

Peterborough - Lindsay

LOSING MORE RAIL LINES

The National Transportation Agency, by its Order 1989-R-160, dated June 12, 1989, authorized CN Rail to abandon its line between Peterborough and Lindsay, as well as the line from Peterborough to Lakefield effective in 30 days. CN and CP had made arrangements for CP Rail to take over rail service to those industries in Peterborough located on CN trackage. CN had taken over CP's customers in Lindsay; that permitted CP to abandon its Bobcaygeon Subdivision. In late-breaking news, apparently the City of Peterborough has requested and obtained a 15-day extension to the date of abandonment. However, indications are, since various track changes in Peterborough were well advanced for the CP Rail take over, their service to CN customers has commenced.

This current abandonment, if permitted to go through by the National Transportation Agency, will permit the removal of trackage built by five different railways and includes:

1. The Lakefield Spur, built as part of the Midland Railway of Canada: the 9.51 miles from Peterborough to Lakefield was opened for traffic on January 1, 1871. The Lakefield Subdivision, as it was called in the January 1927 CNR Timetable, had one first class and one second class passenger train each way every day except Sundays, down from the six first class passenger trains per day in the summer of 1908.
2. The Ashburnham Spur trackage is probably the last remaining part of the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway Co. This line extended from Cobourg via Rice Lake to Peterborough (Chemong Junction). The portion in Peterborough from Hiawatha was opened for traffic December 29, 1851.
3. The Peterborough Industrial Spur trackage is part of The Port Hope, Lindsay and Beaverton Railway Company and this section was opened for traffic on August 12, 1858. In 1908, this line had two mail trains and three passenger express trains per day as part of the service between Toronto and Port Hope via Peterborough.
4. The Campbellford spur is part of the former Campbellford Subdivision that extended from Belleville to Lindsay until the portion east of Peterborough was abandoned under the authority of the Railway Transport Committee in February 1987. The line from Peterborough to Lindsay was constructed by two separate railways. The 8.78 miles from Omemee Junction to Lindsay was constructed as part of the Port Hope, Lindsay and Beaverton Railway and was opened on December 30, 1857. The Toronto and Ottawa Railway Co. constructed the 14.51 miles between Peterborough and Omemee Junction and opened it in 1883. The January 1927 CNR Timetable shows one first class passenger train and two first class mail trains each way six days a week. In addition, the trackage west of Omemee Junction had a second class train six days a week that also traversed the Bethany Subdivision from Omemee Junction to Millbrook Junction.

The 1927 CNR Timetable carries a couple of interesting footnotes. The first relates to a three-armed semaphore at the junction with the CPR. The top arm governed the Campbellford, the middle the Lakefield trains, and the bottom the CPR. The second may be of interest to some of the traction fans as it is noted there were two Peterboro Radial Railway (Electric) crossings of the CNR Campbellford equipped with semaphore signals. These were on Charlotte and Locke Streets. There was also a crossing at Water Street on the Lakefield line as well as one at Park Street over the trackage to Canadian General Electric Company; these two crossings were not interlocked, but were flagged by the Peterboro Radial Railway's staff.