

The Year On The Canadian National Rys.

By S. J. Hungerford, Acting President Canadian National Railways

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The year 1932 has witnessed the continuance of the world's greatest economic depression. The revenues of the railways, in common with those of other enterprises throughout the world, have suffered such severe declines that the most strenuous efforts have been required to cope with the situation. The necessity for drastic curtailment of expenditure has been fully appreciated by the Canadian National System and strict economy has been practised in all departments.

Since 1928, when an all time peak in railway revenues in this country was touched, the trend of railway earnings has been steadily downward. In 1929 Canadian National Railways gross revenues on the all-inclusive System showed a decline of \$13,000,000 from 1928; in 1930 the decline from the previous year amounted to \$48,000,000; 1931 saw a decline of \$50,000,000 from 1930 and to the end of 1932 the decline was about \$38,000,000 as compared with 1931. The total decline in receipts in 1932 as compared with 1928 amounts to approximately \$150,000,000 or 48 per cent. For every dollar which the Canadian National received in 1928, it received in 1932 only 52 cents.

To meet the situation economies have been effected through the elimination of unprofitable services, the reduction and reorganization of the supervisory staff, closing of stations and office buildings, laying off a large number of employees, including many previously carried on part time, and by such other measures as could be made effective without bearing too heavily upon the communities served. At the present time the staff is approximately 31 per cent below the 1929 level. The total payroll, on the other hand, is 39 per cent below the 1929 figures. The average number of employees and amount of compensation they received, from 1929 to the present, is as follows, the 1932 figures, of course, not being final:

1929, average number of employees 111,383. Compensation \$177,037,822.

1930, average number of employees 101,046; compensation 159,980,994.

1931, average number of employees 91,416; compensation 139,784,630.

1932, average number of employees 77,000; compensation 108,000,000.

In addition to staff reductions which have been made, all employees of the System have been subject to a decrease in rates of pay ranging from 10 per cent upwards. The economies thus effected has reduced the payroll account by more than \$10,000,000 per year. The supervisory payroll of the Canadian National System was considerably reduced during 1932 through the consolidation of operating districts and divisions; by the abolition of a number of positions and a general readjustment of salaries, so that the cost of supervision of the Canadian National System is currently at a level of approximately 35 per cent below that of 1929.

The elimination of a great many unprofitable passenger services has been brought about by a severe curtailment of passenger train miles. The reductions in passenger train miles and passenger car miles from the 1929 standard follow:

Reduction in 1930 passenger train miles 460,863; passenger train car miles 8,069,938.

Further reduction 1931 3,021,779; passenger train car miles 26,024,207.

Further reduction 1932 passenger train miles 4,775,156; passenger train car miles 23,804,709.

Total reduction from 1929 passenger train miles 8,277,798; passenger train car miles 57,898,854.

Some idea of the extent of these reductions may be gained by realizing that they are equivalent to wiping out practically one third of the passenger train service operated in 1929.

Examination of the operating expenses for the years in question show the results of successive measures of economy. In 1929 operating expenses were reduced by \$751,000 as compared with 1928 and in 1930, by which time it was evident that the depression was not to be short-lived, operating expenses were reduced by \$27,000,000 from those of the previous years: in 1931 there was a reduction of \$29,000,000 from 1930 and in 1932 a further reduction of \$43,000,000 from the 1931 figures, the operating expenses of 1932 being \$100,000,000 under 1928. The reduction of expenses on the Canadian National Railways by \$43,000,000 in 1932, with a decline in revenue of \$38,000,000 in the same period is somewhat striking. Good railway practice indicates that a reduction of about 70 cents in operating expenses is expected to accompany each dollar reduction in revenues. In 1932, for every dollar decrease in revenue from 1931, the Canadian National System reduced its operating expenses by \$1.13 and there must also be taken into consideration the heavy reductions in expenses made during the preceding years.

Despite the drastic economies put into effect, the operating efficiency of the Canadian National System has been maintained at a level consistently in accord with better times and in accord with that of other large railway systems on the North American Continent. In general, the indices of operating efficiency, by which the larger railway systems gauge their performance, show few declines on the Canadian National and generally show improvement. Some of the more important indices follow:

(For 10 months of 1932.)

1—Gross tons per freight train 1932, 1,471, 1929, 1,474, 1931, 1,311.

2—Net tons per freight train 1932 604; 1929, 642, 1931 596.

3—Gross ton miles per freight train hour—1932 23,361, 1929, 19,775, 1931 15,445.

4—Freight train miles per freight train hour (speed) 1932 15.9, 1929, 13.4, 1931 11.8.

5—Fuel consumed per 1000 gross ton miles (pounds) 1932, 115, 1929, 125, 1931, 146.

6—Fuel consumed per passenger car mile (pounds) 1932 13.0, 1929, 13.3, 1931 15.1.

One of the difficulties facing railway operating officers in times of falling traffic is that of keeping up the average loading of freight trains. As indicated by items 1 and 2, the freight train load on the Canadian National System has stood up well despite the severe decline in traffic offerings. In addition, the average speed of freight trains has been increased, and as shown, fuel consumption has been reduced,

which represents a direct economy to the railway.

In gauging measures of economy to meet declining revenues, the executives of a railway system must guard against jeopardizing the condition of the property. Facilities and equipment must be maintained on a standard of safety and efficiency. This factor has been carefully considered by the Canadian National Railways management and at the present time the property is in fit and proper condition to handle all traffic offering, safely and efficiently.

Operating expenses may be broadly grouped under three main headings: First, transportation expenses representing the cost of the movement of traffic and station services; second, maintenance expenses having to do with repairs to and renewals of the fixed property and rolling stock, and third, other expenses. Any reduction in transportation expenses is a true saving and represents "money in pocket," but too drastic cuts in maintenance expense are prone to result in the property becoming run down, to the detriment of service and the jeopardizing of safety. These proportions of the total reduction in expenses which can be attributed to reduced transportation costs and to reduced maintenance expenses on the Canadian National system, when compared with similar figures for Class 1 railroads of the United States during the same period, show that the policy followed by the Canadian National is substantially in accord with the best practice of other railways on the North American Continent. Using the expenses of 1929 as a criterion and apportioning the total reduction of expenses during the years 1930, 1931 and 1932, to the latest date at which complete records are available, among the above three main groups, the position of the Canadian National system, when compared with Class 1 railroads in the United States is shown as follows:

Percentage of total reduction in expenses compared with 1929.

Reduction in transportation expenses Canadian National Railways, 45.9; class 1 U. S. Roads 42.3.

Maintenance Canadian National Railways 51.2; class 1 U. S. roads 54.0.

Other expenses Canadian National Railways 2.9; class 1 U. S. roads 3.7.

Total Canadian National Railways 100.0; class 1 U. S. roads 100.0.

In the case of the Canadian National Railways, 51.2 per cent of the total reduction in expenses is attributable to reduced maintenance.

For Class 1 railroads of the United States, the corresponding figure is 54.0, which indicates that the relative operating condition of the Canadian National Railways today, when compared with that of 1929, is at least equal to, if not slightly better, than that of the larger railway systems of the United States.

The effect of depression on the ancillary activities of the Canadian National System has paralleled that on the railway proper. Express and telegraph services, hotels and the numerous other activities of the System have suffered shrinkages in income substantially equivalent to those of the railway. Drastic measures have been necessary and drastic steps have been taken. The reductions in expenses in the subsidiary services, 1932 from 1929, are as follows: Express service, 31 per cent; telegraphs 24 per cent; hotels 42 per cent; other subsidiary companies 32 per cent.

Severe curtailment of capital expenditures has been made. Following consolidation, expenditure of large sums on capital account was necessary for improvements in line

and equipment. Many of the properties now part of the National System were, prior to consolidation, in poor condition and others had hardly emerged from the construction stage. Newly developing districts required railway facilities and large expenditures were required if the fullest advantage of consolidation was to be secured. At present, however, only capital expenditures which cannot be avoided are undertaken. Not capital expenditures during the last few years were: 1929 \$91,550,000; 1930 \$66,575,000; 1931, \$34,287,000 and for 1932 the figures will be approximately \$2,100,000.

The policy which has been pursued in 1932 has permitted, on the combined Canadian National Railway system, including the Eastern Lines, an improvement in net revenue from operating account of nearly \$5,000,000 as compared with 1931, and this result has been achieved in the face of a decline in gross revenue of \$38,000,000. Items of income, revenue and expense, such as income from separately operated properties, rentals of joint facilities and car equipment, show considerable changes in detail: expenses in connection with the rental of car equipment in particular show substantial reductions.

An extraordinary item of expense which has militated against a more favorable showing in 1932 is the premium on U. S. funds. This charge was heavier in 1932 than in 1931, and, while there were some compensating advances to the company from the situation affecting sterling, the net loss to the Company during the year through the foreign exchange situation was \$4,500,000.

Reference has been made to the rigid curtailment of expenditures on new capital works, and the policy has also been followed, in accordance with good practice in times of declining business, of using, as far as possible, the stocks of materials on hand. These and other factors have brought about a reduction in the cash requirements of the railway covering the year 1932, and in consequence the Government will be called upon to furnish for the needs of the railway a much smaller sum than in 1931.

When the general upturn in business comes about the Canadian National System will quickly show, in increased net earnings and income, its resiliency and its power of recovery. Operating, as it has been in 1932, with about fifty per cent of its 1928 traffic, there is a definite limit to its capacity to produce impressive net earnings, no matter how economical may be the administration of the property.

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TIGNISH

Honorable Governor Dalton who has been visiting in Tignish returned to Charlottetown on Thursday.

On Wednesday last Mrs. E. J. McTague delightfully entertained at three tables of bridge. Two hours of interesting and snappy play was brought to a close by the awarding of prizes. The winners being Mrs. Colin Conroy and Mr. Urban McLellan (Major), Miss Marge Conroy and Mr. P. A. MacDonald (Minor). A delicious lunch was daintily served by the hostess, Mr. and Mrs. McTague have for their house guest Mrs. McTague's nephew, Mr. Edmond Hessan, Halifax, N. S.

The friends of Mr. Paul Buote, Tignish are sorry to learn of his illness in the City Hospital, Charlottetown.

Mr. Hector Buote and Mr. Walter Bernard, students at S. D. U. are spending their Christmas holidays at their respective homes in Tignish.

The Rev. Father McKenna, Lot 7 was in Tignish on Thursday.

At Tignish midnight Mass at St. Simon and St. Jude Church was celebrated by the Rev. Father McNeil. Almost the entire congregation received Holy Communion. The Rev. J. A. MacDonald preached an eloquent sermon on the gospel. Before Mass the boys' choir under the direction of Mr. Edgar Perry, their organist, rendered Christmas hymns. Violin obligato artistically rendered by Mr. Arthur Perry greatly augmented the choir. 8 a. m. Mass was offered by Rev. Father McNeil who also preached a very impressive sermon on the Feast of Christmas. 10.30 High Mass was celebrated by Rev. J. A. MacDonald who also preached. The choir under the direction of Mr. J. J. Chaisson, choir-master and Mrs. Albert Chaisson, organist rendered a special Mass.

Midnight Mass at Braeton, Lot 7 was celebrated by the pastor, the Rev. Phalan McKenna who also preached a very instructive and eloquent sermon on the Nativity of our Lord. Almost all those assisting at Mass received Holy Communion. After Mass the parishioners waited on their pastor and presented him an address which was read by Mr. Ronald McKenna very fittingly conveyed to the Rev. Father how much his labours were being appreciated and the esteem in which he was held by the people of the community. The Rev. Father gratefully acknowledged their tribute and thanked the parishioners of Braeton for their charity and generosity in his behalf.

The friends of Mrs. J. M. Grath are pleased to know that she is recovering from a serious injury recently sustained.

Mr. Wilbur Harper son of Mr. and Mrs. ohn P. Harper who has been employed in the study of engineering with a New York firm is at present visiting his parents at Tignish.—T

forest contains some 4,500 deer, and 73 brown and black bears. It is estimated there are 1,090 coyotes in the region—an increase over last year, and 46 mountain lions, also an increase. The bobcat total is also 785, a slight decrease. There were no wolves known to range in the area.

Men killed 275 coyotes, 10 mountain lions and 109 bobcats in the forest during this year.

Dr. Jahn Keeveranta, a prominent Finnish naturalist at present staying in London, said:

"I went to Wormwood Scrubs today to investigate reports I heard of this mysterious bird, and at 7.30 p. m. I saw a man and a young woman running. I ran after them and saw a bird flying off, about fifty yards away, silhouetted against a lamp. It had attacked them.

"I followed it and found it perched in a tree. I flashed a powerful torchlight on it and found it was a female albino owl; it was entirely white and of the mountain type. It would therefore have red eyes, but my torchlight blinded it for the moment and I could not see their color.

"It has probably come from Wales, or broken away from some private collection.

"The most probable theory is that the bird, suddenly finding its freedom, has become crazy with the noise of London and is attacking people, in fear."

He had passed the preliminary examination for the rank of detective sergeant, and was studying for his final examination.

When he failed to report for duty at Leytonstone Police Station when due inquiries were made at once, he was not found, however, till twenty-four hours later in Cornwall.

Morris, who was thirty and single, came from Wellington, Northants.

He had a promising career, and one of the first cases with which he was associated with a famous case of attempted blackmail, for which two men received long sentences.

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Mad Owl Terrifies London Motorists

LONDON, Eng., Jan. 2.—A mysterious bird which haunts the neighborhood of Wormwood Scrubs struck terror into the hearts of a woman motorist and three pedestrians one night recently.

Miss Catherine Grell was in a car with her fiancé, Mr. H. C. Leonard, of Culworth Street, St. John's Wood, when "a large white object" swooped down on them.

"The bird," said Mr. Leonard, "swooped down with a rush on to Miss Grell's shoulder. She gave a piercing shriek, and in the excitement I nearly lost control of the car."

Frightened By Cry

"I jammed on the brakes, and then I saw an immense bird, with a wing span of at least three feet, on her shoulder. Her cry must have frightened it, for a moment later it flew off.

"Although I have been driving for some years I have never experienced such a thrill. Miss Grell was so unnerved that she had to go to bed as soon as I had driven her home.

"Had the bird swooped down on us in a busy street we would probably have met with disaster."

Soon after it had terrified Miss Grell the bird swooped down on a dog which was being taken for a run about a mile from the North Pole Hotel. Its owner, Mr. John Harrison, of Median Road, Clapton, rushed to the dog's assistance and struck at the bird with his stick.

The bird thereupon attacked Mr. Harrison, who received severe scratches to his face and had his eyeglasses damaged.

Mr. Harrison said: "The bird must have mistaken my dog—which is a fox terrier—for a rabbit. It flung its wings round the body of the dog and pecked furiously at it.

"Piercing howls from the animal caused me to dash to its assistance, and though I struck out with my stick, the bird was considerably quicker in its movements than I was, and after scratching my face rather badly, knocked off my glasses.

"After the fight had lasted four or five minutes the bird flew off. It seemed to be an owl, brown on top, with light-colored feathers underneath."