



CN LINES

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**FREE
ONLINE
PREVIEW**

CN's Rebuilt F-Unit Fleet, Part 1 ● Sixty Years at Edson, Alta. ● CNR Class H-6-d/g 4-6-0 Locomotives
June 1950 Excursion to Coboconk and Lindsay, Ont. ● CN's Prince Edward Island Operations in 1977

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Cover

— © Mark A. Perry

Assigned to VIA Train 95, the *Hudson Bay*, CN F7Au units 9171 and 9168 reflect the setting sun at Churchill, Man., on December 30, 1986.



Coming soon in CN LINES

- CN's Rebuilt F-unit Fleet, Part 2
- Plow trains on Prince Edward Island
- Last days of Toronto's Sunnyside station
- *Burrard and Bedford* – The untold story
- Grand Trunk's New England stations
- Diesel Study: GE 44-tonner
- Canadian National's hump yards

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The Canadian National Railways Historical Association (formerly known as the CN Lines Special Interest Group) is an international self-sustaining operational research and historical society that exclusively focuses on the Canadian National family of railways and actively promotes the art of modelling them accurately. The group was founded in 1989 by Mike Christian with the assistance of the late Art Thomas and volunteers from across North America. The CNRHA is not affiliated with Canadian National, and no endorsement by CN is implied or intended. Trademarks are used under license granted at the time the CN Lines SIG was organized. The focus of the CNRHA is on all constituent parts of the Canadian National system during periods of CN ownership. Except as background, it normally will not include coverage of lines prior to amalgamation into CN, nor components after they have been sold or leased to other operators.

CN LINES magazine is published at least two times per year and is available by direct mail or at hobby shops.

Please direct correspondence about the CNRHA to the pertinent volunteer listed on the masthead. You can also find us on the internet at: www.cnrha.ca. All material submitted for publication in *CN LINES* should be sent to the Editor and is considered gratis. Submitted material may be edited for style, content and length, and will be returned if requested. Proper credit will be given when material is published. Contact the Editor for written permission to reprint material from *CN LINES*.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

Covid-19

This issue of *CN LINES* was printed and distributed during the Covid-19 pandemic, and we thank the management and staff of Premier Printing in Winnipeg, and Canada Post, for their efforts during this unprecedented situation.

Many of CNRHA's retail distributors have suffered heavy financial losses due to government-ordered business closures, and we encourage readers to support these shops with on-line purchases, wherever possible, until they are able to reopen their doors and resume full, normal operations.

With train shows and similar gatherings also cancelled during the pandemic, we encourage readers to renew their CNRHA memberships on-line, using the secure electronic payment methods noted on page 2.

John R. Davis

CNRHA's long-serving New England correspondent, John R. Davis of South Paris, Maine, passed away on February 10, 2020, at the age of 87. Although never employed by the Grand Trunk (New England Lines), John was the grandson of the GT agent at Lockes Mills, Maine, and grew up observing, riding and even firing GT steam locomotives as a boy. His knowledge of GT steam was encyclopedic. Many of John's records are now at the Island Pond (Vt.) Historical Society.

Harry R.J. Home

A legend in CNR steam locomotive preservation and operation, Harry Home, passed away in Jasper, Alta., on March 30, 2020. He was born on May 27, 1933, into a CNR family, and had a long career with the railway in his father's footsteps. Harry was a long-standing member and contributor to the CNRHA. He was the driving force behind the initial preservation of CNR U-1-f Mountain-type engine No. 6060 as a static display in Jasper, and its subsequent restoration to service in Alberta after CN ended its steam-excursion program in the early 1980s. Harry's proudest moment probably was when he brought "his girl" to Vancouver from Jasper to participate in Steam Expo in 1986.

CNRHA's U.K. Representative

Since 1996, Robert H. Tucker of Surrey, England, has served as an important link between CNRHA and our members in Great Britain, coordinating membership applications and renewals and distributing a bulk transatlantic shipment of each issue of *CN LINES* for individual forwarding via the Royal Mail. Bob has had to retire from that role, and we extend our deep gratitude for his efforts on behalf of CNRHA.

Bob's retirement leaves a vacancy in our far-flung operations, and may alter how *CN LINES* is distributed to U.K. members. Any readers residing in the U.K. who have an interest in taking on this volunteer role are invited to contact Chairman Al Lill.

Updated Back Issues DVD

An updated third edition of CNRHA's popular back-issues DVD is now available, and includes searchable PDF copies of every *CN LINES* issue through Vol. 19 No. 4, as well as bonus content. Price is \$41.95 post-paid, or only \$25.00 for members owning a previous edition; order form at cnrha.ca.

Photographic collections

Two photographers have made recent contributions to CNRHA's growing archive of Canadian National images.

Sincere thanks are extended to George Bergson and Carl Ehrke for their generous support of CNRHA's publications.

V19N4 Errata and Addenda

Don McQueen advises that "CNR 6520 was delivered along with 6620 from GMD London to London East on March 12, 1957." In Don's photo on p. 26, FP9A No. 6520 was powering Train 5, the *La Salle*, beside Bath Road at Collins Bay, Ont., west of Kingston.

At the Shops

Reservations are being taken for a limited rerun of Sylvan Scale Models kit HO-1051, a CNR 1929 40-foot single-sheathed box car. These cars were very common from 1929 through to the 1980s, hauling many commodities from grain to machinery and everything between. They lasted in grain service until 1983, and in CN work service into the 1990s. Priced at \$50.00, kits will be offered with wood or steel doors, Tichy ladders, Sylvan decals and Bettendorf truck sideframes. They do not include wheels or couplers. Send reservation requests or questions to: mlwm420@gmail.com.

Monashee Laser Engineering has HO kits of CNR structures, including three variants of a Third Class station, a late post-1920 Fourth Class station and a 40,000-gallon enclosed wooden water tank. More CNR structures are in the works; information at www.monasheelaserengineering.ca.

Rapido has announced two HO diesel locomotives of interest to CN modellers, the CLC H16-44 and MLW M-420. ♦



Faced with illegal blockades of key routes in February 2020, CN was forced to shut down much of its network in Canada — with stranded trains parked in yards and on main lines, such as these four near Belleville, Ont., on February 11 — until the federal government intervened, and, soon after, the growing threat of the Covid-19 virus halted the protests. Thankfully, CN has been able to maintain its crucial supply-chain role during the pandemic. —John Soehner

CN's Rebuilt F-

by Marc Simpson with Mike Chandler



CN's fleet of F3A, F3B, F7A and F7B locomotives was an iconic element of the railway's motive-power mix from the late 1940s through the late 1980s. CN was one of the few railways to rebuild its F-unit fleet to extend the locomotives' useful lifespan (typically around 20 years), and was among the last of the major North American railways to roster these units in its active fleet. The rebuilt F-units were common sights across western Canada throughout the 1970s and 1980s. They worked in Ontario later in their careers, in both freight and snow-plow service, and they could also be seen in the Vancouver area in transfer service.

They were also commonly used on CN and, later, VIA Rail Canada passenger trains, ranging from the *Super Continental* to the *Hudson Bay* and *Skeena*. If you model

CN in the 1970s and 1980s, you will need to have a few of these units in your fleet.

I model CN in northern Manitoba in the 1980s, so F7Au and F7Bu units are an important element of my locomotive roster. As part of building the models, I carried out research that turned into a prototype and modelling clinic that I presented at the 2018 Railway Modellers Meet of B.C. (www.railwaymodellersmeetofbc.ca) in Burnaby, B.C. This article is based on that clinic.

History

CN experimented with diesel-electric equipment in the 1920s and early 1930s, and bought a small number of ALCO and EMD diesel switchers before and during World War II, before acquiring its first production-line diesels for heavy-duty

mainline service — EMD's F3 series — in 1948. A group of four F3A and two F3B units (operated as two A-B-A sets) became CN's first cab and booster locomotives, and these were joined by another 98 freight-service F-units in CN and Grand Trunk Western service by the time the last one, CN F7A No. 9142, was delivered in 1952. CNRHA's *Canadian National Railways Diesel Locomotives*, Volumes 1 and 2, describe the origins of the CN and GTW F-unit fleets and the 1970s rebuild program, and Jim Brock's article in *CN Lines* Vol. 9 No. 2 covers the original F-units' dispositions.

Rebuild program

By the early 1970s, CN's F3 and F7 units were reaching the end of their useful lifespans. However, instead of retiring

unit Fleet

Part 1



these workhorses and purchasing new locomotives, CN elected to rebuild 40 of them (29 F7A, one F3A, and ten F7B) to extend their service lives.

CN operated both rebuilt and as-built F-units briefly in the early 1970s, with the last of the original units retired by 1975.

In the early 1980s, CN modified nine rebuilt F7Au cab units into B-units by removing the cab equipment, painting over the windows and number boards, as well as installing a new fuel tank. These were known to railfans as “Beetles”. This second rebuild program was the last gasp for CN’s F-unit fleet.

CN’s F7Au fleet was reaching the end of its serviceable life by the late 1980s. Many were stored during traffic downturns as they were becoming mechanically unreliable. The requirement to add RSC

ABOVE This group of CN diesels, on the Lac la Biche Subdivision at Egremont, Alta., on May 27, 1985, includes one of each major type of rebuilt F-unit — from left to right, an F7Au; a booster converted from an A-unit, with blanked cab windows (not part of the original rebuild program); and a relatively rare F7Bu. Road numbers applied in white were standard; black numbering on F7Bu No. 9194, shown here, was an exception, applied in error to this side of the locomotive only. —Lawrence Priest

equipment to all locomotives by the end of 1989 sounded the death knell for many of the older units in service on CN at the time. The last F7Au I photographed in active service was No. 9172, in late 1988, so this unit has a special meaning for me. Most of the fleet was stored in 1988-89 and retired by the end of 1989.

CN commenced stripping the locomotives of parts in 1990. A select few of these locomotives are in museum collections throughout North America, and a few units are still extant in the dead line at equipment dealer NRE in Silvis, Ill.

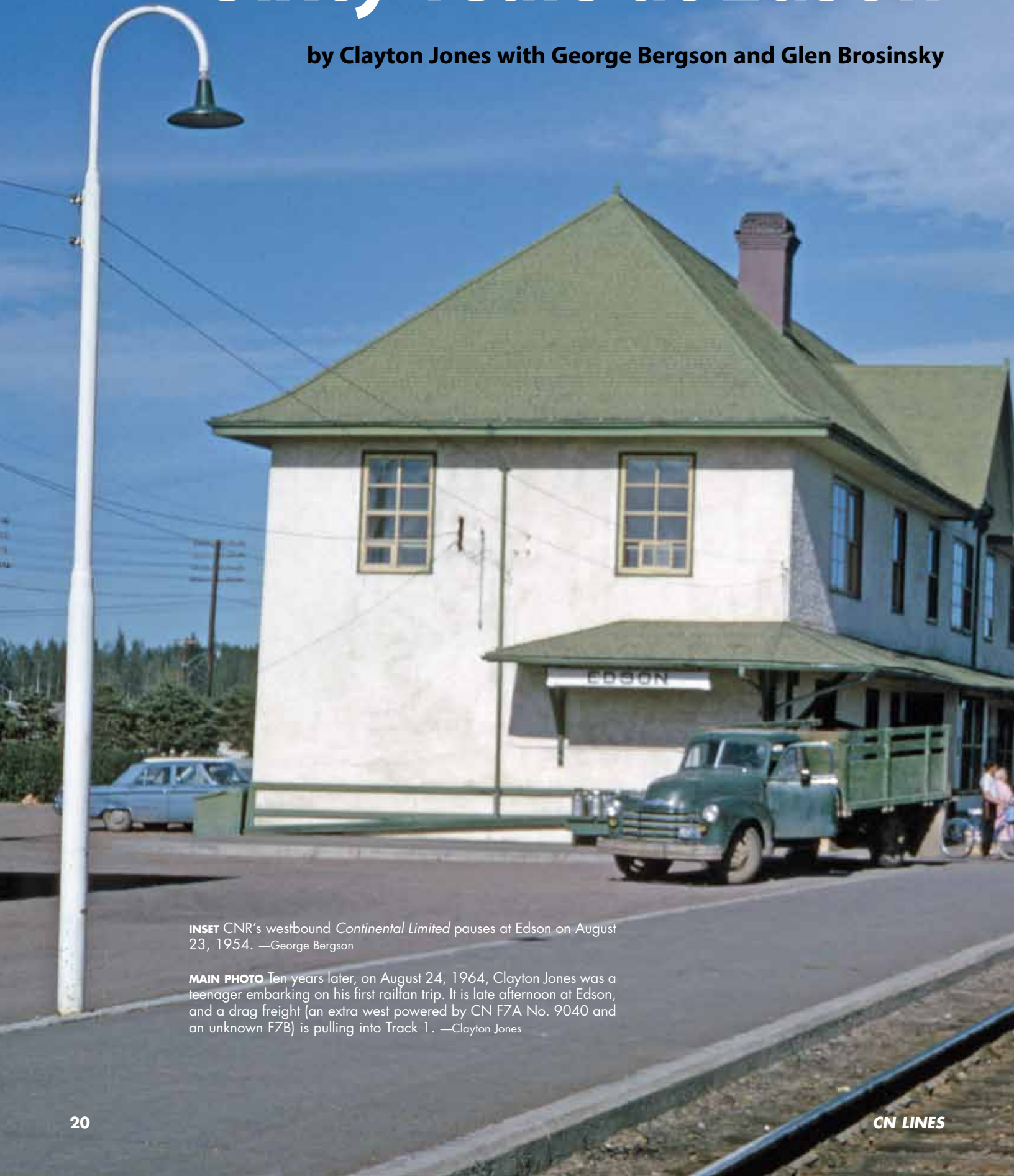
Prototype variations

Over the course of researching the rebuilt CN F-unit fleet, I compiled a list of the variations between the various locomotives (Table 1, pp. 10-11). There are some gaps in the data, most notably regarding details at the rear of the locomotives. Photos of uncoupled F-units from the rear are notably more difficult to locate than front-end views.

The information in the table can be used to plan how to accurately model any specific unit in the rebuilt fleet. Readers should bear in mind that many of the parts

Sixty Years at Edson

by Clayton Jones with George Bergson and Glen Brosinsky



INSET CNR's westbound *Continental Limited* pauses at Edson on August 23, 1954. —George Bergson

MAIN PHOTO Ten years later, on August 24, 1964, Clayton Jones was a teenager embarking on his first railfan trip. It is late afternoon at Edson, and a drag freight (an extra west powered by CN F7A No. 9040 and an unknown F7B) is pulling into Track 1. —Clayton Jones



The four photos in this article represent 60 years of CN photography, all at one location: Edson, Alta. Together, they illustrate significant changes in railway operations over the years.

On August 23, 1954, George Bergson was a teenager travelling from Edmonton to Vancouver aboard the Toronto section (Train 3) of the *Continental Limited* to begin his apprenticeship with the CNR.

He briefly got off the train at the Edson station stop to take a picture (above) of the locomotive on the head end. He also captured the edge of the water tank and the water plug next to the tracks with

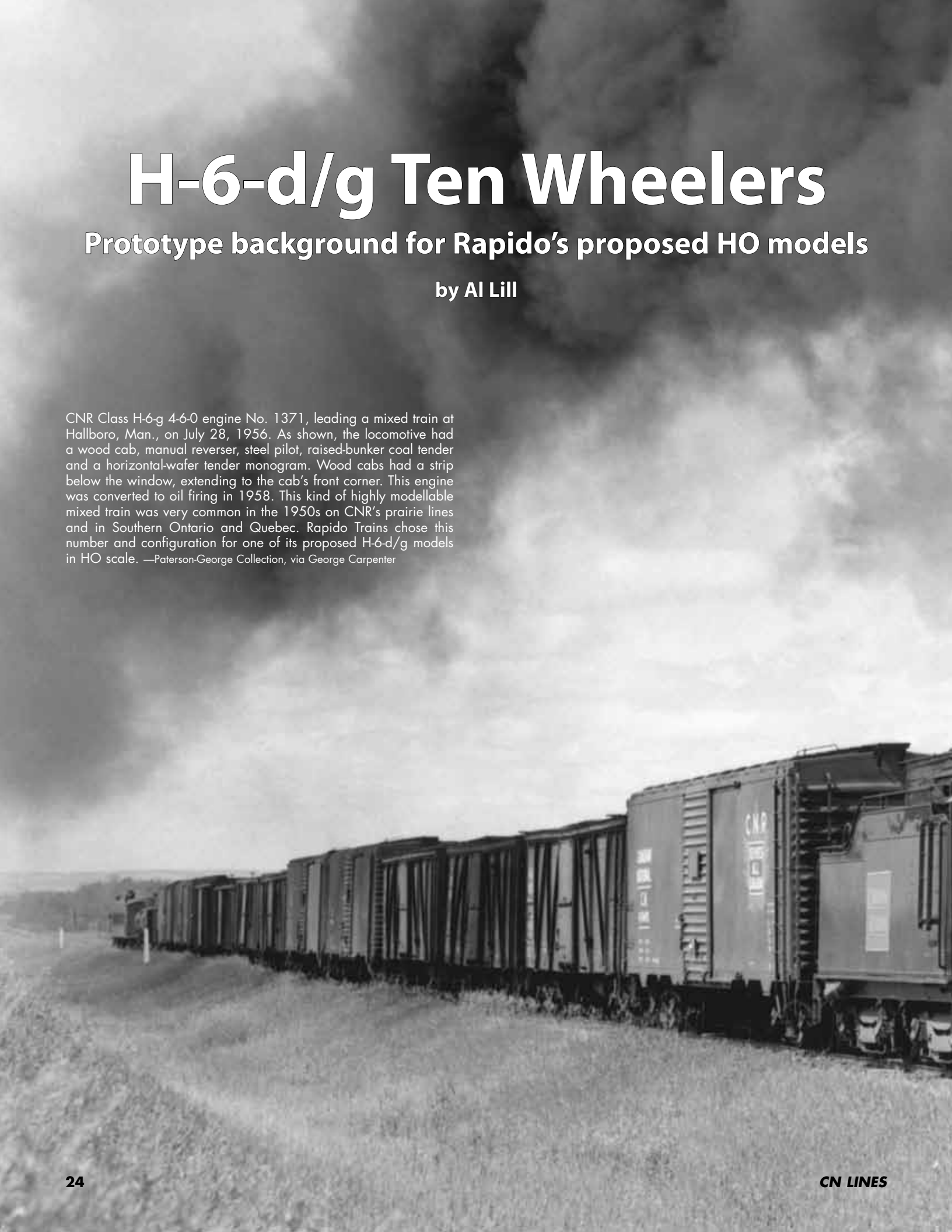


H-6-d/g Ten Wheelers

Prototype background for Rapido's proposed HO models

by Al Lill

CNR Class H-6-g 4-6-0 engine No. 1371, leading a mixed train at Hallboro, Man., on July 28, 1956. As shown, the locomotive had a wood cab, manual reverser, steel pilot, raised-bunker coal tender and a horizontal-wafer tender monogram. Wood cabs had a strip below the window, extending to the cab's front corner. This engine was converted to oil firing in 1958. This kind of highly modellable mixed train was very common in the 1950s on CNR's prairie lines and in Southern Ontario and Quebec. Rapido Trains chose this number and configuration for one of its proposed H-6-d/g models in HO scale. —Paterson-George Collection, via George Carpenter





With this article, I would like to encourage readers to choose or continue to model the steam-to-diesel era on the CNR, consistent with CNRHA's mandate of promoting the art of modelling the Canadian National family of railways accurately. A model of a CNR Class H-6-d/g Ten-Wheeler 4-6-0 engine alongside a fine CNR depot (scratch- or kit-built) could create a scene that fits any era on any layout. For example, CNR H-6-g No. 1392 is still operational at the Alberta Railway Museum (see p. 31).

CNR's H-6-d/g class could be found at several larger terminals, including Fort Rouge and Turcot, and shared the tracks leading from them with larger power until branching off to some very interesting small terminals. These would make great subjects for modest layouts suitable for any available space. To do that, you need at least one accurate, smooth-running locomotive model of a CNR steam engine — preferably equipped with all of the latest DCC technology for control, lighting and sound. The S Scale Workshop, a group of modellers in Southern Ontario and the Montreal area, has embraced this concept, with some very fine models of small and medium-size CNR steam classes, one of which is the H-6-d/g.

CN's Prince Edward Island Operations in 1977

by Keith Hansen and Ted Rafuse

Photographs by Keith Hansen

Early in 2017, railway historian and author Keith Hansen died unexpectedly. His widow, Lynn, has granted permission for *CN LINES* to publish some of Keith's railfanning experiences. This article records two trips he made to Prince Edward Island in 1977. In addition to family vacation time, Keith documented his railfanning adventures in text and images. His intent was to create

a photographic record of CN operations in the province at that time. Spurring his journeys, perhaps, was the uncertain future of rail service on the Island.

Lynn was aware of Keith's large collection of photographs, some of which he had digitized and filed onto his computer's hard drive. Some of those images are a part of this article. As Lynn and I examined Keith's paper files, a significant dis-

covery occurred. In an unlabelled binder, Keith had kept meticulous handwritten notes concerning CN's P.E.I. operations during the visits he made in 1977, 1978 and 1979. Those latter two visits, as well as his 1981 trip to Newfoundland, will be the subjects of future *CN LINES* articles.

On two different occasions in 1977, Keith visited Prince Edward Island to railfan; both visits were brief. His first

Awaiting potato loading, a string of MDT and NRC reefers is stored in the siding at Clarkin, P.E.I., near Montague Station in September 1977.







A 1950 CNR Excursion to

Travelling back in time with the Central Ontario Train Trip Committee

by Fred B. Furminger

In 1946, a number of railway enthusiasts from the Toronto area organized an informal group called the Central Ontario Train Trip Committee. This group's main purpose was to plan and sponsor one-day excursions from Toronto, with a focus on the Central Ontario region where many branch lines were accessible during the mid- to late 1940s. The Committee spon-

sored its first rail outing in 1947, according to photographer and author Robert J. Sandusky. Bob was unaware of the Committee's existence until he took part in his first rail excursion, on Saturday, June 17, 1950, going from Toronto to Coboconk and Lindsay, Ont., on a trip sponsored by this group in conjunction with Canadian National.

Planning trips, taking pictures

These trips usually included traversing multiple branch lines, with stops at stations and engine terminals in order for the excursionists to get off the train and photograph as many different locomotives as possible. For the most part, still portraits of steam locomotives were the practice back then. At that time, most cameras had



LEFT CNR Class K-3-b 4-6-2 Pacific-type engine No. 5592 (built by the Grand Trunk Railway in 1911 as GTR No. 217) has just arrived at Coboconk, Ont., on Saturday, June 17, 1950, with the Central Ontario Train Trip Committee's excursion train from Toronto. As passengers are milling about and getting their bearings, the engineer will give a couple of whistle toots and begin moving forward toward the turntable. The Coboconk Branch came to an end north of the station, making it necessary to turn the engine in order to proceed back south and on to Lindsay. Some of the excursionists are starting to gravitate toward the turntable as well, so they can watch the turning procedures along with the taking on of water, followed by the repositioning of rolling stock. The Coboconk station building was moved to a local park in 1995. —Robert J. Sandusky

ABOVE Just moments after the train came to a stop in front of the Coboconk station (built by GTR after an earlier structure was destroyed by fire in 1908), passengers were allowed off to view the proceedings. The excursion originated at Toronto Union Station, with stops in Coboconk and Lindsay before heading back to Toronto. The train included a CNR baggage car, two food-service cars and three coaches. —James A. Brown Collection

BELOW CNR No. 5592 has just arrived at Coboconk on June 17, 1950, with the COTTC's excursion train. Passengers are detraining while the crew plans the switching moves to reverse the train on this stub-end branch in order to continue on to Lindsay. —Robert J. Sandusky

Coboconk and Lindsay





Passengers arriving in Lindsay, Ont., aboard a June 17, 1950, excursion sponsored by the Central Ontario Train Trip Committee had the opportunity to visit the CNR engine terminal and yard, where these three wooden passenger cars were parked near the coal dock. Closest to the camera is No. 15747, built by Barney & Smith in 1903 as Canadian Northern coach No. 115. It became Canadian National No. 3227 in 1922, and was partially rebuilt as No. 15747, for use as a gas-electric trailer car, in 1931. It was scrapped at London, Ont., in 1957. (Lepkey and West, *Canadian National Railways Passenger Equipment*, 1995.) Elsewhere in the Lindsay yard that day, four derelict CNR Mogul-type steam locomotives attracted the attention of excursionists, as recounted by Fred B. Furminger beginning on page 40.—James A. Brown Collection

Coal-fired H-6-g 4-6-0 "Ten-Wheeler" engine No. 1391 on March 30, 1958, awaiting a CRHA excursion train from Central Station, Montreal, with steam power taking over for a day-long circle trip. This engine had a top-mounted bell and tilted-wafer monogram on the tender until being shopped for this excursion. Within a couple of weeks, it was off to Stratford, Ont., for conversion from coal to oil fuel, and then reassignment to CNR's Western Region, where it served at Prince Albert, Sask., into 1959. Rapido Trains has announced an HO model of this engine, with the earlier tilted-wafer tender monogram that No. 1391 wore for most of its service life. Beginning on page 24, Al Lill summarizes the other individual CNR H-6-d/g engines selected for Rapido's proposed model release. —Al Chione Collection, via George Carpenter

