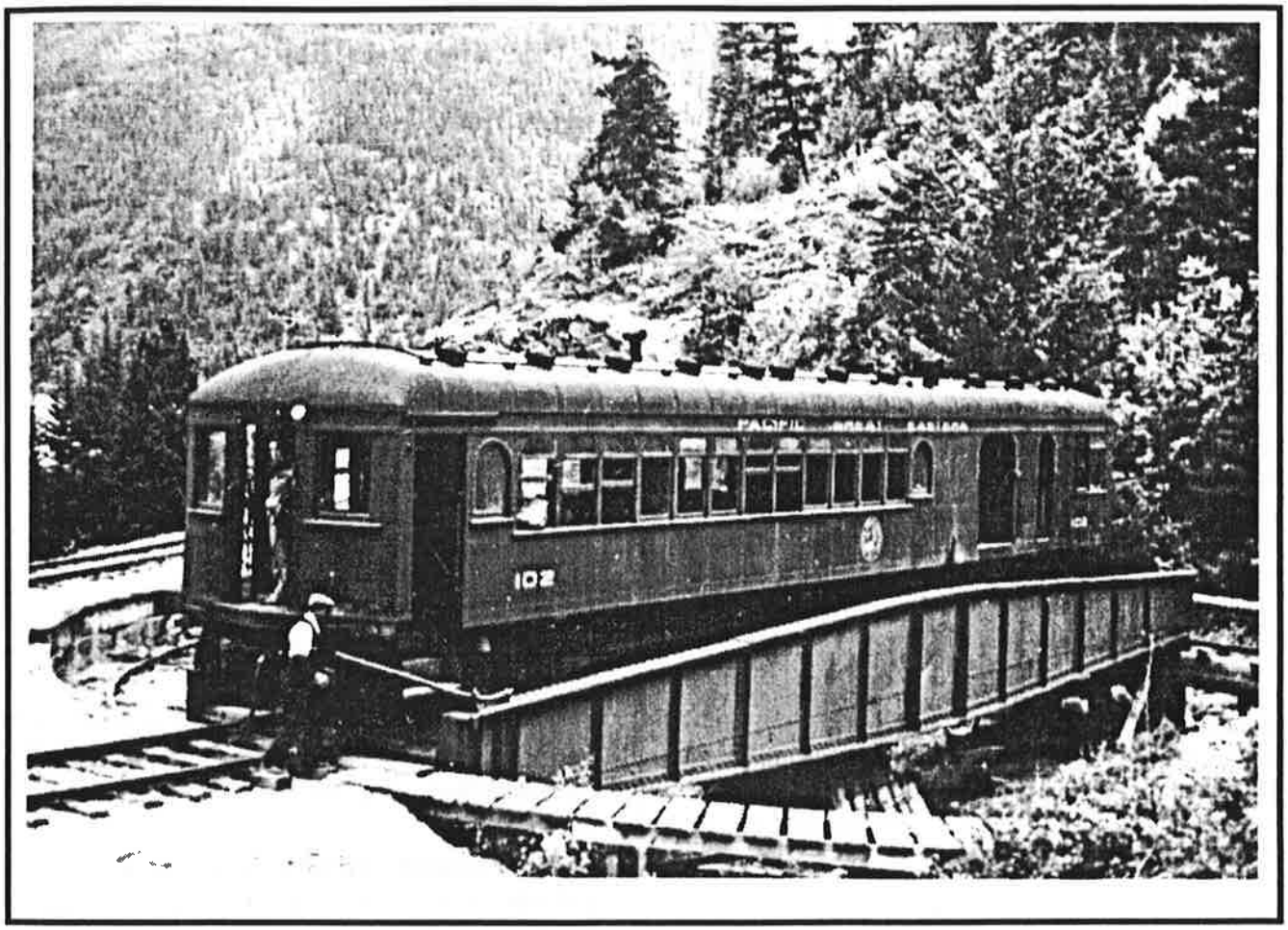
The CARIBOO

The British Columbia Railway Historical & Technical Society



Issue 22 October 1995

PGE's Shalalth Service

Covered Hoppers

Yard & Switcher Jobs

IN THE NEWS

Edited by Jim Moore

BC Rail For Sale? (March 16) The B.C. government is considering a proposal to privatize BC Rail in the face of "major threats to its ongoing commercial viability", says a secret cabinet document.

It could be the biggest action to bring down B.C.'s debt that the New Democratic Party government will take this year. A cabinet source said that the money raised by unloading the Crown corporation would "absolutely" be used to pay down the debt.

The document estimates the value of a general share offering could raise between $300 and $420 million in equity as well as pay down $320 million in BCR's government-guaranteed debt.

The draft submission to cabinet says BCR, one of the most profitable arms of the government, is facing two serious threats to its fiscal health. One danger is increasing competitive pressures and the other is potential declining revenues from BCR's lifeline -- forest products and coal. The government has little appetite now to begin subsiding BCR if the warnings come true and the railway sinks into the red.

The draft submission to cabinet recommends BCR seek private partners in the short term, but eventually back out of the public sector altogether. The six-page report stresses the attempt at private-sector partnership should be sold as part of an expansion strategy.

On Our Cover...

One of the more interesting operations in PGE history was the Shalalth-Lillooet auto trailer service. Here we see PGE gas car #102 on the turntable at Shalalth.

Patrick O. Hind's history of this operation begins on page 7.

Photographer and date unknown. From the J. Coosheck Collection, courtesy of Patrick O. Hind.

The CARIBOO

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All contributions are welcome. It is helpful if submissions are on a 3.5" disk in IBM Word, 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.

The report continues: "Without the expansion program in place, it may be seen more in terms of a narrow financial initiative to reduce government debt and an abandonment of the province's commitment to the Interior and the North." (Vancouver *Sun* via William MacLatchy) ❐

Reactions... The B.C Taxpayers' Association was quick to applaud the announcement that the province will consider privatizing BC Rail.

Rapid privatization is favored by the B.C. Trucking Association, which has accused the railway's present management of predatory pricing tactics.

A national representative with the Canadian Auto Workers which represents 230 BC Rail carmen said, "An off-the-top response is that they shouldn't do it."

A CP Rail System spokesman said his railway is too involved with labor disputes to have any interest in BC Rail being put into play. (Vancouver *Province* via Eric L. Johnson) ❐

A selloff of BC Rail is not the only option the provincial cabinet will be considering when it looks at a discussion paper prepared for it by the railway's management.

The second option is to hold onto the railway, possibly with private sector minority participation, and have the carrier swallow part of CN North America's system. The discussion paper suggests that a sale of a dismembered CN would give BC Rail a chance to bid on a line to Prince Rupert, which carries 12 trains a day in each direction. Acquiring the Prince Rupert line would give BC Rail sole control of coal traffic originating on its tracks in northeastern B.C. (Vancouver *Province* via Trevor Mills) ❐

Milestone: As of June 1, cabooses were no longer in service south of Prince George. Northward, vans remain on wayfreights and yard switchers. Employee Timetable #6 contains details concerning the new caboose-less operating rules. (Eric L. Johnson, Trevor Mills) ❐

BC Rail plans to invest over $130 million in projects in 1995, including new freight cars and locomotives, rail, bridge, and tie replacement, new technology for cabooseless train operations, and the re-engining of yard locomotives.

Among the projects underway is the installation of 115 lb. continuous welded rail in heavy tonnage track between North Vancouver and Tumbler Ridge, completion of the North Van yard upgrade project, a new bridge across the Green River (near Mile 81), and rock stabilization in the Chekamus Canyon area.

The CAT re-engining program continues, along with the acquisition of communication equipment (i.e. hotbox detectors) for cabooseless train operations. (BC Rail *Carrier*) ❐

We are proud to share some news concerning two BCRH&TS members. Eric L. Johnson's story of narrow gauge mining railways has made it into print. Entitled *Mining Railways of the Klondike*, Eric's books traces several narrow gauge railways serving coal mines on Cliff Creek and Coal Creek, as well as a placer gold operation on Bear Creek in the Yukon Territory.

Copies of Eric's book may be obtained from the Pacific Coast Division, Canadian Railroad Historical Association, POB 1006, Station A, Vancouver, B.C. V6P 2P1.

Patrick Lawson won first place in the Masterworks Drawing Contest sponsored by Graphsoft, a software company. Of the more than 75 entries from around the world, Patrick's scale drawings of the General Electric GF6C locomotive (*Model Railroader*, April 1995) were judged best overall. We plan to feature some of Patrick's scale drawings of woodchip gondolas in an upcoming issue of *The Cariboo*. ❐

BC Rail has created a new service for tour groups traveling a 193 km stretch on its mainline between North Vancouver and Prince George. Three rail diesel cars started seasonal runs on May 15 between Whistler and Kelly Lake. They will carry parties traveling by bus on other legs of scenic tours through B.C. and the Rockies.

The new service --the *Whistler Explorer*-- is expected to be used by 9,000 tourists before the season closes October 6. Delta Whistler Resort will cater the train and use its own staff to serve meals.

As for its other passenger operations, the thrice-weekly Lillooet-Prince George run have been renamed the *Cariboo Prospector*. Minimum fares have been scrapped and meal service, previously reserved for those paying premium fares, is available to everyone.

The *Cariboo Prospector* is expected to carry 72,700 riders this year, compared to its most recent best of 100,000 in

1992. (Glen Etchells, Eric L. Johnson, the Vancouver *Province*) ❐

Thirty-seven million dollars will be included in BCR's 1996 Capital Budget for the purchase, upgrade, and conversion of railcars. BCR will buy 250 60-foot 100-ton all-purpose boxcars. The cars (series 601xx and 602xx) have plug-doors and feature outside bracing. They were built this spring, and are Class XP, Plate E.

The railway is also acquiring 100 wood chip gondolas (series 911xx) from National Steel Car. 150 50-foot 70-ton boxcars will be converted to 100-ton capacity. Fleet Management is also negotiating to bring (via lease) 200 NSC TTZX 73-foot centerbeam bulkhead flats on line, with delivery beginning in the first quarter of 1996.

Since 1991, the railway has spent $92 million to buy 1,100 new cars in addition to converting and upgrading 1,500 existing cars. (BCR *Carrier*) ❐

A derailment of 19 cars from a southbound (Prince George-North Van) freight train occurred at 0200 hours on March 6. The incident, which was linked to a section of broken rail, happened at Mile 86.8, north of Green River. Dave Wilkie has provided us with a diagram of the incident, which we've included in this issue. ❐

AUTHORS URGENTLY NEEDED. Looks can be deceiving. Despite the fact that this issue has 24 pages, fresh material is urgently needed for use in 1996. This, along with past issues of *The Cariboo*, have relied heavily upon only about a dozen members who have repeatedly submitted articles and features for publication.

Surely among the nearly 200 members in this Special Interest Group, there must be many tales, experiences, memories, and observations (prototypical or modeling) that others would very much enjoy reading about. Include pictures and illustrations if you have them.

So how about sitting down for a couple of hours and putting your thoughts on paper. You don't have to be a great writer, speller, grammarian, or anything of the sort. Just send your material to me and I'll fix it up. That's the responsibility of the editorial staff. I've listed below the preferences I have for receiving material just so you'll know what's easiest for me. If you don't have the talent or equipment to send it in a fancy way, just do your best.

Methods of Communicating Articles and Features. (Worst to best). Carved on a stone. In hieroglyphics or Latin (sorry, no French please.) Handwritten. Typed on a piece of paper. On a computer disk (can be high density, double density, or low density.) Can be either 720 kb or 360 kb, on 3.5" or 5.25" disks. In WordPerfect 5.1 DOS format. In Microsoft Word for Windows format. You get the idea. Voice transmissions, either by phone, tape, CD or other means, are not acceptable. Either the notes get lost or I simply don't have time to transcribe them.

Your submission of an article or feature will earn my undying gratitude. (Thanks to Art Thomas, editor of *CN Lines,* for the inspiration.) ❐

Home Oil Co. plans to drill 35 wells in the Kahntah gas field 300 km north of Fort St. John and build a small gas processing plant. The plant will produce 35 million cubic feet of gas and 300 barrels of hydrocarbon liquids a day. The liquids will be transported via pipeline from the plant to the Sikanni siding (Mile 877, Ft.Nelson Sub) 23 km away. BC Rail will transport the gas to Taylor (BCR *Carrier*) ❐

USA Today has confirmed what many of us knew all along. The news daily recently named the *Cariboo Dayliner* (North Van to Prince George) one of the ten most scenic rail excursions in North America. ❐

The 1995 Royal Hudson season will run Wednesdays through Sundays, as well as holiday Mondays, from June 4 through September 10. The train departs the North Vancouver station at 10:00 am.

An inaugural run will be held on Saturday, June 3. Three post-season runs will operate September 15-17. (Trevor Mills) ❐

In other Royal Hudson news, names have been selected for the cars purchased from VIA Rail. (Ed Note: See Issue 21, page 3.) They will be baggage-generator car 9618 *Shalalth*, cafe-bar-lounges 2503 *Lions Bay* and 2505 *Horseshoe Bay*, and coaches 5437 *Birken*, 5506 *Exeter*, 5582 *Whistler*, 5594 *Seton*, 5595 *Brunswick*, 5596 *Chasm*, 5618 *Dragon*, 5623 *Porteau*, 5628 *Sunset Beach*, 5642 *Kelly Lake*, and 5652 *Capilano*. (WCRA *News*) ❐

The 1995 edition of BC Rail's *Traveller* magazine is out and features a full-colour cover shot of Royal Hudson #2860. This glossy magazine is distributed on-board all of the railway's passenger trains. (Trevor Mills) ❐

BC Rail's 2-8-0 steam locomotive #3716 was out doing movie work again, this time on home track based out of

the Garibaldi siding area north of Squamish. The filming work saw her out on April 1 and 2, then on April 3 she made a run from North Vancouver to Pemberton with a special passenger consist. She returned to North Vancouver just after 2130 hours, turning heads as she cruised through West Vancouver with her lovely steam whistle at work for grade crossings. In tow, she had power car *Chekamus*, two of the newly painted Royal Hudson coaches, one cafe-bar-lounge car, and a caboose. (WCRA *News*) ❐

More on the new Squamish station: The facility opened for business on March 29, when the daily Cariboo Dayliner made its first stop. The $750,000 building, which features 3,400 square feet on two floors, was constructed by BCR's Building and Bridges Department. (Squamish *Chief* via Trevor Mills) ❐

The *Chekamus River* power car has been condemned and will not operate again. BC Rail is shopping for a baggage-coach combine to replace it and provide both power and additional revenue seats. (WCRA *News*) ❐

Over the Canada Day weekend, Budd car BC-30 was used on a system tour organized by Travel Unlimited. The train operated North Vancouver to Fort Nelson, return. ❐

Canfor announced plans to build a cogeneration plant and, through a joint venture, a mill for medium-density fibreboard, at a total cost of about $200 million CDN. Both facilities would be situated in BC Rail's Prince George Industrial Park.

The fibreboard mill would use sawdust and shavings from nearby mills. The cogeneration plant would burn the remaining bark and other wood residue. Electricity generated would be used by Canfor's pulp mills. (*Wall Street Journal*) ❐

The Port of Portland Commission has approved a proposal from a group of Canadian potash suppliers to build a $40 million export terminal for bulk potash produced in Saskatchewan. The terminal will be built by Canpotex Ltd., a potash export association of four producers from Saskatchewan.

Canpotex currently exports three to five million tons of potash through Vancouver Wharves. The move to Portland diversifies the group's logistical alternatives and allows growth. Volume is targeted at one million tons annually at startup, late 1996, with an ultimate capacity of five million tons of potash and other bulk mineral cargoes. (*Globe & Mail* via Paul J. Crozier Smith) ❐

Thanks to Dave Barone, Paul J. Crozier Smith, Dave Harvey, F. John Perry, and Ron Tuff for their generous donations to the Society's photo archives. Thanks to Trevor Mills for his donation of assorted printed material. ❐

MUSEUM SCENE

BCRH&TS member Roy Smith wrote to advise us of recent developments at the Central British Columbia Railway & Forest Industry Museum in Prince George.

The restoration of steam locomotive 1520 continued through the winter, with the construction of two new doors for the cab. It is hoped that a new coat of black paint can be applied to the engine itself in the near future.

Through the generosity of The Pas Lumber, the Museum will be the recipient of a Beehive Burner. The unit will be reassembled on the Museum's grounds this summer.

Much effort has gone toward fully restoring the Penny Station during the past several months. The project has been among the Museum's top priorities, and is expected to be completed by this summer.

Additional information regarding the Museum can be obtained by writing to POB 2408, Prince George, B.C. V2N 2S6. ❐

WCRA CORNER

Progress continues to be made in connection with the West Coast Railway Association's restoration of the former PGE carshop building. Grant Ferguson reports that a provincial grant has been awarded for the construction of the five sets of large track doors.

The Rail Show in the Park, the first annual railroadiana show at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park, will be held in Squamish on August 19-20. Contact the WCRA for further details.

Ex PGE #561 has been fitted with a new pre-lube pump, and she has been fired up and used to switch cars around the WCRA's Heritage Park trackage.

A limited number of tickets remain available for the WCRA's fall BC Rail System Tour. Dates are September 9 through September 17. For an itinerary and pricing info, contact the WCRA at Box 2790, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 3X2. Tell 'em the BCRH&TS sent you! ❐

UPDATE:

• Several members have submitted additional info regarding the diagram of the North Vancouver yard which appeared in Issue 21. These comments have included historical info about facilities formerly found in the yard, as well as elaboration on today's yard. If reader interest warrants, we'll publish a set of detail drawings incorporating this info.

In the meantime, we welcome further comment regarding the North Vancouver yard feature, as well as any other article which may have appeared in *The Cariboo.*

• F. John Perry advises of a correction to our feature on potash hoppers which appeared in Issue 21. The cylindrical hoppers of International Minerals & Chemicals (IMCX 12000-12599) were built by Marine Industries, not National Steel Car as previously stated.

• Andy Barber wrote to say there exists an earlier version of the matchbook cover described in Issue 21's Collectible Corner. The front cover features a full colour photo of diesel loco #702, while the back has the PGE map-style herald. The slogan on the end lip says "A Modern Railway Opening New Frontiers". The book's front lip says "The Vital Link to Northern Resources". The matchbook was produced for the railway by Vista-Lite Products Ltd, Canada.

While on the topic of matchbooks, another booklet has come my way via BCRH&TS member Paul Roy. The overall colour is white with black lettering. The front cover features a colour shot of GF6C #6001, while the front lip contains the dogwood herald and BC Rail lettering! Like previous booklets, the interior is blank. The rear cover contains the slogan "Tomorrow's Railway Today...". The booklet was produced by Eddy Match Company of Vancouver. (Jim Moore)

• According to *Railroad* (September 1965): The Island Tug & Barge operation stems from a contract rail-barge connection between the Pacific Great Eastern Railway at Squamish, B.C. and Seattle. About nine years ago (1956), IT&B sold the Union Pacific, Great Northern, and Milwaukee Road on the idea of a spur spanning the water. The company then built a terminal on filled-in land and began regular service in 1959. Among the commodities it handles are produce, bulk molasses in tank cars, steel, bulk grains, additives for plywood manufacture, and sand. (Jim Moore)

• David Morgan has discovered the whereabouts of the former barge *Pacific Great Eastern No. 3*. The barge is now a floating fishing wharf, tied up at the end of Harbour Road in North Vancouver. All railway equipment has been removed (steel rails, etc.), and the deck has been resurfaced with concrete. David is presently preparing scale drawings of the barge which we hope to publish in 1996. (David Morgan) ❐

FLASHBACK: "The railway today is the product of a dream of 'The North' that began in 1912 when promoters launched the Pacific Great Eastern Railway -- a grand name for a glorious vision of vast, untapped wealth in a new land. It was a dream that collapsed almost immediately, a few years later, when the railway was unable to redeem its bonds and the province was forced to assume ownership. Over the years that followed, successful provincial governments either ignored or extended the railway, depending on the whims of the politicians involved. And the dream lurched forward, from 'Nowhere to Nowhere', as some critics joked. But the dream of this fabulous north, in many ways more like a nightmare, would not die. Not until 1977, when the Dease Lake extension was halted and supplanted by a more modest vision of the north -- a vision no longer determined by the dreams of politicians, but founded on true economic realities. Latter-day politicians discovered that there are limitations to all dreams." --from the 1985 British Columbia Railway annual report. ❐

PGE's Shalalth Auto Ferry Service

Patrick O. Hind

For some years, mining exploration had been undertaken in the Bridge River and Bralorne districts of the central interior of British Columbia. Gold and other metals were found in these regions. In 1934, the Bralorne Mine at Bridge Lake was opened, and a rough roadway was constructed from Bridge Lake to a connection with the Pacific Great Eastern Railway at Bridge River station at Mile 104.2 (now Mile 141.4). The Pacific Great Eastern Railway was faced with the need for an increased service between Lillooet and Bridge River to accommodate the miners, their families, and the equipment that was required at the Bralorne Mine. There wasn't any other access to the area at that time, only the railway at Bridge River. Accordingly, the Pacific Great Eastern was faced with two choices. Either use conventional equipment hauled by a steam locomotive to operate from Lillooet to Bridge River, adistance of sixteen miles; or use a couple of the stored gas cars from the North Shore District that were at Squamish. The choice was made to use the gas cars and equip two flatcars with stake sides. These trailers accommodated the automobile and truck traffic, and created a bridge route between Lillooet and Bridge River.

Gas cars No. 101 (2nd) and 102 were sent to Lillooet, where on September 2nd, 1934 a service was started with gas car 101 (2nd) hauling two flatcars for automobiles between Lillooet and Bridge River on a schedule of four round trips' daily. As the 101 and 102 Hall-Scott gas cars could only be operated from one end, the cars had to be turned upon reaching Bridge River to enable their return to Lillooet.

There was no space at the Bridge River station for either a turntable or a wye, so a 75-foot turntable was obtained and installed at Mile 103.70. (Ed note: Now Mile 140.9, this location was totally obliterated by the realignment of trackage in later years). This was rather an elaborate turntable, and was connected on the north end only. It was constructed over sloping ground and featured a walkway around the entire pit, with one side that was raised up because of the terrain. The turntable was an "armstrong-type", and it was necessary for the motorman and conductor to manually turn the car around. Being 75 feet in diameter, it was easily large enough to accommodate the Hall-Scott cars. Upon reaching Bridge River, the trailers loaded with automobiles or trucks were switched into a north facing spur equipped with an unloading ramp. The gas car would uncouple from the cars run down the mainline to Mile 103.70 where it was turned around. When this was completed, it was then run back to Bridge River. In the meantime, the cars had been unloaded and reloaded with vehicle traffic for Lillooet. The spur was located on a slight incline to the unloading ramp. When the gas car returned, the trailers were allowed to drift down the siding where they had been reloaded and onto the mainline. The gas car would then back up past the switch and recouple for the return to Lillooet.

Upon reaching Lillooet, the gas car proceeded past the station and then backed the flatcars into a siding adjacent to the station where the vehicle traffic was unloaded. Vehicles bound for Bridge River were loaded for the next run. As there was no turntable in Lillooet, the gas car was turned on the wye that was located alongside the former roundhouse. When this was completed, the car was serviced and layed over until required for the next run to Bridge River. As that time approached, the trailes were hauled out of the siding by the Lillooet switcher and recoupled to the gas car.

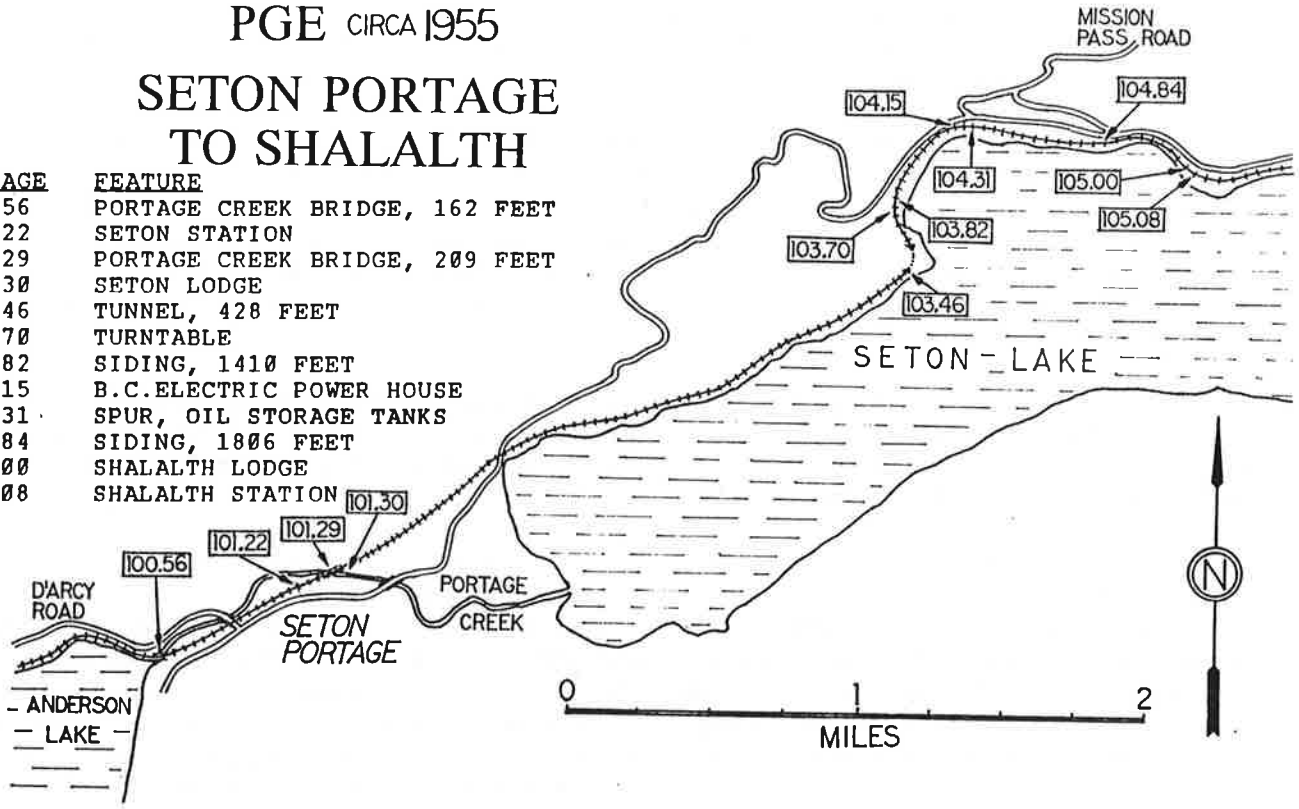
In the beginning, the service consisted of four round trips per day, with the gas car and its trailers remaining in Lillooet each night. By 1936, it was felt that four round trips a day were not required, and the service was cut to two round trips per day, with the train still remaining in Lillooet overnight. Gas cars 101 and 102 alternated on this service, one being kept in reserve in Lillooet most of the time. Gas cars No. 104 and No. 105, the two General Electric cars, were brought to Lillooet and tried on this service in the early years; however, they proved to be too costly to operate (when compared to the Hall-Scott cars). They were larger than the Hall-Scott cars, being 71'-4" in length overall. They did not present a problem at the Mile 103.70 turntable, as has often been suggested. The company simply found that the two Hall-Scott cars were far more economical to operate.

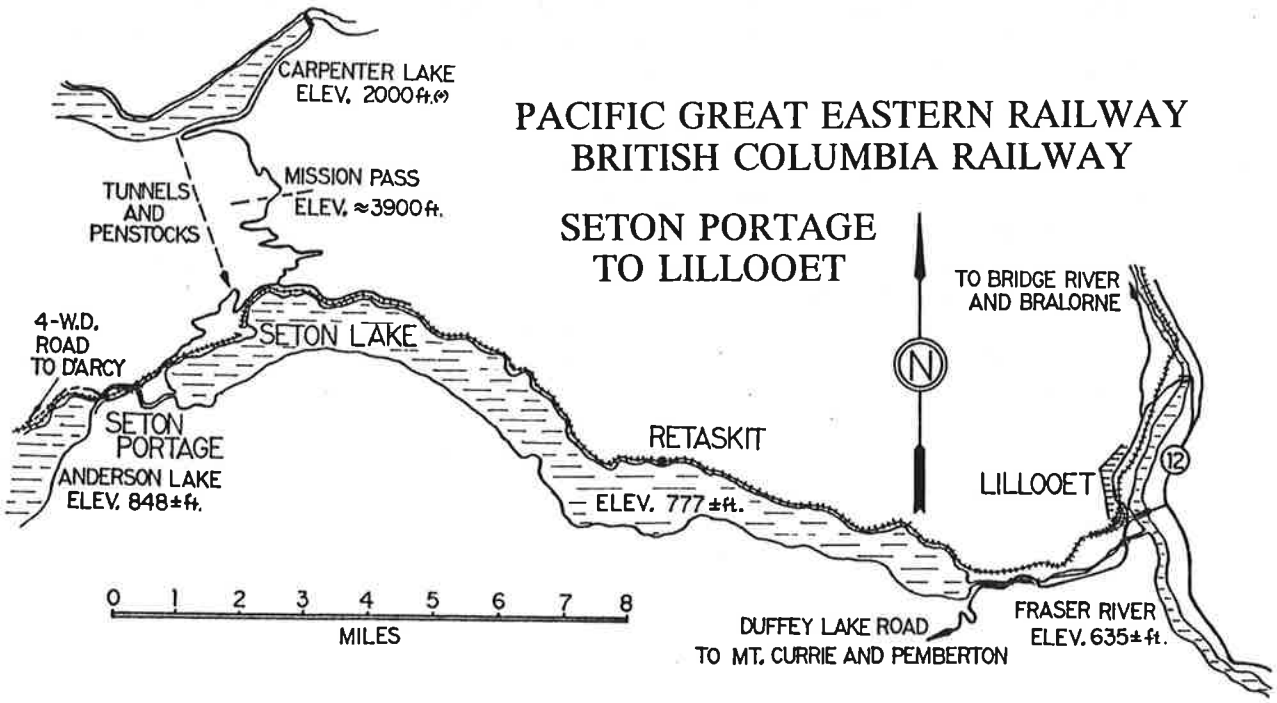
The fare for a one-way trip for a passenger from Lillooet to Bridge River was 65 cents, and the fare for a passenger and automobile was $ 4.00 one-way. In 1938, a better road was constructed down from the Bridge Lake/Bralorne area to Shalalth station, which was located at Mile 105.01 (now Mile 142.3), and the gas car service was cut back to operate between Lillooet and the station at Shalalth. A new automobile loading ramp was constructed at Shalalth, it was also on a

PGE CIRCA 1955

SETON PORTAGE TO SHALALTH

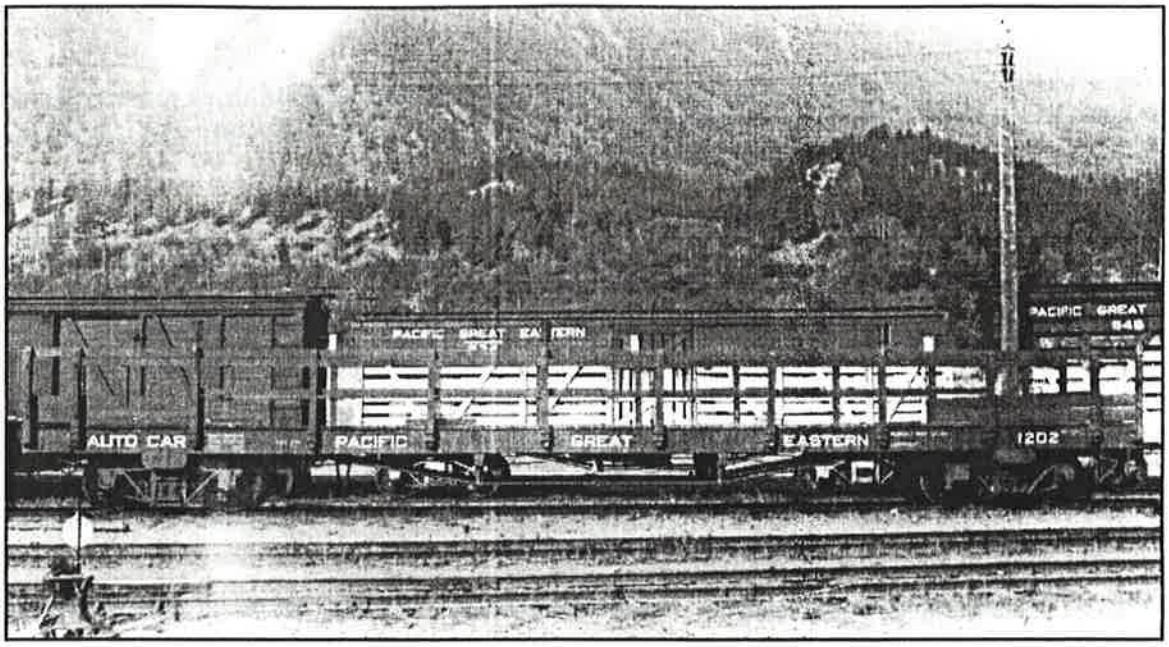
MILEAGE	FEATURE
100.56	PORTAGE CREEK BRIDGE, 162 FEET
101.22	SETON STATION
101.29	PORTAGE CREEK BRIDGE, 209 FEET
101.30	SETON LODGE
103.46	TUNNEL, 428 FEET
103.70	TURNTABLE
103.82	SIDING, 1410 FEET
104.15	B.C.ELECTRIC POWER HOUSE
104.31	SPUR, OIL STORAGE TANKS
104.84	SIDING, 1806 FEET
105.00	SHALALTH LODGE
105.08	SHALALTH STATION



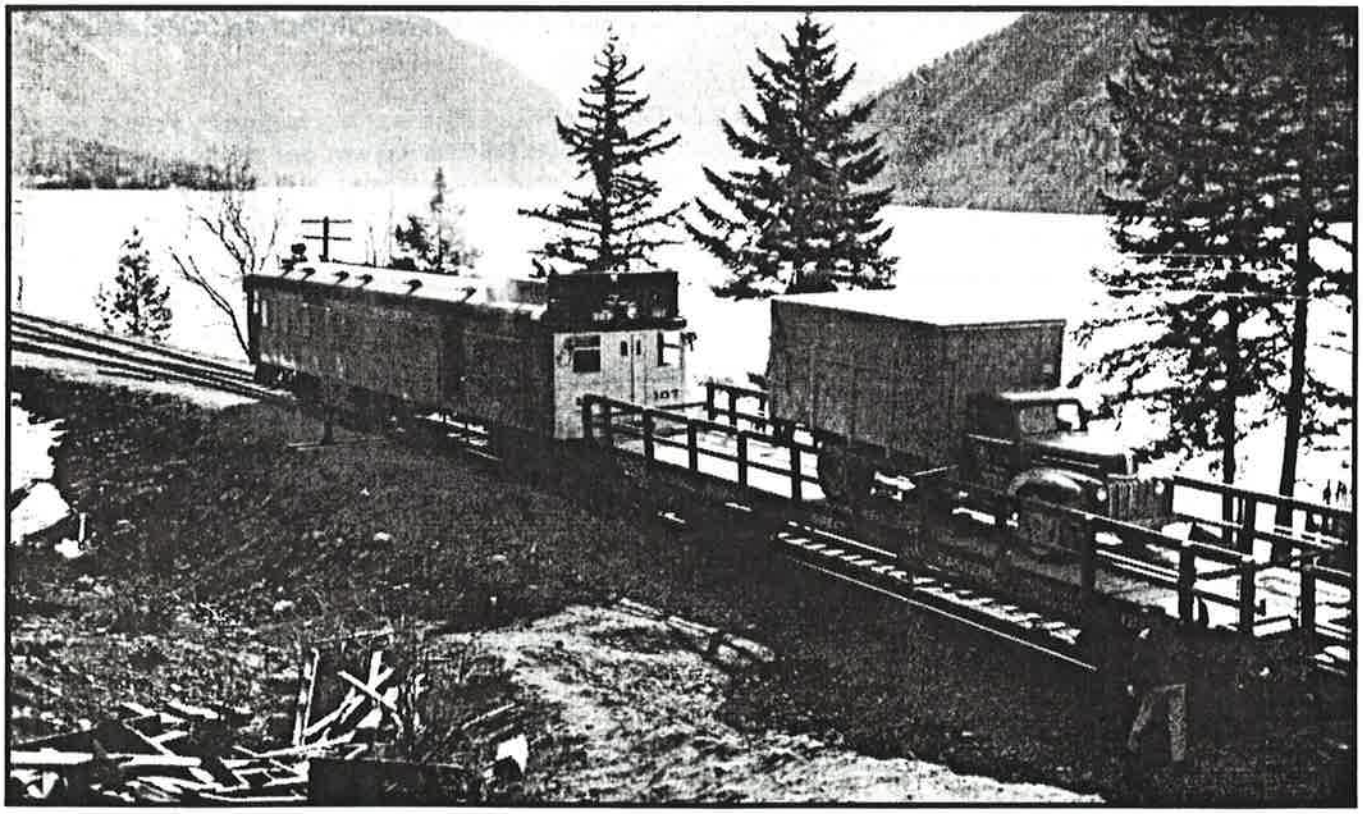


PACIFIC GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY
BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY

SETON PORTAGE TO LILLOOET



Auto trailer 1202 at Lillooet.
Wil Whittaker photo. Jim Moore Collection.



From the winter of 1949-50: No.107 prepares to depart Shalalth for Lillooet with loaded auto trailers in tow.
Collection of BC Rail. Courtesy of Timothy J. Horton.

slight incline with a switch facing north. This was to allow the cars to roll back onto the mainline to recouple to the gas car after it had been turned. The gas car was still taken to the turntable at Mile 103.70 where it was turned, and returned to Shalalth ready for the return to Lillooet with the reloaded trailers.

The late Leo Cahill, who worked as motorman on the Lillooet/Shalalth service in later years, mentioned that the incline at Shalalth was not very steep. There were many times when the one or two loaded trailer cars would not roll completely onto the mainline and clear the switch thereby enabling him to back up the gas car for coupling. He said that there were many times when he had to use the switching pole to nudge the car(s) far enough to clear the switch. The operation continued in much the same manner through the years, although not without it's humorous moments.

From its inception in 1934 until the late 1940s, gas cars 101 and 102 served faithfully in all weather to maintain the service. It was a friendly service, where everyone knew each other. Stops were made along the way, like a streetcar in the city, to pick up passengers, most of whom were native people who lived in various reservations that the line passed through. A major stop was also made at Craig's Lodge where a hotel was built. This was at the north end of Seton Lake, and remained a stop until it was eventually burnt down in later years

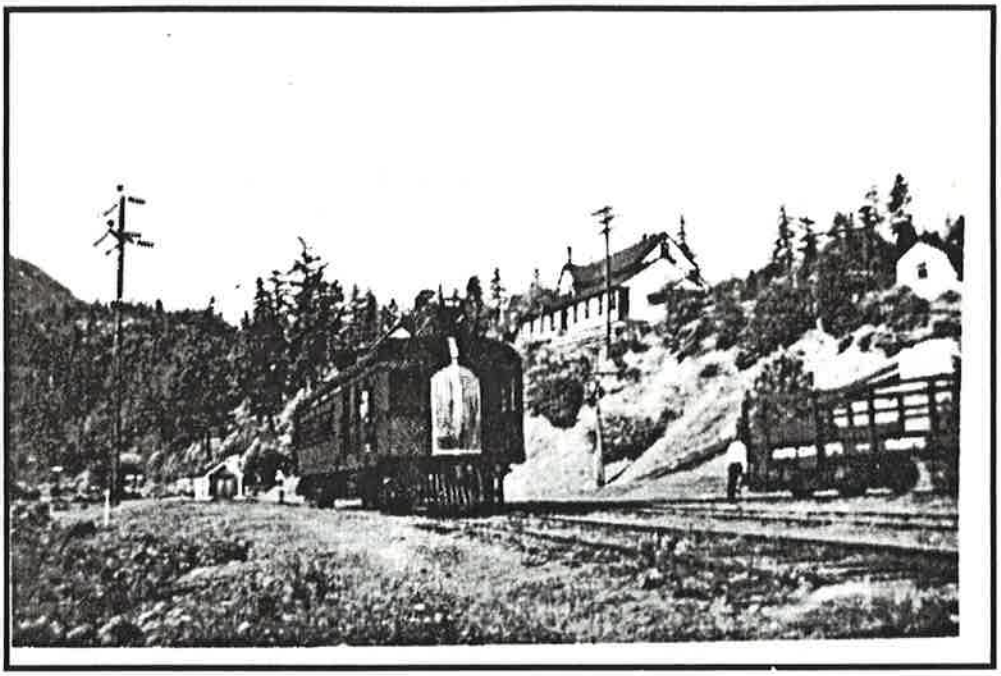
By 1948, the Hall-Scott cars were wearing out. Numerous breakdowns occurred, and the Pacific Great Eastern Railway had to consider other options to continue the service. The Canadian Pacific Railway operated a number of gas cars in the eastern part of Canada, and the Pacific Great Eastern Railway approached them to see if one could be purchased for use on the Lillooet to Shalalth service. Canadian Pacific gas car No. 9005 arrived on the property via barge at Squamish. It was run north to Lillooet to be tried in the Shalalth service. The car was to have become gas car 108, however it was not purchased. During trial use, it was found to be far too heavy on the front truck, and was not able to maintain the schedule. The crew also was afraid that if they increased the speed, it would derail, which it did on a couple of occasions while being tested. Therefore, it was with some relieved comments that it was sent back to the Canadian Pacific Railway, where it served the C.P.R. for many more years in the east. So it was back to the trusty Hall-Scott cars, old, but still usable with care.

In 1949, the Pacific Great Eastern Railway learned that the Canadian National Railway was to dispose of one or two of their gas cars. The Pacific Great Eastern Railway approached the Canadian National Railway, and obtained gas car No.15823. Built by the Ottawa Car Company in 1926, this car had been used mainly by the C.N.R. in eastern Canada. The car was numbered Pacific Great Eastern Railway No. 107 and was taken to Squamish where it was thoroughly overhauled. It was painted in the standard P.G.E. passenger colour maroon. The railway had recently applied its new herald to some of its passenger equipment, and No.107 emerged from the shops with the yellow Caribou herald on its side.

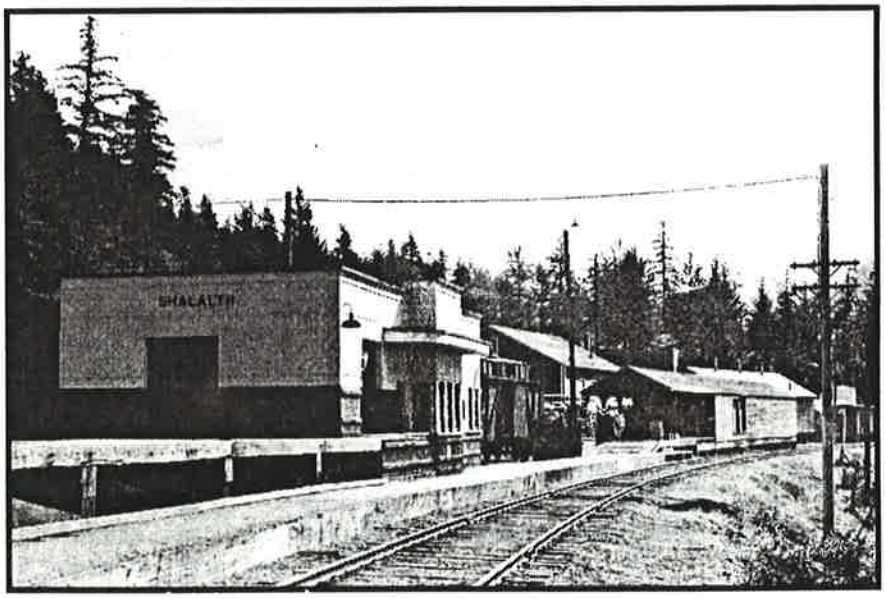
This unit had a distinct advantage over the Hall-Scott cars that it was to replace, as it could be operated from either end. This meant that the car would not have to be turned on the turntable at Mile 103.70. This enabled the railway to make a line adjustment, which it had been contemplating for some time. Trackage was routed through a tunnel, the northern portal of which emerged directly in line with the old turntable. Therefore, the acquisition of the Canadian National gas car was very timely for the P.G.E. as it meant that the car would simply have to change ends at Shalalth and return to Lillooet with its trailers.

In the late 1930's, the potential for Hydro Electric Power from the Bridge River was seen as a source of power for the City of Vancouver. Shalalth became the site of a large hydro electric project, and today is one of the main sources of hydro for Vancouver and the surrounding areas.

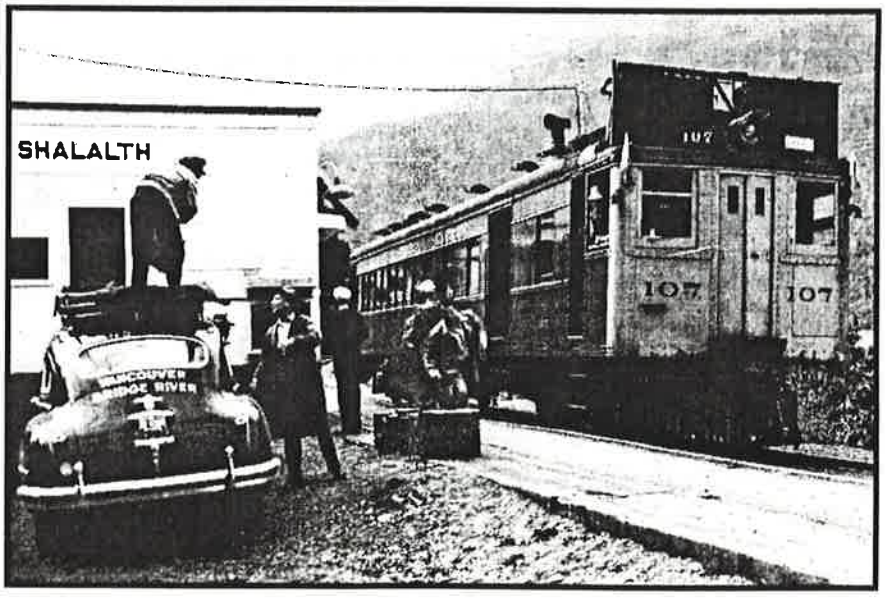
The service remained relatively unchanged through the early 1950's. Two round trips a day were made between Lillooet and Shalalth. Train No.10 left Lillooet at 0850 daily, except Sunday, and arrived at Shalalth at 0940. The return trip to Lillooet, as train No. 11, left Shalalth at 1005 and arrived at Lillooet at 1050. This schedule enabled passengers to arrive in Lillooet to keep appointments, do their shopping, or generally visit with friends and relatives. The southbound train, No. 14, departed at 1545, to arrive in Shalalth at 1630. After the trailer cars were unloaded and reloaded, No.107 ran around the train and departed for Lillooet at 1650. Train No. 15 arrived in Lillooet at 1740, where after pushing its



Gas car #102 at Shalalth.
Circa 1947.
Note the front grill work.
Bert R. Jordan photo.
Patrick O. Hind Collection.



Trackside at Shalalth.
Station and freight shed.
Warren E. Miller photo.
Courtesy of Paul Roy.



Gas car # 107 at Shalalth station. Note taxi used to transport workers to the nearby mines.
Courtesy of Paul Roy.

cars into the siding and loading ramp, it was taken to the roundhouse for servicing for the following day's schedule. When the service was first started to Bridge River in 1934 (and later changed to Shalalth in 1936), it had operated on a daily schedule. In the early 1940's the need for Sunday service diminished, and the service was cut back to six days a week. The departure and arrival times at Lillooet and Shalalth changed somewhat over the years, but in general the service remained unchanged for nearly 25 years.

On April 27th, 1958, in Timetable No.77, a significant change took place in the service. It was announced that the car would operate a daily service to Seton Portage at Mile 101.2 (now Mile 138.5), due to the fact that many summer and permanent homes had been established at Seton, and the railway wished to give those who lived there the opportunity to travel to Lillooet.

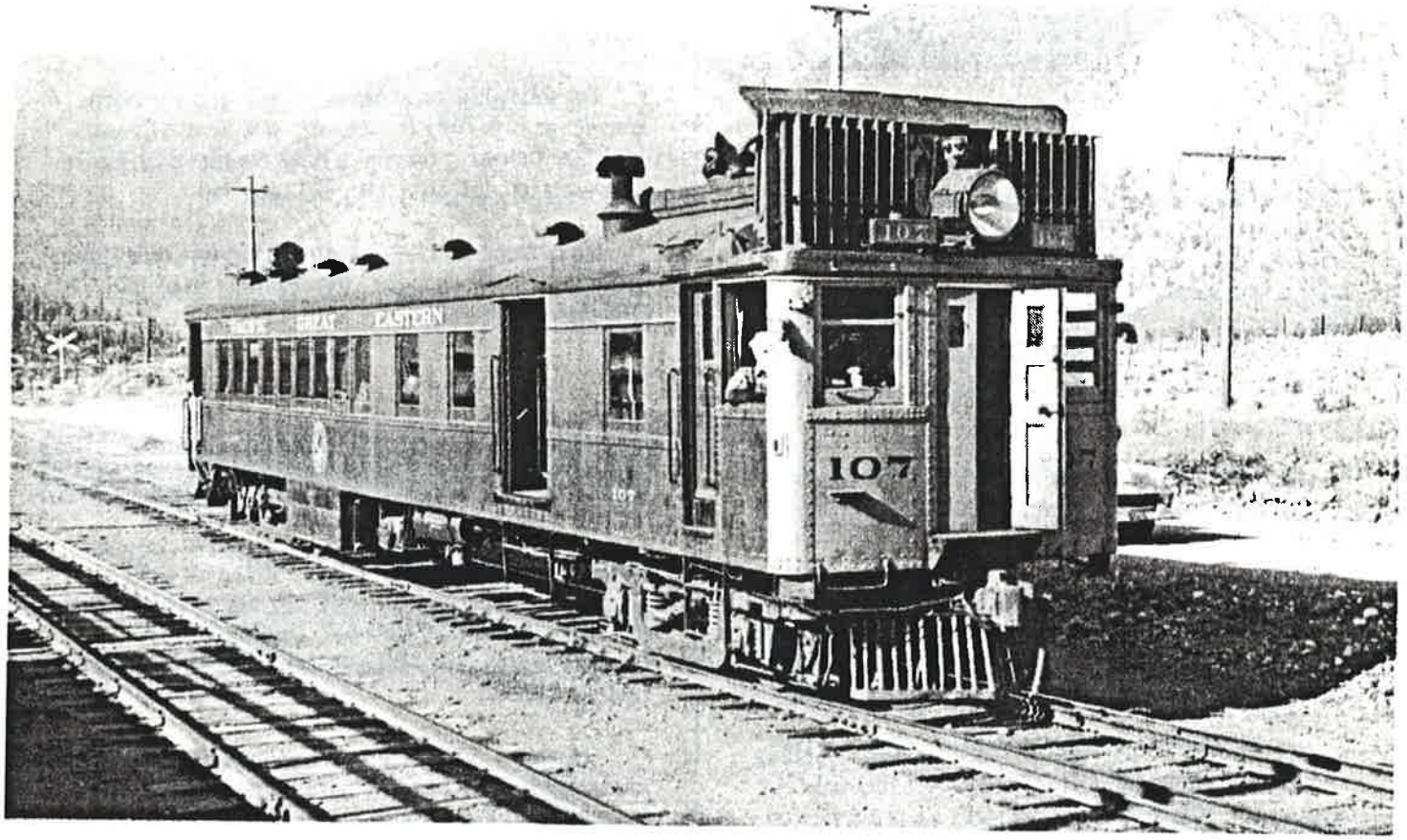
In 1956, due to the resulting increase in passenger traffic, seven Rail Diesel Cars were purchased from the Budd Company of Philadelphia . These were of a new design of self-propelled car that was quickly taking over short haul passenger traffic throughout North America. In spite of this, the indomitable No.107 kept operating between Lillooet and Seton Portage twice a day hauling its one or two trailers loaded with automobiles and trucks. The trailers were often quite crowded, as more and more automobiles were being purchased by residents that lived in Seton, Shalalth and the surrounding area. The train left Lillooet as train No.14 daily at 0840 and arrived at Seton Portage at 0955. The trailers were unloaded and then reloaded for Lillooet. No.107 ran around its train and departed Seton Portage for Lillooet at 1000 as train No. 13, arriving at Lillooet at 1100. A second run was made as train No.16, which left Lillooet at 1510 and arrived at Seton Portage at 1625. Again the procedure was followed, that of unloading the trailers and reloading them for Lillooet. Train No.15 departed Seton Portage at 1630 and arrived at Lillooet at 1745, to complete its daily operation. With a slight schedule revision in 1959, the service remained unchanged until 1961. In the late 1950's, a road was eventually constructed to Bridge River from Lillooet. This meant that it was no longer necessary for traffic to travel from Lillooet to Shalalth by the old mountain road to the Bridge River area. This new roadway signaled the end of gas car service on the railway.

The efficiency of the new Rail Diesel Car service from Vancouver was excellent. With a daily service passing through Seton Portage and Shalalth, plus the road that had been built from Lillooet to Bridge River, the need for the gas car service had diminished. Service was finally discontinued on June 4th, 1961 with "gas car" No. 107 arriving in Lillooet at 1720. This officially marked the end of a service that had been in continuous operation for 27 years along the lake: first to Bridge River, then Shalalth, and finally Seton Portage.

There were many points in between that had felt the impact of the daily service the gas car maintained. Places with strange sounding names such as Retaskit at Mile 111.5 (now Mile 149.2), or Craig Lodge at Mile 117.4 (now Mile 154.7), no longer in existence as the lodge was destroyed by fire. There were other places along the line, local native names, and places like Joe's Cabin or MacNeill's place and many others where the car could be waved to a stop by someone wishing to ride into, or out of, Lillooet.

The two Hall-Scott cars saw additional service after they were withdrawn from the Lillooet-Shalalth service in late 1949. Both were taken to Squamish and stored. In 1951, it was decided to convert both of them to combine cars. Number 101 (2nd) was rebuilt, the engine was taken out, and the space converted to baggage space and storage. The car emerged from the shops in March 1951 as combine No. 1800. Given a caboose-type cupola so that it could operate in wayfreight service, No. 1800 could be seen over the entire system from North Vancouver to Prince George. Number 102, which received the same conversion, was placed in service in April 1951 as combine No. 1801. It too saw service throughout the system, and was also noted as far north as Prince George. Both were eventually taken out of service in the early 1960's and scrapped at Squamish. With the demise of the gas cars, so ended an era that had spanned 47 years of service to the Pacific Great Eastern Railway.

Patrick O. Hind, a resident of Vancouver Island, is a transportation historian and author. Patrick is currently writing a comprehensive history of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway's gas car service. The author wishes to thank Eric L. Johnson, Jim Moore, and Ron Tuff for their assistance in the preparation of this feature.



PGE #107 at Lillooet, June 1956.
W.C. Whittaker.
Patrick O. Hind Collection.

PHOTOFILE

BC Rail's first Dash 9-44CW.
BC Rail photo.
Andy Barber Collection.

MOTIVE POWER NOTES

Edited by Paul J. Crozier Smith

• BC Rail's four new Dash 9-44CW locomotives (#4641-4644) arrived in early April, and were quickly assigned to mainline duties. A special inaugural run for corporate dignitaries was made on April 11, as #4641 headed up a consist of business cars on a dinner trip. Departure was at 1700 from North Vancouver with consist #4641/4607, power car *Cheakamus River*, business cars *Caribou*, *Discovery*, and *Northern Summit*, and caboose #1871.

The train traveled up the line to Brunswick siding where it parked for a couple of hours while the guests enjoyed a sunset dinner. (WCRA *News*)

• On May 1, the pusher set (#766, 737, 750, and 746) derailed at Mile 92.9, south of Pemberton. Units 737 and 750 were damaged. Loco #4643 (Dash 9-44CW) replaced the two out-of-service diesels. (Paul J. Crozier Smith)

• The new Dash 9s are on line, but operating as trailing or mid train units until the railway resolves the issue of crew access. The units presently lack an exit door on the brakeman's side. The units will enter the Squamish shops for modification during July. (Andy Barber)

• Six more CAT conversions are still to be completed. Latest ones from the Squamish shop are #604 and 626. Units 606 and 614 were in the rebuild shop in early July. (Jim Moore and Trevor Mills)

• BC Rail #4643 is builders number 48471, built March 1995. (PJCS)

• Dash 8 was seen in the Squamish shop in early July. The right side of the cab was being repaired as a result of damage sustained during a recent derailment.

• Units 640, 684, 686, and 688 remain stored at Squamish. It is expected that the insurance claim surrounding these locomotives will soon be resolved.

• Also noted stored out of service at Squamish were Budd cars 6128, BC-22, BC-12, and RS-3 #576.

• Former Santa Fe B36-7 diesel #7485 remains in use as of early July. The unit has been noted in service throughout virtually the entire system.

• The following locomotives are still in the two-tone green/dogwood scheme: 621, 622, 628, 630, 632, and 645. The following remain in the red/white/blue--hockey stick scheme: 631, RCL 683, 761, and 766.

• Seven Budd cars will be utilized to provide BC Rail's passenger service this year: four RDC-1s and 3 RDC-3s. (*The Sandhouse*) ❐

NEW PRODUCTS

• Dave Harvey reports the recent release of Atlas' N scale version of a BC Rail flatcar. Based on publicity photos, the car carries "BC Rail" markings, while the 40-foot trailer has British Columbia Railway titles and dogwood herald. How about someone preparing a more in-depth review?

• Volunteers sought to prepare product reviews of the following commercially available items: Micro-Trains' (N scale) centerbeam bulkhead flatcar, Out West lumber loads (HO scale), and Promotex/Herpa's 40' reefer van with Freightliner COE (HO scale, as decorated for BC Rail).

Reviews to be published in upcoming issues of *The Cariboo*. Contact Jim Moore if you can help. ❐

Decals Available!

Andy Barber has two HO scale decal sets available exclusively to BCRH&TS members. Set One is for Mountain Pine's 50-foot boxcars and features four-colour artwork. This set, which contains material for one car, is priced at $5 CDN or $3 USD.

Set Two is for the NOKL boxcars. Lettering is white, and each set will do two cars. Price is $3 CDN or $2 USD. Both sets were produced by Herald King, so the quality is top notch.

Contact Andy at 3718 Marine Vista, Cobble Hill, B.C. V0R 1L1.

BC Rail's 4427 cu ft Covered Hopper

Dan Rowsell

In early 1986, BC Rail acquired twenty-one used Pullman Standard design 4427 cubic foot centre discharge covered hoppers. According to the April 1986 edition of the *Official Railway Equipment Register*, the first car to arrive was numbered BCOL 2300, with a 100-ton capacity. This initial car was twelve inches shorter in overall length than the following twenty cars (54'-3" long and 201,000 pounds capacity). Built in May 1972, the fourteen year old cars were painted dark green with white reporting marks. The scheme was very spartan as very few received a herald. BCOL 2300 was recently photographed in North Vancouver yard with a dogwood flower herald, even though this group of cars were acquired after this style marking was no longer being applied.

Series 2300 cars are assigned to domestic grain service (wheat, oats, barley, rye, flaxseed or canola) primarily originating from the Peace River District and are restricted to these commodities until after they have been authorized and thoroughly cleaned. This small fleet is often unable to transport all of the on-line customers' products, so they are often supplemented by cylindrical hoppers from the Canadian Wheat Board, Alberta Wheat Board, or either of the two national railways.

As modellers of BC Rail have come to realize, nothing comes easy when attempting to accurately model the railway's rolling stock. There are few cars which can be built straight from the box, with the majority requiring either kit bashing or scratch building skills. So I was anxiously awaiting the arrival of Walthers new hopper kit. I figured that since it was advertised as a model of a Pullman Standard 4427 cu. ft. capacity covered hopper --and as the railway had this size hopper-- a model would finally be available that would require little modification. Well, all things being equal, the Walthers kit is a representation of the first phase of the 4427 cu. ft. hopper. BC Rail's 2301-2320 series (see photo one) is a later phase with shorter car sides and two extra ribs. To make an accurate representation of the car, I was again faced with a large kit bashing job.

The Walthers kit (932-5700: PS-2CD 4427, undecorated) provides the body and frame for the car. Intermountain parts were used to model the ends. All measurements are in scale feet, and all strip styrene dimensions are in thousands of an inch. Here's what I did:

1. To shorten the car sides, measure 9 ft 6 in down from the top of the car. Carefully cut along this line. This allows for some extra material for filing/sanding to size. The finished side measures 9 ft 4 in high. Test fit the frame to the finished shell. The flat sections between hoppers should be flush with the bottom of the car sides.

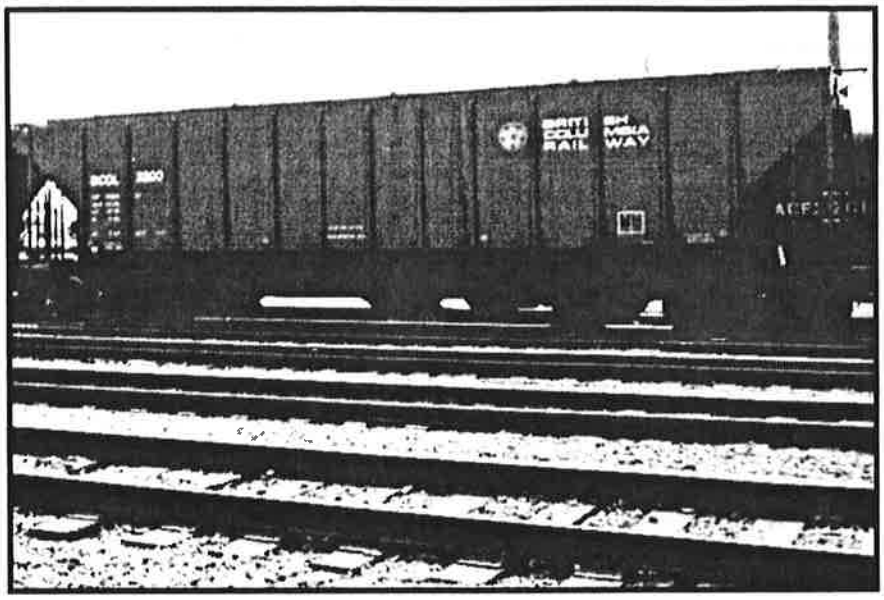
2. Fabricate four extra side ribs starting with Evergreen .010 x .060 strip styrene for the backing. Cement these strips in the centre of the blank areas on the side. Use the existing car ribs as a guide for size and placement. As the above strip styrene was too thick, an Xacto #11 blade was used to plane the backing to the desired thickness. Ribs built from Evergreen .030 x .040 strip styrene are centred. They are then cemented on the backing strips and shaped (by filing) to match existing ribs.

3. File notches in each end corner to accept the Intermountain ends. (Intermountain detail sprue #1, detail sprue #2, and ladder sprue from the 4750 cu. ft. covered hopper kit. These sprues are available separately from Intermountain.) Carefully remove the molded on ladder supports. Leave the weld line that runs continuously along the car side top. Trim off the cast on brake wheel housing, roof walk supports, and angle iron from the ends.

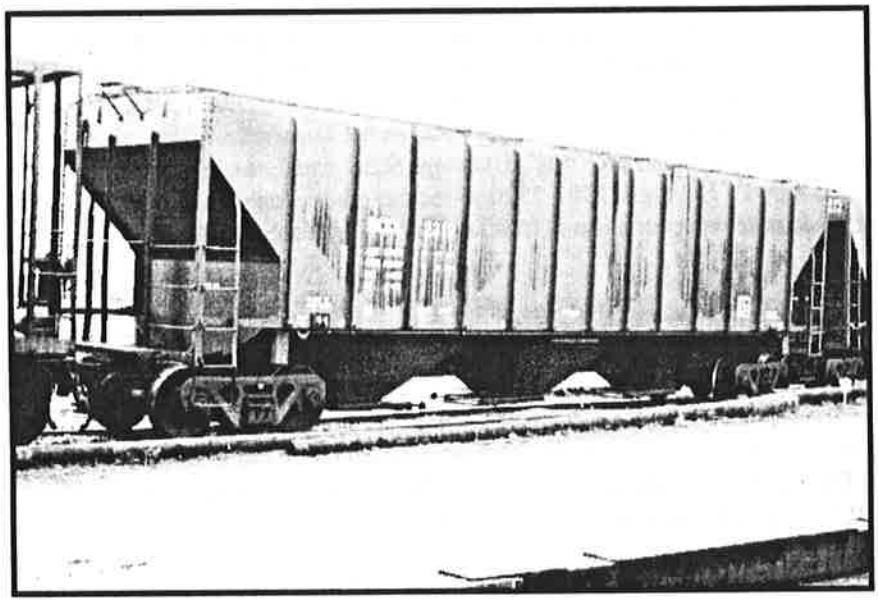
4. Remove the molded on shaker plates from the hopper bay sides. Sand smooth.

5. On the frame, at each end where it steps down, remove a 2 ft 6 in section from each side. Cut from the bolster out to where it meets the angled frame support. (see photo two)

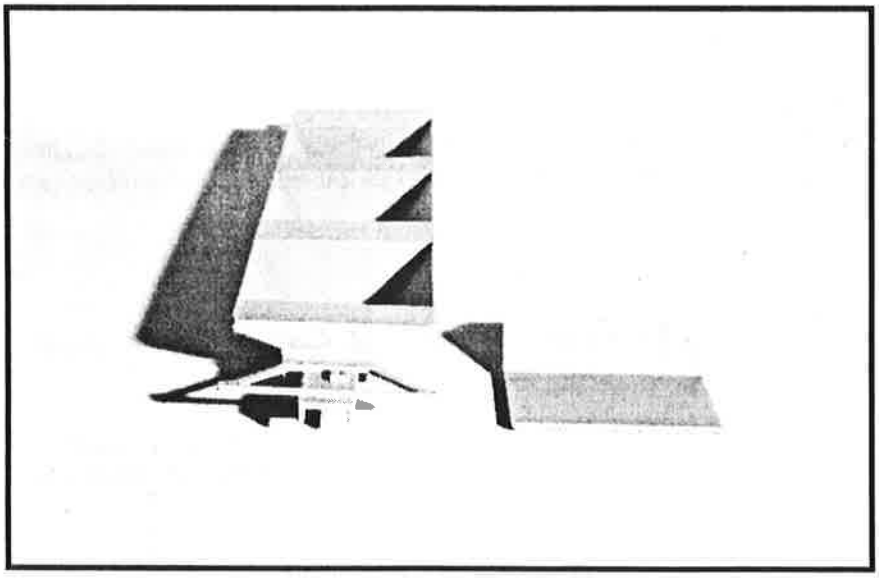
6. Test fit the hopper ends to the body shell. Make a mark on the ends where the bottom of the sides terminate. Measure along the bottom of the hopper ends 2 ft 6 in from each side. Mark and scribe. Cut the corners off between the two marks at each end. (see photo two)



BCOL 2300. Note different placement of lettering on left side, 20" dogwood herald. This car has shaker plates on hopper bays, but lacks jacking posts on corners. North Van, April 1995. Laszlo Dora photo.



BCOL 2319. North Vancouver. January 1994. Dan Rowsell photo. (photo one)



In progress shot showing hopper sub-assembly. Garry Dodds photo. (photo two)

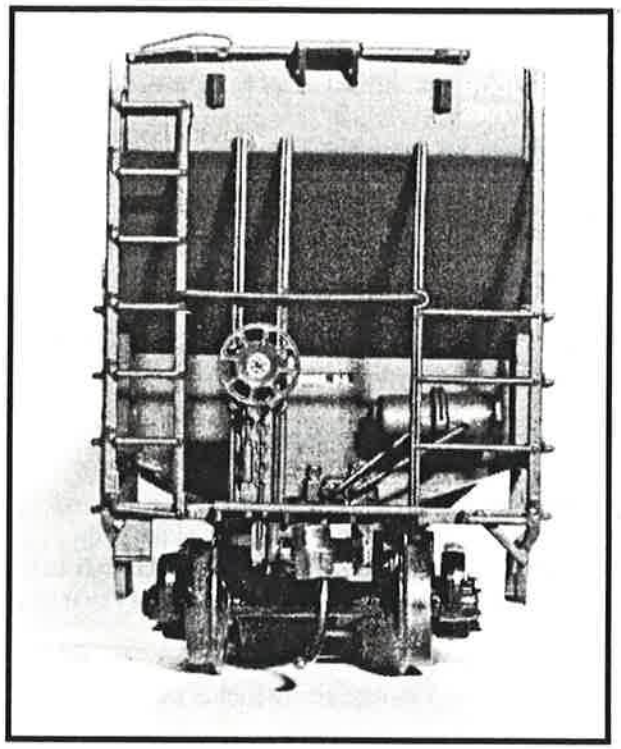
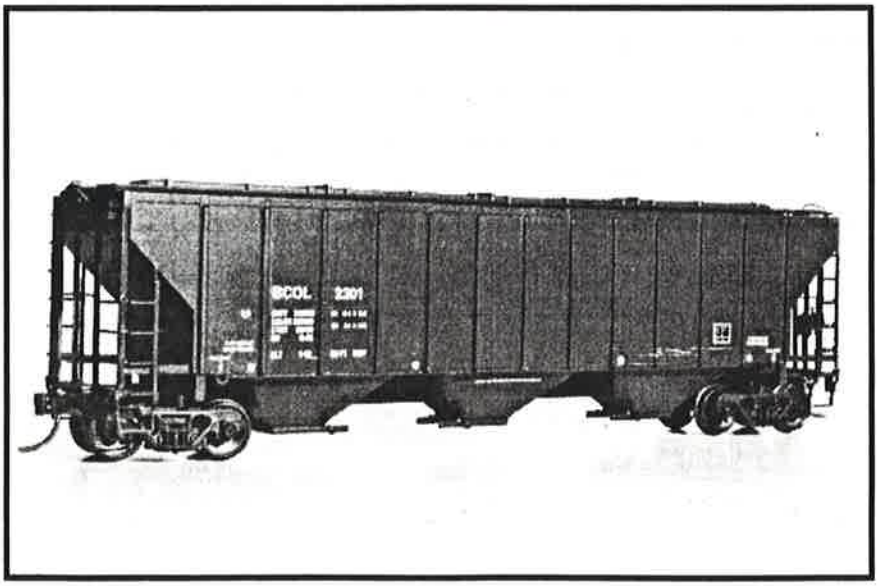


Photo of completed model. Note installation of brake equipment. Garry Dodds photo. (photo three)



Author's finished model. Garry Dodds photo. (photo four)

7. Glue the hopper ends into the body shell.

8. Test fit the body assembly into the frame. Mark the angle on the bolster section of the frame at the bottom of the ends. Trim this material away until the angle at the bolster is the same as the angle of the hopper ends. (see photo two)

9. At the brake end of the frame, remove the rectangular frame that is for the brake lever. This piece will not be not used on this car. Drill #61 holes one foot higher than the original holes for the air reservoir. Fill all other holes with body filler.

10. Install the hatches, roofwalk and hopper bay hatches following the Walthers' kit instructions.

11. Secure the car weight to the frame. Glue the body shell to the frame.

12. Cap the bottom of the hopper ends with Evergreen .010 x .156 strip styrene.

13. Install the brake equipment before assembling the ends. I used the air reservoir from the Walthers kit, and control valve assembly from the Intermountain kit. Use wire to simulate the piping. (see photo three)

14. The main air line was bent from Evergreen .035 styrene rod using prototype photos as a reference.

15. Install the Intermountain ends to the model. I removed the flange along the bottom of the end ladder assembly and glued a piece of Evergreen .030 x .040 styrene strip in its place. This made the ends square when secured to the body assembly. The centre support on the end stirrups was removed to more accurately represent the BC Rail car. The ends will be a little short, and will not extend all the way to the top of the car. Fill in the remaining space with Evergreen strip styrene or Plastruct (A-1 3/64") 90 degree angle shapes.

16. The jack supports at each corner are fabricated using Evergreen .060 x .080 strip styrene cut 16 inches long.

17. The towing eyes, which are located next to the jack supports, were made by cutting the ears off of a Kadee #5 coupler box. Trim to size, and glue under the hopper side bottom.

18. The small triangular shapes on the car ends, near the roofwalk, were fabricated from Evergreen .040 x .040 strip styrene. Plane down to a triangular shape. Cut 7 inches long and glue in place.

19. Roofwalk supports were made from Evergreen .015 x .020 strip styrene.

Note: A scale drawing and an article on this style of car are printed in the March 1995 issue of *Mainline Modeler*. The finished car sides are approximately 4 inches too low. However, due to the limitations imposed in this kit bash, I felt I could live with this minor difference. This same style of car is used for potash service. See Issue 21 (July 1995) of *The Cariboo* for a photo of PTEX 4123.

20. Paint the car dark green. This car was painted by Stewart Clark using Accuflex paint. A mixture of 10 parts BN green, 5 parts engine black, and one part Pullman green was used. We found a syringe to be the most accurate measuring device.

21. The car was lettered using Andy W. decal set AWS-1001. Finally, Kadee #5 couplers and Kadee 36-inch smooth back wheel sets were installed. Your car is now ready for domestic grain service. (see photo four)

Dan Rowsell, an avid modeler in both HO and N scales, resides in Victoria, B.C. Dan is presently completing an article which will describe his experience with modeling BCR's slug units.

BC Rail in the '90s---the Switchers

Eric L. Johnson

What BC Rail calls a "switcher" is generally referred to by many as a "turn." BC Rail switchers can rival the through freights in power and tonnage, ranging from 100-car trains head-ended by more than 10,000 hp, to a single RS-18 and coach on a 36-mile round trip. There are eight switchers operating on the BC Rail system circa 1994.

CHETWYND-SEPTIMUS SWITCHER Fort St. John Subdivision engines: three or more of all types, except Dash 8s.

No through freights run on the Fort St. John Subdivision. Transfer between through freights (the NJ/JN and the CP/PC) is done by the yard job from Fort St. John which meets the "Septimus Switcher" at Septimus siding (mile 705) daily --except Monday-- to exchange trains. Designated a Work Extra, the Septimus Switcher departs Chetwynd (mile 659) at 0800 hours and returns home by 1200 hours --- round trip, 92.6 miles. Normally three engines handle the transfers, but as many as eleven engines (includes northbound serviced units in exchange for those southbound in need of service) have been seen in the power consist. Septimus is no more than a siding "in the bush", accessible only by rather rough, dirt roads.

CHETWYND-DAWSON CREEK SWITCHER Dawson Creek Subdivision engines: four to six M420s, M420Bs, and RS-18s.

Three return runs per week are made by the "Dawson Creek Switcher" - Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. It operates as an Extra, North and South (although the line is east/west). Leaving Chetwynd at 0700 hours, the switcher arrives at Dawson Creek, 60.9 miles distant, by 1000 hours. Switching chores here, which include interchange with the Canadian National Railway, can take up to three hours. There is no yard engine stationed here. The Dawson Creek switcher then heads back to Chetwynd, usually home before 1400 hours. Both Chetwynd and Dawson Creek are substantial towns, connected by Highway 97 which parallels the rail line (although not as closely as rail fans would like). There is no on-line business for the switcher on the Dawson Creek Sub.

PRINCE GEORGE-MACKENZIE SWITCHER Chetwynd and Mackenzie Subs engines: three to four SD40-2s, M420s, and M420Bs.

The "Mac Switcher" leaves Prince George at 1200 hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for Mackenzie, traveling 104.9 miles on the Chetwynd Sub to Kennedy (mile 567.3). There it switches onto the Mackenzie Sub, reaching the giant forest products complex (Fletcher Challenge/Mackenzie Pulp mill, Finlay Forest Industries' mill) at Mackenzie in another 23.5 miles. Since there is no yard engine here, the Mac Switcher sets out empties and makes up a southbound train. The crew beds down overnight in BC Rail quarters in Mackenzie, to depart for Prince George early next morning, arriving there (Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays) about 0900 hours. The Mac Switcher operates as an Extra, North and South. There is no on-line business. The Kennedy wye (junction) is readily accessible, and an excellent paved road follows the Mackenzie Sub rail line to Mackenzie, a one-company town -- population 6000.

FORT ST JAMES-LOVELL SWITCHER Takla Subdivision engines: four M420s, M420Bs, RS-18s.
The "Lovell Switcher", also referred to as the "Logger", is actually two trains, a northbound and a southbound. Each operates daily, most often meeting at Tachie siding, both are designated Extras. The northbound leaves Fort St James about 1100 hours (about an hour after the arrival of the James Switcher) arriving in Lovell by 1900 hours.

The run is only 124.3 miles, but poor track keeps train speeds at 20 mph or less. At Lovell, the Lovell Switcher leaves its string of empty lqg flats for loading by the logging companies operating here, and makes up next morning's train. After spending the night at BC Rail quarters here, the crew takes the southbound out of Lovell at 0500 hours, to arrive back at Fort St. James by 1300 hours. BC Rail also maintains quarters for the three full train crews at Fort St. James. A community of over 2000 people, Fort St. James is accessible by a first class road, and has all the amenities. By contrast, Lovell is a company camp with no public facilities, and is accessible only by a circuitous and rough gravel road.

PRINCE GEORGE-FORT ST. JAMES SWITCHER Chetwynd & Stuart Subs engines: three to six of all types, sometimes with engines in remote.

The "James Switcher" makes six return trips per week (daily except Saturdays) operating as an Extra, North and South. Departing Prince George at 0700 hours, the James Switcher takes the Chetwynd Sub to Odell (33 miles), and switches onto the Stuart Sub, arriving at Fort St. James (an additional 72.7 miles) at 1000 hours. Power from the James switcher, or from the Logger, will be used to marshall a southbound, which will be on its way by 1100 hours, arriving at Prince George by 1600 hours. The business is purely forest product: logs from Lovell and chips and lumber from Fort St. James mills (Apollo, Canfor, Stuart Lake). There is no on-line business. The Odell wye and junction (mile 495.4) is not easily accessible, nor is much of the Stuart Sub. Only a few forestry/logging roads intersect the line.

LILLOOET-KOSTER SWITCHER Lillooet Subdivision engine: a single RS-18.

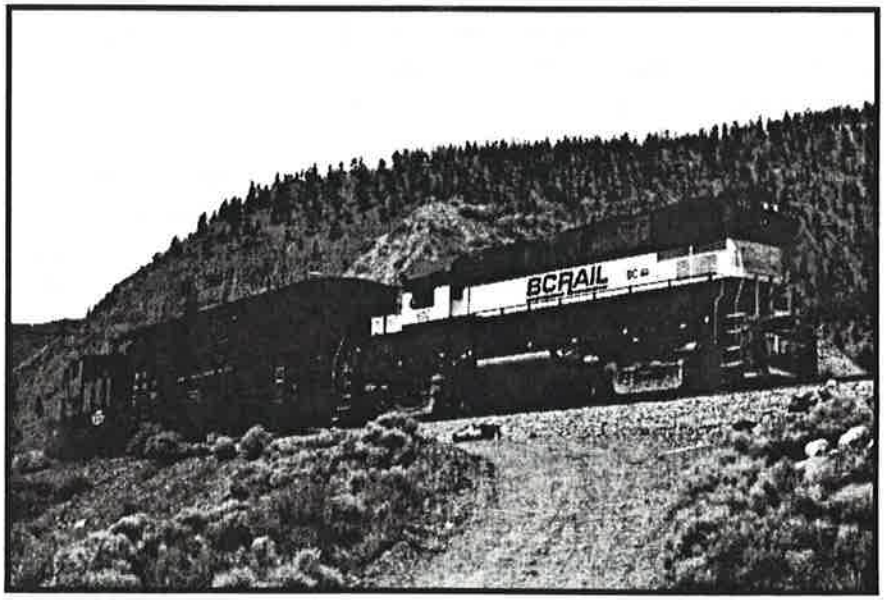
The territory of the "Koster Switcher" extends from Lillooet (mile 157.6) to Exeter (mile 259.6), though it very seldom goes beyond Koster (mile 220, 62.4 miles from Lillooet). The Koster switcher is on duty at Lillooet at 0800 hours, although it may not leave for Pavilion (mile 177.9) until about noon. It operates alternately as an Extra and Work Extra, daily or as required. At Pavilion, it may drop off supplies for a B&B camp (part of its regular MofW duties), and pick up lime hoppers (filled by Continental Lime) which it will set out at Lime (mile 197.6). The lime hoppers are usually bound for Prince George, and since Pavilion is on a steep 2.2% grade, the through freights will not stop here to make pick-ups. After setting out the loaded hoppers at Lime, and switching hoppers here for Lafarge Cement (for pick up by a through freight), the Koster switcher continues on to extra trackage at the Ainsworth sawmill near Chasm (mile 213.2). The sawmill is switched and a string of loaded cars is set out on a back track at Koster siding for pick-up by a through freight. Through freights drop-off empties here for the Ainsworth mill, as well leaving empty lime hoppers at Lime for both Lafarge Cement and Continental Lime.

LILLOOET-DARCY SWITCHER Squamish Subdivision engine: a single RS-18

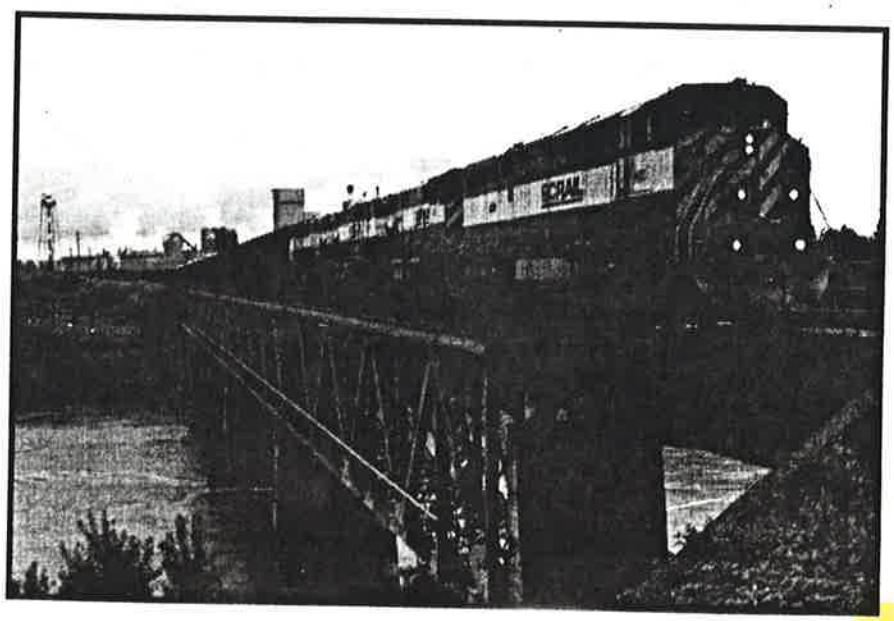
The operating range of the "Darcy Switcher" (whose power is the same engine used by the Koster switcher) is from Lillooet to Darcy (mile 122.9), although it very rarely runs south beyond Seton (mile 139.5). In fact its "switcher" duty is generally restricted to the Seton school train (the "Budd Wiser") which operates weekdays only from September to June. On duty at midnight, the switcher is first a yard engine, switching the yard and the nearby Ainsworth mill complex). Later, departing Lillooet at 0600 hours as a Work Extra, with a coach in tow, the Darcy switcher makes the 18.1 miles to Seton before 0700 hours. After picking up students here, the switcher heads north, stopping at South Shalalth (mile 141.4) and Shalalth (mile 142.4) for more students, and arrives at Lillooet before 0800 hours -- its duty complete for the day. The students, out of school by 1500 hours, catch the southbound Budd cars (Passenger Train No. 2), and are home before 1600 hours. In the rare case of a much-delayed passenger train, the Darcy Switcher will run the Budd Wiser back south. In the early summer of 1994, the school train was temporarily canceled because of the CWR program. Students then rode a school bus over the "dreaded" Mission Pass/Bridge River road to Lillooet, taking almost two hours. The Darcy switcher will make rare trips as far south as Darcy, but jobs along Seton and Anderson Lakes are usually taken care of by the wayfreight.

SQUAMISH--NORTH VANCOUVER SWITCHER Squamish Subdivision engines: from one RS-18 to full through freight power and additional engines.

The duties of the "Squamish Switcher" are the most variable of all switchers on BC Rail's system. It hauls chips and veneer, brought to Squamish from Lillooet by the wayfreight, to North Vancouver. It may pick up cars of gravel loaded at Porteau (mile 26.0) for use at North Vancouver. It moves carloads of chips left by the through freights in Squamish to North Vancouver (temporary storage at Squamish - Fibreco in North Vancouver works only Monday to Friday, and there is limited storage in the North Vancouver yard). It moves cars of pulp from CN's Lynn Creek yard to the Squamish Terminals, and returns the empties. It transfers engines and cars between North Vancouver and the Squamish back shop. And the Squamish Switcher brings home southbound trains whose crews have run out of time! The Squamish Switcher leaves Squamish anywhere between 2000 and 2300 hours for North Vancouver, and is generally back in Squamish within six hours. Power on the switcher can be a single RS-18, but more often a pair of SD40-2s. When leading in a "stranded" southbound through freight, a half-dozen engines might be used.



Near Fountain: June 2, 1994, 1:00 pm. Koster Switcher, long hood forward, bound for Pavillion, Lime, and Koster. 2000 hp, one boxcar. Eric Johnson photo.



Prince George: June 7, 1994, 4:00 pm. Atop the Fraser River, the southbound James Switcher returns with 85 carloads, 14,000 hp. Eric Johnson photo.

BC Rail in the '90s - Yard Assignments

Eric L. Johnson

Engines used in yard service include both MLW- and Cat- engined RS-18s and the pair of C420s. The duties (assignments) have been variously described as "tricks", "jobs", "tramps", and so on. There are eleven stations on BC Rail's system where yard engines are permanently stationed (circa 1994).

FORT NELSON: A single RS-18 works entirely within the Fort Nelson yard, on night shift only. Included on site are a sulphur loading facility (Petrosul), a bulk fuel plant, a chopstick factory, and a sawmill.

FORT ST JOHN: Three RS-18s, often operating in multiple-unit configuration, are assigned to work the Fort St. John yard where in addition, assignments include switching industries here - grain elevators (Alberta Wheat Pool, United Grain Growers) and sawmills (Canadian Forest Products). The units also switch the Taylor area, 11.1 miles south, where there is an oil refinery (Petro Canada), a sawmill (Peace Wood Products), and grain elevators. Yard limits extend right to Septimus, 23.2 miles south. Here the yard engines, designated Work Extras, meet the Septimus switcher from Chetwynd to exchange trains six days per week. On alternate days, power from the JN/NJ is combined with the yard power for this job, and the Taylor area may be switched enroute.

CHETWYND: A number of engines are stationed at Chetwynd, including SD40-2s, M420s, and RS-18s. They are used on the Dawson Creek switcher and the Septimus switcher, and yard assignments which include switching industries within ten miles of Chetwynd. Power from the CP/PC, which lays over in Chetwynd for about eight hours during the mornings of Sundays to Fridays, will also be used in the Chetwynd yard to marshal southbound trains. Additionally, these engines may be used on the Septimus switcher.

FORT ST. JAMES: Based at Fort St. James is an RS-18/slug set, although in the past a single engine or a pair of engines have also been used. Working day shift only, Monday to Friday, three sawmills here are switched. About forty cars of logs arrive every day from Lovell, but these are usually marshalled with power from the Lovell switcher or the James switcher.

PRINCE GEORGE: Five RS-18/slug sets (may include one or both of the two remaining C420 locomotives) are always on hand, but only four crews work --three at the south (main) yard, and one at "the Bridge yard" at the CN junction. The latter must be designated a Work Extra when crossing to the north side of the Fraser River. The other three engine/slug sets never leave the south yard. Besides two pulp mills (Prince George Pulp & Paper, Intercontinental Pulp) on the north side
of the river, there are many other industries at Prince George. It is the busiest single point on the BC Rail system.

QUESNEL: Two RS-18s in multiple-unit configuration (no slugs) are based at Quesnel. An engine/slug combination was first tried here, and although theoretically practicable, this was found to be not satisfactory. The Quesnel area has steep grades, plus with longer trains, lots of air is needed. Additionally, it was found that a single engine had difficulty pumping up train air lines in winter.

The crews work seven days a week on day shift, switching pulp mills. Monday to Friday, the night shift works local industries. Quesnel has the third highest rate of intermodal traffic on the BC Rail line, and there are two pulp mills, five sawmills, and one plywood plant here --"the most concentrated wood-related industries area in North America." There are also two bulk fuel plants at Quesnel. The Quesnel yard is very long at 11,368 feet. The yard crew must

work beyond the yard every day, requiring designation as a Work Extra, both North and South of the Quesnel yard, to reach all the industries.

WILLIAMS LAKE: An RS-18/slug set operates at Williams Lake. Working two shifts, seven days a week, it switches the yard, two sawmills (Lignum, Jacobson Brothers) and local industry, all within yard limits. But the yard engine may also work as far as Comer, six miles north, and is then designated a Work Extra.

EXETER: A single RS-18 operates day shift only, Monday to Friday, switching two sawmills (Ainsworth Lumber, Weldwood) -- all within yard limits.

LILLOOET: Yard switching assignments here are light. A single RS-18 goes on duty at midnight, generally seven days a week. Later it becomes the Darcy switcher about 0600 hours (weekdays only, September to June). On the day shift, this same engine becomes the Koster switcher.

SQUAMISH: A single RS-18 is assigned to Squamish for switching the yard and Squamish Terminals. It never strays beyond yard limits, operating on both day shift and night shift.

NORTH VANCOUVER: Three RS-18/slug sets are assigned to the North Vancouver yard, although only two work at any one time. Neither move outside the yard limits. One of the railway's two remaining C420s may also be found at North Vancouver.

Quesnel: June 3, 1994, 8:45 am. Yard engines 621 and 624 (MLW/CAT) set off to switch pulp mills at north end of yard. Eric Johnson photo.

We've Moved!

Effective immediately, our new address is BCRH&TS, 25852 McBean Parkway, Suite 187, Valencia, California 91355, USA.

Our Canadian members may continue to renew their subscriptions (in CDN funds only) through Andy Barber at 3718 Marine Vista, Cobble Hill, B.C. V0R 1L1.

PRODUCT REVIEWS

Conducted by Mark Giles

Walthers 50' FGE Insulated Box Car (932-4762)

Walthers 50-foot FGE insulated boxcar (RBL) is by current standards a very acceptable model of its prototype. Although this car type is widely used in the USA, it has never appeared on BC Rail's equipment rosters. Walthers hasn't hesitated to produce its kits in "close enough" schemes to enhance their appeal. The BCR version of the FGE box is numbered BCIT 4505. A check of the *BC Rail Freight Car Roster and Pictorial* shows a series of National Steel Car-built 50-foot insulated cars numbered BCOL 4601-42 that appears to be the closest match available to the FGE design (note that there is no actual BCIT 46xx series). This suggests some tact on Walthers' part in carrying out this presentation.

I assembled the model using Testors liquid cement and a touch-n-flow applicator. The parts fit so well that I didn't have to scrape the paint off. I cut the parts as close to the surface as possible so that the grey (unpainted) plastic did not show. By doing so, I was able to avoid having to touchup, or match, the existing paint. Although the roof on my model fit fine, I've heard from fellow modelers who said they had to file the inside (of the body) in order to get a proper fit.

I chiseled and filed the coupler pockets so that a Kadee #5 coupler could be installed. The coupler height and car weight both conformed to NMRA standards. I checked the wheels for flash, but found none. I had to regauge all of the wheels to the proper width.

I found both the model's paint and lettering to be very thick. In addition, the lettering is fuzzy and incorrect for the British Columbia Railway boxcar application. While the dogwood herald is the proper size, the leaves are too dark and it is missing the orange centre. Further, the build date on the car is two years too early.

The Walthers version of the BCR insulated boxcar is not a close match of the prototype for at least four important reasons. 1) The model's plug door measures a scale 10'-6". This should be 9'-0". 2) The model's roof is a Murphy diagonal design. This should be a Pullman-Standard roof. 3) Prototype photos in the pictorial show that the actual BCOL 4601-42 series has NSC/ECC/NYC style tapered rectangular end ribs, rather than the "banana taper" improved Dreadnaught end ribs of the model. Plus there is one more of the rectangular ribs on the prototype than there is on the model. 4) The prototype has six riveted panels one either side of the door, while the model has seven (and these have the very distinctive FGE additional row of rivets in the panel).This is not to say that the model is a total loss. Many will be happy to weather it and run it on the layout as-is. As an undecorated version, it provides a good starting point for at least two boxcars commonly found on BC Rail.

The first car is a Mountain Pine USEX 20xx series lumber boxcar. The Walthers model is very close and easy to fix. You will need to remove the doors and replace with Details West BC800 (10' smooth plug door) parts. Remove the rivets and ribs from the car sides. Replace by scoring weld seams. As for decals, BCRH&TS member Andy Barber has a limited supply of the appropriate decal sets available for purchase. (Ed Note: See Issue 21, page 35 for further info.)

The second car is a work train crane boom car (e.g., PGE 991003). This type of car consists of one-third of a steel boxcar body. Therefore, the doors and most of the car sides are discarded. The car ends are the most prominent feature, and the Walthers kit is accurate. The roof is close enough.

If you plan to kit-bash any of these three options, I suggest that you use the Walthers undecorated version (932-4750). The kit retails for $9.98 USD.

I would like to thank BCRH&TS members Andy Barber, John Bruce, and Dan Rowsell for their help and information.

Mark Giles resides on Vancouver Island. This is Mark's first appearance in The Cariboo. *He is presently completing a kit-bash of BC Rail's General Electric GF6C locomotive, details of which will appear in a future issue.* ❐

RESEARCH RESOURCES

Scale drawings of BC Rail's 50-foot combination door boxcar appear in the June 1995 issue of *Mainline Modeler*. The drawings were produced by BCRH&TS member Patrick Lawson.