

Local Railway Items from Area Papers - Brockville and New York Bridge

27/02/1890 Brockville Recorder Brockville and New York Bridge

The Bridge Scheme

The announcement that Col W.H. Cole and Mr. R. G. Hervey have started for England on business in connection with the proposed international bridge across the St Lawrence at this point, took most of our citizens by surprise. It proves, however that the gentlemen who are promoting this project are thorough earnest and we are certain that every citizen will wish the two gentlemen who have gone to England every success in their mission. The building of the bridge here would add enormously to Brockville's prosperity, as it would mean an increase to the population, and would make it one of the traffic centers of the Dominion. In event of the bridge being built a large amount of the GTR traffic now crossing at Suspension Bridge (Niagara Falls) and handed over there to American companies would cross here, thus giving that road a longer haul. All, or nearly all of the CPR freight traffic would also cross here and it would no doubt also mean more friendly relations between the town and the road in the future. The New York, Ontario & Western Railway is particularly anxious that the bridge should be built, and as soon as work on it is commenced the company would begin the construction of the eighty miles of road necessary to bring them to the St Lawrence. This road hands over all its western traffic to the GTR at Suspension Bridge, but before it reaches that place it is hauled a portion of the distance by the RW&OR (Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburg Railway). The bridge would give the NYO&W direct connection over their own tracks with the GTR and thus make their business more profitable. The Brockville, Westport and Sault Ste Marie Railway is another road that would be immensely benefited by the construction of the bridge. The road, it is hoped, will be pushed forward at an early date to Palmer Rapids or Burk's Falls and its construction through to the Soo is only a question of time. If the bridge is built that time may come sooner than most people anticipate, as it is known that the Northern Pacific people have expressed themselves favorable to a connection with the BW&SSM if built through to the Soo. Such connection would shorten the route from Duluth to New York about 210 miles, a very important matter in these days of keen railway competition, and one which the Northern Pacific fully appreciates. The building of the bridge would in all probability also mean the construction of the proposed air line from Brockville to Ottawa. Aside, however from these railway advantages which would accrue to the town there can scarcely be a doubt that it would become a great manufacturing center. We have already all the natural advantages demanded by manufacturers, and such increased facilities for shipping as would result from the concentration of several more railways at this point would undoubtedly attract manufacturers, and thus largely add to the growth and material prosperity of the town. Brockville is certainly deeply interested in the bridge scheme, and all that our citizens can do to make it an accomplished fact should be done.

10/05/1892 Ottawa Journal Brockville and New York Bridge

THEY CAN BUILD A BRIDGE

At a meeting of the Railway Committee of the House of Commons to-day and act to revive and amend the act to incorporate the Brockville & New York Bridge Company was passed. Hon. John Haggart stated that the government would require to have the plans for the bridge submitted to them for their approval. They would require to be not less than sixty feet in height from the water level and a sufficient distance between the piers to permit of navigation. The late John Page, chief engineer of canals, gave the opinion that no hindrance would be placed in the way of navigation if this was carried out.

29/09/1892 Brockville Recorder Brockville and New York Bridge

International Bridge - For some time past Engineer Smellie, with a staff of men has been engaged taking levels and taking out a line from the BW&SSM bridge over the GTR across Smith's Island with a view to ascertaining its suitability as a site for the proposed International bridge. The work is being done under instructions from the Brockville and New York Bridge Company and the American company that has the charter in the United States. It is not known definitely what height the bridge will require to be and it is not yet certain that this route will be the most advantageous, though it would undoubtedly be the best location to suit the interest of all the roads interested.

The work has been going on quietly for some time past, so quietly in fact that no one seems to have heard of it until parties out rowing on the river discovered the surveyor's at work and their stakes set up on Smith and Refugee Islands. The proposed line strikes the river opposite Smith's Island near what is known as the old Sabine place.

12/10/1893 Brockville Recorder Brockville and New York Bridge

An old file of the Recorder shows that as far back as 1852 a bridge over the St. Lawrence at Brockville was discussed. Still the bridge has not materialized yet.

01/03/1894 Brockville Recorder Brockville and New York Bridge

A number of men were engaged yesterday under the direction of Engineer Smellie and Mr. Howland in taking soundings for the proposed international bridge opposite the Three Sisters Islands. They are reported to have found forty feet of water at the spot where the piers are to be located.

Plans of the Union Bridge Co. have been approved by the US government--international bridge between Morristown and Brockville. --Mr. C.J. Pusey holds charters on both sides of the river--The plan was seen at the residence of Mr. Howland, a son in law of Mr. Pusey, himself a well known engineer, and, from what the reporter saw and heard, he for the first time feels safe in assuring the public that the long-talked of international bridge is an assured fact.

Mr. Pusey, who, though for some time a partial resident of Brockville, is not widely known by our citizens, is a pleasant appearing gentleman about fifty years of age, and resides at Irondale, Ont., where he owns and manages a successful railway line in addition to extensive mills, factories, etc. Though by no means an assertive talker, he converses fluently on the matter in hand, and impresses one with the conviction that he not only knows his subject thoroughly but is sincere in his expressed conviction that the bridge will be built.

Plans - Union Bridge Co. chief engineer C. McDonald of Gananoque.

Gives details of cantilevers, spans etc. - total 5,500 feet. The connections in order to tap on this side of the Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk and on the American shore, the New York Central, will give, with the bridge proper an aggregate length of 6¼ miles.

Crossing on this side the Grand Trunk tracks east of Chaffey street, and not far from the new asylum, a sort of loop is formed in order to tap the Canadian pacific near the present round house. The line after crossing the Grand Trunk, bends southward, passes down through the east side of the old lacrosse grounds, crosses King street at that point and reaches the river in the property of Hon. W.J. Christie and just across from Three Sisters Islands.

American side --

Charters demand that bridge shall be 150 feet above high water--

As is generally well known, to Mr. Pusey is due the credit of successfully carrying to its present position the international bridge project, and no doubt seems to exist in his mind that the erection of the structure is a probability in the near future. In fact timber is now being got out in the vicinity of Irondale for the caisson work, and will be brought here at once, and work commenced in the early summer. The cost of the bridge as given in the engineer's estimates is \$2,500,000, and it will require in its construction 25,000,000 pounds of steel, 2,000,000 feet of timber, 14,000 yards of masonry and 60,000 yards of concrete. It will be the regulation width of railway bridges, and will be provided with a walk for foot passengers. The organizations under which the concessions were granted and work done up to the present were the St. Lawrence Railway Co. on the American side and the Brockville and New York Bridge Co. here. These will now be amalgamated under the name Brockville and St. Lawrence Bridge Co. and contracts issued for the building of the structure through the above.

Also summary in Renfrew Mercury, March 23.

29/03/1894 *Brockville Recorder* *Brockville and New York Bridge*

Mr. C.J. Pusey, promoter of the proposed international bridge here, is understood to have asked for tenders in certain quarters, for supplying half a million feet of lumber to be used in the structure. During the week he was also looking about for a suitable man to act as master of the tug which is to be used in towing supplies to the site of the work. It looks at present as though the major portion of the stone needed will be taken from Point Ann quarries near Belleville, which are so situated that barges can be loaded there and towed right to where the stone is wanted.

03/05/1894 *Brockville Recorder* *Brockville and New York Bridge* *Brockville*

A regularly advertised meeting of the Brockville and New York Bridge Co. was held Thursday afternoon at two o'clock, in the law offices of Wood, Webster & Stewart. The principle business on hand was the election of a permanent board of directors which resulted in the election of the following gentlemen:- Col. W.H. Cole, D. Darbyshire, D.W. Downey, Geo. H. Weatherhead, W.B. Smellie, Brockville, L.H. Howland and C.J. Pusey, Irondale. At a subsequent meeting of the board, Mr. Pusey was elected president, Col. Cole vice president; and L.H. Howland secretary treasurer. The directors adopted the agreement of amalgamation with the St. Lawrence Railway Co. of New York, under the name of the Brockville & St. Lawrence Bridge Co. This agreement will be submitted to a meeting of the shareholders, which will be held on 17th May for confirmation. The St. Lawrence Bridge Co. will hold their meeting in New York City early next week when the agreement will be submitted to their shareholders. At that meeting the permanent board of the New York Co. will be named.

In conversation with president Pusey, a Recorder reporter was informed that nothing can be done towards asking tenders or laying supplies on the ground until the specifications for the proposed bridge are finished. These specifications are now in course of preparation by the Union Bridge Co. of New York, and upon completion will be submitted for acceptance by the governments of both countries. When this course has been taken, tenders will be asked and supplies will be put on the ground as soon as the necessary contracts have been awarded.

07/06/1895 *Brockville Recorder* *Brockville and New York Bridge* *Perth*

On Tuesday, says the Perth Courier, Mr. Chas. J. Pusey, of Bancroft, Ont., arrived in town in the interest of the proposed extension of the Irondale, Bancroft and Ottawa railway eastward to Lanark, Perth and Brockville, there to cross by the projected new bridge across the St. Lawrence, to New York city. The other end will be extended to Gravenhurst on Georgian Bay, to get Northwest connections. Bonuses will be asked from the municipalities about here.

16/08/1895 *Brockville Recorder* *Brockville and New York Bridge* *Brockville*

Interest in the construction of the International bridge here is being greatly revived of late by the work that is being done in connection with the scheme. In addition to the construction of docks at the Sisters Islands, a large store house for the keeping of material and implements under cover will be erected. Friday night the contractors were looking for a steam drill to use on the works, and for several days they have been endeavoring to purchase a small steamer for their purpose.

01/11/1895 *Almonte Gazette* *Brockville and New York Bridge*

Work is pretty well advanced on the International bridge at Brockville. It is expected that most of the heavy work will be done before the end of this year.

08/11/1895 *Brockville Recorder* *Brockville and New York Bridge* *Brockville*

The commencement of actual operations in connection with the construction of the International bridge across the St. Lawrence at this point is already beginning to attract the attention of outsiders to the fact that it will make Brockville one of the greatest railway centres in the Dominion, and consequently a most desirable place to establish manufacturing industries, owing to its splendid shipping facilities both by rail and by water. At Monday night's meeting of the Council a most interesting communication was read from Mr. A.B. Rudd of Perth, pointing out the unequalled advantages possessed by Brockville as the point for the establishment of an iron blast furnace. There is lots of iron ore within easy reach, and he claims that coke could be laid down here cheaper than anywhere else in Canada. The matter should be carefully inquired into.

09/12/1895 *Brockville Recorder* *Brockville and New York Bridge* *Brockville*

Up to the present time the C.P.R. people have delivered 78 cars of stone for the international bridge. There are some 15 car loads yet to come this season but these will likely remain on the dock until navigation opens. Workmen are still engaged on the island blasting out the ground for pier No. 5, which will be started just as soon as the stone can be placed in position in the spring. Work will then be started on the first caisson which when completed will be sunk on the American side.

Just as soon as strong ice is afforded in the river, a party of men, under direction of Engineer Smellie, will resume work in connection with the international bridge. The first work on hand will be to determine the depth of mud at various points where it is proposed to erect piers, and for this a set of tools specially constructed for that purpose are required. These tools are here now, and as their weight is considerable, strong ice is necessary to carry them and the working force. There is known to be at least 70 feet of water at some of the points where piers show on the plan, and it is known that the bottom is of mud. A firm bottom must be secured at all points where piers are to be built, no matter how deep the mud may be, and it is to finally determine these depths that the proposed work is about to be undertaken.

27/03/1896 *Brockville Recorder* *Brockville and New York Bridge*

At a meeting of the shareholders of the Brockville and New York Bridge Company held in the company's offices, Weatherhead Block, on Monday, the agreement for the amalgamation with the St. Lawrence Railway Company of New York was ratified, the amalgamated company to be known as the Brockville and St. Lawrence Railway Company. The capital stock of the two companies is \$2,000,000, of which \$21,400 has been subscribed and \$21,400 paid up. The capital stock of the new company, formed by the amalgamation, is to be \$2,500,000, divided into \$25,000 shares of \$100 each. The first board of directors of the new company are: Charles McDonald, Joseph S. Decker, Wayne Griswold and Clarke R. Griggs of New York city and Charles J. Pusey, Wilmot H. Cole, Daniel W. Downey, George B. Weatherhead and Lucien B. Howland of Brockville. Mr. Charles J. Pusey is president; Mr. Clarke R. Griggs, vice-president; R.S. Colburn, of New York, secretary and, Lucien B. Howland, treasurer.

21/01/1898 *Brockville Recorder* *Brockville and New York Bridge*

In Saturday's Canada Gazette, notice of application to parliament is given by the Brockville and New York Bridge Company for an act, extending the time for completion of its works, changing the name of the company to that of Brockville and St. Lawrence Bridge Company, confirming the amalgamation between it and the Brockville and New York Bridge Company, and for other purposes.

11/08/1921 *Winchester Press* *Brockville and New York Bridge* *Brockville*

An International Bridge Better at Brockville

A More Suitable Place Than Prescott For Building.

The proposal to build an international bridge spanning the St. Lawrence at Prescott, a scheme advocated by Ottawa newspapers, has led to advocacy of Brockville as its location by J.J. Bell, M.A., a former editor of the Brockville Recorder now residing in the Capital. Mr Bell writes as follows to the Ottawa Citizen with relation to the proposed bridge and enumerates the advantages to be derived from location at this point over the suggested Prescott route:

"I noticed recently in your paper a letter advocating the bridging of the St. Lawrence at Prescott, and later an editorial to the same effect. No doubt such a bridge would be of great service, as there is none between Niagara Falls and Cornwall, but there is a better site for the bridge at Brockville, 12 miles west of Prescott.

"In 1851 when a great railway Jubilee was held in Boston, attention was directed to the possibilities of a bridge at Brockville. The last of the Thousand Islands, known as the Three Sisters, just east of the Town, lie in line and form natural piers for such a structure. The bank on the north side, where the main steam boat channel lies, is sufficiently high for a bridge as the south shore is lower, and a draw on the south channel would be necessary, but only the smaller craft use that channel, which is comparatively shallow.

"Several years ago an actual commencement was made on this bridge, but little was done, the object being to keep an existing charter alive, rather than the hope of being able to push to completion what must necessarily be an expensive undertaking.

"The late Samuel Keefer, an engineer who had considerable experience in bridge construction, also drew plans for a bridge at a point known as the Narrows, a short distance above Brockville, where there are numerous Islands. This would be a low-level bridge, with a draw over the main channel. The principal objection to this site is the strong current, always an objection where a draw has to be used. A drawing and the description of Mr. Keefer's plan was published at the time in a Chicago railway journal.

"The interests of navigation are an important consideration in connection with a site for a bridge and in this view Brockville appears to have a decided advantage over Prescott."