

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

July 1994

How times have changed! As a kid on the farm, it always seemed to me that the completion of haying, which was a summer chore, signalled that it was time to get ready again for school and fall. What did I see on June 11, as I travelled along some of the railway lines north of the St. Lawrence River between Montréal and Québec City, but a farmer out haying? Thank goodness he was cutting and mulching green hay, so we should still have a few months of summer before fall.

After nattering about some of the lines south of the St. Lawrence for a few months, I decided it was time to look over some of the area north of this waterway. I have made a few trips over parts of this territory, but there are still many questions that I haven't found answers for. I propose to start with an overview of the areas outside of the metropolitan areas of Québec City and Montréal. These urban areas, along with details on some of the roads, will be topics for future months.

While various writers have stated that the history of the Canadian National is one of the most complex in the world, if this is so, and I wouldn't disagree, the trackage in this small section along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River sure helps achieve this title.

### Trackage of CP Rail

Today, CP Rail's main line in the area is its 155-mile Trois-Rivières Subdivision between Québec City and Saint-Martin Junction (junction with the Park Avenue Subdivision in the suburbs north of Montréal). This line, as shown on the map, parallels the river and passes through L'Épiphanie, Lanoraie, Berthier, Trois Rivières, and Cap-de-la-Madeleine.

Without getting too far into the politics of railways of Québec, this line was first desired in 1852 with many public meetings, at which, to quote a Québec historian, "There was much talk, but no practical aid."

The North Shore Railway Company was incorporated on April 22, 1853, with authority to build a railway from the City of Québec to the City of Montréal or to some convenient point on any railway leading from Montréal to the Western Cities of the Province and on the North Shore of the St. Lawrence River.

Over the next 20 years there was a couple of mergers, name changes, and much talk, but it was on December 24, 1870, that the name was changed back to the North Shore Railway Company.

On July 18, 1872, the first sod on the railway was turned at Québec by Madame Joly, and Bishop (afterward Cardinal Archbishop) Taschereau in an elaborate ceremony gave the enterprise his episcopal blessing. Construction was slow; it took over five years before the first train was run from Québec to Trois-Rivières on December 18, 1877; and it was February 8, 1879, when the railway entered Montréal.

Before the line was opened, the Province of Québec, under an act dated December 24, 1875, and based on the wishes of the Directors of the North Shore Railway Company, transferred the rights, powers, assets, etc., of it to the Quebec, Montréal, Ottawa and Occidental Railway Company.

This corporate entity also constructed the 2.0-mile line from Berthier Junction to Berthierville that was opened about December 31, 1881, and the line from Lanoraie to Saint-Félix-de-Valois. This 17 miles was opened about February 27,

1883.

I am not exactly sure when the 27-mile line from Cap-de-la-Madeleine northeast to Garneau (Saint-Georges) and on to Grandes-Piles was constructed. It would be in this 1880 period since it is mentioned in 1882 documents. This line is now abandoned except for a short section in Cap-de-la-Madeleine used as an industrial spur. The portion north of Garneau appears to have been abandoned for quite a few years. The southern portion was probably abandoned in the early 1970s.

CP's 1983 timetable shows an interesting feature at Garneau. CP is shown with running rights over CN's line from Shawinigan to Garneau to reach 0.6 miles of their old Piles Subdivision that had been renamed the Piles Spur. This spur extended south from CN's Joliette Subdivision towards Lac-a-la-Tortue.

The North Shore Railway Company received a Dominion Charter in May 1883 and was declared a work for the general advantage of Canada. In December 1882, the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada had purchased control of the North Shore Railway and from about January 1, 1883, to September 19, 1885, the road was operated on behalf of the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada, under the direction of a Mr. William Wainwright as General Manager.

On September 19, 1885, an order-in-council was issued that resulted in the Dominion Government entering into an agreement to transfer the company and equipment of the North Shore Railway Company to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

CP's Saint-Maurice Valley Subdivision extended from Trois-Rivières to Grand-Mère and was constructed by the St. Maurice Valley Railway Company. The line was constructed about 1910 and was leased to the CPR effective January 1, 1911. While some trackage in the Grand-Mère area has been abandoned, I am going to leave those details to include in a later article on the Shawinigan Falls Terminal Railway Company.

The 11 miles of CP's Saint-Gabriel Subdivision from Saint-Félix-de-Valois to Saint-Gabriel was constructed by the Montréal and Lake Maskinonge Railway and was opened north to Saint-Cleophas in 1887 and on to Saint-Gabriel in 1890. CP leased this line commencing on January 1, 1906. The portion of this line between Saint-Félix-de-Valois and Joliette has been sold to Bel-Gaz Ltée. The portion of this line from Joliette to Lanoraie is still operated by CP.

West of Joliette, CP's only other penetration into this area was with their 15.1-mile St. Lin Subdivision between Saint-Lin Junction on the Québec, Montréal, Ottawa and Occidental Railway and Saint-Lin. The QMO&O is the line north from Montréal that became part of CP's Sainte-Agathe Subdivision that extended northward to Mont-Laurier. Again, I am going to ignore lines west of Saint-Lin Junction. (The name Saint-Lin is derived from St. Linus, successor of St. Peter as Bishop of Rome.) This line was constructed by the Laurentian Railway and was completed in the season of 1877, the first train operating from Saint-Lin Junction to Saint-Lin and return on November 6, 1877.

The Laurentian Railway's president was a J. H. Pangan and their one locomotive, a light 4-4-0, was named for

him. This locomotive had originally been built by Danforth in 1858 for the Camden Amboy Railroad and had 68-inch drivers. The Laurentian Railway Company was purchased by the CPR on March 13, 1882.

While daily passenger train service was a feature on this line for many years, in the latter years it was a daily-except-Sunday passenger service, which lasted until April 1956, when passenger service was completely withdrawn. Total abandonment of this line became effective October 1, 1963. So today, it is just a memory.

#### CN'S LINES

The first line of the CN family in this area was the Québec and Gosford Railway that extended for about 26 miles from the Saint-Sauveur bog on the outskirts of Québec City north-west to Lac-a-L'Île (or Lac-Sept-Îles?). For now, it is enough to say that this line was opened on November 26, 1870, and operated for a couple of years before closing.

Meanwhile, the Québec and Lake Saint John Railway Company had been trying to get established following its incorporation in 1870. About 1880, this company started to re-activate the Québec and Gosford Railway. On July 9, 1881, the Québec and Lake Saint John Railway Company opened 18.17 miles of a new line from Loretteville Junction on the Québec and Gosford Railway northwest to Lake St. Joseph. This was the first portion of what would eventually become CN's Batiscan and more recently the Saint-Raymond Subdivision. The old Québec and Gosford Railway line from Loretteville Junction into Québec City was rehabilitated and used for a few years.

The Québec and Lake Saint John Railway Company continued its march northward when it opened the 13.19 miles into Saint-Raymond on November 3, 1881.

The Québec and Lake Saint John Railway Company was renamed the Québec and Lake St. John Railway Company in 1883 and opened an additional 9.02 miles north of Saint-Raymond on November 11, 1884.

Riviere-a-Pierre received its first railway traffic on November 2, 1885, and service was extended to Lac-Edouard, north of Linton Junction, by January 9, 1888.

Also in this part of Québec, the Québec and Lake St. John Railway Company opened their 39.6-mile line from Linton Junction to La Tuque on November 23, 1907. This line was short-lived as it was abandoned in 1921 following the construction of the National Transcontinental Railway through La Tuque.

Back in the Québec City area, a new line opened from Whitehouse (near Loretteville Junction) to Québec on July 1, 1890. This permitted the abandonment in the same year of the original Québec and Gosford Railway south of the Québec and Lake St. John.

The Québec and Lake St. John Railway constructed a new 4.6-mile line into Clarks that opened on August 1, 1907. This short segment was abandoned in 1932. The Canadian Northern Railway acquired the Québec and Lake St. John Railway early in 1907.

One other small railway in the Québec City area was the St. Charles and Huron River Railway Company, which built a line just before the first world war from Loretteville on the Québec and Lake St. John Railway to Stoneham. This 9.95-mile line was abandoned in 1935.

In addition to the above abandonments, CN abandoned two substantial segments of the former Québec and

Lake St. John Railway. The first segment abandoned was the 19.07 miles between Riviere-a-Pierre and Saint-Raymond and was effective October 24, 1993, and the NTA has granted CN permission to abandon the 20.32 miles from Saint-Raymond south to Shannon. While many of the bridges are still in place, the track on the northern segment has been removed. On my recent inspection, the track on the south portion is still in place.

The other main north-south line west of the Québec City area is the National Transcontinental Railway. This line was part of the eastern half of what was to be the third national railway line. The portion from Québec City via Domburg, Saint-Marc-des-Carrières, Saint-Prosper, Hervey Junction, and north to La Tuque was officially opened on June 1, 1915. This was well within the railway depression that led to the demise of the Canadian Northern, Grand Trunk, NTR, Grand Trunk Pacific, Intercolonial, and other railways, followed with the formation of the Canadian National Railways.

The 17.38-mile portion from Cap-Rouge to Domburg is part of CN's present La Tuque Subdivision. Since by 1924 the NTR was under the CNR's control, a new 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-mile connection was completed between Domburg and the former Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Railway at Donnacona. However, it wasn't until 1938 that the 22<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> miles of the NTR between Domburg and Saint-Marc-des-Carrières was abandoned.

The remainder of the NTR north of Saint-Marc-des-Carrières in this part of Québec is still in use as CN's La Tuque Subdivision.

Before we leave the NTR we should mention that in 1991-92, CN Rail constructed their new 5.1-mile Deschambault Spur to serve the new Alcan plant. The head block for this spur is at Mile 38.6 of the present La Tuque Subdivision (formerly the Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Railway) near Deschambault. The first 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> miles of this spur was constructed on a newly acquired right-of-way, but about another 3.75 miles of it was constructed on the roadbed of the long-abandoned NTR.

Paralleling the NTR from Cap-Rouge to Saint-Prosper and then on to Garneau was the line constructed by the Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Railway Company. The eastern terminal of this line was at Limoilou, about 10 miles east of Cap-Rouge in Québec City. This eastern portion was sold to the NTR in 1915. The complete line, totalling 77.39 miles, was opened for traffic on July 30, 1909.

The Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Railway became part of the Canadian Northern Railway family and then came into CN control. This permitted the 14.62 miles between Saint-Marc-des-Carrières and Gendron to be abandoned in 1920 following the construction of connecting tracks at both ends. In the early years of CN, the Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Railway was operated as the St. Lawrence Subdivision and it is interesting to note in the January 15, 1922, timetable that operation over the above mentioned 14.62 miles is "via La Tuque Sub-Division."

The 18 miles from Saint-Prosper to Garneau was last operated as CN's Saint-Stanislas Subdivision. The Railway Transport Committee authorised CN to abandon most of this track in the spring of 1977. Short spurs were kept at both ends. My recent travels show that much of this line is still traceable and shows signs of being well-used by snowmobiles and ATVs.

The eastern portion of CN's main east-west line was constructed by the Lower Laurentian Railway Company. This

company constructed a line from Riviere-a-Pierre west through Hervey Junction and Saint-Tite to Saint-Tite Junction and then on to Proulx (Grandes-Piles). This 39 miles of railway was opened on November 9, 1901. By the time this line was opened, it had been purchased by the Great Northern Railway of Canada. In 1906, this company, along with the Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and the Chateaugay and Northern Railway, were amalgamated into the Canadian Northern Québec Railway Company. At that time, the 4.27 miles between Saint-Tite Junction, five miles east of Garneau, and Grandes-Piles was abandoned. The five miles east from Garneau, along with the Lower Laurentian Railway from Saint-Tite Junction east to Riviere-a-Pierre and the Québec and Lake St. John Railway from there northward, is now operated as CN's Lac Saint-Jean Subdivision.

As mentioned previously, I am going to leave details of the trackage around Grand-Mere, Shawinigan, and Shawinigan Falls to a later article.

The Great Northern Railway of Canada was incorporated in 1883 and in addition to acquiring various lines proceeded to construct several lines that were eventually added to the CN group of lines. This company constructed a 20-mile line from Saint-Tite Junction west through Garneau (Saint-Georges) to Saint-Boniface-de-Shawinigan (west of Shawinigan Falls). The next 542 miles, west from Saint-Boniface-de-Shawinigan to Montcalm, seven miles west of Joliette on the now-abandoned St. Lin (Lachute) Subdivision, was opened on April 1, 1901. In the meantime, the 7.8 miles from Montfort Junction east towards Joliette, again on the abandoned St. Lin (Lachute) Subdivision, was opened on December 19, 1884. The next 10 miles east on this line through Saint-Lin to Bissonette was opened about December 20, 1889. The remaining ten miles from Bissonette to Montcalm was opened about July 1, 1889.

CN abandoned this line from Joliette west to Montfort Junction in 1945, when the Saint-Laurent Subdivision bypass of Montréal was opened.

To complete our maze of railway lines in this part of Québec, we must look at the lines of the Chateaugay and Northern Railway and a short section constructed by the Canadian Northern Québec Railway.

The Chateaugay and Northern Railway built 36.21 miles from Moreau Street in Montréal northeast to connect with the Great Northern Railway's trackage in Joliette, and this was opened on August 9, 1904. This line crosses the CP's line at L'Épipharnie on a diamond.

The Chateaugay and Northern also built a line northward from Paradis, on the Moreau Street-Joliette line to Saint-Jacques, a distance of seven miles. This line was opened on September 7, 1905, and was extended north across the Great Northern Railway's St. Lin (Lachute) Subdivision at Rawdon Junction and on to Rawdon by the Canadian Northern Québec Railway. The four miles to Rawdon Junction was opened on November 3, 1909, and the last 4.77 miles into Rawdon was opened on September 7, 1910.

The line from Moreau Street to Joliette is still operated by CN. The portion from Pointe-aux-Trembles to Joliette is part of the Joliette Subdivision and the remainder on the island of Montréal is designated as the Longue-Pointe Spur. The line from Paradis to Rawdon was abandoned in the 1960s.

#### **Abandonments**

CN, by authority of NTA order 1994-R-213, dated June 9, 1994,

has been granted permission to abandon the operation of 5.6 miles of its Fonthill Spur; head block (H.B.) at Mile 5.2 Thorold Subdivision. This line, originally a part of the Niagara, St. Catharines and Toronto, was opened about July 1, 1906.

CN, by authority of NTA order 1994-R-214, dated June 10, 1994, has been granted permission to abandon the operation of 4.7 miles of its Petrolia Spur; H.B. Mile 46.3 Strathroy Subdivision. This line, constructed by the Great Western Railway, was opened in December 17, 1866, to serve the developing oil industry of Petrolia and surrounding area. Petrolia was also served by a second line, a spur north from the Canada Southern Railway's St. Clair Subdivision.

\*\*\*\*

#### **Brownies in 1872!**

About a year ago, my boss gave me a photocopy of a Grand Trunk Railway bulletin listing "*Punishments Inflicted and Rewards Given*" in June, 1872. Being a computer pack-rat, I now have these on my computer's hard drive. It has been a 122 years since the GTR issued these directives, but has things changed? Let's look at a few.

What year? – A Montréal conductor was fined 1 day's pay for: "Allowing two gentlemen to smoke in first class Car on Mixed Train to the annoyance and against the protests of other passengers."

The two sides! – A Toronto conductor was fined 2 day's pay for: "Not seeing that Brakes were properly applied to his Train up Special when standing on a grade at Limehouse Station, 3 cars broke loose from Train and ran at a great speed down the grade until overtaken by Driver Brow 1 mile east of Norval."

The reward to Mr. Brow, a Toronto engineman was 3 day's pay for: "Promptness in securing part of Special Train which had become detached at Limehouse, thereby preventing serious damage to the Company's property."

Did the Limehouse incident cost the GTR anything? In noting the figures one must ask, "how would the two day's pay for a conductor compare to the three days extra pay to the engineman?"

Origin of confusion! – Today we sometimes hear the comment that trains should stop for vehicles at crossing – well maybe, for in 1872 a Point St. Charles engineman was given an extra day's pay as reward for: "Promptness in stopping No. 7 Train on observing a loaded cart stuck on a farmer's crossing near St. Anne's."

There are a few others that I will throw your way in future columns.

#### **Books**

#### **Early Excursions**

May 28, 1994

Jasper Station  
Nakina Station  
Tillsonburg

\*\*\*\*

CN Hamilton Station

\*\*\*\*\*

**Future Months:**

CP LaSalle station still standing

Newburgh CNOR Station exists in town as a house –

Dan McConnachie.

Millville Station

Dog at Boston Bar