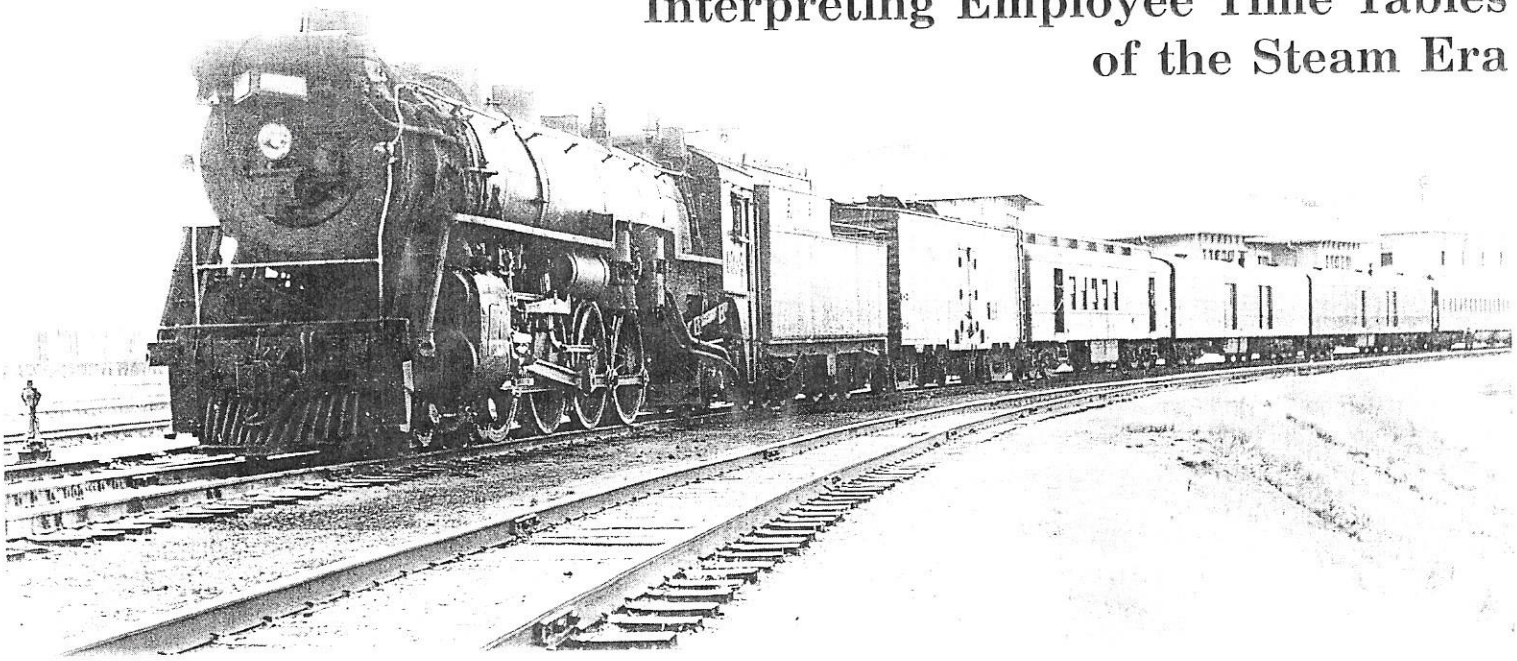
CNR Employee Time Tables

Before the days of radio communication and Centralized Traffic Control, the vast majority of the trains in operation on the Canadian National Railways were governed by train orders and timetables. The employee timetable in effect was "the authority for the movement of regular trains subject to the rules*," containing "classified schedules with special instructions relating to the movement of trains and other information." The Uniform Code of Operating Rules stated that all railway employees "whose duties are in any way affected by the timetable must have a copy of the current timetable, and supplements thereto if any, with them while on duty."

Interpreting Employee Time Tables of the Steam Era



U-1-b Mountain 6034 is in charge of southbound 44 at Allandale on July 22, 1958. This train made numerous stops for mail and express as noted on the employee time card.
—*photo: Howard Ameling*

—by Ian Wilson

In conjunction with the timetable, every "conductor, engineman, trainman, fireman, yard foreman, yardman, and such other employees as the Company may direct" had to carry, while on duty, "a reliable railway grade watch approved by the proper authority." Inspection of watches was required by a "designated watch inspector for comparison and record at intervals of not less than twenty and not more than thirty days." Conductors, enginemen and yard foremen were required to compare their watches with a designated standard clock before commencing work each day. The lives of railway employees, passengers and the general public alike depended on these rules being adhered to by the letter.

The operating timetable governed the movement of regular trains in the steam era. For modellers, railway enthusiasts and historians it is an invaluable reference aid for recreating, in the imagination or in miniature, the train movements of yesteryear. In this article, we will take a close look at a specific example of an operating timetable from the Northern Ontario District of the Central Region of the CNR. We will try to determine what we can about the track layout and movement of trains, and then compare our conclusions to the real situation as documented by engineering drawings and a train register.

Consider the Newmarket Subdivision of the Allandale Division as described in Time Table No. 10, effective at 12:01 a.m. Sunday, September 26, 1954 (Figure 1). Consistent with operating time cards of any road, "Superior" trains are shown on the right. In the steam era, "a train is superior to other train by right, class or direction. Right is conferred by train order; class and direction by time table. Right is superior to class or direction," and class prevails over direction. Of the trains shown in the example, the first class trains in either direction are superior to the fourth class trains or extra trains unless otherwise dictated by train order.

First class trains travelling in the southward (superior) direction are superior to the first class trains travelling in the northward (inferior) direction.

Down the centre of the timetable are shown each station ("a place designated on the time table by name") and its corresponding mileage measured from the initial station, "the station at which a schedule is first timed on any subdivision." Symbols in capital letters, shown in the two columns to the immediate left and right of the station names or beside train times, denote specific things as summarized in Table 1. The column headed "Office Signals" describes telegraph call letters for operators and dispatchers, and the letters in this column are not to be confused with the standard symbols. Sidings, denoting tracks "auxiliary to the main track for meeting or passing trains," are indicated by capacity in another column. Train crews and dispatchers depend on these sidings being clear of cars for meeting and clearing trains. If for any reason a train leaves a siding blocked with a car or cars, the conductor must immediately notify the dispatcher who will issue a train order to all trains advising them of the situation. The column marked "Other Tracks" identifies by capacity those tracks (team tracks, extra sidings, or industrial leads) which may be available to facilitate train movements.

Table 1

- A Arrive
- B Bulletins and train register
- C Fuel
- D Day train order office
- F Flag stop to receive or discharge traffic
- K Standard clock, bulletins and train register
- L Leave
- N Night train order office
- P Telephone
- R Train register
- S Regular stop
- V Station protection signal
- W Water
- X Crossover
- Y Wye
- Z Yard limit sign

Figure 1

TIME TABLE NO. 10, SEPTEMBER 26th, 1954

NORTHWARD TRAINS — FIRST CLASS						Miles from Toronto	Symbols	NEWMARKET SUBDIVISION — STATIONS	Train Order Office or Telephone	Office Signals	Car Capacity: Sidings	Car Capacity: Other Tracks
47 Passenger Daily	3 Passenger Daily	51 Passenger Daily ex. Sunday	49 Passenger Daily ex. Saturday	45 Passenger Daily ex. Sunday	41 Passenger Daily ex. Sunday							
L 11.30 PM	L 11.00 PM	L 9.30 PM		L 5.50 PM	L 9.30 AM	0.0	K	TORONTO	D N	U N		
8 11.39	8 11.11	8 9.39		8 5.59	8 9.30	2.4	K	PARKDALE	D N	Q N		
8 11.48	8 11.21	8 9.48		8 6.08	8 9.40	5.2	Z	ST. CLAIR AVENUE	D N	D	69	45
11.51	11.24	9.50		6.11	9.43	6.2		FAIRBANK	D N	F C		
11.54	11.27	9.53		* 6.14	9.47	8.0		DOWNSVIEW	P	D N	55	125
12.01 AM	11.34	9.59		6.21	9.53	12.4		ELIA	P		40	
12.04	11.37	10.02		8 6.26	9.55	14.3	W	CONCORD	D	H I	39	11
12.11	11.44	10.07		8 6.35	8 10.03	18.3		MAPLE	D N	M A	60	32
12.20	11.53	10.13		8 6.45	8 10.14	22.7		KING	D	K S	47	17
12.27	11.59 AM	10.18		6.55	10.23	27.5		CHERRY			35	
F 12.31	12.04	10.22		8 7.00	8 10.29	30.0	W	AURORA	D N	U O	43	33
12.37	12.10	10.27		8 7.10	8 10.38	34.1		NEWMARKET	D	N W	27	73
12.43	12.14	10.32		F 7.17	10.44	37.8		HOLLAND LANDING	P		22	S.2
12.49	12.18	10.36		8 7.24	8 10.50	41.5	W	BRADFORD	D N	B F	38	94
12.59	12.28	10.46		8 7.37	8 11.01	49.0		GILFORD				8.12
1.03	12.32	10.49		8 7.43	8 11.08	51.8		LEFROY	D	W F	39	24
1.10	12.39	10.56		7.52	11.16	56.7		BRAMLEY	P		33	
				F 7.53	8 11.17	57.5		STROUD	N	C V		15
A 1.20 L 1.30	A 12.48 L 12.55	A 11.05 L 11.12		A 8.02 L 8.12	A 11.30 L 11.45	63.0	*CK WZ	ALLANDALE (Jct. with Mesford and Milton Subdivisions)	D N	G O	YA	RD
8 1.34	8* 1.00	8 11.17		8 8.17	8 11.48 PM	64.1	Z	BARRIE	N	B R		
1.42	1.08	11.23		8 8.28	8 12.01	69.7		SHANTY BAY	P		58	6
1.48	1.14	11.28		8 8.37	8 12.08	74.2		ORO	P		63	9
1.53	1.19	11.32		8 8.43	8 12.15	77.9		HAWKESTONE	D N	H K	39	
1.57	1.22	11.35		8.47	12.18	80.3		CARTHEW	P		41	
					12.26	85.8	Z	ORILLIA FREIGHT YARD			39	328
A 2.06 L 2.13	8* 1.32	8 11.44		A 9.00 PM	A 12.27 L 12.32	86.3	RW YZ	ORILLIA (Jct. with Midland Subdivision)	D N	O R		
2.17	1.35	11.48	From Bala Sub.	To Midland Sub.	F 12.37	88.5	YZ	ATHERLEY (Jct. with Midland Subdivision)	P	N F	31	
F 2.27	1.42	11.54 AM			8 12.46	93.7		LONGFORD	P	G B	49	
S 2.39	A 1.52 AM	A 12.04 AM	L 8.39 PM		8 12.58	98.8	*CR WYZ	WASHAGO (Jct. with Bala Subdivision)	D N	W G	85	148
2.43			8.42		F 1.02	100.4		BRYSON				
2.49	To Bala Sub.	To Bala Sub.	8.48		1.08	104.2		KAGISHE	P		61	
2.52			8.51		8 1.12	106.2		KILWORTHY	P			8.6
2.58			8.57		1.18	109.8		JEVINS	P		48	
3.01			9.00		1.21	111.4	*CK WYZ	MUSKOKA JCT.	D N	M J	YA	RD
A 3.03 AM			A 9.02 PM		A 1.23 PM	112.2	KWZ	GRAVENHURST	D N	Q	YA	RD
Daily	Daily	Daily ex. Monday	Daily ex. Saturday	Daily ex. Sunday	Daily ex. Sunday							
47	3	51	49	45	41							

SOUTHWARD TRAINS — FIRST CLASS						FOURTH CLASS		
52 Passenger Daily ex. Tuesday	46 Passenger Daily	50 Passenger Daily ex. Sunday	42 Passenger Daily ex. Sunday & Monday	44 Passenger Daily ex. Sunday	148 Passenger Sunday only	410 Freight Daily	524 Wayfreight Daily ex. Sunday	428 Freight Daily
A 6.15 AM	A 7.10 AM		A 10.45 AM	A 7.10 PM	A 9.45 PM	5.15 AM	A 1.40 PM	A 10.50 PM
8 6.04	8 6.59		8 10.35	8 7.00	8 9.34	5.00	1.30	10.40
8 5.54	8 6.48		8 10.25	8 6.49	8 9.23	4.50	1.20	10.35
5.49	6.44		10.22	6.42	9.19	4.35	1.10	10.30
5.46	6.41		10.20	6.38	9.16	4.20	1.00	10.17
5.40	6.34		10.15	6.31	9.10	4.15	12.55	10.02
5.38	6.30		8 10.12	8 6.26	9.07	4.00	12.40	9.52
5.32	6.24		8 10.03	8 6.17	F 9.00	3.45	12.25	9.45
5.25	6.16		8 9.53	8 6.08	F 8.52	3.30	12.10 PM	9.35
5.18	6.08		9.45	5.56	8.44	3.20	10.29	9.30
5.14	F 6.04		8 9.41	8 5.49	8 8.39	2.55	10.05	9.20
5.08	F 5.57		8 9.33	8 5.39	8 8.30	2.35	9.45	9.10
5.03	5.51		F 9.25	5.30	8.23	2.25	8.20	9.00
4.58	5.46		8 9.20	8 5.19	8 8.17		8.00	
4.49	5.36		8 9.09	8 5.06	F 8.05	2.00	7.55	8.40
4.45	5.32		8 9.05	8 5.01	8 8.00	1.47	7.40	8.30
4.37	5.24		8.58	4.52	7.52			
			F 8.57	8 4.51	F 7.51			
L 4.28 A 4.18	L 5.13 A 5.01		L 8.50 A 8.40	L 4.40 A 4.24	L 7.42 A 7.32	L 1.30 AM	L 7.30 AM	L 8.15 PM
8 4.15	8 4.56		8 8.37	8 4.20	8 7.29			
4.03	4.45		8 8.27	8 4.09	F 7.18			
3.58	4.39		8 8.20	8 4.02	8 7.12			
3.53	* 4.33		8 8.14	8 3.55	8 7.07			
3.50	4.28		8.09	3.50	7.02			
8 3.40	8 4.17		L 8.00 AM	L 3.40 A 3.34	L 6.53 PM			
3.32	F 4.10	To Bala Sub.	From Midland Sub.	3.29	From Midland Sub.			
3.24	F 4.02			8 3.21				
L 3.10 AM	8 3.50	A 5.40 AM		8 3.06				
From Bala Sub.	3.45	5.37		F 3.01				
	3.38	5.31		2.55				
		5.28		8 2.52				
	3.28	5.21		2.46				
	3.25	5.18		2.43				
	L 3.22 AM	L 5.16 AM		L 2.40 PM				
Daily ex. Tuesday	Daily	Daily ex. Sunday	Daily ex. Sunday & Monday	Daily ex. Sunday	Sunday Only	Daily	Daily ex. Sunday	Daily
52	46	50	42	44	148	410	524	428

The Newmarket station and train order office was still a busy place in the mid 1960s with a dozen trains daily. It was served by two way freights, one of which left the merchandise car which is spotted at the freight shed.
—photo: Maclean Wilson

Under each designated train schedule are a column of times. At stations where one time is shown, it is a leaving time. That is, a train cannot leave a station until its scheduled time, at which time it is automatically due at the next station. Scheduled meeting times between trains are shown in bold face. We may find other information for our purposes in the section of footnotes, which follows the schedules, and in the appendices in the last few pages of the operating timetable.

Focus on Newmarket

Let us select Newmarket station, at mileage 34.1 of the Newmarket Subdivision, as a place to explore through the information presented on the operating timetable. We will begin with trying to determine some information about the sidings which the Newmarket station operator, scheduled to work from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Figure 2), would concern himself with. Besides the single-track main line, there is a passing siding of capacity 27 cars, and other unspecified tracks with a total capacity of 73 cars. Comparing the station mileage 34.1 to the table listing Other Tracks (Figure 3), we note that there is a Hydro Electric Power Commission (forerunner of Ontario Hydro) siding, with capacity five cars and points facing south, at mileage 32.8, south of the station. The Office Specialty Company (manufacturers of filing cabinets and business forms) has a siding of seven car capacity with points facing north at mileage 33.7, and the Newmarket District Co-operative has a siding of six car capacity just south of the station at mileage 34.1, with points facing south. Under the footnotes dealing with Newmarket (Figure 4), we determine that there is an additional siding serving a flour mill, a freight shed, stock pens and other buildings. Concluding our study of information dealing with trackage at Newmarket as discernible from the employee time table, we decide that there is only a main track, a passing siding, some sort of team track, three industrial sidings, and an unspecified amount of trackage totalling about 55 cars.

The actual track layout in the vicinity of the Newmarket station is depicted in Figure 5. At this point we arrive at the first instance of a recurring theme with employee timetables: they do not necessarily tell the whole story. For reasons known or unknown to the railway, some industrial sidings are noted in operating timetables, but the vast majority are not. West of the station there is indeed a main track, a passing siding, a team track serving a number of coal sheds and a mill, and the aforementioned Co-op siding. Additionally, however, there is another team track, and sidings serving the Davis Leather

Figure 2

OTHER TRACKS

	Car Capacity	Points face	Mileage
Downsview Lumber Co.	4	N	9.2
Spalding Lbr. Co.—Central Lbr. Co.	14	N	9.4
Toronto & York Road Commission.	11	N	9.5
DeHavilland Aircraft	21	N	9.7
McFarlane Construction Co.	10	N	9.8
Canadian General Electric	31	S	10.0
DeHavilland Aircraft	25	NS	10.2
R.C.A.F. Supply Depot	201	NS	10.5
First track west of main track is set off track. Second track west of main track is pick up track. Other tracks can be switched on request.			
Ontario Dept. of Highways No. 1	3	N	10.5
Warren Bituminous Paving Co. and Community Builders Ltd.	37	S	11.1
Robinson Clay Products	10	N	14.1
M. Palmer	6	S	18.0
Superior Propane Ltd.	8	N	18.3
Hydro Electric Power Commission	5	S	32.8
Office Specialty	7	N	33.7
Newmarket Dist. Co-operative	6	S	34.0
Office Specialty	13	S	38.7
R. T. Allman	6	N	39.3
Federal Farms Ltd.	18	NS	39.5
Orillia Institute	11	N	84.5
Dominion Tar & Chemical Co. Ltd.	40	S	93.4

Company, a couple of fuel/lumber dealers and the Hoffman Manufacturing Company, all to the east of the station. Therefore, in reading any employee timetable, it would be incorrect to assume that the notes tell the whole story of any track arrangements.

Let us now consider train movements, starting with morning passenger trains, and taking a Wednesday as an example. The action at Newmarket would apparently begin sometime before 5:08 a.m. with southbound passenger train 52 (from Capreol, as evidenced by studying timetables of adjoining subdivisions) rolling through without stopping. Just before 6:00 a.m., number 46—the overnight sleeper from Timmins—would chuff into the yards, stopping if anyone is flagging the train or if any passenger has requested to be let off. At about half past nine in the morning, train 42, the mail train from Midland (any passenger train shown as stopping at just about every station building is very likely carrying a Railway Post Office), would arrive at the platform. After a scheduled meet with number 42 at Maple, the last passenger train of the morning, number 41 for North Bay, carrying mail and express, would roll to a stop shortly past 10:30 a.m.

In the afternoon, shortly before 5:44 p.m., number 44, the southbound counterpart of number 41, would arrive. Shortly past 7:00 p.m., following a scheduled meet with number 44 at Concord, northbound train 45 for Midland would roll in, handling an RPO and express. At almost 10:30 p.m., northbound 51 would pass through en route to Capreol. Just after midnight, number 3, the Toronto section of the Continental, would be seen, followed about a half hour later by number 47, carrying sleepers for Timmins.

In the manner of freight trains, we note three scheduled movements. Manifest freight 410 out of Allandale apparently passes through at about 3:00 a.m. The northbound way freight 524 should arrive at about 10:00 a.m., after having taken the siding at Holland Landing for train 42 to pass, and before a scheduled meet with number 41 at Aurora. In the evening, manifest freight 428 from Allandale should arrive just before 9:20 p.m., in advance of a scheduled meet with passenger train 51 at Concord. Finally, in the notes listing way freights and manifest trains (Figure 5), we see that sometime in the morning, northbound way freight 525 for Allandale will likely call at Newmarket. The remainder of freight movements and any other unscheduled trains would be considered extras, with movement governed by train orders.

Figure 3

NEWMARKET SUBDIVISION FOOTNOTES

Toronto is an initial station, Newmarket Subdivision.

Northward trains must obtain terminal clearance at Parkdale.

Movements of trains between Mileage 9 and Toronto will be governed by Toronto Terminals Timetable. Movements not provided for must be arranged through train dispatcher at Allandale.

WILSON AVE.—Sounding of engine whistle signals on any locomotive, car or other mechanism propelled on the Railway is prohibited in respect to Wilson Ave. public crossing at Grade, Township of North York, Mileage 9.1 Newmarket Subdivision, except when necessary to prevent accident. (B.T.C. 80818).

This does not prohibit the sounding of engine whistle signals when necessary for train operation.

Mail catch posts located at Mileages 9.1, 96.5 and 100.4.

MAPLE—Crossover switch Mileage 18.4 is entrance to Siding.

NEWMARKET—

Switching movements over Davis Drive (formerly known as Huron Street) Mileage 34.1 (first public crossing North of station) must be protected by member of crew performing switching operations. Freight trains occupying the passing track shall not stand closer than fifty feet from the said crossing. Cars placed on the siding serving the flour mill, freight shed, stock pens, and other buildings must be left a sufficient distance from the crossing to give the same view either way as the flour mill corner permits. (B.T.C. 72143).

The sounding of Engine whistle signals on any locomotive, car or other mechanism is prohibited when approaching and passing over public crossings at grade within the limits of the Town of Newmarket between the hours of 10.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. except for the purpose of giving such signal necessary to prevent accident (B.T.C. Order 64180).

This does not prohibit the sounding of Engine whistle signals when necessary for train operation.

Limits of the town of Newmarket extend between Mileage 33.0 and Mileage 34.4.

BRADFORD—Siding is second track in front of station.

ALLANDALE—*Coal only. Trains must obtain Terminal Clearance at Allandale.

Second track in front of station on Newmarket Subdivision between second crossover switch located 1588 feet South of station and crossover switch located 962 feet North of station is siding for the meeting of passenger trains.

All movements over Bradford Street on Canadian General Electric Co. track will stop clear and movement over crossing must be protected by a member of crew.

BARRIE—Trains instructed to meet or wait by train order will do so at lead switch South end of station platform.

HAWKESTONE—Derail is located 249 feet South of North switch.

ORILLIA FREIGHT YARD—Siding is first track East of main track.

WASHAGO—*Coal only. Trains must obtain Terminal Clearance at Washago.

Newmarket Subdivision Main Track between switches connecting with Bala Subdivision Main Track is known as "Joint Section". Normal position of switches is for Newmarket Subdivision. Double-arm signals are located on both Subdivisions 300 feet North of North connecting switch and 200 feet South of South connecting switch, respectively. Top arms govern through movements on same Subdivisions; lower arms govern movements from one Subdivision to the other. Normal position of signals STOP. These signals are "Interlocking Signals" and movements over the "Joint Section" can be made only when signals are in proceed position for the movement intended. Trains must approach signals prepared to stop, as required by Rule 98 and speed must not exceed ten miles per hour over "Joint Section". Switches and signals to be operated by or under direction of the Station Operators. Approach signals located in all four directions.

Trainmen must see that cars are not placed on siding within 350 feet (10 car lengths) on either side of Orillia Street Road Crossing, North of station. (B.T.C. 33345.)

MUSKOKA JCT.—*Coal only.

Trains must obtain terminal clearance at Muskoka Jct.

First class and passenger extra trains may register at Muskoka Junction by delivering register ticket to Operator.

MUSKOKA JCT.—Spring switch at entrance to yard. Automatic signal 1095 located just south of south switch Jevins, Mileage 109.8 and fixed signal 1109 located approximately sixty (60) feet south of spring switch Muskoka Jct., protect this spring switch. Rule 501 to 519 apply at signal 1095. Rule 104-A applies at signal 1109 and at the spring switch. Automatic signal 1095 to fixed signal 1109 protecting spring switch is designated as GRADE SIGNAL. Rule 509-B applicable.

First track west of main track Muskoka Jct., now known as siding will be used for meeting of passenger trains. Under Rule 93 note reading "where automatic block signal system rules are in effect 'Known to be Clear' includes when track is known to be clear by 'signal indication'" is not applicable at Muskoka Jct.

GRAVENHURST—Gravenhurst is a register station for Huntsville Subdivision trains except fourth class trains and except trains originating and terminating at Muskoka Jct.

Phillip Street Crossing Mileage 111.9. No car shall be left standing within 100 feet of each side of this Crossing. No engine, car or train shall pass over this Crossing on the main track at a speed greater than 25 miles per hour. No engine, car or train shall pass over this Crossing on the side track at a speed greater than 10 miles per hour. (B.T.C. 77261.)

Track for meeting of passenger trains is second track in front of station. The track known as "SERVICE TRACK" is first track immediately North of Gravenhurst station and West of main track. Capacity 32 cars.

What Really Happens

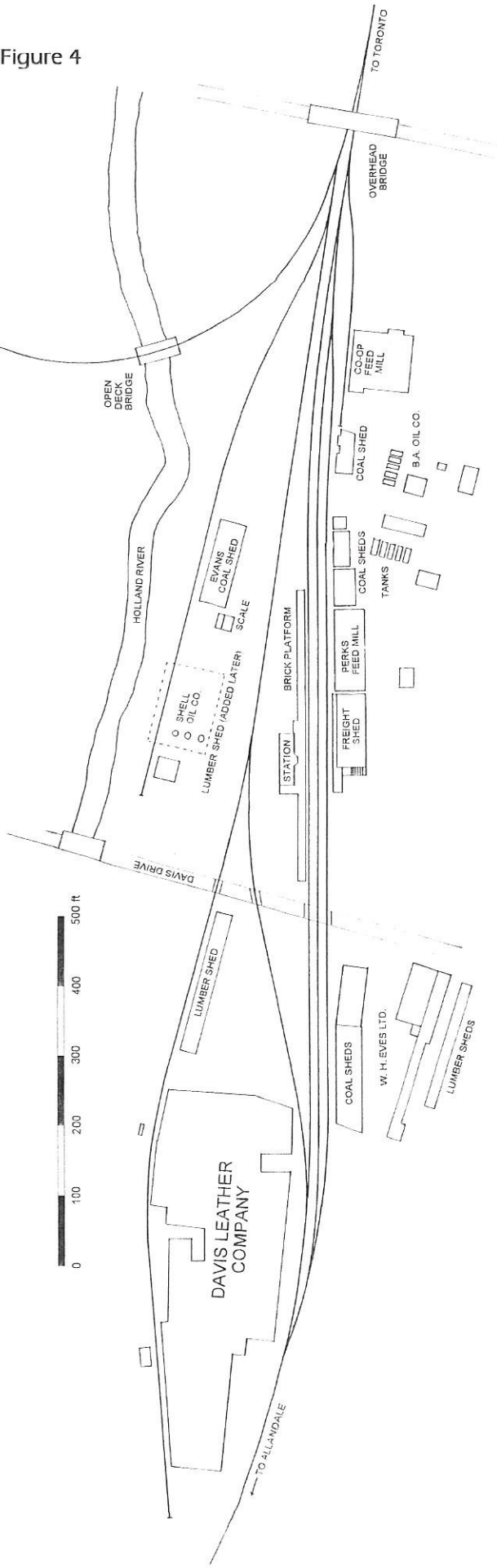
Now, let us observe what really happens at Newmarket as far as freight movements are concerned. We must bear a few things in mind. Firstly, in this example, timetable schedules for freight trains are provided for southward and eastward (superior direction) trains. Opposing trains (those running northward and westward) run as extras, denoted by white flags or marker lights on the engine (similarly, green flags would indicate another section to follow on the same schedule). This arrangement simplified the situation for dispatchers, operators and train crews.

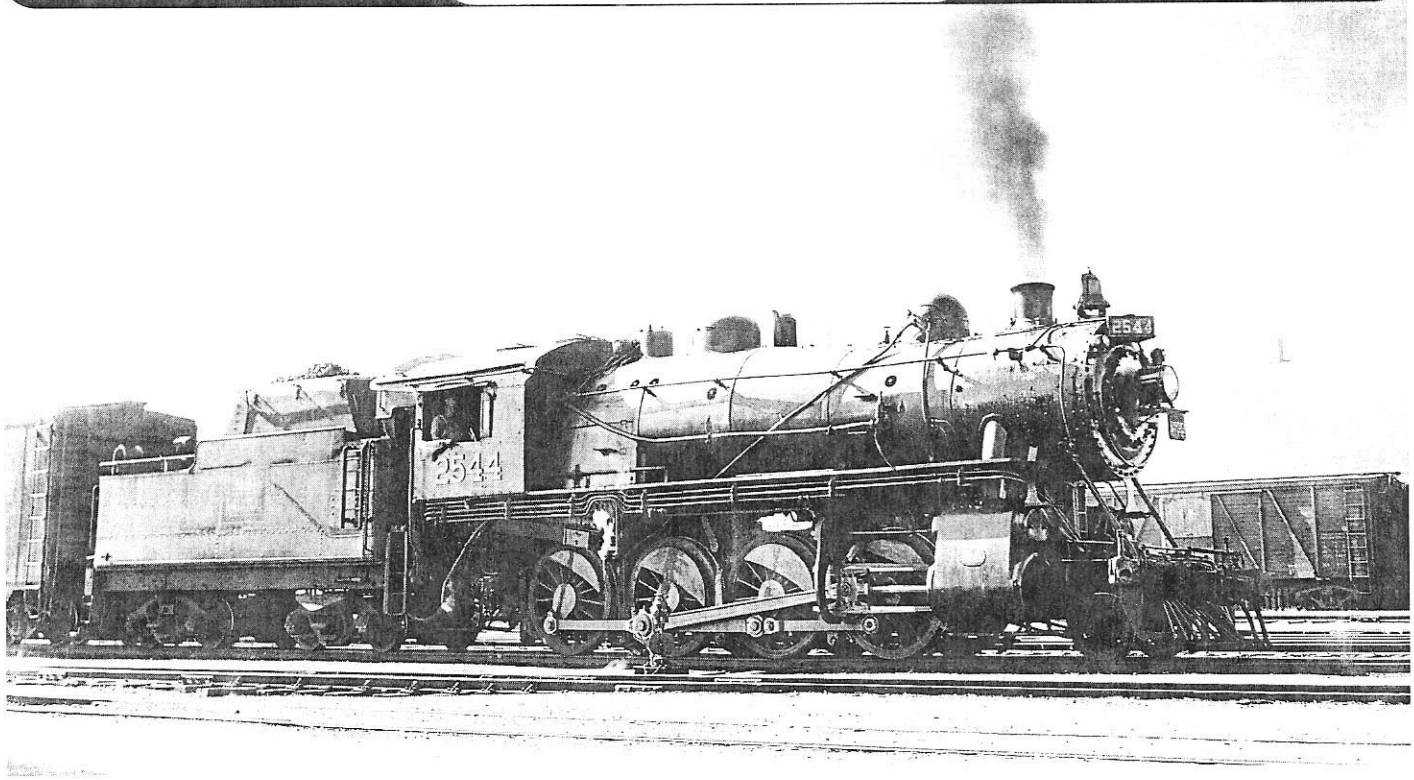
Secondly, we must recognize the difference between a train schedule and an actual train movement. Some train schedules were placed in the operating timetable for the convenience of dispatchers to comply with a Board of Transport directive that all extra trains in the superior direction should be run on a schedule. Schedule 428 on the Newmarket Sub. did not represent an actual crew and train assignment, but was put on the timetable for dispatchers to use for any southbound extra trains that may be required. Train schedules were in effect for twelve hours, and any train could run on a train schedule if authorized by the dispatcher. To illustrate this point, on one day during the month of June 1957, the train operating on schedule 410 was a Sperry Rail test car! If a train following a schedule became more than twelve hours behind, it lost both right and schedule, and the schedule was annulled by train order. If a train movement was cancelled permanently, train orders would have to be issued each day annulling the movement until a bulletin, supplement or replacement timetable was issued.

Thirdly, in steam days, there were numerous factors affecting the departure of a train after the crew was called. The men were required to prepare their locomotive, check bulletins, check watches, perform brake tests, display signals, check equipment, possibly assemble their train, and wait for any superior trains (by direction, class or train order) to arrive and leave. Such variables accumulated to the tune of half an hour to two or more hours from the time the crew reported to duty. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that any freight train ever left an initial station at the specified time, kept to a schedule, or arrived when indicated. The only guarantee (if a train was following a schedule) was that it could not leave before the scheduled time from any station.

Finally, in addition to knowing that freight trains identified in schedules or in footnotes may or may not have existed as actual train movements, we must realize that many regular freight assignments were not even mentioned in employee timetables. Typical examples are yard jobs and assignments known to crews as "Switchers". Within yard limits, "movements not authorized by time table or train order" could be made on the main line, and yard crews or switchers working on yard tracks were not bound by the Yard Limit Rule. Such switching assignments within major yards were handled by crews and yard engines stationed there. Some smaller yards were known as outpost assignments (such as Gravenhurst in the example presented, with an outposted Allandale yard engine and crew). A significant town with numerous industries and yard limits may have been served by an assignment known as a "Switcher", which operated from an engine terminal, and served only the named town, leaving intermediate work to the way freight. In the Newmarket Subdivision example, there was an Orillia Switcher running out of Allandale, and a Huntsville Switcher running out of Gravenhurst. Ten Wheelers handled both assignments. Of special note is that any train holding the main line while switching, where there no yard limits, had to be protected by a flag man or train order.

Figure 4





N-4 Consolidation 2544 arrives at Allandale with an unscheduled way freight from Toronto in July 1957.
—*photo: Carl Gay collection*

Back to our Example

Turning back then, to our example timetable, the information suggests that there was a northbound and southbound way freight through Newmarket six days a week, as well as a couple of southbound manifest freights from Allandale to Toronto. In reality, there were indeed the two way freights.

There also was a freight train known as 410 to the crews, which was in fact run daily except Sunday (reduced sometime in the 1950s to Monday through Friday), not daily as implied by the timetable. This short haul freight left Gravenhurst in the afternoon for Toronto via Allandale, and passed through Newmarket sometime in the middle of the night. In our example, a schedule is shown for this train only for that portion of the run between Allandale and Toronto. As for the freight identified as 428, this was likely a schedule put in place to accommodate southbound afternoon extras out of Gravenhurst, which were routed via Allandale.

The northbound counterpart of 410 was another short haul freight known as 455 (not mentioned in footnotes of operating timecards after the early 1940s) working from Toronto to Gravenhurst, which came through Newmarket in the middle of the night. Another northbound freight, known as 451 to train crews (and similarly not mentioned in employee timetables after the early 1940s), ran from Toronto to North Bay, typically Monday through Friday. On Saturdays, crews on this run often handled Second 47, an all-express train from Toronto to North Bay. None of these trains are evident in the employee timetable.

Looking at the Train Register

Let us observe the actual day time train movements at Newmarket, as recorded in the train register for the month of June 1957 (Table 2). There is no evidence of passenger trains 3, 46, 47, 51 or 52 in the train register. They would have passed through in the middle of the night, before the operator came on duty at 7 a.m. Standard Time (or 8 a.m. Daylight Savings Time). Although trains ran on Standard Time all year, agency hours were scheduled to accommodate public business.

Passenger train 42 was consistently on time for the month, arriving between 7:50 and 7:58 a.m., and leaving between 7:53 and 8:00 a.m., after a stop ranging in time from one to three minutes. (By 1957, this train no longer carried an RPO, and was operating as a commuter train between Barrie and Toronto, scheduled to leave Newmarket not before 7:53 a.m.) It is interesting to note that as of June 23, the Sunday evening passenger train 148 was annulled in favour of a Monday morning passenger extra south operating on the schedule of number 42 by authority of train orders.

Figure 5

WAY FREIGHTS

No. 522 leave Washago	7.45 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday for Allandale.
No. 523 leave Allandale	7.15 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday for Washago.
No. 524 leave Allandale	7.30 a.m. Daily except Sunday for Toronto.
No. 525 leave Toronto	6.45 a.m. Daily except Sunday for Allandale.

MANIFEST TRAINS

No. 452 leave Gravenhurst	1.00 p.m. daily.	Arrive Washago	1.80 p.m.
No. 453 leave Washago	1.00 a.m. daily.	Arrive Gravenhurst	1.80 a.m.
No. 454 leave Gravenhurst	3.30 p.m. daily.	Arrive Washago	4.00 p.m.

Not shown in employee time tables, but regular assignments nonetheless, are yard jobs such as this one at Allandale, handled by 0-18-a 7429 in the summer of 1958.
—photo: Ray Faux

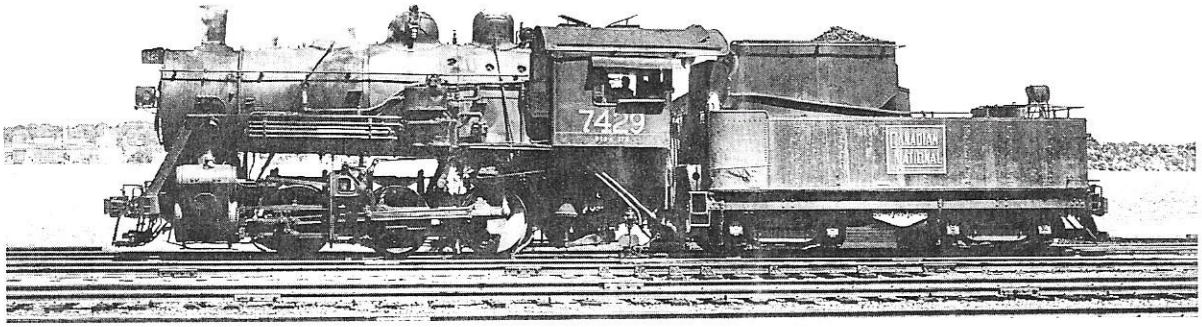


Table 2 NEWMARKET TRAIN REGISTER

Monday June 10th to Sunday June 23rd, 1957

Engine	Date	Train	Arriving	Leaving
1228	57 06 10	524 Allandale-Toronto	0915	1038
6031	57 06 10	41 Toronto-North Bay	1036	1040
1230	57 06 10	525 Toronto-Allandale	1302	1307
4504	57 06 10	451 Toronto-North Bay	144	1449
5299	57 06 11	42 Barrie-Toronto	0752	0754
1229	57 06 11	524 Allandale-Toronto	0950	1058
4373	57 06 11	410 Gravenhurst-Toronto	1030	1030
6032	57 06 11	41 Toronto-North Bay	1048	1054
4525	57 06 11	451 Toronto-North Bay	1533	1541
5299	57 06 12	42 Barrie-Toronto	0752	0753
1230	57 06 12	524 Allandale-Toronto	0910	1042
6031	57 06 12	41 Toronto-North Bay	1038	1049
1229	57 06 12	525 Toronto-Allandale	1409	1415
6252,4519,4528	57 06 12	451 Toronto-North Bay	1537	1545
5287	57 06 13	42 Barrie-Toronto	0751	0753
6252	57 06 13	410 Gravenhurst-Toronto	0857	0857
1230	57 06 13	524 Allandale-Toronto	1005	1103
6032	57 06 13	41 Toronto-North Bay	1038	1049
1220	57 06 13	525 Toronto-Allandale	1248	1257
4512	57 06 13	451 Toronto-North Bay	1551	1558
3275	57 06 14	410/2 Gravenhurst-Toronto	0710	0710
5287	57 06 14	42 Barrie-Toronto	0751	0753
1230	57 06 14	524 Allandale-Toronto	0920	1045
6031	57 06 14	41 Toronto-North Bay	1043	1052
1228	57 06 14	525 Toronto-Allandale	1252	1300
4503	57 06 14	451 Toronto-North Bay	1554	1602
NA	57 06 15	53 Toronto- Capreol*	0012	0014
5287	57 06 15	42 Barrie-Toronto	0751	0753
1227	57 06 15	524 Allandale-Toronto	0945	1012
6023	57 06 15	41 Toronto-North Bay	1042	1050
5287	57 06 16	148 Barrie-Toronto	1949	1950
1229	57 06 16	sb freight extra	2015	2015
1220	57 06 17	524 Allandale-Toronto	0855	1042
6031	57 06 17	41 Toronto-North Bay	1038	1041
1229	57 06 17	525 Toronto-Allandale	1155	1210
4531	57 06 17	451 Toronto-North Bay	1510	1516
1220	57 06 18	525 Toronto-Allandale		1220
2577	57 06 18	sb freight extra	0730	0730
5250	57 06 18	42 Barrie-Toronto	0751	0753
1230	57 06 18	524 Allandale-Toronto	0950	1138
6023	57 06 18	41 Toronto-North Bay	1039	1049
4522	57 06 18	451 Toronto-North Bay	1535	1543
2577	57 06 18	nb freight extra	1600	1615
2566	57 06 19	sb freight extra	0739	0739
5250	57 06 19	42 Barrie-Toronto	0751	0753
6107	57 06 19	410/1 Gravenhurst-Toronto	0903	0903
1229	57 06 19	524 Allandale-Toronto	0945	1245
6031	57 06 19	41 Toronto-North Bay	1045	1053
2566	57 06 19	nb freight extra	1116	1116
3423	57 06 19	nb freight extra	1130	1147
1220	57 06 19	525 Toronto-Allandale	1505	1510
4523	57 06 19	451 Toronto-North Bay	1543	1543
3423	57 06 19	410/2 Gravenhurst-Toronto	1616	1616
5250	57 06 20	42 Barrie-Toronto	0757	0759
6023	57 06 20	41 Toronto-North Bay	1044	1054
3223	57 06 20	410 Gravenhurst-Toronto	1054	1058
1229	57 06 20	524 Allandale-Toronto	1130	1335
1228	57 06 20	525 Toronto-Allandale	1305	1318
4527	57 06 20	451 Toronto-North Bay	1442	1449
5250	57 06 21	42 Barrie-Toronto	0751	0753
1229	57 06 21	524 Allandale-Toronto	0915	1040
6031	57 06 21	41 Toronto-North Bay	1036	1045
1227	57 06 21	525 Toronto-Allandale	1315	1330
4525	57 06 21	451 Toronto-North Bay	1545	1557
5250	57 06 22	42 Barrie-Toronto	0753	0754
6007	57 06 22	47/2 Toronto-North Bay	0859	0859
SRS 135	57 06 22	410/2 Gravenhurst-Toronto	0935	0935
1228	57 06 22	524 Allandale-Toronto	1025	1025
6023	57 06 22	41 Toronto-North Bay	1042	1054
	57 06 23	No Traffic Recorded		

Notes:

Not all trains passing Newmarket were recorded. Some did not stop and others passed through when the station was closed.

*53, the Toronto Section of the *Continental*, did not usually stop at Newmarket. Apparently the operator was called out one evening to put up a red board for this train.

Locomotive types:

1200 series	- SW1200RS (any trailing units not usually listed)
2500 series	- 2-8-0
3200-3400 series	- 2-8-2
4500 series	- GP9 (trailing units not usually listed)
5200 series	- 4-6-2
6000 series	- 4-8-2
6100-6200 series	- 4-8-4

Passenger train 41 was similarly consistent. With one exception, it arrived between 10:36 and 10:48 a.m., and left between 10:40 and 10:54 a.m. On June 29 the train was about an hour late, arriving at 11:28 a.m. and leaving at 11:38 a.m., on account of running behind two sections of summer-only passenger train 55 (not scheduled in the 1954 time table) from Toronto to North Bay on the holiday weekend.

On two Saturday mornings in June 1957, Second 47 ran late enough to appear on the register at Newmarket, about eight hours behind the lead section (typically Second 47 left Toronto a couple of hours behind the first section). The only other passenger activity, during daytime hours, was a couple of northbound extras, which showed up on the evening of Sunday, June 9th.

As far as freight trains are concerned, the southbound way freight showed up between 8:48 and 11:30 a.m., most often between 9:15 and 10:00 a.m., and somewhat ahead of the schedule shown in Time Table No. 10. (This schedule had been removed from the timecard by June of 1957.) Of the 24 instances of the southbound way freight shown in the train register, on 17 occasions it took the siding at Newmarket for a meet with passenger train 41, a wait of upwards of two hours or more (this was obviously the lunch stop for the crew). On every Saturday (when all way freights had light work) during the month, the southbound way freight arrived and left in short order, ahead of number 41. On two of these occasions, the way freight would have taken the siding at Aurora, while in the other three instances it probably reached King, Maple or Concord before the meet. Only on one other day, a Wednesday, was the way freight early. The only time the way freight was held up occurred when running behind freight 410, which itself was running late. In conclusion, the scheduled meet shown with number 41 at Aurora likely occurred only twice in the month.

According to the train register, unscheduled northbound way freight 525 arrived anytime between 11:50 a.m. and 3:05 p.m., typically between noon and 1:30 p.m., having likely met passenger train 42 at Concord or a neighbouring station. In contrast to its southbound counterpart, the northbound way freight typically lingered at Newmarket anywhere from only five minutes (to handle a small amount of merchandise) to twenty minutes (likely setting off or lifting a car). It is very clear that the Allandale way freight

Time was Authority

In train operations in train order territory, time was authority. Everything a crew did was based on time. All passenger trains and some freight trains operated as regular trains, on a timetable schedule, with times shown at most stations. Regular trains could not leave a station before the designated time. Inferior trains had to stay out of the way of regular trains and be clear of the mainline when the regular trains were due. Time was especially important when working on single-track territory, (such as the Newmarket Sub.) with trains moving in both directions.

For instance, suppose I was the conductor on way freight 525 running as an extra north out of Toronto, for Allandale, ordered for 6:45am out of Bathhurst Street Yard. Before entering the Newmarket Sub. at Parkdale, I would have to make sure all superior trains due had arrived and left. I could do this by checking the train register at Parkdale, or by a Form "W" train order from the dispatcher.

Having ascertained that all superior trains due at Parkdale had arrived and left, I would allow my train to proceed north, watching the times of southbound trains 42 and 524 and northbound train 41. With all the switching en route and the way cars to work, we would probably have to clear 41 north at Downsview.

A train running on single track had to be in the clear for a following superior train at the time shown for the superior train at the station at the rear. If the 525 cleared 41 at Downsview, it would have to be in the clear with the switches closed, when 41 was due out of Fairbank.

Having cleared 41, we would likely hold 525 at Downsview for train 42. This time the rule was different. When meeting an opposing superior train, the inferior train had to be clear of the main line, with the switches closed, five minutes before the superior trains was due out of that station. Train 42 was due out of Downsview at 10:20 a.m. Therefore our train would have to be in the clear with the switches closed at 10:15 a.m.

Train crews, working on the mainline, were constantly monitoring their watches to keep track of all the superior trains. After a lifetime of constantly checking my watch, I found it hard to break this habit when I retired. For several years after retirement, I did not wear a watch because I was constantly looking at the time.

Don Grove CNR Conductor (Retired)

Using Public Passenger Time Tables

The public time tables are another useful tool that should not be overlooked in understanding passenger train movements in an area and era of interest. Twice a year at the change of time, the CNR issued system timetables that list almost all passenger trains. I say 'almost all' because certain express trains were not shown even though they were technically passenger trains. There were also instances of local seasonal services that were not listed. In particular the Camper's Specials on the Minaki and Quibell Subs appeared only on small card schedules beginning in 1955. Regular seasonally-operated trains sometimes appeared in public timetables but were not shown on the employee timecards because they operated as extras.

In an ideal world, the employee timetable, track layouts, station registers, dated photographs and recollections of retired employees would all be available to help the researcher or modeller with respect to the area and era of interest. When some of these items are not at hand, the more readily available public timetables can help to fill some of the gaps. Public passenger timetables can be particularly helpful when you have some of the above items but not all from the same date.

Al Lill

crews did the majority of their work at Newmarket on the southbound run, with all the sidings (with the exception of the Office Specialty Company) having points facing south. In addition to considerations of track geometry, this situation also fit the pattern of crews in the steam era. Lumping the heavier volume of work into the going-away leg of a two-day trip was advantageous for a couple of reasons - to have more rest time at home and to maximize pay for overtime. (The crew was paid for a minimum of 100 miles on the faster day anyway).

On the several occasions that manifest freight 410 was late during the month, it typically passed through Newmarket between 9 and 11 a.m. Otherwise, it indeed arrived and left before 7:00 a.m. On at least three occasions in June 1957, it ran in two sections.

According to the train register, northbound freight 451 came through Newmarket in the afternoon five days a week, generally between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. This train often passed through without stopping, and otherwise completed any necessary work in a matter of a few minutes. A handful of freight and passenger extras and work trains round out the month's daytime operations at Newmarket for the month of June 1957.

Conclusions

Concluding our look at this example of a steam era employee timetable, a few general conclusions can be made. Firstly, no assumptions should be made about existence of industrial sidings based merely upon footnotes in operating timetables. Local city or telephone directories, fire insurance maps and railway operating diagrams are excellent sources of information in this regard, to supplement notes from the time cards. Secondly, with few exceptions, passenger trains could be depended upon to run on the schedules indicated. Finally, information regarding the existence and movement of freight trains, while suggestive of operations, is insufficient to describe actual train movements. More instructive in this regard is the knowledge of retired railway employees who worked the territory. To quote a former Allandale Division train dispatcher, "just because something happened twenty days out of the month doesn't mean it happened that way every day." After more than forty years since the last fires were dropped, it goes without saying that in considering action along this avenue of research, time is of the essence.

*All quotations presented where source is not otherwise identified are taken from the Canadian National Railways Uniform Code of Operating Rules, effective August 26, 1951.

Acknowledgements

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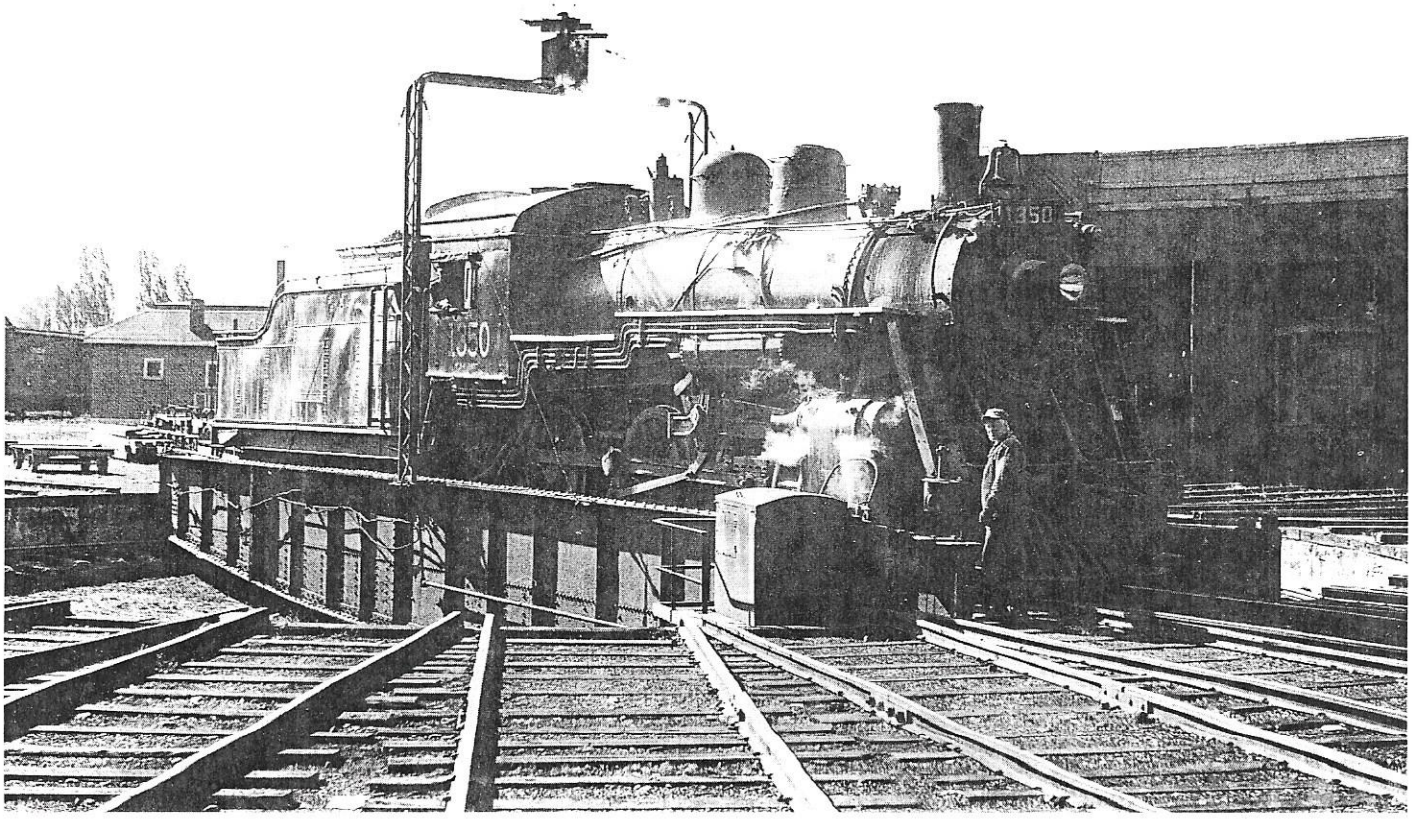

H-6 Ten Wheeler 1350, in care of the hostler on the Allandale turntable on October 1, 1957, is typical of light power used on regular 'switcher' assignments not shown in employee timetables.
—photo: Allan Crompton