

Local Railway Items from Area Papers - 1951

07/02/1951 Ottawa Citizen Sussex Street

An Eastview man, Sydney H. Webb, 78 St. Amboise streey, escaped unhurt when his car skidded into the side of a slow moving freight locomotive shortly before 7.30 p.m. yesterday.

The CPR crossing at Charlevoix Street in Eastview was the scene of the accident, which involved CPR locomotive No. 3410 operated by Engineer Hubert Bough, 231 Primrose Avenue.

Webb told police that the train pulled out of the yards of Betcherman Iron and Metal Company as he approached the crossing. He stated that he noticed the engine and though he applied the brakes the automobile slid on the glare ice into the side of it. The train was travelling at the rate of 4 miles an hour at the time. Damage to the automobile was estimated at \$400.

The accident was investigated by Constable Claude Dwyer of the Eastview police, who was assisted by Constables Gordon Hicks and William Haley of the Ottawa City Police.

12/02/1951 Ottawa Citizen Chalk River Pembroke

Pembroke - No injuries resulted but considerable damage was caused and the main line of the CPR blocked for several hours here yesterday, the result of a derailment of a freight train near the Pembroke Shook Mills, just inside western Pembroke limits.

Ten box cars were derailed two of them overturned beside the track which happened about 7.45 a.m.

Traffic along the transcontinental line was immediately halted and interrupted until late yesterday afternoon when wrecking crews completed clearing up the wreckage and repaired the damaged rails.

Railway officials revealed that the accident occurred when a mechanical defect caused a broken arch-bar on the underside of one of the cars.

Ten cars were derailed and the tracks torn up for several hundred feet. Two of the derailed cars, the one with the defect and another, were overturned one on each side of the right-of-way with the wheels torn off both.

The officials revealed also that the train, eastbound at the time, was an extra freight under the charge of Conductor Tom Spooner of Smiths Falls. They emphasized that no blame was attached to anyone with respect to the accident.

One wrecking train and crew arrived from the west early yesterday morning while another from Smiths Falls reached the scene about noon and both worked rapidly to clear the line. Eastbound trains were held at Chalk River, about 20 miles west of here, while those westbound were stopped at Pembroke.

17/02/1951 Ottawa Citizen Lachute

None hurt in crash of truck train.

Ernest Bastien, 35, of 154 Hinchey Avenue, narrowly escaped injury yesterday afternoon when his loaded fuel-oil truck with its inflammable cargo skidded into the side of a moving passenger train at a Hull crossing.

The CPR Montclair Street crossing was the scene of the truck-train crash, when the truck plowed into one of the rear coaches of CPR Ottawa-Maniwaki passenger train, locomotive No.2927, that had just pulled out of Beemer station at 4.45 p.m.

Although the cab of the heavy tanker tractor owned by Hall Fuels, 339 Preston Street, was totally wrecked, the efforts of the driver in pulling the truck sideways was credited with saving the 1,200 gallon oil tank from damage.

None of the oil escaped and there was little danger of fire or explosion following the crash.

--

Although the railway coaches were slightly damaged as a result of the accident, officials reported last night that none of the passengers were injured.

--

Engineer William R. Creighton, of 125 Bayswater Avenue and Fireman George Tapp, of 158 Beach Street were in charge of the locomotive.

23/03/1951 Ottawa Journal Chaudiere

Derailement Causes Traffic Tie-Up

A derailed CNR freight car at the Lloyd street crossing on Booth street last night tied up traffic for about an hour. No one was injured in the derailment.

A CNR foreman told police the freight car was derailed when a section of track caved in on the west side of the crossing shortly before eight o'clock.

The car, which remained on its wheels, was put back on the tracks by a CNR work crew shortly before 9.15 p.m.

During the tie-up, Constable Gordon Bradley, assisted Sgt. Allen Donaldson and Constable Maurice Nash, diverted traffic at the Wellington and Booth street intersection.

14/05/1951 Ottawa Journal Carleton Place Churchill avenue

Railway Wreck Suits Settled

Sequel to the derailment of a CPR passenger train at Churchill avenue, Westboro, on January 20, this year, in which Albert Scharf, engineer of the train was killed, a number of legal actions arising out of the crash have been settled, it was intimated in Ontario Supreme Court today

The CPR's transcontinental flyer was derailed when it crashed into a truck owned by the Independent Coal and Lumber Company which was stalled at the level crossing.

While principals in an action taken against the coal and lumber company by Mrs. Scharf over her husband's death declined to reveal the precise amount of the settlement she received, it was learned that it is in the vicinity of \$18,000. O.F. Howe, KC, acted for Mrs. Scharf and T. N. Phelan, KC, of Toronto, for the Independent Coal and Lumber Company.

At Carleton County Courthouse this morning, Roydon A. Hughes, KC, counsel for the lumber company in an action taken against it by the Canadian Pacific Railway arising from the crash intimated that a settlement had been reached and that minutes of the agreement would be filed shortly.

The settlement covers both the action taken by the railway company against the coal company and a counter-claim made by the Independent Coal and Lumber Company against the CPR.

Neither party would divulge the amount of the settlement. It is understood however, that it is not of an order which would have serious financial consequences to either the railway or the coal and lumber company.

In making his announcement to the court, Mr. Hughes intimates that he was doing so with the consent of the other counsel involved.

24/05/1951 Ottawa Journal Kingston (CN) Cardinal

Wreck train jumps tracks while on way to clear debris from earlier derailment.

Cardinal. Heavy holiday traffic between Montreal and Toronto was disrupted and rerouted today after five cars of a CNR work train were derailed on the CNR main line, just west of Cardinal station shortly after 4 p.m. Wednesday. No one was injured.

The train was proceeding west from Montreal to help clear a CNR main line derailment of 24 freight cars at Napanee, which occurred earlier in the day.

Rest is illegible.

Emergency tracks were being laid throughout the night at the Cardinal accident scene. - -

Trains were being rerouted last night around the Cardinal wreck by way of Smiths Falls and Dorval. Other passenger and freight trains were carried on CPR tracks as the two systems combined to meet the looming emergency.

Rail officials at Ottawa said that the disruption in passenger and commercial traffic could have been "just about the worst holiday weekend imaginable" had it not been for the fast decisions and the ability to change routes.

The derailment at Cardinal, still being cleared at presstime, threw off four cars and a big railway crane about 4.30 p.m. yesterday. The small work train from Montreal, which also included four other cars and a diesel engine which were not derailed, was on its way to Napanee to clear a wreck there which had blocked the line at noon yesterday, requiring further rerouting earlier.

The crew of 15 had been riding in the rear cars or the engine at the time of the rail-jumping at Cardinal. No one was injured as the crane and four cars toppled over about a mile north of Cardinal at the place where the tracks cross the Shanley Road subway there.

Cause of the accident was a broken axle on the crane car which edged the heavy piece of wrecking machinery off the tracks, dragging the four cars with it. Both tracks were ripped up for more than 50 yards. Crews last night worked to restore one of the tracks. Trailing pieces from the bottom of the crane car scraped the track badly for several hundred yards further.

25/06/1951 *Ottawa Journal*

Hear NYC Application To Discontinue Service

Hearing of an application by the New York Central Railway to discontinue passenger service between Helena, NY. and Ottawa opened here this morning before the Board of Transport Commissioners.

Sitting as chairman is Hugh Wardrope, Assistant Chief Commissioner. Other members of the board are Armand Sylvestre, Deputy Chief Commissioner, and H.B. Chase.

This morning's session was taken up with submission of financial statements presented by the railway company.

Also represented at the hearing are the City of Cornwall and Cornwall Township - which are contesting the proposed discontinuance of service.

26/06/1951 *Ottawa Journal*

New York Central

NY Central seeks to end train service

Cornwall June 26 The Board of Transport Commissioners for Canada heard seven witnesses for the New York Central Railway system give evidence to the effect continuation of the passenger service between Helena, NY, and Ottawa, is a financially unsound Venture.

Evidence was also given by two representatives of bus lines serving communities between Cornwall and Ottawa which are also NYC centers. The hearing is on an application of the NYC to discontinue passenger service between the two points.

All Railway officials testifying in the first day of the hearing indicated that ticket sales have decreased steadily during the past 10 years. Evidence was that value of passenger ticket sales was \$3,786 last year and only \$3,348 in 1949.

Those testifying were F.E. Weaver, trainmaster, Norwood NY, S.A. Francis and James H King, special investigators with the office of the executive vice-president; John E. Finucane, Canadian freight and passenger agent, Montreal; V.A. Donnelly, representative of the railway express agency, Rochester, NY; William Smith, assistant manager of mail and express traffic, New York City; C.S. Thompson, NYC agent at Cornwall, Hugh E. Trainor, traffic, freight and passenger agent, Ottawa.

Charles Belfort, superintendent of Transportation, Colonial Coach Lines limited, and Arthur Cardinal, proprietor of the Cardinal bus system, appeared for their respective concerns to outline passenger services between Ottawa and Cornwall.

Appearing for the railway is Cuthbert Scott, KC, of Ottawa; G.A. Stiles is representing the City of Cornwall, and the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry are represented by S.E. Fennell.KC..

Hugh Wardrope, assistant chief commissioner, is Chairman of the hearing, with H.B. Chase, CBE, commissioner, and Armand Silvestre, deputy chief commissioner, as his aides.

Reserved decision on request of NY Central to end service

Cornwall June 27th. Decision was reserved by the board of Transport Commissioners on an application by the New York Central Railroad to discontinue passenger service between Helena, NY, and Ottawa. Headed by Hugh Wardrope, assistant chief commissioner, as chairman, the three-man board conducted a hearing on the application in the County Courthouse here.

Mr. Wardrope, announcing reservation of the board's decision, said certain aspects of the evidence presented by the railway and objections to cutting off the service would require special study and consideration. The hearing opened Monday morning and was concluded Tuesday afternoon.

Evidence submitted by the railway show the operation of passenger service over the route had been a losing proposition for the past 7 years. F. W. Weaver, NYC trainmaster from Norwood NY, said there was accommodation aboard the train for 133 people. James H. King, special investigator of the office of the railroads Executive Vice President, said that in a 36 - day operational period the number of passengers from Cornwall to Ottawa was 1353, for an average of 3.75 per trip. The average from Ottawa to Cornwall was 5.41 per trip. F.A.R. MacFadden auditor for the city of Cornwall, expressed strong objection at Tuesday's hearing about the manner in which to statistics on the railways operating expenses was presented.

"I cannot draw a single, accurate and valid conclusion from the exhibits placed before this board", said Mr MacFadden. "There is doubt in my mind as to whether accounts presented as evidence are accurate expenses or a mixture of accuracy and estimates."

Asked by H.B. Chase, a commissioner, if he agreed that actual expenses could have been higher if compiled on a pro-rata system, Mr McFadden said he had considered this possibility.

"But that does not alter the fact I can't draw an accurate conclusion from accounts presented", added Mr McFadden.

Appearing for the railroad, Cuthbert Scott, QC, of Ottawa, told the board "There was plenty of evidence" to indicate financial losses more than outweighed inconvenience to those using the passenger service.

"I submit it has been shown there would not be a great deal of inconvenience to people residing in the area served by this line", said Mr Scott. "There has been no substantial passenger traffic in the past 5 years --- the Cornwall - Ottawa route has been patronized by as few as three three people on the average. The average for Ottawa-Cornwall trips has been about 5 people or less."

Ottawa, Hull indifferent.

Mr. Scott expressed the opinion the cities of Ottawa and Hull should be interested in the railway's application to discontinue service. Both cities, however, had demonstrated complete indifference by having no legal representation at the board meeting.

Council for the railway deal dealt with representations by a delegation from Russell County, contending the delegates were more interested in obtaining some financial settlement of a grant made by the council in 1897 to the old Ottawa - New York Railway.

Mr. Scott listed the railways losses since 1948. These were \$27,940 1948, \$37,021 for 1949 and \$31,380 in 1950.

Solicitor for the city of Cornwall, G. A. Styles, objected to granting of the application on the grounds evidence submitted by the NYC had been "improperly prepared" and it was not possible to decide whether figures gave a true picture of conditions.

Mr Styles agreed that there had undoubtedly been a decrease in passenger traffic as well as financial losses in the freight service. It seemed incredible, he said, that the railroad did not seek to halt freight services if figures presented were correct.

Not proper information.

"I contend the railway has not given us proper information concerning the relation of this line with the remainder of the NYC system" said Mr Styles

Counsel for Cornwall Township, S.E. Fennell, KC, supported Mr. Styles in the contention a true picture of financial conditions could not be obtained. Mr Fennell said this was impossible because the accounting system was not compiled on a pro-rata basis. He said the passenger losses were said to be substantial, but the railway still was willing to carry on freight services which showed even greater financial loss.

Mr. Fennell did not subscribe to the suggestion that passenger services could be taken care of by bus companies. He did not believe anything should be done to assist railways from leaving the passenger field. He did not think bus services in this part of the province were sufficient to meet the demands of travelers.

"If the railway wants to have rights to freight services, it should be willing to assume its responsibilities as a passenger line". Mr. Fennell concluded.

The other member of the three-man board hearing evidence was Armand Sylvestre, deputy chief commissioner.

To Cut Service of NYC Line

The Board of Transport Commissioners today authorized .the New York Central Railroad to discontinue its passenger service between Ottawa and Helena, NY, for six months of each year.

The service may be shut down from November to April, inclusive, each year. It must operate the rest of the year.

The company, arguing that it was beating a substantial loss on the service, asked permission to discontinue the service entirely in a hearing before the board at Cornwall, Ont, last month.

The present service is two trains daily, one leaving Helena and the other leaving Ottawa. The traffic is purely local between Helena and Ottawa, with no connecting links beyond those two points. Before 1939, when the railway was authorized to reduce the service, there were two passenger trains daily each way. Today's order does not affect the railway's freight service.

NYC to Run November To April

The Board of Transport Commissioners has ruled, that the New York Central Railroad must continue to operate its passenger service between Ottawa and Helena, NY. between the months of November and April inclusive. . As a result of the NYC's application to the Board to cut its year-round service because of present substantial loss, the NYC must not operate between May and October. With the cut service, one train will leave Ottawa and Helena every day, during the months the company is obliged to operate.

Ottawa - Helena NYC service stops August 15

Cornwall, Ont., July 25. Passenger service on the New York Central Railway line between Ottawa and Helena New York, will halt Aug. 15 and resume next November, it was announced here today.

The change in schedule is to comply with a federal Transport Board order permitting the company to suspend passenger train operation from April to November. The company's application to discontinue the service entirely as unprofitable was heard here last month.

Derailment Tears CPR Line Near Perth

SMITHS FALLS, Aug. 6 (Staff) Traffic on the CPR main line was delayed briefly last night when one box car of an eastbound freight train jumped the tracks during switching operations a mile east of Perth. No one was injured.

The derailment resulted in a stretch of track being ripped up. Rail official said service could continue over another track.

Provincial Police Corporal H A. Caldwell and Constable Bud Mitchell of the Perth detachment investigated the accident. A wrecking crew was dispatched to the scene from the Smiths Falls rail shop to clear the line.

End Of An Era: .

53-Year-Old N.Y.C. Passenger Service Suspended 'Till Fall

With a sharp blast of its whistle and a belch of black smoke from its time-honored smoke-stack, the last New York Central passenger train to travel through Cornwall during summer months chugged away from the old, gray station in the city's west end last night.

Along with a few passengers and some express, the train also carried old, and, perhaps, somewhat misty, memories for Charles S. Thompson, agent-telegrapher at the local NYC depot since 1933 and an employee of the railroad since 1909.

This trip marked the end of an era in the history of this 53-year old division of one of the greatest railroads to the United States. For last month the Board of Transport Commissioners at Ottawa authorized the company to discontinue passenger service on this division for six months of the year the year from November until April. Arguing that it was bearing a substantial financial loss on the service, the company asked permission to discontinue passenger service entirely at a hearing before the board here in June.

Little Used

Few Cornwall people today use the line which extends from Helena, N. Y., across the mighty St. Lawrence River via Roosevelt International Bridge to Canada's Capital City..

But such was not always the case. This division, which used to run through to Tupper Lake, N., Y., used, to have a heavy passenger trade.

Mr. Thompson, who has been with the line for 42 years - all spent on this division - sat at his workworn desk in the old-fashioned office and reminisced yesterday afternoon,

"Why I can remember when I used to sell tickets for an hour steady before train-time," said

the balding, bespectacled agent with perhaps, a trace of witfulness in his voice, "It wasn't unusual in years gone by for between 45 and 50 passengers to board a train at this station.

"I certainly am sorry to see summer passenger service cut off," said the veteran railroader

in reply to the reporter's question.

But he was philosophical about the whole thing, for he knew he would still have work to do, as freight service will still continue.

"When I started my apprenticeship at Newington we had four passenger and two freight

trains a day. Then in 1939 passenger service was reduced to one train up and one down.' Mr. Thompson said.

"Yes, we did a terrific passenger business years ago. Why I have sold tickets for two special trains for two days during Ottawa exhibition week, and each train was loaded to the roof.

"We ran specials for holidays, too. I remember Christmas, Thanksgiving and other holidays

when we ran two specials and they were packed," the agent said. "Last July 12 we ran a special for the Orangemen - probably the last. It was the first since wartime when special troop trains ran to Ottawa."

Ten years ago passenger ticket sales at the Cornwall station totalled between \$1,800 and \$2,000 for a month. Now the average is between \$400 and \$500. Last month 262 tickets were sold.

Started in 1909

Mr. Thompson began his apprenticeship with the New York Central at the Newington station in 1909'. Since that time he has worked at Santa Clara, N.Y., Kildare, N.Y., Dickenson's Centre, N.Y., and Black River, N.Y.

His first position after completing his apprenticeship was as an assistant agent at Russell and he was at the Berwick station for 21 years.

"I learned my operating at Newington," Mr. Thompson said, "and when I came to Cornwall

in 1933 I was put on the second trick job. Then the agent died and the man next to him moved up to his job. When he died some time later I got the job."

When the reporter rather hesitantly queried Mr. Thompson about his age, he replied with a smile, "Oh, I'll soon turn 50."

But he was just joking. He will celebrate his 60th birthday next Tuesday; He has five more years to go before retirement.

"And you can say this too," he added. "The New York Central is a great company to work for. In the years that I have been with them they have certainly been good to me."

He wasn't positive, but he thought the line to Ottawa was opened about 53 years ago.

Yesterday morning he sold a ticket to an elderly lady from Harrison's Corners who said she travelled on the first train 53 years ago and she wanted to travel on one of the last ones.

Freight business is still, "very good," Mr. Thompson pointed out. It will not be curtailed and two freight trains a day will continue to operate. Express will also be carried on these trains.

17/09/1951 Athens Reporter Westport Athens

Strong opposition to the closing of the Canadian National Railway line (the Brockville and Westport) from Lyn Junction to Westport was registered at the regular meeting of the Athens village council. Reeve Guy Purcell and all councilors were in attendance at the meeting, at which the members agreed to send a representative expressing their views to any board or committee meeting held in connection with the line's closing. A copy of the resolution was voted to be sent to the Board of Transport Commission at Ottawa.

10/12/1951 Ottawa Journal New York Central Hurdman

Friday the 13th.

On the afternoon of October 15, 1950 Friday the thirteenth - the truck in which Mr. Forget was a passenger was struck at the New York Central crossing one mile east of Hurdman's Bridge.

Minutes later Mr. Forget lay in agony his legs crushed and his left arm ripped and torn.

He almost bled to death and when he was taken to hospital the doctors put him on the critical list.