

# Canadian Rail



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# Trains Up North

The Story of Passenger, Freight,  
Ski and Other Trains from Montréal  
to the Laurentian Mountains.



M. Peter Murphy

## Part II - Canadian National Railways

Editor's Note: Part I of this three-part article was presented in the February 1975 issue Number 277 of CANADIAN RAIL.

Part III will be presented in a forthcoming issue of our magazine.

### CN in the Laurentian Mountains.

While the Canadian Pacific Railway was preparing to extend its line from St-Jérôme to Labelle, Québec, under the charter powers of the Montreal and Western Railway Company, the Montfort Colonization Railway Company was incorporated on 2 April 1890. The prime mover in this enterprise was none other than Curé François-Xavier Antoine Labelle, who now turned his organizing abilities to the settlement of the river valleys to the west of the Rivière du Nord, which would not be accessible via the Montreal and Western.

The new railway was slightly different, in that it was planned and built as a "chemin de fer économique" or narrow-gauge line, of a gauge of 3 feet. Construction began at Montfort Junction, near today's Vimy Siding on CP RAIL north of Shawbridge, Québec, in the autumn of 1893 and the standards to which this 36-inch-gauge line was built could only be described as primitive. Apparently, the surveyed route was cleared of trees and the stumps and roots were used

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IDENTIFIED AS THE STATION AT MONTFORT, QUEBEC, ABOUT 1905, THE PASSENGER train is hauled by an engine with a round number plate, suggesting that it is a Canadian Northern engine. The patriarch on the left seems to be flagging the train, but he is obviously more interested in having his picture taken! Photo collection F.F.Angus.

THE BRIDGE ABUTMENT OF THE NARROW-GAUGE MONTFORT COLONIZATION RAILWAY on the east side of the Rivière du Nord near Piedmont, Québec, as it looked in 1972. This part of the Montfort line was abandoned in 1907. Photo by the Author.

as fill for the low spots. Years later, when the stumps had rotted, the result was a number of serious subsidences on the line.

From this first Montfort Junction, about two miles south of CP RAIL's present-day station of Piedmont and directly across the North River from St-Sauveur's modern water-filtration plant, the narrow-gauge Montfort Colonization Railway curved to the west and crossed the North River, climbing up the hillside to the St-Sauveur valley. Traces of this right-of-way may be seen today in the bridge abutments on the banks of the Rivière du Nord, suspicious curves in pasture fences and traces of the grade, visible from the road leading to the "Ski-Avila" ski area.

The Montfort Colonization Railway was completed in stages, the first being from (old) Montfort Junction to Morin Flats (today, the village of Morin Heights), a distance of about 10 miles. The first three-foot-gauge train made the trip over the new line in the spring of 1894. The line was subsequently extended to the settlement on the shores of Sixteen Island Lake and the first train over the whole line of about 21 miles ran on 8 March 1895.

The extension from Morin Flats to Sixteen Island Lake was, to say the very least, a difficult stretch of railway to operate. The curves were tight and the grades were steep and, despite the alleged suitability of the narrow-gauge motive power to this kind of operation, the trains had their problems in overcoming the grades at Lac Chevreuil and Orphanage Hill at Montfort. The former, a grade of about 210 feet to the mile, remained unaltered after the Montfort Colonization was standard-gauged in 1898 and the last train to Montfort and Lac Remi in 1962, albeit diesel-hauled, had to take a good run to make the hill without doubling it.

The origin of the 36-inch-gauge equipment for the Montfort Colonization Railway is not certain, but it is believed to have been acquired from the Lake Temiscamingue Colonization Railway Company (incorporated 20 July 1886) of northwestern Québec. Poor's "Manual of Railroads" for 1894-95 records the following motive power and rolling stock on the Montfort Colonization Railway:

Steam locomotives	2
Coaches, first-class	1
Coaches, second-class	1
Baggage cars	1
Boxcars	2
Platform (flat) cars	19

In 1895, the year service was inaugurated to Sixteen Island Lake, Father St-Pierre of the village of St-Sauveur-des-Monts wrote a letter to Monsieur T. de Montigny, colonization agent for the Government of Québec:

"The Parish of St-Sauveur-des-Monts gives me the impression of a sick person who is slowly recovering. The decrease in the population and revenues of some years ago suggests to me that St-Sauveur has passed through a very bad period. However, these days, the Parish seems to have regained its former strength. What are the reasons for this? Probably there are many advantages that favour it. Two railways are crossing the Parish, agriculture is doing well here as everywhere else and noticeable progress is being made every year.

This year, five of my parishoners (Messieurs Elie Desjardins, Casimir Latour, Lambert Bélanger, Joseph Plouffe, Adélarde Forget and Jean-Baptiste Gohier) have received certificates, two were honoured by agricultural societies, whose members may be held up as examples by their work.

Everything seems to be prosperous here. We have an agricultural society which, although small at the beginning, is growing day by day; three butter factories are prospering; three merchants seem to be doing well, together with many other small store-owners; two nice, well-kept hotels; two doctors who are earning their living quite honorably; all trades can be found in the neighbourhood and are well encouraged and patronized and, except for a tin-smith, we have everything."

From this optimistic communication, it is easy to imagine the kind of life that the residents of a Laurentian community enjoyed in the year of Our Lord 1895. The two railways referred to were, of course, the Montreal & Western (CPR), which had helped to develop the eastern side of the Parish of St-Sauveur-des-Monts since 1892 and the more recent Montfort Colonization Railway of 1894, which passed right through the centre of the Parish and the village of St-Sauveur.

As built, the MCR was never extended beyond Sixteen Island Lake but, on 13 June 1898, the company was reorganized and emerged as the Montfort & Gatineau Colonization Railway, with powers to build between the Rivière du Nord and the valley of the Gatineau River, some miles to the west. With fresh plans for expansion in mind and conscious of the interchange possibilities with the Canadian Pacific, the old Montfort Colonization line was standard-gauged in the summer of 1897. The brief, difficult, three-year life of the Montfort narrow-gauge had come to an end.

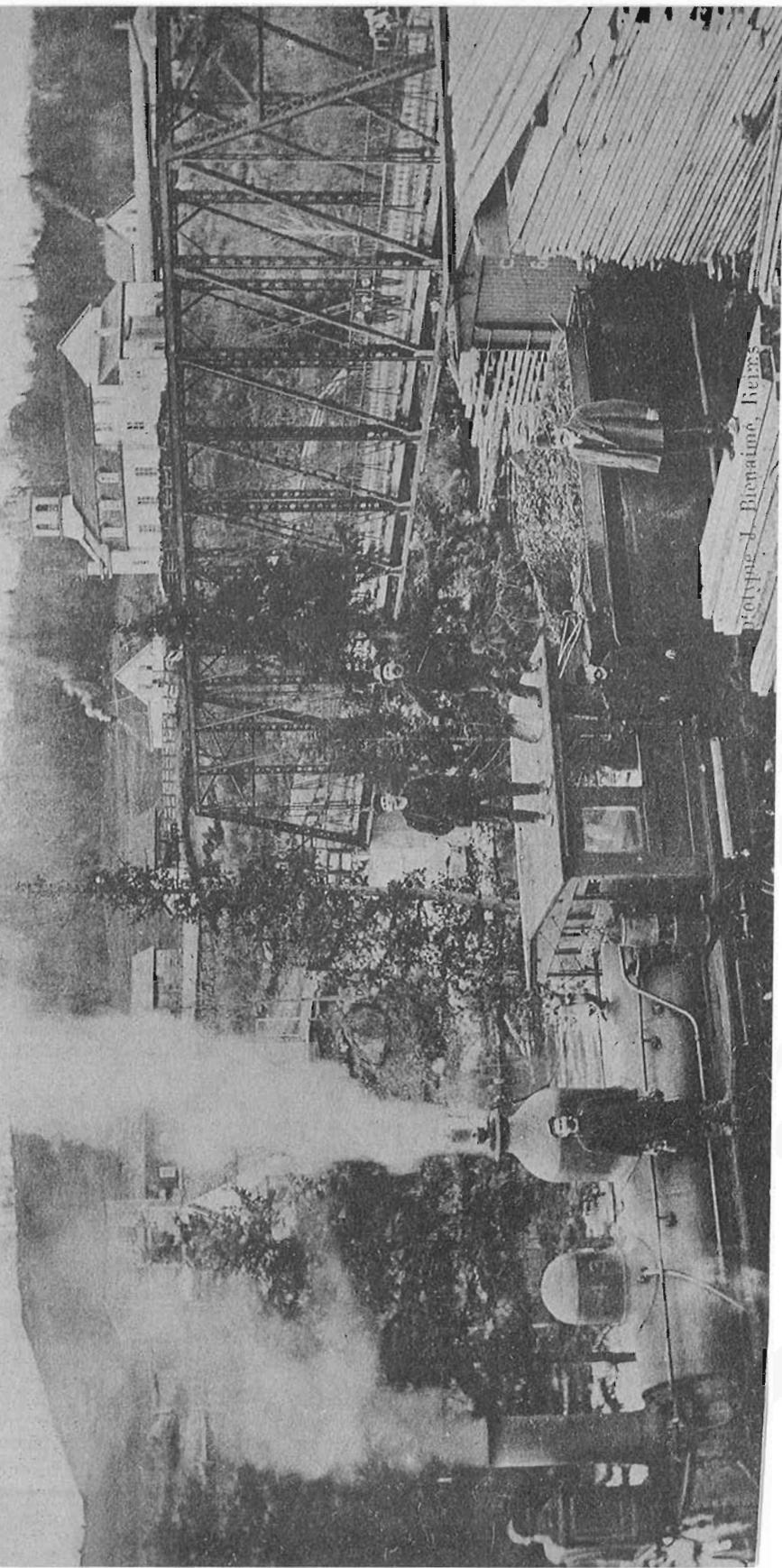
What happened to the narrow-gauge equipment of the MCR has never been established precisely, but an unconfirmed report says that it was sold to a lumberman by the name of Patenaude, who operated a private logging railway between Lac-des-Iles, near Mont-Laurier, and Nomingue, Québec. It is further believed that the boiler of one of the narrow-gauge engines was used in a steamboat on Lac-des-Iles, long after the logging railway had been abandoned. These elusive reports continue to persist and, while still unconfirmed, are being researched further.

7 December 1897 was a day of celebration, when the Montfort and Gatineau's first train ran over the new standard-gauge line from Old Montfort Junction to Huberdeau, Québec, about ten miles beyond Sixteen Island Lake, the terminal point of the original narrow-gauge. The Huberdeau extension had been built to standard-gauge branch-line specifications and, just north of Sixteen Island Lake, an impressive rock-cut had been blasted through the stony ridge to permit the line to descend to the shores of Pine Lake and the village of Weir.

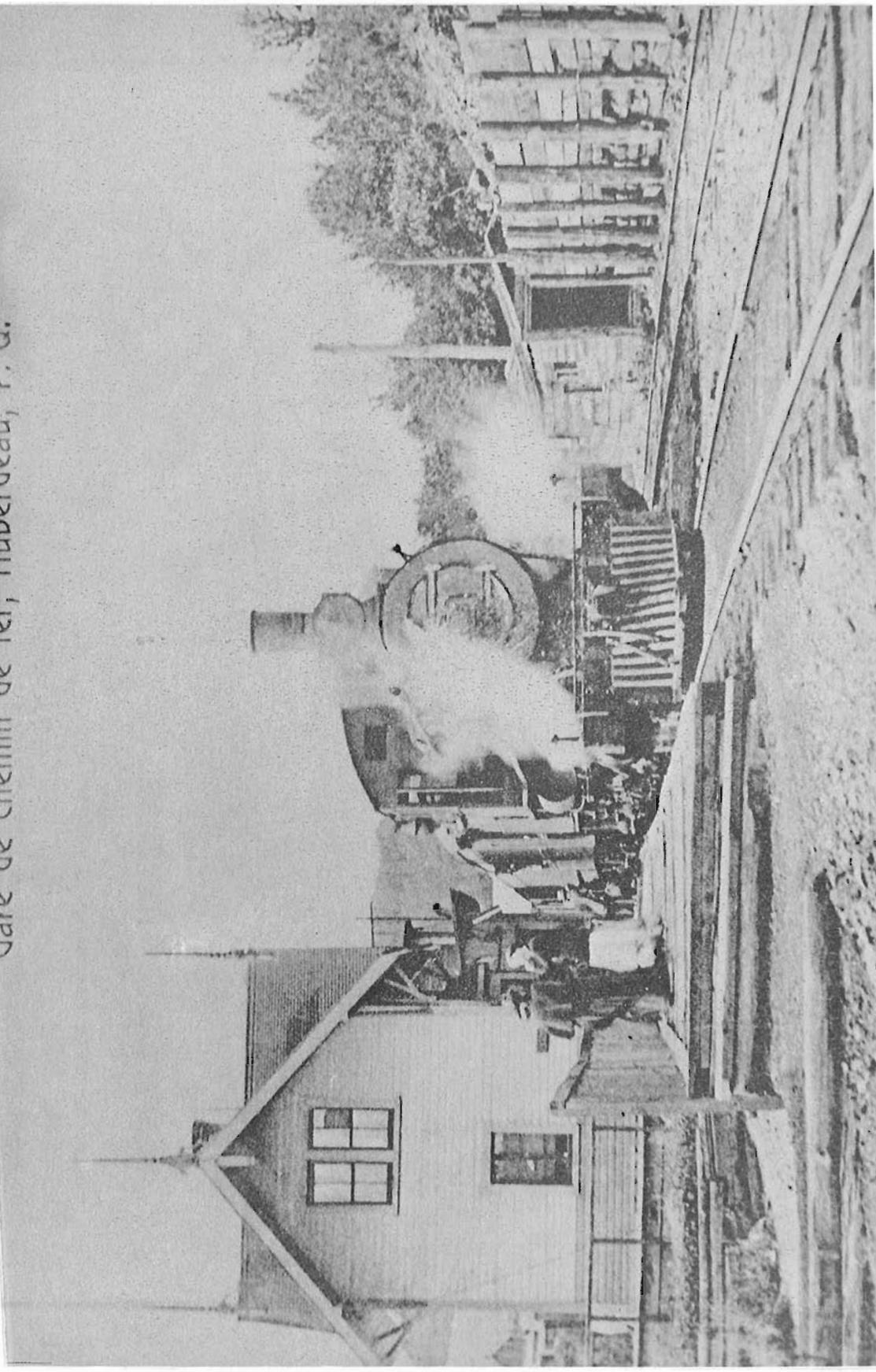
**GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY OR CANADIAN NORTHERN QUEBEC? 4-4-0 NUMBER 43 switches boxcars in the stub-end yard at Huberdeau, Québec, about 1905.**  
Photo by J. Bienaimé Frères.

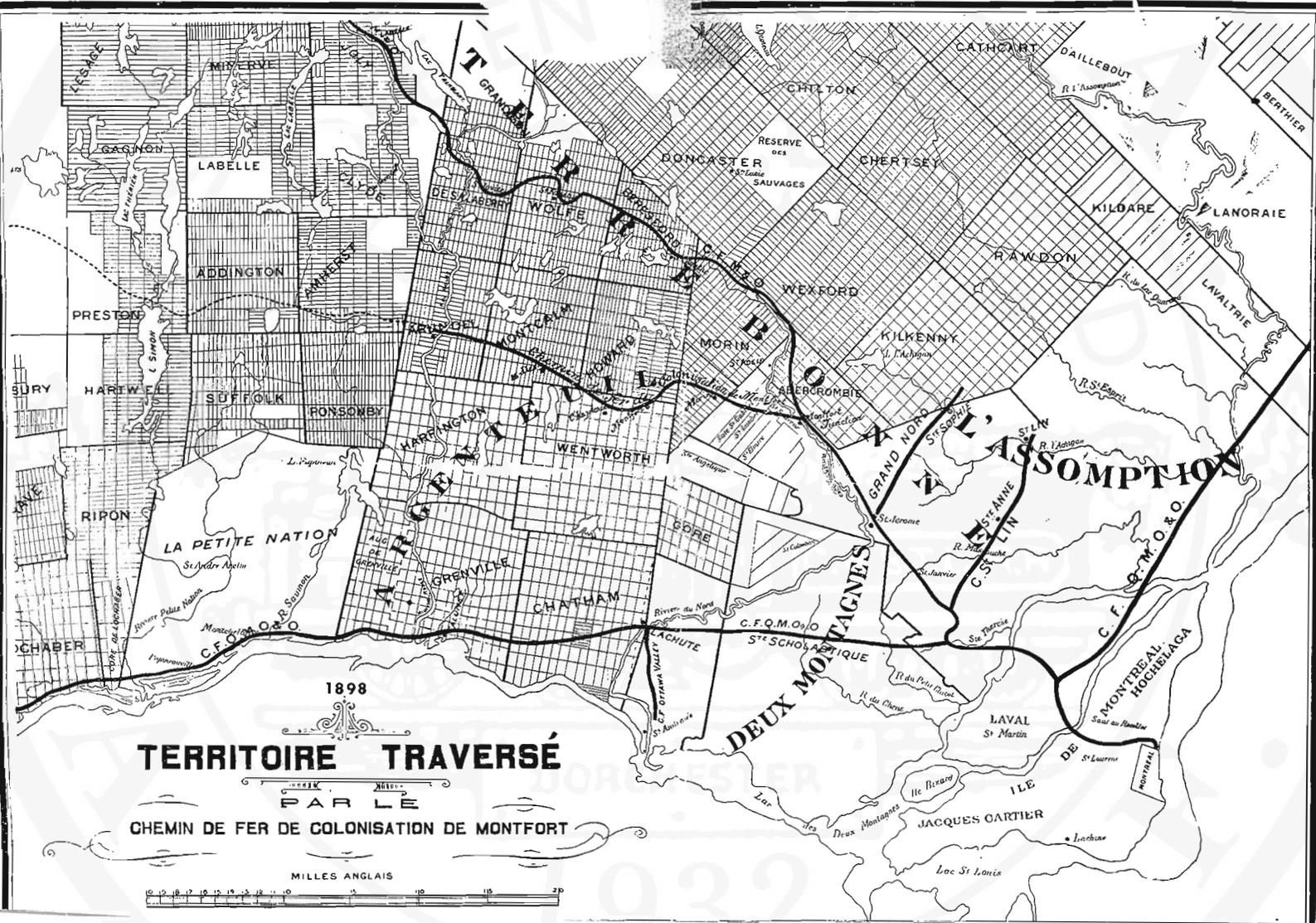
**NUMBER 43 OF THE GREAT NORTHERN/CANADIAN NORTHERN QUEBEC STANDS IN the station at Huberdeau, Québec, with the passenger train, about 1903. The 4-4-0 is said to have been built by the Grand Trunk Railway at Pointe-St-Charles, Montréal. Photo from the Montfortian Fathers Archives, Ottawa, Canada.**

3. HUBERDEAU - Le pont



Gare de chemin de fer, Huberdeau, P. Q.





1898

**TERRITOIRE TRAVERSÉ**

PAR LE

**CHEMIN DE FER DE COLONISATION DE MONTFORT**

MILLES ANGLAIS



**La Compagnie de Chemin de Fer  
de Colonisation de Montfort.**

A partir de cette date les trains des  
passagers circuleront tous les jours  
aux heures suivantes:

JONCTION A ARUNDEL.		
Milles.		P.M.
0	Partant de la JONCTION	7.37
2½	" St-SAUVEUR	7.52
7½	" MORIN	8.15
13	" MONTFORT	8.50
17	" CHAPLEAU	9.10
21	" BRUNET	9.30
26	" LOST RIVER	9.50
27	" ROUND LAKE	10.00
33	Arrivant à ARUNDEL	10.30
ARUNDEL A JONCTION.		
33	Partant de ARUNDEL	5.00
27	" ROUND LAKE	5.20
26	" LOST RIVER	5.30
21	" BRUNET	5.50
17	" CHAPLEAU	6.10
13	" MONTFORT	7.00
7½	" MORIN	7.20
2½	" St-SAUVEUR	7.45
0	Arrivant à la JONCTION	8.00

Le train de 5.30 P.M. du Pacifique  
Canadien, gare Dalhousie, se  
raccorde avec le train ci-haut de 7.37  
P.M., et le train de retour se raccorde  
avec celui de 8.00 A.M. à la Jonction.

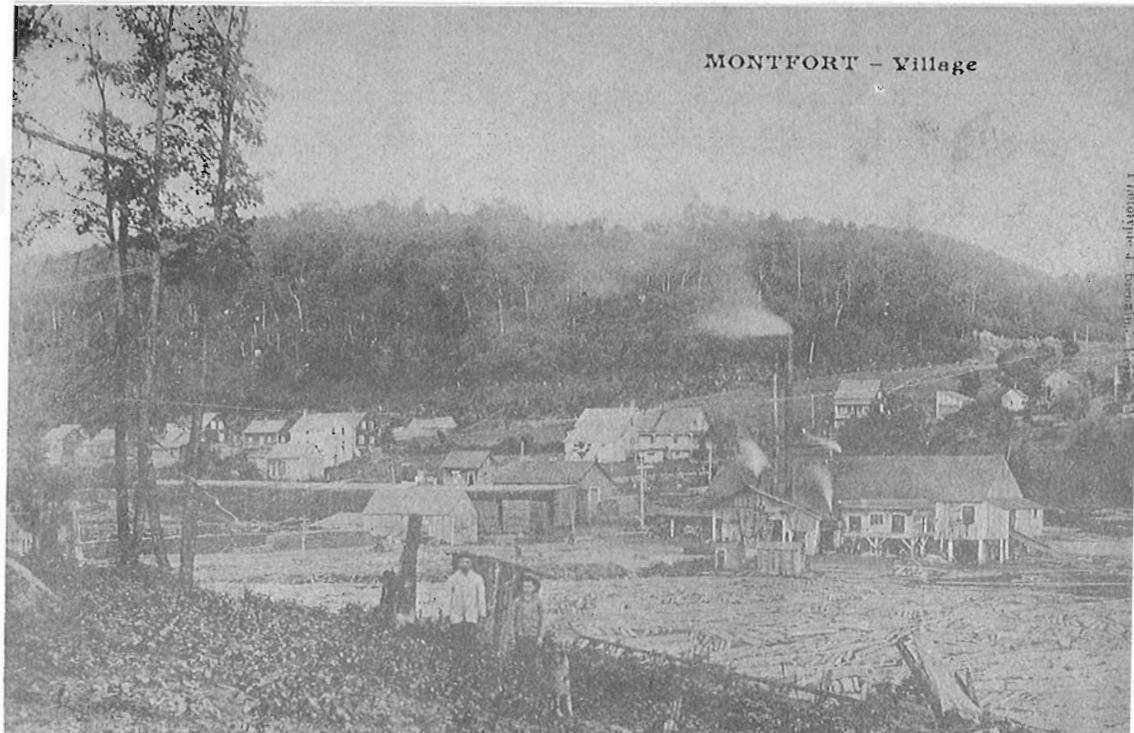
A. S. HAMELIN,  
Sec.-Trés.

7 Décembre 1897.

The three years to the turn of the century were not good ones for the Montfort and Gatineau. In 1902, the railway was declared to be bankrupt and it was purchased by the Great Northern Railway Company of Canada under a deed of sale dated 10 February 1903.

The Great Northern itself was a rickety organization, promoted and built by Charles Newhouse Armstrong, who had achieved a questionable reputation for railway promotion on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River. The GN's main line from St. Andrews East on the Ottawa River to the St-Maurice River valley in central Québec was to pass through St-Jérôme from Joliette, about 40 miles to the east. In order to reach its new property, the "Grand Nord", for the time being, had to use the Canadian Pacific's rails over the 13-mile gap between St-Jérôme and (old) Montfort Junction on the Montfort and Gatineau.

Another three years passed and the Great Northern, despite its name, found itself in a precarious financial situation. Charles Newhouse Armstrong had run out of money, but not out of ideas. In that year, Messrs. William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, lately of Manitoba and Ontario, formed the Canadian Northern Quebec Railway Company by purchasing the Great Northern Railway Company of Canada (Hawkesbury, Ontario to Montcalm, Québec and (old) Montfort Junction to Huberdeau, Québec) and amalgamating it with the Chateaugay and Northern Railway Company (Montréal to Joliette, Québec) and the Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Railway Company (Garneau to Limoilou, Québec), to create a line from the western shore of the Ottawa River to the St. Lawrence at Québec, bypassing the time-consuming freight yards and the monopolistic Grand Trunk Railway at Montréal. It seemed like a logical - and profitable - proposition. Messrs. H.H. Melville and James McNaught, who held a controlling interest in the Great Northern, were overjoyed!



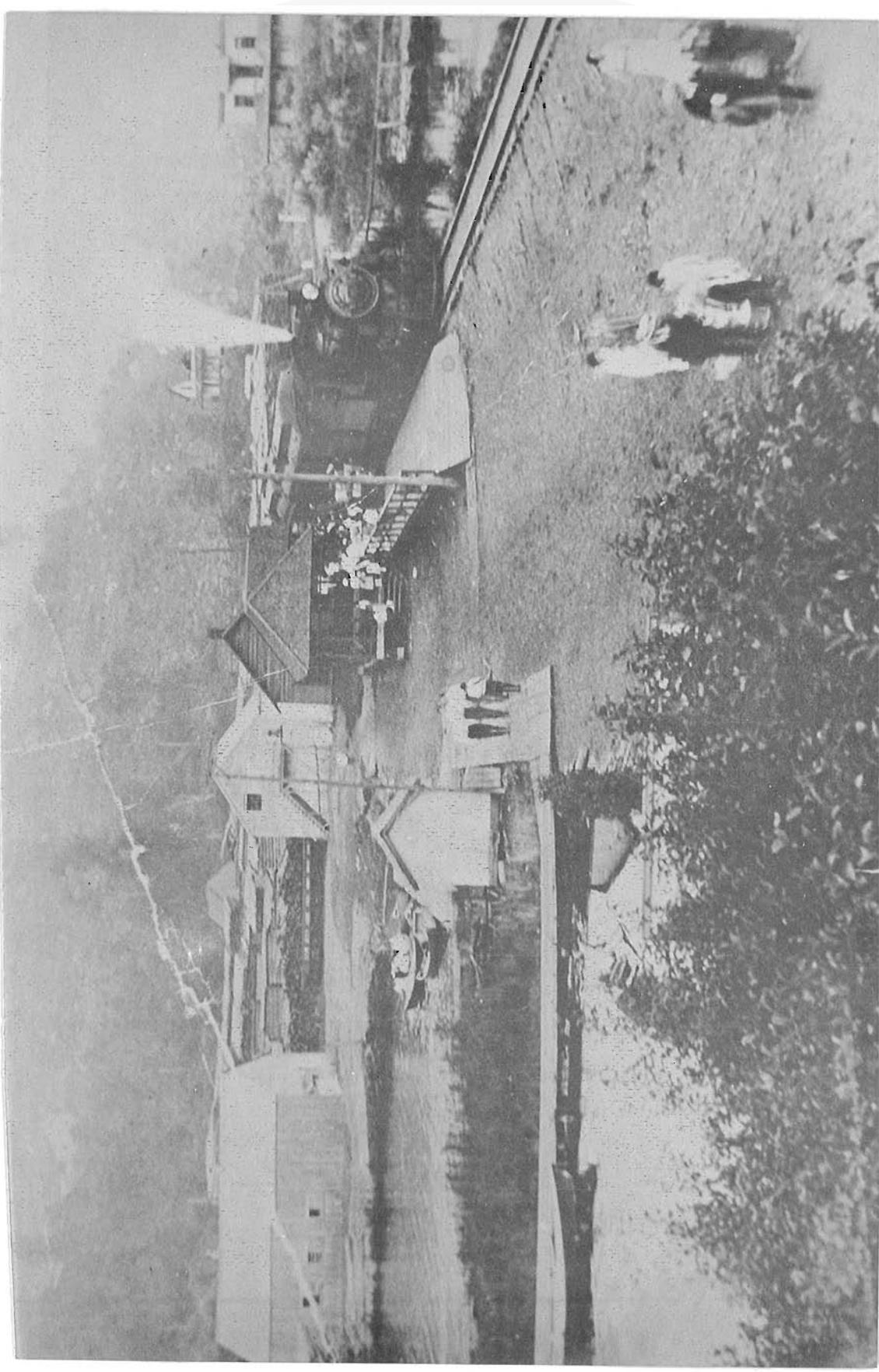
↑ THE VILLAGE OF MONTFORT, QUEBEC AND ITS SAWMILL, TYPICAL OF MANY VILLAGES along the railway, whose sawmills provided freight for the line for years. Photo from a postcard from Mme. Jean Labelle, Montfort.

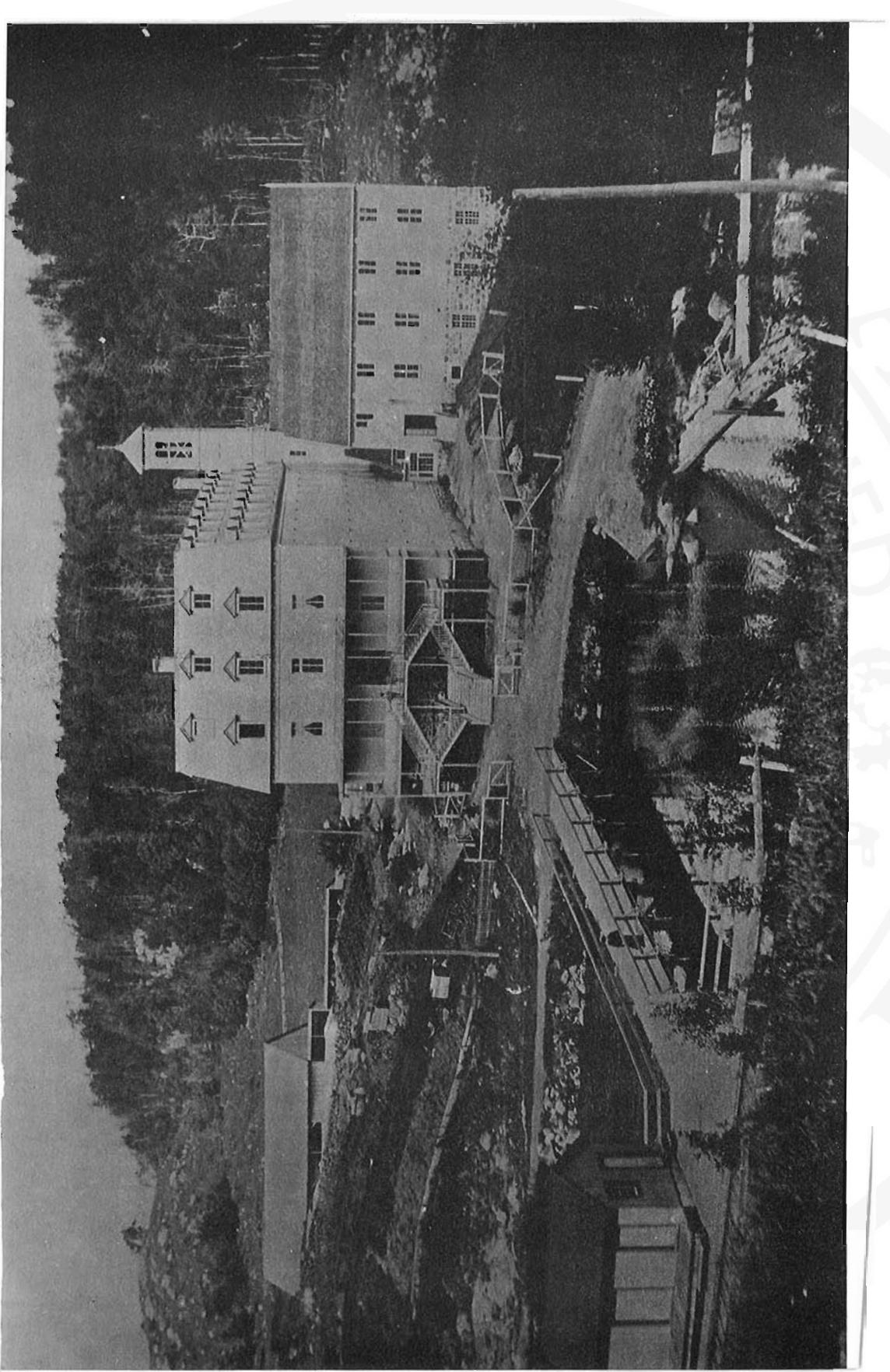
→ THE CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY STATION AT SIXTEEN ISLAND LAKE, QUEBEC, in 1912. A year later, the station was demolished and a larger one built. The siding to the sawmill is visible in the background, behind the engine. Photo courtesy M. Jean Gagné.

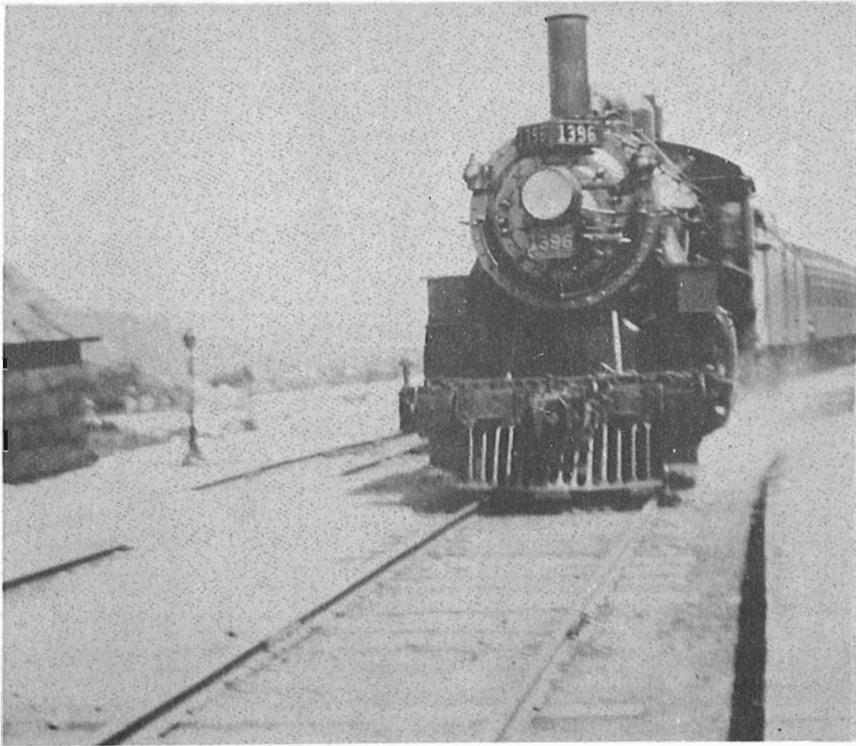
The following year, Mackenzie and Mann set about building their own line north from St-Jérôme to (old) Montfort Junction, and south to Montréal. From the Canadian Northern Québec station in the southern part of St-Jérôme, a new line was built north along the west side of the Rivière du Nord, crossing to the east bank at Shawbridge and re-crossing the river, to climb up the west side of the valley past Lac Marois to a junction with the original M&G main line at St-Sauveur-des-Monts.

Until the CNorQ's southern extension towards Montréal was completed, passengers from Montréal to Sixteen Island Lake and Huberdeau took the CPR train from Place Viger Station, Montréal, to the crossing at grade with the CNorQ south of St-Jérôme, named (new) Montfort Junction, changing there to the CNorQ Laurentian branch train. The (old) Montfort Junction, near Piedmont, was abandoned and the M&G's bridge over the Rivière du Nord and the line up the side of the valley to St-Sauveur, were lifted.

There were two minor extensions built later on the northern end of the Montfort & Gatineau by the Canadian Northern Quebec, or taken over by that company. On 23 November 1916, the CNorQ opened for operation a 9.07-mile spur from Intervale, near Huberdeau, to China Clay, later Kasil, where deposits of china clay had been discovered. This spur was operated to the china clay deposits until 29 July 1926.







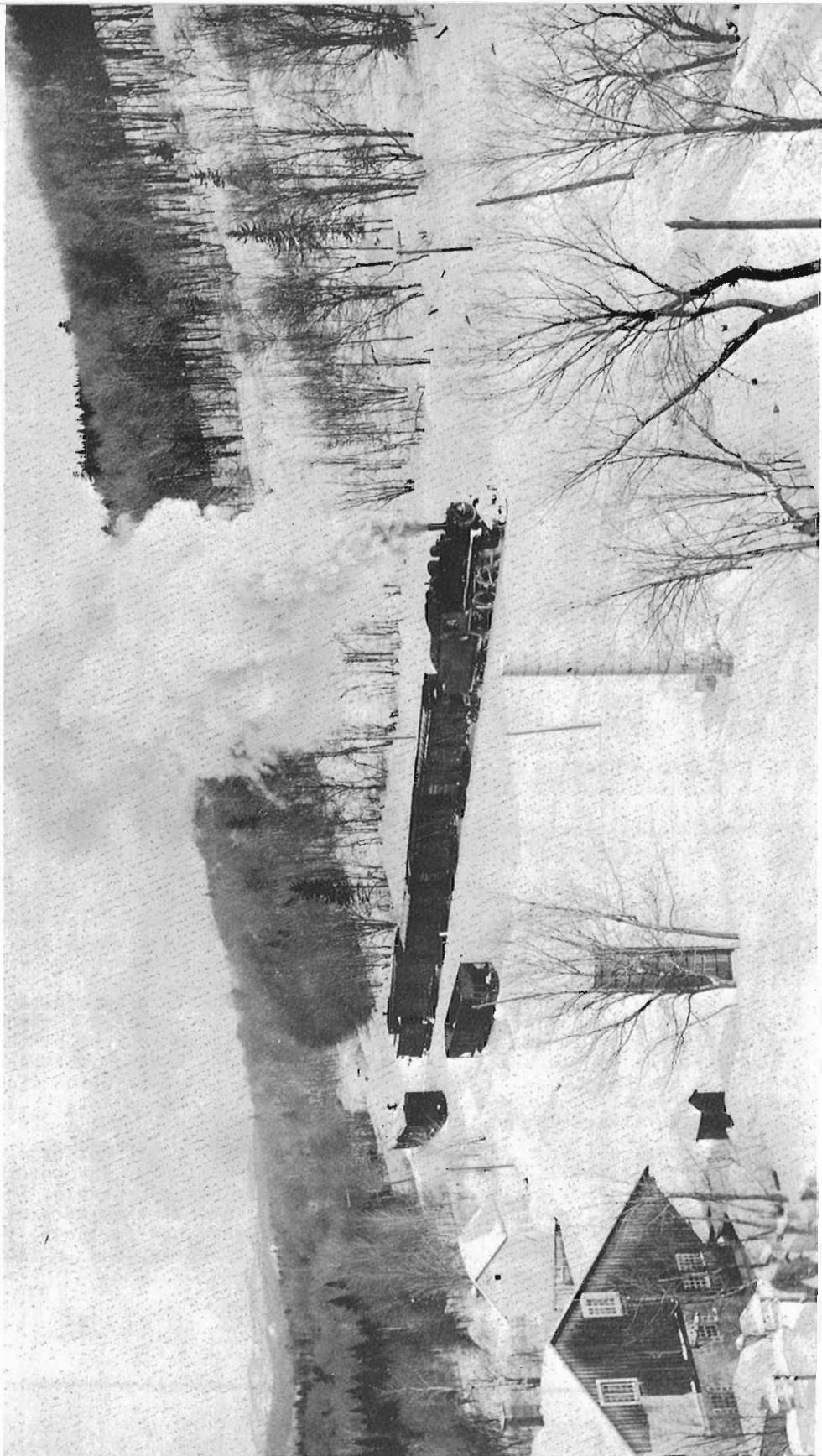
↑ CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS NORTBOUND PASSENGER TRAIN, WITH 4-6-0 NUMBER 1396 ON THE HEAD-END, RUMBLES INTO THE STATION AT MONTFORT, QUÉBEC ON A SPRING DAY IN 1928. PHOTO COURTESY MME. PROVENCHER, MONTFORT.

← THE ORIGINAL ORPHANAGE OF THE MONTFORTIAN FATHERS AT LISBOURG, QUÉBEC, AS IT APPEARED IN 1912. THE RAILWAY RAN ALONG THE BANK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PICTURE. THE STATION WAS NAMED "ORPHANAGE" IN THE 1915 CANADIAN NORTHERN PUBLIC TIMETABLE AND WAS 0.4 MILES SOUTH OF MONTFORT.  
PHOTO COURTESY PÈRE DURCHARME, MONTFORTIAN FATHERS, MONTRÉAL.

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But in 1918, Mackenzie and Mann had decided to extend the Montfort & Gatineau westward towards the valley of the Gatineau River. They secured a charter for the River Rouge Railway Company, to build from a point in the Township of Amherst, County of Labelle, to a point on the Ottawa River between Grenville and Montebello, Québec. A subsidy for the construction of this railway was obtained from the Government of Canada in 1919. The CNorQ proposed to apply the subsidy to the 9-mile section of the line, already built, between Intervale and the Canadian China Clay Company's mines at China Clay and onward to St-Remi-d'Amherst in Labelle County, shown later in CN operating timetables as Lac Remi.

The CNorQ was surprised to discover that they could not obtain the subsidy for the 2.33-mile extension to Lac Remi, for the government said that the standard of construction was not acceptable. The directors of the Canadian China Clay Company, some of whom were also directors of the River Rouge Railway Company, were not inclined to pay for the improvements required to obtain the subsidy and the CNorQ was thus frustrated in collecting it.



In the second session of Canada's parliament in 1922, a time-extension for the subsidy was granted, so that the line could be improved to the required standard. But, by that time, the Canadian Northern Québec had been amalgamated with other lines to form the Canadian National Railway Company and, in the same year, the River Rouge Railway Company offered to sell the extension to Lac Remi to the newly-formed CNR. Not surprisingly, the offer was declined. The CN felt that the extension was not justified and that the River Rouge crowd had been unethical in their attempts to secure the subsidy.

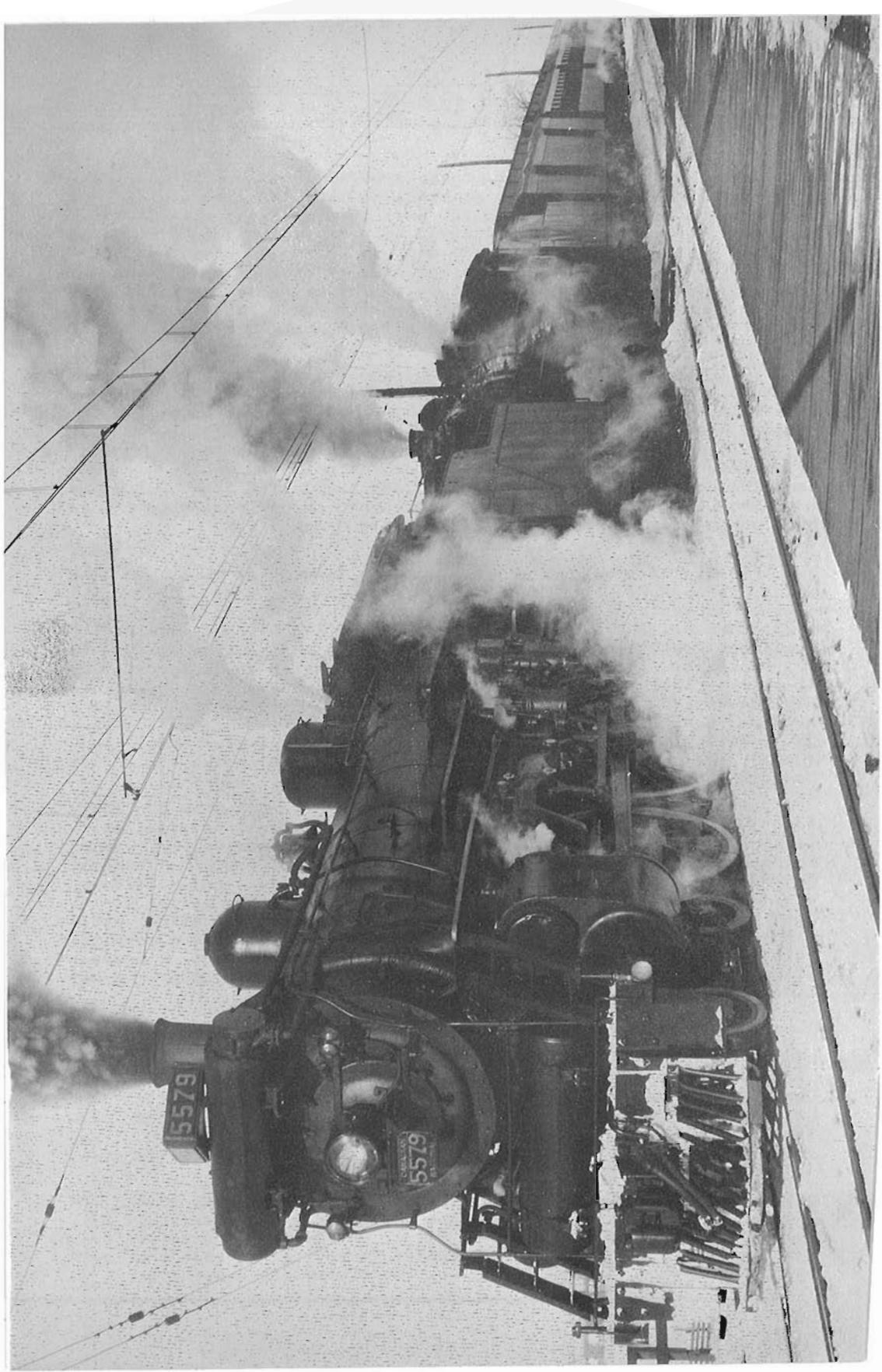
The CN subsequently obtained the authority to extend the railway from the mines at China Clay to Lac Remi in 1924. The affairs of the moribund River Rouge Railway Company were settled by the Exchequer Court of Canada in 1924-25, by arbitration. Claims for the use of the right-of-way from Intervale to China Clay, and onward to Lac Remi, were paid to the individual claimants. On 29 July 1926, Canadian National Railways reclassified the 9 miles from Intervale to China Clay as main-line track and opened the extension to Lac Remi under Board of Railway Commissioners Order 37922.

The southern extension from St-Jérôme and (new) Montfort Junction, through Fresnière, St-Eustache-sur-le-Lac (today, Deux-Montagnes) to Montréal, was built by Canadian National Railways in 1925, thus providing a through service from its "Tunnel Terminal" on Lagauchetière Street in downtown Montréal to Lac Remi, 93 miles to the northwest. The railway was opened for service on 22 May 1925. It is interesting to note that, at that time, there was another station called "Deux Montagnes" at Mile 29.2, between St-Augustin and Papineau. Today, this operating point is called "Tooke" on the CNR's Montfort Subdivision. Similarly, "Tunnel Terminal" has become Central Station, Montréal, which is the focal point for all Canadian National passenger services in Montréal.

Little is known about the early days of operation on the Montfort line, although several "old-timers" can extract numerous hair-raising experiences from the recesses of their memories. Father Ducharme, now approaching his ninetieth year, was one of several Montfortian Fathers who spent some years at Montfort and Huberdeau, where his order had established orphanages. While the larger was at Montfort, both were founded in the latter years of the 1890s, persuaded to locate in this area by the ubiquitous Curé F-X.A. Labelle. Father Ducharme could not but admire the Curé's business acumen, since the land offered for the orphanages was so rocky that not even a kitchen-garden could be cultivated.

← LOOKING ACROSS THE VALLEY FROM THE MONTFORTIAN FATHERS' ORPHANAGE AT Lisbourg, Québec in 1947, you could see the Lac Remi wayfreight of Canadian National Railways working up the grade to the station at Orphanage and on to Montfort. The lumber from the Montfortian Fathers sawmill was loaded on the siding where the hopper car was standing. Photo from M.P. Murphy Collection.

↷ AFTER THE OPENING OF THE CANADIAN NORTHERN'S MOUNT ROYAL TUNNEL IN October, 1918, electric locomotives hauled north and westbound passenger trains to Lazard, now Val Royal, where steam locomotive operation began. In the 1940s, doubleheaded steam engines were the rule on ski trains on the Montfort line. Photo courtesy A.A. Clegg.



MONTREAL—MONTFORT—HUBERDEAU											
Via C.P. Ry. and Montfort Jct.											
41		1915						43		44	
Ex.	Sun.	TABLE 68						Ex.	Sun.		
Br.	Dim.	(Eastern Time)						Mon.	Dim.		
		(Heure du Meridien de l'est)						Ex.	Sun.		
								Br.	Dim.		
								seule	Dim.		
								Dim.	Long		
								A.M.	P.M.		
	4.00	Lv.	Montreal 86	Ar			9.20	10.40			
		Lv.	Montreal (CPR) Place Yagar	Ar							
		Lv.	Montreal (CPR) Windsor St.	Ar							
	8.32	0.0	Montfort Jct.	Ar			7.56	9.00			
	8.38	0.6	St. Jerome A.	Ar			7.40	8.60			
	8.44	8.3	Fillon	Ar			7.30	8.40			
	8.51	9.4	Shawbridge	Ar			7.15	8.58			
	8.58	10.7	St. Sauveur	Ar			7.00	8.18			
	8.54	19.4	Christieville	Ar			6.48	7.54			
	8.58	21.9	Morin Heights	Ar			6.38	7.45			
	8.57	25.8	Chevreuil	Ar			6.13	7.23			
	7.00	27.0	Orphanage	Ar			6.05	7.19			
	7.00	27.4	Montfort	Ar			6.00	7.17			
	7.07	28.4	Newaygo	Ar			6.08	7.18			
	7.10	31.4	Leclerc	Ar			6.53	7.08			
	7.08	32.8	Chapleau	Ar			6.50	7.03			
	7.08	34.8	Wolash	Ar			6.47	6.41			
	7.04	35.6	Sixteen Island	Ar			6.38	6.40			
	7.04	35.4	Pine Lake	Ar			6.33	6.45			
	7.04	40.6	Larose	Ar			6.21	6.31			
	7.04	40.8	Weir	Ar			6.19	6.30			
		41.4	Bates	Ar							
		41.7	Beyan	Ar			6.12	6.23			
		44.6	Arundel	Ar			6.05	6.16			
	6.10	45.9	Huberdeau	Lv.			6.00	6.10			
							A.M.	P.M.			

While Montfort was a "desert of rocks", Huberdeau was a "desert of sand". Father Ducharme recalls the hard winter of 1912-13, when the Montfort railway was the sole link with the outside world. Inevitably, several severe snowstorms blocked the line for more than a month, isolating the orphanage without food or other vital supplies. Learning from this hard lesson, the Montfortian Fathers thereafter stocked up every autumn, against the possibility that a similar situation might occur.

George Calder, born in 1896, moved with his parents to Sixteen Island Lake at the tender age of 6 months, to join his grandfather, who was already established there. Grandfather Calder had acquired some timber rights and the narrow-gauge railway brought in the machinery for his sawmill. The sawmill was wood-burning and steam-operated. The railway served mills of this type all the way down the line and these mills were, without question, the main source of business for the railway in the early years.

George remembers the forests of pine trees so thick and so tall that their depths never saw the sun. His parents told him of a journey (when he was very young) during which the 3-foot-gauge passenger coach derailed. As there were only four or five passengers on the train, the derailed coach was uncoupled and the passengers completed their journey in the cab of the diminutive wood-burning locomotive.

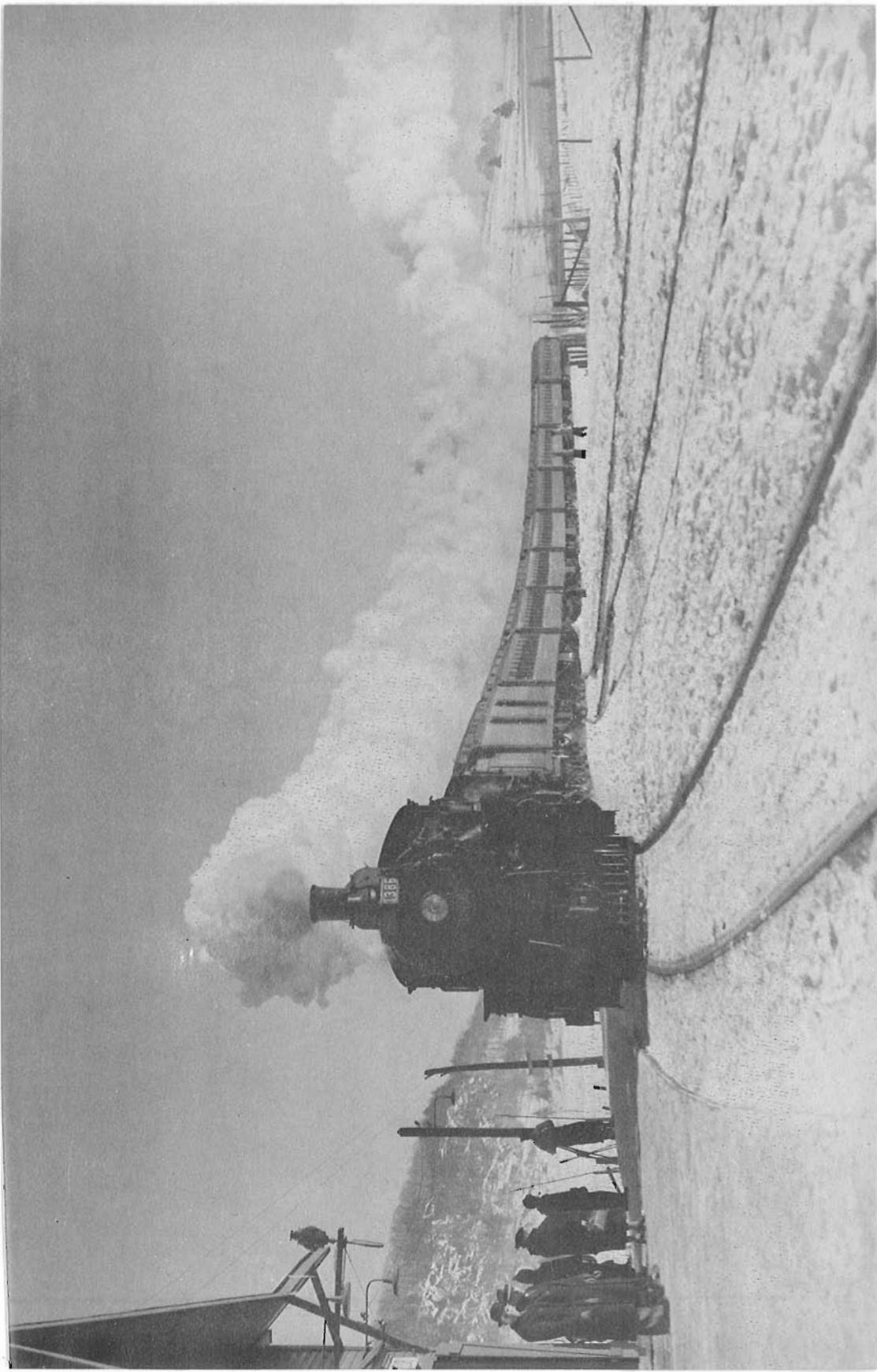
Some years later, a northbound train, doubleheaded by two 4-4-0s, was pulling out of Sixteen Island Lake, when the second engine began

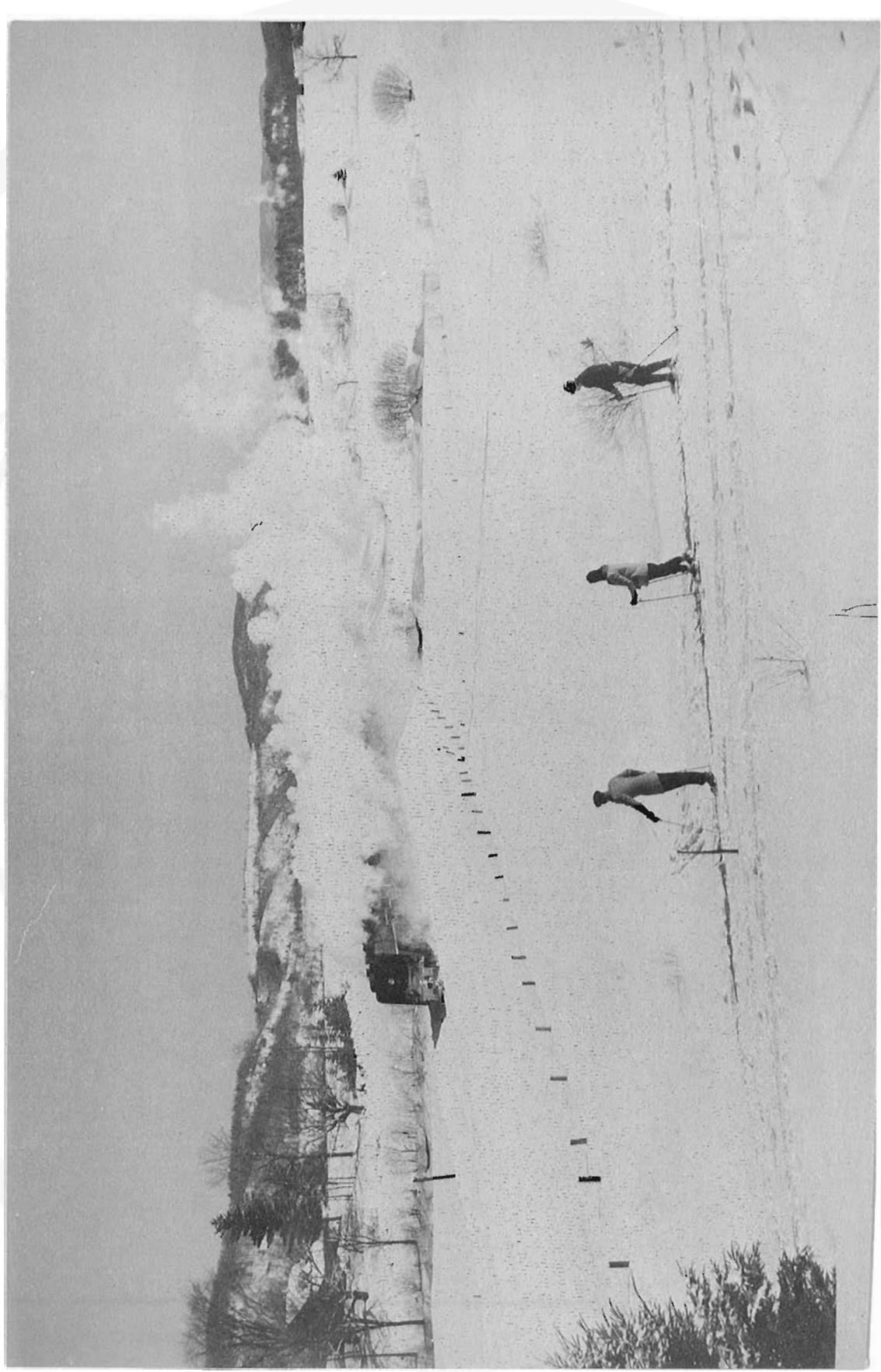
**2** IN THE WINTER OF 1945, CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS' SUNDAY MORNING northbound Train 99, doubleheaded with pacific Number 5557 in the lead, swept up the valley toward St-Sauveur-des-Monts, Québec, on the way to Montfort and Lac Remi. Photo courtesy CNR.

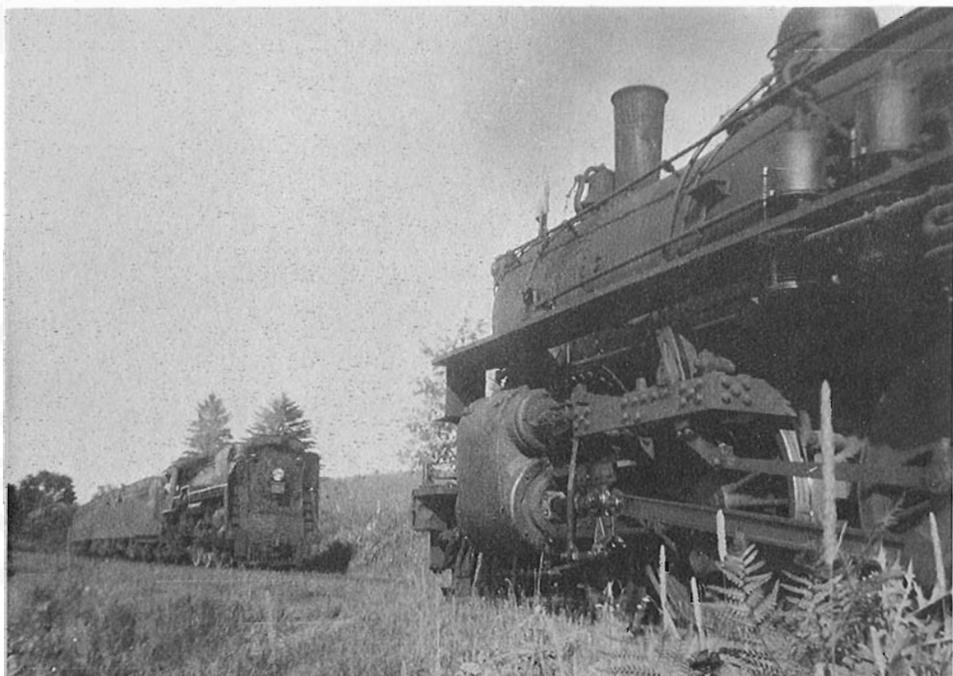
ON A CRISP WINTER'S MORNING, A CANADIAN NATIONAL NORTHBOUND EIGHT-car passenger train, doubleheaded with engine Number 1386 on the point, pulled into the station at St-Sauveur, Québec.  
Photo courtesy Canadian National Railways.

MID-MORNING SKIERS AT MORIN HEIGHTS, QUEBEC, WATCH THE MORNING CN northbound passenger train whirling through the snow on the meadow just south of the station, on a winter day in the mid-1940s.  
Photo courtesy Canadian National Railways.









↑ ON A SUMMER DAY IN 1947, CANADIAN NATIONAL'S NORTHBOUND PASSENGER train met the southbound wayfreight at Morin Heights, Québec.  
Photo CRHA, E.A.Toohy Collection.

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to whistle frantically. As the train ground to a second halt, one of the driving wheels of the leading engine wobbled erratically and fell off the axle! The engineer of the second engine, always alert, had noticed the wobbling driver and had raised the alarm.

The repair crew, probably summoned from the Angus Shops of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Montréal, took two days to make the repairs "in the field" and thereby re-open the line to traffic. On the day of the affair, the lead engine was uncoupled and the train backed up to the station at Sixteen Island Lake, where the passengers could find accommodation and might find alternate means of transportation to their destinations.

Locomotives used in the early days on the Montfort Subdivision were of the lightweight variety, because of the uncertainty of the roadbed. Initially, 4-4-0s were used, but soon tenwheelers replaced them. Sharp curves, light bridges and spindly trestles, such as those at Shawbridge, Morin Heights, Newyago, Intervale and Kasil, limited the permitted weight-on-axle severely. After Canadian National acquired the branch, moguls and light tenwheelers appeared and, in later years, 5000-series pacifics were most commonly used, although several types appeared on the line at one time or another.

The early passenger and freight trains were not equipped with air-brakes and the brakemen had their work cut out for them, especially down the steep grades on the southbound runs. While the trains were always operated in a safe manner, passengers frequently complained of the slow speeds on the northbound runs, the time wasted in doubling the hill at Lac Chevreuil and Montfort and the lengthy stop for water at Lac Chevreuil. The prolonged station stop at St-Jérôme was another irritation. After detraining and entraining pas-



A DOUBLEHEADED NORTHBOUND CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS PASSENGER TRAIN with 4-6-0 Number 1396 as the helper and a 5500-class pacific with smoke deflectors as the train-engine, starts up the grade from Morin Heights, Québec, in the summer of 1947. Photo CRHA, E.A.Toohy Coll.

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sengers, the train would move ahead a short distance to load and unload express. Then there was another short advance to the water-plug, to allow the locomotive(s) to take water. Half-an-hour could easily be spent in these activities.

At Montfort, however, the entire operation seemed to be carried out with the utmost efficiency. It was never a question of when the train from Montréal would arrive; it was a question of if it would arrive! When it did arrive, the helper engine was cut off the head of the train promptly, some of the cars were also dropped on the siding and the remainder were hurried on toward Lac Remi as though the fate of the township depended on an "on-time" arrival at the northern terminus.

At most stations on the Montfort line, the exhaust of the locomotive(s) was clearly audible, and generally quite visible, long before the train came in sight. Doubleheading was the rule, rather than the exception, particularly in winter, when the rails were greasy and the journal-boxes stiff. The early-morning weekend departures from the Tunnel Terminal in the winter were pure bedlam.

The most enthusiastic passengers on the Montfort line were unquestionably the skiers of the 1940s and '50s. Animated by the thoughts of a day's skiing on the snow-covered slopes or comforted by the prospect of a warm bath and a soft bed at the end of their homeward journey, they rode the distances to and from Shawbridge, St-Sauveur, Morin Heights and Montfort in antique passenger cars, crowded to the limit. Frequently, the overflow rode in the baggage car. The return trip in the late afternoon or early evening in the



↑ CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS AFTERNOON PASSENGER TRAIN FROM LAC REMI to Montréal approaches the highway crossing and the station at Morin Heights, Québec, in the summer of 1947. Photo CRHA, E.A. Toohey Coll.

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same cars and under the same crowded conditions, worn out from the day's activities and partially paralysed by the local grade of "canned heat" available at nearly all of the "skiers' retreats" in every village, was an experience that had to be endured to be believed.

The summer-time trains, even on the weekends, were much less hectic, even in stormy weather. There seemed to be less urgency in the Friday-evening exodus than in its Sunday-morning counterpart.

With the advent of the motor car, the passengers slowly began to disappear from the Montfort line. With the advent of the diesel-electric locomotive, the irritating delays inherent in steam-locomotive operated passenger trains also disappeared, but the time thus saved could not shorten the schedule for the journey to Lac Remi significantly. Then, with the advent of improved highways and the "Autoroute des Laurentides", the passengers disappeared. And so did the railway!

But that, too, is another story.

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#### Postscriptum

(The following text was printed in the Canadian Colonizer of March 15, 1898, a Francophone publication and relates what took place in 1897. The copy of the newspaper was discovered by Mr. F.F. Angus and was translated for presentation by Mr. D. Latour:)

### NECESSITY OF WIDENING THE TRACK

Nevertheless, experience has shown that the Montfort Railway cannot provide all anticipated services, as long as it will remain narrow-gauge, as it presents for the settler and the industrialist a serious source of disadvantages that are growing as traffic increases.

The promoters of the enterprise were forced to build their railway to a narrow gauge and we have seen before that in spite of this, they had to go through a lot of sacrifices, money-wise.

By the nature of the region crossed by the railway, it will be understood that its main traffic cannot be other than (pulp) wood and agricultural - and later mine - products. Then, all this traffic had to reach Montréal, the logical business outlet and the only possible one in this area, whether the products mentioned above are for use in this country or to be exported. To reach Montréal, traffic must use the Montreal & Occidental Railway, of which the Montfort Railway is a tributary. There has to be a transfer of all freight at Montfort Junction. Naturally, the freight rate for all goods produced in the region served by the railway is more expensive than on any other line, due to this transfer, no use to mention the delays.

This is also the cause of serious inconveniences to shippers and especially to farmers who are in the impossible position of selling their products at a good price and whose profits are, in a large part, absorbed by the freight rates.

To avoid this transfer and for a better usefulness of the railway, its gauge would have to be the same as the other railways.

But, the Montfort Railway had exhausted its resources and made all the sacrifices possible; already, its contribution to the enterprise is \$ 169,000 or more than \$ 5,000 per mile and many companies cannot claim to have done as much! The Company is unable to undertake the widening of its track without an additional subsidy from the government. The revision of many curves and fills, the cost of new ties, spikes, bolts, etc... will cost more than \$ 82, 500 or \$ 2,500 per mile.

This is why, taking into account all sacrifices already made, the Company is asking the government for an additional subsidy of \$ 66,000 or \$ 2,000 per mile.

The success achieved by the Montreal & Occidental Railway operating in the same conditions, the colonization move which has already been done along the Montfort Railway, in spite of the disadvantages mentioned earlier, the future that lies ahead for this rich territory that the Montfort Railway has to serve, everything leads one to believe that the additional subsidy will be largely compensated by the benefits the whole country will derive from it.

Montréal, March 1897.

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September, 1975

# WAYBILLS

Which the Eastern Express Company agree to forward and deliver at destination, if within their route, and if not, to deliver to the connecting Express, Stage or other means of conveyance, at the most convenient point; and to be responsible for such delivery to the amount of Fifty Dollars only, unless value is stated above. It is further agreed that they shall not be held responsible for any loss occasioned by Fire, or the dangers of Railroad, Steam or River Navigation, or for the breakage of glass or other fragile goods.

FOR THE EASTERN EXPRESS COMPANY,

*McKenney*

THE EDITOR REGRETS THE ERRORS WHICH OCCURRED ON PAGES 175 (PARA 1 ) and 181 (para 9) of the June 1975 issue Number 281 of CANADIAN RAIL. The reference to "Gorham" should in every case have been to "Groveton". Thanks to our readers who pointed out these errors.

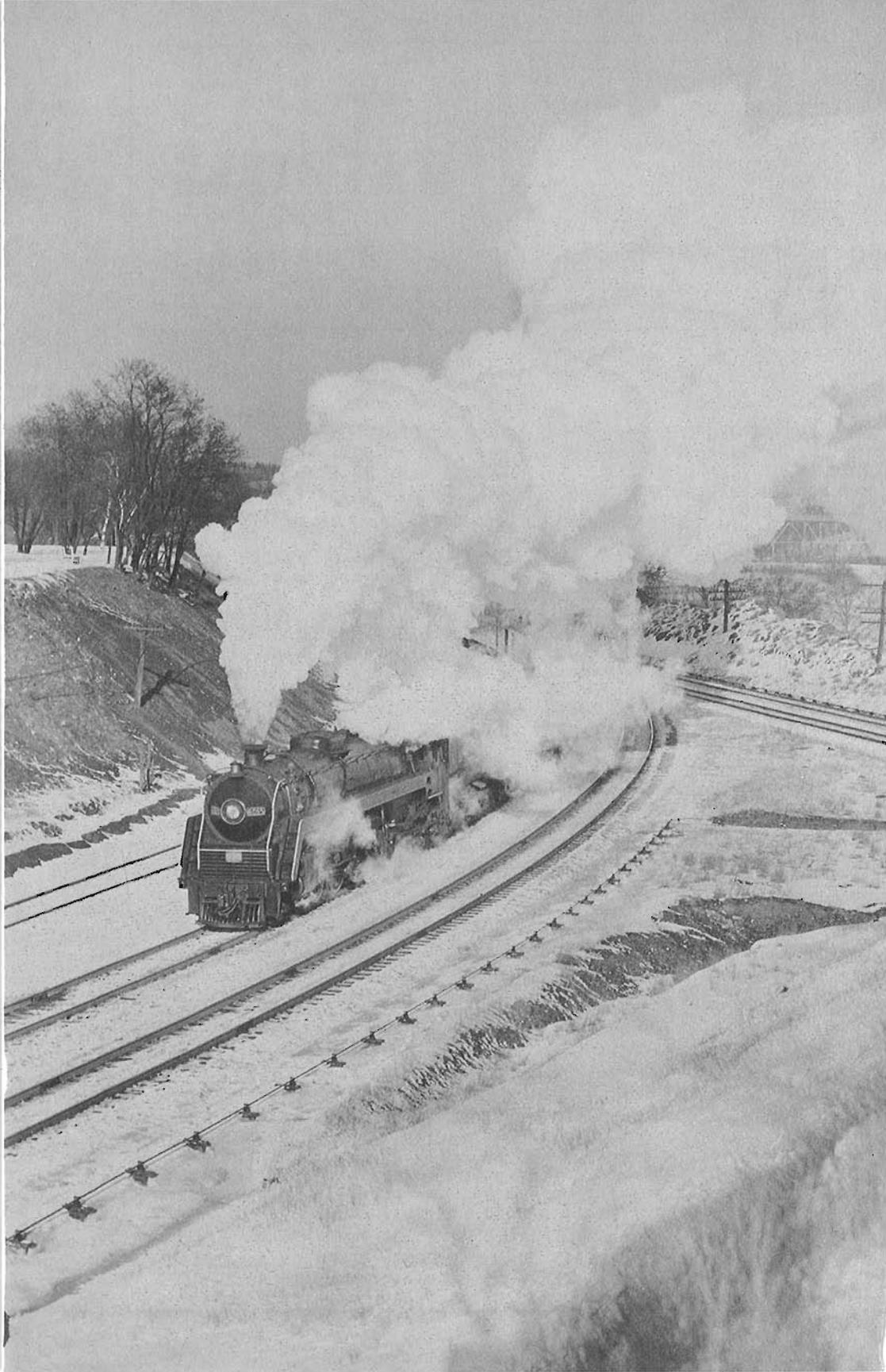
BECAUSE OF LACK OF SPACE, THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ON DIESEL MOTIVE POWER sent in by Pierre Patenaude have had to be held over to this issue:

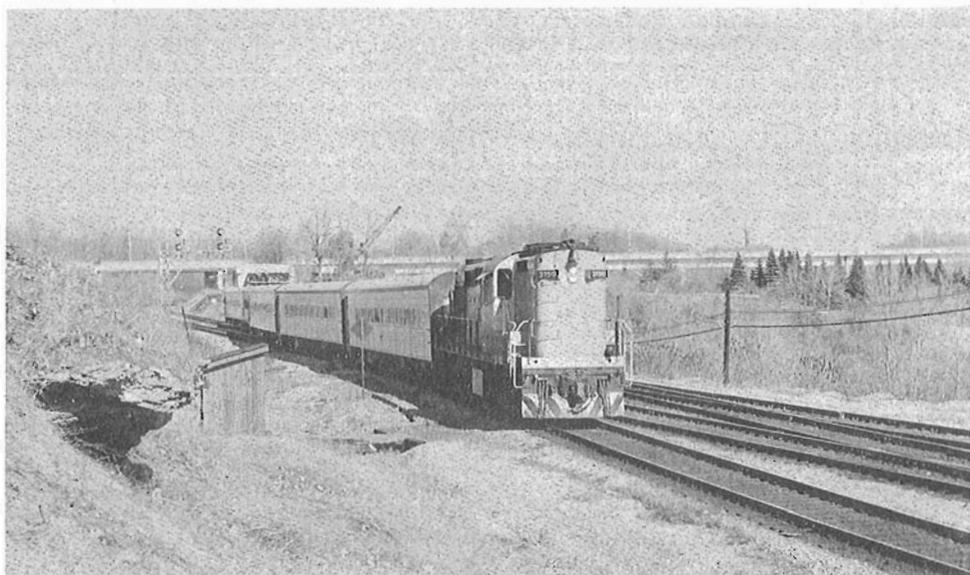
- Ontario Northland Railway's order with Diesel Division, General Motors of Canada Limited for four 2000 hp. GP 38-2s was C-373, B/N A-3109 through A-3112, road numbers 1800 through 1803. These units were delivered to the ONR at North Bay, Ontario, on 7 November 1974.
- Canadian National Railways has confirmed order C-376 with DD GMCL for one hundred and one GP 40-2Ls, with safety cabs. The road numbers will be 9351 through 9362, B/N A-3166 through A-3267.
- An additional order from CN for 21 SD 40-2s with safety cabs is C-378, B/N A-3268 through A-3288. These units will have road numbers 5241 through 5261.
- CN has also confirmed order C-378 with DD GMCL for 17 SD 40-2s with safety cabs, B/N A-3289 through A-3305, with corresponding road numbers 5262 through 5278.

ON 26 MARCH 1975, IT WAS REPORTED THAT THE BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY had completed North America's newest freight car building plant at Squamish, British Columbia. The plant, built to complete four cars per day on a single shift, cost \$ 8 million. It is expected that the capacity in excess of BCOL's needs will be used to solicit contract orders from southeast Asian railways.

THE CANADA AND GULF TERMINAL RAILWAY, 38.8 MILES LONG, BETWEEN MONT Joli on Canadian National's main line east to the Maritimes, and Matane, Québec, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River, was sold to CN on February 17, 1975. The C&GT is a very important part of CN's proposed car-ferry operation from paper mills on the north shore of the St. Lawrence. It is understood that all 33 C&GT employees will become CN staff.

CANADA'S TRANSPORT MINISTER JEAN MARCHAND, BESET ON ALL SIDES BY worsening rail transport problems, said in April 1975 that he hoped that a rail line would be built soon to bypass British Columbia's hazardous Frazer River Canyon. The Department of





← YESTERDAY AND TODAY: IN FEBRUARY 1957, JIM SHAUGHNESSY RECORDED THE  
 ↑ passage of Canadian National Railways' Train 17: Toronto, London, Sarnia and Chicago, the "Intercity", passing Bayview Junction on its way up the hill past Dundas, in a cloud of steam.  
 On 1 March 1975, H.L.Holland caught CN TEMPO Train 143 at Bayview Junction, on its speedy way to Brantford, Woodstock, London and Windsor, Ontario.

Transport's solution was to build a connection between CN-CP RAIL at Ashcroft and the British Columbia Railway in the vicinity of Clinton.

Anyone familiar with the topography of this region and the location of BCOR's main line from Clinton to North Vancouver can speculate as to whether or not such a connection would be, in Mr. Marchand's own words, "urgent and essential to the development of the normal circulation of goods in the direction of the B.C. coast".

THE TORONTO "GLOBE & MAIL" OF 14 JUNE 1975 REPORTED THAT SIEMENS Canada Limited of Pointe Claire, Québec and the West German firm of DUWAG have been awarded a joint contract for \$ 7.715 million for 14 rapid transit cars by the transport commissioners of the City of Edmonton, Alberta. The cars will have a minimum of 25% Canadian content.

J.D.Welsh.

MR. DAVID CASS-BEGGS, CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA HYDRO Commission, said in April 1975 that electrification of Canada's 5,000 miles of mainline railways would cost about \$ 1 billion, but would save more than 56% in operating costs over existing diesel traction.

D.L.Davies.

TATOA (TORONTO AREA TRANSIT OPERATING AUTHORITY) HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED (19 June 1975) to development an agreement with CP RAIL to provide GO Transit services to and from Milton, Ontario.

It will take at least three years to provide the necessary connections to Union Station and to provide the rail passenger cars, expected to be redundant from the Oakville service when the new double-decker cars are available in 1977-78.

W.J. Bedbrook.

SHOULD YOU HAPPEN TO BE TRAIN-WATCHING ON THE ONTARIO NORTHLAND RAILWAY along the 25-mile stretch from Fraserdale to Otter Rapids, Ontario, please don't be surprised if you see a Volkswagen "Beetle" hauling a four-wheeled track-car house-trailer come clattering down the track!

The vehicle, referred to as a "rail-speeder" by its owner, Ontario Hydro, is the only one of its kind, as far as Hydro knows, and was placed in service in 1965. Its purpose is to transport Hydro personnel from Fraserdale to the Otter Rapids Generating Station, to maintain this latter facility.

The "RailBUG", like other lepidopterae, is seasonal, but contrariwise, appears only during the winter months, since in summer Ontario Hydro uses a power boat on the Abitibi River between the two facilities. There is no road between Fraserdale and Otter Rapids.

The four-wheeled track-car house-trailer is an emergency ambulance vehicle, occasionally used to transport sick or injured employees, the limited head-room making it unsuitable for the regular transport of passengers, except in a horizontal position.

Ontario Hydro feels that the "RailBUG" does not meet its requirements too well and, for this reason, a replacement is being sought. In the meantime, although it is a source of curiosity to strangers, the "RailBUG" keeps on doing what it is supposed to do, at a cost considerably lower than other, more sophisticated local transportation modes.

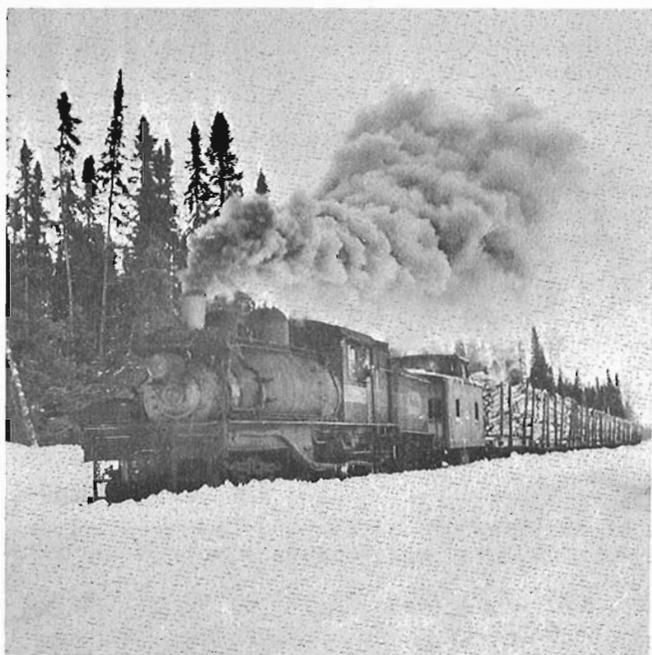
ADAC-Motorwelt: C.A.Andreae.



Kein neues Caravan-Gespänn, sondern ein Schienenkäufer, der Tag für Tag in der kanadischen Provinz Ontario über die Gleise klappert. Das seltsame Fahrzeug haben sich die Männer gebastelt, die in dieser unwegsamen Landschaft für eine Energiegesellschaft die Stromleitungen längs der Bahnlinie kontrollieren. Sie müssen jetzt keine zeitraubenden Umwege mehr über die Straßen machen.

Foto: autopress

ABITIBI PAPER COMPANY'S 70-TON THREE-TRUCK SHAY-GEARED STEAM LOCOMOTIVE Number 70, built by the Lima Locomotive Works, Lima, Ohio, U.S.A. in February 1926 (S/N 3298) for the Tallahassee Power Company of Calderwood, Tennessee, U.S.A., has not oper-



ated recently, according to Mr. A.G. Mackie, Manager of Public Relations and Corporate Advertising for Abitibi Paper.

Number 70 may yet be the focus of attraction on a tourist railway operation at Iroquois Falls, Ontario, or it may be simply a static display in that town. The project, says Mr. Mackie, has not developed sufficiently to comment further.

CN TOWER, THE LARGEST FREE-STANDING STRUCTURE IN THE WORLD, WAS DECLARED officially complete on Wednesday 2 April 1974, when the Canadian flag was unfurled 1,815 feet above Union Station, Toronto. The occasion was graced by the Honourable Donald Macdonald, federal Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and marked the end of 26 months of work, thousands of tons of steel and concrete - and one successful parachute jump.

THE "CAPE BRETON POST" OF SYDNEY, NOVA SCOTIA, PRINTED AN ITEM ON 3 May 1975 that might have resulted in some serious disturbances among the population of the Island. The news item, sent in by Barry MacLeod, suggested that Hugh Heffner of PLAYBOY MAGAZINE, complete with a bevy of bunnies, had planned to come to Cape Breton soon for the purpose of photographing a "fashion layout", a descriptive phrase amenable to many interpretations. The proposed background was the Cape Breton Steam Railway's ex-Great Western Railway (England) first and second-class brake composite passenger coach.

What the newspaper account did not mention was the possibility that boiler-pressure gauges from the two locomotives would probably necessarily be remounted on the engine crews, while the train crews would logically be fitted with Westinghouse airbrakes, under the control of the producer.

THE FORMER CP RAIL SHIP "PRINCESS OF ACADIA", FINANCIALLY TROUBLED AND sold to Canada's Department of Transport in December 1974, was the subject of sharp criticism by southwestern Nova Scotia Member of Parliament Coline Campbell late in March '75. She said that, not only were ferry fares under CP RAIL ownership the highest in the Maritimes, but concerned Fundy shore residents could obtain no information from CP RAIL on the future operation of this important service from Saint John, N.B. to Digby, N.S.

Department of Transport Minister Jean Marchand, beset on all sides by transport troubles, said that, in this case, the Government had three options: (1) to ask CP RAIL to continue the service and to collect the resulting federal subsidy; (2) to persuade the Government of Nova Scotia to purchase the ship, continue the service and thereafter collect the federal subsidy or (3) hand over the operation to Canadian National Railways and pay them the subsidy for operating this "essential passenger train service".

While Mr. Marchand made no mention of federal Government thinking at that time, it was rumored that Canadian National would soon assume complete control of this Fundy ferry.

Meanwhile, on Canada's west coast, Canadian National Railways' cruise liner the "S.S. Prince George" was withdrawn from service in mid-April 1975, six months ahead of schedule, after a disastrous fire on 4 April destroyed 20 of the ship's cabins. Total damage, estimated at \$ 400,000, was caused by an electric heater in one of the cabins.

Later in the year, offers of sale by CN appeared in Vancouver and Montréal papers.

IN THE EARLY PART OF APRIL 1975, THE "ADIRONDACK" passenger service on the Delaware & Hudson from Albany/Rensselaer, NY to Montréal, took on another new look, when refurbished dining-lounge cars "Adirondack Lodge" and "Saratoga Inn" were placed in service, enabling the return of the two dome-buffet-coach cars to CP RAIL on April 10. Re-engined D&H PA 4 Number 16 was returned to service, along with the first of a total of eight completely renovated coaches and two refurbished baggage cars.

NY DOT Commissioner Schuyler said that the dome coaches would be replaced soon and speculation had it that dome-coach-lounge cars originally built for the B&O and recently used on the "Yampa Valley Mail" might be used.

Effective April 27, the "Adirondack" service was accelerated by 20 minutes in both directions with an additional speed-up of 15 minutes due June 29.

Section 403-b in the legislation establishing AMTRAK provides that new passenger trains can be added to the system when requested by a responsible state agency and providing that this agency agrees to absorb two-thirds of any deficit. As of 1 January 1975, the following trains consequently became AMTRAK operations:

Adirondack	New York/Albany/Montréal	PC/D&H
Arrowhead	Minneapolis/Superior/Duluth	BN
	(Connection at Minneapolis with the "North Coast Hiawatha" for Chicago.)	

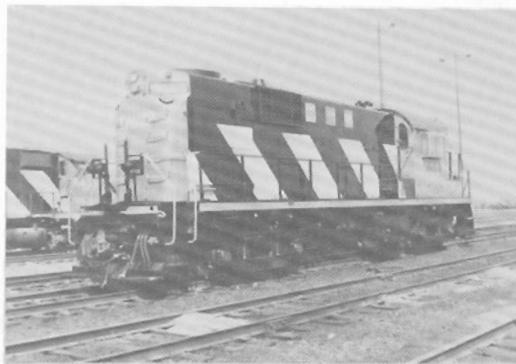
WITH THE ADVENT OF DAYLIGHT-SAVING TIME IN APRIL 1975, CP RAIL REVERSED the schedule of Trains 1 & 2, RDC "Dayliner" service between Victoria and Courtenay on Vancouver Island, so that this same-day service originated and terminated at Courtenay. This report from John Hoffmeister.



LA COMPAGNIE DE CHEMIN DE FER CARTIER took delivery of five M-636 units from MLW Industries on 21, 27 and 31 March 1975. The B/N were M-6085-01 through M-6085-05 and the road numbers were 81 through 85. Pierre Patenaude, who sent this information, also sent the accompanying picture of Number 82 on National Harbours' Board trackage on 22 March 1975, waiting shipment to Port Cartier, Qué.

DULUTH, WINNIPEG AND PACIFIC RAILROAD ALSO RS 11 NUMBER 3609 CAME TO Canadian National's Pointe-St-Charles Shops, Montréal, at the beginning of 1975 for an overhaul and a paint job.

Pierre Patenaude photographed 8609 at Montréal Yard on 2 April 1975, on its way back to its home rails at Fort Francis, Ontario. The unit is in CN's new paint scheme.



THE RIDING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PASSENGER CARS USED ON CANADIAN National's "Tempo" trains have been said by some to be rough. Well, on Thursday, 10 October 1974, the Montréal Research & Development Car Number 15015 was the last car on TEMPO Train 149/144 from Toronto to Windsor, Ontario and return. In front of 15015 was regular EM Coach Number 5621 and in front of that was TEMPO Coach 371; neither of the passenger cars were in service.

Car Number 371 was fitted with a special axle sprocket and it was this device which improved the riding qualities of the TEMPO coach.

Barry Biglow took the accompanying picture of the rear end of Train 144 at Windsor (Walkerville), Ontario on 10 October 1974.



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