

LE QUEBEC
ET LAC
ST JEAN
DIARIES

C. H. RIFF



QUEBEC AND LAKE ST JOHN RAILWAY.

The Quebec and Gosford and its vision of Lake St John had not been locked away. On February third 1876 E. Beaudet assembled the Gosford investors and a new company was reorganized out of the ashes of the Gosford. The Quebec and Lake St John Railway took a land grant of from the Province of Quebec of 5,000 acres per mile, situated in alternate sections partly along the line of the railway and partly in the wheat lands surrounding Lake St John. Also \$5,000 per mile cash subsidy promised from the Province of Quebec and \$3,200 per mile from the Dominion of Canada .

By now most of the Quebec notables were involved in various railway promotions, particularly the Levis and Kennebec that was building south from the St Lawrence into the Beauce heading for the United States of America . For several years there was seldom mention about the Q&LSJ in the Quebec newspapers. This changed in June 1879 , Quebec Premier Joly had pushed forward the subsidies. Tenders were called were called for the first two sections of the railway. August 1879 work started on the reconstruction of the Quebec and Gosford and some trains were running to the Jacques Cartier River. This time the company built an iron bridge to go across the river. August 11th the company received it's third shipment of steel rails, enough to build forty miles of track. Construction trains were now running between Quebec and the sawmill of Connolly on the Jacques Cartier River, a distance of seventeen miles.

At the Palais Market in the center of Lower Town Quebec the company built its new rolling stock. On July 28th, 1880 the first train of nine of wood arrived at Quebec from Connolly's mills.

During the summer of 1880 at least three hundred men were at work on the Quebec and Lake St John Railway. Work progressed northward for thirty-six miles to the village of St Raymond. On January 16th 1882 the line was ready for the first inaugural run. The

guests including Quebec Premier Chapleau left the QM&OO Palais Station and ran over the QM&OO several miles branching off at Ancien Lorette on to its own rails.

At a general meeting in February of 1883 T. LeDroit was named President succeeding M. W. Withall who had in turn succeeded E. Beaudet. During the winter of 1883-1884 there were more than three hundred men at work on the railway. At the same time there were a great many at work in the bush cutting trees for the various new sawmills built along the tracks. Construction trains were running north bringing up ties and rails and brought down to the Port of Quebec solid trains of 23 cars of lumber.

The timetable during the summer of 1884 had two trains a mixed train and a mail-passenger train running between Quebec and St Raymond.

By November of 1884 the mixed train service had been extended ten miles north from St Raymond to St Simon. The railway had stations

Petit River, Ancienne Lorette, Saint Ambroise, Valcartier, St Gabriel, Sainte Catharine, Lac Saint Joseph and Bourg Louis

SOURCES

1. Le Journal de Quebec February 3, 1876
2. Le Journal de Quebec June 10, 1879
3. Le Journal de Quebec August 8, 1879

In August 1888 the Quebec and Lake Saint John Railway had reached Chambord Junction and an additional three miles toward Roberval. On December 14th, 1888 the Government Engineers inspected the section from Chambord Junction towards Metabetchouan for 4.07 miles and towards Roberval 13. 57 miles.

On the first day o January 1889, the railway company took over the working of their road from the contractors and at that time maintained a daily train service between Quebec City to Roberval. The Monarch Palace Car Company established palace and sleeping car service over the entire line.

QUEBEC CITY

By 1890 the company had decided it had to pursue the acquisition of its own Quebec City terminal rather than using the Canadian Pacific tracks west out of Quebec City to Lorette. A line east was built east from its station at Jeunne Lorette and ran to a station at Hedleyville where the Quebec and Lake St John connected with the the Quebec, Montmorency and Charlevois Railway.

This would allow both of these railways a free and easy entrance into the City of Quebec and its harbour. A bridge was constructed over the St Charles River that allowed both railways to reach a railway terminal near the Palais Market and alongside the Quebec inner harbour. A new passenger and freight shed were built

During the year the Q&LSJ had acquired a considerable sum of rolling stock , consisting of two Mogul locomotives, three first class coaches, three second class coaches, two compartment cars, six stockcars, 25 boxcars, 62 flatcars and two vans.

The excessive costs of building the Metabouchouwan Branch had precluded the rapid completion of the railway into Chicoutimi.

METABETCHOUWAN BRANCH

A branch line was built from St Andre Junction, which was 159 miles north of Quebec eastward to Metchouwan eleven miles to service a new pulp mill of the Metabetchouawn Pulp Company. The pulp company operated this branch line using their own locomotive and cars.

ROBERVAL WHARF BRANCH

The railway company in September 1904 built a one mile spur from Roberval Station to the Government Wharf located on Lake St John.

GOSFORD BRANCH

The Gosford Branch extended from Lorette to the Clark Settlement in the Riviere aux Pins Valley 8.75 miles. It was opened for service on August first, 1907. The locomotive drawing the official party over the new branch line was the E. Beaudette, engine No. 1, which according to accounts at the time was the first to run over the old Quebec and Gosford Wooden Railway back in 1872. Speeches were made about how the railway was built and it was appropriate that the speeches paid tribute to all who had an early connection with the railway. The old route had been abandoned when the railway built to St Raymond.

LOWER LAURENTIAN RAILWAY-BAS LAURENTIDE

The Lower Laurentian Railway ran from St Tite Junction on the Canadian Pacific Railway to Riviere a Pierre on the Quebec and Lake St John Railway for thirty-nine miles. A small half mile spur ran from St Tite Station to the Laurentides Saw Mill.

The railway was chartered as the St Lawrence, Lower Laurentian and Saguenay Railway Company. It changed its name in 1888 to the Lower Laurentian or Bas Laurentide. The railway was completed November the ninth, 1891. Early in February 1895 the railway was leased to the Quebec and Lake St John Railway for three years. It provided the Quebec and Lake St John Railway an entrance to the forest and waterpower rich St Maurice River Valley.

LA TUQUE BRANCH

In 1903 surveys were made for the construction of a branchline to La Tuque. This new branch would leave the Quebec and Lake St John Railway at milepost 85, near Beaudet and run west for thirty-five miles to La Tuque. The branch was intended to tap the La Tuque water-power estimated at 100,000 Horsepower and the timberlimits of the Upper St Maurice River. A. E. Doucet the Chief Engineer reported that the surveys showed that construction would not be difficult and the gradients and curvature would be moderate. The company was promised a subsidy of \$3,200.00 per mile from the Provincial and Federal Governments. Construction started in 1904 at a point on the Jeanet River, that was later named La Tuque Junction. One mile of track was laid by the end of 1904.

The rail used on the La Tuque branch came from the mainline, as the older and lighter rail was being replaced with heavier seventy pound steel rail on the Q&LSJ mainline.. By mid 1905 the grading was completed for six miles and the bridges and culverts completed for another ten miles. Track was laid for thirty miles by 1907.

The contractor was J. Paquet, and the subcontractors were O'Brien and Fowler.. The work exceeded the estimates, owing to the great deal of rock found where test pits had led the engineers to expect only earth and gravel.

The contractor was running regular trains to the end of track, supplying men and material to the railway construction but to many newly created lumber camps, but also to the new and large National Transcontinental Railway mainline that had started construction from La Tuque. While one historian points to the building of this branch to solely supplying the NTR construction camps. The natural resources of the area were plentiful reason. The water power at La Tuque was sold to a syndicate of pulp and paper manufacturers from the United States who also paid the Railway Company their land grant of

158,000 acres of timberland. The same purchasers had also acquired a large area of timber limits on the St Maurice River and contracted to furnish the railway with not less than 4000 carloads of freight annually for the next nine years.

The official opening of the La Tuque Railway took place November 30, 1907, when a special train carried a party of Directors, Politicians and Business men over the railway.

The La Tuque branch started at La Tuque Junction M.P. 78 and ran to La Tuque at the head of navigation of the St Maurice River, forty miles. The route had the railway crossing the Batiscan River and ran up the Jeanette River then turning up one of its tributaries crossing Lake Wayagamack and following the discharge of that lake into the St Mauricer River at La Tuque.

Railway and Shipping World	January 1904, p.7
	September 1904. P. 315
	September 1905, p. 243
	September, 1907. P. 393

CANADIAN NORTERN QUEBEC; QUEBEC CITY IMPROVEMENTS.

In 1918 the Canadian Northern built a new station for the joint use of the CNoQ. And the Quebec and Saguenay that was using the old QM&C- Quebec Railway Light and Power station. The first bridge had been built by the Quebec and Lake St John Railway in 1890 and had seen use by both the Q&LSJ and the electric cars of the Quebec Railway Light and Power Company. The bridge after nearly thirty years was extremely antiquated and had been condemned since 1909 as being too light for the amount of traffic rolling across it. The first trains ran over the new "Sainte Anne Bridge" April 7th, 1919.

Canadian Railway and Marine World, 1918, p. 335, 340, 1919 p.128,
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JAMES BAY AND EASTERN RAILWAY

The James Bay and Eastern Railway gave the Quebec and Lake St John- Canadian Northern Railways the authority to build a railway five hundred miles from the St Lawrence River through the Saguenay Region to the Ontario Border. This charter was used in 1912 to start building a railway from Roberval on the Q&LSJ eighteen miles along the shore of Lake St John to St Felician. The Provincial Government gave 4000 acres per mile. While the grading for thirty miles were completed by July 1912 the rails were not laid until four years later. Steel rails finally reached St Felician, and a wye was built for turning engines. Train service from Chamford Junction to St Felician began December 3rd, 1917.

Canadian Railway and Marine World, January 1918, p. 12.

SAGUENAY DEVELOPS

With the major developments of hydro-electric power plants and aluminium smelters the Saguenay was undergoing major industrialization. The Canadian National Railways had to upgrade the capacity of the old Quebec and Lake St. John route. A new freight yard was built at Jonquiere in 1926. The yard had a capacity of 250 cars this was increased to 800 cars. A new six stall brick roundhouse serviced by an 85 foot turntable. New storehouse, ash-pit and a 200 ton coaling plant.

The Belle River Bridge was completely replaced by a steel truss bridge. Also the 200 foot timber trestle across the Rat River at Chicoutimi was replaced by three spans of reinforced concrete and one steel span. As part of this work the Rat River was excavated to create a new River channel.

Canadian National Railways purchased second hand from the Boston and Albany ten USRA light 2-10-2 Santa Fe type steam locomotives for operation north on the former Canadian Northern Quebec lines. The former Quebec and Lake St John Railway was transformed into a heavy duty mainline railway serving the now industrialized Saguenay Region.