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The Peterborough area appears to have produced an unusually large number of settler narratives, and Stewart's letters are of indisputable value for the light they shed on the pioneer experience in early Ontario. As this new edition reminds us, they can also play an important part in illuminating the complex and ever-changing roles played by class and gender, and the manner in which

individuals sought to navigate such issues while attempting to create and understand their own narrative of identity. Aoki and Dundurn Press are to be congratulated for making such an important collection widely available once again.

Patrick J. Connor  
York University

### *Niagara, St. Catharines and Toronto Railway (2008) and Ontario's Grand River Valley Electric Railways (2010)*

by John M. Mills

Pickering, Ontario: Railfare DC Books, 2008. 256 pages. \$44.95 softcover, ISBN 1-897190-27-1; \$64.95 hardcover, ISBN 1-897190-28-X. Railfare DC Books, 2010. 244 pages. \$54.95 softcover, ISBN 1-897190-52-2; \$74.95 hardcover, ISBN 1-897190-53-0

Between 1967 and 1977 John Mills wrote three books on Southern Ontario's electric railway industry. In 2008 and 2010 Railfare DC Books published significantly updated editions of two of these books. John Mills' books actually cover two distinct but related railway technologies. The one technology is street railways such as the system still in use in Toronto today. However the main focus of these books is on electric "interurban railways," that once formed a very unique and short-lived era of North America passenger transportation history.

The interurban era mirrored the rise of automobile transportation in North America. The number of these railways expanded rapidly from the 1890s to the First World War and was distinguished by the use of high-speed, self-propelled electric railway cars providing fast, frequent services between city pairs. At the same time as they became dominant, the automobile evolved from an experimental luxury to a viable means of transportation. During the 1920s interurban railways could compete effectively with motor vehicles. But, in the

following decade the combined impact of the Depression and the convenience, flexibility and comfort of automobiles caused the interurban railway industry to collapse. Unlike the United States experience, many Canadian lines, including the two in this review, continued to operate, albeit at a reduced level, into the 1950s.

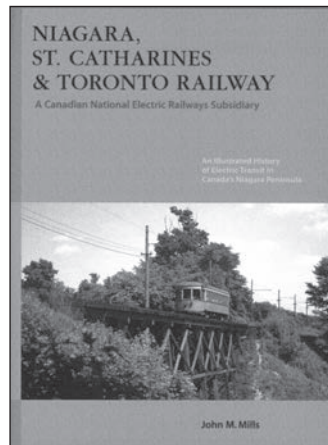
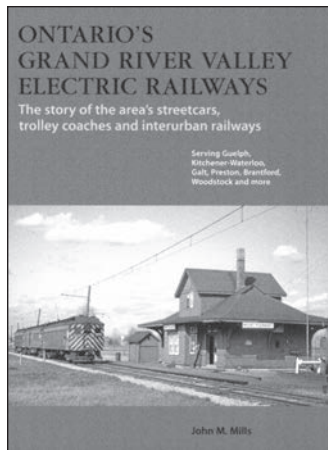
The interurban railways described in *Ontario's Grand River Valley Electric Railways* served the prosperous Grand River valley industrial towns of Kitchener, Galt (today Cambridge) and Brantford as well as the Lake Erie beach resort of Port Dover. The book also covers the isolated line between Woodstock and Ingersoll and the street railway systems of Kitchener/Waterloo, Brantford and Guelph. The *Niagara, St. Catharines and Toronto Railway* describes the interurban services to the industrial towns of St. Catharines, Thorold, Niagara Falls, Welland and Port Colborne and the beach resort of Port Dalhousie on Lake Ontario. The book also covers the street railway operations in St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, the tourist electric railway along the Niagara gorge and the

quaint mono-rail system at the isolated Crystal Beach resort on Lake Erie. The original text has been retained in both books. New material, particularly that of the bus services that replaced some of interurban services, has been added as new chapters. The most important changes have been the improved maps and the substantial number of new photographs.

The original volumes had very good maps of the routes and the tracks in downtown areas. The new editions have very, very good maps that are redrawn and augmented with additional details. This reviewer's only comment is that the maps were originally drawn at a large size and then reduced to fit a page, making some of information difficult to read.

The additional photos account for the greatly increased size of the two books. The original 1977 *Grand River* edition was 96 pages; the reprint is 225 pages. The 1967 *Niagara* book went from 118 to 257. The photographs are critical to the appreciation of the story of the interurban railway industry. Too often publishers, and possibly authors, think of photographs as "dressing." However well chosen images significantly augment textual data and add appeal to a broader readership. Not only were more photos included but their sharpness and contrast have been enhanced and add immeasurably to the readability of the images.

The photographs, in common with



much railway literature, fall into two components; close ups of rolling stock, buildings and structures, and landscape views of urban and rural settings. The close up views—as well as numerous line drawings of much of the equipment—are essential for appreciating the technology of the interurban industry. The landscape views depict how much the cities and countryside have changed. One particularly

compelling pair of pictures in the *Grand River Valley* book shows the track in the vicinity of Preston Hill. The 1912 photo (p. 17) shows open farmland while the same view taken in 1961 (p. 97) depicts the farmland obscured and the railway lined with weeping willow trees. As one would expect the photographs also show social changes in terms of the dress of people. Some illustrate safety practices in railway operation that would be totally prohibited today.

Both books, but especially the *Niagara St. Catharines & Toronto*, include reproductions of ephemera such as of tickets, brochures and timetables. The cost of a ticket, the writing style of brochures, and the technical information contained in the timetables give insight into both social history and the complexity of running a railway. They add to the quality of the books' information.

If anything, the average reader may find the encyclopaedic collection of railway equipment photographs a little overwhelming. As well there is some duplica-

tion of pictures; is it necessary to have two identical views of Preston Hill from August (black and white, p. 91) and September (colour, p. 97)? Conversely, this reviewer noticed one pair of photos that were not included. The original 1977 *Grand River* book included a photograph of the Guelph railway car shop while the 2010 book contained only a modern picture (p.188) of the car shops as they had been renovated into residences. Both photos together would have provided an interesting comparison in adaptive reuse of buildings.

Transportation historians, railway enthusiasts, and local historians will have no difficulty in appreciating the value of these

books. To fully appreciate the significance of the interurban era a reader should probably try to find a copy of the long out-of-print book, John Due's *The Intercity Electric Railway Industry in Canada* (1966). For the layman, the photographs and maps alone would provide days of exploring the historical landscapes so well identified in the two books. Based on the quality of these revised editions it can only be hoped that the third book by Mills on Hamilton's electric railways will also be reprinted by Railfare.

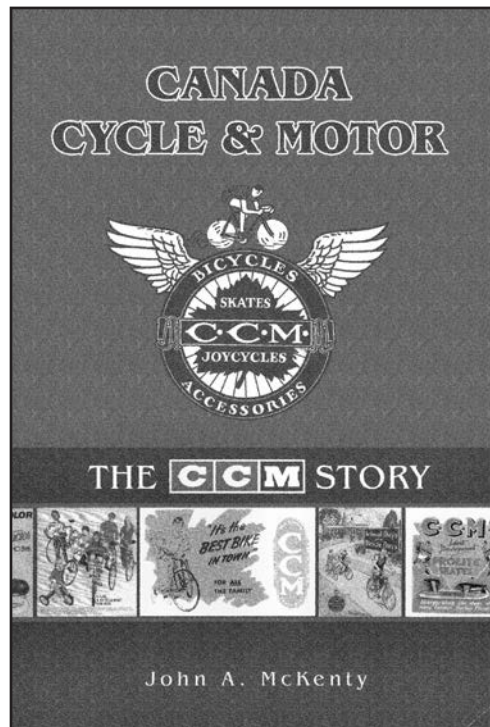
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### *Canada Cycle & Motor: The CCM Story*

by John A. McKenty

Belleville, Ontario: Epic Press, 2011. 352 pages. \$19.95 softcover. ISBN 978-1-55452-667-3 ([www.essencegroup.com](http://www.essencegroup.com))

John McKenty has produced a polished and balanced narrative history of the Canadian Cycle and Motor Company, or CCM as it became. McKenty does not spend time on theoretical reprise and the erection of complex interpretational structures, but he also largely avoids a merely anecdotal account. The substantially illustrated volume explores the firm's creation out of five different bicycle companies in 1899 with much care, outlining the pressures of domestic and then potential foreign competition in the Canadian market. In fully delineating the backgrounds of the Canadian capitalists involved in creating CCM, the author provides an excellent picture of the tight world of late nineteenth-century Ontarian capitalism, where there was much opportunity, though only a few over-achievers such as George Cox,



Joseph Flavelle or Walter Massey. It would have been useful, in his discussion of the CCM merger, for the author to note that the company was intended to be a near mo-