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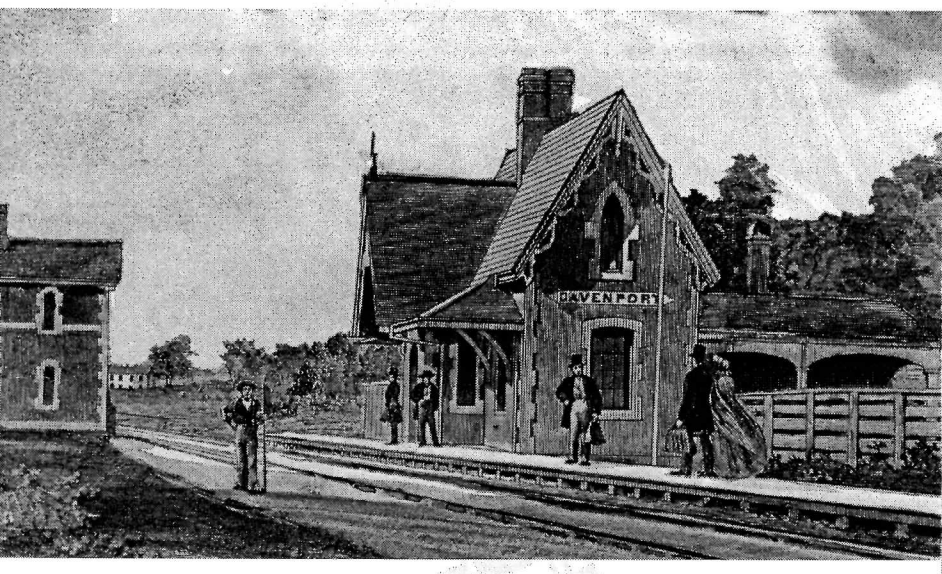
All Aboard Toronto!

RAILWAYS AND THE GROWTH OF A CITY

August 4-October 7 · 2001

· Exhibit Guide ·



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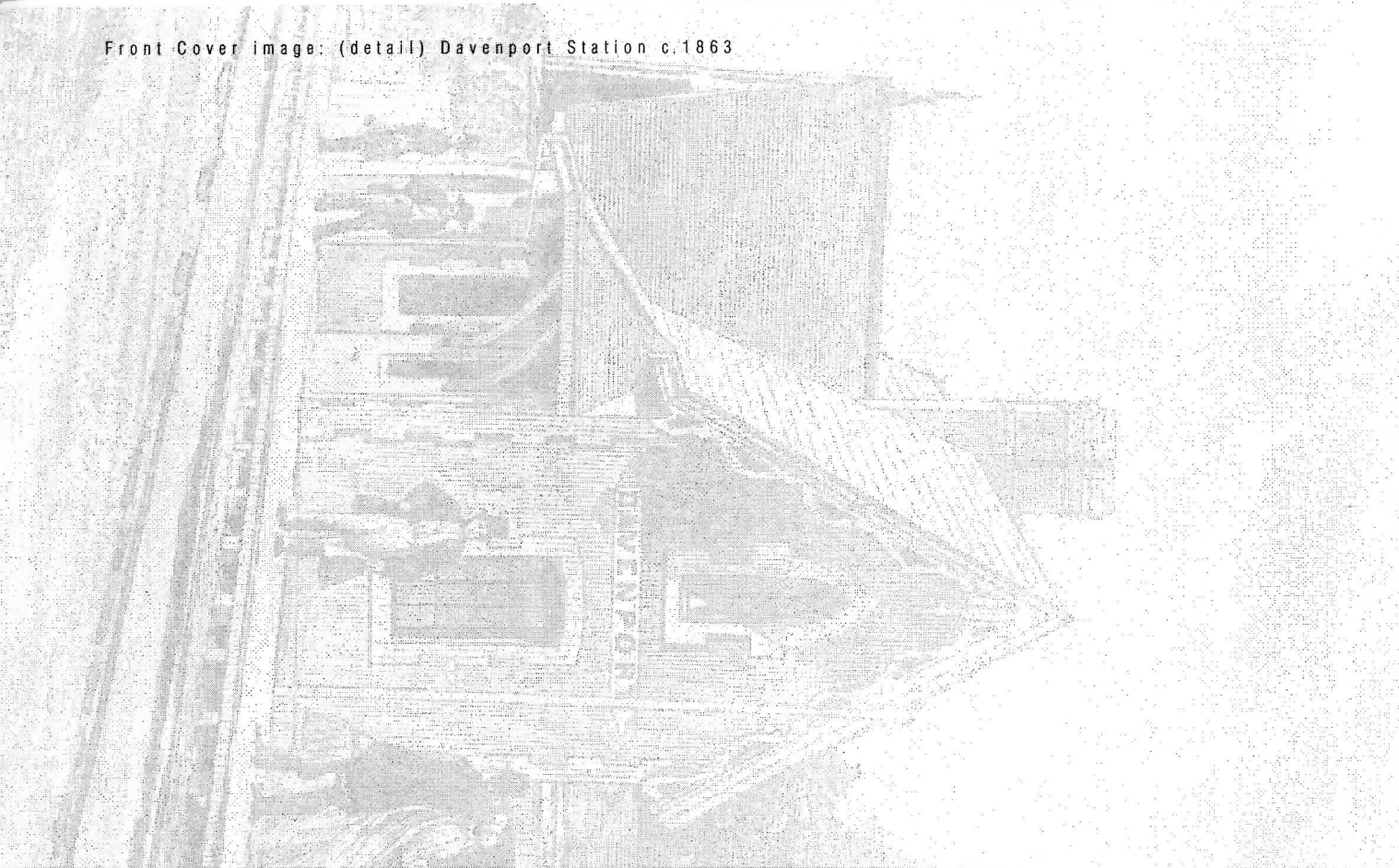
Front Cover image: (detail) Davenport Station c.1863

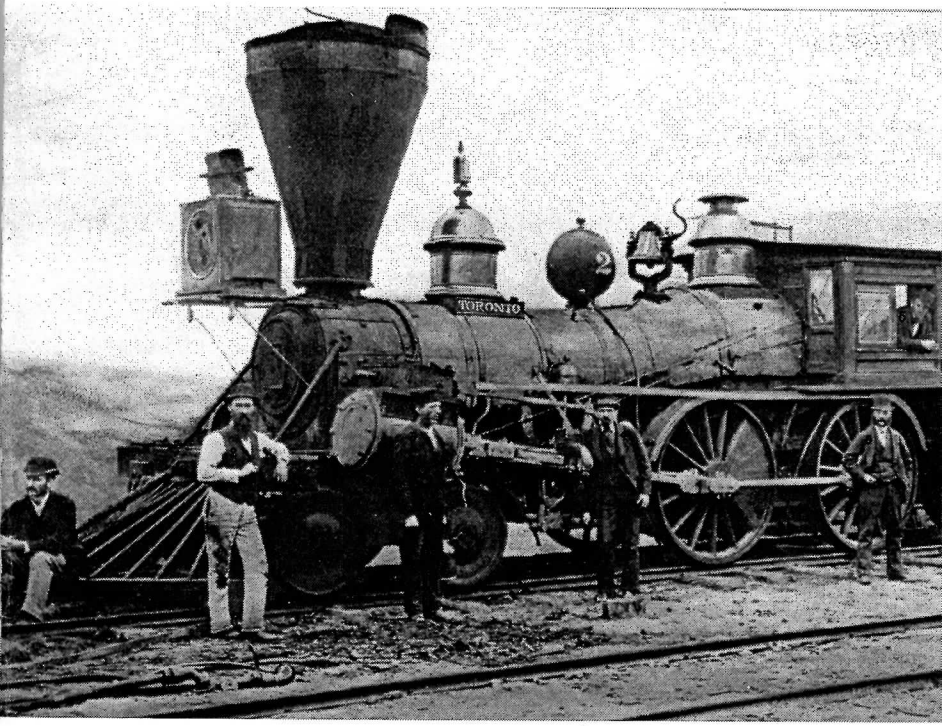


Welcome to All Aboard Toronto!

Railways and the Growth of a City

This exhibition explores railway and city history. The coming of the steam engine altered Toronto tremendously between 1850 and 1950, transforming a remote colonial outpost into a busy cosmopolitan city. It was a period of intense growth.

Toronto has been a major railroad and immigration centre for Ontario and indeed, North America over the past 150 years. The arrival of railways changed the face and fabric of the city in many ways:



The Toronto, Engine #2 (JRR 1115)

Railways and the Growth of a City *Continued from page 3*

Transportation changes
- Railways linked the city to neighbouring communities, the provinces, the United States and western Canada.

Economic impact
- Railways strongly stimulated the city's commercial, economic and financial growth.

Community development
- Railways initiated the development of a number of local communities around Toronto.

Physical and built landscape changes
- Railways promoted a surge of urban building.

Social development
- Railways created new entrepreneurs, provided employment and opportunity to immigrants and improved mobility and travel.

The exhibition focuses on four areas of Toronto – the waterfront, East Toronto, West Toronto Junction and Leaside. It shows the influential contribution that railways made in developing these local communities; places that began as railway towns and became neighbourhoods in our "city of neighbourhoods".

You will see that the issues of the past are still relevant today. Plans for revitalizating the railway lands, for reconnecting the city with its waterfront, and reclaiming industrial areas were being debated then and continue to be a challenge in the early 21st century.

The materials on exhibition are, except where noted, from the collections of the Toronto Public Library.

The Library is grateful for the support provided by the Millennium Bureau of Canada, The Toronto Star and toronto.com for this exhibition.

Toronto before the Railways

Toronto, on the shore of Lake Ontario, was an isolated city before the arrival of the railways in the 1850s. Three primitive roads connected the city with the rest of the province: Kingston Road went east, the Dundas Highway went west to London, and Yonge Street trailed north to Lake Simcoe. When it rained, all the roads became quagmires. Most people chose to travel by boat, if possible.

York, the name of the original town, was a small ten-block rectangle at the eastern end of the harbour. It extended from Berkeley Street west to George Street and north from Front Street, which ran along the harbour, to Lot or Queen Street. In 1834, York became the city of Toronto. By the 1850s, the city was expanding westwards. The Provincial Parliament and many fine homes were located beyond Yonge Street. Farther to the west, the Garrison Reserve, a large piece of land used for troop maneuvers, surrounded Fort York.

Charles Dickens, who visited in the 1840s, wrote in his *American Notes* that many of Toronto's streets were paved and gas lit. Planked footways along the streets were "kept in very good and clean repair". King Street was known as the best street in the city, and its stores had plate-glass windows. When fire destroyed the area around St. James Cathedral and the Market in 1849, the buildings were rebuilt with brick walls and tin roofs. At the time, the city was able to boast of a town hall, law courts, university and colleges, a Board of Trade, a Mechanics' Institute and public baths.

The Provincial Asylum, the Provincial Parliament, church steeples and the windmill at Gooderham and Worts' mill and distillery were the most visible structures on the low skyline. The well-to-do lived in large houses on spacious lots, many near the harbour. The poor lived in wretched housing and scrambled for a living. Freely available, inexpensive liquor served as an outlet. Sanitation in the city was poor. Sewage and water sources often mingled, and Torontonians suffered through periodic epidemics of typhoid and cholera.

For entertainment, travelling circuses, such as Barnum's, led parades through the city to the Fair Green by the lakeshore. People danced the Elephant Polka and the Grand Trunk Mazurka at charity and military balls. St. Lawrence Hall offered sophisticated activities like the recital of the Swedish Nightingale, Jenny Lind, and lectures by the American abolitionist, Frederick Douglass. In the summertime, horse-ferries went to the Peninsula (Toronto Island) for fishing and picnics. In the winter, ice-boating, skating and fishing were popular pastimes on the frozen harbour.

By the early 1850s, Toronto's population had grown to over 40,000 people. The city was surrounded by small hamlets such as Yorkville, Parkdale, Brockton and Carlton and a more remote hinterland of villages, farms, orchards, and vineyards.

Toronto's Railway Era Begins
The 1850s to 1860s

"Let us in the West... push through a western railroad, cheap or dear. Let us have the road."

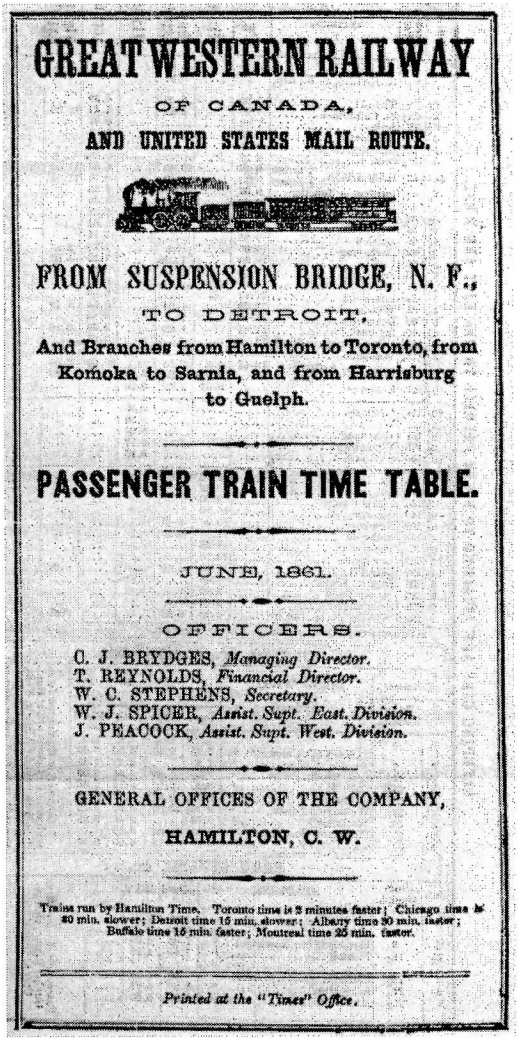
The Globe, March 19th, 1850

Toronto entered the railway era on May 16, 1853 when the engine "Toronto" pulled four passenger cars to Machell's Corners (Aurora). This first trip took about five hours. Beginning at Front and Simcoe Streets near the Provincial Parliament building, the train ran west on track south of Front Street passing Bathurst Street and then curved north. The route's destination, Collingwood, resurrected Lieutenant Governor Simcoe's "Toronto Passage" as a shortcut for western travel. However, the railways' greatest benefit was to permit year round travel on a regular basis.

Toronto was well-situated to take advantage of the railway era with an excellent geographical location for trade. At the end of the 1840s, British trade laws had changed drastically, ending Montreal's export trade monopoly. American and Torontonian commercial drive meant that New York became a valuable market for Toronto. Markets were also developed when railways opened up the area around the city as well.

Railways were enormously expensive to build. The Ontario, Simcoe and Huron (by 1858, renamed the Northern Railway) took eleven years to finance and build the city's first railway. Toronto's second railway, the Grand Trunk Railway was the biggest. The Montreal-based Grand Trunk entered Toronto first with a Toronto-Brampton-Sarnia line in October 1855. Its station was built at the foot of Bathurst Street. The third railway, the American-financed Great Western, came from Hamilton in December 1855 and located its passenger terminal at Bathurst Street, just north of the Grand Trunk's. All three railways built their yards on the western edge of the city on open land, known as the Esplanade. Parliament had deeded this land in 1818 to the citizens of York for their recreational use. The railways eventually occupied all of it.

In 1856, the Grand Trunk Railway's eastern line from Montreal crossed the Don River south of Queen Street. A temporary station was constructed east of the river. The track followed the Don's western bank around Gooderham & Wort's mill, curved around the old Gaol on Parliament Street and crossed the open Fair Green land. Railways need land, and a great deal of it for track, stations and yards. Toronto's problem in the 1850s, was that it went to the water's edge. The Front Street shoreline from Berkeley to Bay streets was filled with houses, businesses and wharves. The City and the Grand Trunk Railway wrangled for several years about the solution to this problem. Finally, the railway agreed to create a 100 foot landfill strip across the harbour. Forty feet would be for the railway's use. This landfill



GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY

OF CANADA,

AND UNITED STATES MAIL ROUTE.

FROM SUSPENSION BRIDGE, N. F.,

TO DETROIT,

And Branches from Hamilton to Toronto, from Komoka to Sarnia, and from Harrisburg to Guelph.

PASSENGER TRAIN TIME TABLE.

JUNE, 1861.

OFFICERS.

C. J. BRYDGES, *Managing Director.*
T. REYNOLDS, *Financial Director.*
W. C. STEPHENS, *Secretary.*
W. J. SPICER, *Assist. Supt. East. Division.*
J. PEACOCK, *Assist. Supt. West. Division.*

GENERAL OFFICES OF THE COMPANY,

HAMILTON, C. W.

Trains run by Hamilton Time. Toronto time is 3 minutes faster; Chicago time is 30 min. slower; Detroit time 15 min. slower; Albany time 30 min. faster; Buffalo time 15 min. faster; Montreal time 25 min. faster.

Printed at the "Times" Office.

Great Western Railway Time Table, 1861

was the beginning of the eastern Esplanade.

The Grand Trunk Railway faced two problems. First, the landfill would take months to settle before tracks could be laid. Secondly, the railway had two stations at the city's edges – one at Bathurst Street and the other east of the Don River, but no station in the centre. As a solution, temporary track was laid along the south side of Front Street through the crowded district to west of Bay Street where it joined the Northern Railway track. As all three railways were built to a similar 5'6" track gauge, known as "Provincial Gauge", trains were able to run on each other's lines. A temporary station, adjoining Northern's at Front and Bay Streets was built. As soon as the Esplanade landfill settled, the railway laid track to its western yards. In 1858, the Grand Trunk built the first Union Station just west of the

Toronto's Railway Era Begins *Continued from page 7*

foot of York Street. The two other railways, Northern and Great Western, moved into it closing their own stations. The new station had such amenities as a ladies' waiting room, refreshment room, and barbershop, in addition to ticket, telegraph and baggage offices.

At this time, the largest segment of Toronto's population was Irish. While Toronto's earliest settlers had come mainly from the British Isles or the United States, the Irish potato famine in the 1840s and 50s caused a huge number of poor Irish Catholics to immigrate. These immigrants were one of the first waves that came to Toronto for a new life. The railways and the accompanying industries provided desperately needed jobs for many of these new settlers as they struggled to re-establish their lives. Many lived in houses on the small streets at the eastern end of the city, within easy distance of work at the foundries, breweries and the Grand Trunk's Don Yard. The area became known locally as Corktown.

The physical face of the city began to change. Industrial and residential areas started to separate, at least for the affluent. Railways, because of their own needs and large bulk-carrying capacities, caused manufacturing and heavy industries to concentrate along railway lines. As the number of lines and yards increased, people who could afford to gradually moved away from the waterfront and the noise and dirt of the yards and tracks. Their properties were subdivided into smaller housing lots or became used for commercial and industrial purposes.

Along Toronto's Waterfront
1870 to 1899

A major change for the larger railways in the 1870s was alignment with the narrower American standard gauge track (4 ft. 8 ½ in.). The volume of traffic across the border made it politic to change to the American system. In 1870, the Provincial Gauge was repealed and the railway lines began to switch. The Great Western changed first, followed by the Grand Trunk and last by the Northern Railway, which had the least contact with the United States.

Four new railways, two narrow gauge (3 ft. 6 in.), and two standard gauge were built. Narrow gauge track was cheaper and quicker to lay as there was less rail bed to prepare and was often used for local railways. The Toronto and Nipissing (T&N) was the first public narrow-gauge line in North America. Its yards and terminus were at the foot of Parliament Street, opposite the Gooderham and Worts distillery and mill, which owned it. By adding a third rail between Grand Trunk's wider rails, the line ran east to Scarboro

The Golden Griffin Dry Goods Emporium (E 2-28a)

Junction, where it turned north. The railway supplied the distillery and mill with grain and lumber, and opened for business in 1871. Ten years later it was taken over by the Midland Railway, which in turn was taken over by the Grand Trunk Railway in 1883.

The second narrow gauge railway was the Toronto, Grey and Bruce (TG&B). Its terminus was at the foot of Bathurst Street between Front Street and Queen's Wharf. The line, which went northwest eventually reaching Owen Sound, opened for service in 1871. It ran a third rail between Grand Trunk's as far as Weston, where it turned west. The TG&B's first central passenger station was on Front Street, near the Parliament Buildings. Later in 1873, it became a tenant in the second Union Station. The railway suffered from its success. The freight volume was so great that the lightweight engines and cars could not handle the loads. The directors resigned, and operations were turned over to Grand Trunk, which re-gauged and ran the railway until the early 1880s. Then Grand Trunk encountered financial problems of its own, and the TG&B merged with the Ontario and Quebec Railway, a subsidiary of Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), in 1883.

In 1879, the third railway, the standard gauge Credit Valley, located its Toronto terminus in Parkdale on the northeast corner of Dufferin and King Streets. This railway ran on its own line to West Toronto Junction where it turned west to St. Thomas and Elora. The first section, from Parkdale to Milton opened in 1879. After a battle that went all the way to the Privy Council, Credit Valley won the right to use the Esplanade and by 1880 was running trains into Union Station. The railway was complete by 1881, but the company was nearly bankrupt and Canadian Pacific Railway purchased it. This purchase gave CPR an entry for its passenger trains into Union Station, but trains coming from the east had to go to West Toronto and back down the track five miles into Union station. Eventually in 1892, CPR built a line down the Don River from its main line at Leaside to give it eastern access to the station and the waterfront industrial area.

In 1897, the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo (TH&B) railway opened the fourth line. It was built by a consortium of four Canadian and American railways to provide competition to the Grand Trunk Railway route from Toronto-Hamilton-Buffalo. By 1910, a half million people a year would use this line. In 1977, CPR purchased control and ten years later merged the line into CP Rail.

The railway building era was characterized by periods of boom and bust. In the 1880s, Grand Trunk and its new competitor, the Canadian Pacific Railway, took over many of the other railways operating in Ontario. The Grand Trunk absorbed the Great Western in 1882, the Midland in 1883 and the Northern in 1888. The Ontario and Quebec Railway as part of the Canadian Pacific Railway absorbed the Toronto, Grey and Bruce and the Credit Valley in 1883.

One of the greatest benefits from these railways was the creation of markets around the city. The lines also allowed farmers to get their crops to market more swiftly, enabled mail-order business such as Eaton's catalogue, speeded up the delivery of mail, and eased travel for people living in the country.

By the 1870s, the first Union Station, built in 1858, was unable to handle the steadily increasing volume of traffic. Great Western chose to build its own station on Yonge Street. Grand Trunk formed a special company to build a new, grander second Union Station just west of the old one, which opened in 1873. However, after ten years the station required more tracks and a large building on Front Street, due to Toronto's tremendous growth. This station was in use until 1927, when the fourth Union Station opened.

The most lasting event occurred in 1883, when Sandford Fleming's proposal to create a 'standard or railway time' to bring conformity to time, was accepted. This meant fewer missed trains due to discrepancies between local times, which could vary wildly, and railway timetables. On November 30, 1883, the City of Toronto adopted standard time. Sandford Fleming was knighted for his achievement of obtaining consensus among many nations for time standardization.

Into the 20th Century

The last railway line built in the city was the Canadian Northern Railway linking Toronto to Parry Sound in 1906. It came down the west side of the Don River and its two yards were located at Cherry Street and in the Rosedale valley. Complaints about the noise and dirt from the valley caused the railway to move that yard to Leaside in 1919.

In the early part of the century, railway traffic on the Esplanade had become increasingly heavy with numerous freight trains and at least 48 passenger trains every day. All these trains ran at ground level presenting a serious hazard to pedestrians and traffic. The Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific railways formed a joint company, the Toronto Terminals Railway Company (TTR), to regulate rail traffic along the waterfront and in Union Station. Several railways were also reorganized, and Canadian National Railway (CNR) was formed, acquiring Canadian Northern Railway in 1919 and Grand Trunk Railway in 1923.

Skating on the Don River

During the 1920s, the railways along the waterfront underwent a massive change. The Prince of Wales opened the fourth Union Station in August 1927, although the track area was not yet finished. In this new station, the main passenger hall had a high vaulted ceiling and the train sheds low ceilings, in contrast to the earlier Union Stations where ceilings in the passenger areas were low and lofty in the train sheds. Work also began on the enormous viaduct project to separate the railway tracks from the street traffic. The tracks were raised 18 feet above ground level and all the major streets were bridged. Track was laid farther south on the edge of the waterfront, and the harbour landfill was increased yet again to provide new industrial sites. Both CPR and CNR reorganized and expanded their yards. CPR built the John Street roundhouse and yards in 1927-28, just south of the Sky Dome today.

The Depression caused a large reduction in the amount of passenger railway traffic between Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa. CNR and CPR began to pool their trains between Toronto and Ottawa in 1933, and between Toronto and Montreal in 1934.

King George VI and Queen Elizabeth made a trans-Canada tour by train in 1939, the first visit to Canada by a reigning monarch. They came to Union Station on June 6, 1939. Three months later Canada would be at war. The Second World War created a surge in passenger travel, and the trains had to be lengthened and run in sections.

Railways were extensively and heavily used during the Second World War to transport troops and military supplies. By the end of the war, tracks, trains and cars were old and worn out. Steam engines were gradually replaced by diesels. The Canadian National Railway experimented with diesel engines in 1928, but only started using them as yard switchers in 1946. As the railways changed to diesels, roundhouses were no longer necessary. CNR closed the Danforth Yard and transferred to its marshalling yards at Mimico.

However, the railway era was passing. By the 1950s, the public's fondness for the ease and mobility of cars for personal travel, the use of trucks for freight, and of airplanes for long distance travel meant that the reliance on railways had dwindled significantly. Railways, although vital to the building of Toronto and indeed our country, remained an important but no longer dominant force.

Little York/East Toronto

The Beginning of a Railroad Town 1883-1899

By the 1880s, the Grand Trunk Railway needed a new main freight yard. Their yards along the Esplanade were squeezed for lack of room. The company selected farmland five and half miles to the east of Toronto in 1883. The new freight yard at York Station would serve the company's main line between Toronto and Montreal, as well as the traffic from the recently acquired Midland Railway.

The railway yard was built south of the Danforth, just below Little York and Coleman's Corners crossroads, where the Grand Trunk line to Montreal crossed Dawes Road. The road was closed and traffic diverted to a new street called Main. The yard could store 420 cars on seven miles of track and 31 engines in a roundhouse with adjacent repair shops. The York Passenger Station was built on the north side of the tracks. In 1890 and again in 1903 local people tried to rename the station "East Toronto", but the railroad refused. Soon, industries that relied on bulk transport, such as fuel and lumber, grew up next to the tracks near the station.

As the yard was built on farmland, Grand Trunk had to put up workers' houses. They were constructed on Lakeview Avenue (Gerrard Street), Swanwick Street, and the north side of

York Station, East Toronto (966-2-25)

Stephenson Street (named after the first Reeve). The last of these houses was demolished in 1965 when Kimberley School was built. To provide rooms for the train crews, a large YMCA was built in front of the station at Main Street and Danforth Avenue. This building provided the community with much needed space for church, social and charity meetings in its assembly hall.

The town incorporated in 1888 with a population of 750, and the council met upstairs in the Firehall. One strip of East Toronto, between Balsam & Beech Roads ran down to Lake Ontario at Balmy Beach to secure water rights; however, the Grand Trunk Railroad provided water for the town from local springs. Toronto annexed the area south of Queen Street west of Balmy Beach in 1887. This area, containing Kew and Woodbine Beaches, had become a summer resort area with tents and cottages. People reached 'The Beach' by steamer excursions from Toronto or by the Queen Street railway.

East Toronto – A Railroad Town 1900 –1940s

East Toronto's commercial heart was the corner of Main and Gerrard Streets. McMillim & Costain had a hardware store there for the first thirty years of the twentieth century. Other stores of that period were Widdowson's Shoes, William's grocery store and O'Donnell's dry goods just up the street. William Candler, who had started out as a carriage builder, eventually owned a Ford dealership and sold gas. Fred Taylor played early silent movies at the Ideal Theatre, and afterwards people enjoyed ice cream treats in his Palm Gardens parlour.

Several events took place in 1903: East Toronto became a town with three wards. A second event saw a section of Balmy Beach made into a popular park. Finally, the YMCA building was moved to the northeast corner of Main and Gerrard. It eventually closed in 1920 and today, the Ted Reeve Arena occupies the site, and the playing fields are known as the Grand Trunk Fields.

In 1907, people living near Lake Ontario became alarmed by railway expansion rumours. Newspapers published attempts by the railroads to run track just offshore east to Port Union. Later, more rumors claimed that both Canadian Pacific & Canadian Northern Railroad were surveying the beach and 200 yards north of Queen Street as possible track sites. The public was aroused, worried about their property values and quality of life. Petitions were signed and a delegation travelled to Ottawa. All the railways remained where they had been.

East Toronto *Continued from page 15*

Although there were many advantages to annexation – paved streets, more reliable water, electric light, and good sewage systems, East Toronto's feelings were mixed. The southern Beach ward was keen, while the north feared higher taxes. East Toronto finally joined Toronto on December 15, 1908, but the advantages came slowly. The area remained surrounded by fields and market gardens until as late as the 1920s, as the city crept nearer along the street railways lines on Gerrard Street, Danforth Avenue and Kingston Road.

The Grand Trunk Railway became part of the Canadian National Railways in 1923. By the 1940s, the Danforth Yard was no longer used as a freight yard, and the locomotive roundhouse was demolished. In 1940, there were six tracks north and 17 south of the mainline. By the 1980s, the northern tracks had been removed and there were 11 southern storage tracks. The York Station was demolished in October 1974, and a GO transit station now occupies the site.

Although the village had easy access to Toronto by trains or street railways, people tended to live, work and play close to their neighbourhood. The closeness of The Beach with its clean air and change of atmosphere made it 'the place' to go to for summer enjoyment for many East Torontonians.

West Toronto Junction
1870-1899

The Junction' was created where four railway lines crossed. Two railways, the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron (later the Northern) and the western Grand Trunk, had built lines through the area between 1853 and 1873. The third, Credit Valley Railway, created a junction in 1879 when its line branched to the west. Canadian Pacific's (CPR) forerunner, the Ontario and Quebec Railway, which constructed a Toronto bypass just north of Dupont Street, completed the final link. Its track crossed all the other tracks. CPR established its Ontario headquarters at The Junction. The huge yard employed 1,000 men and contained track, storage, roundhouses and machine, boiler, erecting, paint, car and woodworking shops. A second yard was later built at Runnymede with workmen's houses built between so the men could walk to either. The passenger station was located at Dundas Street West and Weston Road.

Manufacturers were attracted to The Junction because of its excellent transportation and shipping facilities. Thirty trains a day ran to Toronto from the four railway stations. Foundries, planing mills, wire factories, and industries, such as Wilkinson Plough, Dominion Showcase and the Heintzman Piano Co. began. Other firms came because land, labour and taxes were cheaper. The Vermilyea Corset Factory owned by Madame Vermilyea employed the wives and daughters of the mills and railway workers.

Land speculators quickly realized the potential of The Junction. One, Daniel Clendenan, bought the Carlton Racecourse at Dundas and Keele streets and registered it as a townsite. In 1888, The Junction was a village of 750 people; by 1891 a town with a population of 5,000. The Globe approvingly described Clendenan, West Toronto's first mayor, as an "energetic pushing businessman". The Mayor and Council pushed for utilities and firehalls, as well as schools and libraries. The corner of Dundas and Keele streets was the centre of town with several blocks of large well-built stores. The streets near the railway tracks were filled with a mix of workmen's homes, while southwest of Annette and Quebec streets was an area of larger homes stretching down to High Park. In one year, 600 houses were built with watermains and sidewalks.

The Junction was prone to booms and busts: 1888 to 1890 was a time of prosperity, while the period between 1893 to 1900 was a recession and poverty became widespread. When factories closed and construction stopped because of a worldwide depression, the municipality was unable to assist its citizens because of large civic debt.

West Toronto Junction, circa 1900

As a railway and factory workers' town, The Junction soon had taverns and pubs. By 1903, alcohol was a big problem for families and a public embarrassment for the town – drunks were visible from passing trains. A prohibition movement grew, led by the Women's Christian Temperance Movement. Hotels were denounced as "cesspools of Harlotry, Vice & Iniquity". Things became so boisterous that the town voted to go dry in 1904 and did not repeal this law until 2000, the last area of Toronto to do so.

Although the period before the First World War was a prosperous one, with no employment insurance, welfare or job safety, people worked long ten to twelve hour days, six day a week. In the days before public welfare, groups like the Women's Benevolent Society and the churches worked hard to provide care to the less fortunate. In their free time, people created their own entertainment. As there were two piano manufacturers in The Junction, music was a popular pastime. Railway maintenance workers flooded a rink at Vine Avenue. The Shamrock Lacrosse Club and baseball were very popular. The latter was played on vacant lots, school and church grounds. From 1905 to 1908, games were held at the Athletic Grounds, later the site of the Annette Public Library.

The closing of the stockyards and several industries caused hardship in West Toronto, although it remained a popular place to live. Toronto annexed The Junction in 1909 and gradually the two have grown together. However, like many other self-contained neighbourhoods in Toronto, people retain their community identity and remain very loyal to their neighbourhood.

West Toronto Junction (S 1-4132a)

Leaside
1900 – 1950s

Leaside was a Toronto community created by the railroads as a real estate speculation venture before the First World War. In 1870, the Ontario and Quebec Railway purchased part of the Lee farm for their line from Toronto to Peterborough. Four years later, when the railway was in financial difficulty, it leased the property to Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). As the land was unoccupied and inexpensive, CPR decided to establish a yard (south of present day Commercial Road and east of Laird Drive). Gradually over the next several decades more tracks, a roundhouse and shops were added and a passenger station was built just east of where Millwood crossed the tracks. Up to this time all the construction was for the operational needs of the railway.

The last railway to be built in the city was the Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR) linking Toronto to Parry Sound in 1906. It ran down the west side of the Don River and had yards at Cherry Street and Rosedale, south of the Brickworks in the Don Valley. The Rosedale yard was moved to Leaside in 1919. A two-mile spur connected the yard to its northern line, east of Leslie Street, which joined the Canadian Pacific's line to Leaside.

Railways had become heavily involved in land speculation, particularly across western Canada. In 1910 as Toronto was booming, two Toronto financiers, William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, owners of CNoR, purchased most of the land south of Eglinton and east of Bayview avenues, and north and west of the Canadian Pacific main line and decided to create a town. A landscape architect, Frederick Todd, was commissioned to design a garden city with curved streets and cul-de-sacs, similar to another city he had designed for them, Port Mann, BC. Some Leaside streets were named for influential friends and notables: Hanna, the third company Vice-President, McRae, a prairie-land tycoon, and Laird, Vice-President of the Bank of Commerce, a major financial backer.

The planned subdivision was ready by 1912; however, war rumours, financial uncertainty and the collapse of the western Canada real estate bubble caused Toronto real estate prices to fall. Leaside, because of its remoteness, was not a desirable residential area during the 1913 depression and the First World War that followed. By 1915, both Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk railways were in difficulties, and the Canadian government recommended reorganization into the Canadian National Railway.

Advertising at that time extolled Leaside as Toronto's new business and railway centre. The Leaside Munitions Co., a division of Canada Wire and Cable, established itself at Laird Avenue and Commercial Road and built some accommodation for workers. Other workers commuted from the CPR North Toronto Station at Yonge (built in 1916) on special trains. As men went overseas, women filled their jobs. A Royal Flying Corps

Leaside *Continued from page 19*

aerodrome north of the munitions plant was established in the summer of 1917 to train pilots. This airport continued as a commercial airport until superseded by the Island and Malton (Pearson) airports. The last hanger was torn down in 1971. After the war, one of the plants was taken over by Durant Motors, later Dominion Motors, which made cars until 1933, the last independent Canadian car business. Another industry that established itself in Leaside in 1920 was the Thorncliffe Race Track, located east of the Leaside Station. In its heyday there were stables for 600 horses; an apartment complex now covers the area.

Since the 1920s, Leaside has gradually become one of the most desirable residential neighbourhoods to live in. The streets are quiet and tree-lined, yet the city, schools and shops are close by. Many residents are the children and grandchildren of the people who lived there some eighty years ago.

Acknowledgements

This exhibition explores two complementary themes of railways and city history using Special Collections material from the Toronto Public Library's Baldwin Room. The exhibition is a collaborative effort by many people across the Library.

The exhibition is intended to support the Historicity: Toronto Then and Now project, a Virtual Reference Library gateway to information about Toronto and its neighbourhoods. Historicity brings together a variety of resources from the Library's collections in order to enhance public access.

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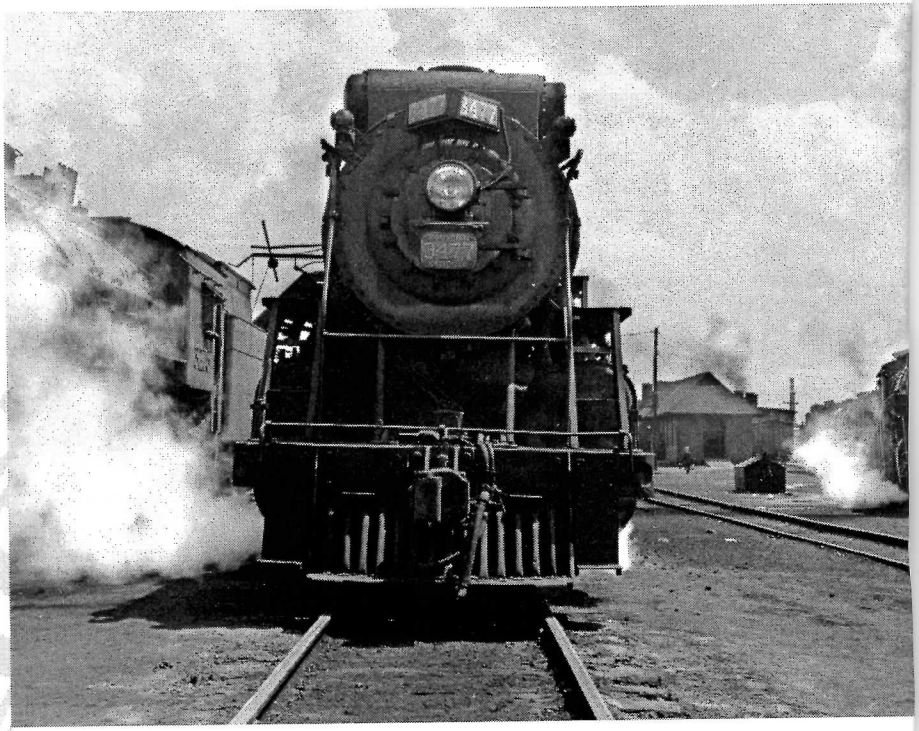

Mimico Yards 1954 (S 1-2875)