



Revelstoke Railway Museum photo #3151 Photographer G.H. Soole

T1a No. 5907 leads No. 5905 on a double-headed eastbound Dominion out of Revelstoke about 1936. The 5907 may be the “pusher” in this situation as it does not have running board skirts while the 5905 does, however there is really no way to tell. Road engineers usually held seniority of pusher engineers and often insisted on running up front to avoid the smoke. Another 5900 sits on an adjacent track waiting to head east with a freight train. The structure in the distance behind the 5907 pilot is the Revelstoke ice house.

Englishman, Godfrey Hewitt Soole was the photographer and has captured an excellent action photo. Mr Soole travelled to Canada twice in the mid 1930s, and photographed the CPR in the mountains of British Columbia. The 5907 will surely assist the train all the way to Glacier. It may then return light to Revelstoke, or possibly it will stay with the train as far as Beavermouth, and then assist a westbound train back to Revelstoke.

T1a class locomotives were rated for 2,000 tons from Revelstoke to Albert Canyon but only 1,050 tons from Albert Canyon to Glacier. Therefore this train is probably well over 1,050 tons. The use of an R3 class pusher would have enabled a train of 1,750 tons and an S2 class pusher would have enabled 1,875 tons. A sixteen car train of all heavyweight cars would weigh about 1,350 tons.

The T1a locomotives served reliably for about 24 years on the Revelstoke Division until replaced by diesels in the early 1950s. A relatively short time but much longer than the T1bs and T1cs. It is a shame that no T1as or T1bs were saved. The two T1cs that were saved are the 5931 in Calgary and the 5935 at ExpoRail in Quebec. All T1 class locomotives were built by Montreal Locomotive Works.

The T1as were not called Selkirks until the T1bs arrived in 1938 and the name was applied after an employee naming contest. Prior to that they were just called 5900s.