

# COBOURG'S RAILWAY CONNECTION TO THE WORLD

## THE GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY

In the mid 19th century Canada's greatest railway construction was the building of the Grand Trunk Railway from Portland, Maine to Chicago, Illinois. This grand trunk line of railway passed through Cobourg in 1856 and as such was the second railway operating in Cobourg, the C&PR having commenced operations one year earlier.

In 1911 the Cobourg yard and facilities were significantly altered. On the south side of the tracks, a new brick and stone station replaced the former wooden buildings. At the time there were three trains daily each way stopping in Cobourg. With new rail lines, the GTR provided transcontinental service by 1920, although shortly thereafter the GTR was absorbed by the Canadian National Railways.

In 2011 the former Grand Trunk Railway station celebrated its centennial. It continues to provide passengers with rail service, albeit under a new company, VIA Rail.

Credit: Cobourg & District Public Archives



This photo (above) features the new, 1911 erected, Cobourg Grand Trunk Railway Station. This station still stands a century later and still is in use for its intended purpose, attending to the needs of the rail traveling public as the town's VIA station. In the background is the CPR station, also newly erected.

When initially opened the 1911 GTR station offered an elegant Edwardian food service to the traveling public (below). Food was prepared in a small kitchen in the southeast corner. In the north east corner was a well stocked bar for thirsty patrons.



Credit: Library & Archives Canada PA186280 – Collection of Ted Rafuse

## MOVING EAST AND WEST



Credit: Library & Archives Canada PA 186279

### COBOURG'S 1<sup>ST</sup> GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY STATION

Cobourg's original 1856 Grand Trunk Railway station was a sprawling wooden two storey structure with eight south facing roof dormers. This depot stood on the north side of the track a short distance west of the current VIA station. The date of the image is unknown but is several years prior to 1911. The two tracks closest to the station are the main line while the rails closest to the photographer were part of the freight yard. In 1911 much changed.

