

Dispatch

Dedicated to the historic preservation and/or modeling of the former CMS&P&P/Milw. "Lines West"

Volume 4, Issue No. 1

January 1991

DEER LODGE REVISITED

By Kurt Armbruster

It's cool and shady in Bill Denty's living room, even though it's pushing 90 degrees outside. July, 1990, in Deer Lodge is hot, but in the home of a railroad man, temperature - and time - fade away, and as you listen to his stories you can almost hear the trains of the Milwaukee Road roll once more through town.

William Denty went firing on the Milwaukee in July, 1940, 50 years ago to the month as we sit in his living room. "I was born in one of the oldest houses in Montana. Its a log house on Main street; my son-in-law owns it now and he's restoring it. My dad settled in Deer Lodge and hired on the Milwaukee in 1910 as a boiler inspector. He was 57th on the list at the roundhouse so I guess that'll tell you how many men they had working here back in those days. That was before we got the electrics, all steam, had a lot of Japanese workers, boiler washers, laborers, and such. They lived right there by the roundhouse, called it "Jap Camp". Had some good parties in there but that died out after the electrics came in. Had several hundred men good men here in those early days but we didn't need so many with the electrics".

"They had a mandatory 6 months as a hostler before you could bid on yard or road firing and I was glad when I could get on the road. Got assigned to Avery for a time as a relief helper crew while the regular men took vacation or something. It was a good job but Avery was sure some boondock town; there was nothing to spend your money on. I was glad when I could come home and work out of Deer Lodge. This was a

booming town in those days. Pretty quiet now".

"I got to fire for some real old timers, Hooter Drake, his real name was James but he was hard of hearing so you had to "hoot" at him--he was the best, the fastest runner on the division as he just loved to make time, race the NP. See, our number 16 and their number 2 passenger trains would hit town at the same time. We'd lay for one another and have a little race--that was the fast track down the valley. Oh, we'd run away from 'em with the big Westinghouse motors we had. They couldn't catch us with their steam engines; old Hooter, he'd just chuckle and notch her out. He was also known as "Owl" because he loved to stay up all night playing poker, loved to skunk you, get that money. He was a real gent though. One time a kid fireman laid a \$10 bill on top of the brake stand as they were coming into the depot here and pointed to a spot on the platform and bet old Hooter he couldn't stop there. Hooter didn't say anything, he just rolled her right down to the mark and stopped her right on the dot, swept up the \$10 and put it in his pocket. They went to sign in and that boy wasn't too happy--\$10 was a lot of money in those days. When they were leaving Hooter took out the \$10 and handed it back and said, "Now let that be a lesson to you"; a real gent".

"Another fast runner was Martin Holland, we called him "Snoose"; he was a Swede and proud of it. He used to brag about being and "eng-i-neer" for 30 years and still not speaking English with that accent of his. Oh, we had some good ones; Ally Gouyd was the only man I ever heard

who touched the wire and lived to tell about it. He was on top of a motor in the yard and forgot himself and went to steady himself on the front pantograph and didn't see that the back one was up. The jolt knocked him off the motor, dead in mid-air, but when he hit the ground he broke his leg and the shock of that revived him. Regained perfect use of that leg too, lucky guy".

"That juice was frightening, you had to respect it or else! I was poking around in a Westinghouse once with my flashlight. The pans were down but they had an auxiliary battery in there and it was cut-in while I was working. I touched the electrical gear with my light--fused that light right to the cabinet. Lucky it didn't take my hand with it as that was one hell of a jolt. I would have been done for if the full line power was on".

"I had my share of accidents, more than I would have liked. Couple of washouts, slides; its a sickening feeling as you end up all over the landscape like cordwood. We cleaned up some bad messes but I didn't get hurt. Had 13 grade crossing accidents, more than anyone on the railroad (laughs), but what can you do? People just drive right in front of you. Hit a young fellow in Missoula, wrapped his car around my engine. He was all right but I went to see him at the hospital and asked him "Why did you do it? Didn't you see me?" Said he was in a hurry to get home for dinner".

"We took safety real seriously though and our record over the years was good until they let the railroad go

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in the last years. Our division won safety awards for the whole railroad 3 times in the 70's and we worked at it! Its a tough piece of railroad from here to Avery, lots of curves, blind spots, road and river crossings, and we had to be on our toes constantly".

MilWest Management

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"I was promoted to engineer in 1943 as the company cut the usual four-year mandatory firing period short due to the wartime shortage of experienced men. I had every kind of deferment there was, they were renewable every 6 months, but somebody decided I was needed on the railroad so I didn't get in on the fight. During the war we were busier than we ever had been with all kinds of freight extras, troop trains and such. We ran the Olympian in 2 or 3 sections every day; we were hopping. Some days I'd make 2, even 3 trips to Alberton and back. All the 16-hour law stuff was forgotten during the war--you'd get in and they'd send you right back out. We got the first diesels then, the General Motors FT freight unit, the 40's, and they were real nice. They sped things up considerably, especially in the "Gap" between Avery and Othello that was non-electrified. They were nice to run, good haulers. The later diesels were even better, almost as good as the motors".

"I liked working on the Westinghouse and Little Joe motors. They were fast, smooth, plenty of power--they rode like a feather and I'll say they could move. They painted the E-11 with silver stripes and sent her to Chicago for the fair--she had a special horn on her too. People would perk up their ears when they heard it. The Quills were retired in the mid-50's and a lot of men missed them".

"The Joe's were more modern, the newest motors we had and our best freight unit but all the lettering in the cab was in Russian. They were built for the Soviet railroad post-war but we ended up with them. That's why we called them Little Joe, after Joe Stalin. We had to change the lettering on the controls and enlarge the air pipes so they didn't freeze in the winter. After that they were great. We eventually ran them with 3 or 4 diesels, boy we'd go like the devil. We had the hotshot freight 265 and 266 called the Thunderhawk, practically a non-stop freight. One night in the 60's I made it from Alberton to Deer Lodge in 150 minutes exactly. That's 110 miles--you figure it out!"

"I did get to work a lot of different jobs; relief jobs on the Great Falls branch and the Bonner local out

of Missoula. They were steamjobs, the trolley didn't go off the main line, but I got a kick out of running steam; you had to work more but it was kind of fun making them work for you. Got called for the rotaries once in awhile too--they'd work you to death."

"Never ran passenger, we only had one train most of the time and there were plenty of senior men to cover it. I fired on the Hiawatha quite a bit in the 50's. That was a beautiful train, nice job going through all that wonderful country. That was very easy work compared to freight where you never knew when you'd get in. We also had the Photographer's specials. Back in the 50's a group of railfan-photographers would hire a train once a year and have us ride them around--stop here, back up there; sightseeing stuff. We kind of dreaded and welcomed that one at the same time".

"My last run was in 1975 on the Milwaukee's Bi-Centennial engine. They were starting to cut corners and wanted us older men to take early retirement. They also wanted to eliminate the Alberton crew change, stretch the division full length. I saw a hassle coming what with the track going to seed and maintenance just starting to be reduced--we started having more derailments so I figured it was time to move on. Once I left I never looked back, but the railroad was a good living all right, and we felt proud to be "family"."

In 1990 the trains, and the track itself, are long gone and only the distant whoosh of the Interstate breaks the peace of the valley. I feel fortunate that it dawned on me, back in '73, that the West's most unusual railroad might not be around forever. There were dark rumors of merger with Burlington Northern, and the Milwaukee was all too well known as a weak sister, a straggly, marginal line through an empty land with little money and too much high-powered competition--the story of its life. In the spring of '73 the end was clearly in sight for the famous electric operations in Montana. Having spaced-out on the old boxcab's final years on my hometown Coast Division, I vowed to catch up with them in Montana that

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summer of '73.

With that, fate and Greyhound put me in Butte on Labor Day weekend, just days after the end of boxcab helper service over Pipestone Pass--story of MY life! But a captivating day and evening of Milwaukee juice action there made it well worthwhile and I moved on to Deer Lodge in high spirits.

What you found down Milwaukee Avenue in Deer Lodge in 1973 was a busy switching yard overhung with trolley wire where antique electric goat E-80 shunted long strings of brown boxcars and serviced the adjoining Potlatch lumber mill. You also found a big wooden roundhouse, shop, and service area that hummed with the comings and goings of diesel and electric power spanning almost 60 years, and a homey depot whose dispatch phone rang cheerily and whose friendly operator and train crews were pleased to share their railroad with an interested visitor.

The Deer Lodge hotel is now boarded up, but in 1973, a clean room that probably had not changed much in 50 years was only \$6.00. Late at night E-80's quaint air whistle chirped down the track a couple of blocks away, and in the wee hours the honking of a cow horn announced the arrival of a Little Joe powered freight.

Next day was spent roaming the yard and depot area. Here, pristine on the ready track was the E-45 boxcab set just retired from Butte helper service ("Yeah, so laugh you old crate, I'm having fun anyway!"). There, apparently welded to the track was an ancient steam rotary plow sitting the weeds near a couple of outside-frame wood boxcars. There too were shiny new SD-40-2's ready to head west, their electronic "bells" sounded weird but they could move! E-80 finished making up their train and the 4 big diesels coupled on, then dug in for Tacoma as the little orange caboose bobbed along past the depot--"clown car" some joker had scrawled in the dust on the side.

As the sun went down on the vast Deer Lodge valley the moon rose high over the big yard as it has for

almost 70 years. The copper trolley wire gleamed as E-80 rustled around with another cut of boxcars getting ready for the next train. The lights were warm in the depot and a brakie asked if I was going to stick around for the train. "Got a double Joe 'cording to the lineup". But it wasn't due until after dark and it had been a long day and I had seen what I'd come to see.

Walk down Milwaukee Avenue once more. A logging truck roars by (and how much longer will they be around?), but otherwise, Deer Lodge is sleepy in the late afternoon sun. Where a magnificent willow tree stood in 1973, there in 1990 is a parking lot--empty. Hammering echoes from inside the old Northern Pacific depot, now moved away from the track, as it is being converted into a senior center. The former NP line looks more and more like the branch line it always was, the rust barely held at bay by the occasional short Montana Western freight bound for the Montana Rail Link connection at Garrison Junction.

Across the way the Milwaukee station still stands, brooding but prim in its new life as a church. Newly painted, the 1909 structure looks better than it did in its heyday--but it looks lonely too in the empty field. The railroaders and their pickup trucks are gone, along with the trains, the track, the crashing of boxcars, the piping of air whistles, the husky joshing of engineers and fireman, and the beckoning emerald green of the far-away signal light. Mighty quiet around here--too quiet.

In 1973 Bill Denty, his Little Joes, and the Milwaukee road were still "going like the devil" racing the competition up the Deer Lodge and Clark Fork valleys. The shiny new SD-40-2's, while casting a long shadow over the electrics, showed a continuing hope for this western railroad institution. Alas, seven years later, it was over.

In a shady corner behind the courthouse sleeps E-70, the only surviving Little Joe. She was shunted grudgingly into display, against the wishes of some who considered her an "eyesore", thanks to others who felt otherwise. And out in the brush where the roundhouse formerly stood, a jackrabbit scurries across the broken foundation. As the sun goes down on

the Deer Lodge valley the moon rises over a vast and barren field whose weeds trace the faint outlines of a vanished rail empire. - Kurt Armbruster

Waybills

FOR SALE: Milwaukee Road HO Brass, NWSL Little Joes with replacement gears and wheels - \$225. NKP ES-2 switcher, factory painted, \$150. NJ ribbed boxcars 40 & 50 foot, painted, \$100, unpainted \$85. Richard Yaremko, 116 DeerCross Road SE, Calgary, AB, Canada T2J 6G7.

FOR SALE: HO scale models of Milwaukee, mainly brass. Send SASE for list. Bradley H. Dobbins, 825 Park Lane S.W., Roanoke, VA 24015.

WANTED: Information including rosters and photographs on Milwaukee Road cranes including Burro cranes. Bradley H. Dobbins, 825 Park Lane S.W., Roanoke, VA 24015.

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"DFW"

This column serves for miscellaneous news items about the former MILWAUKEE ROAD's operations. Like the symbol for "Dead Freight - West" it utilizes, the subjects found here are a "catch-all" from a variety of sources.

Lewis Picton reports that on a recent trip tracing the MILW from Bozeman to Butte, he learned that the Pipestone Pass tunnel is decayed to a point that the concrete liner is failing near the east portal. He says it would be very dangerous for anyone to attempt to enter the tunnel. Beware!

Milwaukee Model Notes

By Rick Yaremko as of 11/90

The following models are reported as being in stock at Overland Models.

HO GAUGE

#1265	Milw. Rd Terminal Caboose Rebuilt #991731-991766	only 10 left
#1284	Milw. Rd. Bay Window Caboose, International Car #992215-992229	
#1285	Milw. Rd. Bay Window Long caboose #992298-992299	
#1446	Milw. Rd. G6ps 4-6-0 #100-1113	only 5 left
#1446.1	Milw. Rd. G6ps 4-6-0 painted, includes decals	only 4 left
#5872	Milw. Rd. E6A #15A, 15B Modernized	
#6030	Milw. Rd. E8B #30B w/dynamic brakes	only 2 left
#3143	Milw. Rd. Jordan Spreader #X-283	
#3163	Milw. Rd. 70 ton refrigerator car URTX #89025-89049	

O GAUGE

#0398	Milw. Rd. ES-2 Steeple Cab switcher
#0507	Milw. Rd. SD40-2 #130-176 extended range D/B, early rad screens
#0534	Milw. Rd. FT A & B #35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 47

HO GAUGE, FUTURE

If you are interested in any of the following models you should make your reservations now to ensure you get the model you want. Most runs are very short, for example, the SD45's for MILW consisted of just 23 units.

#1462	Milw. Rd. A 4-4-2 #1-2 Original Hiawatha version	due 11/90
#1463	Milw. Rd. A 4-4-2 #3-4 Modernized Hiawatha version	due 11/90
#5119	Milw. Rd. SDL39's #582-590	due 1991
#5649	Milw. Rd. F7A #48 A & C, 50 A & C, 68 A & C, 79 A & C	due 1990
#5650	Milw. Rd. F7B #48 B, 50 B, 68 B, 79 B	due 1990
#5651	Milw. Rd. F7A #87 A & C, 89 A & C, 106 A & C, 121 A & C	due 1990
#5652	Milw. Rd. F7B #87 B, 121 B	due 1990
#5704	Milw. Rd. FM Erie-Built, A #5C, 9 A & C, as built with chrome nose shield	due 1991
#5705	Milw. Rd. FM Erie-Built, B #5C, 9 B, as built	due 1991
#5712	Milw. Rd. FM Erie-Built, A #21 A & C, 22 A & B	due 1991
#5739	Milw. Rd. F9A #93 A & C, 94 A & C passenger	due 1990
#5740	Milw. Rd. F9A #125 A, 126 A freight	due 1990
#5741	Milw. Rd. F9B #125 B,C & D, 126 B,C & D	due 1990
#5832	Milw. Rd. FP7A #90 A,B & C, 105 A,B & C w/passenger pilot	due 1990
#5833	Milw. Rd. FP7A #90 A,B & C, 105 A,B & C w/freight pilot	due 1990
#5993	Milw. Rd. FP45 #1-5, 1969 era for passenger service	due 1991
#6118	Milw. Rd. E7A #16-19	due 1991

Note the re-release of a second run of SDL39's. If you missed out the first time around this will be your last chance. The FP45 will also be a short run as it is being done in conjunction with the ATSF version. The Milw. version will not have dynamic brakes as is it is being modeled as used circa 1969. These units operated on the west end under wire still in their yellow paint for a few years before being converted to freight service and painted orange.

O GAUGE-FUTURE

#0153	Milw. Rd. F-7 4-6-4 Original #100-105	due 1990
#0154	Milw. Rd. F-7 4-6-4 Modernized #100-105	due 1990
#0436	Milw. Rd. H-12-44 #740-744	due 1990
#0439	Milw. Rd. h-10-44 #734 with cab overhang	due 1990

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined MilWest for 1991.

Ira Laby, Holyoke MA
 Warren Wing, Seattle WA
 Stan Jackson, Memphis TN
 James Futterer, Tumwater WA
 John Nymon, Federal Way WA
 Bill Pasewaldt, Othello WA
 Chauncey Steltzner, Forest Junc'n WS
 A.L. Mason, Abbotsford B.C.
 Larry Trumbull, Issaquah WA
 Don Spencer, Lee's Summit MO
 Doug Wicks, Great Falls MT
 Chris Allan, Lakewood CA
 Robert Quillin, Portland OR
 Roger Olinski, Mt. Prospect IL
 Andrew Radovich, Orlando FL
 George Berkstresser, Monte Vista CO
 John Worrall, Vancouver B.C.
 Brian Rommel, Ferndale WA
 Donald Hanson, San Diego CA
 Bob Young, Mountlake Terrace WA
 Kurt Lange, Milwaukee WI
 Jeff Simley, Lakewood CO
 Richard Horn, Seattle WA
 Walter Forsman, Great Falls MT
 Raymond York, N. Plainfield NJ
 Paul Lavender-Willison, Seattle WA
 Ed Nyitray, Bothell WA
 Patrick Egan, Chicago IL
 J M Nunn, Centralia WA
 Todd Wick, Portland OR
 Larry Wilson, Tacoma WA

Notes from the Editor's Desk

Annual Meet - General Manager Art Jacobsen asked me to mention that the 1991 MilWest Annual Meet will be held at Newport, WA. Tentative plans now are for it to be in September or October. We plan to have full details for the Meet in the April issue of the Dispatch.

New Members - As you can see at the top of this column, we are adding a new feature welcoming new members joining MilWest. Secretary Ron Hamilton suggested this as a token of our appreciation of their joining and we welcome them into the group.

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B.E.N.X.

By Thomas E. Burg

Recently I came to the realization that my fascination with the history and operations of the "old" Washington, Idaho, and Montana Railway (WI&M) had left me with a blind spot for the road's current history that all too soon will also pass by. Specifically, it occurred to me that the current "home road" rolling stock of the WI&M, which began in the 1970's under Milwaukee Road ownership, are the Bennett Lumber Products, Inc., private owner cars; Thrall door boxcars and A-frame bulkhead flatcars. These are regulars in current WI&M (now the WI&M branch of Burlington Northern) consists and are stored awaiting use in the WI&M Potlatch, Idaho yard. Even though the WI&M ceased to exist as an entity in 1962 with its purchase by the Milwaukee Road, it still lives with the Bennett cars. Each car is stenciled "Return empty to WI&M Ry., Potlatch, Idaho", no doubt giving headaches to anyone trying to find the WI&M in a guide to route the cars. The A-frame flats bear the lettering on the outside ends of the bulkheads, and the Thrall Door boxcars bear this lettering in a variety of places on the car sides along the side sill.

On August 23, 1990, while enroute to last year's MilWest meet, I visited with John Bennett at the Bennett mill between Princeton and Harvard, Idaho, on the WI&M. I had written ahead inquiring about the cars, and was invited to call and visit.

I was greeted cordially by Mr. Bennett and his most attentive secretary, as he took time from his busy day to do some public relations work and make a railfan extremely happy. He provided me with the following information on the Bennett cars: In the 1970's the railroad could not get an adequate supply of cars to supply Bennett's needs. The Thrall Door car had been developed by this time and customers liked them, so Bennett got 8 existing cars refurbished and tested them. Thrall Car Co. drew up plans and in 1975 Bennett purchased the beginning of its fleet of 86 such cars numbered 100-186. In the mid-1970's Bennett also purchased 37 of the A-frame bulkhead flatcars. The Thrall Door cars were popular for quite awhile, and are still popular with certain of Bennett's customers who like the in-transit protection they provide for higher grade lumber and the inside storage they provide until unloading, which is important to smaller lumber yards. However, when the railroads deregulated and became more efficient from a business point of view, they did not like the BENX cars which had only 120,000 lb. capacity. The railroads wanted longer cars with higher capacities, and began raising the rates for these cars, which increased prices to Bennett's customers. At present, Bennett ships only about 20 of its own cars per month to those customers who still prefer them.

At one time Bennett owned 126 cars altogether and was the largest private car owner in the State of Idaho. Forty of these were leased from North American Car Co., and were returned when the lease ran out 2-3 years ago. Fifteen more were recently sold, and several have been wrecked over the years. By August, 1990, BENX is down to about 15-20 of the all-doors and still has almost all of the original A-frame flats

which have more capacity than the boxcars. Most are now stored at Lewiston, Idaho.

Following my visit a number of the A-frame cars were documented in the WI&M Potlatch yards as none were on hand being loaded at the Bennett mill in Princeton. None of the all-doors were present.

Bennett Lumber Products, Inc. began with the Guy Bennett Lumber Co. of Clarkston, Washington. Guy Bennett, the founder, now 83, still runs the company but operations are gradually being turned over to his very capable and well liked daughter. A second company was established at Princeton, Idaho, run by the Bennett sons, and recently a third has been purchased, I am told at Elk River, Idaho. Bennett companies produce dimensioned lumber (2-bys) and boards (1-bys) of 5 species; white fir, Douglas fir, Ponderosa pine, Idaho white pine, and cedar. Almost all of the boards (one inch dimensioned go to the east coast and most of the rest to the midwest, with only a small bit going to California, where Bennett cannot compete well due to the freight rates.

At Clarkston the lumber is transferred from the sawmill across the Snake river to the planing mill at the Port of Wilma, Washington, adjacent to the Camas Prairie Railroad (CSP). BENX cars are stored on CSP sidings on the north side of the Snake River, and at a point called Transfer on the Idaho-Washington State line just west of the CSP lift bridge. At Wilma, Bennett has a small freight car repair facility for replacing trucks, couplers, bulkhead siding, decking, etc. On August 26, 1990, when I visited returning from MilWest, cars #312, 316, 307, and 337 (all bulkhead flats) were in for repair. The frame from one of the scrapped Thrall Door cars was observed at the repair facility.

The BENX cars, particularly the Thrall Door cars, are now an endangered species; we railfans should document them while they last, for too soon they too will be gone.

With regard to the WI&M, Mr. Bennett commented that in view of problems experienced with the Burlington Northern during its period of ownership (1980-present), Bennett possibly should have purchased the line when it was available, and would consider it should it again become available.

Modeling the BENX cars, particularly in HO scale, is possible, though presenting some problems. Years ago these BENX cars (the all-doors) were produced in custom paint and may be available at swap or collector meets. Lifelike continues to produce the Thrall Door cars, which could be repainted in Bennett blue. In examining a number of the cars in operation, a variety of shades of light blue were observed, no doubt due to fading from standing in the bright Idaho sunlight. I see the Bennett blue color as similar to GN Big Sky Blue. HO scale decals for the BENX all-doors are marketed by Miller Advertising ("The Herald King" line), set #PR-1.

Modeling the flatcars would seem to present more problems, in fabricating the A-frame center beams. This might be done in styrene, but a flatcar of this length (53' 6") is not readily available, nor is the BENX style of red lettering. - Tom Burg

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FREIGHT EQUIPMENT																		
Cars are marked "BENX" and are numbered and classified as follows:																		
L i n e No.	A.A.R. Mech. Desig.	DESCRIPTION <i>See Explanation Pages for Abbreviations & Symbols</i>	A.A.R. Car Type Code	NUMBERS ▶Change from Previous Issue	DIMENSIONS										CAPACITY		No. of Cars	
					INSIDE			OUTSIDE					DOORS		Cubic Feet Level Full	Lbs. (000)		
					Length	Width	Height	Length	Width	Height from Rail	Side	Side						
ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.				
BENX																		
1	LU	Special	L047	▶ 100-139	50 6	9 2	9 6	52 10	9 3	9 9	9 8	14 3	15 1	25 1	9 6	4433	141	40
2	LU	Box, All Door, Plug Doors	L047	▶ 140-185	50 6	9 2	9 6	52 10	9 3	9 9	9 8	14 3	15 1	25 1	9 6	4433	141	20
3	LU	Box, All Door, Plug Doors	L047	▶ 160, 161-179	50 6	9 2	9 5	58 10	9 6	10 4	3 9	14 4	15 1	25 1	9 6	4397	140	20
4	LU	Box, All Door, Plug Doors	L047	▶ 180, 181-185	50 6	9 2	9 6	58 10	9 6	10 4	3 1	14 4	15 1	25 1	9 6	4397	140	6
5	LU	Box, All Door, Plug Doors	L047	▶ 186	50 6	9 2	9 6	58 10	9 6	10 4	3 1	14 4	15 1	25 1	9 6	4397	144	1
6	FBS	Flat, Std. "A" Frame Down Center, Bulkheaded Ends, Cables & Chains & Clamps Providing Adjustable Tie-Downs, (Packaged Units of Lumber & Building Products)	F151	▶ 300-337	50 10	10 3	13 11	53 10	10 3	10 3	13 8	3 8	13 11				148	38
Total																		125
Report movements and mileage, send bills for repairs to cars and make remittances to Bennett Lumber Products, Inc., owner (shipper), P.O. Box 49, Princeton, ID 83857.				Home Point(s)—Cars 100-125 and 127-186: Chicago Heights, IL; Princeton, ID.				Cars 300-337: Joliet, IL; Princeton, ID.										

From the January 1990 "Official Railway Equipment Register

50' 6" ALL DOOR CAR

DOORS: 8 Plug Type Doors
 DOOR OPENING HEIGHT: 9' 6"
 DOOR OPENING WIDTH:
 ONE DOOR: 12' 5"
 TWO DOORS: 25' 0"

FLOOR: 2 1/4" T & G Decking
 FLOOR CAPACITY (FORK LIFT TRUCK LOAD): 25,000 Lbs.
 HEIGHT FROM RAIL TO FLOOR: 3' 8-1/8"

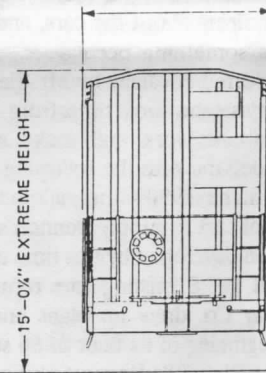
CUSHION UNDERFRAME: 10" End of car cushion

BEARINGS: Roller 3-11/16" Springs

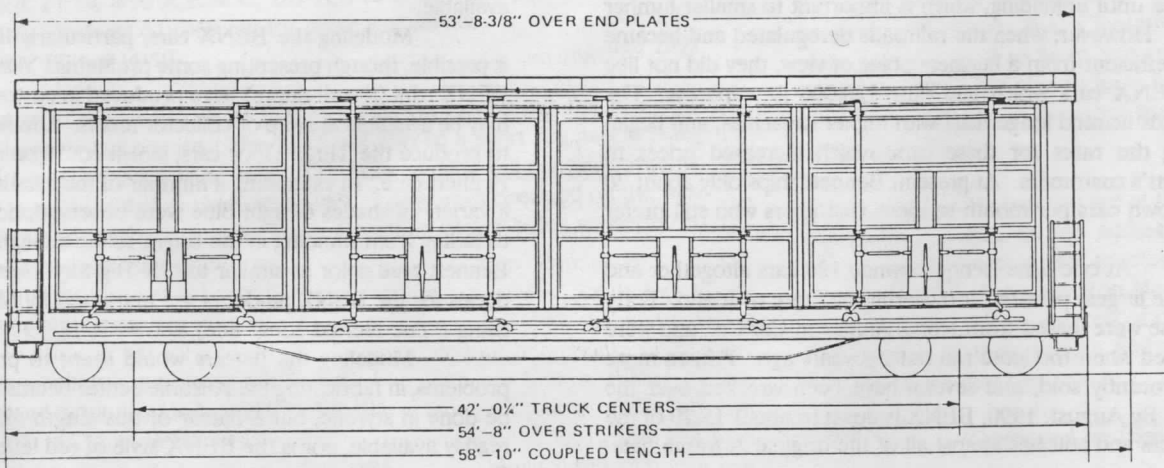
COUPLER: Type E

MINIMUM HORIZONTAL CURVE NEGOTIABILITY:
 COUPLED TO AAR BASE CAR: 255 Ft.
 COUPLED TO SIMILAR CAR: 256 Ft.

10'-4" EXTREME WIDTH



53'-8-3/8" OVER END PLATES



EARTHQUAKE IN SIXTEEN-MILE CANYON

By Ron Hamilton

The following article is an adaptation from a book entitled, The Milwaukee Road. It's First Hundred Years, written by August Derleth. The original version was published by American Stratford Press, 1948.

In 1925 the Milwaukee Road encountered the spectacular when an earthquake caught train Number 15 in famed Sixteen-Mile Canyon just out of Barron, Montana. The train was travelling in two sections on that Saturday, June 27, 1925, and carried a heavy complement of passengers including the assistant master car builder, F. D. Campbell, who was on a personal inspection tour in Washington, Idaho, and Montana. Campbell, who was riding in the first section of the train, took such good note of what took place that he was later able to give an excellent account of it.

The earthquake occurred late in the afternoon. In the distant darkening sky, Campbell had observed what to him was something peculiar and strange to Montana. Horizontal chain lightning was streaking the sky below a bank of gray, hazy clouds loosening some soft, scattered showers which seemed to then hang motionless in the sky. It would seem perhaps an ominous sign of things to come. An hour later, when the train was just out of Barron, at a little past six o'clock on a warm, still-light summer evening, and while he was in conversation with Conductor Sterling of the first section of Number 15, Campbell related, "we experienced what we considered a sun kink under the train and ran ten car lengths before the train was brought to a stop". They looked back, but could see nothing but dust, black clouds and curiously, rocks "coming down on the railroad track and bounding into the Missouri River". Campbell and Conductor Sterling got off and walked back along the train. At the second sleeper, *Racine*, they found a pedestal and an oil box entirely gone. On the next car, the *Waubay*, the gas boxes were badly dented and there was some other damage of less importance. The *Council Bluffs* was dented where a rock had struck it. Its battery box was damaged, and its oil box and pedestal were broken. On

the *Columbia*, the end cylinder, non-pressure head, and guides were broken while on the open-air observation car, *Alta Vista*, a pedestal and one tie rod were broken. The train had been stopped at 6:19 on an electrified portion of the western line of the Milwaukee Road. The power was off and the train was now stranded and isolated.

What had happened was not immediately clear to Campbell or Conductor Sterling, any more than it was to the curious employees and passengers on Number 15. But as the two men walked back toward the head end of the car, a second earth tremor took place leaving them with no doubt as to what had stopped the train. "With the moving of the ground and the upheaving of the land, the shock was so great that a person could not stand," Campbell reported. There was also a "terrifying roar of tremendous rocks falling down the side of the mountain." Though the passengers were badly frightened, it was necessary to keep them in the cars because the region was infested with rattlesnakes.

The train, however, was near open country and at some distance from the mountain, though several rocks did come down, bounding over the train and into the Missouri River. The first concern of the Milwaukee Road's employees was for the passengers. Campbell wrote later: *We had an unusual load of passengers; the tourist had a large number of regular Army men on the way to Alaska. The ladies' coach was filled up with women and children. The four sleepers were comfortably loaded with people from all over the country and England, and there were many Baptist ministers on their way to the convention at Seattle -- old and young people, and quite a number of children. We took extra precaution in the cars of the passengers and had wonderful assistance from the regular Army soldiers, especially after the second shock, when we had obtained a handcar and, with the assistance of the officers and soldiers, were able to pull it around the train and over the rocks, so that we could proceed to Eustis to get into communication with the outside world.*

The trip toward Eustis was informative but not successful. The handcar could not get into Eustis, for not only were all wires down and communication and power cut off, but rocks from one to fifteen tons in weight were on the track, and "rails were so bent that they could not be used; they looked like hairpins."

The party returned to the train and set out for Barron, in the opposite direction. On the way they estimated that the rock which had struck the first section of Number 15 weighed at least 2,500 pounds. They also learned that the second section of Number 15 had had an almost miraculous escape. This section had just cleared the tunnel before the bridge across Sixteen-Mile Creek east of Barron when the first shock stopped them, while immediately behind them the tunnel went down on both ends and the roof collapsed in the middle with sufficient weight to crush the train and all its occupants had the shock taken place but a few moments before.

But the earthquake was not over by any means and it was no brief disturbance. With almost meticulous method, Campbell kept record of the shocks, which began at 6:19 P.M., June 27, and did not end until 5:00 A.M., June 29. Number 15 was therefore stranded in the midst of an earthquake for 35 hours of varying degrees of intensity. The road's employees, including the methodical Campbell, stood guard for that Saturday night, waiting upon the daylight to take steps to supply the train.

Early Sunday morning, the resourceful Conductor Sterling remembered that a former section boss, who had become a rancher, lived a half mile east of the place where Number 15's first section was marooned. From him they obtained an auto delivery car and went to Three Forks for other supplies, having already gotten water and ice from Barron, for the promise of a hot June day was soon fulfilled. The trip to Three Forks among further tremors was illuminating. "There were large

(Continued on Page 8)

Earthquake

(Continued from Page 7)

cracks in the earth from one to eighteen inches, and when we dropped rocks down them we could hear them going down for God knows how many feet," according to Campbell. "At places it was necessary to place planks across in order to get over with an automobile." Fortunately, they had the foresight to bring the planks. At Three Forks the magnitude of the quake was plainly evident, for many buildings were down, particularly those of brick. It was also evident that chasms were opened in the bed of the Missouri River for the waters rapidly receded. But as earth drank its fill, they rose again during Sunday and thereafter remained at their customary height.

Ironically, while the earthquake damaged open country property of the Milwaukee Road, it left intact "one point that had been watched for years with the expectation that the rocks would come down," while other supposedly solid cliffs collapsed. Though the earth settled at bridge bulkheads, the bridges themselves were left in good solid condition.

Yet the train was not able to move throughout Sunday, though early Sunday morning some communication was made with Deer Lodge, and information as to the condition of Number 15 was put through in preparation for wrecking and repair forces. By Monday morning, H.B. Earling, Vice-President, and F.N. Nicks, Western Traffic Manager, arrived from the west together with other personnel of the road. A steam engine pulled Number 15 to Eustis and from there the train proceeded to Three Forks under its own power. Leaving Three Forks at 10:21 Monday morning, the train reached Seattle at long last at 9:30 the following morning, June 30, delivering a load of passengers who were "very much pleased" at the way in which the road's employees had taken care of them in one of the most unusual situations in which any train ever found itself. - Ron Hamilton

Editor's Notes

(Continued from Page 4)

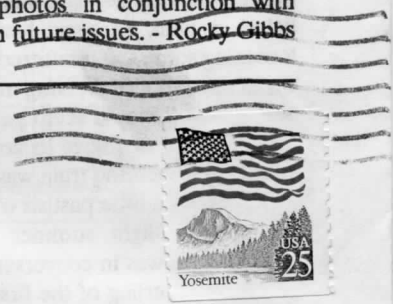
Secretary Address - MilWest Secretary Ron Hamilton advises us of yet another address change for him. He is not moving around as it may seem. The problem is the City of Redmond can't seem to make a firm decision on an address for the houses in his area. He hopes this will be the last change for him so once again, please take note of his "new" address in the masthead.

Dispatch Format - You may have noticed some change in the "look" of the Dispatch with this issue. I keep adding new software and features to my computers as well as constant learning in their usage. This issue is being produced in a different program than I was using which does a better job of right justification so I have gone back to full justified columns. The other major change is the glued binding of the Dispatch rather than stapled as before. This is due to changing to another commercial printer using a different process than previously used. This process will allow photos in the body of the Dispatch so I hope to include photos in conjunction with articles in future issues. - Rocky Gibbs

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January, 1991

MilWest Dispatch

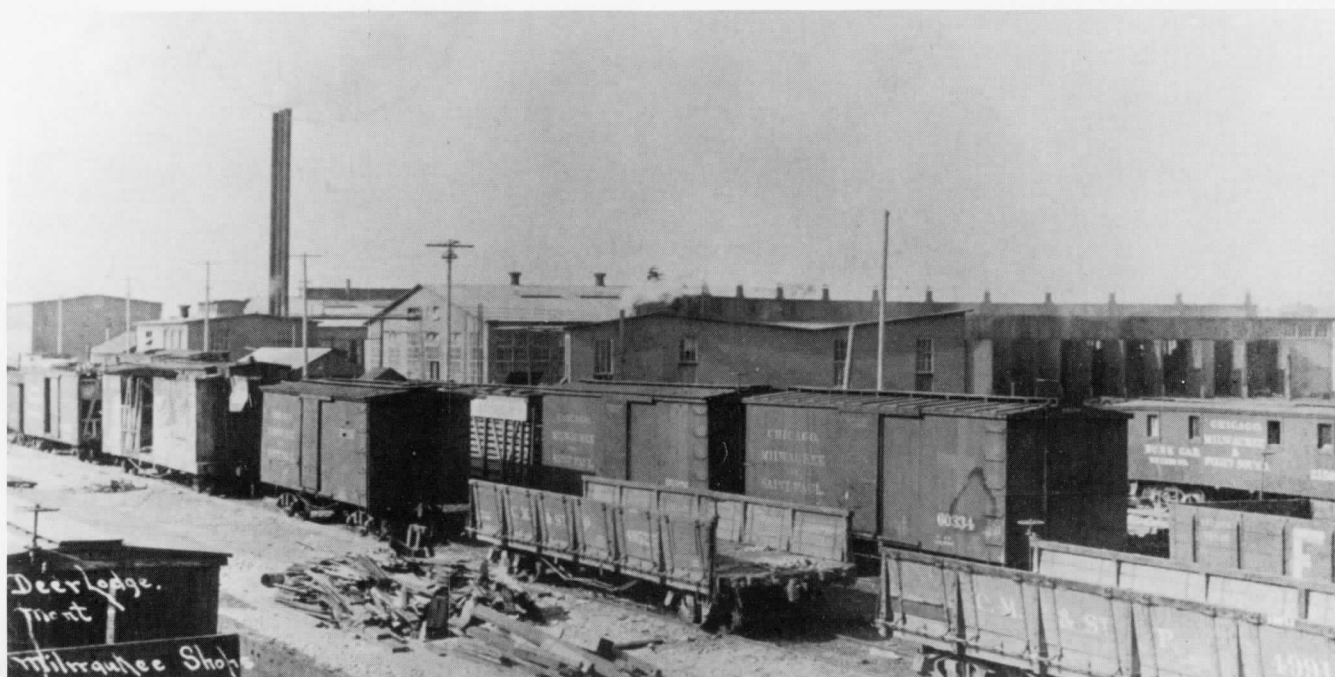
444 W. 15th Avenue
Spokane, WA 99203-2110



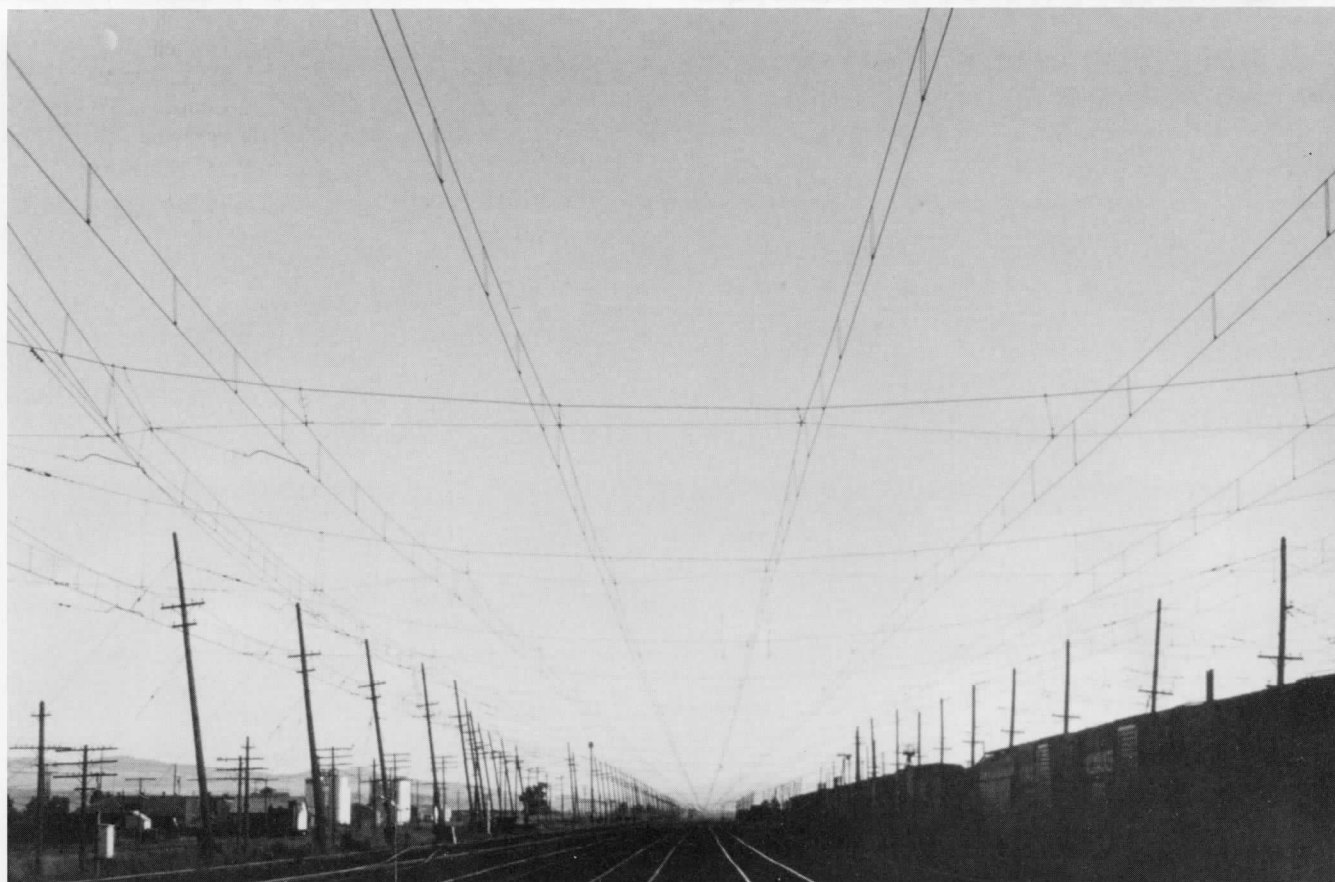
DAVID KLAUNDER
PO BOX 195
VALLEYFORD WA 99036-0195

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JAN. 31 1991



While the facilities at Deer Lodge were always vital to the railroad, they were most active before electrification. This photo, believed to be taken before 1915 shows some of the road names from this time. Bill Pasewaldt Collection



Near the end of electrification the Deer Lodge Yard did not seem as busy as years before. — Kurt Armbruster September '73



Train #164 is highballing for Harlowton on the North Montana Line with engines 626 and 651 and 26 cars at Judair on March 17, 1946.

W.R. McGee Photo
Art Jacobsen Collection



Bennett Lumber Products, Inc. #108 at Princeton, Idaho.

Bennett Lumber Products Photo — Tom Burg Collection