

The Ferrophiliac Column *January 1990*

Compiled by Just A. Ferronut

Welcome to 1990 and it looks like just about everyone is showing the results of the Year End Holidays. However, before I fully thaw out, I am going to pass along some of my experiences during the last two weeks of 1989. This year, like more years than I want to remember I travelled to the Maritimes with Art Clowes. These winter trips are great, but you never get all the things done that you plan on. This year I said things were going to be different, they were – the temperature was well below normal and many of our modern devices stop working when the temperature drops below -30 Celsius.

With a bright sunny Saturday morning around us we started eastward. Scanner chatter and the rail activities of the Toronto area was at its normal level. A CP Rail west bound with a SOO unit leading was coming out of Agincourt Yard as we scooted along the 401. The scanner told us of several freights on both railways as we headed to our first stop at Odessa, near Kingston. This is a photo site I have been watching over the last couple of years. The County of Lennox and Addington has constructed a new overhead bridge for county Road # 23 over the middle of a sweeping reverse curve on CN's Kingston Subdivision. The shots here are as good as they looked on the map during construction. We blasted an east bound CN freight here at noon, a beautiful sweeping curve back across County Road # 6. West bounds would have their nose dark this time of year for a standard lens shot, but by early afternoon would be fine for a long shot. Also, west bounds would be better with the higher sun towards summer. This is a new location for those liking varied action shots. To get there use exit # 599 (County Road # 6) from Highway 401 and travel south to the CN tracks and then turn east on County Road # 23 and you are there.

After a little snow and a good night in Montreal we got up to another sunny but cold day. To downtown Montreal, with thoughts of a good brunch at the ONCE UPON A TIME restaurant that has been mentioned in this column. We struck out here on two counts – the restaurant didn't open until 11:00 a.m. and the results of the cold decided to start a crack in the windshield of the car. From what can be seen from the outside it does appear this is well worth a trip in, even if only to browse the photos and memorabilia. So brunch was a muffin and coffee in Saint-Hyacinthe.

Being now in the land of snow, we couldn't resist getting off the Jean Lesage Autoroute (Highway # 20) west of Drummondville to photograph a east bound CN freight with all the snow it was kicking up on its dash to the east coast. The twenty of so mile section of Highway # 20 from Laurier-Station to near Charny parallels CN's Drummondville Subdivision and it is always fun either to pace an east bound freight or watch the west bounds come at you with a closing speed of from 190 to 240 km.p.h. (120 to 150 m.p.h.). This is good test of your reflexes to be able to stop safely and photograph a west bound (especially a LRC). If you don't have your camera ready, know your car extremely well and in the winter know stopping on ice – DON'T TRY IT. We got a LRC and one freight in clouds of snow.

More freights east of Quebec City and a couple on the Pelletier Subdivision, but our target was the Sunday night Budd Car from Edmundston to Moncton, NB. Not wanting to end up

in the ditch or snow bank like so many other motorists, we didn't make summer travelling time, so as we started to turn into the Edmundston Station Yard, RDC-1 # 6137 started its trip east. Forty two minutes later we piled out of the car in Grand Falls, startling the VIA passengers as we ran with tripods and camera gear to set up for # 6137 which was starting to show its headlight glow around the curve west of the station. So at 7:13 p.m. Train # 628 made a 50 second stop to pick up a half of dozen passengers and then vanish eastward. A leisurely drive put us in Woodstock, NB where we spent the night at Art's sister. She had some messages for us from a local antique dealer having some railway material and another friend having some railway photos.

In the sun and cold of the next morning, we went looking for an old station at Upper Woodstock, N.B., sure enough, it is still there. I came across reference to in it an old newspaper clipping. It is located on the north side of the street that extends from Highway # 103 down towards the CP tracks and railway bridge a couple of miles above Woodstock proper. It is a small wooden structure about 3 by 5 metres, painted red with an UPPER WOODSTOCK sign on one end (not the original) and now used as a home shop. This building has a low gable roof and the main walls have vertical tongue and groove siding. Under the eaves and on the end gables is an overlay of vertical boards with a pattern cut in the bottom ends of them. This design reminds me more of New England stations than Canadian. I would say this station predates the CPR or at least their more common known station design. This one is going to take some more digging since I am not certain whether this portion of the Shogomoc Subdivision was constructed by the New Brunswick and Canada Railway or the New Brunswick and Fredericton Branch Railway? So gang, help me out, let's get a few more facts about this interesting piece of history out on the table.

One phone call in Woodstock turned up some turn of the century railway magazines, a CP Employees Timetable and an undated, untitled photograph of a train wreck. I am certain it is the June 22, 1900 wreck of a south bound CPR train that decided it should bath in the Saint John River as it went across the bridge at Grand Falls, NB.

The other phone call turned up a couple of rather large frames pictures. One is a standard CPR sepia print publicity shot of their tracks along a stream near Farnham. Quebec. The second and slightly large one being about 3' x 3'-6", is a coloured rendering of the Ocean Limited in the Matapedia Valley during the period it ran as the Canadian Government Railway. The engine was a 400 series steam lettered for the CGR.

Matters settled in Woodstock, it was on to Moncton, NB. This we called home base for the remainder of our stay in the east, mainly to ensure we visited friends and relatives. We photographed a number of trains including RDC's in around Moncton at several of the usual spots. We got as far east as Nappan, NS where I had a camera lock up primarily from the cold. The CN line between Gordon Yard in Moncton and the Amherst, NS area has enough curves, etc., you can find locations to photograph either east or west bound trains in good light any time of the day. One excellent section is the giant loop sweeping eastward around the head of Cumberland Bay between Sackville and Fort Beausejour, NB, it has more than 270 degrees of

curvature.

We spent a half an hour or so burning up film on a couple of CN 1700's in the Caledonia Industrial Park, in the Humphrey or north east section of Moncton. This is a growing industrial park with both good rail and highway access and some interesting photo opportunities, so is worth keeping on the list for future visits. While the trackage into this park is served by CN, CP just opened a trucking terminal in this park in mid December. This industrial spur connects to the Springhill Subdivision at CN Humphrey (earlier Buctouche Junction) and the first mile and half of this spur was a portion of the Buctouche and Moncton Railway. The Buctouche and Moncton Railway was opened September 1, 1887. The Canadian Government Railway acquired this line in 1918, but then spent the next sixteen years straightening out the land titles.

While on the subject of Moncton, a number of our readers have visited the Salem and Hillsborough Railroad in Hillsborough and no doubt some of these and others have travelled south on Route 114 through Riverside-Albert to Alma, NB and Fundy National Park. How many were aware that the Albert Railway (Salisbury and Harvey Railway) of which the S&H is part of extended as far south as Albert, (now Riverside-Albert), NB. From Hillsborough this railway went inland to Albert Mines and then back out to Route 114 at Hamilton Creek south of Hopewell Cape. At Hamilton Creek is crossed Route 114 and stays on the east side (river side) all the way down to Albert. The embankment and several remains of timber trestles are still very visible along this line that was abandoned in 1955. The station, in Albert, converted into a house still exists and still in CN station maroon. It is down the hill from route 114 south of the Village School, partially hidden by trees. I have not tracked down the exact south end of this line since different sources have implied there were early extensions to nearby locations. It was also interesting to note that the local TV station was using a number of local scenes as back drops for Christmas Greeting from various merchants and one of these was the remains of a Albert Railway pile trestle showing through the snow covered railway embankment with the Shepody Bay Marshes extending in the background. So no matter what part of the country you are in there is always some interesting facets of the railway hobby to watch for and explore.

Still in Moncton, the old ICR shops are gradually being reduced to rubble. These shops were the replacement shops constructed by the ICR's along their line on the outskirts of Moncton following the February 24, 1906 fire that destroyed their shops that had been located near where the present CN/VIA Station is located.

The other casualty on this trip was the scanner. Without thinking we left it in the car one night and it froze its brains (crystal) out. It went to -40 degrees that night, so this is something new I learned about radio crystals.

We made a fairly straight dash back to Toronto – I could bore you with the trains we missed, the ones that would not cooperate (or else they didn't want their photo taken), so stayed down the line a couple of miles until the sun went down, but all in all a good two weeks.

Now with the new year, its back to digging on some of the promised Ontario topics. Since we are always looking for information, ideas or yes even questions, drop me a line at the Society's Postal Box and I will see what can be done.