

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

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Trains, trains, trains, where to go and what to look at this month? Two weeks ago, I was photographing trains in lots of fresh snow. Today, as I was wandering around the rail lines west of St. Henri, here in Montreal, it felt like I should be going for a swim in the Lachine Canal. How things change, but that is life.

Montréal

Last month, in my long winded epistle on Montréal, I was wondering the exact route that the Grand Trunk Rail-way of Canada used to get from their Pointe St. Charles station across the Lachine Canal on its westward trek towards Toronto. A review of some land documents reveal that the lands adjacent to the Lachine Canal for the present route was purchased by the Grand Trunk Rail-way of Canada in 1854. This points to Grand Trunk's original main route alignment from Pointe St. Charles across the Lachine Canal was the same as it is today. While this answers one question, it raises a couple of more. Where did the GTR cross the Montreal & Lachine? The second is, why the sizable station at St. Paul on the GTR branch of that name? We'll let the pot on these simmer and hopefully, better answers will float to the surface. Today, this former GTR track in the area of the Lachine Canal is part of CNR's Montréal subdivision and has about 60 trains a day passing over it.

Last month, I looked at the stations in a small segment of the Montréal area, but as I try to learn more about the railways of this province, one begins to realize that the Montréal area and perhaps Québec in general still has a substantial number of older stations in existence.

Montréal stations to the younger fan probably stops with CN's Central, CP's Windsor and perhaps a few of the suburban commuter stations. While the subject is a topic for a major article, a quick look at three stations from the CPR family to visit should you be in town. The oldest, is the Dalhousie Square Station that was opened in December 1882. It was designed by Thomas C. Sorby, a consulting architect for the British Public Works and built just inside (west) of the fortification walls of Old Montreal. As mentioned in last month's column this station is famed as the departing point for the first passenger train to Port Moody, BC. This station was also referred to as "Quebec Gate Barracks" depot. While it has been ninety-five years since it was last used as a station, it has been restored and can be found at 514 rue Notre-Dame east, (south side).

The CPR constructed its Place Viger station and Hotel across the street, in the block between rue Notre-Dame est and rue Saint-Antoine. This chateau style structure, designed by Bruce Price, while built of brick and stone, rivals Windsor station. It was opened in August 1898, and while down-graded in later years it continued to see passenger trains until May 31, 1951. The building is officially located today at 700 rue Saint-Antoine est has been taken over and used for municipal office space.

The third station, and again a spectacular one is the Canadian Pacific Park Avenue Station, on the north side of Jean Talon at Park Avenue. This building is of an Italian-Renaissance style and was opened on November 1st, 1931. Today, this station sees more people running to catch trains than ever before – but the trains are the rubber tyre ones of Montréal's Métro. Part of the station is used for the entrance to the Parc Métro station on the east - west Blue Line.

Travelling East

Since last month, I have made two trips to New Brunswick, one mainly to chase trains and one to pester the

mostly friendly librarians. To me, it is a flip of a coin as to which is the more enjoyable, both can make my adrenalin flow. Sitting beside the Pelletier Subdivision listening to Alcos chuff their way up the grade, then to be surprised by something like a leased GTAX unit in the consist, great! But it is also great to find a news article in a library about the first locomotive in some town, or translating library information into locating a long abandoned section of railway roadbed.

While there was chatter on the scanner, nothing seemed to line up for convenient viewing on my schedule, as I had left early to be able to visit the Edmundston, library. This is a library I hadn't previously visited because of their hours. Edmundston, in addition to having been the northern terminal for the New Brunswick Railway (CP Rail), a former divisional point on the still existing National Transcontinental Railway (CN Rail), was at the bottom of the "U" of the alignment of the former Temiscouata Railway in its trek from Rivière du Loup, Québec to Connors, New Brunswick. While I wanted to see what they had on railways generally, my prime interest was the Temiscouata Railway. My interest in this railway has been rekindled as the result of my attending the rail enthusiasts luncheons on Tuesdays here in Montréal. One of the regular attendees is Anthony Clegg, and the Temiscouata Railway is one of his favourites.

Edmundston & The Temiscouata Railway

The Edmundston library didn't offer as much railway information as I expected, but unless it is different than most, it is worth a trip back to confirm what they may have hidden away. However, I did find a photograph of the three local railway stations as they appeared about 1915. The Temiscouata station was interesting in that it was a tall, single storey frame structure with a very low pitched (nearly flat) hip roof. Its plain lines and trim reminds me of numerous New England stations. All three stations had add-on canopies over the passenger platforms.

The National Transcontinental Railway (CNR) station was a larger, simple, two storey frame building with a hip roof. A gable protruded from the roof in the middle of the building on the track side to support the order board. This station was on the east side of the tracks, probably very near to the location on the present station.

The New Brunswick Railway (CPR) station was a single storey frame structure with a gable roof and again located very near the location of the present station on the west side of the CPR line.

The first railway into Edmundston had been the New Brunswick Railway (CPR). The Temiscouata Railway's 81 mile line from Rivière du Loup reached Edmundston about ten years later and was opened on January 1, 1889. At that time Edmundston was only a village and was not incorporated as a town until 1905. The rail connection with the CPR was known as Edmundston Junction.

The Temiscouata Railway extension, some 31 miles northwest along the St. John River to Connors, was opened on October 1, 1891.

The National Transcontinental Railway was opened from Moncton to Edmundston late in 1912 and on west to Escourt, Québec on May 1, 1913.

The alignment of the Temiscouata line for the 12 miles along the St. John river from Edmundston to Baker Brook where it and the NTR took different river valleys had been a question in my mind. Since the Temiscouata was there first, I had expected that it had followed the

easier route along the edge of the river occupied today by the NTR, but it didn't. Maybe the surveyors, so used to the hills, valleys and curves between Rivière du Loup and Edmundston, didn't know how else to lay out a line as they headed for Connors. Maps, etc., from this trip showed the alignment of the Temiscouata crossed to the east side of Highway 120, just south of the Roman Catholic church in St-Hilaire and continued northward for about six miles to Baker Brook where it had a diamond crossing with the NTR. An inspection revealed that many portions of the road bed of this line that was abandoned in 1941 are still visible. Parts wander through farm yards where it has become farm roads, other parts form dividing lines between orchards and fields.

The June 29, 1908 timetable for the Temiscouata Railway indicates that it had one passenger and one mixed train, 6 days a week in each direction over the full 113 miles of its railway. Their timetable in addition to the normal comments about connecting trains has some additional interesting footnotes. It states that No. 3 Mixed leaves Rivière du Loup after the arrival of ICR Maritime Express from Saint John and Halifax. It further states that St. Hilaire is opposite Frenchville Maine, connections by ferry across the St. John River, and Clairs is opposite Fort Kent Maine, connections by ferry across the St. John River, and one mile distance from ferry landing to Bangor & Aroostook Railroad Station.

Grand Falls and the St. John River

Grand Falls was the next library I visited. Here, the librarian, being interested in her town's past, dug deep. While Grand Falls, like many communities, is just a station on the New Brunswick Railway (CPR) and NTR lines, the library's vertical files had some interesting railway tidbits, relating accounts of an early horse powered railway and various problems and accidents regarding the railway bridge over the St. John river. Grand Falls' horse powered railway was built in 1838 for moving sawn lumber from the mills nears the falls to calmer water below the river gorge.

The New Brunswick Railway reached Grand Falls in the fall of 1877 and it wasn't until 1912 that the National Transcontinental opened through Grand Falls. But the files at the Grand Falls library reminded me of other modes of transportation along the St. John river. Prior to 1848, Edmundston was called Petit Sault (Little Falls), whereas Grand Falls was called the Grand Falls. Both were obstacles to river navigation. While, I never had the pleasure of travelling by a river steam boat on the St. John, I can remember the last of them on the lower reaches of the river, as well as seeing a couple of their decaying hulks near Saint John. I can also recall being shown some of the tow paths on the river banks along parts of the river. South of Fredericton, numerous concrete wharves for river boats still exist.

The first commercial traffic on the St. John river was the towboat. These towboats were about 70 to 80 feet long and about 8 feet wide. Two-lines, some 200 feet long, were attached to a mast about 12 feet high that was located in the centre of the boat. These lines were extended to shore where horses, working in relays pulled the towboat upstream.

Steam started to replace horse-power with the launching at Saint John in April 1816 of the *General Smyth*. This steam boat at first made one trip a week between Saint John and Fredericton. More steam boats were added and by 1851, fifty thousand people were carried from Saint John to Fredericton.

River steamboats first reached the Grand Falls about 1847.

In 1842, a steamboat named the *Reindeer*, was launched. It was special, since it was the first steam vessel

in the world to be propelled by a compound steam engine, i.e. one in which high and low pressure steam were combined.

While the river boats lasted until 1945, they reached their peak in the latter part of the last century just as the railways began regular service to the various communities. There are stories of the railways purchasing a number of the river boats and taking them out of service to reduce competition. River boat engineers, were a source for early railways to get trained engineers.

Shrinking Trackage

The New Brunswick Railway Company's remaining trackage continues to shrink. The 65 mile portion from Perth-Andover south to Millville that has was operated by Canadian Pacific's subsidiary, the Canadian Atlantic Railway, has been abandoned after the failure of a McCains Foods appeal. They apparently didn't have the clout that VIA used in getting the federal cabinet to overturn the NTA decision to abandon the CN trackage through Lévis, Québec. While CAR hasn't removed the trackage, they have been quick in deactivating the crossing protection and paving over the crossings. And CP/CAR has now received permission to abandon the remaining 50 miles of its trackage between Millville and Fredericton including 9 miles of the former Southampton Railway that serves the paper mill at Nackawic, later this year.

CP/CAR aren't the only ones abandoning trackage in the Maritimes. The NTA gave CN permission to abandon 11.90 miles of its 12.4 mile long Havelock subdivision from Havelock south to Petitcodiac, New Brunswick, effective May 13, 1993. This 12.4 mile line north of Petitcodiac was the remaining section of the 26 mile Elgin and Havelock Railway that originally extended from Havelock via Petitcodiac (junction with the Intercolonial Railway) southward another for another 13.8 miles to Elgin. The Elgin portion was opened in 1876 and abandoned in the spring of 1955. The extension to Havelock was opened on October 14, 1885.

CN has also filed a "Notice of Intent" that it will be filing an application to abandon 37.4 miles of its Chester Subdivision in Nova Scotia between Summit (Mile 4.9) and Stillwater Marsh (Mile 42.3). This section of rail line is part of the Halifax and South Western Railway that was incorporated by William Mackenzie and Donald D. Mann in 1901. This Canadian Northern Railway controlled company opened the 67.86 miles from Halifax to Mahone Junction, that includes the above noted section, on October 27, 1904.

Woodstock and Mid-Valley

The Woodstock, New Brunswick library is always worth a visit, since for their size they have an extensive collection of historical documents. Also, the town is fortunate as newspapers have been published there since before the railways and are recorded on micro-film. This visit found a researcher, from Maine, that I met a couple of years busy digging out information for a book he is working on. His project is the history of the area around the original northern terminal of the Saint Andrews and Quebec Rail road at Richmond (Corner), a few miles west of Woodstock. So we spent two days, comparing notes and discussing our personal postulates on the various railway and historical developments of the area as seen from our respective sides of the border.

The original intent of the SA&Q was to by-pass Woodstock, due to the problem of the grades to get down into the valley. However, 10 years after the opening of the line to Richmond, the 10 mile long Woodstock Branch Railway was constructed from Debec to Woodstock. As described by Dave Hanson in the November, 1991, *Newsletter*, this construction made the 5 miles of railway

from Debec to Richmond, redundant and it would appear that it was abandoned in the early 1870s, rather than absorbing the cost to regauge the track. A trip to the Richmond – Debec area lets one still trace the visible remains of embankments of this the long abandoned railway.

The steep grades (always referred to as the steepest east of the Rockies) and deep valleys made the job of getting the rail line down to river level difficult. To assist with the construction, a locomotive was brought to Woodstock by river boat to enable work to proceed from both ends. It is articles like the following that appeared in the August 3, 1867 issue of *The Carleton Sentinel* that makes historical research exciting; “The first locomotive for the Woodstock Railroad is now en route for its destination, having reached Fredericton, where it was the observed of all observers. It would have been here (Woodstock) before this but for the unfortunate accident which occurred when getting it into the towboat at Fredericton.” The locomotive did reach Woodstock and helped in the construction, but what were the details of the accident in Fredericton? A reason to visit the Fredericton library on the next trip.

Future Months:

CP LaSalle station still standing
Newburgh CNOR Station exists in town as a
house – Dan McConnachie.