

HISTORY OF RAILROADING IN THE ANNAPOLIS VALLEY

(By Conductor W. W. Clark in the Halifax Herald)

Murdock's History of Nova Scotia informs us that in February 1816 Isaac Smith, stage driver, notified the travelling public that they could travel from Halifax to Windsor and from Windsor to Halifax for six dollars. His stage-coach, which would accommodate six inside passengers, made two trips each week. Considering the enormous amount of railway traffic between Halifax and Windsor to-day, this scrap of ancient history appeals to the traveller with a degree of absurdity.

The Dominion Atlantic Railway had its beginning in 1866. On July 6th the following letter was sent to the Hon. Charles Tupper, Provincial Secretary, Nova Scotia, at Halifax:

- 1st-The time for the completion of the railway to be three years. 2nd-The Government to give us the right of fixing the location of the road. 3rd-Increase the present subvention to 30,000 pounds a year for the first four years, amounting to 120,000, pounds. 4th-To be paid 40,000, pounds for the bridge over the River Avon at Windsor. 5th-About the end of the second year from the commencement of the work the sum of 190,000 pounds to be provided by the Government by capitalizing the annual subvention, which in about thirteen years will pay the interest from a sinking fund, to pay off the sum. 6th-Payments to be made to us monthly as the work advances, upon actual work done and materials delivered, such payments to be derived at by means of a schedule of prices to be hereafter agreed upon. 7th-To enjoy all the privileges conferred by present act of incorporation of the Windsor and Annapolis Railway Co.

(Signed) JNO WARDROPE & Co, Brownville, Canada West.

Preceding this movement the Nova Scotia Government had tried to get some English gentlemen interested in starting the railway between Windsor and Annapolis.

In the latter part of 1866 all arrangements were perfected and the survey for the Windsor and Annapolis railway started at Windsor, engineers, Kambie and Brunell. Among the members of the staff was Joe Edwards, afterwards conductor and for several years and later officiating as station agent at Annapolis. John Carroll was also a member of the staff, later serving as conductor and in 1899 being promoted to Traffic Superintendent, and now acting as town clerk of Kentville.

The track was laid with iron rails—40 pounds to the yard, 5 ft. 6 in. gauge.

First Engine In the spring of 1869 the first engine on the W. and A. R. was landed at Ellderkin Creek, one mile east of Kentville—Joseph McLellan, driven; Nick Whalen, fireman. The second engine, "Joe Howe" landed at Bridgetown, Fred Jurney, driver of this engine. These engines were purchased from the Nova Scotia government. Tanks were under the engines and they were four wheelers.

1869. Engine, "St. Lawrence" landed at Annapolis on the south side of the present railway wharf from a steamer called "The Prince of Wales". This was a second hand engine (Portland) 6 cylinder 12-21, William Boyd, driver.

At this time Wolfville was the headquarters of the W. and A. R. During the year engine No. 1, "Evangeline" and No. 2, "Gabriel" 16x24 cylinders, were landed at Wolfville. These engines were built at Bristol, England by Fox and Walker and company and exhibited wonderful power in ploughing through snow. Later in the year four more engines were added to the service. Thomas Legge came from England with these engines and later became locomotive superintendent. Two machinists also came with the engines, George Jepson and John Waugh. The latter died in 1870, but George Jepson remained in the service for several years.

Annapolis to Horton. The opening of the road between Annapolis and Horton Landing was August 18th, 1869. The first passenger train left Annapolis about 9 a. m., Conductor James Keys, Driver Billie Boyd, Fireman, John Phelan. Engine, "St. Lawrence". The train arrived at Kentville about 3 p. m. and a big banquet was held in the present machine shop; then proceeded to Horton Landing. Thomas Legge drove the engine from Kentville to Horton Landing. George Jepson, then traffic superintendent, acting as conductor.

Daily trains were run following the opening of the railway from Annapolis to Horton Landing and Horton Landing to Annapolis passengers being driven by stage from Windsor to Horton Landing. Mr. Pratt, brother of the late H. A. Pratt, was the first agent at Middleton and would travel on the trains both ways sell tickets and collect freight charges. Mr. Ruggles was the first agent at Annapolis, first agent at Bridgetown, Mr. Crookill, now agent at Bridgetown for the H. and S. W. R. R. The general offices for the W. & A. R. were built at Kentville 1868, on the ground where Conductor W. Herbert's house now stands, George Brown, father of R. Brown, train dispatcher, Kentville, being the first auditor with his office in this building. The building, long and narrow, was later converted into a dwelling.

(Copy of letter received from the Engineers' office, Halifax in 1866). Nova Scotia Railway, Engineer's Office, Halifax, Dec. 21, 1866.

Hon. James McDonald, Financial Secretary, Sir—Having heard, indirectly that it is the intention of the contractors for the construction of the Annapolis Railway to "break ground" in the course of a few days, I beg respectfully to state that unless such is being done with the knowledge and approval of the government, the proceeding seems irregular and premature for up to the present time no official communication has been had with the commissioners of this department. Moreover the government so far as I am aware, have accepted no

definite location of the railway and unless there exists some special reason for the performance of the ceremony at this particular time, I would suggest that it be postponed until the surveys are properly completed and the line of location finally determined upon and appointed by the Governor-in-Council as required by the contract.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant, ALEX. MACNAB, Chief Eng.

Shunting by Horse At this time the shunting of cars at Annapolis was done by a white horse, driven by the late Anthony Riordan.

On the fourth of Oct. 1869 the tracks were badly damaged by the Saxby Gale. The dykes at Grand Pre were broken and the tide swept away the road bed. At this point trestle work had to be put in to allow the water to pass through and save more of the road from washing away.

On Dec. 18th, 1869 the first train of the Windsor and Annapolis Railway arrived in Windsor.

On June 1870 Wm. Yould came to Kentville as machinist and put new machinery shops in shape.

In June 1870 Jas. Leitch came to Kentville as a machinist and was afterwards made Locomotive Foreman at Halifax.

On Jan. 1st 1872 the first train of the W. and A. R. ran through from Annapolis to Halifax, the W. and A. R. being granted running power over the Windsor Branch, which had been leased to them. They were also granted running power over the fourteen miles from Windsor Junction into Halifax, John Carroll, now town clerk of Kentville, was the first conductor to run a W. and A. R. train into Halifax, John Cameron, Driver, and John Murray, a government Conductor acting as pilot from Windsor to Halifax.

D. Hallisey. Preceding this the railway between Halifax and Windsor was known as the Nova Scotia Railway. In 1857 D. Hallisey helped to build the Nova Scotia Railway. When the road was completed he became agent at first station, Beaver Bank, and has held the same ever since. Previous to the completion of the railway men, horse and produce were loaded on flat cars and carried to Halifax. Man, horse and wagon (not to exceed 500 pounds) would be carried from Mt. Uniacke to Halifax for fifty cents. As many as fourteen cars of wagons have been conveyed at one time to Halifax.

Rails by Team. When extending the W. & A. R. to Halifax the rails were hauled by teams to Mt. Uniacke from Bedford. One night a heavy rain storm descended upon the pile of rails, washing away the ground and burying 100 of the rails. They still remain buried at Mt. Uniacke.

The first engine used on the Nova Scotia railway was known as the "Mary Ann". Driver Woodworth who was drowned when the engine ran off the track at a place now known as Fairview. The second engine was "The Mayflower" and the third engine "Joe Howe". Railroading in the Maritimes was undergoing its initial boom at this time. Gradually the hoem of steel were supplanting the stage coaches. The year 1872 marked the beginning of interprovincial transportation. On November 11 of that year the first railroad train ran between St. John and Halifax. This road had been for years under construction and its completion marks the beginning of the rail era in North America. The conductor on this famous train was John Ryan while the engineer was S. Cameron.

Shipbuilding. We read a great deal of the days of clipper ships and many fail to remember that our own province of Nova Scotia was one of the leaders of the world during that era. Vessels carrying the British flag with the seal of Nova Scotia on their sterns were carrying the produce of the world into the seven seas. And it seems peculiar for us today to read of these sea-worthy vessels being built in such places as Horton Landing. When we think of shipbuilding at all we picture such maritime ports as Mahone, Liverpool or Shelburne. Just before the completion of the Windsor and Annapolis Railway, Windsor, Horton Landing, and Annapolis were turning out some splendid craft. At Horton Landing a big ship building plant was situated between the railway bridges and the main road, bridge. We read of the two barques "Florence" and "Margaret Doe" being launched away back in the 1870's.

The Great Storm, 1872. Many of the old-timers whom we remembered to speak of the Great Snow Storm (and from their accounts of it, it certainly should be spelled with capitals), still say of an exceptional storm, "There ain't been anything like it since the great storm of 1872". This storm was a disastrous one indeed. Not only were the main roads of the province tied up for weeks but the railroads which at that time did not have the snow-fighting facilities that they today possess, were also seriously affected. For fifteen days not a train moved in this province. Farmers who had been transported to Halifax on the train, together with their horses and wagons, became storm-stayed in the city. This had a more serious effect than is apparent on the face of it. During this half month no fresh produce found its way into the city. The farmers themselves were unable to get to their homes where they might be fed. Many of them volunteered to shovel snow for the railway company and individuals for their food and a chance to get home.

Beginning of W. C. R. On Monday morning, September 22, 1873, the first sod of the Western Counties Railway was turned at Lovitt's wharf, somewhere near the present situation of the Boston and Yarmouth Steamship Co., at Yarmouth. On Wednesday, September 2, 1874, the first rail was laid, the first spike driven by Geo. B. Doane, president of Company; second spike driven by S. M. Ryerson, treasurer of company; third spike driven by J. K. Ryerson, M. P. P. for Yarmouth Co.; fifth by G. M. Tooker; sixth by J. M. Birney, Secretary of company. The first locomotive, "Pioneer", arrived at Yarmouth October 20, 1874, and the first trip was made October 27. The road between Yarmouth and Digby was formally opened for traffic in the year 1875, the first passenger ticket being purchased by J. R. Kinney, M. P. P. The first excursion was a May party, Tuesday, May 10, 1875. Train left for

of Lovitt street at one p. m. returning at five p. m. and running as far as Fitch road. Train consisted of twelve platform cars and carried between 1100 and 1200 passengers, accompanied by the Milton brass band. On January 15, 1880 the Western Counties Railway closed its traffic the last train running that day from Digby, and did not resume operations until Monday, 26 April, 1880. The Western Counties Railway opened the Windsor Branch from the summer of 1877 to the fall of 1879, running four locomotives belonging to the Windsor branch—3x4x5 1/2, names, Frank Killam, Halifax, Windsor and Yarmouth. Change of Gauge. On Friday, June 26, 1875, the gauge of the Windsor and Annapolis Railway was changed from 5 feet 6 inches to 4 feet 8 1/2 inches between Windsor Junction and Annapolis. The Dominion Government exchanged the old wide gauge engines for nine Standard Gauge engines. Trucks under cars were changed at Kentville. Engine 1 "Evangeline", 2 "Gabriel", 3 "Hiawatha" were built at Kingston, Ont. 1866, 65 inch drivers, cylinder 15x24. Engine 4 "Blomidon", 5 "Grand Pre", 6 "Gaspereau", 7 "Basil", 8 "Benedict", 9 "Minnichaha" built at Portland, Maine, drivers 62 inch cylinders 16x24. Weight of these engines with tenders attached 55 tons. Threats Against R. R. In August 1877, the Dominion cancelled lease of Windsor Branch because of threats made along this branch if the Government attempted to run this piece of road. When one of the first trains came up from Halifax the trainman found a huge tree laid across the track a short distance out from Windsor. (Extract from Western Chronicle, Kentville, September 11, 1878.) "The supporters of the McKenzie Government contest that Dr. Tupper and his party gave the Windsor Branch to the Western Counties Railway. Whose Government was it that wrested the Branch line forcibly from the company that for a year had exercised running powers? Is it not well known that on the eve of the Digby election this act of spoliation was perpetrated? Was it Dr. Tupper, who was so desirous to ensure McVail's election? The assertion is too transparent. Neither will it do to blame the W. and A. R. Co., because they refuse to submit to dictation as to terms by the W. C. Co. The misunderstanding as to rates of freight and passage with all the inconvenience of changing cars at Windsor is attributable to the forcible and hasty ejection of the W. and A. R. prior to any arrangement as to joint action by the two contending parties. The actual ownership of the Windsor Branch does not concern the general public half as much as does the extra charge for freight. The inconvenience of changing cars and the impracticability of getting through tickets, and for all this the McKenzie Government is responsible in having forced two companies into antagonism. First Mechanical Supt. William Yould (now retired and living in Kentville) joined the W. and A. R. April 28, 1870. Went with the Western Counties Railway as mechanical superintendent and store keeper at Halifax, Oct. 1, 1877. The W. and A. R. regained possession of the Windsor branch and Mr. Yould came back to Kentville

as mechanical superintendent. Later (1912) he was given the title of engineer and mechanical superintendent. On Feb. 19, 1912 Mr. Fullerton was appointed engineer of the road with headquarters at Kentville. Mr. William Yould retired on pension June 30, 1912. (Continued in next issue)

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AN ALPINE GUIDE OF THE CANADIAN ROCKIES

"If mountain climbing is dangerous, then lying in bed is far more dangerous, since more people die in bed than on the mountains." That is the answer of Rudolf Aemmer, the famous Swiss guide of Edelweiss, British Columbia, in Montreal recently, when asked if mountain climbing is a dangerous sport.

Rudolf Aemmer is well known to mountain climbers and tourists to Lake Louise, Banff, Field, and all the most favored of the holiday resorts in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. He has led many a party of old climbers over the peaks of the Rockies and initiated many novices in the sport.

In the summer months when most climbing is done, Rudolf, with four other Swiss guides, makes his headquarters at Lake Louise.

Rudolf has been in Switzerland since the beginning of the winter. He went over to see the old folks in Intevakken, where he was born, and also to indulge in the Swiss winter sports. He expects a record climbing season in the Canadian Rockies in 1922, and he has been keeping himself fit to meet it. He will be back from Switzerland in May.

Though he loves his native Switzerland Rudolf would rather live in Canada. He has been here since 1909.

Asked how he learned to climb Rudolf said he learned in the Swiss mountains when he was a child. When a young man he got his climbing diploma. He then exhibited this in the shape of a medal which he wore on the inside of his coat. One has to qualify in Switzerland before becoming a guide.



RUDOLF AEMMER

"You need strong waterproof boots, with heavy nailed soles. The guides help in every way they can so that beginners starting out on a climb are properly equipped." "Do climbers ever get nervous or dizzy?" was a question put to Rudolf. "Yes," he answered, "but they very soon get over that. In an exceptional case of dizziness we bring the person down again."

Proceeding, Rudolf said that the guide led the climbing parties, and climbers held on to a rope, keeping about twenty-five feet apart. The guide used his axe to sound snow bridges. By the sound made when hit the guides know if it is safe to cross the snow bridge. It is easier to climb up than to climb down. Rudolf has climbed with many famous Alpinists, both men and women. Records of climbs are kept at Lake Louise. It was he who carried Mrs. Stone on his back to safety after her eight day exposure on the ledge of Mount Eon last summer. The Swiss guides of the Canadian Rockies reside at a village called Edelweiss built for them in Swiss Chalet styles of architecture by the Canadian Pacific Railway. It may be seen from the transcontinental trains about a mile west of Golden, B.C. There they bring up their families, and the youngsters are taught to climb from their infancy. So Canada is assured of a hardy race of mountaineers.

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