Classic Trains
SPECIAL EDITION NO. 19

Great Trains EAST

Holiday 2016

The golden age of American rail travel

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Silver Meteor • Merchants Limited • Powhatan Arrow
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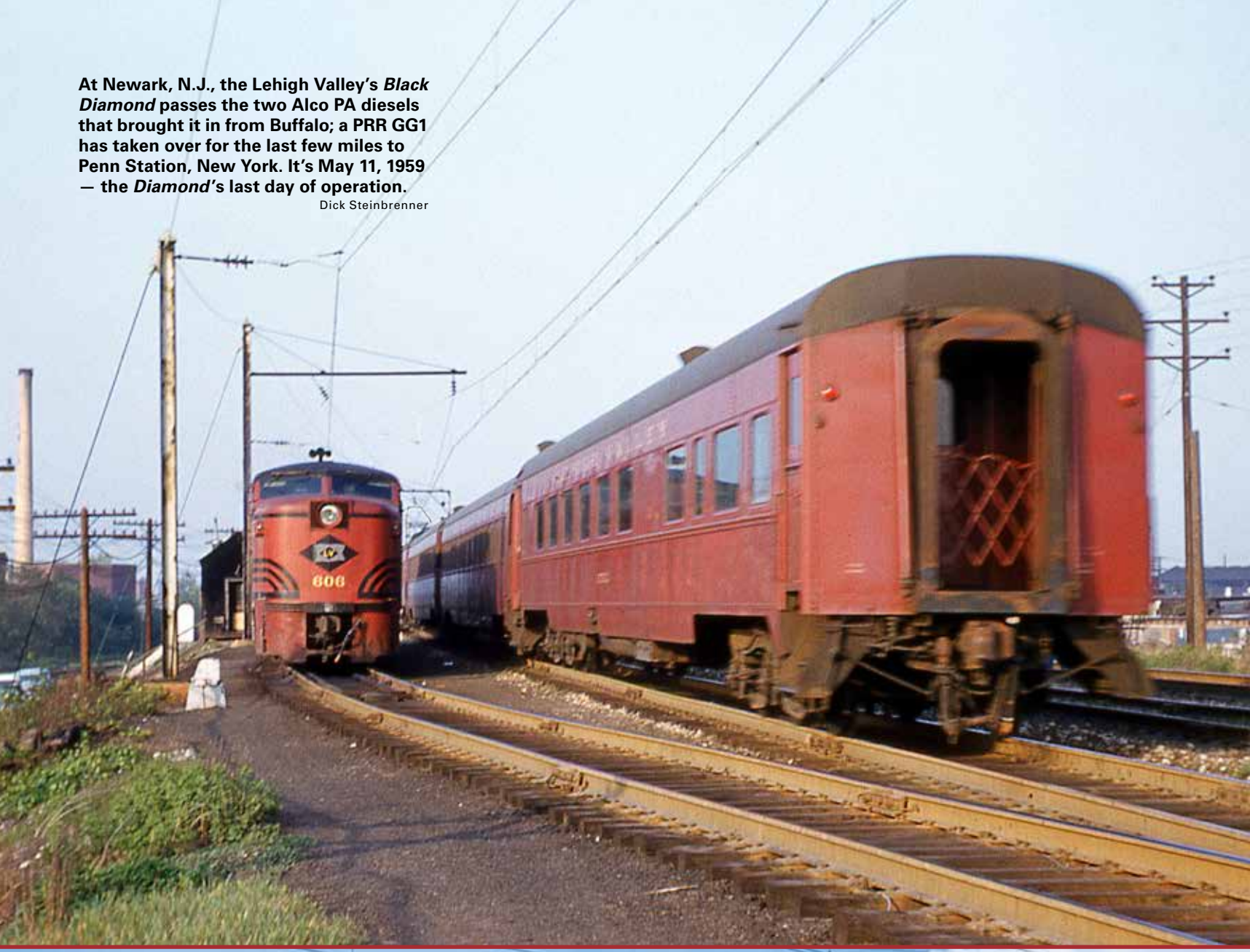
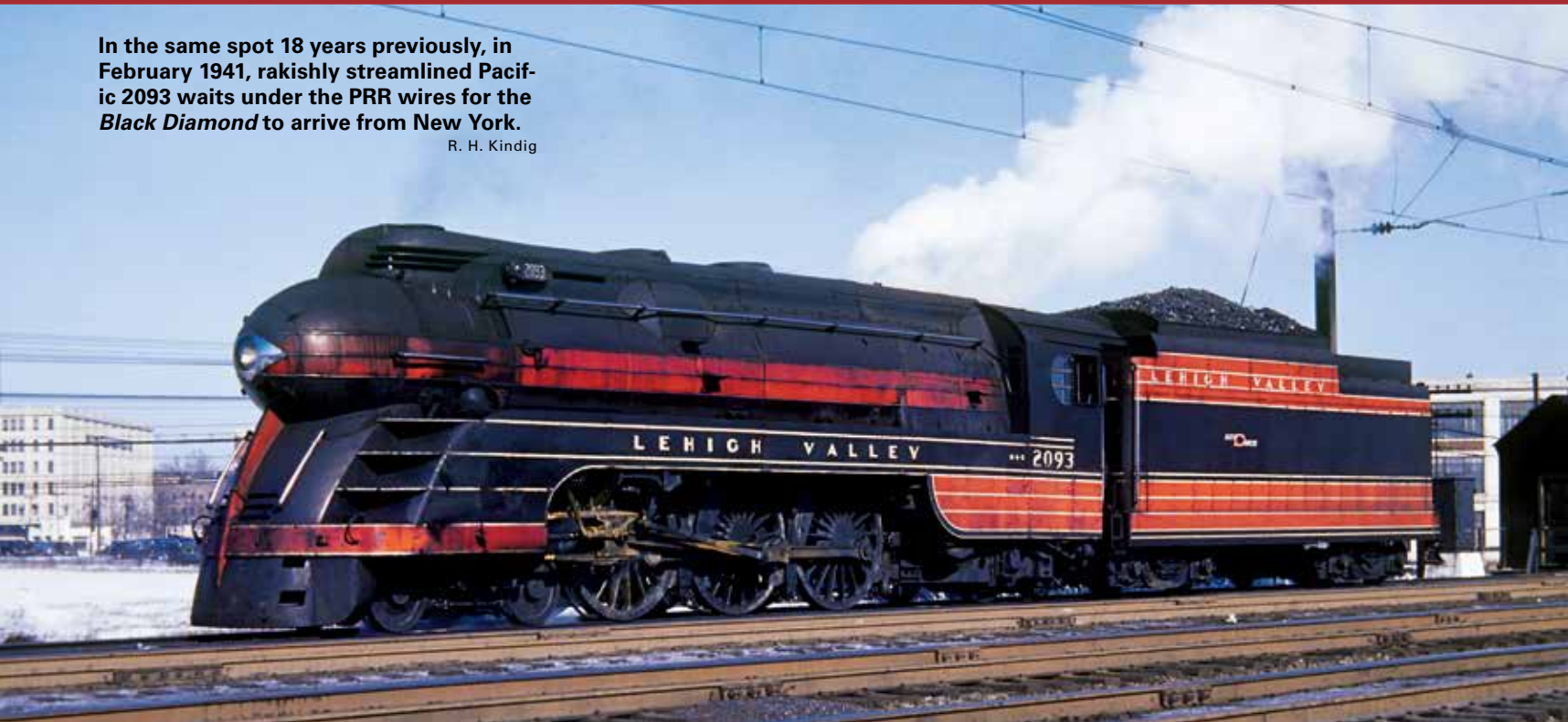
At Newark, N.J., the Lehigh Valley's *Black Diamond* passes the two Alco PA diesels that brought it in from Buffalo; a PRR GG1 has taken over for the last few miles to Penn Station, New York. It's May 11, 1959 — the *Diamond*'s last day of operation.

Dick Steinbrenner



In the same spot 18 years previously, in February 1941, rakishly streamlined Pacific 2093 waits under the PRR wires for the *Black Diamond* to arrive from New York.

R. H. Kindig



Great Trains EAST

The golden age of American rail travel

EDITED BY **ROBERT S. McGONIGAL**

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GreatTrains IN PHOTOS

ON THE COVER:
A New York Central streamlined Hudson pulls out of La Salle Street Station, Chicago, with the famous *20th Century Limited* for New York in the early 1940s.
W. C. Merle II

GreatTrains EAST

ACL	Atlantic Coast Line
B&M	Boston & Maine
B&O	Baltimore & Ohio
C&EI	Chicago & Eastern Illinois
C&O	Chesapeake & Ohio
CN	Canadian National
CNJ	Central Railroad of New Jersey
CV	Central Vermont
ERIE	Erie Railroad
FEC	Florida East Coast
L&N	Louisville & Nashville
MEC	Maine Central
N&W	Norfolk & Western
NC&StL	Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis
NH	New York, New Haven & Hartford
NYC	New York Central
PRR	Pennsylvania
PRSL	Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines
RDG	Reading
RF&P	Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac
SAL	Seaboard Air Line
SOU	Southern
WPR	West Point Route

Not all lines shown
Some areas not to scale

Big-league territory

The major-league baseball teams of 1950 were all located in an area defined by Boston, Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Washington, D.C. This was where the National Pastime took place — the rest of the country had only minor-league teams. In terms of commerce, the primacy of this area could be seen in the name given to it for the purposes of railroad freight rates: "Official Territory."

Now add the region to the south, down to the great cities of Charleston, Miami, and New Orleans, and you're covering the eastern third of the continental United States (in 1950, the *whole* United States) — the area of greatest population, industry, culture, learning, and, yes, conflict during the nation's first, formative 175 years.

And, as the map on the previous page shows, it's also the area covered by this, the second installment of our series celebrating great passenger trains. Like its predecessor, Great Trains West, this edition consists primarily of articles from Trains magazine spanning back to 1942, plus one from the special publication Trains Classic 1999, and one from the first issue of Classic Trains, Spring 2000. These stories, spotlighting some 14 services, have been completely redesigned, with many new photos added. Also, several two-page spreads throughout the issue cover yet more trains, for a total of 24 in all.

The important region east of the Mississippi River spawned many great trains, too many for one issue. Therefore, we have included only trains that served points on the Eastern Seaboard.

We hope you enjoy Great Trains East!

Robert S. McGonigal

Great Trains East

CLASSIC TRAINS SPECIAL EDITION NO. 19 • 2016

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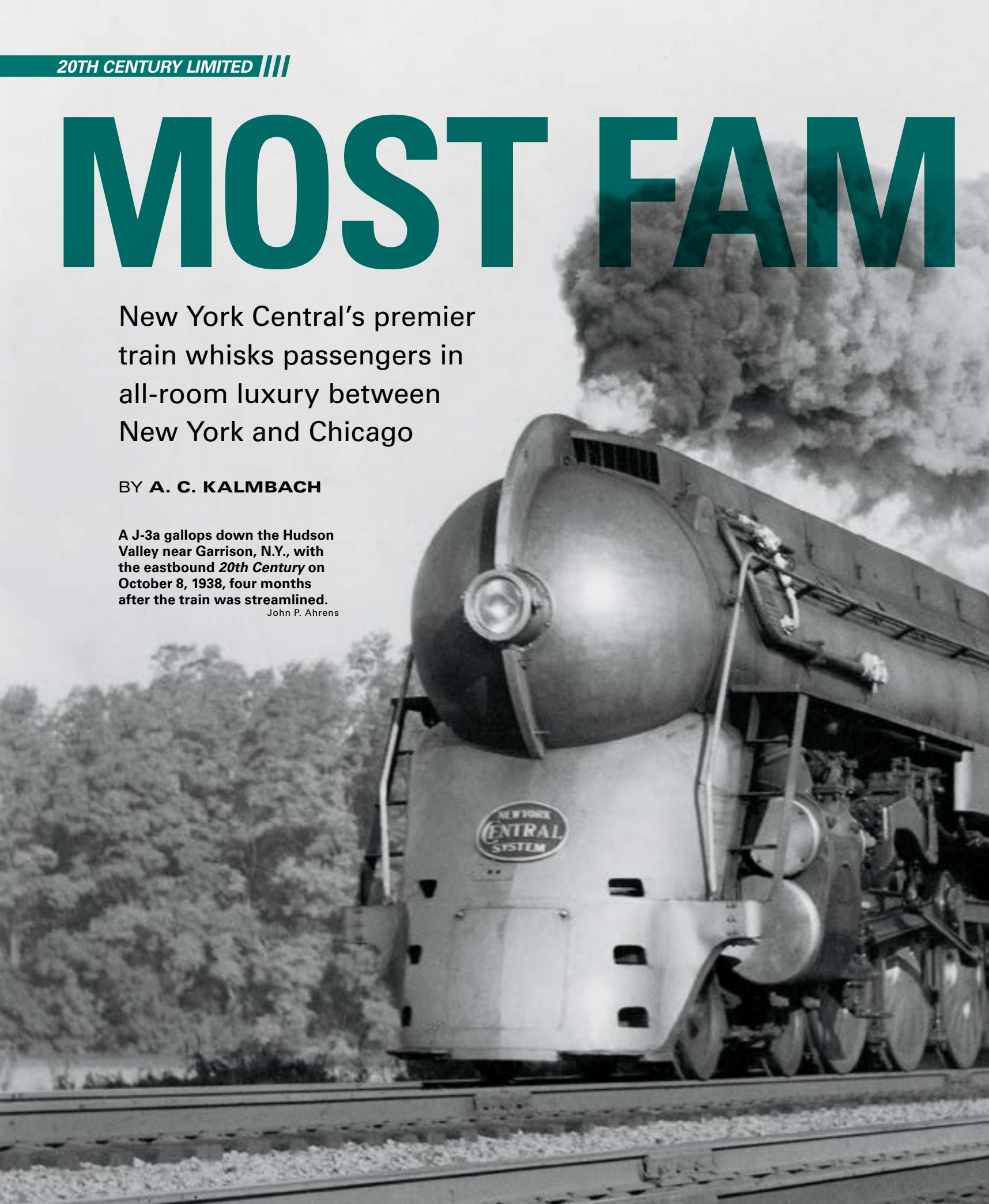
Please Recycle This Magazine

The 15 heavyweight cars of the Long Island Rail Road's all-parlor *Cannon Ball* stand at Montauk, N.Y., after the train's Friday evening run from Penn Station to the tip of Long Island in September 1964.
Ron Ziel

MOST FAM

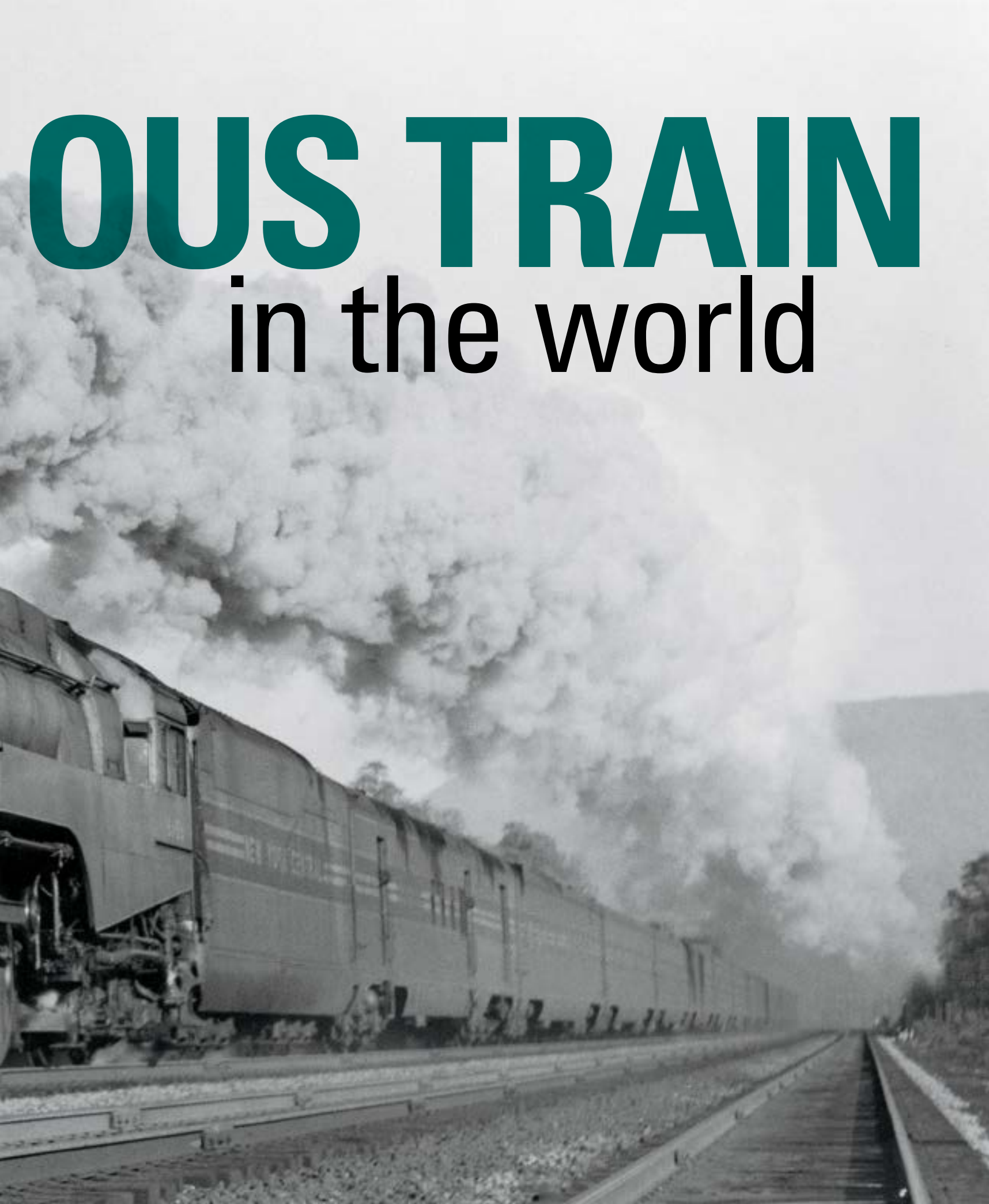
New York Central's premier train whisks passengers in all-room luxury between New York and Chicago

BY **A. C. KALMBACH**



A J-3a gallops down the Hudson Valley near Garrison, N.Y., with the eastbound *20th Century* on October 8, 1938, four months after the train was streamlined.
John P. Ahrens

OUS TRAIN
in the world



In a photo purported to be of the *Century*'s first westbound run, a 4-6-0 of NYC Water Level Route partner Lake Shore & Michigan Southern skirts Lake Erie. Though crudely retouched onto this print, the semaphores suggest the safety of the left-handed LS&MS.
Classic Trains collection

Tickets for the 20th Century Limited—Today Only reads the sign over ticket window No. 3 opposite the information booth in Grand Central Terminal. For one-half hour, from 5:30 to 6 p.m., when the train leaves for Chicago, this window will be selling only *20th Century Limited* tickets and Pullman space so that no *Century* passenger need wait. It is only one of the many small touches which combine to make this one of the most famous trains, if not *the* most famous train, in the world.

"20th Century Limited" was a most timely name on June 15, 1902, when New York Central trains 25 and 26 made their first runs between New York and Chicago. The title has since become timeless, a synonym for luxurious railroad travel. In the business world "taking the *Century*" is now a figure of speech for "going to Chicago" — or New York.

In the 40 years of its operation the *Century* has set many a record, but by far its most outstanding achievement is that of earning a gross revenue of $150 million, exclusive of dining-car receipts. The number of passengers is not phenomenal. Many a modern coach streamliner far exceeds the *Century*, whose record for number of passengers carried was established on Monday, January 7, 1929, when it ran eastbound in seven sections, bringing 822 passengers into Grand Central Terminal. But remember that each of these passengers was not only paying an extra fare, $10 at that time for the entire distance, but the *Century* was and is solid Pullman and, in fact, is now an all-room train. The *20th Century Limited* is not only first class but upper first class, and that's where all that revenue comes from.

STRICTLY LIMITED

The traffic between Chicago and New York on the *Century* is about equally divided. It is strictly a limited train. Westbound No. 25 is posted in Grand Central Terminal as 20th Century Limited—To Chicago. The only passenger stops are at Harmon, Albany, Syracuse, and Buffalo, and these only to pick up passengers for Chicago. Eastbound No. 26 makes two concessions. It will discharge passengers at Albany and also stops at Toledo only to pick up passengers. With such a strictly limited business, both as to number of passenger stops and class of passengers, the *20th Century* has handled more than 200,000 people in a single year and earned a gross of more than $10 million in a year.

The name was coined by George H. Daniels, general passenger agent of the New York Central in 1902. It was Daniels, likewise, who created the *Empire State Express*. The train's name was picked on the basis that it was the forerunner of a new era in high-speed transportation by rail. Actually it was preceded in experimentation by the Central's *Exposition Flyer*, which ran during summer 1893 between New York and Chicago at the time of the Columbian Exposition in the latter city. Express-train speed between Chicago and New York before the *Century* was 24 hours. The *Century* cut this to 20 hours, later 18 hours, and now 16 hours, an average of an even mile a minute for the 960 miles.

On the maiden trips the equip-

Powerfully demonstrating the *Century*'s success, five sections of train 26 are poised to depart Chicago on a snowy day in 1924. The Pacifics in charge here would give way to Hudsons three years later. In its first 40 years, the *Century* earned $150 million for NYC.
New York Central

ment of each train consisted of three Pullmans, a diner, and a combined mail-buffet car, pulled by an Atlantic-type locomotive. The engines cost between $15,000 and $16,000 each, and the entire rolling equipment in service on a *Century* train in early years represented a cost of about $115,000.

Twenty years later the equipment consisted of a combination baggage-club car with a barber, valet, and stenographer (these three classes of employees are on the train today); a 10-compartment sleeping car; two sleeping cars each with seven compartments and two drawing rooms; four sleeping cars with 12 sections, a compartment, and a drawing room each; and a sleeping car with 12 sections and a drawing room. Each section of the train carried two diners. Such a train with locomotive — a Pacific type — represented an investment of approximately $250,000. The locomotive cost some $59,000, or almost four times more than the 4-4-2 originally used and more than half of the cost of the entire train of 1902. The Pullmans were much larger than the original cars and since December 1910 have been of all-steel construction. The dining cars were likewise changed to all-steel in November 1912.

Today, in 1942, each 16-car section of the *Century*, including its locomotive, represents an investment by the New York Central and the Pullman Company of $1,384,000. The modern streamlined version of the train went into service June 15, 1938. The locomotives are picked from the 10 streamlined J-3a Hudsons, part of the large fleet of 4-6-4s which pull the major part of the Central's passenger service. Each Hudson represents an investment of more than the entire *20th Century Limited* of 40 years ago.

ALL ROOMS, NO SECTIONS

It was with the inauguration of the streamlined equipment that the *Century* became an all-room train. Gone are the old open sections with their upper and lower berths, and in their places are roomettes, together with vastly improved compartments, drawing rooms, double bedrooms, and a new and

From J-1 Hudson up front (upper photo, along the 4-6-4 type's namesake river) to brass-railed observation car on the rear (above, in the New York electrified zone), the *Century* of the late 1920s and 1930s was a masterpiece of railroading's "standard era."
Upper, New York Central; above, Classic Trains collection

A SAMPLING OF *CENTURY* CARS

NO. 5020: Mail-baggage car with 60-foot Railway Post Office section; one car per typical consist; 4 built; Nos. 5020–5023.

CITY OF TOLEDO: 17-roomette sleeper (plus one section for porter); two per typical consist; 10 built; *City of*-series names.

CENTURY INN: Club lounge with crew dorm, barbershop, buffet, lounge; one per typical consist; 4 built; *Century*-series names.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY: 13 double bedroom sleeper; one per typical consist; 8 built; *County*-series names.

Monumental Grand Central Terminal opened in 1913, 11 years after the *20th Century*'s maiden run. For 30 minutes before train time, 5:30 to 6 p.m., a ticket window near the clock-topped information booth serves only those passengers departing on No. 25.

CLASSIC TRAINS collection

luxurious deluxe suite of drawing room, bedroom, and shower bath. The dining cars are no longer the old formal layout of tables in two rows. Instead, the seating arrangements are varied, so an individual can be seated alone, or so parties of two to five can be seated together. Some tables are placed side by side, facing into the car, while others are set before curved settees in diagonally opposite corners. A phonograph provides an agreeable background of light music during dinner, and in the evening, with changed lighting and table tops, the music likewise changes to popular orchestras and the dining car becomes a night club.

With recent speed-ups in passenger trains, public curiosity about speed has increased, and the *Century*'s observation car is now provided with a speedometer and odometer. Among the novel decorations are large maps in color and scale models of the *DeWitt Clinton*, first locomotive operated in New York State, and the famous No. 999, which set a world speed record of 112.5 mph on May 10, 1893.

The mail-baggage cars have a 60-foot space for Railway Mail Service use. The *Century* has long been one of the chief conveyances of first-class mail between New York and Chicago.

NO. 680: Dining car with kitchen and 38 seats; two per typical consist, coupled with dining areas adjacent; 6 built; Nos. 680–685.

CASCADE VALLEY: 10-roomette/5-double-bedroom sleeper; two per typical consist; 12 built; *Cascade*-series names.

IMPERIAL COURT: 4-compartment/4-double-bedroom/2-drawing room sleeper; three per typical consist; 14 built; *Imperial*-series.

MANHATTAN ISLAND: Observation/sleeper/buffet/lounge; one per typical consist; four built; *Island*-series names.

Eight photos, Pullman-Standard

Locomotives are changed twice during the *Century*'s run. Once is the exchange of steam and electric locomotives at Harmon, 33 miles outside of Grand Central Terminal. The other change is to swap Hudsons at Collinwood in East Cleveland, approximately the midpoint of the journey. Crews, of course, change more often.

The enginemen and firemen change at the following division points: Harmon, Albany, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, Cleveland, Toledo, and Elkhart.

The Pullman conductor makes the entire trip, as do the porters, the dining-car crews, the bar men, train secretary, barber, and maid. The railroad company's train crew, including conductors, brakemen, and baggagemen, change at Buffalo and Toledo.

A CAST OF OVER FIVE DOZEN

To staff each *Century* the following crew is required: 9 enginemen and 9 firemen, 3 conductors and 6 brakemen, 1 Pullman conductor, 6 or more Pullman porters, 3 baggagemen, 1 train secretary, 1 barber, 1 maid, 1 valet, 2 bar men, and 24 men in the two diners, including 2 stewards, 2 chefs, 6 cooks, and 14 waiters. All of these men are chosen especially for *Century* service, and in each respective field, assignment to the *Century*

Powered by dashing streamlined Hudsons west of Harmon, N.Y., the *Century* is entrusted to utilitarian box-cab electrics in New York third-rail territory. Here, a T-class motor brings a 16-car consist west through the Marble Hill commuter station in the Bronx.

General Electric

The eastbound *Century* follows the smoke of its J-3a locomotive at Peekskill, N.Y., as it makes its way down the Hudson River. The cars are selectively turned at the end of each run so the compartments, bedrooms, and drawing rooms are facing the river in both directions. In the obs car is the luxurious drawing room/bedroom/bath suite.
Classic Trains collection

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Typical *20th Century Limited* consist, 1942	
1st car	Mail-baggage
2nd car	Dorm-lounge
3rd car	17 roomettes
4th car	17 roomettes
5th car	10 roomettes/5 double bedrooms
6th car	4 double bedrooms/4 compartments/2 drawing rooms
7th car	Diner
8th car	Diner
9th car	4 double bedrooms/4 compartments/2 drawing rooms
10th car	10 roomettes/5 double bedrooms
11th car	13 double bedrooms
12th car	4 double bedrooms/4 compartments/2 drawing rooms
13th car	Observation-sleeper-lounge

represents the aristocracy of New York Central's service.

The *Century*'s most famous engineman was Bob Butterfield, now retired. He made many remarkable runs that earned the sobriquet of "On-Time Bob." More stories in newspapers and magazines have been written about Bob Butterfield than any other engineman during the past 20 years. He is ready for wartime service, if called, although he is now 75.

The estimated mileage since the start of the service is 47,576,000 miles. With all these miles and with 40 years of history the *20th Century Limited* was discontinued only once, for 10 days from December 10 to December 20, 1919, because of the coal shortage following World War I.

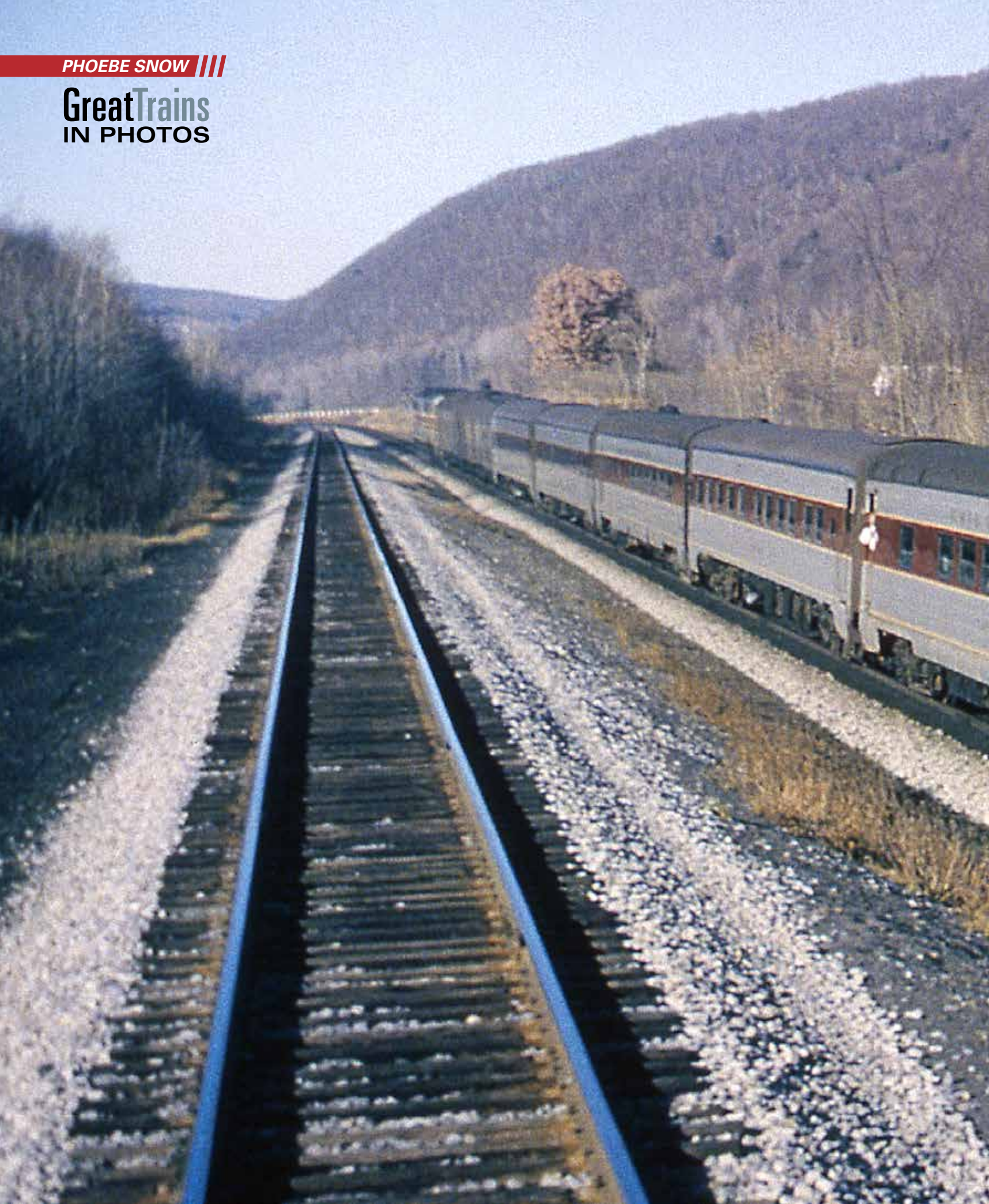
Before it was streamlined, many a railfan said of the *Century*, "She looks just like any other train." Even with her distinctive styling she is to all outward appearances not so unusual among the many streamliners of today, but upon this one limited the New York Central has lavished the best of its loving care. To the men along the line Nos.

A rearward view in one of the *Island*-series observation cars shows the main lounge area; behind the New York City skyline photo mural is the smaller observation lounge.
New York Central

25 and 26 are practically a religion. The Pullman porters are more courteous, the dining-car waiters and stewards more attentive. Even the station porters snap to respectful attention when you offer them baggage for the *Century*. Truly, a ride on this train is an Experience.

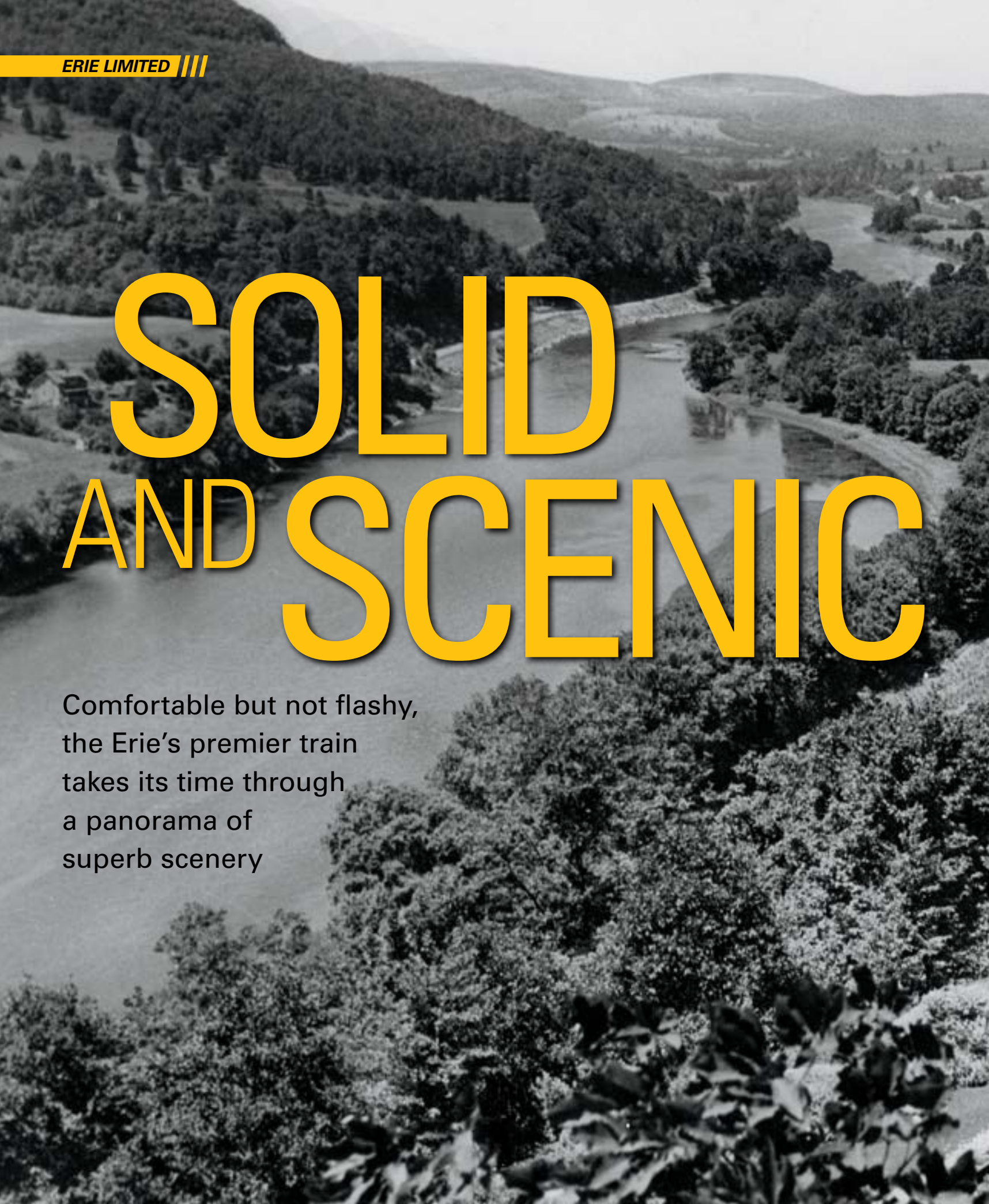
A. C. KALMBACH, a Milwaukee printer with a passion for railroads, launched his magazine business with Model Railroader *in 1934, followed by* Trains *in 1940. He was Kalmbach Publishing Co.'s board chairman when he died in 1981. Today KPC publishes 13 magazines, books, and digital content.*

The head-end club lounge cars contain crew dorm space, barbershop, buffet, and casual seating. Industrial designer Henry Dreyfuss styled the '38 *Century* inside and out.
New York Central



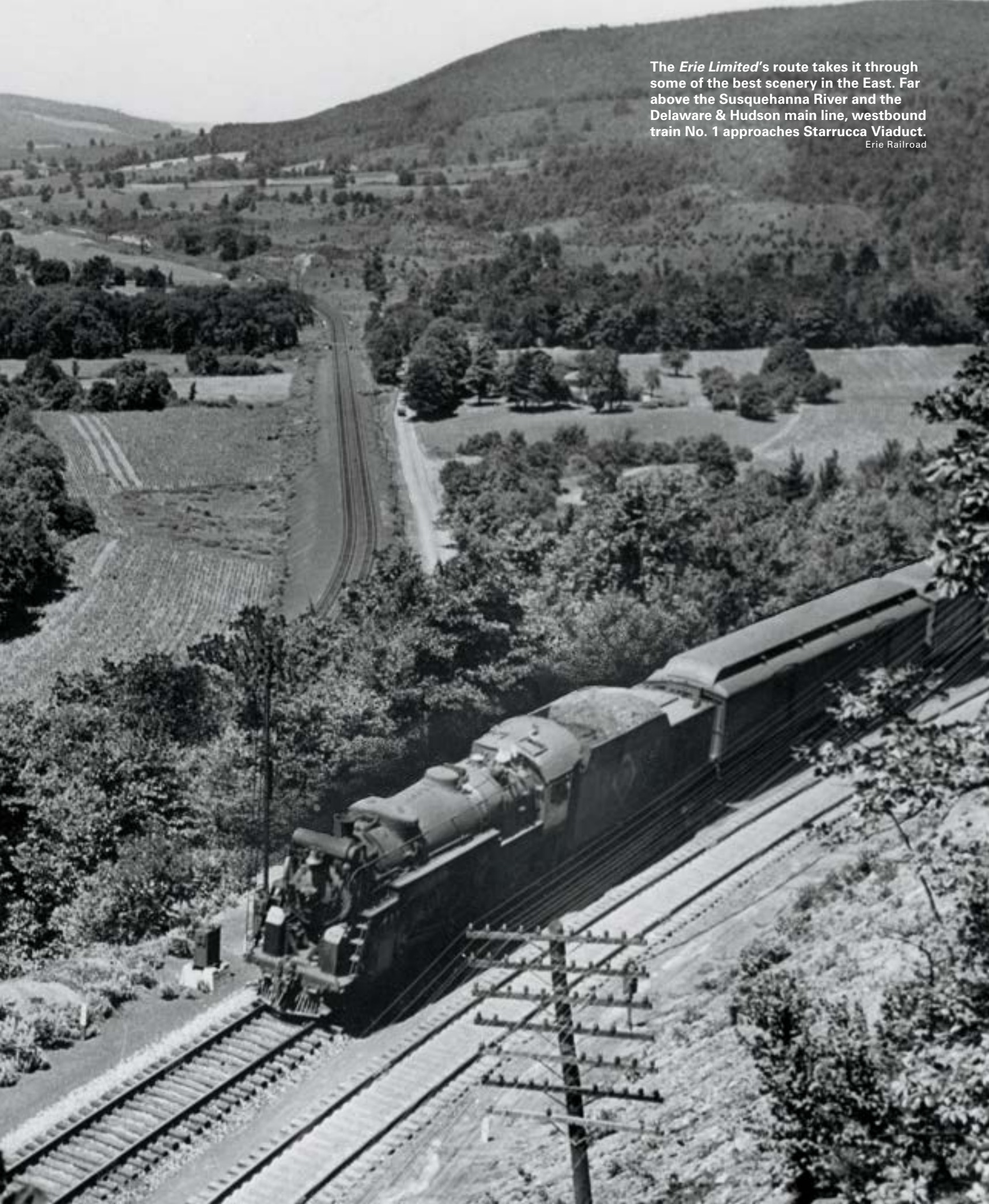
Eight days before their last runs, Erie Lackawanna's Hoboken–Chicago *Phoebe Snows* pass at New Milford, Pa., on November 20, 1966. We're on eastbound train 2's tavern observation car, looking at No. 1. In 1949, EL predecessor DL&W applied a 1900s fictional advertising name to its new Hoboken–Buffalo day streamliner, which carried through cars for Chicago via Nickel Plate Road. Under EL, the name vanished in 1962 but was revived for the road's top Chicago train in 1963.

J. W. Swanberg



SOLID AND SCENIC

Comfortable but not flashy, the Erie's premier train takes its time through a panorama of superb scenery



The *Erie Limited*'s route takes it through some of the best scenery in the East. Far above the Susquehanna River and the Delaware & Hudson main line, westbound train No. 1 approaches Starrucca Viaduct.
Erie Railroad

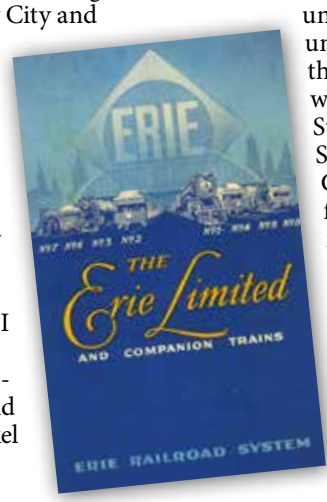
Not far out of the Erie's Jersey City terminal, K-5a heavy Pacific 2918 accelerates the *Limited* west at Croxton, N.J., before big 12-wheel tenders replaced 8-wheel jobs on the road's top passenger power. In the background, a Lackawanna train heads to Hoboken.
Robert A. LeMassena; below, Joe Welsh collection

"Adam loved Eve because Eve was the only one around that he could love. And by the same token the Deposit people have to love the Erie Railroad because there is no other railroad around to love, but they really do love it, and are proud of it." So spoke the Rev. Graydon Scott of Deposit, N.Y., on the occasion of the inaugural trip of the *Erie Limited* in June 1929.

The sentiment expressed by Rev. Scott might well be termed a factor for the introduction of the *Erie Limited* by Erie Railroad officials. Every railroad, small or large, has a drawing power that is felt by the people who live close to it or who use it regularly. Friendliness, and even affection, grows throughout the years, and this is recognized by those who run the railroad. For such friendliness, officials often go to tremendous expense to create new features of comfort and convenience for their patrons so they may have the best in equipment and facilities. Other factors do enter the picture, but because railroading is the greatest service industry in the world, every effort is made to perpetuate the friendliness created by service.

For years, manufacturers and businessmen in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois have depended on the fast freight service offered by the Erie. But when these men wanted to travel to New York or Chicago, they preferred to use other railroads. Although Erie operated New York–Chicago passenger trains, its equipment was not up to date, and the schedules were slower than those on competing railroads. Erie concentrated on freight.

That changed on June 2, 1929, when Erie launched the new *Erie Limited* to facilitate more comfortable travel. Interestingly, today's *Erie Limited* takes 35 minutes longer to cover the route between Jersey City and Chicago. Previously, the journey took 23 hours 50 minutes, not counting the 25-minute ferry ride between New York City and Jersey City. What is behind this? While other railroads have cut running time considerably between New York and Chicago, the Erie has not felt it necessary. Before World War II caused all "name" trains to make more stops, the *Erie Limited* was already doing that, and has, in common with the Nickel Plate-Lackawanna through trains, consistently held to a fare about $2 less than others' deluxe New York–Chicago fares. Moreover, the most beautiful scenery is on the eastern end of the run, and the Erie's flagship covers it both ways in daylight.



WEST FROM JERSEY CITY

Let's ride westbound. Passengers must cross from New York to Jersey City by ferry or on the subway-like Hudson & Manhattan, which has a station under the Erie depot. Leaving Jersey City terminal at a scheduled 8:50 a.m., the train enters a long tunnel under Bergen Hill, passing right under the Lackawanna tracks at the far portal. The Erie then works north through Paterson to Suffern, just inside New York State. At Newburg Junction, the Graham Line, a low-grade freight route, branches off to the north. Beyond Middletown the Erie goes over a small summit and drops into the beautiful series of valleys that extend in a line from Kingston, N.Y., to Stroudsburg, Pa.

After Port Jervis the line follows the Delaware River,

The *Erie Limited* follows the curving Delaware River for 90 miles west of Port Jervis, N.Y., before attacking the Gulf Summit grade.
David R. Connor

and here can be seen remnants of the old Delaware & Hudson Canal, the father of the D&H Railroad. At Lackawaxen, Pa., a freight branch turns off to the left toward Scranton, paralleling the D&H canal remnants. Parts of this branch were at one time operated by cable. The first major geographical barrier is Gulf Summit, elevation 1,369 feet, crest of a helper grade for freight trains in both directions. Soon the railroad goes across the famous 1848 Starrucca Viaduct and follows the East Branch of the Susquehanna River through Susquehanna, Pa., and Binghamton, N.Y., all the way to Waverly, N.Y. Then follows a series of more southern New York towns, in almost make-believe scenic settings: Elmira, Corning, and Hornell. Here the Buffalo trains, including a through connection for the *Erie Limited*, branch off northwest and the main line becomes single track until Cuba Junction, in the heart of dairy and lumbering country.

From Cuba Junction the *Erie Limited* goes by Carrollton, a connection to the Bradford oil fields, then Salamanca; Jamestown on beautiful Chautauqua Lake; Corry, Meadville, and Sharon, Pa.; and Youngstown, Ohio, which is bypassed by the principal freight route. Not far west of Youngstown, at Leavittsburg, the freight bypass rejoins the main line and an important Erie line branches off to Cleveland, while the main line continues west through Akron, Marion (where, east of the yard and locomotive shops, a branch south to Dayton diverges), and Lima, Ohio, and Huntington, Ind., then angles slightly northwest toward Chicago. Beyond Hammond, Ind., the *Limited* uses the partially Erie-owned Chicago & Western Indiana Railroad to reach Dearborn Station.

The *Erie Limited* is usually headed by a class K-5a Pacific type locomotive, a 1923 Baldwin-built copy of the United States Railroad Administration heavy Pacific, which only the Erie received. These engines are thoroughly modern, many having been recently rebuilt with cast engine beds, Boxpok

Big-tendered K-5a 2940 has just crested Gulf Summit but is still working steam to lift the westbound *Erie Limited*'s 12-car consist over the top at 1:09 p.m. on July 4, 1946.
W. R. Osborne

***ERIE LIMITED* CONSISTS**	
WESTBOUND NO. 1	**EASTBOUND NO. 2**
1 express, Akron–Chicago, sealed	1 express, Chicago–Binghamton, working
1 express, Jersey City–Chicago, sealed	2 express, Chicago–Jersey City, working
1 express, Jersey City–Chicago, working	1 storage mail, Chicago–Jersey City, working
1 baggage-exp., Jersey City–Chicago, working	1 RPO-baggage, Chicago–Jersey City, working
1 RPO-baggage, Jersey City–Chicago, working	1 coach, Chicago–Jersey City
1 reclining seat coach, Jersey City–Chicago	1 buffet-coach, Buffalo–Jersey City
1 buffet-coach, Jersey City–Buffalo	1 diner-lounge, Chicago–Marion, and another Youngstown–Jersey City
1 diner-lounge, Jersey City–Youngstown, and another Marion–Chicago	1 Pullman sleeper, Chicago–Jersey City
1 Pullman sleeper, Jersey City–Chicago	Totals (weekdays): 8 cars, Chicago–Marion; 7 cars, Marion–Youngstown; 8 cars, Youngstown–Hornell; 9 cars, Hornell–Binghamton; 8 cars, Binghamton–Jersey City. On Tuesdays, the non-passenger-carrying cars are increased by one by the Chicago–Newark (Jersey City, with switch delivery) *Life* magazine movement.
1 "streamlined" Pullman slpr., Salamanca–Chgo.	
Totals (weekdays): 8 cars, Jersey City–Hornell; 7 cars, Hornell–Salamanca; 8 cars, Salamanca–Youngstown; 7 cars, Youngstown–Akron; 8 cars, Akron–Marion, 9 cars, Marion–Chicago.	

The westbound *Limited* crosses the New York-Pennsylvania state line as it bridges the Delaware River at Mill Rift, Pa. An ordinary Pullman, not a fancy observation car with a tail sign, brings up the rear of the Erie's unpretentious but comfortable flagship.
Wayne Brumbaugh

The famous Starrucca Viaduct, a landmark on the *Erie Limited*'s route at Lanesboro, Pa., was observing its centennial year at the time of this June 17, 1948, photo. The great stone bridge measures 1,040 feet long and stands 100 feet above Starrucca Creek.
Charles A. Elston

drivers, and high-capacity six-axle tenders.

Yes, the *Erie Limited* is still steam-powered, and until recently all its cars were of the older "heavyweight" type. The one exception, introduced in July 1942, is a new streamlined *American*-series 6-section/6-roomette/4-double-bedroom car that the train carries between Salamanca and Chicago. The *Limited*'s other Pullmans are 10-section/2-double-bedroom/1-drawing-room heavyweights with names in the *Scenic* series.

SLOW BUT BUSY SCHEDULE

As can be seen from the consist tables on the previous page, the *Erie Limited* is a busy train with a lot of en route switching.

Weekend consists differ from those shown in the table. On Saturday and Sunday, No. 1 is often a 10- to 11-car train east of Hornell and 8 to 10 cars west thereof, mostly owing to increased coach traffic. Again because of heavier coach traffic, on weekends No. 2 usually carries 9 cars from Chicago to Marion, 8 to Youngstown, 9 to Hornell, 11 or 12 to Binghamton, 10 or 11 to Port Jervis, and 11 or 12 to Jersey City. During the fruit season, starting in late April or early May, No. 2 frequently handles 12 cars, increasing the number of head-end cars from 5 to 9 between Chicago and Binghamton and from 4 to 8 on to Jersey City with express refrigerator cars from western connections. All the passenger-carrying cars on the *Erie Limited* are air-conditioned, and all the coaches, which Erie calls "Salon Coaches," feature individual reclining seats.

Doubleheading of locomotives is usually restricted to when there are 11 to 12 cars and lost time to be recovered. Westbound No. 1, even if on time, requires a second engine on the Allegany Division from Hornell to Wellsville or Olean, N.Y., when there are 10 or more cars. Ordinarily, the Erie prefers to run second sections to doubleheading its through-line passenger trains, as it calls them. Since the K-5a's are equipped with the most modern appliances and trailing-truck boosters, they can start and maintain timetable speed with quite heavy trains.

Other Erie passenger service is provided on an almost train-every-eight-hour schedule between Jersey City and Chicago by Nos. 5 and 6, the combined *Lake Cities* (serving its end point of Cleveland) and the *Midlander*, and by Nos. 7 and 8, the *Pacific* and *Atlantic Expresses*, respectively. These last two trains are principally mail, express, and (in the case of No. 8) milk trains, but do carry through coaches all the way and offer sleeping-car service on portions of their runs. ■

THIS ARTICLE, like many in the early years of Trains, originally appeared without a byline. Its original title was "Erie Limited." Erie Railroad authorities Larry DeYoung and Marty Obed contributed additional material for this republication.

In a grand display of standard railroading, K-5a Pacific 2936 steams out of Chicago with the *Erie Limited*. About 24 hours and 1,000 miles later, the train will be at the Erie's terminal on the Hudson River.
Railroad Photographic Club

GreatTrains IN PHOTOS

Beginning in 1885, the top trains between New York and Washington — the busiest intercity passenger route in America — were the Pennsylvania Railroad's *Congressional Limited* and its descendents. A keystone tail sign on the parlor-observation car identifies the *Congressional* as it pulls out of North Philadelphia beside a Philly–New York "Clocker" in the 1940s.
Al Rung

The *Congressional*'s younger (1929), longer-distance (Boston–Washington) running mate was the *Senator*, operated east of New York by the New Haven. PRR re-equipped both trains with 64 Budd-built cars — and painted 10 GG1s Tuscan red to pull them — in 1952. "G" 4911 speeds the westbound *Senator* under the Lehigh Valley bridge at Newark, N.J., in October '52.
John Dziobko

Parlor-obs car *George Washington* brings up the rear of the *Afternoon Congressional*, departing Washington on March 29, 1968, two months after the Penn Central merger. By this time, the future kings of the ex-PRR portion of the Northeast Corridor — the *Metroliners* — were late and getting later, beset by technical bugs that would delay their debut until January '69.
J. W. Swanberg

Parlor car *Henry Knox* (29 seats, 1 drawing room) in the eastbound *Senator* catches the afternoon sun at New Haven in May 1959. The letterboards of the silver 1952 "Congo" cars were a nod to PRR's Tuscan red tradition that the road would dispense with in the 1960s (see top photo).
J. W. Swanberg

In the tracks

A pleasant overnight jaunt on the Southern's all-Pullman limited

BY ROY G. CLARK

Green-and-white E6A No. 2902 and an E6B are about 4 miles out of Peachtree Station, Atlanta, with the northbound *Crescent* on March 16, 1947. The train's name is painted in the upper white area just in front of No. 2902's cab-door ladder.
R. D. Sharpless

of the "Vestibule"

Enclosed passages between cars were such a novelty when the forerunner of the *Crescent* was launched in 1891 that the train was named *Washington & South Western Vestibuled Limited*. "Vestibule Car" *Ulysses* was a combination baggage-smoker.
CLASSIC TRAINS collection

"Can you be in Washington tomorrow?" the telegram asks. Only the Western Union folks know how many millions of similar messages have gone out from our nation's capital in the five turbulent years since the United States was drawn into World War II. But even Western Union can't say how many men have grown gray overnight trying to get Pullman reservations there on a few hours' notice.

However, we're lucky this time and at 1:30 p.m. we arrive at Atlanta Terminal Station with a little pink ticket for Lower 4, Car 94, and with five minutes remaining before departure time for us to look over the Southern Railway's *Crescent*, the all-Pullman limited that will carry us to Washington.

The West Point Route steam locomotive that brought the train in from Montgomery, Ala., has been replaced by a two-unit Southern diesel-electric, its 4,000 horses champing at the bit. Walking back, we count a Railway Post Office car, a combination baggage-club car, three Pullmans for Washington, two for New York, the dining car, then three more Pullmans for New York, and, on the end, an observation car with 3 compartments, 2 drawing rooms, and lounge This is a dignified and solid train of 12 cars with no emergency hodge-podge equipment stuck in here and there, as is so often the case these days. Including the sleeper-observation, no fewer than seven different Pullman car types are represented, offering section, drawing room, compartment, and double bedroom accommodations.

The *Crescent* is the modern version of the *Washington & South Western Vestibuled Limited*, inaugurated in January 1891. After a short period during which it ran only between Atlanta and Washington, with connections south and north, it became the pioneer through train between New Orleans and New York. The first all-year train in the South to carry vestibuled equipment, it soon gained the nickname of the "Vestibule," and folks used to spend lots of time walking from car to car just to enjoy the thrill of being able to do so without losing their hats. It was the first train, too, to operate dining cars between Atlanta and New York.

The route then, as now, was Louisville & Nashville from New Orleans to Montgomery, West Point Route to Atlanta, Southern Railway (known as such beginning in 1894) to Washington, and Pennsylvania Railroad to New York. The trains were numbered 37 and 38, just like today. After vestibules became commonplace, the name was shortened to *Washington & South Western Limited*; in 1906 it was changed to a more descriptive *New York and New Orleans Limited*, a title it held for two decades.

New Orleans is the Crescent City, and in April 1925 the train, re-equipped with five sets of cars, became the *Crescent Limited*. The Southern's famous green-and-gold Ps-4 Pacifics began hauling it between Atlanta and Washington the following year. The train assumed perhaps its most striking appearance with the arrival in 1929 of more new Pullmans, which were dressed in a two-tone green with gold CRESCENT LIMITED lettering; some of the 1925 cars got the same treatment, and some Ps-4 tenders were emblazoned with the train name. In 1938, "Limited" was officially dropped and the train became simply the *Crescent*. Devotees of Southern's great green 4-6-2s shed a tear in 1941 when Electro-Motive diesels took over the head-end duties between Atlanta and Washington.

Winding out of Atlanta

The "all aboard" call tells us to get into our car. The *Crescent* slips out of Terminal Station, runs parallel with the Union Station tracks for about a mile north, swings to the right, and crosses the tracks of the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis. In 10 minutes we're at Peachtree Station, a popular suburban point of departure for north-side Atlantans. Many a harried postwar traveler jumping aboard downtown at the last minute, but without a Pullman ticket, has joyfully noted the empty sections when his train left the terminal, only to have all hope dashed when the crowds flocked aboard at Peachtree.

We're winding now through Atlanta's north-side residential section, reputed to be equaled in gracious beauty only by Chicago's famed North Shore region and New York's Westchester County. A mile or so farther on, we're starting up a stiff short grade to Oglethorpe University Station. This brings to mind the nights we've listened in bed, in our nearby home, to the diminishing rumble of the heavy tonnage freights as they worked this grade. We've strained along with the big 2-10-2s as their exhausts slowed down to less than 50 a minute, finally topping the crest at 10 mph, and we've relaxed with them as they rapidly accelerated after getting over the summit. Today our diesel with its reserve

Ps-4 No. 1401, one of the handsome Pacifics that began hauling the *Crescent Limited* in 1926, brings the train into Atlanta in 1939. The only surviving Ps-4, this engine has been displayed at the Smithsonian Institution since 1962.
R. E. Prince

power slips over the top in an effortless stride.

In an hour we're at Gainesville, Ga. We cross the wavery track of the Gainesville Midland, a picturesque Georgia short line, and, as we swing around a curve, we catch our first glimpse of the hazy Blue Ridge Mountains to the west. We'll see these mountains most of the afternoon, but we'll be running parallel with them and will never enter them.

Now that our tickets have been collected, let's go to the club car for a better view of the route. We're traveling on the main stem of the entire Southern Railway System, a double-track line that extends from Atlanta to Washington in a tree-trunk fashion, its diverging lines extending from both sides like substantial branches.

Since before the Civil War, this historic route has been the most vital artery of commerce and travel in the Piedmont states. Along it the Battle of the Wilderness was fought between Manassas and Orange, Va., and during the tragic closing days of the war Confederate President Jefferson Davis fled

At an unknown station on an unknown date, *Crescent Limited* passengers enjoy the open rear platform of the train's sleeper-observation car as a Ps-2 light Pacific passes.
F. S. McKay

Ps-4 1397 (top), its days on the *Crescent* over, awaits its next trip south at Washington's Ivy City engine terminal in the late 1940s. Also at Ivy City (above), E6 2801, lettered for the *Southerner,* stands in front of a Ps-4, whose steam rises above the diesel.
Ps-4: Leonard Rice, Southern Railway Hist. Assn. coll.; E6: Ron Flanary coll.

southward over what are now Southern rails.

Today the line is jam-packed with a great diversity of traffic. From Greenville, S.C., northward it traverses the fabulous cotton country, and later this afternoon we will pass mill after mill with remarkable regularity, and we'll recognize that the slogan "a mill a mile" is no exaggeration. Bananas from New Orleans, oil from the Southwest, manufactured products from Atlanta, and general freight from the prosperous cities on the route keep the Southern's rails shiny.

Three routes from New Orleans

The Southern is the only American railroad that offers three optional through routes between two major cities more than 1,000 miles apart. The traveler from New Orleans to Washington may ride Southern rails all the way if he chooses the luxurious coach streamliner, the *Southerner,* via Meridian, Miss.; Birmingham; and Atlanta. Or he may take the *Crescent*, our train, and proceed via Mobile, Montgomery, and Atlanta, in which case he'll be on L&N and West Point Route rails for more than 40 percent of the trip. On a third alternate route, he may go via Birmingham; Knoxville, Tenn.; and Roanoke Va., riding the heavy and curving rails of the Norfolk & Western between Bristol, Tenn., and Lynchburg, Va. The *Southerner* makes the fastest time, just over 27 hours, with the *Crescent* taking almost three hours longer. The Birmingham–Knoxville–Roanoke route requires two nights on the road and is considerably slower.

But back to the double-track Atlanta–Washington line, which is equipped with automatic block signals all the way and with automatic train stop for part of the distance. The terrain is rather rough throughout, since the line runs parallel with the mountain ranges and therefore must cross all the rivers and divides that extend toward the ocean. Going northward the ruling grade is between Monroe and Charlottesville, Va. (the general locale of the wreck of the old No. 97, famed in song and story), and steam-powered passenger trains with more than 13 cars must be doubleheaded. Our diesel will take the *Crescent* over the hill without help, even though we'll have 15 cars after we leave Greensboro, N.C., tonight; Pullmans from Charlotte, Raleigh, and Asheville will be added before then.

After we leave Lynchburg late tonight, we'll be on a mighty busy piece of passenger line. Twelve daily through trains travel in each direction, not counting the fleet operated by Chesapeake & Ohio, which has trackage rights for its trains over Southern rails from Orange to Alexandria, Va., just across the Potomac River from Washington.

Nothing could be finer . . .

Every railfan remembers the song hit of yesteryear, "Chattanooga Choo Choo," with its alluring line, "Dinner in the diner, nothing could be finer." It was a Southern diner that songwriter Harry Warren was referring to, as the hit was written shortly after he had taken a trip on the road's *Birmingham Special*. Let's enjoy one of the Southern's fine steaks now, which, with the rest of the meal, will convince us that Warren was right.

At 10:45 p.m. we're at Danville, Va., junction point for the lines to Richmond and Norfolk, and it's time to go to bed. While we're asleep, our car, with several others, will be set off at Washington Union Station at 4:30 a.m., and the Washington Terminal switch crew will do it so nicely that we'll never wake up. Incidentally, the *Crescent* will have covered the 637.5 miles from Atlanta at an average speed of 42.7 mph — a gait that undoubtedly will be stepped up as wartime traffic subsides.

In a way it's too bad that we're riding the *Crescent* to Washington instead of a different train that arrives in daylight, because we'll miss the always-new thrill of first seeing the Washington Monument and the Capitol dome as we glide across the Potomac River bridge. And we'll miss the interesting view of the river from the bridge as well as the trip past some of our best-known government buildings and through the tunnel that burrows right under Capitol Hill. But we'll see all that when we go back to Atlanta on the *Crescent*, which leaves at 1 p.m.

Incidentally, we learn that neither the Southern nor its tenant the C&O gets into Washington on its own rails. Going northward, Southern ownership ends at the junction with the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac in Alexandria, on which Southern has rights to the south end of the river bridge; the Pennsylvania — that big old man that gets everywhere — owns the bridge and the tracks to the Capitol Hill tunnel's south portal. The tunnel and tracks into the station are owned by the Washington Terminal Co., which, in turn, is owned 50 percent each by the Baltimore & Ohio and the PRR.

Huge, sprawling Washington Union Sta-

The decoration of individual locomotives was a tradition in the South, and the Southern was the leading practitioner of the art in the 20th century. Ps-4 1395, steaming at Ivy City in 1935, sports an eagle on the smokebox and "candlesticks" flanking the headlight.
Thomas C. Tenniswood

Atlanta & West Point and Western Railway of Alabama — together known as the West Point Route — handle the *Crescent* between Atlanta and Montgomery. On February 28, 1948, WofA 4-8-2 No. 185 heads a 13-car train 38 east at Hogansville, Ga.
David W. Salter

West of Montgomery, the *Crescent* rides the Louisville & Nashville to New Orleans. In 1950, L&N E6s 776 and 770 stand with train 37 at the Flomaton, Ala., station after a non-stop run from Montgomery. Connecting train 64 from Pensacola, Fla., is at right.
Robert Chapman

tion is operated by the Terminal Company, whose tenants are B&O, C&O, Pennsylvania, RF&P, and Southern. The roads from the south enter by the tunnel and use the lower-level tracks, while the B&O and PRR come from the north onto the upper-level stub tracks. The number of trains entering and departing on the upper level is bewildering to a visitor from the hinterlands, where two or three trains in the station at one time is something to talk about.

The Washington Pullmans may be occupied until 7:30 a.m. (about when the New York portion of the *Crescent* is pulling out of 30th Street Station, Philadelphia), and we take full advantage of the extra time. We crowd into a taxi that makes four other stops before it eventually deposits us at the Hotel Washington, just across from the Treasury Building and only a stone's throw from the White House grounds. After breakfast we spend hours telephoning to secretaries, assistant secretaries and, it seems, secretaries to secretaries — only to find that we're wanted tomorrow, not today.

Seeing Washington's sights

We decide to go sightseeing. Washington always has something to show a visitor, no matter how many times he goes there. Where to start? The White House, of course. It's second home to every American and it's the spot to which almost every visitor instinctively turns first.

But today is not visitors' day at the White House, so we walk through the Mall. In a few minutes we've reached the base of the Washington Monument. We recall the time, more than a few years back, when we came to the capital on a vacation and proved our prowess to our friends by climbing the stairs to the top, 555 feet. Today we take the elevator. The view, as always, is breathtaking. From nowhere else, not even in a plane, can one catch the broad conception of the Washington Plan as laid out by the French engineer L'Enfant back in the 1790s.

Although many visitors make the descent by stairway, we come down by elevator and walk down the Mall to the Capitol. The building's great dome makes it appear nearer than it actually is, and as we climb the tiers of steps at the entrance we resolve to take a taxi back to our hotel when we leave. Washington is called the City of Magnificent Distances, and rightfully so!

The magnificent distances are beginning to tell on us, so we do take a taxi when we go to the Lincoln Memorial, where the calm, quiet waters of the Reflecting Pool seem to mirror the man in whose honor it was erected.

Then, of course, we must stop by the Pentagon, just to say we've seen it, and after that make a quick trip through the Smithsonian Institution, which really merits a month's visit. Later on, we'll take a ride through Rock Creek Park, where the noise and turmoil of the city seem a thousand miles away.

All those sights should be of interest to every citizen. For those of us fascinated by railways, Washington has plenty to offer too. Take in the show at Union Station, especially before 9 a.m. and in the late afternoon, when most through trains arrive and depart. You can ride a B&O train or the George Avenue streetcar line to B&O's suburban Silver Spring station to see the parade of westbound streamliners between 5:44 and 6:04 p.m.

Fancy an out-and-back train trip? The Washington & Old Dominion's motor train departs Rosslyn in Arlington for Purcellville, Va., in the morning and afternoon. The interurban-like "Cabin John" trolley runs from Georgetown along the north bank of the Potomac to the Glen Echo amusement park. If you have a whole day, ride the Pennsy's local up the main line to Bowie, Md., then down a rural branch line to Pope's Creek. ■

ROY G. CLARK wrote nine feature articles for Trains *between 1944 and 1951, most about journeys on passenger trains. BILL SCHAFER, author of the* Southern Crescent *sidebar (opposite page), is retired from a management career with Southern and Norfolk Southern and co-founded the Southern Railway Historical Association, whose magazine he co-edits.*

From *Crescent* and *Southerner* to *Southern Crescent*

Three E8s leave Atlanta with the *Southern Crescent*'s cars from New Orleans, as the train is in two sections this August 1977 day.
Bill Schafer

In 1941, the Southern Railway operated dozens of passenger trains across its 8,000-mile system. Two of the most distinctive were the venerable New York–Atlanta–New Orleans all-Pullman *Crescent*, and the spanking new, all-coach, diesel-powered streamliner the *Southerner*, linking the same end points, but via an all-Southern routing between Atlanta and New Orleans.

The *Crescent* was streamlined in 1949 and retained its all-Pullman status on the Southern until summer 1956, when it absorbed the coach-and-Pullman *Augusta Special* north of Charlotte (it remained Pullman-only between Atlanta and Charlotte). The *Southerner*, always a coach train, added Pullman service in 1951 between Birmingham and New York, eventually carrying Pullmans over its entire route.

Throughout the 1950s and '60s, Southern, like many roads, suffered declining patronage that led to train consolidations and discontinuances. In late 1967, the railway combined the southbound *Southerner* with the *Crescent* between New York/Washington and Atlanta, departing D.C. around suppertime. The next day, the trains continued beyond Atlanta to New Orleans on their separate routes. Also still running was the southbound *Peach Queen*. Its through cars left New York in the evening; the main train left Washington just before midnight, reaching the Carolinas in the morning, and Atlanta in the afternoon.

Northbound, after an overnight run from New Orleans, the *Crescent* left Atlanta midday, and was the overnight train between the Carolinas and New York (with a set-out sleeper in D.C.); after an all-day trip from New Orleans, the *Southerner* continued overnight from Atlanta to Washington with through cars to New York. These four trains served what market remained between New York/Washington and the Carolinas/Atlanta. In early 1970, the Atlanta–Washington overnighters were branded the *Southern Crescent*; those between the Carolinas and New York were renamed the *Piedmont*.

An Amtrak alternative

When Amtrak materialized in May 1971, Southern was the largest intercity passenger carrier to opt out of joining the national rail passenger organization. The *Piedmont* quickly became a Washington–Atlanta coach-only daytime mixed train (toting piggybacks and auto racks behind the coaches), but the *Southern Crescent* remained the flagship, with sleepers, dining car, tavern car, and coaches, linking (in cooperation with Amtrak) New York, Washington, Atlanta, Birmingham, New Orleans, and even Los Angeles with through cars.

W. Graham Claytor Jr. was president of Southern when Amtrak was born. His road was prosperous enough, he reasoned, to operate its remaining passenger service for years at a minimal deficit, while avoiding the operational uncertainty and possible loss of control represented by the new Amtrak. Further, Amtrak was a nationalized experiment in intercity passenger service. The *Southern Crescent* could act as a private-sector control to highlight the pros and cons of rail operations in the public sector.

By most accounts, Claytor succeeded in distinguishing the *Southern Crescent* in the eight years it operated outside the Amtrak network. Touches that made the train special included meals fully prepared on the train; drawing room and master room accommodations unavailable on Amtrak; dome cars between Atlanta and New Orleans; and refurbished equipment. Southern maintained a policy of accommodating as many reservations as possible by adding equipment to handle traffic surges. During summer and holiday periods, 18-car trains and even extra sections were commonplace. And who could forget the traditions Claytor revived when the flanks and faces of Southern's E8s were painted green, and the stylized gold script *"Southern Crescent"* graced their cheeks?

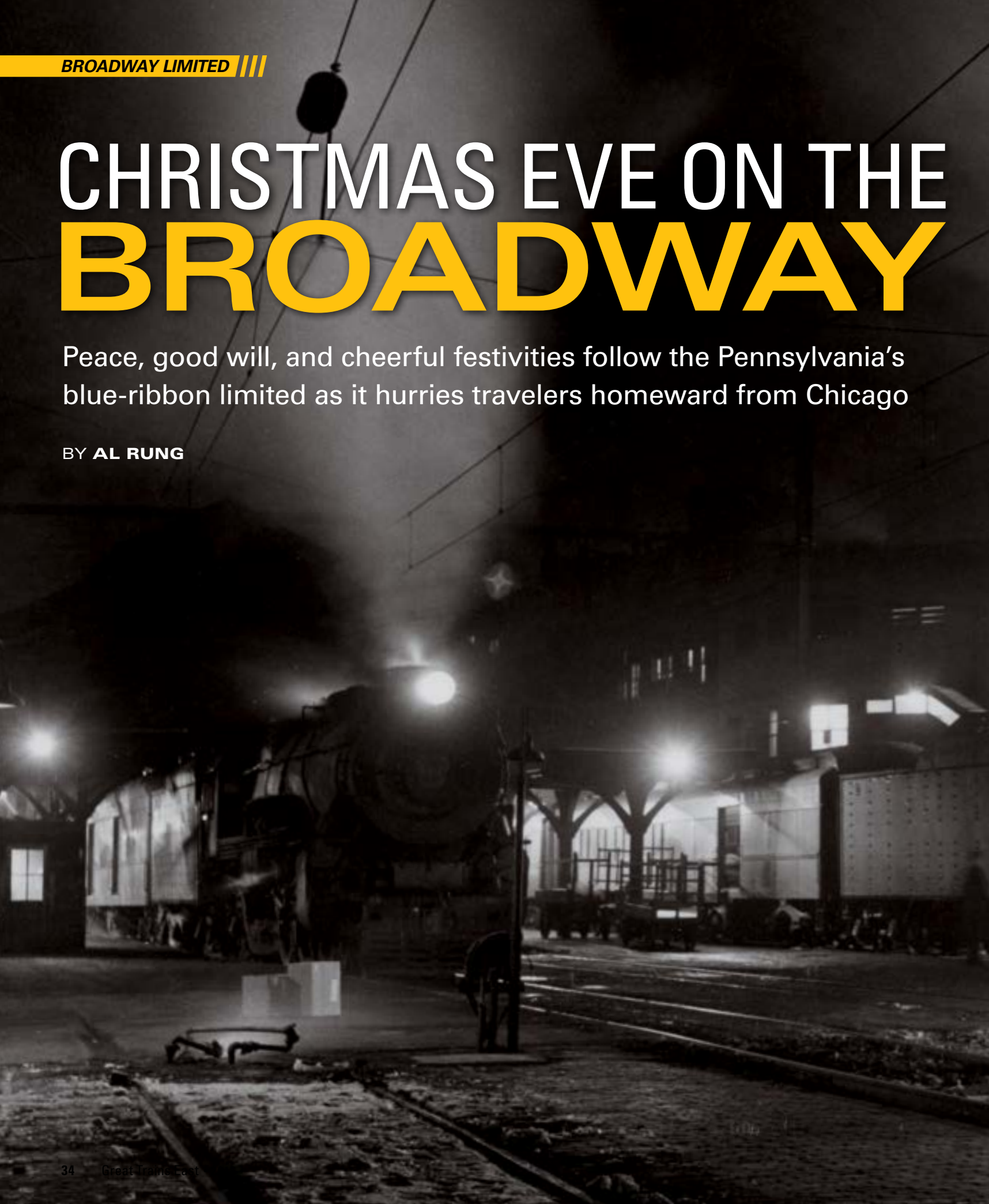
While some patrons were railfans and rail romantics, a significant number were businessmen. Many of the latter were Southern employees from the Washington office with business in Atlanta (or vice versa), who were required by company policy to utilize the train. To fly between the two cities took the assent of a vice president-level officer.

Time ran out for the *Southern Crescent* when its equipment began fraying, and Southern was faced with heavy rebuildings or new equipment acquisition. After attempts to discontinue the train, the road joined Amtrak on February 1, 1979. Amtrak dropped *"Southern"* from the train's name, and to this day, Amtrak's *Crescent* continues to link the Northeast with New Orleans on the route of the *Southerner* and the *Southern Crescent*. — *Bill Schafer*

CHRISTMAS EVE ON THE BROADWAY

Peace, good will, and cheerful festivities follow the Pennsylvania's blue-ribbon limited as it hurries travelers homeward from Chicago

BY **AL RUNG**



In winter especially, most of the *Broadway*'s run occurs in darkness. Here, K4s Pacifics prepare to head two trains west from snowy Harrisburg, Pa., one evening in the 1940s.
Al Rung

Christmas Eve of every year finds some thousand souls aboard the country's overnight limiteds while old Saint Nick and his arctic steeds whirl mystically through the night sky overhead. And while family groups and friends everywhere congregate in homes aglow with the festive Christmas spirit, the Christmas Eve travelers, luggage in hand, trudge along station platforms and swing aboard the trains that will be home to them for the most important, most anticipated night of the year.

Last December 24, Chicago Union Station thronged with thousands of late-afternoon travelers, most of whom were bound for towns and cities only a few hours' journey away. Traffic had been so heavy all afternoon that yard movements had been hampered, and only a few trains were being spotted on station tracks in time for scheduled loading and departure. A large crowd had gathered at the entrance gate of the Burlington's Minneapolis-bound *Afternoon Zephyr*, whose Vista Dome cars were visible through the gates.

The minute hand of the station clock moved resolutely onward, and it was 4:10 before the Pennsylvania's 4:15 *Detroit Arrow* opened for loading. At the far left gate, Gulf, Mobile & Ohio's new northern flagship *Abraham Lincoln* to St. Louis was loading (GM&O having just bought the Alton Railroad seven months before), well in advance of its scheduled 4:50 departure, while at Gate 22 a small group of passengers waited quietly for the *Broadway Limited*'s train announcement to be placed on the board.

PRR's flagship debuted June 15, 1902, as the *Pennsylvania Special* on a fast 20-hour schedule; 10 years later it was renamed *Broadway Limited*. D16 4-4-0 No. 1395 speeds the first trip out of Jersey City, location of PRR's main New York terminal until 1910.
Classic Trains collection

At 4:25, just five minutes before scheduled leaving time, the lights on the gate board were switched on and the red-and-gold train announcement was lifted into position. "4:30 P.M., THE BROADWAY LIMITED, 16-HOUR TRAIN — PHILADELPHIA, NEWARK, NEW YORK," the sign read. Below this was listed the train's consist, which of course included nary a coach.

The passengers filed through the gate, calling out their space reservations to the gateman: "Roomette 2, car 285"; "Bedroom E, car 289." The train was handsome in its highly polished coat of Tuscan red and gold, and the red, white, and blue BROADWAY LIMITED tail sign shone in brilliant contrast to the darkened trainshed.

At Philadelphia in 1906, E3 Atlantic 374 leads the *Pennsylvania Special* through the complex convergence of main lines to New York, Washington, and Pittsburgh that would later become Zoo interlocking.
Gottfried Heibesen

At 4:41 the *Broadway* began to move slowly out of the station, past the *Abraham Lincoln*, whose modern coaches had been filled to the very last seat. Two New York Central coaches had thoughtfully been added to the GM&O train in anticipation of the heavy travel. The twin-unit E7 diesel that topped off the *Abe*'s consist stabbed its headlight in through the rounded rear windows of the *Broadway*'s streamlined observation car, *Skyline View*, as a farewell gesture.

Gathering speed as it passed PRR's 12th Street coach yards, the *Broadway* passed the Burlington's *Denver Zephyr* backing into Union Station for its nightly sprint to the foot of the Rockies.

Several passengers boarded at Englewood, 14 minutes out on the South Side of Chicago, and then the *Broadway* began to dig in for its race over the Pennsy's speedway to Fort Wayne — a stretch of track dear to every Pennsylvania Railroad man.

About five passengers sat in the observation lounge, all sipping drinks served by the lounge attendant. The 10-year-old son of a New York couple was bombarding his very tolerant father with a barrage of questions and comments in a tone of voice that clearly indicated that the youngster was "playing to the galleries." Finally his mother explained that he was "tired," and led him away to their room. This course of action was visibly appreciated by the other passengers.

The steel mills of Gary flashed by, then glimpses of towns and of cars halted at grade crossings as the *Broadway* hurtled past on its lightning-fast dash to Fort Wayne.

BEEF AND APPLE PIE IN THE DINING CAR

About six cars ahead, the dining car was the center of attraction. A courtly steward assigned the diners to their tables in the attractively decorated car. All tables were soon filled. Tablecloths on the *Broadway* dining cars differ from others used on the Pennsylvania; they are a rich copper-brown shade. The menu this Christmas Eve was palate-tickling: the *pièce de résistance* was braised ribs of beef, preceded by cream of pea soup and PRR assorted salad. Stewed onions and stringless beans were the vegetable offerings, topped off by a number of desserts, most interesting probably being the hot deep-dish apple pie. The meal would have made the most exacting gourmet weep tears of joy, and the service provided by the handpicked crew left nothing to be desired.

After dinner, in the lounge car a beautiful young actress and her husband played a few quiet rounds of cards. A middle-aged manufacturer was — between sips of beer — engrossed in a pocket-size mystery thriller, while a young chemical engineer read the December issue of TRAINS magazine (provided in the lounge cars of crack PRR trains). He finally paused at the Pennsylvania Railroad advertisement entitled "'Twas the Night Before Christmas." It pictured a PRR trainman, in company with Santa himself, smiling down on a sleeping youngster as she slept in her roomette.

Equipped with all-steel cars required for operation through the river tunnels into Penn Station, New York, the *Broadway* flies west at North Elizabeth, N.J. The locomotive is new E6s No. 425, one of the 80 "super Atlantics" the railroad built in 1914.
Fred Westing; below, Joe Welsh collection

"Step into cars aglow with good cheer and good fellowship," said the ad copy. The chemist showed it to the smiling lounge attendant and said, "I think it would be a splendid act of good fellowship on the part of the Pennsylvania Railroad if it were to serve a free round of drinks tonight." The attendant, who had listened with amused anticipation, broke into a hearty guffaw that soon had the other occupants of the car laughing.

"That laugh is worth a million words," said the manufacturer.

The chemist grinned. "Well, if Santa isn't going to visit us tonight I'm going to turn in," he said, and after exchanging a "Merry Christmas" with the other passengers he left the car.

A beauty parlor owner had been looking idly about the car. He expressed interest in the *Broadway*'s master rooms, and since both were vacant that night, the attendant showed him one of those luxurious, two-person rooms, each of which had a shower bath, at that time the only such Pullman accommodation in the country except for a similar car on the *Broadway*'s running mate, the Chicago–Washington *Liberty Limited*.

Christmas Eve 1947 was cold and clear, and bright moonlight bathed the rolling fields of Indiana and Ohio as the *Broadway* streaked eastward. From the cushioned quiet of a darkened room you could plainly see the brilliantly lighted farmhouses and town residences, and sense the pre-Christmas activity going on inside. Glimpses of colorful Christmas trees could be seen through parlor windows, and in many windows electric candles were glowing.

The gleaming Tuscan red limited drifted to a halt at the crew-change and service stop of small Crestline, Ohio. With ghostly quiet, the shadowy figures of station workers appeared and began to check the train's mechanical equipment and fill the water reservoirs of the cars. Soon, then, the station lights of Crestline glided gently backward as the *Broadway* resumed its trek to New York.

A few miles east, at Toledo Junction, a steam-shrouded M1 4-8-2 freight engine waited in the darkness for the *Broadway* to clear the main line and enable the Toledo–Pittsburgh nightly merchandiser to again get under way toward the Steel City.

Mansfield and Orrville flashed by, and on the station platforms stood truckloads of parcel post that wouldn't arrive in time for

K4s Pacific 5369 pauses with the eastbound *Broadway* at Englewood Union Station on Chicago's South Side in the late 1920s or '30s. Singly and later doubleheaded, the K4 was standard power on PRR 28 and 29 for a quarter of a century.
Andrew Hritz

Representing the epitome of the "standard era" limited, the westbound *Broadway* makes its Englewood stop in 1933. Open-platform observation cars, already losing favor to enclosed "solarium" cars, would soon be rendered passé by streamlined designs.
Rail Photo Service

Christmas — mute testimony to the overloading of postal and express facilities during the unprecedented 1947 holiday rush.

It was getting on toward midnight now, and most homes were in darkness, although — considering the hour — a surprising number were ablaze with light. You could imagine children's gifts being placed under the family tree, trimmed with patience and loving care though possibly at the expense of a strained disposition or two.

The *Broadway* raced for the Ohio River with the springing, steely stride of a giant greyhound. Up ahead you could see the speeding three-unit Electro-Motive diesel as it swung gracefully around the curves and under signal bridges whose yellow position-light signals jumped from a vertical to a horizontal position as the diesel thundered past below.

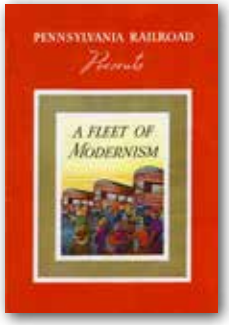
Then up the mighty Ohio, both of whose banks are lined with the heavy industry that is an outpost of the Pittsburgh-area activity. On the adjacent track, forerunners of the westbound night fleet flashed by with a roar and a blaze of light. Then all was still

throughout the cold moonlit valley.

Beyond the brief stop at Pittsburgh, the train rolled past East Liberty and Greensburg, then twisted through the rugged Conemaugh River valley and over the bridge at Johnstown and curved away into the night as steel furnaces lit the sky.

UNEXPECTED HALT IN THE MOUNTAINS

The *Broadway*, having made up the 11-minute deficit caused by the late departure from Chicago, was running right on time before it slowed to a halt past the summit of the Alleghenies, perhaps a mile short of the famed Horseshoe Curve. Then the stillness became apparent. Nothing stirred that night on the famous four-track main line that climbed the dark, hushed mountains. Inside the insulated, streamlined Pullmans, lights shone softly on carpeted aisles, but as in



On June 15, 1938 — the 36th anniversary of its launch — the *Broadway* was upgraded to a streamlined train, albeit with a rebuilt heavyweight RPO and diner. Given a shroud in 1936, K4s 3468 heads the new equipment's inaugural eastbound run at Englewood. Rival NYC completely streamlined its *20th Century Limited* on the same date.
Vernon Seaver

In 1938, GG1 electrics like No. 4869 (top, on a commuter train at Perth Amboy, N.J.), began powering the *Broadway* east of Harrisburg. Beyond catenary, T1 duplex 4-4-4-4s (left, backing toward Chicago Union Station at 21st Street) were to be the successors to the long-serving K4, but were quickly pushed aside by diesels, particularly EMD E7s (right, on an outbound train, also at 21st Street).
GG1, Frank Kozempel; T1 and E7, Robert Caflisch, Helen Caflisch collection

the famous Christmas Eve poem, "not a creature was stirring."

The midtrain lounge car, flooded only a few hours before with bright light, smart décor, and talkative passengers, was now the peacefully dark headquarters of the train crew. Only one trainman remained in the car, his bulk silhouetted against a window.

"Forty-eight's got engine trouble," he said about the *General* up ahead of us.

Soon the other trainmen returned, their electric lanterns jabbing beams of light around the wood-paneled walls of the lounge car. "We're going to back to MG Tower and run around 48," said the conductor, referring to a set of crossovers located midway up the grade west of Altoona.

Before the *Broadway* began to back up, the Detroit–Washington *Red Arrow*, train 68, stepped smartly past us on an adjacent track with her K4 Pacific's sprightly exhaust chuckling as she bypassed our streamlined, diesel-powered blue-ribbon train. And so the K4 will be remembered — valiantly turning in a last great performance before being retired from mainline service to be replaced by more modern power.

After backing to MG, our *Broadway* switched to another track and started slowly down the mountain again. The *General* had

The *Broadway* heads east out of Englewood in 1948, the last full year for the train's 1938 equipment. These cars introduced the elegant two-tone red and gold "Fleet of Modernism" livery; their 1949 replacements would wear a simpler red-and-gold scheme.
Edmund M. Spieker, Andrew Spieker collection

remedied its diesel trouble by this time, however, and so went ahead of us around the graceful, moonlit Horseshoe Curve and into Altoona, mechanical heart of the PRR.

The drab station and sooty Civil War-era trainshed at Altoona camouflage the fact that here is the home of the great spirit that nightly directs and drives the Pennsy's east-west fleet — the spirit that is present in every operating department, shop, and office the length and breadth of the far-flung Pennsylvania system. The executive formality and elegance, the polished desks and occasional touches of glitter that are a part of operations in the large eastern cities, won't be found in Altoona. You will have to look hard to detect even the slightest outward indication of this timeless spirit. But look closely at the small group of trainmen standing on the station platform — the men who loudly profess disdain for any sentiment about railroads — as they brace themselves against the biting wind of a cold winter night to watch the *Broadway* slip away to the east. The *Broadway* is more than just "No. 28" to these men.

For the next 2 hours 20 minutes, we raced over PRR's Middle Division, through the historic Juniata Valley that once was laced with Indian foot trails, later to give way to plodding Conestoga wagons and canal boats. Dark, towering mountains looked down on the speeding train.

ENGINE CHANGE AT HARRISBURG

In the gray half-light of dawn at Harrisburg, the diesel units were cut off, replaced by a green and gold GG1 electric for the last high-speed dash over the tensely scheduled Philadelphia and New York divisions. Then the *Broadway* rolled along the broad Susquehanna River, lined with huge plants of the Bethlehem Steel Co. Past the slumbering army air base at Middletown she went, then over the rolling hills of beautiful Lancaster County. She left the deserted Lancaster station behind in a swirling 80-mph rush, crossed the high stone bridge at Coatesville, and headed for the Main Line suburbs of Philadelphia.

At Paoli, the *Broadway Limited* entered the string of fashionable residential towns that stretch for some 15 miles along PRR rails to the city limits of Philadelphia. The early morning sun that shone on the Main Line that Christmas morning reflected from the vine-covered embankment and from the foliage of residential lawns, a warm blending of greens and browns that brightened the cold of the day.

Dining-car attendance for Christmas breakfast was light; Philadelphia-bound passengers apparently had arranged to have breakfast with their families on arrival — and the majority of *Broadway* passengers were destined for Philadelphia. It was about 9:05 a.m. when the GG1 brought the blue-ribbon flyer to a halt at North Philadelphia station, the only stop in the city for PRR's east-west fleet. The eastbound platform was unusually quiet for this hour — it's normally jammed with passengers bound for New York — and the ceremony of unloading luggage onto the platform and tipping the porters was quickly accomplished.

In a matter of seconds the *Broadway* was rolling noiselessly along the platform, bearing passengers, trainmen, and porters home to New York for Christmas morning get-togethers with their families. And as the streamlined observation car receded down the straightaway that is the Pennsylvania's main line to New York, Philadelphia passengers walked downstairs to the taxi stands to board cabs that took them to all parts of the city, each to participate, a few minutes later, in the happy festivities that have made Christmas morning a joyous occasion throughout the civilized world.

ALBERT M. RUNG, son of a PRR conductor at Harrisburg, Pa., held several positions with Kalmbach Publishing Co. during 1947–53 and wrote at least 10 articles for Trains. He joined CB&Q's public relations department in 1957, retiring in 1978 as Burlington Northern's V.P. of p.r. and advertising. He died in 2000.

The Reading Company's *Crusader* of 1937 was one of the first non-articulated streamliners in America. The Budd-built train made two Philadelphia–Jersey City round trips daily except Sunday. For faster turns at terminals, the five-car consist had an observation car at each end. In April 1948, one of the two 1918 Pacifics streamlined for the train hurries the *Crusader* west through Woodbourne, Pa.

Robert J. Linden, Dale W. Woodland collection

Like B&O's Royal Blue Line [pages 92–101], the Reading's New York trains used the Central Railroad of New Jersey main line east of Bound Brook, N.J. Year-old FP7s 904 and 903 make 70 mph down the CNJ at Fanwood, N.J., with the *Crusader* in August 1951. The symmetrical train consisted of two coach-observations, two coaches, and a diner-lounge in the middle.
Edward Theisinger

The Reading sidelined the Budd consist in fall 1960, then sold it to Canadian National. On May 29, 1965, one year after its debut as the Montreal–Quebec City *Champlain*, the train heads west at St. Hubert, Que., behind an FPA4. CN dispersed the cars to other runs, and VIA retired the last ones in 1981, the same year the *Crusader*, RDC-equipped but still named, died.
Bob Krone

By parlor car to BOSTON

New Haven's crack *Merchants Limited* has the atmosphere of an exclusive club and has carried almost every important American

BY **ROY G. CLARK**

Handsome and sleek in a sophisticated way, like a well-groomed woman, the New York, New Haven & Hartford's *Merchants Limited* stands waiting in New York City's Grand Central Terminal. An illuminated sign signifies that she will make another trip to Boston at 5 o'clock this afternoon.

Up ahead, one of NH's big electric locomotives stands inert, her tense silence contrasting with the turbulent chatter of the diesel-electrics we've become accustomed to hearing in other stations in recent years. Behind her the highly polished cars string out: a club car, four parlor cars with drawing rooms, two dining cars, three standard parlor cars, and a lounge-observation car. In the last car, an important-looking gentleman wearing spats is using the train telephone to give last-minute orders to his office downtown. Until recently, this telephone service was available only at the terminals, through wire connections to the telephone circuits. Now, however, radio phone service is available while the train is moving.

The whole layout has the atmosphere of an exclusive city club, and we begin to understand why an extra fare is charged.

As early as 1855, only two decades after most people knew what railroads were, the need for quick travel between New York and Boston became apparent. In that year the first through route was established, utilizing various small lines through Dedham, Mass., to Mechanicsville, Conn., and on to Norwich, where passengers boarded a steamer that went down the Thames River and through Long Island Sound to New York City. Today's fast *Merchants Limited*, streaking between the cities at an average speed of 53 mph, is a far cry from that early rail-water schedule, but its purpose is the same as then — to give New York and Boston the quickest possible means of earthbound transportation.

The New Haven became established in Connecticut and Rhode Island at an early date, and it has virtually kept the two states in its pocket since. It is the only Class 1 road operating in Rhode Island and, with the exception of Central Vermont, has the same distinction in Connecticut. It is the only railroad in the United States that serves exclusively four cities of better than 150,000 population each: Bridge-

Two Alco DL109 diesels rush the all-parlor-car *Merchants Limited* toward Boston at East Haven, Conn., on a summer evening in 1947.
T. J. Donahue

The image of a full-rigged ship on the observation car's tail sign identifies this as the *Yankee Clipper,* one of the *Merchants'* running mates on the New York–Boston run. The train is not far out of the Park Avenue Tunnel north of Grand Central Terminal, New York.
Frederick B. Gleason Jr.

port, Hartford, New Haven, and Providence. Because it serves one of the most densely populated regions in the nation — the average population per square mile is 476 — it has spread a network of lines over Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island.

The *Merchants Limited* was born on December 14, 1903, and has operated continuously since then. It has carried almost every important personage in the U.S. in the intervening 45 years. The original train consisted of five parlor cars, a baggage-buffet car, and a dining car, pulled by a 4-4-0 locomotive. It made the 229-mile run in 5 hours flat.

Our trip this afternoon will spread before us a kaleidoscopic picture: high-speed interlocking plants, drawbridges over navigable waters, multiple tracks on which dozens of electric suburban trains will streak past, branch line after branch line forking off to the north and, always, flashing glimpses of blue water as we skirt the north shore of Long Island Sound. That a high-speed train like the *Merchants* can be operated safely over this congested labyrinth seems almost incredible until one learns of the remarkable railroad plant created to make it possible. Automatic block signals, automatic train-stop control for 113 miles, heavy modern track with high-speed turnouts to third and fourth main tracks, all provide the flexibility and safety needed.

In the 229 miles to Boston there are 12 drawbridges over navigable waters, and 50 interlocking plants, but in most instances the passengers will never notice them, they are so well equipped for high-speed operations. All but one drawbridge can be crossed at 45 mph — but more about them later. Here's the "All aboard!"

SMOOTHLY OUT OF GRAND CENTRAL

We glide smoothly out of the station and into the tunnel that burrows under the most fabulously valuable real estate in the world. The tunnel lights flash by, faster and faster, and in eight minutes we're through the 125th Street station without stopping. The multiple tracks are jammed with fast-running New York Central and New Haven suburban trains, carrying commuters to their homes.

We're on a part of the old New York & Harlem, owned now by NYC and leased jointly to the NYC and the New Haven. Near 138th Street at Mott Haven, we leave the Hudson Division of the NYC and turn eastward on its White Plains–Chatham line.

Twelve miles out, at Woodlawn, we swing to the east again and are now on New Haven rails. This is the old New York & New Haven Railroad, built in 1848 and on which suburban service was established back then. Here, without stopping, our locomotive switches from third-rail to catenary power. We'll have four main tracks from here to New Haven, and our line will be electrified to that point.

We pass commuter train after commuter train destined to the suburbs of New Rochelle, Rye, Greenwich, and Stamford, names that became familiar to many theatergoers years ago when these towns were spotlighted in George Cohan's great musical comedy, *Forty-five Minutes from Broadway.* At each suburban station we see dozens of parked automobiles, left there all day while the suburbanites go to and from downtown on the New Haven. Here is one region where the automobile likely won't cut into train travel. Wise motorists keep away from New York's traffic congestion.

At New Rochelle, N.Y., the double-track Hell Gate Bridge line swings in from the right. It was built between 1912 and 1917 to afford direct rail connection with the Long Island and Pennsylvania railroads, and it is the route today for all through passenger trains and cars from Pittsburgh, Washington, and Philadelphia, to Boston. Prior to its construction, all through cars were ferried across New York Harbor, a slow and hazardous procedure. For a time, too, when these ferryboats burned, through Washington trains were routed via the Lehigh & Hudson River Railroad to Maybrook, N.Y., and thence over the double-track New Haven freight route through Poughkeepsie and

A boxy EP-2 electric leads a Boston–New York express at Cos Cob, Conn., amid the heavy plant required to keep NH trains moving.
Fielding J. Bowman

Danbury. Today, eight daily trains in each direction operate through Pennsylvania Station linking Washington, Philadelphia, and Boston.

A round trip to Boston via the New Haven should definitely include a ride over Hell Gate in one direction. The long approaches to the bridge are as spectacular as those on Southern Pacific's Mississippi River bridge at New Orleans. In both instances, the tracks have been raised from the adjacent flatlands a height sufficient to permit ocean-going vessels to pass beneath. The Hell Gate Bridge Route also affords an awe-inspiring panorama of Manhattan's skyline and the New York World's Fair grounds.

Our *Merchants* slows down to 45 mph as we rumble over the drawbridge at Cos Cob, Conn., and we recall what the man in New Haven's engineering department told us about the interlocking protection for these water crossings. The general operation is under the control of the War Department, which recognizes, however, that much latitude must be given the bridge operator if undue delays to the railroad are to be avoided. Consequently, the bridge operator must be a well-balanced man with the ability to make quick and proper decisions.

For instance, if a tugboat whistles for the draw shortly before a train is due, the operator must decide whether he can open up without delaying the train. If he feels that he cannot, he blows four blasts on his Klaxon horn and also runs up a red flag. This means the tug must wait. However, if he feels that there is sufficient time to pass the tug through, he must first set all distant and bridge signals on the line of track at danger. He cannot get the power to operate the bridge

In another view at Cos Cob, a freight crosses the Mianus River on a bridge that includes a gap in the catenary above the draw span. This is one of a dozen drawbridges on NH's Shore Line.
Jim Shaughnessy

For a few years in the late '30s, the steam queens of NH's Shore Line were 10 class I-5 4-6-4s. The handsome Hudsons' wheel-balance woes prompted NH to begin acquiring a fleet of 60 DL109 diesels in 1941. Here, an I-5 roars west with the *Merchants* at Sharon, Mass.
Wayne Brumbaugh

until he does this. Then he must unlock all wedges and locks on the bridge before he can get any power to move the draw. When all this is done, he can open up.

The 12 bridges on the New Haven's Shore Line are opened more than 18,000 times in a normal year. The busiest is at Mystic, east of New London, where more than 600 openings take place each month in summer. The New Haven has more drawbridges per mile of track than any other Class 1 railroad.

Skirting Long Island Sound, we swing around bays and coves, often so close to the water's edge that salt spray blows on car windows in stormy weather. Countless cabin cruisers, sailboats, and just plain rowboats are anchored in coves and inlets. Fine houses have lawns running down to the shore, with piers extending into the water and with summer houses at their ends. Here, if anywhere, is the boatman's paradise.

We slow down as we pass through Bridgeport, a bustling machine tool city of more than 150,000, and then in a few minutes we make our first stop, New Haven, at 6:28 p.m. This is the end of the electrified district, and the changeover to a diesel is made in a snappy four minutes. Most other trains take five. The porter warns us not to get too far away from the car door, so we can't catch the diesel's number or class. We note from the timetable, however, that it will speed our train over the next 113 miles to Providence at an average of 58.8 mph.

New Haven is the nerve center of the entire system. The road's general offices are here, and from the city several lines radiate, including the freight branch that runs almost up to the Vermont border at Turners Falls and the important double-track line to Hartford and Springfield, Mass. Over this latter line the road also operates through coaches, parlor cars, and sleeping cars to Boston, running in Boston & Albany trains from Springfield east and thus giving such important Massachusetts cities as Worcester and Framingham fast and frequent service to and from New York City. Practically no through New York to Boston passengers use this route, of course.

The New Haven's Springfield line is also the route for the *Montrealer* and *Washingtonian* overnight trains between their namesake cities [see page 86], which north of Springfield operate over the Boston & Maine, Central Vermont, and Canadian National. The *Day White Mountains* also affords through coach service between New York and Montreal.

NONSTOP THROUGH NEW LONDON

We're out of New Haven at 6:32, and we walk up to one of the dining cars for supper. Just past Old Saybrook, we haven't finished our soup before we cross the broad Connecticut River on a long bridge with a jackknife bascule lift section for the boat opening. We're enjoying our steak as we slow down at the sharp curve in New London, where the station is smack on the waterfront with the wharves just a jump away. In the great 1938 hurricane, a steamship was blown onto the New Haven tracks and a passenger train was tipped over near here by the big wind. New London has a genuine Down East salty

Photos from 1891 (left, of a new car on New Haven predecessor New York & New England) and 1967 (above, of NH's 1948-built car *New Rochelle*) show the enduring parlor-car configuration of two rows of swivel armchairs flanking a wide central aisle.
Left, New Haven; above, J. W. Swanberg

flavor, and we're sorry that our *Merchants* doesn't stop.

The approach to the Thames River bridge here constitutes the ruling grade eastbound, 0.87 percent — not enough to worry about with two big diesels up front, of course. Here, too, we touch the only other Class 1 road on our run, the Central Vermont. As we cross the bridge we notice the New Haven's line to Norwich paralleling the river, and we recall that the road used to operate grandstand boat trains along this line during the famous college rowing races. Grandstands facing the river were erected on flatcars, thus enabling spectators to watch the races as the trains kept pace with the racing shells.

At Westerly, R.I., we begin to swing inland and the terrain becomes rolling, with outcroppings of stone in the fields and pastures. At Wood River, in the gathering dusk, we get just a glimpse of the abandoned right of way of the erstwhile Wood River Branch Railroad, a 5-mile short line that ran up to Hope Valley. It went out of business in 1947. At Kingston we try to see the historic Narragansett Pier Railroad, still operating today but not nearly as busy as in its heyday before automobiles, but we're shooting through town too fast to see it.

It's totally dark as we enter the curved trainshed tracks at Providence station at 8:23. Here we have another four-minute stop, but no engine change. We get a glimpse of the imposing Biltmore Hotel across the square and recall that, in the 1938 hurricane, water stood five feet deep in front of the hotel.

The New Haven practically owns Providence and Rhode Island, but it takes care of the city and state like a loving parent. No other railroad serves this city of 260,000, a most unusual situation. Many freight lines deviate from here, and Providence folks have superb passenger service to New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, and, in season, to Florida resort points.

Just beyond Pawtucket, a substantially French-speaking textile city, we go through Boston Junction Switch, junction point with the double-track line west to Worcester. This is the route of the famous *State of Maine* from New York to Portland, bypassing Boston entirely and traveling over the Boston & Maine from Worcester via Ayer and Lowell Junction, Mass. In the summer season this train carries 9 or 10 sleeping cars; 4 are standard in winter.

We flash through Attleboro, Mansfield, and Canton Junction, Mass., and at 9:15 we're at Boston's Back Bay Station, where many of our passengers get off. Some of them look like Back Bay folks, too, and we wonder if they are kin to the Cabots, who, it is reputed, speak only to the Lodges, who in turn speak only to God.

It's exactly 9:20 when we ease to a smooth stop in South Station. As we wait at the gate for our bags, we notice that another New Haven train, from Hartford via Willimantic and Putnam, is pulling in. This train made connections at Hartford with a New York train that left Grand Central at 3:20 p.m. On an adjoining track, B&A train No. 555 has just backed in, preparatory to leaving at 11 p.m. with coaches and Pullmans for New York via Springfield. There are three routes to New York that a New Haven passenger may take.

Boston is the hub of extensive New Haven suburban service. A total of 132 trains operate over various lines to Dedham, North Easton, West Medway, Greenbush, Plymouth, and Middleboro. Add to this the extensive suburban service of the B&A to Riverside and Framingham, and old South Station is something to behold between 8 and 9 o'clock each morning.

Furthermore, both the New Haven and the B&A use steam locomotives. That's the stuff! We're coming back here tomorrow morning and have some fun. We still like to hear those air pumps panting as each engine noses the station bumping posts and the commuters stream out the train gates. ■

Although the crack *Merchants Limited* is dieselized, steam is still abundant at Boston's South Station in 1950. NH Pacific 1380 pulls out with a local to Providence while NYC Mohawk 3021 stands ready to depart with the *South Western Limited*.
H. W. Pontin

Fine new FEATHERS

N&W is spending more than $2 million on new equipment for the *Powhatan Arrow*, even though the streamliner operates at a loss

BY **DAVID P. MORGAN**

Observation car 581 (main photo) carries the markers as N&W's *Powhatan Arrow* departs Cincinnati Union Terminal for Norfolk, Va., in the early 1950s. Later in the decade (above), class J 4-8-4 No. 612 brings the westbound *Arrow* down Blue Ridge grade.

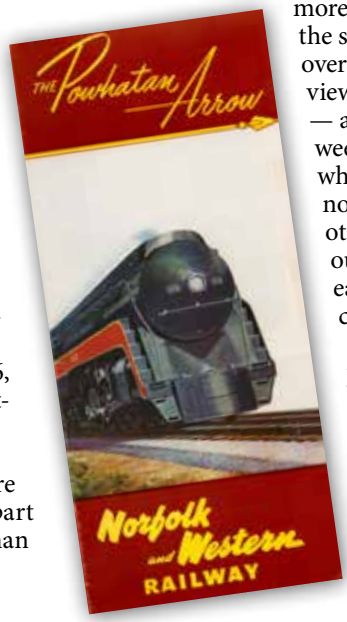
Main photo: David R. Sweetland, Frank and Todd Novak collection; above: J. Schmidt, Krambles-Peterson Archive

On the last day of November 1949, a fat, torpedo-jacketed 4-8-4 backed into industrial designer Raymond Loewy's conception of a modern passenger station and kissed couplers with a line of handsomely tailored streamlined cars fresh from Pullman-Standard's Chicago plant. The group of reporters congregating in the train's tavern-lounge-observation car and the array of railroad traffic and operating officials gave notice of the occasion for the white flags flapping on the Northern type's bullet nose: Norfolk & Western was putting its new *Powhatan Arrow* through the paces of a press preview trip out of Roanoke to Bluefield, W.Va., and return. A warm Virginia sun showed up for the event and glinted on J-class No. 609's gleaming lightweight rods and the riveted Tuscan red cars.

But the daily press failed to catch the real significance of the *Arrow*, and the N&W modestly refused to call it to the reporters' attention. What made the train of unique interest was the fact that the all-coach daylight Cincinnati–Norfolk schedule it was to serve had been in effect since April 1946, and had failed to earn its basic out-of-pocket expenses by the kindest yardstick known to passenger accounting. But here was N&W, more than three years later, displaying part of an 18-car order costing more than $2 million and carded exclusively for a run that looked pretty sick on any statistician's slide rule.

Where was the joker in the deck? Had soundly managed N&W suddenly gone overboard for the passengers who contribute less than 3 percent of the railroad's revenues (in 1948), or was this a strategic move to match an unannounced but expected C&O bid for the trade? Were the cars ordered when *Arrow* traffic was exceptionally high, with excellent future prospects?

These and similar questions were not mingled in the tavern car conversation that bright November morning simply because N&W didn't feel like burdening the press with its own problems. But more than one railroader on the streamliner was glancing over its travel features with a view toward passenger appeal — and no doubt recalling the week shortly before V-J Day when another railroad announced its plans for another daylight streamliner out of Cincinnati for points east, including the Atlantic coast.



That was the Chesapeake & Ohio, and the proposed new streamliner was the *Chessie* [see page 70]. Steam turbine-electrics, said C&O, would whip its new Vista-Domed luxuryliner from the Queen City through to the nation's capital in "12 hours or less" while the passengers parked their kids in the recreation car, then took in a late movie in the theater or read awhile in the library solarium. The announcement was a grand overture, underwritten by orders to Baldwin and Budd — and heartily endorsed by C&O Chairman Robert R. Young.

There was and is a good deal of doubt concerning C&O's ability to make good a 12-hour Cincinnati–Washington timecard, but that was not the big point of the announcement that worried both Baltimore & Ohio and N&W in 1945. B&O was concerned for its Washington trade; it called on its Mount Clare Shops and quickly rebuilt standard cars and P-7 Pacific locomotives into one of the nation's smartest streamliners: the *Cincinnatian*. If *Chessie* were to have the edge in luxury extras, then at least B&O would get there first.

N&W ANSWERS C&O'S CHALLENGE

For its part, Norfolk & Western caught the full meaning of a projected *Chessie* connecting service to Newport News, just across Hampton Roads harbor from Norfolk. Happily enough, N&W was in better shape to meet this southern-route threat than B&O was to beat C&O's Washington one. In 1941 N&W had installed 15 streamlined Pullman-Standard coaches on its *Pocahontas*, a Norfolk–Cincinnati overnighter; later, these hard-working cars proved a blessing to war-weary travelers. Now N&W seized upon

INSIDE THE ARROW: At far left, members of the press enjoy a meal in the train's 36-seat diner during a preview run out of Roanoke on November 30, 1949. At center, models pose for a publicity photo near the bar in the observation-lounge car's mid-section. Above, another publicity view shows the obs car's 16-seat rear lounge.
Three photos, Norfolk & Western; below, Joe Welsh collection

them as a ready answer to Young's forthcoming *Chessie*. Roanoke Shops ripped the seats out of two of these coaches and rebuilt them into full-length lounge cars. The remaining cars were refurbished and emerged as twin streamliners — that is, except for standard but redecorated dining cars. The top $500 prize in a name-the-train contest went to a retired N&W Virginia section hand who suggested *Powhatan* — say it POW-a-tan — to honor the father of the namesake for N&W's banner coach and Pullman limited, the *Pocahontas*.

Christened the *Powhatan Arrow*, the new streamliner started operations April 28, 1946, on a 15¾-hour westbound timing over the 676-mile route (train 25 to depart Norfolk 7:00 a.m., arrive Cincinnati 10:45 p.m.), 10 minutes faster eastbound (26 out of Cincy 8:20 a.m., into Norfolk 11:55 p.m.). Both were the fastest schedules in N&W history.

The *Arrow* also gave the road's famous J-class 4-8-4s a chance to unleash a bit of their potential speed — but not much of their power. The light loading of the train was and is child's play for a Northern with an 80,000-pound tractive effort rating and an estimated 5,300 drawbar horsepower. But the faster *Arrow* did prove helpful in boosting monthly mileages of these 11 big 600-series engines. Currently they turn in 15,000 miles a month each — and could probably double that if N&W was a longer railroad with fewer mountains to cross. The sight of a J hoisting heavy trains over 2 percent grades is one to excite the heart — and in reams of cold statistics, the same locomotive shows up equally well. It is an explosive engineering blend of guts for the grades and speed for the straightaway — one that does not take its peak performance out in excessive fuel and maintenance costs.

The 4-8-4s that handle the *Arrows* are normally changed at Roanoke but can and do run the entire Cincinnati–Norfolk route when necessary. When one comes up for scheduled overhaul or monthly boiler wash, its place is ably taken by a class K2a Mountain type, originally of heavy USRA design. All of these 4-8-2s have been rebuilt and streamlined in the J's distinctive dress by Roanoke Shops.

As a final gesture in 1946, N&W ordered 18 coach, dining, and observation cars from Pullman-Standard to re-equip the makeshift consist at the earliest possible moment. All that apparently remained in spring 1946 was to watch the traffic roll in — and keep a weather eye on C&O.

What took place after that lends an excellent clue to the premature gray hair featured by too many honest railroad passenger traffic men. Both B&O and N&W found that the Cincinnati–Washington/Norfolk daylight trade was no gold mine. In spite of the fact that C&O, for many reasons, lost interest in its announced *Chessie*, both competing roads advertised widely and worked hard to promote their respective streamliners. But the public's acceptance, while enthusiastic, was not large enough. B&O never had to add to the *Cincinnatian*'s five cars (two of which, a diner and a lounge, represent non-revenue space); the train made money only during the summer tourist season; and would be switched to a Detroit–Cincinnati routing in mid-1950. N&W's new streamliner never even covered its own operating costs.

TRAFFIC PATTERNS ON THE *ARROW*

The *Powhatan Arrows* carry their heaviest loads during summer, when the Atlantic coast vacation surge is in full swing; there are also traffic spurts at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and other holidays for the several women's colleges spaced out along the N&W. The westbound *Arrow* originally grossed $1.90 per mile. It now makes (as of October 1949) $1.58. Its eastbound companion came out a little better: $2.20 a mile to begin with, falling to

Class J 4-8-4 No. 609, built in 1943 without streamlining as a class J1, gleams at the head of a *Powhatan Arrow* consist during a 1950 display stop at Williamson, W.Va.
Norfolk & Western

Workers shine up the Tuscan red exterior of the *Arrow*'s dining car at Williamson.
Norfolk & Western

$2.12 in 1947–48, and climbing back to $2.21 from January through October 1949.

With that financial record in mind, the simple fact that Norfolk & Western re-equipped its *Powhatan Arrow* would seem to blast a hole in the oft-quoted theory that railroads are hard-headed, hard-hearted institutions out only for the customer's cash. Basically, N&W wants its passenger trains to pay their out-of-pocket costs; it naturally hopes fervently that $2 million worth of new equipment will do at least that much for the *Arrow*. But it also holds to the belief that a railroad's passenger trains are its showcase. Good passenger service means shipper goodwill, community goodwill. And that, N&W thinks, is worth spending money on. A railroad with less vision in this specific case could easily have discontinued the *Powhatan Arrow* and distributed the old and new streamlined cars on the *Pocahontas* and *Cavalier*, the two trains that represent N&W's basic and more-or-less irreducible Norfolk–Cincinnati passenger service.

Incidentally, N&W toyed with the idea of dome cars, but gave up the thought when the engineering department suggested that a hanging wire from the overhead catenary in N&W's electrified territory could brush across a dome and give the upstairs patrons an 11,000-volt lightning display. Nobody would be injured in such an event, but passenger traffic men figured that such fireworks would not be good p.r. or press copy.

But the new *Powhatan Arrow*, as is, looks good and rides just as well. That much was demonstrated on the train's press trip to Bluefield. The equipment makes no claims for unusual extras but rests its case on plain, old-fashioned comfort. The tavern-lounge-observation is beyond question the finest single advance over the old trains. It neatly tapers off the external outline of the *Arrow* and affords a picture-window view of "Precision Transportation" in action — provided the coal miners are digging.

And never to be overlooked on any train anywhere is the diner. Pullman-Standard's latest work in this field simply provides a finer setting for such traditionally fine N&W plates as hot Virginia apple pie — a thin-crusted, syrupy delicacy that is passing rare.

PASSENGER PROGRESS ACROSS THE BOARD

It is worth noting that current Norfolk & Western passenger progress is not limited to the new *Powhatan Arrow*. Replaced *Arrow* cars, for example, are going back onto the *Pocahontas*, which already features brand-new Budd room sleepers. Former *Arrow* lounge cars in this service will be open to both Pullman and coach passengers.

Then there is Raymond Loewy's exceptional Roanoke passenger station, which cost N&W $1 million. Oddly enough, the prime feature of escalators is not what pleases the mind most about this new vista in railroad station design. Rather, it is the quiet understatement in functional modernism as expressed in the glass front doors, the system map behind the curved ticket counter, and the external appearance at night.

Roanoke's station is new, but this trend has also been carried out in several notable modernization projects. The station at Lynchburg, Va., just down the line, is typical. Waiting-room folk there now receive a full-sized panoramic view of all trains in the station, thanks to a generous use of glass.

A quick check of where Norfolk & Western's income came from in 1948 places these passenger improvements in true perspective. In that year N&W rang up $6.2 million in passenger fares and $172.3 million in freight revenues. Obviously the road has more than a passing interest in its "showcase," but it is progressing within the framework of good business policy. *Fortune* magazine hinted

A broadside view in Ohio shows the full *Powhatan Arrow*: J-class 4-8-4, 40-seat coach/smoking lounge/crew locker room, 66-seat "divided" coach with 24-seat section for black passengers, diner, two 58-seat coaches, and observation car.
Norfolk & Western

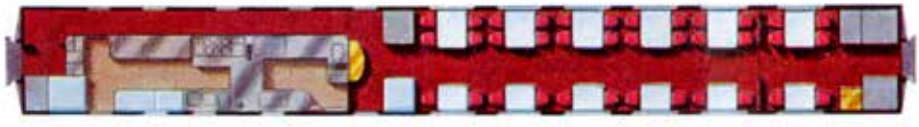
that neighbor Chesapeake & Ohio under Robert R. Young expanded its passenger service beyond all comparison with its traffic potential. The same charge cannot be levied at N&W; the record shows a consistent year-to-year improvement rather than a wholesale splurge.

In this regard, the optimism of a Pullman-Standard representative aboard the *Powhatan Arrow* press run warrants consideration. He pointed out that no postwar P-S coach streamliner had failed to pay its way, and went on to venture the opinion that Norfolk & Western's $2 million investment would not be any exception to the rule.

DAVID P. MORGAN joined the TRAINS staff in 1948, became the magazine's editor in 1953, and retired as editor/publisher in 1987. Widely regarded as the greatest 20th-century railroad writer, Morgan died in 1990 at age 62.

THREE *POWHATAN ARROW* CARS

Coach — 58 adjustable seats with footrests, men's and women's washrooms



Diner — kitchen, 36-seat dining room

Tavern-lounge-observation — 36-seat lounge, bar, 16-seat rear lounge

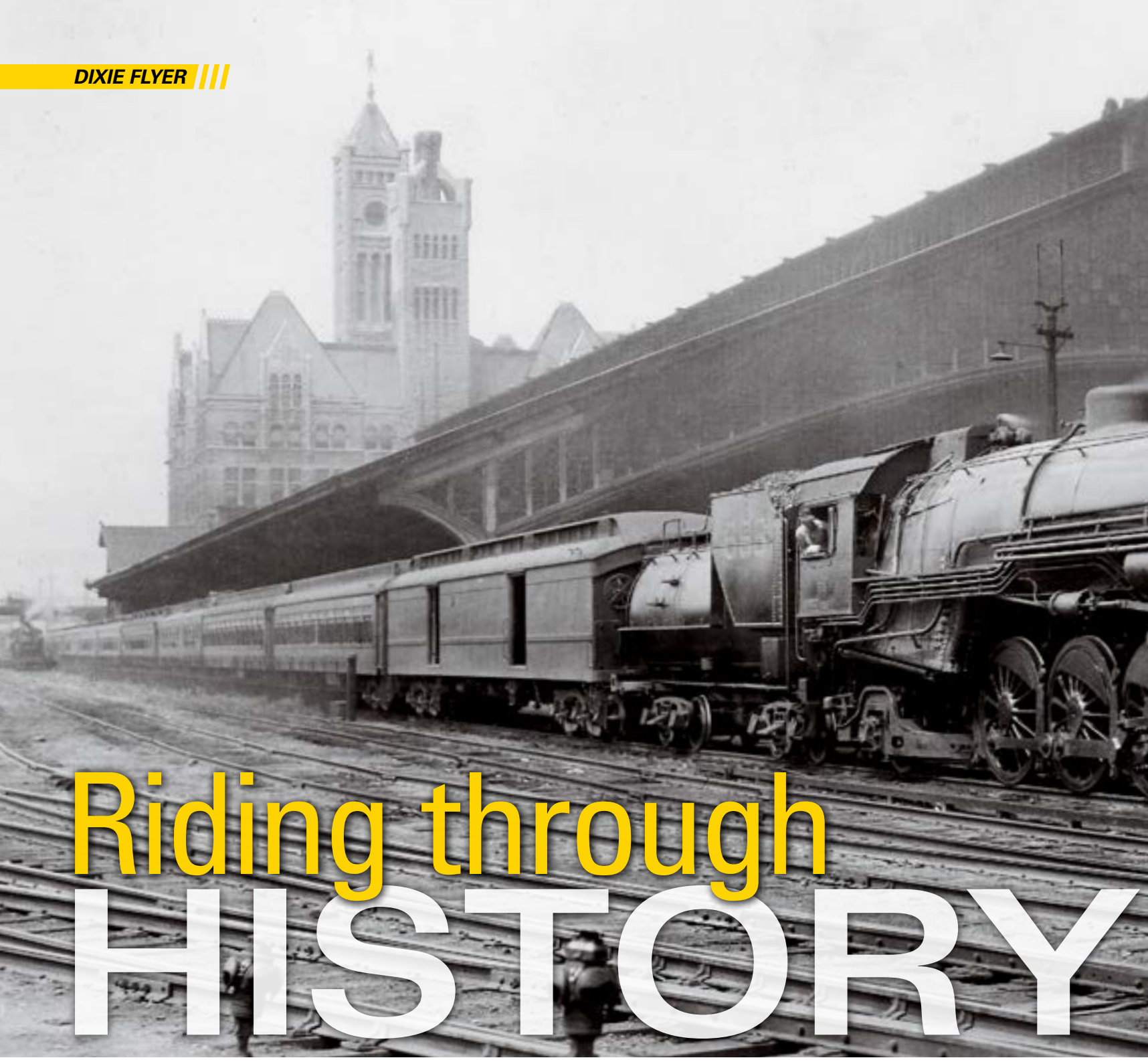
NANCY HANKS II

GreatTrains IN PHOTOS

MAN O' WAR

Little Central of Georgia (1,800 miles) debuted two intrastate streamliners, both with E7 diesel power, in 1947. The *Nancy Hanks II* (reusing an 1890s name honoring a trotting horse), built by American Car & Foundry as a five-car train, made one 588-mile Savannah–Atlanta round trip daily. It had only four cars on its July 9, 1947, exhibition run into Atlanta (left) but ran with up to six (above).
Opposite page, Walter M. Pharr; above, L. A. McLean

CofG's other 1947 streamliner was the four-car Budd-built *Man O' War,* also named for a racehorse. The train made two daily round trips between Atlanta and Columbus, Ga., site of the Army's huge Fort Benning, where the new train, whose observation car was named for the fort, stands on display (above). Like "the Nancy," the *Man O' War* used Atlanta's Terminal Station (left, in 1957).
Opposite page, Shelby Lowe; above, Classic Trains collection



Riding through HISTORY

Reminders of the Civil War abound along the route from Nashville to Atlanta

BY **ROY G. CLARK**

We're going to take a ride on a traveling history book today. It's an unusual book, made up of 14 "pages" in the following order: Electro-Motive F7A No. 814, a companion B unit, eight head-end cars, two day coaches, one diner, and one standard Pullman. It affords one of the few chances in this country to combine a scenic railroad trip with a historical panorama that is actually continuous.

Our journey will take us from Nashville to Atlanta on the *Dixie Flyer* over the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway, the "Dixie Line." The *Flyer* is the offspring of an unnamed train that carried St. Louis-to-Jacksonville sleepers as far back as 1885, but the inspiration for the memorable *Dixie* name didn't come until 1882. It was 10 years later that arrangements were made with the Chicago & Eastern Illinois at Evansville, Ind., making possible through sleepers from Chicago to Florida points. The *Flyer* has operated continuously since 1902.

NC&StL 4-8-2 No. 556 departs Nashville Union Station with the southbound *Dixie Flyer* (the first section — note the green flags on the smokebox) during the mid-1920s.
Classic Trains collection

West of Chattanooga, a view from the engineer's side of a locomotive cab shows a pre-Civil War tunnel, long since bypassed by the NC&StL's double-track main line.
Shirley C. Eldridge

The *Flyer* traverses four railroads: C&EI, Louisville & Nashville, NC&StL, and Atlantic Coast Line. Cars from St. Louis via L&N join the train at Evansville, and some cars continue south of Jacksonville in Florida East Coast and ACL trains. Departure from Dearborn Station, Chicago, is in late evening, and the 1,086-mile run ends in time for an early breakfast at Jacksonville Terminal.

We could, if we wished, ride the streamlined, diesel-powered *Georgian* or the *Dixie Flagler* instead of the *Dixie Flyer,* which is no longer the premier train on the route. But those trains cover the distance largely at night, and we don't want to miss any of the scenery.

Right now, the train caller at Nashville Union Station is announcing the arrival of our *Flyer* and we go down the escalator to the tracks. The ornate gingerbread architecture of the station seems definitely dated to our eyes accustomed to modern, streamlined effects, but it was the last word in luxury and efficiency when it was opened in 1900.

We get a seat in the Pullman just as the diesel eases us out of the trainshed at 10:15 a.m. We proceed slowly through the manufacturing and wholesaling district of the city, swing to the left off the joint terminal tracks, and immediately begin our history lesson.

CIVIL WAR LANDMARKS

On our right we see Fort Negley, recently restored to its Civil War appearance. It was one of the Union fortifications in the Battle of Nashville, where 100,000 Confederate and Union soldiers fought the last great battle of the war in what was then the West. Our flagman, who is unusually well-versed on Civil War events, calls attention to a bridge we're crossing and tells us that practically every bridge in the 285 miles to Atlanta was destroyed, often more than once, in that epic struggle of brother against brother.

Ten miles out we swish past Antioch station, end of the first segment of the original Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad track, which reached that point in 1851. The road's first engine was brought down by boat from Cincinnati via the Ohio and Cumberland rivers. The original track was laid on red cedar stringers laid lengthwise, on which inverted U rails were spiked.

At Murfreesboro, where we stop briefly at 11:05, our tracks cross the battlefield where 10,000 men lost their lives in the three-day battle. (The Union forces lost 1,800 men in one charge alone.) We notice an impressive tall white shaft situated at a high point on the

The *Dixie Flyer* rides Chicago & Eastern Illinois rails between the Windy City and Evansville, Ind., where the Louisville & Nashville takes over. Here, another member of the route's family of *Dixie*-named trains, the *Dixieland*, speeds south somewhere on the C&EI.
CLASSIC TRAINS collection; below, Joe Welsh collection

battlefield. The flagman tells us that it was built by the NC&StL in memory of the Union boys who gave their lives on that gallant charge. It was a futile one, however, as the Union forces were badly defeated and were obliged to retreat.

All along the line to Chattanooga we often see evidence of old abandoned roadbed. This came about because at the end of the Civil War so many bridges and fills had been destroyed that it was necessary to rebuild many miles of line, and more advantageous routes were then selected. Our first two hours of travel cause us to realize, for the first time, how terribly ravaged by warfare was this fair state of Tennessee. The more recent traces of abandoned roadbed are the result of the railroad's reducing maximum curves to 2 degrees and grades to 1 percent, where the cost was justified, in the years following World War II. This was done at a cost of approximately $4 million.

We make another stop, at 12:10 p.m., at Tullahoma, junction point for the 60-mile branch to Sparta, Tenn. Here we're in the heart of the fabulous Tennessee red cedar belt, whose wood is so sturdily pliant that a factory here makes golf club shafts and ships them to Scotland. Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, and other kings of swat have doubtless knocked many home runs with baseball bats that are manufactured here of the same wood.

We're eating a real southern fried chicken dinner in the diner as the *Dixie Flyer* slows down through Decherd, junction point for a system of branch lines that totals 222 miles. One of the lines extends as far south as Gadsden, Ala. The *Flyer* is now starting to climb to the broad Cumberland Plateau, and the mountains ahead are plainly visible. In the old days, the *Flyer* had to be doubleheaded at this point, but our diesel takes the climb in stride.

At Cowan we see a line cut off to the south. It runs parallel to our line for about three miles, then swings up and over us on a stone arch bridge. It is the 38-mile branch to Monteagle and Palmer, striking out boldly to the wall of mountains we see to the north.

Our view is broken as we plunge into Cumberland Mountain Tunnel, 2,228 feet long, started in 1848 and bored with hand drills, black powder, and pick, shovel, and wheelbarrow. That it is still adequate for today's traffic is a tribute to its engineers, particularly J. Edgar Thomson,

the great civil engineer who projected the original main line of the NC&StL from Nashville to Chattanooga, and who, years later, became one of the Pennsylvania Railroad's greatest presidents.

Out of the tunnel into the sunlight, we start down Rush Creek Gorge and the flagman points out a situation that is similar to that in the Royal Gorge of Colorado, where there isn't room for both stream and track. The NC&StL engineers here solved the problem by carrying the stream's waters over the tracks in flumes and pipes, whereas the D&RGW used its famous hanging bridge.

We're soon in Alabama and slow down for Stevenson, where the Memphis Division of the Southern Railway joins our rails. The Southern is a tenant of the NC&StL for the 33 miles to Wauhatchie. The line, except for the Tennessee River bridge at Bridgeport, is double track for the joint distance.

At Bridgeport we cross what appears to be two large rivers but actually is the great Tennessee, cut in two here by a large island over which we pass. From our car windows we get a graphic picture of what this great stream has done in millions of years to break through its mountain barriers. It and its tributaries have gouged out a deep and wide trough more than 1,000 feet deep, 5 miles wide, and 75 miles long, and from our vantage point it is as distinct as a piece cut out of a cake. The NC&StL branch to Pikeville runs up this wide trough, called the Sequatchie Valley, for 57 miles, serving woodworking plants, coal fields, and cement plants.

REAL MOUNTAIN RUNNING

We're in the mountains in earnest now. For six miles our train clings to the side of towering Raccoon Mountain on our right, with the Tennessee River just below us. Then we swing onto Running Water Viaduct, the fifth bridge that has been built on this spot. Then we climb to the summit of Sand Mountain, where, to our right, we catch our first glimpse of Lookout Mountain, which means Chattanooga to most folks, and where the "Battle Above the Clouds" was fought in the Civil War. We're surprised to learn that Lookout Mountain actually extends 75 miles to the southwest, to Gadsden, Ala.

We're even more surprised to find that we're now in Georgia, although we haven't yet reached Chattanooga. The NC&StL swings in and out of Georgia two times in its tortuous efforts to find a path into Chattanooga, which sits in a cup surrounded by mountains. In a few minutes more we come around the brow of Lookout Mountain, get a breathtaking view of Moccasin Bend in the Tennessee River, and start dropping down into Chattanooga.

It's 3:45 p.m. Eastern Time as we pull into the Union Station at Chattanooga. The flagman reminds us that we have a 10-minute stop here, and that the famous old Civil War engine, the *General*, is on exhibition in the station concourse. We hurry to look at it and marvel at the little 4-4-0's small cylinders, flimsy driving rods, fragile wooden cab, and relatively small drivers.

Civil War history is on view at Chattanooga Union Station, where in 1891 the NC&StL placed on display the *General* (top), the 4-4-0 that led the "Great Locomotive Chase" of 1862. The terminal opened in 1858; the headhouse (above) was built in 1881–82.

Top, Robert Holly; above, NC&StL

The story of the *General* and the *Texas* has become an American classic. Readers will recall that in 1862 the Western & Atlantic's *General* was stolen by Andrews' Raiders, of the Union forces, and that it was pursued and eventually captured by William Fuller, the conductor of the train the *General* had been pulling. Nothing remotely approaching the flight of these two little Eight-Wheelers over flimsy war-torn track at better than 60 mph has ever taken place since.

The "All aboard" call gets us back in our seat just as the train backs out of the station onto the main tracks and then heads southward again toward Atlanta. Although we're still in Tennessee, we're actually on Georgia property now, as the line from the Chattanooga station to Atlanta is owned by the State of Georgia under the corporate name of Western & Atlantic Railroad. The entire line and facilities are leased to the NC&StL and not one passenger in a thousand knows that he is traveling on Georgia-owned tracks.

The W&A has had a long and checkered career. It was built in 1849, with the intention of linking Georgia with the Ohio River. It found itself in the middle of the Civil War before its roadbed had had time to settle. Both the Confederate and the Union forces held portions of the line during the conflict, and when either side had to retreat it did its best to wreck the portion of the line it held.

Consequently, there wasn't much left when the war ended. Eight miles at the north end were completely obliterated, and at other points bridges were gone, fills had been blasted open, tunnels destroyed, and everywhere, ties and rails were gone. Not until 1866 was it again possible to get a train through from Atlanta to Chattanooga.

The State of Georgia worried along, trying to operate after a fashion, until 1870. That was the carpetbagger era, when the worst element from the North flocked down to Georgia to grab off the spoils. Carpetbaggers got control of the railroad and operated it for their private gain. Incompetent friends of the outsiders were given top positions, and every seasoned employee was discharged if he had supported the Confederacy — which, of course, practically all of them had, living in the heart of the South.

Eventually the carpetbaggers were dispossessed and the line was leased to Joe E. Brown and other southern politicians for private operation. It must be admitted that they made a mess of things too. Matters went from bad to worse, and finally on December 27, 1890, the line was leased to the NC&StL. The chaotic conditions existing when the lease was made are evidenced by the fact that only 10 engines could be operated, only half a dozen passenger cars had enough wheels to move on, and every one of the 690 freight cars had to be scrapped — a graphic commentary on what eventually happens when politicians play at operating a railroad.

Under today's management, the NC&StL is a first-class piece of railroad, laid with 112- and 132-pound rail, and equipped with centralized traffic control. It is capable of handling anything that is turned over to it. Millions of dollars have been spent on additions and betterments.

ONE LONG BATTLEFIELD

From Chattanooga to Atlanta we're traveling over a continuous battlefield, and this is a literal fact. Sherman's army used every foot of the line on its advance to Atlanta, and had to fight for every foot. From our seat we see names that are known to every schoolboy: Missionary Ridge, Orchard Knob, Chickamauga River (crossed 13 times in 19 miles by our train), Ringgold, Tunnel Hill, Resaca, Kennesaw, and so many others. We pass over one stretch of six miles of entirely new railroad between Cartersville and Emerson, Ga., which was opened for traffic in June 1949.

The railroad has set markers on the sites of many of the battles on or adjacent to the right of way. Two of the most interesting ones indicate the spots where the *General* was stolen at Big Shanty (now Kennesaw, Ga.) and was abandoned just south of Ringgold. Until a few years ago the NC&StL furnished Pullman passengers with a booklet, synchronized with these markers and identified by milepost numbers, so each passenger might read all about the historical sites he saw from his window.

Down toward Atlanta our *Flyer* goes, covering the same ground that Sherman took weeks to win at a terrible cost in blood. We stop at Dalton, headquarters for Confederate General Johnston, and we note that the Southern Railway is again our tenant, using the NC&StL tracks and station. We take particular interest in the station at Calhoun, our next stop, because it was used as a blockhouse during the war.

At Cartersville the L&N main line from Knoxville will be our tenant for the rest of the way into Atlanta. Over to the right we notice a Seaboard Air Line 2-8-0 and we recall the

In April 1951, red-and-yellow NC&StL GP7 helpers escort the northbound *Flyer*'s F7A and F7B road engines off the Cumberland Plateau and into Cowan, Tenn., where the Geeps will be cut off. The all-heavyweight consist totals nearly 20 cars.
A. C. Kalmbach

Standard power on NC&StL's 285-mile portion of the *Dixie Flyer*'s run is an A-B set of F units. The road considers its 9 F3As, 12 F3Bs, 23 F7As, and 8 F7Bs as dual-service engines; only the B units carry steam generators. F7A 821 and an F7B stand at Nashville.
Linn H. Westcott

time, some years ago, when high water made it necessary to detour the *Dixie Flyer* on which we were traveling over the Seaboard branch from Cartersville to the junction with the SAL main line at Rockmart, Ga. We recall what a time the crew had getting our long Pullmans, with their low track clearances, around a sharp and improperly elevated curve on the Seaboard branch. The cars fouled the track, and the crew finally ended up individually switching each car around on another track, a process that just about exhausted the patience of railroaders and passengers alike.

LAST LAP INTO ATLANTA

At Marietta, 20 miles out of Atlanta, the Blue Ridge line of the L&N swings in from the east. This was originally the L&N main line, but the sharp curves, steep grades, small tunnel clearances, and general roughness of the line — at one point it makes a complete loop over itself — made it impractical for modern traffic. The Blue Ridge line branches off at Etowah, Tenn., 60 miles south of Knoxville, and heads straight into the Blue Ridge Mountains, spurning the valley to the west where the L&N main line is now situated. Any traveler willing to undergo the mild hardship of the rather dirty local train on the Blue Ridge line will get some scenic thrills not to be encountered anywhere else east of the Rockies.

At 7:30 p.m., just as our diesel's headlight rays are beginning to penetrate the dusk, we pull into Atlanta Union Station, our cars trailing way out around the curved trainshed tracks. The station is owned and operated by the NC&StL, with the Coast Line, the Georgia Road, and the L&N as tenants. The waiting room exits are high above the tracks and we're again glad to use an escalator for the steep climb.

Our *Dixie Flyer* has covered the 285 miles from Nashville in 8 hours 15 minutes, at an average speed of approximately 35 mph. When we recall the tough pulls up the Cumberland Plateau and Sand Mountain, and the serpentine lines through Rash Creek and Running Creek gorges, plus the rough going almost all the way, as well as the necessity of making local stops, we think she's done pretty well.

It hasn't been a speed trip, true — but who wants to hurry through a history lesson as interesting as this one has been?

Wonder train OF 1929

Jersey Central's luxury flyer to Atlantic City was a flash of chrome and color. It sired successful deluxe all-coach streamliners on other roads, yet couldn't make the grade itself

BY **W. A. B. DAVIDSON**

On a blustery February 21, 1929, at the height of one of the worst storms to hit New York in many a year, the 79-inch drivers of a big Pacific spun momentarily on the icy rails in the Central Railroad of New Jersey's big passenger terminal at Jersey City. Then her huge frame shuddered as her tires bit into the sand and slowly she started her six cars on their 136-mile run to Atlantic City to mark a milestone in U.S. railroading.

Thus was born Jersey Central's *Blue Comet*, the pioneer of all the deluxe coach trains in America. Conceived at the height of a prosperous era and launched several months before the Great Depression, the *Blue Comet* just never had a fair chance. But when it succumbed in 1941, it left a lasting and important impression on American railroading. For in its wake followed a long string of successful luxury coach trains offering the *Comet*'s innovations of extra-special services at regular coach fare.

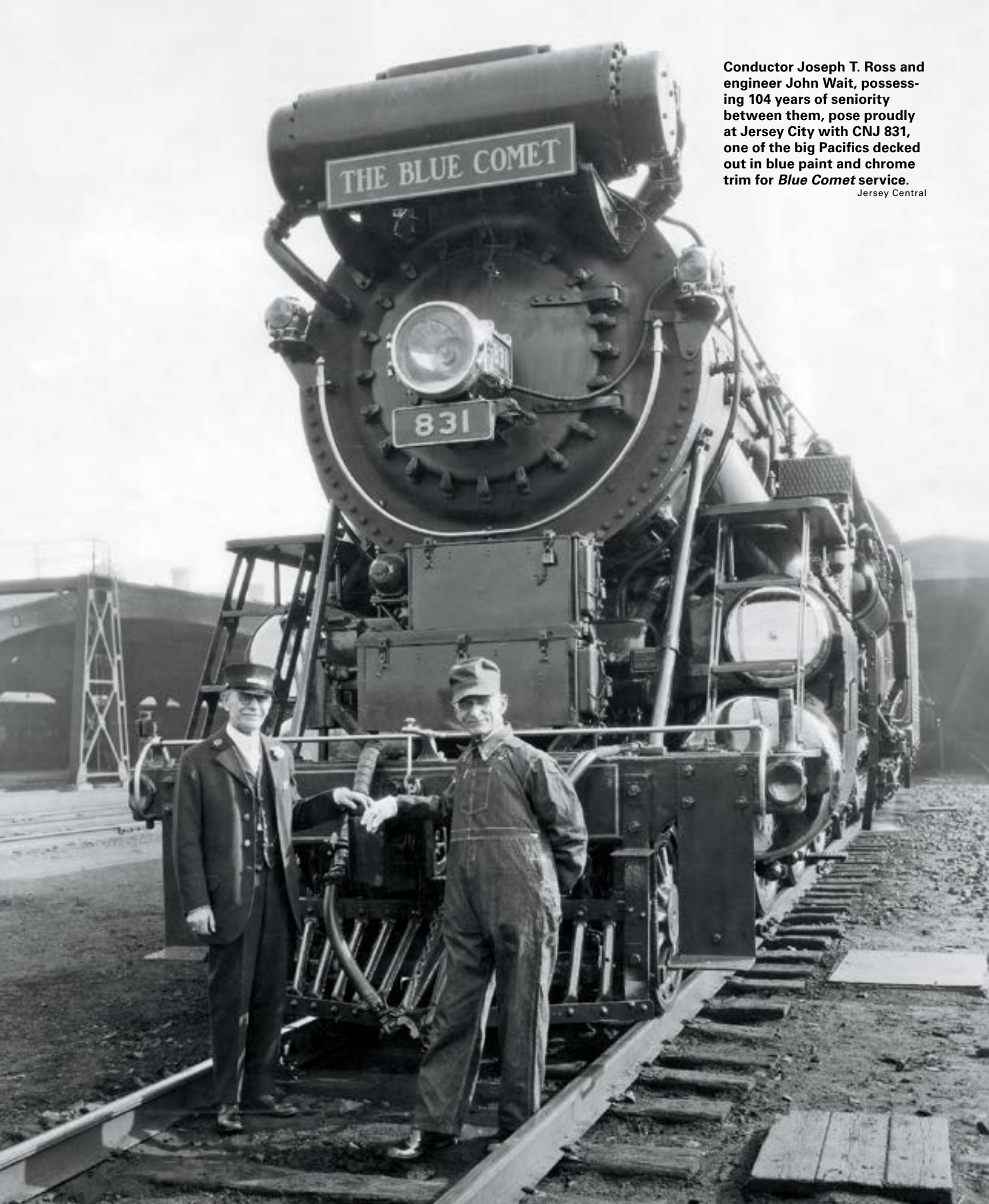
For years the Jersey Central had been operating trains between New York and Atlantic City, N.J., running on its own rails from Jersey City, located across the Hudson River from New York, down through Elizabethport, Red Bank, Lakewood, Lakehurst, and thence over the low-lying pine and bog section of its Southern Division to Winslow Junction. Here the trains left the Central's own tracks and used those of the Reading Company's Atlantic City Railroad to reach the famed seashore resort.

A BIG IDEA FROM THE TOP

In the late 1920s there was a persistent thought lurking in the active mind of CNJ President R. B. White that the full potential for seashore business was not being realized. Something must be done to cultivate passenger traffic for the day coaches. Passengers were not using the regularly scheduled New York–Atlantic City trains of day coaches and chair cars, such as the *Playground Special*, in anything like the quantity desired by the railroad's management. Aided by an expanding highway network, people were deserting CNJ trains for buses and private autos. Drastic measures were necessary to meet the problem of declining passenger revenues. As a result, some of the most revolutionary techniques ever seen up to that time in American railroading were evolved.

It was in October 1928 that White formulated a picture of what was to become the *Blue Comet*. This was to be more than a simple train. It was to have personality and character. It was to have speed and color in tune with the times. It was to be a work of art, a Symphony in Blue.

On October 27, 1928, the railroad decided to go ahead with the train. The entire work of creating the *Blue Comet* was done in the Jersey Central's shops at a cost of around $500,000. Details of decoration were in the hands of Frank Becherer, superintendent of the car department. Changes in the locomotives were left to C. E. Chalmers, superintendent of motive power and equipment, as well as George



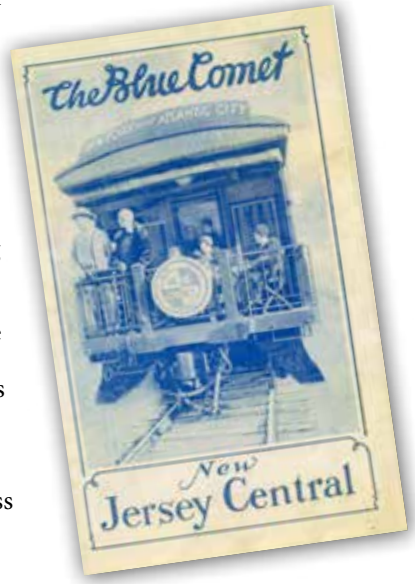
Conductor Joseph T. Ross and engineer John Wait, possessing 104 years of seniority between them, pose proudly at Jersey City with CNJ 831, one of the big Pacifics decked out in blue paint and chrome trim for *Blue Comet* service.
Jersey Central

Pacific 833 speeds south with a baggage-smoker, coach, diner, coach, and obs car. The morning *Comet* is nearing Red Bank, where it will turn onto CNJ's line to South Jersey.
Don Wood coll.; below, Joe Welsh coll.

Fink, his assistant of motive power. Actual work on blueprints had been proceeding under the direction of J. H. Smith, chief draftsman, and his staff.

No train was ever built with more loving care, and no train was ever operated by a group of employees that showed more enthusiasm. All helped in its creation. For example, the locomotive shops assisted in preparing the railing on the observation cars. One old-timer, since retired, who worked in the car shop when the *Comet*'s coaches were being refurbished, said, "If they ever decide to build another train like that one, I hope they let me know and I'll be right back!"

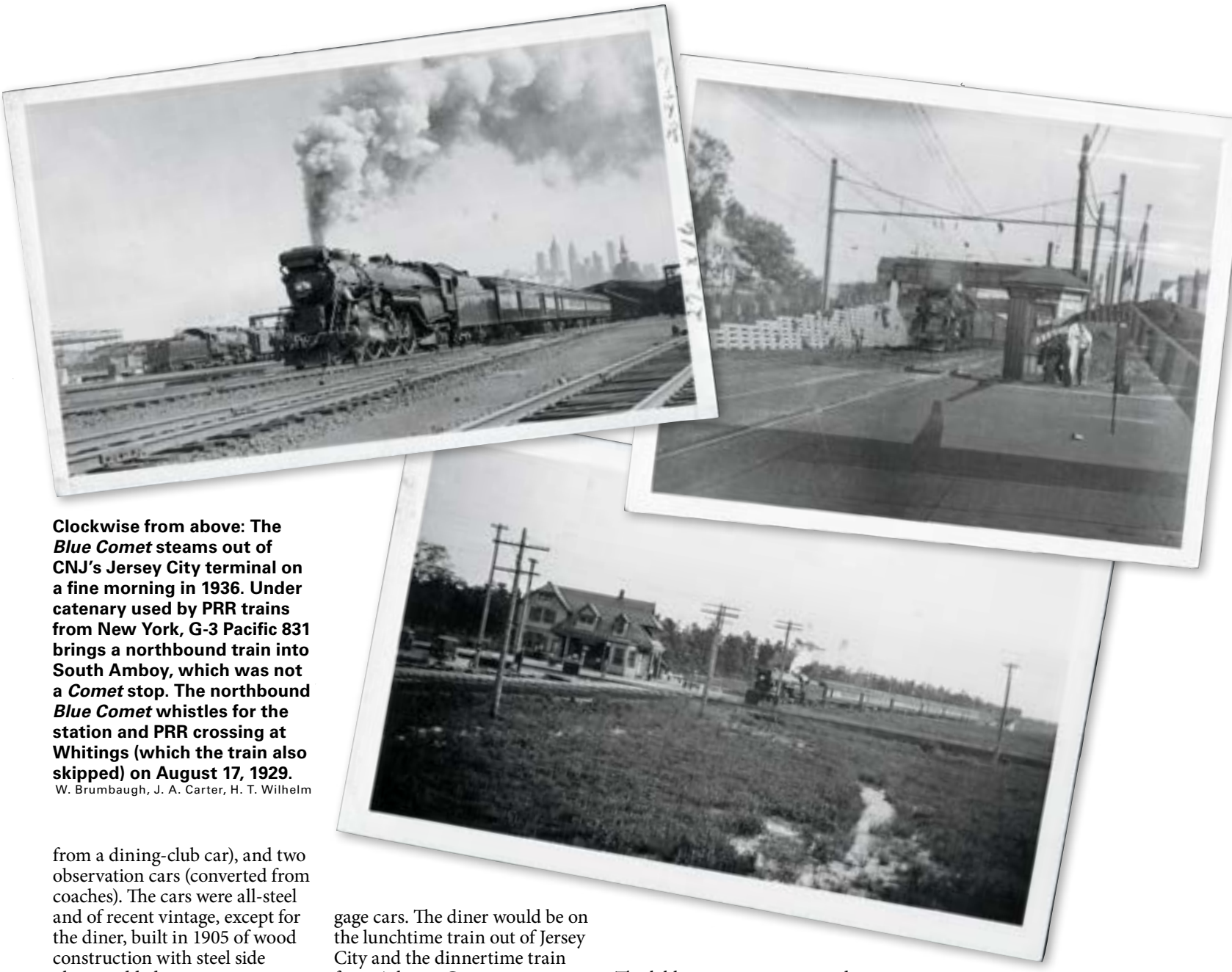
Two locomotives and 13 cars were selected for use on two trains, each of which would make a daily round trip. The engines were Baldwin-built class G-3 Pacifics Nos. 831 and 832. Delivered earlier in 1928, the locomotives were painted dark green. This would never do. The engine and tender, except for the smokebox, were painted a resplendent combination of Packard blue and royal blue. Some early observers were known to have called the color just plain ultramarine blue, but they didn't linger long enough to grasp the scheme's subtle beauty.



The big 4-6-2s boasted 79-inch drivers and carried 230 pounds boiler pressure. Cylinders were 26 x 28 inches with Walschaerts valve gear. Total loaded weight was 326,470 pounds, and the weight on drivers was 197,660 pounds. Tractive effort was rated at 46,470 pounds, and the engines were equipped with standard type B stoker, type A superheater, and an Elesco feedwater heater. An innovation at that time was the one-piece cast-steel water-bottom tender frame. Water capacity was 10,000 gallons and the bunker held 15 tons of coal.

This was to be a train distinct from all others. It was to impress itself on the public through the eye as well as the pocketbook. So chromium plating was applied to the headlight, front marker lights, smokebox-front handrail, coupler-pin lifting rod, front and back valve chamber, and cylinder head covers. Main and side rods were polished. The road's "New Jersey Central" emblem appeared in gold on the tender. A plate carrying the name The Blue Comet in gold letters on a blue background was attached to brackets above the smokebox.

The 13 cars initially selected for renovation comprised two baggage cars, two combination baggage-and-smoking cars, six coaches, one diner (converted



Clockwise from above: The *Blue Comet* steams out of CNJ's Jersey City terminal on a fine morning in 1936. Under catenary used by PRR trains from New York, G-3 Pacific 831 brings a northbound train into South Amboy, which was not a *Comet* stop. The northbound *Blue Comet* whistles for the station and PRR crossing at Whitings (which the train also skipped) on August 17, 1929.
W. Brumbaugh, J. A. Carter, H. T. Wilhelm

from a dining-club car), and two observation cars (converted from coaches). The cars were all-steel and of recent vintage, except for the diner, built in 1905 of wood construction with steel side plating added.

Exterior surfaces of the cars were royal blue with Jersey cream in a band between the belt rail and the letterboard. Although such decoration would later become commonplace, it was regarded as quite startling in the late 1920s. The name of the train appeared in gold on each letterboard, and each car was named after a comet (*Halley, De Vico, Westphal*, to name a few) in gold letters in the middle of the side. The railroad's name did not appear on any of the cars. Underframes and trucks were also painted in royal blue and varnished. Ten of the cars had Hyatt roller bearings, the dining car had Timkens, and standard bearings were used on the baggage cars. The diner would be on the lunchtime train out of Jersey City and the dinnertime train from Atlantic City.

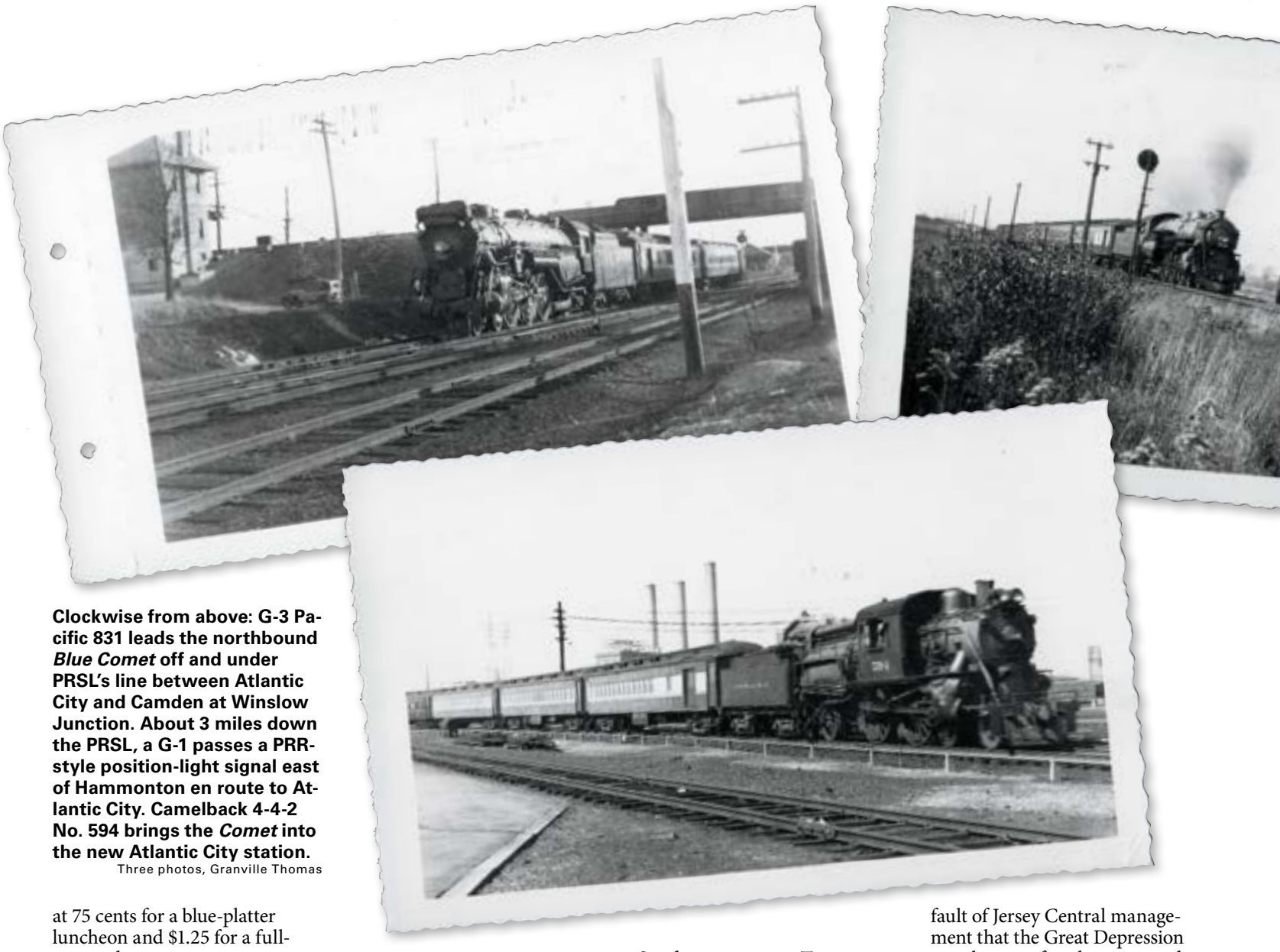
In May 1929, three months after service began, G-3 No. 833, two coaches, and an observation car were added to the pool, enabling operation of three trains on summer weekends.

BUCKET SEATS AND NICKEL PLATING

Inside the train the blue color scheme was carried out in a most tasteful manner. Porters' uniforms, table service, and linen in the dining car were prime examples of the motif. Coaches and smoking cars had bucket-type seats (62 and 48, respectively) with a center armrest that could be raised or lowered. Coach seats were upholstered in blue mohair; smoker seats were in blue leather. Thick blue carpeting was used in the coaches, and the floor of the smoking cars was done in a diamond pattern of blue and white tiling. The *pièce de résistance* was the 22 nickel-plated cuspidors. There were also nickel-plated coat hangers and umbrella holders on the back of each seat. Each car was given a spacious ladies' lounge with boudoir chair and a connecting washroom, just like on a first-class train.

The observation cars had 48 silver and blue wicker armchairs and on the open platform there were six collapsible chairs. The dining car sat 36 guests, and when they weren't too busy eating they could sit back and admire the artwork above the windows — panels of frosted glass containing a hand-etched design representing a comet with stars and clouds. Even the parchment shades on the table lamps had designs of stars and comets. China and glassware were dark blue. Nothing was spared. The dining-car waiters had white uniforms trimmed with French blue epaulets, chevrons, and trouser stripes. They wore blue vests, white shoes, and, so it was reported, white socks.

Each train carried a porter who wore a uniform of French blue. These porters, dining-car waiters, and kitchen crews were carefully selected. The diner attempted to give deluxe service at coach rates, and the price of meals seemed reasonable enough



Clockwise from above: G-3 Pacific 831 leads the northbound *Blue Comet* off and under PRSL's line between Atlantic City and Camden at Winslow Junction. About 3 miles down the PRSL, a G-1 passes a PRR-style position-light signal east of Hammonton en route to Atlantic City. Camelback 4-4-2 No. 594 brings the *Comet* into the new Atlantic City station.
Three photos, Granville Thomas

at 75 cents for a blue-platter luncheon and $1.25 for a full-course dinner.

Everything was done to make things easy and pleasant for the passenger from the time he boarded the ferry from Liberty Street in New York until he stepped onto the platform at Atlantic City. Special tickets were printed on blue paper stock and each was lettered and numbered to indicate the passenger's assigned coach and seat. A metal plate with the car number was hung on a projecting bracket at each coach door. Only the coach seats were sold as revenue space. A sign titled Train Crew for Today gave the names and years of service of the engineer and conductor.

Cars for the *Blue Comet* were modernized before the era of air conditioning on trains, so 12-inch fans were used to circulate the air. However, all regularly assigned equipment was later fully air-conditioned.

Time for the 136-mile run was 168 minutes and top speed on the single-track line that formed the majority of the route was around 75 mph. But this was fast enough to beat some of the slow training planes that used to race the train from a field at Red Bank. These planes couldn't do much better than 70 mph and there was great propaganda value in announcing that the *Blue Comet* had outraced an airplane.

Blue Comets left New York at 11 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.; Atlantic City departures were 9:15 a.m. and 4:35 p.m., except on Sundays when the afternoon train left at 5:30 p.m. For a time there was an extra *Blue Comet* that left New York on Fridays at 4 p.m., returning from Atlantic City on Sunday at 6:40 p.m. Train numbers for the four regular trips were 4203 and 4215 southbound and 4206 and 4218 northbound.

A BELOVED REGIONAL SYMBOL

The *Blue Comet* quickly became a symbol throughout the territory in which it operated. All prayed for its success, mainly because it represented an effort to give the public better service. In the true tradition, folks would come to the station to see it streak by. Others would note the time of day when they heard the train's whistle, a cross between a foghorn and a cathedral organ, specially made for the *Comet*'s locomotives. This was a train that appealed to the ear as well as to the eye.

At first, the *Comet* was a fabulous success. It certainly was no fault of Jersey Central management that the Great Depression struck soon after the train made its debut. Not a penny was spared to publicize and advertise the road's dream child, but this was a relatively short-haul run, and in spite of all its innovations, drama, and charm, the train was slowly to become a victim of highway competition. Further, because its tracks ended on the west bank of the Hudson, the CNJ was at a disadvantage to the Pennsylvania, whose passengers could ride directly from Manhattan. This became more of a factor after 1933 when the Atlantic City Railroad became part of the Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines — which was two-thirds owned by the PRR.

Through the years, the competitive forces sapped the great train's strength. Although Jersey Central management did all it could to popularize the *Blue*

Above: Just before discontinuance, the southbound *Comet*, its Pacific and cars no longer blue, departs Elizabethport. Left: The storied train, still with obs car and drumhead, prepares for its final run at Atlantic City, September 27, 1941.
Above, Frank Quin; left, O. H. Borsum

Comet, the train suffered a progressive traffic decline after 1930. Ridership hit a high of 56,746 passengers that year; by 1940 the number had fallen to 14,045. A glance at revenues taken at random shows an income of $279,237 in 1931, but by 1939 the figure had declined to $61,315, which represented a net operating loss of $48,233.

In spite of these shadows, the CNJ carried on its advertising and publicity campaign, ever hopeful there would be a turn for the better. Birthday parties were held every year in February to celebrate the inaugural date. A special birthday cake was carried aboard the trains on these days, serving more than 150 pieces to the passengers.

By its fifth birthday, the *Comet* had made 3,800 trips and its on-time record for the five-year span was 97 percent. For this celebration in 1934, the engineer was popular Bill Smith and the front of his engine, Pacific 833, carried five of the biggest electrically lighted candles ever built. As one old-timer recalled later, "The largest single expense that day was $40 for the darn candles, but we got $1,047 worth of free publicity in the newspapers!" Nevertheless, the train was cut to a single daily round trip on September 30, 1934.

The 10th birthday celebration was in the form of a special trip to Atlantic City on Lincoln's birthday, February 12, 1939.

By then the *Comet*'s gleam had faded considerably. Jersey Central had begun repainting the cars in standard green. The three G-3's, which also had lost their blue livery, were commonly assigned to other runs. In their place, older Pacifics or Atlantics handled the *Comet*, which increasingly ran at its four-car minimum. Matters were not helped by a serious derailment on August 19, 1939, near Chatsworth that injured 36 passengers and took the diner out of service; the train carried a cafe car from the general pool for the rest of its life. Operating at a loss and facing a big tax bill, CNJ entered bankruptcy on October 30 — three weeks after asking the New Jersey Board of Public Utility Commissioners for permission to discontinue the *Blue Comet*.

Permission was denied, and here came the unkindest cut of all. The commissioners scolded management, saying the CNJ had failed to publicize the train sufficiently and that the times of departure were inconvenient! Finally, after another request, permission was granted and the famous train made its last runs on September 27, 1941.

Thus was ushered from the American scene one of railroading's noblest experiments. An idea had been born, tried, and failed only through a chain of circumstances over which its sponsor had no control. That the idea had merit cannot be questioned. The deluxe all-coach trains that began proliferating in the late 1930s rolled beside the ghost of the *Blue Comet*.

Tonight I sit in the low-lying pine and bog section of southern New Jersey. Mosquitoes whine, crickets chirp, and a chorus of frogs sings. I look up in the sky and a shooting star flashes across the heavens. Could it be a comet? As if to answer my question, I'm sure I hear across the misty flats the sound of a locomotive's whistle like a combination foghorn and a cathedral organ. Then it fades into the night, as must all great dreams.

C&O's dream train THAT NEVER WAS

Chessie had everything but customers

BY **HERBERT H. HARWOOD**

The *Chessie*'s steam turbine-electric locomotives, like the train itself, were like nothing else on rails. Turbine 500 is on exhibit at the 1949 Chicago Railroad Fair.
Robert A. Caflisch, Helen A. Caflisch collection

It was America's finest train, no question or qualification — a daylight streamliner designed for speed (2 hours faster than anything else on the railroad), scenery (some of the East's best, to be seen through its domes), and luxury (a plushness to make any resort hotel owner green with envy). This perfection was the joint production of the country's most creative carbuilder and one of the wealthiest and most passenger-minded railroads, the Chesapeake & Ohio. Nothing quite like it was ever built before or after.

Take a look and see for yourself. The moment this train appears down the track there's no doubt that it's different, if not actually frightening. The locomotive is unlike anything else on rails. It's enormous — bigger than the largest steam locomotive, weighing over 600 tons — and is done up in silver and orange to match its train. No doubt about its being the engine — steam and smoke pour out of it, but they're coming from its rear, and in a steady swoosh. Up on its slanting nose are two gaping grilles, and about a third of the way back is the streamlined cab. It's a coal-fired steam turbine-electric that puts out 6,000 h.p., the equal of a modern 4-8-4 or three-unit passenger diesel. Baldwin built it especially for this train, although it is also meant to show off the possibilities for modern coal-fired motive power in all types of railroad service. It's a fast machine; it has to be, for this train is scheduled to cover 600 miles at a 50 mph average, including all stops.

With a beginning such as this, the train itself may seem an anticlimax. To be sure, it doesn't look much different from the other Budd-built postwar streamliners — solid stainless steel, bright orange letterboard, and

C&O boss and passenger-train visionary Robert R. Young shows renderings of the *Chessie*'s "cabin" rooms to a radio host in 1947.
Classic Trains collection

domes. Ah, but climb aboard.

There's an individual locker for your luggage; put your suitcase in, lock it up, and keep the key if you're so inclined. (You'll find lots of open luggage space at the end of the car too, in case you're more casual. The coach porter will put your bags away for you.)

Head down the coach aisle — it's carpeted — and locate your reserved seat. (The on-train passenger representative will be glad to help in the event of a reservation foul-up, which on this railroad is virtually impossible.) Now stretch out. Each coach seats only 36 people, meaning plenty of legroom. Compare that with the usual 44- or 52-passenger seating of the "luxury" coaches of other roads. The seats themselves recline to 10 positions, and beside each window seat is an individually adjustable Venetian blind. Inside your headrest is an individual speaker — choose radio or piped-in music. Don't worry, it won't disturb anyone near you. If you feel like writing, a desk is provided at the end of the car next to the ladies' lounge.

Take a walk back to the train library to borrow a book or maybe make a phone call. (Inductive telephones connect you with the outside world anywhere along the route.) Just touch the car door and it slides open. As you walk through the train, notice that you seem to be flowing along. The passageways are all gently curved so that you're not constantly running into walls and dodging around corners. A small matter, perhaps, but just one more indication that nothing has been overlooked to make this a pleasure trip instead of simply something to put up with.

Traveling with young children? Seats are reserved for you in the family coach, where you won't have to worry about your brood squirming or annoying other passengers. The seats are the same as in the other coaches, but two additions are a little cartoon theater and a playroom with toys. Playpens and portable cradles are available for babies; and when it's diaper-changing time, go into the special alcove where you'll find all needed facilities. Next to it is the food preparation room for formula mixing, bottle heating and washing, and whatever else you might require. Ask the nurse if you need help. Incidentally, she also has a supply of special comic books telling the history of the railroad and this train.

Hungry? Facilities can serve almost anything you can name — milkshakes, sundaes, sandwiches, steak dinners. First is the full diner . . . with room for everyone without waiting, since it's a roomy twin-unit job with seats for 52. Behind it is a lunch counter with snack tables. In the adjacent lounge car is another lunch counter, featuring a soda fountain.

If you're a scenery-watcher, you can do so for 12 hours if you want. Two dome cars give you a direct view of some of the best landscape in the East, almost all of it in daylight.

It's not the Rockies, perhaps, but there is Piedmont country, the Blue Ridge, the Alleghenies, spectacular gorges, and the Ohio River valley. Should the décor and scenery

bore you, don't despair. Between meals the diner converts to a movie theater with a full-size screen. The train is a rolling art gallery too; throughout the cars are original oil paintings of scenes along the route, many of them atmospheric and all of high quality.

Lounges are everywhere, it seems. If you can't make it as far as the full-size lounge, you'll find a small eight-seat area in each luxury coach. But the real thing, at the center of the train, is worth the walk: seats for 35, interspersed with plantings, a fountain, and a glass tank with live goldfish.

Of course, at the rear of the train is a dome-lounge-observation car. Hung on its shining rounded end is the tail sign, carrying one of the world's most instantly recognizable trademarks and the name of the country's finest train, the *Chessie*.

NOT (QUITE) REAL

Advertisements could have said all this and more, but they didn't because the train never existed. Was it just another dream of some superheated press agent or overwrought railfan? No, it was real — all too real. It was built and delivered, almost exactly as described, complete with turbine locomotive, domes, tail sign, everything. But as a train, the *Chessie* never existed.

It all started in the early 1940s. For 20 years previously, C&O had intermittently been in the news as the key piece in a vast and complicated financial chess game involving merger plans, holding companies, and reorganizations. As a railroad, though, C&O was mostly a stolid, faceless tonnage hauler with a reputation for running impeccably polished passenger trains and conveyor-belt coal drags. It was, in fact, the closest thing in railroading to a bank — conservative, ponderous, and rich. In 1942, however, C&O acquired a new board chairman: Robert R. Young. With Young, C&O got a new image, like it or not.

Young was no railroader. His business was brokerage and finance, and through the late 1920s and early '30s he had made a fortune for himself and his clients. His own leaning was toward special situations: he liked the long shots, the companies with unique problems but potential value with the right breaks.

One of the long shots was Alleghany Corp., a holding company that in theory controlled 23,000 miles of railroad stretching from New York to Pueblo, Colo., and from Ontario to the Rio Grande. Alleghany was the creation of Cleveland's quiet, quick Van Sweringen brothers (bachelors Oris Paxton and Mantis James — "the Vans"), who in 14 years had pyramided a 6-mile suburban Cleveland rapid-transit line into an almost coast-to-coast rail system. The Vans incorporated Alleghany in 1929 as the holding company for their empire, which included C&O, Nickel Plate, Pere Marquette, Erie, Wheeling & Lake Erie, Missouri Pacific, and Chicago & Eastern Illinois, plus a one-half stake in Den-

Among the *Chessie*'s many innovative features were "family coaches" 1700–1702, which had seats for 32 passengers plus a playroom and cartoon theater for kids.

The *Chessie*'s cars were standard Budd stainless steel, topped by yellow letterboards with the train's name in blue script. This is tavern-lounge-lunch counter car 1901.

The *Chessie*'s three "cabin-domes" were built with 6 roomettes for train personnel, 3 larger rooms ("cabins") of two sizes for passengers, and an operations center.

A tail sign with an image of Chesapeake & Ohio's longtime cat mascot "Chessie" adorned the three coach-lounge-dome-observation cars built for the exotic streamliner.

Four photos, Herbert H. Harwood collection

In a meeting of would-be Washington–Cincinnati rivals, a Pacific assigned to B&O's *Cincinnatian* faces off with *Chessie* turbine No. 501 at the 1948 Chicago Railroad Fair.
B. L. Stone, Krambles-Peterson Archive

C&O 492, one of four streamlined Hudsons the road rebuilt from heavy Pacifics to power connecting sections of the *Chessie,* stands at Washington in September 1948.
H. M. Stange, Krambles-Peterson Archive

Renderings for C&O by architecture firm Garfield, Harris, Robinson & Schafer depict the *Chessie*'s 2-C1+2-C1-B turbine-electric and 4-6-4 piston-drive steam locomotives.
Herbert H. Harwood collection

ver & Rio Grande Western. No sooner had Alleghany been born than it was whacked by the full force of the Depression. MoPac promptly went bankrupt, and most other Van Sweringen lines stopped paying dividends and began trying to survive.

Young had watched the Van Sweringens' woes with increasing interest, waiting for an opportunity. It came in 1937. Both brothers had died amidst a heartbreaking effort to keep their system alive. Alleghany landed in the lap of 74-year-old Muncie, Ind., entrepreneur George Ball (Ball Jars, Ball State University), who had rescued the brothers with a loan in 1935 and now found to his surprise that he was the owner of the entire tangle.

Young quickly collected some backers and arranged to buy out Ball, who had little interest in taking on the Vans' troubles. Alleghany's most liquid asset was its control of C&O, plus the relatively solvent W&LE, NKP, and PM. Erie was allowed to fall into a well-deserved bankruptcy, and Alleghany's control of MoPac was locked in a hopeless court tussle.

In 1942, following a five-year scuffle with some majority stockholders and a few of his own backers, Young assumed control of C&O. For the next 12 years, C&O and Robert R. Young were synonymous in a way that few modern large corporations and individuals ever become. The company's transformation was immediate and spectacular.

Young was everything the Van Sweringens were not. A small man with large opinions and ambitions, he was flamboyant and forceful. He had strong views about the state of the railroad business, and he expressed them at the drop of a press release. The industry was engulfed in moss and myopia, he thought, caused largely by an unholy alliance of conservative bankers, equally conservative railroad managers, and cozy cartel arrangements with carbuilders. In Young's eyes, technical progress was being stifled, stockholders were being shortchanged, and travelers were being forced to put up with idiotic inconveniences and third-class facilities. A "For Progress" tag suddenly appeared in C&O's corporate herald, and the company set about making itself an example of what a modern railroad could do.

With the end of World War II, Young went to work. Through both his personal inclinations and publicity sense, he settled on the passenger business as the flag for his crusade. His famous ad line, "A Hog Can Cross the Country Without Changing Trains, but You Can't," appeared in early 1946. This was followed by national advertising broadsides against railroad managers, bankers, and the Pullman Company — most featuring cobwebs, snails, and scenes of squalor in open-section sleepers. What was needed? Almost everything, said Young — streamlined equipment, streamlined reservations, more conveniences, finer facilities. He was more than willing to demonstrate how to do it.

The westbound *Chessie* was to take fuel from this specially designed streamlined coaling tower at Clifton Forge, Va. Making a special run, turbine 500 stands beneath the smoke-blackened structure with its bunker doors open.
Herbert H. Harwood collection

The *Chessie*'s two low-profile domes afforded the same 360-degree view as standard domes. A stewardess-nurse (in aisle) was to be part of the train's crew.
C&O, Classic Trains collection

The luxury coaches featured Venetian blinds on the windows, airliner-style pouches on the seatbacks, and, on the forward wall, a clock and a speaker for announcements.
Herbert H. Harwood collection

Besides his passenger focus, Young's C&O legacy would include the first large-scale railroad computer system, larger and better freight cars, a well-staffed research and development department, and the diversification of freight traffic, which began in 1947 when C&O finally merged ally Pere Marquette, whose automotive industry traffic shielded C&O against swings in coal by upping merchandise traffic to half its haulage.

As for passenger service, Young would create, as a capstone and symbol, the best luxury train on rails — the *Chessie*.

YOUNG'S GRAND PLAN

The C&O was hardly the ideal vehicle for Young's passenger ideas. The road was rooted in the Alleghenies, with none of the mouth-watering passenger potential of a Pennsy or a New York Central. Washington, D.C., and Cincinnati were C&O's largest on-line points. Otherwise, its territory was full of scattered but unrelated medium-size cities such as Louisville, Ky.; Columbus, Ohio; Huntington and Charleston, W.Va.; and Richmond and the Hampton Roads area of Virginia.

To the outside world, C&O was known less as a link between big cities than as the railroad to reach the posh resort hotels at White Sulphur Springs, W.Va., and Hot Springs, Va. Yes, its affiliated Pere Marquette dipped heavily into the Chicago–Grand Rapids–Lansing–Detroit markets, but these were not suitably long enough for the kind of luxury liner Young had in mind.

Be that as it may, Young wasn't the type to give up on a technicality. He selected Washington and Cincinnati as the *Chessie*'s terminals, and dictated that the train would run on a 12-hour schedule — 2 hours better than the somewhat leisurely *George Washington*.

Chessie would leave Washington at 8 a.m. and reach Cincinnati at 8 p.m. Only seven intermediate stops were scheduled for the 599-mile route: Charlottesville, Staunton, Clifton Forge (primarily to change crews and fuel the locomotive), White Sulphur Springs, Charleston, Huntington, and Ashland. Westbound, it would cross the Blue Ridge in late morning, deposit Greenbrier patrons at White Sulphur Springs just after lunch, and pass through the spectacular New River Gorge in midafternoon. Eastbound, the train was serviced at Hinton instead of Clifton Forge.

Young originally intended his dream train solely as a Washington–Cincinnati service, but news of it quickly reached Richmond,

where the state house and C&O's headquarters stood within sight of each other. Suggestions were made that to forget the Hampton Roads area and the state capital would be unthinkable, so a connecting train with similar equipment was added to meet the *Chessie* at Charlottesville. *Chessie*'s strict schedule didn't permit switching, so Richmond and Newport News passengers changed trains.

After Young's fulminations against the stifling Pullman monopoly, C&O chose Budd to build the *Chessie*. The order was signed in late 1945. Altogether, 46 cars were ordered — enough for three complete 14-car consists, plus extras to be used on the Virginia connecting train. (So there would be no danger of shortchanging the consist or of tainting the train with inferior equipment when something was in the shop, Young had ordered one extra full trainset, with locomotive.)

Included were 3 baggage-coach combines, 22 luxury coaches, 3 family coaches, 3 full lounge cars, 3 twin-unit diner sets, and 3 coach-lounge-dome-observation cars. No parlor equipment was planned (it was superfluous), but there were 3 dome cars with three rooms (two double, one single, called "cabins" in keeping with the liner concept) and six roomettes. The roomettes were intended primarily for crew members, though they could be used by passengers desiring privacy. The cabin-dome car would also serve as the train's operations center, with facilities for recorded music and announcements. In addition, three diner-lounge-observation cars were included specifically or the Newport News–Charlottesville connecting train.

The *Chessie* cars were to be equipped with Sleepy Hollow seats in addition to all the extras already described. Audio speakers were built into the headrest of each coach seat, with controls to select recorded music, a recorded history of the route, or radio programs. Each coach also carried a large clock on its forward bulkhead wall and a speaker for station announcements. Wash basins were operated by foot pedals, and toilets were fitted with ultraviolet antiseptic lamps, dictated by Young's personal obsession with germs.

Non-revenue lounge space abounded on Young's dreamliner. At the rear of each luxury coach was an eight-seat area with club chairs and a sofa, set off by a low wall.
Herbert H. Harwood collection

COAL-FIRED POWER

For motive power, Young made a double bow to innovation and preservation of C&O's biggest customer — the coal industry. By 1944 the diesel was plainly the power of the future. Even the coal roads recognized that its takeover was only a matter of time, barring any breakthrough in coal-fueled locomotion. (In fact, C&O's own Pere Marquette already had EMD switchers on the property plus eight E7s for its new, Young-inspired *Pere Marquette* streamliners.) *Chessie* was the chance for C&O to show off not only the best in passenger service but the potential of steam turbine power.

In 1944, C&O and a group of major coal producers and railroads had jointly formed a research group to start basic work on a new turbine design. Young couldn't wait for the long-range results of a group project, though — he set his newly formed C&O research group (headed by aeronautical engineer K. A. Browne) to work with Baldwin and Westinghouse on a more expedient design incorporating a more or less standard firetube boiler, steam turbine, and electrical drive. Three of these monsters were ordered in late 1944.

And monsters they were. Their final specifications called for a 106-foot engine plus a 48-foot water tender. From front to rear coupler, they measured almost 30 feet more than C&O's massive 2-6-6-6 Allegheny type articulateds and 23 feet more than a Union Pacific 4-8-8-4 Big Boy. Engine weight was 428 tons. "The world's largest single-unit passenger locomotives," C&O called them. With those stupefying dimensions, nobody argued.

A 6,000 h.p. steam turbine churned out electric power for eight traction motors mounted in a 2-C1+2-C1-B wheel arrangement. Coal was carried in the nose ahead of the cab, and the boiler faced backward, with turbine and generator at the far rear. From the outside, however, it was difficult to tell what was where. The whole affair was streamlined, from a great outward-slanting orange nose to stainless-steel-flanked tender.

CARS BY THE HUNDREDS

The *Chessie* was merely the show window of a fully stocked candy store. In November 1946, C&O also dispatched a remarkable order to Pullman-Standard for 287 passenger cars — enough to replace virtually every piece of pre-war mainline equipment on the railroad. The purchase was advertised as the largest single order from one railroad to one carbuilder. Every C&O through train — the *George Washington*, *Sportsman*, and *F.F.V.* — was to be re-equipped from the head-end cars on back. Every one would carry a twin-unit diner, observation car, and all-room sleepers.

In this order were 14 twin-unit diner sets, 13 observation cars in three varieties, and such exotica as 19 lunch-counter coaches equipped with telephones. A total of 97 sleepers contained such niceties as cutaway beds in the roomettes, foot-operated wash basin faucets, center bedrooms, and private toilets for the bedrooms — all C&O innovations.

Equipment was only part of the program. Supporting all the streamliners was an enticing variety of extras — offered only by C&O,

The *Chessie*'s mid-train tavern-lounge car had seats for 35 in the main area (above left), plus a 6-seat lunch counter with soda fountain (above right). Etched glass partitions, live plants, and a fountain — plus one truly novel element — were part of the decor.
Three photos, Herbert H. Harwood collection

CHESSIE'S EQUIPMENT, AND WHAT BECAME OF IT

LOCOMOTIVES		
500–502	M-1 steam turbine-electrics (Baldwin, 1947-'48)	Retired 1950; returned to Baldwin for salvage
490–493	L-1 4-6-4s, streamlined, for connecting sections (C&O, 1946-'47; rebuilt from 1926 Alco 4-6-2s)	Used in regular passenger service until early 1950s; 490 preserved at B&O Museum
CARS		
1400–1402	Coach-combine; 28 passengers (Budd, 1948)	1400–1401 sold to Argentina; 1402 kept by C&O
1500–1511	Luxury coach; 36 passengers, plus 8 lounge seats; vestibules face rear of train (Budd, 1948).	1500, sold to ACL; 1501, 1502, 1503, 1506, 1507, 1508, 1509, 1511 to Argentina; 1504, 1505, 1510 to SAL
1600–1609	Luxury coach; 36 passengers, 8 lounge seats; vestibules face front of train (Budd, 1948)	1600, 1602, 1603, 1605, 1609 sold to ACL; 1601, 1604, 1606, 1607, 1608 sold to SAL
1700–1702	Family coach; 32 passengers, plus cartoon theater, playroom, etc. (Budd, 1948)	1700–1702 sold to C&EI
1850–1852	"Cabin-dome"; 2 double rooms, 1 single room, 6 roomettes, 24-seat dome (Budd, 1948)	1850–1852 sold to B&O; reconfigured with 3 drawing rooms, 1 compartment, 5 roomettes, 24-seat dome
1875–1877	Coach-lounge-dome-observation; 24 passengers, 24-seat domes (Budd, 1948)	1875–1877 sold to D&RGW
1900–1902	Tavern-lounge-lunch counter (Budd, 1948)	1900 rebuilt as Robert R. Young's private car (C&O 19, later NYC 23, then *Adios II*); 1901-1902 sold to Argentina
1920–1922	Diner-lounge-flat-end observation; for use on connecting trains (Budd, 1948)	1920–1922 in service on C&O mid-1968
1940–1942	Lunch-counter-kitchen (Budd, 1948); half of twin-unit diner	1940–1942 sold to ACL
1970–1972	Full diner-theater car (Budd, 1948); half of twin-unit diner	1970–1972 sold to ACL

of course. The Central Reservation Bureau, for example, was created to give passengers instant space confirmation — no waiting for wires, no danger of duplicate sales. The bureau opened in early 1948 in C&O's Huntington offices, with direct phone lines to 24 on-line and off-line cities. A New Yorker, for instance, had only to dial a local number to reach Huntington; operators sitting at a large revolving control board could see at a glance what was available on the *Chessie* or on any C&O Pullman run for eight weeks ahead, and assign space immediately.

The passenger didn't have to worry about ticketing technicalities, either. A C&O credit card was all he needed to buy transportation or space, and the tickets could be delivered if he desired. In fact, they could be picked up on the train, where they were held by a uniformed passenger representative. These were major innovations for a railroad in 1948.

The passenger could ship his auto on the train, too. And the train itself carried a passenger representative as well as the usual complement of coach and Pullman porters. No need to tip dining-car waiters, either. Movies were to be shown in the diners after dinner. Anywhere on C&O, nothing was too good for the passenger: timetables were radically redesigned for easy reading, branchline trains ran up every remote West Virginia creek, and excursions were operated for children to give them the right impressions of train travel early in life.

FIRST SIGNS OF *CHESSIE*

The first visible sign of *Chessie* appeared in late 1946, when the first of four streamlined Hudsons showed up for service. These were conversions from C&O's fearsome F-19 Pacifics, rebuilt by Huntington shops into poppet-valved, roller-bearing 4-6-4s and shrouded in *Chessie*'s stainless-steel and vivid orange motif. (Five were converted, but the fifth never got the shroud.) C&O had hustled these engines through Huntington as a hedge against late delivery of the turbines, reasoning that in any event they could be used on connecting services from Newport News and possibly Louisville.

Also in 1946 came reaction from the competition. Baltimore & Ohio had the most to lose from Young's dreamliner, both in business and in prestige. B&O was the only other direct Washington–Cincinnati passenger carrier; it owned the short route between the cities and was also highly passenger-minded. The minute the C&O order went to Budd and the press releases began to flow, B&O rushed to create its own daylight streamliner.

B&O dispatched a group of 1920-era heavyweight coaches to Mount Clare Shops for a complete rebuild. Mount Clare turned out a superb little streamliner, the *Cincinnatian*, albeit much more conservative than its threatened competition. It had only a five-car consist — a combine-lounge, three coaches with capacities from 52 to 60, and a compact diner-lounge-observation. It did have several Young-inspired amenities, however, including a stewardess-nurse and special facilities for children. Power was also in the B&O mold: four 1927 Pacifics were modernized and streamlined in royal blue, black, and silver, giving them a generally more tasteful look than the somewhat garish C&O Hudsons. The *Cincinnatian* started service in January

The truly novel feature of the lounge car was a tall aquarium, complete with goldfish. The fish, being eyed here by C&O mascot Chessie the cat, apparently suffered from train-sickness, and promptly died.

Young's passion for improving C&O passenger service included a new reservation bureau based around a three-tiered console with rotating drums (above left), and a "timetable calculator" that was smaller and easier to use than traditional folders (above right).
Above left, Classic Trains coll.; above right, John B. Corns coll.

1947 on an 11½-hour daylight schedule — 30 minutes better than the *Chessie* was to do, thanks largely to B&O's 55-mile shorter route.

To the south, Norfolk & Western decided not to wait for the Hampton Roads incarnation of the *Chessie* either. N&W in 1946 put together some pre-war lightweight coaches into the daylight Norfolk–Cincinnati *Powhatan Arrow*, and at the same time had Raymond Loewy and Pullman-Standard collaborate on an all-new version. (This was finally delivered in 1949 [see pages 50–55] and, like B&O's streamliner, was short and far from *Chessie*'s standards in appointments.)

But still no *Chessie*. An expected 1947 delivery date came and went as Young had more ideas and added more features. Nevertheless, the project was moving ahead. Two massive modernistic coaling towers were built to fuel the turbines — one at Clifton Forge for the westbound *Chessie*, the other at Hinton for the eastbound.

In 1947, Baldwin delivered steam turbine No. 500, and C&O's publicity machine was oiled up for the main event in 1948, when two more turbines and the train itself would arrive. Color postcards were printed up showing *Chessie* dome cars and coach interiors. The cover of the company's 1947 annual report carried a full-color photo of the 500's orange face, and inside was an artist's drawing of *Chessie* streaking through the Alleghenies. "Embodying the latest features of passenger-car design," it burbled, "such as vista domes, individual radio reception, recreation facilities, and induction telephones, the *Chessies* will be C&O's outstanding contribution to passenger comfort and convenience."

The 1948 calendar featured a full-color turbine and train, with C&O's mascot cat Chessie asleep while his mate Peake and their kittens looked on admiringly. "Here Comes Your Train, Chessie," they said in the headline below. "No wonder Chessie's family is excitingly alert with tingling spirit," the foaming copy continued. "This is about to become a moment of dramatic importance in the eventful career of Chessie — and in railway progress. . . . These are the trains all America has waited for! You'll be welcome aboard in 1948 — a momentous year for railroad leadership — and Chessie!"

Chessie's train did indeed come. The 46 cars finally arrived in August 1948, all lettered "The Chessie" in a flowing script that was part of C&O's new image. The construction bill was $6.1 million, plus $1.6 million for the three turbines — not including research and development costs. But here it was at last, and Young wasted no time taking two trainsets on a triumphal tour of the system. Thousands of potential passengers and freight customers trooped through the cars, gaping at the goldfish, marveling at the children's theater, and appraising the oil paintings.

Then . . . silence. Although the equipment was on the property, C&O's 1948 annual report said not a word about it. Instead, vague references were made to the passenger deficit problem and the "realistic" steps the company was taking to solve it. The company's public relations staff, one of the most creative and articulate in the business, turned mum, and even began excising references to the *Chessie* from its comic-book handouts. C&O's fall 1948 timetable listed the three old standby trains, but no *Chessie*. The silence continued. Within three years, the turbines and almost all the beautiful Budd equipment had vaporized, leaving behind only four cars.

REALITY INTERVENES

What happened? Sandhouse gossip had it that the domes wouldn't clear the Capitol Hill tunnel in Washington, that the 12-hour schedule was impossible to make, and that B&O's 11½-hour *Cincinnatian* schedule had already beaten the *Chessie*'s best anyway.

The tunnel tale wasn't true — or so claimed a C&O design engineer who was involved in the project. A minor clearance problem did exist with the platform sheds, he said, but this was to have been solved by a change in the car springing. *Chessie*'s schedule was questionable, but possible. True, it was almost 2 hours faster than any time C&O had achieved, but without the head-end business, local stops, engine changes, and consist shufflings that were the norm even for C&O's best trains, it might have been managed.

At least one test run was made successfully, although everything else on the railroad was held up as it passed. As for B&O — well, maybe it was fractionally faster, but next to the *Chessie*'s domes, playrooms, movies, and Muzak, Mount Clare's finest looked like an IRT subway train. No, there were other reasons for *Chessie*'s premature demise.

To begin with, C&O had discovered that no business potential existed for a daylight Washington–Cincinnati run, and apparently never had. B&O, in its rush to outflank Young, unwittingly provided C&O with two years' worth of depressing market experience. B&O had begun conservatively, with only three revenue cars plus a lounge and a diner. It found that even this was more than adequate and never had need to expand the train. Once the *Chessie* threat was definitely over, B&O in 1950, only 3½ years after its launch, moved the *Cincinnatian*, both the equipment

In each *Chessie* consist was a "family coach" that included facilities and services for children. Kids could watch cartoons in a small theater decorated with Disney characters (top left). Low glass walls kept tykes corralled in a play area (above). A hostess tends to a baby in one of the train's portable cradles (left).

Top photos, Classic Trains coll.; left Herbert H. Harwood coll.

and train name, to the Cincinnati–Detroit route, which had bigger intermediate cities.

N&W discovered essentially the same thing. Its Norfolk–Cincinnati *Powhatan Arrow* remained six cars and lost money from the day it started. Unlike B&O, however, wealthy N&W could well afford the prestige.

Even if *Chessie*'s seats were filled, the train's economics were cloudy at best. Originally, C&O had calculated the break-even point of occupancy at about 75 percent; by 1948 the cost of *Chessie*'s luxury extras and staff of attendants had ballooned to the point where it needed closer to 125 percent.

MORE TO THE STORY

Business wasn't the entire story. More pertinent, perhaps, was that the *Chessie* symbolized a phase of C&O's corporate life that the company was ready to forget. For just as its cars were arriving in 1948, Young and C&O had slipped into serious trouble.

The postwar years were hard for C&O and were not particularly helped by Young's personal enthusiasms. First, an enormous amount of new investment was needed simply to replace war-worn power and rolling stock. On the other hand, postwar freight business inevitably slowed down, while expenses started to climb. Passenger business, of course, began its long deterioration. C&O also was busy formally digesting the Pere Marquette after years of close affiliation.

At the same time, Young was more than ready to reform the industry and to expand his domain. C&O money was poured into the hog-and-snail advertising campaigns. In 1947, he pulled the company out of the Association of American Railroads' policy-making and p.r. activities and made C&O the chief sponsor of his own Federation for Railway Progress. He bought the lush Greenbrier Hotel back from the government and gave it a $4 million facelift. Substantial sums went into Young's passenger passions — the Central Reservation Bureau, development of the lightweight *Train X*, greatly expanded service staffs, station and ticket office remodeling, and of course, the $33 million commitment for new cars. In another, and more significant, direction, $7.6 million of C&O cash was spent for New York Central stock.

The result was a severe strain on C&O's treasury. From 1946 to '48, its equipment debt more than doubled. Midway through 1948, C&O found itself so short of cash that it was forced to issue $40 million worth of new mortgage bonds — its first bond issue in 20 years. C&O's total net debt climbed $130 million at a time when net income was dropping.

The situation was worrisome to C&O management, and it showed. In 1948, its finance vice president resigned, publicly blasting Young for his arbitrary one-man rule, his preoccupation with publicity, and his financial overindulgence. In the same year, Presi-

Even as C&O management was cooling on the *Chessie,* the streamliner toured the railroad. At Charlottesville, Va., would-be passengers line up to walk through a train they could never ride.

Temporary lights illuminate the *Chessie* at an exhibition stop in September 1948. The twin-unit diner closest to the camera wound up serving passengers on Atlantic Coast Line trains.

Three photos, Herbert H. Harwood collection

dent Robert Bowman suffered a heart attack and retired, and was replaced by Vice-President Walter Tuohy. In early 1949, a former General Electric executive was brought in to help untangle the financial situation.

Predictably, *Chessie*'s dilemma was also a red flag to stockholders who had never been entirely entranced with Young. Some felt his ideas and ambitions were out of scale for a small railroad like C&O. A few had memories of 15 years before, when C&O was single-handedly supporting the tottering Van Sweringen system, and they were not ready to bankroll another empire builder. For better or worse, in their minds *Chessie* represented all that was wrong about Young's management — the lavish expenditures in an area without profit, the dilettantism in buying equipment irrelevant to C&O's traffic, and the high cost of three untried turbines when common sense dictated buying just one to see how it worked. In short, *Chessie* suddenly became a gleaming skeleton in C&O's closet.

With both corporate and personal images at stake, Young quietly gave in and allowed the train to be sacrificed without ceremony. The *Chessie* cars were spread out on existing C&O runs. In October 1948, some of the more practical cars (mostly coaches and the dome-observations) were put on the Chicago–Grand Rapids *Pere Marquettes*, a market with solid passenger potential. A few other cars were tried on trains in traditional C&O territory with varying degrees of success. Some troubles still existed: the goldfish in the lounge cars' tanks promptly died, apparently from trainsickness set off by the sloshing water; and steam locomotives blanketed the dome windows with cinders. The *Chessie* name discreetly disappeared from all letterboards and was replaced by "Chesapeake & Ohio" in an identical flowing script.

Then there was that 287-car order for C&O's "regular" passenger service — an extravagance by 1946 standards, clearly an absurdity by 1948–49. Tuohy managed to lop 99 cars off the order before they were built, and fortunately found other railroads willing to take another 38 directly from Pullman-Standard. (Rio Grande was the biggest beneficiary with 23 assorted head-end cars, coaches, diner-lounges, and sleepers; B&O and Illinois Central also picked up some Pullmans.)

The balance of 150 cars could be absorbed by C&O or sold off. Eight twin-unit diner sets, survivors of the intended 14, promptly went to Illinois Central, Atlantic Coast Line, and NYC; B&O bought four Pullman lounge-observations for its *Capitol Limited* and *Ambassador*. Later, as C&O's passenger business continued to slide, other coaches, parlor cars, and sleepers drifted off to ACL, Seaboard, C&NW, MoPac, and B&O. Interestingly, B&O wound up as one of the largest owners of ex-C&O postwar passenger cars several years before its 1960s C&O affiliation.

Meanwhile, the turbines were having their own troubles. As it turned out, their performances were less than spectacular. Operating and maintenance costs were high, and power output and availability were uncertain. The 500s went into mainline passenger service west of Charlottesville, where they wheezed erratically for two years hauling heavyweight consists of the *Sportsman*, *F.F.V.*, and *George Washington*. In 1950, all three were quietly retired and turned back to Baldwin. Equally quietly the same year, fleets of F7 and GP7 road diesels began showing up, and in 1951 the first E8s arrived to dieselize the passenger runs. On C&O, the coal-fired locomotive in any form was as dead as the *Chessie*.

SECOND LIVES

Since their cruise-liner luxury didn't fit anywhere in C&O's passenger patterns without rebuilding, and C&O had more than enough other new cars anyway, most *Chessie* cars were sold in 1950 and '51, a few before they had rolled on C&O rails. All but 4 of the 46 cars got scattered from Vancouver to Buenos Aires. C&O kept the three diner-lounge-observations intended for the Virginia connection and assigned them to the *George Washington*. A single coach-combine, 1402, was kept for *Pere Marquette* runs.

After a brief, unhappy trial on the *Sportsman* between Detroit and Clifton Forge, the three dome-Pullmans were bought by B&O. They were later leased by ACL and Canadian National. Rio Grande picked up the three coach-dome-observations, and Chicago & Eastern Illinois acquired the three family coaches. Robert R. Young selected *Chessie* lounge car 1900 for conversion into his own private car, C&O 19. It eventually followed him to the New York Central.

For their Florida trade, ACL bought the three twin-unit diners and six luxury coaches, and Seaboard eight coaches. Most paradoxical was that 12 cars — 8 coaches, 2 combines, and 2 lounges — were shipped to Argentina, a strange anticlimax to the career of the train that was to set America's standard of luxury. But, then, perhaps it was appropriate to the whole surrealistic tale of the train that never really was.

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A display consist promoting the *Pere Marquette*s at Muskegon, Mich., ends with a *Chessie* observation car relettered "Chesapeake and Ohio." The *Chessie*'s obs cars went to the D&RGW.

SOUTH WIND

From their December 1940 debuts until 1957, three all-coach streamliners, originally 7 cars each, left Chicago and Miami every third morning offering complementary service on three routes north of Jacksonville; all used Florida East Coast to the south. The Budd-built *South Wind* (above, east of Englewood, Ill., behind streamlined PRR K4s Pacific 2665) ran via Louisville and Montgomery, Ala., on Pennsy, L&N, and Atlantic Coast Line.

Paul Eilenberger

CITY OF MIAMI

The *City of Miami* ran on Illinois Central, Central of Georgia, and ACL on a route via Birmingham, Ala., and Albany, Ga. The only one of the trio that was all-diesel at launch, it used IC E6 4000 (at Centralia, Ill., in 1946, in a unique green-and-orange livery that matched the train) to Jacksonville, where it swapped out for FEC E3 1001, which handled all three trains.

Henry J. McCord

DIXIE FLAGLER

The *Dixie Flagler*'s route over Chicago & Eastern Illinois; L&N; Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis; Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast; and ACL took it via Evansville, Ind.; Nashville; Atlanta; and Waycross, Ga. The Budd consist first ran in December 1939 as FEC's Jacksonville–Miami *Henry M. Flagler*. Pennsy, L&N, AB&C, and C&EI used streamlined 4-6-2s on their trains; here, C&EI 1008 speeds the *Dixie Flagler*, augmented by two heavyweight coaches, out of Chicago in 1941.

Paul Eilenberger

The *Dixie Flagler* was discontinued in 1957, leaving the *South Wind* and *City of Miami* to continue on an every-other-day schedule. Before that, all three trains added sleepers, and diesels began running through. Above, ACL E units are on PRR tracks as they bring the *Wind* into Englewood on the way out of Chicago in January 1967. The fourth car is a Northern Pacific dome-sleeper, a winter-season addition to the consist. Penn Central ended the *South Wind* as a through service in 1969, but Amtrak used the name on its Chicago–Florida train briefly in 1971.

The *City of Miami* kept its every-other-day schedule until Amtrak. Like the *South Wind*, the *City* carried NP dome sleepers during the busy season; the *Wind*'s domes remained in NP livery, but the *City*'s cars were repainted into and out of IC colors as appropriate. A dome is four cars from the rear on this *City of Miami*, heading out of Chicago beside IC's electrified suburban trackage in 1968.

Two photos, Craig E. Willett

The Bootlegger

About a pair of passenger trains that were steam, electric, slow, non-uniform, distinctive — and remembered

BY **ROBERT A. LE MASSENA**

Fortified by logic, one could presume that Table 1 of the Pennsylvania Railroad in the *Official Guide* perennially displayed a schedule belonging to the *Broadway Limited*. If it did not, then surely that premier position would be occupied by some other service ranking only slightly less in importance to the famous New York–Chicago express. Although such presumptions are reasonable, there were occasions in the 1920s when PRR Table 1 pertained only to an inconsequential maid-of-all-work, whose southbound run was dubbed accurately, if not politely, "the Bootlegger."

The *Washingtonian* and the *Montrealer*, named for their destinations, possessed no particular stature entitling them to their

first-place position in the *Guide*. They were, if anything, slow in end-to-end speed. Their equipment was non-uniform, reflecting the individual prerogatives of the several carriers that handled the cars, and they were not deluxe, extra-fare, or all-Pullman. Yet the trains were distinctive. They operated over five major railroads between Washington and Montreal: Pennsy, New Haven, Boston & Maine, Central Vermont, and Canadian National. Their cars indicated ownership by those railroads, and, except on the electrified segments of the PRR and the New Haven, they were hauled by hand-fired Pacifics belonging to four and sometimes all five companies. Surprisingly, one of their sleeping cars, of 12-section/1-drawing-room arrangement, in winter plied the 2,000-mile run between Montreal and Miami.

Patronage was as diverse as the consists, varying with the seasons as well as with the immediate locations of the trains themselves. Diplomats shuttling between the capitals of Ottawa and Washington were fixtures in the Pullmans, while affluent members of New York and Washington society inhabited parlor cars on the daytime southern portions of the route. Winter found frigid Quebecers heading for sunny St. Petersburg and Miami, and summer produced a migration of sweltering New Yorkers and Philadelphians to the cooler climes of eastern Canada. At the end of June the *Montrealer* became an element of the New Haven-Boston & Maine network that distributed thousands of boisterous kids to summer camps in New England. Then, toward Labor Day, the *Washingtonian* helped bring the tanned and tired brats home in time for school.

Montrealer north

After leaving Washington's magnificent Union Station in midafternoon, the *Montrealer* was hardly more than another of 30-odd through trains dispatched northward over PRR to New York. In the pre-electrified era on PRR that begat the Prohibition moniker for the southbound train, up front on the *Montrealer* was a standard hand-fired K4s 4-6-2, whose cleanliness extended scarcely beyond the perimeter of its smokebox keystone number plate. The multihued aggregation of cars behind resembled the aftermath of an American Railway Association track

Not long after sunrise in July 1940, Central Vermont 4-8-2 No. 601 makes 60 mph around a curve with the *Montrealer* at East Swanton, Vt. Built in 1927, Nos. 600–603 were CV's elite passenger engines.
Robert A. Le Massena

A mile east of Newark, N.J., PRR K4s Pacific 5388 (top) steps through the third-rail trackage at Manhattan Transfer with a train for New York on August 2, 1930. Here the 4-6-2 will give way to a DD1 (above) or L5 electric for the 9-mile run to Penn Station.

Top, H. Cotterell Jr.; above, Brown Brothers

exhibit. Mail and express filled a couple of soiled Tuscan red head-end cars right behind the tender, followed by a Canadian National combination car in olive green. The coaches were beyond human prediction, the letterboards varying among CN, CV, B&M, NH, PRR, and even Grand Trunk. The diner belonged to the Pennsy and was detached at New York; its usual companion, Central Vermont compartment-club car *Missisquoi* or *Springfield*, remained in the train. The sleeper consist was intriguing in that it represented the north end of a Florida–New York run originating on Seaboard Air Line, and the south end of a Washington–Canada run terminating on the CN. Bringing up the rear were Pennsy parlor cars, in Tuscan and gold, of course, occupied by those who could afford the luxury of a journey to New York in uncrowded, quiet, and sedate surroundings.

The *Montrealer*'s 5-hour schedule for the 226 miles from Washington to New York — about average prior to electrification — did not seem particularly fast. Yet six station stops, another one at Manhattan Transfer to swap the K4 for a DD1 or L5 electric, and two slowdowns to scoop water from track pans into the K4's 12,000-gallon tank gave the hogger little time en route for contemplating the wonders of man and nature. (Three decades later GG1s, 155-lb. rail, and lighter equipment yielded a 3½-hour timing.) Since this was the fastest leg of the entire run, car windows remained closed against dust and cinders, even though outside temperatures were scorching.

Pennsylvania Station in New York, where 20 minutes were allotted for the conversion of the *Montrealer* from a Washington–New York express into an overnight international limited, possessed local and distinctive character. Although Penn looked like an architectural facsimile of a public bathhouse of Roman times (as contemplated by its designers), and probably was just as noisy, its aroma, in the pre-pizza-and-popcorn era, decidedly was that of electrified transportation. Identifiable odors were those emanating from hot brakeshoes, warm electric motors, and high-voltage arcs. It was to this great edifice that "Mothaw and Fathaw" escorted summer-camp-bound Wilberforce Prescott Gladstone III, just before his parents sailed for the Grand Tour of Europe; or Mom and Pop delivered Susan on her way to two weeks of vacation in New England while her folks endured summer in the city. To some of the youngsters, vast terminals and Pullmans were commonplace; but to most, the breath-taking panorama of Penn Station and its two-block-long columned façade facing Seventh Avenue was the thrill of a lifetime.

All aboard for Vermont

I was once one of the boys in those chattering groups. Oblivious to the farewells of our parents, we descended the steel stairway to platform level where our own "private" Pullman, *McNierney*, awaited us. Inside the standard heavyweight 12-1 we were transported into another world, one that excluded all external noises and whose solemn stillness was disturbed only by the hum of two tiny fans at either end of the center aisle. The odor here also was different, smelling pleasantly of scrubbed carpeting and fresh bedsheets.

Minutes later a dull *clunk-clunk-clunk* from six-wheel trucks said that the *Montrealer* was slipping stealthily out of Penn Station behind a long sea-green New Haven EP-2 1-C-1+1-C-1 motor. After emerging from the East River tunnel, the train passed Sunnyside Yard and began the long climb to the giant steel-arch Hell Gate Bridge, the principal asset of the New York Connecting Railroad, the link between PRR and NH in New York. Such incidentals, and even the splendid view of Long Island Sound from the bridge, failed to impress us young travelers; we were too intrigued with the porter's rituals involving mysterious mechanisms that transformed our seats into comfortable berths behind long green curtains.

We saw little of Connecticut's shore line or its industrial cities in the darkness, but some of us stayed awake as far as New Haven so we could peer out of our windows at the rows of dimly lit electric locomotives awaiting dawn assignments back to New York. It

was well past our accustomed bedtime when a snorting New Haven class I-4 Pacific accelerated us northward, and at least one youngster discovered how to open both the inner and outer berth windows, thus ensuring himself of the maximum dosage of *clickety-clack*, smoke, and cinders. Arrival time at Springfield, Mass., 135 miles out of New York, was not shown in the New Haven's schedule, but this was a trivial piece of information when practically everybody was supposed to be sound asleep at midnight.

The nocturnal passage of the *Montrealer*, now behind a Boston & Maine class P-2 4-6-2, over 112 miles of the road's Connecticut River line was an event the B&M refused to recognize in the *Guide* with either train number or arrival times. Northampton . . . Greenfield . . . Bellows Falls . . . Claremont Junction . . . Windsor. One could assume the train was a nonstop proposition, a situation that might have benefitted dozing passengers in the coaches if the crews had not insisted on keeping the lights illuminated all night long. The last 14 miles of the journey into White River Junction, Vt., required the use of Central Vermont track, an arrangement that necessitated the periodic use of CV locomotives into Springfield to equalize the mileage. The enforced idleness of these engines for almost an entire day reportedly tempted frugal B&M personnel to borrow them for other purposes without observing the formality of obtaining CV's permission. This practice terminated when CV discovered one of its new 4-8-2s in Boston!

Into the Green Mountains

Thus far the *Montrealer* had taken us over the high-density/high-speed trackage of the Pennsylvania; threaded its way through the New Haven's commuter zones; and paralleled New England's principal river on the Boston & Maine. Now the train would have to climb for 45 miles to reach the crest of the Green Mountains at Roxbury (in Vermont pronounced *Roxbree*). If the consist was light, a CV K-3 Pacific was adequate; otherwise one of the road's hand-fired U-1a Mountains would be assigned. Regardless, the pace would be slower and the exhausts measured and distinct; they would echo in the narrowing valley, and the steam would hang low over the track long after the markers had vanished around a curve. Mail sacks would be snatched from cranes, and others would thud to the graveled platforms at West Hartford, Sharon, South Royalton, Royalton, Bethel, Randolph, and Braintree in the gray predawn mists as the slender-boilered 4-8-2 barked upward through the forest.

Having earned his pay by shoveling coal continuously for well over an hour, the fireboy could relax for the 72 miles of downhill running from Roxbury Summit to St. Albans. Along here somewhere was where a few of us kids, unable to sleep any longer, usually

Penn Station (top), filling two full blocks of Manhattan real estate, resembled a great Roman building. Inside (above), the aroma of electrified transportation filled the air.
Top, PRR; above, Thomas Emden

decided to ride in the rear vestibule despite the admonitions of a rear-end brakeman. For almost 2 hours we stood out there, inhaling the cool air flavored occasionally with the aroma of overheated brakeshoes, damp steam, and soft-coal smoke that wafted back along the cars. We enjoyed the varied cadence of *clickety-clickety — clickety-clickety* from beneath the heavy car, and we watched the black engine roll gracefully around the curves in the dappled morning sunlight. We were fascinated with the traffic in milk cans, newspapers, mail sacks, express packages, and trunks at Montpelier Junction and Essex Junction, and we wondered how anyone could be so busy in these early hours. And then we caught a glimpse of Lake Champlain, our destination — a thin streak of blue water in a vast green panorama — the signal for mass awakening. Fortunately for the sleeping occupants of the other Pullmans, ours was the last one in the train, and the passengers were not disturbed by the ebullience of two dozen boisterous hellions. Finally the slackening pace of the *Montrealer* told us we were about to enter St. Albans' old wooden-arch trainshed, an anachronism in any place but New England.

Harsh though Vermont may be in winter, in the summer it is a gentle land, and this trait was evident in the skilled handling of the 0-8-0 that nuzzled our rear coupler so delicately that only the knuckles moved. Thus disconnected from the *Montrealer*, we

In the 1920s and '30s, New Haven box-cab electrics like EP-2 No. 0311 (above left) hauled the *Montrealer* and *Washingtonian* between Penn Station and New Haven; beyond catenary, one of NH's 50 class I-4 Pacifics forwarded the train to Springfield, Mass. I-4 No. 1376 (above right) races through North Haven, Conn., with train 66, the *Day White Mountains Express*, in February 1939.

Above left, Kent Day Coes; above, John P. Ahrens

At Springfield, Mass., around midnight, a Boston & Maine P-2 Pacific would be put on the *Montrealer*; P-2 No. 3656 is seen at Bellows Falls, Vt., on a different assignment.

Classic Trains collection

were pushed around it on an adjacent track, past the engine terminal, then down a ladder to the rear of a local freight ready to leave for Rouses Point, N.Y. We were now in a mixed train! Within the hour we would detrain at West Swanton, Vt., with all of our baggage and ball bats, but hopefully without any souvenirs labeled Pullman.

Transformation, and secret "luggage"

In the 5 minutes allotted by timetable at St. Albans, the *Montrealer* underwent its final transformation. The Railway Post Office car was sealed, and its clerks departed. Canadian and American immigration and customs officers boarded the train to check passengers and their possessions. Canadian French was heard in the cars, and the train was truly a Canadian entity as it rolled toward the border now only 19 miles away at the end of CV track. North of the border, station names on Canadian National would be French-flavored too — St. Armand, Des Rivières, Iberville, Brosseau, and of course Montreal, 52 miles north of the international boundary. On either side of the track was farmland, a fertile plain extending from the border to the banks of the St. Lawrence River, which was crossed into Montreal over the multispanned Victoria Bridge. Only minutes later the journey would end at CN's aged Bonaventure Station.

Our camp was located at the northeast corner of Lake Champlain, where on calm nights we could hear the rumble of Rutland Railroad freights traversing the islands in midlake. We also could hear the *Washingtonian* southbound for home, whistling through East Swanton, but little did we know of its illicit traffic in bootleg booze. These were Prohibition times in the U.S., when a misguided element of society succeeded in allocating the exclusive distribution and manufacture of alcoholic beverages to the lawless minority. Canadian liquor commanded high prices in the clandestine markets south of the border, and the traffic was immense. Cases of firewater were submerged in tender cisterns unbeknownst to the crew; passengers would hide bottles inside or outside the cars; and trunks with false bottoms rode in the baggage compartments.

The Bootlegger was aptly named, and the alias stuck long after Prohibition ended in spring 1933.

Washingtonian south

After our weeks in camp had ended, we felt important when the *Washingtonian* braked to an unscheduled halt at East Swanton so we could climb aboard our Pullman, *McPherson,* late at night. The berths were already made up, so almost everyone turned in. But there were a few who wanted another look at the big engines in St. Albans and who preferred to stand on the rear platform listening to the soft music from the stack and the triple-beat rhythm of the wheels clicking across each rail joint. Eventually, Morpheus triumphed, though, and the slumberers in *McPherson* knew nothing of Roxbury Sum-

mit, White River Junction, Brattleboro, Springfield, or New Haven. The early wakers who peered out beneath the green window shades saw Bridgeport, Saugatuck, and South Norwalk shrouded in thin gray fogs that had rolled inland from Long Island Sound. Then, while the porter reconverted our berths, we indulged in the ultimate luxury of breakfast in the diner. With scant consideration for Pullman occupants who wanted to remain asleep, we would race down the dim green-curtained aisles to await our table as we stood in the corridor with our backs against the warm wall of the galley.

Stamford, Cos Cob, and New Rochelle slipped by our windows as the *Washingtonian* sped down the New Haven's glass-smooth, rock-ballasted, multiple-track main line. New York City's tremendous towers, seen from Hell Gate Bridge, reminded us to gather up our tennis rackets and suitcases, and to remember to behave ourselves now that we had returned to civilization.

The switching crews took most of the 15 minutes allowed in Penn Station to dismantle the train's hodgepodge consist and to put it back together as a Pennsylvania Railroad-style Washington express. Thirteen minutes after departure via the Hudson River tunnel, the *Washingtonian* was accelerating out of Manhattan Transfer behind a customary K4 Pacific, headed down the four- and six-track New York Division of the "Standard Railroad of the World," where seeing four trains at one time was not uncommon. Elizabeth, Monmouth Junction, and Tacony were showered with cinders from the K4's stubby stack; long freights, rattling slowly along behind L1 Mikados, were overtaken in a moment of ear-shattering roar.

After leaving Philadelphia behind, the train raced down the Maryland Division, then over the high steel bridge spanning the broad Susquehanna River at Perryville. There a Baltimore & Ohio freight train might be seen crossing its own bridge a short distance upstream. The *Washingtonian* felt its way through Baltimore's peculiarly oriented trackage, then it covered the last 40 miles in only a few minutes less time than the speedy *Congressional* and arrived in Washington's station well after lunch.

The train was attacked by a ponderous Washington Terminal 0-8-0 switcher and was quickly dismembered; its individual elements were distributed to their predestined resting places. One hour later, no trace remained of the Bootlegger, except for two sleepers departing south in Seaboard's *Orange Blossom Special.* ■

ROBERT A. LE MASSENA, who died in 2013 at age 99, authored scores of articles and books, including 35 stories for Trains *and one for* Classic Trains. *A New Jersey native, he moved to the Denver area in the 1940s and was active at the Colorado Railroad Museum.*

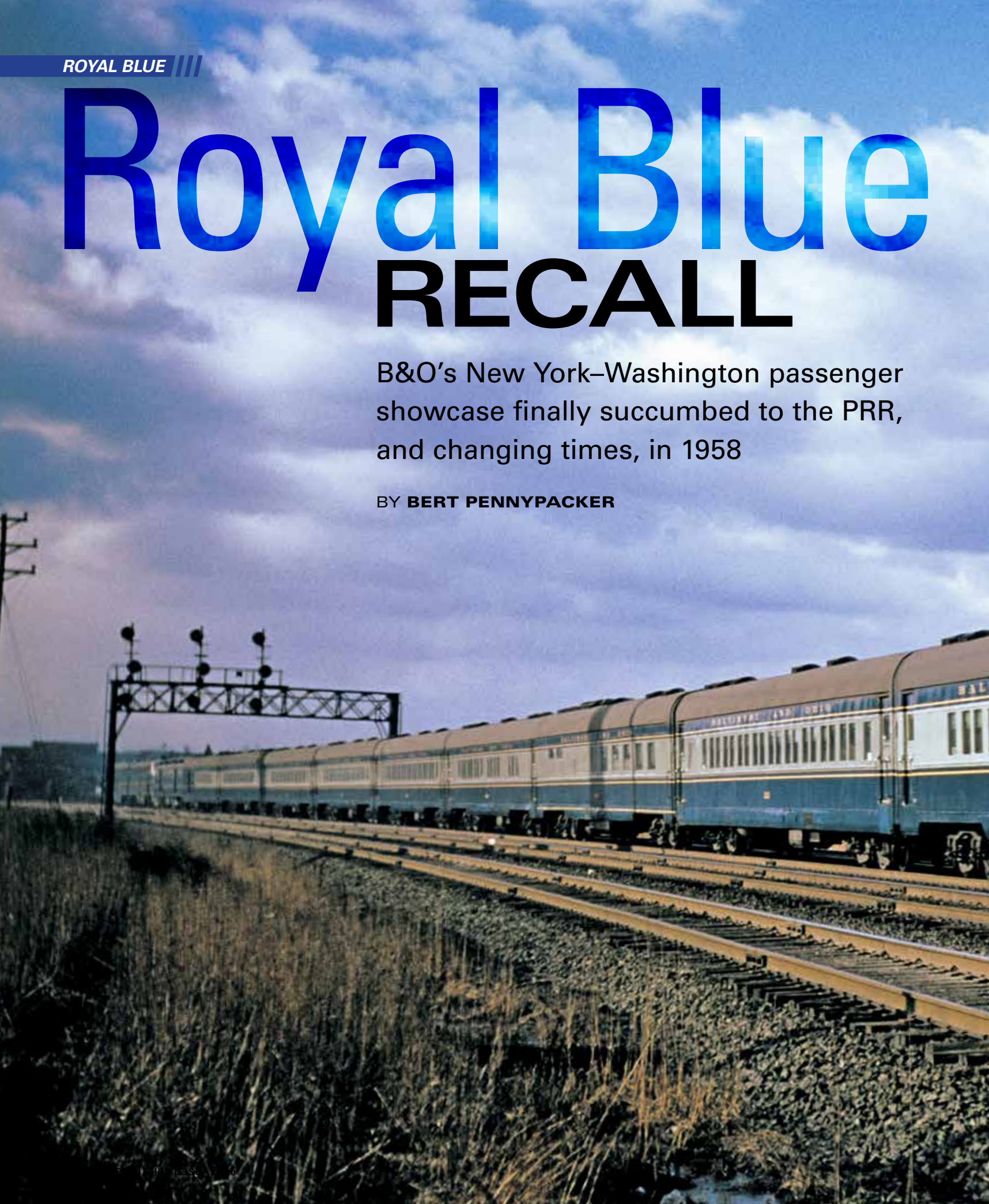
Canadian National U-2g No. 6211 pauses with the *Washingtonian* at Essex Junction, Vt., on the Central Vermont in 1954. The 4-8-4 has brought the train from Montreal.
Jim Shaughnessy

With a typically varied consist, the *Washingtonian* moves out of New Haven behind an EP-5 in September 1960. The *Montrealer*/*Washingtonian* names lasted well into Amtrak.
J. Buchanan, Krambles-Peterson Archive

Royal Blue RECALL

B&O's New York–Washington passenger showcase finally succumbed to the PRR, and changing times, in 1958

BY **BERT PENNYPACKER**



Line

In 1910 (above), B&O 4-4-0 No. 853 nears Washington with a Royal Blue Line train. Four decades later (below), in 1952, two E units speed away from Jersey City with the *Royal Blue* herself.

Above, Charles B. Chaney; below, Ed Theisinger

On a bright and clear Saturday, April 26, 1958, Baltimore & Ohio's celebrated Royal Blue Line was in full operation on its 223.6-mile route between Washington and Jersey City, just as it had been for 68 years. Using the through route that exercised trackage rights on the Reading Company and Central Railroad of New Jersey east of Philadelphia, B&O's handsome blue-and-gray E units forwarded 12 daily named expresses, most of them carrying parlor cars, full diners, and through Pullmans to and from western connections at Washington. A scheduled Budd RDC round trip operated as far east as Philadelphia, and a 15-car schoolchildren's New York City excursion ran to Jersey City.

Yes, April 26 seemed like any other day since 1890 — but it wasn't, for on the next day there would be no Royal Blue Line and B&O's eastern passenger terminus would be Baltimore. In what was perhaps America's largest fell-swoop passenger-train discontinuance, the Royal Blue Line finally had succumbed in its long fight with the parallel Pennsylvania Railroad for at least a modest-size wedge of the New York traffic pie. Competing against monumental disadvantages, B&O had predicated its competitive stance upon courtesy and extra services such as coach attendants and trainside bus connections from the Jersey City ferry terminal on five routes into Manhattan and Brooklyn.

In a thrilling 1905 publicity photo (top), Royal Blue Line trains pass at speed on famous Thomas Viaduct outside Baltimore. B&O vestibule coach 445 (above) of 1896 is resplendent in dark blue with gold lettering and striping and Maryland's coat of arms.
Top, Smithsonian Institution collection; above, B&O

CHANGING PARTNERS

It all began in the formative years when B&O was determined to extend its eastern terminus beyond Baltimore and tap the lucrative Philadelphia and New York trade. This led directly into a bitter grudge fight with predecessor lines of the Pennsylvania, which had handled B&O traffic east of Baltimore. After obtaining an interest in both the Reading and Jersey Central, B&O in 1880 suddenly switched its trains to that route at Philadelphia in violation of its contract with PRR. The keystone road retaliated by deliberately delaying B&O trains that used its Junction Railroad between Grays Ferry and Belmont in Philadelphia.

A court battle over this proved to no avail, and then in 1881 B&O again was rebuffed in an attempt to gain control of the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore, which entered PRR's camp. Finally, by 1884 the squabbling

Reading Company catenary disappears in the smoke of P-7 Pacific 5318 *President Garfield*, scooping water from the pans at Roelofs, Pa., 29 miles east of Philadelphia. The train is the *Shenandoah* to Chicago.
W. R. Osborne; below, John D. Denney Jr. collection

over train handling and delays became so intolerable that Pennsy simply slammed the door on all B&O traffic. B&O, after once again losing a court decision over this, rushed completion of its own line from Baltimore to Philadelphia, hooking up with the Reading at Park Junction in Philadelphia in 1886.

The rivals now could compete on even terms. In 1890, B&O established the Royal Blue Line, featuring "through vestibuled limited express trains between New York and Washington, no extra fare for fast time." The cars, pooled from B&O/RDG/CNJ equipment, were painted blue with gold lettering and striping. Their letterboards read ROYAL BLUE LINE with state coats of arms at each end — Maryland's for B&O cars, Pennsylvania's for Reading's, and New Jersey's for CNJ's. The idea of not charging extra fare for speed apparently signaled the beginning of a practice of extra services, innovations, and a superbly run operation that was to exemplify the Royal Blue Line trains for their 68 years.

B&O and PRR trains — their routes often within sight of each other and even crisscrossing at several points — competed on an almost minute-by-minute basis in running times. This was the great age of "wooden cars and iron men" railroading. Passenger-car interiors displayed the ornate splendor of Victorian decor, and highly polished locomotives received treatment accorded the personal property of their engineers.

The dawn of the 20th century brought advanced concepts in motive power, and as 4-4-0s became less numerous on important limiteds, bigger engines took over. To match the fast-flying pace of Pennsy's new E2 heavy Atlantics, B&O in 1901 received from Baldwin nine Vauclain compound Ten-Wheelers especially designed for Royal Blue Line service. They had 78-inch driving wheels and were known as class B-17. The compound cylinders soon gave way to standard slide valves, but in any event, the B-17s' speed and power became legend along the line for many years. By 1906, however, the first P-class Pacifics, built by Schenectady, also began appearing with their long, slim boilers, slanted piston-valve cylinders, and Stephenson valve gear — hallmarks of their builder in that period.

The B&O engines came off at Philadelphia, where Philadelphia & Reading or Jersey Central power took over for the final 91 miles to Jersey City. Beginning in 1906, P&R's big class P-5 Camelback 4-4-2s became a familiar sight on these trains. Their 86-inch drivers reached above the cab floor level, and firemen had a vast 94.5 square feet of grate area to cover.

Then in 1910, Pennsy subjected the Royal Blue Line to its initial disadvantage by burrowing beneath the Hudson River and spiking down PRR rails to the very heart of Manhattan. However, B&O still was able to match the overall running time of 5 hours flat for the fastest trains, even though they could go no farther than the Hudson's west bank with ferry connections. Both routes experienced a change of motive power en route, with the B&O-P&R exchange occurring at Philadelphia, as mentioned, and Pennsy's steam-electric change at Manhattan Transfer, N.J., just east of Newark.

Under wartime orders of the United States Railroad Administration, B&O in 1918 scored a notable competitive

Baltimore: Mount Royal Station, located 1.5 miles north of old Camden Station at the north end of Howard Street Tunnel, opened in 1896 as the centerpiece of B&O's electrified Baltimore Belt Line. Commuters' autos fill the fore court in this 1942 scene.
Baltimore & Ohio

Washington: Doubleheaded 4-6-2s on a Royal Blue Line train approach Washington Union Station, beyond which rises the U.S. Capitol dome, in May 1937. The two tracks closest to the tower at right are B&O's Metropolitan Division from Harpers Ferry, W.Va.
A. D. Hooks

victory by being granted entrance to Penn Station in New York. The revised routing went over Lehigh Valley between Bound Brook and Newark, then to PRR, completely bypassing CNJ. Needless to say, this arrangement was a bitter pill for the PRR to swallow. It's been said that during the eight years B&O trains used Penn Station, ticket clerks were instructed to automatically sell only PRR tickets unless the customer specifically asked for B&O. By 1926, the unwanted tenant was evicted and was sent back across the Hudson to CNJ's Jersey City ferry terminal.

SPECIAL LOCOMOTIVES

The guidance of B&O's noted motive-power chief, Col. George H. Emerson, brought revolutionary changes to Royal Blue Line equipment and engines that culminated in dieselization. First, Emerson needed a new high-capacity locomotive that could equal the performance of Pennsy's great K4s Pacific. So in 1927 Baldwin outshopped class P-7 Pacifics 5300–5319, popularly dubbed "President class" because each carried the name of an early U.S. president on its cab. Their basic dimensions bore remarkable resemblance to those of the K4: 27x28-inch cylinders, 80-inch drivers, and nearly similar boilers and grate areas. But the higher steam pressure (230 pounds vs. 205) of the P-7 afforded slight edges in tractive effort and potential horsepower, at least on paper.

Like the high-drivered B-17 Ten-Wheelers of 1901, the P-7s were designed primarily for Royal Blue work and for such had the U.S. presidents' names as well as a special paint scheme. The P-7's color scheme began with a basic overall livery in standard coach olive green; lettering and striping was in gold leaf. Dark-red trim embellished certain small parts. Beginning about 1935, with the appearance of blue passenger cars, P-7s began acquiring a new livery of matching deep blue without striping. Finally in 1943, the presidents' names were removed.

When the P-7s arrived in 1927, B&O's standard Royal Blue power consisted of hand-fired class P-5 USRA light Pacifics. which ran between Washington and Philadelphia. On the Reading, G-1sa Pacifics had been relaying B&O trains east to Jersey City since they were built in 1916. The heavy stoker-fired P-7s changed all that and began running straight through from Washington to Jersey City. (This arrangement applied only to passenger engines; in steam days, B&O freight power could be seen east of Philly only on rare occasions of emergency.)

Since the Royal Blue Line was a high-speed route convenient to B&O's Mount Clare Shops in Baltimore, it provided an excellent testing ground for Colonel Emerson's experimental steam locomotives of the 1930s. Several big Hudson and Mountain types, the famous duplex-drive 4-4-4-4 No. 5600 which carried Emerson's name on her cab, the One-Spot 4-4-4 *Lady Baltimore*, and the Two-Spot 4-6-4 *Lord Baltimore* were put through their paces here, some making only

Philadelphia: Passengers board the St. Louis-bound *Diplomat* on April 23, 1958. B&O's Philly depot stood just across the Schuylkill River from PRR's 30th Street Station, hidden by the train in this photo.
Aaron G. Fryer

Elizabeth, N.J.: The Royal Blue Route crossed the Pennsy's competing Washington–New York line five times. At the northernmost crossing, EA diesel No. 55 and an EB bring a westbound train into CNJ's Elizabeth station as a PRR train passes overhead.
Classic Trains collection

Jersey City: The *Royal Blue* leaves the Manhattan skyline behind for the final time as it departs CNJ's terminal on the Hudson River on April 26, 1958. The next day, rail passengers would have one choice between New York and Washington: the Pennsylvania.
Don Wood

brief appearances. There also was a 21st President-class Pacific, No. 5320, *President Cleveland*, built at Mount Clare in 1928. She was a class P-9, differing from a P-7 principally in having an Emerson watertube firebox and Caprotti poppet valve gear.

Most of Emerson's experimentals did well, but one casualty involved the frail and slippery *Lady*, whose 84-inch drivers and light weight couldn't withstand the rigors of Royal Blue work. Her stay was brief, for after a few break-in runs she assumed her intended mission on B&O's subsidiary Alton Railroad between Chicago and St. Louis; unfortunately, she did poorly there too.

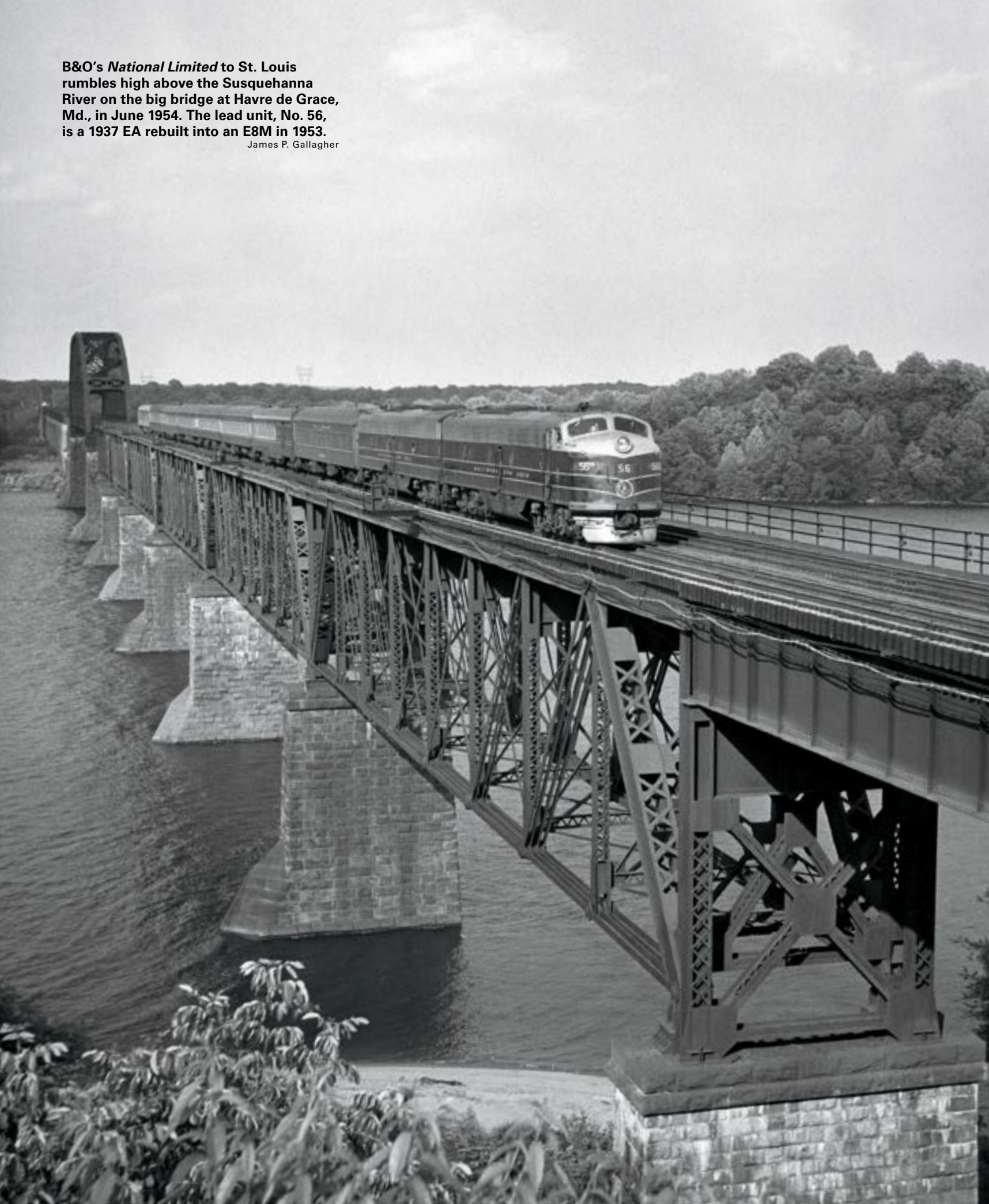
In one sense, every steam experimental may be considered a casualty because the exhaustive tests to increase capacity served only to prove that Electro-Motive diesels provided the capacity and economy Emerson so diligently pursued in motive power. Therefore, the most successful experimental of them all had to be America's first single-unit passenger diesel, the 1,800 h.p. box-cab that broke in on the Royal Blue in 1935. Two years later, B&O had America's first single-unit streamlined diesels running in the form of EMD EAs. In original or rebuilt 2,000 h.p. (E8M) form, they powered the Royal Blue regularly to its final day of operation.

The Washington–Jersey City route was the only place on the entire B&O where steam locomotives scooped water from track pans. These were at Stanton, Del., and Swan Creek, Md., 33 and 63 miles, respectively, south of Philadelphia, roughly every 30 miles along the 96-mile Philly–Baltimore segment. The Reading had track pans at Roelofs, Pa., and CNJ at Green Brook (Dunellen), N.J. Including standpipe water spouts at Philadelphia and Baltimore (Camden Station), six water-supply points were possible en route, but with 11,000-gallon tenders, the P-7s didn't always take water at every track pan.

Track pans were constructed of rolled steel plate, were about 8 inches deep, and were fed by gravity from a nearby tank, with the water level controlled by float valves. The Stanton pans were 1,450 feet long, while those at Swan Creek measured 1,300 feet — rather short compared with those on New York Central and Pennsy, which measured up to 2,500 feet. Maximum scooping speed was 55 mph. The amount of water that could be picked up varied from 2½ to 2¾ gallons per lineal foot of scooping distance, meaning that somewhere over 3,000 gallons might be secured from the short B&O pans. Speed had a lot to do with how much water actually got into the tank, for too fast a gait would throw much water aside; 35 to 45 mph was considered an ideal scooping speed on most roads.

PIONEERING EFFORTS

Throughout its lifetime of illustrious service, the Royal Blue Line was noted for



B&O's *National Limited* to St. Louis rumbles high above the Susquehanna River on the big bridge at Havre de Grace, Md., in June 1954. The lead unit, No. 56, is a 1937 EA rebuilt into an E8M in 1953.
James P. Gallagher

special and lavish attentions to its equipment and services in order to keep one jump ahead of the competition. The line was run almost like a separate part of the railroad and nearly always received innovations first. Although the Royal Blue Line operated as a valuable connecting link in forwarding through cars for B&O's east-west services, it also existed as a line catering to its own clientele with its own equipment pools. For all practical purposes, most through trains ended at Washington and were reswitched for the Royal Blue portion of the runs; even diesel units seldom went through.

B&O in 1929 tried the first experimental air-conditioned car. The weight of coach 5275 was increased by 7 tons with this installation, which — before the advent of mechanical refrigeration equipment — featured iceboxes beneath the car into which were placed 300-pound blocks of ice. The following year, B&O's Royal Blue Line became the first to use a regularly assigned air-conditioned car, dining car *Martha Washington*. And in 1931, the *Columbian* between Washington and Jersey City became the world's first fully air-conditioned train.

It seems almost inconceivable that with the completion of Pennsy's high-speed electrification to Washington in 1935 that another road would stand a ghost of a chance to compete, yet B&O's special brands of extra service and courtesy continued to fill 18 daily trains for many years. The fabulous performance of GG1 electrics permitted a reduction in PRR's overall running time from 4 hours 40 minutes to 3 hours 35 minutes, while the best B&O eventually could manage with diesels was just under 4 hours.

However, on June 24, 1935, B&O scored a competitive bull's-eye with its new flagship, the *Royal Blue*, the first non-articulated streamliner in the East and the second in America (Milwaukee's *Hiawatha* had debuted a month earlier). The eight-car *Royal Blue* consisted of lightweight Duraluminum equipment built by American Car & Foundry: one baggage car, three coaches, one diner/lunch-counter car, two full parlor cars, and one parlor-observation. It became trains 27-28, replacing the *Columbian*, and initially was powered by experimental Hudson *Lord Baltimore*, which had a clean-lined appearance in the style of British locomotives. On August 22, 1935, EMC's first single-unit road diesel, box-cab No. 50 with two Winton 201A engines, started trial runs with the train.

It's interesting to note that the original *Royal Blue* consist had a twin, a set of equipment built of Cor-Ten steel that became trains 2 and 3, the *Abraham Lincoln*, on the Alton between Chicago and St. Louis. To power this train, which began operation July 1, 1935, B&O supplied experimental 4-4-4 No. 1 *Lady Baltimore*.

By 1937, diesel 50 and the eight-car *Royal Blue* lightweight train were sent to the Alton

The "Bullet" — streamlined P-7 No. 5304 — dashes down CNJ's four-track main line with the *Royal Blue* in the late 1930s or '40s. One of the few steam locomotives to be streamlined twice, 5304 donned a different dress in '47 for service on the *Cincinnatian*.
Frank Quin

Watertube-fireboxed 4-6-4 *Lord Baltimore* — one of B&O motive power boss George Emerson's experiments — has the original lightweight *Royal Blue* in hand at Elizabethport, N.J., in 1937, shortly before the engine and cars were reassigned to the Alton.
R. P. Morris

Another novel locomotive on the lightweight *Royal Blue* was diesel No. 50, forerunner of Electro-Motive's line of E units. Like steam locomotives *Lord* and *Lady Baltimore*, the 1935 box-cab, pictured on CNJ with the *Royal Blue*, was sent to the Alton Railroad.
A. P. Formanek

EA No. 51 — the first Electro-Motive E unit — heads the *Capitol Limited* at Jersey City in 1953, not long before the unit went to B&O's museum in Baltimore. The bus at left brought passengers from New York.
I. W. King, Joel King collection

as well, where they became the *Ann Rutledge*. Mount Clare Shops rebuilt 16 older heavyweight cars, and 8 of them became the improved *Royal Blue*, this time pulled by a completely streamlined P-7a, No. 5304, which was considered so beautiful and graceful that B&O men dubbed her the "Bullet." Otto Kuhler designed her streamlining as well as the entire train and, later, the most handsome blue-and-gray paint scheme for diesel road units.

Although the B&O found little difficulty in filling its 18 daily Royal Blue trains during the hectic World War II years, seasoned travelers knew they had a better chance of finding a few empty seats on the B&O since PRR's 150,000-plus everyday load seemed like rush hour in the subway at all times. B&O's heavyweight cars, rebuilt by Mount Clare Shops and kept in tip-top shape, rode smoothly and comfortably. One of the author's favorite trains was the *Marylander*, which retained its P-7 Pacific after most of the other runs had been dieselized. And who could ever forget the diner's great B&O salad bowl for 85 cents, almost a meal in itself?

The heaviest consists — which often ran 12 cars or more, including through and local pool assignments — counted among them the *Capitol Limited, National Limited*, and *Shenandoah*, which consequently had the slowest schedules and, with 10 or more cars, rated three diesel units. In CNJ's Jersey City ferry terminal, tracks 16 and 18 were assigned to all B&O trains. Track 17 was removed and paved over for use by the train-side motor-coach transfer. At the outer end of the trainshed there was a flat-platform turntable to turn the buses, which used CNJ ferries to reach Manhattan, there branching out on their respective five routes.

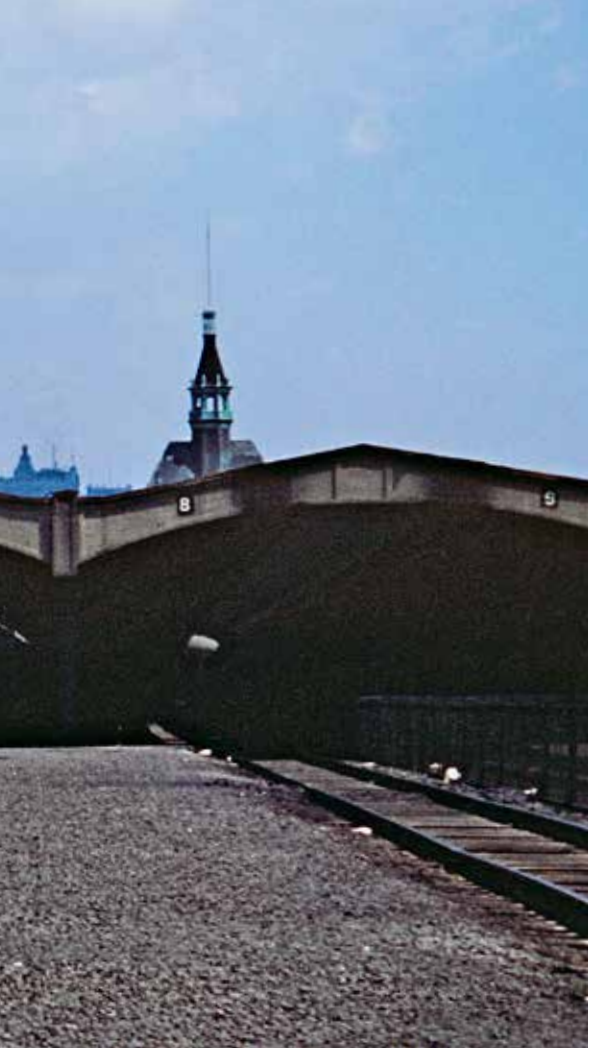
PENNSY GAINS AN EDGE

Perhaps the two hottest competitors of their time were B&O's *Royal Blue* and PRR's *Afternoon Congressional*, which usually highballed out of Washington Union Station side by side. Classic photos from the steam era depict P-7 and K4 straining with every turn of their 80-inch drivers to accelerate faster and outdo each other, and in later years the same contest occurred between EMD diesels and GG1s. On August 15, 1947, both trains inaugurated on-board public telephone service.

However, the competitive stance of the Pennsy's 18-car stainless-steel *Congressional,* introduced in 1952, dwarfed that of B&O's train. The "Congo" had 8 coaches, 7 parlors, a twin-unit diner, and a coffee shop car with a total capacity of about 900. A typical total passenger count for the entire trip was over 1,500. *Royal Blue*'s three coaches and three parlors carried about 375 and handled a maximum of perhaps 600 passengers. An old saying stated, "The man who knows goes B&O," and that about sums it up when one considers the secret behind Royal Blue's long existence.

A good reason for the loyal following of B&O patrons is exemplified by an incident when the road went far beyond the expected in rendering extra service. A railfan excursion train arrived back in Baltimore too late for about 20 passengers to make connections with train 36, the last schedule for Philadelphia. B&O could have said, "We're sorry, but you can easily take a Pennsy train." It would never do this, though, and didn't in this case. Instead, a call went to Riverside enginehouse for a locomotive to pull a special three-car train for the 20 ticketholders.

The schedule frequency of the Royal Blue Line's nine trains in each direction had to be geared to connect with east-west service at Washington, since a majority of the Jersey City runs carried through cars for these connections. Therefore, most Royal Blue



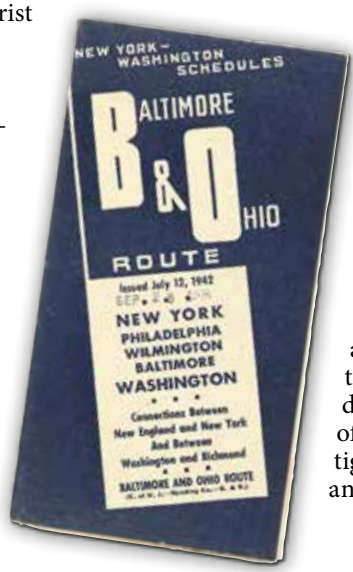
A toddler watches from a rear window of the *Royal Blue*'s observation car as the train departs Washington in the late 1930s. This modernized heavyweight equipment, which replaced the 1935 lightweight train in '37, ran until the end of service in 1958.
Alexander Maxwell

trains ran during the popular daylight hours, spaced from 1 to 3 hours apart between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. In addition, a slow late-night run in each direction carried Pullman sleepers from Jersey City to and from Baltimore and Washington, 186.8 and 223.6 miles respectively — likely among the shortest sleeping-car runs ever operated.

The Royal Blue Line attracted much business from local sources, but it also depended on through ticketing for a good portion of its ridership. Admittedly, anyone who chose B&O from Jersey City to Chicago or St. Louis could only be a tourist out for the ride, but there were many in-between cities to furnish long-distance riders. B&O made the most of that, advertising "All East-West trains via Washington," so PRR felt obliged to throw in free Washington side trips on most of its long-distance tickets.

Compared with B&O's 18 daily trains — one of them a Philadelphia–Washington round trip — the armada of PRR limiteds seems almost incomprehensible. PRR ran 47 daily trains with hourly service in both directions between 6:30 a.m. and 9 p.m., all New York–Washington trains, and this did not even count the Clockers to Philadelphia. Most Pennsy trains were 12 to 18 cars long, handling up to 1,500 passengers, while B&O per-train tallies were less than half that figure.

By the early 1950s, the Royal Blue Line was clearly in trouble. Trains 9-10, the *Chicago Express* and *New York Express*, had disappeared from timetables, followed by 504-523, the *Marylander*. In a move to save 35-36, the *Washington Express* and *Philadelphia Express*, RDCs — one equipped with a kitchen — were placed in service as trains 21-22, *Daylight Speedliner*, not just to Washington but all the way to Pittsburgh on a daily round trip. New stainless-steel cars also had appeared, especially as through equipment, although domes could not be used east of Washington because of tight clearances in Baltimore and Philadelphia tunnels. The biggest red-ink items included the expensive New York motor-coach service and heavy losses on Pullman and long-distance traffic.



PULLING THE PLUG QUICKLY

No one really believed that the Royal Blue Line could or would fold; and even after the Interstate Commerce Commission approved B&O's 1958 abandonment petition, court appeals were expected to revive the service. That never happened. It seems paradoxically prophetic that after all those years of bitter rivalry, the very presence of Pennsy's hourly service played a major role in helping to kill Royal Blue. So on April 26, 1958, the Royal Blue Line died without fanfare, performing its job superbly, just as though it would be there on the morrow. The following day, 350 employees, 16 diesels, and over 60 cars found no work to perform for B&O. All equipment was deadheaded to Baltimore, and the railroad became freight-only north of there.

BERT PENNYPACKER, a native of Coatesville, Pa., lived in Philadelphia from 1953 until his death in 2009 at age 85. He authored more than 200 magazine articles and 8 books, mostly on northeastern rail subjects.

GreatTrains IN PHOTOS

New York Central's *Empire State Express* to Buffalo was fairly new when on-board stopwatches timed it at 112.5 mph near Batavia, N.Y., behind 4-4-0 No. 999 in May 1893. This 1894 photo shows the speedster, train name on its tender, scooping water at Palatine Bridge, N.Y. The much-rebuilt 999 has been at Chicago's Museum of Science & Industry since 1962.

The launch of this modern version of the *Empire State Express* — a Budd-built stainless-steel train pulled by a streamlined J-3a Hudson — got little publicity because the debut happened to occur on December 7, 1941, the day the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. In this publicity photo, one of the two new consists heads down the Hudson River toward New York.

Two photos this page, New York Central

The *Empire State Express* name lasted into the waning days of privately operated passenger trains, and in the retrenchment years of the 1960s, NYC launched frequent New York–Buffalo "Empire Service" schedules; the brand name continues under Amtrak. In 1953, E8s roll the *Empire State* west through Rochester.

Two photos, Linn H. Westcott

NEW ENGLAND'S FIRST STREAMLINER

Boston & Maine's "Silver Slipper" was a star by any name

BY **CARL R. BYRON**

By the late 1920s, the soot-covered red plush of railroading's "Standard Era" had been clearly left in the dust by Ford's flivver. The decade-long trend of declining local passenger volume was undeniable, having begun well before the "Crash of '29." By 1932, railroad passenger volume and revenues had plummeted to half those of 1929. Some wondered aloud if the passenger business could survive.

Out of this adversity came first engineering challenge, then financial and industry triumph. In northern New England, that victory was first called, and is best remembered today, as the streamlined *Flying Yankee*.

The Boston & Maine Railroad, a conservative Yankee institution by all measures, was recognized for the superb technical expertise of its engineering and mechanical departments. B&M's utilization of then-new technology had made it an early purchaser of EMC-Winton motor cars, to cut branchline operating costs. It had even ordered a 1,450 h.p. diesel locomotive in 1926 from the German firm of Krupp! Had it been successful, 20 more would have followed, and the B&M would have led the industry in road freight dieselization.

With this, it's not surprising that B&M was well aware of General Motors' new developments in two-cycle diesel power by Charles F. "Boss" Kettering, or the Edward G. Budd Manufacturing Co.'s successful fabrication of stainless steel by its patented "Shotwelding" process. B&M staff watched the April 1934 premiere of the Burlington Route's *Zephyr* with anticipation. Similar improvements in comfort level, speed, cost reduction, and streamlined image might well help bring passengers back to the B&M, officials thought.

On June 8, 1934, B&M announced its $280,000 order of a near-duplicate of the *Zephyr*, subject to approval of financing by the federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The streamliner's construction would bring more than 80,000 man-hours of Depression-era employment allocated among Boston (B&M), Cleveland (GM-Winton), Erie (General Electric), and Philadelphia (Budd). The $225,000 RFC loan was granted in August 1934, and construction soon began.

BIRTH OF A STREAMLINER

B&M's streamliner contract was directly with Budd, which warrantied the entire train as an entity. However, Budd's commitment was backed with specific performance guarantees and the supply of named equipment through subcontracts to GM and GE. Budd designed and fabricated the stainless-steel three-car articulated train. GM's Winton Engine Corp. provided the 600 h.p., 8-cylinder, in-line diesel engine, and other GM affiliates including Hyatt Roller Bearing, Frigidaire, and GM Art & Color Department contributed to the effort. GE supplied the traction motors, main generator, and electrical control gear.

Budd also contracted with noted interior designer and University of Pennsylvania School of Architecture Dean Paul Cret to decorate the train's interior in the best "Moderne" styling. This would be the most "people-pleasing" train northern New England had ever seen.

With the *Flying Yankee* under construction, B&M looked to its

B&M 6000, delivered in 1935 as the *Flying Yankee*, is working as the *Businessman* from Portland in this July 1, 1955, view at North Station, Boston.
George Krambles, Krambles-Peterson Archive

Burlington 9900, the revolutionary streamliner built by Budd in 1934, was the model for B&M 6000. The CB&Q train is on display at Galesburg, Ill., when it was new, before being named *Pioneer Zephyr*.
CLASSIC TRAINS collection

Supervisor of Motor Cars, E. K. "Ernie" Bloss, to minimize technical problems with the new Winton 201A diesel power plant. Bloss had arrived on the B&M as a Westinghouse Field Service Technician in 1926 along with two Brill-Westinghouse motor cars and soon the New Englander bid Pittsburgh farewell. By 1935 he knew every inch of the B&M, its motor car fleet, and its fledgling streamliner. His career was established in the process, as he started up the ladder to ultimately become B&M's chief of motive power, and signed purchase orders for everything from FT freight diesels to Budd RDCs along the way.

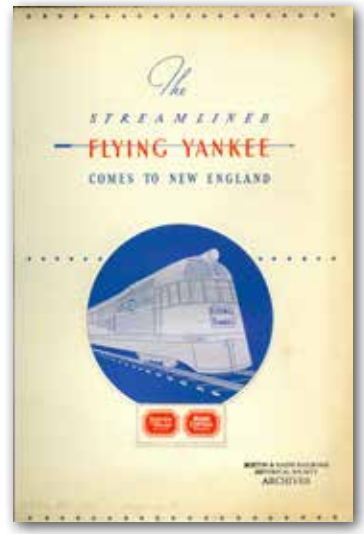
By late January 1935 the train was completed at Budd in Philadelphia and official photographs were taken. On February 9, 1935, "New England's First Streamliner" arrived on home rails at Mechanicville, N.Y. No one in the crowd of curious employees, onlookers, and reporters had seen its likes before. The airflow shape and gleaming stainless steel soon earned the snappy streamliner an unofficial but lifelong nickname, the "Silver Slipper."

Displayed at Boston's North Station, the gleaming speedster stretched 199 feet but weighed just 113 tons. However, the streamliner was not — as commonly thought — entirely constructed of stainless steel. That expensive and noncorrosive component was limited to car frames, trusses, external sheathing, and internal trim. A solid weldment of "Cromansil" (chromium-manganese-silica) steel formed the power car's combined frame, engine bed, front sill, and collision anticlimber. Weldments forming the articulated joints between cars were also Cromansil. Including the weight of the trucks, power plant, and these frame components, nearly 50 percent of the gross weight of the *Flying Yankee* was non-stainless steel.

By using articulation, only four Commonwealth equalized-pedestal trucks were necessary under the train. The front truck carried two 300 h.p. GE traction motors, and bore the majority of the weight of diesel engine and generator, 76,170 lbs.

The second truck carried the combined weight of both the end of the first car, and the front of the second, 46,186 lbs. An identical set-up was used between the second and third cars and carried 37,289 lbs., while the rear truck under the solarium carried only 22,047 lbs. This weight-reduction concept also allowed the *Yankee* to snake gracefully through curves at higher speeds than conventional equipment. As with all articulated trains, the only drawback was that any problem took the entire train out of service.

The *Flying Yankee* stood a diminutive 12½ feet tall over the power car; and only 11 feet 3 inches elsewhere. The center of gravity above the rails for the power car was a remarkably low 54 inches, and only 52½ inches for the following cars. To minimize wind resistance, not only was the carbody streamlined, but a stainless steel "belly" sheathed the bottom of each car, and decorative "pants" covered the sides of each truck. The power car was 75 feet 9 inches long and contained the prime mover, main generator, baggage compartment, buffet, a men's room, and 28 coach seats. The second car was 58 feet 8 inches long and contained coach seating for 60, while the last car was 64 feet 3 inches long, held 32



B&M produced a booklet to introduce its new train to New Englanders. Artwork from the booklet appears on these and the following pages.
Boston & Maine Railroad Hist. Soc. coll.

Fresh out of the Budd plant in early 1935, B&M 6000 is ready to go to work as the *Flying Yankee*. With less space for baggage and express, and no RPO section, the *Yankee* could carry nearly twice as many passengers as CB&Q's *Zephyr*.
CLASSIC TRAINS collection

coach seats, two rest rooms, and the 12-seat solarium lounge. Maximum load was 132 passengers and 6 crew. Some early sources indicate that the solarium carried 20 passengers, but if so, it was only briefly.

The passenger compartments were cooled with electro-mechanical air conditioning, while a small steam generator in the baggage area supplied heat when necessary. The buffet kitchen's grill, oven, and refrigerator were all electric, a radical development in 1935. All windows were insulated twin-pane safety glass. A public announcement system was included, and the solarium had a built-in radio. By mid-1936 a supposedly "first in the country" speedometer was mounted in the solarium. Whether first or not, that speedometer would become a frequent topic of conversation as the streamliner streaked across the New England countryside.

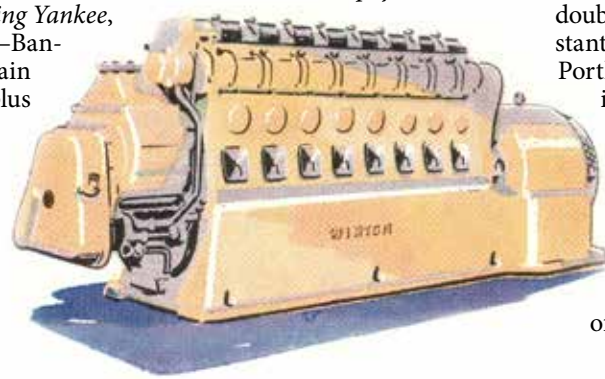
Paul Cret's interior design alone brightened spirits during those tough Depression years. Ivory-colored ceilings offset blue-green painted walls, accented with stainless-steel trim. Coach seats were upholstered in mulberry taupe mohair, highlighted by brown leather armrests. Green-and-sand colored carpeting covered the floor, and all coach seating was illuminated by cove-recessed indirect lighting. Bulbs concealed above the window belt lighted the solarium. Tray meals were available at each seat, prepared at the small buffet in the first car. Sandwiches or cigars were 15 cents each, while apple pie with ice cream was 30 cents!

THE SLIPPER SHOWS HER STUFF

Boston & Maine and its jointly managed affiliate, Maine Central (MEC), showed off the new speedster in on-line cities for the next several weeks. B&M owned the train, and would operate it between Boston and Portland, Maine, on its own trackage. Service north to Bangor, Maine, would be over the tracks and with the crews of MEC. Both railroads' names were emblazoned on the streamliner's side, but its official identification was simply B&M 6000.

On April 4, 1935, No. 6000, the streamlined *Flying Yankee*, replaced the Boston–Bangor steam-hauled train of the same name, plus two Boston–Portland trains as well. That spring morning it began a daily-except-Sunday schedule totaling 730 miles between Boston, Portland, and Bangor. An early-morning Portland–Boston run (115 miles) preceded the Boston–Bangor round trip (500 miles), after which a return Boston–Portland trip ended the day. The prior Boston–Bangor schedule was cut 65 minutes, with the majority of time reduction being on the Boston–Portland segment. Regular maintenance was done on Sundays in Boston.

After a year, the *Flying Yankee* had brought a 48 percent increase in ticket sales, carried more than 94,500 patrons, and grossed $266,800. In 24 months it covered 431,000 miles. B&M President Edward French hosted a Railroad Enthusiasts trip to Concord Shops on June 6, 1937, to announce No. 6000's return to service after completion of its annual shopping and "freshening up." Few derisively called it the "Tin Fish" now; pride that their employer owned the "only *Zephyr* east of the Mississippi" had long replaced skepticism.



Between June 30, 1937, and June 30, 1938, the *Flying Yankee* grossed $1,427 per revenue mile, and cost just $0.188 in direct operating expense. When loan amortization, depreciation, and other overhead costs were included, expenses rose to only 35 cents a mile. The streamliner was netting more than $1.05 per mile to the delight of patrons, accountants, and mechanical-engineering personnel.

Public acceptance of the train was such that B&M's airline subsidiary always knew when the *Flying Yankee* was out of service. Their "Well Ventilated" (no doubt!) planes picked up substantial business on the Boston–Portland–Bangor corridor during those brief periods.

As with almost any new design, the streamliner had a few problems. The train occasionally rode rough, and at first the solarium passengers were nearly given whiplash due to lack of weight on the rear truck.

The "Silver Slipper" poses beside Crystal Lake in Wakefield, Mass., in March 1935, before entering *Flying Yankee* service. This was a favorite photo location on the Portland–Boston route.
CLASSIC TRAINS collection

Under the protection of a crossing watchman, the *Flying Yankee* slips out of Portland Union Station en route to Bangor in 1939. The train used B&M tracks from Boston, Maine Central beyond.
C. Parker

Weight redistribution and spring adjustments solved those problems. Lack of ventilation due to "dead air" trapped next to the ribbed carbody was overcome by mounting spinnakers above the air vents. Brake problems required attention, and the early electrical gear sometimes sparked and quit. The compact equipment layout made servicing difficult. To simplify access, the shrouds over the truck sides were removed. But little could be done about the location of the steam-heat valve for each passenger compartment: under a patron's seat.

However, by far the crew's worst nightmare was road failure, especially in cold weather. The process of opening the front coupler cover, manhandling the drawbar and coupler from their storage location in the baggage area, and wrestling them into place, was difficult enough in warm, sunny weather. Some combination of darkness, bitter cold, snow, and whistling wind seemed universally present when the unexpected occasion arose. And to make matters worse, regardless of what type of steam locomotive arrived to rescue the stranded train, none was capable of maintaining the streamliner's speedy schedule.

The image of panache was paramount to streamlined *Flying Yankee* service. Suffice it to say that B&M's Publicity Department would pay $10 cash for any negatives of the "Sliver Slipper" limping into the station behind a steam locomotive! Chances to collect on that offer were rare, as No. 6000's reliability approached 98 percent.

Popularity was such that by 1936 Lionel and other manufacturers had created *Flying Yankee* toy trains. Many a youngster added them to the top of his Christmas wish list, particularly after a trip aboard the real McCoy. Today those beloved toys are treasured by collectors and investors alike.

As the railroad's top service, the *Yankee* was also the train of choice for employees who needed to travel over its route. General B&M or MEC employee passes were accepted for coach, but not solarium seats, with one caveat: Once capacity was reached, the hapless employees and spouses had to relinquish their seats to the fare-paying passengers. Many an employee finished a trip standing because the streamliner's seating was so limited.

MORE BUDD TRAINS FOR B&M?

The glowing reports of *Flying Yankee* successes were not lost on Budd's regional sales manager. With cost analysis sheets in hand, he was ready to make a formal proposal to the Boston & Maine board of directors in 1937 for an even bigger and better streamliner.

The proposal envisioned a five-car day train called the *Montrealer*, which would make a single daily 325-mile trip between Boston and Montreal, via Concord, N.H., and White River Junction, Vt., in concert with the Central Vermont and Canadian National. The B&M board was impressed, and authorized purchase of the 200-passenger streamliner, contingent upon CV's purchasing an identical one, for two trainsets would be required for the service.

Despite the best sales efforts of the Budd staff, no articulated *Montrealer* ever materialized. CV was a wholly owned subsidiary of CN, and such a purchase had to be approved by CN's board of governors. As a Crown Corporation in the (then) Dominion of Canada, the board reported to the King of England. Alas, the CN board members were far too busy with the constitutional crisis of the abdication of King Edward VIII. The proposal quietly died, as Budd's shop filled with orders from Santa Fe, Burlington, and numerous other roads. Only the fading blueprints remain.

That industrious Budd salesman did no better across town. The New Haven Railroad had called for proposals in 1935 to build a bidirectional streamlined train for Boston–Providence service. Budd's submission was an articulated, double-ended four-car entry, which lost out to Goodyear's aluminum three-car *Comet*. Quicker delivery and lower cost were the likely reasons why Goodyear got the nod.

NEW ROUTES, NEW NAMES

As the 1930s drew to a close, the *Flying Yankee* rolled on, with success ultimately overwhelming the short, fixed-consist train. Unlike CB&Q's *Zephyr*, the *Yankee* never received a fourth coach. With World War II looming, B&M 6000 was replaced on the Boston–Portland–Bangor run in early 1941 by standard equipment powered by B&M's heavy 3700-class Pacifics or

B&M 6000 crosses famous Frankenstein Trestle in New Hampshire's Crawford Notch during the train's early-1940s assignment to the Boston–Littleton, N.H., *Mountaineer*. A. O. Wilkins

4100-class Mountains. With Maine Central and Flying Yankee lettering removed, the train was renamed the *Mountaineer* and assigned to a daily round trip from Boston to Littleton, N.H., through the famous Crawford Notch. It served that limited market well from 1941 through 1944, and even worked Boston–Bangor runs occasionally during off-peak seasons.

In late 1944 the 6000 assumed a third identity: the *Cheshire*. This service ran between Boston and White River Junction, via Keene, N.H., and Bellows Falls, Vt. The line between South Ashburnham, Mass., and Bellows Falls had been constructed in the 1840s as the Cheshire Railroad, hence the train name. This was truly in the heart of rural, small-town New England, and the trackage was secondary at best. No doubt B&M hoped to increase business in an area where the decade-old streamliner would still seem new and exciting, but not have its seating capacity overwhelmed. An unspoken but likely additional factor in putting No. 6000 on this route was that B&M President French lived near Bellows Falls, and used the train daily for his commute to Boston.

The only significant accident involving No. 6000 occurred while in *Cheshire* service. On January 19, 1945, the lead traction motor's cover became partially detached and dropped down as the train approached the North Walpole, N.H., yard. As the front truck passed over a switch it rode up on the cover and derailed. The streamliner careened into a section house. No one was seriously injured, but the section gang's card-playing came to a sudden halt, and a steam-powered substitute train was necessary that evening.

However, in an illustration of just how powerful the Office of Defense Transportation was during World War II, within hours of the accident the ODT ordered the B&M to discontinue the substitute service. Why? "No coal allocation for this service has been provided."

Cheshire service remained suspended until July 8, 1945. Two weeks after V-J Day, on August 28, the 6000 was reassigned to *Mountaineer* service for the rest of the summer season.

The aging streamliner replaced another standard train in early 1952. As the *Minuteman*, No. 6000 covered the 189 miles between Boston and Troy, N.Y., in 4 hours 15 minutes. Based in Troy, the train made a single daily round trip.

Summer 1955 found the 6000 back on its original Boston–Portland route making a daily round trip as the *Businessman*. This assignment was brief, as new Budd RDCs replaced the streamliner with the fall schedule. B&M 6000 became the *Minuteman* once again, but by 1956 patronage had declined to where a single RDC could handle the load.

During her last months of service, in the winter and spring of 1957, No. 6000 closed out her career again on the Boston–White River Junction *Cheshire*.

On May 7, 1957, the weary 6000, having run some 2.75 million miles, was retired. With suitable fanfare, B&M donated its famous vest-pocket streamliner to the Edaville Railroad tourist attraction in South Carv-

The streamliner contrasts with an old-fashioned ball signal at Bellows Falls, Vt., in 1949, during its seven-year stint running as the *Cheshire* between Boston and White River Junction, Vt.
Dwight Smith

er, Mass., the following month.

During the 22 years the Silver Slipper served B&M patrons, the concepts of diesel-electric propulsion and stainless-steel construction had gone from experimental to traditional. The span of B&M's first generation of dieselization was neatly delineated by the arrival and departure of B&M's only streamliner. Within weeks of No. 6000's retirement, B&M's final steam-powered local left North Station. Concurrently, EMD took B&M's 48 tired wartime 1,350 h.p. FT freight units in trade toward 50 new 1,750 h.p. GP9 road-switchers, and Budd was in the midst of supplying a record-setting 109 RDCs to the B&M.

DECAY, SALVATION, THEN LIMBO

Benign neglect was B&M 6000's lot for the next 36 years as it sank slowly into the sands of the cranberry bogs at Edaville. Glass cracked, steel rusted, and the interior upholstery and carpeting moldered away. Mice made homes in the wall insulation, and ceiling paint crazed or fell away in sheets. Finally, in October 1993, the train was disassembled into its three sections, and prepared to be hauled in a truck convoy up to Glen, N.H. The Silver Slipper was in good hands, as rigger "Diamond Jim" Robinson had moved many loads over the years, including B&M F7 No. 4268 to the Conway Scenic Railroad in 1991.

On moving day, the 58-year-old streamliner showed it could still slow traffic and turn heads. Riding backwards with its trucks replaced by rubber-tired dollies, the dowager began her northward return to the heart of Boston & Maine territory over roads which were yet to be constructed in her era. Neither wind nor rain kept the curious and faithful from watching the odd but majestic convoy pass. Families waved from overhead bridges, handmade signs said "Welcome Home," and news helicopters whirled above the scene. With a state police escort, B&M 6000 left Massachusetts' Cape Cod area for the heart of the White Mountains.

For the next four years, the *Flying Yankee* sat on blocking and rubber tires in a gravel bank near Glen, N.H., where it resembled some giant's pull-toy awaiting its master's return.

The train's move from Edaville had been arranged and paid for by Robert Morrell, who had acquired the streamliner in the hopes of restoring it to operation on former Maine Central trackage — now state-owned — through Crawford Notch.

Morrell, a successful tourist-industry businessman, was the son of a B&M conductor who once worked the *Mountaineer*. A staunch defender and promoter of New Hampshire's heritage, he was quietly but fiercely determined that the landmark train be restored and maintained as a part of the state's considerable railroad heritage.

The State of New Hampshire, however, chose the Conway Scenic Railroad, not Morrell's firm, to operate tourist trains through Crawford Notch, beginning in fall 1995. Undeterred, Morrell went to work on an alternative preservation plan.

At the July 31, 1996, meeting of the governor and his Council in the statehouse in Concord, N.H., title to the 6000 was turned over to the state for "$1 and other considerations." In part, the "other considerations" were to include a public-private fund-raising partnership to restore the train to its former glory for contract operations in New Hampshire.

Morrell's dedication and contacts soon provided an opportunity for the New Hampshire National Guard to test its heavy equipment moving skills. On November 19, 1997, the *Flying Yankee* was again on the road, this time to the shops of short line Claremont & Concord in Claremont, N.H.

But tragedy struck in early 1998 with the untimely death of Robert Morrell. The public-private partnership he largely brought about pledged itself to the completion of the *Flying Yankee* restoration in his memory. Significant progress was made before the project began to falter.

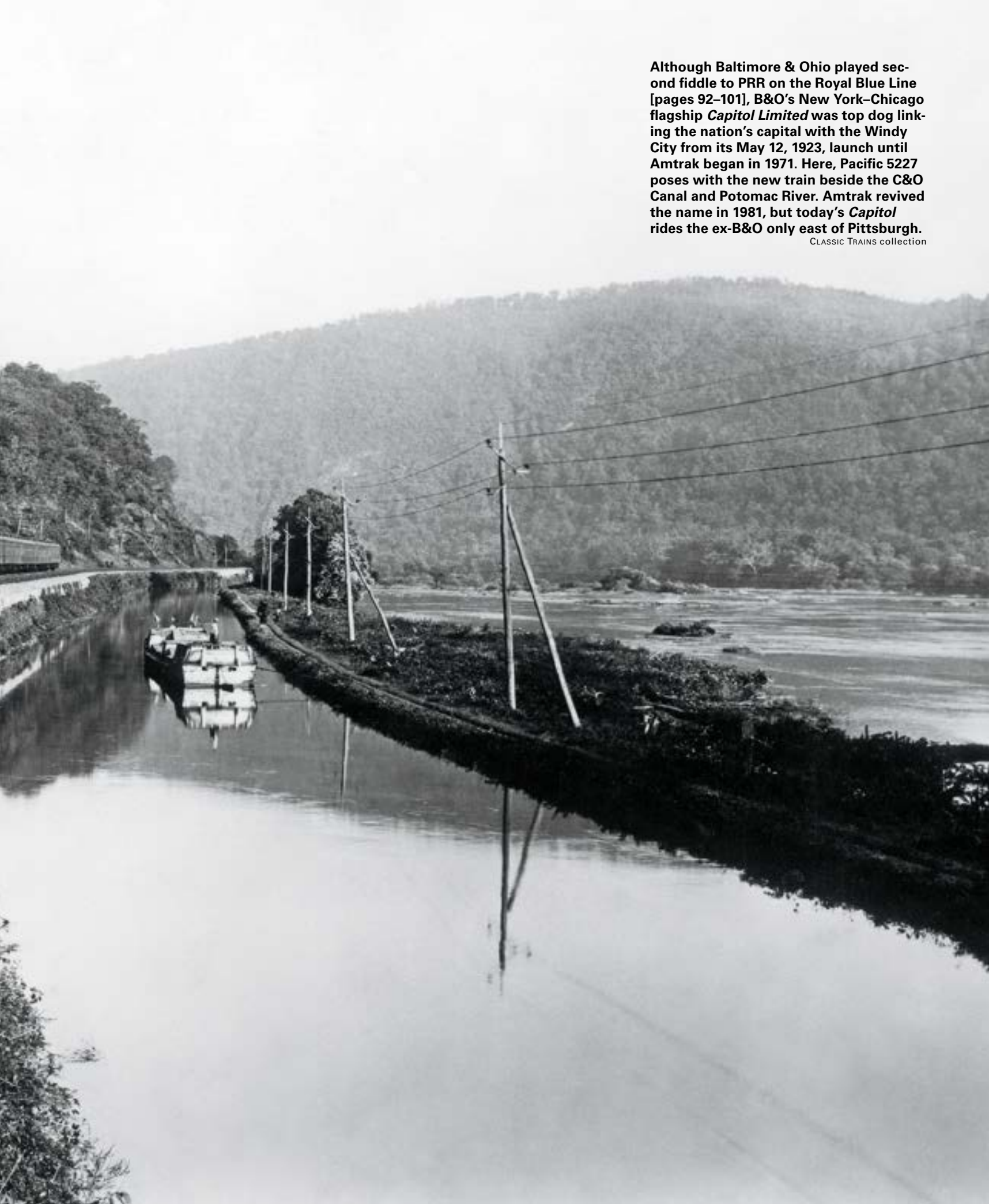
With the passing of Bob Morrell, the *Flying Yankee* restoration devolved into limbo. Money was solicited and spent, but with little visible result. The partially restored carbody was moved from Claremont to the Hobo Railroad in Lincoln, N.H., in 2005 with great hope. However, in 2016 the partially restored carbody remains in Lincoln on blocks while nearby sit its fully rebuilt and road-worthy trucks.

After over a decade and half of limbo, apparently the best hope today for No. 6000 is its completion as a static restoration, and move to be displayed near the shops where she was maintained so long ago in Concord, N.H. Only time will tell.

CARL R. BYRON, of Groton, Mass., is a founding member of the Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society. This was the first of his several articles in Classic Trains publications. Learn more about the Flying Yankee Restoration Group's efforts at www.flyingyankee.com.

The *Cheshire* skims through an icy cut near Surry, N.H., in March 1951. Note the V-shaped snow-deflecting fins that have been added to No. 6000's nose.
Classic Trains collection

GreatTrains
IN PHOTOS



Although Baltimore & Ohio played second fiddle to PRR on the Royal Blue Line [pages 92–101], B&O's New York–Chicago flagship *Capitol Limited* was top dog linking the nation's capital with the Windy City from its May 12, 1923, launch until Amtrak began in 1971. Here, Pacific 5227 poses with the new train beside the C&O Canal and Potomac River. Amtrak revived the name in 1981, but today's *Capitol* rides the ex-B&O only east of Pittsburgh.
CLASSIC TRAINS collection

SILVER METEOR

CHAMPION

STREAMLINERS TO THE SUNSHINE STATE

As one of the watershed events of the 20th century, the Great Depression forced individuals, corporations, and the nation to take steps they never would have taken in other times. The railroads were no exception. Beginning in 1929, the Depression would cut the railroads' annual passenger earnings in half by 1934. Generally, there were two reactions to this challenge. Conservative, financially secure roads often hunkered down, cutting costs and studying their options while hoping to ride out the storm. Their less-stable rivals, needing to make significant progress just to stay afloat, often embraced wholesale change.

When the upstart Seaboard boldly re-equipped its Florida trains, rival Coast Line quickly followed suit

BY **JOE WELSH**

Brightly colored diesels hauled the Florida streamliners in their early years. Seaboard E4s — its 14 As and 5 Bs the only units of the model — stand at Washington in 1940 (above) in the "citrus" livery that lasted into the 1950s. ACL E3 500 poses (lower left) with the *Champion* on the FEC near Lake Worth, Fla., in 1939.
SAL: O. H. Borsum, Paul Lubliner collection; ACL: Jonathan Nelson collection

Nowhere was this difference more evident than in the Southeast. Here rivals Seaboard Air Line and Atlantic Coast Line, both operating between Richmond, Va., and Florida, had slugged it out for the cream of the Florida tourist trade since the turn of the century. Both carriers' trains reached the Northeast via the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac from Richmond to Washington and the Pennsylvania from Washington to New York. Seaboard went to Miami over its own line, hastily built on the eve of the Depression. ACL reached the east coast of Florida on the Florida East Coast Railway from Jacksonville to Miami. Both had direct lines to points on Florida's Gulf coast.

Seaboard's latecomer position was seen in its physical characteristics — a single track winding through the Piedmont, and a lightly ballasted line to Miami that avoided much of Florida's populous east coast. ACL, by contrast, had a flat, well-maintained, double-track route on the coastal plain from Richmond through the Carolinas.

Physical plant wasn't their only difference. As the Depression set in, financially strapped Seaboard went into receivership in 1930. With characteristic Scotch thriftiness native to its North Carolina roots, the larger ACL maintained control of its own financial destiny.

The Coast Line's conservatism is exemplified by 1938 Baldwin 4-8-4 1803 accelerating the heavyweight *Florida Special* south from Richmond, having relieved an RF&P 4-8-4. But even as this 1940 scene occurred, Budd streamliners were changing ACL's outlook.
Wiley M. Bryan

People line up in 1938 to tour Seaboard E4 3001, like its sibling 3000 (previous page) lettered for the train to which it was assigned: the *Orange Blossom Special*. Other E4s were lettered for the *Silver Meteor,* but soon all were placed in a single pool.
Louis A. Marre collection

But as the 1930s progressed, that conservative mindset nearly became its undoing — at least in the passenger business.

A NEW BALLGAME

Attracting passengers, not cutting costs, had become the name of the game as the '30s progressed. That required new thinking and bold steps. Out west, the Burlington Route, Union Pacific, and other roads had done just that — introducing popular diesel-powered streamliners like the *Denver Zephyr* and *City of Los Angeles*. The formidable Florida tourism industry, which was as interested in increasing trade as the railroads were, couldn't help but notice and began urging ACL, SAL, and Florida East Coast to institute dramatic changes to their passenger services.

ACL resisted the idea. Picking up on the friction between local business leaders and the railroads, the press smelled a story. In March 1938, the *Miami Daily News* sent reporter Warren Smith to Chicago and Denver for a look at the new lightweight streamliners traversing the Midwest and to talk with the folks who ran them. In a series of four articles, Smith documented the positive experiences of the Rock Island, which had introduced its popular fleet of *Rockets* in 1937. He spoke with a Denver business leader who noted that his city was experiencing a boom, thanks in part to the *Denver Zephyr*, in his

Models demonstrate the reclining seats, and a water cooler-dispenser, in a coach on Seaboard Air Line's 1939 *Silver Meteor*.
SAL, Joe Welsh collection

Seaboard's Sun Lounges of 1956 featured roof-top windows over the lounge area and were among the last sleepers built until Amtrak's Superliners. The Sun Lounges were SAL's answer to the prohibition of dome cars north of Washington.
Jim Scribbins

mind, having sliced the Chicago–Mile High City travel time almost in half. Adding fuel to the fire, Smith quoted the happy businessman, "This shortening of distance [time] has opened up new possibilities of travel. Coming to Denver is now just a weekend trip. If you, too, had streamliners, Miami would be in a similar situation."

The *Daily News* scribe also wielded the pen to refute the claims of the conservative railroad men that Florida was a "pick-up and distribution" state — a place with numerous stops and a location where the natural speed advantage of the streamliner would be lost. (Somehow, the railroaders had conveniently forgotten that, because of demographics and the nature of the trade, the Florida trains rolled almost nonstop between Richmond and Jacksonville.) Reporter Smith was ready for them here, too, quoting a Miamian who'd ridden Burlington's crack *Denver Zephyr*, "I made that trip last year, and we stopped a dozen times before reaching Omaha; the first stop was only 30 miles out of Chicago. . . . That short-run argument won't hold water."

But Smith was his most persuasive in detailing the economics of lightweight, diesel-powered trains. He explained how diesels helped the Chicago–Des Moines *Rocket* complete a daily round trip while a steam-powered FEC local could only accomplish a one-way trip over the same distance. The articles also predicted that a diesel streamliner could cut the New York–Florida travel time by nearly 5 hours.

Coast Line remained unconvinced. In spring 1938 it took delivery of 12 state-of-the-art 4-8-4 steam locomotives from Baldwin. Their assignment was high-speed passenger service, but the 895,000-pound giants were less efficient than diesels and hard on track. In the same year, the railroad also purchased a series of new heavyweight coaches from Bethlehem Steel; at 78 tons, they were 27 tons heavier than contemporary lightweight cars. On December 15, 1938, ACL introduced the heavyweight, steam-powered *Vacationer*, an all-coach luxury train featuring reclining-seat coaches and air-conditioning with cars for both coasts of Florida.

SEABOARD SHOWS THE WAY

Upstart Seaboard took a different path. First to introduce air conditioning (in 1933), in 1936 it had added a small number of lightweight

A well-positioned palm frond accents a publicity pose of Florida East Coast's *Champion* trainset led by E3 No. 1002, the railroad's contribution to ACL's New York–Miami 1939 coach streamliner. Today's FEC has brought back these colors for its big freight diesels.
FEC, Seth Bramson collection

Filled with perhaps 600 passengers headed north after spending New Year's in Florida, the 16-car coach section of the *East Coast Champion* departs Jacksonville on January 2, 1949. The train consists of 11 luxury coaches, a baggage-dormitory, a tavern-lounge, 2 dining cars, and a tavern-lounge-observation.
James G. LaVake

Pullman-built coaches and baggage-coach combines to its top trains. Intrigued by the cost efficiency of diesels and the attractiveness of streamliners, Seaboard listened closely when the Rock Island, also in receivership, explained how the new trains had turned its passenger finances around. SAL was interested when it read that the Burlington's *Twin Zephyrs* grossed nearly $1.2 million per year and retained nearly 65 percent of that as profit after expenses.

Seaboard's financial overseers were impressed, too. And when, after careful deliberation, the railroad asked the receivers, the security holders, and the courts to purchase diesel locomotives and a streamlined train, they were prepared to support the venture.

In fall 1938, SAL acquired nine Electro-Motive E4 passenger diesels in three A-B-A sets. The justification for the purchase was an expected reduction in operating expenses thanks to the efficiency of the diesels. Schedules were shortened, and the crack *Orange Blossom Special* began handling cars to Boston as a result of the speed-up. Attired in a striking "citrus" scheme of green, yellow, and orange, the flashy diesels were a world apart from the somber steamers running on the ACL. On October 12, 1938, Seaboard upped the ante, finalizing its order to Budd for a seven-car streamlined passenger train.

The natural model for the train was Santa Fe's five-car *El Capitan* coach streamliner, which had been operating between Chicago and

Los Angeles since February 1938 — and attracting significant ridership. Seaboard's new train, dubbed the *Silver Meteor*, would prove even more popular. Within 48 hours of the announcement of the train's first trip, Seaboard received 2,500 inquiries about travel on a train with a total capacity of 280 seats. Four trips were sold out two weeks before the inaugural run. On February 2, 1939, it was introduced on an every-third-day schedule from New York to Florida. The day before, the train was put on display in New York's Pennsylvania Station. More than 14,000 people visited the gleaming stainless-steel streamliner in less than 10 hours.

The *Silver Meteor* was so popular that Florida hotel employees even set up a ticket-scalping business, selling seats on the new train. One of the industry's principal goals in introducing streamliners was attracting new passengers to train travel. The *Meteor* succeeded admirably, drawing more than 40 percent of its riders from other forms of transportation. Seaboard was back in business.

Coast Line's attempts to woo passengers with its heavyweight *Vacationer* were completely overshadowed by the new *Meteor*, and it hurt. For example: Because of the festivities on the day of the *Meteor*'s introduction, PRR had parked the new train in Penn Station hours earlier than normal — and next to a train with ACL's heavyweight coaches for the *Vacationer*. Apparently, riders in ACL's conservative coaches got a good, long look at the sparkling new celebrity across the platform, and they liked what they saw. Word got back to ACL, and its infuriated Chairman Lyman Delano accused the Pennsy of deliberately parking the *Silver Meteor* next to his *Vacationer*. In fact, it had been accidental, but Delano's reaction underscored Coast Line's sensitivity to the competition. It had good reason to worry.

Early ridership information indicated that the *Meteor* was drawing more than just attention. A comparison of passenger revenues for the two roads for a two-month period before and after the introduction of the *Silver Meteor* shows clearly that Coast Line was in trouble.

Seaboard Air Line	JUNE	JULY
1938	$278,766	$266,571
1939	$385,412	$393,918
Increase	$106,646	$127,347

Atlantic Coast Line	JUNE	JULY
1938	$336,193	$347,147
1939	$312,600	$327,992
Decrease	–$23,593	–$19,155

ACL probably had no access to SAL's earnings figures, but it had a handle on its own — and they were shrinking. It had only to look across the Penn Station platform to see where the dollars were going.

Despite Coast Line's conservatism, the reversal in earnings got the larger road's attention in a hurry. In June 1939 ACL and partner FEC ordered a trio of seven-car streamlined trainsets (two for ACL and one for FEC) from Budd. Like the *Silver Meteor*, they were built of stainless steel and were coach trains. The multiple-train order was designed to get a leg up on SAL by offering daily service to Miami. Pulled by Electro-Motive E3 and E6 diesels attired in ACL's striking purple livery or FEC's attractive yellow and red, the new *Champions* were also an immediate success. Neither road would ever look back.

In response to demand and competition, in 1939 the *Silver Meteor* expanded to operate daily to Miami and every third day to St. Petersburg. In 1940 Seaboard doubled the size of the *Meteor* to 14 cars and began daily operation to St. Petersburg. In 1941 the train began handling sleeping cars. The *Champion* grew too. Keeping pace with Seaboard, in 1940 the ACL speedster also expanded to 14 cars and in 1941 added

The 1939 *Champion*'s observation lounge car offered luxurious accommodations at a low fare, not to mention the view from the back end as the rails just ridden dissolved in the distance.
Joe Welsh collection

In the early 1960s, the winter-only *Florida Special* of Atlantic Coast Line and Florida East Coast was famous for its unusual on-board activities, including singalongs in the recreation car.
Above and left, Joe Welsh collection

The alpha and omega of many New York–Miami streamliners, a sleek E unit up front and a tavern lounge observation car on the rear, greet each other as *Champions* meet at Fort Pierce, Fla., on March 11, 1955. Red-and-yellow No. 1031 is one of FEC's five E9s.
Jim Scribbins

sleepers. Coast Line put diesels on its other Florida trains as well.

The new trains revolutionized travel to Florida far beyond the expectations of the chambers of commerce. Among the most vexing characteristics of Florida tourism (for both hotels and railroads) had been its heavy winter-season slant. The streamliners changed that. The new emphasis on affordable, luxury coach travel, coupled with the hotel industry's accent on traveling to Florida in summer, when prices were lower, created a market where none had existed. Thanks also to the advent of air conditioning, Florida became affordable and attractive year-round to people of all economic means.

When war came in December 1941, the demand for travel increased exponentially. The fast, high-capacity trains were just what the doctor ordered. In 1944, its highest year of earnings, the combined east- and west-coast sections of the *Silver Meteor* grossed $11 million in revenues and netted $8 million. That amount was about equal to the deficit the entire Seaboard Air Line had experienced in 1934. Statistics for the *Champion*, although not readily available, undoubtedly read the same. The Florida streamliners were some of the most profitable trains in the country.

POSTWAR PROSPERITY

After World War II, the Seaboard, Atlantic Coast Line, and partners invested heavily to refurbish their trains. The purchase included the first lightweight sleeping cars for the Florida trains. Trains re-equipped included the *East Coast Champion* and the *West Coast Champion* (a west coast section of the *Champion* that had been created in the early 1940s). ACL's famous winter-only *Florida Special* was also streamlined for the first time, in 1949. That killed off the *Orange Blossom Special*, Seaboard's competing heavyweight train, in 1953, again proving the streamliner was a powerful marketing tool. The *Meteor* was also re-equipped and would become SAL's flagship.

Other roads suffered heavily at the hands of the airlines and the new Interstate highway system, but the Florida trains remained popular and at least marginally profitable through the 1950s and into the early '60s. The magnetic draw of sunny Florida, the size of the market, the near-perfect schedule (just overnight) and the lack of good roads (I-95 wasn't complete) all helped. The attitudes of Coast Line and Seaboard toward the passenger certainly didn't hurt.

In 1955-56, a time when the Pennsylvania, Southern Pacific, and other giants who'd been in the passenger business for 100 years or more were concluding that the passenger train was a losing proposition, Seaboard purchased some of the last long-distance cars built in the pre-Amtrak era.

Atlantic Coast Line also doted on its passenger trains. In the early 1960s, the railroad built new stations and offered package vacations and new on-board amenities. The *Florida Special* became a showpiece train for the railroad's 75th anniversary season in 1962-63 (a year after PRR had begun quiet efforts to discontinue its flagship *Broadway Limited*). The *Special* offered refurbished equipment and a wide range of passenger diversions in a "recreation car," including fashion shows, singalongs, games, and other activities. All of this captured the attention of the public and the national press, and the

"Linking north and south," RF&P was owned by its six connecting Class 1s. In postwar years RF&P handled 15 SAL and ACL name trains, plus its own 1947 5-car ACF *Old Dominion*. In the '60s, two of RF&P's 15 E8As pause at Alexandria, Va., with a southbound.
Dan Pope collection

Florida Special was even featured on TV's *Today Show*.

It wasn't all sunny skies, though. In January 1963, Florida East Coast was struck as a result of its unwillingness to abide by a national labor agreement. The resulting labor unrest was tinged with acts of violence, including the dynamiting of moving trains. FEC was no longer a safe place for passengers. Suddenly, ACL found itself cut off from access to much of the populous east coast of Florida. In an arrangement that presaged the two companies' 1967 merger (already under discussion), Coast Line entered into an agreement with Seaboard to use SAL's rails and station to reach Miami. The result would be a decline in Coast Line's revenues in 1964. By now the *Champions*, which had run as separate consists to the east and Gulf coasts, often would be consolidated in spring and fall. The Post Office Department began operating the ZIP Code distribution system using trucks, not trains, and the head-end revenue that had helped meet the bottom line began disappearing from the Florida trains.

But ACL and SAL didn't give up. Coast Line introduced "new" sleeping-car accommodations in 1965 in the form of the "Budget Room Coach," which offered a full-sized roomette to passengers at a cost of only $15 more than coach fare. Dome sleeping cars appeared on the *Florida Special* south of Richmond in the 1965-66 season, as did a popular Candlelight Dinner. Seaboard revenues increased in 1965 and '66. SAL bought nearly the entire FEC streamlined-car fleet in 1965, giving it a significantly enhanced roster at a bargain rate. The exception was sleeping cars, for which Seaboard had no additional need. Coach travel had become the heart of the business. But relatively speaking, the Florida trains still carried a lot of first-class passengers — a throwback to the days when hundreds of Pullman pool cars used to carry people to the Sunshine State each winter. In 1966, for example, the *Silver Meteor* and ACL's *Florida Special* routinely carried more sleeping cars than New York Central's *20th Century Limited* or Santa Fe's renowned *Super Chief*. Eighteen-car Florida streamliners were the norm. At holiday times, extra sections abounded.

North of Washington, the Florida streamliners used PRR's electrified line to New York. Just out of 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, GG1 4864 rolls the *Silver Meteor* past Zoo Tower in 1964.
Above, George Krambles, Krambles-Peterson Archive; left, Joe Welsh collection

THE LAST PRO-PASSENGER RAILROAD

This was the situation that Seaboard Coast Line inherited upon its creation in the July 1967 merger of SAL and ACL. The new company was the last truly pro-passenger railroad in America, and it could afford to be — the passengers hadn't abandoned the service. SCL did reorganize its fleet to save money, however. The most notable change was the elimination of the *East Coast Champion* in 1968. The *Silver Meteor* was the premier train to Miami, while the *West Coast Cham-*

Still cruising the high iron in the early 1960s, a 1939 Seaboard E4 leads two younger E7 siblings on *Silver Star* No. 22 out of Raleigh, N.C. The livery of off-white (light green, to some) with a red band had recently replaced the "citrus" passenger-unit colors.
Wiley M. Bryan

A year after the Seaboard Coast Line merger, the northbound *Silver Star,* headed by E8 597, rounds a curve at Dinwiddie, Va., on November 2, 1968. SCL adopted ACL's latter-day black livery.
Bob Krone

pion — now renamed to simply *Champion* — was the top train to the Gulf coast of Florida. SCL retained the seasonal *Florida Special* to Miami. It also kept the *Silver Meteor*'s kid brother, SAL's *Silver Star*, which served both coasts of Florida.

That's right, in 1968, a time when great passenger trains were dropping like flies, SCL was operating three daily streamliners from New York to Florida, a seasonal luxury train, a number of secondary trains, and dozens of sleeping cars, diners, and specialty cars. And that was after it had taken post-merger steps to tighten up its passenger operations. Imagine SCL's horror when, in spring 1968, Penn Central (formed from the merger of the PRR and NYC in February '68) announced to its connecting railroads that it would no longer handle Pullman-operated cars at New York's Sunnyside Yard, which SCL's fleet used as its northern terminus. The previous year Pennsy had terminated its relationship with Pullman for the operation of sleeping cars on its east-west fleet. Now the new railroad wanted out of any relationship with the ailing sleeping-car company.

Seaboard Coast Line convinced Penn Central to continue the practice, but with Pullman's demise, the railroads took over the operation of sleeping cars on January 1, 1969. Pullman maintenance and pool distribution ended on August 1, 1969.

With Pullman gone, SCL had to staff the sleeping cars itself and find a clever way to manage the fleet. It did so, selling the cars to Hamburg Industries and leasing them back. Then SCL did something else amazing: it arranged for the purchase of more sleeping cars from Chesapeake & Ohio/Baltimore & Ohio, adding dome sleepers and premium room accommodations to its fleet! There wasn't another railroad in the United States buying sleeping cars in 1969. SCL even fought successfully with Penn Central to keep the *Florida Special* when the northern carrier made noises about not renewing the seasonal service in 1970.

Eventually the numbers caught up with SCL, though, and, for once, all that passenger demand worked against it. Despite having by now incurred some significant losses in the passenger business, the railroad had been unwilling to abandon its passengers. But when SCL looked at the long-term costs versus the revenues, especially the high capital cost of replacing its large, aging car fleet, it reluctantly decided to join the National Railroad Passenger Corporation — Amtrak — in 1971. The carrier had been created by the federal government to bail out railroads desperate to get out from under the passenger burden.

But the market never died. Today, 77 years after the *Silver Meteor* was inaugurated, Amtrak long-distance rail routes typically host but a single daily train. The New York–Florida route boasts two, the *Silver Meteor* and *Silver Star.* A third — the *Auto Train* from Virginia to Florida, which builds on a technology tested on the Atlantic Coast Line in 1966 — plies that same route and is one of Amtrak's top money-earners. If *Miami Daily News* reporter Warren Smith were still around, he'd probably find a classy way to say, "I told you so." ■

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Nowhere in the United States of America is there a railroading experience even close to that offered at Ely. With driving the #93 (2-8-0) last year and the #40 with a train this year I learned more and enjoyed myself more during those hours than any other railroading experience in my life.

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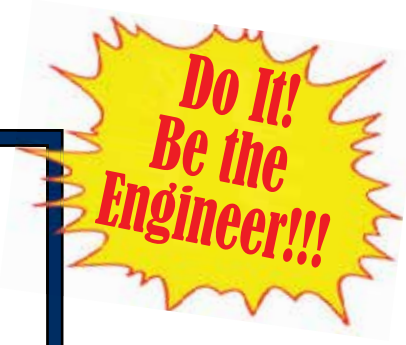
Steve O'Brien



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