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| Needham, R. J. | Riddington, A.  | Thorburn, C. D.  |
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| O'Brien, A.    | Robb, W. H.     | Tinkler, J. E.   |
| O'Brien, E. G. | Robider, H. J.  | Underwood, S. S. |
| Ogden, Jas.    | Rodgers, J. H.  | Wheatley, Jas.   |
| Partridge, R.  | Rodgers, R. C.  | Wheatley, J. H.  |
| Pope, A.       | Rosevear, W. H. | Whiteley, Geo.   |
| Potite, N.     | Sleigh, T.      | Wilson, Geo.     |
| Prevost, L. E. | Spidy, E. T.    | Booth, W. A.     |
| Primeau, L. L. | Stewart, W. H.  | and many others  |

Chairman :

I think you will all agree with me that we are fortunate this evening in having a paper that is of very great interest. The majority of you have probably read the paper, but those of you who have not, will I think, agree after listening to it, that it is exceptional. It is very educational. In this connection I might say that your Subject Committee this year, in working out a list of subjects to be presented at the various meetings, has had in view the selection of subjects that will be educational and can be discussed very freely. I think, as the various subjects are announced from time to time that you the authors of the papers are authorities in their respective fields. This paper to-night on "Car Records and Their Relation to Transportation and Accounting," has been prepared by Mr. J. A. Altimas, Assistant General Superintendent of Car Service, Canadian Pacific Railway, Montreal, I take great pleasure in introducing Mr. Altimas to you, who will read his paper.

Mr. J. D. Altimas :

Mr. President and gentlemen, in preparing this paper I have tried to make it simply a description of the work in the Car Record Office. I did not bring any figures or diagrams to explain the technical side of the question, but I can assure you that if any of you wish to go into the matter further Mr. Phelan, Car Accountant of the Canadian Pacific, or Mr. Balkwill, Car Accountant of the Grand Trunk, will be only too glad to show you at any time how it works out, if you will call upon them.

### “CAR RECORDS AND THEIR RELATION TO TRANSPORTATION AND CAR ACCOUNTING.”

In the early days of railroading, car records were not much in vogue for the reason that cars usually were confined to service on the rails of the owner. Shipments moving from one road to another were transferred at the junction point to cars of the receiving road. This condition obtained for many years, but with the expansion of industrial activities came through rates and through routes, and these aided by that all important factor—competition—gradually compelled all roads to permit their equipment to be loaded to points on other roads, with the understanding that the car and the contents would move through to destination without breaking bulk.

As cars commenced to move from one road to another, always subject to possible delays and diversions, it became necessary for car owners to keep a close tab on the movements of both home and foreign equipment. These same conditions made it necessary for the roads to get together and formulate rules and regulations to cover the interchange of equipment and to protect the accounting of car hire.

Up to June 30th. of the year 1902, the remuneration for the use of freight cars was on a mileage basis, i. e., so much for each mile a car moved. The rates varied according to special conditions and territories, but usually the rate for **common cars**, i. e., box, flat, coal and stock, was six mills per mile, while the rate for special class cars, i. e., refrigerator, tank, palace horse, etc., was  $\frac{3}{4}$ c. per mile. These rates were paid for both the loaded and empty movement, but when cars did not move, they did not earn anything. In those days we did not have any demurrage regulations, and as a result cars were delayed most unreasonably at unloading stations. Many of the railroads deliberately allowed empty cars to lie around waiting prospective loading to avoid empty mileage. Such delays were often to the great detriment of the car owners who had business available on their own roads, which they were unable to accept and move on account of shortage of equipment. In the early nineties, when the writer was chasing cars through New England and the New York and Pennsylvania territories, it was not unusual to find cars delayed under load for periods of two, three or even four months at a time, and the shippers or consignees did not consider this practice unreasonable, although they very seldom made much effort to justify it, simply stating that it was one of the risks incident to the transportation business. It certainly was cheap storage

for the shippers and consignees, although a most expensive proposition for the railroads, both in the matter of car supply and terminal facilities.

These conditions, which permitted excessive delays to car equipment, were mainly responsible for the stories, both told and published, of "lost cars." There is no doubt that many roads had considerable difficulty in locating their equipment in those days, principally due to the inadequate records kept by many of the roads, but since the advent of per diem as the basis of remuneration for the use of freight cars, we do not hear much about lost cars. Under Per Diem Rules the road receiving a car must account for it to the car owner at the current per diem rate from the date of its receipt up to the date it is delivered to the owner or to another road, or in the case of a destroyed car, up to the date it is reported as a "destroyed" car to the owner, in accordance with per diem rules.

We may take it for granted that in recent years the majority of the railroads, especially the larger roads, have been maintaining fairly good records.

Generally speaking, car records are maintained at all stations and contain everything there is to know in connection with the handling of the car and contents, including the charges assessed or collected while in the terminal. Apart from the accounting features these records show the following information:

Initials and number of car, kind of car, date and time of arrival, train reference, point of shipment and kind of commodity if a loaded car, date and time of notification to consignee of arrival of his shipment, date and time of placement, date and time of release, date and time car is forwarded, train reference, and, if car is loaded, kind of commodity and destination.

At stations where a great number of cars are handled there is also maintained a daily on hand report usually referred to as the yard check. This report shows the initials and number of the car, kind of car, on what track located and whether loaded or empty, and if held, for what purpose.

At stations where cars are interchanged with other roads, an interchange report is maintained which shows the initials and number of the car, kind of car, name of road to which car is delivered, date and time of interchange, name of billing station, name of destination station and kind of contents.

An index record for ready reference is also maintained at the larger stations.

The movements of all cars on any part of the road and on

foreign roads are recorded in the books of the Car Accountant, whose office is usually at headquarters. The basis of these records is the agents' interchange report, the conductors' freight or mixed train report and the foreign roads' junction report.

The interchange report now in use on all roads is authorized by the American Railroad Association and is known as the reciprocal form of report. The agent of the delivering road prepares the report in quadruplicate showing information for all cars delivered, and passes the completed report to the agent of the receiving road who checks the information shown thereon, and if he finds it correct, signs all four sheets, certifying to the receipt of the cars. He retains one copy of the report for his station record, sends one copy to his car accountant and returns two copies to the agent of the delivering road. The latter keeps one copy for his station record and forwards one copy to his car accountant.

The conductors' freight or mixed train report is not uniform on all roads, but the information usually shown includes: Initials and number of car, loaded or empty, kind of car, date of movement, name or number of station taken at, name or number of station left at, if loaded kind of contents, name or number of billing station, name or number of destination station. Some of the roads also include information covering tonnage rating, tare tons, contents tons, engine record, etc., for statistical purposes.

Under American Railroad Association Rules where a railroad delivers a foreign car to a connection, not the owner of the car, he is obligated to advise the car owner the name of the road the car was delivered to and the date of the movement and to show whether the car was loaded or empty. This is called the junction report. Roads which use the cut up system preserve the interchange slips for foreign cars delivered and send them to the car owners as the junction report. This saves the delivering road considerable work and gives the car owner a first hand record, avoiding all errors due to transcribing.

Practically all of the larger roads now use the cut up or self-transcribing system for conductors' train report and the agents' interchange report. Under this system the conductors' train report consists of one wide form giving all the information required, including an extra column for the date of the movement, also one narrow form, which is a duplicate of the wide form in so far as it refers to the initials and number of the car, number of station car is taken at and left at and date

of movement. This narrow form has punch holes about 2-16 of an inch between the lines to the left of the "initials" column for the use of the sorting clerks. These two forms are made at one operation by the use of carbon paper.

The information covering initials and number of cars, numbers of stations cars are taken at and left at, and the date of the movement must be written in for every car handled. Ditto marks must not be used. This is necessary on account of the forms being cut up. Each slip must show complete information covering the car referred to. For all other information called by the form ditto marks may be used wherever considered advisable.

The agents' interchange report consists of four wide forms giving all the information required, including an extra column for the date; also two narrow forms which are duplicates of the wide forms in so far as they refer to the initials and numbers of the cars, name of road delivered by and name of road delivered to, name of station at which delivery is effected and date of delivery. The narrow forms have punch holes, about 2-16 of an inch, between the lines to the left of the "initials" column for use by the sorting clerks. The narrow forms are of different colors—one pink for the use of the delivering road and one canary for the use of the receiving road. The pink indicates a delivery record, the canary a receiving record. The original and five copies of this report are made in one operation by use of carbon paper. The information covering initials and numbers of cars, name of road delivered to, name of station at which delivery is effected and the date of delivery must be written in for every car delivered. Ditto marks must not be used. This is necessary on account of the forms being cut up, and each slip must show complete information covering the car referred to. For the other information called for by the form ditto marks may be used wherever considered advisable.

These forms when completed by the agents and conductors are forwarded promptly to the Car Accountant's office where they are entered into the car record books.

The handling of these reports in the car record office is a systematic and interesting operation which I will endeavor to describe to you.

As soon as the mail is opened the reports are passed from the mail desk to the examining clerks who see that all the information called for by the form is properly entered, after which the narrow forms are separated from the wide forms. The wide forms of the conductors' train report are immedi-

ately turned over to the Statistical Department for their use, while the wide forms of the interchange reports are filed for ready reference. The narrow forms are then sorted, the ones only having one car being placed in one lot, those with two cars in another lot, those with three cars in another, and so on. These forms are then made up into packages from 200 to 300 per package, the forms showing the smallest number of cars being on top. This is done to enable the cutter to dispose of the blank slips as they come from the machine, and thus eliminate the unnecessary handling of blank slips by the sorting clerks. Interchange reports are given preferred handling.

When the narrow forms reach the cutter they are put through the machine, and as the slips leave the machine the cutter immediately separates the blank slips from the record slips and throws the blanks into a receptacle used for this purpose, thus eliminating the unnecessary handling of blanks by sorting clerks. These slips are placed in small boxes enclosed on three sides only and these boxes have their tare weight (equivalent number of record slips) stencilled on them so as to facilitate the weighing. These tare weights are checked occasionally to see that there is no variation. The boxes with the record slips are weighed, the correct weights taken, and they are then passed on to the sorting clerks. The machine used for this purpose is of the Advance Lever Type, and when the reports are of uniform size, with spacing and punch holes also uniform, there is practically no chance for mutilation of the slips.

The paper used in the reports is of uniform weight and when cut up the slips average about seventeen to the 1-16 of an ounce, or 272 per ounce. With a list of scale weights from 1-16 of an ounce to one pound it is a very simple matter to ascertain the actual number of record slips handled each day by the sorting clerks and the record clerks. A clerk weighs the slips as they come from the cutter and credits the various sorters with the actual number of slips handled by them. This clerk also weighs the slips turned in each night by the various record clerks and credits them with the correct number of record slips worked. An ordinary druggist scale with a single beam graduated 1-16 of an ounce to five ounces, capacity eight pounds, gives every satisfaction.

The sorting table is usually a high desk, the top being slightly raised towards the back, with two rows of spindles one inch apart, the second row being about seven inches behind the first. The spindles are usually made of brass and are about  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches high. There is a shoulder or collar on the spindle

about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch from the bottom and this part below the shoulder fits into holes bored in the top of the desk, which leaves about four inches of spindle above the desk. One or more spindles are allotted for each record and sufficient spindles to accommodate all records are looked after by one sorting clerk.

The spindles are a little less than 2-16 of an inch and as the record slips have a hole 2-16 of an inch punched to left of the initials column, the sorters slip them on to the spindles very rapidly, the only thing necessary being a knowledge of the various cars allotted to each spindle. Lists are prepared which show this information, and these are posted in suitable places on the sorting desk. Sorting clerks are educated to hold the slips in the right hand and sort with the left. When the slips are held in the left hand the fingers cover the initials of the cars and the handling is consequently slower. Sorting clerks generally handle about 26 to 30 slips per minute.

Some roads do not use spindles. Instead they sort into boxes, each box having a sufficient number of small compartments about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  by  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches to take care of the number of records operated.

The original sorting is done to suit individual requirements. Usually the first sorting is done in book order and the second in page order. In many instances, owing to the make-up of the book, a second sorting is not economical.

The junction records when received on the standard junction report form are transcribed by typewriter to the cut up form and are passed through the machine in the same manner as other forms and are then passed on to the sorters. Junction records received on the cut up forms are at once turned over to the sorters for handling.

At regular periods during the day the record clerks take or receive the record slips from the sorting desk and proceed to enter them in their books. By this method a record clerk does not have to handle any records except those which are to be entered in his book.

The record books are usually about 18 inches long by 17 inches wide. The home car record sheets are ruled about as follows:

One column about one inch wide for last account, one column about one inch wide for car number, then 31 columns 6-16 of one inch wide for the days of the month and one column about one inch wide to the extreme right for mileage or per diem purposes. Each page holds fifty cars and a book usually includes 5000 cars in numerical order. The home car record

usually is made up to take care of two months' records in order to avoid the necessary transferring of the records from one book to another.

The foreign car record sheets are ruled as follows:

One column about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch wide for the last account, one column about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch wide for initials, one column  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch wide for number, one column  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch wide for kind of car, one column  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch wide for per diem days earned, one column  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch wide for checking purposes, 31 columns  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch wide for the days of the month and three or four columns 6-16 of an inch wide for mileage purposes. Each page holds fifty cars and each book contains space for 5000 or 6000 cars of which 1500 to 1800 are actually in service at any one time. These books are made up to show cars in alphabetical road order and in numerical order and are indexed ready for ready reference.

The loose leaf principle for car records is generally used by the larger roads. They cost considerably less and can be manipulated to suit all conditions; especially is this true of the foreign car records where the number of cars handled fluctuates from month to month.

When the clerk is ready to enter records he first finds the space allotted to the car and then enters in the block which represents the date of the movement, the number of the station at which the car was taken and the number of the station at which car was left. Usually the number of the station at which car is taken already appears in the block and it is only necessary to enter the number of the station at which the car is left and a check mark drawn after the number of the station at which the car is left indicates the record is complete. Where the car moves empty, the pencil line drawn above the number of the station at which car is left indicates the record is complete.

In the case of interchange records, a receipt from a connecting road is entered by showing the symbol representing the road in the upper left hand corner of the block immediately followed by the number of the station. To indicate a delivery to a connecting road the symbol of the road is entered in the lower right hand corner of the block preceded by the station number. In practically all cases the number of the station already appears in the record and it is only necessary to enter the symbol.

A good medium hard pencil is used for entering records. Some roads use a black pencil to indicate a loaded movement and a red or purple pencil to indicate an empty movement.

Several of the larger roads use a black pencil exclusively and draw a line above the number of the station at which the car is left to indicate the car moved empty.

Home record clerks average about 300 entries per hour, whereas foreign record clerks average about 225 entries per hour.

Roads which do not use the cut up form of reports simply take the interchange reports, the conductors' train report and the junction reports from the mail desk, place them in packages of suitable size for handling and pass them around the several record clerks who enter the movements direct from the reports to the books. Under this method each clerk must examine every car shown in the reports in order to pick out the records which are to be entered in his record. This takes considerable time and labor. Any road which handles more than six or seven records will find it advisable and economical to use the cut up form of reports.

With a record of every movement made by cars on his own rails, with the interchange record of cars delivered to and received from connections and with the junction record of his cars furnished by foreign roads, a car owner has a complete record of every one of his cars during each month of each year. This enables him to keep a close check on the handling of his cars by foreign roads and to check the earnings of his cars under any and all circumstances. He is also in a position to know what other owners' cars are doing on his rails.

Car records properly maintained and kept up to date are of great benefit and serve many purposes of the Transportation Department in addition to being the basis of the accounting for car hire.

The current records are used constantly:

1. To furnish records to the public in connection with shipments in which they are interested.

2. To furnish records to the Transportation Department to assist in tracing freight urgently required at destination or which may have been unduly delayed in transit or which may be required to be diverted in transit.

3. To furnish location of special class equipment, such as refrigerator, tank, potato, Eastman heaters, palace horse, special grain ears, etc., to enable the Car Service Department to keep them in the special service to which they are allotted or to move them to points where they are required, also to see that such cars are used to full advantage.

4. To furnish car movements, loaded and empty, to the Transportation Department to assist in tracing delays and

placing responsibility, and to the Claims Department to assist in locating overs and shorts and disposing of claims.

5. To check the handling of cars on foreign roads and thus overcome unnecessary delays and diversions.

6. To furnish weekly or monthly statements of the distribution of all classes of equipment by districts or divisions.

7. To furnish records of carloads transhipped in transit.

8. To furnish mileage, loaded and empty, made by special class cars or cars of any class.

9. To check the record of foreign equipment to see they are not unduly delayed or used contrary to Car Service Rules.

10. To check repair bills as to location.

These are the principal items but numerous inquiries of all kinds develop each day which can only be answered by reference to the car records.

A record clerk works on the average about six hours a day in entering records and about two hours a day in furnishing locations, movements and other information.

The car record is the basis of the car hire accounting system and the car records of foreign equipment handled are usually turned over to the Accounting Department about the tenth day following the close of the month. The first duty of the clerks on account is to ascertain what records are incomplete, i. e., what cars are short an interchange receipt or delivery and to check back against the interchange reports to see if such records were skipped by the record clerks. The second operation is to extend the number of days each car was on the rails, and where there is an incomplete record, to list the initials and number of the car so as to aid the correction staff in completing the records.

Where a missing delivery is involved per diem is usually allowed up to the date car is last reported moving. In the case of a missing receipt per diem is allowed from the date car first moved. When the record has been completed, the balance of the per diem, if any due, is allowed in a subsequent month's report.

After the per diem days have been extended, a per diem report is prepared for each road, showing the car number and the number of days earned and same is forwarded to the car owner, within forty days from the last day of the month in which the per diem was earned. On receipt of the per diem report by the car owner he enters in the record opposite each car the number of days per diem allowed by each road, and after all the per diem reports have been entered, if his records indicate a shortage, he has the privilege of making claim

against the road which, according to his records, has short-paid the per diem. Such claims to be valid must be issued and handled in accordance with the rules.

In addition to preparing reports for per diem earned currently, reports are also prepared to cover errors and omissions in per diem reports of previous months, to cover switching reclaims, to cover Rule 14 reclaims, namely, cars held by one road on account of inability of another road to receive and to cover reclaims due to special conditions.

Under Per Diem Rules, per diem must be paid by a road using a car to the car owner for each and every day car is in service on that road, but where a road handles a car in terminal switching service for another road it is entitled to an arbitrary reclaim from the carrier road of an agreed number of days not to exceed five for each car handled in such service. Per Diem Rule 15 also provides that where a road holds cars on account of the inability of another road to receive them, the holding road is entitled to reclaim from the road on whose account the cars were held the full amount of per diem involved, always provided that due notice is given in accordance with the rules.

The Per Diem Rules Agreement, to which practically all American and Canadian roads subscribe, is promulgated by the American Railroad Association and lays down rules to govern every phase of per diem accounting. These rules in their original form were adopted and made effective on July 1st, 1902. Since that date there have been changes from time to time in the rate to take care of the increased cost of owning and operating a car. At the present time the rate is 90c. per day and many roads claim this rate under present conditions is not sufficient compensation to take care of the capital and maintenance charges. The main objection to the rules in their original form was that no penalty was provided for the non-payment of per diem earned, and as a result the car owner was put to considerable expense to collect what rightly belonged to him. On July 1st, 1913, a penalty of 5c. per car per day was made effective when per diem was not paid to the car owner within six months from the last day of the month in which the per diem was earned. At first this rule brought about considerable improvement, but it did not accomplish what was expected of it. To meet this situation, which was the weak spot in the Per Diem Rules Agreement, revised rules with severe penalties for non-payment within a reasonable period, were made effective on March 1st, 1920. The next few months will show just how these regulations will work out.

The Per Diem Rules have done more than anything else to force the railroads to keep proper car records. While it may be true that the cost of accounting for car hire under Per Diem Rules is much greater than under the mileage plan, yet I doubt very much if you could find a dozen railroad car owners who would agree to return to the old method of settlement for car hire on a mileage basis.

Under the Per Diem System a car owner knows exactly what his cars earn and methods are provided to permit of a proper accounting, whereas, under the mileage plan the car owner had no means whatever of checking the earnings of his cars on foreign roads and had virtually to accept whatever was allowed. In the old mileage days many cases of deliberate dishonesty in accounting were developed and the conditions helped a great deal in the agitation which was carried on in favor of the adoption of the per diem system.

In conclusion I may add that car records to be of value must be properly maintained and kept up to date. This can only be accomplished by the hearty co-operation of all concerned and in the preparation and handling of the reports and the records. In the Car Accountant's Office surprise corded in the books. With this system the clerks soon realize that they must do their work properly or make way for others who will. The secret of the whole transaction is system and checks are used to a great extent and with good results to ascertain if the correct and complete information is being re-supervision.

Chairman :

Gentlemen, we have listened to a most instructive paper, which is now open for discussion. There may be those here to-night who do not feel themselves in a position to discuss the paper from a technical standpoint, but there are those of us here who can ask questions, and I feel sure that Mr. Altimas will be only too glad to answer any questions put to him. The paper is now open for discussion.

There was one feature mentioned by Mr. Altimas on page four of his paper about the foreign roads reporting cars to the owners. I should like to ask how long it takes for the owning road to get a report from the foreign road on whose line the cars are running.

Mr. J. D. Altimas :

That will vary according to the location of the office handling the records. For instance, the record of a car de-

livered by the Canadian Pacific to the Wabash at Detroit. The interchange report covering this movement would be received in the Car Accountant's office at Montreal on the second morning after the delivery had been made. The movement would be entered into the record during that day and the junction card or slip would be delivered to the mail room on the same evening. The car owner, if within reasonable distance, would receive the report on the fifth day following the date of movement of the car.

On the other hand, if a Canadian Pacific car was delivered by the Santa Fe Road to the Southern Pacific at some point on the Pacific Coast, the Canadian Pacific would probably not get the record of that movement until ten or twelve days after the date of the movement.

Mr. Norman Holland:

With this very complete system of car accounting how is it that cars get lost?

Mr. J. T. Altimas:

I will answer that by saying that nowadays cars are not lost. When the record of a car is not available, it usually means that the clerk who is looking after the car is not doing his duty. Of course, a car may be actually in Montreal to-day, whereas, the record would indicate that it is still at Toronto. This comes from the fact that the reports upon which the records are based are handled by railroad mail from the points where cars are handled to the car record office.

In some cases the agents or conductors fail to report cars which have moved, but the record office takes up with the delinquents and obtains complete records. Sometimes it is necessary to have the car tracers undertake this work of securing outstanding records and at the same time remedy the difficulty by instituting methods to suit the conditions obtaining at those points, or by arranging for a change in the staff which sometimes is necessary.

We do have considerable difficulty with cars used in construction service. The part of the line under construction is usually operated as a separate road. Cars are moved to out of the way places; in fact, they are sometimes used as back-ground for the scenery. If they get off tracks they are lost sight of, but a check of the local records will indicate where a car is or what has become of it.

I remember some years ago our records indicated several cars seriously delayed at Nelson, and on taking the matter up

with the local agent we were unable to get any trace of the cars. It occurred to us that the cars might have slipped off the wharf or off barges into the lake, and as result of our investigation we found nine cars on the bottom of the lake.

Sometimes cars go into shops and are dismantled, but those handling the work fail to keep a record of the transaction, or fail to make report to the Master Car Builder's Office.

When the records are in good shape and tracing is done promptly, even though reports are missing, it is quite easy to get the exact location or disposal of the cars involved.

Mr. W. T. Hawes :

I would like to ask Mr. Altimas to tell us something about the personnel of the staff outside of the handling of the cars, and the service given where enquiries are made relating to cars.

Mr. J. D. Altimas :

We have difficulties every day in the week. For instance, a man has a car of potatoes coming in. The market is going up. He is anxious to obtain delivery, and should the car move behind schedule, invariably he blames the railroad if he cannot get it and dispose of it before the market declines. The record based upon mail reports gives a good idea of the location of the car, but in the case of perishables or high class freight, usually termed "Red Car Freight," we receive telegraphic advices of the movement and know exactly where the car is at all times.

Mr. W. T. Hawes :

It was the personnel in the office I was referring to. I wanted to ask where it was not possible to get civility when making enquiries about cars.

Mr. J. D. Altimas :

Speaking for my own office, I may say that we have very few complaints in that respect. We have several telephones in the office, and any person calling up can get the record of a car without any trouble.

In the old days our records were not always up-to-date and we did not have the Red Card Telegraphic System in effect. While we could furnish a fairly good record based upon the reports received by train mail, that did not satisfy the consignees. They would tell us very plainly they were not interested in knowing where the car was last reported. They

wanted to know where the car was at that very moment and when it would be delivered at destination. Quite frequently the consignees would express themselves rather forcibly, sometimes in a personal way, but as a rule, the boys know how to hold their tempers, even when under provocation that would tempt them to let loose. Of course, there are some exceptions.

Mr. E. J. McVeigh:

It occurs to me sometimes that we worship a little too frequently and too long at the shrine of the goddess of "Things As They Ought To Be," and not quite so much at the shrine of the goddess of "Things As They Are." You will remember that last year we had a paper from Mr. Norman Holland, at which time he lectured on varnish. He showed us a number of pictures and gave a very good lecture, and when he got through you thought the world was full of good varnish, but suddenly it would occur to you "Where did that varnish come from that gave us trouble last month," and that would get you back to the ground again. The same thing applies in relation to the car record business. The system appears to be perfect, when suddenly you remember that you asked for a car record a couple of weeks ago and got a record that was three weeks old, and they did not touch the car within three hundred miles of where it actually was. We all have to admit that the Car Service Department is a "necessary evil." I apply that expression because the railways say the same thing about the Supply Department. It is true we would not want to get along without the Car Service Department, although it does limp on one foot at times. But so do many other things men try to do and on the whole I think the paper all right.

Chairman:

I may say, with all due respect to Mr. McVeigh's opinion, that I have had occasion to call on Mr. Altimas' department on a number of occasions during the past few months, and I cannot say that it limped on one foot. The information received from his has enabled us to obtain quick movement of material upon several occasions he sent men out to follow up the cars, thereby enabling us to keep men in our shops who otherwise we would have had to lay off, and production would have suffered.

Mr. H. A. Balkwill:

I did not come here with the expectation of being called

upon, I am not a public speaker and have not prepared any remarks.

I would just like to say, however, that I think Mr. Altimas has covered the subject thoroughly, although perhaps he did not dwell enough on the troubles of the Car Accountant.

It has been inferred by some of the speakers that the Car Accountant's office sometimes limps as regards supplying information, but my experience is that the lack of information is caused through failure of the Car Accountant to receive proper reports, and we often give our friends in other departments a helping hand when they appear to be in trouble and start them on their way to the desired goal with two strong legs to walk on.

It is apparently easy to transpose car numbers or to omit cars from reports, and it must not be forgotten that all mistakes of yard and station staffs concentrate in the office of the Car Accountant, but when you get down to the real facts and consider the thousands of cars handled there are comparatively few mistakes, and very few in the Car Accountant's office, especially on Canadian roads.

There is a great deal of discussion which could be held in connection with this paper but would not be of interest to those who do not have to handle car accounts. Some of us of course, have our discussions privately at times in order to get down to bed-rock facts.

There is no comparison of the system in use to-day compared with the old mileage system; under the mileage system if you lost a few records you were that much better off, but to-day we get paid for every car and pay at the prevailing per diem rate for every foreign car handled. In fact, the whole system of "Car Accounting" in recent years has been put on a much more scientific basis, and I think the Car Service Department, which includes the Car Accountant's office, can hold up its head with any other branch of railway service.

Mr. George Wilson:

I have listened to this paper with pleasure and think it very interesting indeed. Mr. Altimas did not, however, elaborate on demurrage. We have all had some experience with demurrage, and I should like to get the views of Mr. Altimas on a feature of the rules which we think is not fair to the public, and while it may not belong to his department, he might be able to enlighten us. I have in mind a case where a car was delayed a long time and demurrage accrued, in connection with which the agent was supposed to have sent out

an advice to the consignee that the car had arrived at destination and was ready to be unloaded, but the advice went astray, presumably in the mail, and notwithstanding that we were charged with ten days' demurrage, although we did not know the car was on hand. I think the agent had some record that notice had been mailed to our company, but it was never received, and because we did not receive that notice we were penalized to the extent of ten days' demurrage, and demurrage rates are very heavy nowadays. We have thought that in cases of this kind, where it is known that the advice has not been received, there should be some "give and take," especially where there is a dispute as to whether the advice went out or not.

Another matter I should like Mr. Altimas' view on is the case of L. C. L. shipments. He speaks only of car loads. In the States, under the Government Administration, the ex-car transfer at terminal points would not be recorded,—that is, the contents outturned nor the car number into which the L. C. L. business had been re-loaded. I have had the idea that all records should show the out-turn at transfer of L. C. L. business and the car reference for outwards loading. I should like to know if that is the rule in Canada.

Mr. J. D. Altimas:

In connection with ear demurrage. The supervision of car demurrage matters comes under our jurisdiction, but all claims involving settlement or interpretation are handled by the Canadian Car Demurrage Bureau, of which Mr. W. J. Collins is Manager. However, I have no objection to giving my opinion on the case quoted.

If the railway company is able to show that the advice of the arrival of a car at destination has been properly made and mailed it does not accept any responsibility for non-delivery. This might appear to be somewhat unfair to the shipping public, but it would also be unfair to hold the railway company responsible when it had complied with all the requirements.

It is not so very long ago since the most frequent complaint against the railroads was in connection with discrimination in favor of certain patrons. The failure of the railway company to maintain a record of the advice and date and time of mailing same would penalize the railway company. On the other hand, if the delays or mishandling chargeable to the mail service could under demurrage regulations be charged to the railway company, undoubtedly some shippers and consignees

would use this means of working discrimination in their favor by use of the big stick. Under those conditions the cancellation of such items would be simply rebates, and as you know, rebates are not permissible under the Transportation Act. Court decisions covering cases of this kind have already been given placing the responsibility upon the consignees, and I think you will admit the correctness of these decisions.

With reference to the handling of L. C. L. shipments, I think I can safely say that the same practice prevails in Canada as in the United States in the handling of shipments through to destination. In every case where there is a transfer of the goods from one car to another, both in the in and out handling at each transfer station is recorded. The reference in my paper to the transfer of goods at junction points was simply a reminder of the days when there were no through routes or through rates. However, to-day through rates and through routes apply as much to L. C. L. shipments as to earloads.

Mr. W. Phelan:

Like Mr. Balkwill I also came unprepared to speak. The paper read by Mr. Altimas and the remarks of Mr. Balkwill have pretty well covered the situation.

Mr. Altimas' paper I think contains about twelve pages. If he had gone into all the trials and tribulations of the Car Accountant it would have taken more than twenty-four pages.

I might mention, however, that one of the troubles that has not been commented upon in detail, concerns the agents' interchange reports. These interchange reports are really the most important forms we get, as Mr. Altimas explained in his paper. They are the basis of the per diem accounting system. It is therefore essential that the records be absolutely accurate and for that reason the agents have got explicit instructions that they must take the initials and car numbers from the cars, write up the reports and exchange them for the purpose of verifying each other's reports to insure accuracy. Many of the agents do not comply with these instructions but take the records from the waybills or transfer bills accompanying the cars. The result is that a great many cars are reported under wrong initials or numbers or are omitted from the interchange reports altogether. A list of these cars has to be drawn from the records and forwarded to the agents for the purpose of obtaining supplementary reports, much of the information being difficult to obtain on account of the time elapsing since the cars were delivered, thus giving the agents and their staff considerably more labor than if the correct information had been

furnished currently. It is necessary in some cases to send field men out to obtain this information. Many of the agents do not realize the importance of these reports. Railroads are obligated under per diem rules to pay all per diem that accrues within a limited period, failing which they must pay additional per diem in the shape of penalty. However, speaking for the C. P. R., we usually complete these records in time to escape payment of penalty. Since the introduction of the penalty rule in 1913, we have only paid an average of about \$50.00 per month, whereas we have received from foreign companies over \$1,500.00 per month. This in itself goes to show the necessity of correct interchange reports.

Another matter I might mention is this—a gentleman asked the question earlier in the evening about giving records to the public. It is not always possible to satisfy the public. In some instances their requests are extraordinary. For instance, we have been asked what progress a car has made which left Pittsburgh the day previous. Pittsburgh is located on a foreign road several hundred miles from Montreal, and we cannot possibly give the information until the car reaches our rails which, in many instances, would take a week or more. Then again, we may be asked the record of a car shipped from Winnipeg several days previous. This car may be shown in our records at Schreiber. Schreiber is located 861 miles from Montreal and the records would show the car reaching that point two or three days previous, this being the best possible record that can be obtained by mail service. This record, of course, would not be satisfactory either but it is the best that could be given at the time.

Cars which contain high class commodities are usually re-carded and special telegraphic reports are provided covering their movements into and out of the terminals. We do receive telegraphic passing reports from certain stations distant from Montreal of cars that contain commodities that are not re-carded and in most cases we are in a position to give satisfactory reports from these telegraphic reports; but some cars are set out at stations due to defects or other causes. We cannot furnish telegraphic advices covering these and therefore cannot always satisfy the shipping public. Everything, however, is done to please our patrons.

Mr. E. J. McVeigh:

For fear I should appear as lacking in sympathy for the car service man, I would like to say that some years ago I worked in a car service office for a whole winter entering up

the records of cars. I have never been in jail, yet—laughter—but I doubt if it would be any worse than my experience in the car office. The car service men have my full sympathy.

Mr. R. F. Holland (Q. M. & S. Rly.):

I have not much to say on this subject. We are a small road and do not keep the elaborate record which has been outlined in the paper to-night, but we certainly have our difficulties in keeping records of the cars, and it is about the worst job I know of. Mr. Altimas has given us a very good paper. I would like to hear from Mr. Leitch.

Mr. Leitch:

I cannot add very much more to the discussion, but would like to ask Mr. Altimas what he does with the slips the sorting clerks sort wrong.

Mr. J. D. Altimas:

When slips are wrongly sorted, the record clerks put such slips to one side and turn them over to the supervisor on the sorting desk, where a record of the wrong handling is taken and the slips are then re-sorted.

While we do not have any lost cars, we frequently have lost records, by reason of the conductors and agents not furnishing records for all cars handled. For instance, I know of a car that was last reported at Smith's Falls Station, yet it turned up at St. John, N.B., over six hundred miles away. Upon investigation we found that the car had been handled over the several intervening divisions without any record having been taken or furnished by the agents or conductors. Evidently the car had travelled without a waybill and no one had made a check of the cars in the train against the train report or the waybills. We do not have many cases of this kind, but there are sufficient to warrant a close supervision on the part of all concerned in order to detect the weaknesses of the system and apply the proper remedy.

Mr. Norman Holland:

How do you trace cars that go to the shops?

Mr. J. D. Altimas:

We trace through the record which reports the arrival of all cars, then through the on hand reports which show on what track cars are located. We then avail ourselves of the shop

records, which indicate when and why the work was done and what disposal was made of the remains.

Mr. H. A. Balkwill:

I am afraid that one of the speakers this evening suffered unduly while employed for a few months in the bygone years in the office of a car accountant of a certain road.

I would not wish to discourage any gentleman present who may desire to apply for a position in a car accountant's office, and desire to assure you that it is not all routine work. There is a valuable experience to be gained and we will welcome applications, as we are always on the lookout for intelligent employees.

Mr. Norman Holland:

An Irishman got a position as conductor on a railway train. He found it difficult to remember the names of the stations. He got along all right for four or five stations, but when he came to the sixth he forgot it, and called out: "Those of youse who want to get off, here's your stop."

I remember some years ago I used to have difficulty in getting car records, but I think it is marvellous the way these records are kept now. In a business such as ours, we do not have many car load lots, the majority of freight being L.C.L.; but the service we have been getting is extremely good. We have a couple of tank cars running and it is essential my office should know where these tank cars are. We moved one car to New Glasgow recently, and almost every day the Car Service Department could tell us where it was. There is one question I would like to ask: Is there any rule in the Car Service Department whereby the railway must re-notify the consignee, as it is possible if the consignee did not receive the first advice, the car would lie for two or three weeks before any action was taken?

Mr. J. D. Altimas:

There is nothing in the regulations which provides for a notification to consignees of information dealing with transfer of goods enroute, except in the case of carload shipments the notification of arrival at destination must contain the original car number in addition to the number of the car in which the shipment arrived. Information covering transfer en route appears on the waybill. A record of the transfer and reason therefor is made at the point where car is transferred. If I were a shipper and received a clear receipt for my goods from

the railway agent at the shipping point, and the consignees did not receive this freight in good order at destination, I am inclined to think that it would take a whole lot of explaining on the part of the Claims Agent to make me let go.

Mr. Norman Holland :

We do not let go. I think we all agree that this is an excellent paper. I must admit I have never really appreciated the troubles of the Car Service Department.

If I remember aright, there was a system used some years ago—I recall my father mentioning it—in which a board was used to keep a record of the cars and their running. The system was, I think, used on the Grand Trunk.

Mr. J. D. Altimas :

I do not know what system was used by the Grand Trunk, but I do know that the Canadian Pacific operated what was known as the Graphic Car Record System during the period 1896 to 1909.

Under the Graphic System each car was represented by a stick about eight inches long. One end of the stick bore the car number and a small pin to permit of ready handling. The stick was shaped to hold a few cards on which the movements made by that particular car which the stick represented were recorded. These sticks were filed in boxes sub-divided to represent districts or divisions of the whole system from the Atlantic to the Pacific. As a car moved from one station to another, or from one district to another, the stick representing that particular car was taken from the box, the movement recorded thereon, and it was then placed back in the box in the sub-division representing the station at which the car was left. As the car moved on the road from station to station, so in the office the stick representing the car moved from sub-division to sub-division in the box.

Theoretically the Graphic System was all right, and under certain conditions it worked out O.K., but it had many drawbacks, and in addition it was an expensive system to operate. Apart from the difficulties which developed from the placing of the sticks in wrong sub-divisions or in wrong positions in the correct sub-divisions, the operation made it necessary for the clerks to be on their feet for the greater part of the day which caused considerable trouble. Within three months after I took charge of the office we discarded the Graphic System and adopted the one now in use, which is known as the Betts System.

Mr. Norman Holland :

In moving a vote of thanks, I think you will agree with me that if this paper is a sample of what the Subject Committee is to give us this year—a paper which the ordinary layman can follow and understand—then this club is serving the purpose for which it was formed. I take great pleasure in moving a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Altimas.

Mr. R. J. Needham :

Before seconding that vote of thanks I wish to ask Mr. Altimas a question regarding the cost of keeping up this system. To my mind there are two important reasons for keeping car records; the first is to find out where the car equipment is and to make charges for per diem. I would like to know what relation the cost of keeping this extensive record bears to the amount of per diem collected.

Mr. J. D. Altimas :

I may say that we keep a record of the work performed each day by the sorting clerks and the record clerks. We can figure out the cost very quickly. Our Car Accountant figures out these cost periodically and keeps the record. I cannot quote the actual figures at the moment, but I do know that we operate at a cost which compares favorably with previous years' costs, as well as with the cost figures furnished by other roads, when the difference in the salaries paid this year as compared with previous years is taken into account.

It costs a great deal less to perform the work currently and correctly than to allow it to drag along until you are compelled to close your records and pay the earnings plus the penalty as provided in the Per Diem Rules. We pay very little penalty per diem while we receive from other roads a great deal more than is required to pay the cost of maintaining what we call our correction and checking staff. I may state that for the year ending June 30th, 1920, the Canadian Pacific received from other roads for car hire \$7,341,498, while we paid to other roads for car hire account the same period \$4,506,804. This will give you an idea of the amount of money involved in the car hire account.

Mr. R. J. Needham :

We have had a very excellent paper, and I take pleasure in seconding the vote of thanks.