

Local Railway Items from Ottawa Papers - 1936

Saturday 18/01/1936 Ottawa Citizen Renfrew

Two west end youths had a narrow escape from serious injury or death early last evening when four box cars passed completely over one youth and a second was forced to jump to safety as a C.N.R. freight train, backing along the trestle over Holland avenue, overtook them as they were skiing along the right of way.

Thursday 20/02/1936 Ottawa Citizen L'Orignal

Set March 27 to hear Application of C.N.R.

Would Abandon Certain Lines East of Capital.

The Board of Railway Commissioners has set for Tuesday, march 17, its hearing of the application of the Canadian National Railways for leave to abandon a portion of its L'Orignal Subdivision between Hawkesbury and Hurdman, and between Rockland and Clarence Creek, a distance of 61.2 miles.

Owing to the illness of E.R.E. Chevrier, K.C., M.P., counsel for the Rockland Board of Trade and the municipalities opposing the request, and to the absence of Hon. Hugh Guthrie, chairman of the Board, who sat in similar cases in Western Canada, the hearing had to be postponed until March 17.

I.C. Rand, K.C., Montreal, will act for the C.N. Railways and the firm of Chevrier and Lacourciere for the Boards of Trade and municipalities fighting the application.

Thursday 12/03/1936 Ottawa Citizen Maniwaki

Maniwaki line blocked by slide.

Old siding called into service to prevent any delay in train service.

Resulting from mild weather during the last few days and rain yesterday a clay bank overhanging the C.P.R. Ottawa-Maniwaki line, half a mile south of Cascades, slid down onto the track sometime during the night, burying the rails to a depth of five feet for a distance of 60 feet. No trains were placed in danger by the slide which was discovered this morning by men sent out to patrol the track which is the custom following heavy rain.

The slide resulted in only slight delay for this morning's passenger trains although it has not yet been cleared up. A gang of nearly 100 men recruited from Ottawa and Hull are at work while two snow plows have been pressed into service to clear the line.

Soon as the slide was discovered notification was flashed to the offices in Ottawa. A work train was immediately rushed to Cascades and a temporary detour was built over a former siding, over which the passenger trains were able to pass while work of clearing the blockade continued.

William Garland, assistant divisional superintendent for the C.P.R. stated that he expected that the line would be cleared in a few hours.

The Ottawa-Maniwaki highway was not affected by the slide, nor were there any buildings in the vicinity to be damaged.

Saturday 15/05/1936 Ottawa Citizen Montreal and Ottawa Hurdman

Tale of a railway collision at Hurdman's Bridge in 1903.

Soo train crashed into freight at midnight. Four men injured but no loss of life. Impact heard a mile away. Heavy express engine ploughed through lighter freight locomotive. Crew of both engines saved lives by jumping.

Here is something hundreds of middle-aged Ottawans may recall. It happened in the early morning hours of September 27, 1903. Four people were injured, two engines were badly smashed and three cars telescoped in a head-on collision on the C.P.R. short line, a little distance north of Hurdman's Bridge. Coming into Ottawa and travelling at a good rate of speed, the Soo train collided with a special freight which, contrary to the rules, had got on the main line while the right of way belonged to the express. The four persons injured were train hands:

Engineer M.J. Doherty, Ottawa; Express messenger R. Thompson, Ottawa; Baggage man Ed. King, Montreal; Brakeman Geo. Gobey, Hintonburgh.

None of the passengers were injured although some had very narrow escapes. That none of the train hands were killed outright was regarded as little short of miraculous.

At Midnight

It was just five minutes to one when the accident occurred. The west bound Soo train had left Montreal on time and was in charge of Conductor McIntosh with Engineer M.J. Doherty and Fireman M.J. Walsh. It was customary for freight trains to be moving back and forth between the Chaudiere and Sussex street and the freight in question had arrived a short time before from Prescott and was to be taken down to Sussex street.

From the account of the accident published at the time, it appears that at the tower the freight hands had received orders to do some shunting up to midnight and then go on a siding and allow the express to pass. They mistook the time or forgot the order from the towerman and remained on the main line until it was too late.

Sharp on time the Soo express rounded the curve near the locomotive sheds. It was then that the engineers of both trains saw what was going to happen. The express was travelling at a good rate of speed while the freight was barely moving. The engineers and firemen of both trains, seeing the inevitable, jumped for their lives and escaped serious injury.

Terrible impact

An instant later with an awful impact which could be heard a mile away, the two trains came together. Engine No. 303 on the Soo was of a large type and it simply ploughed through the smaller locomotive. Though the brakes were applied they were unable to arrest the velocity of the swiftly moving coaches and in less time than it takes to tell it the express and baggage cars and part of a colonial sleeper were telescoped.

Thousands of people who went out the following morning witnessed a hideous sight. Locked together with the smaller one underneath and partly obscured were the two locomotives. In the rear was an express car badly smashed and then the colonist car with its end stove in. In the express section there was a conglomeration of smashed trunks, valises, parcels and mail bags all mixed together while the cars were piled up in splinters.

Tuesday 19/05/1936 Ottawa Citizen Renfrew Ottawa, Bank Street

Complaint of train noise.

Mayor Lewis has received complaints as to the prevalence of shunting of trains in the Bank street railway yards during the night. The C.N. Rly. some time ago agreed to reduce the night shunting to an absolute minimum but residents in the district say the nuisance is now more common. An appeal will likely be made to the minister of railways.

Locomotive fireman of eighties had many mean tasks to perform

Veteran railroader recalls customs of fifty years ago.

George W. Hawley draws on memory to recount tales of hardship, snowbound passenger trains and slow moving freights, tells of fishermen's paradise at Chalk River and of the big ones that didn't get away, relates an amusing partridge story.

Looking back upon forty-four years of railroading in the Ottawa district, Mr. George W. Hawley, of 346 Cambridge street, who entered the employ of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1883 and retired on pension in June 1927, throws some interesting light on the life and experiences of a railroader in the days of "pony" engines and slow-moving passenger trains. Mr. Hawley's reminiscences should prove fascinating to the younger generation of readers and revive memories, both pleasant and unpleasant, for those readers who began their railroad careers under just such conditions as Mr. Hawley describes.

George Hawley, who has 74 summers to his credit and is still as agile as a cricket, is not a native of Ottawa or the Ottawa district. He was born in the year 1862 near the village of Cardinal, in Edwardsburg township and has many interesting memories of life and conditions in that district in his childhood days. Some of them are related in a separate story on this page.

'Twas on the 26th of March, 1883, that Mr. Hawley got word to come to Ottawa and begin his railroad career with the C.P.R. He was slated to commence as assistant mechanic in the machine shops located near the old 3-stall roundhouse, which was built and used by the Quebec, Montreal and Occidental Railway - later taken over by the C.P.R.

In those days, when labor was not as plentiful as it is today, a smart mechanic didn't have long to wait for promotion to a higher position. And so, after slaving in the shops for seven months - with long hours and comparatively little pay - young Hawley found himself elevated to the more dignified and more lucrative position of fireman.

Before we leave the shops and go on with Mr. Hawley's story of his experiences as fireman and later engineer, let us recall the names of some of those employed in the Ottawa Division (C.P.R) in the eighties. Johnny Dewar was foreman of the shops and William Cross was master mechanic. Among those who "ran" out of Ottawa were Isaac Schofield, Joe Burke, Ab Hudson, Bill Christie, Joe Jackson, James Barr, Dave Kelley, Charlie Eldridge, Charlie Bellamy, Jack Dudley, Fred Rowe, Bill Golden and Hughie Richmond.

When the narrator of this story arrived in Ottawa in '83, he secured lodgings in the home of the late William Hill, on Sherwood street. Hill was the official lamplighter for Lebreton Flats. In those days the streets were lighted with naphtha lamps and it was Hill's job to start out bright and early each morning and fill the lamps so they would be ready to set aglow at night. Readers who lived in that section of the city in the eighties will undoubtedly recall seeing Hill driving through the streets with a cart on which was mounted a barrel of naphtha, a ladder with which to scale the lamp posts and a bag containing lamps, wipers, wicks and other paraphernalia.

The life of a railroad fireman was no sinecure in the eighties, Mr. Hawley informs us. The firemen of those days had plenty of the dirty work to do - work which is now done in the shops or through mechanical gadgets which require only the pulling of a lever. For instance, the fireman was required to crawl under his engine and clean out the ashpan with a hoe: it was his business to see that all brass, inside and outside, was thoroughly scoured every day; it was his business to fill the oil cups, lubricators, etc., and it was his business to do a dozen and one other things from which present firemen are exempt.

There were then the discomforts of piloting an engine. There were no side curtains to keep out the snow in winter and the rain in summer. Little provision was made for combatting snowstorms, with the result that running schedules were slowed up considerably and much valuable time was lost. To illustrate this point Mr. Hawley told the following story:

"I remember one time we started out from Ottawa about five o'clock in the evening with a passenger train pulled by two engines. When we were two miles east of Almonte we ran into a heavy snow storm; the snow was up to the footplates of the engines. We plowed through it for a short distance and finally stalled. There we stayed until eight o'clock the next morning when a crew was sent from the city to dig us out.

"No, the passengers didn't freeze to death. In those days each passenger car was equipped with a little coal-burning stove called a Baker heater. The cars were small compared to present day coaches and it didn't require a very big stove to heat them.

"A railroad engineer received the munificent sum of \$1.10 a day, and no matter how much overtime he put in there was no extra compensation. It would take anywhere from ten to twenty hours for a freight train to get from Montreal to Ottawa. The engines of those days would pull between eighteen and twenty freight cars; giant locomotives of today have a pulling power of between seventy-five and one hundred freight cars. Faster time might be made in the old days but for the fact that we had to stop every twenty miles to take on water; present day tenders will go over a division - 120 miles - without having to stop for water.

Mr. Hawley fired the first through time-billed passenger train of the C.P.R. from Montreal to Vancouver, in June 1886, taking it from Ottawa to Chalk River. The engineer on that occasion was Alexander Rogers. The following year - May 1887 - Mr. Hawley was promoted to engineer, and was at the throttles of C.P.R.locomotives from that time until he retired on pension on June 30th, 1927.

Great fishing

The railroader who was fond of fishing and hunting never found time hanging heavily on his hands at Chalk River, according to Mr. Hawley. The lakes and small streams in that vicinity simply teemed with fish "that were fish" and the woods round about were alive with partridge and deer. A few hours fishing would net a man almost more fish than he could carry home.

Mr. Hawley tells that one day he caught seven maskinonge, weighing ten pounds each, and two black bass weighing five to six pounds each. Other railroaders of the eighties and nineties who fished the lakes and streams above Chalk River could undoubtedly match this story. It wasn't necessary to have fisherman's luck in those days.

One day, while angling in a lake near Chalk River, Mr.Hawley landed a ten pound pike which had swallowed a sucker thirteen inches long.

And here is a good one to wind up this part of Mr. Hawley's reminiscences:

"One morning we were going up the Castleford grade, between Carleton Place and Renfrew, when the brakeman, Ed Parke, spotted a partridge standing on a log just inside the railway fence. He hopped off one of the cars near the front, ran back to the van, got a gun and killed the partridge. A few hours later he confided the tale of his achievement to me. That night I came down with a light engine, stopped at the spot where Parke said he had shot the partridge - and next day there was meat on the table in the Hawley home."

Engine crew has remarkable escape from instant death

When locomotive plunged from trestle to deep gully. Engineer Hawley tells the story.

The graphic story of an engine crew's remarkable escape from sure death is related by Mr. George W. Hawley, veteran C.P.R. employe as follows:

"It was about forty years ago. We were shunting a freight engine in McLachlin's lumber yards at Arnprior, and the engine left the track just as we came onto a trestle over a deep gully.

"She ran out onto the edge of the trestle on one side and the force of the heavy wheels grinding over the timbers broke them off, with the result that the locomotive plunged to the depths below, turning a complete somersault as she did so. Fireman Harry Cavanagh, being on the opposite side, jumped first and ran back: then, just as that old engine was about to plunge into the gully, I followed Cavanagh and ran out on the unbroken edge of the trestle, narrowly escaping falling over the edge in my haste.

"Had either of us lingered a second longer we would have gone over with our charge and been smashed to pulp. I recall that it took a wrecking crew a full week to get the locomotive - No. 283 - out of the gully and back in service again. She had landed on her back with the end of the tender lying n the cab. A year later the same engine figured in a wreck just east of Stittsville when Mail Clerk Peden was killed and several others injured."

NB. The accident at Stittsville in which Mail Clerk Robert Peden was killed occurred on 14 October 1897.

Tuesday 23/06/1936 Ottawa Citizen L'Orignal

Must not abandon C.N.R. Hawkesbury to Hurdman Line.

The application of the Canadian National Railways to the Board of Railway Commissioners for leave to abandon a portion of its line between Hawkesbury and Hurdman, a distance of 56.6 miles, was dismissed by the commission. The commission however, granted the company leave to abandon the portion between Rockland and Clarence Creek, a distance of 4.6 miles. Both applications had been joined in the case presented to the commission.

In the judgment which was written by Commissioner G.A. Stone and concurred in by the other members of the board, the opinion was that the business offering between Rockland and Clarence Creek does not warrant the large expenditure which would be required to rehabilitate that mileage.

Regarding the Hawkesbury-Hurdman portion of the application, however, the judgment stated that considering the financial improvement in operation during the past three years on that portion of the line, together with other features, the application was dismissed, without prejudice to any future application the Canadian National Railways may desire to make after the expiration of at least one year from the date of the order.

Friday 10/07/1936 Ottawa Citizen Lachute Smiths Falls

Albert Maynes was fireman on first transcontinental train

Albert Maynes, formerly of Smiths Falls, now retired, was outstanding among the C.P.R. veterans, in the recent golden jubilee celebration of the inauguration of transcontinental railway service in Canada. Mr. Maynes, now residing in Toronto, was, for about a quarter of a century, one of the best known C.P.R. locomotive engineers on the Smiths Falls division.

He had the honor of being one of the two men who piloted the engine that hauled the first through C.P.R. train out of Montreal destined for Fort Moody, then the Pacific coast terminal. He was chosen locomotive fireman for that occasion by the stalwart group who drove in the last spike. The engineer on the first train was Aaron Barr. Mr. Maynes has great recollections of that first trip. He said great crowds gathered about the old Place Viger station and huge bonfires were lighted along the way.

Mr. Maynes, who is the son of an Irish infantry captain, started as a machinist for the old Southern Railway in Vermont and later became a humble engine-wiper in the Hochelaga shops at Montreal. He afterwards became locomotive engineer in Smiths Falls, divisional master mechanic, rule instructor and mechanical examiner. He has travelled with royalty and has been a friend of dukes and princes and statesmen.

<http://news.google.ca/newspapers?id=KLQuAAAAIBAJ&sjid=jNoFAAAAIBAJ&pg=6201,4549174&dq=railway+l+train+l+railroad+l+cnr+l+cpr&hl=en>

Saturday 29/08/1936 Ottawa Citizen L'Orignal Orleans

Orleans family had a narrow escape at crossing.

Freight train smashed into stalled truck.

When the truck in which they were passengers stalled near Orleans on Friday, Mr. and Mrs. Rene Brisbois of Orleans and their three children were forced to abandon the vehicle as a Montreal-bound freight train smashed into it. The occupants barely had enough time to escape before the train struck the truck, carrying it 600 feet along the right of way.

Although he saw the train approaching, Mr. Brisbois thought he had ample time to cross. When the truck stalled he shouted to his wife and catching up the children they leaped to safety.

Monday 31/08/1936 Ottawa Citizen Cornwall Street Cornwall

8 arrested in clash outside Cornwall plant.

Eight persons were arrested, one for intimidation and seven for obstruction in the performance of their duties in a clash between striking workers and provincial police in front of the Courtaulds (Canada) plant at three o'clock this afternoon.

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The trouble occurred when an attempt was made to bring a street railway power car into the plant grounds to move freight cars lying on the siding. One of the picketers attempted to pull the motorman from the car and when police came to the motorman's assistance the large gang of men swarmed on the police in an attempt to take away from them the man who had, according to police, attempted to intimidate the motorman.

The eight men arrested were taken to the city hall, more than two miles distant from the plant, and locked in cells. No one was seriously hurt in the melee although one of the provincial policemen suffered a split lip, caused by being struck with a fist.

A bread truck which was scheduled to make a delivery to the company cafeteria, drove by the plant but did not attempt to go in when it was seen that the picketers were in what was said to be a very ugly mood.

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Saturday 05/09/1936 Ottawa Citizen Montreal and Ottawa Ottawa

Picture of interior

Interior of the buffet coach of the Canadian Pacific's new semi-streamlined train which was on exhibition here Friday and Saturday. One of these coaches, in which refreshments can be served at tables will be a regular part of each train when placed in service. The train is air-conditioned throughout and is the last word in modern day-coach travel.

<http://news.google.ca/newspapers?id=DmEuAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VdoFAAAAIBAJ&pg=1714,5311594&dq=railway+l+train+l+railroad+l+cnr+l+cpr&hl=en>

Thursday **01/10/1936** **Ottawa Citizen** **Prescott** **Manotick**

Three cars derailed on Ottawa - Toronto train, 200 passengers escape.

Night train meets accident near Manotick. Engineer's presence of mind averted disaster and only express and mail cars leave rails. Broken rail given as cause. Members of crew win high praise.

More than 200 passengers on the Ottawa-Toronto night train had a remarkable escape when three cars left the rails between Gloucester and Manotick at mileage ten just before midnight last night. Due to smart work on the part of the train crew, no one was injured and what might easily have been a major catastrophe was averted.

Three cars off tracks

The train, which is the night pool train, pulled out of Ottawa Union station at 11.35 last night with its first scheduled stop Kemptville at 12.25 a.m. It had just got up speed and was thundering on towards its first stop when suddenly the Canadian Pacific Express car left the rails, pulling a Canadian National Express car and the mail car with it. Fortunately the engineer, G. Yelland of Ottawa saw what had happened and immediately braked the train.

Right of way torn up

As he pulled the train to a stop the baggage car between the mail car and the passenger coach and five sleepers held to the rails despite the fact that the right-of-way was torn up and the entire train was rocking from side to side.

Workers in the mail car were thrown to the floor but beyond a few bruises were otherwise unhurt.

Passengers however, were badly jolted but it is understood that none of them were injured.

Among passengers

Among the well known people who left Ottawa last evening on the train were: Arthur Slaght K.C., M.P., of Toronto who was in Ottawa yesterday in connection with a court case; R. McIntyre and J.J. Beachen, both of Toronto, and C.H. Corman of the Hamilton Harbour Commission.

Calls for assistance were at once phoned to Ottawa and Smiths Falls and operating officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway ordered auxiliary engines to the scene of the accident from Smiths Falls and from Ottawa.

Delayed three hours

By three o'clock this morning the three derailed cars were back on the track and the train pulled off for Bedell where other equipment stood ready to rush the now three-hour late train on her way to Toronto.

Despite the fact that there was a drenching rain pouring down, the crew worked like heroes in an effort to get the train back on the track with all possible speed.

Believe rail broken

Officials at the scene of the accident state that they were of the opinion that the accident was the result of a broken rail. They all announce themselves as being extremely glad that the engine itself had not left the rails as this would possibly have resulted in a serious loss of life.

A C.P.R. official from Hull, Que., who was on the train en route to Toronto on his holidays, took charge of the operations at the accident.

The crew in charge of the train were Conductor D. Kennedy of Toronto and Engineer G. Yelland of Ottawa.

Ten feet of rail were found to be split when an examination was made following the accident. The wheels of the three cars ripped fishplates and ties for 400 yards along the track.

Friday **16/10/1936** **Ottawa Citizen** **Alexandria**

Admits he robbed railway stations

B.B. Harris, special investigator for the C.N.R. announced this morning that a series of railway station break-ins in the Ottawa district had been solved by the confession of Redmond Cote, 25 years of age, of no fixed age, but who said his home was in Ottawa

Cote was wounded in the leg by a revolver shot by C.N.R. police at Valleyfield, Que., last week as he was allegedly attempting to break in the New York Central Railway freight sheds there. He is at present in the Valleyfield hospital and will be committed for trial as soon as he is well enough to appear in Valleyfield court.

Mr. Harris stated that Cote admitted breaking into Hawkesbury, Vankleek Hill and St. Polycarp stations. In each case safes were broken open and varying amounts of money stolen.

Cote has previous convictions in Ottawa.

Tuesday **24/11/1936** **Ottawa Citizen** **Prescott** **Ellwood**

Police searching for bogus money believed hidden.

Working on a theory that a quantity of counterfeit bills, and plates for printing them, were cached under the flooring, police this morning ripped up the floor of the Canadian Pacific Railway tool-house at Ellwood, four miles south of Ottawa. Digging several feet into the earth beneath the two-inch planks revealed nothing.

The search was instituted following the arrest early this morning of Daniel McRitchie, 51 years, of Cooksville, who was paroled four days ago from an Ontario reformatory at Mimico. McRitchie was apprehended by Corporal C. Graham and Constable Poudrette of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Cornwall.

McRitchie was caught in the tool-house. he is charged with breaking and entering and awaits arraignment.

A close watch is being kept in the vicinity of the tool-house as the police hold the theory that McRitchie had arranged to meet a confederate believed to have been one of the gang of counterfeiters which was operating in Ottawa and Hull slightly over a year ago. At that time many spurious bills were circulated in the two cities, merchants being the victims.

When police began ripping up the floor of the tool-house they discovered that in one spot the earth appeared to have been recently disturbed. They think it possible that some members of the gang may have visited the shack recently and removed whatever might have been buried there. The officers also made a casual examination of the surrounding fields, ditches and hedges.

Constables Poudrette and Georges Lemieux of the R.C.M.P. and Constable George Kelly of the C.P.R. police, are conducting the investigation.

McRitchie, it is alleged, had a key to the tool-house and police are endeavouring to discover how he got it.

Monday **21/12/1936** **Ottawa Citizen** **Waltham** **Wyman**

Train off rails near Wyman delays traffic

The Waltham-Ottawa C.P.R. passenger train was delayed for about two hours this morning when two wheels of the locomotive left the rails at a crossing a short distance west of Wyman station. No one suffered injury and no property damage was caused. The train was coming to a stop for the station when the derailment occurred. An auxiliary crew was called from Ottawa and placed the locomotive back on the rails. Ice forming over the rails at the crossing on the Hull-Chapleau highway a few hundred yards from the railway station is blamed for the derailment. Highway traffic as well as the railway line was tied up.

<http://news.google.ca/newspapers?id=tvMuAAAAIBAJ&sjid=1NsFAAAAIBAJ&pg=3626,1499335&dq=derailment&hl=en>