting public travel and for giving transient travellers, tourists and immigrants the acme of ready help, comfort and the sense of being well-cared for, Windsor Station, Montreal, stands unsurpassed and unrivalled. "

W a r ;     P e a c e ;     W a r .

If other extensions were then planned for the Station, as they might well have been at this high-tide in Canadian railway operation and prosperity, they were deferred by a political assassination in Serajevo which plunged the world into the blood-bath of the first World War. The tenor of traffic at Windsor Station changed, and troop trains replaced tourist trains. Many a Canadian Pacific man heeded the appeal of King and Country, and those who did not return were commemorated in the magnificent war memorial statue by Coeur-de-Lion McCarthy, which stands today at the south end of the station concourse.

In these sombre days occurred one of more personal connotation to Windsor Station and the Canadian Pacific. On September 11, 1915 the man who had originally conceived the terminal, Van Horne, passed away at his Montreal home. On September 14th, after a brief funeral service at his home in Sherbrooke Street, the cortege with the mortal remains of one of the greatest Canadian Pacific men who ever lived, wound its way to the Station, which was appropriately draped heavily in white and black. In the platforms of the new trainshed, a special train was drawn up, incorporating his old official car "Saskatchewan", to convey the body to Joliet, Illinois, for burial. As it pulled out of Windsor Station, by official order, all trains on the system were stopped for five minutes.

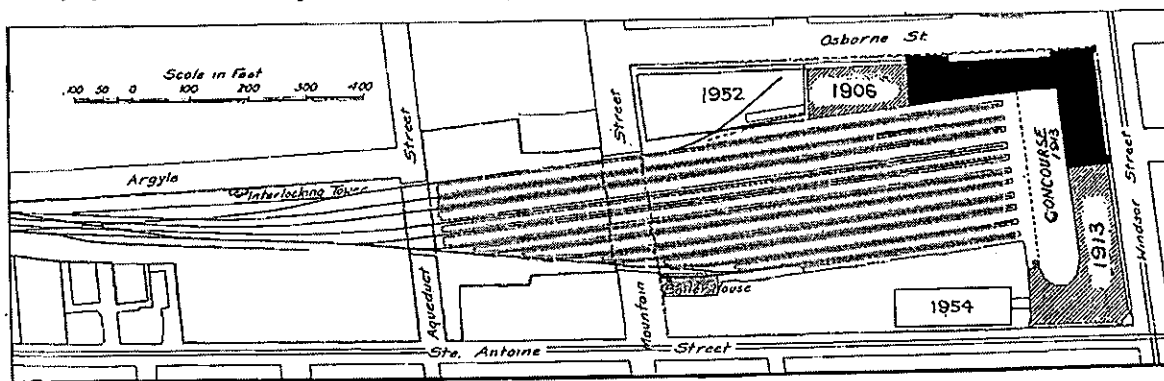
But for a one-storey addition to the "Mud Hut" completed in 1922, forty years were to elapse between completion of the St. Antoine Street addition, and the finishing of the next major extension of the station. In this time came periods of varying economic conditions, the post-war prosperity of the Twenties giving way to the deep and seemingly hopeless depression of the Thirties. Windsor Station carried on its function uninterruptedly, save for the fact that fewer passengers made their way to the trains for pleasure travel. The "Pacific Express" of the 1880s had given way to the "Imperial Limited" in the early 1900s and later to the "Trans Canada Limited". Just before the decline of prosperity in the late 1920s, the Company had introduced the new "Dominion" service between Montreal and Vancouver, a train which was to diminish the prestige and elegance of the "Imperial" to the point where the latter became little more than a transcontinental local train.

One or two events serve as mileposts in the otherwise unevent-

ful drabness of the depression. The first came in the summer of 1933 when, as an expensive but effective publicity gesture, the London, Midland & Scottish Railway of Great Britain, sent its famous "Royal Scot" train to North America for a transcontinental tour, ending up at the "Century of Progress" exposition in Chicago. Locomotive No. 6100 (actually No. 6152) and its eight-car train were prepared for their journey at Angus Shops, principally by equipping the locomotive with a bell, headlight and pilot, and inserting extra linkage in the screw couplings of the train in order to negotiate the comparatively sharp curves in the Rockies. The train made its public debut on display at Windsor Station, its maroon decor contrasting effectively with the tuscan-red livery that has become so much a part of Canadian Pacific's public image.

Then, three years later, on a fine June day in 1936, H-1-a 4-6-4 No. 2803 backed down into Windsor Station suitably bedecked in flags and bunting, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the departure of the first regularly-scheduled transcontinental passenger train, which had occurred at the Dalhousie Square station on June 28th, 1886. The conductor and engineer compared orders while photographers recorded the occasion, then No. 2803, getting swiftly into stride up the grade to Westmount, hauled No. 7 into the sunset to mark a half-century of fulfillment of the promise made by the original Canadian Pacific syndicate to the country, that they would build a transcontinental railway.

1939: the towering image of Mars had once again appeared over Europe; yet again the peaceful progress of the world had to be interrupted -- this time for six years -- by the even more terrible consequences of the Second World War. Once again the martial cadence of military movements was heard on the concourse of Windsor Station, which was girded from the threat of war from the air by the replacement of glasses in corridor doors and windows with masonite. An air raid precaution organization evolved, and certain areas of the vaulted underground of the massive terminal were designated as shelters. Arrows pointing to the "Red Shelter" or the "Blue Shelter" were commonplace around the station, as were the maps of the theatres of war which the Public Relations Department displayed and maintained, with coloured markers, to show the progress of military operations. With the return of peace late in 1945, the maps disappeared, the air raid shelter signs were removed, and civilian clothes began once again to outnumber the military. Windsor Station resumed its role in the direction of the great Canadian Pacific organization, whose services outside Canada on land and sea had been drastically curtailed by the war.



Windsor Station Terminal Trackage, as revised in 1913.

D i e s e l i z a t i o n

An event of unusual significance occurred on September 13th, 1949. At noon on that day, the train from Newport arrived with a diesel-electric road switcher, No. 8404, at the head end; this was the first diesel-hauled passenger train ever to use the station. More than eleven years then remained, however, before the station would see its last operating steam locomotive. Even as the newly-arrived maroon-and-yellow mechanical monster burbled within the confines of the trainshed, hitherto sacrosanct to the invention of Trevithick, plans were going on "upstairs" for the first new additions to the station in four decades. These studies culminated in the construction of yet a further wing along Osborne Street in 1951-52, bringing it finally to Mountain Street. Upon completion of this building, a plaza was built to the west for the accommodation of express trucks; this was finished in 1953.

The years 1953 and 1954 marked the construction and opening of another wing along St. Antoine Street -- this one physically unconnected, except for passageways, with the main building. This structure, eight storeys in height and completely air-conditioned, served to centralize the Accounting Department in one location and, incidentally, provide space on its ground floor for a new mid-Twentieth Century concept in business, the electronic computer. It was in this building that the CPR installed an IBM 705 computer in 1955, later "updating" it (to use "computerese") to a more advanced IBM 7080 assembly. The space vacated in the main building served to accommodate many departments hitherto "farmed out" in other buildings in Montreal.

The trains continued to run in and out of the station as they had since 1889. In 1955, much publicity inaugurated the new service between Montreal and Vancouver, with an early-afternoon passenger departure from Windsor Station. The new, Budd-built, stainless steel and scenic-domed "Canadian" made its first run on April 24th, 1955, the "go" signal having been given at a joint ceremony in which the then-Chairman of the Company, William Mather, and the Mayor of Montreal, Jean Drapeau, officiated.

The intensive suburban service maintained by CPR continued to function with steam locomotives until early in 1960, when the diesels finally became numerous enough to take over for good. The last steam-hauled passenger train to use the station was a special chartered by our Association and using venerable "A" class engine No. 29, on November 6th, 1960. Only two years older than the oldest part of Windsor Station, No. 29 acquitted itself splendidly on that occasion, in keeping with the finest CPR traditions.

Now, on February 1st, 1964, "the Station" observes its seventy-fifth anniversary, and we are bound to ask, "What of the future?" While this is a question whose answer may well, for the

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RIGHT - (Top): Illumination of public buildings for notable events was fashionable forty-five years ago. Here, an "incandescent" Windsor Station shines a welcome for the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, in October, 1919. (OSAL Collection)

(Bottom): Windsor Station temporarily assumed a continental air one day early in the summer of 1933, when Britain's famed "Royal Scot" locomotive and its eight-car train backed down against the stopblock prior to departure on a transcontinental North American tour. Engine is equipped with a bell and headlight, freshly applied at Angus Shops. (CPR)

