

Tom Marshall's Weekly News, February 12, 2018

The Railways of Canada: (Please note that in Canada, as in Europe, there are railways, not railroads, as in the U.S.) Unlike the myriad of main-line railroads in the United States, there were only two in Canada by the end of World War I: Canadian Pacific (CPR) and Canadian National (CNR). Both had main line trackage from Nova Scotia in the east to British Columbia in the west. Canadian Pacific was one of the largest corporations in Canada; Canadian National was owned by the Canadian government. The best hotels in Canada were owned and operated by one or the other.

In the east, Canadian National's line went around the top of Maine, staying in Canada on its route from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to Montreal; Canadian Pacific took a shorter route to the south, passing through Maine. However, CNR did come into the states with a line from Montreal to Portland, Maine, passing through Crawford Notch in New Hampshire's White Mountains. Pool trains (operated jointly by CPR and CNR) ran almost hourly between Montreal and Quebec City. The "Montrealer" and the "Washingtonian" ran over Canadian National rails in Canada; the "Laurentian" from Montreal to New York on a more direct route used Canadian Pacific.

Canadian National owned the Nova Scotian Hotel in Halifax and also the Pictou Lodge in Nova Scotia, and Canadian Pacific had the Cornwallis Inn at Kentville, Nova Scotia, the Digby Pines at Digby (N.S.), and the fashionable golf resort at St. Andrews, New Brunswick. The famous Chateau Frontenac in Quebec City was a CPR hotel (now operated by the Fairmont Hotel group), and in Montreal the company owned the Mount Royal, which was succeeded by the new Chateau Champlain in the 1960s. CNR had built the Queen Elizabeth, Montreal's largest, which opened about 1958.

Both lines pushed westward from Montreal and Toronto in the 19th century. In some areas, the tracks were almost parallel; in other places they were as much as 200 miles apart, with Canadian National being to the north. Fast trains had a Montreal section and a Toronto section, as Toronto was off to the south and caused much extra mileage for Montreal passengers going west. Both lines were north of the Great Lakes, with CPR hugging the north shore of Lake Superior and CNR some 50 miles north of that. Both went through Winnipeg, but they did not come together again until Kamloops, British Columbia, about 200 miles from Vancouver. CPR went through Regina, Saskatchewan; Calgary, Banff and Lake Louise in Alberta, with spiral tunnels descending the western slope of the Rockies. CNR went through Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and Edmonton and Jasper, Alberta. On the CPR line, open air sightseeing cars were added to passenger trains through the Rockies, often requiring their steam locomotives to be double-headed. My uncle and aunt, James and Bess Shallcross, traveled on such a train in 1941 while on a Grange Tour to Alaska and were brought in a '29 Packard seven-passenger touring car to the Chateau Lake Louise for a brief visit while we were staying there on our long western trip in our '37 Packard that summer. Hollywood made a movie, "*Canadian Pacific*" in 1949, which was mostly about building the railway across the rugged Canadian Rockies.

The Chateau Laurier in Ottawa was an outstanding Canadian National hotel, with the railroad's passenger station in its basement. Canadian Pacific had a resort property at Lake of the Woods, probably complete with mosquitoes. The Banff Springs Hotel and the Chateau Lake Louise in the Rockies were world-renowned resort hotels, and Canadian National operated the Jasper Park Lodge with its breathtaking mountain views. In Vancouver, the hotel by the same name was strictly first class, and CPR's Empress Hotel at Victoria is still famous for its afternoon tea.

Canadian Pacific also had a fleet of steamships. Ocean-going passenger ships such as the *Empress of Japan*, the *Empress of China*, the *Empress of Canada*, and the flagship of the fleet, the *Empress of Britain*, plied the Pacific from Vancouver and the Atlantic from Montreal in the summer and from Halifax in the winter to the British ports of Liverpool and Southampton. Warren, Bertha, and 13-year-old Eleanor Marshall, accompanied by Alice Pusey, sailed on a world cruise on the *Empress of Britain* in 1937, and Eleanor talked about this experience the rest of her life. Canadian Pacific also had a fleet of smaller coastal steamers of the Princess class

that were active in the summer months between Vancouver and several Alaskan ports. I had dinner with my friends Anthony and Ollie Rippon on the *Princess Louise* when she was tied up as a restaurant in Los Angeles Harbor in 1972.

The demise of long-distant train trips was as evident in Canada as it was in the U.S. through the 1960s, and trips across Canada were limited to the vacation trade in the summer months. CNR operated its "*Inter-Continental*" through Jasper, and CPR had its "*Canadian*" through Banff and Lake Louise. I saw the latter eastbound at Lake Louise in 1988, but it was over an hour late, and the station at Lake Louise was a disgrace. Like AMTRAK in the U.S., VIA was formed in Canada, and all long-distance passenger trains were operated by VIA, succeeding CPR and CNR. The "*Inter-Continental*" has been discontinued, and the "*Canadian*" runs through Jasper on the old CNR line, not through Lake Louise and Banff. There is a summer excursion train from Vancouver to these places and return on the old CPR line.

In the late 1950s, when steam locomotives were being scrapped by the hundreds, Canadian National offered two small locomotives for sale at scrap value that were stored in their yards at London, Ontario, on the line across Canada between Buffalo and Detroit. Both were 2-6-0 "Moguls." One had been built in 1899; the other in 1910. Roy Benge and I flew to London in 1959 to inspect these engines, with the hope that they might be suitable for use on the future Wilmington & Western. The newer one, number 92, was purchased for \$4,750 and towed on its own wheels from London (Ont.) to Yorklyn. After a lot of volunteer labor, this locomotive went into service as W & W #92 in 1966 and served the tourist railroad well through the 1972 season.