

Tracing the Lines



**The Railway History and Geography
of
Eastern Ontario and West Québec**

by

Brian Gilhuly

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Cover photograph © Arnprior and McNab/Braeside Archives

About the cover picture: This is a digitally retouched enlargement of a 5 x 7.5 cm. snapshot (item # 1993-0017 P0345) from the Archives' collection. The location is the former OAPS station in Arnprior. The photographer, subject and date are unknown, but the date is likely c. 1910.

Introduction

Origin

This book grew out of a research project that I undertook in 2014 for the Arnprior and McNab/Braeside Archives to document the origins and impact of 150 years of railways in the Arnprior area. My presentation, *The Lumber Barons and the Railway King*, was delivered at the Archives' 2015 AGM, covering Arnprior's rail history from 1853 to 1923. Reaction to the maps I created was very positive and many people asked me to make the material available online.

Historical Scope

After a brief sketch of pre-colonial times, the narrative begins in 1807 and covers events to 2019. From the beginning, local actors and interests had to find their place within national and imperial political projects as well as responding to the economic pull of the United States.

I have paid particular attention to the stories of the two railways – the Brockville & Ottawa and the Ottawa, Arnprior & Parry Sound – that reached Arnprior, but they are elements of a much broader narrative. Neither Arnprior nor neighbouring Braeside was ever a 'railway town', unlike Smiths Falls, Carleton Place, Chalk River and, to a degree, Renfrew. Nevertheless, Arnprior and Braeside were very much the railway's creations; one-industry communities whose major employers shipped by rail every stick of lumber produced.

A few of the region's railways were built with resource development in mind, usually lumber but also minerals in the highlands of Lanark, Frontenac, and Hastings. More were through routes. The Ottawa Valley contained the transcontinental main lines from Montréal to the Pacific and shared with the St. Lawrence the main lines from Montréal to Toronto. Ottawa – Toronto connections created a triangle of through routes, with branches lines both inside and out. The arc of lines northeast of the Ottawa had yet another origin: these were colonisation railways, subsidized by the Québec Government in an attempt to populate the Laurentians around the turn of the twentieth century.

By 1923, Canadian Pacific and Canadian National owned all but one of the lines that had been built over almost 70 years by local businessmen and foreign capitalists. So it remained until the end of last century. Those years of duopoly are what Canadians usually think of as 'railway heritage' and what most railway museums present. *Tracing the Lines* presents a longer view.

Cartography

Except for the 1703 Delisle map of Nouvelle France, I created all the maps. They show selected settlements from 1807, steamboat routes from 1825, and the locations and operators of public railways from 1854 to 2019. A railway operator need not be the owner – many railways were leased. Each map shows the state of the rail network at the end of its title year. The area covered is roughly centred on Carp, extending from Vaudreuil-Dorion west as far as Barry's Bay and from Belleville north to Maniwaki. It includes present-day eastern Ontario, plus much of the Outaouais and Laurentides regions of Québec.

US territory is not mapped, the space being required for the legend. US railroad connections to the region and to Montréal are shown schematically around and behind the legend, but not discussed in the text. Apart from the Arnprior-Nepean Railway, industrial, logging and transit railways are not included, nor are sidings and yards. Roads and highways are not shown.


Settlements near the main rivers and canals appear on the map from the generally-accepted date of their founding, which usually is when a mill or store was erected. Other places appear when they enter the railway story. Place names are correct for the date of the map.

On the maps, the lines representing railways vary in thickness according to the services offered.

If a section of railway carries only freight, it appears as a thin line .

Sections that also carry dedicated passenger train service are much wider .

Sections on which the only passenger service is on 'mixed' trains

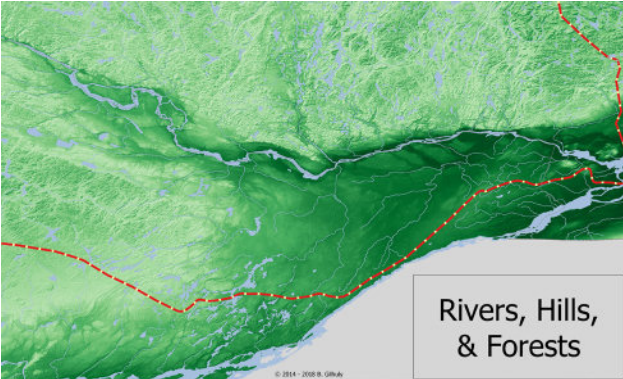
– freight trains that carry a few passengers in a single car or two – are medium width .

Until the 1920s, every bit of railway covered in this book saw a full passenger service along with freight and, often, mixed trains as well. Consequently, all are drawn with broad strokes. The first sections reduced to 'mixed train' passenger service appear on Map 23 (1943). Twenty years later, Map 24 shows many lines that had become 'freight only'.

Arnprior, November 2019

Landscape

Map 1 shows in shaded relief the watershed of the lower third of the river we call the Ottawa and a bit of the northern side of the Lake Ontario — St. Lawrence watershed, as they were before about 1800. The red and white dashed line follows the height of land between them. Higher elevations are lighter.



MAP 1: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE](#). [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN](#).

complete and ranged from hardwoods in the southern lowlands to pines and spruce farther north and west.

Two things stand out immediately.

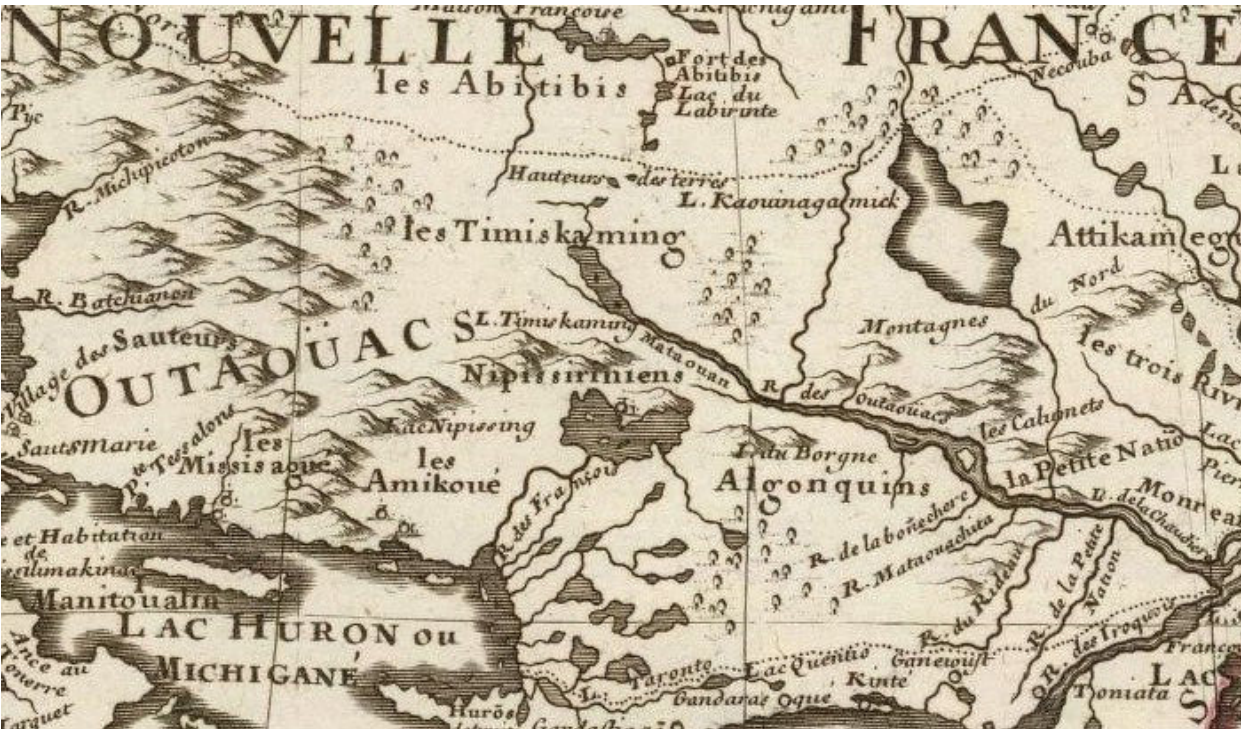
First, most of the area of the map is hilly. Between the hills, the valley of the Ottawa is the natural water route to Lake Huron and the northwest. At a time when water transport, human powered or wind aided, river systems were the only means of connection within continents. Consequently, they shaped human geography as well.

Second, almost the entire area shown in the map drains to the Ottawa. That makes it the means of connection within this territory, as well as with the outside.

Before colonisation, the forest cover was virtually complete and ranged from hardwoods in the southern lowlands to pines and spruce farther north and west.

Homelands

For millennia, the *Kichi Sibi* (Great River) of the Algonquin Anishinabeg nation flowing southeast through their homeland, was one of the major routes of communication, commerce and conflict among peoples across the continent. Traders of many nations travelled the *Kichi Sibi* and various groups more or less controlled its trade over the years. Following Champlain’s 1613 trip up the river, the French joined the traffic along what they, too, called La Grande Rivière. At least they did at first.



DELISLE, GUILLAUME, 1703. CARTE DU CANADA OU DE LA NOUVELLE FRANCE (DETAIL)

Ninety years later, as this section of cartographer Guillaume Delisle’s map shows, their usage had changed to La Rivière des Outaouacs or ‘des Outaouais’ (the Ottawas’ River). The Algonquin word for ‘trade’ is *adaawe* and it is possible that the French misunderstood a reference to the ‘traders’ controlling the river at the time, whose homeland is north of Lake Huron as shown above. However confused its origin, the name Ottawa is deeply embedded in Canadian history as Indigenous nation, river, valley and capital city.

Just at and beyond the eastern edge of these maps, the *Kichi Sibi* flows around a group of islands to join with the *Kanaiatarowenéhne*, (Great River) of the Kanien’kéha (Mohawk) nation, one of the six nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Flowing northeast from Lake Ontario to the Atlantic, this Great River was named Saint Laurent (Saint Lawrence) by the French. The upper St. Lawrence valley, Lake of Two Mountains and the eastern Lake Ontario shores are Kanien’kéha territory.

Fur Trade Thoroughfare (1608 - 1806)

Once European merchants — representatives of an almost limitless market for furs — were installed on the St. Lawrence, traffic up and down the Ottawa increased.

At first the French buyers stayed in Montréal and waited for Indigenous traders to arrive with furs from upriver.

Soon enough, the pursuit of competitive advantage led to French merchants establishing trading posts closer to their suppliers. After 1670, the added challenge of English traders based on Hudson’s Bay spurred the Montréal merchants to expand their range as far as the Red River Valley.

Carillon, at the foot of the Ottawa’s Long Sault rapids, was the site of a famous skirmish in 1660 and became a trading post in the following decades.

Nicholas d’Ailleboust, Sieur de Coulonge, spent the winter of 1694-95 near the mouth of the river he named for himself and established the post of Fort-Coulonge. It was upstream of the Calumet rapids and falls. The portage by which generations of traders had bypassed the Calumet later came to be called the portage “du fort”, in reference to the post at its upper end. Over time, the village of Portage-du-Fort would develop at the beginning of the trail.

In 1760 the proprietors of the Ottawa river posts joined forces to create the Montréal-based Northwest Company.

Farther upriver, a mission was established at Rapides-des-Joachims, but there was no real European settlement before 1800.

The arrival of Loyalist refugees from the American revolution had spurred the British authorities to create a new colony for them in 1792, carved out of the western part of the Province of Quebec, itself created in 1763, after the British acquired Canada in the settlement that ended the Seven Years War. The new province was called Upper Canada and the remainder became Lower Canada.

Henceforth, only the Crown was allowed to buy land for settlement from its Indigenous owners via international or ‘nation-to-nation’ treaties. Only then could would-be settlers acquire it as Crown land. This worked, after a fashion, along the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario shores, but went horribly wrong in the Ottawa watershed. Instead of dealing with the Algonquins, the Upper Canada government in 1819 signed Treaty 27 with some chiefs of the Mississauga nation for the purchase of much of today’s Lanark and Renfrew counties. Algonquin protests were ignored for years but the land is now recognised as unceded Algonquin territory and treaty negotiations are ongoing.

Settlers and Steamboats (1807 - 1850)

Colonial occupation of the Ottawa valley was kick-started by the British Government in 1807, when it raised to 275% the duty charged on timber imports from traditional Baltic suppliers and created the square timber trade from the Ottawa. 1807 was also the year that Robert Fulton introduced commercial navigation by steamboats, with his *North River Steamboat* between Albany and New York on the Hudson River. Steamboats would soon transform river travel.

The tributaries of the Ottawa, bypassed by the fur traders, became important sources of timber. The key timber rivers are marked on Map 2, as are major rapids and falls on the Ottawa and St. Lawrence. Fast-flowing rivers provided waterpower for the mills needed to support settlers.

European presence on the Ottawa was then limited to the fur trade posts and missions, plus three groups of non-refugee migrants from the US: Philemon Wright’s 1800 settlement at the mouth of the Gatineau River, and two others at Lachute and L’Orignal. The upper St. Lawrence valley, on the other hand, was the site of numerous settlements established by Loyalists in the 1780s.

Forestry-based villages soon developed along the Ottawa and Mississippi, while the British set up military settlements at Perth and Richmond. In 1821 the Northwest and Hudson’s Bay Companies merged, and the ‘new’ HBC opened a trading post at Fort William in 1823. In the longer term, though, the merger caused the fur trade to shift away from the Ottawa.



MAP 3: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

In the wake of the War of 1812, the British sought a connection to the Great Lakes that did not skirt the US border. Surveys showed it would be easy to connect the Rideau and Cataraqui river systems to reach Kingston, so the British Army decided to do so and also build canals to make the Ottawa navigable up to the Chaudière Falls. The Rideau Canal project was assigned to the Lt. Col. John By of the Royal Engineers in 1826. On arrival at the mouth of the Rideau, he established a construction camp which he modestly called Bytown.



MAP 2: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

When the McNab settlers began to arrive at the mouth of the Madawaska in 1825, the date of Map 3, there was no village in the newly surveyed township, but the square timber industry in the Madawaska valley was already beginning.

The first steamboat – *Union of the Ottawa* – was already operating between Wright’s Town and Grenville on the Ottawa, with others on the Saint Lawrence River and on the Lake of Two Mountains below Carillon. The Long Sault rapids above Carillon were impassable, as were several above Cornwall on the St. Lawrence.

With the opening of the Rideau Canal in 1832 and the Carillon and Grenville Canals in 1834, the standard shipping route linking Lower and Upper Canada became triangular:

Montréal → Bytown → Kingston → Montréal.

At Kingston, everything was transferred to and from steam and sailing vessels operating on Lake Ontario. Up the Ottawa, along the Rideau Canal, and down the St. Lawrence, goods moved on barges towed by steam tugs; the rapids between Prescott and Cornwall were impassible upstream, but the passage downriver was no problem. Map 4 shows the new arrangement.

In 1836 Arnprior was becoming a ghost village. It had been founded in 1831 by brothers George and Andrew Buchanan. They bought a 200-acre lot straddling the Madawaska through Archibald McNab and built a dam powering both saw and grist mills. They named the spot 'Arnprior Mills'. The Buchanans sold out in 1833 after a dispute with McNab. The new owners shut both mills and sold the property to an English land company in 1834. Andrew Buchanan died in 1836, but brother George went on to establish timber slides at the Chats and Chaudière Falls.

Steamboats had appeared on Lac Deschênes in 1832 and in 1836 the *George Buchanan*, named for its principal owner, introduced steamboat service on Lac des Chats. Like the mills, it soon changed hands but, unlike them, it continued to operate for many years.



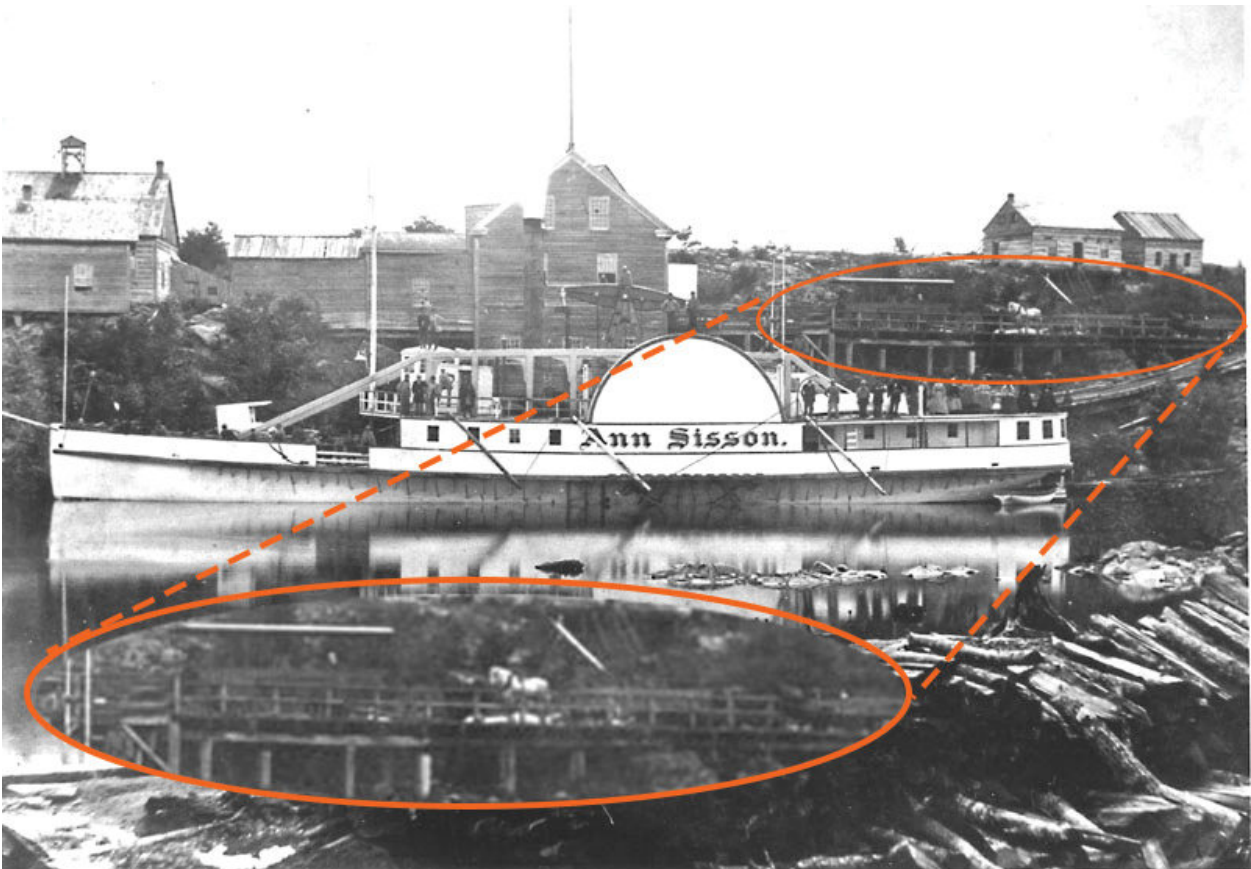
MAP 4: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)



At first, travelers connecting between the steamboats at the Chats Falls took the same portage trail over a mid-river island that had been used since time immemorial. W. H. Bartlett sketched these up-bound travelers at the bottom of the portage in 1838. The settlers re-named the island 'Victoria' in honour of their new young queen.

By the mid-forties, the Union Forwarding Company was operating the steamers both above and below the Chats Falls. It replaced the old portage connection in 1847 with horse-drawn cars running on iron rails over a three-mile route around the falls by the north side. The line was

level from end to end, so much of it was on trestles. In the image below - the only known photograph of the road - I have inset an enlargement of the open-sided passenger car, horse, and a pair of flat cars for freight.



BASED ON ANDREW MERRILEES / LIBRARY & ARCHIVES CANADA PA-207572

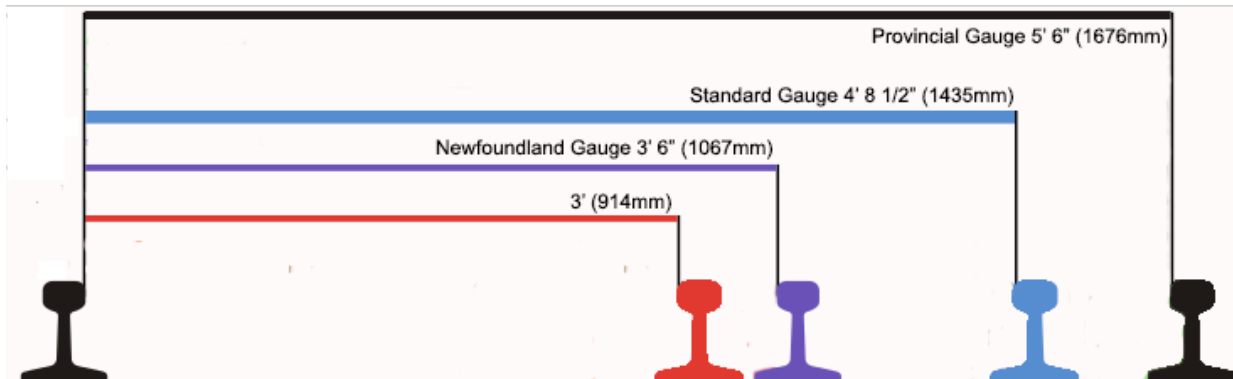
While it never adopted steam propulsion, the **Union Railroad** can certainly claim to have introduced rail travel to the Ottawa Valley.

First Lines (1850 - 1858)

A first steam railway had opened in Lower Canada in 1836 but it was more than a decade before railway construction took off in British North America. To promote railway construction, the Province of Canada in 1849 promised loan guarantees to all railways 75 miles or longer. Its British bankers were horrified and lowered Canada's credit rating so, in 1851, the guarantees were restricted to components of the 'Main Trunk Line of Railways' running east-west across the Province. On a happier note for the government, new locks on the St. Lawrence opened navigation upstream from Montréal to Lake Ontario. This ended the triangular route via the Rideau Canal, leaving it with only local traffic.

The first major railway line was an international joint venture, completed in 1853 from Longueuil, on the south shore opposite Montréal, to Portland Maine. For the first time in its history the Province of Canada had access to an ice-free Atlantic port.

In those days, the idea that individual railways would benefit from being part of a connected network had not yet taken root. Because the handful of locomotive constructors built to order, railways could choose how widely to space their rails – the track gauge – which in turn determined the size of engines and cars.



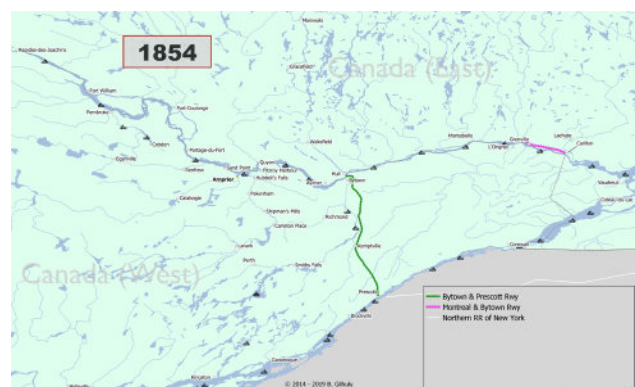
While most railways adopted the default gauge of locomotive builder Robert Stephenson – 4' 8½" between rails – the Longueuil line was being built to a wider 5' 6" gauge favoured by its Portland promoters to prevent cars being diverted to 'Stephenson gauge' ports such as Boston. The road's Canadian promoters had close ties to the Provincial Government, and influenced the latter's Board of Railway Commissioners in 1852 to require the subsidised Main Trunk Line to be built to the 5' 6" 'Provincial' gauge.

In 1850, a charter had been granted for the **Bytown and Prescott Railway (B&P)** to connect those two towns. In fact, the hoped-for southern destination was across the river from Prescott in Ogdensburg NY, terminus of the Stephenson gauge **Northern Railroad of New York**, with connections to Boston and New York. Local investors provided most of the capital for the B&P while timber-merchant directors like John Egan (MPP for Ottawa), Daniel McLachlin (MPP for Bytown) and Thomas McKay (Member of the Legislative Council) promoted its construction as a means of transporting sawn lumber to American markets. McKay's son-in-law was president of the B&P. In those days, as will be observed, little distinction was made between private and public interests.

The Bytown station was on Sussex Drive, near McKay's mills at the Rideau falls, despite strong public sentiment that it should be at the canal basin. The Prescott terminal was on the waterfront below Fort Wellington, just east of the town.

The B&P was built to the 4' 8½" gauge. Thus, it was planned, a car carried to Prescott on the B&P could continue its journey on US rails after a brief ferry ride to Ogdensburg. Map 5 shows the completion of the Bytown and Prescott at the end of December 1854.

Days later, Bytown was renamed Ottawa and the railway duly became the **Ottawa and Prescott Railway (O&P)**. It did not, however, manage to set up a rail ferry link to Ogdensburg. A ferry for the O&P was under construction in Philadelphia, but the railway canceled the contract, most probably for lack of funds. It would be another twenty years before the line acquired its ferry connection.

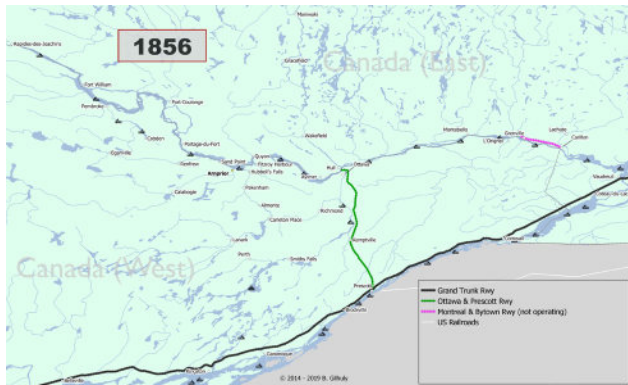


MAP 5: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

Meanwhile, Daniel McLachlin had bought a 462-acre parcel including the former Buchanan property at Arnprior in 1851 and moved his operations there in 1853. That year, a group of investors led by Brockville's MPP, George Crawford, obtained a charter for a line of unspecified gauge from Brockville to Pembroke via Smiths Falls and Arnprior, with a branch to Perth, to be known as the **Brockville and Ottawa Railway (B&O)**. Such a line would make Brockville the commercial gateway to the upper Ottawa as well as to the inland settlements.

Thanks to the Municipal Loan Fund Act of 1852, municipalities in Canada West could borrow against the credit of the Province to make loans to railways or other public works, backed by a mortgage on the property. In the event the railway failed to meet its obligation to pay interest, the municipalities would be liable to repay the Province. Local governments along the B&O route took generous advantage of their new power. They borrowed \$1.4M to finance the B&O: \$200K from Elizabethtown Township, \$400K from Brockville, and \$800K from the United Counties of Lanark & Renfrew.

George Crawford's son-in-law, Samuel Keefer was appointed supervising engineer and on Dec. 2, 1853 a construction contract was signed with Sykes, DeBergue and Company of Sheffield UK. Surveys began immediately and construction started in the spring.



MAP 6: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE](#). [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN](#).

but the M&B was unable to pay landowners for its right-of-way, so they refused to let trains run in 1855. Sykes DeBergue and Co. were bankrupted.

Their failure was the first of numerous setbacks for the B&O. A major complication was Sykes' plan to tunnel under downtown Brockville to reach a waterfront terminus. With its author out of the picture, Brockville Town Council wanted a cheaper surface route but the tunnel – which would be Canada's first – had captured the public imagination. In a referendum, the citizens of Brockville voted to support the tunnel. The B&O company was reorganised in 1856 with the municipalities taking half the seats on the board and yet another fund-raising mission to London was launched.

In January 1857 the M&B's property was sold at a sheriff's auction. In May, the landowners having at last been paid, the 13-mile line reopened as the **Carillon & Grenville Railway (C&G)**, operating seasonally during river navigation season. It operated without a charter in 1857 and 1858, receiving one only in 1859.

The advent of the C&G marked the emergence of two brothers who would shape Canadian railways for the next three decades: John (J.J.C.) and Harry (H.B.) Abbott. John, born in St. Andrews East, near Carillon, was then a high-flying Montréal lawyer, whose clients included Hugh Allan, Canada's richest man. As his representative, John sat on the boards of numerous railways in which Allan had invested. John Abbott had been the M&B's solicitor; now he was part-owner of the Carillon and Grenville, as was Harry, who managed the railway. He was a civil engineer who had worked on the Portland line and a partner in Abbott & Freer, railway contractors. His firm also managed the eastern section of the GTR in 1859.

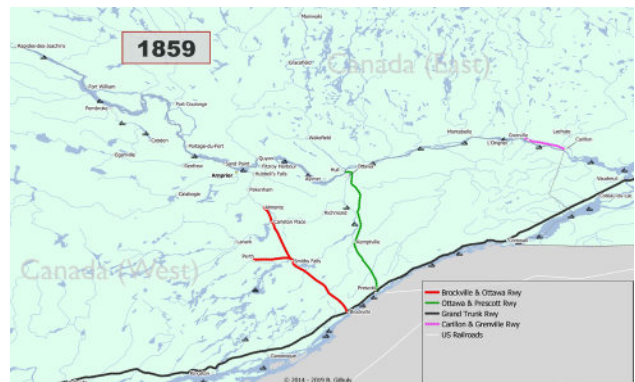
Opening the Upper Ottawa (1858 - 1867)

Rail laying on the Brockville & Ottawa finally began in 1858, and regular service between the GTR station at Brockville and Perth via Smiths Falls began in February 1859. In August of that year the line from Smiths Falls to Almonte was opened, shown on Map 7.

There had been no money for the construction of a telegraph line, so only one train could be allowed to run at any time to avoid collisions. With the available funds expended, Almonte would remain the end of the line for over five years.

Meanwhile, the GTR completed its broad-gauge line from Sarnia to Portland with the opening of Montréal's Victoria Bridge in 1859.

The B&O's Brockville tunnel opened in 1860, providing access to the docks and short connections by boat to Oswego and Ogdensburg, NY, but construction toward the Ottawa remained stalled. Meanwhile, the GTR made a deal for access to the O&P's waterfront yard at Prescott and in 1863 the rail car ferry St. Lawrence began operating to Ogdensburg. Financed by the GTR, the ferry handled only broad-gauge cars, so the O&P remained without a US connection. The Abbott group sold the C&G to the Ottawa River Navigation Company, its main customer, in 1864.



MAP 7: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE](#). [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN](#).



The breakthrough that got construction of the B&O going again was finding a British financier, Henry Bolckow (left), managing partner of the iron and steel company, Bolckow & Vaughan. The firm was willing to supply the needed rails on secured credit. Henry Bolckow was willing to finance the construction as well, provided his agent was given full project control. After much debate, the provisionally separate Lanark and Renfrew County Councils agreed, and the company was reorganised once again in 1862.

Late in 1863, things got under way again. Experienced US railwayman John G. Richardson was brought in to see the project to completion. An agreement with Hugh Allan's Montreal Telegraph Company gave the railway and the communities it served instant electronic communication among themselves and with the world. Constructed during 1864, the Brockville and Ottawa line from Almonte through Pakenham to Arnprior was opened on December 6 of that year. The bridge over the Madawaska was not yet completed, so operations began from a temporary station on the east bank of the river. Its exact location is not known.

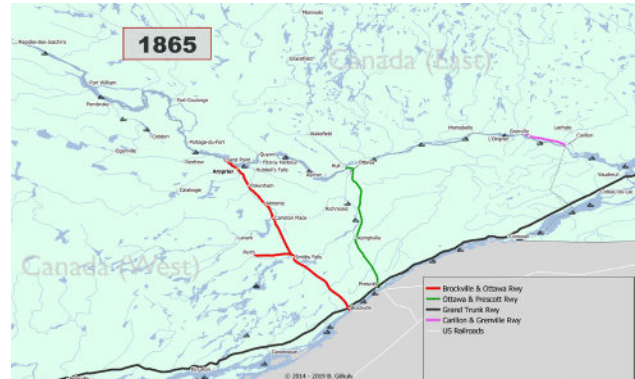
The railway's arrival was greeted with euphoria. The village of 800-odd souls organised an enormous celebration that was the talk of the Valley. J. G. Richardson was the hero of the hour. A full account of the event, from the Carleton Place Herald of Dec. 14, 1864, begins on page 17 or click [here](#) to read it now. The enthusiasm was not misplaced; over the next two decades Arnprior would quadruple in population as the McLachlin mills exported their entire output via the B&O and its shipping links to Ogdensburg, Oswego and beyond.

The following September, with the Madawaska bridge in place, the line was opened as far as Sand Point, where it connected with river shipping. That was as far as the Brockville and Ottawa would ever go, 74.5 miles (120 km) from the Saint Lawrence waterfront, depicted in Map 8. For the next decade, Sand Point would be the transportation hub of the entire Upper Ottawa Valley.

The coming of the railway brought the lumber industry and prosperity to Arnprior but the added traffic did not generate enough revenue to cover the B&O's obligations to pay interest to the municipalities as well as to its bondholders. In 1866 it defaulted on its bond interest payments and Henry Bolckow took control of the railway.

John Abbott had been a director, representing Hugh Allan's interests; in 1866 he became the B&O's solicitor. Harry Abbott also got involved with the B&O. By the end of 1866 he was Managing Director and by mid-1867 Vice-President and General Manager of the Brockville and Ottawa. John Abbott had been the MPP for Argenteuil, and in the 1867 Canadian federal election, he was elected the riding's first MP as a Conservative.

The O&P was reorganised (by another British steel company) as the **St. Lawrence and Ottawa Railway (SLO)** in 1867. Between 1869 and 1871, Rev. Henry Osborne, English country vicar and manager of his family's multinational forestry business, constructed a new steam lumber mill beside the B&O and created a village called Braeside, mid-way between Arnprior and Sand Point.



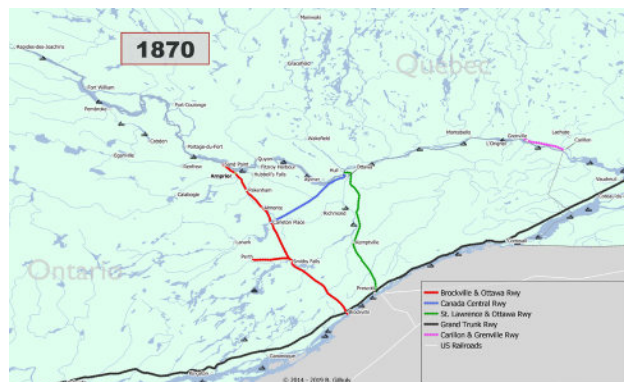
MAP 8: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

Nation Building (1867 - 1882)

Mr. Bolckow did not want to be in the railway business, but he wanted to recover his investment. If making the property saleable would require still more up-front capital, he was prepared to spend. The opportunity was not long in coming. By 1870 the new Dominion of Canada was deep in negotiations to entice British Columbia into the Confederation. BC's price would be a railway, to match the Intercolonial Railway (IRC) being built under the 1867 deal to link Quebec with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. It had long been assumed that the Pacific railway would start from Montréal and run west along the Ottawa and Mattawa rivers; the old water route. The six miles of the B&O along the Ottawa were well-placed, but a connection from Arnprior to Ottawa would be needed.

A decade earlier, an Ottawa group had applied for a charter to build a railway from Ottawa to Arnprior and, eventually, to Sault Sainte Marie. Such a line would have killed any extension of the B&O past Almonte. The municipalities that then controlled the B&O mobilised support in the Legislature, and the charter that emerged in 1861 would limit the **Canada Central Railway (CCR)** to building extensions to the B&O. That was of no interest to the Ottawans, and the charter lay dormant.

An extension to Ottawa was just what the B&O needed, so in 1865 Bolckow and associates acquired and renewed the charter. Construction began in 1868. John G. Richardson was president of the rejuvenated CCR and John Abbott, M. P., vice-president. Brother Harry continued to run the B&O, while simultaneously building the CCR as a private contractor. Subsequently he managed both lines.



MAP 9: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

it provided the Ottawa-based lumber industry with easy access to the upper Valley.

The southern section of the B&O also gained from the CCR's construction. Its same-gauge connection to the Grand Trunk at Brockville gave it a competitive edge over the St. Lawrence & Ottawa. The need to trans-load Ottawa freight between the SLO and GTR at Prescott added handling cost and delay.

By the early 1870s, though, thinking about railway gauges was changing. New railways were being built to the now-standard 4' 8½" gauge while existing broad-gauge lines were converted when it made commercial sense and their owners could afford it. Indeed, the Government that in 1867 insisted the Intercolonial be built to the 5' 6" gauge prescribed 4' 8½" for the Pacific Railway in 1871. But so long as the GTR kept the broad gauge, the B&O had the advantage.

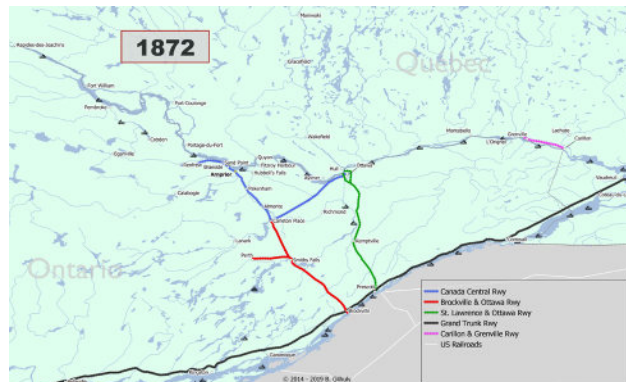
Built to the broad gauge, the Canada Central took the shortest practical route between Ottawa and the B&O main line, illustrated on Map 9. That brought it from the Lebreton Flats to Carleton Place Junction, about a half-mile south of the existing Carleton Place station. For several years the village had two stations. Bolckow and associates financed the construction themselves, since no private Ottawa investors came forward and the City refused a subsidy. Ottawa had wanted a direct line to Arnprior.

Now that the triangular CCR-B&O route was built, it would be only a matter of time before it was incorporated into the Pacific railway. Meanwhile,

As hoped, the improved prospects made the B&O and CCR more attractive to investors. Bolckow sold control of both railways in May 1871 to Hon. Asa Foster (right), a pioneer railway developer and operator of several lines in southern Québec and New England. Named by Macdonald to Canada's first Senate, Foster was known by the press as "Canada's Railway King". He understood the importance of the lumber business to the railway's prosperity, so when Osborne's Braeside mill was put up for sale in 1871, he bought and operated it for a year, before selling to the Gillies brothers. With both lines under Foster's control, on July 1, 1872, the B&O from Carleton Place Junction to Sand Point was leased to the CCR for 999 years.



By the time the CCR was extended from Sand Point to Renfrew at the end of 1872 (Map 10), Sen. Foster had good reason to expect that it and the B&O soon would be resold to Hugh Allan's Canada Pacific Railway syndicate, of which he was a charter member. The syndicate's attorney was John Abbott. Macdonald's Conservatives had won the closely-fought 1872 election and awarded Allan's group the Canadian Pacific Railway contract. As Conservative candidates, John Abbott had won re-election in Argenteuil while Harry lost in Brockville by a scant eleven votes.



MAP 10: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

Events in 1873 put an end to Sen. Foster's expectations.

In April, it emerged that the Canada Pacific syndicate had provided the Conservative Party \$360,000 in election financing in return for the contract. John Abbott was at the heart of the affair. As the syndicate's attorney, he had drawn up a 'cash for contract' agreement that fellow railway lawyer and MP G.-E. Cartier signed for the Conservative Party. It was a whistle-blower in Abbott's law office who revealed the evidence of the deal.

Foster eased the Abbott brothers out of the B&O and CCR before the "Pacific Scandal" brought

down Macdonald's government in November and the Canadian Pacific contract was cancelled by Mackenzie's incoming Liberal administration. The Canada Pacific syndicate dissolved.

Meanwhile, the Grand Trunk had changed to the standard 4' 8½" gauge in October, ending the CCR's ability to interchange freight cars. A chain of bank failures in the US, beginning in September 1873, plunged that country and Canada into a depression that would last to the end of the decade. By 1876 US lumber market had collapsed, causing the Ottawa Valley mills to close. Traffic on the B&O and CCR dropped by two-thirds.

After passing important electoral reforms, including introducing the secret ballot, the Liberals called the January 1874 election in which they won a majority. J. J. C. Abbott was initially declared elected in Argenteuil, but the courts overturned the result because of corrupt practices. Re-elected, Macdonald went into opposition.

The SLO finally achieved the B&P's original aim of a car ferry connection to Ogdensburg NY in 1874 when a local entrepreneur contracted to provide the service.

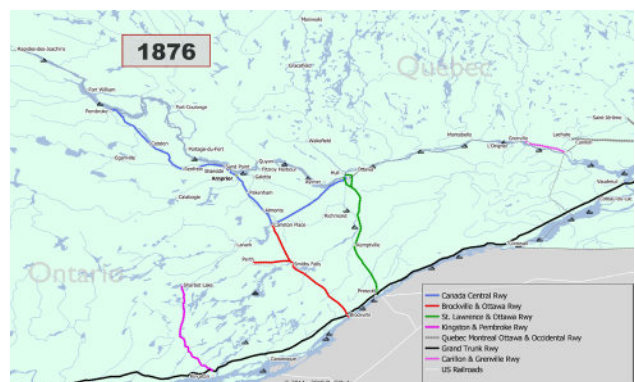
Asa Foster's position became complex. Although a Conservative Senator, he had backed up the whistleblower's account and thus became persona non-grata with Macdonald and his colleagues in the Party. Mackenzie's Liberals were no more inclined to do business with him, so he relied on Montréal businessman Duncan McIntyre, a long-time investor in the B&O and CCR, to smooth relations with the new Government.

Government relations were vitally important to the CCR, because Mackenzie had adopted a new Pacific Railway strategy. Like the Intercolonial in the east, it would be a public undertaking, not privately-owned, and it would be built in stages. First, rail lines would be built, by the Canadian Government, from both the Pacific coast and the Ottawa Valley to the upper Great Lakes, along with a trans-Canada telegraph. Once a seasonal rail-water link was established, work could begin on a railway north of Lake Superior. The eastern component of the plan was a line connecting a point near the east end of Lake Nipissing to Georgian Bay. An extension of the CCR to meet the new line would be subsidised.

Foster in early 1875 won contracts to build both the Georgian Bay section of the CPR and the CCR extension, to the horror of almost everybody. Conservatives in Parliament and their allied newspapers denounced the contract as a traitor's reward. Foster was little happier, particularly since he had been obliged to give up his Senate seat to bid for a Government contract. He had planned an extension via Pembroke and Mattawa, but the Government was insisting on a route up the Bonnechere River to Eganville then through the Algonquin highlands.

The citizens of Pembroke and the Upper Valley feared perpetual isolation if the road turned left at Renfrew. Foster needed the increased lumber traffic that only a line to Pembroke could bring. He spent over a year, and a good deal of money on surveys, to persuade a reluctant administration to allow the line to detour via Pembroke. It finally relented.

When the CCR reached Pembroke late in 1876 (Map 11) Foster's railway kingdom was collapsing. He



MAP 11: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

defaulted on the B&O mortgage so Bolckow foreclosed. Harry Abbott returned as its manager. Foster held on to the CCR but cooperation between the two roads was non-existent. Denied access to the B&O shops in Brockville, the CCR built its own at Carleton Place. A flurry of lawsuits followed, ending only with Foster's sudden death in Nov. 1877.

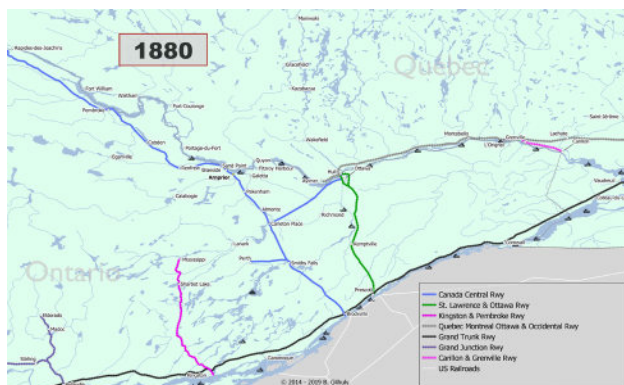
The **Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental Railway (QMOO)**, having been taken over by the Québec Government, opened both its main line westward from Montréal as far as Lachute and a colonisation branch to Saint-Jérôme in late 1876. When the road was first promoted by Hugh Allan in the early seventies as the Montreal Northern Colonisation Railway, the Laurentian route was to have been the main line. Map 11 also shows another new line, the **Kingston and Pembroke Railway (K&P)** winding its way north to Sharbot Lake. While it never did reach its intended northern terminus, the K&P did succeed in delaying Pembroke town council's decision to support the CCR for almost three years.

In December 1877, the Foster estate sold the CCR to Bolckow's B&O. The latter decided to use the Canada Central name for the merged enterprise as it once again prepared for sale. The depression was easing, and the re-elected Macdonald government was looking for Pacific railway partners. The CCR's claim to be included had been greatly strengthened by the completion of the QMOO as far as a Hull station at the north side of the Chaudière falls, where a road bridge led to the CCR station on the south bank. In 1879 the QMOO was completed to Aylmer.

By the time Henry Bolckow died in June 1878, a contract for the western extension to Lake Nipissing had been awarded to contractor James Worthington and financier Duncan McIntyre. The extension would be built to the standard gauge.

In October 1879, Worthington and McIntyre acquired the controlling interest in the CCR from the Bolckow estate. The following January, Worthington sold his CCR shares to McIntyre's new partners, George Stephen and Richard Angus.

The McIntyre group made major investments in new, standard-gauge locomotives and rolling stock. To use older equipment awaiting re-gauging in the shops, it was decided to build the western-most part of the extension (beyond Mackey's Station) to the broad gauge and convert it later. Over the last weekend of April 1880, the lines east of Pembroke were converted to the standard gauge, restoring interchange with other railways. An overnight sleeping car service between Ottawa and Toronto was introduced and a rail car ferry was leased to transfer cars to and from the **Utica and Black River Railroad** at Morristown, NY.



MAP 12: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

In late November, the CCR opened the western extension as far as Mackey's, off the western edge of these maps. From there, contractor Worthington offered passenger service over the broad-gauge section.

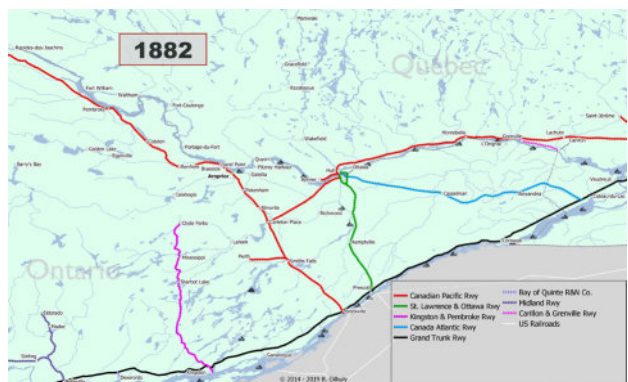
For its part, the QMOO in 1880 built the Prince of Wales Bridge just above the Chaudière so that trains from Montréal could reach Ottawa. The CCR and QMOO built Ottawa's first union station in the Lebreton Flats, opened on Jan. 17, 1881.

By the date of Map 12, the K&P had resumed construction northward. At the bottom left is the eastern end of the **Grand Junction Railway (GJR)**, a line connecting Belleville to Peterborough, with a branch through Madoc to a gold mine at the hopefully-named village of Eldorado.

Early in 1881 a syndicate including McIntyre and his partners won the contract for the transcontinental line and formed the **Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR)**. George Stephen was president and Duncan McIntyre vice-president. As before, John Abbott was the company's attorney. The first meeting of the CPR Board on June 9, 1881 agreed to the purchase of the Canada Central. Within a year, the CPR had also acquired the Ottawa-Montréal line of the QMOO, and McIntyre was in control of the SLO to Prescott.

As Map 13 shows, the CPR would thus have controlled access to the capital had not the **Canada Atlantic Railway (CAR)** been opened from Ottawa to a connection with the GTR at Coteau in 1882. The CAR was owned by Ottawa lumber Baron J. R. Booth and two American partners. Its passenger service to Montréal, in association with the Grand Trunk, was immediately successful because it was faster than the CPR route.

By 1882 the Grand Junction had been absorbed by the **Midland Railway of Canada (MRC)**. Twenty miles to its east, the recently inaugurated **Bay of Quinte Railway and Navigation Company (BQRN)** was a short connection from the Grand Trunk to Deseronto to serve the Rathbun family enterprises there.

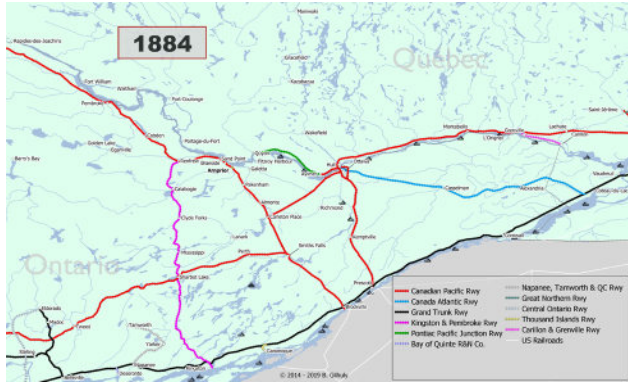


MAP 13: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

Railway construction in the region increased through the 1880s. Most of the new mileage was constructed by, or for, the CPR. (Many eastern CPR lines were owned by separate CPR-related companies, which leased to them to the CPR, usually for 999 years, for operation. The CAR operated several leased branches, built by local investors to gain a railway connection for their town. The maps in this book identify all such lines by their operator.) Local railways were developed to connect communities to the CPR and GTR

Boom Years (1883 – 1896)

The K&P reached Barryvale in 1883 and Renfrew the next year (Map 14); it never went any farther. On the north shore of the Ottawa, the first section of the **Pontiac Pacific Junction Railway (PPJ)** was built from Aylmer to Quyon in 1884. The plan was to build west from Aylmer on the Québec side, then bridge the Ottawa via Allumette Island, just west of Pembroke. At 'Pacific Junction' it would connect to the CPR main line.



MAP 14: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

In the south west, the Midland was taken over by the GTR. In the midst of its brief heyday, Eldorado attracted a second railway in the form of the **Central Ontario Railway (COR)** from Picton via Trenton Junction on the GTR.

Gananoque on the St. Lawrence had just been connected to the Grand Trunk by the 5-mile-long **Thousand Islands Railway (TIR)**, the second Rathbun line. A third, the **Napanee, Tamworth and Quebec Railway (NTQ)** opened from Napanee to Tamworth. The **Great Northern Railway of Canada (GN)**, intended to link Québec City with the Ottawa, opened a few miles of track east from Saint-Jérôme in 1884.

The same year, the CPR leased the SLO and gave itself a route to Toronto by extending the Perth branch of the former B&O through Sharbot Lake, Havelock and Peterborough to the provincial capital.

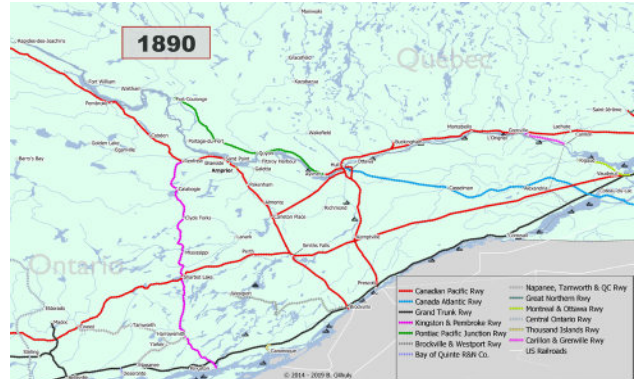
When transcontinental service began in 1886, passengers from Toronto to Vancouver changed trains at Carleton Place.

Brockville got its third railway that year, when the **Brockville and Westport Railway (B&W)** opened, and 1886 was also the year the PPJ was extended to Fort-Coulonge. The CPR completed its Montréal – Toronto main line in 1887 by again extending the old B&O Perth branch, this time eastward from Smiths Falls to Vaudreuil.

The NTQ was extended both ways in 1889: west to a CPR connection at Tweed and east to the K&P at Harrowsmith. From there, it bought the right to run into the K&P station in downtown Kingston. Also in 1889, the COR continued its pursuit of mineral riches with an extension to an iron mine at Coe Hill, just off the left edge of the map. The GTR, for its part, abandoned the former Grand Junction track from Madoc to Eldorado.

A new route, the **Montreal and Ottawa Railway (M&O)**, opened its first stage from a GTR connection at Vaudreuil to Rigaud in 1890. Its intent was to complete the line to Ottawa via Vankleek Hill, then lease it to the Grand Trunk. The GTR publicly confirmed the plan.

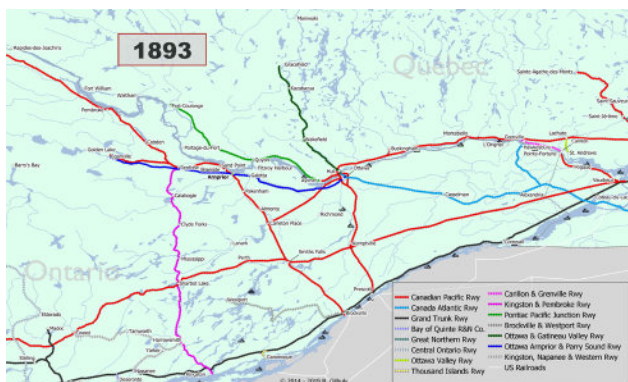
Once its bridge across the St. Lawrence opened in 1890, in time to make Map 15, the Canada Atlantic linked Ottawa to northern Vermont, on the doorstep of US markets for J. R. Booth's lumber. It had long been planned that the next step would be a western extension, but both his CAR partners died within a few months. Booth bought their shares and resolved to go it alone.



MAP 15: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

He undertook, on his own, to build a railway from Ottawa to Georgian Bay, via Arnprior. It could capture some of the western grain traffic and it would provide year-round access to Booth's timber limits in the Algonquin highlands. The first stage of the **Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound Railway (OAPS)**, shown on Map 16, opened in September 1893 from the CAR's Elgin Street station as far as Arnprior.

The CPR tried to prevent the OAPS from crossing its tracks in Arnprior, but the Railway Commissioners found for Booth. Then, the CPR built a 'Georgian Bay line' from just west of Renfrew as far as Eganville and went to court claiming there was no room for two lines on the route both it and Booth proposed to use through Hagarty township. Booth won again. By year end, the OAPS had also reached Eganville.



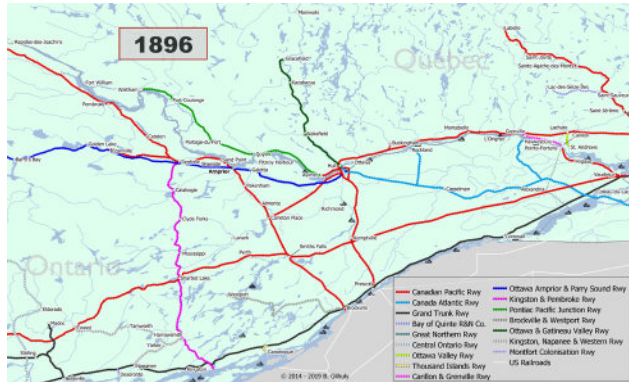
MAP 16: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

Hull to the Pickanock River, just south of Gracefield, by the close of 1893. The NTQ was renamed the **Kingston, Napanee and Western Railway (KNW)**.

Meanwhile, the M&O's plan had come unstuck. First the company shifted the route north to follow the shoreline, despite local protests. Then, while that extension to Pointe-Fortune was under construction, the GTR lost interest. The M&O's Vaudreuil connection changed to be with the CPR. As soon as the Pointe-Fortune line opened in 1892, the M&O was leased to the CPR.

Canadian Pacific that year extended its Laurentian line north to Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, the seven-mile **Ottawa Valley Railway (OV)** opened from Lachute to St. Andrews and the CAR leased a line to Hawkesbury. The **Ottawa and Gatineau Valley Railway (OGV)** was open from

1894 saw the OAPS reach Barry's Bay and the PPJ open to Waltham. Funding to bridge the Ottawa was not found, so Waltham was its final terminus. The OGV changed its name to **Ottawa Gatineau Railway (OGR)**. 1894 was also the year that the region's only narrow-gauge railway opened. In the upper right corner of Map 17, the **Montfort Colonisation Railway (MCR)** ran west from the CPR Laurentian line to promote settlement and to serve an orphanage and farm operated by the Montfortian Fathers. To minimise construction costs, it was built to 3' gauge, very unusual for Canada.



MAP 17: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

In 1895, the OGR was completed to Gracefield and the CAR opened a new, leased branch to Rockland. The OV became part of the **Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway (ALS)** but seems to have kept operating fitfully under its original name.

Service began from Georgian Bay over the OAPS to Ottawa in December 1896, a few months after the OAPS and CAR opened their new Central Depot in Ottawa, on the east bank of the canal near the last set of locks. That year the CPR Laurentian line was extended to Labelle and work was under way to complete the former M&O line on its originally planned route via Vankleek Hill.

No fewer than sixteen Canadian railway companies are represented in Map 17.

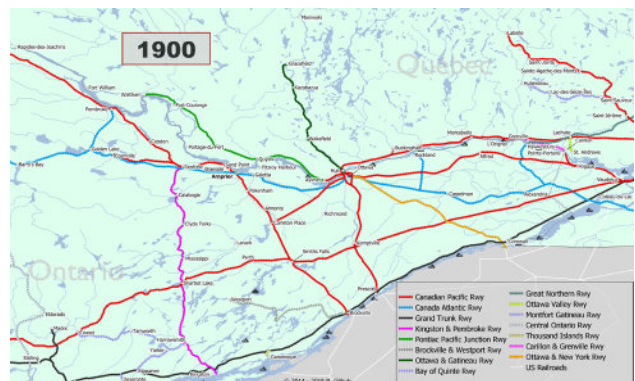
Growth and Consolidation (1897 – 1905)

In 1897 the Rathbuns consolidated the BQRN and KNW as the **Bay of Quinte Railway (BQ)**. The narrow-gauge equipment of the MCR proved inadequate but there was traffic, so that railway was rebuilt in the same year to the standard gauge. Its line was extended west to Huberdeau and the company re-organised as the **Montfort and Gatineau Railway (MGR)**.

In 1898 the CPR finally responded to the CAR's competition for Ottawa – Montréal passenger traffic with the full opening of its ex-M&O short line via Vankleek Hill and Alfred. The OAPS was absorbed by the Canada Atlantic in 1899 (Map 18).

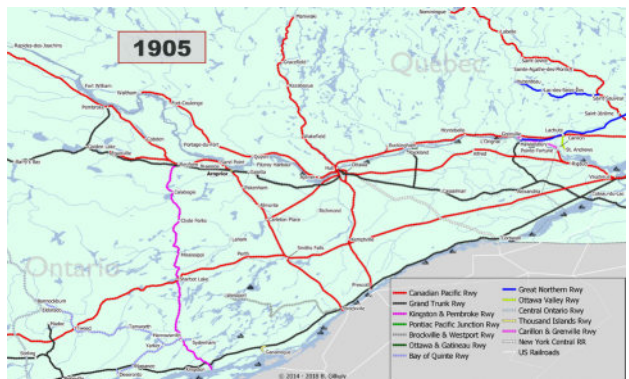
Ottawa gained another new connection when the **Ottawa and New York Railway (ONY)** began operation from Cornwall. The next year its Cornwall Island bridge opened, permitting service to Tupper Lake, NY. The COR resumed construction northwest (and off the map) in 1900, now serving lumber operations rather than mines. It would reach its terminus at Maynooth in 1907. (An attempted extension to Whitney in 1911 was not completed, leaving an 11-mile stub ending at Wallace that never saw scheduled service.)

The Great Northern was finally completed in 1900 with a line from Saint-Jérôme to Grenville and a bridge over the Ottawa to a connection with the CAR at Hawkesbury. As of Map 18, Québec City had a connection direct to Georgian Bay, bypassing Montréal. A branch entered that city from the east.



MAP 18: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

Competition to build a second transcontinental railway was heating up, giving Booth an opportunity to sell the CAR to one of the aspirants. As it happened, the Laurier government had its own idea for a joint venture with the Grand Trunk on a route far from the Ottawa Valley. The CAR had great potential, though, for the competing, western-based **Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR)**. The CNoR's western lines connected to its Great Lakes ships at Port Arthur. The CAR's Georgian Bay port at Depot Harbour and its GN connection to Québec City could create an instant transcontinental link, albeit partly by ship.



MAP 19: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

To prevent the CAR falling into 'enemy' hands, the GTR was encouraged by Laurier to buy it. A sale to the Grand Trunk was agreed in 1904 and took effect the next year, as shown on Map 19.

The CPR extended its Laurentian route to Nominungue in 1904. It was also an active buyer in this period, picking up the newly-merged ONW in 1903 and extending it to Maniwaki in 1904. The CPR bought control of the K&P in 1903, but maintained its separate identity. The **New York Central Railroad (NYC)** bought the ONY in 1905.

In 1901, the OGR again changed its name, to the **Ottawa, Northern and Western Railway (ONW)**. New name became new reality a year later when it absorbed the PPJ. Also in 1902, the Great Northern purchased the bankrupt MGR with which it had no direct rail link. The BQ reached its greatest extent in 1903 with a short eastward extension to Sydenham and a new line from Napanee to Deseronto.

While it negotiated to purchase the CAR, the CNoR in 1903 gained control of the GN and several other Québec railways, maintaining them as separate companies.

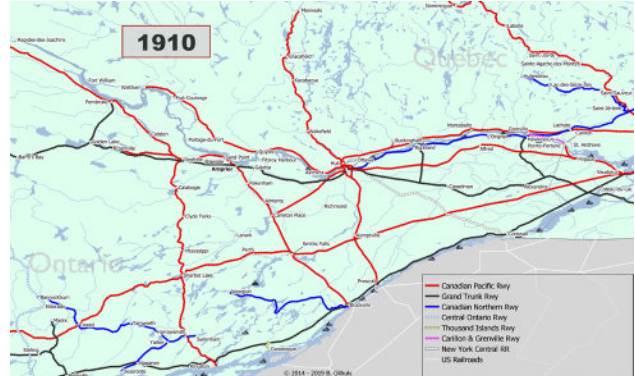
Final Growth Spurt (1906 - 1916)

The next decade saw two new transcontinental railways completed. The Government – GTR route passed far to the north. But, despite its failure to acquire the CAR, the Canadian Northern became a major player in this region. Buying where it could, building where it must, the CNoR created a network in Ontario and Québec that included both an Ottawa Valley and an Ottawa – Toronto line.

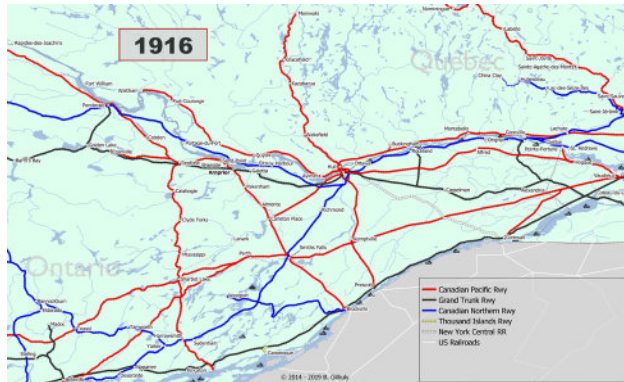
In 1906, the CNoR consolidated its Québec properties and the following year built a line from Hawkesbury to its Ottawa station at Hurdman. The COR was acquired in 1909 but kept as a separate entity. In 1906 the BQ closed its original connection from Deseronto to the GTR in favour of the Napanee route. CNoR absorbed the BQ in 1910; the latter would provide a key link in its Ottawa – Toronto route. As Map 20 shows, it also swallowed the Brockville & Westport, for no obvious reason.

The Carillon & Grenville shut down for good at the end of the 1910 navigation season. In its final years the C&G had become a tourist attraction in its own right; the last broad gauge railway in North America. CNoR bought the C&G's property in 1911 to reuse part of the roadbed for its direct line from Grenville to Montréal.

For its Ottawa – Toronto line, the CNoR in 1914 built from Ottawa via Smiths Falls as far as the east end of the former BQ at Sydenham and resumed building from Deseronto west. That was also the year the COR was absorbed.



MAP 20: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)



MAP 21: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

it opened a second route, also leased, from Glen Tay, just west of Perth, to Belleville and on to Toronto. The CNoR and CPR shared tracks and station at Belleville. By 1916, Canada had three transcontinental railway systems, all present in our region.

In 1915 the CNoR completed its transcontinental main line from Vancouver to Ottawa. The Valley segment from North Bay was all newly built. It bypassed Arnprior, crossing into Québec at Portage-du-Fort and back into Ontario at the Chats Falls. Then in 1916 the CNoR opened the direct line east of Grenville. (Map 21) Once its Mont-Royal tunnel opened in 1918, Canadian Northern had a terminal in the heart of that city.

The Grand Trunk bought the TIR but kept it a separate company because it had a municipal tax exemption. The CPR leased the K&P in 1913, ending its separate identity, and opened a leased branch to Cornwall. Most importantly, in 1914

End of an Era (1917 - 1923)

Unfortunately, Canada's traffic barely justified a second cross-country line, let alone a third. Neither the Grand Trunk nor the Canadian Northern could earn enough to repay its loans and the outbreak of World War I made those loans impossible to re-finance. The final blow came in 1917, with a US Government decision to double railway wages, when it nationalised American railroads for the duration of the war. Given the integrated continental rail system, Canadian carriers were forced to follow suit. The railways, Canada's largest employers by far, were, except for the CPR, on the brink of collapse.

The Federal Government had been in the railway business since 1867; building and operating the Intercolonial Railway from Québec to Nova Scotia had been part of the Confederation deal. When PEI joined in 1873, a federal takeover of its railway was negotiated. The Laurier government made two additions to the federal stable. One was the Hudson's Bay Railway project, intended to link The Pas, MB to arctic tidewater. The other, supposedly temporary, was the National Transcontinental Railway (NTR) which the government was building as its contribution to its partnership with the GTR. On completion, the NTR was to be leased to the Grand Trunk Pacific (GTP), a GTR subsidiary. At first an informal term, by 1912 Canadian Government Railways (CGR) was the official name for the whole group, which operated as a government department under direct ministerial control.

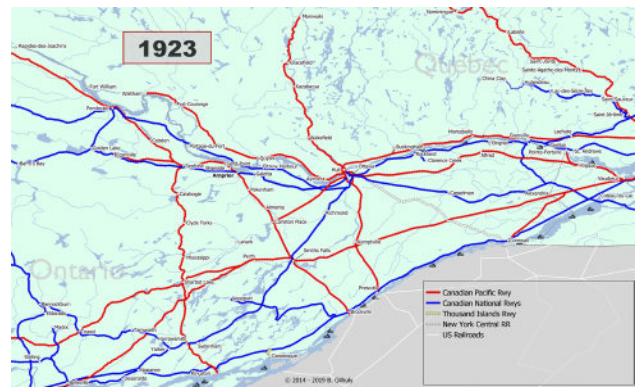
The GTP/NTR transcontinental line opened in 1914. When the Grand Trunk Pacific in 1917 broke its agreement to lease the NTR, the Borden Government was forced to act, though not until after a Royal Commission studied the entire railway mess. The commission recommended nationalisation of both GTR and CNoR, though the only commissioner with direct railway experience argued that that the CNoR could return to viability with government assistance.

In 1918 the Government bought the Canadian Northern as a going concern. Rather than add it to the CGR group, Borden created a semi-independent Crown corporation to take over all CGR and CNoR lines. It would be called **Canadian National Railways (CNR)**. The GTR's Grand Trunk Pacific subsidiary was bankrupt by 1919 and duly became part of the CNR.

The Grand Trunk itself held out a little longer but finally failed in 1922 and became part of the CNR early in 1923. The Rockland branch was closed almost immediately but public protest, led by the local MP, forced the re-opening of a short spur from Rockland to Clarence Creek.

Map 22 illustrates the new reality. Apart from the NYC Ottawa line, every inch of track belongs to either the CNR or the CPR. Note the 'the'; both railways were popularly known by their initials as "the CPR" and "the CNR", always including the definite article.

The duplication of lines on Map 22 is striking, particularly between Montréal and Ottawa where each company has two separate routes, built by different predecessor railways.



MAP 22: CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE. CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.

From Glamour to Gloom (1923 - 1933)

The 'roar' of the twenties was the sound of crack passenger trains. World War I had demonstrated the technologies that would supplant the railways, but decline was yet far off. Branch line services remained little changed, while the CPR and its new, larger competitor focussed on profitable inter-city routes. Three of the latter ran across our maps: the transcontinental Montréal – Ottawa – Vancouver, the international Montréal – Toronto – Chicago, and Ottawa – Toronto.

Canadian Pacific had operated transcontinental trains up the Ottawa Valley since 1887. Canadian National inherited in 1918 the CNoR service that began in 1915. On both roads, the trip took 4½ days. In 1919 the CPR introduced a faster train, the *Trans-Canada Limited*, conveying only sleeping car passengers, apart from a "limited number of parlor car passengers" between Montréal and Ottawa, that cut 15 hours from the journey. In the Valley, Ottawa and Pembroke were its only stops. Even though the CNR hadn't tried to match it, in 1929 the timing of the *TCL* was speeded up by a further 5 hours and it was totally re-equipped. It was cancelled in 1931 as the Depression bit, but the remaining daily train had 10 hours taken off its schedule, so the CPR remained fastest across the continent.



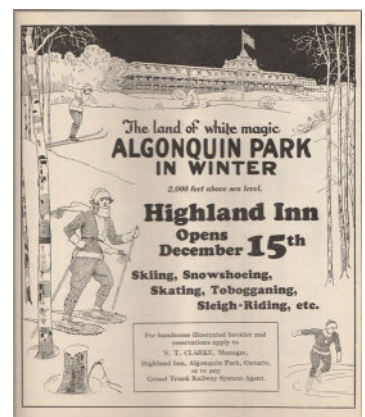
Introduced in 1880, the Grand Trunk's most famous train, the *International Limited*, left Montréal at breakfast time, reaching Toronto in late afternoon and arriving in Chicago the following morning. Eastbound it left Chicago at the end of the business day. In both directions, it offered a daytime connection from the St. Lawrence valley towns to Toronto and Montréal. The CPR could reach Chicago from Windsor via its partner, the Michigan Central Railroad, but its inland route from Montréal to Toronto via Peterborough was too slow to compete. That changed with the opening of a faster route via Belleville in 1914. Through the twenties the CPR's *Canadian* and the *International Limited* competed head-to-head, cutting the 24-hour journey of 1923 to 18 hours by 1931. They left Montréal simultaneously, from almost-adjacent stations, and the *Limited* arrived about fifteen minutes earlier than its rival. Each railway also had a pair of slower trains that were overnight Montréal – Toronto and daytime Toronto – Chicago.

The Ottawa – Toronto route was a CPR monopoly from 1884 until the CNoR opened its line in 1914. Through the twenties, the CPR and the CNR each operated two daytime and two overnight trains in each direction between the capitals. All CNR service was on its single line via Napanee, but the CPR had two routes from Ottawa to Smiths Falls, and two from Glen Tay to Toronto, that split the traffic. Perth and Smiths Falls were served by every CPR train between Toronto and Ottawa or Montréal.

Competition in the twenties was not limited to train schedules. In 1923 the CNR became the first railway in the world to equip a lounge car for radio listening via headphones. Soon, luxury CNR trains advertised their "radio-equipped" cars and the company created a three-station network to provide the programming. (In 1933 the CNR radio stations would become the nucleus of the new Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, ancestor of today's CBC.).

The two railways controlled telegraph communications in Canada, as well as express (courier) delivery services. Each had a portfolio of hotels and resorts. In our region the CNR had the ex-GTR Chateau Laurier in Ottawa and the ex-OAPS Highland Inn in Algonquin Park, which it promoted as a year-round tourist destination. The CPR owned no hotels in the region, but it was the financial backer of the luxury private resort, the Seignory Club, which boasted the largest log building in the world. Decades later the CPR would take over and operate the property as the Chateau Montebello.

As had been the case in 1873, the US stock market crash of October 1929 took a couple of years to drag the world economy into a second Great Depression, but by 1932 Canada's railways were reeling from its impact. The CNR was hemorrhaging public funds and even the mighty CPR sought government help. A new Royal Commission rejected the CPR's proposal that all railways be amalgamated, under private or public ownership. Instead, it called for more voluntary collaboration between the two companies.



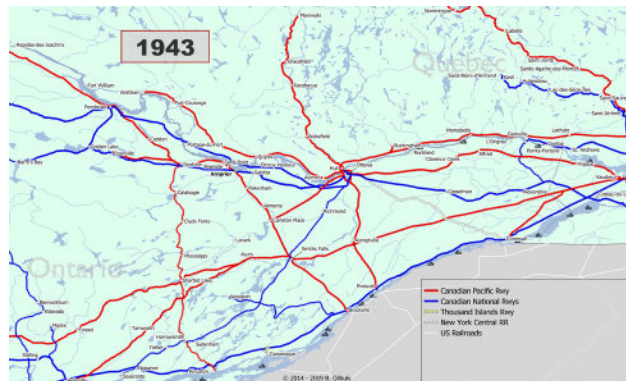
The possibilities were great but all that emerged from months of negotiation was an agreement to 'pool' services on just three routes: Quebec - Montréal, Montréal - Toronto, and Ottawa - Toronto. The Montréal - Ottawa segment was not included in the pool because it hosted the railways' transcontinental trains, which both were determined to keep separate. But, as of April 2, 1933, most trains between Toronto and

both Ottawa and Montréal were pool trains, involving both railways. One could still buy a ticket from Montréal to Chicago on the *Canadian* or the *International Limited*, but in either case the Montréal - Toronto leg of the trip would be Pool Train 15, which left the CPR station in Montréal but ran most of the way on CNR tracks. West of Toronto the trains separated.

Half-Century of Decline (1933 – 1983)

Future growth would belong to the emerging transport technologies: automobiles, trucks, buses and aeroplanes. But existing industries had been designed and built around the railway infrastructure; so long as they flourished the freight business would have a stable base. Post Office contracts for carriage of mail on passenger trains offset declining passenger numbers. The rise of Toronto as Canada's commercial and industrial centre, displacing Montréal, reduced through traffic on the transcontinental main lines along the Ottawa Valley. The decline of the lumber industry, of which the 1928 closure of Arnprior's McLachlin Bros. was an early example, reduced the volume of freight generated by the valley lines.

Nevertheless, over the next two decades the CPR retained all but one of its lines in this region. The lone Canadian Pacific closure, in 1941, was the branch from Rigaud to Pointe-Fortune. Dedicated passenger trains on the former K&P were replaced by mixed trains that did not promise adherence to a schedule.



MAP 23: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

As Map 23 shows, the CNR was much more active in abandoning routes though it also built a new line north to the junction with the ex-Montfort line in 1925. The former OAPS line was severed at Cache Lake in Algonquin Park in 1933 when the CNR concluded that a trestle repair would be uneconomic, but service continued both east and west of the gap. In 1936, the CNR abandoned its Clarence Creek branch and the former CNOR line west of Deseronto. The Ottawa-Hawkesbury line closed in 1939, then in 1940 the CNR abandoned what remained of the Great Northern.

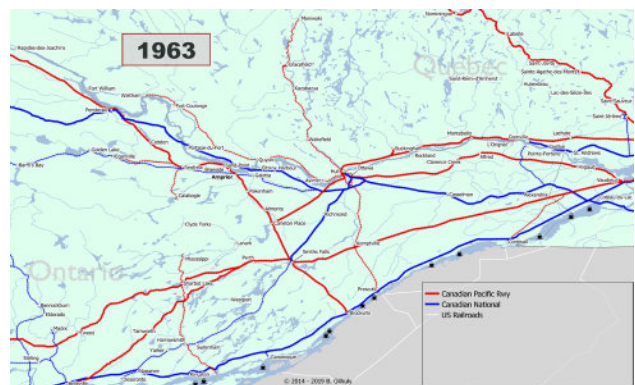
World War II caused a dramatic rebound in rail traffic, freight and passenger, civilian and military.

Camp (now Garrison) Petawawa was a key army base. A military airfield was constructed just south of Arnprior to support a training facility for pilot instructors. It was connected by a long spur to the CNR west of Division Street. The region's worst railway disaster occurred during the war when, on Dec. 27, 1942, a troop train from the west slammed into a local passenger train standing at Almonte station, killing 39 and injuring more than 150 passengers on the local. By the war's end in 1945, the railways were severely run down by the combination of high traffic and deferred maintenance. Post war, customers deserted the shabby, old-fashioned trains in favour of private automobiles and long distance air travel.

In 1953 the CNR closed the onetime Brockville and Westport. In the following decade, the biggest change in regional railways was caused by the building of the Saint Lawrence Seaway to give ocean-going vessels access to the Great Lakes. The widened river forced CNR's former Grand Trunk trackage between Cornwall and Cardinal to be moved inland and the NYC bridge removed. Replacing the bridge made no commercial sense, so the New York Central abandoned its Ottawa line in 1957.

The Thousand Islands Railway was absorbed by the CNR in 1958 when its municipal tax exemption ended. In 1961 the CNR 're-branded' itself as **Canadian National | Canadien national (CN)**. It also abandoned the branch from Golden Lake to Pembroke. The following year, CN cut its Laurentian service back to Saint-Jérôme, abandoning the entire Montfort line.

The only CPR cutback shown on Map 24 is the abandonment of former K&P track between Snow Road and Calabogie at the end of 1961. CPR passenger service to Waltham ended in 1959 and to Maniwaki in 1963. The last steam locomotives were removed from service on both CN and the CPR by early 1960. After two years of operation with a single self-propelled "Railer" car, passenger service from Arnprior on CN's (ex-OAPS) line to Barry's Bay and Ottawa ended on June 30, 1961.

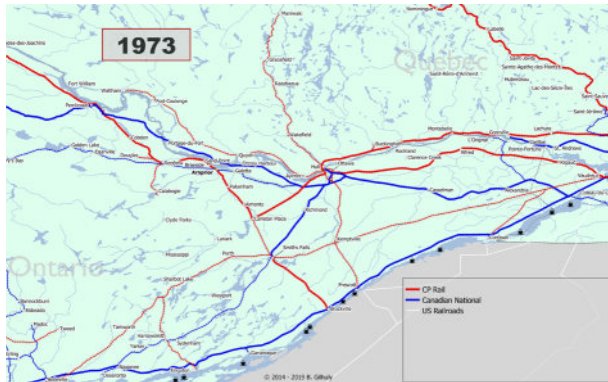


MAP 24: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

In the mid-sixties, railways within the City of Ottawa were radically reduced and rearranged, culminating in the opening in 1966 of the new Union Station on Tremblay road and a new joint yard south of Walkley Road. The CPR closed additional sections of its ex-K&P route in 1964 and in 1966.

After thirty-two years, the pool train agreement was allowed to expire in October 1965. CN immediately quit the Ottawa - Toronto route and launched a new 'Rapido' service between Montréal and Toronto. The CPR half-heartedly competed for a few months but in January 1966 it abandoned inter-city service between Toronto and both Montréal and Ottawa. This meant the end of passenger service to towns such as Perth, Winchester and Sharbot Lake. It would also have ended all Ottawa - Toronto passenger service had the government not directed CN to provide three daily train pairs; the morning and afternoon departures used CPR tracks between Smiths Falls and Brockville, while the overnights were the first passenger trains in years on the Smiths Falls - Napanee line. CPR passenger service continued on other routes, including the transcontinental line through Arnprior.

In 1968 the CPR re-branded its railway as **CP Rail (CP)**. Re-branding had a linguistic impact. Almost as soon as the railways shortened their initials to two letters from three, the previously obligatory definite articles largely disappeared from speech. I have rarely, if ever, heard anyone say “the CN” or “the CP”. Inclusion of the definite article somehow sounds wrong, just as its omission does when the old, three-letter initials are used.

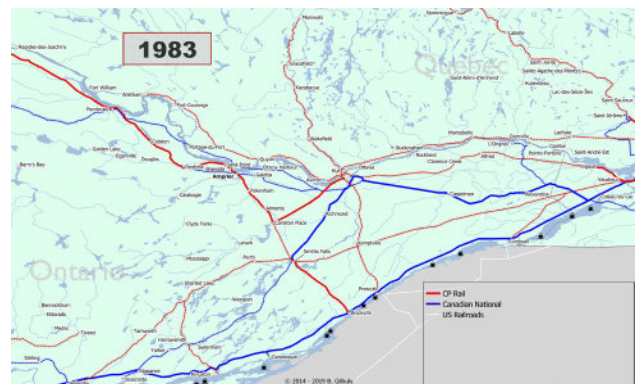


MAP 25: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

Ontario Hydro completed its series of power dams on the Madawaska with the Arnprior Generating Station, opened in 1976. Creation of the new headpond, Lake Madawaska, required CP to divert about three miles of track slightly to the east so a dyke could be built on its original alignment. Map 26 shows the new arrangement.

VIA Rail Canada (VIA) took over most passenger service in Canada in 1978, with no immediate local impact. Then in 1981 VIA shifted its transcontinental trains away from the Ottawa Valley route. To meet regional demand, an Ottawa – Sudbury passenger service on CP tracks was introduced, so Arnprior continued to be served. CP made no changes to its network other than removing the remainder of the Eganville branch and the Calabogie – Renfrew stub of the former K&P.

CN closed the Madoc branch in 1980, then followed up by abandoning the entire former Central Ontario two years later. The former OAPS line from Renfrew to Whitney was shut down in 1983.



MAP 26: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

A Difficult Decade (1984 - 1993)

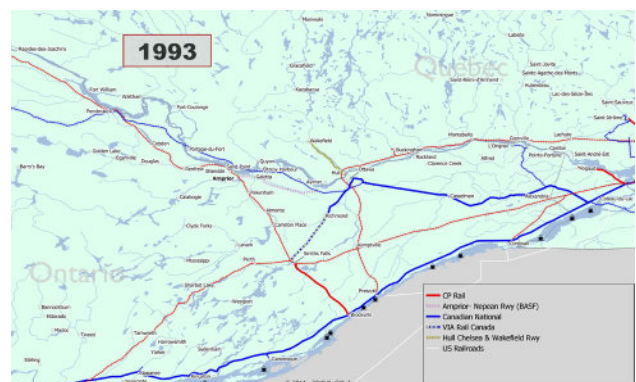
Over the next ten years, closures accelerated and this time Arnprior would be directly affected. Map 27 shows what happened. CP drastically cut back its routes in the region. The Waltham (ex-PPJ) line was abandoned in stages between 1984 and 1993. Both CP's 'short line' from Ottawa to Montréal via Vankleek Hill and the southern stub of the former K&P were closed in 1986. In 1988, it was the turn of the tracks west from Tweed to Havelock. The entire Laurentian line beyond Saint-Jérôme was abandoned in 1989. The Maniwaki line was abandoned in 1986 but a tourist operation, the **Hull, Chelsea and Wakefield Railway (HCW)**, began operating seasonally between those communities in 1992.

VIA returned the Montréal section of its transcontinental train to the CP route in 1985, replacing the Ottawa – Sudbury train. The return was brief. With the departure of VIA's westbound Canadian on Jan. 14, 1990, Arnprior had seen its last passenger train. Passenger service on the former B&O route had lasted one hundred and twenty-five years, one month and eight days. The next day, the 1870 CCR line from Ottawa to Carleton Place was abandoned. Canada's original transcontinental rail link was broken.

Changes to the CN network in Map 27 were less sweeping but they touched Arnprior even more deeply. First, CN got rid of its former CNoR line from Richmond to Napanee. The western portion was abandoned in 1985 and the stretch from Richmond to Smiths Falls was purchased by VIA in 1991, becoming the first route owned by the passenger carrier. The former Grand Junction was abandoned in 1987.

By the eighties, Arnprior's BASF plant was the only customer left on the former OAPS and BASF only took two cars per week. CN abandoned the tracks from Arnprior to Renfrew in 1989 and sought approval to abandon the rest, which could have forced the BASF facility to close.

In the end, a public-private solution was developed. BASF obtained a provincial charter in 1992 to operate a private industrial railway. The Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton bought the right-of-way to preserve it as a long-term transport corridor and leased it to BASF's **Arnprior-Nepean Railway (ANR)**. The ANR bought the rails and infrastructure from Canadian National and contracted with CN for their



MAP 27: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

operation from August 1, 1993. The Madawaska bridge and tracks west were abandoned; the right-of-way in Arnprior became a pedestrian path, now closed.

Forest industries had virtually disappeared from the Ottawa Valley by the nineties, taking freight traffic with them. Both national railways had lines from Montréal to the Sudbury area that were uneconomic to maintain for their modest volume of run-through freight trains. Facing a common problem, CN and CP in 1992 announced an agreement in principle to share the existing CN route, with the CP line to be abandoned. A follow-up announcement in June 1993 launched the CNCP Ottawa Valley Partnership.

Short Line Experiments (1994 - 2003)

The Partnership seems to have sunk almost immediately, but its end was officially announced by the parties in 1995, just as CN was being sold to private investors after 77 years as a public entity. There would be no collaboration. Both CN and CP, in addition to closures, began selling or leasing routes to companies that specialised in operating so-called ‘short line’ railways at lower cost, primarily through lower wages and benefits to employees. As a result, new companies abound on Map 28.

CP in 1995 closed the Prescott end of the ex-B&P line, the Cornwall branch and a section of the former QMOO route east of Thurso. The last was reopened in 1997 when the **Quebec Gatineau Railway (QGR)** acquired the entire line west of Saint-Augustin. CP retained its connection from the Walkley Yard to the QGR in Gatineau.

In October 1996, the eastern operations of CP Rail were reorganised as the **St. Lawrence and Hudson Railway (STL&H)**. The same month the Valley line from Smiths Falls to Coniston, just east of Sudbury, was leased to **RaiLink Ottawa Valley (ROV)**, which in turn became the **Ottawa Valley Railway (OVR)** in 1999 when ownership changed. In 1998, the northern part of the former Bytown & Prescott was closed. The STL&H was re-absorbed in 2001 into what was by then called the **Canadian Pacific Railway (CP)**.



MAP 28: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

CN abandoned its line from Pembroke west to Capreol in 1996. The same year, the Hawkesbury branch was leased to the **Ontario L'Original Railway (OLO)**. Then in 1998 CN sold to VIA the former CAR route between Ottawa and Coteau, retaining the right to use the line for freight, for a fee. It subsequently leased the one-time CNor line from Ottawa to Pembroke, plus its access to the VIA track, to the **Ottawa Central Railway (OCR)**. In 2000 the OCR bought the Ontario L'Original Railway. CN completed its retreat from the Laurentians in 1999, with the QGR acquiring the branch to Saint-Jérôme and the southern connection abandoned.

A Further Sorting Out (2004 - 2019)

Of the new short line operators, only the Quebec Gatineau Railway managed to find a viable long-term business model. Thus, it is still in operation in 2019 and appears on Map 29. Likewise, the ANR, now the property of Nylene Canada Inc., continues to be operated on contract by CN.

CP sold its line from Walkley Yard to the Gatineau end of the Prince of Wales Bridge to the City of Ottawa. Except for the bridge, it is used by the light rail O-Train. Because of this change of use, the line does not appear on Map 29.

The ending of the short line leases came swiftly with the onset of the 2008 economic downturn and abandonments were not far behind. The closure of the Smurfit-Stone plant in Portage-du-Fort in 2008 was quickly followed by the end of the Ottawa Central. CN took back the branch to L'Original at the end of 2008. The Pembroke line was closed. In 2013, rails were removed from Pembroke to Portage-du-Fort and in 2014, after a brief court battle, the remainder were lifted.

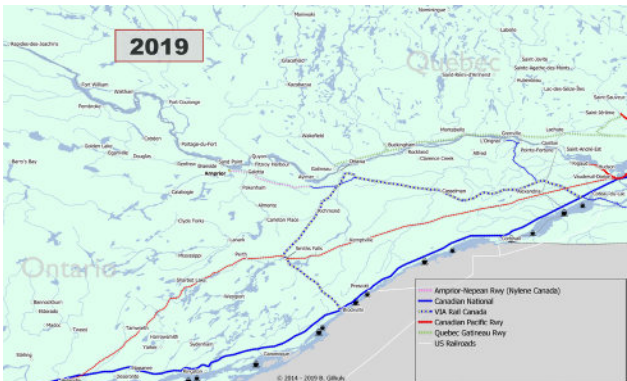
Traffic ceased on the OVR line through Arnprior in the spring of 2009 and the lease was terminated by the end of the year. CP's removal of the track east of Meath hill began in 2011, reaching Arnprior in May 2012 and Smiths Falls by mid-summer. The track from Meath hill to Mattawa was lifted from mid-2012 to late 2013.

The HCW tourist train ended operation after landslides damaged the track in 2011. Several years of attempts to re-start or re-locate the attraction proved fruitless and the venture was officially declared dead by the end of 2018.

VIA acquired the rest of the CN line north from Richmond to Ottawa Station in 2010 but, as Map 29 shows, CN retains some tracks within Ottawa. On Nov. 23, 2015 VIA announced that it had acquired the original B&O line between Brockville and Smiths Falls from CP.

VIA's Montréal – Ottawa – Toronto trains now run on its own tracks from Coteau to Brockville, apart from a short stretch on CP in Smiths Falls.

Canadian Pacific retains just 12 miles of its very first acquisition in 1881; the B&O line from Smiths Falls



MAP 29: [CLICK TO VIEW FULL SIZE.](#) [CLICK AGAIN TO RETURN.](#)

to Perth. That route with its extensions has been the core of the CP main line from Montréal to Toronto since 1884.

Farther north, trains are mostly a memory. Like the lumber industry they created, railways are gone from the central Ottawa Valley, the Laurentians and the Hastings Highlands.

An Uncertain Future

On September 21, 2018, CN updated its 3-year network plan – a document spelling out its intentions for all of its lines for the succeeding three years. The updated plan revealed that CN intends to discontinue all services, and abandon all the track it owns, in the Ottawa area by September 20, 2021. This will mean the closure of the line to Hawkesbury and L'Orignal and the line across south Ottawa. That will leave the ANR without a connection to the rail network, presumably leading to its abandonment as well. What that will mean for the future of the Nylene facility in Arnprior remains to be seen.

The Great Railway Celebration

Carleton Place Herald, Dec. 14th 1864

Upper Ottawa Correspondence

The topic of conversation for the last two weeks has been the

GREAT RAILWAY CELEBRATION AT ARNPRIOR

This grand and truly magnificent affair came off on Thursday last, the 8th inst., and was a complete success. The large and commodious two-story brick school house was selected for the purpose, and for three days before the event the committee were engaged in decorating for the occasion. The supper and ball were got up by private subscription, all the inhabitants of Arnprior joining in defraying the expenses, but I must give the description seriatim, commencing at the

DANCING HALL

On entering the room the eye at once embraced in its scope of vision a scene of the most enchanting magnificence and luxurious splendor. The walls were hung with scarlet flags, banners, standards ornamented the windows, between each of which hung suspended paintings and engravings by the most able masters of the art. In a species of alcove elevated above the floor, and surrounded with crimson curtains, encircled with festoons of evergreens and flowers was the space allotted for the orchestra. Directly opposite the dais appeared a full length portrait of Her Majesty beneath a crown of flowers and evergreens, surrounded with a circlet of tastefully arranged bouquets. Seats covered with scarlet cloth and sofas were arranged along the sides of the walls. The whole was brilliantly lighted with chandeliers of bronze and silver and large globe lamps.

THE DINING HALL

On the first or lower story were arranged the tables, designed to accommodate about 140 at a time. The tables actually glittered with crystal and silver and burnished gold. The set of silver and crystal procured specially for the Prince of Wales' visit to Arnprior was kindly lent by Mr. McLachlin for the occasion. The light of the large candelabras was reflected with a lustre that was almost dazzling and set off the table to becoming advantage. The walls were decorated also with flags and adorned with banners.

BILL OF FARE

Turkeys, roasted and boiled; Fowls, variously dressed ; Wild Ducks; Geese ; Prairie-hens; Roast beef; Rounds of beef; Hams; Tongues; Mutton hams; Jellies; Custarts; Blanc mange; Whips; Pineapples; Apples; Pears; Almonds; Raisins; Figs. The tables absolutely creaked beneath this luxuriant profusion of the very best viands and fruits the seasons could afford.

WINES &C

Champagne; Port; Sherry; Claret; Ale; Brandy; Rum; Scotch Whisky; &c &c

THE GUESTS

The company began to arrive at 8 P.M. The

hotels in town were all crowded, especially Mr. Lyon's, Mr. Eady's and the Ottawa House, kept by Mr. Tackaberry. The principal guests present were Mr. Richardson, the energetic manager of the road, R. P. Cooke, Esq., Chief engineer, R. Shanly, Esq., T. P. French, Esq., Mr. Sheriff Thompson, Mr. R. R. Smith Warden United Counties, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Keefer. Messrs. H Burnston, J. Percival, H. Carmichael, M. McMartin, D. Galbraith, D. Wylie Brockville Recorder, M. Menzies, Dr. Mostyn, R. Moffat, Capt. McGill Chambers, W. O. Buell, Esq., Barrister, H. C. Jones, Brockville. W. C. Lewis, Almonte; H. H. Dickson, Cedar Hill; Mr. Hartney, Pakenham; Mr. Riddle, Fitzroy; and a number of others whose names we forget, and if we have omitted any it is through inadvertency. Most of the gentlemen were accompanied by their ladies. The Brass Band of Arnprior was in attendance but did not play. A string band was brought from Ottawa, the music of which was rather below mediocrity, so much so that Mr. Lyons and Mr. Scrimgeour kindly volunteered to assist, and thus added to the harmony and delight of the large assemblage. Dancing commenced about 9. The gentlemen and ladies were all in full dress, and about three hundred were present.

THE SUPPER

About half-past ten o'clock the guests were marshalled into supper by H. H. McLachlin, Esq., one of the committee, assisted by Mr. J. Campbell. Daniel McLachlin, Esq., occupied the chair, with the principal guests on his left and right. A. H. Dowswell, Esq., acted as croupiere. The company set to with a zeal and relish which did ample justice to the viands before them. After the cloth was removed the Chairman gave:

"The Queen," with nine times nine.

"The Prince and Princess of Wales and all the Royal Family," with all the honours.

"The Governor General," with three times three.

Mr. McLachlin then rose and said --

"Gentlemen, I now rise to propose the toast of the evening -- 'Success to the Brockville and Ottawa Railway Company.' I know it will be drunk with enthusiasm and honoured with applause. I am certainly most happy to see you all here partaking of our hospitality and enjoying yourselves. Little did I once think we would ever have such a demonstration in Arnprior; but see what perseverance will accomplish and industry effect. I was once a poor man, getting out a few sticks of timber and shouldering my axe, but good fortune, industry and perseverance has made me what you now see me. When I first purchased Arnprior there was no talk of a railway. I found this place in a ruinous condition, with only one or two shattered and dilapidated houses and the ruins of Buchanan's mills. I encouraged the formation of a village and you now see the result. Eleven years has effected this change. The first house of the present village was erected in 1853, and its increase has been rapid and its advancement prosperous. (Cheers.) When the railway stopped

I began to despair; within the last few years I thought we never would see the railway here, but thanks to the energy and financial abilities of Mr. J. G. Richardson we are now celebrating its arrival and rejoicing over its completion to Arnprior, (cheers) and I hope it will not remain here, but that it will go forward and onward; and my ardent aspiration is that before I die I may see it spanning the forest between this and Huron until it extends to the western shores of Lake superior." (Vociferous applause.)

Mr. Richardson, Managing Director, said:

"I am proud and delighted that our exertions are appreciated by the people of Arnprior and the county of Renfrew, to extend the road to its present position. When I first undertook its management, I was dubbed an M.D., that is to say not a doctor of medicine but a Managing Director, and I found the road in a sickly, weak and debilitated condition. I neither administered, like other M.D.'s, blue pills nor black draughts, but I applied tonics which was the proper remedy to adopt. In every shanty gang it is necessary to have the men fed, and the most important personage in the feeding department is a Cook. I procured a Cook, and as the French are the best cooks I obtained a French Cook, or, in other words, a Cooke and a French to assist me in carrying on the enterprise and bring it to a successful termination. We have brought it to Arnprior. (Cheers.) We have located in your midst, but the terminus is not here. It must go forward, and I hope before I have done with it to see it carried to Pembroke. We are determined to bring it there, and there it will be before many months elapse. We have had many difficulties to contend with, local jealousies amid the rival municipalities have almost paralyzed our efforts, but we have persevered and we have succeeded. (Cheers.) I have been at many demonstrations in the United States and in Canada, but I have never seen one equal to this at Arnprior for brilliancy, profusion, liberality, harmony and good will. I return to you, gentlemen of Arnprior, in the name of the B&O Railway Company, my most sincere thanks for the honour you have done us, for the hospitality we have experienced." (Loud applause.)

From the Chair -- "The Press."

Mr. Wylie, of the Brockville Recorder, replied in a suitable manner, and said:

"I had always opposed the old company under Sherwood and Steel, and I felt dubious of the new until I saw their intentions were honest and that they had been in good faith carrying out the wishes of the company and at the same time keeping faith with the people. If they ever deviated from that course, I would oppose them to the uttermost." (Applause.)

The next was "The Ladies", which was warmly responded to and drank with enthusiasm. Mr. W. O. Buell, of Perth, replied in an appropriate speech.

The standard toasts were now ended and the party retired to the ball-room, where dancing was kept up with spirit till an early hour in the morning. The company separated much pleased with each other and delighted with the

entertainment they had received.

Friday, 9th, 12, m.

At noon today the invited guests, accompanied by a large number of the residents of the village of Arnprior repaired to the station preparatory to their final departure.

T. P. French, Esq., said that he now addressed the people of Arnprior to thank them for their kindness and hospitality, and for the splendid entertainment they had received, but he begged one boon and hoped it would not be refused. The ladies of Brockville, and those from a distance, wished to hear Mr. McNab speak, and he hoped that gentleman would oblige them all by delivering a farewell address.

Mr. McNab, Principal of the Arnprior Public School, rose and said :--"Ladies and gentlemen, to such a request there is only one reply, acquiescence. I am delighted to witness this assemblage -- to be here now to bid you farewell. Never has the county of Renfrew witnessed such a spectacle, and it may be long, very long, before we shall see such another. Proud of your appearance among us, we are still prouder of the completion of the road to this very point; and we may, with justice, attribute it to the exertions of Mr. J. G. Richardson, and no other man under the sun. Had it been left to the municipalities it might have remained for ages at Almonte, or terminate in some swamp forgotten and neglected. (Cheers.) I therefore propose -- (no, no, go on, go on, don't stop: from the crowd.) Well, ladies and gentlemen, I will go on. It has come to Arnprior. Steele has been supplanted by iron, we are united by an iron band to the St. Lawrence, still more by the band of sympathy and the ties of mutual friendship and esteem. (Loud cheers.) The railroad must go on. It will penetrate the depths of the forest and carry civilization and progress through those regions hitherto doomed and consigned to barbarism and the fur company. New life and new energy will be installed into the brawny arms and stout hearts of the stalwart and indomitable settlers of the county, and they can now lay their hands upon their breasts and say 'We are grateful for all the gifts of Providence, but more especially for our present happiness and prosperity.' Long may this day be remembered. It will be, I assure you, cherished in my after memory as one of the most delightful that ever occurred in our woodland home, and I can tell my children, if spared in life and health, when this village shall be a city, and this forest that now surrounds us a country cultivated like the fair fields of our native lands, that I witnessed the inauguration of the Brockville and Ottawa Railroad, and the joyous looks and happy congratulations of the present assemblage." (Loud and long continued cheering.)

Mr. Wylie, of the Brockville Recorder, was then called upon, and he said :--"That he did not hear the whole of Mr. McNab's remarks and would beg Mr. McNab to repeat his speech, for from the concluding sentences which he had heard they were most eloquent. The railroad now is a fixed fact. I return you all my warmest thanks for your kindness and hope someday soon to reciprocate the compliment." (Loud and enthusiastic cheers.)

The whole company now embarked on the cars and departed, amidst the cheers of the people of Arnprior. This, certainly, was one of the greatest demonstrations ever made in the county of Renfrew, and I must now conclude as no pen could do sufficient justice to it.

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Revision History

This book was originally published in May 2015 under the title *Arnprior Area Railway History in Maps*. That title was republished with revisions in June 2015. *Tracing the Lines* was released in October, and updated in November, 2015.

The March 2016 revision added coverage of the railways of the Laurentians and the Hastings Highlands, filling in the empty corners of the map. Four maps were added, three retired, and the remainder revised. An original newspaper account of the 1864 Great Railway Celebration at Arnprior was added. The account of the Canadian Northern Railway properties in the region was revised and expanded and the name of the Carillon and Grenville Railway was corrected.

All of the maps have been revised for this November 2019 update. Cartographic items of note are the inclusion of US railroads and more accurate representation of the St. Lawrence before the Seaway and the Ottawa before the Carillon dam. A brief sketch of the physical and human landscape before colonisation and during the timber era has been added to the text. The Union Railroad is now covered and the histories of the Brockville & Ottawa and Canada Central expanded. A small number of images have been included and the page size is now the same for text and maps, which should simplify life for anyone who elects to print a copy

If you want to learn more

Colin Churcher's Railway Pages is by far the best source for Ottawa area rail history. It is online at <https://churcher.crcml.org/>. The Bytown Railway Society publishes a great bi-monthly magazine, *Branchline*. You can subscribe and/or read back issues online at <https://www.bytownrailwaysociety.ca/>. The Canadian Railway Historical Association publishes *Canadian Rail* bi-monthly and back issues are readable online at <https://www.exporail.org/en/>. All three sites have many links of interest.

There is no other single book on our regional railway history, though there are a number about specific local railways included in the bibliography on the next two pages. Many of the books listed are out of print but may be obtainable at your local library via inter-library loan. All of the books listed, and many more, are available for public consultation at the C. Robert Craig Memorial Library (<https://www.crcml.org/>), located with the City of Ottawa Archives at 100 Tallwood Drive, Nepean.

The Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario, based in the former CNoR station in Smiths Falls, is well worth a visit. For more information, see <http://rmeo.org/>. Ottawa's Canada Science and Technology Museum, recently re-branded as 'Ingenium', (<https://ingeniumcanada.org>) has an important railway collection.

To contact the author

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Atlas


The maps on the following pages are interactive; if you click on a map you will be taken to the corresponding text.

On the maps, the lines representing railways vary in thickness according to the services offered.

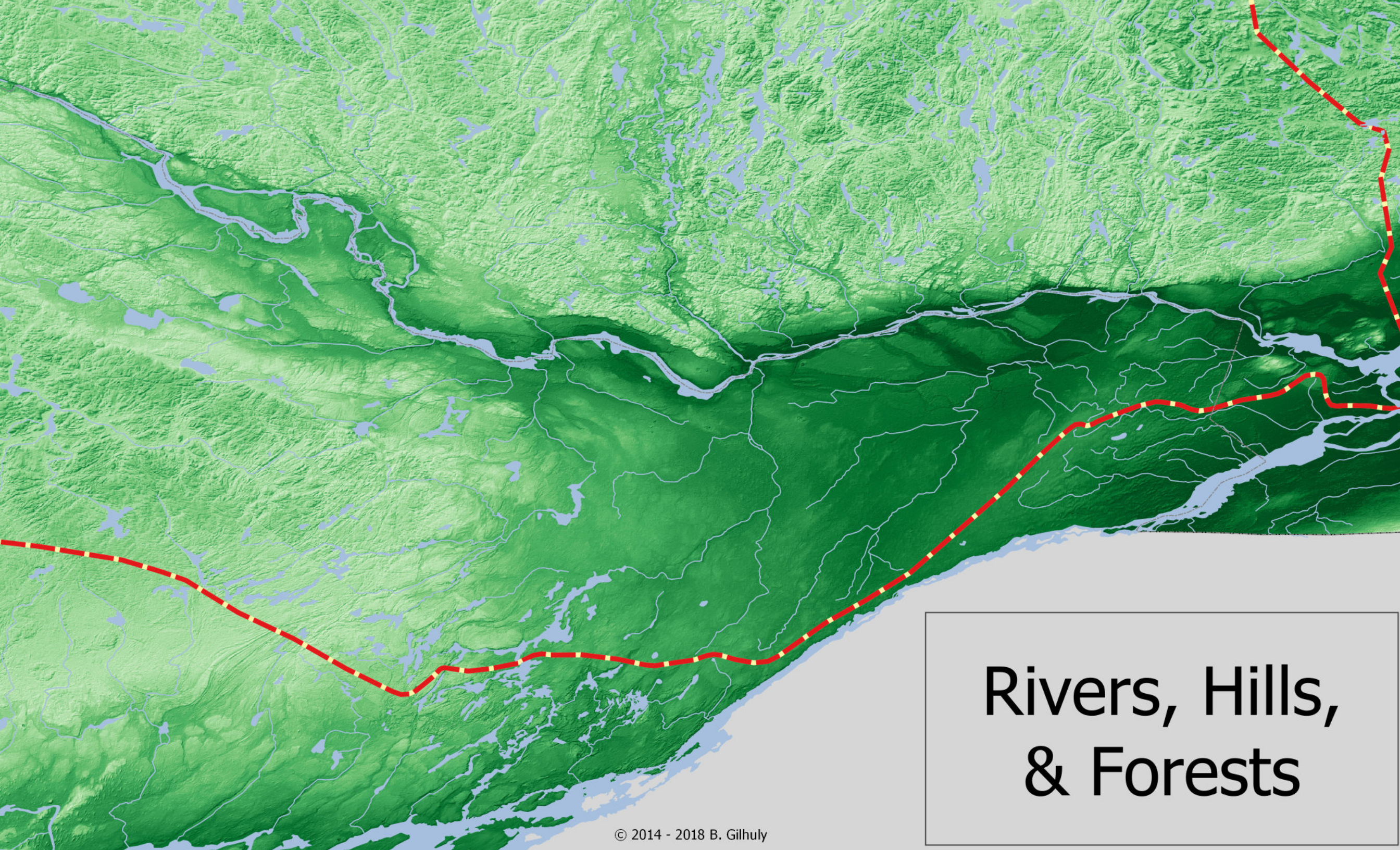
If a section of railway carries only freight, it appears as a thin line .

Sections that also carry dedicated passenger train service are much wider .

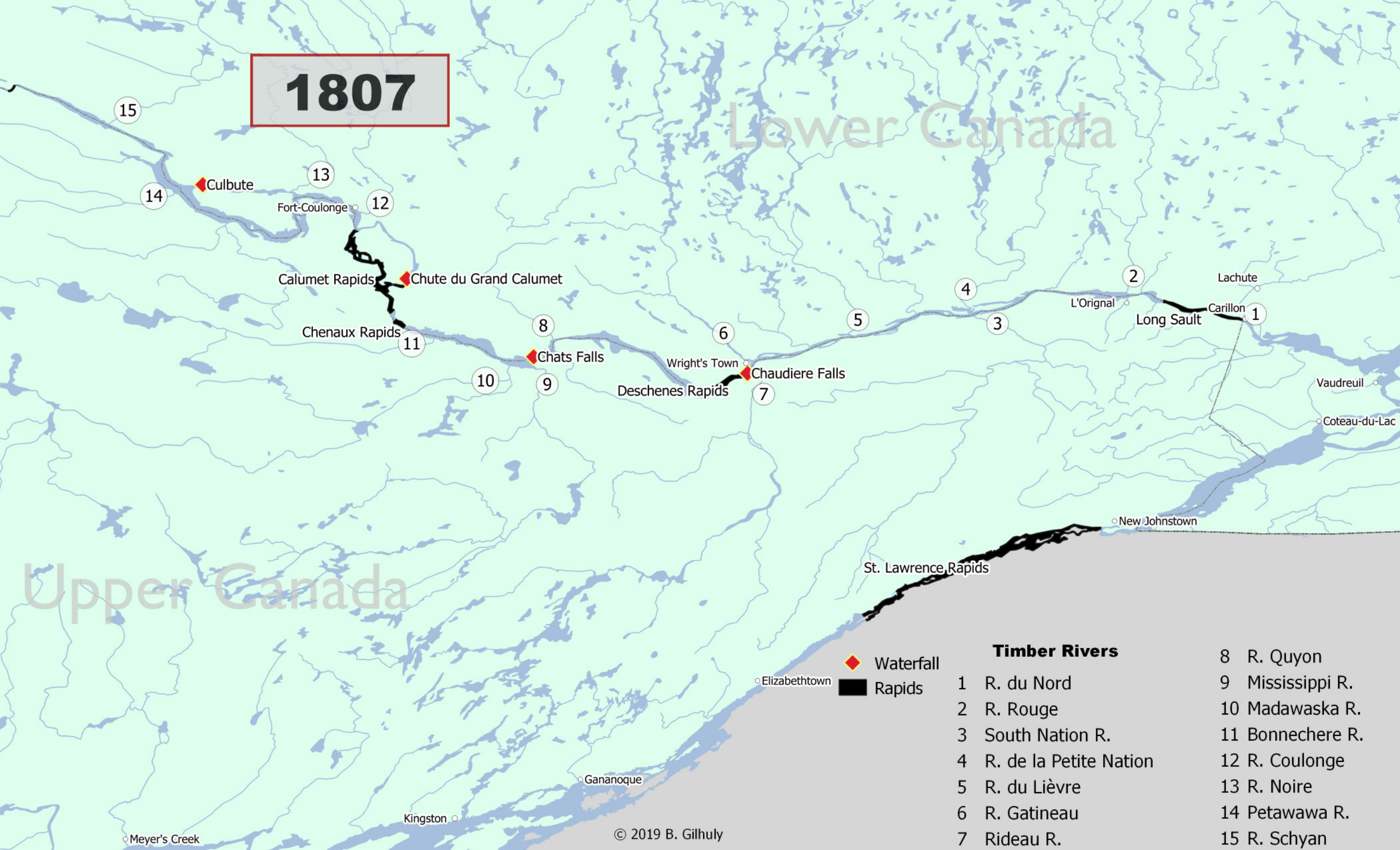
Sections on which the only passenger service is on 'mixed' trains

– freight trains that carry a few passengers in a single car or two – are medium width .

The maps were created using QGIS; a free, open-source software package. QGIS is available for Windows, Mac, and Linux operating systems from <http://qgis.org/en/site/>. The underlying geographic data are from NRCan's Atlas of Canada 1:1,000,000 digital maps. Location of recently active railways is from the same source, while the locations of former lines are based on multiple sources cited in the bibliography on pages 21-22.



Rivers, Hills, & Forests



1825

Lower Canada

Upper Canada

Fort William

Fort-Coulonge

Portage-du-Fort

Hubbell's Falls

Pakenham

Shipman's Mills

Morphy's Falls

Lanark

Perth

Gananoque

Kingston

Belleville

Wright's Town

Richmond Landing

Richmond

Clothier Mills

Prescott

Brockville

Montebello

L'Original

Grenville

Lachute

Carillon

Vaudreuil

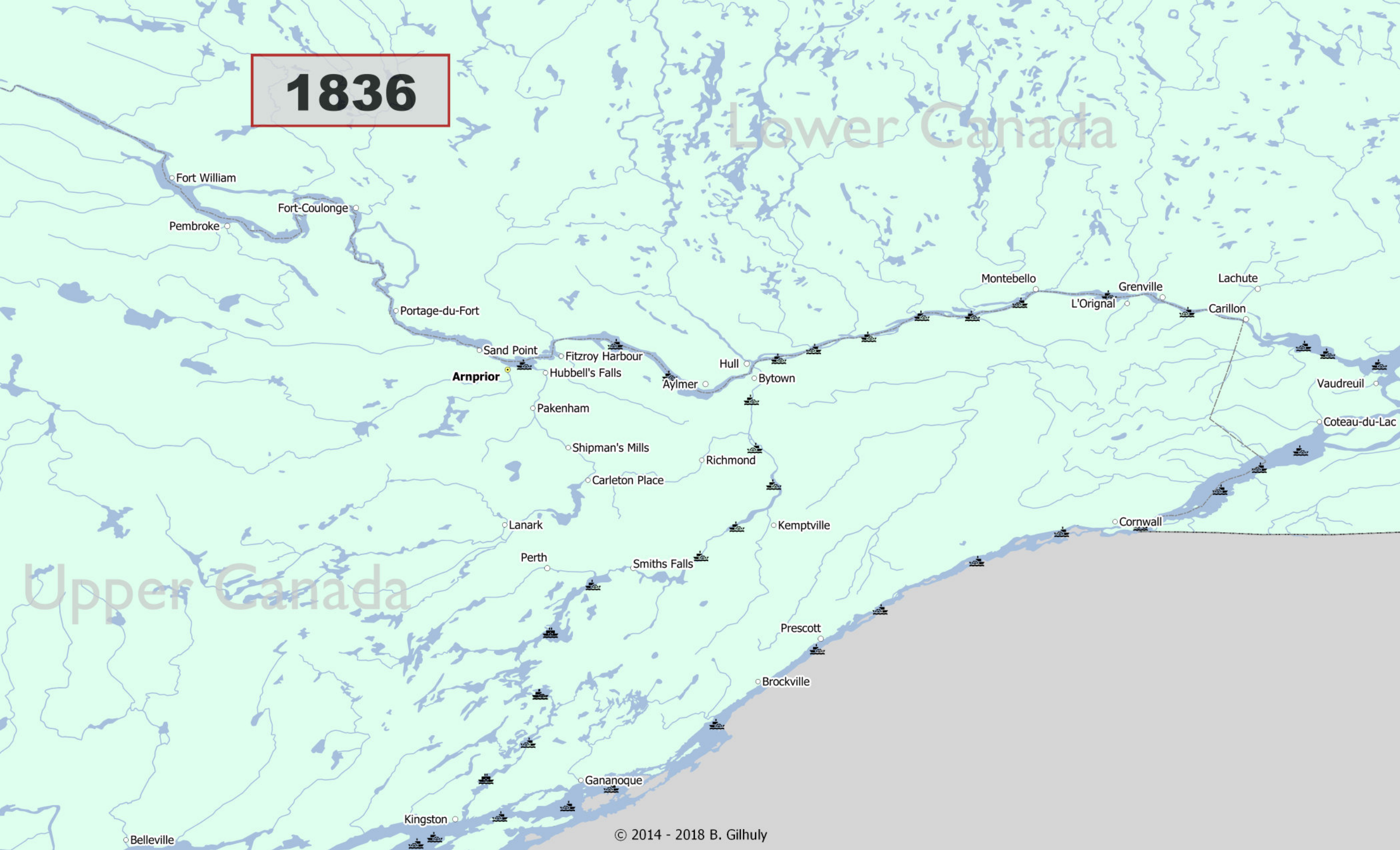
Coteau-du-Lac

Cornwall

1836

Lower Canada

Upper Canada



1854

Canada (East)

Canada (West)

- Bytown & Prescott Rwy
- Montreal & Bytown Rwy
- Northern RR of New York

1856

Canada (East)

Canada (West)

- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Ottawa & Prescott Rwy
- Montreal & Bytown Rwy (not operating)
- US Railroads

1859

Canada (East)

Canada (West)

- Brockville & Ottawa Rwy
- Ottawa & Prescott Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- US Railroads

1865

Canada (East)

Canada (West)

- Brockville & Ottawa Rwy
- Ottawa & Prescott Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- US Railroads

1870

Quebec

Ontario

- Brockville & Ottawa Rwy
- Canada Central Rwy
- St. Lawrence & Ottawa Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- US Railroads

1872

Quebec

Ontario

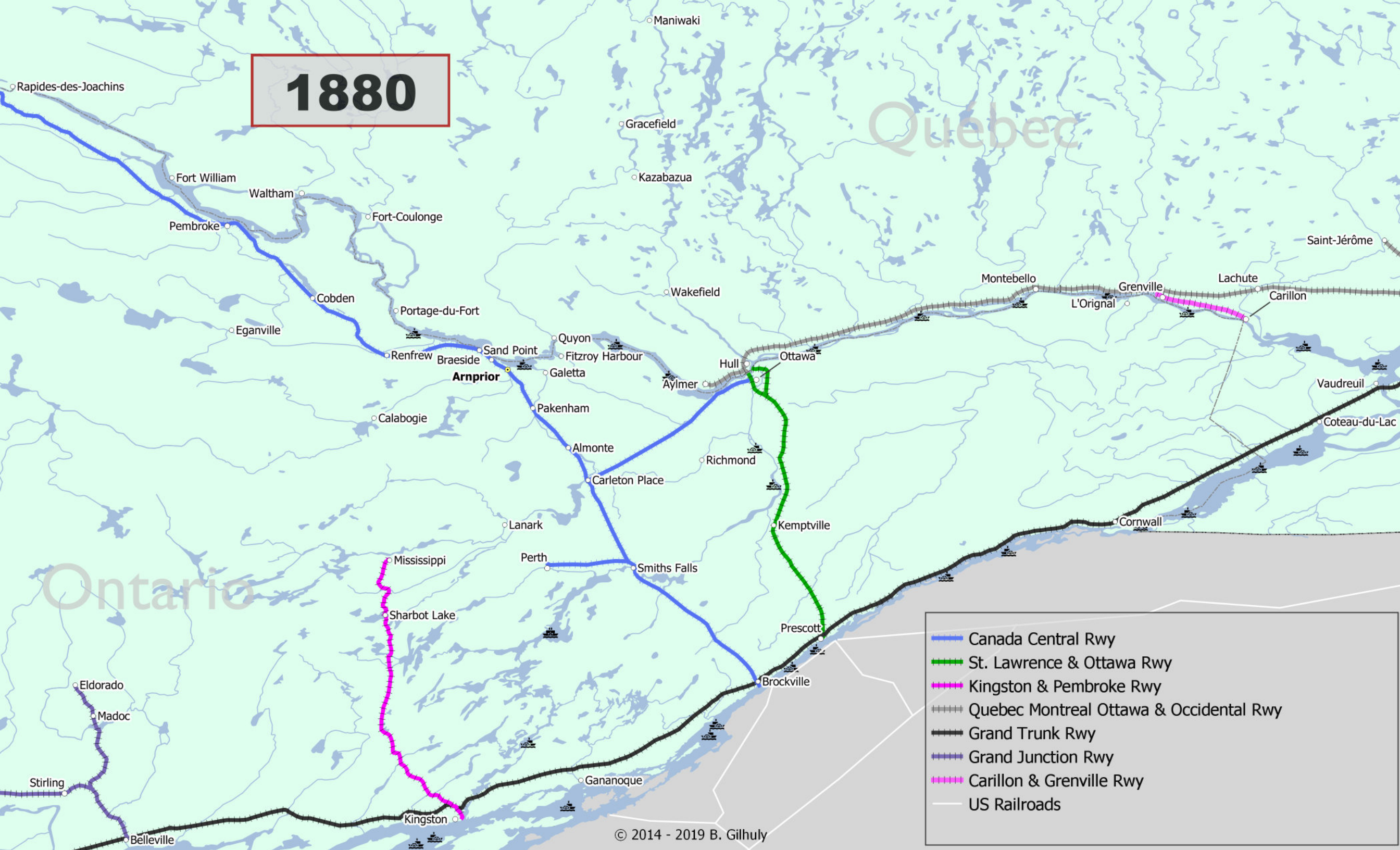
- Canada Central Rwy
- Brockville & Ottawa Rwy
- St. Lawrence & Ottawa Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- US Railroads

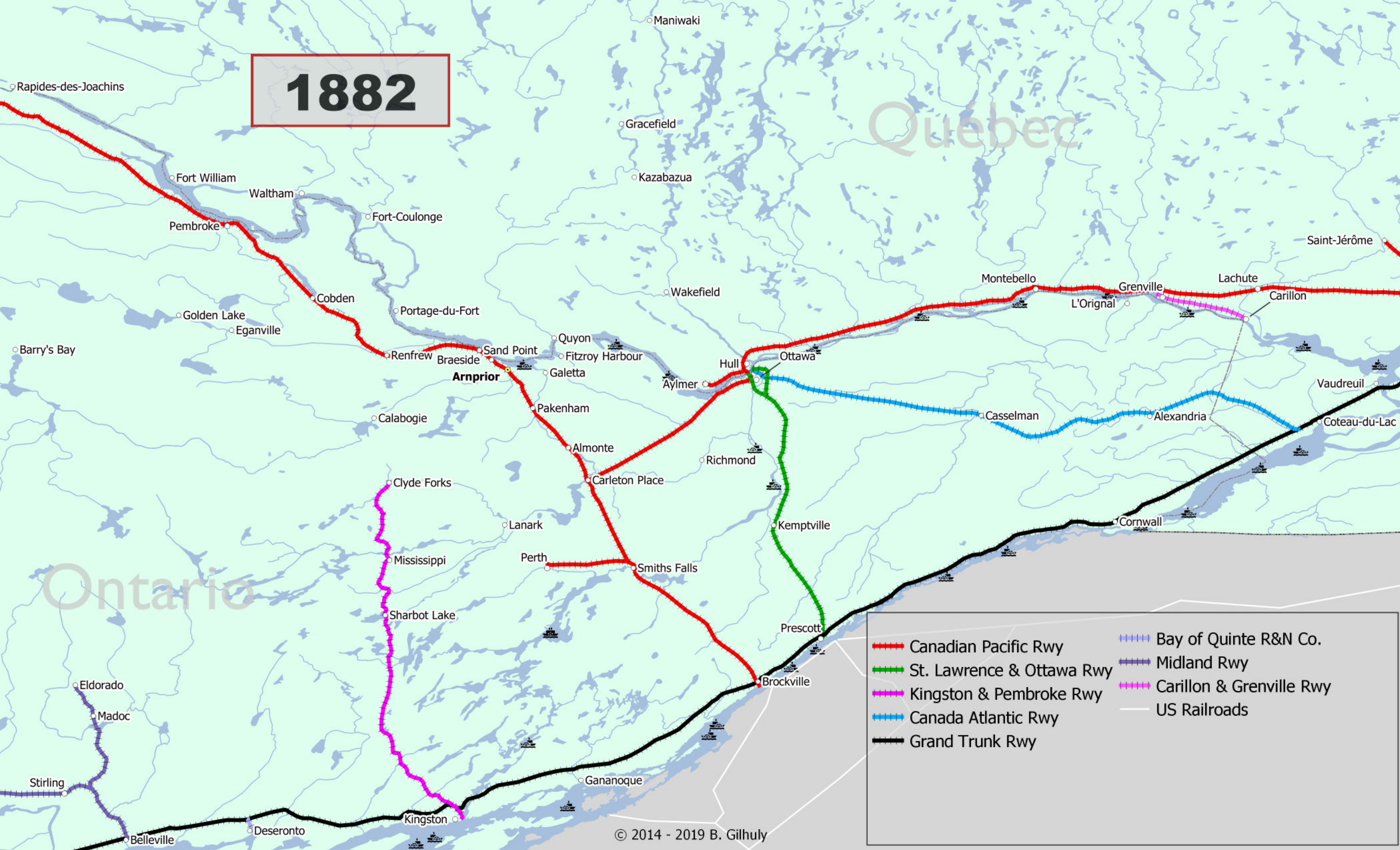
1876

Quebec

Ontario

- Canada Central Rwy
- Brockville & Ottawa Rwy
- St. Lawrence & Ottawa Rwy
- Kingston & Pembroke Rwy
- Quebec Montreal Ottawa & Occidental Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- US Railroads





1882

Quebec

Ontario

Canadian Pacific Rwy

St. Lawrence & Ottawa Rwy

Kingston & Pembroke Rwy

Canada Atlantic Rwy

Grand Trunk Rwy

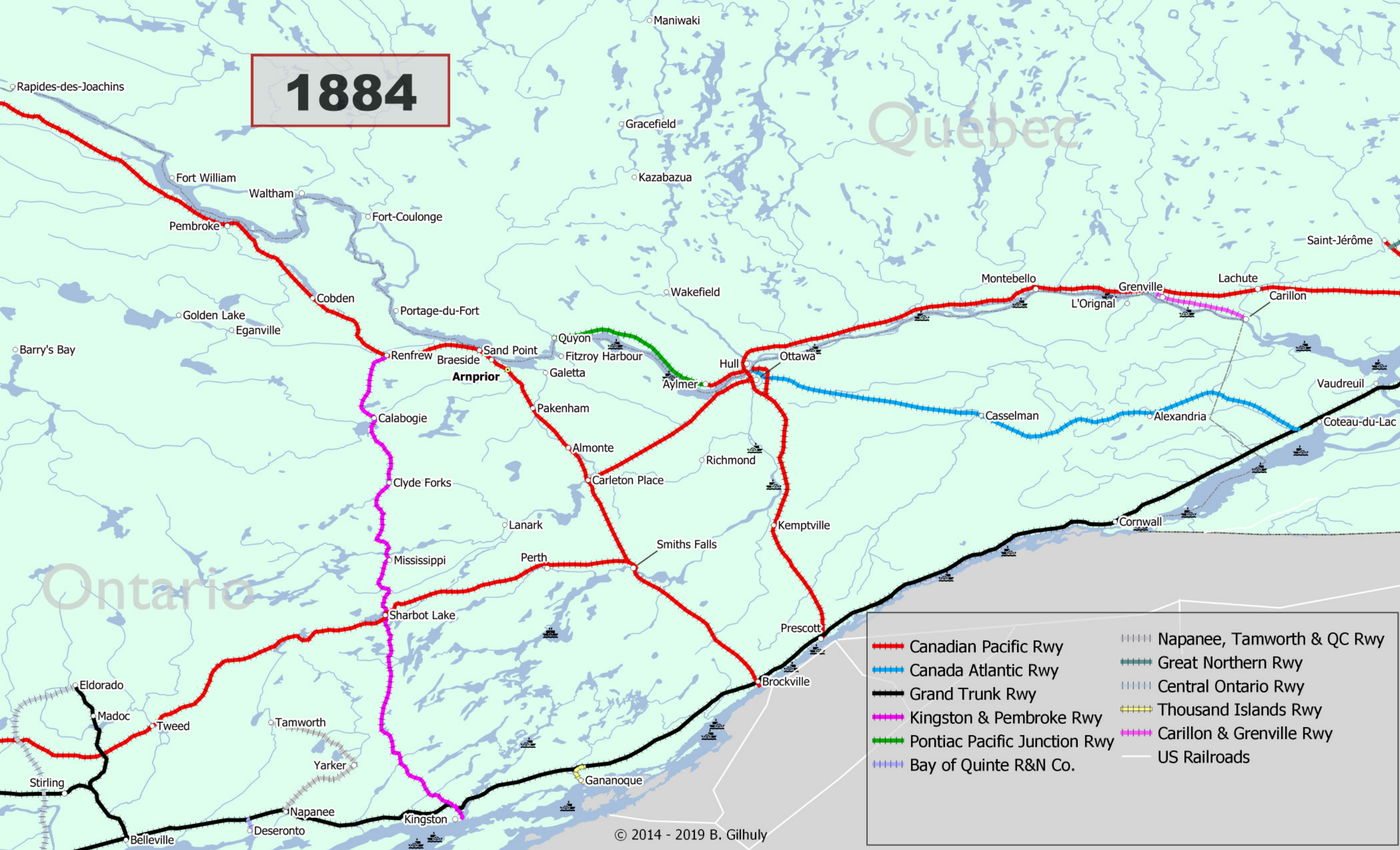
Bay of Quinte R&N Co.

Midland Rwy

Carillon & Grenville Rwy

US Railroads

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1884

Quebec

Ontario

- Canadian Pacific Rwy
- Canada Atlantic Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Kingston & Pembroke Rwy
- Pontiac Pacific Junction Rwy
- Bay of Quinte R&N Co.
- Napanee, Tamworth & QC Rwy
- Great Northern Rwy
- Central Ontario Rwy
- Thousand Islands Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- US Railroads

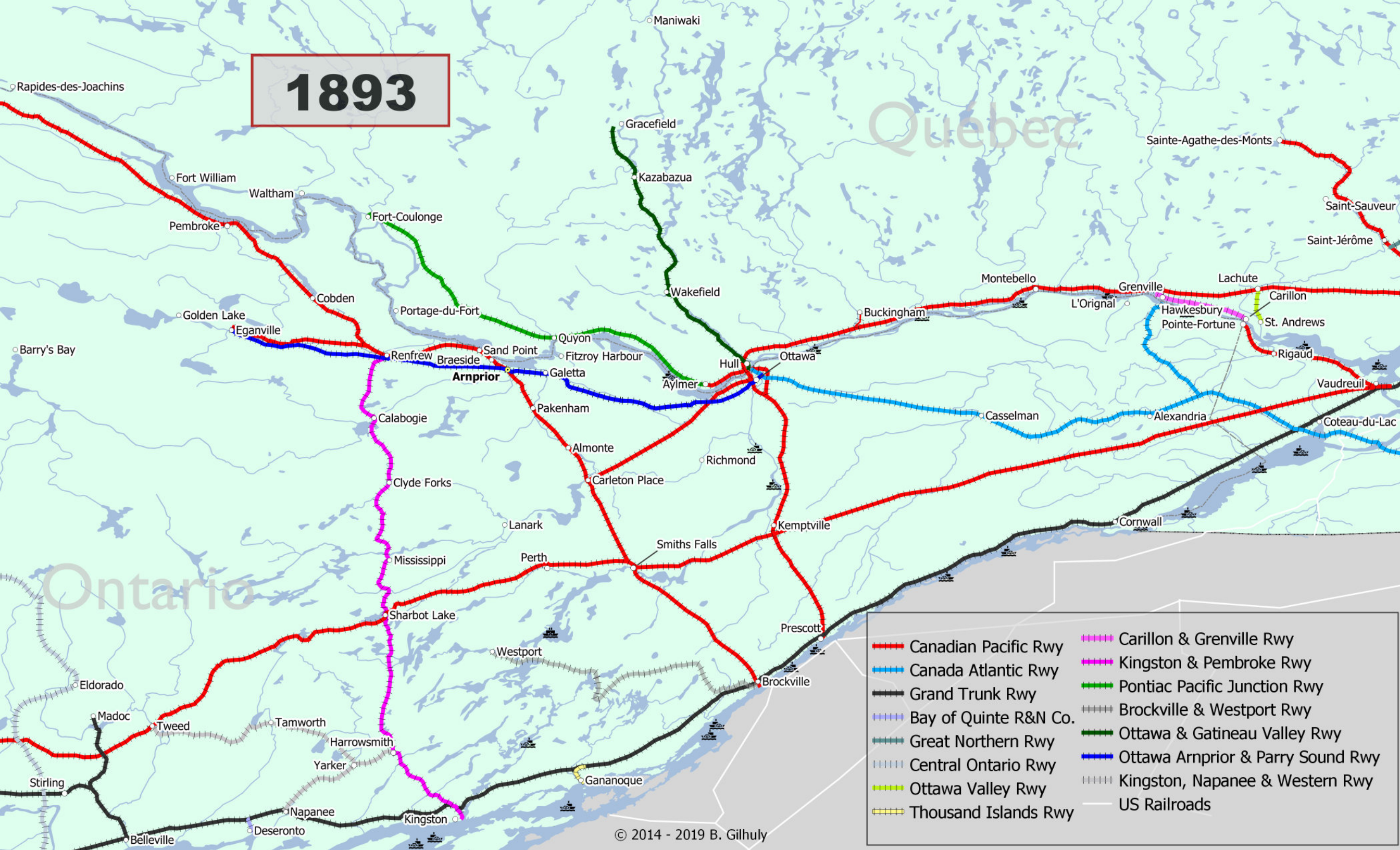
1890

Québec

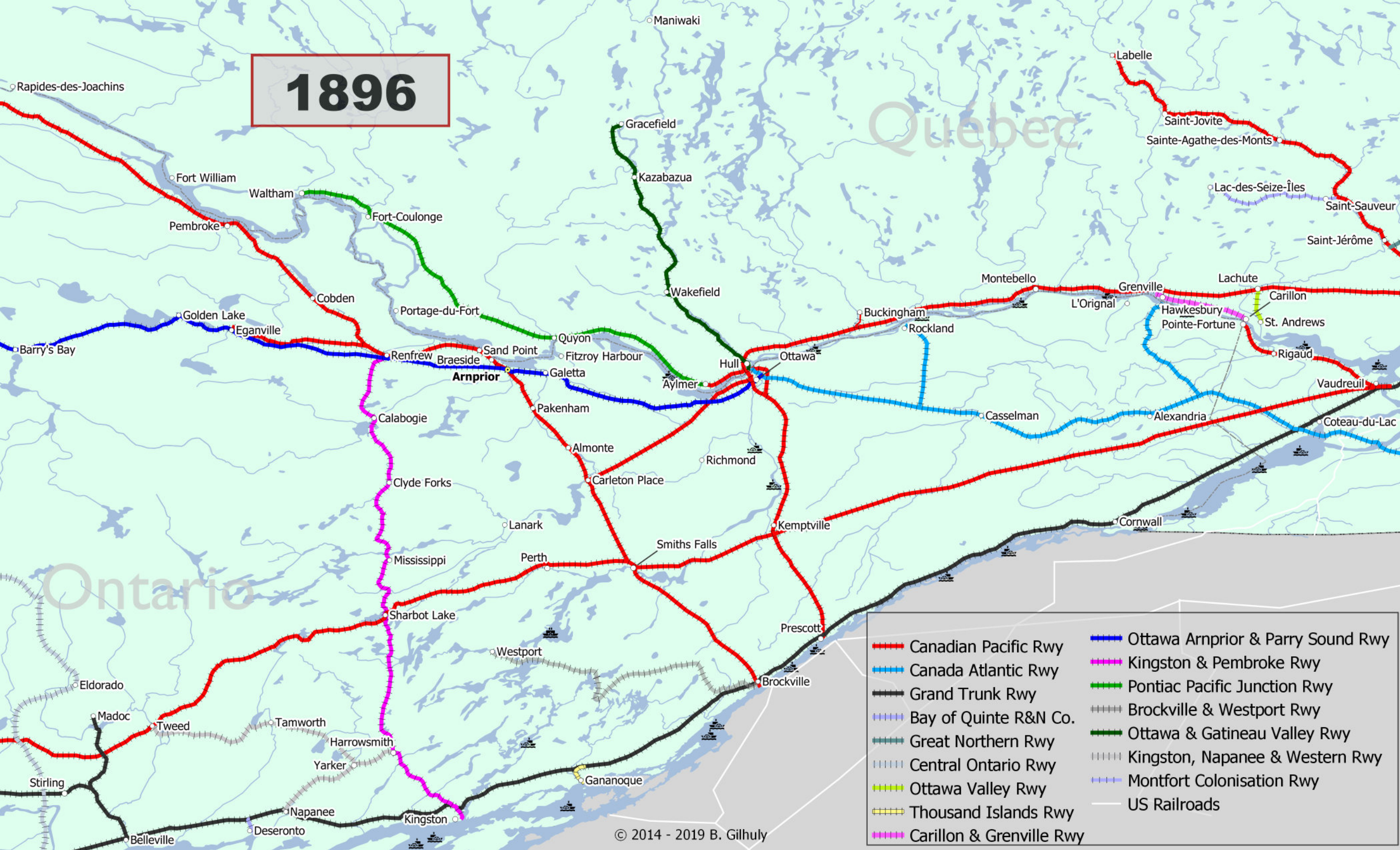
Ontario

- Canadian Pacific Rwy
- Canada Atlantic Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Kingston & Pembroke Rwy
- Pontiac Pacific Junction Rwy
- Brockville & Westport Rwy
- Bay of Quinte R&N Co.
- Napanee, Tamworth & QC Rwy
- Great Northern Rwy
- Montreal & Ottawa Rwy
- Central Ontario Rwy
- Thousand Islands Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- US Railroads

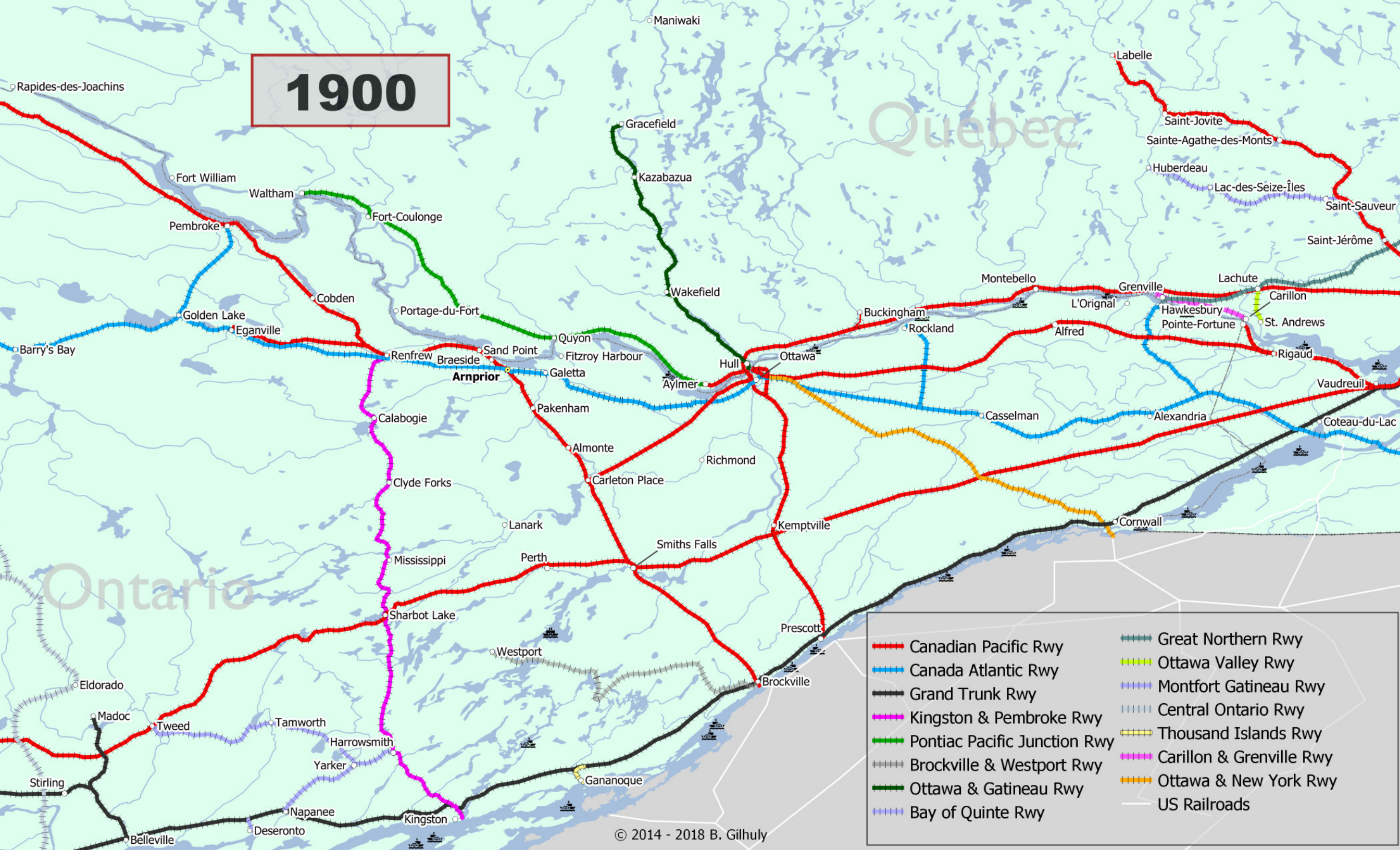
1893



1896



- Canadian Pacific Rwy
- Canada Atlantic Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Bay of Quinte R&N Co.
- Great Northern Rwy
- Central Ontario Rwy
- Ottawa Valley Rwy
- Thousand Islands Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- Ottawa Arnprior & Parry Sound Rwy
- Kingston & Pembroke Rwy
- Pontiac Pacific Junction Rwy
- Brockville & Westport Rwy
- Ottawa & Gatineau Valley Rwy
- Kingston, Napanee & Western Rwy
- Montfort Colonisation Rwy
- US Railroads



1900

Quebec

Ontario

- Canadian Pacific Rwy
- Canada Atlantic Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Kingston & Pembroke Rwy
- Pontiac Pacific Junction Rwy
- Brockville & Westport Rwy
- Ottawa & Gatineau Rwy
- Bay of Quinte Rwy
- Great Northern Rwy
- Ottawa Valley Rwy
- Montfort Gatineau Rwy
- Central Ontario Rwy
- Thousand Islands Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- Ottawa & New York Rwy
- US Railroads

1905

Quebec

Ontario

- Canadian Pacific Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Kingston & Pembroke Rwy
- Pontiac Pacific Junction Rwy
- Brockville & Westport Rwy
- Ottawa & Gatineau Rwy
- Bay of Quinte Rwy
- Great Northern Rwy
- Ottawa Valley Rwy
- Central Ontario Rwy
- Thousand Islands Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- New York Central RR
- US Railroads

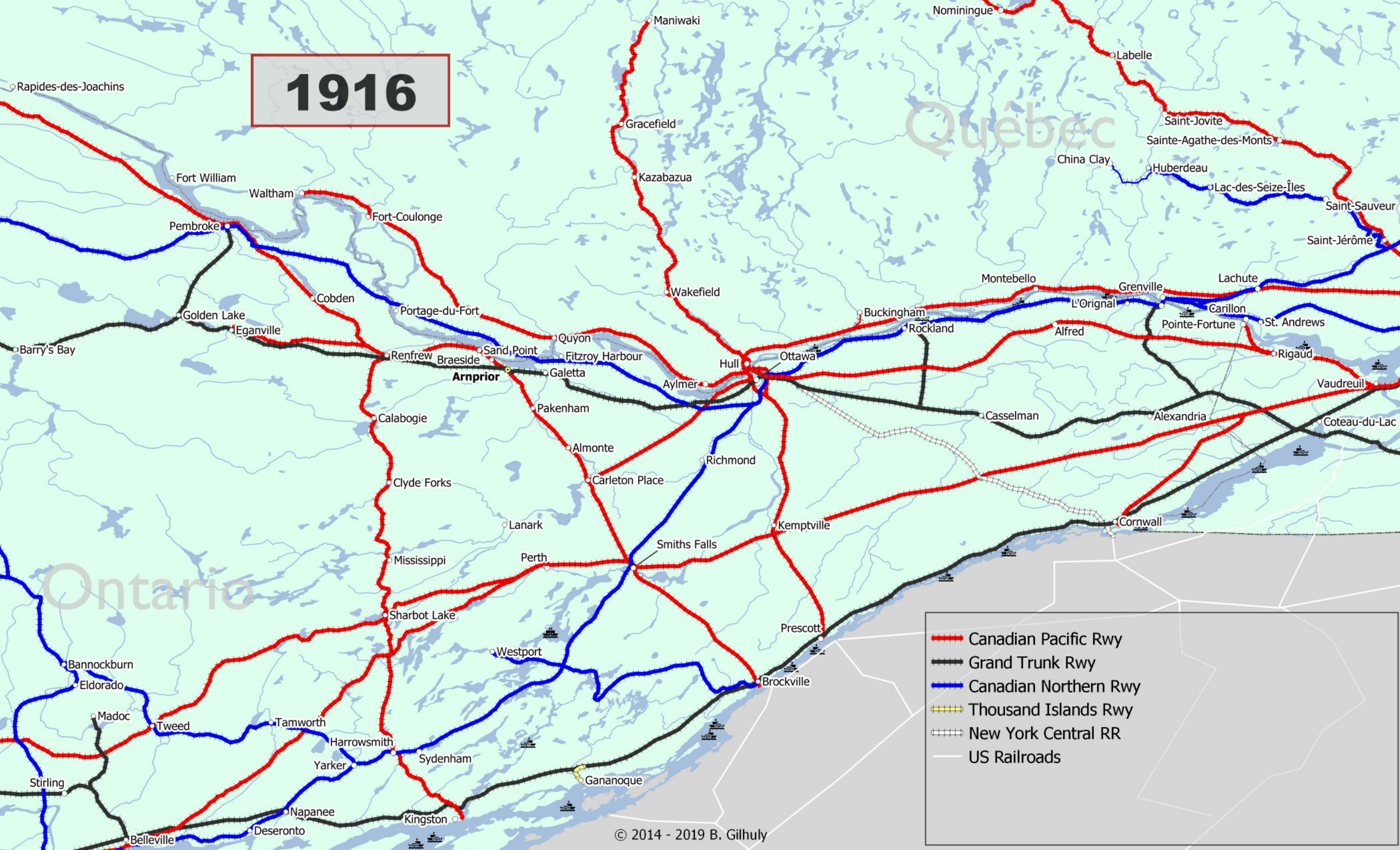
1910

Québec

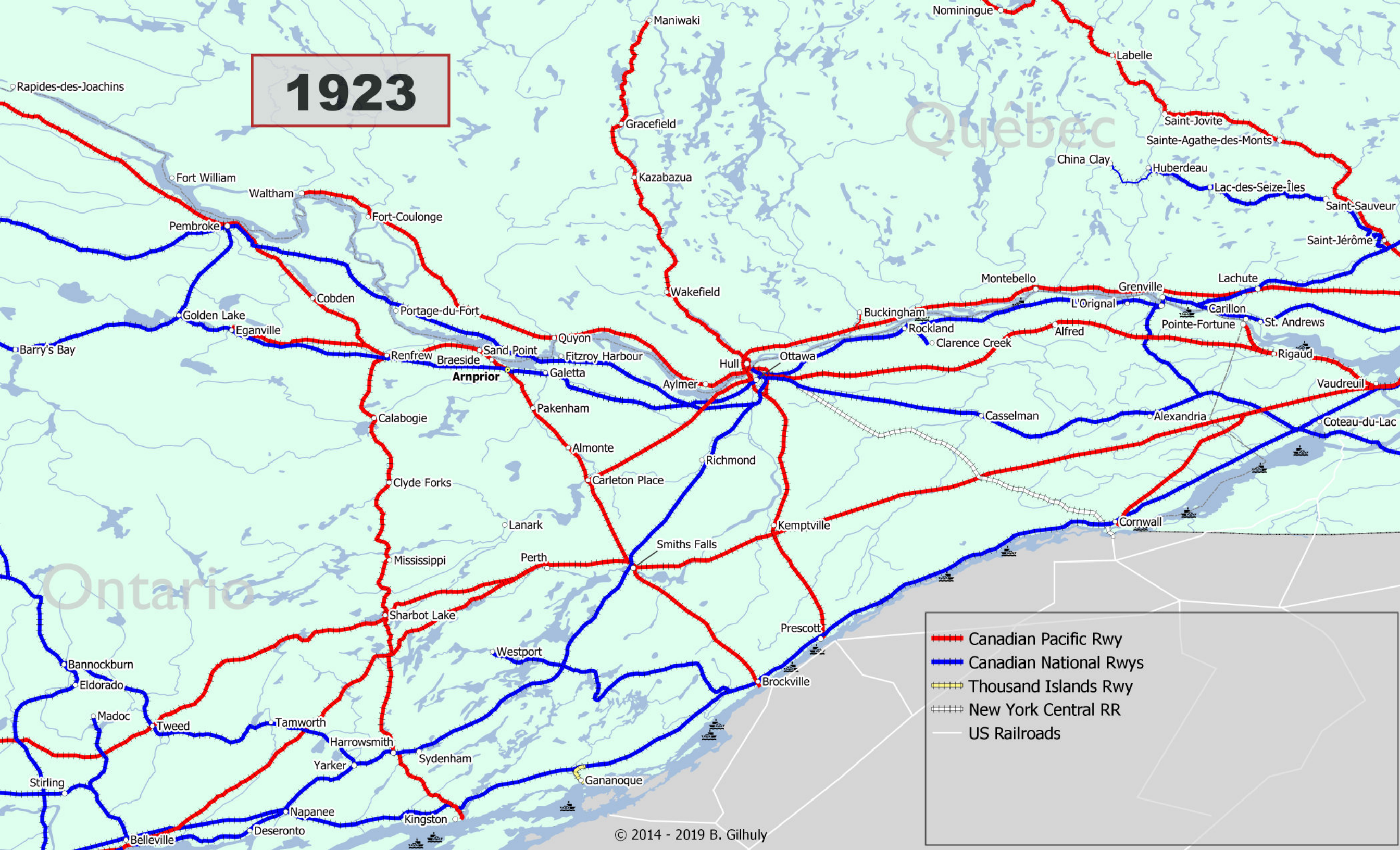
Ontario

- Canadian Pacific Rwy
- Grand Trunk Rwy
- Canadian Northern Rwy
- Central Ontario Rwy
- Thousand Islands Rwy
- Carillon & Grenville Rwy
- New York Central RR
- US Railroads

1916

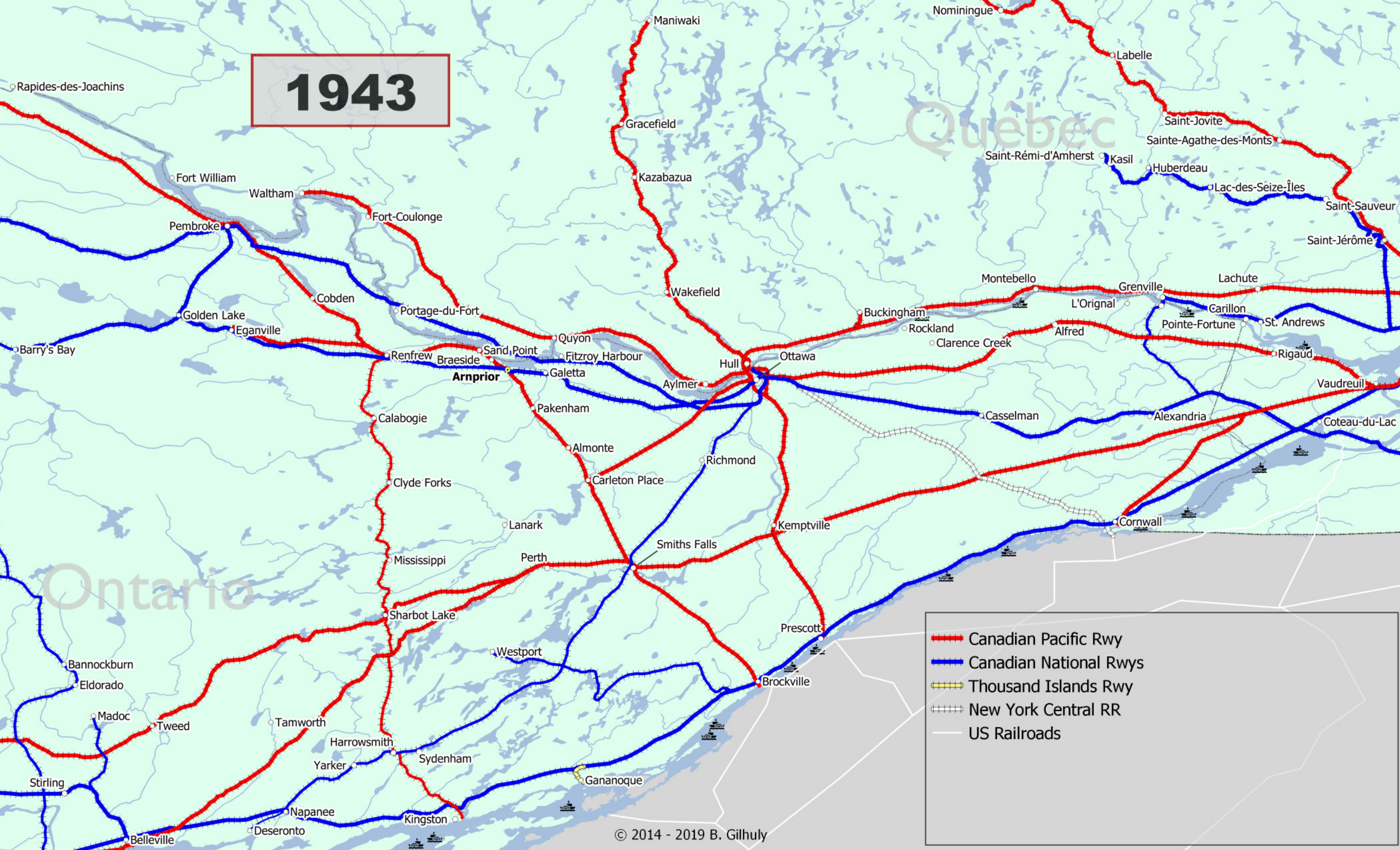


1923

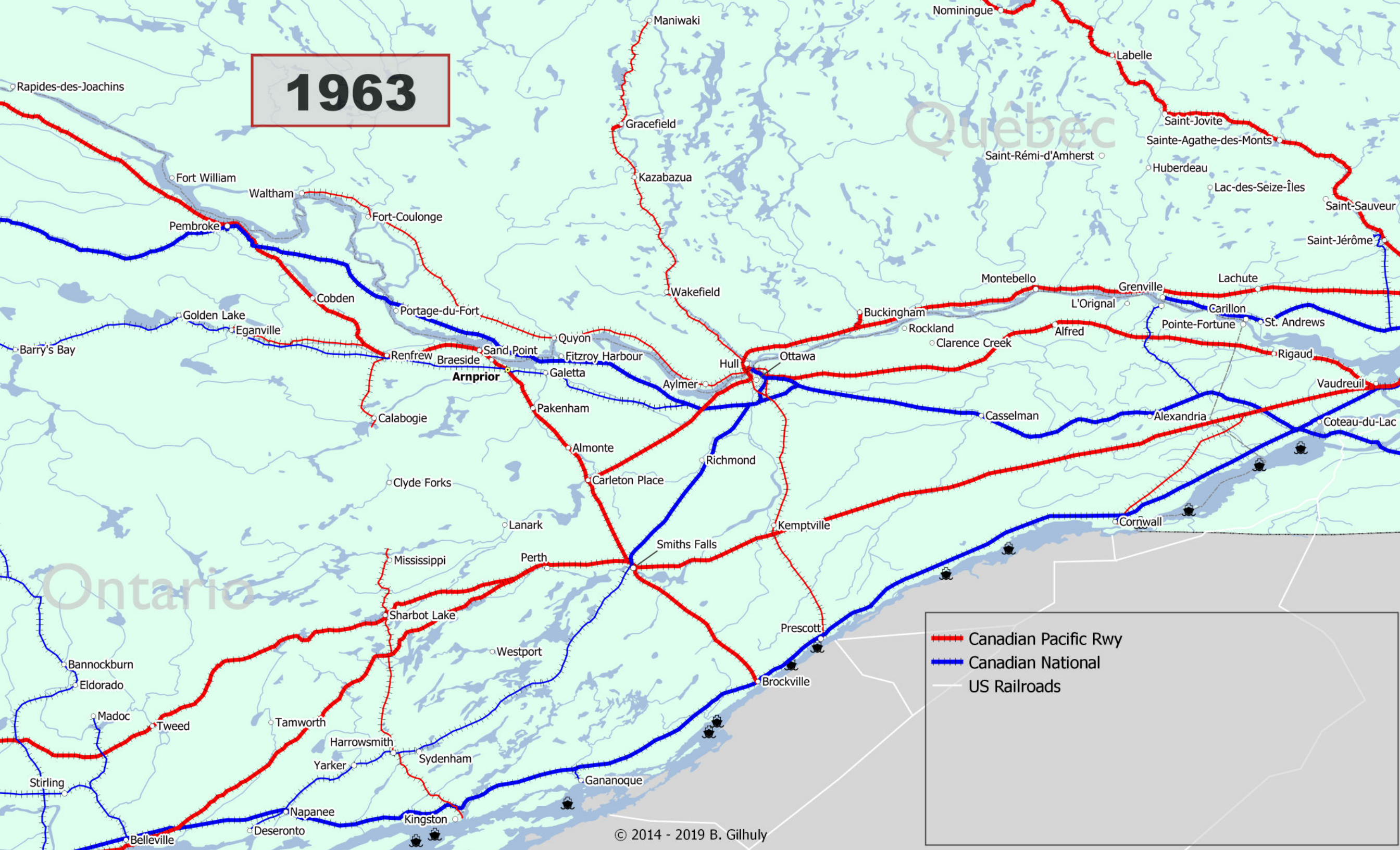


- Canadian Pacific Rwy
- Canadian National Rwy
- Thousand Islands Rwy
- New York Central RR
- US Railroads

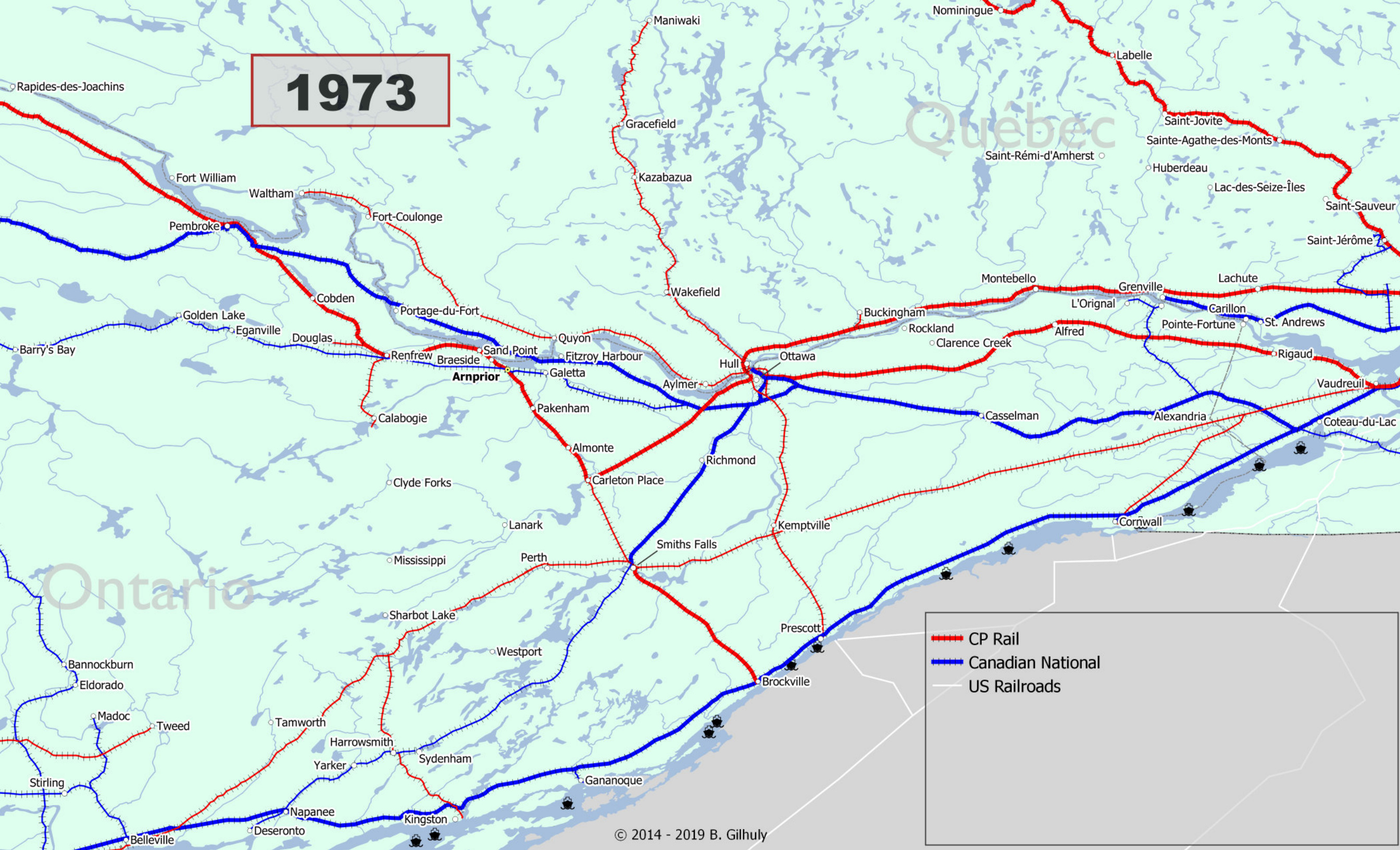
1943



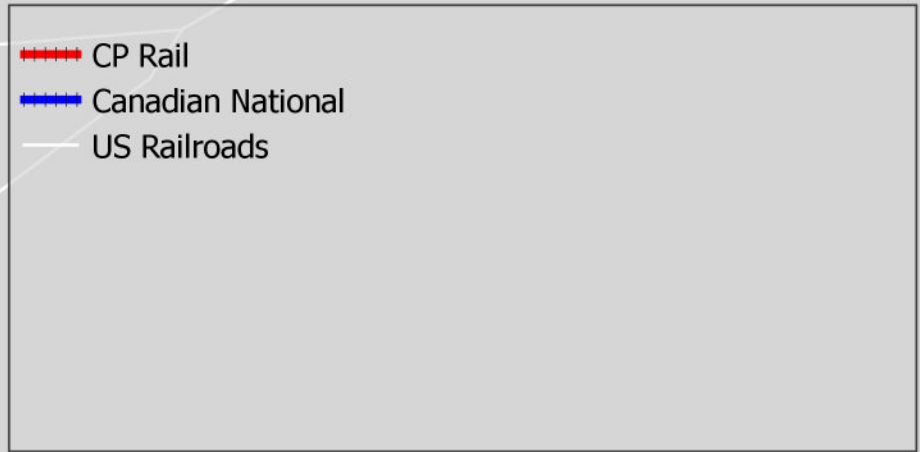
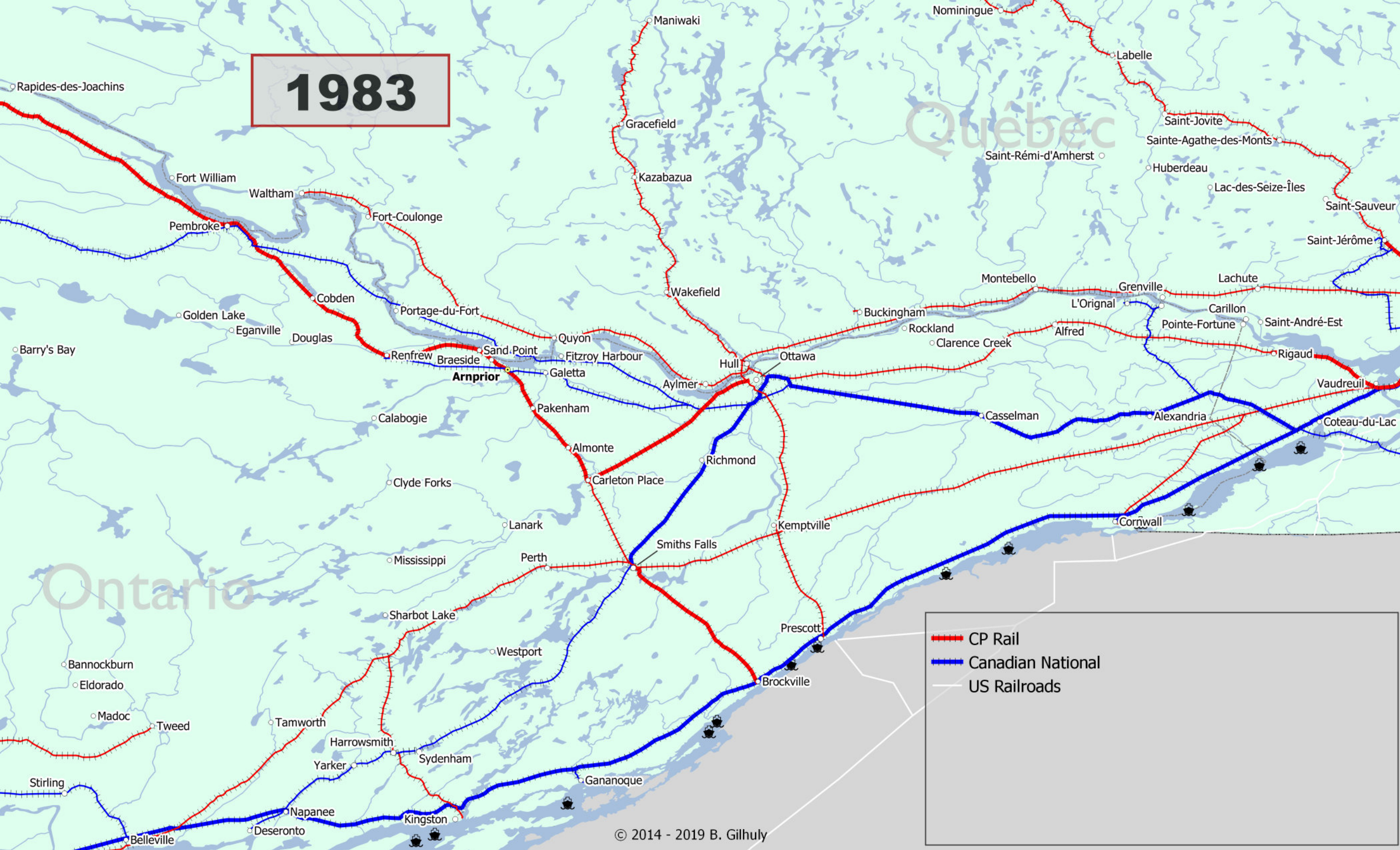
1963



1973



1983



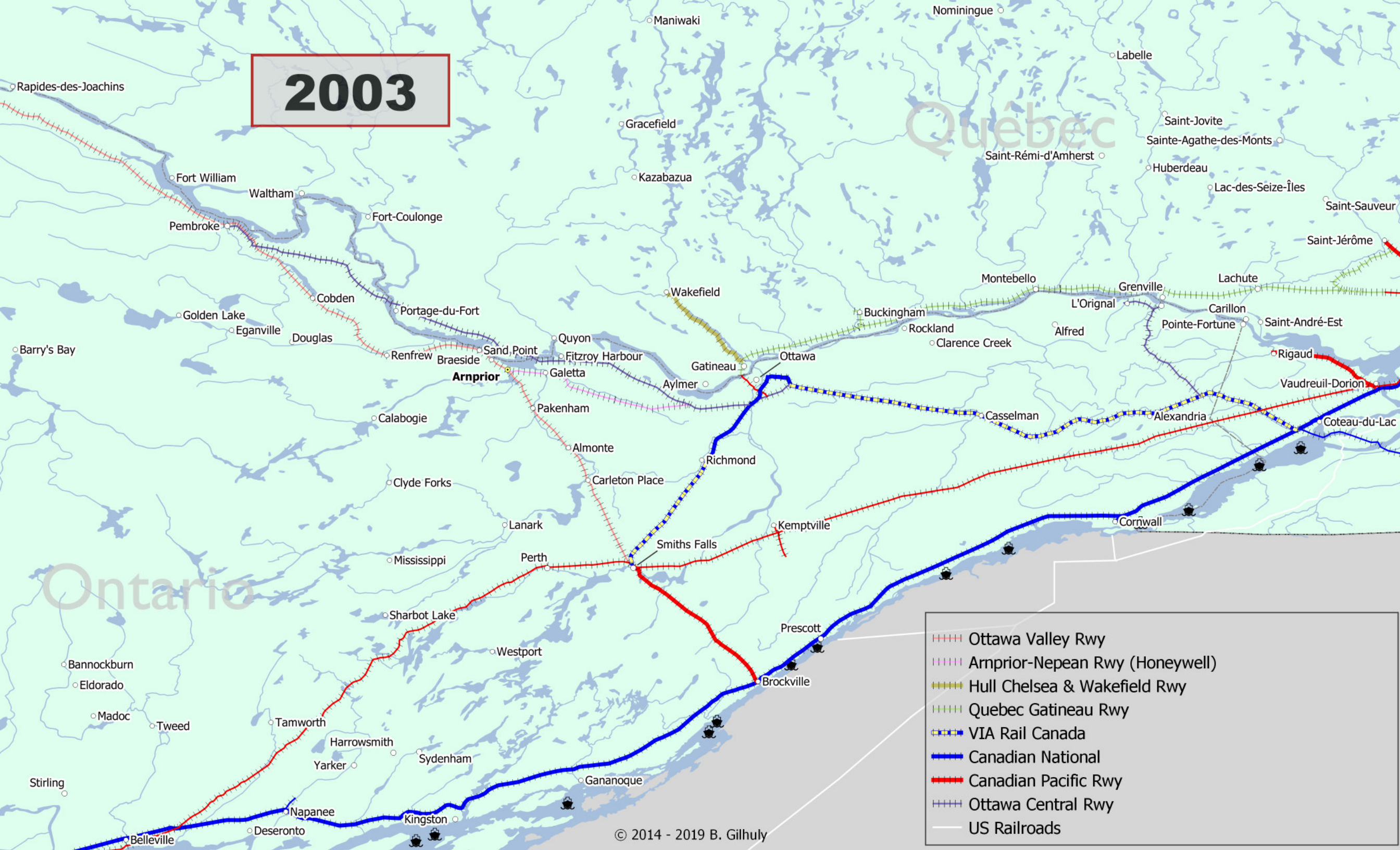
1993

Québec

Ontario

- CP Rail
- Arnprior- Nepean Rwy (BASF)
- Canadian National
- VIA Rail Canada
- Hull Chelsea & Wakefield Rwy
- US Railroads

2003



2019

Québec

Ontario

- Arnprior-Nepean Rwy (Nylene Canada)
- Canadian National
- VIA Rail Canada
- Canadian Pacific Rwy
- Quebec Gatineau Rwy
- US Railroads