The CARIBOO

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Issue 18 **October 1994**

NEWS ITEMS

Edited by Jim Moore

The Royal Hudson steam excursion program recently marked its twentieth operating anniversary, featuring a double-header with the recently rebuilt 3716 engine. 2860's first run occurred on June 20, 1974. (Dan Rowsell)

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BC Rail has launched a customer service network comprised of mechanical employees from each terminal. These carmen visit on-line customers every day to inspect cars and, if needed be, repair them on site. All cars were formerly repaired only at BCR shops, resulting in a delay to the customer. (*"Carrier"*)

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Between 100 and 150 shipments of steel pipes were carried on BCR beginning in late May. Carloads of pipes originated in Edmonton and Camrose via the CNR in Price George. BC Rail hauled the loads to West Coast Energy in Chetwynd. These line hauls resulted in about $225,000 in extra revenue for the railway. (*"Coupler"*)

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The employees of the Price George locomotive shop have achieved one full year (and counting!) accident free. That translates to approximately 115,000 man-hours. (*"Coupler"*)

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Several charter trips using the Royal Hudson are on the books for the 1994 season. Watch for these:

July 25 --- 700 passengers to Whistler
Sept 15 --- 350 passengers to unnamed destination
Sept 23 --- 400 passengers to Whistler
Sept 24 --- possible charter
Sept 27 --- possible charter
Sept 30 --- 200 passengers to Whistler
Oct 6 --- 500 passengers to Whistler
Oct 15 --- 400 passengers to Whistler

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The BC Railway group posted a $3.5 million net profit in 1993, down from $51.2 million in 1992. Principle reason for the decline was the 37 day strike which cost the company $30 million. In addition, the provincial government has withdrawn subsidies that had previously been applied to passenger services and operation of the Fort Nelson Subdivision. (WCRA*"News"*)

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West Coast Plywood has completed its first shipment of cottonwood logs. (Ed Note: Six log cars containing cottonwood poles were shipped from Prince George to Squamish.)

Cottonwood is still an anomaly in the wood fibre business. Most mills use softwoods such as spruce and pine. In contrast, cottonwood is hardwood, and therefore harder to peel. Plywood plants avoid it because they lack the facilities to process it. West Coast is the only mill in western Canada with the capacity to dry and peel cottonwood on a volume basis. Fifty percent of its product is made from cottonwood. Fir, hemlock, spruce, and cedar veneer comprise the second half.

West Coast Plywood 's south Vancouver plant, formerly owned by Weldwood, is one of Canada's oldest and largest plywood mills, and produces 185,000 msf of plywood annually. The company is the only one in the nation capable of producing oversize panels. (*"Carrier"*)

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The first of 250 refurbished centerbeams have rolled off BCR shop tracks. The project, which began in February 1994, involves converting bulkhead flatcars with BCR centerbeam kits. Cost is $13,000 per converted car versus $65,000 per new 73-foot car.

The railway is refurbishing three cars every second day and expects the project to be completed by October 1994. Customers prefer centerbeams because loading is more convenient and economical. With centerbeams there's no banding and dunnage is reduced.

To convert cars, 13 posts are added along the car's center. The wooden deck is replaced by steel one and metal risers. Then cables and winches are added to tie the load.

BC Rail's centerbeam fleet now consists of 1,986 cars. By year's end, the railway expects to have 2,336 centerbeams with the purchase of 100 new 73-foot centerbeams. (*"Carrier"*)

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Inside This Issue

The Summer 1994 issue of "The Railfan Photographer" contained a full-page black and white photo of BCR M630s crossing the Fraser River with freight. (Mike Jackson)

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The State Railway of Thailand has selected International Rail Consultants (a BC Rail subsidiary) to design and construct 43 km of double track northeast of Bangkok. ("*Carrier*")

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BC Rail's Fleet Management has begun receiving the first of its order of 100 73-foot centerbeams, as well as the first of 50 100-ton boxcars. Total price for the order is $10 million. ("*Carrier*")

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BCR has moved a record 1,100 log cars from Canfor in Niteal (near Ft. Nelson) to Ft. St. John between January and March. The railway attributes the large haul to high lumber prices and warm local weather which hampered logging in Ft. St. John. ("*Carrier*")

Slocan Forest Products and Donohue Inc. have purchased Finlay Forest Industries. Slocan's other holdings include Quesnel Forest Products, Tackama Forest Products, and Fibreco Pulp. Donohue operates a pulp mill, paper mills, sawmills, and logging operations mainly in Quebec. ("*Carrier*")

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Riverside Forest Products Ltd. (of Kelowna) has purchased Jacobson Bros. Forest Products in Williams Lake. Riverside owns and operates three lumber mills, as well as plywood and veneer plants in the Okanagan. ("*Carrier*")

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BC Rail steam locomotive #3716 will head a four day stem train tour to the Cariboo September 24 through 27. Equipment used will be BCR's ex Freedom Train cars and the *Northern Summit* business car. Overnights will be at Whistler en route in each direction and the 108 Ranch as the destination. Call (604) 738-9499 for more details. And be sure to mention that your read about this trip in *"The Cariboo"*! (WCRA "*News*")

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BC Rail has completed one of its largest shipments ever with the transfer of over one million pounds of equipment to Ainsworth's new oriented strand board mill. (Ed Note: see related item Issue 16, page one.) Equipment consisted of press frames and related components originally shipped from Europe destined for BCR's Exeter (100 Mile House) station.

The press frames, weighing in at 175,000 pounds, were loaded onto specially-designed depressed-center flatcars from Chicago. Two 125-ton cranes lifted the press frames from Vancouver Wharves' piers onto the two cars for the four day trip to Exeter. In addition to the flatcars, four 66-foot bulkhead flatcars and 17 TOFCs were part of the special equipment train. ("*Carrier*")

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THE TEAM

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All contributions are welcome. It is helpful if submissions are on a 3.5" disk in IBM Word for Windows, IBM WordPerfect, as a "flat" ASCII file, or typewritten.

All submissions are subject to editing as a condition of publication. Material will be retained unless other arrangements have been agreed upon in advance.

The editors encourage submission of photographs and illustrations which help reinforce the content of material submitted. Appropriate captions should be included. Photographs may be either black and white prints, colour prints, or colour slides.

Authors are responsible for all original statements made in their work. Submissions are accepted with the understanding that they are not under consideration elsewhere.

BC Rail hosted a senior delegation from China in May to discuss BCR Group's potential involvement in China's rail and transportation development. China plans to expand its rail system by 15-17,000 km by year 2000. (BC Rail *"Carrier"*)

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The Royal Hudson train of June 25 operated on a different schedule, departing North Van around 1400 hours and returning at approximately 2200 hours. The day's run was operated as a charter to an American-based corporation. (Ron Tuff)

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Observed the evening of July 8 was a passenger extra arriving in North Vancouver just before 2030 hours. A pair of SD40-2's (#767 leading) was seen pulling four green passenger cars (NRHS-owned), the charter car "Discovery", power car "Chekamus River" and a caboose. (WCRA*"News"*)

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BC Rail and its customers have welcomed the removal of restrictions on American cars used in Canadian service. Under the former permit system, BC Rail applied and paid for a permit every time it used a restricted car. Over 4,500 permits were requested in 1993.

The new system improves BCR's fleet capacity. Formerly, when a customer ordered boxcars, BCR had to check the load's destination. Instead of taking the most accessible cars, the railway had to dig out specific ones. (*"Carrier"*)

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BC Rails' Royal Hudson continues to attract the attention of Hollywood. North Vancouver recently played host to the making of the made-for-TV movie *"State of Terror"*. The project featured actors Scott Bakula and Rosanna Arquette. (*"Coupler"*)

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The North Vancouver yard office has upgraded from the former card board (for keeping track of cars in the rail yard) to a computer system. The Integrated Railway Control System (IRCS) will simplify the tracking of cars and car-types rather than using the old style card board. (*"Coupler"*)

CORRECTIONS DEPT.: The chemical equation contained in Issue 17/page 6 (Limestone: An On-Line Industry) was incorrect. The correct equation should read as follows: $CaCO_3$ + heat $\rightleftharpoons$ CaO_2 + C0. The "double arrow" symbol denotes the fact that the reaction is reversible (i.e. if the carbon dioxide is not removed from the kiln as quickly as possible, the quicklime may revert to limeston. Thanks to Andy Barber for catching this error.

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Follow up to Laszlo Dora's item with *New Products* (Issue 17, page 4): The zinc concentrate originates at the Red Dog Mine in Alaska. It travels to North Vancouver via sea, where it is off-loaded into BN gondolas and wood chip hoppers. The commodity is then taken to the Cominco smelter in Trail B.C. , which is a CP subsidiary.

TRIVIA: On October 20, 1979, the original PGE bridge at milepost 715.4 burned. What was its original length before reconstruction.? (Ryan D. Cruickshank/WCRA)

Answer: 991 meters (3251'), including seven steel deck truss spans, 32 meters above the water, with a curve approach trestle 423 meters (1390') at 8 degrees curvature. It was the approach trestle that burned and was replaced with fill.

RESEARCH RESOURCES: A scale drawing of CN's 557000-series boxcar (double-door with 18 foot opening), appeared in the December 1992 issue of *Railroad Model Craftsman*. This group of cars, built by National Steel Car between 1967 and 1970, is similar in design to BC Rail series 5100-5799 and 40000-41084. (Jim Moore)

BCRH&TS member John Riddell had an insightful article spotlighting PGE's 800-series wooden reefers published in the August issue of *Mainline Modeler*. John's article contains several good quality black and white photos, along with pointers on modeling these cars in HO scale using a Westerfield kit. (Jim Moore)

FROM THE PUBLISHER: Thanks to all of you who responded to my call for assistance (Issue 17, page 3). As aresult of your responses, we have the next two issues of our newsletter well under way. Plus we plan to begin publishing scale drawings of on-line structures in early 1995.

We still need is a volunteer to coordinate our planned feature detailing the history and operation of the 8000-series insulated/heated boxcars. If you can help, please contact Jim Moore.

COLLECTIBLE CORNER: The premiere issue of BC Rail *Traveller* (summer/fall 94) has been released. The slick paper magazine, which features extensive use of colour

photos, is available on-board each of BCR's passenger trains.

The cover shot, by Chris Harris, is of a seven-car *Dayliner* on the bridge in Chekamus Canyon. *Traveller* is published by On-Board Publications of Williams Lake.

Two sheets of cut-and-fold paper models have been produced by the students of the Graphics Arts Training Institute of BC. The sheets, printed in a 9x12 format, feature Royal Hudson loco #2860 and a Cariboo *Dayliner* Budd car.

MOTIVE POWER NOTES

Edited by Paul J. Crozier Smith

BC Rail currently has three SD40-2s (#736, #738, and #741) on lease to CN. The units are operating in the Vancouver area. In addition, #746 has been paying-off horsepower transfers by working in Port Mann to Lynn Creek transfer service. (WCRA *"News"*)

Former BC Rail M630 #715 has been donated by General Electric to the Canadian Railway Historical Association at Delson, Quebec. (WCRA "*News*")

Consolidation steam locomotive #3716 is back together , despite problems experienced during her test run. Fresh from a two-year rebuild of major proportions, the lovely 2-8-0 engine was test run on April 28. She chugged out of the North Van yard pulling a string of wood chip cars. It wasn't for long though, as near 21st Street in West Vancouver a valve-drive bar broke, and she was disabled. #3716 was towed back unceremoniously to await repairs and another test run. (WCRA "*News*")

Some recent spottings courtesy of Ron Tuff and Jim Moore:

1) #604 and #626 operating as yard engines in Quesnel in dogwood color scheme;
2) #621 as yard engine in Prince George in dogwood scheme;
3) #617 converted to CAT powerplant, in red-white-blue colours, in Prince George;
4) HCLX 656 GP40-2, silver colour scheme, leased, operating as road engine;
5) #627 and S-409 working as yard team in Williams Lake;
6) #682 spotted in r-w-b colours
7) HCLX661 GP40-2, silver colour scheme, leased, operating as road power;
8) #631, Prince George, in hockey stick scheme;
9) #632, Prince George, dogwood scheme;
10) #630, in dogwood scheme, as Exeter switcher.

CAR SHOP

Thanks to Mike Jackson for the donation of colour prints depicting BCIT 800828 and BCIT 801115. We've added these photos to the Society's archives. Thanks also to Jim Pike for the donation of photos depicting the mow equipment, which have also been added to our archives.

More on modeling the BCOL 2300-series of covered hoppers from Mike Jackson: Walthers offers a HO scale Pullman-Standard PS2CD 4427 car for $29.98. Item 932-5700 is their undecorated version. As built, this model has eleven ribs per side, but with evenly matched empty spaces for the addition of two more ribs. The BCOL 2301-2330 series have thirteen ribs per side. Plus the model is listed as being 4427 cubic feet capacity, same as the BCOL prototype.
Also from Mike Jackson: Intermountain's latest release is a cylindrical potash hopper in markings for Potcan. Car is burnt orange in colour, with white stylized maple leaf logo to the left of the company name. Black reporting marks are CGLX three digit numbers, with at least three different road numbers available. CGLX 897 shows a built date of 10-72. Retails for about $16.

DOGWOOD COLOURS REMAIN: During a recent railfan trip (June 94), the following freight cars were noted (still) resplendent in the "dogwood" colour scheme:

2207 pressure-flow hopper
2214 as above
2215 as above
5438 50' combo door
5513 as above
5631 as above
5733 as above
9061 gondola
9113 gondola
9121 gondola
9147 gondola
9148 gondola
9164 gondola
9216 gondola
9251 gondola
9263 gondola
9266 gondola
9269 gondola
9290 gondola
9369 gondola
9401 gondola
9402 gondola
9403 gondola
9404 gondola
9405 gondola
9407 gondola
9411 gondola
9412 gondola

9413 gondola
9415 gondola
9418 gondola
9422 gondola
9424 gondola
9425 gondola
10144 pole car
10239 pole car
40098 50' combo door
41017 as above
41046 as above
40187 as above
40468 as above
40472 as above
40478 as above
40543 as above
40616 as above
40660 as above
40747 as above
40790 as above
40873 as above
40964 as above
80954
80969
800824
801008 sliding dbl door
801045 as above
801050 as above
801119 as above
801180 as above
993068 40' steel insulated/heated boxcar. Ex 8004. Now mow tool car.

OUT-OF-SRVICE AT SQUAMISH SHOPS: The following equipment was noted as unserviceable during June 94:

1876 caboose
1877 caboose
1880 caboose
9111 gondola
9113 gondola
9124 gondola
9561 woodchip hopper
993043 40' steel boxcar (mow)
993055 40' steel boxcar (mow)

DOGWOOD CABOOSES: As of June 94, the following vans were sighted still in the two-tone green ("dogwood") colour scheme:

1851--1852--1859--1861--1862--1864--1867--1884

With the impending removal of cabooses from through freights, it is doubtful that any of these remaining units will be repainted in the red/white/blue scheme.

PGE REPORTING MARKS: It's hard to believe, but despite the passage of more than 20 years, some equipment still carries PGE reporting marks and/or titles. During June 1994, the following pieces were sighted:

8021 ex insulated heated boxcar, map herald
8023 as above. both cars in mow svc
9208 gondola, block style lettering
9315 gondola, boxcar red, map herald
9419 gondola, block style
10014 pole car, boxcar red
10035 as above
10155 as above
10276 as above
993066 ex insulated/heated boxcar, boxcar red, block style
993067 40' steel boxcar, map herald. Now mow tool car
993304 as above

PRINCE GEORGE MUSEUM: The following pieces were noted (stored out-of-service) on the lead to the Prince George Railway Museum: 5309 (flanger) and 5667.

WCRA CORNER

July 10 will be a day long remembered, as it signaled the official opening of the West Coast Railway Heritage Park. The park opened with a the help of a very special visitor, Royal Hudson #2860. The locomotive, which added an extra few miles to its regular duties delivered dignitaries and special guests to the Heritage Park site for opening ceremonies.

June 4 saw the passage of fourteen heritage cars from CN's Thorton Yard to BC Rail in North Vancouver. The consist was impressive but slow--moving at a maximum speed of 15 mph. On the point was CN GP9 #7048.

Following an overnight stay in North Vancouver, the train made its way up to Squamish and the Heritage Parks site on Sunday.

Cariboo Overnighter--Friday, October 14 & Saturday, October 15. Four Great Options!

Private car on BC Rail service to Lillooet and on to Cariboo Country. Option 1, to Williams Lake with overnight stop at the town's best hotel; OR (option 2) a stay at The 108 Hills Health & Fitness Resort/Ranch featuring an indoor pool and horseback riding; OR (option 3) a stay at the upscale 108 Resort featuring hotel-type rooms, golf, beautiful gardens, horseback riding; OR (option 4) at stay at The Big Bar Ranch, a working rustic log guest-ranch, back in the hills. Return departure mid-Saturday for North Vancouver. A great chance to see the autumn colours and experience the clean fresh air of ranching country. Scenery as for the

Lillooet trip, but with the added grandeur of the Fraser River over 600 m (200 ft.) below the train as we climb the canyon wall near Moran enroute to the Cariboo Plateau and ranching country. A 45-minute morning town tour is included in Williams Lake. Prices including all onboard meals, hotels, transfers, and GST start at only $219 adults/$209 seniors based on double-occupancy.

For reservation information, contact the WCRA at (604) 524-1011.

NEW PRODUCTS

Andy Barber has an update regarding the long awaited Overland Model HO scale version of BCR's extended-vision caboose. According to comments made by Tom Marsh at the recent NMRA confab in Portland, Overland has received approximately 175 reservations for this project. As previously reported in *"The Cariboo"*, the magic number to begin production is 200. Therefore, if this project is of interest, we recommend contacting a reputable brass dealer asap. (Ed Note: We have heard positive reviews re Northern Scale Models in Minnesota). Overland plans to offer the BCR caboose in two versions.

E&C Shops is set to produce the popular PS-1 smooth-side boxcar with the BCR dogwood logo (dark green). Anticipated release date is Winter 1994. (Marcel de Vlieger)

H&D Distributing (212 50th Ave. S.E., Calgary AB T2G 2A9) has just released a new BCRAIL logo t-shirt for $15.95 Cdn. Also available is a sweatshir for $27.95 Cdn. Include $3.50 Cdn for shipping. (Marcel de Vlieger)

"The Cariboo" is published quarterly for enthusiasts and modelers of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway and its successor lines. A cycle of four issues (posted to North American addresses) may be obtained for $18.00 in U.S. funds. For subscription information contact Jim Moore, 25729 Floral Court, Valencia, California 91355-2139, U.S.A.

THE CLOSING DATE

FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE

IS DECEMBER 1, 1994.

INTERCHANGE

CABOOSE INFO REQUESTED: Greg M. Kennelly is preparing a feature for "The Cariboo" which will illustrate the numerous paint scheme variations of PGE/BCR's caboose fleet. Does anyone know the earliest date that #1851 appeared in the two-tone green scheme with PGE markings? Also, Greg is seeking for prints/slides of unit 1856, 1859, and 1860 in the two-tone green scheme. Please contact Greg (7739 Gray Avenue, Burnaby, BC V5J 3Z7) before sending any material.

POTASH HOPPERS: Mike Jackson (5759 Claremont Avenue, Apt D, Oakland, California 94618) is interested in obtaining information regarding the top deck loading arrangements for the potash cars (e.g. Potcan, Canpotex) commonly seen on BC Rail. Specifically, do these cars feature the trough-style openings as well as the round-shaped hatch openings?

N SCALE DECALS: Bill Thawley (POB 493, Cape May, NJ 08204) wants to hear from any of our N scalers interested in obtaining custom printed BC Rail decals. If enough interest is generated, Bill will coordinate this project. And the BCRH&TS will broker these decals to our members.

ICE STORAGE DETAILS: David Morgan (20887 Alpine Avenue, Maple Ridge, BC V3Z 1B9) is seeking plans/dimensional information for the ice storage facilities formerly located in Squamish yard. Also wanted are any details relating to the PGE's ice reefer operations.

TOP DOLLAR PAID for issues one through ten of *"The Cariboo"*. Originals only, no photocopies. A.E. Roach, 6919 Harrison Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306.

TUMBLER RIDGE INFO: David Woodall (966 King Street East, Oshawa, ON L1H 1H2) is modeling the Tumbler Ridge Subdivision and welcomes correspondence regarding this subject from fellow BC Rail modelers. At present, David is preparing a feature for "The Cariboo" which will describe his experience of kitbashing the General Electric GF6C locomotive.

EUROPEAN MEMBERS: Ian Bareham (10 Cullingham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk 1P1 2EG England) wishes to hear from fellow Europe-based PGE/BCR modelers and enthusiasts. Goal is to establish a support and information exchange network.

The "Interchange" column is designed as a cost-free information exchange forum among members of our Society. If you receive a response your request, kindly share the information you have received with other members (preferably via this column).

PGE'S MARITIME OPERATIONS 1913-1957

David Morgan

Until 1956, PGE's shoestring rail operation on the northern shore of Burrard Inlet remained isolated from the North American rail network. Maritime barge service, bringing interchange freight cars from rail connections at Vancouver, was fundamental to the PGE's operation during the first half of the 20th Century. Although the PGE would ultimately evolve into Canada's third largest railway, it was often referred to as "the railway that started nowhere and went nowhere." The non-descript coastal town of Squamish, located at the northern end of fjord-like Howe Sound, was the PGE's railhead into the vast interior of British Columbia. Engineering difficulties precluded the building of the railway along the rugged shore of Howe Sound between Whytecliff and Squamish, and construction of this section had been deferred in favor of the rail barge service between Vancouver and Squamish. So until 1956, the Squamish dock and barge facility was the sole link to the Strait of Georgia and Puget Sound to the south. In essence, the outside world.

Barge operations lasted from 1913 until 1957, when completion of the final 20 miles of mainline along Burrard Inlet to Squamish rendered it redundant. During that 45 year period, the PGE owned and operated two steam tugs (the *Clinton* and *Point Ellice*) and three rail barges (*PGE No. 1, PGE No. 2, and Pacific Great Eastern No. 3*). From the time of service initiation until 1918, the railway leased equipment for its marine operation from the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Tugs

Built in 1909 by Crawford & Reid (Tacoma WA) as the *Daring*, the first tug was purchased on August 13, 1918. Renamed the *Clinton* (Official Number 140937), she would serve the railway until January 15, 1922. The *Clinton* had length of 98 feet, a beam of 19 feet, and displaced 155 gross tons.

Following the loss of the *Clinton* in 1922, PGE chartered various tugs. However, this arrangement proved to be impractical. On October 23, 1923, the *Point Ellice* was acquired. Built in 1911 by McDougall & Jenkins (North Vancouver BC), the tug 's initial duty was as a dredging tender for the Department of Public Works. She would serve the PGE until her retirement in 1957, upon sale to Wagner, Stein and Greene (Victoria BC) as scrap.

During the First World War, the *Point Ellice* (Official Number 130897) was employed in the Queen Charlotte Islands towing spruce rafts. While in this service (1918), *Point Ellice* was lengthened by 11 feet 6 inches.

The *Point Ellice* now had a length of 103 feet, a beam of 20 feet, and displaced 171 gross tons. She was manned by a crew of seven: skipper, chief engineer, two firemen, deck hand, cook, and cook's helper. The *Point Ellice* was finished in colours typical of the day: black hull with orange sheerline stripe, cream deck house, white wheel house, and a black smoke stack. The stack was decorated with a unique diamond-shaped

PGE herald (medium dark green on a white background), which measured 33.5 inches wide by 40 inches high. This is the only documented use of this style of logo.

(Ed Note: In the book *Full Line, Full Away*, reference is made to the tug *Dola*. This vessel, which is believed to have been owned by Island Tug and Barge, was frequently contracted for by the Pacific Great Eastern Railway during the course of its maritime operations. The *Dola* was lost on October 28, 1953 in the First Narrows. The Union Steamships Ltd. *Lady Cynthia* cut into and sank the *Dola* which at the time was towing a PGE Railway barge loaded with boxcars bound for Squamish. The tug went down in five minutes, but the nine-man crew was rescued and taken aboard the Union vessel.)

Barges

Rail barges *PGE No. 1* and *PGE No. 2* were of wood construction with a steel truss rod arrangement mounted on wooden posts to reinforce the hulls. Loaded freeboard appeared to be about six feet. These first two barges also had substantial superstructures containing wheel and deck houses and galleys. Each carried three crew members and a cook.

PGE No. 1 (Official Number 140989), built in 1914 in New Westminster as the *Sidney No. 3* for the Great Northern Railway, was purchased by the PGE in 1918 for $14,000. Originally equipped with two 150-foot tracks, it was modified (by B.C Marine Ltd.) shortly thereafter to accept a third track in PGE service. As built, it had a length of 172 feet, a beam of 39 feet, a depth of 10 feet, and a displacement of 652 gross tons. It was sold in 1938 to the Mayo Brothers Lumber Company (Paldi, BC) for use at Cowichan Bay.

PGE No. 2 (Official Number 170761) was built in 1937 by E.R. McCharles (Elburne BC) for the PGE at a cost of $37,000. It was placed into service with PGE that same year. As built, she had a length of 210.5 feet, a beam of 42 feet, a depth of 10 feet, and a displacement of 818 gross tons. Equipped with three tracks, this barge could hold 14 freight cars. During the Second World War, *PGE No. 2* was painted in an overall Royal Canadian Navy grey scheme. Pre-war photos suggest a darker colour was used earlier. This second barge, along with *Pacific Great Eastern No. 3*, was sold to the Island Tug and Barge Company in February of 1957.

Little is presently known about *Pacific Great Eastern No. 3* (Official Number 194186). She was built in 1945 for the PGE by Reliable Welding Works of Olympia WA. The largest of PGE's three barges, she had a length of 216.5 feet, a beam of 42 feet, a depth of 10.5 feet, and a displacement of 858 gross tons.

(Ed Note: Within his unpublished monograph, *Ships of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway*, noted PGE historian Greg M. Kennelly makes reference to three additional vessels. These vessels (*Conveyor* [Official Number 130885}, *Operator* [Official Number 130886], and *Cottonwood* [Official Number 141619]) were formerly registered to PGE-contractor Foley, Welch & Stewart.

Conveyor and *Operator* were both built in 1912 by George Askew of Tete Jaune Cache, BC.
Both vessels were acquired by the PGE in December 1919, for use in connection with the construction of the

railway between Soda Creek and Fort George. Both measured 142 feet in length and 35 feet in width, and were dismantled in late 1938.

Cottonwood was built in 1913 by Stewart B. Johnson of Chelan WA. Formerly named the *H.E. Carleton,* this vessel was acquired by the PGE in May 1921 for the sum of one dollar. Constructed in Tete Jaune Cache, the Cottonwood measured 44 feet in length, 9 feet in width, 4 feet in depth, and had a displacement of 9 tons. This vessel featured a twin-screw, gasoline-fueled powerplant.)

Dock Facilities

The focal point of maritime operations was the modest dock complex located south of Squamish at old mile 0.2. This facility was completed in 1913, and later rebuilt in 1929. Passenger, freight, and barge traffic were serviced by three parallel tracks totaling nearly 2,000 feet of pile trestle. The west track, 1000 feet long, served the single-track 40 foot long barge slip apron. The centre trestle, 800 feet long, serviced a freight shed and express transfer structure. The east trestle, 700 feet long, serviced the passenger dock. From here, the Union Steamship Company provided passenger service to the Union Pier at the foot of Carrall Street in Vancouver.

In 1921, flood waters from the Squamish River on the west destroyed both passenger platform and freight shed, necessitating the building of another passenger shed at a south easterly angle from the south end of the passenger track.

New facilities, constructed in 1929, adjoining the existing Dominion Government Public Dock, consisted of a pile trestle 800 feet long leading to the passenger dock. A 500-foot pile trestle diverged out of the new barge slip, which was located some 250 feet west of the passenger dock. The new barge slip had a three track apron (40 foot long) with two timber towers, each containing a six ton concrete counterweight. Starting in 1940, the pile trestles were replaced with rock fill. All other structures remained supported on piling.

The barge slip was completely unadorned by any architectural pretense, perhaps reflecting the grim financial prospects of the railway. Colour photos circa 1955 show the supporting piling and much of the associated timber as being treated with creosote. The top enclosures of the towers were weather-beaten wood. The inclined slopes and tower roofs appear to have been covered with tar paper.

Trains connecting with passenger boats used the twenty-car passenger track on the east side. The south end of this track was 460 feet north of railway mile zero. The boat dock extended 220 feet south from end of track. The 20-car express and baggage track was west of the passenger track and parallel at 20 foot centres. Between these tracks was the elevated covered loading platform, 180 feet long, with a 90 foot ramp at the south end. An electrically-driven endless chain hauled trucks from the dock up the ramp for loading onto railway cars.

(Ed Note: For a further discussion of the development of the Squamish Harbour, see Eric L. Johnson's text and maps which follow this article.)

Maritime Operations

Turnaround time for unloading and loading was approximately three to four hours, depending upon the tide and its influence on the angle of the apron. The apron had to be level or else the railcar undercarriages could be damaged. Photographs suggest loading and unloading occurred at high tide. The tug wound in its cable and secured a position on the starboard (right) side of the barge, guiding it into the slip. Unloading/loading was done with idler cars which were kept on the trestle for this purpose. Photographs suggest that any empty freight car was employed, including flat cars, box cars, and tank cars. Southbound freight cars were assembled in the yard north of Squamish (the North Yard) prior to being weighed at a track scale near the Squamish station. The railway charged its shippers by weight, so each car was weighed prior to going on the barge.

Once the barge was loaded and underway, the tug let out about 1,000 feet of cable while transiting Howe Sound. Typical cruising speed was six knots. Approaching Vancouver Harbour, the cable was shortened to 100-150 feet, depending on how the tides were running. The PGE did not have its own barge facilities in Vancouver, but docked at the CPR barge slip west of Pier A on the south shore of Burrard Inlet. Besides this route, barge service also extended to Vancouver Island. The Milwaukee Road used the Squamish barge slip to interchange freight to and from Seattle. In later years the CPR may also have interchanged at Squamish.

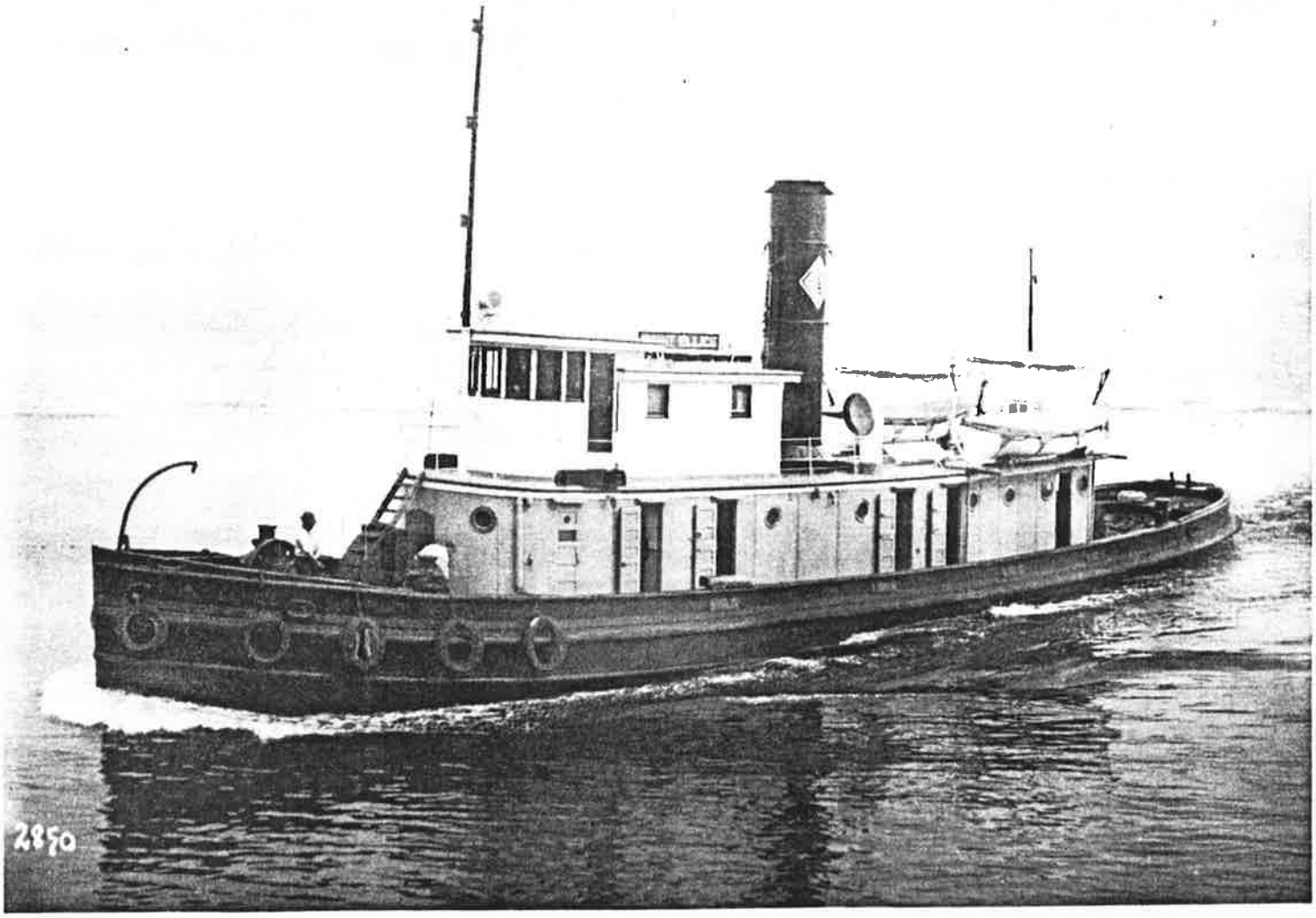
Despite the loss of the *Clinton* in 1922 (due to sinking off First Narrows west of Vancouver Harbour following a collision with the CPR steamship *Princess Royal*), PGE's barge service was largely uneventful. Wind and weather were the main antagonists. The *Point Ellice* was prone to burying its prow into the swells in the face if occasionally strong westerlies passed the First Narrows. The persistent winds around Squamish, which formerly were a challenge to barge operations, are now sought by wind surfers. On one occasion a sail boat narrowly missed colliding with the *Point Ellice*, only to be run down by the barge. The crew was grateful to be rescued, but not enough to avoid pressing charges against the tug's skipper. However, on the appointed day, the matter was quickly thrown out of court. The *Point Ellice*, sans radar, often relied upon a Vancouver Harbour fire boat to "talk" is through the fog via radio.

Such were the highlights of PGE's maritime operations. Although out of the barge business for almost forty years, BC Rail still ships freight cars on the waterways of the Pacific Northwest utilizing the fleet of Seaspan (formerly Island Tug and Barge). Included here are two rail ferries, *Seaspan Doris* and *Seaspan Greg*.

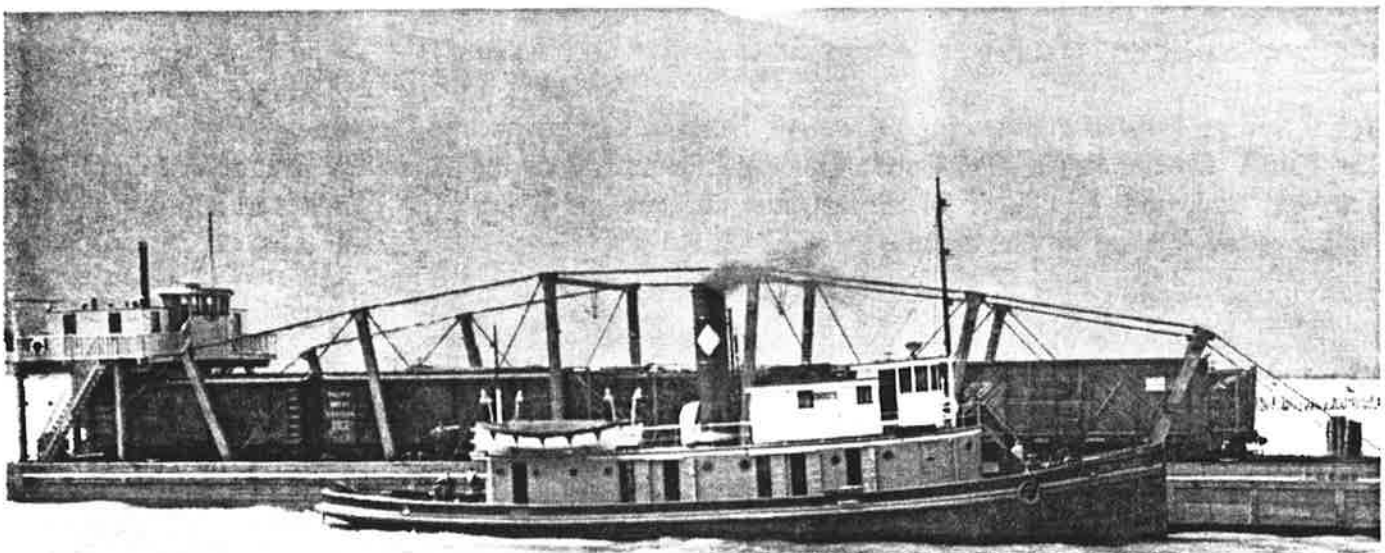
This discussion is but an introduction to the former PGE barge service. Additional information or descriptions of modeling efforts are solicited. Further details can be found in Timothy Horton's *"The Pacific Great Eastern"* (v. 2), published by the BRMNA, from which much of the technical data cited above was taken. Attention is also drawn to an article by Randy Zarowny, which appeared in BC Rail's *"Coupler"* (August 1993). Additional photographic coverage can be found in Adolph Hungry Wolf's book, *"Route of*

the Cariboo", and Patrick O. Hind's *"Pacific Great Eastern Locomotives"*.

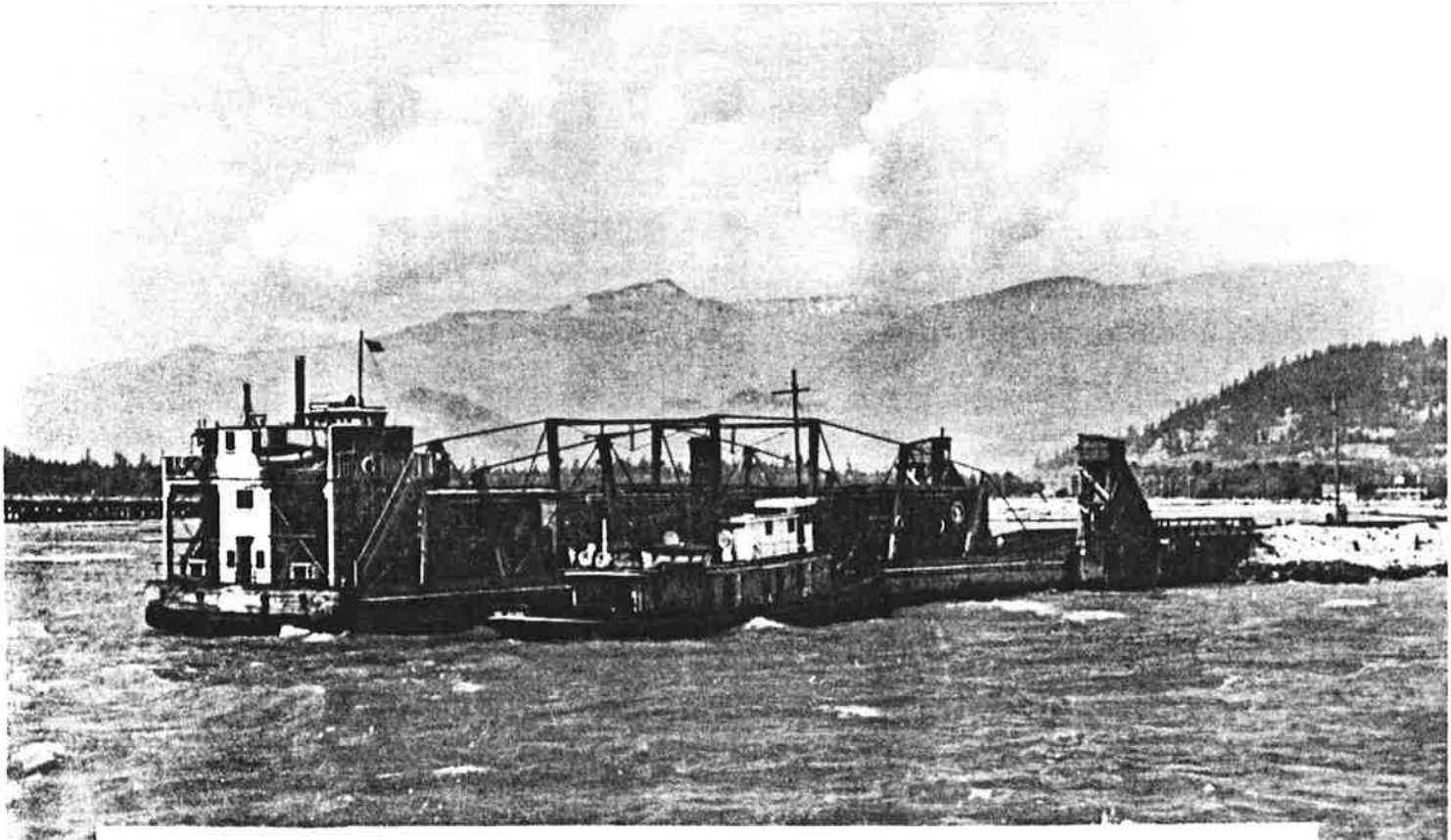
The following assisted in preparing this story: Norman Beasley (retired Captain of the *Point Ellice*), John Bruce, Paul J. Crozier Smith, Bob Deno, Timothy J. Horton, Greg M. Kennelly, and Jim Moore. Thanks also to BC Rail, the Vancouver Maritime Museum, and the Vancouver Public Library for generously providing the accompanying photographs.



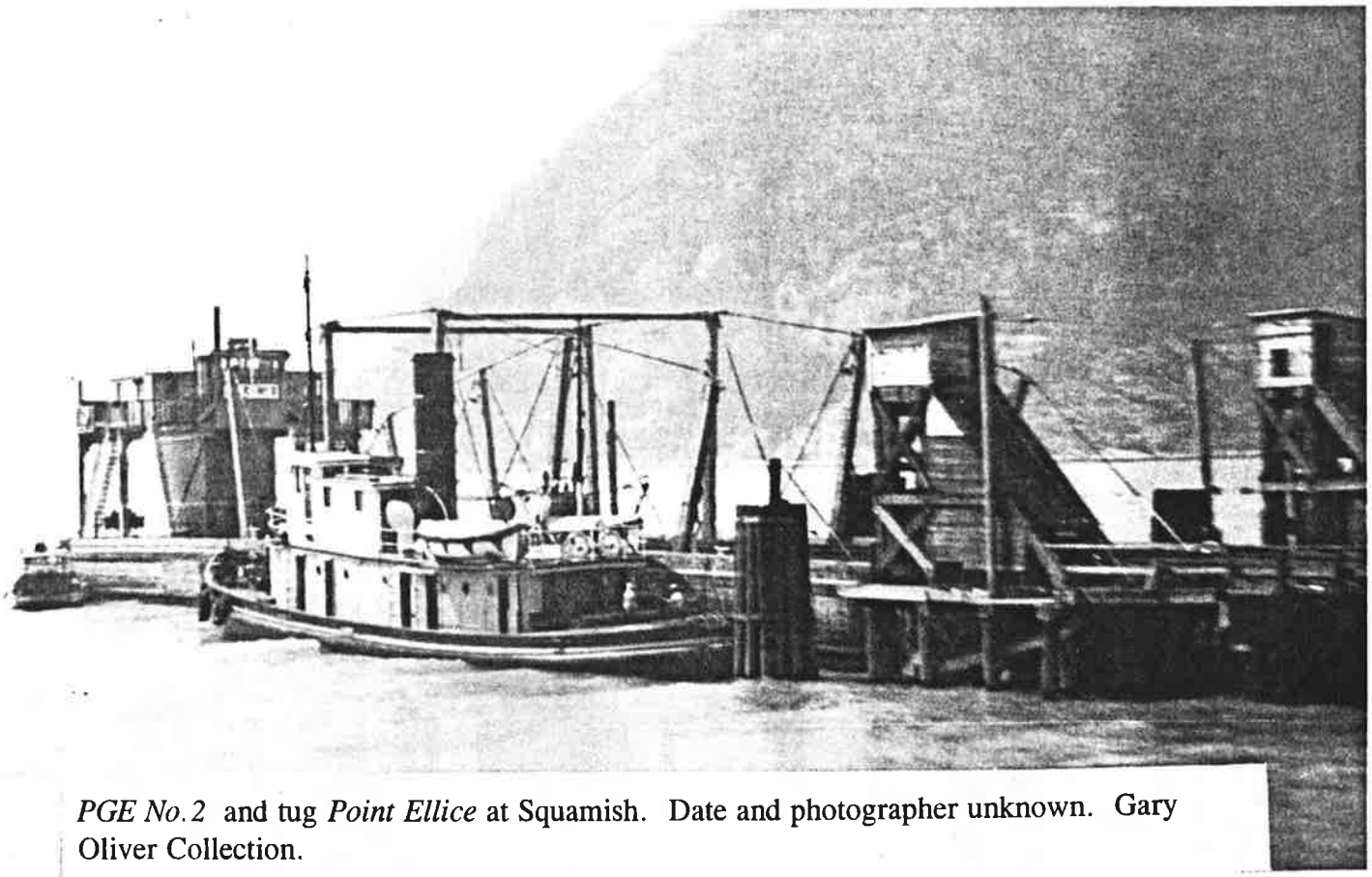
PGE tug *Point Ellice*. Note the diamond-shaped herald on the tug's stack. Date, location, and photographer unknown. Courtesy of the Vancouver Maritime Museum.



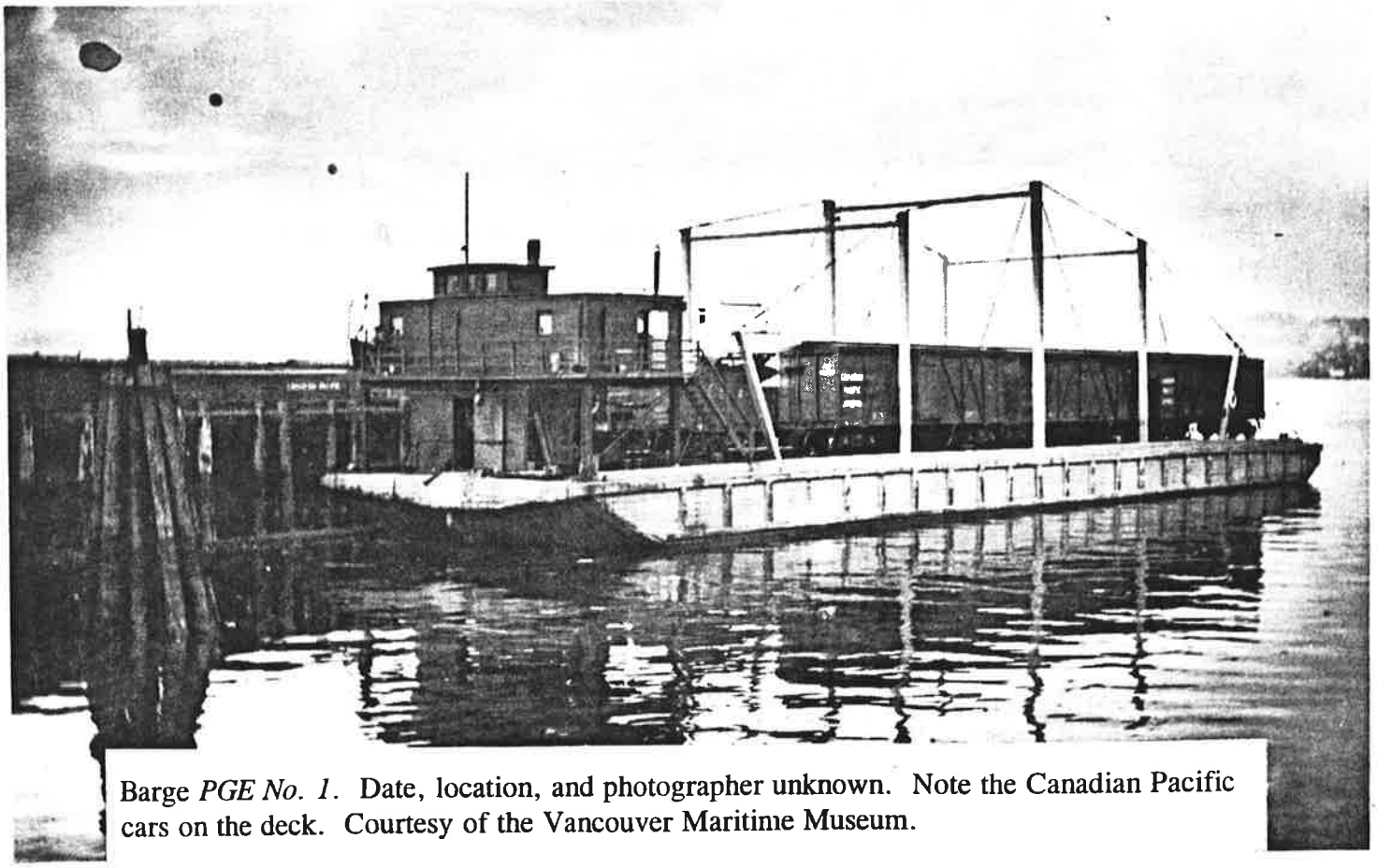
Side view of tug *Point Ellice* and barge *PGE No.2* at Squamish dated June 25, 1943. The barge appears in its wartime livery of battleship grey. Judging from the smokestack its another windy day. Photograph by Ernie Plant. Vancouver Public Library Collection.



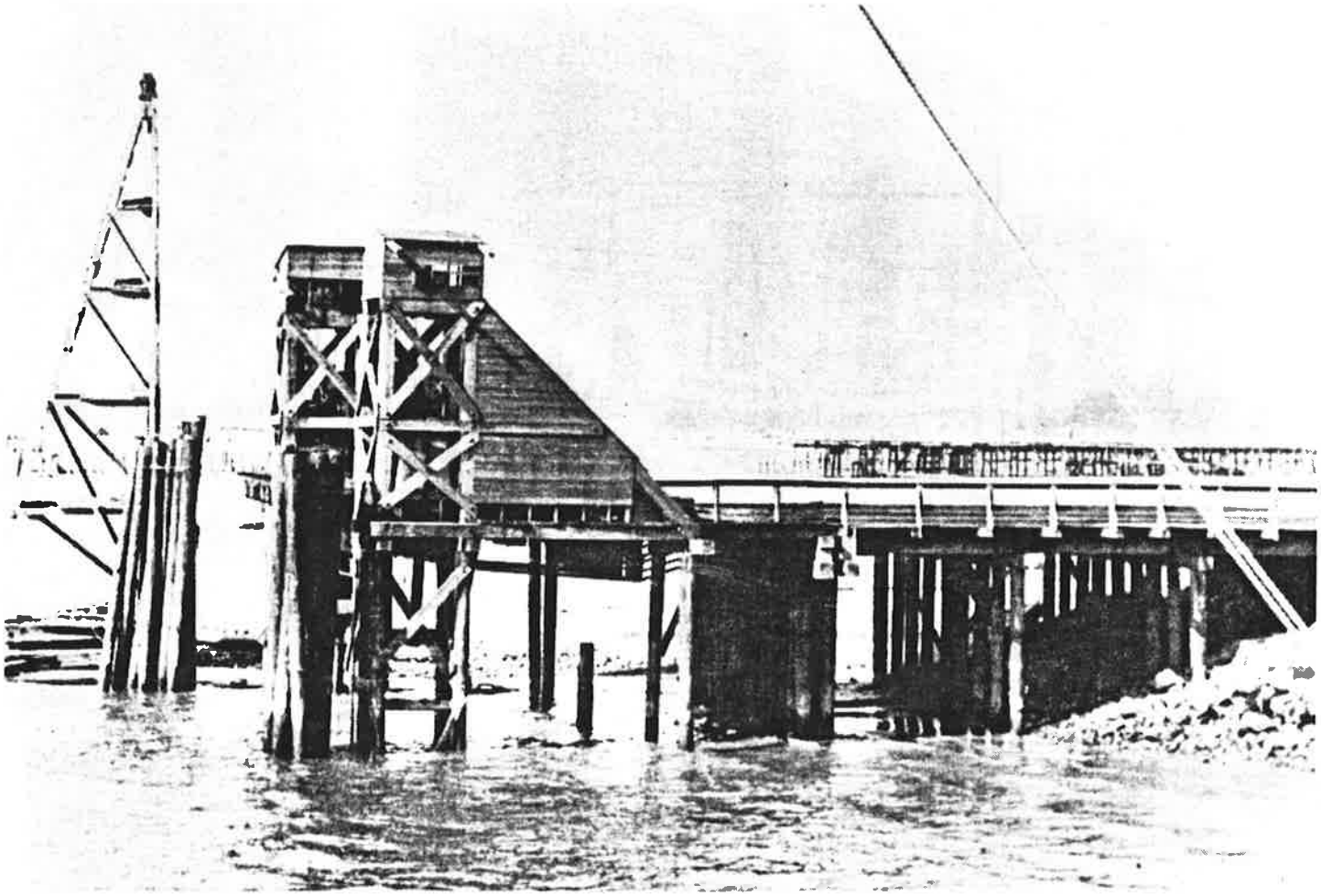
Tug *Point Ellice* and barge *PGE No.2* at the Squamish barge slip. Note the high tide for unloading and loading, the white caps, the substantial superstructure and the Great Northern boxcar at the bow of the barge. Photograph undated. Courtesy of BC Rail.



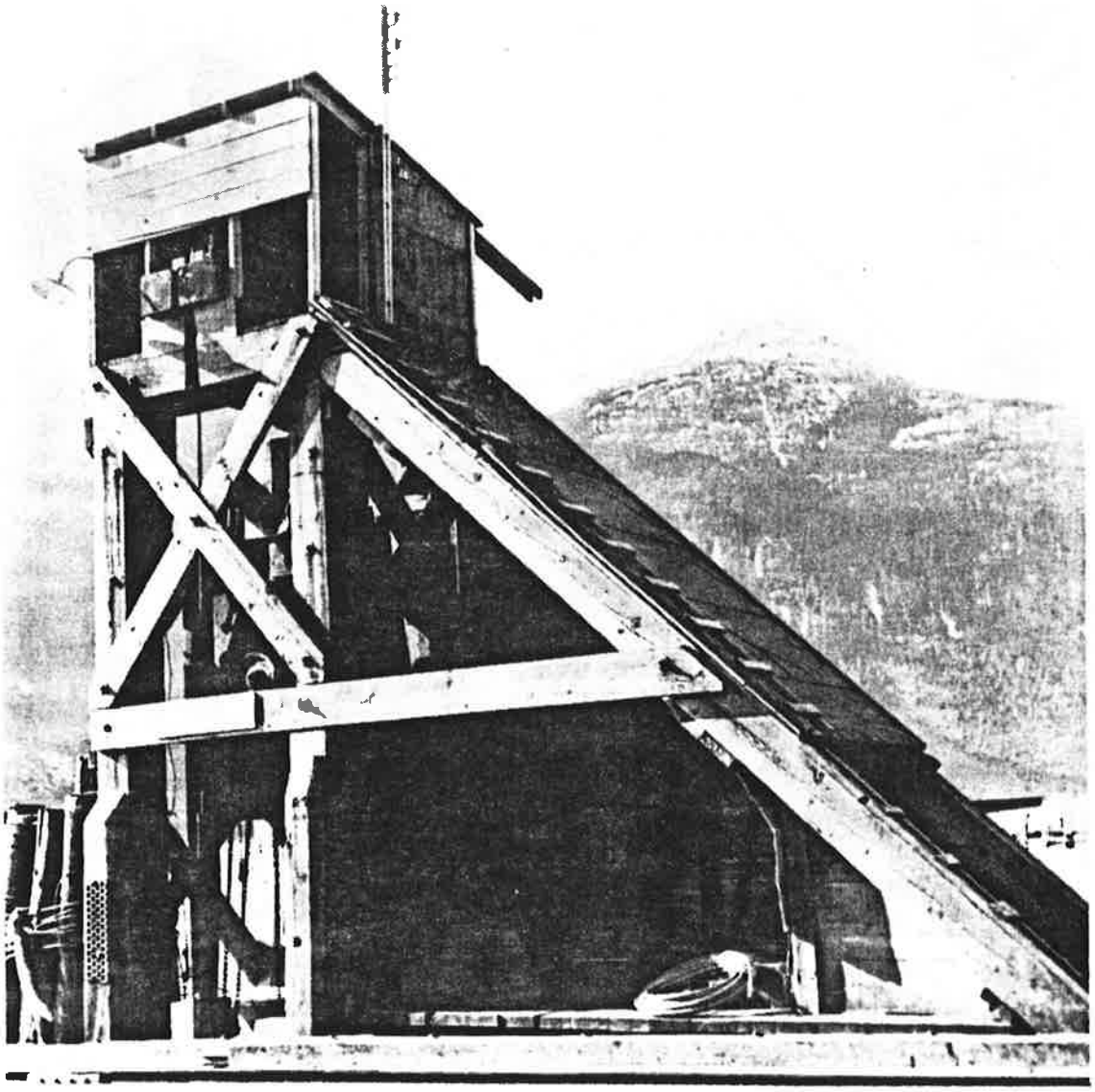
PGE No. 2 and tug *Point Ellice* at Squamish. Date and photographer unknown. Gary Oliver Collection.



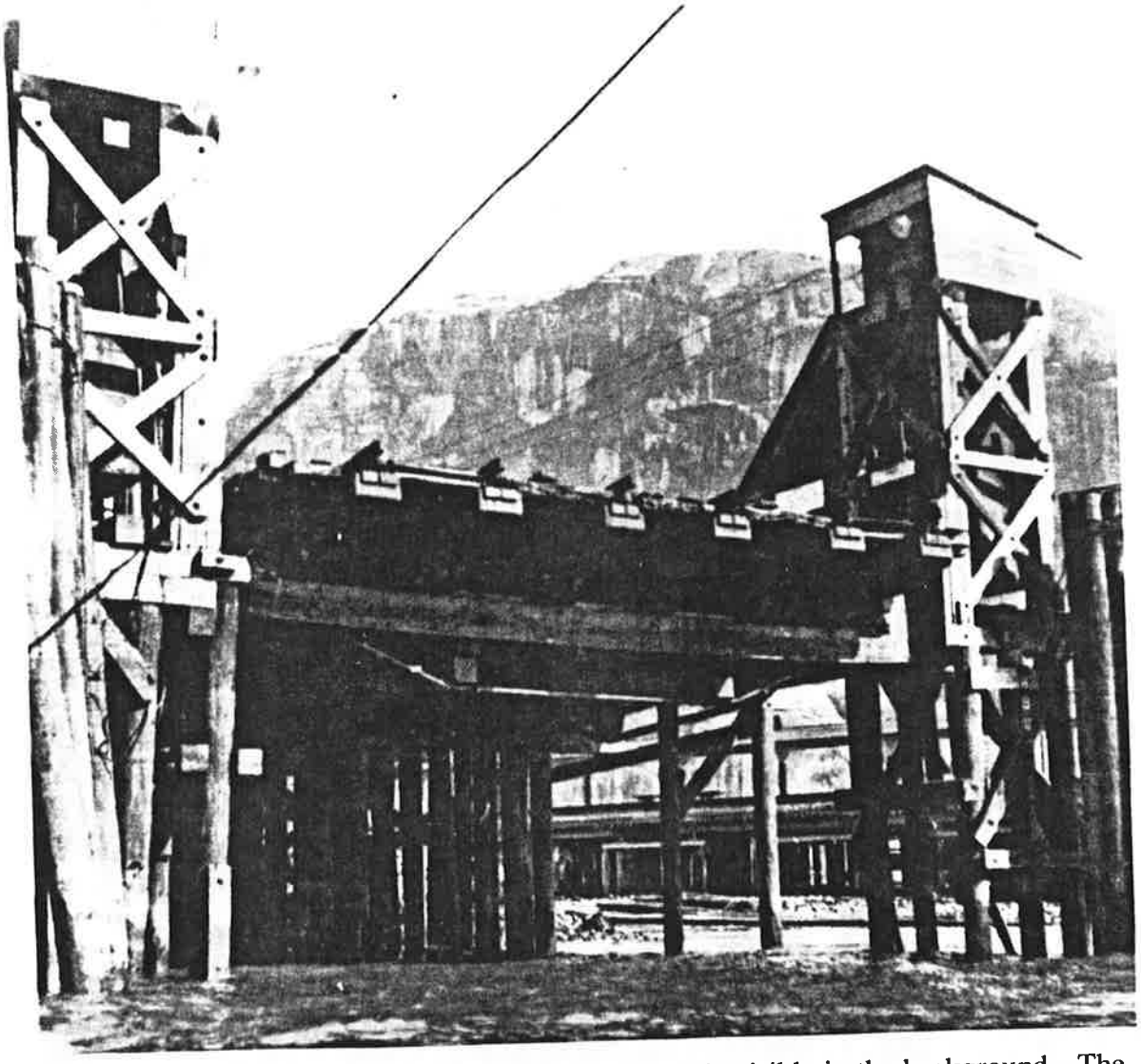
Barge *PGE No. 1*. Date, location, and photographer unknown. Note the Canadian Pacific cars on the deck. Courtesy of the Vancouver Maritime Museum.



Squamish barge slip apron. Low tide. View from the passenger dock looking west. Photograph undated. Courtesy of BC rail.

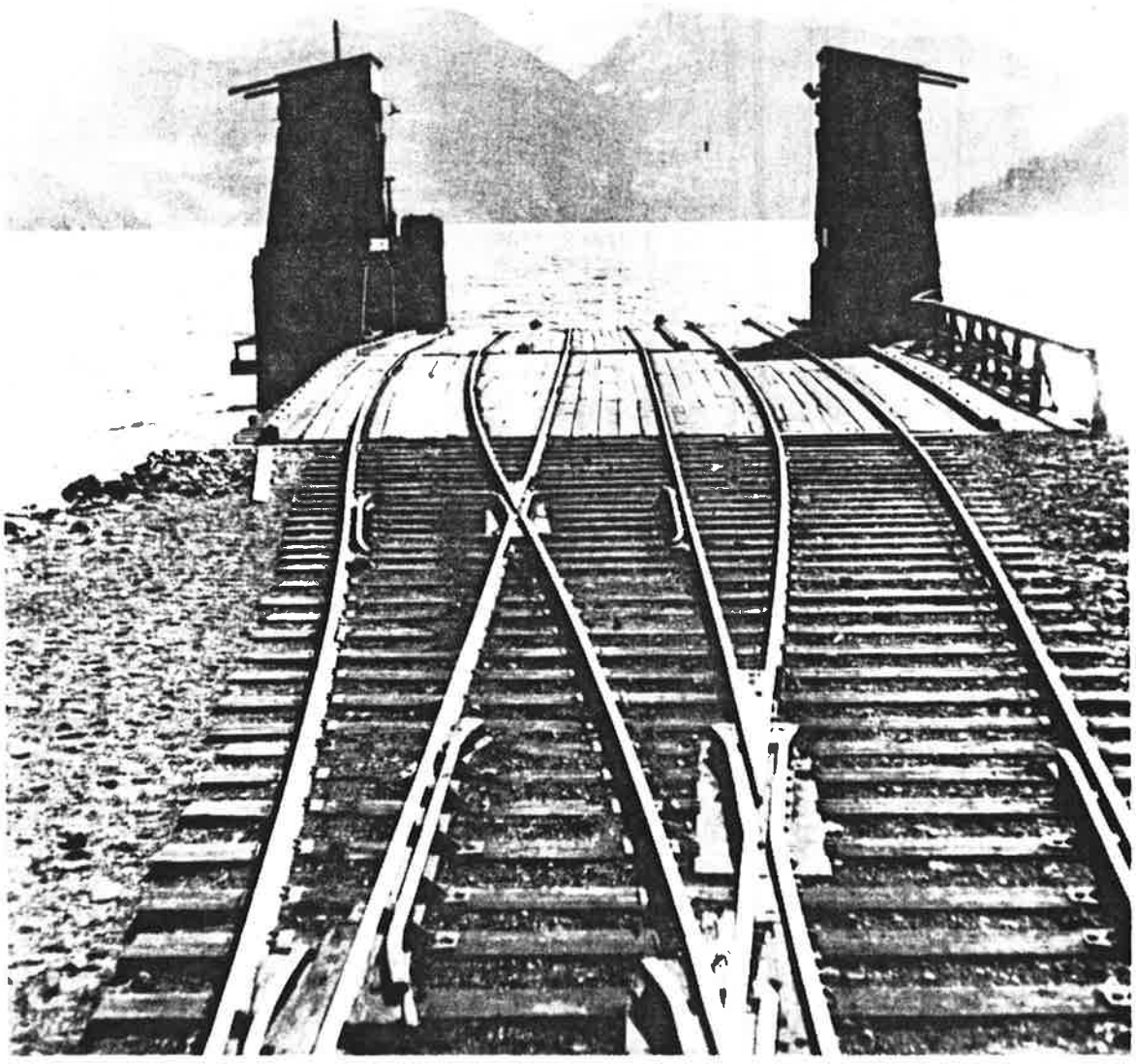


Detail of the western counterweight tower from the barge slip apron. Photograph undated. Courtesy of BC Rail.



Squamish barge slip apron. Lowtide. Passenger dock is visible in the background. The rocky feature which dominates the scene is known as "The Chief". Photograph undated. Courtesy of BC Rail.

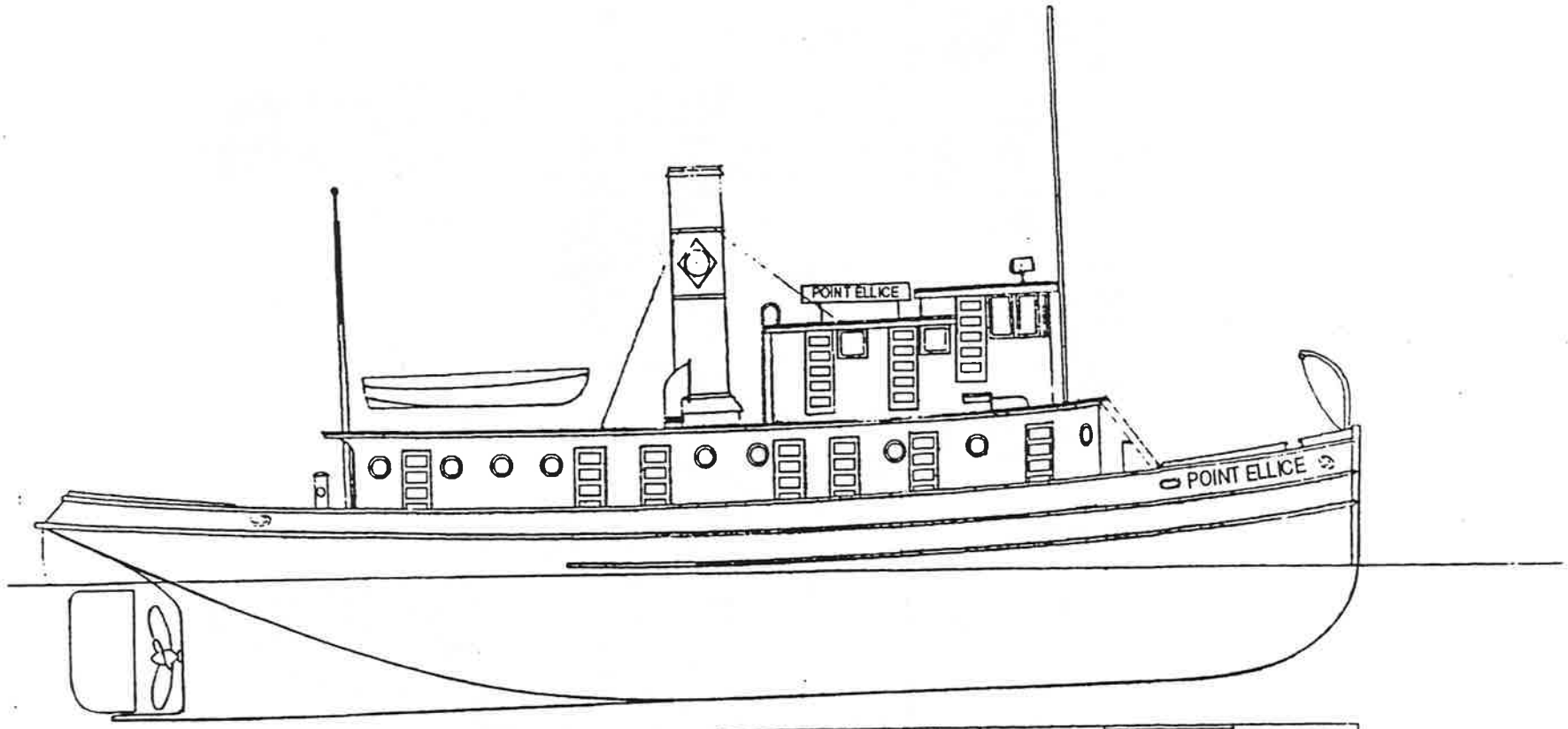
This logo was carried by the tug *Point Ellice* from at least 1929 until the early 1950s. This is the only documented use of this logo on PGE equipment.



View to the south into Howe Sound showing track arrangement. The negative appears to have been reversed, as the railing should be on the east or left hand side of the structure. The earlier pile trestle has been filled in with rock. Photograph undated. Courtesy of BC Rail.

PACIFIC GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY

STEAM TUG *"POINT ELLICE"*



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FEET

Drawn by Greg M. Kennelly, March 1994

PGE/BC RAIL - SQUAMISH HARBOUR

Eric L. Johnson

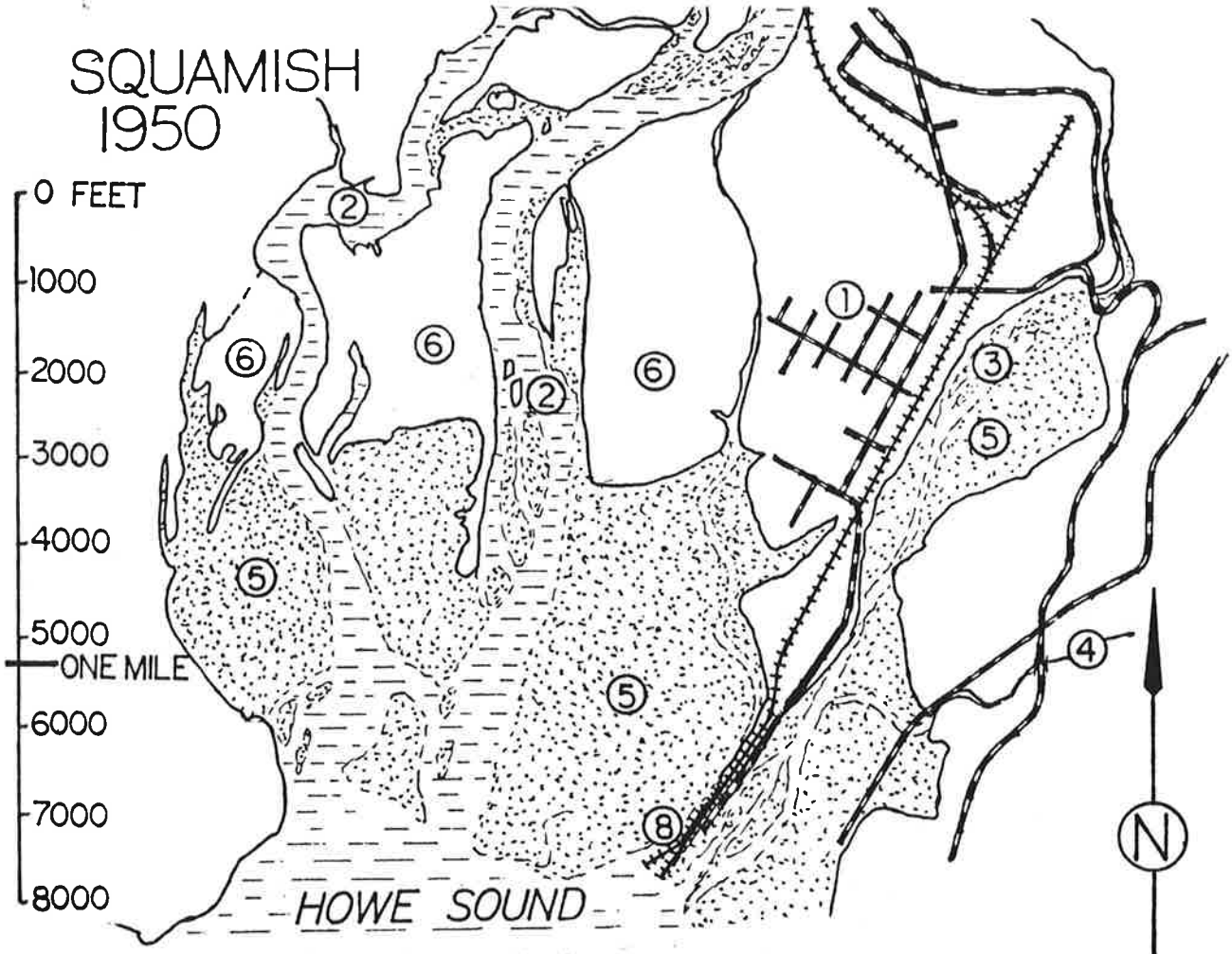
The Squamish River delta at the head of Howe Sound has changed greatly in the last 80 years. Although Europeans first settled here over 100 years ago, no real port development took place until 1913 when construction of the PGE began. At that time the Squamish River entered Howe Sound on the west side of the delta, and the Mamquam River on the east side. The village of Squamish was on very low ground between the two rivers, and was subject to periodic spring flooding. History records particularly disastrous floods in 1921, 1937, 1940 and 1949. In the flood of 1921 the Mamquam River changed course, and since then has flowed into the Squamish River 2 1/2 miles upstream from Howe Sound the former entry point is now called the Mamquam Blind Channel, and Highway 99 roughly runs over the rest of the former river course. Another flood in 1945 opened up a new, second, channel down the center of the delta. up until the recent man-made re-shaping of the harbour, it was estimated that the delta front was advancing at the rate of 22 feet per year because of deposition of silt from the rivers. Dyking above Squamish began in the 1'950s as a means of flood control - today both banks of the Mamquam River (for a mile or more) and the east bank of the Squamish River (above and below the mouth of the Mamquam) prevent any flooding.

Also flowing into the Squamish Harbour on the east side is a lesser stream, the Stawamus River. The tidal flats at the mouth of the Stawamus, and of the Mamquam Blind Channel, were used for years as a log storage basin - remnants of pilings and trestles can still be seen today. A trestle which led out over the mouth of the Stawamus is believed to once have supported a logging railroad from which logs were dumped into the harbour. The eastern part of the harbour became very polluted from logging waste, and in more recent times extensive dredging and fill operations have radically changed the form of the Mamquam Blind Channel; today the entire Weldwood sawmill/planermill complex occupies a fill area, and a dry storage area for logs has been built up below the mouth of the Stawamus.

Long docks leading from Squamish to deep water on Howe Sound had been built in the early 1900s - some details of these structures are listed in Timothy Horton's "The Pacific Great Eastern Railway", (Volume Two). The PGE's dock became obsolete in 1956 with the completion of the rail line from North Vancouver. The new line joined the old at the wye just north of the village of Squamish, crossing over the south leg of the wye. A portion of the south leg was not torn up, and today serves as a loading dock spur. The remains of the south leg and the north leg were removed and today the grade lies below pavement of the main road leading into the village of Squamish. The grade on which the tail of the wye once lay is now a lane behind MacDonalds and the Esso station. BCRail's wye is now located at the Squamish yard.

Much of the Squamish delta waterfront land was owned by the PGE, and in the 1960s plans were made to develop the harbour into an industrial seaport. The FMC chlor-alkali plant was built on the old PGE dock line which had been filled and stabilized with rock - today the plant is owned by Canadianoxy Chemicals. Then, in 1972, the PGE completed a 3-mile long "training" dyke on the east bank of the western channel of the Squamish River. In the process the main (west) channel was also dredged and straightened. Additionally, work began on a rock and fill extension, just west of the FMC jetty, out to deep water to create what is today the site of Squamish Terminals, a busy pulp-loading port for ocean freighters. Almost two miles of a new rail spur was built across marsh land to serve the terminal.

But, even before the Squamish Terminals site was completed, concerns about environmental damage to the delta were being voiced strongly. Much of the tidal flats, marsh land, and waterways had already been severely altered, affecting the habitats of hundreds of species of flora and fauna. Dozens of environmental "studies" ensued, and it can be said with certainty that any future port development will meet with most restrictive regulations.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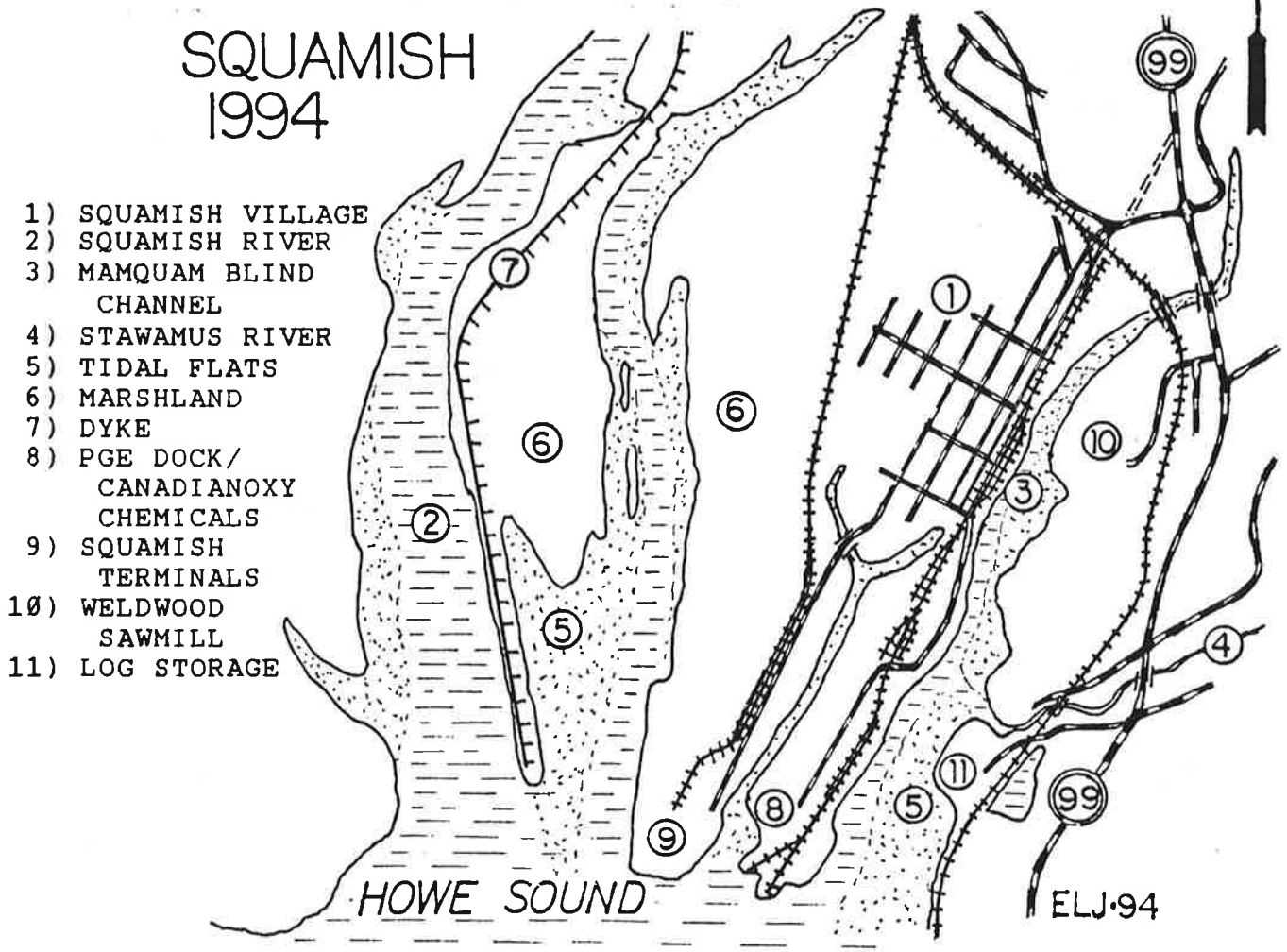
SQUAMISH
1994
1) SQUAMISH VILLAGE
2) SQUAMISH RIVER
3) MAMQUAM BLIND CHANNEL
4) STAWAMUS RIVER
5) TIDAL FLATS
6) MARSHLAND
7) DYKE
8) PGE DOCK/ CANADIANOXY CHEMICALS
9) SQUAMISH TERMINALS
10) WELDWOOD SAWMILL
11) LOG STORAGE
HOWE SOUND
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TUMBLER RIDGE : TEN YEARS ON

Lawson Little

Ten years have passed since British Columbia Railway's Tumbler Ridge Subdivision began full electric-powered operation. In that time only passing comments about the line have appeared in "The Cariboo", so perhaps now is a good time to review the situation to date.

As far back as 1968, BCR or Pacific Great Eastern as it then known, was studying electrification, though at that time only in connection with the main line from North Vancouver to Prince George. The idea was soon discarded when it was established that even with the relatively low capital costs then applicable, the price of diesel fuel would have to more than double before a switch to electrification would be justified.

A year later, exploration began of the massive coal deposits on the eastern flank of the Rockies in northern B.C. In this remote and in-hospitable area, an economical way of moving the coal out on the first stage of its journey to distant markets was obviously a prime consideration.

The transportation problem was eventually officially recognized in 1976, when the B.C.Provincial Government funded a feasibility study by to determine the best route for a branch line serving the mining area and connecting with the existing BCR route north of Prince George. Electrification again raised its head when it was realised that several lengthy tunnels would be required, and the projected grades and tonnages involved would need six-unit lashups of conventional diesel power; it was suspected that in such a situation the rear locomotives would be starved of cool air and probably shut down, causing trains to stall. Working conditions for pusher crews would also likely be unacceptable.

At that time however there was little data available on modern heavy-duty electric railroading, and concerns over such matters as excessive overhead clearances in tunnels (later found to be unnecessary) caused the whole question of electrification to be once again shelved.

Meanwhile, several alternative routes for the new branch were being considered. The favored option, a line along the McGregor River valley, was vetoed by the Provincial Government as it would have conflicted with a plan by BC Hydro to divert the river and flood the valley. So a second proposal, a route from Anzac to Tumbler Ridge, was studied in greater depth, and over the period 1977-80 detailed costs were developed; the line of route finally chosen involved three lengthy tunnels (two of which were later combined into a single continuous bore) and grades of 1.2 % against loaded trains and 1.5% against empties.

SYSTEMS GO!

Project approval was finally given in December 1980, and a few months later some urgency was injected into the situation by news of an agreement between the coal producers and Japanese steel mills for long-term supply contracts, conditional however on shipments commencing by first December 1983. Despite this, it was not until November 1981 that the final go-ahead was given by the B.C.Government, leaving a scant two years to complete the project. Construction was then delayed by severe winter weather, so it was April 1982 before serious work commenced.

At this stage the railway was still being planned, and indeed firm tonnage rates quoted, on the assumption that conventional diesel power would be used throughout. Subsequently it was found that in order to provide acceptable working conditions in the tunnels, purging and ventilation systems would be needed at a cost estimated at $21,000,000

SECOND THOUGHTS

The prospect of spending such an amount simply to blow diesel fumes out of a couple of tunnels, concentrated the planners minds wonderfully, and the old electrification plans were brought out and dusted down. Two additional factors were also considered; the FRA had been conducting studies into a "dual-model' locomotive, which would operate on straight electric power where conditions warranted, and revert to diesel elsewhere - something on the lines of the old FL9 design, but much updated. Secondly, experience was being accumulated, in Arizona and in Sweden, on the use of 50kv. power, which promised significant economies on the cost of overhead equipment and sub-stations.

BCR's initial thoughts were to adopt the dual-mode concept, with electric power only being used in tunnels; it was quickly realised however that for a fairly modest extra cost the whole branch could be energised, particularly as one of the virtues of 50kv. operation was that only a single substation was needed to service the whole branch.

The total cost of installing a 50kv system was calculated at just over $31,000,000 (the locomotives would be twice as expensive as diesels, but also twice as powerful, so fewer would be needed); saving $21,000,000 on the ventilation systems would give a net extra cost of around $10,000,000. Happily, funds totaling just that amount were forthcoming through Federal and Provincial Conservation and Renewable Energy programs!

THE RACE TO ELECTRIFY

So in mid-1982 the case for an electric-powered railway was quite suddenly an economic feasibility, and although the planned opening date was now only eighteen months away the enormous challenge to design and build a 50kv. system was accepted.

Both GE and END tendered for the supply of locomotives; the latter, thanks perhaps to its established partnership with the experienced Swedish company ASEA, and with recent production experience for AMTRAK, got the nod, and set out to custom-build a 6000 h.p.C-C design, using trucks and traction motors derived from the SD40 but with everything else from the frame up designed from scratch.

The catenary and power supply was less of a problem, and indeed it proved possible to source 85% of the gantry and fastenings requirements and all the poles and wire, from Canadian suppliers. Meanwhile, December 1983 was looming ever closer, and planners nerves were stretched even tighter when it was discovered that the storage areas at the shipping dock at Prince Rupert had to be pre-lined with a 'floor' of expendable 'bedding coal'. Bearing in mind the inevitable effects of severe winter weather, plus some intermittent labor problems, there must have been a great collective sigh of relief when the first coal train finally rolled, on first November 1983, just a month ahead of the deadline. This train, like many others after it, was diesel hauled, since the first electric locomotive had yet to be delivered.

Design studies had suggested that each of the new EMD locomotive:, designated GF6C by the builder, would be good for around 3500 tons on the ruling grade, and twice that figure on the rest of the line. The standard train of 98 hoppers weighed in at about 12,000 tons, so two locomotives would be needed as road power, with a two-unit pusher on the main adverse grade.

Although nine sets of hoppers would be needed to maintain the required rate of coal shipments, most of their time would be spent off-line enroute to Prince Rupert with CN power, and it was anticipated that only two sets would normally be on the branch at any time; these would each need two GF6C's, plus the helper set, six in all. A single extra loco was ordered as a maintenance spare.

The first EMD arrived in mid-November 1983 and the remainder at intervals over the next few months. Following extensive trials, electric working was progressively introduced, and the last scheduled diesel workings were phased out in July 1984, just over two years from the decision to go ahead with electrification.

PROBLEMS

The ten years since that day in July 1984 have seen the railway tackling a variety of problems, some arising from extreme weather and geological conditions but many from inexperience in the new high-voltage technology. The need to deliver custom-built locomotives to a very tight time schedule led to numerous component failures caused by rushed under-design, insufficient allowance for actual operating conditions, or inadequate interfacing between Swedish and US technology. Bearing in mind the scarcity and inevitable lengthy delivery of 50kv components, the decision to purchase only one spare locomotive was in hindsight a mistake; although electric locomotives need significantly less maintenance attention than diesels, much of the downtime was caused by external problems which often affected more than one locomotive simultaneously, as will be detailed later. The lack of availability has caused partial substitution by diesel power from time to time.

A major problem affecting availability proved to be the loading arrangements at the mines. As no switching power was available, the road units were required to move the empty hoppers through the loading bunkers, which at both mines were placed on balloon loops for continuous I running. Since it was obviously impractical to string catenary under the bunkers, the trains had to coast through this area with pantographs lowered before backing up to position the leading car for loading . This lowering operation, done on the run, was obviously accident-prone, not always through operator error but often due to severe weather affecting the lowering rate or response time.

The mining companies are responsible for operating the trains throughout the loading cycle while the BCR crews take a break, and the coal people specified remote control of the locomotives and the pantograph lowering - this caused endless problems since the remote systems were unable to cope with the electromagnetic effects of the 50kv. current; some improvements have been achieved by re-design, but the remote control system has still to receive regulatory approval.

MORE PROBLEMS

The locomotives are equipped with an advanced radar-controlled version of 'creep control' which provides spectacular improvements in tractive performance; unfortunately this has exposed weaknesses in the traction motors which are virtually identical to those used in the 3000hp SD40. They are now thought, not surprisingly, to be over-stressed in this application. A curious side-problem with the radar control is that it can be misled by certain conditions of fine blowing snow, leading to false readings resulting in trains being held to 3 kph instead of the normal 30 kph

The lightweight pantographs have proved susceptible to damage, not only from ice or snow build-up as might be expected, but more commonly from mishaps arising from inappropriate movements in non-wired areas such as the maintenance shop. On at least two occasions, all four pantographs along with the rest of the roof-mounted equipment, were wiped off a pair of locos by the premature lowering of the loading chutes at the mine bunker. Two major main transformer failures, coincidentally on the same locomotive, have not been explained, and were hopefully random occurrences. A serious design error was to provide dynamic rather than regenerative braking on the GF6C's. It is quite usual in industrial power applications for a significant element in the pricing structure to be determined by the peak power demand, rather than the total, since it is the peak loading which the power company has to cover in terms of generating plant. In order to reduce this peak, some operating constraints have been imposed recently, such as slowing or deferring a train if its upgrade time would coincide with that of another in the opposite direction. With regenerative braking, it should have been possible to arrange for a heavy-drawing upgrade train to be balanced by a regenerating downgrade one; it is believed, however, that BCHydro were not keen to see power being pumped back into the system, since this would obviously affect their income. It seems, indeed, that BCR and BCHydro have enjoyed a fairly prickly relationship throughout the Tumbler Ridge era. Flashovers on roof-mounted equipment caused by contamination from coal dust, tunnel water or snow were initially quite common, but have now been virtually eliminated by redesign and the application of anti-tracking coatings.

THE TUNNELS

Apart from the locomotives, the main problems have been with the overhead current supply system, particularly in the tunnels. The 3.7-mile Wolverine Tunnel suffers from excessive build-up of natural hydrogen sulfide gas (the crews call the bore "Old Stinky"!), the corrosive effects of which caused premature failure of the stranded copper contact wire. Replacement with solid copper wire proved unsuccessful and an aluminum all wire is now under trial - this resists corrosion but adversely affects the carbon pick-ups on the pantographs.

The 5.6-mile Table Tunnel has a different problem - water! This has earned it the title of "Car Wash", but is no joke in winter when the water freezes and the icicles cause damage to roof equipment. The problem is being tackled by lining the tunnel with flexible Styrofoam which channels water down the tunnel sides to drainage ducts at track level. Out in the open the catenary has been relatively trouble-free, though a close watch has to be kept for snow buildup and the possibility of avalanches.

PERFORMANCE

The list of problems may appear lengthy, but bearing in mind the advanced technology and inhospitable environment, overall performance of the line has been excellent. Using electric locomotives has saved $4,500,000 in diesel fuel costs annually compared with $1,400,000 spent on hydro-produced electricity. Locomotive maintenance costs are half the equivalent for diesels, and overall there is an annual saving of nearly $4,000,000. As a result the energy cost of moving the coal is less than 20 cents per ton/mile compared to 54 cents for diesel power.

THE FUTURE

Since 1984 the Tumbler Ridge Sub has continued to operate 24 hours a day 365 days of the year, moving some 8,500,000 tons of coal annually. Although one of the mines currently served will be worked out within the next ten years there are ample reserves in the area, and with stable long-term contracts the line should be earning handsomely for the BCR well into the next century.

My special thanks to Andy Barber for assistance with the bibliography for this article.

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CARIBOO MODELLERS WIN!

There was some heavy competition at this year's CANADIAN PROTOTYPE RAILWAY MODELLERS show in Toronto. BC Rail modellers walked away with five awards including Best Overall to Laszlo Dora. Unlike in the past, this year's show had an excellent PGE and BCR representation which was made possible by the participation of several BCRH&TS members. It was great to see PGE/BCR finally well represented here. Congratulations guys!

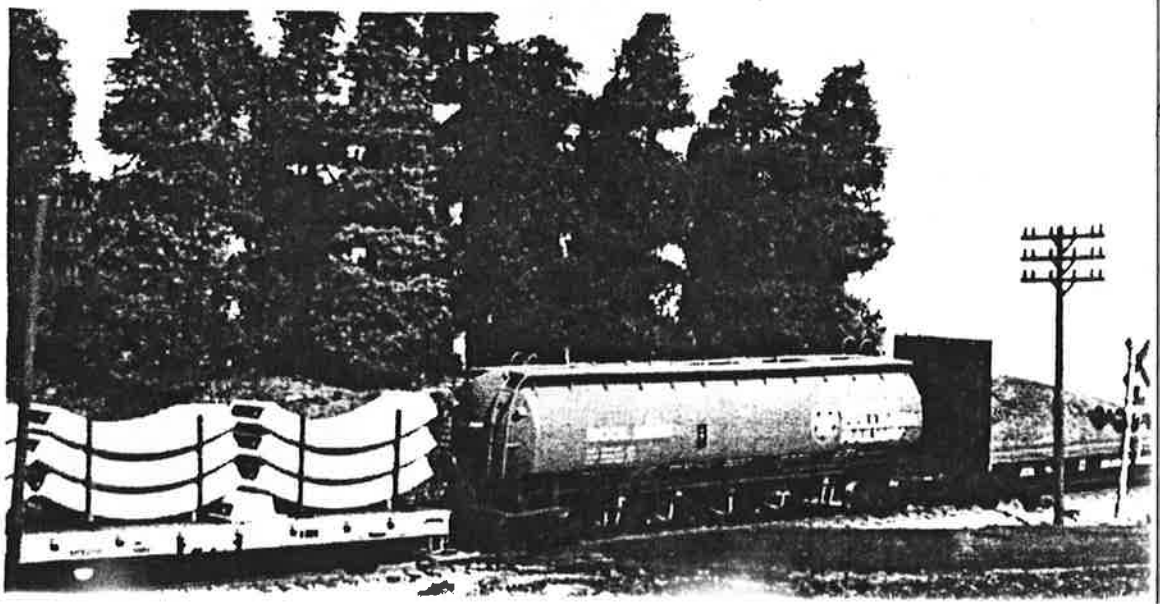
ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF JIM EAGER.

BEST OVERALL

Laszlo Dora for his kitbashed RS-18 CAT rebuild.

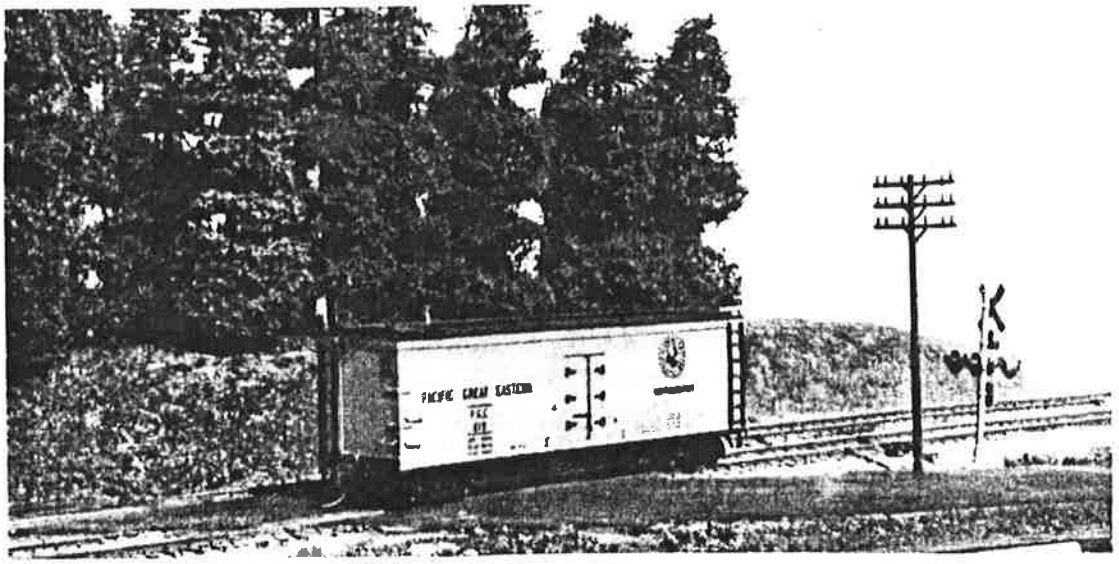
BEST FREIGHT CAR

Marcel de Vlieger for his kitbashed pressure-flow hopper.



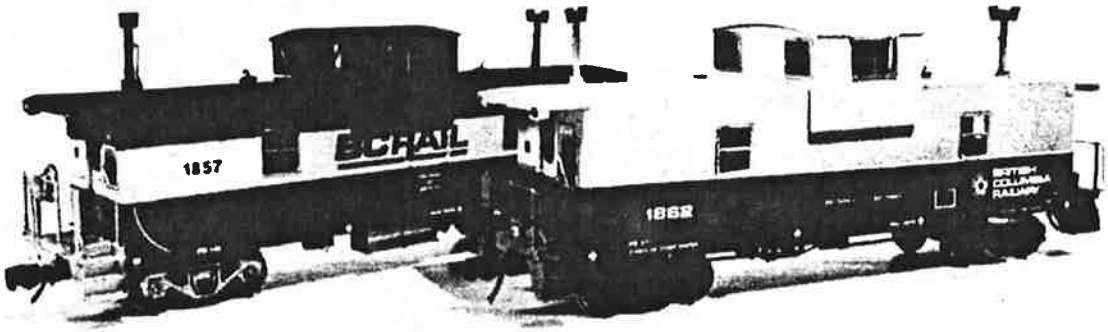
BEST CLASSIC FREIGHT CAR

Awarded to John Riddell for his kitbashed reefer.



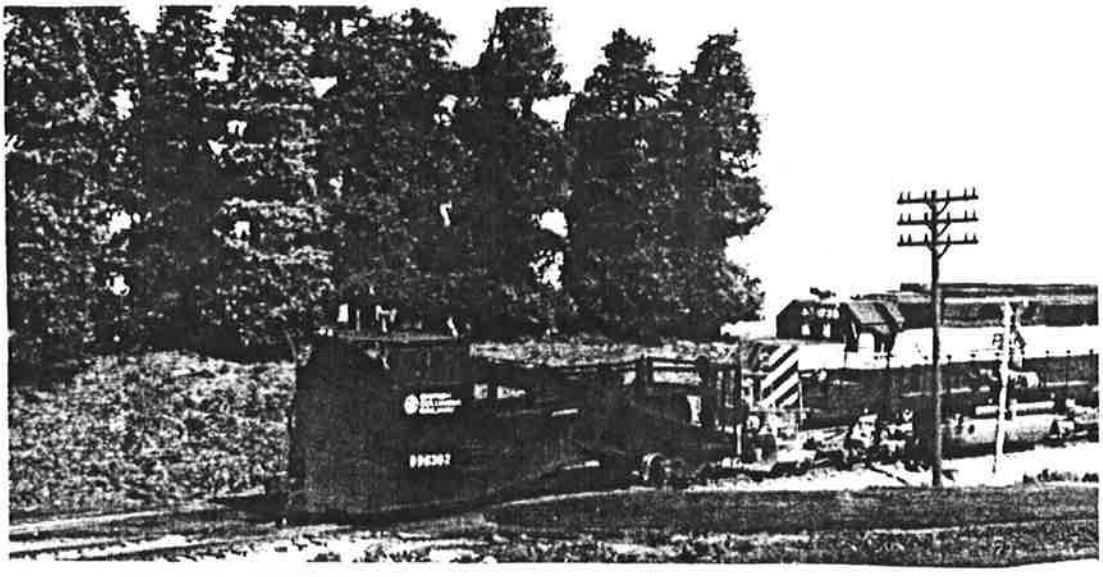
BEST CABOOSE

Awarded to Marcel de Vleiger for his scratch-built caboose.



BEST MAINT/WAY

Awarded to Marcel de Vlieger for his scratch-built spreader.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A while back, Jim Moore requested increased member participation in "The Cariboo". Yes, I know he didn't grovel enough to satisfy most of us. But you have to admit the reasons for his request are ultimately in our own best interest. Let me use my own circumstances as an example. Currently I'm working three jobs to make ends meet. But I've still found the time to offer "The Cariboo" readership some info on the grain cars. And in the process, I made new acquaintances with common interests and found Jim and the staff both helpful and cooperative as well. Consider this: Doesn't that say that I got out of it what I put into it? Okay...

Now imagine how big your issue of "The Cariboo" could be if each of us contributed just a little information, as I have. Now you see why it doesn't have to be anything big to count. And being a novice to railroading, I --for one--can use and appreciate your piece of information.

So I'd like to join Jim Moore in encouraging your contribution to "The Cariboo"'s content. There are a variety of ways that you can do this for the rest of us, with a minimum of time and effort.

Nothing is too small to go unappreciated by the rest of your fellow members who stand to gain from whatever you may provide.

Mike Jackson
Oakland, California

Ed Note: We welcome letters from our readers regarding both material published in "The Cariboo" and matters relating to our Society. All letters must be signed and are subject to editing.

NMRA MEET: On Saturday, September 25, the Pacific Northwest Region/Seventh Division will hold the Victoria Model Railway Show at the S.J. Willis Centre-Gymnasium, 923 Topaz Avenue, Victoria, B.C. Hours will be 10:00 am until 4:00 pm.

BCRH&TS member Dan Rowsell is organizing a PGE/BCR display/booth at the show. Be sure to stop by and meet some of your fellow BCRH&TS members. For more info call (604) 652-1894.

VIDEO REVIEW

Mike Jackson

BC Rail has produced a video that is a collection of railroading vignettes spanning early PGE days to the present. Entitled "Fiddle & Throttle", it runs only 17 minutes. So right off, I'd say it is too short. We join organizations such as the BCRH&TS because we crave railroading. So I believe we'd all wish for a longer version.

The term video is somewhat misleading in this instance. For with the exception of just 60 seconds of home movie footage depicting the opening of the railway's line between North Vancouver and Squamish, the remaining 16 1/2 minutes consists of 4-10 second still shots. Around one-third of these are in black and white, circa 1900 to 1945. At the 7 minute mark, the still photographs become colour and some movie footage is introduced.

Emphasis appears to have been placed on a history of the employees rather than the railroad's rolling stock. One observes nameless faces from different departments accompanied by descriptive audio. The background country music and folk songs are clear and well done. The quality of the video is good, although some of the still photographs are slightly out of focus.

For modelers, the scenery shots alone are worth the viewing. For railroad buffs, the interviews give us a fresh reminder of what it means to belong to the railroading fraternity.

Copies of "Fiddle & Throttle" can be purchased by contacting BC Rail--Passenger Service, POB 8770, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 4X6.

Price is $28.79 Cdn or $21.00 U.S. and includes shipping and all taxes.

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Any questions? Contact Jim Moore. And good luck!

Video Review: Steam on BC Rail's Squamish Subdivision

By J. Lee Smith

BC (Lotus Land) railfans are fortunate to have supernatural scenery and top notch trains to watch as well as one of the best train rides available in the world.

Literally word famous, the Royal Hudson steam excursion trip from North Vancouver to Squamish has no shortage of patrons and supporters. Steam on BC Rail's Squamish Subdivision, one of two videos produced by Iron Horse Video Productions on BC steam locomotives, follows several round trip runs where different locomotives have been assigned to the full passenger consist. Highlights include some of the best steam locomotive pacing shots ever seen - taken from only feet away. You'll see what it's like to be offered the Engineer's seat during unique cab rides in both Hudson No. 2860 and Consolidation No. 3716.

Throughout the video, it is evident that a lot of effort was put into finding great vantage points along Howe Sound and Horseshoe Bay to show off these immaculate steam engines to their best advantage. All shots are well lighted with bright British Columbia. sunshine that makes you want to be there in person. While this 70 minute production has no narration, by using the supplemental information supplied, you'll have no trouble figuring out what's going on. The sound quality is excellent and while the video quality ranged from fuzzy to very good, you quickly get caught up in the high quality performance of the stars of the show ... the steam locomotives.

Reviewers rated the program at a 4 (5) and felt it important that you realized that the price is very fair at $34.50 plus $3.00 for postage. Five dollars of that price is being donated to the Prince George Railway Museum toward the full restoration of CNR 1520, a 4-6-0, H-4-a Class steamer. This is an excellent way for you to not only see some of the world's best steampower currently available but also to help a dedicated and capable group rescue another steam locomotive. If you like steam (and who doesn't), you'll enjoy this tape.

Steam on BC Rail's Squamish Subdivision
Produced by Iron Horse Video Productions, R.R. 3, Site 6, Comp. 10, Prince George, BC, V2N 2Jl, (604) 962-7737.
Running Time - 70 minutes, VHS format
Retail Price - S34.50 plus S3. 00 postage S5. 00 donated to the Prince George Railway Museum for the restoration of
CNR 1520.

This review, which originally appeared in Canadian Railway Modeller, was provided courtesy of Iron Horse Productions.