

BLIND RIVER

BLIND RIVER TRANSPORTATION COMPANY
Three Foot Narrow Gauge Logging And Portage Railway

The Blind River Transportation Company located in the small lumber town of Blind River, Ontario, along the north shore of Lake Huron, served by the Canadian Pacific's Sudbury-Sault Ste Marie railway, was incorporated in 1903. The officers of the Company were John Stover President, Peter Wallace Vice-President and Harry Burns, Secretary. Its object was to carry supplies back to the numerous logging camps further up the Blind River. It would appear construction started in the summer of 1903. The company built a four mile three foot gauge portage railway. The Sault Star reported August 13th, 1903 that the engine and cars had arrived and had been the subject of considerable curiosity. They were described as of the old time narrow gauge style, such as used on the Flint and Pere Marquette Railroad some time ago. The engine was a most peculiar piece of mechanism having all its propelling power on one side and runs by cogs instead of a driving shaft (rod). The paper was describing a Lima Locomotive Works Shay engine that the company had acquired from Luther, Michigan. It had been built in 1888. A temporary railway was laid down Woodward Avenue so the engine and cars could be moved from the C.P.R. Tracks to the waterfront at the foot of the street.

The Sault Star reported October 22nd, 1903, that the company had spent nearly seven weeks building a large scow. This scow's purpose was to have railroad cars on the deck. The cars would remain on the scow at Blind River where they could be loaded directly from the shore. The scow would travel up river and then the railroad cars, full of supplies would be transferred directly on to the railroad track. The Shay would then pull the cars over the four mile portage, at which time the cars would then be unloaded at the far side of the portage into smaller boats to travel further north to the various lumber camps.

In 1906 a brand new Shay was purchased from the Lima Locomotive Works.

In later years it was reported that the company used a ragged rail-automobile, a photograph of which went to Henry Ford's Greenfield Village.

The portage railway was believed abandoned in the mid 1920's.

No. 1	Two-truck Shay	Lima 1888	from Luther, Michigan
No. 2	Two-truck Shay	Lima 1906	New