# THE KINGSCOURT CUT-OFF

# THE ALVINSTON BRANCH

C. H. RIFF

#### The Kingscourt Cut-Off

In 1891 the Grand Trunk Railway had completed the Sarnia Tunnel under the St Clair River that gave a direct unbroken railway link between Canada and the United States. Freight traffic that had used the Windsor line was now transferred to the Sarnia line. The Grand Trunks former Great Western Railway line was still at this time single tracked. With a Grand Trunk terminal in Chicago the GTR enjoyed a heavy traffic in "bridge" traffic bound for the Niagara Frontier just as the Great Western had enjoyed thirty to forty years earlier. To the south lay the Air Line that ran from Glencoe to Fort Erie and Niagara Falls. It had been under-utilized The grades were minimal. Trains were sent south from London to St Thomas over the leased London and Port Stanley Railway. The Grand Trunk lease of the London and Port Stanley Railway expired on February 28th, 1893.

It was decided to let the L&PS lease lapse and the the GTR would build the Kingscourt Cut-Off from Kingscourt on the Sarnia to London line south twenty-one miles to Glencoe, Ontario on the Windsor to London line and the junction of the Air Line from Fort Erie. It was planned that through freight trains could be routed from Sarnia to Kingscourt, Glencoe, and St Thomas directly to Buffalo, New York. There would be only one village of seven hundred people, Alvinston served by the freight cut-off. Thus in 1892 the work started.

September 1, 1892

The rails had been laid up to the Canadian Pacific Railway crossing. The diamond crossing will be laid on the CPR crossing on Sunday next.

September 15, 1892

Work was stopped to gain permission to cross the Canadian Pacific

September 22, 1892

The CPR diamond crossing has been laid.

September 29, 1892

Ballasting is continuing, while waiting for the semaphores to arrive for the CPR crossing.

October 6, 1892

The Grand Trunk passenger station will be erected on the Lovell property opposite Lorne Street. A water tank will be located at this point and supplied with water from the river, where an engine and all the latest appliances will be used to force the water up into the tank through a large pipe. An offer has been made to the town council, giving them the power to tap this pipe at each street, when, by extending the pipes through the town, with hydrants at certain intervals, the place would have a most effective waterworks system for fire purposes. After the pipes and hydrants had been placed in position the only expenses would be one dollar an hour when being used in the event of a fire,

#### October 13, 1892

The rails have been laid on the Glencoe-Kingscourt extension of the Loop Line for a distance of six miles from Glencoe, and from Kingscourt to within two or three miles to Alvinston. As there is considerable work to be done in Alvinston and vicinity, however, the line will not be ready for traffic for nearly three months yet.

#### October 27, 1892

The steel has been laid on the Glencoe to Kingcourt extension excepting about a mile between the Sydenham River bridge and Alvinston. The bridge work is well under way, nearly half of the iron work being erected. It is possible the line may be opened for traffic this year yet.

The old engine house at the turntable on the Air Line, (at Glencoe), which has been twisted by many a storm until it looked as ifs been the slightest puff must be its final doom, has at last been torn down and removed. It had been built with the Air Line, some twenty years ago but was seldom made use of.

### November 17,

It is expected that the rails will be connected this week.

#### December 8, 1892

The filling on the Glencoe-Kingscourt line has been completed through Alvinston and the station at that place is well under way. The iron work of the Sydenham bridge is expected to be completed to-day and it will not be long till the track is connected at that point. As there is considerable ballasting to do, however, the road will not be opened for general traffic for about six weeks yet.

#### February 3, 1993

Shortly after five o'clock Monday morning, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1893 Grand Trunk brakeman Willaim Brown left London on his usual train the No. 553 ballast train. He had been engaged in hauling gravel from the pit at Komoka to the Glencoe to Kingscourt Loop Line since the work had begun. About three miles east of Alvinston, is a bridge spanning the Sydenham River, commonly known as the Bear Creek. The distance from the top of the bridge to the river below is sixty feet. Just as the train approached this bridge, Brown started from the from the engine cab to the gravel cars to put on the brakes. He had reached the rear end of the tender, and was stepping to the car when he missed his footing. With nothing to grasp he fell from the train. His shoulder struck the car and he then fell nearly seventy feet to the ice below. He was dead.

### February 3, 1893

The new Glencoe to Kingscourt GTR line through Alvinston will be ready for traffic no later than February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1893. The Alvinston station is being completed.

#### February 13, 1893

The first through freight train from the tunnel to Buffalo over the Kingscourt Cut-Off, arriving at st Thomas at 9:30 in the morning and left for Buffalo at ten o'clock. It was in charge of Conductor Smuck and engineer Jeffery.

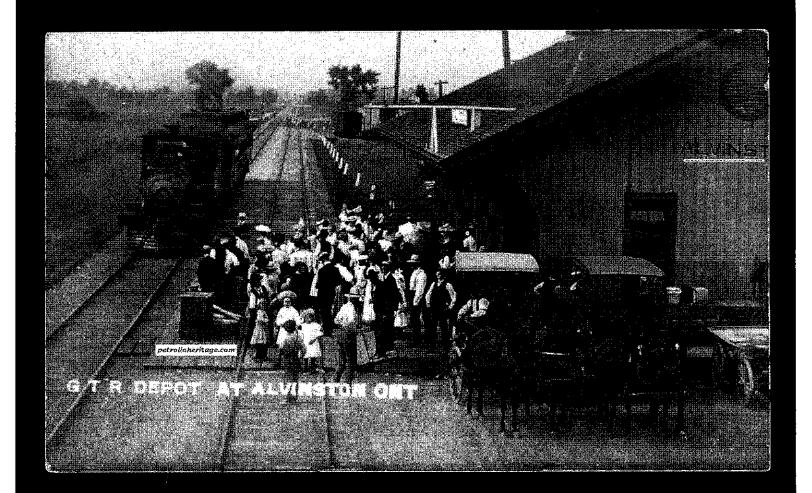
#### March 15, 1893

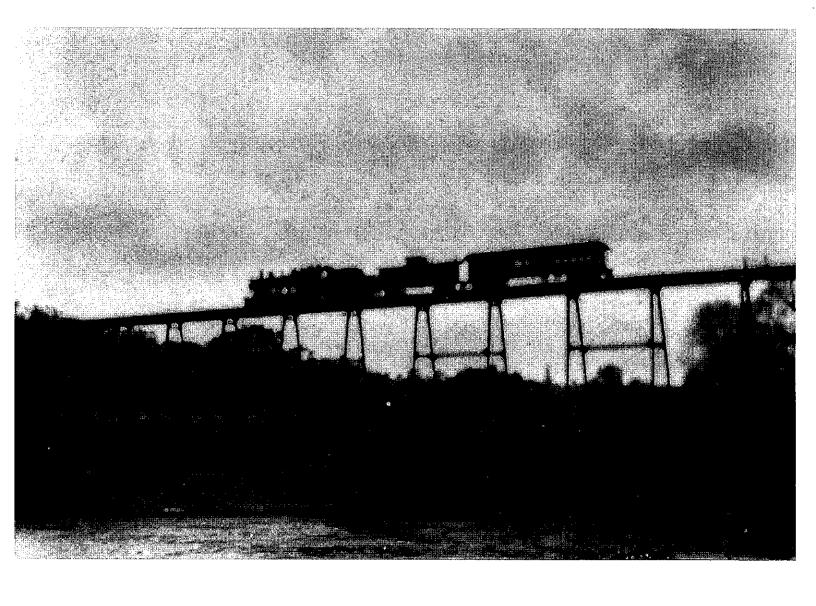
Wednesday morning, on March 15th, 1893 at 5:10 a passenger timetable came into operation on the new railway connecting the Air Line and Sarnia branches of the Grand Trunk and at 7:55 the first passenger train over the new line arrived at Glencoe from Sarnia. Shortly afterwards a train left Glencoe for Kingscourt with a special car attached containing the reeve and members of the town council, business men, and others at the invitation of the Grand Trunk. The train was in charge of Conductor Smith and was drawn by engine No. 870; the driver was Charles Cheeseborough, and fireman McMillan. After a pleasant twenty-one mile ride taking about one hour Kingscourt Junction was reached. Here the party was was joined by District superintendent Tiffin and other GTR officials. After one hour the party then started the return trip with the train stopping at Alvinston for a three hour dinner and tour. The train stopped at Fergusons crossing and Mitchell's Mill, A flag station had been established at Ferguson's Crossing.

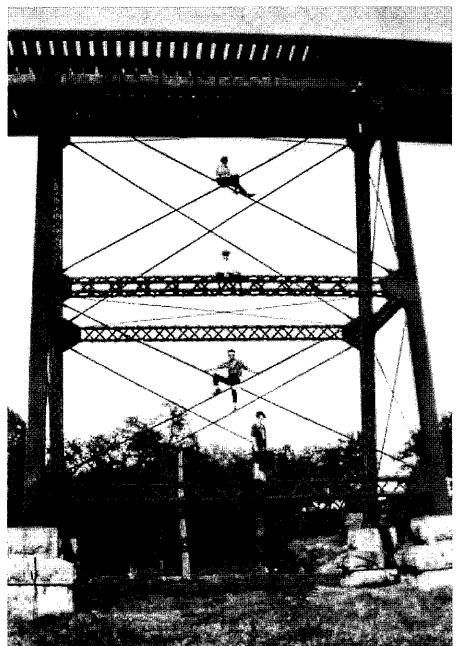
### August 25, 1893

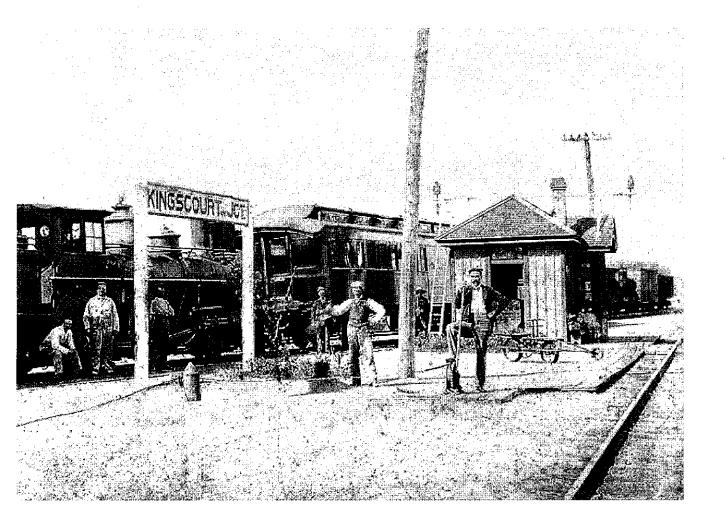
A collision which resulted in considerable damage to rolling stock occurred at Kingscourt Junction on Thursday night last. Special freight train No. 86, from Sarnia bound for Buffalo, via the cut-off, was run into from the rear by main line freight No. 88. Four cars of the head train were knocked off the track, and the engine turned over on its side. The trainmen were able to jump in time, and escaped unhurt.

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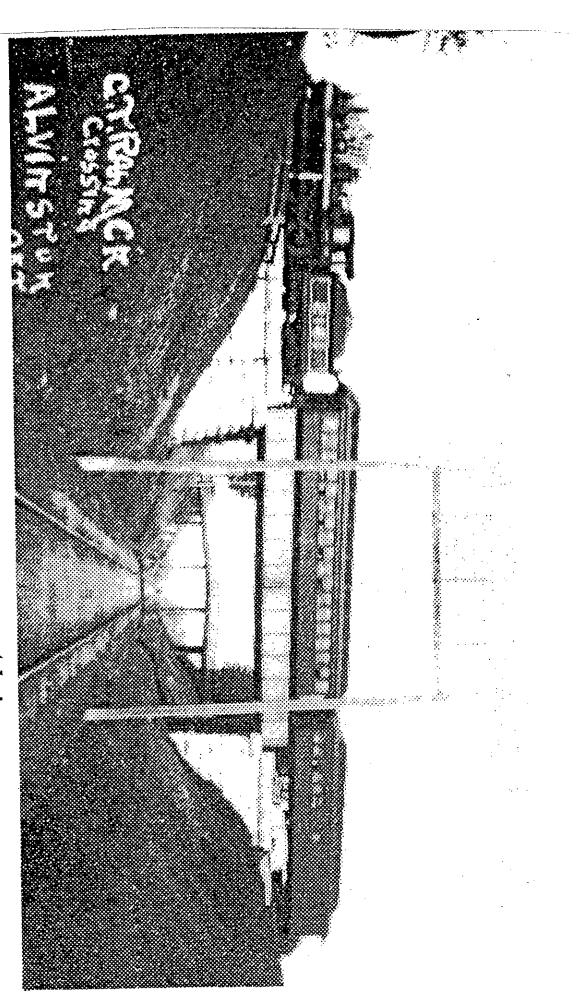












New York Central and C.N.R. crossing at Alvinston.

that the Commission is not a railway company. By its Act of Incorporation, 1899 (Can.), c. 34, it is provided by s. 22:—

"In this section, the expression 'harbour tracks' means rail-ways and tramways within the boundaries of the harbour of Quebec; and harbour lines mean branch lines connecting harbour tracks with main lines of railway; but nothing in this section shall be deemed to constitute the corporation a railway company within the meaning of the Railway Act and its amendments."

The powers possessed by the Board over lines of railway subject to its jurisdiction are not extended, by inference, to lines which are specifically stated to be outside the Railway Act. It, therefore, follows that the Board, under the circumstances involved in the present case, cannot, as a matter of initial power, direct the absorption in whole or in part by the Canadian National Railways of the switching charges involved.

COMMISSIONERS NORRIS and STONEMAN concur.

Alvinston

#### RAILWAY SERVICE—ABANDONMENT

TOWNSHIP OF BROOKE, ONT. et al. v. C.N.R.

(File 22586.1.)

Board of Railway Commissioners. January 28, 1932.

Railways II A - Railway service - Abandonment - Operating costs - Revenue.

Under its incorporating Act (R.S.C. 1927, c. 172, s. 23), leave of the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Board is necessary to enable the C.N.R. to abandon the operation of any portion of its railway. Upon the application of the Company the Board by Order dated December 7, 1930, recommended to the Governor in Council that the Company be permitted to abandon the operation of its Alvinston Subdivision. Protests against the closing of the subdivision were received by the Board, and on the application of the business men and farmers of Alvinston and the Township of Brooke a re-hearing was granted.

One of the first considerations to be taken into account in determining whether leave to abandon the operation of the railway should be granted or not is the effect such abandonment will have on the present shippers on the line in regard to railway service.

While the abandonment of this subdivision would involve a long haul by truck or we son to reach a railway, Alvinston would still be served by two main lines of the C.N., a line of the C.P., and a line of the M.C. Railway Companies, which would leave, in the

Board's view, ample railway facilities to enable shippers on the line proposed to be abandoned to get their products to market.

Comparison of the total receipts for the years 1929, 1930, and 1931 with the annual cost of operation shows the Alvinston Subdivision is being operated at a heavy loss. Further if its operation is to be continued a considerable capital expenditure would be necessary to put the line in condition to handle the traffic.

Held, upon the material filed together with the evidence and argument submitted, that said Order of December 7, 1930, recommending for the approval of the Governor in Council that the C.N.R. be permitted to abandon the operation of its Alvinston Subdivision, except that portion northwest of Glencoe to Gillies Siding, a distance of 4.22 miles—this exception was made to ensure service to the Dominion Petroleum Co. for shipping crude oil in tank cars from that point—should stand.

Heard at Glencoe, January 8, 1932.

J. P. Pratt, for the C.N.R.

N. L. LeSueur, K.C., for the Applicants.

Fullerton, Chief Commissioner:—On October 28, 1930, the Canadian National Railway Co. applied to this Board under s. 19 of 1919 (Can.), c. 13 (now R.S.C. 1927, c. 172, s. 23), for an order recommending to the Governor in Council the abandonment of the operation of the Alvinston Subdivision of its railway.

On December 7, an Order was made recommending for the approval of the Governor in Council that the Canadian National Railway Co. be permitted to abandon the operation of this subdivision, except that portion northwest of Glencoe to Gillies Siding, a distance of 4.22 miles. This exception was made to ensure service to the Dominion Petroleum Co. Ltd. for shipping crude oil in tank cars from that point.

Protests against the closing of the subdivision having been received from farmers and others living in the vicinity of the line, the Board decided to grant a re-hearing which was held at Glencoe on January 8, 1932.

The Alvinston Subdivision which is sought to be closed extends from Glencoe on a line of the C.N.R. running from London to Windsor in a northwesterly direction twenty-one miles to Kingscourt on the line of the C.N.R. running from London to Sarnia. Alvinston, a village of about 700 people, situate about half way between Glencoe and Kingscourt, is the only station on this line. There are, however, five sidings at which

should prepare and file returns showing the exact amount of revenue received for the years 1930 and 1931. These figures have now been filed and show the following:—

Total	Receipts for	or 1930	\$3	2,258
Total	Receipts fo	or 1931		6,646
Of these am	ounts the f	following ar	re credited to	Alvinston:

 1930
 \$25,588

 1931
 22,940

It will be seen, therefore, that the great bulk of the traffic for this line is shipped from Alvinston which, as above stated, is served by the Michigan Central Railway.

Maintenance of Way and Structures \$20,000 Wages of Agents, Station Fuel, Etc 2,000
Wages of Agents, Station Fuel, Etc 2,000
3 · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Train Service 8,520
Expenses—C.P.R. Interlocker

Not only is the line being operated at a loss but if its operation is to be continued, the railway company say it will be necessary to make considerable capital expenditure to keep the line in condition to handle traffic. For example, they say that a bridge must be replaced at an expenditure of \$150,000. Mr. LeSueur in his written argument contends that this amount is excessive, and he says that the railway company previously gave the figure at from \$40,000 to \$60,000. The fact, however, remains that in either case the capital expenditure involved is substantial.

Another capital expenditure which it is said will have to be made shortly is in connection with an automatic interlocker at the crossing of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Mr. LeSueur contends that inasmuch as under the Order of the Board the portion of the line from Gillies Siding to Glencoe is being continued this capital expenditure is out of the picture. Mr. Spencer, the Head of the Board's Operating Department, advises me that the line retained between Gillies Siding and Glencoe will furnish only a switching service and as such will not require the expensive interlocking device necessary if the road were being operated in the ordinary way.

Mr. LeSueur has made some very ingenious calculations in connection with revenue and operating costs of the line with a view to showing that it is not really losing as much money as the railway company claims. For example, he says that Gillies Siding is 4.2 miles from Glencoe, or exactly one-fifth of the total length of the line and, consequently, that in calculating expenditures you must deduct one-fifth of the cost of maintenance of way and structure and of train service. Providing merely an infrequent switching service between Gillies Siding and Glencoe would not in my opinion modify the figures to anything like the extent claimed by Mr. LeSueur. The railway company would be delighted to cut out the service between Gillies Siding and Glencoe along with the rest of the line, but the Board felt that if this were permitted it would entirely destroy the investment of the Dominion Petroleum Co., at Gillies Siding, and for this reason required the railway company to continue a switching service to this company.

After carefully studying all the material filed, together with the evidence and the argument submitted, I can come to no other conclusion than that the Alvinston Subdivision is being operated at a heavy loss, and in my opinion the operation of this subdivision has become unnecessary and inexpedient by reason of the economic considerations involved and the Order recommending its abandonment should stand.

COMMISSIONER STONEMAN concurred.

#### SUBWAY—APPORTIONMENT OF COST.

C.N.R. v. QUEBEC R., L. & P. Co.

(File 26782.21.)

Board of Railway Commissioners. January 23, 1932.

Railways II B—Subway—Cost—Apportionment — Party — "Interested or affected by"—Railway Act, s. 39.

The C.N.R. applied for an Order varying or rescinding the Board's Order authorizing the City of Quebec to construct a subway under its tracks at Charlesbourg Road, and dividing the cost of construction, less a contribution allowed from The Railway Grade Crossing Fund, as well as the cost of maintenance, equally between the City and the C.N., by placing part of the cost of construction upon the Q.R.L. & P. Co.

LONDON Free Press Dec 9/93/

conger and Charles Gilmore

## SCRIBED AS DANGEROUS

# volved in Arms Cache and

Attempted Prison Lower State, Dec. 1.

Substitute of the President State of the Canadian National Railways to glimors brothers, at the close of their sial before the Free State military founding a charge of filegal possession of arms and ammunition and of their distributions against the recent act trended to suppress agitation against he Geverament.

The Glimore brothers were described in the state of the Canadian National Railways to close the Alvinton subdivision, between Glencoe and Kingscourt, it was learned today. The contention of the railway is trended to suppress agitation against the the three todays are substituted in the state of the st

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through a two-story window to the street. She was re-moved to the hospital in the

On Alvinston Subdivision From Glencoe To Kingscourt

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## Questions About Canadian National Railways Branch Lines.

C. R. McIntosh, North Battleford, Sask, said in the House of Commons, Feb. 23:-"I should like to ask the Minister of Railways a question in regard to the St. Walburg-Loon Lake-Bonnyville-Ashmont branch of the Canadian National Rys., north of the North Saskatchewan River and linking North Battleford and Edmonton. I understand 25 miles of that road towards Edmonton is graded and ready for steeling and 44 miles south of the Beaver River towards North Battleford is graded and ready for steeling. Has the Minister of Railways, considering all phases of the problem, looked into the question of steeling on those 69 miles in order to supply railway facilities to the people along that line and also as an aid to the solution of the unemployment problem in North Battleford?'

The Minister of Railways and Canals, Dr. Manion, replied:—"I am told by the railway management they have not made any recommendation towards the continuation of that work at present any more than they have towards the continuation of any of the branch line work on other branches throughout the country, because of the very serious financial situation of the railways and because of the continuous decrease in the earnings of the railways even as compared with last year. It is in exactly the same position as other branch lines throughout the country, and so far as we know at present no further work is likely to be done on it. There is quite a wide space, I think 36 miles, on which nothing has been done yet."

H. E. Spencer, Battle River, Sask, said:—"Will the same answer be given to the proposed branch line from Bulwark, Alta., to a point called Airways, where a grade has been made?"

The Minister of Railways and Canals replied:—"I do not just know about the line to which the member refers, but I shall look into the matter."

Committee on Government Railways and Shipping.-The House of Commons adopted a motion by the Minister of Railways and Canals, Dr. Manion, on Feb. 23, as follows:—That standing or-der 63 of the House relating to the appointment of the select standing committees be amended by adding to them for the present session a select standing committee on railways and shipping owned, operated and controlled by the Government, to which will be referred the accounts and the estimates of the Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Government Merchant Marine for the present session, for consideration and report to the House. Provided, however, that nothing in this resolution shall be construed to curtail in any way the full right of discussion in committee of supply and that the said committee consist of Messrs. Beaubien, Bell (St. Antoine), Bothwell, Cantley, Chaplin, Duff, Gobeil, Gray, Hanson (York-Sunbury), Heaps, Kennedy (Peace River), McGib-bon, MacMillan (Saskatoon), Manion, Munn, Power, Rogers and Stewart (Lethbridge).

Montreal Central Terminal Co. has given notice of application to Parliament for the passing of an act to consolidate the powers granted it by its act of incorporation, Dominion Statutes of 1890, chap. 93, and amending acts, to revive

the powers granted it by the Dominion Statutes of 1909, chap. 109, secs. 2 and 3, and to define the time for the completion of tunnels under the St. Lawrence River. The Statutes of 1909, chap. 109, sec. 2, authorized the company to build and operate one or more tunnels for railway purpose under the St. Lawrence River, from Montreal to the south shore of the river, and sec. 3 authorized it to build and operate a bridge or tunnel across or under the St. Lawrence near Lachine.

Canadian Railway Centenary.—A 10-day exhibition, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the signing, on Feb. 25, 1832, of the charter of the Champlain and St. Lawrence Ry. Co., was begun, Feb. 22, by Montreal Antiquarian and Numismatic Society, at the Chateau de Ramezay. Outstanding among the exhibits is one of two name plates of the Dorchester, the first locomotive in Canada. The plate, of polished brass, with engraved lettering, was turned up by a ploughman in 1888, where the Dorchester had been derailed and damaged in the early sixties, and came into possession of the Brothers of Joliette College, by whom it has been loaned for the exhibition.

Freight Car Condition and Supply.—
The Railway Association of Canada reports that on Jan. 15 there were 198,-162 freight cars on Canadian lines, of which 14,234, or 7.2%; were in bad order, and that there were 41,403 surplus cars on hand. The American Railway Association's Car Service Division reports that, on Jan. 1, there were 2,169,-407 cars on lines on U.S.A. class 1 railways, of which 187,666, or 8.7%, were awaiting or undergoing repairs. On Jan. 31, there were 741,864 surplus freight cars on U.S.A. class 1 lines, compared with 740,925 on Jan. 14, 1932, and 646,750 on Jan. 31, 1931.

Alvinston Subdivision Abandonment.—
The Board of Railway Commissioners, following a hearing at Glencoe, Ont., Jan. 8, passed order 48,038, Jan. 28, dismissing an application by business men and farmers of Alvinston and Brooks Tp., Ont., to rescind order 47,784, Dec. 7, 1931, which recommended to the Governor in council that Canadian National Rys. be permitted to abandon its Alvinston Subdivision, London Division, Southern Ontario District, line, extending from Glencoe, on the London-Windsor line, 21 miles to Kingscourt on the London-Sarnia line.

Loan for Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Ry.—G. H. Webster, Vice President, M. St. P. & S.S.M. Ry., a Canadian Pacific Ry. subsidiary, has announced that the company has applied to the United States Government for a loan not to exceed \$2,990,173, with which to pay bond interest due from March 1 to Sept. 1.

Gibraltar Tunnel. — Recent reports from Spain indicate that the republican government is anxious to proceed with building a tunnel between Europe and Africa, at Gibraltar, a project which has been discussed from time to time since 1868.

Railway Taxes in Quebec.—The Quebec Legislature passed a bill, at its recent session, to amend the Corporation Tax Act, making important changes in the methods of railway taxation.

South African Railways.—Total railway mileage operated by the South African Railways and Harbor administration at the end of the last fiscal year was 13.732.

#### Alberta Coal Transportat Ontario.

The test period for the move Alberta domestic coal to Onta flat rate to the public of \$6.7 the difference between that rate cost of carriage being made u railways by the Dominion Gownich would have expired on A 1932, has been extended to B 1933, by Dominion order in coof Feb. 9, as follows:—"The coff the Privy Council have hathem a report, dated Feb. 3, 11 the Minister of Mines, stating test movements of Alberta contario authorized by order in coof March 16, 1928, and as amorder 2,364 of Dec. 3, 1929, a tended by order 1,268 of June 5, terminate on March 15, 1932. mittee, on the recommendation Minister of Mines, advise that termination of the provisions 439 together with its amend extension as above stated, the visions be extended for a furtly of one year."

Order in council 439 was giv in our April, 1928, issue, pg. order 1,268 was given in full in 1930, issue, pg. 433. (Feb., pg

Dominion Financial Assistance adian Pacific Ry.-H. Mitchel ton East, Ont., asked in the Commons, Feb. 15:- "Has any assistance been rendered by go funds to the Canadian Pacific ing the last six months, and what purpose and amoun Minister of Finance, Mr. Riplied:—"None, apart from pay in the ordinary course of buservices rendered, e.g., the caservices rendered rende mails and steamship subsidies under the Department of ] Commerce, with the exception 710 being amount paid under employment Relief Act, 1930, est on expenditures undertak lief measures in advance of requirements, under agreement ed by order in council 2292 of 1930."

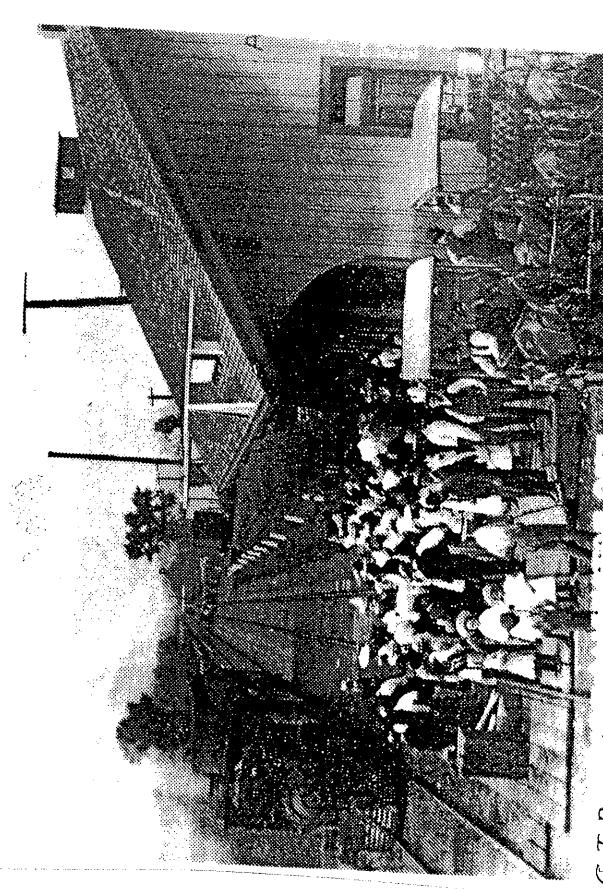
London Terminals. — It rumored, recently, that St. Pation, London, England, will be as a passenger terminal. It rumored, a few months ago, Euston passenger station abandoned in favor of a new Camden Town, but no definite the matter have been taken.

South African Government have about 2,100 standard gracities, representing over 100 classes, the large number being due to the fact that prunion, in 1910, there were through the systems in South Africa, eaching locomotive designs alon lines.

Ties for African Railway timber suitable for ties is no easily in South Africa, and utisteel ties has been extended coon the government railways.

Southeastern Railroad Secur has given notice of applicat Dominion Secretary of State fsurrender its charter.

The Mechanical Division, Railway Association, will hold meeting at Congress Hotel, Cl June 23 and 24,



G.T.R. station looking south. Note canning factory smoke stack in background.