

ONTARIO
NORTHLAND
RAILWAY DIARY
NORTH BAY
NUGGET 1940-1950

C. H. RIFF

"DIESEL SWITCHER" NO. 1200 MAKES TEST RUN



One of three 1,000-horsepower Alco-G.E. Diesel Electric Switching Locomotives delivered in North Bay last week for use by the Ontario Northland Railway is seen above as it was taken on its trial run by veteran

JUNE 24 1946

engineers of the railway. The engines will be used for switching operations in the O.N.R. yards at North Bay and Englehart. This engine is No. 1200, and is known familiarly to railroaders as the "Diesel Switcher."

(Nugget Photo)

JUNE 24
1946

Timmins to Get New ONR Diesels



The Ontario Northland Railway's program of dieselizing its Northern Ontario railway yards took another step forward this week with the arrival of this new 1,000-horsepower diesel switcher. The

Photo by W. diesel, seen standing in the North yards, will be serviced and tested before going to Timmins for yard-switching duty. Diesel switchers already operate at North Bay and Englehart.

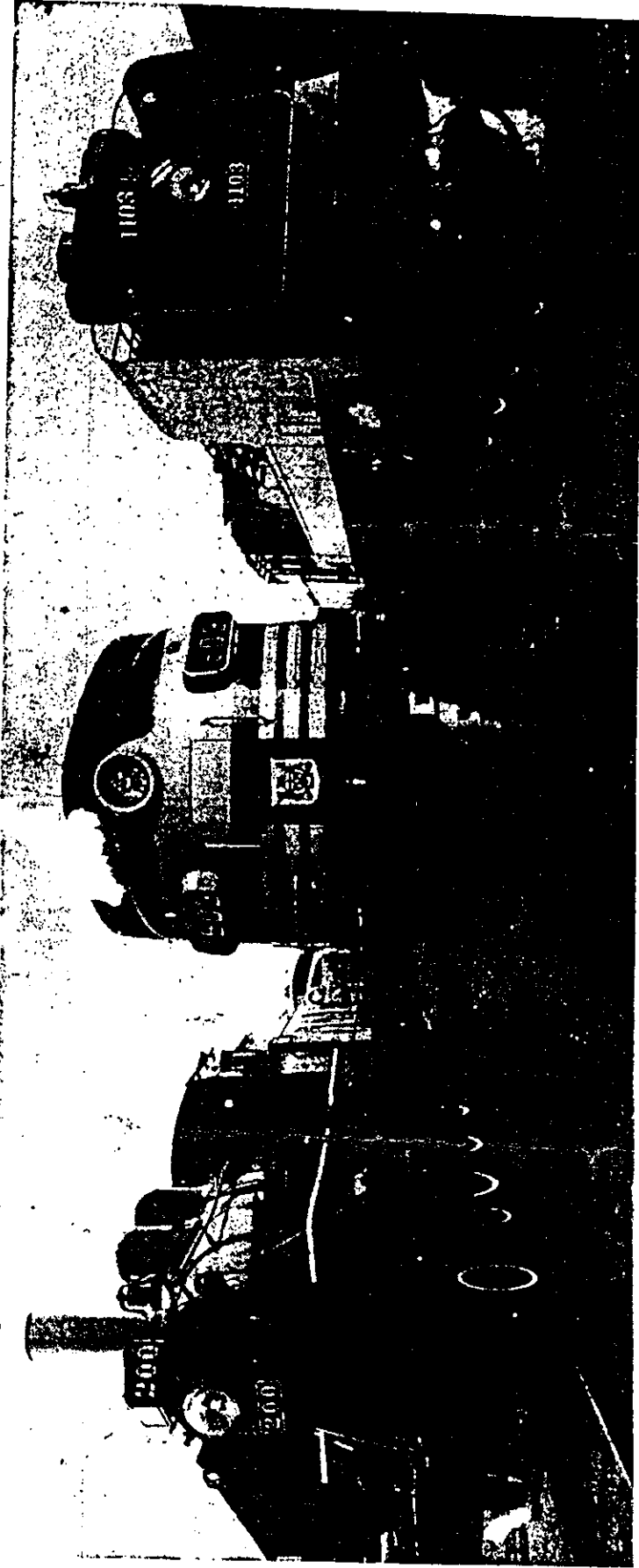
November 4

1950

Nov 4 1950

THE OLD AND NEW O. N. R. LOCOMOTIVES.

MAY 12 1952



—Nurset Photo by McKnight

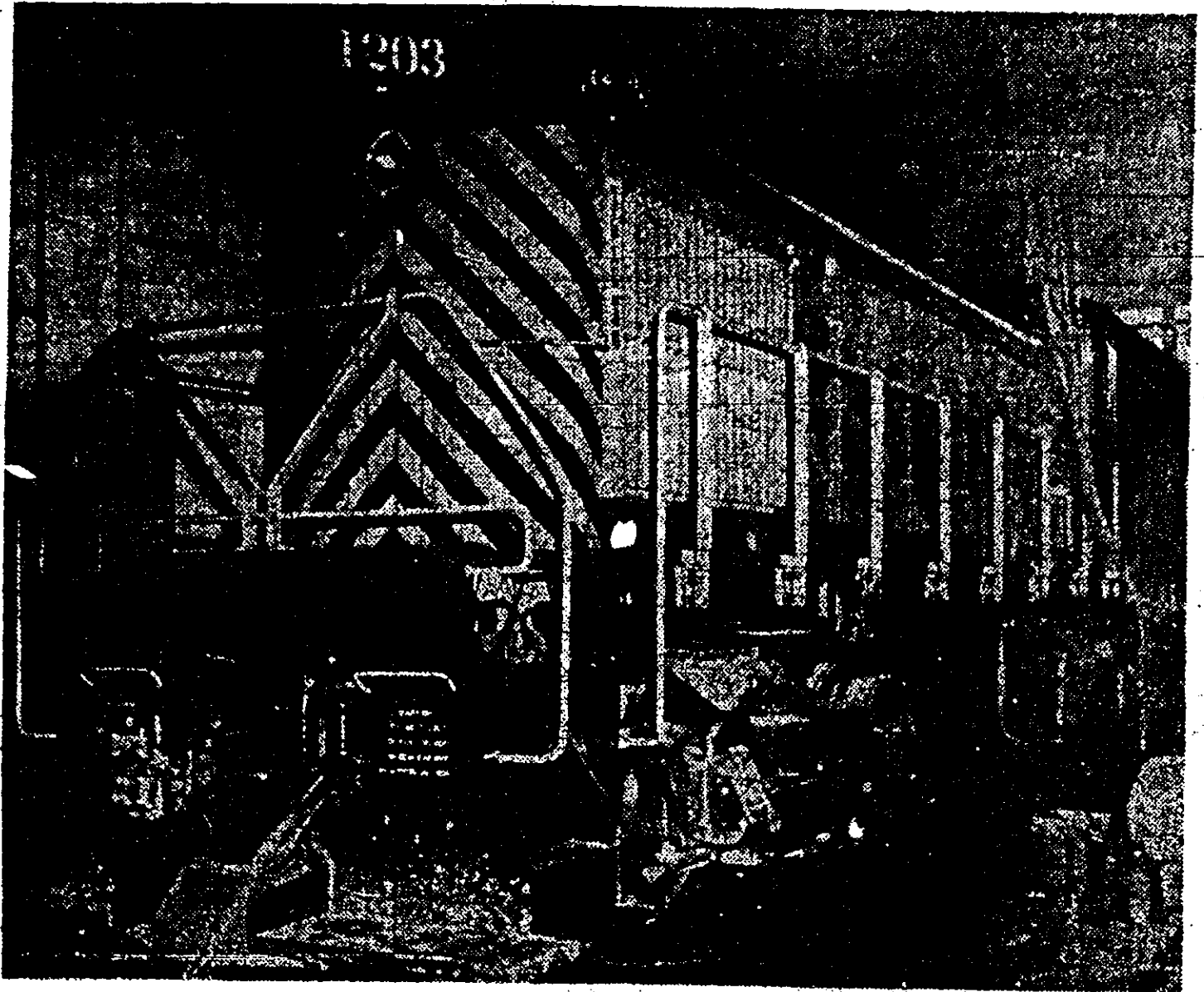
Three generations of locomotives are portrayed here on display at the Canadian Pacific Railway station. They were featured in the O.N.R.'s 50th anniversary program. The railway celebrated its Golden Jubilee today with a monster luncheon and a special excursion to the scene of the first sod-turning May 10, 1902. On the left, above, is a 200-class locomotive made in 1908. At the right, one of the big "1100" class engines purchased in 1936. And in the centre, the latest type of diesel locomotive, which the O.N.R. is in the process of adopting exclusively.

All North Congratulates O.N.R. on 50th Birthday

By LEN FARKES
Northern Ontario is celebrating today, marking the 50th anniversary of the birth of the Ontario Northland Railway, and industrial commissioner for the party," a spokesman for the government-owned railroad said. "There will be a hearty welcome for everyone to celebrate together 50 years of progress."

MAY 18
1952

ONR ADDS TO GROWING FLEET OF DIESELS



—Nugget Photo by Orlankee

This 1,000-horsepower diesel yard switcher was added to the Ontario Northland Railway's growing fleet of diesel units last week. It is now being tested and ser-

viced in North Bay and will go to Timmins for operations in the ONR yards there. The ONR expects delivery of six streamlined road diesels within the next two months.

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November 7
1950

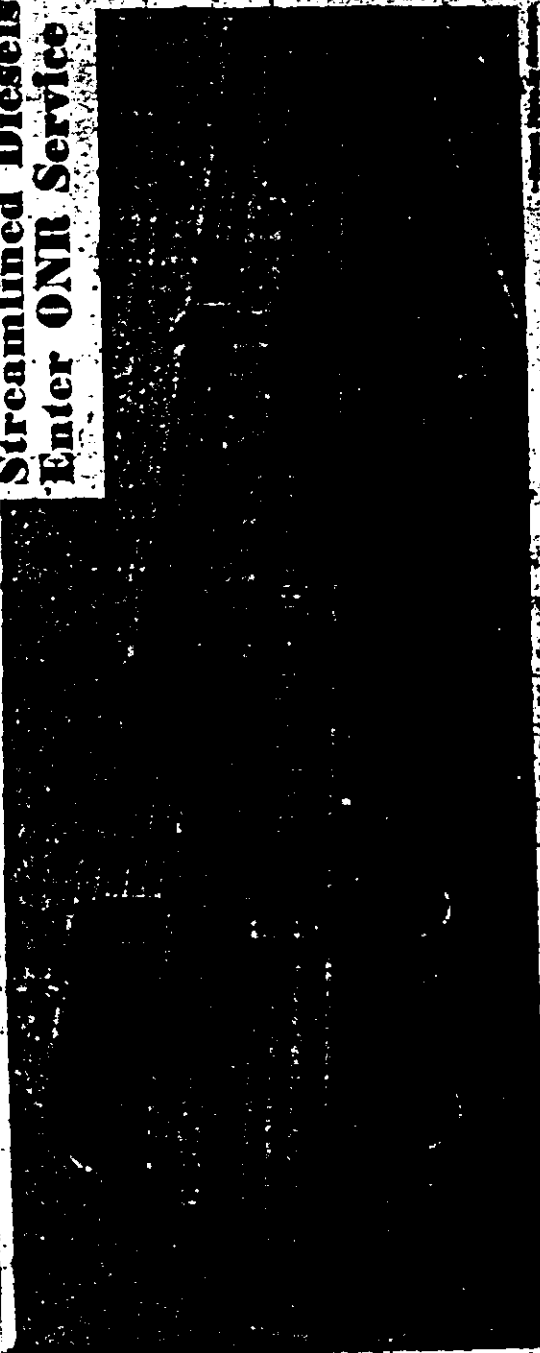
ONR Exhibit Judice Exhibit Friday, May 4, 1953



One of the ONR's Diesel Road Switchers

May 1953

Streamlined Diesels Enter ONR Service



Streamlined Diesel locomotives have their first appearance on the Ontario Northland Rail-
road Tuesday. The first pair of streamliners
was delivered to the GNR Monday and they are

seen here being delivered to a freight rail north from York. Each unit develops 1,500 horsepower and can be operated

separately. Four more are ordered by the Ont. Ont. plant of General Motors Diesel Ltd. Each costs \$225,000.

APRIL 4
1951

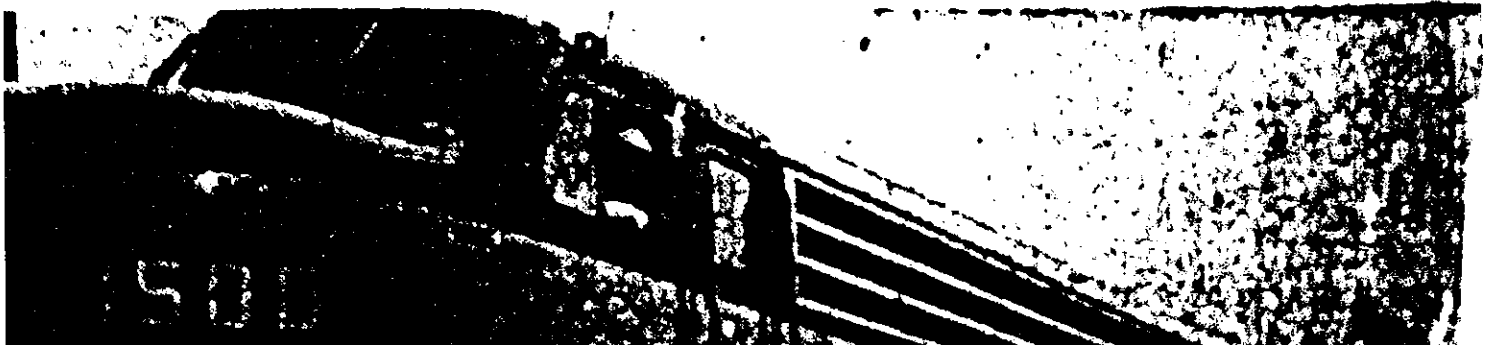
APRIL 4, 1951

OFFICIALS INSPECT NEW OVR DIESELS



L. Robeson (second from left) shows
men the details of the new General
Motors Diesel locomotive delivered to the

railway this week. Left to right are Hor
er Blais, engineer; Mr. Robeson; To
Read, shop foreman, and John Collins, fir
man.



April 2 1951

Two New Diesels Delivered to ONR

A pair of streamlined 1,500-horsepower Diesel locomotives were delivered to the Ontario Northland Railway in North Bay today.

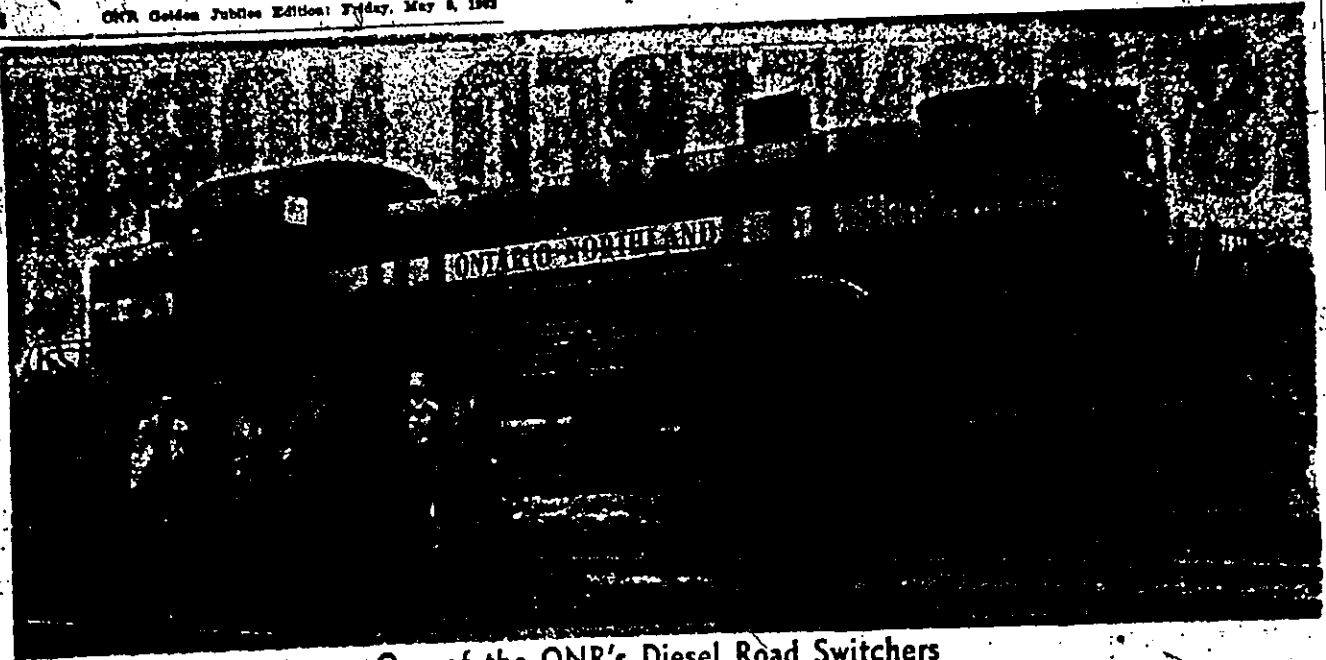
The Diesels—first of the streamlined type received by the ONR—were built by General Motors Diesel Ltd., at London, Ont.

Four more are on order for the railway's freight service in Northern Ontario.

The ONR already has four Diesel road-switchers of the 1,500-horsepower variety in use and a number of yard switchers.

The new arrivals will be checked and tested here before going into service.

April 2 1951



One of the ONR's Diesel Road Switchers

T. G. (Tom) McDonald

Saw First, Last Spike Driven in ONR's Rails

The distinction of having been present at three ceremonies connected with the history of the T&NO — once in the role of spectator and on the other occasions because of his association with the public life of his home community — belongs to T. G. ("Tom") McDonald, who also worked on the construction of the present Ontario Northland Railway and was a member of its running crews for a time in its earlier days.

Mr. McDonald now lives in Timmins, and is a contractor on his own account, but for many years his home was at Matheson, of which North Country town he is a former mayor and identified also with the activities of the Board of Trade and other organizations there. He was the chief magistrate of the municipality in 1918, when the Ontario Government of that day agreed to guarantee the town's bonds in order that a waterworks system might be installed.

On the trip to Toronto in connection with these negotiations with Queen's Park, he was accompanied by the town clerk, who was the Rev. Dr. James A. Lytle, now of North Bay, and superintendent of United Church missions in the northern districts, and at that time on the mission field at Matheson. One result of the deal was that the T&NO agreed to pay Matheson \$2,000 per annum for water supplied to the station bank, and thereby bring a tale, Mr. McDonald said.

The water from the railway authority was applied toward reducing the municipal debt, but one year the Matheson public school board ran into financial difficulties and the school actually was closed

temporarily, Mr. McDonald said. It chanced that George W. Lee, then chairman of the T&NO Commission, came along and, when told of the situation by Mr. McDonald, for the town, he arranged matters so that the Commission's cheque was turned over to the municipality and funds thus provided for the trustees.

Typical Service

That action, in the opinion of the former Matheson mayor, was typical of the services rendered the North Country by the T&NO. He recalled how trains would be stopped in what seemed the middle of a stretch of bush in order that some prospector might be able to launch his canoe in a handy stream, instead of having to carry it from the nearest regular stop, and spoke also of conveniences arranged for the settlers who had to get their produce to market.

They were "great people," those Old Timers of the T&NO, said this pioneer of both the railway and the country. Mr. McDonald was living and working in North Bay when, as a youth of eighteen, he went out to Trout Lake on May 14, 1908, to watch Hon. Frank Latchford, then Commissioner of Public Works in the Ross Administration, turn the first sod. Thirteen years later, as a representative of Matheson, he was in Ottawa when Hon. R. C. Drury, then Premier of Ontario, performed a similar function in the T&NO bogged his drive north to Kenosha.

Thirteen more years elapsed before the rails reached their waters and the ceremony of driving the last spike on what was called the James Bay Extension was performed. The

special train picked up Mr. McDonald at Matheson and he recalled how Chief Justice Latchford (as he had become), Mr. Drury and the Hon. George Henry, Premier of Ontario in 1912, swung the hammer that day. Of the three, Mr. McDonald thought the venerable Justice, then past eighty, did the best job.

Half a century ago, this pioneer citizen worked for Paddy Furlong of Eganville, who had the first contract to cut the T&NO right-of-way and who had to relinquish it because of financial troubles. Mr. McDonald said he and Mickey Hayes cut down the first trees along the survey, these being at Trout Lake. Later, after A. R. Macdonnell had taken over the construction job, he went braking on a construction train, whose conductor was Jack Keenan.

Subsequently, he drove a four-horse team for Alex Stirling, also of Timmins today, and who had a freight contract along the right-of-way. Loads started out of North Bay and he got as far as Rainwater on occasion, he said. Then, he took a turn at braking for the T&NO itself on its passenger trains, a job on which he stayed for a couple of years, running as far as the First Crossing of the Missisquoi River (meaning Englishbury) before he left railroading for other work.

Old Names

Date the conversation with this veteran of the North Country except the names of many railroaders, contractors and their employees, among them Jack Shields, who carried the mail out of North Bay to the various Macdonnell construction camps as the road was pushed

north. There was talk of Jim Midd, Ash Newell, Ab. Miller, Tom Hamblin, Tom McParland and, in this partial list of early conductors, Jim Murray who, Mr. McDonald said, made only one trip as freight conductor before taking over a passenger run.

There was, too, John Judge, who became the T&NO's first trainmaster, it was stated. Some other

pioneers mentioned were "Big Bill" Wright, and the three Macdoonas, who held a sub-contract in the building of the railway, Mr. McDonald said. They were exceptionally tall men, aggregating twenty-one feet among them, with one of their number going several inches above the seven foot average struck for the trio.

Before taking up railway work.



SERVING CUSTOMERS

Canadian General Electric congratulates the Ontario Northland Railway on the occasion of its Fiftieth Anniversary

G. E. believes that the greater the



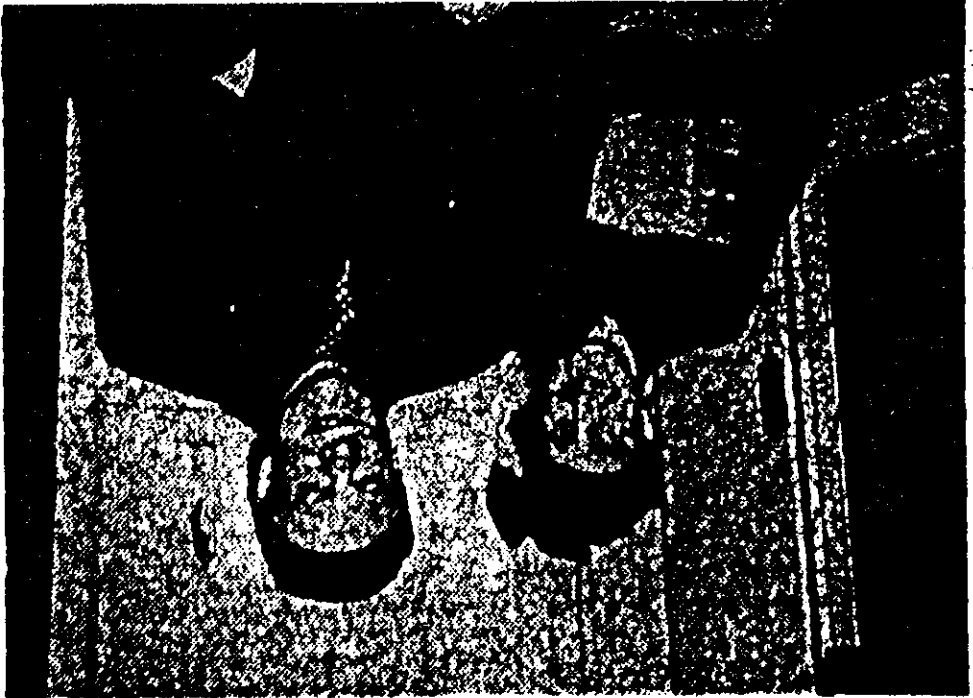
FULL STEAM AHEAD

Her bearings and brakes checked, the ONR pulls out of Timmins into the air, the locomotive ONR, which has played so vital a part in the growth of Timmins on the first leg of a journey to show the staunch durability of the steam engine. Blasting smoke high that seems synonymous with the, during the years.

The passenger on Train No. 100 looked up as the conductor at the single passenger coach beckoned and the conductor over. "Where is the dining car on this train?" the passenger asked. "Getting a broad smile, the conductor answered: "Borry, it have no dining car on this train."

BY BEN WARD

Like "MIXE"



Dusk, and the "mixed" puffs out of New Liskard on the last lap of a northward run to Englehart. Most of the train's work is south of New Liskard at isolated communi-



Backwoods Charm Rej

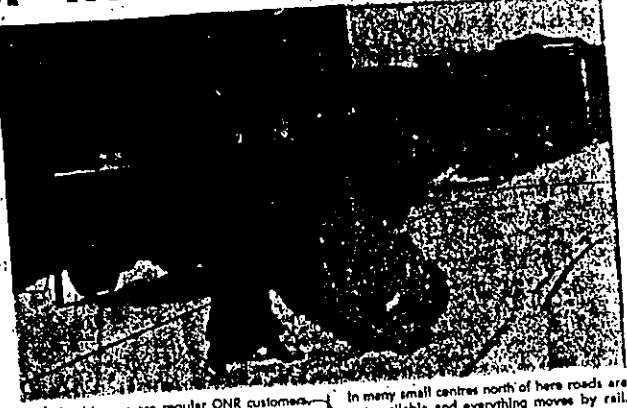
oods Charm Replaces Luxuries for No. 209's Travellers



"Mixed" puffs out of New South of New Lakeard at isolated communities.



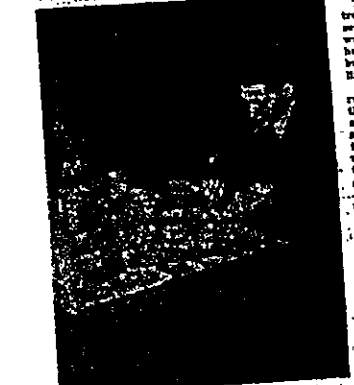
A brief respite between stops gives Conductor Grievs a chance to get his books in order.



Bushland horses are regular ONR customers. A bale of hay is unloaded for a horse at Diver. In many small centres north of here roads are not available and everything moves by rail.



the total population of White Rock—Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Jarvis.



Chief table, but the food is good. Dessert may be pie from a lumber camp cook.



Give Engine 314 a long load drink at New Lakeard station.

Like Friendly Neighbor, "Mixed" Visits ONR Points

By BEN WARD

The passenger on Train No. 209 looked up as the conductor entered the single passenger coach. His backbones and the conductor came over.

"Where is the dining car on this train?" the passenger asked. "Shifting a broad smile, the conductor answered: 'Sorry, sir, we haven't got one on this train. But have no dining car I can spare you a couple of sandwiches and a cup of tea.'

The passenger jerked his head back in surprise. "You mean to say there is no diner anywhere?"

"Where?" the conductor answered him. "This coach is the only diner we've got... if you bring a lunch."

Three another traveller was introduced to the "mix," a daily passenger-train which ambles its way between North Bay and English Bay, but abundant with courtesy, friendliness and back-woods charm.

Neither a freight nor a passenger train, lacking the polish and speed of the coast "Northland," the weight and revenue importance of the superior, often diesel-driven through freight and yet loaded with the responsibilities of both, the "mix" takes everything in its stride.

In many of the isolated bushland communities strung like tiny beads along the 120-mile line between North Bay and English Bay, Train 209 is a southbound constant part.

While the great passenger and freight trains rush by bent on more important errands as the pulsating lifeblood of Northern Ontario business and industry, the calm, unhurried "mix" lugs these insignificant dots on the map among its regular stops and calls in regularly like a friendly next-door neighbor.

The regular crew-men on these trains are practically members in every community they visit. Though the railroaders long and hard the work is made easy by the warm, friendly atmosphere that covers their lonely route.

Take a typical trip with north-bound 209 — Conductor Arnold Grievs of English Bay in charge. As we pull out of the N. Bay yards we meet his crew members. They are brakemen Riley Archer, another English Bay man, and Ted Burke of the North Bay, youngest member of the crew. Up ahead in engine No. 314 are Engineer Bill Gard, Ferris, and Fireman Bill Blitt. Jr. North Bay.

(Later on you'll find that everyone along the line knows the conductor as "Boney" and his engineer simply as "Pop.")

The train you're travelling with is a state-of-the-art engine, 15 tons of steel, a coach and the usual freight car, a coach and the usual van or "caboose."

There are a half-dozen other passengers in the coach, all of whom would rank as inconspicuous and unimportant on a big passenger train. But along this line everyone is important and they all have a story to tell.

Take the aged couple sitting in that rear corner, for instance. That's Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Jarvis bound for White Rock, the nearest of any white stops. Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis are away from North Bay, when they stop at North Bay. When they stop at White Rock, the population of White Rock amounts to zero—they are only inhabitants.

Mr. Jarvis is in charge of the department of lands and forests operation tower at White Rock and has been on duty the year 'round. He has been in Canada for 26 years, coming here originally to look around and see what the country had to offer. Not taking any chances on getting stuck here "after all, I come from the best part of England..." Tor-

wouldn't trade for any other freight job.

The "mixed" has many competitors and the biggest of these, according to the men who know, is its regularity. They work six days a week—three trips north and three south. There are no hurried calls in the middle of the night to get out a heavy train in 40-below weather or overloaded work periods when a brakeman catches an hour's sleep in between runs.

On the weekly schedule all members of the crew get four nights home. Away from home they sleep in the van—a comfortable spot thanks to the spare-time work of the conductor and the unwritten rules of cleanliness observed.

Every conductor has his own van and most of them are particular about the way it is kept. Some of them even carry this to extremes.

Conductor Grievs has no extraordinary traits in the maintenance of his van, but others have.

For example, one conductor on the line has curtains on each window. Another is particular about his water supply and keeps four kinds of water on hand—drinking, washing, hand-washing and cooking. Each water closet is of a varying softness according to its job.

Even more amusing is the conductor north of English Bay who has installed large fibra door-mats at each end of the van... and heaven help the rookie brakeman who slips without carefully wiping his feet.

The van is a home away from home for these freighting crews and is completely equipped for sleeping and cooking. ONR men claim the railroad has the most modern, cleanest and best-equipped vans in Canada—and most CPR vans in Canada—and most CPR men, at least, will probably agree with them. As an interesting fact, the ONR was the first railroad in Canada to put all-steel vans into use.

In the van of conductor Grievs on a "mixed" trip a non-railroading visitor doesn't stand much chance of joining the conversation. Usually of joining the conversation with railwaymen aboard chatting with the working crew and the conversation always swings to talk of the railway, old experiences and new happenings.

At meal-time the three men take turns on the red-glowing portable stove cooking each his portion. They don't mind the mess. The railwayman who has the most restaurant-like dishes, choose and the like with heaps of vegetables, a hard desert and the inevitable quantities of sweet, black tea.

There may be a freshly-cooked pie which was handed aboard at one of the stops by an appreciative camp cook or a housewife who likes to favor or a housewife who likes to have hot-cooking appreciation. And as for the Redwater, Owanan, Tomlin, Malook and Diver—the "mixed" goes on its way. The train that does the job of bushland service well. And like it.

Other regular passengers on the train might include lumbermen headed back to the logging camps after a payday spurge in the city, after a winter supper-trapper with their winter supplies ready to hop off at some obscure millage point and hike into the trap-line, Indians, farmers, forest rangers and free-riding railway workers bound for isolated stations.

One half of the coach is usually piled high with grocery orders to be dropped off along the route. On the other side may be a couple of dogs leashed to the walk-bracket, panting and eager for companionship with anyone who may pass by and wondrously content can't sit up in the passenger compartment with their masters — as they sometimes do.

At the outset it looks like an easy chore for the trainmen, but don't let their appearance fool you. Conductor Grievs and his brakemen have a busy time of it.

There are dozens of individual chores which go to making up the "mixed" job. Passengers must be checked, tickets collected, arrangements made to detain the passengers at various small or obscure millage points. These or obscure millage points, flag men orders dropped off, signals for the engine crew and freight work.

The three trainmen remove the freight at each stop—a bale of hay for a farmer's horse, a drum of oil for a new gas stove for the Jenecks. Sometimes it's a heavy job requiring three strong backs. If section men are available they can be called on to lend a hand.

Carted-in hay to be cut out at certain points and new cars picked up at others. The train may pick up as many as 10 or 12 extra cars before the run is finished.

The ONR's unique school car which brings education on wheels for children in the area between Tomlin and Redwater is moved around on a regular schedule by the "mixed" train.

This busy schedule keeps the conductor and his men constantly on the hop. On top of it there are several orders frequently arriving to inform them of other train movements for which Little 209 usually has to duck into a siding and clear the main-line.

It differs sharply with the work of crews on the fast-railing "through" freights at 20 and 30 m.p.h. which usually make the entire English Bay North Bay run without a scheduled stop.

But despite the extra work these "mixed" train crews are quite content with their lot and most of them

spouting smoke and steam, the train moves off in the face of a wild winter storm.

Weariness after a city week and a lumber market takes its toll of the slow schedule to sleep.

Section workers unloaded new rails along part of the line, the track in good shape.

A long-awaited parcel is delivered at Tomiko to Little Pigeau by smiling Brakeman Riley Archer.

Bushland horses are regular ONR customers. A bale of hay is unloaded for a horse at Diver.

In many small centres north of here roads are not available and everything moves by rail.

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TOMIKO WATER TANK COLLAPSES ON TRACKS

Southbound Local Is Delayed
Tuesday; Cause Not Yet

JAN 5 Determined 1938

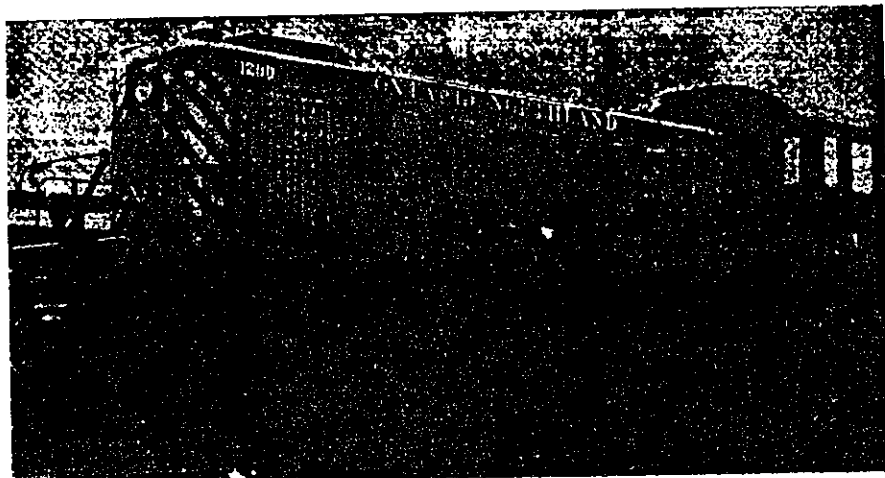
Passengers on T. & N. O. train No. 2 experienced a 15-minute delay Tuesday afternoon when the railway's water tank at Tomiko, 28 miles north of North Bay, collapsed. Fortunately, no one was injured when the old structure caved in, deluging the tracks with thousands of gallons of water and wreckage.

Two Tracks Blocked

The main line and one siding of the railway were blocked by timbers. After a short delay, train No. 2 was able to proceed around the debris via a third passing track, and continued on its journey southward. The cause of the accident has not yet been determined, though officials have ordered an investigation.

The Tomiko tank is the first watering place used by the railway north of North Bay, and was built in the early days of the T. & N. O. construction. It was used mainly by freight trains.

THREE DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES ARRIVE IN NORTH BAY



Test runs conducted in the Ontario Northland Railway's yards at North Bay last week introduced the "Diesel Switcher," known formally as the 1,000-horsepower Alco-G.E. Diesel Switching Locomotive. Three "Diesel Switchers" and brought from Schenectady, N.Y., where they were manufactured. In the upper photo are seen some of the men who participated in the trial runs of the new engines. From left to right are Jack McKenny, fireman; Jimmy Fry, engineer; T. Read, general foreman; A. D. Lawrence of New York, service engineer, and H. W. McKenzie, master mechanic, O.N.R. In the middle picture is a side view of No. 1200, one of the three engines. Below, Jack McKenny, and Jimmy Fry take instructions in the operation of the Diesels from Mr. Lawrence. Engineer Fry is learning the workings of the Diesel on the eve of his retirement from service. He will go on pension at the end of this month.

