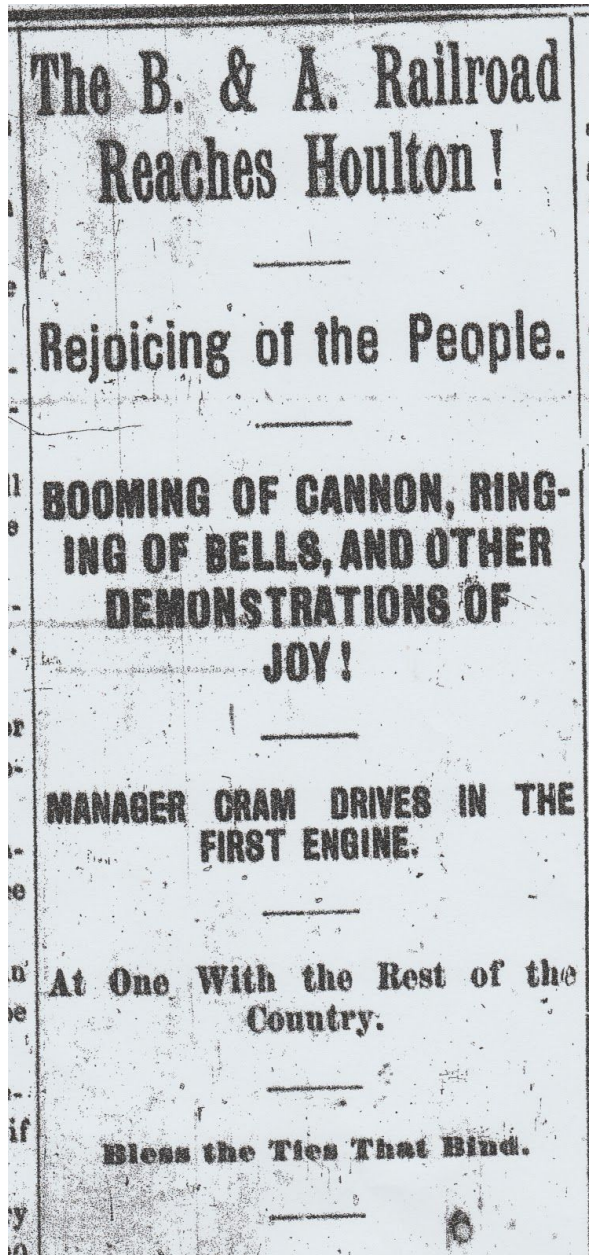


December 16, 1893

The B & A Railroad Reaches Houlton!

A Houlton History Lesson

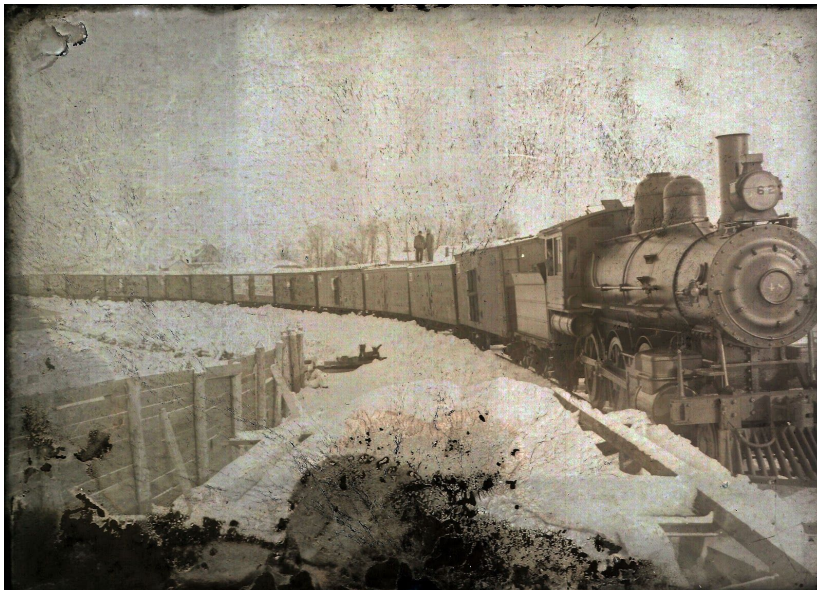


At 1pm, on Saturday, the 16th, the track of the great Bangor and Aroostook Railroad reached Houlton, and a locomotive in charge of General Manager Cram entered the town in the midst of a blinding snow storm. The occasion was one of great rejoicing, and notwithstanding the cold and disagreeable weather, was celebrated by the ringing of church bells, the firing of cannon and the blowing of steam whistles.

There was a large crowd of persons assembled at the station to welcome the first train to arrive, which was drawn by the new locomotive, No. 16. Houlton is now connected with the rest of

the country by the direct line over its own soil, and our people have reason to rejoice at the railroad facilities they are to have in the future, largely due to the persistent and untiring labors of General Manager Cram and President Burleigh, who have accomplished so much toward bringing the much desired railroad into this country. Now, "On to Caribou," is the watchword.

Cheer after cheer greeted the new and long looked for arrival of the first train into Houlton of the B & A Railroad. The shrill whistle of the locomotive responded immediately, as though it were glad to meet so many of our citizens on its first appearance in our town.



It was a fine spectacle to see No. 16, the last engine received by the B & A Railway company, standing there in front of the depot and the crowd surrounding it as though it had

performed some heroic deed, and to hear it puffing and panting,

as though to announce the fact that it had been triumphant in overcoming all obstacles and had, at last, been successful in reaching Houlton.

Everyone felt like shaking hands with each of the workmen and congratulating them upon the excellent progress made during the past few months.



This road is being built so that it will be perfect in every particular.

The passenger cars of this line are fitted with all modern conveniences and all of the rolling stock will be of the very best obtainable, while the rails are the heaviest and best that have, as yet, been introduced into our State.

No expense has been spared in the construction of the road, to make it perfectly safe and first class in every respect, yet all

attention has been directed towards obtaining the greatest speed in transit.

The distance already covered by the road from Brownville to Houlton is 94 1/2 miles, 144 from Bangor. This will not only be a more pleasant but a far shorter route for travel from Aroostook to the sister towns of our State, than heretofore enjoyed.



It has been interesting to watch the proceedings of the track layers. A crew first would clean the way for the sleepers, then would follow a crew who would pick out and

lay the sleepers, at proper distances apart, while behind them and on either side of the track would be the track layers, who would pick up rails, 30 feet long and weighing 70 pounds to the yard, as though they were mere pieces of wood and with a shout, rush forward with them dropping them into the required place, when a few spikes would be driven just a sufficient to hold the

rail in place, and away they would go with the next one, which would be disposed of in a similar manner, scarcely allowing time for the spikers to complete their work, before the engine and cars would run forward to supply more rails to the track layers leaving the further completion of the work to the care of still another crew who would bolt the rails together and drive more spikes rendering the road comparatively safe for the loaded trains which would follow with still more rails. Everything has been done with despatch, and yet not the slightest necessity has been overlooked.



The buildings at the yards in this town, have been completed and ready for the reception of the trains for sometime, and even the buildings show the

marked completeness which is distinguished in every portion of the work undertaken by the B & A RR CCo.

The depot is a model of neatness and convenience, being finished very attractively on the inside entirely in native woods.

Of course, as in almost every such great undertaking, hindrances have been encountered, but, on the whole, the progress of the work has been satisfactory and much credit is due to the enterprising manner in which the officials of the road have entered upon the construction of this “finest railroad in Maine.” Hurrah for the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad!

- From the Aroostook Times, December 19, 1893.