



crha

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News

STATION "B"

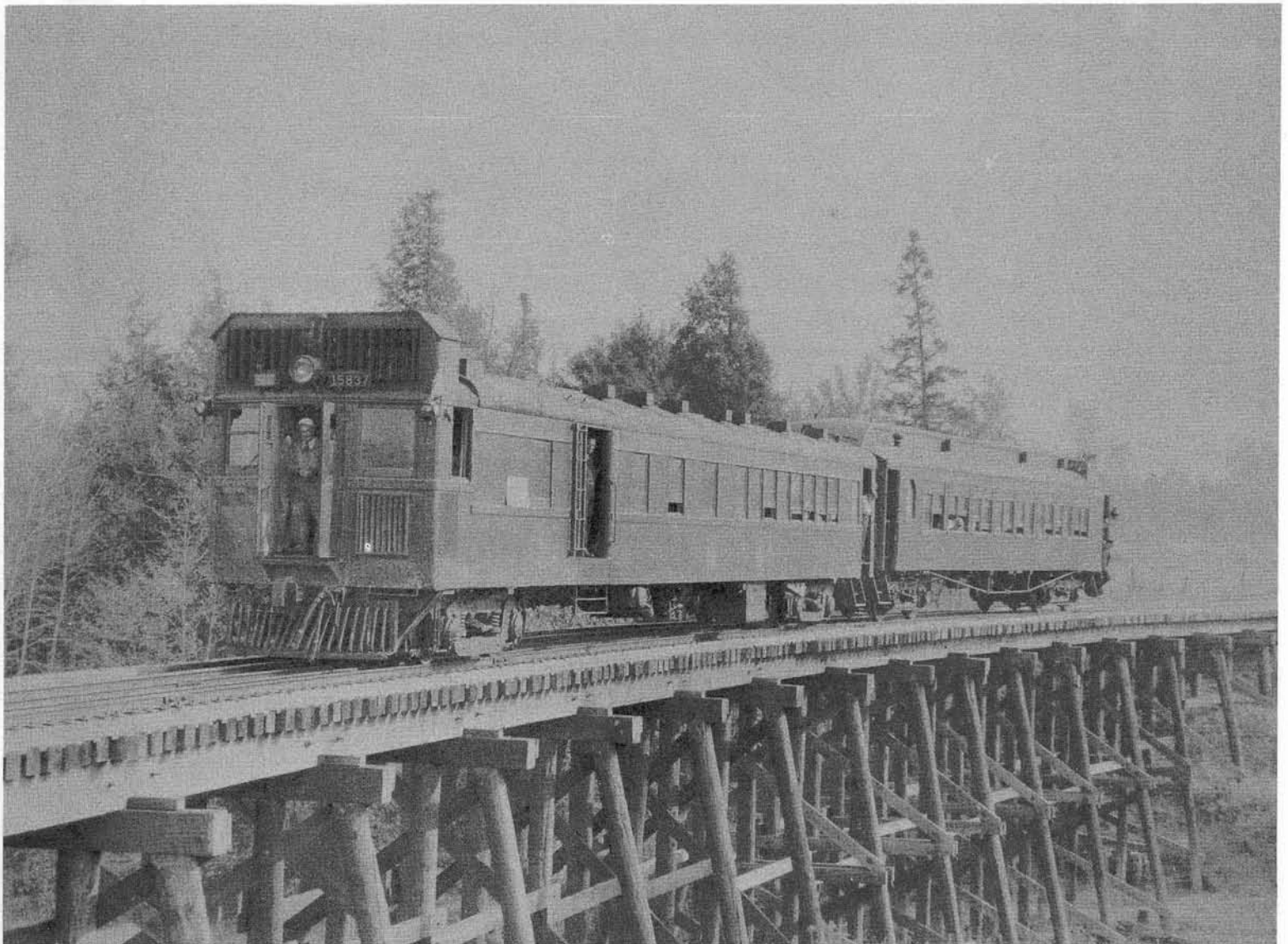
Report

MONTREAL 2, QUEBEC

NUMBER 115

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OCTOBER 1960



**TEN YEARS OF CRHA TRIPS.** To observe our tenth anniversary of rail trips, we illustrate this month our first special railway train, consisting of Canadian National diesel-electric unit car 15837 and a passenger car, which ran from Montreal to Huberdeau, Que. and return on October 1, 1950.

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NOTICE OF MEETING:

The October Meeting of the Association will be held in the McConnell Engineering Building at McGill University, University Street at Milton Street. Use the Milton Street entrance. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 12th, 1960 at 8:15 PM. Mr. O.S.A. Lavallee will give an illustrated talk entitled "Craigellachie, Before and After" which will incorporate original photographs taken on the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the west about 1886. As usual, members are invited to bring guests and prospective new members to this meeting. The room number will be posted at the door.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

The September meeting, at which Mr. Frank Lewin showed colour slides which he had taken on a visit to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1958, was one of the most interesting programmes we have had in recent months. His visit was made when tourists were first permitted into the U.S.S.R. two years ago, and there were many features of railway and other interest to those in attendance at this splendid show. Particularly noteworthy was the extensive use of steam locomotives on the railways, including vari-coloured 2-8-4s of large proportions but light construction.

Mr. Lewin's non-railway pictures were also splendidly chosen, showing views in the five principal cities which he visited, including many impressive buildings.

At the September meeting, the following persons were introduced, and their names proposed for election to regular membership at the October meeting:

Mr. J.B. Porteous

Mr. William T. Stewart

The Chairman of the Membership Committee, Mr. Stephen Cheasley, wishes to remind the membership that, with the start of a new season of CRHA meeting activity, now is a very appropriate time to bring new members in to CRHA. The continued growth of our Association is an end which should be the goal of every member and subscriber.

The Interprovincial Railway (Rolling Stock committee) is busily putting the two Quebec Railway cars to "bed" for the winter; many members are aware that the cars are stored for us, on a temporary basis, through the kind interest of the Canada Creosoting Company at Delson, Que., and working parties assemble there nearly every Saturday. Work in hand includes painting the roofs of the two cars, also the underbody equipment and running gear. There is also some glass to replace, in order to make the car interiors show-proof while they are stored outside. Those interested in giving a hand should call Mr. Lavallee at CR.9-8822.

The Association has now been advised that the Canadian Pacific Railway is holding for delivery to CRHA, four wooden passenger-train cars, to wit: Baggage Car #3987, built in 1910; Coach #1554 built in 1912; Instruction Car #56, formerly the observation-parlour car "Malahat", built in 1893; and Official Car No. 1, built by Crossen between 1868 and 1871, formerly St. Lawrence & Ottawa Railway car No.9. The Baggage Car is at Weston Shops in Winnipeg; the other cars are at Angus Shops.

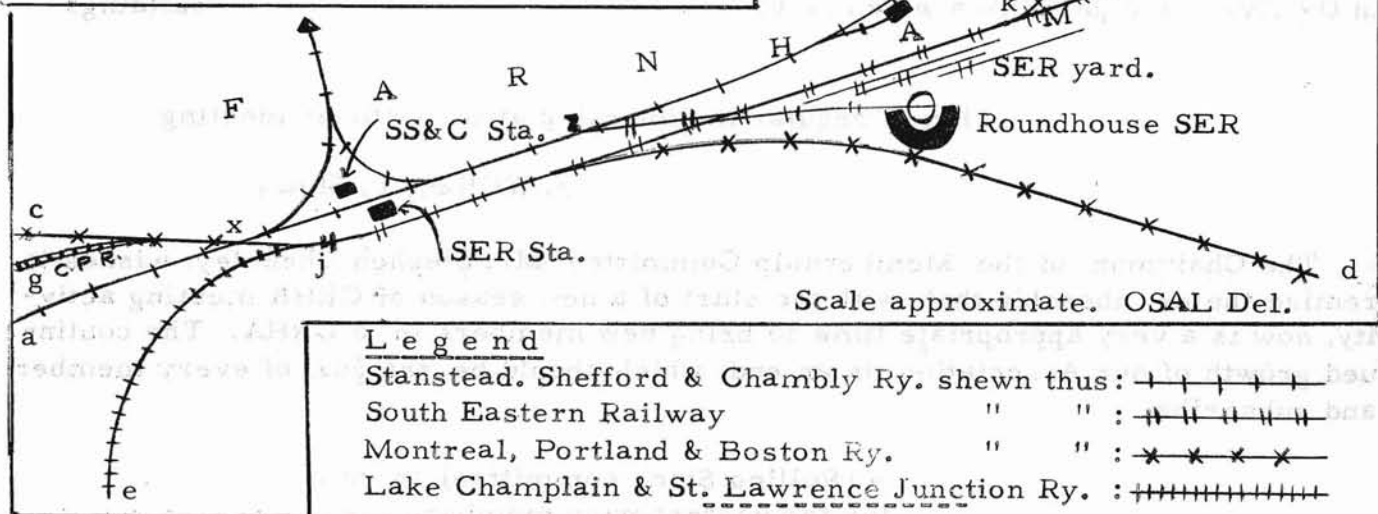
\*\*Will you be with us on November 6th, when we re-enact the Last Spike Ceremony?

# FARNHAM - CENTURY-OLD RAIL CENTRE ..... by Omer S.A. Lavallee

The town of Farnham, Que., situated about forty miles east of Montreal on the Canadian Pacific Railway's through route to the Maritimes, is a railway community of more than one hundred years' standing. The town is the headquarters of the Canadian Pacific Railway's Farnham Division, whose area covers all CPR lines east of the Saint Lawrence River in the Province of Quebec. It possesses an extensive yard, including engine terminal and repair facilities, car repair tracks, with the divisional headquarters housed in a modern station building which was opened in 1951.

It is now nearly one hundred and two years since the first railway was opened into this community, beginning an era which saw rail lines radiate in eight directions, like spokes of a wheel, in all directions of the Eastern Townships. For a considerable period, Farnham was the headquarters of the South Eastern Railway, an extensive rail system whose parts now form sections of both Canadian Pacific and Canadian National rail lines in eastern Quebec.

It was in the year 1853 that the Stanst-



ead, Shefford & Chambly Railway was incorporated to serve, essentially, the three counties encompassed by the railway's name. The southern counties of Quebec, bordering on neighbouring New England, had been areas of heavy settlement, even at this early time. An extensive farming community had grown up, populated both by French-Canadians and by English-speaking settlers, many of whom had come north into Canada at the time of the Revolution in the United States. With the completion of the Champlain & Saint Lawrence Rail Road from Laprairie, opposite Montreal, to St. John's, on the Richelieu River, in 1836, it seemed natural and desirable that the railway should be prolonged in to the "Townships". This was not to be, however. When the railway era came to Canada in the early 1850s, the C&StL turned south to the international boundary at Rouses Point, and a connection with American railroads. The result of this was the incorporation of the S. S. & C. Ry. by local interests in Waterloo, Que.

Construction got under way in 1858 with a bridge over the Richelieu from St. John's



to Iberville, then a straight run across flat, level, fertile farmland, through the communities of Ste. Brigide and St. Gregoire, to the village of West Farnham. While construction progressed onward toward Granby and Waterloo, service was inaugurated from St. Johns to West Farnham, and the first train entered the latter place, the subject of our study, on January 1st, 1859. In later years, the word "West" was dropped, and the town became known simply as "Farnham". The SS&C built a wye and enginehouse in the town, entering at "a" on the accompanying map. On December 31st of the same year, the succeeding section ("b" on the map) was opened through to Granby.

For twelve years, Farnham was served adequately by the S.S. & C.Ry., but as the town began to grow in size and in importance, situated in an attractive spot on the Yamaska River, local railway interests again came to the fore by the incorporation of the South Eastern Railway, to effect a direct connection between this town and the international line near Newport. Farnham became the headquarters of the South Eastern and an elaborate, multi-storey brick station and general office building was built, along with engine house, car and locomotive shops and a large yard. The South Eastern opened the first section of its line, beginning at "x" on the map, with a connection with the SS&C, to the Province Line near Richford, Vermont, in 1871. The point at which the SER left Farnham is shown at "h". In 1873, the SER, through an American subsidiary, reached Newport and a connection, there, with the Connecticut & Passumpsic Rivers Railroad Company.

With the opening of the South Eastern, Farnham became a target for other railroads. In 1877, the Montreal, Portland & Boston was opened through from Longueuil, opposite Montreal, to Frelighsburg by way of Farnham. (points "c" and "d" on the map). This railway was under the control of the South Eastern Railway, and really afforded the SER a connection into Montreal.

Having now rail lines radiating in five directions, to St. Johns, Montreal, Granby, Newport and Frelighsburg, matters were complicated somewhat by the opening, in October, 1879, of the 3' 6"-gauge Lake Champlain & Saint Lawrence Junction Railway, which extended from a connection with the Central Vermont Railway at Stanbridge, through Farnham, St. Pie and St. Hyacinthe, to St. Guillaume. This line was built to bring agricultural products, chiefly hay, from the fertile valley of the Richelieu, then forward it on via the Central Vermont through St. Albans. The LC&StLJR came into Farnham at the west end of town (map reference "e"), made a double-gauge connection with the SER at the latter's station ("j"), then proceeded on double-gauge track to a switch at the east end of the SER yard ("k"), crossed the SS&C where Meigs is now located ("y"), and so across the Yamaska to St. Pie, St. Hyacinthe and St. Guillaume.

This little line shortly came under the control of the powerful South Eastern, and after only two years as a narrow-gauge line, it was converted to standard-gauge and assimilated into the SER. Now possessing seven rail routes, the stage was set for the last "spoke" in the wheel.

In the early Eighties, the Canadian Pacific Railway acquired control of the South Eastern, as part of its policy of construction in western Canada, and expansion by acquisition of existing rail lines in the east. No sooner had the transcontinental been completed in 1885, than the CPR turned its attention eastward, for a direct line across the State of Maine to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia -- shorter than any now existing. Accordingly, under the charter of a "paper company", the Atlantic & North West Railway, the CPR built from Montreal to Farnham, by way of St. Johns and Iberville, in

1887. Between Iberville and Farnham, it paralleled the SS&C to the north, and made its entrance into the Yamaska River town just a few hundred feet to the north of the older railway ("g" on the map). Its course eastward lay along the SER for a few miles to Brookport, where the route reverted to a new line through Foster and Magog to the city of Sherbrooke.

Farnham had, by this time, progressed from the sleepy farm village of thirty years before, to a busy railway town, with train bells and whistles sounding constantly to remind the inhabitants of the source of their prosperity. A particular point of congestion was at the west end of the town ("x" on the map) where the MP&B and CPR crossed the SS&C. There was a two-ball mast signal erected here, governing movements over the several lines. Operation of this signal is described in a Central Vermont Ry. rule-book for 1897, which the writer possesses, the Central Vermont having acquired control of the SS&C in 1867, and the MP&B in 1891. In 1891, also, the SER was reorganized as the Montreal & Atlantic Railway and was thereafter operated as part of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Hence the reference to the CPR and to the "MP&B and SS&C Divisions" of the Central Vermont, in the following extract from the rule-book:

#### FARNHAM

Junction with M.P. & B. and S.S. & C. Divisions and C.P.Ry. Two red balls by day, or two red lights by night.

When no signal is shown, S.S. & C. trains have right of track.

When one red ball or one red light is shown, C.P.R. trains have right of track.

When two red balls or two red lights are shown, M.P. & B. Division trains have right of track.

It was not until 1925 that the first reduction in trackage was made of the lines serving Farnham. On August 31st of that year, the Canadian National Railways, who had succeeded the Central Vermont Railway as proprietors of the old MP&B and SS&C lines on November 1st, 1923, abandoned the old MP&B line (exiting at "c") between Farnham and Ste. Angele. The portion from Ste. Angele in to St. Lambert continued to be operated as part of the electric Montreal & Southern Counties Railway until the autumn of 1956.

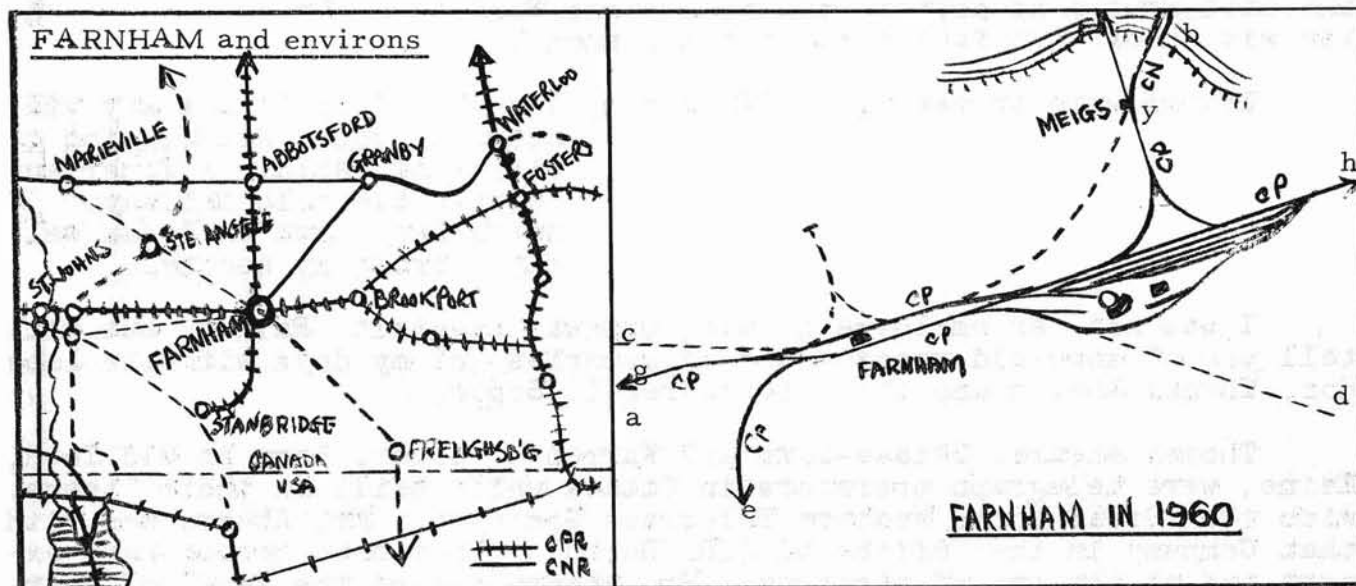
In 1935, Canadian National Railways, now in the process of eliminating unprofitable parallel operation with other lines, abandoned the old SS&C line between a point a short distance east of Iberville on the Central Vermont line, known as SS&C Junction, to Farnham (line entering at "a"). Thereafter, CNR trains between Iberville and Farnham ran over the CPR, utilizing the short Lemoyne Subdivision in Iberville between the CNR and CPR lines. Due to the direction of the switches at each end of the Lemoyne Subdivision, this section had the unusual idiosyncrasy of having all train operation made in a backing-up direction. Canadian National passenger trains ran over this route between Montreal and Waterloo until November 25th, 1951, when service to Granby and Waterloo was begun by diesel train over the M&SC route through Mariville and St. Cesaire. CNR 4-6-2 #5056 was on the last train on that day, which was marked, on the westward and last trip, by the issuance of a "31" order by the CPR Dispatcher at Farnham, extending best wishes of the CPR Farnham Division officers to the CNR train crew on the last run.

The only other line to be abandoned was the Frelighsburg Subdivision of the CNR, the tail end of the old Montreal, Portland & Boston, which saw the end of service on

March 6th, 1939. About this time also, the CNR abandoned that part of the SS&C line in Farnham extending from "z" on the map, to "y", running over the C.P.R. between these points. The grade crossing just before the Yamaska bridges became a junction, known thereafter as "Meigs". The wye behind the old SS&C station remained until comparatively recent years. A visit there about ten years ago showed the wye rails in tact, with all fishplates unbolted. The switch at the "tail" of the wye was then a stub switch, with an ancient "harp" switchstand.

On February 9th, 1949, the original South Eastern Railway headquarters building, the multi-storey brick structure referred to elsewhere in this story, was destroyed by fire. The only part remaining intact was the vault shaft on all floors. Many interesting original SER records were recovered from these vaults, including two old SER letter books from which Mr. Lorne Perry took extracts for these pages about two years ago. The Canadian Pacific set to work building a new station for Farnham, the present modern and spacious structure being opened on February 16th, 1951. It serves the needs of both CPR and CNR, the latter still operating passenger trains between Farnham and Waterloo, via Granby.

During the early part of this year (1960), Canadian Pacific dismantled part of the



roundhouse at Farnham, reflecting increased utilization of fewer diesel locomotives. Parts of the old brick South Eastern Railway buildings remain, however, as a reminder of the times before the advent of the highway, when all traffic moved by rail, giving growth and status to towns which grew up around railway headquarters, and of which Farnham is today one of the friendliest and pleasantest examples.

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**STEAM ON NORTHERN ALBERTA RAILWAYS:** Robert Sandusky, who is presently on an extended business assignment in western Canada, reports that a visit to the facilities of the Northern Alberta Railways at Dunvegan Yard, just north of Edmonton, on September 16th, revealed the following steam locomotives, presumably serviceable. Those marked with an asterisk were under steam: 2-10-0s Nos. 51\*, 52, 54, 57\*, 101\*, 102. 2-8-0s Nos. 72\*, 73, 74\*. 4-6-2 No. 161 and diesels 302 and 304. No. 51 went out on that day on train #7 to Waterways. The Barrhead freight on the same day ran with No. 72. The Barrhead and Waterways branches are still steam operated.

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REMINISCENCES OF AHEARN AND SOPER  
by Seymour Rathbone

At the Association's Banquet which was held in Montreal during the Spring, the Guest of Honour was Mr. Seymour Rathbone, Chairman of the

Board of Ahearn & Soper Company Limited, a pioneer electrical firm, whose interests embraced the building of street railway cars under their own name, and later as the Ottawa Car Manufacturing Company, and also the building and operation of the electric railway in Ottawa, until it was taken over by the Ottawa Transportation Commission in 1948. Mr. Rathbone has kindly provided us with a transcription of his talk, which we reproduce herewith.

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Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I was moved by Mr. Soper's kind introduction. Warren Y. Soper, now the third generation of the family as President of Ahearn & Soper, has been, since he was a small boy, a loyal friend of mine as has been Mr. Frank Ahearn, also from boyhood. Frank Ahearn, the son of the late Hon. Thomas Ahearn, was the last President of the Ottawa Electric Railway. My long association with these two families has meant much to me.

If you were to ask me - "What's my line?", I could not say addresses, but I am honoured to have been asked by your Association to speak to your members on the early activities of Ahearn & Soper and their pioneer days of formation of the Ottawa Electric Railway. I must apologize for reading this brief narrative, but as I am well launched en route to my 82nd birthday, I can't trust my memory.

I was not an employee of the Ottawa Electric Railway but will tell you of some old records and of memories of my days with the late Hon. Thomas Ahearn and the late Warren Y. Soper.

Thomas Ahearn, Ottawa-born and Warren Y. Soper, born in Old Town, Maine, were telegraph operators in Ottawa while still in their 'teens, with the Great North Western Telegraph Company. Mr. Ahearn was with that Company in the office of J.R. Booth. They both became very expert and at the age of eighteen, Mr. Ahearn joined the staff of operators with the Western Union Telegraph Company in New York City; he was there on the memorable Black Friday when fortunes melted away. These two young men applied themselves vigorously and very soon their endeavours became well and favourably known. While still very young, Mr. Ahearn was appointed to the office of Local Manager of the Bell Telephone Company in Ottawa and Mr. Soper as Manager of the Ottawa office of the Dominion Telegraph Company. Their occupations brought them together, and in the year 1881, they decided to resign their important offices and form a partnership as Ahearn & Soper, Electrical Contractors. They secured the district representation of the Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company, dealing with that notable organization's Chicago office. After a few years representing Westinghouse, Ahearn & Soper were instrumental in persuading Mr. George Westinghouse to build an electrical apparatus plant in Hamilton, Ontario, where his Company already had a small air brake plant.

Prior to the year 1891, Ottawa's transportation system consisted of a few small horse-drawn street cars -- six in all -- which had begun operation in 1870. I have ridden in those quaint little cars in



the winter time, the floors covered with straw and heated with a tiny coal stove in the centre of the car. Twenty years after the opening of the horse railway, and in spite of the fact that cynics said that snow conditions in Canada's winter world would not permit of operating electric streetcars, a party of U. S. interests negotiated for some months with the Corporation of Ottawa for the construction of an electric railway. This offer fell through and on October 20th, 1890, Ahearn & Soper forwarded the following letter to the Corporation:

Ottawa, October 20, 1890.

The Mayor and Corporation of Ottawa,  
Gentlemen:

Understanding that the security offered by the Company with whom negotiations have been carried on for some months for the construction of an electric railway in this City, is not satisfactory to your Corporation and that the time stipulated for making such security satisfactory has expired, thereby terminating your negotiations with that Company, we now offer to undertake the immediate formation of a local Company for the construction and operation of the railway in accordance with the terms of the agreement already prepared and as security for the proper fulfilment of the contract, we enclose herewith our accepted cheque in favour of your Corporation for the sum of \$5,000.00.

Yours truly,

Ahearn & Soper

This letter was signed by the late Warren Y. Soper, grandfather of Mr. Warren Y. Soper, today's President of the Ahearn & Soper Company, Limited and with us at this banquet tonight.

After much hesitation and refusal on the part of Ottawa's financiers to join the Company, because of their belief that such an operation was not feasible, Ahearn and Soper were successful and their offer was accepted. The Company was formed with Thomas Ahearn as President and Warren Y. Soper, Vice-President. Eight months later, on June 20th, 1891, the first small electric cars appeared on Ottawa's streets. The man, then a boy of five, who closed the switch to start the service was Frank Ahearn, later to become President of the Ottawa Electric Railway Company on the passing of his father, the Hon. Thomas Ahearn, in 1938. Three cars were built and equipped by Ahearn & Soper at their small plant formed as the Ottawa Car Company from what was the Wylie Carriage factory.

The horse-drawn cars operated by the Ottawa City Passenger Railway competed for two years with the Ottawa Electric Railway and then went out of business.

The snow problem was covered by the manufacture of electric snow plows at the Ottawa Car Company's plant. The tracks were cleared and the Railway Company was obligated to remove the snow from the streets on which the car lines were. This was done by loading and drawing the snow away on the Company's horse-drawn snow boxes. In later years, with the advent of motor cars, the City undertook the removal of the snow from the curbs at its own expense.

The first Superintendent of the Ottawa Electric Railway Company was Mr. J.E. Hutcheson who later left Ottawa for Montreal to become Superintendent of the Montreal Tramways Company.

On June 22nd, 1895, the Ottawa Journal said, editorially:

"How the Street Railway serves the district in all the 29 miles of track in Ottawa; if your friends, who will come to the growing capital this summer, want to know how many cars are in service here, tell them there are 68 cars and that nowhere are cars kept in better repair and cleaned and dusted for the comfort of the public."

This tribute was dated within two days of the fourth anniversary of the commencement of the Ottawa Electric Railway Company's service.

In 1894, the Ottawa Electric Railway contracted with the Federal Government to carry the mail from the Post Office to the Broad Street Railway Station and the old Canada Atlantic Station. This contract was in force for some years when the Company lost it to a cartage firm. The irony of fate willed that the contract was closed on the day Ahearn & Soper were about to put into service two additional Post Office cars.

In 1897, when Canada's capital city was celebrating the 60th Anniversary Jubilee of the reign of Queen Victoria, Ahearn and Soper were entrusted by the Federal Government to illuminate the entire face of the Parliament Buildings with thousands of electric lights. This quite overpowering and wonderful sight still lingers in the memory of Ottawa old-timers. Your narrator recalls carrying out instructions of his employers (on immediate completion of the installation) to stand on Parliament Hill and endeavour to count the lamps. The situation became embarrassing when passers-by gradually formed a group who were amused at the lamp counter whom they were satisfied had escaped from, or should be directed to, a mental institution.

During this same celebration, Mr. Ahearn was instrumental in organizing the first coast-to-coast communication network which, through the medium of the recently-completed telegraph circuits was able to carry news of the capital's participation in the celebration to all the major centres in Canada.

On Christmas Eve, 1897, the Ottawa Electric Railway gaily decorated a small car with Santa Claus (Mr. Warren Y. Soper) standing beside a Christmas tree on the car, and drove through the car lines throwing candy, apples, oranges and nuts to the crowds of children following. In the afternoon of that day, Mr. Ahearn acted as Santa in a second run.

1901 saw the Company build a handsome specially-equipped car to convey the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (later King George V and Queen Mary), for a tour through the car lines.

Your narrator recalls that when he joined Ahearn & Soper in 1895, (sixty-five years ago) he was interested in noting that the O. E. Ry. operations were largely directed from the offices of Ahearn and Soper on Sparks Street, by means of notes and 'phone calls by Mr. Ahearn and Mr. Soper to Mr. Hutcheson at the O.E. Railway offices on Albert Street. Mr. Soper would hear a car pass the Sparks Street office with a flat wheel; he would call "Seymour, get the number of that car". I would

run and come back with "No. 26, sir". An immediate call to Mr. Hutcherson, "Jim, car 26 just passed here with a flat wheel -- take it off".

An amusing instance of these directions was the occasion when Mr. Soper, who had obviously agreed with Mr. Ahearn that I had little of a mechanical mind called me into the private office and said "Seymour, will you tell Mr. Ahearn and me the meaning of 'remote control'?" My reply was "Well sir, I'm not sure unless it means the manner in which you and Mr. Ahearn direct the operation of the Ottawa Electric Railway by 'phone calls and notes from this office to Mr. Hutcherson at the O.E. Railway office". I have always felt that my answer saved the situation for me.

The electric cars Ahearn & Soper made were highly thought of and orders came to the firm from outside sources. Your narrator recalls Mr. Soper going to Montreal with an offer to the Montreal Tramways Company to furnish one hundred cars and returning the following day with the order. A. & S. also furnished cars to the municipal systems in

Quebec, Trois Rivières, Oshawa, Port Arthur, Fort William, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Halifax, St. John's, Newfoundland (narrow gauge), Saint John, NB, Kitchener, and the Windsor, Essex & Lake Shore Elec. Ry..

In the early days of the Ottawa Electric Railway and before motor cars came into being, the Company built a summer playhouse in the west end of the city, which at that time was very suburban and necessitated transportation by street car. The Ottawa people flocked out in large numbers in the old open cars to be entertained by an interesting stock company. Another popular venture of the O. E. Ry. was the opening of a pavilion at Britannia Bay where band concerts in the summer evenings brought very large crowds of passengers in the cars.

The electric heaters installed in the first electric cars in Ottawa were invented and patented by Thomas Ahearn and manufactured in the Ahearn & Soper heater factory on Albert Street, at one time a small, brick dwelling house. Mr. Ahearn also invented and patented cooking heaters. An interesting proof of this is the old Ottawa Windsor Hotel dinner menu of August 28, 1892, which proudly boasted that "Every item on this menu has been cooked by the electric heating appliances invented and patented by Mr. T. Ahearn of Ahearn & Soper of this city and is the first instance in the history of the world of an entire meal being cooked by electricity. The bread and meats were cooked in an electric oven and the liquids in other electric heaters". The menu goes on to list an "Electric Dinner" beginning with soup and running through a number of fish, meat and vegetable courses, ending up with such attractive desserts as "Apple souffles, wine sauce" or "Cocoanut Drops, vanilla ice cream" and black tea, green tea, or coffee.

Mr. Ahearn and Mr. Soper also promoted the formation of the Ottawa Electric Company in competition with the Chaudiere Electric Light Company, then serving Ottawa with light and which Company they later absorbed. Mr. Ahearn became President of the Company with offices on Sparks Street a short distance from the Ahearn & Soper office on the same street, from where he would have daily communication with Mr. Soper on O. E. Ry. and other matters by Morse telegraph key, both Mr. Ahearn and Mr. Soper having a key secretly installed in the top right hand drawers of their desks.



In 1924, the O. E. Ry. Co. introduced buses on one of its routes. They ran for a short period, when the cars again took over. In 1939, buses were again introduced and continued to spread over new routes. The Ottawa Electric Railway was privately-owned for 58 years when in the year 1948 it was taken over by the City and became the Ottawa Transportation Commission.

I have many personal remembrances of the late Mr. Soper. He was a skilled amateur magician and was a corresponding friend of the renowned Thurston. I recall that on the occasions when Thurston came to Ottawa to perform, his first move on arrival at the station was to immediately come to call on Mr. Soper at the Ahearn & Soper office. Mr. Soper gave a number of performances at the old Russell Theatre for charitable purposes and had a weekly date at Ashbury College for the entertainment of the students.

Lord Aberdeen, at that period Governor General of Canada and in residence at Rideau Hall, Ottawa, and who was, at times, a visitor to the Ahearn & Soper offices came in one morning to tell Mr. Soper how much he had enjoyed a benefit performance Mr. Soper had given the previous evening at the Russell Theatre. Mr. Ahearn and Mr. Soper were at the moment in conference. Mr. Ahearn, unnoticed, nodded to Mr. Soper, who wrote on a small slip of paper a message to Mr. Ahearn, handed it to Lord Aberdeen and asked him to crumple it and hold it. Mr. Ahearn then placed his right hand on Mr. Soper's and suggested that Lord Aberdeen place his hand on theirs. Mr. Soper telegraphed to Mr. Ahearn with his finger, the message he had written (Lord Aberdeen being quite unaware of the proficiency of the two men as amateur telegraphers). Mr. Ahearn, who had a small pencil between his thumb and forefinger repeated the words of the message on the cuff of his white shirt and asked the Governor General to check. The puzzled dismay of Lord Aberdeen was a source of profound gratification and amusement to the two telegraphers.

Two of my outstanding recollections of both Mr. Ahearn and Mr. Soper were Mr. Ahearn's boast, "I started as a messenger boy and am proud of it. I tried to do my work well. I never loitered by the way, I did not have time as I needed every minute to perfect myself in telegraphy. The boy who loiters on the way when sent on an errand too often remains the errand boy throughout life".

Mr. Soper's favourite quotation was Elbert Hubbard's "Carry your Message to Garcia", and "Life is just one damn thing after another, Seymour, now go after it!" -- and I went !!

Your narrator looks back on his many years of association with two of Canada's prominent, successful and interesting business men as a privilege and a very happy memory.

#### CANADIAN RAILROAD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

News Report No. 115      October 1960

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## O B S E R V A T I O N S

A department of news and commentary, by  
Anthony Clegg.

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...TEN YEARS AGO..... (October 1950 issue of News Report)

" On October 1st, 1950, the Association held a railroad excursion from Montreal to Huberdeau, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the famous Montreal to Vancouver run of CNR diesel-electric unit car #15820, in 67 hours.

" The Canadian National Railways has placed an order for diesel-electric locomotives, to replace Montreal & Southern Counties Railway electric trains between Montreal and Granby and CNR steam trains between Montreal and Waterloo, Que.

" The Central Vermont Railway will name locomotive No.601 "City of St. Albans" as a highlight of the railway centennial day in St. Albans on Wednesday, October 18th. "

- e It has been reported that a fully automatic train, with the train crew on board standing by, made a test run between London, Ont., and Toronto during the latter part of September. The tests were conducted by General Motors Diesel Limited of London, using a Canadian National Railways locomotive, cars and track. A company spokesman confirmed that the tests had been under way since June, and were recently completed. The company conducted the tests in conjunction with Westinghouse Company Air Brake Division through its subsidiary, Canadian Westinghouse Company Limited, and General Railway Signal Company of Rochester, N.Y.
- e Further to the news item last month, effective September 24th, the Canadian National's "Continental Limited" has been providing sleeping car service only between Montreal and North Bay, Ont., Saskatoon and Edmonton, Alta., and between Kelowna and Vancouver, B.C. Dining car facilities are not now available. Sleeping car service between Montreal and North Bay is provided by an 18-roomette car; between Saskatoon and Edmonton a four double-bedroom and 8-section car is in service; and between Kelowna and Vancouver, the sleeping car has four sections, eight duplex roomettes and four double bedrooms. The run of the "Continental" between Saskatoon and Edmonton does not, of course duplicate that of the "Super Continental", as Nos.3 and 4 operate via North Battleford and Vermilion, while Nos.1 and 2 serve Biggar and Mainwright.
- e Effective September 25th, Canadian Pacific British Columbia Coast Service between Vancouver, Victoria and Seattle, was curtailed and the ageing "Princess Elaine" was withdrawn from service for the winter months. Last winter, the "Elaine" provided a daily round trip between Victoria and Vancouver. Daily service between Nanaimo and Vancouver for the winter months will be provided by the train-ferry "Princess of Vancouver", the "Princess of Nanaimo" and the "Princess Patricia" or "Princess Marguerite". Eight daily trips are planned.
- e Effective September 26th, Canadian Pacific reduced its Montreal-Ottawa via Vankleek Hill passenger service to four round trips per day. This was accomplished by the cancellation of train #237, leaving Montreal

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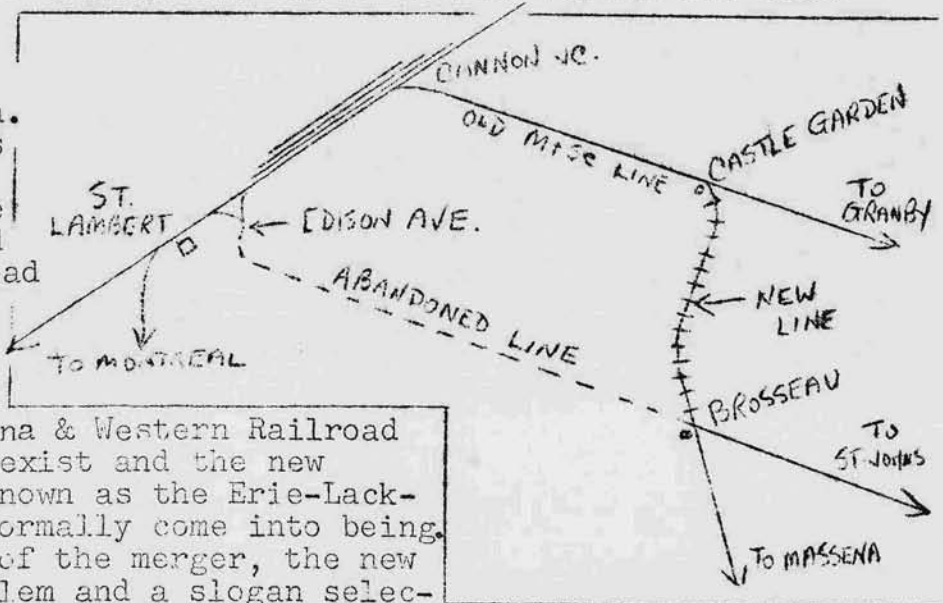
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at 6:50 PM except Saturday and Sunday, and train #238 leaving Ottawa at 1:10 PM except Saturday and Sunday.

- Canadian National Railways abandoned that part of its Rouses Point Subdivision between Edison Avenue (St. Lambert) and Brosseau, Que., effective 2:01 PM, October 11th, 1960. All trains now go over the new line between Brosseau and Castle Gardens, 4.0 miles, the latter station situated on the former Montreal & Southern Counties Railway. Passenger trains are running as extras until the new timetable is issued at the end of the month. The abandonment was brought about as a result of extensive road construction in conjunction with the new Champlain Bridge across the St. Lawrence River between Verdun and Ville Brossard, and also to eliminate the multiplicity of rail lines in this expanding area. The line abandoned was part of a line built in 1852, diverting the original Champlain and Saint Lawrence Rail Road from Laprairie to St. Lambert, Que.



- The Erie Railroad and the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad will shortly cease to exist and the new merged system, to be known as the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad will formally come into being. Anticipating approval of the merger, the new company adopted an emblem and a slogan selected from more than 2,400 employee suggestions. The emblem and trademark will be diamond-shaped with a disc bearing the letters "E" and "L" while the new slogan will be "The Friendly Service Route". The proposed merger was approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission early in September.
- According to statistics, railways are the safest form of transportation in America. There was only one passenger fatality in a train accident in all of 1959, but eleven passengers died in "train service" accidents in which the passenger's negligence was the primary cause, such as when passengers tried to board or leave moving trains. It was the smallest number of train fatalities in history.
- Innoticed among the many passenger-service abandonments in recent months was the cessation of service between Hamilton, Allandale and Meaford on Canadian National lines in Ontario. This was the run formerly served by diesel-electric unit car D-1 and trailers.
- Plans have been announced by the National System to discontinue trains 107 and 108, operating daily except Sunday between Hervey, Que., and Fitzpatrick, Que. This will come into effect October 31st, the last run being made on Saturday, October 29th. Trains #110 and #109 will have their schedules adjusted at the same time.
- The Board of Transport Commissioners will hear evidence in Niagara Falls on October 19th, in connection with a New York Central RR application to abandon the most northerly portion of its Niagara Branch, running to Niagara-on-the-Lake. A previous application was deferred.



DON'T FORGET THE BANQUET ON NOVEMBER 7TH !!

Members and subscribers resident in the Montreal area have already received a circular announcing a Banquet, which will be held in the Alouette Room, Windsor Station, Montreal, on Monday, November 7th, 1960. The Banquet will mark the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Driving of the Last Spike completing the Canadian Pacific Railway, which occurred at Craigellachie, B.C., on November 7th, 1885.

The guest speaker will be Mr. N.R. Crump, President, Canadian Pacific Railway, and Honorary Vice-President of our Association. It is hoped that all members and their families resident in this area will take this opportunity to hear one of Canada's foremost transportation spokesmen, also enjoy a convivial dinner in company with other CRHA people and their families.

FOR THIS SPECIAL OCCASION, a SPECIAL PRICE of \$2.50 per person has been set for the dinner, which will include four courses, with an entree of Roast Beef, for which the CPR restaurant is justly famed. The dinner will begin at 7:00 PM, but the Room will be open from 5:30 PM for those who desire liquid refreshment, the price of which is not included with that of the meal.

Those wishing to reserve may 'phone Dr. Nicholls, WE.3-8263, or Mr. Omer Lavallee, CR.9-8822, or mail them in to P.O.Box 22, Station B, Montreal 2, Canada marked "Banquet Reservations". RESERVATIONS ARE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY, and they must be made before November 3rd.

RESERVE NOW !

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- An order for an additional 50 steel flatcars for use on Canadian National Railways lines in Newfoundland has been placed with the Eastern Car division of Dominion Steel & Coal Corp., Trenton, N.S. The cars supplement an order of 80 cars placed with Dosco last July. The flat cars, 40 feet in length, are similar in weight to cars now in service in the province, but have an increased capacity of 35 percent due to the use of low-alloy steel. (Page S-33 last issue, delete phrase "similar to others in service in Newfoundland".)
  - Canadian National Railways and Roberval & Saguenay Railway Company recently accepted delivery of four specially-designed aluminum hopper cars from builder Marine Industries Limited. The cars, developed by the Aluminum Company of Canada, and mechanical and research departments of CNR, each carry nine more tons of payload than existing CNR hopper cars, are easier to unload and more readily adaptable to various services. Three of the cars will go into service immediately, carrying bulk materials like lime, cement, alumina, gypsum, polyethylene and adipic acid. The fourth will be subject to tests. Empty, each car weighs 16 tons.
  - The Board of Transport Commissioners has ordered six Canadian railways to erect new aluminum warning signs that shine brightly in the lights of approaching autos. The sign is the same as the familiar X-shaped wooden sign, except that it is made of aluminum. The words "Railway Crossing", and in Quebec "Traverse de Chemin de Fer", remain the same style and size.



