

# Local Railway Items from Ottawa Papers - 1982

*27/01/1982 Eganville Leader Renfrew*

CN Abandons Winter Service On Local Line

Rail service on the local Canadian National Railway line has been abandoned for the remainder of the winter months and unless there is an upswing in the economy of the area, the line between Renfrew and Barry's Bay will remain closed in the winter months in coming years.

Thursday afternoon, the red and black CN locomotive, pulling a lone boxcar and caboose, pushed eastwards back to Ottawa signalling an end to the use of the line until the spring season arrives.

*17/02/1982 Brockville Recorder Brockville Brockville*

Brockville history buff Mildred Livingstone believes she has proof that the CPR tunnel and adjacent waterfront property in that community belong to the city and not to Canadian Pacific. Her proof is based on a 3 page 1959 document describing a contract between the Town of Brockville, James Foster a representative of the Brockville and Ottawa Railway Company at Smiths Falls, and a construction firm called Messrs. (Nathaniel) Taggart of Ogdensburg. The contract, for the sum of \$1,859.11, is for the delivery of iron, sand, wood and stone to the front of the tunnel, and is signed by the three parties and stamped with Brockville's official seal. Livingstone feels that Brockville's seal on the papers proves that the town was responsible for maintenance and ownership of both the tunnel and waterfront property adjacent to it.

City solicitors are attempting to validate the authenticity of the paper. A 1979 deal which would have seen the city acquire the tunnel and land in front of it from Marathon Realty fell through in 1980 as the city felt that the Canadian Pacific real estate arm did not have clear title to all the property. (Branchline)

*15/04/1982 Brockville Recorder Brockville Brockville*

Leeds County MLA Bob Runciman has proposed that a "first class railroad museum" be developed at Brockville. Citing the community's long association with the railway industry, Runciman has called for a project centred around a 3 mile tourist operation running from Brockville's waterfront, through the city's historic rail tunnel and north on CP's Brockville Subdivision to the provincial-municipal conservation area (known locally as the "Back Pond") at the edge of the city. Apparently Runciman has gone so far as to consult with CP officials as to the feasibility of such a project. According to the freshman MLA, Canadian Pacific has been "extremely co-operative", especially in terms of their offers to re-install track and supplying vintage railway equipment. (Branchline)

*28/06/1982 Brockville Recorder Kingston (CN) Prescott*

The historic Grand Trunk Railway stations at Prescott and Belleville have both been selected as official historic sites by Parks Canada.

Monuments Board of Canada plaques (were) . . . unveiled at both locations on (Dominion) Day . . . to commemorate the historic Grand Trunk Railway (and its station architecture). Senator Royce Frith of Perth (represented) . . . Federal minister John Roberts at the 2 p.m. ceremony in Prescott.

The mayor of Prescott, Sandra Lawn, and Carleton-Grenville MPP Norm Sterling, provincial secretary of justice, (were) among the guests . . . at the unveiling.

At 7 p.m., Frith (unveiled) the second plaque at Belleville Station. The ceremony (was) followed by a reception in Allhambra Hall.

The Grand Trunk Railway was incorporated in 1853. Between its incorporation and 1857 several existing rail lines were combined with new construction to form Canada's first inter-provincial railway.

Sarnia was linked via Toronto and Montreal to Portland, Maine. Although much of the track and roadbed have not endured, Belleville and Prescott stations both remain as monuments to the entrepreneurial efforts of the Grand Trunk Railway.

Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada selected Belleville and Prescott as the first two sites to commemorate along the railway this year. The board is responsible for commemorations of people, places, and events "of historic significance in Canada."

(Branchline)

*Monday 12/07/1982 Ottawa Citizen Winchester Mountain*

CP Train derailment near Mountain cuts Toronto-Montreal line for a day. (with picture)

MOUNTAIN, Ont. All freight traffic on the Toronto-Montreal rail corridor was paralysed for 30 hours on the weekend by a train derailment in this quiet Eastern Ontario town.

A Canadian Pacific railcar carrying wax plunged off the track and burst into flames while travelling 80 km/h about 7 a.m. Saturday.

The 24-car pile-up burned until early Sunday morning on the outskirts of Mountain, 50 kilometres southwest of Ottawa.

There were no injuries and damage to local property was minimal. CP spokesman said no cause has been determined. The derailment is under investigation.

Had the cars derailed seconds earlier, the crash could have destroyed the home of Arnold and Marion Johnston, who were sleeping at the time.

The train overturned only 20 metres from the Johnston home, leaving the yard and garden littered with boulders and pieces of metal.

A steel railway shack was thrown 30 metres, coming to rest 10 metres from the farmhouse.

Windows were cracked and dirt was thrown into the house. There was also minor damage to the farm on the other side of the tracks.

"Another couple of hundred feet and it would have taken off the north side of the house," said Marion Johnston.

The derailment cancelled the Johnstons' plans for Saturday. They were expecting a large turn-out of friends and relatives to help with a hay harvest.

The Johnston's son Steve, who was in the barn milking cows at the time of the accident, said: "You'd swear you were in a war."

He said the boxcars just continued to pile up in the midst of flame and flying debris.

The 81-car train was carrying grain, general merchandise and automotive parts, along with the flammable wax substance, from Toronto to Montreal.

There was no toxic material on the train, which was travelling at two-thirds of its freight capacity.

The derailed cars on the west-bound line were removed and 150 metres of track were replaced, restoring west-bound service Sunday morning. East-bound freight traffic remains at a standstill until further repairs and clearing are done.

Six firetrucks from the Mountain County, Kemptville, and the Winchester fire departments tried to control the fierce blaze throughout the day and most of the night

The Mercury contends that rumours are plentiful, but facts scarce. One sure thing was that the CPR chief returned and was driven by Mr. Barnet up the valley of the Bonnechere as far as Douglas, going up one side of the river and back the other. The next week W. A. Ramsay, chief engineer, and his staff of surveyors returned to Renfrew and commenced a survey of the route on the north side of the Bonnechere River.

It was speculated that the Grand Trunk and New York Central Railway were at the back of Mr. Booth. Hence, Mr. Booth's apparent retirement from the fight "only another move on the railway chess board.

(The fight between the CPR and OA & PS created widespread interest articles appeared in various large dailies.)

The Toronto Empire pointed out that the CPR seemed to have taken control of the Parry Sound colonization road. If this were true, would Booth continue to build beyond Renfrew, as he did not propose to enter into a fight with a large corporation like the CPR. Booth added that if the CPR did go to Parry Sound, he would swing his line in the direction of Lake Nipissing and the French River, where he has large timber interests, which alone would create sufficient traffic to sustain a railroad for many years.

A Montreal paper interviewed Mr. Van Horne, President of the CPR, on the subject: He stated that work was already in progress and they expected to complete forty miles this season, but that the final direction had not been determined. Van Horne said, 'OA & PS was paralleling their railroad for fifty miles, and we feel justified in meeting such a movement in the most effective way possible.'

Van Horne was quoted in the Empire that he intended 'to build a branch to Eganville and some thirty miles beyond, and we will certainly keep ahead of anyone coming into our territory.' He looked upon the granting of a subsidy to the OA & PS as a great injustice to the CPR. The Montreal Gazette credited Van Horne with saying: Construction will commence at once.

The Toronto Telegram held the belief that locomotives would be done away with on the new line, to be replaced by electric trolleys. Also, traffic on the Grand Trunk between Toronto and Hamilton would be entirely electric. Trains would then run every hour, the public would have better service and the company would pocket the large difference between the cost of electricity and steam.

(The writer did not say where this electricity would originate.)

The Eganville Enterprise reported that: The CPR brass had again visited, called a town meeting and asked that the right of way be given to them. It was resolved that the line along John Street would be taken and that this right-of-way be free. This would be expensive, since some buildings would have to be removed and damages paid for properties cut off from access to the street. Eganville is desperate for a railroad and it is reasonable that aid be given to the first one which will accommodate it, but it would have been better to have given a reasonable bonus and allowed the company to purchase the right-of-way themselves. Eganville has been disappointed before in the matter of rail access; it is hard to believe that we will now have cars running into the village before winter sets in. There is a good deal of speculation as to whether the O. A. P. S. will now build their line.

The Ottawa Journal of August 2, 1892, carried a response from Booth: 'that his line did not parallel the CPR in some cases they diverge as much as twelve miles. And even if the two roads are apparently parallel, there is not, and never was, any intention of competition. We had to get to Parry Sound, and the route selected was the most convenient to ourselves.' 'The CPR' he continued, 'need not worry itself over the Parry Sound, a railroad that may not be completed for fifty years yet.'

In the Free Press, the contractor at Carp reported that: "the work of building was advancing most favourably; five or six miles had been graded already. The economic advantage to the village of Carp was huge. Every house was filled from top to bottom with workers, and boarding houses had been built"

02/09/1982 *Ottawa Citizen**Smiths Falls**Smiths Falls*

Railway buffs organize to keep station whole.

Railway buffs from Perth, Merrickville and Brockville have joined ranks with local enthusiasts in their battle to save the CN Station here.

They've formed the Smiths Falls Railway Museum Association.

President of the newly formed group is Bill LeSurf, chamber of commerce manager, who has spearheaded the Save Our Station Appeal to save the building from demolition.

Smiths Falls lawyer Hugh McLain was named secretary-treasurer. Committee members include Dr. Robert V. Nicholls, president of the Canadian Railway Historical Association and director of the Canadian Historical Society, Clare Garrod of the chamber of commerce; Smiths Falls; Smiths Falls collegiate principal Robin Fraser; artist Craig Campbell; Perth restaurateur Fred Bannon; and Brockville Tunnell Bay Railroaders Club executives S.H. Galloway and Steve Hunter. First priority will be to persuade Smiths Falls council to assume ownership of the doomed building. Dr. Nicholls warned the meeting that as soon as the structure is declassified as a non-operating station by the Canadian Transport Commission, the wrecking crew could move in within 24 hours.

LeSurf planned to contact CN officials to attempt to get a stop order on the demolition of the building.

The first fund-raising project will be a draw for a painting of the station by Craig Campbell.

The Tunnel Bay Railroaders said they have given up hope of having a railway museum on Brockville because of lack of space, so they're joining the Smiths Falls group.

Bannon, owner of Noonan's restaurant in Perth, has offered the committee the original blueprints of the station plus an architect's proposal for turning it into a restaurant. Bannon has been unsuccessfully trying to negotiate a deal with CN for the past four years to buy the station for a restaurant.

30/09/1982 *Brockville Recorder**Brockville*

CP Rail's Brockville subdivision, also nick-named the "bump and grind" line, has been targeted for upgrading work by VIA Rail Canada as part of an overall 10 million dollar project to cut Ottawa - Toronto running times by as much as 50 minutes. This work will involve laying newer and heavier rail in addition to straightening curves, upgrading the roadbed (parts of which are still cinders or pit-run gravel) and extending the track circuits at level crossings protected by bells and flashers. Similar, but less drastic, work is planned for CN's track between federal and Smiths Falls East. (Branchline).