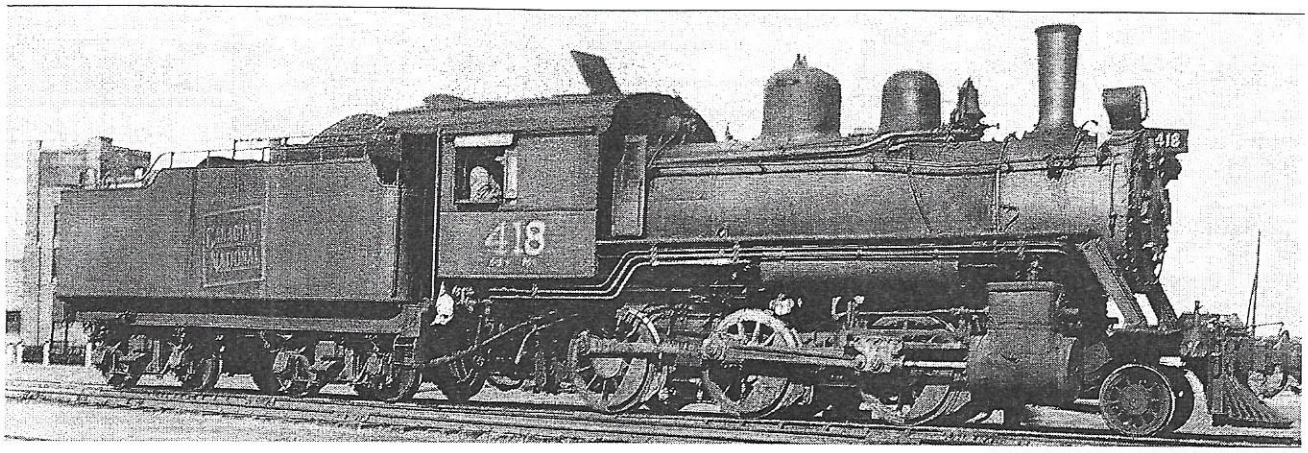
THE WRECK OF CNR ENGINE #417 AT ARMSTRONG LAKE MAY 29 1915.



wreck. (For more details see Corley: "CNR 417: The Mystery Lifts" in *UCRS Newsletter* 8-1982 or "The Mystery of CN 417" in *Canadian Rail* #368 9-1982).

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Economy (Universal) steam chests (EsC) were installed on **CNR 419** at the same time it was superheated.

CNR 418 at the east end of Fort Rouge yard in Winnipeg during August 1939, had undergone many of the usual changes made during periodic shoppings throughout its thirty years of service. Superheating had been achieved by using a Hungerford-Cameron unit and Economy steam chests. Also easy to detect were the changes to the pilot wheels, type of headlight and location of the bell above the check valve, as well as the addition of running board ladders, the blanking of cab windows, and a coal bunker extension. [WES DENGATE COLLECTION]

C-5-b
C-6-a

CNR 416-429 (first)

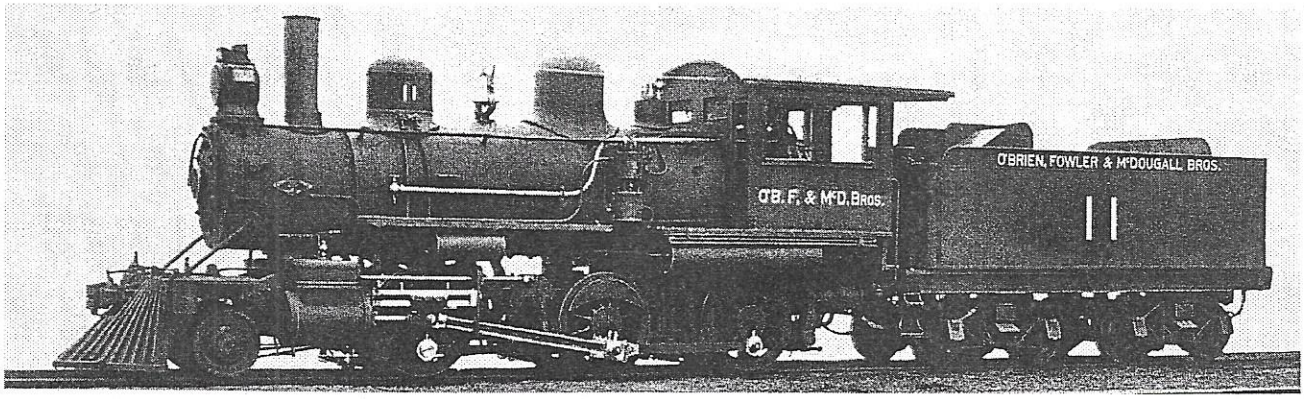
See CNR 7375-7388 (page O-55)

CNR 421-422 (second) — 2-6-0 MOGUL TYPE — C-6-a

Specifications							Appliances		Weights	Fuel Capacity		Length	Notes
Cylinder	Gear	Driv.	Pressure	Boiler	T.E.	Haulage	Steam	Stkr.	Drivers/Eng./Total	Water	Coal		
18x24"	S	50"	180#	EWT	23800		sat		102/117/210800	3800 gals	8 tons	55-6'	[orig]
18x24"	S	50"	180#	EWT	23800		sat		102/117/210800	5000 gals	8 tons	55-6'	[CGR 421 1917]
19x26"	S	51"	180#	EWT	23328	24%	sat		102/117/210800	3800 gals	8 tons	56-1'	[af. 1923]

Canadian Locomotive Company 1909 $13,500 (2) Acquired by CNR 9-01-1919

	Serial	Shipped	New as	???	3-1916	Disposition	To
			—	—	R2-4 120%		
421/2	911	10-23-09	**OF&M 10**	**OF&O** 5 ?	**CGR–NTR 4505**	Sc 11-30-35 AK	
422/2	912	10-23-09	**OF&M 11***	**OF&O** 6 ?	**CGR–NTR 4506**	So 10- -39 A	**MSCo 422**



CNR 421 and **422** were built for the **O'Brien, Fowler & McDougall Brothers'** Grand Trunk Pacific Railway contracts. The locomotive assignments between 1913 and 1916 are not known, although some records for **OF&M 10**

(text continues on next page)

OF&M 11, photographed at Kingston during October 1909, carried a busy alphabet of identification. The engine cabs were stencilled "O'B. F. & McD. Bros.", while the tender panels were spelled out in full except for the word brothers. [CLC, HENDERSON PHOTO/DON MCQUEEN COLLECTION]

CNR 413-414 — 2-6-0 MOGUL TYPE — C-5-b, E-12-b

Specifications							Appliances		Weights	Fuel Capacity		Length	Notes
Cylinder	Gear	Driv.	Pressure	Boiler	T.E.	Haulage	Steam	Stkr.	Drivers/Eng./Total	Water	Coal		
19x26"	S	50"	180#	EWT	29000		sat		112/130/249000	5000 gals	8 tons	59-5'	[orig]
19x26"	S	51"	180#	EWT	28080	28%	H-C		112/130/230800	5000 gals	9 tons	59-5'	[af. 1923]

Montreal Locomotive Works – ALCO 1913 (Q-225) $10,020 — (2) Acquired by CNR 9-01-1919

	Serial	Shipped	New as	Superheated	Mods	To	Disposition	To
			—	& EsC		E-12-b		
413	53746	10- -13	**McA-(HBC) 18**	4-27 PK			So 6-12-36 W	**M&SCCo 413**
414	53747	10- -13	**McA-(HBC) 19**	5-27 PK	w	12-51	Sc 6-17-52 PU	

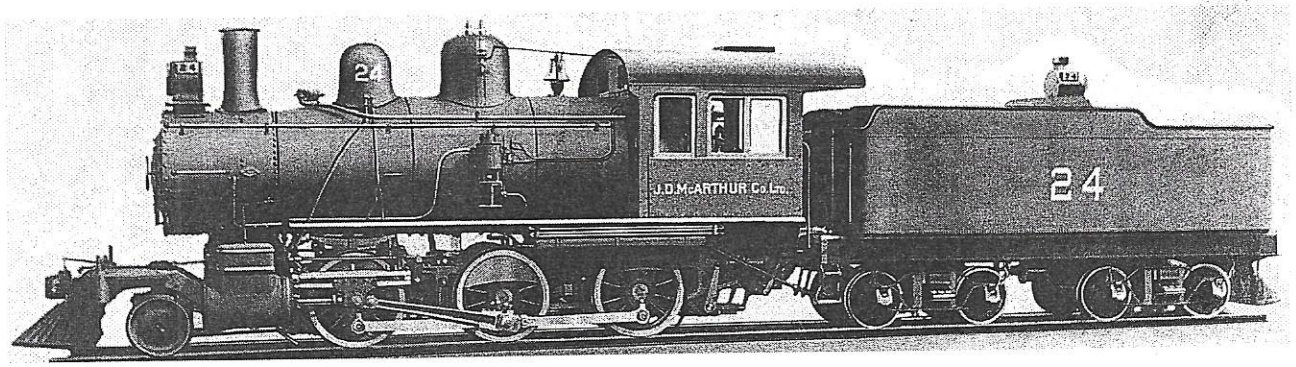
CNR 413 and 414 were ordered in February 1913 and built for the **J.D. McArthur Company (Hudson Bay Construction Company)**. They may have been temporarily transferred to McArthur's Edmonton Dunvegan & British Columbia Railway in the fall of 1917 to aid in grain traffic. **CNR 413** was sold for $3000 to the **Manitoba & Saskatchewan Coal Company.** As **M&SCCo 413**, the Mogul remained on the roster until the mine closed in 1961.

CNR 415-420 (second) — 2-6-0 MOGUL TYPE — C-5-b

Specifications							Appliances		Weights	Fuel Capacity		Length	Notes
Cylinder	Gear	Driv.	Pressure	Boiler	T.E.	Haulage	Steam	Stkr.	Drivers/Eng./Total	Water	Coal		
19x26"	S	50"	180#	EWT	29000		sat		113/130/249000	5000 gals	9 tons	60-1'	[orig]
19x26"	S	51"	180#	EWT	28080	29%	H-C		112/130/249000	5000 gals	9 tons	60-1'	[af. 1923]

Canadian Locomotive Company Limited 1914 (C-512) $11,690 — (6) Acquired by CNR 9-01-1919

	Serial	Shipped	New as	Superheated	Mods		Disposition	To
			—	& EsC				
415	1234	4-28-14	**McA-(HBC) 20**				So 11- -33 W	**M&SCCo 415**
416/2	1235	4-28-14	**McA-(HBC) 21**	5-29 PK	f		So 6- -35 W	**WDC 416**
417/2	1236	5-20-14	**McA-(HBC) 22**			Wr 5-25-15	Ab 6-17-52 PU	
418/2	1237	5-02-14	**McA-(HBC) 23**	3-27 PK			So 12- -40 W	**WDC 418**
419/2	1237	5-18-14	**McA-(HBC) 24***	3-27 PK EsC			Sc 6-23-32 PU	
420/2	1244	5-28-14	**McA-(HBC) 25**				Sc 8-29-32 PU	



The third batch of the future C-5-b class was built in 1914. **J.D. McArthur Co. Ltd. 24**, at Kingston in May 1914, was among the last eight Moguls built by CLC. Railways under construction lacked such amenities as turntables or wyes, relying primarily on a great deal of reverse running. This explains why the locomotives in the order were equipped with a headlight and road pilot mounted on the tender. Unlike the first and second lots manufactured at Montreal Locomotive Works, this one was built with modified Stephenson gear using only one cross-head guide. The location of the check valve on the last two lots had been moved from the side to the top of the boiler, ahead of the sand dome. [CLC, NOBLE SCOTT LTD. LITHOGRAPH FROM A HENDERSON PHOTOGRAPH/DON McQUEEN COLLECTION]

CNR 415-420 were ordered in December 1913 and built for the **J.D. McArthur Company**, at the time constructing the **Hudson Bay Railway**. They were assigned CLC builder's numbers #1233-1238; however records show they had their domes stamped as recorded in the roster above. Some may have been temporarily transferred to McArthur's Edmonton Dunvegan & British Columbia Railway in the fall of 1917 to aid in grain traffic.

CNR 415, sold for $2500 as **Manitoba & Saskatchewan Coal Company 415**, remained on its new owner's roster until 1958.

CNR 416, sold for $3000 as **Western Dominion Coal Company 416**, remained at Taylorton, Saskatchewan until 1955, although it is recorded being at the **Manitoba & Saskatchewan Coal Company** mine site in August 1950.

McA 22 (417) derailed into thirty feet of mud from a failed trestle vent over Armstrong Lake, Manitoba, (May 25th 1915. As recovery was initially anticipated, t Mogul was assigned a CNR road number in 1919, but October 1920 CNR finally abandoned it as a submerg

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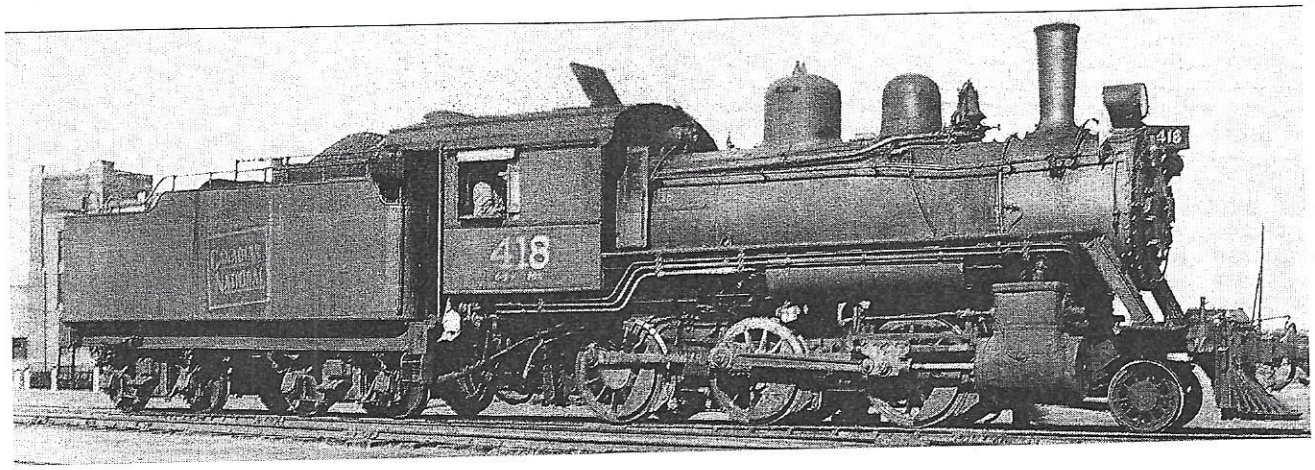

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CNR 416-429 (first)

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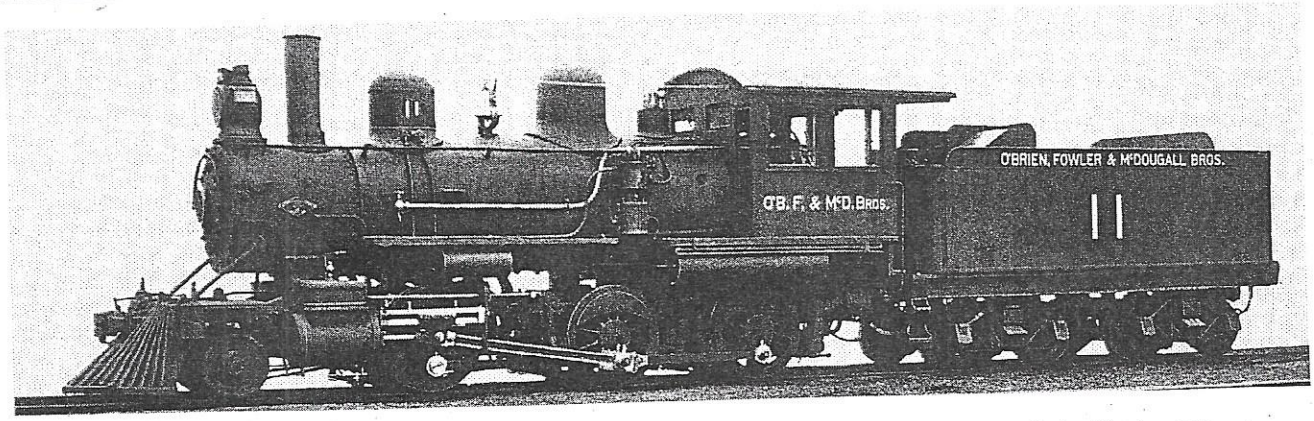

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OF&M 11, photographed at Kingston during October 1909, carried a busy alphabet of identification. The engine cabs were stencilled "O'B.F.& McD.Bros.", while the tender panels were spelled out in full except for the word brothers. [CLC, HENDERSON PHOTO/DON McQUEEN COLLECTION]

THE MYSTERY OF CN 417

Further to our enquiries of November 1981 and May 1982, some further research, great co-operation and a little luck have resulted in a definitive answer.

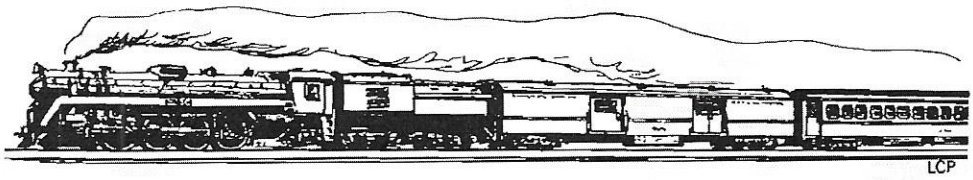
Omer Lavallee, dean of Canadian railway historians, was researching "Canadian Railway and Marine World" on another subject when he spotted some news items in the 1915 issues. And there, on page 392 (October 1915) appears "The contractor, J.D. McArthur, is reported to have said in an interview recently, that the accident early in the summer, when the trestle bridge over Armstrong Lake gave way, had not interfered materially with the summer's work on the line. At the time of the accident a locomotive and a track layer were precipitated into the lake; these have been definately located, and it is expected that they will be recovered during the winter."

This is undoubtedly "CN 417" which, contrary to J.D. McArthur's expectations, was not retrieved and hence was ultimately reported to the CN as "Lost in Armstrong Lake" in October 1920. Undoubtedly there was hope it could be recovered, and it was carried "on paper" as being acquired by the CN with the rest of the McArthur fleet.

The writer surmised the accident could have occurred at least up to 1917 - but this, and earlier 1915 reports, confirms construction north of mile 214 was in effect by 1915.

With thanks to the Manitoba Archives, CN Archives and the individuals who have assisted, now all we have to determine is the date in the "summer of 1915".

R.F. Corley
June 6, 1982



NEWSPAPER TRANSCRIPTS RE CN 417 IN ARMSTRONG LAKE

(exactly as written)

Manitoba Free Press Monday May 31, 1915 (Page 10, Col. 4)

The Pas. Man., May 29 - An engine and three cars loaded with track steel last Tuesday went through a vent in the bridge over Armstrong lake on the Hudson Bay railway, and lies out of sight in 30 feet of mud. The engineer was the only person aboard and he escaped by climbing through the cab window into the lake as the engine toppled over and swam ashore. *

The bridge was just finished and this was the first attempt to take a train of any kind over it. The railway engineers were uneasy about it sustaining heavy traffic on account of the great depth of light swampy soil to solid bottom.

Assistant Chief Engineer J.P. Gordon sat in a canoe close to the bridge and narrowly escaped serious injury when the engine went down. He was observing the action of the structrue under the heavy strain.

The cause of the accident is attributed to the weakness of the wooden piles and failure to drive them far enough down to rock bottom. A delay of from three to six months will occur in the completion of the railway through this mishap.

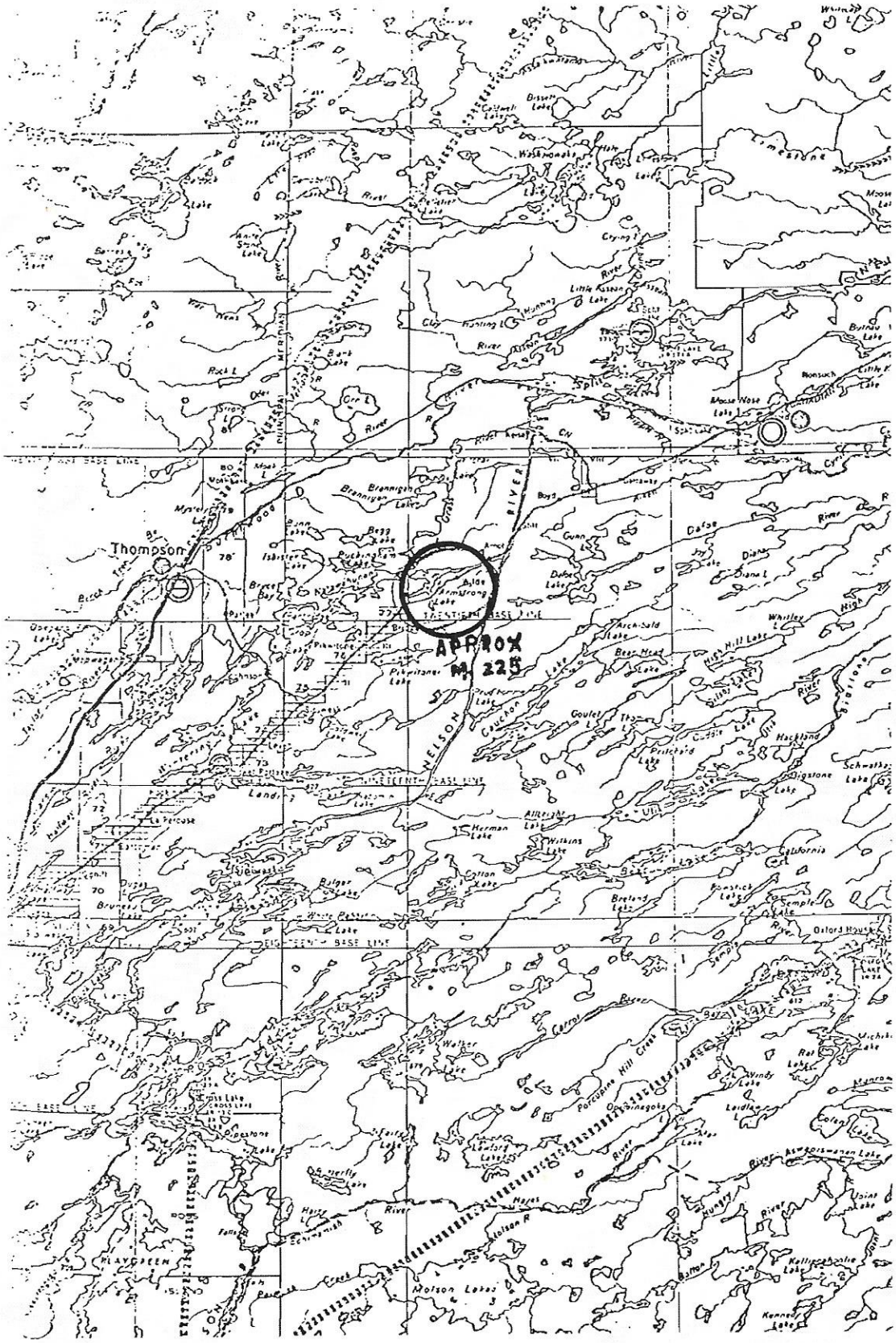
The accident followed a pressure test of 300,000 pounds, causing a displacement of track pilings. The bridge is 900 feet long and half of it was destroyed. Reconstruction of the damaged part has commenced.

Hudsons Bay Herald (The Pas) June 4, 1915 (Page 1, Col. 2)

Assistant Chief Engineer Gordon's report on the Armstrong Lake bridge accident attributes it to the faultiness of track piles between vents Nos. 8 and 14. The total loss will probably amount to $54,000, $24,000 on the destruction of 24 vents in the bridge and the balance on the engine, cars and material that have entirely disappeared in the mud beyond all chance of salvage. Engineer Cameron saved himself by diving under the engine as it reached the water. The fireman escaped when the bridge started to give.

Every precaution was taken to avert disaster. The night before, four cars and track layer were shunted out on the bridge and remained there all night, subjecting the piles to a pressure of three hundred thousand pounds. Mr. Gordon examined the bridge in the morning and found no movement had taken place. Reconstruction of the vents destroyed is proceeding with and it is not expected to delay the completion of the railway from the time set.

* **EDITOR'S NOTE: An amusing choice of words. If this was literally true it would be nice to have a photo of the engine swimming ashore!**


Thompson
APPROX M. 225
Armstrong Lake
Split Lake
Limestone
Nelson River
Brannigan Lake
Pikwitonei
Paint Lake
Sipiwesk Lake
Cauchon Lake
Hackland
Oxford House
Porcupine Hill Creek
Playgreen
Hayes River
Molson Lakes
Twentieth Base Line
Nineteenth Base Line
Eighteenth Base Line
Crying L.
Moose Nose Lake
Nonsuch
Kettle
Wilkins Lake
Herman Lake
Cotton Lake
Walker Lake
Pipestone Lake
Semple Lake
Windy Lake
Kennedy Lake

(July, pg. 255.)

Dominion Government Railway to Hudson Bay.—The contractor, J. D. McArthur, is reported to have said in an interview recently, that the accident early in the summer, when

Wreck CNR 417

October 1917

October 1917

Wreck at Armstrong Lake

the trestle bridge over Armstrong Lake gave way, had not interfered materially with the summer's work on the line. When the two big bridges are completed over the Nelson River, which it is expected will be the case next spring, he anticipates that there will be very little work left to be done to complete the line for operation. At the time of the accident a locomotive and a track layer were precipitated into the lake, these have been definately located, and it is expected that they will be recovered during the winter.

From the experiences of the past summer it is believed that navigation of the Hudson Strait and Bay will be possible in July. The supply boats have left the wireless equipment for installation at several points on the straits and bay. Five dipper and clam shell dredges have been built at Port Nelson for harbor dredging work. Good progress is being made with the laying out of the railway terminals at Port Nelson, the work being reported to be in charge of Engineer Bayfield, who is said to have replaced Engineer McLachlan, formerly in charge. (Sept., pg. 348.)

Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Ry. Track was reported, Sept. 3, to have

UPDATE ON C.N No. 417

In the January 1982 issue of Canadian Rail we printed an article entitled "WHERE IS CN 417?". This engine is shown in C.N.'s official records as lost in Armstrong Lake. The question was which Armstrong Lake. Since then, as a result of this article, the story has gradually unfolded and now the mystery of 417 has been solved as can be seen from the following correspondance.

The Mystery of CN 417

Due to the persistent research of Jacques Messier in reviewing possible locations of "Armstrong Lake", the authors of "Canadian National Steam Power" believe we have located the lake from which "CN 417", as the J.D. McArthur 2-6-0 No. 22, was reported as being in, and not recoverable, in the CN Motive Power retirement record of October 1920.

Mr. Messier redirected our attention to the lake in Manitoba on the Hudson Bay Railway. While several of this class of locomotive were used on McArthur contracts on the NAR, the company also had the contract for construction of the first 214 miles of the HBR to Pikwitonei, about 10 miles south (before) Armstrong Lake.

When this possibility was examined a few years ago, the writer's research led him to dismiss it, since the account of the HBR construction stated the line got to Pikwitonei and then construction ceased in 1917.

But now a more definitive account consulted indicates the rails had reached mile 333, but when work ceased and the McArthur contract was closed, the CGR operated a service to mile 214.

Hence by at least 1917, McArthur was constructing over the arm of Armstrong Lake. After 1917 it is likely locomotives ventured beyond mile 214, either operated by McArthur or the CGR, to close camps, take in materials, etc. On Sept.1919 the McArthur locomotives were officially accepted into the CN roster.

Thus the locomotive could have been lost by McArthur, or the CGR/CN, in the period up to October 1920, and only "written off" on the latter date.

Further research suggests starting at that date and working backwards, and the assistance of CN Archives, and the Manitoba Archives, on construction history of the HBR, and McArthur, will be sought. In addition to determining the date, we may also learn what was the nature of the incident (washout, collision, speed, etc.).

Our thanks to Mr. Messier for redirecting our attention to this location.

R.F. Corley
May 12, 1982