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SUMMER 2023
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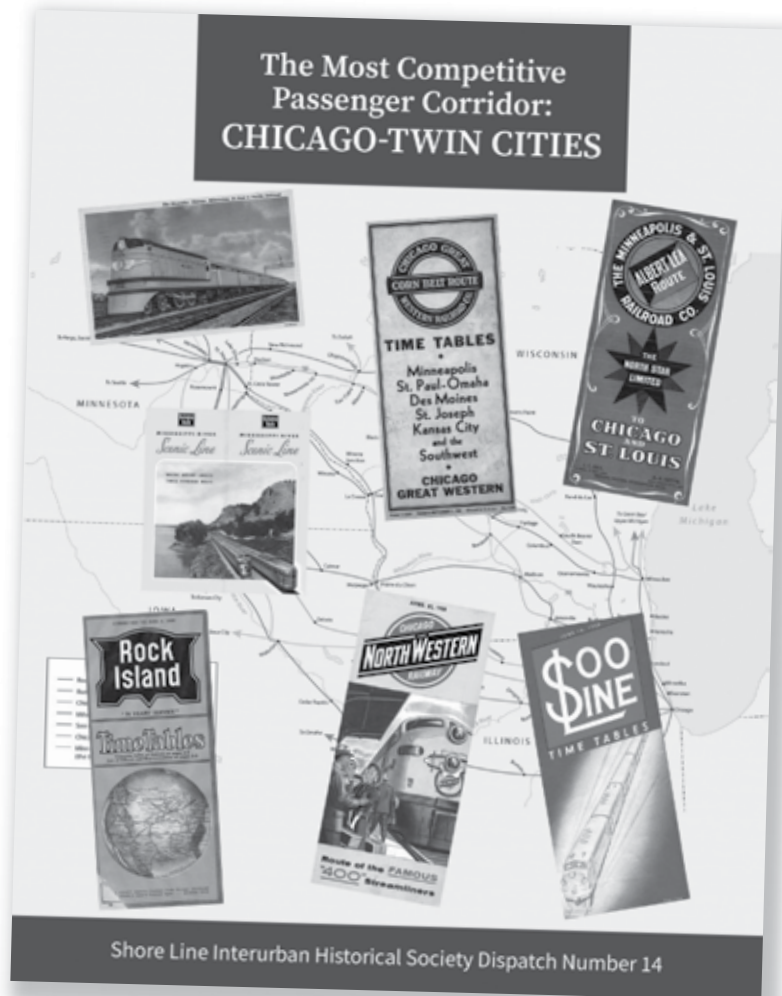
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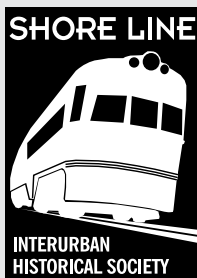
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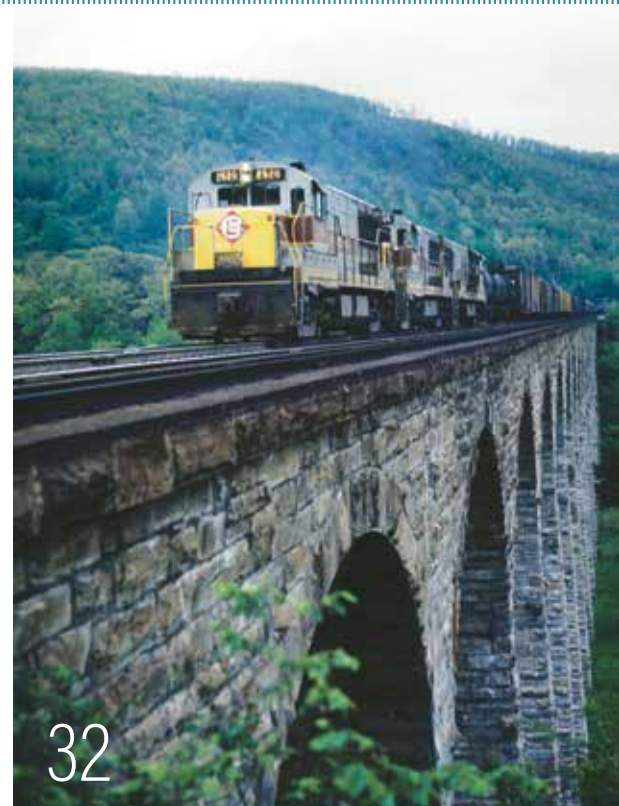
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Be careful for what you wish

Deregulation revitalized U.S. railroading in the 1980s. While I can't envision a complete return to those dark days before the Staggers Rail Act, I can't help but think that the pendulum is swinging back that way in 2023.

The railroad industry is back under media and political scrutiny after a series of high-profile derailments early in 2023 and years of service complaints. A significant wreck and chemical release at East Palestine, Ohio, on Feb. 3 led to media coverage that soon found every minor mishap making national headlines. This peaked with a Union Pacific runaway on Cima Hill in southern California on March 27.

I often hear railfans lament the passage of Staggers more than 40 years on and its subsequent effects on the industry. They envision a return of their "good old days": five-man crews, cabooses on every train, and once-a-week branchline service to each and every town. Some even advocate for the Class I railroads to operate passenger service in place of Amtrak, too. Of course, that could also mean weed-choked rights-of-way, standing derailments, and stagnation of innovation returning, as well.

Certainly there is a need to find balance between the free market and appropriate government regulations to ensure both safety and proper service. I suspect we may be heading back the other direction after the events of early 2023.

Just be careful for what you wish.

EDITOR



Penn Central GP7 leads biweekly Brewster-Chatham turn south through Millerton, N.Y., on Oct. 4, 1975. Railroads today need to find a proper balance of reinvestment and profit. Jack Armstrong



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A potpourri of railroad history, then and now

HeadEnd



Plain wooden Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee caboose 1002 brings up markers at Lake Bluff, Ill., on March 31, 1962.
Tom Gildersleeve

Summer by the sea

Beachgoers seem largely unimpressed by the passing of a pair of Burlington Northern F units at White Rock, B.C., in July 1976. Although, we have to think that the head end crew was watching them all intently.

L. G. Russell, Brian M. Schmidt collection



Pacific Goldliner?

Perhaps it's best that Amtrak stuck with its "Platinum Mist"-based paint schemes for decades, given the alternatives. Here, Amtrak FP7 No. 492 (ex-Southern Pacific) sports an eye-catching paint scheme at Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal on Feb. 19, 1979. Also sporting a new gold paint are coach 4460 (ex-Santa Fe) and dome-observation 9250 (ex-Burlington *Silver Horizon*). Only one side of the F unit was so painted. The set was made for the CBS series "Time Express" starring Vincent Price. Apparently it was not a success, as only four episodes aired before cancellation. Joe McMillan



A Winter Spectacular photo freight moves into position, approaching the Rockhill Furnace, Pa., station. Two photos, Dan Cupper



East Broad Top sells out Winter Spectacular

East Broad Top Railroad's freshly restored 2-8-2 Mikado locomotive No. 16 delighted admirers over the weekend by pulling a full schedule of eight passenger trains and two photo freights for the road's annual Winter Spectacular. All trains were sold out.

The event was a landmark in several ways. First, No. 16 (Baldwin, 1916) has not run since 1956, when the original common-carrier version of the 33-mile narrow gauge coal railroad in south-

central Pennsylvania shut down for the first time. After a three-year restoration, the engine was steamed up two weeks ago and has made break-in trips in the yard and on the main line.

Master Mechanic Dave Domitrovich, who oversaw the restoration and served as engineer for some trips, declared the engine's performance in its new public role to be "perfect — couldn't ask for anything more."

The second item of note is that this was the

first steam-powered edition of the winter event in 42 years. As a steam tourist carrier from 1960 to 2011, EBT held a tradition of running an annual winter railfan festival on the weekend preceding Presidents' Day. After the February 1981 event, the celebration eventually moved to fall.

Finally, this was the first time the railroad deployed all four of its new passenger cars, built by Hamilton Manufacturing of Bellingham, Wash. The first of the cars was delivered July 2022.

The first three cars were 52-seat coaches, but the body of the fourth car, a 40-seat combine with electric wheelchair lifts on both sides, arrived just a week before the event. EBT rushed to get it roadworthy for the weekend, and, at least on Sunday, it was actually used for that purpose.

Crowds were large on both days. Authorities placed flares on the centerline and on both sides of U.S. 522 for a quarter-mile to remind train-chasers to drive safely. The highway parallels the track for about 3 miles. At one spot, cars were parked bumper-to-bumper on both sides of the highway.

In addition to the regular trains and M-1 gas-electric, the road's five-seater M-3 gas-powered inspection car, converted from a 1928 Nash auto, carried a total of more than 200 riders on short hops. These trips toured trackwork that is advancing southward on the main line about a mile, with a goal of eventually opening up the line as far as Three Springs, Saltillo, Coles, and Robertsdale. — *Dan Cupper*



No. 16 leads a train with three coaches, a new combine with wheelchair lifts, and caboose.

Genesee Valley Transportation acquires Alco PA locomotive

Nickel Plate Road-painted No. 190 has resided at the new Oregon Rail Heritage Center in Portland for years. Prior to that it was stored at the Union Pacific's nearby Brooklyn Yard. *Brian M. Schmidt*

Genesee Valley Transportation has acquired the Alco PA locomotive restored by preservationist Doyle McCormack and will run the unit on mainline passenger excursions.

McCormack and GVT Rail President Michael D. Thomas finalized the agreement in a recent meeting at the Oregon Rail Heritage Museum in Portland, Ore., where the locomotive, built for Santa Fe and later operated by Delaware & Hudson, but restored by McCormack as Nickel Plate Road No. 190, has been stored and displayed.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to obtain the 'Spirit of St. Louis' of locomotives," Thomas said in a press release. "On behalf of our ownership group and the entire team at GVT Rail, we are ecstatic that Doyle has entrusted us with the stewardship of his great gift to rail preservation."

Thomas said initially the PA will be used to power GVT's Office Car Special, which makes regular business train runs on D-L. He says that the railroad runs other pas-



senger events, and they likely will see the PA on the head end.

"There is a lot of potential for this locomotive," he says.

The locomotive began life as Santa Fe No. 62L, built in December 1948. It was one of four PA1s sold to the Delaware & Hudson in 1967 for use on the railroad's New York-Albany-Montreal passenger

service, retaining the warbonnet paint scheme, but with D&H blue replacing Santa Fe red. No. 62L became D&H No. 18.

The units became expendable when the Albany-Montreal route was not included in Amtrak's 1971 plan. All four were shipped away, with two leased to Steam Tours Inc. of Akron, Ohio, and two traded

to General Electric for new units. But under president C. Bruce Sterzing, the railroad reclaimed the four PAs — the tour company was behind on lease payments, and the planned purchase of new GEs had fallen through — and eventually used them when Amtrak restored Albany-Montreal operations. During this period, all four locomotives were rebuilt by Morrison-Knudsen, with their 2,000-hp 244 prime movers replaced by 2,400-hp 251 engines. The rebuilds were dubbed PA4s.

They again became expendable when Amtrak began using Rohr Turboliner trainsets on the route, and after brief periods in freight service and a lease to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, they were sold to Mexico in 1978. In 2000, the shells of two of the locomotives, which was all that remained, were returned to the U.S. with the help of the U.S. and Mexican governments and the Smithsonian Institution. One shell is under restoration at the Museum of the American Railroad in Texas; McCormack acquired the other. — *David Lassen*

Power company donates locomotive to Coopersville & Marne



Consumers Energy donated its 125-ton GE center cab diesel to the Friends of the Coopersville & Marne Railway. The locomotive was built in 1979 and was repowered around 2010 with two 600-hp Caterpillar diesels. It operated at the utility's West Olive facility near Grand Rapids, Mich. The railroad also has a former Grand Trunk Western SW9 and offers freight service. *Friends of the Coopersville & Marne*

Minnesota Transportation Museum will repaint SDP40 No. 325, which operates at its Osceola & St. Croix Valley, into Great Northern paint. Steve Glischinski



Minnesota museum to repaint Great Northern diesel

Minnesota Transportation Museum will repaint its former Great Northern Railway SDP40 No. 325 into GN's simplified orange and green color scheme, the museum announced to members. A museum member has agreed to fund the project, which is estimated at more than \$60,000. MTM also has a large collection of GN passenger cars painted in the orange and green colors.

GN No. 325 was built by EMD in 1966, one of six SDP40s purchased

for passenger service. Only 20 SDP40s were built between 1966 and 1970 for GN and National Railways of Mexico. The 3,000-hp units were essentially an SD40 with a steam generator added. Transferred to freight service upon Amtrak's inception in 1971, No. 325 operated under various numbers for GN successor Burlington Northern and BNSF Railway until it was retired in 2008. BNSF donated the locomotive to the museum in 2009, and it has been a mainstay of MTM's Osceola

& St. Croix Valley, based in Osceola, Wis., since its donation.

A few years ago an effort was made to repaint No. 325 in GN's Big Sky Blue colors. That effort only netted \$16,400. GN adopted the blue scheme in 1967, but the colors were short lived, as GN merged into Burlington Northern in March 1970, and the unit was repainted in BN green.

Great Northern adopted its Omaha Orange and Pullman Green colors in the 1940s with its first order of EMC FT diesels. The most

famous application of the scheme came in 1947 when new streamlined *Empire Builders* went into service. Subsequent orders for streamlined passenger equipment by GN all wore the colors, as did its diesels. In the early 1960s GN simplified the scheme on its diesels by eliminating some striping; it is this scheme No. 325 was delivered in and will wear after repainting.

MTM says the locomotive will be repainted in time for service this summer. — *Steve Glischinski*

Northwest Railway Museum to preserve Talgo Bistro car

The Northwest Railway Museum in Snoqualmie, Wash., has acquired a Series VI Talgo Bistro car for preservation. While the car was donated, the museum will launch a fundraiser to offset the \$26,000 cost of its move.

The Series VI equipment was a fixture on the Vancouver-Seattle-Portland *Amtrak Cascades* route from 1999 through 2020. Five of the unique tilting-carbody trainsets eventually operated in *Cascades* service, three owned by the Washington State Department of Transportation and two owned by Amtrak.

Their service life came to an end following the fatal December 2017 derailment of one of the trainsets in Dupont, Wash., after the National Transportation Safety Board report questioned the safety of the equipment's design. The Washington-owned sets were scrapped in 2021 and the Amtrak-owned sets were sold for scrap

in 2022.

A last-minute negotiation by the museum led to the preservation and donation of the Bistro car by the Rail Excursion Management Co.

Designed by rail designer César Vergara, the Bistro design avoided the use of straight lines and features an illuminated ceiling map of the Cascades corridor from central Oregon to southern British Columbia. The museum intends to use the Bistro car to highlight not only modern rail passenger service in the Pacific Northwest, but also the career of Vergara.

The museum says that "this sole remaining car is exceptionally significant due to both César Vergara's beautiful design work and its contributions to the perception of passenger rail travel. The car's significance has made it eligible to be considered for listing on the National Register of Historic Places." — *David Lassen*



The ceiling map of Puget Sound, with lights indicating cities, was a unique design feature of the Talgo bistro cars. Bob Johnston

Omaha Road No. 602 handles train No. 514, *The Victory*, at St. Paul, Minn., on July 1953. W. H. N. Rossiter

Biggest 4-6-2 Pacific: Omaha Road's E-3 class



Any history of the American steam locomotive must save some superlatives for the 4-6-2 Pacific. The wheel arrangement allowed a wide variety of design and performance options, such that approximately 6,000 were manufactured in the first half of the 20th century, all in the name of hauling people. As *Trains* Editor David P. Morgan noted in a 1988 essay, "History will record the Pacific as the majority passenger locomotive of this century because its inception and development coincided with the peak season of rail passenger traffic."

Several big carriers fielded big rosters of Pacifics, chief among them the Pennsylvania Railroad, which owned 696, including 425 in its legendary K4s class. Most railroads bought basic USRA-designed Pacifics that, though listed as "heavy," were rather modest-size engines. Other carriers — notably Santa Fe, Jersey Central, and Chesapeake & Ohio — bought truly large Pacifics. But leave it to an obscure Midwestern railroad — Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha, the "Omaha Road" — to operate the biggest 4-6-2 Pacific of all, its E-3 class. As a subsidiary of Chicago & North Western,

the CStPM&O was obliged to use the E-3s to haul the Minneapolis-Chicago *North Western Limited* on tight schedules between the Twin Cities and Elroy, Wis., as well as other C&NW trains.

The E-3 class was obscure, to be sure: only three engines, all built by Alco in 1930, numbered 600-602. But they weighed in at a whopping 347,000 pounds, heavier than Santa Fe's huge 3400-class machines rebuilt in 1934 from earlier engines and each weighing in a 338,000 pounds. Although the Omaha Road initially considered



No. 600 arrives at Minneapolis' Great Northern depot from Omaha in June 1952. James G. La Vake

moving beyond its earlier E-2 4-6-2s to the 4-6-4 wheel arrangement, it settled on this "super" 4-6-2 to accommodate the railroad's 90-foot turntables; the E-3 measured 87 feet in length, with some overhang on the turntables.

Among other attributes, the E-3s boasted 75-inch drivers, multiple throttles, Baker valve gear, and Franklin boosters, all of which added up to an impressive 64,600 pounds of tractive effort. Their tenders hauled 14,000 gallons of water and 16 tons of coal. Modernization after World War II would include the addition of roller bearings, but the boosters were removed because of maintenance costs.

In his history of the CStPM&O, historian Stanley H. Mailer extolled the E-3 as the ultimate in Omaha Road motive power. "What Omaha got was a massive modern Pacific that filled its needs. One of the most remarkable engines in the Midwest, the E-3s routinely operated as far east as Milwaukee's lakefront station."

Thus, a rather small railroad — just over 1,600 route miles — could claim it operated the biggest 4-6-2 Pacific. — *Kevin P. Keefe*



Ferrocarriles Nacionales de México No. 6406, wearing original paint, rests in the sun during September 1956. NdeM operated its Centipedes individually or with power from other builders. It was the last railroad to operate them, into the early 1970s. J. R. Williams, Krambles-Peterson Archive

Baldwin Centipede locomotives — Diesels That Didn't

Baldwin Centipede locomotives were an oddity of mid-century railroading that just couldn't compete with more mundane offerings from rivals Alco or Electro-Motive.

Officially, this gargantuan diesel is the Baldwin DR12-8-1500/2. That's a mouthful. Broken down, it stood for Diesel Road, 12 axles, eight of which were connected to traction motors, with two engines, each producing 1,500 horsepower. The 2 stood for their original design philosophy of having two of them semi-permanently connected back-to-back to form a 6,000 hp package. Whew!

No wonder it was usually referred to as the Centipede. Baldwin engineers conceptualized the unit in the mid-1940s, and 56 of them were built between 1945 and 1948 for just three railroads in the U.S. and Mexico.

Designed as high-speed passenger motive power, their debut was met by a ho-hum response from the railroads, especially when

compared to offerings from competing manufacturers, such as multiple-unit sets of EMD Es or Alco PA cab units.

Railroads that brought them into their rosters included Pennsylvania Railroad, with 24 units with a final numbering of 5811-5834; Sea-

board Air Line, with 14 numbered 4500-4512; and Ferrocarriles Nacionales de México, with another 14 in the 6400-6413 slot. A pair of demonstrators, originally intended for the Union Pacific and ultimately canceled before delivery rounded out production.



Centipede locomotive No. 5811 and mate rest at Altoona, Pa., in October 1959. Pennsy opted to run its units in pairs between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh. William D. Volkmer, Krambles-Peterson Archive



Seaboard Air Line 4504 shows the tapered rear of the Centipede units at Wildwood, Fla., in 1949. W. B. Cox, Krambles-Peterson Archive

Initially the Mexican and Pennsylvania units were powering passenger trains as intended, but the railroads were frustrated with their mechanical reliability and rather quickly re-assigned them to other duties. Mexico had the builder rebuild theirs with upgraded components to achieve a better operating ratio, while the Pennsy put its unit in freight service and helper duty in Pennsylvania. Seaboard Air Line predominately assigned them to freight trains.

The problem? Baldwin was assembling diesels in the same fashion as it did steam locomotives: one at a time. This resulted in none of them being exact mechanical copies of each other, with wiring and other details varying widely from unit to unit. Confounding to field mechanics, the units were rewired to be in mechanical harmony with each other as they came due for heavy overhauls. Some railroads had their pneumatic throttles, which kept them from being mated with units of other manufacturers, replaced with more universal electric designs so the railroads could create mix-and-match motive power consists at will.

But by that time, Baldwin's reputation was tarnished in the eyes of many who were used to comparative cookie-cutter units delivered by competing builders. When a mechanic had to tune up or fix an EMD F3, for example, he knew what to expect. With a Baldwin Centipede? Good luck.

In and out of storage due to fluctuating car-loadings, the last of Seaboard's units were unloaded by 1960. The Pennsylvania held on to its a few more years but mostly had them gracing storage lines.

Longest lasting were the NdeM's, which had been reworked by the builder and railroad shop forces and managed to hang on until the early 1970s, predominately in freight service.

Whatever their shortcomings, however, Baldwin Centipede locomotives must have made an impressive sight working a train. — *David Lustig*

OBITUARIES

Jeff Schmid, BNSF railroader and engineer of Frisco 4-8-2 No. 1522, died Feb. 8, 2023, after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Schmid, 74, started work with the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway, and ran trains for 15 years, before moving into management at BN and successor BNSF. He managed a variety of programs, including working on safety education for law enforcement and the closing of thousands of railroad crossings. Schmid frequently ran No. 1522 as part of the St. Louis Steam Train Association, which operated the 4-8-2 via an arrangement with its owner, the National Museum of Transportation. He frequently ran the engine and helped supervise operations across several states and numerous railroads in the Midwest.

Former Kansas City Southern CEO **David Starling** died Feb. 24, 2023, at age 73. Starling's railroad career began in 1971 on the Frisco. He later worked for Burlington Northern before moving on to American President Lines and Mi-Jack Products. Starling served as KCS CEO from 2010 to 2016 and is credited with making the cross-border railway work as a single, unified system. He was named the railroad's president in 2008. Starling became KCS's independent trustee on Dec. 14, 2021, when the company was placed into a voting trust as part of the Canadian Pacific merger review process.

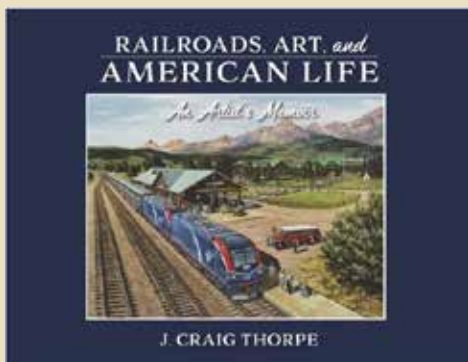
Union Pacific express boxcar



This is a UP class BX-50-31 express boxcar, built by the railroad in 1941 and shown in 1960. John S. Ingles, Jeff Wilson collection

THIS COLORFUL UNION PACIFIC CAR is a class BX-50-31 double-door 40-foot express boxcar, built by the railroad in 1941 and shown in 1960. Express boxcars (along with baggage cars) carried parcels for Railway Express Agency and bags of U.S. Mail — shipments that garnered a premium price for faster delivery. To provide this service, express cars were carried at the front of passenger trains (hence the term "head-end traffic") or in all-mail/express trains. Express boxcars were given the AAR code BX. Because they operated in passenger trains at high speeds (often in excess of 80 mph), they required high-speed trucks, and they were also equipped with steam lines and train-signal lines and connections. They can be spotted by a pair of air hoses at each end (one for brakes, one for the train-signal line), along with the pipe connector for steam. Because they did not carry heavy loads, express boxcars often had a light capacity — this UP example was a 25-ton car (compared to 50 tons for a freight boxcar of the period). This car's inside height (8 feet, 6 inches) is also about two feet shorter than a standard boxcar. — *Jeff Wilson*

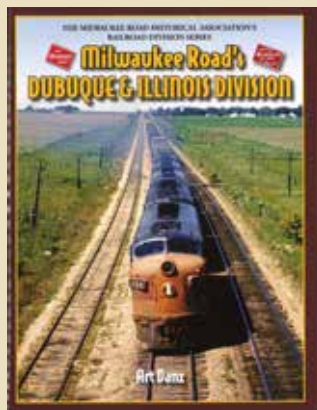
Reviews



Railroads, Art, and American Life

By J. Craig Thorpe. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 194 pages, \$40.

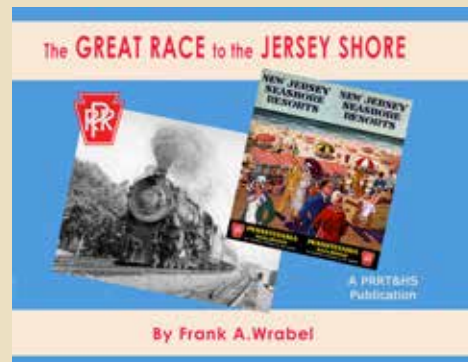
Both the work and the philosophy of artist J. Craig Thorpe are handsomely presented in what the author subtitled “an artist’s memoir.” For more than 30 years, Thorpe has been a prominent contributor to the railroad art scene, mostly with stirring, panoramic views of railroading, often with a passenger-train theme, often the product of commissions from industry entities. Working in various media, Thorpe’s details and proportions are highly realistic, but with just enough artist’s license to take them beyond the merely illustrative, displayed to great effect in various paintings of Amtrak trains in the mountain West. Thorpe is also a good writer, something he demonstrates in thoughtful ruminations on how railroad art has evolved over more than a century. Most of the more than 130 illustrations are Thorpe’s own paintings, beautifully reproduced here by the publisher. — *Kevin P. Keefe*



Milwaukee Road's Dubuque & Illinois Division

By Art Danz. Milwaukee Road Historical Association, P.O. Box 307, Antioch, IL 60002. 136 pages, \$49.95.

The most famous stretches of the Milwaukee Road were the Chicago-Twin Cities main line and the much-lamented Pacific Extension. But as veteran MILW railroader Danz shows in this colorful, information-packed volume, the railroad’s D&I Division — about 135 miles of double-track main line pointed west from Chicago — offered plenty of its own diversions. It’s all here: postwar streamlined steam, first- and second-generation diesels, the passenger trains MILW shared with Union Pacific, branch-line services, major terminals in Chicago and, to the west, the division point of Savanna. Among the photo credits (both black-and-white and color) are such heavy hitters as Mel Patrick, Henry J. McCord, Alfred W. Johnson, Jim Scribbins, and Mike Schafer, who edited and designed the book for MRHA. The author’s colorful memories of the Milwaukee Road railroaders he worked with and loved add considerable appeal. — *K.P.K.*



The Great Race to the Jersey Shore

By Frank A. Wrabel. Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society, Lewistown, Pa. 376 pages, \$80.

Few rail corridors blazed more brightly before fading to dim embers than the lines that carried passengers from Philadelphia to the New Jersey shore resorts. This handsome book charts the shaky beginnings, bright zenith, long decline, and modest revival of what from 1933 to 1976 was known as the Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines, named for the two big railroads whose subsidiaries battled for business in South Jersey, only to merge in the face of highway competition. Bursting with 370 photographs, maps, timetables, advertisements, and various paper ephemera, this is more an album of engaging images than a textbook. A nice inclusion is a chapter on the many trade-show equipment displays that Atlantic City hosted over the years, bringing everything from doodlebugs to a giant C&O turbine to the shore resort. The emphasis, however, is on passenger service to Atlantic City, with freight service and more minor locations accorded less attention. — *Robert S. McGonigal*

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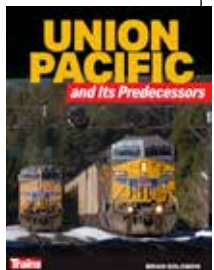
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A Family Railroad Fun Guide

More Furler photography

After purchasing *The Railroad Photography of Donald W. Furler* (Center for Railroad Photography & Art, 2020), I realized he was one of the “elite” group of railroad photographers from this ’40s to ’50s era, capturing the end of steam to the beginning of diesels time period. If you look carefully at his work, you begin to notice something unique to his “style” – he generally managed to capture light on the driving wheels of the steam locomotives he shot while also showing the rods in a down position! This is hard to do, I’m sure.

In addition to this, his showcasing of the end of the Lehigh & New England steam power in the Spring issue highlights this road’s clean lines of its roster of 2-8-0s, 2-10-0s and, in my opinion, the finest looking 4-8-2s (with pedestal tenders) of any railroad ever! In addition to their clean lines, these locomotives were always spotlessly clean looking.

Articles like this keep reminding me why I always renew my subscription to *Classic Trains* well ahead of time. — *Larry Gustina, Buffalo, N.Y.*



Central of New Jersey G4s class 4-6-2 No. 812 leads train 316 east through Bethlehem, Pa., across the Lehigh River and Lehigh Valley Railroad on Oct. 15, 1948, in an outtake from the Spring 2023 feature story. Donald W. Furler, Center for Railroad Photography & Art collection

Furler and Uncle Phil

It was great to see that the Lehigh Gap article made it onto the cover. This place looms large in family lore. My great-uncle Phil lived just up the hill from the Lehigh Gap in Walnutport, Pa. There were spooky stories told about an airplane crash at Devil’s Pulpit (a rock outcropping overlooking the Gap), or how boys walking across the Lehigh & New England bridge had to dangle from the sides of the bridge when surprised by a train, unable to reach safety. The Lehigh Gap’s then desolate, rocky appearance, scarred by fire and the acrid emissions of the nearby New Jersey Zinc Co., did little to ease the spooky mystique.

Then came the great article by Scott Lothes with the stunning cover photo of a L&NE doubleheader. I could almost feel the ground shake! A small but valiant coal road in the heart of rugged Appalachian country – what’s not to like? I’ve never been to the Gap, but my interest goes back to my teens in the 1960s when Ambroid released a craftsman kit of a L&NE covered hopper.

Now, all I need is a model railroad, the kit to run on it, and a time machine to visit the real thing.

Mark Hymers, Fredericton, New Brunswick

As a child, my first visit to the Lehigh Gap came on July 3, 1968, on a family visit to Uncle Phil for the July 4 holiday, a family tradition. Other than New York City subways, I had never seen a “real” train before. That evening, Uncle Phil took my father and I out fishing on the Lehigh River. We parked on the Palmer-ton side of the river. To our left was the Lehigh Gap and to our right in the distance was the N.J. Zinc plant. Other than

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a low humming sound coming from the plant, all that could be heard was the gentle sound of the flowing river.

Just as it was getting dark, the sound of a distant horn echoed through the Gap. It was followed by a low rumble that grew and grew until it was the only sound that could be heard. There I sat on my uncle's tackle box, nervously staring to the east where the sound was coming from, when a light appeared. The light grew closer and I could eventually see that it was a train on the other side of the river. The train seemed to be moving pretty fast, as the headlight traced a cone shape that lit up the rocky sides of the mountain. My eyes followed it moving from left to right as it rounded the bend and turned away from us, heading towards Lehigh. There was enough ambient light to see car after car rounding the bend. I had never seen such a long train. The sound diminished as the little light on the caboose speeding from us faded away. Then it was quiet again.

Though I would not become interested in railroads for another decade, this encounter certainly made a big impression on me. I went on to a career in the transit industry, and I have seen and ridden many trains. I think it's pretty cool, and nice to know, that the first one I ever saw was LV's Advance FFW-1.

Lou Millan, Somerville, NJ

Mixup of the Century

I loved the spotlight on the 20th Century Limited. However, the Century train numbers are 25 and 26; Nos. 27 and 28 belonged to the New England States.

Edward Hungerford wrote about the Century in the heavyweight era. His book is called "The Run of the Twentieth Century." It is an easy read and done in the present tense, so it takes you back to 1930 when the Century typically ran in several sections.

Joe Beal, Loveland, Ohio

North Shore exposure

Regarding "Traction's biggest what if," on Jan. 10, 1963, I became a brand new Seaman Recruit in the U.S. Navy. We crossed the Hudson to Hoboken and rode the Erie to Chicago.

I was with a Marine (who joined

the Navy for electronics training) and around 40 "juvenile delinquents" from New York City.

We arrived in Chicago on the 11th and rode the North Shore to Naval Training Center Great Lakes.

We were supposed to keep eyes straight ahead when marching, but one day I heard a "tinny" sound coming from the North Shore's tracks outside the fence. When the company commander was not booking, I looked out and there was an actual Electroliner! I don't recall the date, but it may very well have been the last day for the line.

John Frink, Carson City, Nev.

RDCs: the final, final word

I read with interest the recent RDC coverage because I worked at Harmon on the New York Central in 1967.

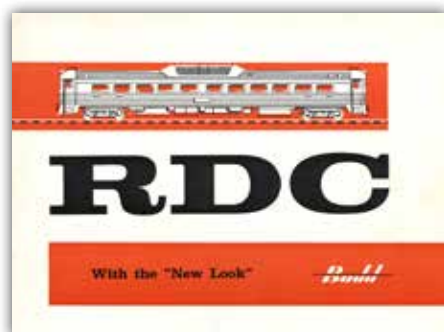
First, I want to correct an error in a Spring 2023 letter. RDCs had only two engines. One of the projects I did was analyzing the in-service time after overhaul before failure. It wasn't pretty, but that's another story.

Perhaps more interesting, in 1967 the Central's RDCs that had been disbursed around the system were brought to Harmon for off-peak services on the Hudson and Harlem Lines. The electricians told me that no two were wired the same due to "field modifications."

But they soldiered on.

Mike Fox, Atchison, Kan.

Thank you for your civility in bringing this to our attention. While your note



about there being only two engines in RDCs rings true, their horsepower rating does not. Curiously, Trains' "All About the RDC" story from March 1953 lists the engines at 275 hp production; however, Budd promotional materials for the "New Look" RDC reproduced here reference 300 hp output. — B.M.S.

One happy customer

Many thanks to you and the staff and contributors at *Classic Trains* for the hard work producing this Spring 2023 issue. A great magazine with many great features, especially the Ingalls Shipbuilding diesel, Union Railroad 0-10-2, North Shore interurbans, Lehigh & New England steam by the Furlers, and much more. It whets the appetite for next issue. By the way, those Union 0-10-2 engines look like they could pull everything a yardmaster could tack on.

A. C. Fries, Troutdale, Ore.

Northwestern Steel steam

Thank you for your article on North-



The hulk of Grand Trunk Western 0-8-0 8305 resides near the site of its last use: Northwestern Steel & Wire in Sterling, Ill. Dave Kuntz

western Barb Wire. Not only was the place one of the last in North America to run steam, but one steam locomotive that presumably "ran when parked" is still there. Last summer, a longtime rail-

fanning friend and I found ex-Grand Trunk Western 8305, an 0-8-0 with tender long gone, deep in the weeds. It's on the edge of the property of a privately owned grain elevator, but we photographed it with permission.

The history of Northwestern Barb Wire lives on!

Dave Kuntz, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Got a comment? Write us at Fast Mail, Classic Trains, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612; email: fastmail@classictrainsmag.com. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



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Railroads that live “forever” . . . on paper

Three examples show that the past isn't always past



A northbound Southern freight on the Rathole crosses the Cumberland River and enters a tunnel at Burnside, Ky., in the early 1950s. *Classic Trains* collection

Like trilobites and brachiopods, the paper carcasses of 19th-century railroads seem forever locked away in the sediments of corporate archives and government files. They fill the pages of old *Official Guides* and *Poor's Manual of the Railroads* by the hundreds. Nearly all of them are dormant — but some are not.

Consider the case of the Cincinnati Southern Railway, a carrier I'm guessing many readers never heard of. It was created in 1869 by the city of Cincinnati to tap into resources of the surging South, building in fits and starts southwestward 337 miles until it reached its destination, Chattanooga, in 1880. It gave the city an alternative to the Louisville & Nashville. At the time, it was the largest municipally owned railroad in the country.

The old railroad has been in the news recently, now that Cincinnati has decided to sell the route to lessee Norfolk Southern for \$1.6 billion, subject to various state, local, and Surface Transportation Board approvals. The arrangement already had NS paying Cincinnati about \$20 million each year. Now the city will get it all in one lump sum, targeted, they say, for further infrastructure improvements.

Actually, you've likely known about the Cincinnati Southern all along, except by another name: Cincinnati, New Orleans & Texas Pacific, created by English investors in 1881 to assume the line under lease and extend it all the way to New Orleans, as well as to Meridian, Miss., and Shreveport, La. In turn, CNO&TP was absorbed by the Southern Railway in 1893, then folded into NS upon its creation in 1982.

Along the way, a major stretch of the railroad became famous — or infamous — as CNO&TP's Second District, a tortuous line cursed with 27 tunnels, uncountable curves, and steep grades. Southern largely fixed the problems between 1959 and 1963, when massive line relocations enabled it to bypass most of the tunnels. NS has continued to make improvements, including a double-



Louisville & Nashville train 3, operating from St. Louis to Atlanta, pauses at Cartersville, Ga., on Nov. 8, 1970, on the famed Western & Atlantic route. William J. Husa Jr.

tracking project in Kentucky in 2013.

Author Michael Iden memorably nailed the popular identity of this railroad in the April 1976 issue of *Trains*, when he reported on riding a Southern hotshot freight nicknamed the “Beagle.” In his introduction, written from the perspective of 1940, Iden wrote: “Train crews seldom refer to the district by its official name, for they know it from choking tunnels, the almost-too-big 2-8-2s that plod over these Cumberland Mountain grades, and the human endurance required to coax trains between terminals. Out of their experience they have christened this line the Rathole Division.”

The Rathole. Was there ever a better name for a stretch of nasty railroad? I find it fascinating that for more than a century, all those Southern passenger trains and Mikados and Geeps and all those Norfolk Southern coal trains and double-stacks traipsing over the Rathole were riding track owned by a railroad born the same year Union Pacific and Central Pacific met at Promontory.

There are at least two other ancient paper railroads worth mentioning. One is steeped in Civil War history: the Western & Atlantic. Yes, the very name that adorned the tenders of 4-4-0 locomotives *General* and *Texas* when they dashed north toward Chattanooga on April 12, 1892, after the former was commandeered by Union spy James Andrews and his raiders. The Great Locomotive Chase, as it came to be known, spawned a Disney movie, several museum exhibits, and numerous markers along the 138 miles of W&A now operated under lease by CSX.

That’s right, like the Cincinnati Southern, the Western & Atlantic still exists as an entity, this time owned by the state of Georgia. Organized in 1837, the railroad is inextricably bound up in the history of both Georgia and Atlanta, including the city’s celebrated “Zero Mile Post,” a stone marker displayed at the Atlanta History Center along with the beautifully restored *Texas*. Operation of the W&A via lease has seen several tenants over the years, from Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis to Louisville & Nashville to today’s CSX. Under a 2018 renewal, CSX is paying the state upwards of \$1 million per year.

If you chase CSX’s W&A Subdivision today along U.S. Route 41, you’ll find plenty of reminders of the original Western & Atlantic, starting with the *General*, displayed as a sacred artifact at the Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History in Kennesaw, Ga. Kennesaw, you might recall, was formerly known as Big Shanty, the place where the Andrews Raiders first ran off with the *General*. Outside the museum, you’ll hear the rumble of at least a dozen CSX freights over the course of a day; CSX sends most of its tonnage between Nashville and Florida via Birmingham, but the W&A retains enough to keep its mainline status.

For a third 19th-century paper railroad, we go back to Norfolk Southern, which runs on the 317 miles of the North Carolina Railroad, incorporated by the state legislature in 1849. The railroad crosses the Tar Heel State in a west-to-east arc linking Charlotte with Morehead City. From the first shovel full of dirt lifted in 1851 in Greensboro to the

completion of the last mile in 1858, the NCR was a classic antebellum railroad.

The NCR’s earliest lessee was the Richmond & Danville, later conveyed to successor Southern Railway, and today it’s NS. It’s an important freight artery, carrying more than 1 million carloads annually. Recent renegotiations between NS and the state have relegated NS to basically a trackage-rights agreement.

What really sets NCR apart from other similar railroads is its status as a passenger corridor. The line sees a dozen Amtrak and state-sponsored trains each day, including the six daily Raleigh-Charlotte *Piedmonts*, featuring the state’s own rolling stock and locomotives. Other services include a portion of the *Carolinian’s* Charlotte-New York route, plus a share of the *Crescent* and *Silver Star*.

Digging into the history of these old “paper” railroads has been an eye opener. I wouldn’t be surprised to learn there are other examples, especially from the world of short lines. If nothing else, the existence of the Cincinnati Southern, the Western & Atlantic, and the North Carolina Railroad show that novelist William Faulkner had a great point: “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.”



KEVIN P. KEEFE joined the *Trains* staff in 1987, became editor in 1992, and retired in 2016 as *Kalmbach Publishing Co.’s* vice president, editorial. His bi-weekly blog “*Mileposts*” is at *Trains.com*.



Toronto three-in-one

Three distinct noses line up at Toronto on Aug. 28, 1968. At left is Canadian National 3155, a Tempo-painted, HEP-equipped RS18M. These six orange-and-white units highlighted the road's passenger service between Toronto and Windsor/Sarnia. Of note, the unit does not have a front walkway because of its longer nose to accommodate the auxiliary head-end power generator. Behind it is Ontario Northland FP7 1510, laying over before returning to Cochrane and the Northland's home territory. Beyond that is Montreal-built CN C630M 2036, wearing the road's typical-for-the-era black, red, and white freight scheme. J. W. Swanberg



CALIFORNIA CHRONICLES

SCRAPBOOK • 2

Friendships come and go, but some last a lifetime, transcending the complications of advancing age, physical relocation, and new interests. Among the latter are two native Californians, Robert P. “Bob” Townley and Walter H. “Walt” Vielbaum, who became pals as teenage railfans and have together outlived the obstacles of military service in the 1950s, marriages, jobs, multiple moves, and various family obligations. Each served as best man for the other at their weddings. And offspring from those two marriages called their father’s friend “uncle.”



Santa Fe RDCs D-191 and D-192 running as trains 80-82 southbound and 81-83 northbound pose at the San Diego depot on Feb. 21, 1954. The two cars made the Los Angeles-San Diego round trip twice daily, covering a total of 512 miles. Walter H. Vielbaum

THROUGHOUT THE FIFTIES,
PALS **BOB TOWNLEY** AND **WALT VIELBAUM**
RECORDED A NOW-LOST WORLD OF STEAM,
DIESEL, AND TRACTION



Los Angeles-bound Pacific Electric car 1107 arrives at Oneonta Park in South Pasadena. Above the Spanish Mission-style station is the tower controlling the interlocking.

Robert P. Townley

SOUTH OF SAN FRANCISCO ALONG SOUTHERN PACIFIC'S COAST LINE, BOB AND WALT



The early sunlight of June 10, 1958, plays to the photographer's advantage as Southern Pacific train 91, the *Coast Mail*, moves through San Luis Obispo. Leading the way is a pair of Alco PA1 diesels originally built for SP subsidiary Texas & New Orleans. Robert P. Townley





Also on June 10, 1958, black-and-orange Fairbanks Morse H12-44 No. 1538 held down switching assignments at San Luis Obispo. The SP unit was one of 10 such equipped with M.U. gear. Robert P. Townley

One of two Southern Pacific EMD E9 diesels to wear what was normally SP's "Black Widow" freight paint scheme, No. 6050 brings the southbound *Coast Daylight* into San Luis Obispo on April 25, 1958. The use of this paint scheme on the Es was only temporary. Robert P. Townley



Bob and Walt are also accomplished photographers, as was evident in Part 1 of "California Chronicles" in Spring 2023. In this issue, we return to this 77-year friendship and the work these two produced over several decades as they carried their cameras on myriad trips across the West and other parts of the United States. It's a remarkable record, especially of the immediate postwar years, when steam, diesel, and traction magically coexisted.

In this episode, we travel with Bob and Walt south from their home bases in the Bay Area to Golden State locations beyond Fresno. Their quarry were generally electric operations, but they also eagerly sought steam. Fortunately for us, they did not follow the example of some of their contemporaries and put away their cameras when diesels approached. They also made a point to carefully preserve their work: most of their black-and-white and Kodachrome images look as good as the day they were developed.

For Bob and Walt, the Los Angeles area was a big draw for multiple subjects. Foremost was the Pacific Electric system, with hundreds of miles of interurban and street trackage. Much of the system operated as "suburban electrified main-line service," as authors George W. Hilton and John F. Due memorably wrote in their book, *The Electric Interurban Railways in America*, the bible on such subjects.

In traveling south of the San Francisco region, Bob and Walt encountered multiple distractions. Their destinations included Southern Pacific's three-foot narrow-gauge operation radiating from Owenyo; Santa Fe operations in the Central Valley; and Southern Pacific around Bakersfield, Tehachapi, and beyond.

The SP narrow-gauge — last common-carrier narrow-gauge railroad in the Far West — is noteworthy from several perspectives. The war years saw a significant surge of traffic in the Owens Valley, but mining diminished in peacetime. Though business hung on, the aging equipment — including three Baldwin 4-6-0s and various gondolas, boxcars, and stock cars — began to show its age. Most of the track was equipped with 35-pound rail, although the southern end had been improved with 62-pound rail. The only significant improvement made to the operation by Southern Pacific was the purchase of a 50-ton General Electric diesel in 1954. It did not vanquish steam, but severely reduced the need.

Interchange between the narrow- and



Southern Pacific Ten Wheeler No. 18, trailing its familiar water car, rumbles along the south end of the railroad's narrow-gauge near the town of Mount Whitney, Calif. Much of the equipment in this 1951 photograph was already more than 50 years old. Walter H. Vielbaum

At Owenyo, SP's GE 50-tonner No. 1 shuffles a lone gondola. Cross-platform transfer of freight between narrow- and standard-gauge cars occurred at right. There was no dual-gauge track. Robert P Townley





At the point in Owenyo where slim- and standard-gauge rails met, SP No. 3203, a husky 1911 Baldwin 2-8-2, dwarfs narrow-gauge 4-6-0 No. 18. Walter H. Vielbaum

standard-gauge SP came at Owenyo, but without dual-gauge track. Boxcar freight was transferred across a dock between railroads, by hand, while bulk commodities were dumped into standard-gauge cars from an overhead trestle arrangement. A gantry crane enabled heavy loads to be lifted between railroads, long before intermodal became a buzzword. Alas, the final run for SP's slim gauge came in April 1960.

For Bob, his years at California Polytechnic State College in San Luis Obispo offered numerous photo opportunities. Southern Pacific was the only game in town, but back then, it was quite a game! Not only did six daily passenger trains per day (*Coast Mail*, *Coast Daylight*, and *Lark*) polish the rails through "SLO," but freight trains and local switching assignments kept several crews busy. Typically, the north and southbound *Coast Daylight* trains were at San Luis Obispo midday, scheduled to arrive within 40 minutes of each other.



A WIDE VARIETY OF PACIFIC ELECTRIC EQUIPMENT HUNG ON AROUND L.A., IDENTIFIED



One might wonder if anyone in the restaurant on the corner of San Pedro and 9th Streets in San Pedro looked up to appreciate the passage of Pacific Electric "Blimp" 433. PE acquired the cars after the cessation of Interurban Electric Railway service in the Oakland area. Walter H. Vielbaum



Running as a three-car train, a trio of Pacific Electric MU-equipped double-ended PCCs crosses the Fletcher Viaduct on the Glendale Line. Pullman built the cars before 1940 in an order of 30. Walter H. Vielbaum



Pacific Electric's diverse roster included all-steel and wooden box motors used in postal and express freight service. Two of the motors pose at the 6th and Main station in Los Angeles. RPO 1406 originally was one of three Brill cars on the Portland, Eugene & Eastern. Walter H. Vielbaum



Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority car 1543, formerly PE car 427, travels along dual-gauge track on San Pedro Street on April 8, 1951, the day before abandonment of the entire service over the Long Beach line. Robert P. Townley

One of the more memorable trains included a northbound edition of the *Coast Daylight*, in September, 1959, when Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and his wife came through the area. The 16-car train featured four EMD E units on the head end. Although hundreds gathered to get a look at Khrushchev, Bob still managed to get a picture of the lavish train and was close enough to touch the premier when he alighted.

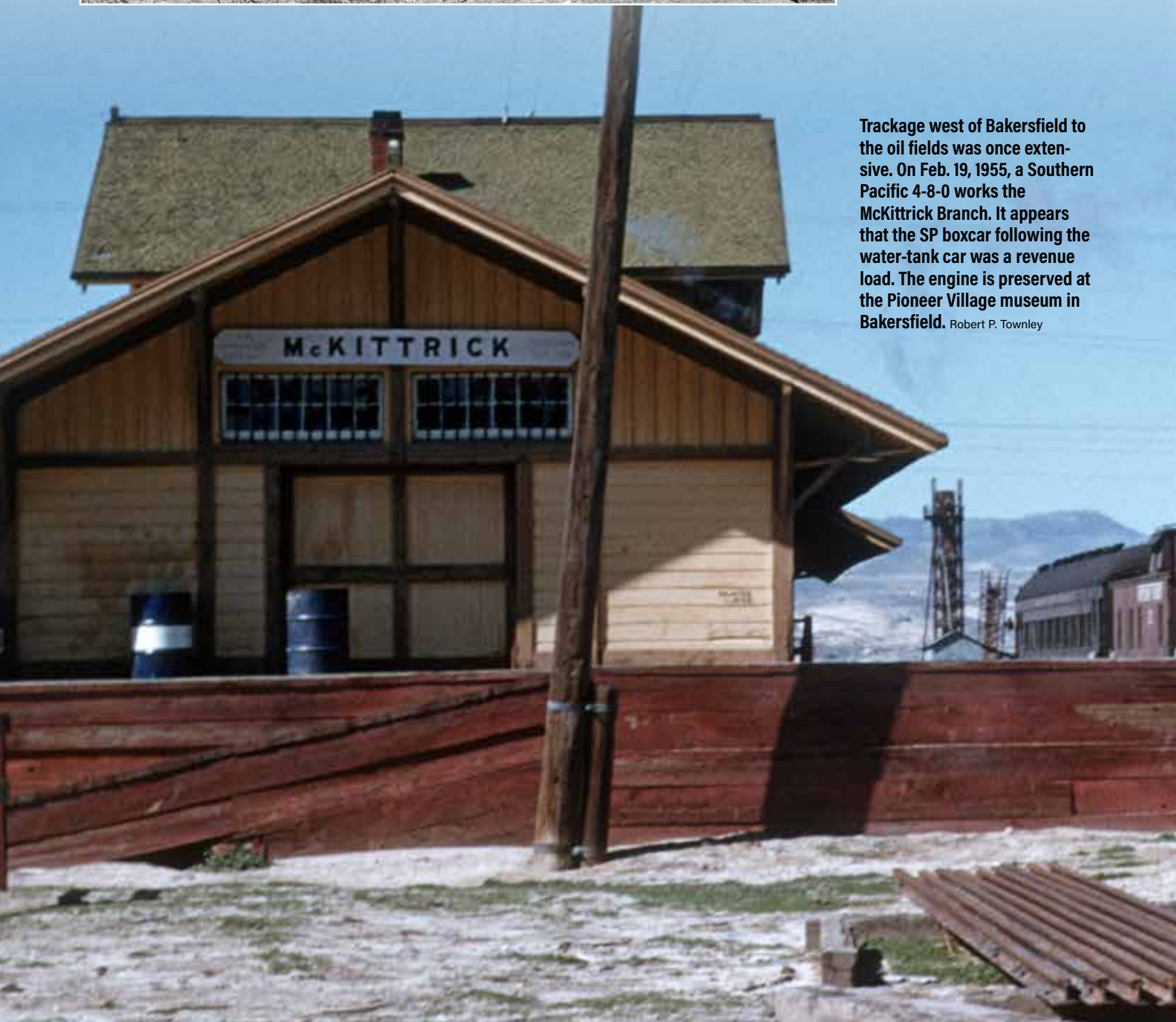
For Bob and Walt, Los Angeles offered a host of attractions such as Southern Pacific's vast Taylor Yard complex as well as Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal, with its mix of SP, Union Pacific, and Santa Fe trains. Most of all, though, the L.A. area was the land of the Pacific Electric, an operation that seems almost breathtaking in retrospect, especially when you throw in the 42-inch, narrow-gauge operations of the former Los Angeles Railway, known after 1945 as Los Angeles Transit Lines. The cars of PE and LATL occasionally shared the same streets and overhead wire.

Pacific Electric's ridership and freight traffic declined after the war, but what remained could be captivating. A wide variety of equipment hung on, and that equipment was often identified by nicknames such as "Hollywoods," "Blimps," "Woods," and "Tens." To the unwashed,

BOB AND WALT HAVE BEEN GENEROUS IN SHARING THEIR PHOTOGRAPHS WITH A NEW



San Diego was the first city in California, indeed in the West, to put PCC cars in service. Ordered in 1936, 25 cars were placed in service in 1937, followed by a small order for three in 1938. PCC 509 is shown at the Adams Avenue car house on August 16, 1948, just eight months before service ended. Robert P. Townley



Trackage west of Bakersfield to the oil fields was once extensive. On Feb. 19, 1955, a Southern Pacific 4-8-0 works the McKittrick Branch. It appears that the SP boxcar following the water-tank car was a revenue load. The engine is preserved at the Pioneer Village museum in Bakersfield. Robert P. Townley

GENERATION EAGER TO KNOW THE GLORIES OF POSTWAR CALIFORNIA RAILROADING.

the nicknames made little sense, but to the camera-toting enthusiasts, the lingo added to the enchantment.

Any suggestion that Pacific Electric operated mere streetcars was quickly put aside when you boarded a massive Blimp, or noted the many routes governed by block signals, or witnessed the four-track main lines to Sierra Vista and through Watts. There was also Railway Post Office service and less-than-carload express deliveries by box motors. It is said that PE performed more freight service in the L.A. area than the mighty Union Pacific. Bob and Walt and other friends from the Bay Area made multiple visits in the waning years and the timing of their expeditions was prescient, for significant route closures soon occurred.

Pacific Electric operated dependable service until 1953, when what remained was sold to Metropolitan Coach Lines, then in 1958 transferred (along with Los Angeles Transit Lines) to public operation under the Los Angeles Metropolitan

Transit Authority. Under LAMTA, former Pacific Electric routes were fully abandoned by 1961. Some routes with PCC cars lingered on LAMTA until 1963.

Further south, San Diego had its own allure for Bob and Walt. They were drawn partly to Santa Fe's RDC operations between San Diego and Los Angeles, disbanded after the disastrous Jan. 22, 1956, derailment at Redondo Junction that killed 30 passengers and injured 117. Our photographers were likely more interested in the cream-and-green equipment of the San Diego Electric Railway, with its fleet of streamlined PCC cars.

Thanks to Bob and Walt — lifelong friends — for sharing their collections and memories. Both have been extremely generous in sharing their photography with new generations who have come to know the glories of postwar California railroading. 📷

GORDON LLOYD JR. is a retired railroader, having worked nearly 38 years for Union Railroad, Bessemer & Lake Erie, and Canadian National in the Mechanical and Transportation Departments. He lives with his wife, Sheila, in Lexington, Ky.



Bob Townley (standing) and Walt Vielbaum together in a May 2021 photo.





Delaware & Hudson's southbound *Laurentian* charges out of Montreal Windsor Station on June 4, 1968.

THREE RAILFANS TOOK A ROAD TRIP IN 1968. THEY HAD NO IDEA HOW EPIC IT WOULD BE.



BY MIKE SCHAFER // Photos by the author

Northeast Nostalgia

I was born and raised in the Upper Midwest in the late 1940s amid a stronghold of classic Midwestern railroads, notably Illinois Central, Chicago & North Western, Milwaukee Road, and Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. About 90 miles east of my hometown of Rockford, Ill., Chicago was a gateway to exotic carriers that reached to the Atlantic Ocean.

I love the Midwest and have lived and worked there my entire life — at least thus far. That said, ever since I was a teen, I've felt an unusually strong draw to the Northeast in general, and in particular its fascinating railroad network.

Not until 1968, when I was 19, did my quest to explore the Northeast become reality. Jim Boyd, Bill Wagner, and I — three local railfans — concocted an aggressive itinerary that covered a rather amazing variety of territory. Boyd did the bulk of planning, as he had done a sweep of the Northeast in 1966 with a couple other buddies of ours.

What sparked this adventure was Delaware & Hudson's newly acquired (from the Santa Fe) quartet of Alco PAs for its revamped passenger services. Another major goal was the New Haven Railroad, which we knew was going to end up

eventually being swallowed by Penn Central, born of the Pennsylvania Railroad and New York Central merger less than six months before our trip.

■ DAY 1: Saturday, June 1, 1968

Our conveyance for this epic adventure was Boyd's 1966 green Volkswagen Beetle, already well-worn and packed to the gills with our camera gear and suitcases. Being the runt of our trio, I was relegated to the back seat. The first stop was to fix a flat tire before we even left our starting point of Dixon, Ill.

One might expect we would start out by highballing due east to Cleveland or Pittsburgh, but that wasn't the case. In late afternoon, we were trackside across the river from Detroit in Windsor, Ont. — my first time in Canada. We blitzed the waterfront and Canadian National's

passenger terminal, where I had my first look at Canadian National passenger trains and Montreal Locomotive Works FPAs. By the midnight hour, we were in Toronto Union Station.

■ DAY 2: June 2, 1968

Toronto Union Station was our home base for the morning, photographing CN, Canadian Pacific, and Ontario Northland trains, as well as trains of the new GO (Government of Ontario) commuter rail system. Also new: CN's new "Tempo" corridor trains. There was never a dull moment and we kept busy into the early afternoon when we felt it was time to continue east, with a brief stop at Burlington, Ont., before shuffling off to Buffalo.

Boyd's routine in trips of this nature was to "blitz-and-run." We made a brief stop at Buffalo Central Terminal and then somehow found Erie Lackawanna's "new" Babcock Street station (actually a freight yard office turned passenger depot after EL and Lehigh Valley pulled out of the old Lackawanna Terminal downtown) in time to photograph EL's *New York Mail* leaving for Hoboken, N.J.

We decided to celebrate our rewarding day at a full-service restaurant — Lauby's



Canadian National's passenger station at Windsor, Ont., was our first major stop. Here, train 48, the *Erie*, departs for Toronto.

of Amherst, N.Y. — despite shockingly high prices (\$3.95 for a four-course steak dinner!). Then, onward into the night, holing up at Geneva, N.Y.

DAY 3: June 3, 1968

Our main goal was to get down to the Binghamton, N.Y., area for our highly anticipated first look at the D&H, destined to become one of my favorite railroads of the Northeast.

We hit the railroad's Binghamton yard for some roster photography, but without any road trains scheduled for a few hours, we made a side trip east to Starucca Viaduct, where ELs ex-Erie Binghamton-Jersey City main line passed over D&H's Penn Division.

We were stunned by Starucca, truly a remarkable landmark, which opened in 1848. The world was a different place in 1968 and we didn't give second thought to walking onto the viaduct, scoping out an angle for a down-on shot of D&H

trains. (I wouldn't dare do this now!) Alas, action was limited to one EL freight, an EL helper move, and a Sperry railcar on the D&H. Back to Binghamton.

The D&H gods were with us, though. An eastbound freight in the charge of two SD45s and an Alco RS36 was about to set out for Albany. Bingo!

Eastbound D&H trains out of Binghamton faced a stiff climb up Belden Hill to Belden Tunnel. It was a stellar chase, but the latter prevented us from keeping up with the train once it got through the bore. There was no U.S. Interstate 88 back then, only the winding State Route 7 to the capitol at Albany.

It was near midnight when we ambled into Albany. We headed straight for Union Station, an impressive facility that hosted Penn Central (ex-NYC) and D&H passenger trains. Security was almost unheard of in those days, so we simply headed to the platforms and set up for some night photography.



At Toronto Union Station we photographed one of CN's new Tempo trains — for upgraded corridor service — on public display.



Temporarily serving in the new GO Train commuter service were Ontario Northland locomotives and heavyweight coaches.

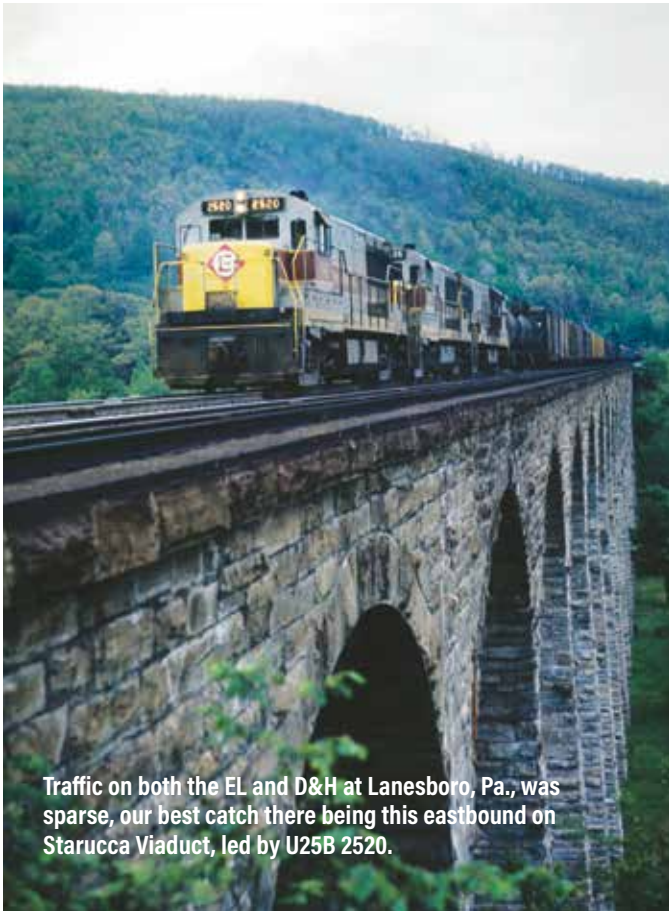
But then, where to bed down? After talking to a couple of railroad employees at the station, we learned the Railroad YMCA at Union Station offered rooms (stalls, actually) for a mere \$4 a night!

DAY 4: June 4, 1968

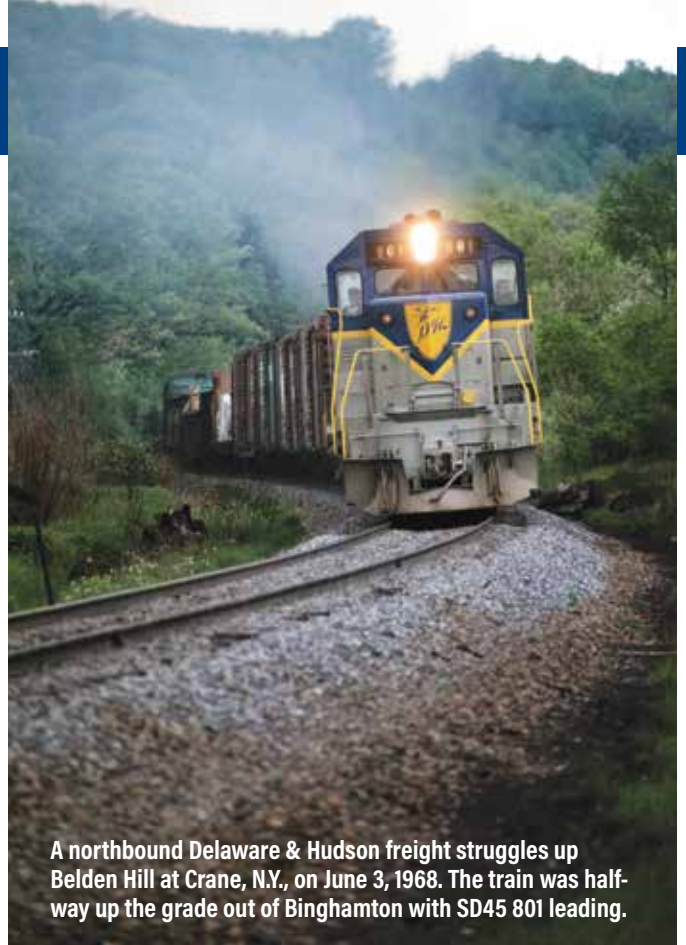
The YMCA thing worked perfectly. We were in the right place for the morning action in Union Station, including the eastbound Chicago-Boston *New England States* (now nameless) and its connecting section to New York. Between New York and Albany, D&H trains were handled by Penn Central with PC power.

Our next quarry was the aforementioned PAs on the northbound New York City-Montreal *Laurentian*.

Classic Trains readers who have ridden the D&H to Canada — be it on the D&H or today's CP Rail and Amtrak's *Adirondack* — know this line is anything but straight, though the scenery is splendid. The chase on State Route 7 that



Traffic on both the EL and D&H at Lanesboro, Pa., was sparse, our best catch there being this eastbound on Starucca Viaduct, led by U25B 2520.



A northbound Delaware & Hudson freight struggles up Belden Hill at Crane, N.Y., on June 3, 1968. The train was half-way up the grade out of Binghamton with SD45 801 leading.



In the midnight hour of June 3-4, we checked into the Railroad YMCA at Albany Union Station where we photographed a "new" Penn Central *Empire Service* train.



Fellow traveler Bill Wagner snapped this shot of author Schafer (left) and Jim Boyd on Erie Lackawanna's Starrucca Viaduct at Lanesboro, Pa.



While we were taking photos of PC/NYC equipment at Albany Union Station, what should show up but the northbound *Montreal Limited*?



Delaware & Hudson PA16 sweeps along the main line north of Mechanicville, N.Y., with a four-car consist: baggage, buffet-bar, coach, and New York Central parlor.

parallels the line back then had a 50 mph speed limit. Could we keep up with the train? Well, with Boyd at the wheel — he was a seasoned driver on Chicago expressways — the chase was a bit harrowing but successful.

Meanwhile, as dedicated passenger-train fans, Bill and I hatched a plan to have Boyd drop us off at the Rouses Point, N.Y., station (the Customs stop) where we would board the train we had been chasing all afternoon and ride its last leg into Montreal's Windsor Station. Boyd would meet us there.

Bill and I pulled it off, and the venture netted some good photography at Windsor Station while waiting for our ride.

Waiting for a late-running Jim Boyd was nothing new to us. He finally showed up almost two hours after we did. It seems Customs tagged him for a suspicious amount of luggage in his car. It didn't help when he tried to explain to the Canadian Customs agent that his two cohorts had taken the train into Montreal while he drove in with the luggage.

We closed out the day with night shots — tripods and all — at Windsor Station, although here we ran into a bit of trouble.

Station personnel told us we couldn't take photos in the station. We explained we were only interested in photographing D&H's *Montreal Limited*, which was in the process of boarding. "Oui! You are welcomed to take photos of American trains!" Thus we did, though we did manage to sneak some shots of CP's *Atlantic Limited* on a nearby track.

DAY 5: June 5, 1968

We spent the morning at Montreal shooting some CN action, notably the railroad's electrified suburban service. The best part of the day lay ahead, as we re-entered the States in Vermont, which I'd been intrigued by way before the trip.

I still have dreams of retiring there, snowy winters notwithstanding. My only disappointment was that, in 1968, the Green Mountain State was devoid of passenger train service. (Who woulda think how much that would change in 1972 and beyond?)

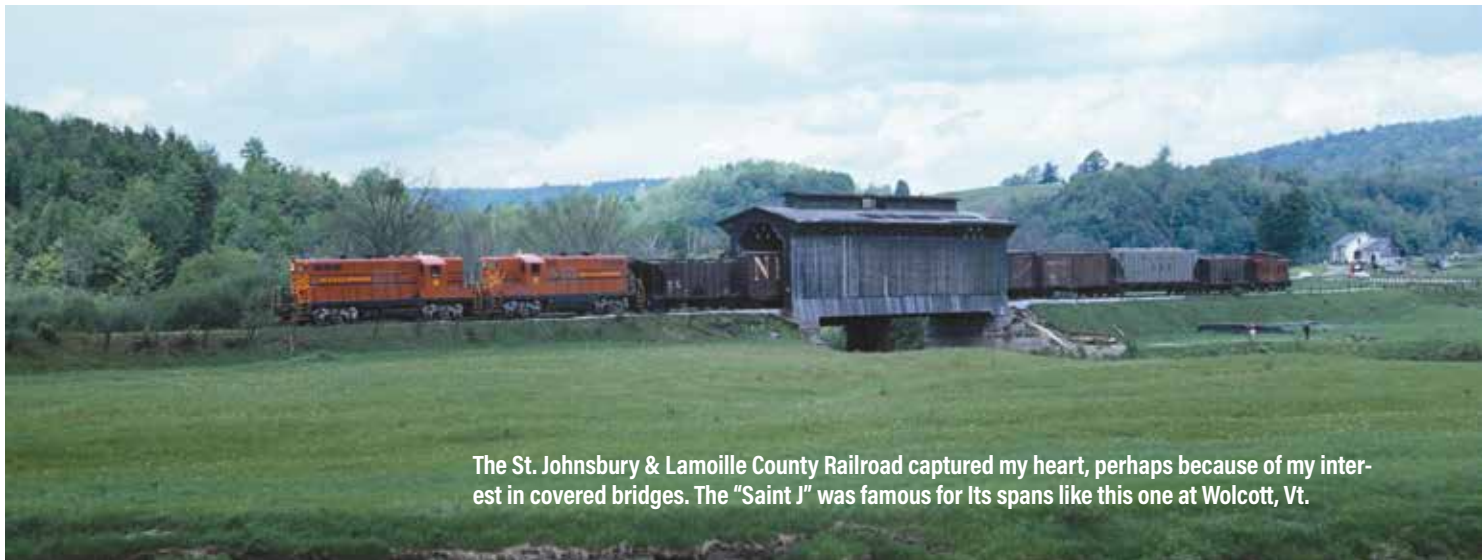
Boyd was now targeting a Vermont shortline he had read about in an early issue of *Trains*, the St. Johnsbury & Lamoyille County Railroad, which stretched across the northwest portion of Vermont. It linked Swanton on the Central



Bill and I made a spur-of-the-moment decision to hop aboard the *Laurentian* at the Customs stop at Rouses Point, N.Y., for a ride into Montreal's Windsor Station where Boyd met us.



After our arrival at Windsor Station, we wandered out onto the platforms, where we caught this view of Canadian Pacific's Montreal-Quebec *Viger*, led by one of CP's three E8s, the 1800.



The St. Johnsbury & Lamoille County Railroad captured my heart, perhaps because of my interest in covered bridges. The “Saint J” was famous for its spans like this one at Wolcott, Vt.

Vermont main line with Boston & Maine, Canadian Pacific, and Maine Central at St. Johnsbury. The “Saint J” headquarters and shops were at Morrisville, and by the time we got there it was dusk and time to hit the sack.

We returned to the shops and yard the following day. I was a bit miffed as I yearned to see the B&M, Central Vermont, and MEC — you know, those New England classics. As it so happened, the daily “Saint J” freight was about to head east to its namesake. The chase was on, and by the time it rolled into St. Johnsbury a few hours later, I had claimed the StJ&LC as my all-time favorite short line.

Though a modest-size city, St. Johnsbury, on the Passumpsic River, was quite interesting. It had a large brick depot and divisional headquarters building for B&M and CP, and an interchange yard used by B&M, CP, MEC, and StJ&LC. I would return here several times during my many trips to New England.

Boyd, of course, was anxious to press on. Our goal was to hit Boston the following morning to begin our multi-day quest for New Haven action. We struck out of St. Johnsbury, heading east to Portland, Maine, with a quick side trip to see the Bangor & Aroostook at Northern Maine Junction. That was pretty much a bust, but Portland paid off with some night photography at the Portland Terminal yard.

DAY 6: June 6, 1968

I have no recollection of where we slept after our stop at Portland, but we



A quick stop at Northern Maine Junction, where Maine Central meets the Bangor & Aroostook, netted this roundhouse view on the Maine Central. The nearby BAR facility was nearly empty.

were indeed at Boston in the morning. Engine terminals were always a focus back in those days, and generally we photographers were ignored by yard crews.

Our stop at the B&M-NH engine terminal netted some interesting scenes: piles of B&M RDCs, the remains of a B&M Talgo train, New Haven FL9s, and lots of rain.

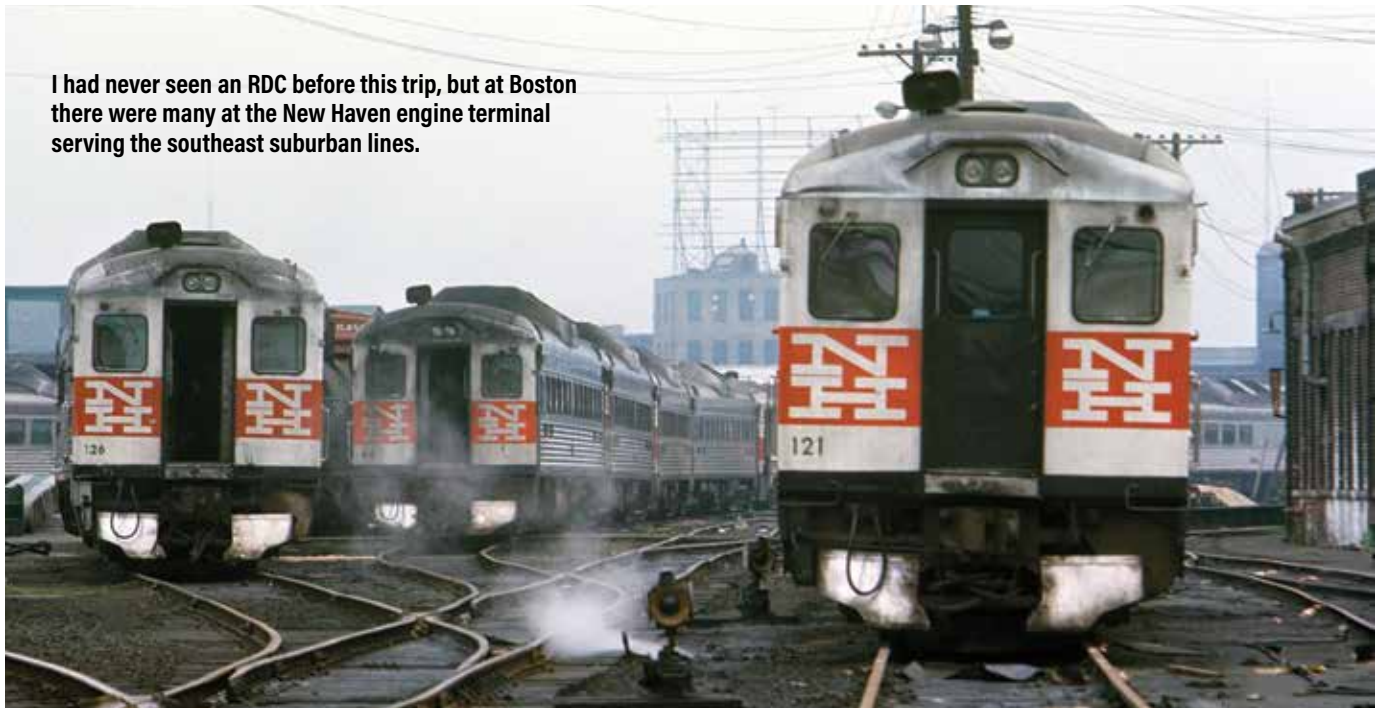
We nailed a bit of action at the throat of South Station and then began following the NH main line westward toward New York. Shortly after entering what is today’s I-95, I spotted an NH passenger train: the westbound *Puritan* as it turned out, paralleling us. The race was on!

Believe it or not, we beat the train to New London. Unfortunately we couldn’t say the same for the rain. The downpour let up after the *Puritan* left town.

Next stop: New Haven, Conn. I grew up on A.C. Gilbert American Flyer trains, which were manufactured there. The toy-maker’s huge plant on Peck Street was hard against the NH main line. Perhaps not coincidentally, Flyer catalogs were chock full of surprisingly accurate NH models, including the railroad’s handsome Alco PAs and EP5 electrics.

We first blitzed the NH engine terminal at Cedar Hill and then set up for late-afternoon action just west of the New

I had never seen an RDC before this trip, but at Boston there were many at the New Haven engine terminal serving the southeast suburban lines.



We stopped at Cedar Hill near New Haven, Conn., to find clean Alco FAs and a set of E44 "Bricks" — New Haven electric freight motors.



Rush hour on the New Haven at namesake was quite a show. This is eastbound train 174, the *Patriot*, out of New York Penn Station.



Detraining from the *Merchants Limited* at GCT, we spotted one of PC's ancient, ex-NYC S2 2-D-2 electric locomotives, the 133, built in 1906.



After the Manhattan excursion, FL9 2044 and electric 172 slumber at New Haven. Yard crews were nonchalant about our flash photography.



Two E44 “bricks” command the center main with a westbound freight at Mamaroneck, N.Y.; it was the only NH freight we saw.



We planted ourselves at Newark South Street for a parade, typified by the Washington-bound PC *Afternoon Keystone* meeting a local.



Outbound Central Railroad of New Jersey suburban train of unknown destination at South Newark led by Fairbanks-Morse H16-44 2407.



Reading's commuter trains, the *Crusader* (pictured at South Newark) and *Wall Street*, operated in and out of Newark Penn Station.



We finished out the day at Spuyten Duyvil, N.Y., with this eastbound Empire Service train.

Haven depot. It was a bastion of activity with electric-to-diesel locomotive swaps, connecting trains off NH's Springfield (Mass.) line, and rush-hour commuter trains. EP5 electrics handled consists to and from New York's Penn Station.

In general, dual-mode FL9s headed trains to and from Grand Central Terminal, where most NH passenger trains originated and terminated.

While photographing this incredible parade of commuter consists, Boyd turned to Bill and me and asked, “You guys ever been to New York City?”

“Nope...” I responded.

“Well then, let's take a spin into town on the New Haven!”

We did just that as the rush-hour eased off.

But what train should we take? I had always dreamed of my first arrival in the Big Apple would be aboard NYC's *20th*

Century Limited. However, looking back, my choice of NH's westbound *Merchants' Limited* was the perfect pick.

We could catch dinner on what was considered NH's premier Boston-New York train. The diner provided fine meals and FL9 2011 a fast ride. And thus was our introduction to both Manhattan and awesome Grand Central Terminal.

We had less than an hour before catching a suburban train back to New Haven, so we had but a whirlwind tour of GCT, where we had arrived at 9:15 p.m.

It was late evening when we got back to New Haven on train 382, but we still needed to get in closer to New York. We stopped at Bridgeport, Conn., when I realized we could tag another NH train, in this case the overnight *Owl* between New York and Boston. In the wee hours, we checked into a hotel for two nights at suburban Mamaroneck, N.Y.



We made haste for North White Plains, N.Y., the location where diesels coming down from Brewster with suburban trains were swapped for electrics like Class P-2B motor No. 240.

Entering the lobby, all eyes were on TV as newscasters buzzed about the assassination of Robert Kennedy.

DAY 7: June 7, 1968

The first morning event was the collapsing of the front passenger seat of the Boydmobile. It was permanently fully reclined and then some.

It had to be fixed somehow, lest I be strapped to the roof of the car, so Jim dropped Bill and me off along the New Haven main line in Mamaroneck to record some fine morning action. He returned a couple hours later, having found a VW seat at a local auto scrapyard (What are the chances?).

The NH main line yielded a parade of activity — both through-passenger and m.u. locals — and one freight led by a pair of red-and-white-striped electric EF-4 “bricks.”

A midday break took us out to Ramsey, N.J., for a visit with Hal Carstens at the Carstens Publications office. At the time, Boyd was establishing ties with Carstens, doing feature articles for *Railroad Model Craftsman*.

I would never have believed at the time that both Jim’s and my future would involve Carstens in several ways — notably the launch of *Railfan & Railroad Magazine* and ultimately the sale of R&R and RMC to White River Publications. But that’s another story.

For the afternoon, we repositioned ourselves to shoot photos at Newark

Penn Station across the Hudson River southeast of New York City.

The commuter-focused Aldene Plan that had taken effect in 1967 had drastically changed passenger operations; nowhere moreso than at Newark. Central Railroad of New Jersey’s sprawling terminal facing Upper New York Bay at Jersey City — which had hosted Jersey Central, Reading, New York & Long Branch, and Baltimore & Ohio passenger trains — had been closed along with CNJ’s Newark Broad Street Station.

The passenger trains of those carriers were funneled into Pennsylvania Rail-

road’s Newark Penn Station through new connections. This packed the ex-PRR main line between Newark Penn and Aldene (Elizabeth, N.J.) with an unbelievable amount of rush-hour passenger action, only a sampling of which I can show.

We ended the day back-tracking up the Hudson River to Spuyten Duyvil in the Bronx for a few trains. There, Penn Central’s ex-NYC Hudson River main out of Grand Central joins the ex-NYC freight line into Manhattan (now Amtrak’s line into New York Penn Station).

DAY 8: June 8, 1968

On this bright, sunny morning, we wanted to sample some ex-NYC electric operations and closed in on North White Plains, N.Y. The location marked (and still does) a transfer point between diesel-powered suburban trains and electric runs into GCT.

This was followed by a quick midday visit to the Long Island Rail Road at Jamaica, Queens.

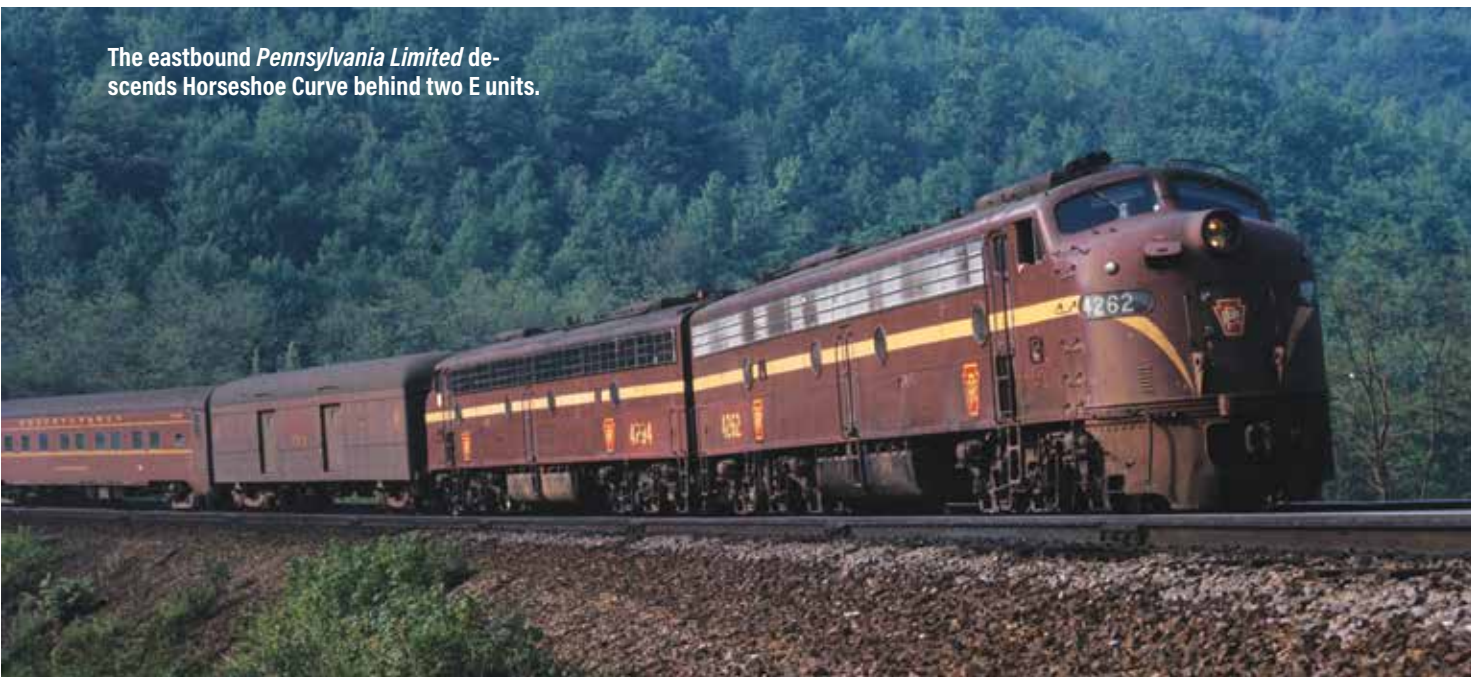
Here, we began the trek back to the Midwest, though not with a straight-shot drive in one day. We still had one major destination to conquer the following day: Horseshoe Curve and Gallitzin Tunnels.

Once out of New York City, we aimed northward to Warwick, N.Y., for a brief check-out of the Lehigh & Hudson River Railroad, and then west to Wilkes-Barre, Pa., to scope out some modest D&H, CNJ, and LV activity. We ended up at Forty Fort, Pa., to visit a friend of mine and his parents.



At Jamaica we came away pretty much empty handed. I’ve photographed a lot of the LIRR since then, but this shot I took on Day 8 remains one of my favorites on the railroad.

The eastbound *Pennsylvania Limited* descends Horseshoe Curve behind two E units.



We plunged into the night, heading for Horseshoe with great anticipation. This was my first time ever in the Keystone State, another one of those places that for years I had yearned to visit.

I don't remember much of the drive. It was some 150 miles between the Wilkes-Barre area and Altoona, much of it on two-lane highways. I do remember having that "I've been here before" feeling.

DAY 9: June 9, 1968

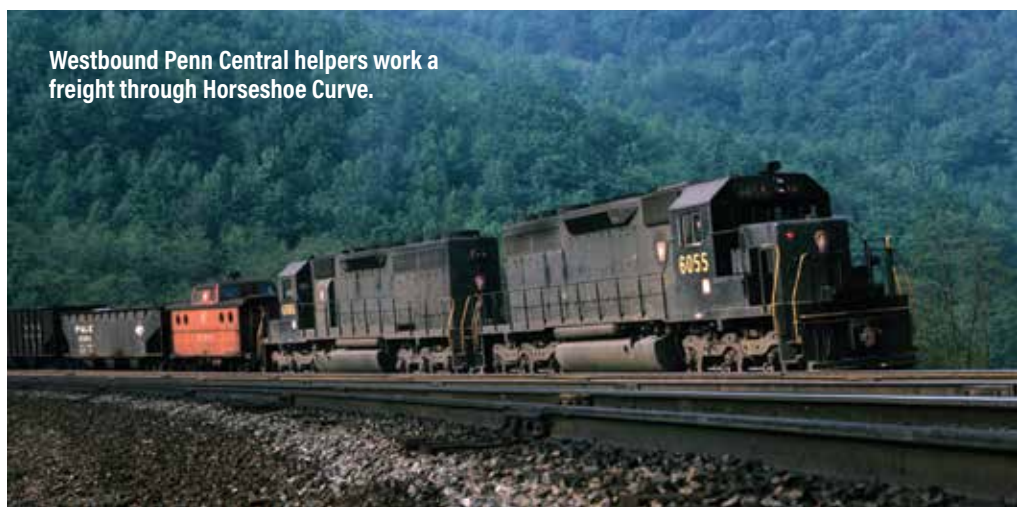
Frankly, I don't remember if we drove all night or holed-up somewhere. I suspect the latter.

Horseshoe Curve and its environs astonished both Bill and me (Jim had been there for the first time two years earlier). As is often the case with many first-time visitors to Horseshoe Curve, I didn't realize that the Curve itself was perched on a mountainside, and to get up to track level, one had to climb more than 100 stairs from the park's entrance and parking area.

On display at the upper-level portion of the park was a Pennsy classic: K4 4-6-2 No. 1361. A small stone maintenance building stood at the apex of the curve, and there was no fencing anywhere along the four-track main line as there is today.

I never would have dreamed that, some 30 years hence, a map I created of the whole Horseshoe Curve territory would be on display today at the apex of the Curve.

Westbound Penn Central helpers work a freight through Horseshoe Curve.



The fun started with the eastbound *Pennsylvania Limited* dropping down the hill. Plenty of freight action followed, with most trains having helpers — SD40s primarily — both uphill and down. When finished with their work, they back ran solo for repositioning.

Eventually we climbed up the side of the west slope for some choice views of action down on the Curve — a hike that would be difficult to pull off today without ending up in the klink.

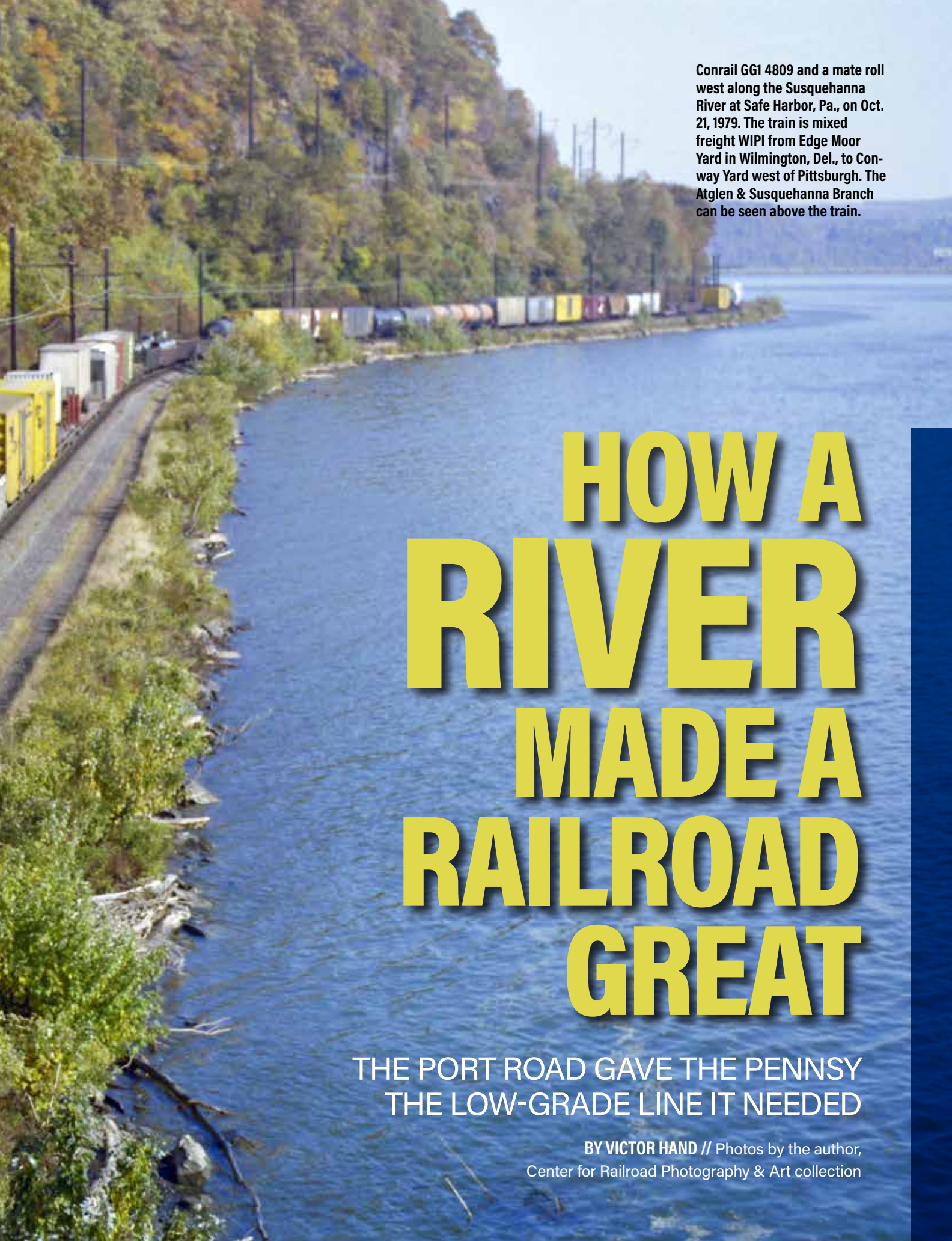
We spent the remainder of the day in the Cumberland, Md., area (surprisingly close to Horseshoe) photographing the B&O and Western Maryland.

DAY 10: June 10, 1968

We were now officially on our way home, but it was hardly a straight shot with Pittsburgh in the way. The Steel City region really deserves several days (which we didn't have) for exploring its fascinating railway network. We chose to check out the Bessemer & Lake Erie and short line Monongahela Railroad.

The visit to the B&LE led to a side-trip up to Greenview, Pa. — the Bessemer's nucleus — so Boyd could check out stored steam engines there. Then it was back to Pittsburgh to see its streetcar system before hopping on the Pennsylvania Turnpike and highballing for home. ■





Conrail GG1 4809 and a mate roll west along the Susquehanna River at Safe Harbor, Pa., on Oct. 21, 1979. The train is mixed freight WIPI from Edge Moor Yard in Wilmington, Del., to Conway Yard west of Pittsburgh. The Atglen & Susquehanna Branch can be seen above the train.

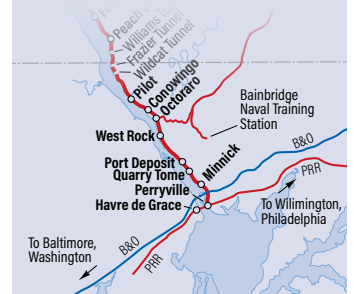
HOW A RIVER MADE A RAILROAD GREAT

THE PORT ROAD GAVE THE PENNSY
THE LOW-GRADE LINE IT NEEDED

BY VICTOR HAND // Photos by the author,
Center for Railroad Photography & Art collection



Map on p. 53 shows the Port Road and related lines from Perryville, Md., to Enola Yard north of Harrisburg, Pa.



Two privately-owned Canadian Pacific 4-6-2's head a Baltimore-Harrisburg, Pa. excursion west along the Susquehanna at Pequea, Pa. on May 18, 1969.

Fifteen-month-old Pennsylvania Railroad SD45 6217 leads an eastbound coal train through Cresswell, Pa., on May 18, 1969. The smoke at left is from the steam excursion pictured above, which has just passed Cresswell.



Two E44 electrics cross Conodanquet Creek on Oct. 21, 1968, leaving Enola Yard (across the river from Harrisburg) with an eastbound freight. Famous Rockville Bridge can be seen in the far distance between poles.



// RAILROADS WERE BEING BUILT AT THE SAME TIME AS THE CANALS, AND IT SOON BECAME EVIDENT WHICH FORM OF TRANSPORT WAS SUPERIOR. //



On Oct. 4, 1968, two E44 electric locomotives pump air at the east end of Enola Yard in preparation for their departure with an eastbound mixed freight.

From colonial times the Susquehanna River has been an artery for trade between central Pennsylvania and the Eastern seaboard. In the early days, timber rafts were loaded with coal, lumber, and agricultural products. The boats were floated down the Susquehanna to the Chesapeake Bay and Baltimore. The products were sold, and the rafts broken up, with the wood bringing additional profit. The boatmen made the long walk back upriver for another load.

The success of New York's Erie Canal, completed in 1825, led other states to consider building waterways to protect their trade routes. There was intense competition between New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore for trade with the developing West. In Pennsylvania, the "Main Line of Public Works" legislation was passed by the commonwealth in 1826; construction started the same year. The state built canals from Columbia, on the Susquehanna River, to Pittsburgh, using the Allegheny Portage Railroad between Hollidaysburg and Johnstown.

Connecting canals reached up the west branch of the Susquehanna to beyond Lock Haven and up the north branch of the Susquehanna to the coal fields at Wilkes-Barre. In addition, private canals (the Schuylkill and the Union) were built between Philadelphia and the Susquehanna, and the Susquehanna and Tidewater Canal was built along the rocky lower reaches of the Susquehanna River between Columbia and Havre de Grace on Chesapeake Bay.

PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION

Railroads were being built at the same time as the canals. It soon became evident which form of transport was superior.

The Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad was built by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1834 to connect Philadelphia with the state canals. The Pennsylvania Railroad completed its line from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh in 1854, and in 1857 it purchased the money-losing Main Line of Public Works (the railroads and the canals) from the state.

A westbound freight led by Penn Central E44 electric 4417 on Sept. 5, 1976, crosses the Susquehanna River on the Shocks Mills (Pa.) Bridge.



Two Penn Central GG1 electrics head east with a coal train for Baltimore at Peach Bottom, Pa., on July 27, 1975.



Penn Central 6106 leads an Erie Lackawanna unit on eastbound Conrail train EJ-8 west of Shocks Mills, Pa., on Oct. 22, 1976.



Conrail GP30 2198 is eastbound on the Port Road with a coal train at Peach Bottom, Pa., on Oct. 22, 1978.



Amtrak E8 No. 321 exits Wildcat Tunnel near Wildcat Point, Md., on Nov. 21, 1974. In tow is the lone car of Amtrak train 430, a tri-weekly Harrisburg-to-Washington, D.C., run. Inset, Conrail E8 4020 eastbound on Sept. 5, 1991, heads the business train at the same spot.

By 1861 the Pennsy took control of the Lancaster-Harrisburg link and had a through railroad across the state from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh.

What was to become the Columbia & Port Deposit Railroad (known as the Port Road) began as a branch of the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad, built in 1866 between Perryville, at the mouth of the Susquehanna River, and Port Deposit on the east side of the river. By 1868 this line had been extended up the river to Octoraro, where construction stalled.

During this period the Pennsylvania Railroad was making major investments in the coal fields of eastern Pennsylvania. It was also looking for a way to move the commodity to tidewater while avoiding the heavy grades on existing railroads.

The Pennsy realized a near water-level route along the Susquehanna would be useful and advanced the money to complete the line between Port Deposit and Columbia in 1877.

At Columbia, the line connected with a railroad to Royalton, near Harrisburg, that had been built in 1850. By 1881, the PRR had gained control of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, & Balti-

more Railroad, giving the PRR access to those cities via the low-grade Columbia & Port Deposit line.

GETTING BETTER

The next big improvements came in the 1890s. Traffic growth prompted the Pennsylvania to build the Trenton Cutoff in 1892, providing a Philadelphia bypass for New York traffic. In 1902 construction started on the Atglen and Susquehanna Branch, a spectacular line connecting the Philadelphia-Harrisburg main line to the Pennsy main at Marysville, west of Harrisburg.

This new line met the Port Road at Cresswell east of Columbia and continued across the Susquehanna River on the 2,221-foot Shocks Mills Bridge to a junction with PRR's Northern Central Railway at Wago Junction.

The Northern Central line was used west to Marysville. The huge yard at Enola, across the river from Harrisburg, was built at this time. By 1906 the Pennsy had low-grade freight lines in operation allowing traffic from the West to reach New York, Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore, avoiding congested areas.



Four Conrail GG1s take mixed freight WIEN (Edge Moor Yard, Wilmington, Del.-Enola, Pa.) west at Safe Harbor, Pa., on Nov. 4, 1979. The electrics were long in the tooth, so Conrail often dispatched freights with four motors, in the hope that at least one would be running at the end of the trip.

Conrail 7658 heads west on the Port Road under the massive girders of the Atglen & Susquehanna Branch bridge at Safe Harbor, Pa., on Oct. 21, 1979.

// LOCAL PASSENGER TRAINS SERVED THE PORT ROAD THROUGH THE 1920S. THEY RETURNED TO THE LINE IN 1971 AFTER AMTRAK BEGAN OPERATION. //



Conrail 6210 leads freight PE-3 (Potomac Yard, Arlington, Va.-Enola, Pa.) west after a light snowfall on Jan. 22, 1978.

Empty Conrail grain train JSI-5 heads west at Peach Bottom, Pa., on Oct. 22, 1978.



Construction of several hydroelectric dams on the Susquehanna River early in the 20th century involved elevating the Port Road, and many improvements were made at that time to reduce curvature.

By the 1930s the Pennsylvania had a high-capacity freight railroad east of Harrisburg. The freight lines were electrified in 1937-1938 when the Pennsy extended that capability west to Harrisburg and Enola.

LATER LIFE

The Port Road passed into Penn Central ownership in 1968 and to Conrail in 1976. The latter discontinued electrified operations in 1981 when it rerouted most of its freight traffic to avoid high trackage-rights charges on the Amtrak-owned Northeast Corridor.

It did, however, continue to move heavy freight traffic for Wilmington, the eastern shore of Maryland, Baltimore, and Potomac Yard over the Port Road using an assortment of diesel motive power.

Local passenger trains served the Port Road through the 1920s but were eliminated from the line during the Great Depression. Passenger trains returned to the line in 1971 after Amtrak began operation.

The Northern Central line between Baltimore and Harrisburg had become run-down, and Amtrak ran the Washington section of the *Broadway Limited* over the Port Road until 1975, when this train was rerouted via Philadelphia. A section of the *National Limited* ran via the Port Road until 1978.

When Conrail was split between Norfolk Southern and CSX Transportation in 1997, Norfolk Southern assumed operations over the Port Road. Traffic is still heavy, but except for a few intermodal schedules, most trains operate at night to avoid conflict with passenger traffic on the Northeast Corridor. 📌

Port Road 1946

The PORT ROAD

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIREMAN'S SIDE OF A "MIKE"
ON ONE OF THE P.R.R.'S CRACK SYMBOL FREIGHTS
by J.F. Quill, MD. DIVN, P.R.R.

ALL PHOTOS WERE TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR ON OCT. 22, 1946
AND, EXCEPTIVE NOS. 1, 3 AND 6, 15 ALL WERE TAKEN WHILE RUNNING



BRAKEMAN BERT MASTON,
CONDUCTOR JIM MITCHELL
INSPECTOR (left)



ENGR J.E. "JACK" PIERCE
VETERAN OF 37 YEARS

P.R.R.
MD: Elec

OBSERVATIONS ON A FAMOUS PENNSYLVANIA MAIN LINE FROM THE LEFT SIDE OF THE CAB

BY J. F. QUILL // Photos by the author

On May 12, 1853, the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad Co. was authorized to build a bridge over the Susquehanna River from Perryville to Havre de Grace, Md., the principal condition being it also construct a branch railroad to Port Deposit, a distance of four miles. The estimated cost of construction, less locomotives and cars, was \$165,000.

Thus began the Columbia & Port Deposit Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad, an integral part of the Maryland Division. Today, 93 year later, the C&PD, familiarly known as the "Port Road," is the main artery that pumps the nation's goods into and out of the great freight terminals at Chester, Wilmington, Baltimore, and Potomac Yard, not to mention dozens of other points to which cars which roll over its gleaming rails are destined.

It extends from Perryville in a general westerly direction to Creswell, where it joins with the Atglen and Susquehanna Branch of the Philadelphia Division to form the main freight line of that division from Columbia to Harrisburg and Enola.

From Perryville to Creswell the distance is 38.3 miles; through its length it wanders, in the leisurely fashion of an age long gone, along the east bank of the Susquehanna through some of the most breathtakingly beautiful country imaginable. Its casual appearance belies the fact that hundreds of thousands of tons of freight roll daily up and down its hills and curves. Single trains whose consists march impressively to figures like 10 and 11 thousand tons are the rule.

Except for a short distance just east of Conowingo, the roadbed is never out of sight of the river. Twisting and winding at the foot of, and in places through, huge rocks and wooded hills now ablaze with all the glory of autumn, the vistas which unroll themselves like a series of magic carpets each more lovely than the last are truly indescribable. The great pity is that it is exclusively a freight branch.

Even the three huge power dams, Conowingo, Haltwood, and Safe Harbor, seem to compliment nature instead of detracting from her handiwork. The names of the tiny settlements through which the road passes are as picturesque as the countryside; mostly cottages use in summer and as fishing and hunting lodges: some of them are Peach Bottom, Fishing Creek, McCalls Ferry, and Pequea.

Electrified these past few years, the power most frequently seen consists mainly of the P5a boxcab and, as my engineer calls them, "sport model" (streamlined) P5as and the GGa electric locomotives, and about an equal number of L1s Mikados and M1 Mountain type steam engines. Steam is used principally on the Thurlow, Edge Moor, and Baltimore trains; electric power almost exclusively handles Potomac Yard trains.

Columbia handles, by way of CTC, what required 14 towers in manual block days. Trains are operated in both directions with and against the current of traffic, which is westward, by automatic signals and the Pennsylvania's famous four-indication continuous coded cab signals. Between points where rock slides are apt to occur, both wayside and cab signal



Top: Brakeman Bert Masten, Conductor Jim Mitchell, and a car inspector appear below a locomotive. Middle: Engineer J.E. "Jack" Pierce, with 37 years service, waits for Mitchell to highball the train out of Thurlow. Bottom: Class L1s 2-8-2 686 appears at Thurlow Yard near Philadelphia ready to leave with train TH1.



Conductor Jim Mitchell calls Marcus Hook Tower in the distance and the Mikado eases through the interlocking.



First stop, Bellevue. Edge Moor Yard in Newark, Del., isn't ready for the train's arrival yet.



Running the northbound track, the train eases into the yard at the north end to pick up at Edge Moor.



Now 32.5 miles from Edge Moor, the train enters the Port Road at Perryville via the north leg of the wye.

Twisting and winding at the foot of, and in places through, huge rocks and wooded hills now ablaze with all the glory of autumn, the vistas which unroll themselves like a series of magic carpets each more lovely than the last are truly indescribable.

circuits are connected with slide protection fences for maximum safety.

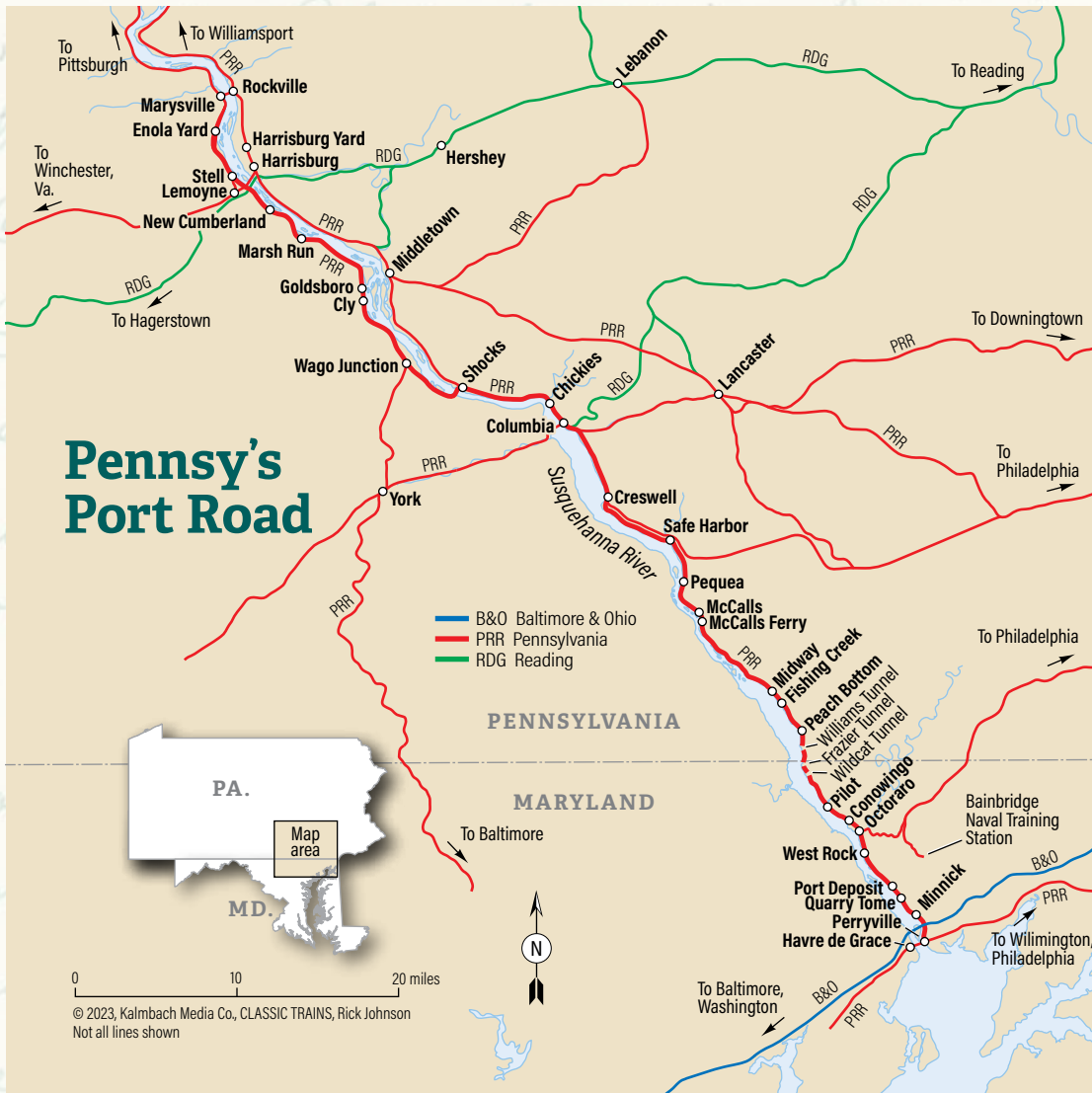
Sidings, of no assigned direction, and which are taken on signal indication, are at Pilot (145 cars) and Harbor (140 cars). Double-track is laid between Minnick and Quarry Tome and West Rock; Midway and McCalls; and numbered "one," eastward, and "two" westward.

The writer works in the pool which handles the trains known as "TH1" and

"Adv. TH1," TH2" and "Adv. TH2." Home terminal of this pool is at Harbor, headquarters of the Chester, Pa., district. Usually, we pick up cars at Edge Moor on the daylight job, TH1, leaving the yards there by way of the Shellport branch, which connects with the main line at Ragan, just below Wilmington. A little under 30 miles south we enter the Port Road at Perryville, which is a very busy tower, to say the least. There all the westbound freight

from Thurlow, Edge Moor, The Delaware Road, Baltimore, Washington, and Potomac Yard funnel onto the Port Road. East- and southbound freight from the west also feeds out on the main line here; and this betwixt and between all of the Washington-New York passenger traffic, local trains, Washington-Philadelphia express and freight trains, Potomac Yard-Jersey City freights, together with helper engines, work trains, wire trains, and sundry other traffic.

All steam-powered trains stop at Minnick for water. East Rock interlocking guides the single track Octoraro Branch



The train makes a water stop at Minnick. At left is a work train with a class H9s 2-8-0.

East Rock is the connection with the Octoraro Branch, which breaks off No. 1 track at left.





The train enters Wildcat Tunnel. There are three such bores — Wildcat, Williams, and Frazer — and they're really only holes blasted through huge rocks.



Near Midway the broad expanse of the Susquehanna is recorded for posterity.



A view west of Conowingo Dam, faintly visible in the distance. The rear of the train is hidden behind the nearest catenary pole.



Approaching Safe Harbor, the trestle of the Atglen and Susquehanna Branch looms. Left of here is the third of three great power dams along the Port Road.



West of Harbor, two of the overhead water drainage chutes are visible. They help direct water off the railroad right-of-way.



At Creswell, between Safe Harbor and Columbia, the consist trails back into double track at the point where the Port Road ends and the Philadelphia Division begins, 38.3 miles west from Perryville.



The train passes Columbia, and its tower, whose operator handles the Port Road. Here the Columbia Branch from Philadelphia joins the route, providing a freight bypass around Harrisburg.



Cly, on the west bank of the river now, we meet one of our crews, TH2 with M1 No. 6917, while taking water. Left are the tracks of the "N.C." (Northern Central), which handles passenger trains from Washington.



End of the run, pulling the train upon the hump at the huge classification yards at Enola, northwest of Harrisburg. In a few minutes 686 will be put away and the crew will head for the showers.

(once known as the Baltimore Central) into the Port Road. Here, during the war, thousands of U.S. Naval and Marine personnel changed direction en route to and from Bainbridge Naval Training Station, the branch from which joins the Octoraro about six miles above.

Wildcat Tunnel is one of the three holes blasted through solid rock to carry the roadbed. Even a camera can't do this justice. I ride this road at least six times a week and never tire of its glorious beauty.

Approaching Harbor, the A&S Branch, known as the "Low Grade," snakes out of the hill and on to the trestle to practically run over our heads to Creswell. The "Chute" drains the Low Grade roadbed and carries water over us into the river. Creswell ends the Maryland Division and begins the Philadelphia, going west.

Columbia, whose tower is now officially known as "Cola" (some of us are wait-

I've heard it said that a man who hasn't a hobby is already half dead. I'm one of those who makes his living at his hobby. Would you say that I'm twice alive?

ing for Perryville to be renamed "Pepsi"), was once a much larger railroad terminal; construction of the huge yards at Enola spelled its doom.

Cly, while not a junction, is the first interlocking west of Wago Junction, where the Northern Central from Baltimore via York runs alongside. From here to Lemoyne the four tracks are eastward and westward passenger and freight, numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4, from west to east.

I've heard it said that a man who hasn't a hobby is already half dead. I'm one of those who makes his living at his hobby. Would you say that I'm twice alive?

Sometimes I feel as though I am, for believe me, there's no thrill that quite

equals the one you get when you hear an M1 crack through those hills on a frosty morning, especially when you're making the stuff that make it crack.

Down along the Port Road, we often see deer coming down to the rivers to drink; duck by the thousands; quail, and pheasants so fat they can hardly fly. Swans have been seen along here, though I never have been fortunate enough to be around when they are. Warm summer nights are often scented with an odor like cucumbers, and you know what that means.

It's magnificent country. Railfans ought to get and prevail on the PRR to run a special next spring and fall. I'll go, and I work on the road every day. 🚂

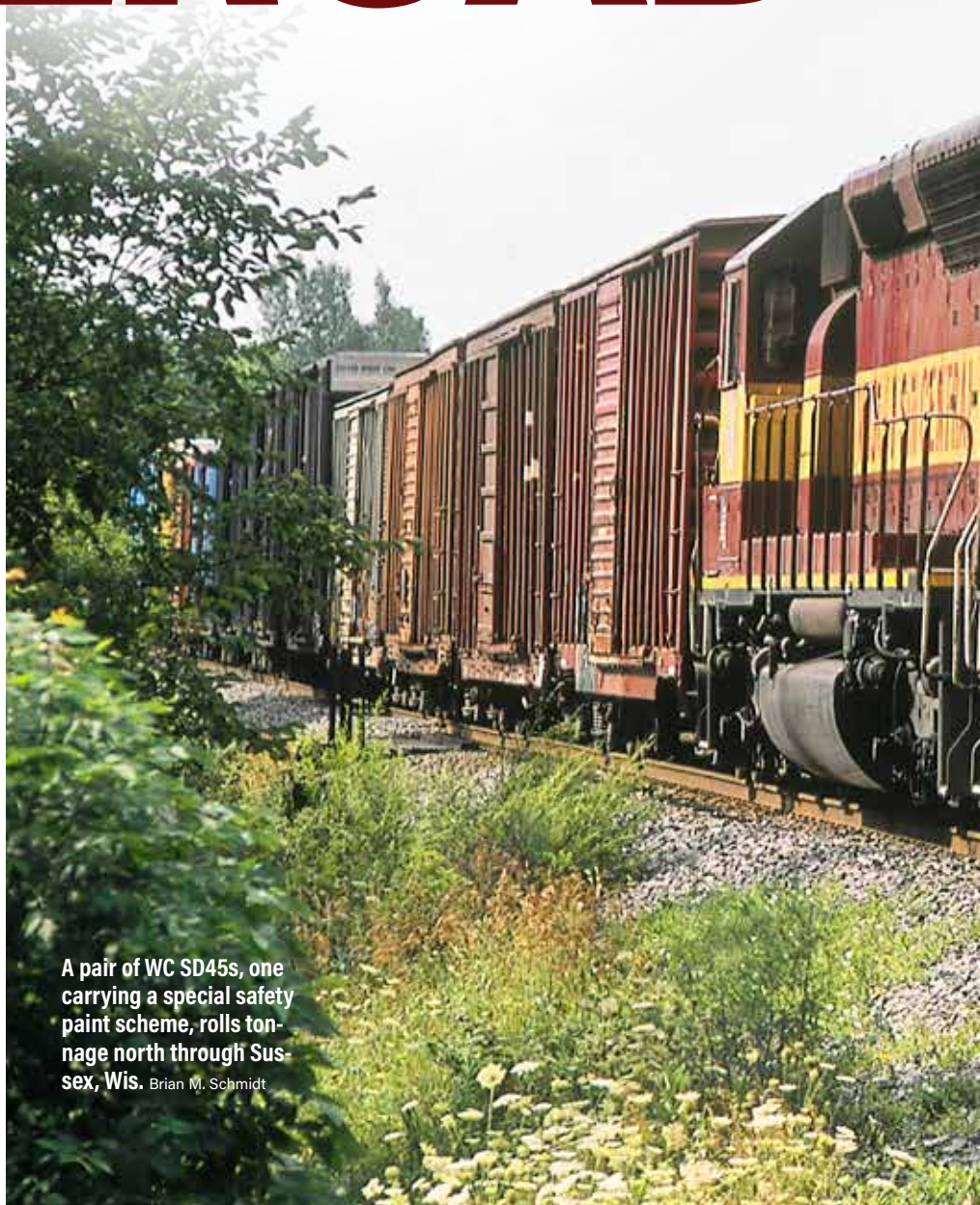


Ed Burkhardt and the ALL-AMERICAN

REGIONAL RAILROAD

In the 1980s and 1990s, a number of regional railroads sprouted up — spurred on by government deregulation — as Class I railroads unloaded lines that were deemed not profitable enough. In the West came Montana Rail Link, in the East it was Wheeling & Lake Erie, and in the South arose MidSouth Rail. The Midwest was a breeding ground for regionals, with names such as Chicago Central; Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern; and Chicago, Missouri & Western.

But there was one regional that stood above the rest: Wisconsin Central Ltd., the “All-American” railroad. What defines it as All-American? The WC had it all: a management team that understood customer service, a growing traffic base, memorable locomotives with a paint scheme considered classic today, and people who appreciated railroad history even as they looked to the future.



A pair of WC SD45s, one carrying a special safety paint scheme, rolls tonnage north through Sussex, Wis. Brian M. Schmidt

WISCONSIN CENTRAL'S CO-FOUNDER EXPLAINS ITS APPEAL

BY STEVE GLISCHINSKI





PONDER A FEW FACTS:

- WC, born in 1987, grew from a 2,047-mile regional into a 2,850-mile rail system in its 14 years of existence.
- Just before its acquisition by Canadian National in 2001, it celebrated moving its 5 millionth carload — not bad for a bunch of hand-me-down lines.
- Customers, a railroad's most important constituency, consistently rated WC's service above other railroads.
- The company welcomed special trains, including steam specials, as a way to cultivate good public relations. At times WC operated more than one special across its system on a given day; it even hosted a special train for President George H.W. Bush in 1992.
- In its 14-year history, WC's annual revenues grew from less than \$100 million to more than \$350 million.

What's more All-American than that?

From a railfan perspective, WC again had it all. Classic EMD SD45s were the backbone of its fleet, with more than 100 units, while four-axle EMDs such as GP30s, GP35s, and GP40s held down lesser assignments. When WC took over Canada's Algoma Central Railway, it replaced its hood units on passenger trains with a fleet of ex-VIA Rail FP9s.

Then there was that paint scheme: maroon (almost burgundy) with a gold

stripe, and the WC shield that harkened back to the original Wisconsin Central of the 19th century. The "old" WC had adopted a shield as its emblem and used it until Soo Line took control in 1909; those with sharp eyes could spot the occasional yellow shield-shaped switch stand targets along old WC lines right up to the advent of the "new" WC. The railroad even washed its locomotives! It was as if a railfan businessman had dreamed up the whole thing. Which, in fact, was true.

That man was Edward A. Burkhardt, WC's first president and chief executive officer, who, together with Thomas F. Power Jr. founded the company. Burkhardt, still going strong today at age 84, came up through the management ranks at Chicago & North Western. Born on Long Island, his first "steady" railroad job after college at Yale University was with the Wabash.

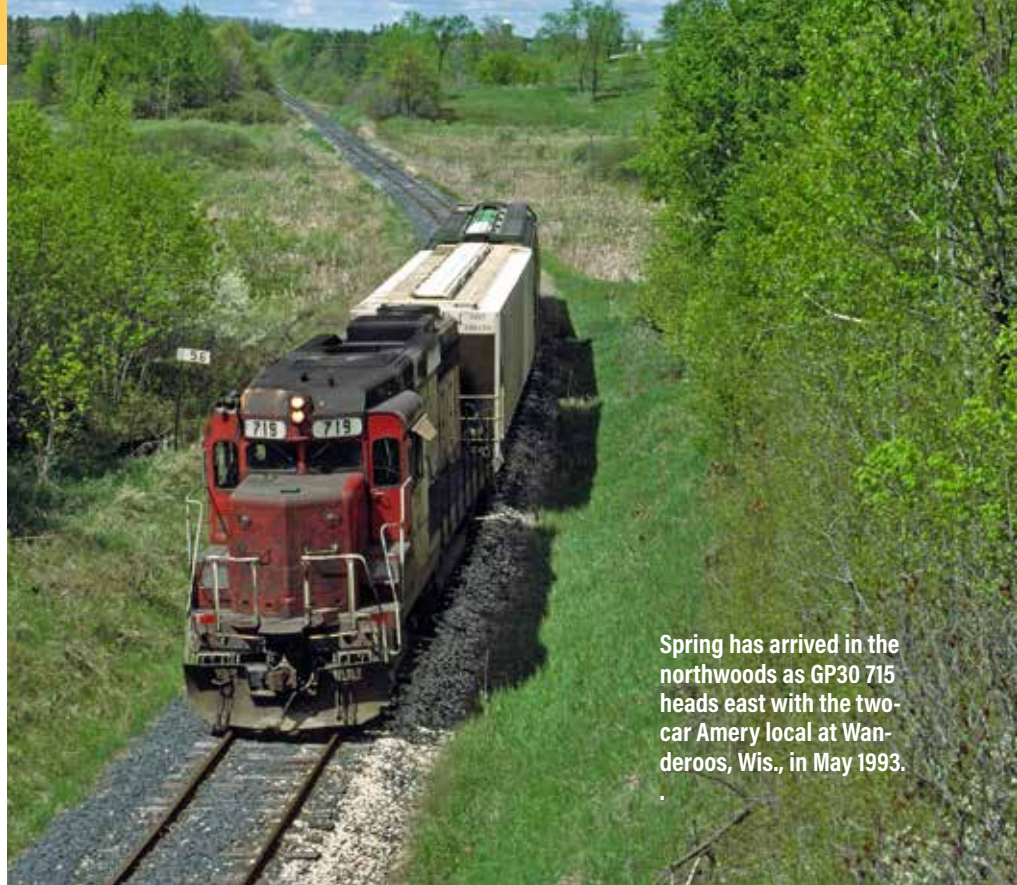
Prior to the creation of WC in 1987, Burkhardt had spent 20 of his 27 railroad career years with North Western, much of them working in operations as vice president-transportation. Today he is president and CEO of Rail World LLC, the railway management, consulting, and investment corporation he established in 1999. Rail World operates Rail Polska in Poland; Baltic Rail, a container-hauling railroad in Estonia; and short line San Luis Central in Colorado.

SEIZING OPPORTUNITY

Working for a Class I railroad, Burkhardt watched as rail traffic in the Midwest was diverted to trucks and opportunities for new rail traffic passed by. Burkhardt concluded this was because railroads were encumbered by traditional operating methods, a lack of enterprising momentum, and, to some extent, restrictive labor rules. Railroads had become inflexible and unable to react quickly with cost-competitive services, even after deregulation. Despite the inherent efficiencies of rail, truckers continued to offer rates and services that undercut what railroads offered. When portions of Class I railroads began to be spun off, Burkhardt and his associates saw an opportunity for a fresh approach and a more productive way of doing things, and set out with Wisconsin Central to do just that.

When asked what made his railroad so different, Burkhardt turns the question around. "Why was it so unique? It shouldn't have been unique," he says. "It turned out to be unique because people weren't managing their companies properly. We simply put the customer first. I was sick and tired of customers being upset with the railroad. An upset customer is a customer who is walking away. We'd seen the growth of the trucking industry and the railroads were having a hard time keeping up. So, we said, 'we're going to

Green Bay-Chicago intermodal train T219 curves off the Green Bay & Western onto WC at Black Creek, Wis. For a time WC used trackage rights out of Green Bay for this train and counterpart T218 before acquiring the GB&W in 1993. Two photos, Steve Glischinski



Spring has arrived in the northwoods as GP30 715 heads east with the two-car Amery local at Wanderoos, Wis., in May 1993.

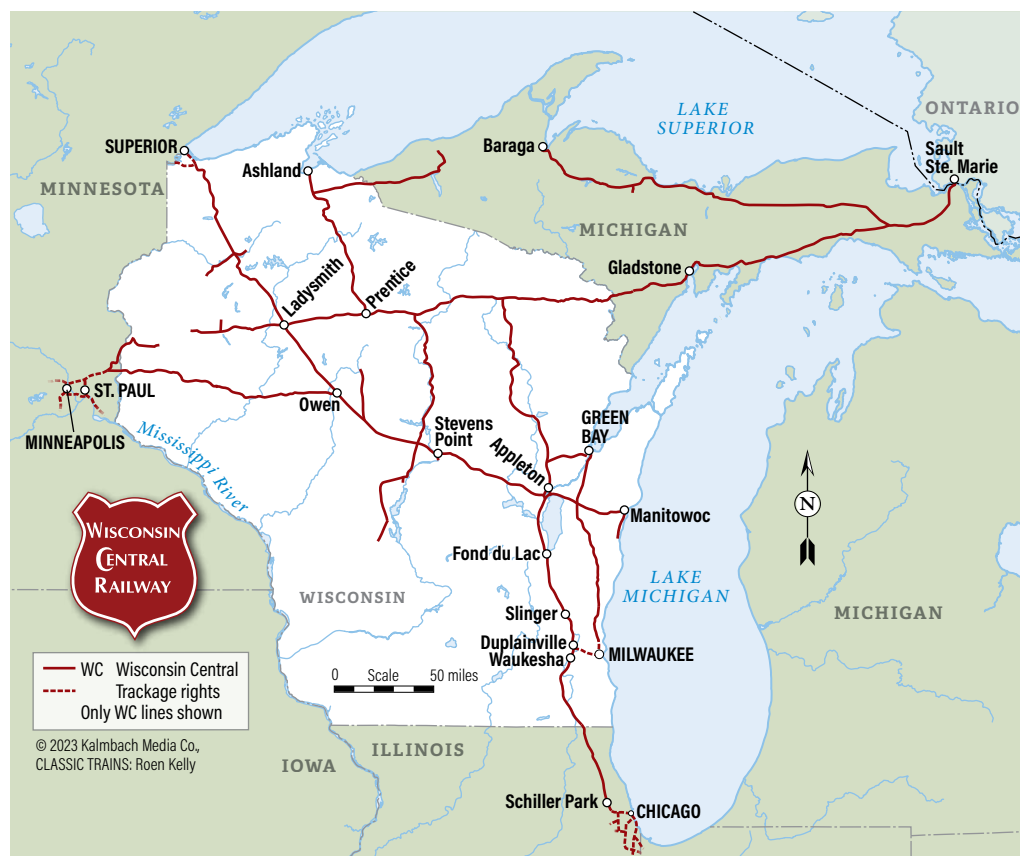
have the customer be first?

“Then, if you do that, who serves the customer? Your employees,” he adds. “They have to be energized and be turned loose, have some authority to run the business and take care of the customers. So that’s what we did, and it worked amazingly well, certainly better that I would have ever dreamed.”

In 1986, Soo Line merged the Milwaukee Road into its system and by spring 1987 was shopping around to interested parties its original Soo and Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic lines in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, plus the former Milwaukee Road “Valley” and Green Bay lines. After considering other offers, the Soo on April 3, 1987, chose Burkhardt’s group and announced it had reached a sale agreement. After a last-minute delay, an estimated 80,000 pages of closing documents were signed on Sunday, Oct. 11, 1987, and the Soo was \$122 million richer.

But there were ominous signs: Soo Line President Dennis Cavanaugh had Burkhardt come to his hotel room in Pittsburgh during a meeting of the Pittsburgh Traffic Club to sign paperwork related to the WC sale. After signing, Burkhardt got up to leave. As recalled by Burkhardt, Cavanaugh asked him to come back for a minute. “I’ve known you for years, we trust you, that’s why we’re

WISCONSIN CENTRAL AT ITS INCEPTION





doing this deal with you,” Cavanaugh told Burkhardt. “But some of the guys that are on your team, I can’t say that at all. I’ll leave you with one thought: ‘Watch your back.’” Indeed, Cavanaugh’s fears were well founded, as Burkhardt found out a little over a decade later. “Dennis was right,” says Burkhardt.

At 7:23 a.m. on Oct. 11, the first Wis-

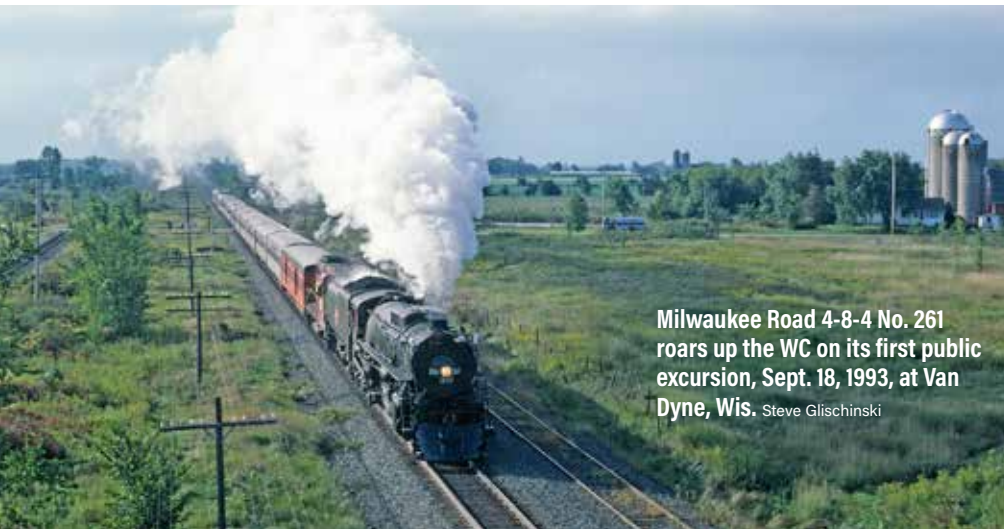
consin Central freight train departed Stevens Point for North Fond du Lac. The train was operated by Wisconsin Central Ltd., a subsidiary of a holding company known as Wisconsin Central Transportation Corp. Formed in April 1987 by five men including Burkhardt and Power, the firm was originally privately held. Stock was owned by the lending institutions

that provided capital for purchase and start-up, by senior management, company founders, and a small number of outside investors.

ONE CAR AT A TIME

One of the first things the new WC did, explains Burkhardt, was put the railroad on a timetable, and provide good car movement. “If you shipped a car on the southern half of the railroad (south of Green Bay and Stevens Point), it would be interchanged to a connecting carrier the next night,” Burkhardt says. “If further north by Ladysmith, Superior, Escanaba, or Sault Ste. Marie, just add a day to that. And we did it. It wasn’t an act of genius. We focused on moving cars, and it turns out we moved cars better than anybody else, which is probably more a commentary on the other people than it was on us.”

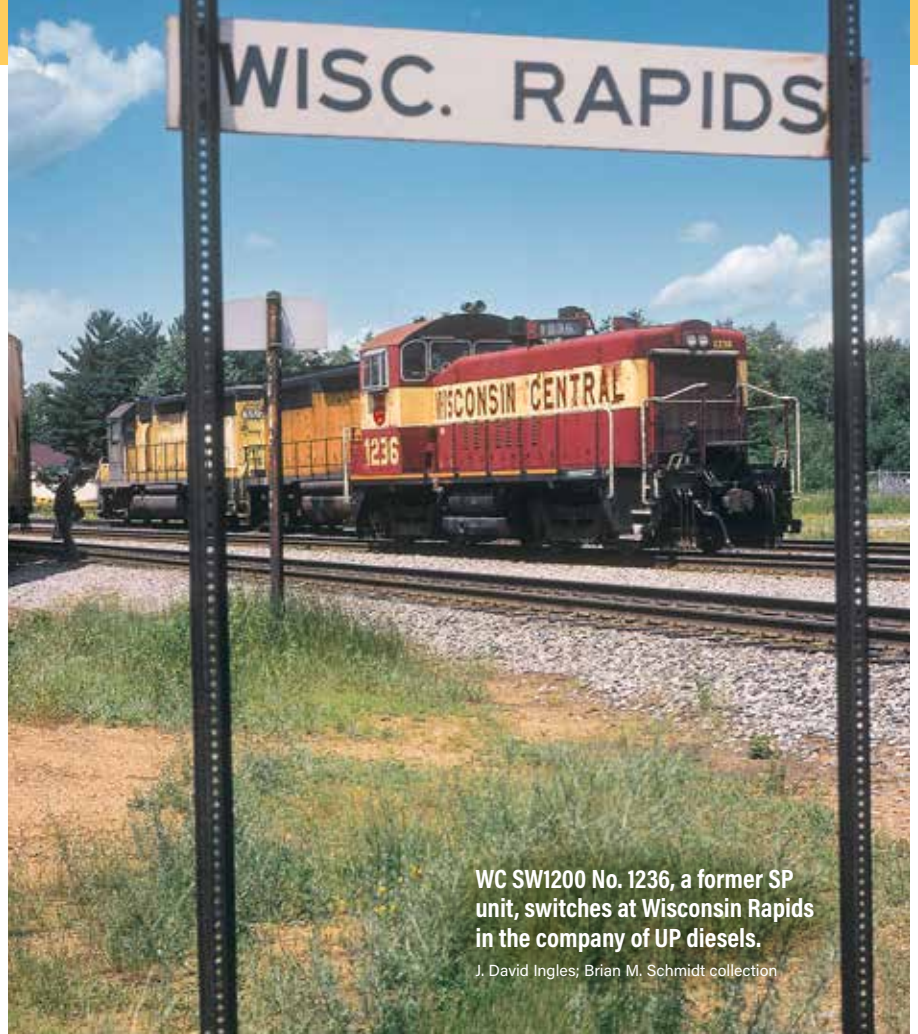
WC built a base of traffic one or two cars at a time by looking for business and knocking on doors. If WC tracks went through a community, marketing people wanted to know what was in every town, and who the railroad could serve from a team track, transload, or a loading dock.



Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 No. 261 roars up the WC on its first public excursion, Sept. 18, 1993, at Van Dyne, Wis. Steve Glischinski

A quartet of WC SD45s runs a transfer job over to Canadian Pacific crossing the Mississippi at Camden Place in Minneapolis on Jan. 3, 1996.

Steve Glischinski



WC SW1200 No. 1236, a former SP unit, switches at Wisconsin Rapids in the company of UP diesels.

J. David Ingles; Brian M. Schmidt collection

The mission: break the rust off old sidings that hadn't been used in a long time.

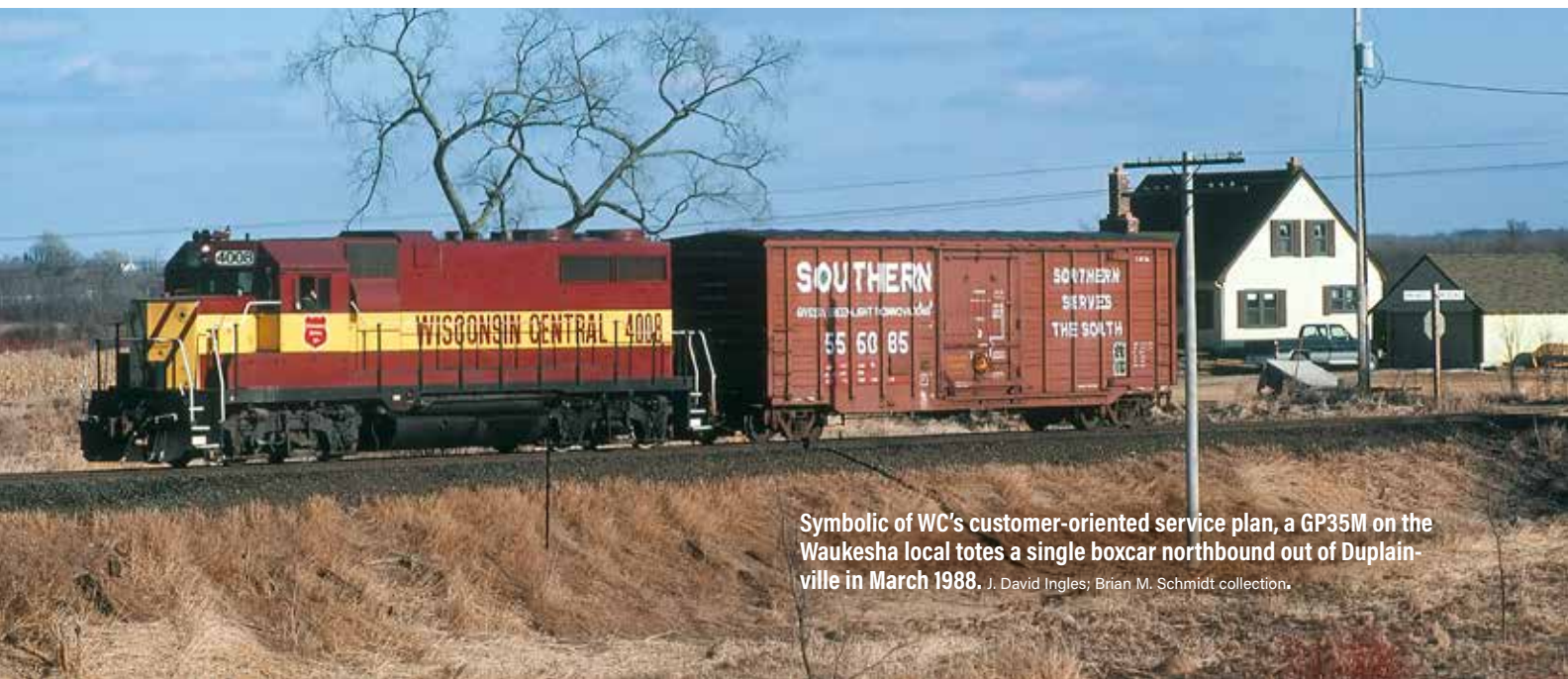
WC immediately increased the level of customer service by boosting the number of trains, not only on main lines but also on secondary and branch lines, where service went from tri-weekly to five or six days a week. WC set up marketing efforts

to enlarge the share of freight shipped by existing customers, to regain customers who had shifted to trucks, and to serve new shippers. The strategy included going out and talking with potential shippers, large and small, who had never used the railroad or had stopped using it years before. Train crews and other employees

in the field were responsible for many leads on new customers.

"We just had the best group of employees that you can imagine," Burkhardt says.

By the end of WC's first full year of operations in 1988, the strategy had paid off. That year WC handled almost 145,000 revenue carloads, compared with



Symbolic of WC's customer-oriented service plan, a GP35M on the Waukesha local totes a single boxcar northbound out of Duplainville in March 1988. J. David Ingles; Brian M. Schmidt collection.

Wisconsin Central SD45 6586 leads three sister units with coal loads for Green Bay, photographed at Bateman, Wis., about 100 miles east of the Twin Cities. Steve Glischinski



Soo Line's traffic base of 138,000 at the time of the sale. The railroad turned a profit beginning in March 1988. The new Wisconsin Central quickly established itself as a railroad synonymous with dependable, responsive, and competitive service, able to boost traffic by diverting it from trucks, and convincing former shippers to return to rail service.

An example of WC's new approach was how it operated its trains. Like airlines, WC initially operated a hub-and-spoke system, with Stevens Point and

Shops Yard in North Fond du Lac as the two major hubs. Neenah, Wis., and Gladstone, Mich., were minor hubs. Trains fanned out from those locations and operated on schedules shippers and employees could count on. Whether there were 10 or 100 cars, WC trains moved on schedule. Unlike most railroads, they ran at the same time every day.

A major key to Wisconsin Central's success was that its work force could be versatile and did not have to contend with restrictive work rules. While most of

these rules are gone today, in the 1980s it was a radical approach. Train crews were able to be far more flexible than on traditional railroads and could work without limitation on any trains: a transfer, a switch job, or a through freight. There were two-person crews and they originally were salaried.

WC gave its employees, including train crews, the authority to make decisions to better serve customers. An example Burkhardt cites is the day he noticed that a train originating at Conrail's Ashland Avenue Yard in Chicago was a couple of hours late. Burkhardt asked questions. It turned out the crew was ready to go on time, but the conductor determined the Conrail train with a block of cars for WC was running late and would be arriving right about the time his train was scheduled to depart. The conductor decided to wait for the cars and got the freight to the customer a day earlier than they would have otherwise.

"So, people said to me, 'Did this conductor exceed his authority?' And I said 'Absolutely not!'" he says. "He was doing exactly what we told them to do."

CULTIVATING FANS

While the most important reason for any company's success is customer satisfaction and dedicated employees, railroads have a special constituency most other industries do not: legions of loyal fans. While many railroads choose to ig-



During a July 1990 excursion, a High Iron Travel excursion on WC paces a Lake Superior & Ishpeming taconite ore train between Marquette and Eagle Mills, Mich., to the delight of railfans.

Running as a CN train but with WC locomotives, a Chicago-bound train approaches the Canadian Pacific diamond at Duplainville on Dec. 31, 2001.

Three photos, J. David Ingles, Brian M. Schmidt collection



nore or even irritate enthusiasts, WC embraced them.

“I felt it was important to show ourselves off to the public. We have an interesting business. Tell me any other business that has a whole bunch of fans that are in our camp, that are rooting for us. We wanted to take care of them and recognize them like they recognize us,” Burkhardt says.

The maroon-and-gold paint scheme so popular with fans, derived from the original pre-1909 WC, received some tweaks over the years. Early units didn't have the shield nose logo or the “pine tree” that surrounded it. Later revisions came from WC's mechanical forces, who would come up with a new variation of the scheme and run it by Burkhardt. The end result was a classy livery that outshines most Class I railroads. Burkhardt even adopted the colors for overseas railroads managed by WC and for the Rail Polska operation in Poland.

While WC didn't set out to expand as much as it ultimately did, its success bred expansion. Deregulation occurred not only in the U.S. but internationally. WC got calls from New Zealand, which was privatizing its railroads, and from the owner of Algoma Central in Canada, who wanted to sell. Knowing a good deal when it saw it, WC ultimately paid less for the entire AC in 1995 than the value of the railroad's rolling stock. In addition to Canada, ultimately WC owned or op-



Symbolic of the partnership to haul taconite to Geneva, Utah, an Southern Pacific GE C44-9W and a Wisconsin Central GP40 congregate at North Fond du Lac on Oct. 27, 1994.

erated railroads in the United Kingdom (English Scottish & Welsh Railway), Tranz Rail in New Zealand, and Australian Transport Network.

Expansion also came to the original railroad. In 1993, WC acquired the Green Bay & Western and Fox River Valley railroads, using subsidiary Fox Valley & Western. In 1997, another WC subsidiary, Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Co., purchased from Union Pacific the former

Chicago & North Western ore lines north of Green Bay into Michigan's Upper Peninsula. This gave WC direct access to taconite ore mines in Michigan and control of the ex-C&NW ore dock in Escanaba. Before the sale, WC had already greatly expanded all-rail ore business in conjunction with C&NW and Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range. It even developed a long-distance ore haul from Minnesota to the US Steel works in Geneva, Utah, in conjunc-



Inbound Metra train stops at Round Lake Beach, Ill., Aug. 30, 1996, shortly after commuter service began on WC between River Grove and Antioch in Chicago's north suburbs.



On May 7, 1992, WC GP35r 4011 and a boxcar trundle over the diamond at abandoned Rice Lake Tower, overlooking WC's crossing of C&NW west of Ladysmith. Steve Glischinski



Its ditch lights dimmed for a September 1992 meet, an eastbound WC intermodal pauses at Vernon, Wis., the next passing siding south of Waukesha, on the busy Chicago Subdivision.

tion with Southern Pacific and DM&IR. Canadian National became an important partner when in 1998 WC was able to grab the movement of CN traffic from Superior, Wis., to Chicago away from Burlington Northern. At the time there was no intention of selling the railroad to CN; rather, it was to bring more business to WC, which it did.

SUCCESS BRINGS NEW ISSUES

In May 1991, Wisconsin Central Transportation Corp. went public under the ticker symbol WCTC, and raised more than \$36 million. In light of later events, Burkhardt thought going public was a mistake, but he is philosophical. "People at the time told me you're going to both love this and hate it. Going public brought access to the public markets so if you needed funds for your capital budget it was relatively easier as a public company," Burkhardt says. "At the same time, your shares were owned by a bunch of guys, a lot of whom took the long view, but there were some that took the short view and were only interested in one thing — the next quarter's earnings, and they better be a new record every time. We weren't in that kind of business. We did very well but somebody is always going to say it should have been more."

Still, for several years the stock price kept rising, and the expansions kept coming. In 1999, *Railway Age* magazine named Burkhardt its Railroader of the Year. Yale University even did a case study of WC to see how it achieved its success. Nevertheless, within months Burkhardt would be out of the company.

In 2001, WC was sold to CN only 14 years after its founding.

Looking back, Burkhardt says great success brought something he did not realize at the time: "Success begets its own unwinding," he says. "People start to get greedy. They think whatever you're doing you could have done better, things of that nature. One of the things we had to do in our first 10 years was pour a lot of money into the physical plant. The year before we bought it from the Soo, they had changed out 5,000 ties on the whole property. Normal tie requirements were about a quarter of a million. So, we had a lot of maintenance to catch up on, especially if you are very safety conscious, which we always were. You need good track and good rolling stock, so we poured a lot of money into the property.

"It turned out that some elements on our board didn't like that. They wanted us to pay big dividends and take cash out of

the company. I stood in the way and said we could not do that because we weren't yet in the kind of shape to permit that. So right about the time we were in good enough shape to do that, they decided they'd had enough of me and they'd do better with somebody else."

Burkhardt was pushed out in July 1999 and new management installed.

"There was nothing wrong with our earnings," Burkhardt said. "But it didn't have the quarter-to-quarter growth of a few years previous. Some board members didn't like that I was spending so much money on maintenance; they wanted the money to go to the shareholders and be reflected in the stock price. But that didn't happen either," he says. "After I left the stock went straight down. I knew the guys that were then running the company. You could call them a safe pair of hands, but if you were looking for something innovative and new and trendsetting you weren't going to get that from them. So, they had no growth at all and the market began to realize it. The stock went down by about half from the time I left. I was the largest individual shareholder and I was unhappy with what I was seeing."

Burkhardt began a proxy fight to regain control, a battle difficult to win against entrenched management. In the end his team didn't win, but he did make a significant showing: about 39% of the

vote. During the fight Burkhardt learned that large shareholders wanted the company sold regardless of who won, and agreed that if he won control, ultimately the company would be sold. When the current management heard that, they agreed to sell as well. In the end, management won and sold out to Canadian National, ending WC's independent existence on Oct. 9, 2001.

While that sale was good for WC shareholders, board members, and CN, all those small shippers who had single-car shipments and whose "rust" had been knocked off the sidings went right back to where they were prior to 1987. Virtually all of the all-rail ore trains vanished, and while CN honored a pledge not to abandon any lines for 10 years, in 2022 it sold several low-density lines in central Wisconsin and Upper Michigan to Watco's Fox Valley & Lake Superior and Grand Elk Railroad. Some of the lines have not seen service in several years and remain dormant.

Burkhardt is saddened by the situation since the CN sale, especially for the em-



WC REMEMBERED

Pick up our 100-page tribute to Wisconsin Central. It covers the road's startup through its 2001 merger and legacy under Canadian National. Available at www.kalmbachhobbystore.com.

ployees. "I just loved that bunch of employees. They'd do anything for us and I'd do anything for them. The ones that are left are back in the Class I methods and thinking and they all hate it. They liked working for Wisconsin Central. I look at that and say 'Did I let these guys down? Is there something I could have done that would have prevented it?'"

Had WC survived, what would it look like today? "It would have had continued business growth, and also a bigger geographical

footprint," says Burkhardt. He says he was in discussions with BNSF about acquiring a significant part of its property, less profitable but with lots of branch lines. "Another Wisconsin Central," he says.

Regardless of how it all ended, there's no doubting Wisconsin Central and Ed Burkhardt's legacy. For one brief period in North American railroad history, the WC could lay claim to being America's finest regional railroad. ■

STEVE GLISCHINSKI is the co-author with Otto P. Dobnick of "Wisconsin Central: Railroad Success Story" (Kalmbach Books, 1997).

Less than six months into Wisconsin Central's tenure, GP35r No. 4001 switches the Quad Graphics plant at Sussex on April 1, 1988. WC served numerous paper customers throughout the Badger State. Three photos, J. David Ingles, Brian M. Schmidt collection



Pennsylvania steel-making road

The Cornwall Railroad began operation in 1864, hauling iron ore from deposits around its namesake Cornwall, Pa., to a processing plant at Lebanon, Pa. These mines began operations in the mid-1700s and continued to produce for two centuries.

While there was some interchange traffic with the Pennsylvania Railroad and Reading Co., the iron ore was hauled in captive hoppers. In 1895, the CRR ran five daily passenger trains in each direction between Lebanon and Mount Hope, Pa., across its entire 12-mile main line. Three of these round-trips extended another 19 miles to Columbia on the Reading & Columbia, a Reading predecessor. That year, the railroad carried 71,347 passengers over 428,082 passenger-miles, earning \$11,698 in revenue.

Bethlehem Steel bought the road in the 1920s and discontinued passenger service shortly thereafter. The company operated the line until 1964 when it was leased to the Reading, which acquired it outright in 1968. After the mines ceased production, imported ore was brought in by boat via Philadelphia. Into the 1970s, Conrail still operated a 6-mile remnant of this colorful road as part of its vast multi-state rail network. These three views, shot in November 1962, show the railroad at Lebanon near the end of its Bethlehem affiliation. — *Brian M. Schmidt* Photos: Brian M. Schmidt collection





In this 1949 scene, a shovel-nose unit pairs with an E5B on the westbound *Afternoon Zephyr* at Lee, Ill. Clyde Eide, Mike Schafer collection



Zephyr 9900 and its shiny legacy

The original stainless-steel streamliner sparked a railroad revolution

Zephyr! It's a famous name in the world of American passenger trains that dates from 1934 and is still in use by Amtrak. Its pronunciation even has a fast sound to it.

Let's do what *Classic Trains* does best: turn back the clock — in this case to 1933-1934. Rivals Chicago, Burlington & Quincy and Union Pacific were competing to launch the two first true streamliners to speed their way into U.S. railroad history. UP won first place in February 1934 with its three-car, riveted, smooth-side, yellow-and-brown M-10000. On April 18, 1934, CB&Q's three-car, stainless-steel *Zephyr* 9900 was christened at Pennsylvania Railroad's Broad Street Station in Philadelphia.

OK, so if *Zephyr* 9900 was second place, why are we focusing on it here? Oh, let me count the ways. In the scope

of North American passenger train developments, it truly earned a first-place position. To wit:

- *Zephyr* 9900 was the first diesel-electric, internal-combustion-powered train that could operate at sustained high speeds.
- Built by the Edward G. Budd Company in Philadelphia, *Zephyr* 9900 featured an advanced (and a long-time patented) form of stainless-steel welding known as Shotwelding, considered unsurpassed in terms of its ability to provide strength, longevity, and durable appearance.
- The *Zephyr's* timeless streamlined styling — with its iconic fluted stainless-steel car side — survives to this day. Think Amfleet, Superliners, and Viewliners, all of them either built by

Budd or by Bombardier and Pullman-Standard, and inspired by the Budd Company's approach to stainless-steel construction.

- Train articulation was a breakthrough in which cars share bogies (trucks) and thereby reduce train weight and stabilize ride quality. Good news and bad news here: Both the M-10000 and *Zephyr* 9900 were articulated train sets that delivered smoother rides, but the fixed consists make it difficult to expand or contract train lengths to accommodate fluctuating ridership. That said, articulated train sets are the rule today in frequent, high-speed train services. Think Amtrak's *Acela*.

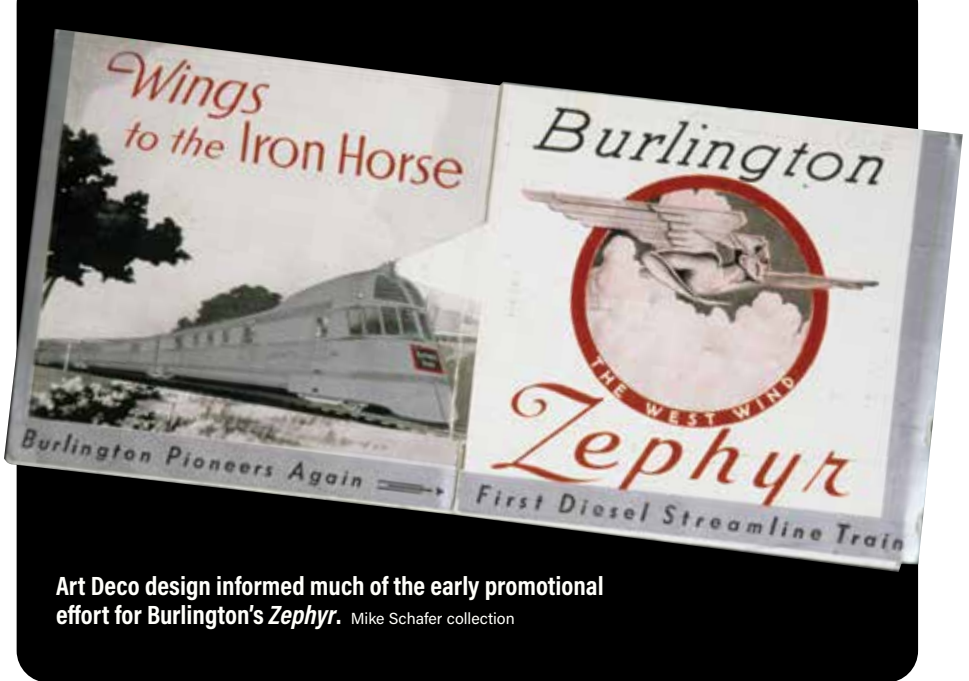
Before *Zephyr* 9900 entered regular service, it barnstormed the country in a grand, multi-month publicity tour, rack-

ing up 39,437 miles and going on display in 222 cities (including my hometown of Rockford, Ill., located on a dead-end CB&Q branch). During the tour, the 9900 was used in the RKO film “The Silver Streak,” but the train is probably best known for its dawn-to-dusk, supposedly nonstop run between Denver and Chicago on May 26, 1934. (Rumor has it the Q included a secret fuel stop).

A key test run before *Zephyr* 9900 entered regular service occurred between Chicago and the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St. Paul. The results were almost shocking, with *Zephyr* 9900 performing the run in nearly half the scheduled time of Burlington’s fastest steam-powered trains on the route. This prompted Burlington to order two more such train sets, and in 1935 the *Twin City Zephyrs* — train sets 9901 and 9902 — were born. (My ma made a trip during World War II on a packed-to-the-gills *Twin City Zephyr* between Oregon, Ill., and Minneapolis. She sat on her suitcase most of the way and said she was borderline “terrified” of the train’s terrific speed.)

Toward the end of 1934, *Zephyr* 9900 entered regular service between Kansas City, Omaha, and Lincoln. It made the 250-mile round-trip daily, replacing two money-losing, steam-powered, conventional trains and making the train profitable for the Q.

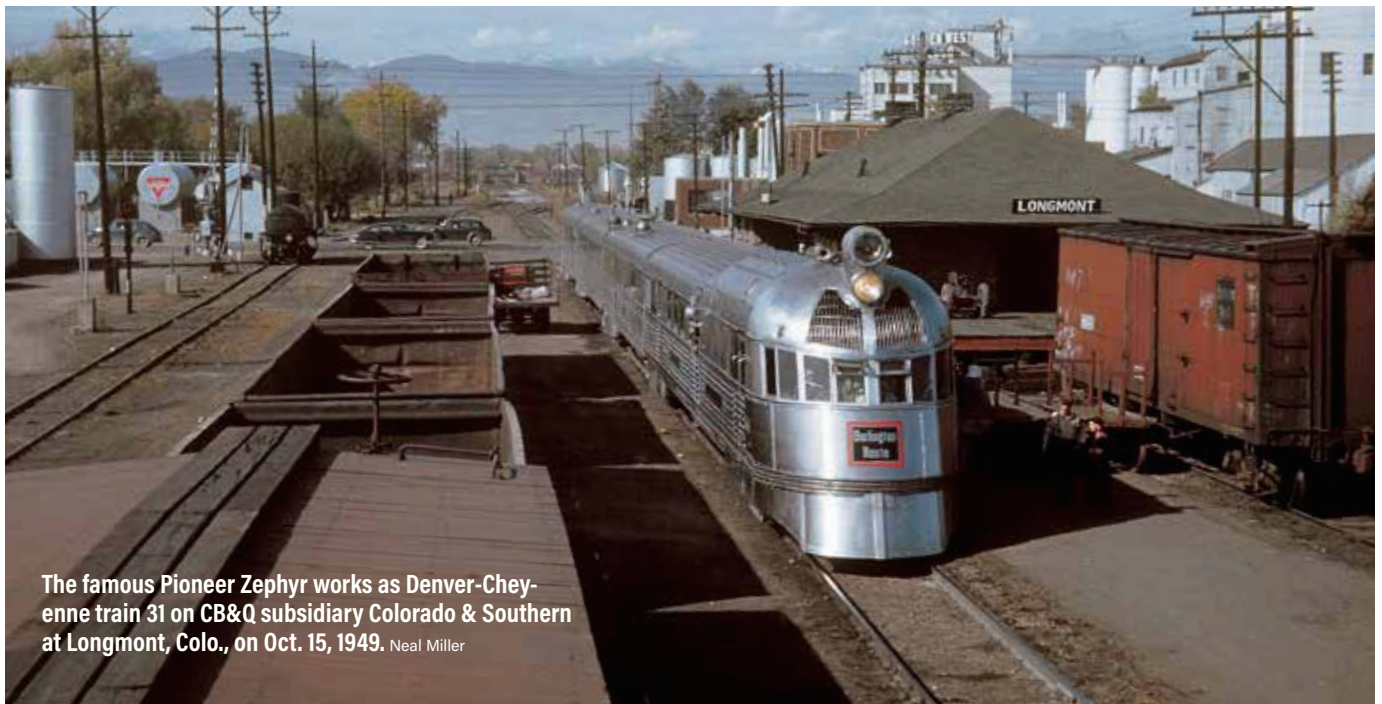
Burlington certainly took notice of this trend and quickly expanded its shovel-nosed *Zephyr* fleet to replace



Art Deco design informed much of the early promotional effort for Burlington’s *Zephyr*. Mike Schafer collection

ARTICULATED, SHOVEL-NOSE ZEPHYR TRAINSETS

9900	<i>Zephyr</i> 9900/ <i>Pioneer Zephyr</i> (1934)
9901	<i>Twin Zephyr</i> (1935)
9902	<i>Twin Zephyr</i> (1935)
9903- <i>Injun Joe</i>	<i>Mark Twain Zephyr</i> (1935)
9904- <i>Pegasus</i>	<i>Twin Zephyr</i> (1936)
9905- <i>Zephyrus</i>	<i>Twin Zephyr</i> (1936)
9906A- <i>Silver King</i>	<i>Denver Zephyr</i> (1936)
9906B- <i>Silver Queen</i>	<i>Denver Zephyr</i> (1936)
9907A- <i>Silver Knight</i>	<i>Denver Zephyr</i> (1936)
9907B- <i>Silver Princess</i>	<i>Denver Zephyr</i> (1936)
9908- <i>Silver Charger</i>	<i>General Pershing Zephyr</i> (1939)



The famous *Pioneer Zephyr* works as Denver-Cheyenne train 31 on CB&Q subsidiary Colorado & Southern at Longmont, Colo., on Oct. 15, 1949. Neal Miller



The interior of the *Pioneer Zephyr's* observation lounge, seen here in its restored state when displayed in 1998 at Chicago's Museum of Science & Industry, was very much in the 1930s Art Deco tradition with its use of stainless steel moulding and Spartan parlor seating. Mike Schafer

steam-powered runs. With the coming of the *Twin Zephyrs*, Burlington tagged the name *Pioneer Zephyr* to the 9900 train set. When it wasn't assigned to a specific route, the *Pioneer Zephyr* became a promotional tool for upcoming *Zephyr* routes. The train also occasionally substituted whenever a *Zephyr* train set might be down for maintenance.

The slope-nose format for *Zephyr* power units ended in 1939 with the delivery of the *General Pershing Zephyr*. The design put locomotive crews in a dangerous position if there was a grade-crossing collision, one of which, in fact, smashed the nose of the 9900, killing the engine crew. Yes, the nose you see now on the *Pioneer Zephyr* is not original. The slope-nose look carried on with early Electro-Motive E-units, first introduced in 1939, but with cabs that sat above and back of the nose.

Alas, the *Pioneer Zephyr* made its last run in 1960, and Burlington donated the train to Chicago's famed Museum of Science & Industry, where it is proudly displayed today at one of the entrances. In

1015 miles in 785 minutes

—AND THEN HE SMOKED A CAMEL!

AS THE BURLINGTON'S "ZEPHYR" dashed from Denver to Chicago, Jack Ford's steady hand was on the throttle. Before he tells what the long journey felt like, and what Camels meant to him after it was over.

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Budd develops a wide variety of unobstructed products, among them are railway cars, motor and bridge cars, trucks, buses, and mobile homes.

Safety was a key theme of early *Zephyr* promotions, even if it included a smoking engineer. Michael Zega collection

Workers rely on elbow grease to haul the cosmetically restored *Pioneer Zephyr* out of the Northern Railcar shops in Milwaukee in September 1997. Mike Schafer



The public mills about as *Zephyr* 9900 is on public display at the joint Burlington-Milwaukee Road passenger station in Rockford, Ill., in May 1934. Roy Peterson, Mike Schafer collection

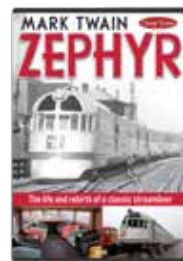
the late 1990s, the museum dispatched its *Pioneer Zephyr* to Northern Rail Car in Milwaukee for a complete refurbishment, inside and out. Upon completion, it was rolled out of the shop in the same manner in which it rolled out of the Budd plant 63 years prior: with manpower, i.e. several workers tethered to the head end, illustrating how lightweight the pocket streamliner was.

Aside from the original *Zephyr* now on display in Chicago, remnants of shovel-nose train sets survive, including one built for Boston & Maine/Maine Central as the *Flying Yankee*, operating between Boston and Bangor, Maine. It is

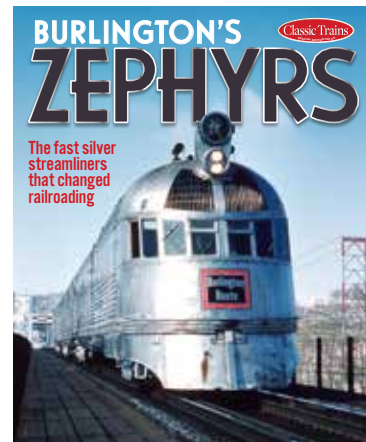
on display at Lincoln, N.H. The *Mark Twain Zephyr* recently was moved to the Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad at Trego, Wis. (see page 72). Well into the 1960s, Burlington's Chicago-Omaha-Lincoln *Nebraska Zephyr* was protected by two original articulated *Twin Zephyr* sets, one of which remains in operation today at the Illinois Railway Museum, where it made a cameo appearance in the 1992 movie *A League of Their Own*. And the *Zephyr* name rolls on, with Amtrak's *Illinois Zephyr* (Chicago-Quincy, Ill.) and, of course, on one of the carrier's most popular long-distance trains, the *California Zephyr*. 📌

A ZEPHYR CELEBRATION!

Learn more about *Zephyr* and its legacy with our Burlington's *Zephyrs* special issue and upcoming DVD chronicling the *Mark Twain*



Zephyr and its restoration at Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad at Trego. You'll find other great *Zephyr* products, too. Place your order today at www.KalmbachHobbyStore.com.



Mark Twain rides the rails, soon

Post covid supply delays have slowed restoration



Wisconsin Great Northern President Greg Vreeland applies the *Mark Twain Zephyr* lettering to the name plate of observation *Tom Sawyer*. Two photos, Steve Smedley.

the mail would be sorted for furtherance to its intended recipient.

The only intact example of a Winton engine from the CB&Q's *Zephyr*'s in existence is part of the *Pioneer Zephyr* on display in the basement of the Museum of Science & Industry in Chicago.

The five trucks manufactured by General Steel Castings for the train are being rebuilt with new hardware replacing any broken or cracked fittings due to the age of the castings.

"We finally have on hand all the necessary parts to finish work on the *Zephyr*'s non-powered trucks. It took 18 months to have new spring packs for all five built, and those finally arrived in October ... right as we started up the busiest time of the year with our Santa Pizza trains, so all hands were needed to finish our operating season," Turinetti says.

The trucks were stripped to bare metal, sandblasted and wire wheeled, had all pins and bushings for the brake rigging removed and renewed as necessary. New pedestal liners were fabricated and installed, the journal boxes were rebuilt, the roller bearing were serviced and inspected.

"They were actually in very good shape in spite of being underwater several times prior to our purchase of them," Turinetti says.

Coil springs were sandblasted and new vibration dampeners were fashioned and installed as well. Once all that was completed, the spring packs were compressed and reinstalled, brake was rehung, and the trucks painted.

"So far two of the five have been worked on and are almost ready to come out of the shop," he adds.

"We have employees with different skill sets, they all work together on projects that have a common goal," notes WGN President Greg Vreeland.

Vreeland's staff and the railroad's motto are that the word "cannot" is not in the company vocabulary. — Steve Smedley

Wisconsin Great Northern's *Mark Twain Zephyr* project has moved into the final and more complicated stages of the restoration of the classic streamliner. The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy purchased nine of the distinctive early trainsets from the Budd Co. in the mid 1930s.

The railroad's post-Covid reopening of its popular dinner and bed-and-breakfast trains, along with delays in being able to obtain some of the unique fixtures and newly manufactured springs for its trucks has affected the project.

The Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad is the home to the *Mark Twain Zephyr*, the fourth *Zephyr* built for the Burlington, which operated from St. Louis to Burlington, Iowa. It was christened in Mark Twain's hometown of Hannibal, Mo., on Oct. 25, 1935. The train subsequently operated for 23 years on a variety of routes across the Midwest until its retirement by CB&Q in 1958.

The stainless-steel train passed through seven owners in the next 62 years, being vandalized and stripped before coming to the WGN in 2020.

Injun Joe, the shovel-nosed power car, has been fitted with new FRA-approved

front windows in its streamlined brow. The engine room and Railway Post Office area have had new steel plating welded into the floor.

The engine, control stand and electrical cabinet from an SW600 - No. 1280 painted in Chicago & North Western livery - along with one of the switcher's trucks, will be cannibalized and reused in the power car, according to Nick Turinetti, WGN operations manager.

The power car still has its mail slot, where passengers or townspeople could drop mail into the rear of *Injun Joe* where



With an SW600 power truck temporarily placed beneath *Injun Joe*, snow has held a tight grip on northwest Wisconsin in 2023.

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Two photos, Ken Kasun

A moment on the Milwaukee Road

Ode to the long-lost station agent

Railroading is full of unsung heroes. Everyone knows the conductor and engineer are on the train — even if they don't know the jobs of each. But railroading runs on the backs of many professions and trades, from boilermakers to accountants, and everything in between. Perhaps most overlooked is the once ubiquitous station agent.

The agent was the vital link between railroad and community in so many places, big and small, across this great continent. He or she (and it was a she more often than in any other job on the railroad) sold tickets and offered information, wired Western Union, and handed off Railway Express Agency packages to their recipients. For the railroads' industrial customers, the agent ordered empty cars, arranged for pickups of loads, and handled billing. It is safe to say that many community members were on a first-name basis with their agents in the first half of the 20th century.

On top that responsibility, an agent would often live in or near his or her station of assignment. Some agents also qualified as operators, handling train orders on top of their other duties.

Here we see Milwaukee Road agent Al Paske at Brookfield, Wis., in the 1960s. The town is 15 miles west of Milwaukee and only a short distance from Kalmbach Media's offices of 30-plus years. At the time, the depot sat between two tracks, one the main to La Crosse and eventually St. Paul, Minn., and the other the Milwaukee's route through downtown Waukesha to Janesville and Beloit.

Today, both tracks comprise the Canadian Pacific main line to the Twin Cities, and the line to Waukesha is a recreation trail. In October 2021 the depot was moved up the hill to become a coffee shop. While the Milwaukee's proud *Hiawatha* fleet no longer polishes the rails here, Amtrak's *Empire Builder* still passes twice daily, albeit without stopping. — *Brian M. Schmidt*





RAILROAD
CROSSING

4

TRACKS

STOP
ON RED
SIGNAL

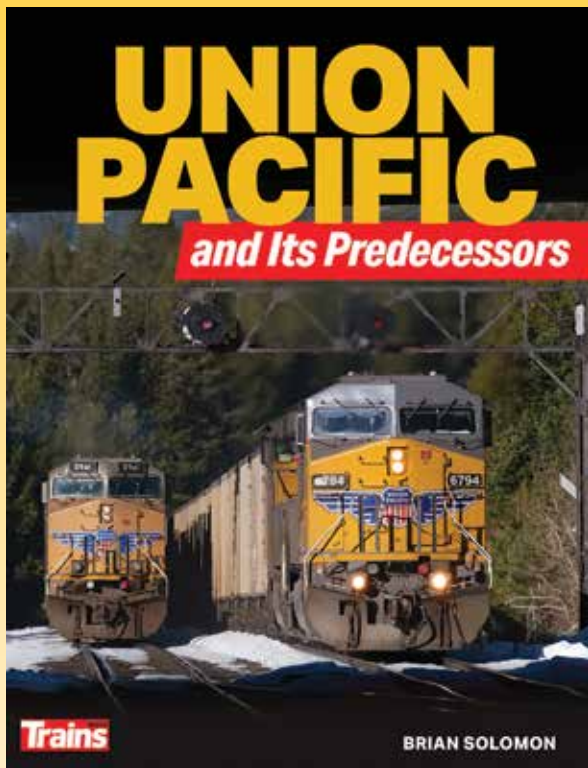
BROOKFIELD

RAILROAD EXPRESS AGENT

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Next Issue



New England Summer

Roger Cook takes us to Island Pond, Vt., in July 1958 for a look at Grand Trunk operations in New England.

Touring Alaska

Trainwatching in the 49th state was hit-and-miss in the 1960s, but that didn't matter with Uncle Sam footing the bill.

North Western Education

Take a look at the Chicago & North Western, and other roads, around Eau Claire, Wis., in the 1980s.

"Pickle" Clerk on the Rock

Working the Precise Inventory and Car Location Clerk desk at Silvis, Ill., kept the beleaguered Rock Island rolling into the 1970s.

U.S. Steam in France

World traveler and steam aficionado Victor Hand shows us expat Baldwin steam in the other land of red, white, and blue.

PLUS: True Color, What's in a Photograph, Short Rails, Passenger Perspectives, Bumping Post, and more!

FALL ISSUE
ON SALE
Aug. 22, 2023

Classic Trains
THE GOLDEN YEARS OF RAILROADING

From the Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society

The Great Race to the Jersey Shore



Atlantic City, New Jersey grew to be the most popular Atlantic Shore vacation destination of the Northeast after WWI. Both the Pennsylvania and Philadelphia & Reading railroads fought hard to capture passengers. Buses and autos ate into profits in the 1930s, so the two adversaries merged to survive. This book is the grand story of the growth and atrophy of South Jersey rail to the present day.

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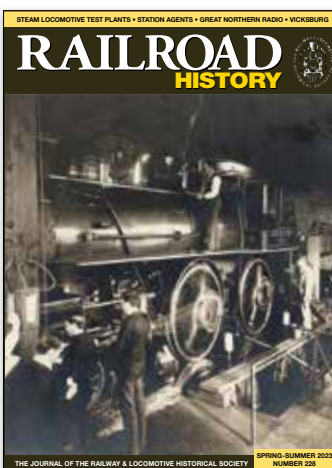
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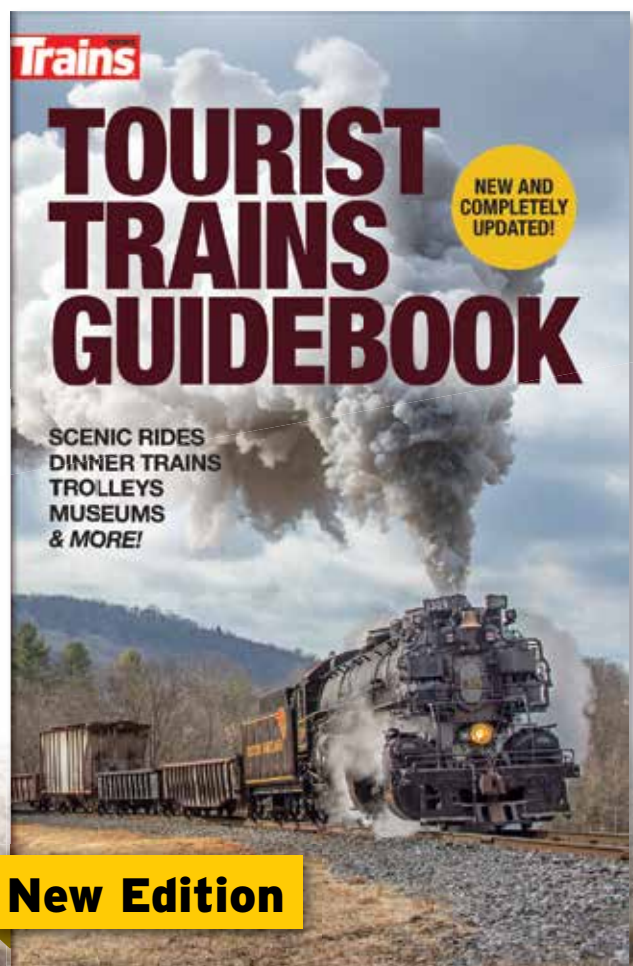
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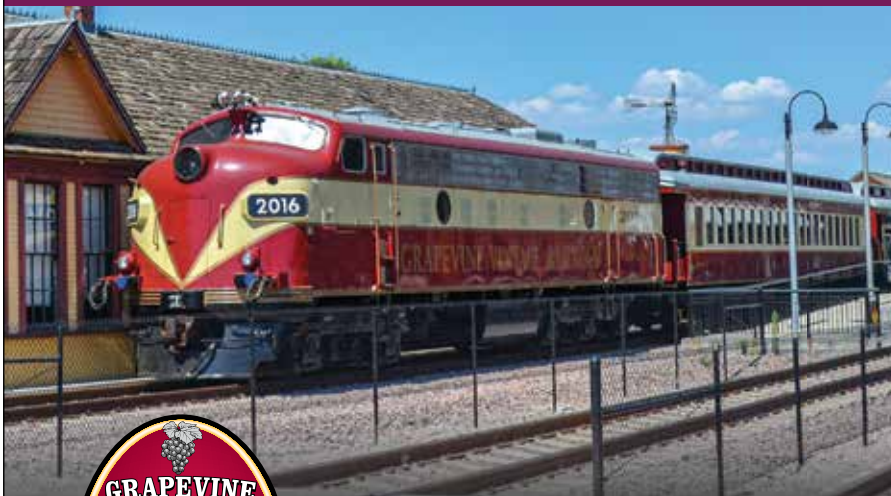
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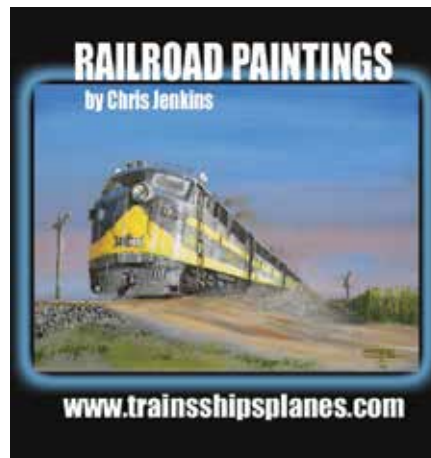
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Photos: June 1950, by George Krambles, Krambles-Peterson Archive collection





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Hub on the Hudson

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A dual-purpose facility, the building saw trains come and go on one side and handled Lackawanna ferries on the other. The boats went to three corresponding terminals across the river.

On Oct. 1, 1949, DL&W F3 No. 801 stands ready to speed train 11, *The Scrantonian*, to its namesake destination in Pennsylvania. The all-coach express has a 3:35 p.m. departure.

Unfortunately, one cannot count down the minutes, as the clock tower in the distance was dismantled in 1942 to reclaim the copper for the war effort.

Hoboken Terminal was one of several similar facilities built by major railroads along the Hudson. It's the last remaining. The clock tower was rebuilt with four-foot lighted letters spelling "Lackawanna" in 2006; it was completed in 2008. ■

Photo: Robert M. Faase

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