

# Hearing a Missing Voice: Chinese Railway Labourers

Tim Rogers

In Canadian railway music the highest proportion of traditional material can be found in early songs, mostly about building the railway. For example, there is a family of songs centered around “The Rock Island Line” (e.g., Tom Brandon in Fowke, 1970, p. 50) which includes “The Scantaling Line” (Manny, 1968), “The Fox River Line” (Creighton 1933/1966), “The Margineau Line” (Kenneth Fleury in Fowke, 1970, p. 99) and “The CPR Line” (Fowke, 1982).<sup>1</sup> All of these celebrate the ethnic diversity of European workers who built the railways named in the titles. In francophone tradition “Chauffe fort” was first documented in 1918 by Marius Barbeau and exists in 50 versions from PEI to Manitoba (Fowke & Mills, 1984, p. 204). “Drill Ye Tarriers, Drill” has occurred in at least two major versions: an eastern variant from Newfoundland (“Drill Ye Heros, Drill”, Peacock, 1965, pp. 781-782) and a western version with considerable local variation (Thomas, 1979, pp. 88-91). An Irish tune, “The Bonny Labouring Boy,” was adapted to Canada’s Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound Railway, emerging as “The Railroad Boy”

(Fowke et al, 1965, p. 200). These songs, and several others, paint a rich picture of the trials and tribulations of early railway life, bringing humour and pathos to the often difficult conditions encountered pushing a ribbon of steel across our country. They provide a marvelous window on a world that was critical to the building of our nation.

But a word of caution is necessary here. If we stick solely to the traditional material, we run the risk of silencing some important voices. Indeed, if we fail to look outside our own particular traditions, we run a serious risk of participating in the “politics of exclusion,” an insidious component of colonialism where the historical record ignores particular groups of people. A clear case in point is the manner in which the Chinese workers, who were so critical to the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, have been excluded from the canon of early traditional songs about the railway. Even in a song where ethnic diversity is celebrated, such as “The CPR Line” (Fowke, 1982), the Chinese workers have been left out:

There were tinkers and tailors, shoemakers and snobs  
There were heavers and weavers all looking for jobs  
There was a lager beer man who did hail from the Rhine  
They were all heading west for the CPR Line

There were Russians and Prussians, Norwegians and Jews  
They were all in a fluster to see Jimmy Hughes  
To tip him a dollar a paper to sign  
To be forward next spring up the CPR Line.

On the surface, it seems everyone is included in this song, Germans and Prussians, Russians and Jews. And so too are the Irish in “Drill Ye Tarriers, Drill.” But there is a major exclusion: the Chinese do not get even passing mention. This is a stinging rebuke, given the fact that these very workers made the greatest sacrifice working on the CPR. It is estimated that between 1,000 and 1,500 Chinese labourers lost their lives building the Canadian Pacific. This is one out of four of the men who were imported from southern China. Then, to compound the rebuke, once the CPR was completed, the survivors were discouraged from remaining in Canada through the imposition of an onerous head tax that made it almost impossible to bring their families across the Pacific. Starting at \$50 in 1885, the tax escalated to \$500 in 1903 (two years’

wages), culminating in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923. There can be little doubt that considerable stigma was experienced by the Chinese who paid the head tax and worked to be part of the “Canadian dream.”

I began exploring this unhappy exclusion with a preliminary inquiry to a number of Chinese cultural organizations asking if any music from these labourers had been documented. To this point, the answer has been negative. It appears that the voices of these labourers have, to all intents and purposes, been silenced, just as the political forces of the time wished them to be. In a country that prides itself on its multiculturalism, this is both inconsistent and inappropriate. And times have changed since then. However, I was able to locate Josie Chan, who has kindly put

together an illuminating article that discusses this missing music [see pp. 14-21 of this issue, *Eds.*]. And, happily, some newer musical traditions, specifically those of the singer-songwriter, have emerged to

fill in the void. In this article, I present three songs that address this voice that is missing from our historical music.



*Chinese Railway Labourers building the CP line through the Rockies*

The first song comes out of a suite of historically oriented songs by Ontario singer-songwriter Bert Coughlan. Released as a cassette in 1990, this collection celebrates events from the construction of the CPR through to restored steam railways in Ontario. The third song of the eighteen in this suite addresses the exclusion of the Chinese workers from a distinctly outsider or white perspective. Indeed, reflecting the times, the song lyric uses the term “coolie”,

which now has a derogatory connotation.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the title, “The Oriental Navvies”, alerts us to the context of the song, using the Irish term for a labourer (from digging the British canals, or “navigations”) in juxtaposition to the Chinese reference. Nonetheless, Coughlan has brought forward the exclusion of the Chinese labourers, and his song seems to have played a pioneering role in this regard. It is therefore worth our attention.

### **The Oriental Navvies**

The song is prefaced on the CD by a brief spoken narration by Bert Coughlan. He says: “My next song pays a well-deserved tribute to the Chinese coolies,

those unsung heroes who played a major role in the construction of the transcontinental railroad, the Oriental navvies.”

# The Oriental Navvies

Bert Coughlan

Voice

We know that there would nev-er be a Can-a - da to - day If it  
was - n't for the pi - on - eers who built the ra - il way, Men like Sand-ford  
Flem-ing and Cor - ne - li - us Van Horne, They came here from the U. S. A. and -  
Scot-land's Gael - ic shores. \_\_\_\_\_ Those beard-ed her-oes dressed in black can  
still be seen to - day In that fam-ous phot - o - graph be-long-ing to the ra - il  
way, But what a - bout the or - i - ent - al nav-vies from a - far? Who  
came here to this bar-ren land to build the C. P. R.

We know that there would never be a Canada today  
If it wasn't for the pioneers who built the railway  
Men like Sandford Fleming and Cornelius Van Horne  
They came here from the USA and Scotland's Gaelic shores

Those bearded heroes dressed in black can still be seen today  
In that famous photograph belonging to the railway  
But what about the Oriental navvies from afar,  
Who came here to this barren land to build the CPR?

The Orientals risked their lives in every place they worked  
Through the mighty Fraser Canyon where the danger always lurked  
They blasted through the Selkirks and the Rocky Mountains too  
Sometimes a group of them were killed before the day was through

From dawn to dusk they worked for just a dollar every day  
Half the wages of a white man when they built the railway  
The captain made sure every Chinese coolie bent his back  
Pushing wheelbarrows of dynamite up and down the track

They tell us that the Orientals were ten thousand strong  
When they worked for Michael Haney under Andrew Onderdonk  
He's the one who brought them from that Oriental land  
From the heart of mainline China all the way to Canada

They lived on rice and salmon working for the CPR  
While Andrew Onderdonk kept watching from his private railroad car  
When scurvy hit the camps sometimes a coolie passed away  
But no one mourned his passing and they soon forgot his name

We sing about John Henry and remember Casey Jones  
We talk about the white man laying rails (on top of stones)  
Famous railroad builders dominate our history  
But what about the Chinese coolies who sailed across the seas?

Canada should build a mighty monument of stone  
Of a Chinese hammer swinger standing proudly all alone  
To remind of the Oriental navvies every day  
As a tribute to the men who helped to build the railway  
To the Oriental navvies working for the railway.

Coughlan begins in familiar historical territory with well-known figures Fleming and Van Horne, but soon asks: "What about the Oriental navvies from afar?" He chronicles the danger, poor pay and death faced by the Chinese workers in the second verse, followed by a comment on the bosses watching from the safety of their private cars in the third. The realities of the staggering numbers of Chinese who died are not mentioned, despite a plea for building "a mighty monument of stone" as a tribute to these "men who helped to build the railway."

While this song addresses the exclusion of the Chinese labourers, it does little to portray the humanity of the men involved. There is no real sense of the dangers they faced, their homesickness, their mistreatment. Rather, the song constructs them as faceless individuals whose names are soon forgotten. While there is no doubting the good intentions of this song, it does, unfortunately, serve to perpetuate the prevailing callous attitude toward these labourers. Something more is needed, something that begins to picture the world through the eyes of these men.

## **Ribbon of Broken Dreams**

A second song begins to bring these voices to the fore. It is from the pen of John Spearn, whose Canada Songs Project was recently featured in *Canadian Folk Music* (Spear, 2007).

[The song is transcribed an octave higher than John sings it, and the guitar chords given here (by John) assume that the guitar has a capo on the fourth fret. If you don't use a capo, play F#5 instead of D5, *Eds.*]

# Ribbon of Broken Dreams

John Spearn

Voice

Chang left his fam-ily and home in Canton For a one-way fare on the sea.

Halfway a-round the earth he was tossed To work in the land of the free.

"Bring in more of those poor Chin-ese chaps!" cried Van Home, "We'll have ten more

miles of track in our lap by the morn!" "By the morn!" And "On ward!" the fore-man did

cry, "We'll blast through the rock, don't be shy! There's a ten doll-ar bonus

for vol-unteers... Just don't trip or slip in the cav-ern 'til you've clamped the wire.

And if you don't\_\_\_ make it we'll wire\_\_\_ your wag-es to China...

If you des-ire. And your fam-lies can come here with a dollar in their hand, to the

Gold-en Sun they'll trav-el, to this great land.

Chang left his family and home in Canton  
 For a one-way fare on the sea  
 Halfway around the earth he was tossed  
 To work in the land of the free

“Bring in more of those poor Chinese chaps!” cried Van Horne  
 “We’ll have ten more miles of track in our lap by the morn!”  
 And “Onward” the foreman did cry  
 “We’ll blast through the rock, don’t be shy!  
 There’s a ten dollar bonus for volunteers...

“Just don’t trip or slip in the cavern ‘til you’ve clamped the wire  
 And if you don’t make it, we’ll wire your wages to China...if you desire,  
 And your families can come here with a dollar in their hand  
 To the Golden Sun they’ll travel to this great land.”

Voice

Trans-Can-a - di - an line, Brit - ish Col umb - i - a's fut - ure des - ign In the  
 true North where the dream rolls on, On the back - bones of the men from Can ton

Chords: G, F, G, F, C, G, D5, D5(+c)

CHORUS: Trans-Canadian line, British Columbia’s future design  
 In the true north where the dream rolls on  
 On the backbones... of the men from Canton

And their strong young bones lay shat tered, Their broken \_dreams lay tattered, Un - der  
 long, cold, tar - tied ribbons of steel. In the near - by trees the ghost - ly shad ows are real... \_  
 \_ And for ev - 'ry mile of track, A proud Can - ton - ese man lays  
 six feet down In the grave - yard of the new est rail - road town

Chords: D5, D5(+c), D5, D5(+c), C, G, D sus, C, G, D sus, G, F, G, F, C, G, D sus

And their strong young bones lay shattered  
 Their broken dreams lay tattered  
 Under long cold tar-tied ribbons of steel  
 In the nearby trees the ghostly shadows are real!

And for every mile of track  
 A proud Cantonese man lays six feet down  
 In the graveyard of the newest railroad town

CHORUS: Trans-Canadian line, British Columbia's future design  
 In the true north where the dream rolls on  
 On the backbones... of the men from Canton

At Hell's Gate in the Fraser Canyon, Of the six hundred workers left  
 standin', Only three hadn't lost their best companion

At Hell's Gate in the Fraser Canyon  
 Of the six hundred workers left standing  
 Only three hadn't lost...their best companion

CHORUS & CODA: Trans-Canadian line, British Columbia's future design  
 In the true north where the dream rolls on  
 On the backbones... of the men from Canton,  
 Of the men from Canton, of the men from Canton.

Trans-Can-a-di-an line, - - - Brit-ish Col-umb-i-a's fut-ure des-ign In the  
 true North where the dream rolls on, On the back bones of the men from Can ton Of  
 the men from Can ton, Of the men from Can ton Of the men from Canton

“Ribbon of Broken Dreams” tells the story of the Chinese labourers with irony and compassion. It begins by telling the story of Chang, contrasting his prisoner-like passage across the Pacific with working “in the land of the free.” Then we hear the voice of Van Horne, representing the functional, business orientation of the CPR—the Anglo attitude of the time. It celebrates the laying of ten miles of track in a day with casual mention of those “poor Chinese chaps.” The chorus then lauds the great dream of the CPR as “British Columbia’s future design”, noting that it does, indeed, “roll on the backbones of the men from Canton.” Subsequent verses deal with the

shattered dreams of the workers and the terrible loss of life they suffered: “Of the six hundred workers left standing, only three hadn’t lost...their best companion.” The slow, steady rhythm and the stark guitar accompaniment, focusing on unusual (to our ear) 5<sup>th</sup> chords, lends an air of serious tragedy and sorrow to the lyric. “Ribbon of Broken Dreams” does, indeed, address the missing voice in Canadian musical traditions in an effective and appropriate way, creating serious space for us to begin to engage some of the immense human costs that lie at the heart of our national dream.



*Camp for Chinese construction workers building the Canadian Pacific Railway through British Columbia*

## Demon Fire-Carriage Road

A third song comes from Su-Chong Lim, an Asian-Canadian who writes wonderful music in the few minutes he can find between attending to patients in his Calgary family practice. He has written some fine historically oriented songs, including “Twelve Foot Davis” about a colourful character from the Caribou Gold Rush. His addition to the Brothers-in-Law’s parody of Woody Guthrie’s “This Land is Your Land” is notable. In this humorous song we find echoes of the missing voice from Canadian tradition.

To build the railways those CP stoolies  
 Imported whale-loads of cheapie coolies  
 But the buggers stayed here—now they got it  
 made here  
 In this land that’s made for you and me

With a twinkle in his eye, Su-Chong turns the tables in the chorus that follows.

Dis land is your land, dis land is my land  
 Dis Gloc’ly Store and Laund’ly, Chop Suey  
 Gai land

Though we talk funny, we got all your money  
 In dis land dat’s made for you and me.

Dr. Lim takes a much more serious look at the Chinese railway labourers in his song “Demon Fire-Carriage Road.” In a minor key, with a driving rhythm and a complex three-part tune, he paints a portrait from the perspective of the Chinese workers, offering insight into the loneliness and fear in which these men were forced to live.

In his liner notes, Lim presents a short history of the Chinese workers: “6000 labourers were imported from southern China to complete the work on schedule.” He notes that “approximately 1500 ‘Chinamen’ died in accidents or from disease.” He also shares an insider’s view, telling us that the “Chinese idiom reflects the attitude that anything non-Chinese is uncultured, uncivilized and generally barbaric.” The European and Canadian workers, then, are seen as “foreign demons.” Hence, the white man’s railway is the “Demon Fire-Carriage Road.”



# Demon Fire-Carriage Road

Su Chong Lin

Voice

Well it's far a way to come for pay for the men from the Mid - dle  
King dom To the Gold-en Mount ain, Land of the Free. [guitar - riff] And it's  
luck - y joss that the Dem - on Boss needs men enough to bring them, Six  
thous - and, packed like cat-tle, sent by sea. But it's harsh and cold in this  
land of gold, and the work is long and heav-y, Four - teen kill-ing hours ev - ry  
day [guitar riff] Just a cheap pair of hands from for - eign lands, a nameless, faceless,  
navvy, To be used, to sweat and bleed your life a way. [CHORUS] There's the  
smell of death on Gold-en Mount-ain, [guitar\_\_riff] A price in blood is paid on ev - ry  
load, And you bur-y your friends, too man-y for counting, [guitar\_\_riff] In the  
rock and the mud of the De - mon Fire Car-ri-age Road.

Chords: Em, EM+5, EM6, Bm, Am, B7, F#m, B7, Em, Em+5, Em6, Em, Am, B7, Em, Em+5, Em6, Bm, F#m, B7, Em, Em+5, Em6, Am, C, Em, Bm, Em, Em, Em, Am, C, D, Em, Em.

Bridge:

Late at night when the shift is over, You still lay a-wake to see the heavens' gleam  
 From the Sky Kingdom shine the lovers Still part ed by the heavens' star-ry stream Still they  
 wait for-ev-er, But meet-ing nev-er, Their sor-row like a knife in your soul. And  
 heav-en shares your pain As you think of your woman a-gain, And the tears they flow be-yond con-  
 trol.

Chords: Em sus, Bm, Em, Am, Em sus, Em sus, Bm, Em, F#m, Bm, G, Em, Am, Am9/G, F#m, C, Am3, C, F#m, Bm, Em.

Well it's far away to come for pay for the men from the Middle Kingdom  
 To the Golden Mountain—Land of the Free  
 And it's lucky joss that the Demon Boss needs men enough to bring them  
 Six thousand, packed like cattle, sent by sea

But it's harsh and cold in this land of gold and the work is long and heavy  
 Fourteen killing hours every day  
 Just a cheap pair of hands from foreign lands, a nameless, faceless navy  
 To be used, to sweat and bleed your life away

CHORUS:

There's the smell of death on Golden Mountain  
 A price in blood is paid on every load  
 And you bury your friends, too many for counting  
 In the rock and the mud of the Demon Fire-Carriage Road

VERSES:

Well it's hammer, drill and blast, and still the rock she don't give any  
 So it's drill once more, and careful, or you'll die  
 For the gorge is deep, but men are cheap, and China men are many  
 When they're all used up there's plenty more to buy

So you hang from your rope, and you drill and you hope that once more you can take it  
 And you try not to think of Leung who fell last night

And you light your fuse and you try to use your shaking arms to make it  
To the top to hide from the blast of dynamite

CHORUS

There's the smell of death on Golden Mountain  
A price in blood is paid on every load  
And you bury your friends, too many for counting  
In the rock and the mud of the Demon Fire-Carriage Road

BRIDGE:

Late at night when the shift is over  
You still lay awake to see the heaven's gleam  
From the Sky Kingdom shine the lovers  
Still parted by the heaven's starry stream  
Still they wait forever  
But meeting never  
Their sorrow like a knife in your soul  
And heaven shares your pain  
As you think of your woman again  
And the tears they flow beyond control

VERSES:

Now you're wearing rags from old flour bags against the wind that tears you  
And you wonder—How much cold can the winter bring?  
But you sprinkle your dish with your rice and fish and you hope the scurvy spares you  
Till the work and wages start again in spring

When the stones and the sands of this Demon land once more will claim your spirit  
Though you dream in vain of the land that gave you birth  
For the Heavens who give the will to live can just as simply kill it  
And you know in your heart you are doomed for this demon earth

CHORUS:

There's the smell of death on Golden Mountain  
A price in blood is paid on every load  
And you bury your friends, too many for counting  
In the rock and the mud of the Demon Fire-Carriage Road  
In the rock and the mud of the Demon Fire-Carriage Road  
In the rock and the mud of the Demon Fire-Carriage Road

There's no attempt in "The Demon Fire-Carriage Road" to soft-pedal the realities that the Chinese labourers faced. The first two verses are clear about the difficult working and transport conditions, while the first chorus brings us face-to-face with the danger and death so much part of their lives: "A price in blood is paid on every load." In the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> verses, Lim begins to individualize the workers, so we can begin to understand their humanity and the terrible conditions under which they worked: "And you try not to think about Leung who fell last night." The third part of the song, which has a winsome, nostalgic tune, brings this humanity home to great effect in dealing with homesickness: "And the tears they flow

beyond control." The next set of verses draws our attention to the difficulties of surviving the workless winters, while the return of the chorus brings us back to the constant threat of death faced by these men.

This is a masterful song bringing us into contact with the world of these workers. The presentation is enhanced by the song's recorded arrangement using, for example, the pipa and Chinese two-string vertical fiddle to create several distinctively Asian-sounding musical passages that add immeasurably to the song. To the Anglo listener, "The Demon Fire-Carriage Road" does, indeed, transport one into a world silenced by our musical traditions. Dr. Lim is to be congratulated for this marvelous piece of work.

## Conclusion

The three songs presented here chronicle, in song, the gradual coming into awareness of the exclusion of Chinese railway labourers from our cultural consciousness. “Oriental Navvies” brings the topic to our attention. However, because it is written from an outside perspective, it recapitulates the callous attitude that allowed the mistreatment in the first place. “Ribbon of Broken Dreams” contrasts the views of Anglos and Chinese, moving much closer to a humane treatment. “Demon Fire-Carriage Road” places us squarely in the plight faced by the men.

These three songs document a transition in perspective in telling this story. “Oriental Navvies” is written from the outside looking in, what anthropologists call the “etic” view. “Demon Fire-Carriage Road” takes the insider’s or “emic” perspective. “Ribbon of Broken Dreams” dances between the two extremes. Each perspective has its own special purchase on the events, making the history more understandable and accessible to those who may have only read, or perhaps never heard of, these important historical happenings. The power of these two orientations side-by-side is impressive. Spearn has written a sensitive documentary of the event. Lim has found that difficult middle ground in which his song is neither too Western to overshadow Chinese voices, nor too Eastern to be inaccessible to its intended audience. Together these two songs paint an impassioned portrait of the plight faced by the Chinese labourers working on our national dream. They remind us that we, too, have our own share of skeletons in our historical closet.

To its credit, the Canadian Government has recently offered an official apology to Chinese families

who were affected by the head tax and the now-acknowledged racist dogma that led to the terrible abuses enacted while the railway was being built in western Canada (see Harper, 2006). But such apologies are shallow indeed, if they are not followed up with actions that begin to redress the wrongs. Both “Ribbon of Broken Dreams” and “Demon Fire-Carriage Road” are immensely important songs in terms of helping to bring these issues to light and making them known in a meaningful and sympathetic light. They are critical reminders of lessons we must not forget. We are fortunate to have songwriters like Spearn and Lim who take the time to do their historical homework and apply their creative talents to such important themes.

These songs are particularly important for those who use songs drawn from tradition to enliven the teaching of Canadian history. While there is no doubt that getting the “participant’s-eye view” of historical events through songs composed at the time is a wonderfully useful approach, it does run the risk of recapitulating “sins of the past” by excluding specific voices—those silenced by the ethos of the times. Restricting one’s view of Canadian railway history to extant traditional music, thereby excluding the Chinese, is a clear case in point. It becomes necessary to branch out beyond the traditional canon and search for other sources of teaching support materials. Happily, John Spearn and Su-Chong Lim have given us songs that allow us to reach beyond our own single-minded history of the railway. It certainly is a worthy question to ask what other historical lessons may be limited by a one-sided focus on our own traditions.

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## Discography

“The CPR Line”, “Drill Ye Tarriers Drill”, and “The Railroad Boy” are on Barry Luft and Tim Rogers’ CD *Songs of the Iron Trail*. Calgary AB: Iron Trail Music IT01, 2007, available at [www.irontrail.ca](http://www.irontrail.ca).

“Demon Fire-Carriage Road” and “This Land is Your Land” can be found on Su-Chong Lim’s CD *Golden Mountain*. Vancouver BC: Aural Tradition, ATRCD 306, 1990, available from the CSTM Mail Order Service: [www.ahryel.ca/cstm/](http://www.ahryel.ca/cstm/).

“Drill Ye Heros Drill” can be heard on Ken Peacock’s LP *Songs and Ballads of Newfoundland*. New York: Folkways, FG 3505, 1956, available at [www.folkways.si.edu](http://www.folkways.si.edu). It can also be heard sung by Tom Kines on the CD *Anthology of Canadian Folk Music*. Fonovox: ADD VOX 7965-5.

“Drill Ye Tarriers Drill” is on Jon Bartlett and Rika Ruebsaat’s CD *The Young Man from Canada (Volume 2)*. Vancouver BC: CFW, CFW 02, 2003, available at [www3.telus.net/jonbartlett-rikaruebsaat](http://www3.telus.net/jonbartlett-rikaruebsaat). It can also be heard on The Men of the Deeps 2004 CD entitled *Their Lights Will Shine*, available at [www.menofthedeeps.com](http://www.menofthedeeps.com).

“The Railroad Boy” can be heard sung by Tom Brandon on the LP *Folksongs of Ontario*. New York NY: Folkways, FE4005, available at [www.Folkways.si.edu](http://www.Folkways.si.edu).

“Ribbon of Broken Dreams” is on John Spearn’s CD *Northern Sightlines*. Edmonton AB: John Spearn, NS-0699, 1999, available at [www.canadasongs.com](http://www.canadasongs.com).

Tim Rogers recently left the University of Calgary to pursue creative writing. He has just completed an historical novel dealing with a sealing disaster that took place in 1914 in Newfoundland. During the 1980s Tim was deeply involved with CSTM (then the Canadian Folk Music Society), serving several terms as editor of its *Bulletin* and president. He is also a musician, having re-released a CD entitled *Songs of the Iron Trail: The Canadian Railroad Experience in Song* in 2007. Tim is presently compiling a survey of Canadian railway music. The interim results of this ongoing project can be seen at [www.irontrail.ca/intro.html](http://www.irontrail.ca/intro.html).

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### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> This song should not be confused with Leadbelly’s song of the same title (“The Rock Island Line is a mighty good road... Get your ticket at the station for the Rock Island Line”).

<sup>2</sup> “Coolie” is said to have originated from the Hindi-Urdu word “quli” and is an older term for Chinese railway workers.



CPR locomotive ‘Selkirk’ in the Canadian Rockies