



ROBERVAL  
SAGUENAY  
RAILWAY

C.H. RIFF

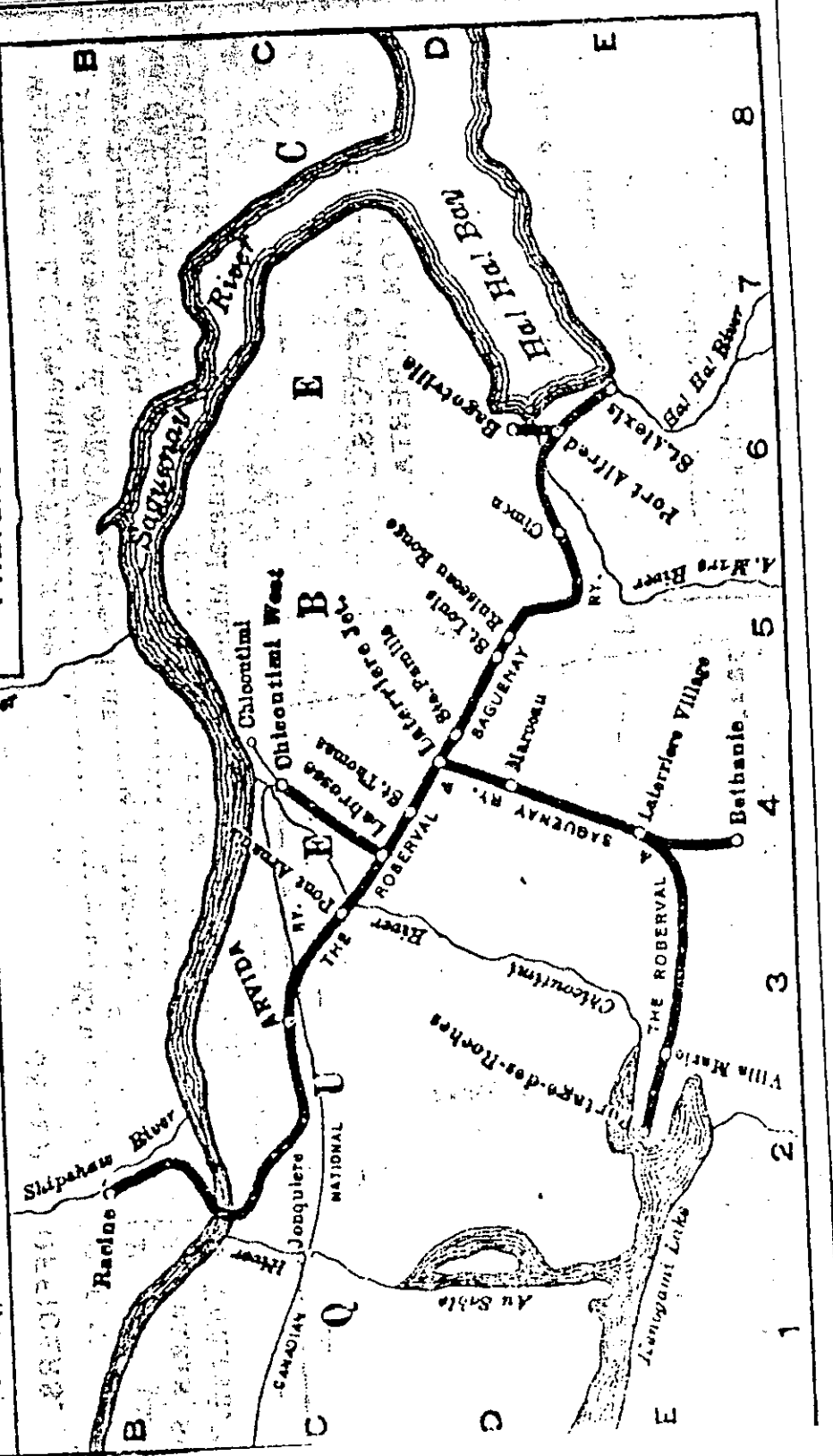
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**KEY**

© Indicates point at which Freight cars are Interchanged with connecting Foreign Roads.

**THE ROBERVAL & SAGUENAY RAILWAY COMPANY**

**FREIGHT INTERCHANGE MAP**



## THE HA HA BAIE RAILROAD.

J. E. A Dubuc while born at St Hugnes in Bagot County in the Lac St John Region of Quebec. Started his business career at La Banque National in Sherbrooke, Quebec. The bank appointed him to return home to become the branch manager of it's Chicoutimi office in 1892, at the northern end of The Quebec and Lake Saint John Railway. He resigned from the bank in 1897 to dedicate his time to the Chicoutimi Pulp Company. In 1907. after he became a director of the Pulp Company he started looking at the construction of the company's own railway to meet the needs not only of his own pulpwood company but for the general region. 1.

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1908 Dubuc along with Phillippe Auguste Choquette, the chief organizer for the Quebec Liberal Party obtained a charter for a railway to connect Chicoutimi with the deep-water of Ha Ha Bay. The charter was for the Ha Ha Bay Railway The Honourable A. Choquette was the President and J. E. A Dubuc was a Vice-President.

In late 1909 construction commenced and by the year end two miles of track had been laid from the Saguenay River at a point called Waterside to Jonquieres. The contractors for this first construction was O'Brien, Payne and Jennings. Grading on the line was completed by August of 1910 when the company received its first locomotive a small 2-4-2T engine from the Montreal Locomotive Works. The company obtained a steam shovel from Taylor and Arnold of Montreal. Second hand steam locomotive was acquired from the Canadian Pacific's Orford Mountain and another came from the Michigan Central. Forty-nine flatcars rounded out the equipment of the new Ha Ha Bay Railway. Due to problems with the geography of the region the line climbed from the Saguenay River Valley from Chicoutimi to La Brosse Junction. The steam locomotives had a hard time with the steep grade on this section the company strung an electric line overhead. An electric engine pulled the steam engine and

it's cars from Chicoutimi to Labrosse where the electric motors and the steam engines continued on their way.

August 1910 the railway had laid rails for twenty miles from Chicoutimi to Bagotsville (five miles from Chicoutimi.) to Mathias Station which would be renamed Ha Ha Bay Junction. The first inaugural train ran on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1910. Work started on a branch line west from the mainline at Riviere du Moulin (La Terriere Junction) to the village of Laterriere 6.6 miles. This line was built to tap the gravel pits and pulpwood holdings south of Chicoutimi. The contractors for this branch railway were Bouliane and Bouliane. This section opened in October 1911

Early in 1911 the railway purchased the small electric railway owned by Chicoutimi Pulp Company that ran that ran from the Pulp Mill Yard at Chicoutimi to the wharf on the Saguenay River. This short railway owned a petit homebuilt electric motor and a brand new electric locomotive was ordered from the Baldwin Locomotive Company.

The company owned one team shovel, 52 flatcars, 13 construction dump-cars six boxcars, one snow-plow, two passenger cars and two electric locomotives.

In 1912 the Ha Ha Bay Railway extended the electric line from Chicoutimi to Labrosse Junction two miles. With the electric motors taking care of both the freight and passenger service. The company planned to electrify its entire railway.

The Company in 1913 extended its Laterriere branch to Portages des Roches on Lake Kenogami, 5.4 miles. Also in 1913 the company a steel bridge across the Rivier a Mars and a one mile branch line from Port Alfred to the new Government wharf at Bagotville.on the southside of Riviere a Mars.

Also in 1912 the Ha Ha Baie Railway built a three mile line from Ha Ha Bay Junction to the Jonquieres pulp mills

## THE ROBerval AND SAGUENAY RAILROAD

The principals of the Ha Ha Baie Railway had acquired a charter for another railroad in 1911 called the Roberval and Saguenay. Its charter was for line extending from the Quebec and Lake St John Railway at Roberval to run around the entire Lake St John and rejoin the Q&L St J and the Ha Ha Baie Railway at a point designated Ha Ha Baie Junction.

The deep-water port on the Saguenay River was to have been along Ha Ha Baie. The railway originally terminated on the Government wharf. The south side of Riviere a Mars was chosen by Dubuc to be the site of a vast new pulp mill. The new wharf was given the name Port Alfred after Julien Edward "Alfred" Dubuc. In 1918 the Ha Ha Baie Sulphite Company opened its pulp mill, A new large wharf was built, as Dubuc considered the Bagotville wharf was much too small to handle the potential traffic.

The proposed route to the Missiniwi River would have enabled pulpwood to be brought out from the country north of Lake St John and via the Ha Ha Baie Railway to deepwater navigation at Ha Ha Baie.

In a deed dated June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1914 the Roberval and Saguenay Company acquired the Ha Ha Baie Railway.

The Ha Ha Bay Sulphite Company would be bankrupt by 1922 and after its reorganization would emerge as part of Consolidated Paper Corporation. The Port Alfred Mill covered an area of about sixty acres, fronting on Ha Ha Baie with its own wharf. Pulpwood was received by ship from Port Mercier on Anticosti Island as well as wood driven down on the local rivers.

The yards at Port Alfred were electrified in 1916 but the proposed mainline electrification never occurred. During this period

the railway projected a number of railway lines, the longest sixty-three miles north to St Michael-Missassi and Point Arnaud to the Rievre du Moulin

The Roberval and Saguenay notified the Quebec Public Utility Commission January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1917, of its intension to suspend service upon the Latierrrre branch-line. The Mayor and the Parish Priest protested against this suspension and after a hearing January 30<sup>th</sup> 1917 the Commission ruled that the company did not show sufficient cause to justify the suspension. Several weeks later the Commission received another complaint from the Mayor of Latierrrre that the Roberval and Saguenay had completely suspended service on the Latierre Branch on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1917. The railway was summoned to appear before the commission on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1917. The Railway's Attourney and Manager appeared before the Commission arguing that the railway had only one fit locomotive in a fit state to operate and that it's supply of coal was very limited. The Company alledged that it was the in without endangering the service on the mainline to Bagotville tension to prepare its line for electrical operation in the next year and that the company had purchased another electric locomotive and to effect this conversion and for these reasons the company did not purchase another steam locomotive. When a heavy snow storm blocked the branch the Company could not clear the line with its available motive power without endangering the mainline service to Bagotville. The Commission was of the opinion that the Company was not excusable as regards it's shortage of locomotives. As to the shortage of coal, it admitted that the situation in this regard during the First World War was throughout the whole Country was a very difficult one and the presumption would seen to be in the company's favour. Nevertheless in view of the actual facts which constitute a case of force majeure the Commission does not fell called upon to order the immediate resuming of service upon the Latierrrre Branch. The commission then ordered the Company to report weekly to the Commission upon the state of it' locomotives, it's coal supply and the climatic conditions affecting the Latierre Branch.

A notice was received from the Company that the regular service had been re-established on the Latierre Branch on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March.

In 1918 a short spur was run from Latierre to Riviere du Moulin.

In 1918, at the end of World War One, the railway was in bad financial shape. For one period the employee's salaries were reported to be fourteen months in arrears. During this time the Roberval and Saguenay was offered to the Canadian Northern and Canadian National Railways.

During the early 1920's the Roberval and Saguenay did very well hauling the traffic generated by the Chicoutimi Pulp Company, the largest exporter of ground-wood pulp in Canada. In the mid Twenties the Pulp Company got into financial difficulties, in 1925 the Quebec Pulp Mills took over the operation of the mill and amalgamated with another local mill. A number of reorganizations followed with the Chicoutimi Mill closing in 1929. Oddly shortly after the mill was closed another industry moved into the Saguenay region in need of railway facilities.

#### ALCOA

The Saguenay River is 107 miles long draining Lake St John which has a 25,000 square mile watershed. In only a few miles the Saguenay River drops three hundred feet before entering a high fiord below Chicoutimi. The river possessed huge Hydro-Electric potential power. The early promoters of the Ha Ha Baie Railway looked to the river for cheap electric propulsion. In 1926 a new industry came to the region in what became the Aluminium Company of Canada a 2.5 billion dollar industry.

Aluminium requires tremendous quantities of electrical power ten kilowatt hours for each pound of aluminium produced. The Aluminium industry had started around 1901 in Quebec's Shawinigan

Valley, in 1910 the demand for Aluminium had increased but the supply was choked by the electrical capacity in the Shawinigan region which had to share the power with other industries. With demand very high and Shawinigan unable to support further expansion.

In 1926 (the Aluminium Company of America) decided to locate a massive expansion in the Saguenay River. The reason that ALCOA chose the Saguenay was access to cheap Bauxite from British Guiana, the availability of cheap natural hydro –electricity and a deep-water harbour.

ALCOA saw the opportunity of expanding it's operations into the British empire by using British Guiana Bauxite, refined in Canada and sold or fabricated in Great Britain. The British Government insisted that British Guiana bauxite must be processed into alumina and aluminium within the British Empire and any further bauxite leases were contingent on this stipulation.

To harness the Saguenay River ALCOA worked out a deal with the Quebec Development Company. Two major hydro-Electric Dams were to be built, the first to be located at Isle Maligne, and the second farther downstream at Shipshaw or Chute a Caron. In both cases the great quantities of construction material would have to be brought in by rail the CNR and the R&S, and the Alma and Jonquieries railroads.

At Isle Maligne, the new Alma and Jonquiere Railroad was built in 1923 eight miles to serve first the construction needs and later the Price Paper Company and a Aluminium refinery.

At Shipshaw, the Roberval and Saguenay constructed a rail line to the site of the Dam. The Roberval and Saguenay became the pivot point for the new Alcoa Hydro Dam sites and link between the Aluminium Plants located on the high ground and the deep water port of Port Alfred. Bauxite came up hill from the Port Aluminium down grade to world shipping or the CNR connection.



The Shipshaw Dam required that the Roberval and Saguenay build a five mile branchline. It left the R&S mainline just west of Ha Ha Baie Junction and descended into the Saguenay Valley where the railway had to cross the Saguenay on two warren type truss spans one of which was one hundred feet long and the other 225 feet long with another seventy foot plate-girder approach span. This was a difficult crossing due to the high velocity and depth of the stream. Which made a center pier impossible so the larger bridge had to be anchored and cantilevered from the smaller approach span. The first five miles of the Shipshaw-Racine branch required 1.25 million feet of BC fir for the timber trestle and about 112,000 cubic yards of earth and rock excavation which was considered extremely high for what was considered a construction railway. The five miles of this line fell 273 feet for a maximum grade of 2.5% with curves of twelve degrees. Work started on this railway in August 1926 with track laid by December of 1926. A further three miles of railway were built on the north side of the Saguenay in the summer of 1927. Called the Racine Branch it saw very little freight traffic other than the construction supplies and remained in place until abandoned in August 1966.

ALCOA acquired the Roberval and Saguenay Railway in 1926. ALCOA rehabilitated the railway built to transport pulp-wood. The big ALCOA smelter was located one mile east of Ha Ha Bay Junction. All shipments of Aluminium left the smelter by rail those for North America by rail over the R&S and the CNR and those for Europe by R&S through Port Alfred. ALCOA built a new townsite around its smelter which it named ARVIDA after ARthur Vining DAVIS, the President of ALCOA. The smelter had its own independent switching railway for many years.

ALCAN

ALCOA put its foreign holdings into a new Canadian Holding Company called Aluminium Limited which controlled ALCAN ( the Aluminium Company of Canada.). An American Sherman Anti-Trust

decision forced ALCOA to divorce its foreign holdings, ALCAN became independent.

The head office of the R&S was moved from Chicoutimi to Arvida in early 1929.

The Price Brothers built in 1930 a paper mill at Kebogami one mile north of Jonquieres. The R&S built a three mile railway from Arvida to the mill.

Effective September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1933 the Roberval and Saguenay terminated service on the line between La Brosse Junction and Le Bassin-Chicoutimi-Ouest. This branch had been built by the pulp-mill to transport pulpwood but the mill closed in 1930. The company had maintained a mixed train service on the 4.7 mile section. The rails were left in place. Approval of the right to terminate service was granted by the Quebec Public Utilities Commission on the Latierre branch from Latierre Junction to Latierre and Portage des Roches twelve miles in 1933.

The Railway made an application in 1938 to discontinue passenger train service on its entire mainline between Bagotville, Port Alfred and Arvida. The company complained that the public highways were kept open during the winter by the Quebec Government with disastrous consequences to passenger service. In fact on a number of days empty trains had to be operated.

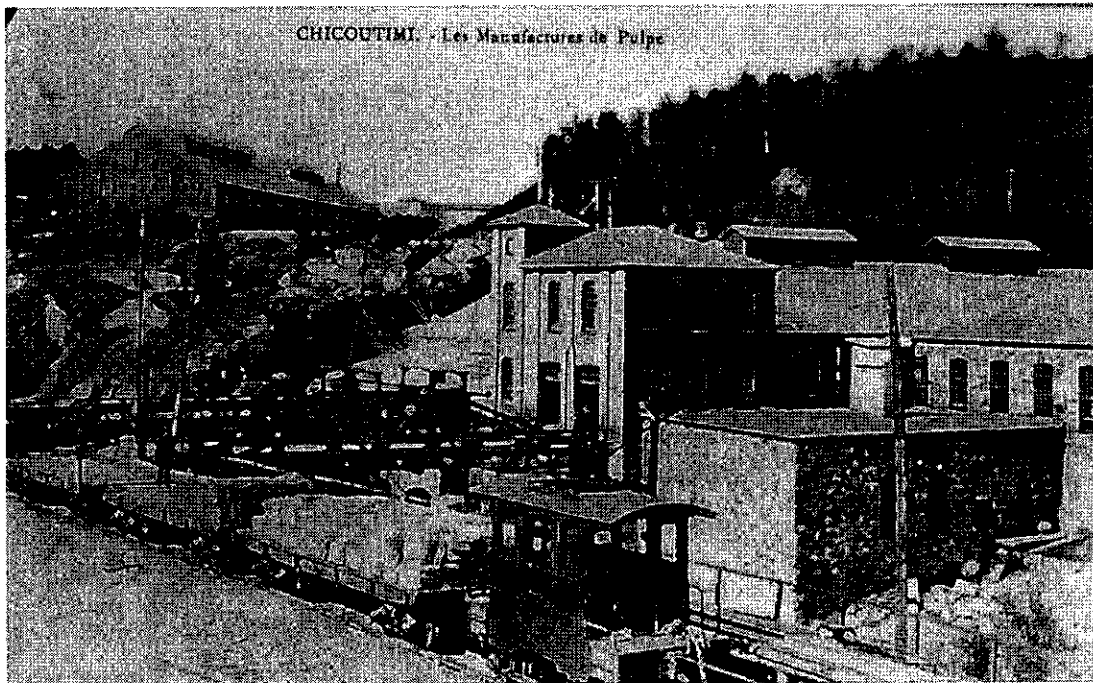
In 1937 the railway ordered a brand new heavy Consolidation steam locomotive from the Canadian Locomotive Works at Kingston. Another identical locomotive arrived in 1940.

During the Second World War German U Boat activity in the Gulf of the St Lawrence halted the shipment of Bauxite through the Saguenay River and Port Alfred. The demand for Aluminium was at an alltime peak.

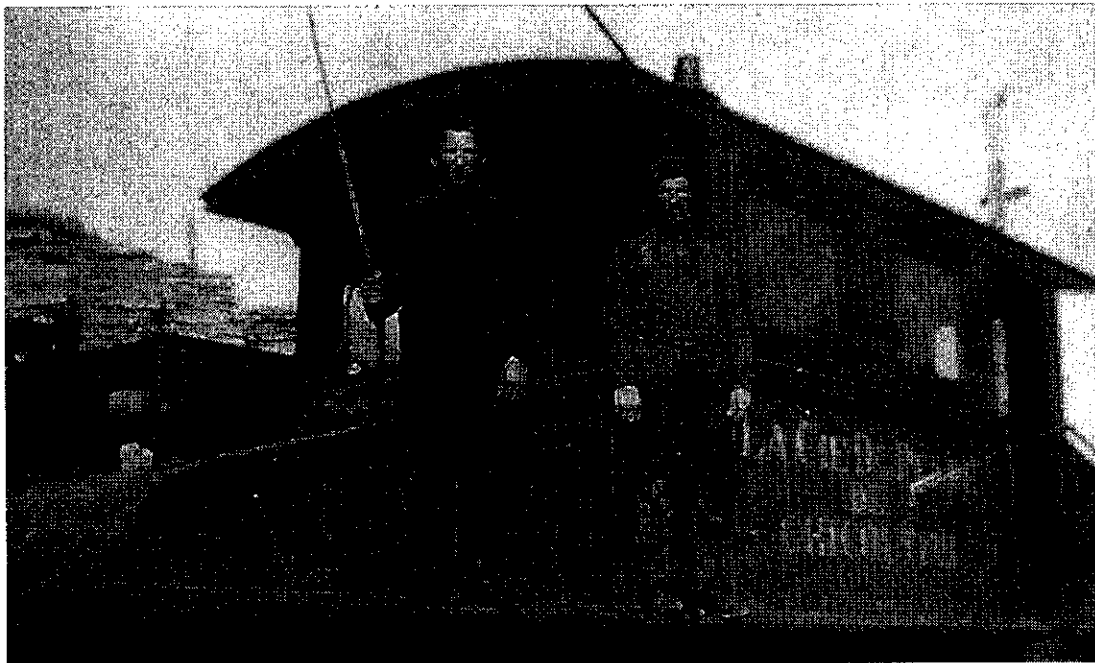
The aluminium industry was worried after the war that the entire industry would become depressed . The Aluminium Company of

Canada attempted to inject aluminium into the construction of railway freight cars. Both the CNR and the CPR had a half dozen boxcars built with aluminium sides.

In 1947 the Roberval and Saguenay had a lot of thirty aluminium sheathed, wood lined boxcars built by the Eastern Car Company



Chicoutimi Pulp 1 *Courtesy of Rio Tinto Alcan, Ian Stronach Collection*



Chicoutimi Pulp 5 a 200 h.p. steeplecab electric. Built by La Cie de Pulpe de Chicoutimi machine shop using four, Westinghouse Type 56, 50 h.p. Railway Electric Motors. B-B configuration on wooden trucks. Acquired in 1913 and retired in 1949. *Courtesy of Rio Tinto Alcan, Ian Stronach Collection*



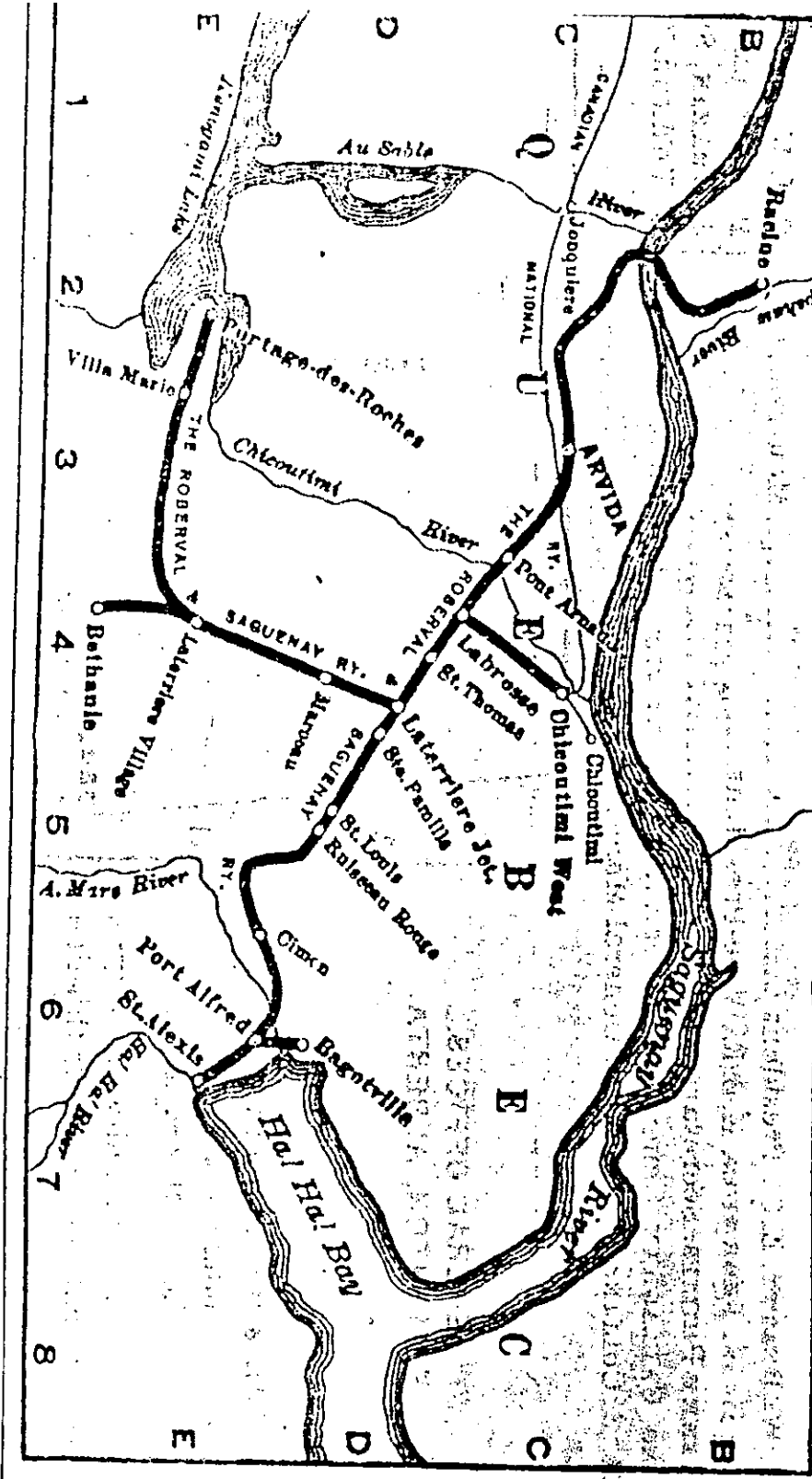
Roberval-Saguenay 6. Baldwin-Westinghouse built in 1912. Rebuilt as diesel-electric 8 (see below).

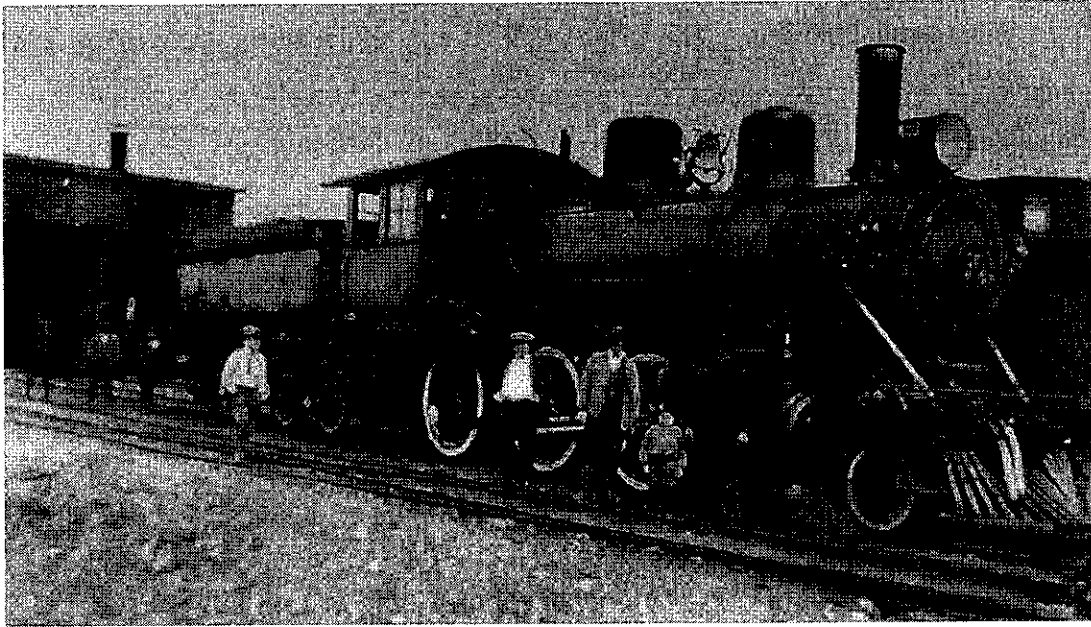


R-S 7 Built by General Electric, Schenectady, # 1458 1917. 500 volts. Class 100-8-A.  
Acquired from Van Loan Corporation but never used at Chicoutimi West. Scrapped 1952.  
*Courtesy of Rio Tinto Alcan, Ian Stronach Collection*

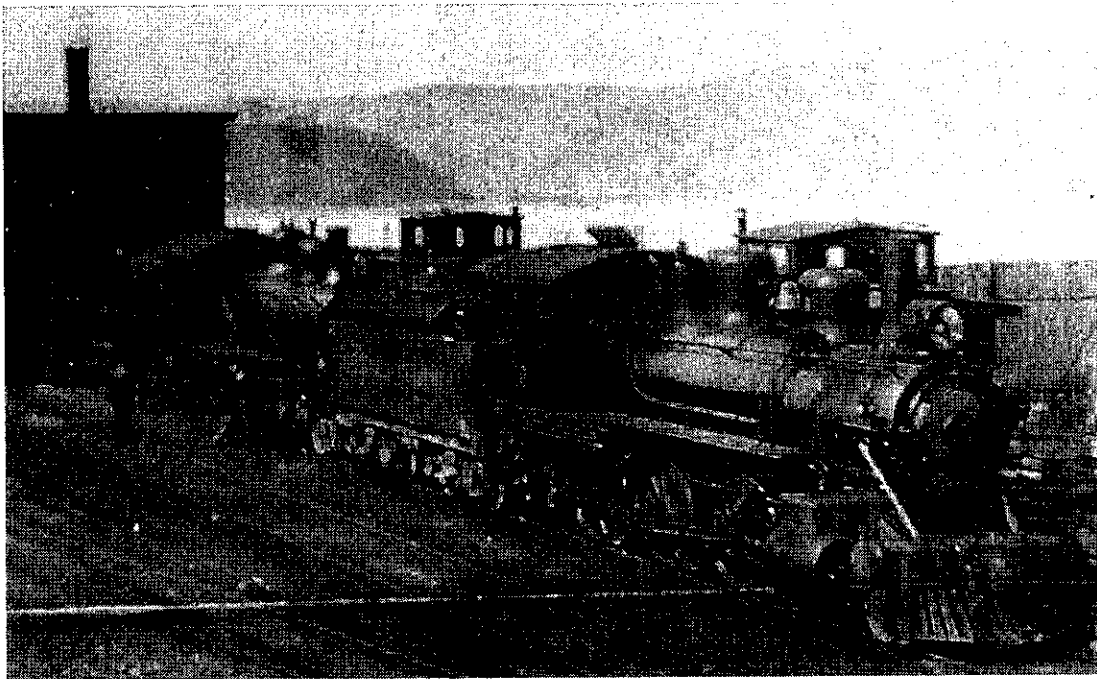
KEY  
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**THE ROBERVAL & SAGUENAY RAILWAY COMPANY**  
**FREIGHT INTERCHANGE MAP**





4-6-0 10 (acq. 7/1920 ex T&NO 105) Cyl. 19" x 24" Drv. 56" Press. 180 t.e. 23,760 CLC 689 3/1906  
 Acquired from Canadian Equipment Co. (D) looking brand new at Bagotville shop. Retired 1932.  
 Courtesy of Rio Tinto Alcan, Ian Stronach Collection



R-S 10 years later with 6 behind it. *Courtesy of Rio Tinto Alcan, Ian Stronach Collection*