

Dispatch

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

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RIGHT NUMBERS - WRONG SEQUENCE

By Bill Wilkerson

The Consolidated Code of Operating Rules in effect on the Milwaukee Road in 1943 contained rule 87. This was a standard rule of long standing and was still in effect when I retired in 1982. Rule 87 reads, "Necessary identification of trains must be made at meeting points and passing points". A train was identified as, "Train, an engine or more than one engine coupled, with or without cars, displaying markers." These two rules were very important in train operations.

The Trans-Missouri division had a lot of snow during the winter of 1943. The spring had been very wet. The rain and the melting snow had caused considerable damage to the roadbed. World War 2 was producing very heavy tonnage both east and west. There were two sections of the Olympian passenger trains 15 west and 16 east. A lot of times, troop trains would be run as 3rd and 4th sections of No.s 15 and 16.

As soon as the weather permitted, the Milwaukee put on work trains to repair the road bed. Gravel for the 340 miles between Marmarth, ND (MP 995) and Harlowton, MT (MP 1335) came from the Paragon gravel pit located about 7 miles west of Miles City, MT. At the station of Paragon was a 130 car passing track. North of the passing track was a small 4 track yard. This yard was used for storing empty and loaded gravel cars. At that time they were loading gravel in the 340 and 370 series battleships that were both 10 feet high. This put them slightly above the headlight numbers of a steam locomotive and above the Engineer's line of sight from his cab seat.

A wye came off the passing track, just west of the east switch. The east leg curved around about 170 degrees into the two miles of track going up into the gravel pit. The west leg of the wye came into No. 4 track. The yard tracks were only about 50 car capacity and the west end tied into the passing track. This allowed work trains to switch from the west end without going out onto the main line.

The track into the gravel pit climbed about 300 feet in 2 miles. It turned north up the west side of a coulee on a 2.5% grade (132 ft. per mile). It then went around a horseshoe curve to the east side and headed south over a high creaking wooden trestle and snaked around the hills until it swung south east on a 4% (211 ft. per mile) grade up into the pit. The pit was 2,800 ft. long and 650 ft. wide with two dead end tracks. One track was always empty with the switch lined so the empties didn't have to stop on the 4% grade. All the curves were 8 to 10 degrees (573 ft. radius). It was an interesting piece of railroad. Any engineer that didn't know what he was doing could get into serious trouble in a hurry, especially backing down with loads out of the pit to Paragon.

Due to the steep grades and sharp curves, an L2 engine could only push about 30 battleships into the pit. Both tracks were always dead end so everything was pushed in and pulled out. The tracks in the pit were still on about a 1% grade down to the switch, so you didn't have to pull anything out, just release the brakes and they would start pushing. We would set the train line feed valve for 90 lbs. The No. 6 ET brake valves on the L2 and L3 engines had a full release position just past running position. This let the 130 lb. main reservoir air go directly into the train line. As we would start backing out of the pit, we would go into full release for about a minute to over charge our train line. When we came back into running position, it caused the brakes to start setting up and dragging. Just as soon as you went over the switch, you would make about a 10 lb. reduction. This with your overcharge would usually hold you to about 10 MPH until you got on the trestle where you went back into full release, to kick the brakes off and get as much recharge in your train line as possible. The horseshoe curve was flat and if you didn't get released in time, you would stall and have a hard time trying to get started on

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the sharp curve. The west end of the curve dropped right off on another 2.5% grade and around more sharp curves. By over charging, you still had saved about 70 lbs of air to get stopped short of the split rail derail at the passing track. Split rail derails were one thing that always worked perfectly on the Milwaukee and this one had been used several time by Engineers that lost their air.

In May of 1943, the Milwaukee had put on 4 work trains to put about a foot of gravel on much of the 340 miles, between Marmarth and Harlowton. There was a work train working between Harlowton and Melstone (105 miles). The Milwaukee followed the Musselshell river all the way with numerous crossings. To supply this work train with gravel, they put on a hauling job between Paragon and Melstone 106 miles. This job would usually tie up one night at Melstone and the next night they would leave their empty battleships at Paragon and tie up in Miles City. There was a work train assigned to the 112 miles between Miles City and Melstone, tying up where necessary. Forsyth and Ingomar were the only towns that had eating and sleeping accomodations between the two terminals. If they were working very far from Paragon, the

hauling job would bring them gravel enroute to Melstone. If they were close, they would get their own when they went to work out of Miles City in the morning. To supply the 4 work trains with gravel, the pit had to load 12 to 16 hours a day, so they put on a pit job. This job would make several trips between Paragon and the pit each day and would spot cars for loading to speed up loading by the shovel that otherwise had to keep moving along the side of the cars to load them. This job tied up in Miles City each night. When they would come in to tie up, they would bring the gravel for the work train working east 124 miles to Marmarth.

Engineer Ed Hepburn had a 9-05-09 firing date and a 6-03-13 engineers date and was working the freight pool between Miles City and Melstone. Hepburn was called for a freight west in the evening. The heavy increase in war time tonnage and the loss of younger employees to the military resulted in a severe shortage of employees. To get help, the company had to adopt a policy of paying the students for making student trips. For this reason and because they were so short of help, they only required the student to make one trip out of the terminal each way if they worked both east and west out of the terminal like Miles City. The company had adopted a policy of recruiting older men from 35 to 50 that were not subject to the draft.

When Hepburn reported for work at the Miles City roundhouse, he saw that he was marked up for the 398, an L3 with a simplex stoker and as usual he had an inexperienced fireman. The simplex had 5 steam jets that blew the coal off the stoker pot to distribute it over the 70 square feet of grates. They were a good stoker, but it was very important to get started properly. Hepburn knew he would have to help his fireman fire the engine. To add to his troubles, the head brakeman was making his first pay trip. All the new trainmen were forced to the engine because the senior train men preferred the peace and quiet of the cabooses.

Hepburn's orders that evening included several meets, among them was one that read, " Extra 398 west meet work Extra 610 at Paragon, work extra 610 take siding."

Work trains were always assigned to work between definite limits and time. A typical work train order would read something like this."Engine 610 work extra between Miles City and Forsyth, between 6:01 AM and 10:01 PM, not protecting against extra trains."

By the time Hepburn got out of Miles City, it was dark. As he came up over the hill from the Yellowstone river bridge east of Paragon. he could see the glow of a headlight in the Paragon yard. There were no automatic block signals on this track at this time. It was all train orders, and that made it very important to identify the engines. As the 398 approached Paragon, each engineer dimmed his headlight so the other could read his illuminated number board on the headlight side. Hepburn could see that the other engine was in the yards and figured it would be behind a track of battleships. Both engineers instructed their brakemen to get up on the tender so they would be high enough to see the other engine number. The engine at Paragon was moving east on an empty track behind a track of battleships and Hepburn was moving west

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about 25 MPH. As the two engines passed each other, the work train's brakeman called out to his engineer in a loud voice "398". He was loud enough that Hepburn and his crew could easily hear it and Hepburn figured it was the 610 identifying the meet.

Unfortunately, Hepburn's new brakeman was more impressed with demonstrating his new skills of throwing wild lantern signals to the other brakeman than in the engine number. He saw a 6 and a 0 and a 1 and evidently figured that was the only locomotive in the 600 series, so it was good enough for him and he kept throwing wild signals with his nice new lantern. That thing really put out a beam of light that fascinated him. The engine was indeed the 601, just like its number plate said it was. They were the pit job and had backed into Paragon with the loads for Miles City and then put their caboose on the west end of the train. They were going to the east end to get on the train to go to Miles City. 601's conductor had walked over to the phone at the east switch to get orders from the dispatcher so they could get into Miles City. 601's engineer knew that the order would read, "After extra 398 west arrives at Paragon, engine 601 run extra Paragon to Miles City". For this reason he had instructed his brakeman to make sure and get that number, which he did. While they probably had a work order between Miles City and Paragon, they had been on it all day and had to get something from the dispatcher and he would usually give them a running order, especially if there was another train involved that he had given an order to.

As 398's caboose rolled up to the east switch, the Conductor and Flagman were both on the rear platform. 601's conductor had identified the 398 and as the caboose came by at about 25 mph, he called and asked them if they were all there. This was standard, meaning was their train complete with markers. 398's caboose confirmed that they were there and called some greetings. The 601 was still coming down the track behind the battleship and they did not identify it. They had a cupola caboose and a man up in the cupola would have been high enough to see the number. Hepburn was picking up speed and they figured he had seen the number.

Hepburn wanted to get to Melstone by about 2 AM before he got caught in the passenger train parades. He went over to check on his fireman and was trying to straighten out the fire with the shaker bar when his brakeman finally came back in the cab. By this time they were over the west switch and picking up speed fast on the slightly descending grade. Hepburn leaned the shaker bar up against the boiler back head, a common practice, and stepped over to hook up the reverse lever for more valve cut off and more speed. As they entered a curve to the left, his fireman called to him that it looked like something on the track around the curve. Hep jumped over to the left side to look and could make out what looked like a train backing against them. He jumped back and grabbed the brake valve with his left hand and went into emergency. The 398 hit the 610 about 20 to 25 MPH. It knocked the pilot and headlight off the 398 and caved the tender in on the 610. The impact threw the shaker bar against Hep's left hand on the brake handle. It almost cut his long finger off and it later had to be cut off all the way. They saved

the other two fingers, but the little finger was crooked the rest of his life.

The Milwaukee didn't have back up headlights on their steam engines. They used the antiquated rule in the Consolidated Code that required a white lantern on the tender. This undoubtedly originated when the engines were equipped with kerosene headlights. I never heard if the 610 had a white light on the tender or not. It doesn't make any difference as they were useless. They didn't give off enough light to attract attention from very far away. They usually smoked up the glass or went out anyhow. For what this stupid white lantern rule cost the Milwaukee in accidents over the years, they could have equipped every steam locomotive with a dozen good headlights. The only steam locomotives that had headlights were in Washington and Idaho to comply with a Washington State law. Even in Washington they installed the cheapest and smallest light that would comply with the law. Even in the early 1950's when they started sending the big N3 tenders to Miles City to put on L3's after the N3 mallets were scrapped, they wouldn't hook up the lights. To me and other enginemen, this was about as stupid as the officials in charge could get.

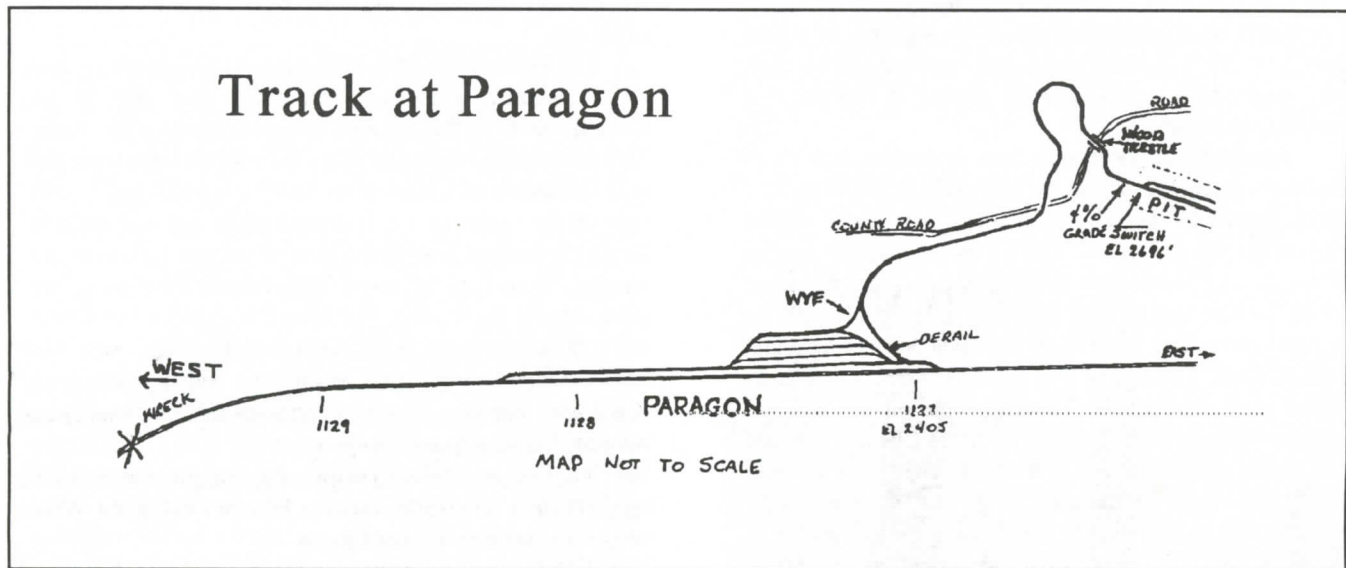
No discipline action was taken against Hepburn. The officials knew the tremendous strain their engineers were required to work under with so many new men on the engines all the time. They appreciated the work the engineers were doing. Most of the time the engineer would be the only one on the engine with a regulation watch and experience enough to get the train over the road. They also knew that they were passing the buck to the engineers to educate the new employees. The older men they were recruiting didn't adapt to railroads for the most part. They hired out because of the higher wages, or because they were told to get into defense industry or be drafted in the army. They had been clerks, cowboys, teachers and everything else you can name. They didn't understand or like railroading and a lot of them quit just as soon as the war was over.

His cowboy brakeman quit when he got back to Miles City. He figured there was a safer defense job someplace even if it was in an ammunition factory and jobs were easy to get.

A lot of the fault for this wreck was with the company. They didn't try to give these older men the rules examinations and education us younger men had to take because they knew they wouldn't last long. They had to pay them to make student trips so some of them had never even got completely over the sub-division. They would change engines where they had a meet and the Engineers would sign their slips to get rid of them. Some of them even made pay trips before they got their physicals and rules examinations. When I hired out, it took over a week at your own expense to get in their required student trips. You had to make a round trip on each sub-division on both an L3 and an S2 in through freight and even work a shift on the hand fired switch engine. Then they gave you the rules examination and finally put you on the fireman's extra board.

Hepburn had tried to protect himself on the meet at Paragon and thought he had fulfilled the order. When the company hired men that couldn't tell the difference between 601 and 610, what chance did he have?

Track at Paragon



I worked with Hepburn a lot after the war. He even brought his big Delta table saw and other wood working tools over and helped me build my house. He was a very good carpenter and showed me how to lay out an elliptical arch and cut my stairs. His wife owned a woman's clothing store and Hep didn't like to lay around the apartment with nothing do. He had his tools in the store basement. Their only daughter was married and lived in Iowa.

The wreck always bothered Hep. It was a mark on his record as an engineer. I don't think there was anything in his company records because there was no discipline assessed. At meets, he would always come over to my side and get the engine number. I respected his concern. but once in a while I had to tease him a little. He would hold up his left hand as evidence. He would then close his fist to show the hole left by the missing finger and smart off with something like " It makes it hard to hold a hand full of salted peanuts now."

Always remember, in order for numbers to mean anything, they have to be in the right sequence. even engine numbers. - Bill Wilkerson

MILWAUKEE ROAD LOG CAR PROJECT By Larry Bunce

I was going through my photos, some time ago, and came across those of the log bunk cars I helped to construct in 1974. The photos were taken while visiting Chehalis, Wa. while on a business trip. These were the same cars I had done some welding work on, when I was a blacksmith-welder in the Milwaukee shops-Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The shop foreman was Ray Baum and my foreman was Bob Hohl. That was the summer of 1974.

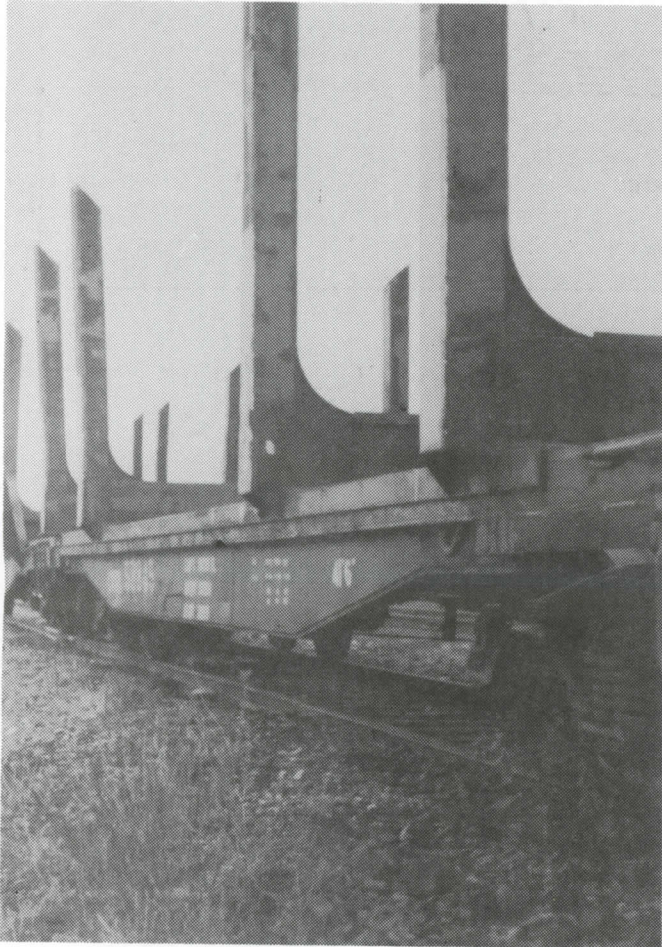
I had learned welding, as a trade, at A.O.Smith corp., Milwaukee. My father, Ed Bunce an engineer, did not want his sons to work for the railroad. However, he realized that I was working at a good trade and suggested I interview for the car shops. I spoke to George Woods, the car shops superintendent, and completed a job application. I was shortly informed of no available carman jobs. However, the blacksmith shop needed a blacksmith helper. I accepted the job.

The blacksmith shop was an imposing building. I guess, it was 600 feet long by 200 feet wide. It was originally two car-loco shops with a transfer table between the buildings. The transfer pit was filled and a very tall sheet steel roof was constructed to span the two original buildings. The height was maybe 100 feet at the peak. This was built high to cover the mobile crane that was built within this structure. The original buildings were built in the 1870's? They were five course brick walls, 18 inches thick.

Much of the metal work and fabrication was for locomotive and freight car repair; cabs, sidesills, underframing, etc. I recall many welders were rebuilding coupler shanks and coupler pockets. These wore away with time. It was more economical to repair rather than to buy new ones.



I had done C0/2 wire welding on the GM auto frames at A.O. Smith corp. The foreman asked if I could do a large wire welding job. The car shop welding technician gave me about an hour instruction and turned me loose. This was a big job, log bunk upright posts. Each car had eight pieces. The total order was 100 cars, 800 posts. This required welding a flat piece to a U-shaped piece and two triangular gussets. This was 5/8-3/4 inch steel sheets. The U-shaped pieces were made in the shop. They were sheared and formed by the co-workers.



Of course, this was a very warm job from the heat of welding, and was done in the dogdays of July. The temperatures in the Menomonee valley occasionally hit 100 degrees F and no hint of wind in the shop. Welding ten foot lengths of metal got them red hot at 500 degrees plus. I also needed to wear protective clothing. Leather apron, gloves, arm protectors, and helmet. Very heavy, hot clothing. Keep in mind, the floor was dirt and was covered in rust powder from 50 years of work. It was very difficult to keep clean around there.

The foreman pulled out the fixtures and gave me a test run. He cut me loose for the duration. The other employees disliked the job because of the wire welding and the moving of heavy pieces. They also did not understand the equipment. The daily quota was 8 pieces per day. Efficiency boosted mine to 11 to 14 per day. Management was happy.

Anyway, the log cars were constructed from cut up steel reefers and boxcars. These were scrap pieces that had outlived

their usefulness. They were cut down to the main sill/box frame and the sides strengthened. All cracks were welded to ARA specs. Couplers, trucks, and brakes systems were overhauled. The parts I welded up were, in turn, welded to a bottom of the U-piece of steel channel. The channel was cut up boxcar center sills. Remember, the Milwaukee Road used everything possible to save money, using the least amount of new material as possible. This U-shaped piece was fitted and welded to the skeleton frames in the car shop. Four U-shaped bunks per car. These were then sandblasted, painted and lettered.

These cars never returned to the east end. They were built for west end forest products service. When photographed, they were sold and lettered for CWWR. Perhaps, a member can identify the purchasing company.

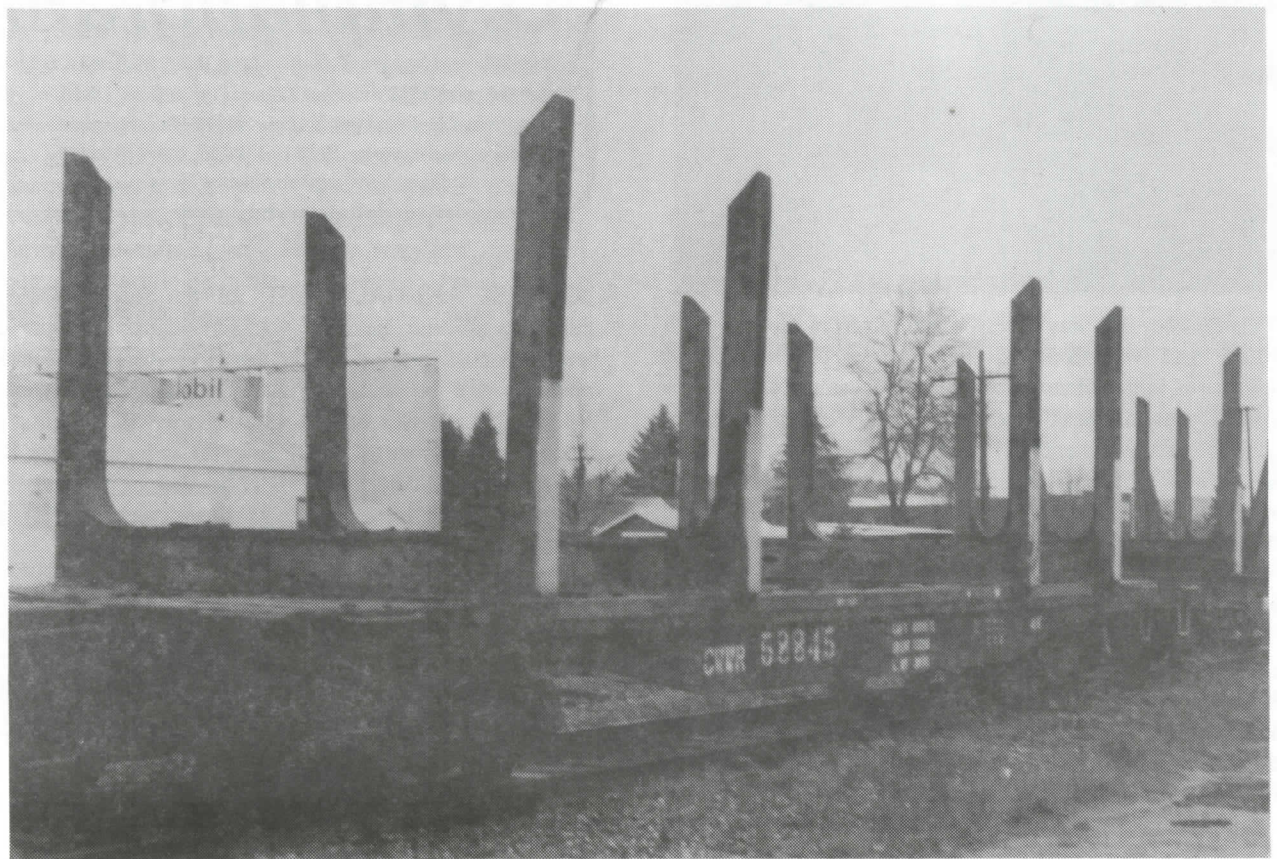
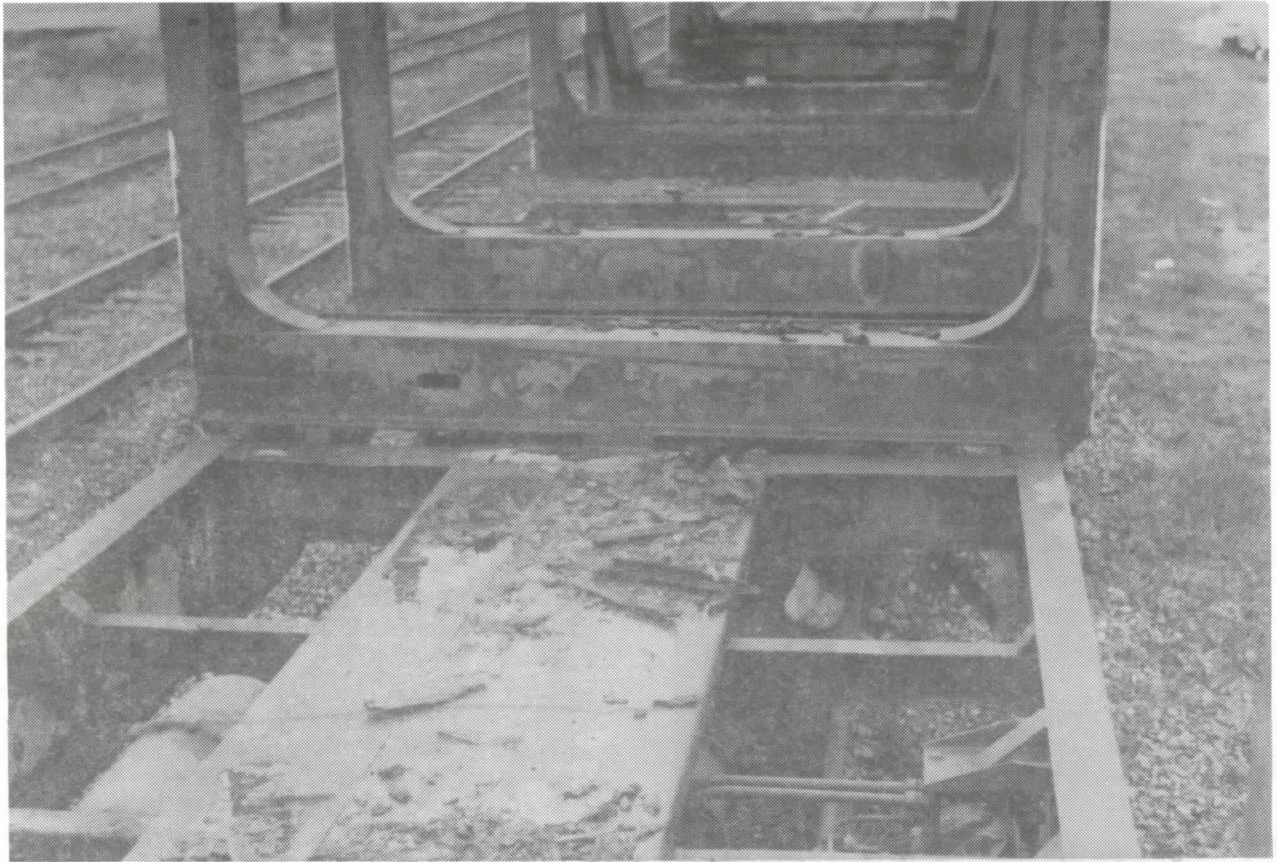
I had an opportunity to inspect the upright posts and took great pride in no visible cracks or broken weldments. Where these cars are now I cannot guess.

I hope that other members can provide a history of logging operations for our favorite railroad. I am proud to have been a part of the history process. I am certain there are many others who can reflect on their employment and unusual jobs they performed. I know I am thinking of other projects I was involved in. Building repair, gear cutting, locomotive repair, and dismantling. - Larry Bunce. Photos on pages 5 and 6 by Larry Bunce.

Olympiangram

The title of this section derives from the former newsletter for passengers on the "Olympian" (trains 15/16) west from Harlowton, Montana. Published in Lewistown, Montana between 1910 and 1918, it provided the latest wire-service news of the day.

MILWEST ANNUAL MEET: At the recent Board of Directors meeting held in Spokane, August 11th and 12th were selected as the dates for the 1995 Annual Meet. The meeting will be in the Puget Sound area of western Washington. At this time it appears we will be using the Tukwilla Community Center. Tukwilla is located near Sea-Tac airport. Full details will be in the May 1995 issue of the Dispatch. Please mark the dates on your calendar and begin making your plans to attend the 1995 Annual Meet.



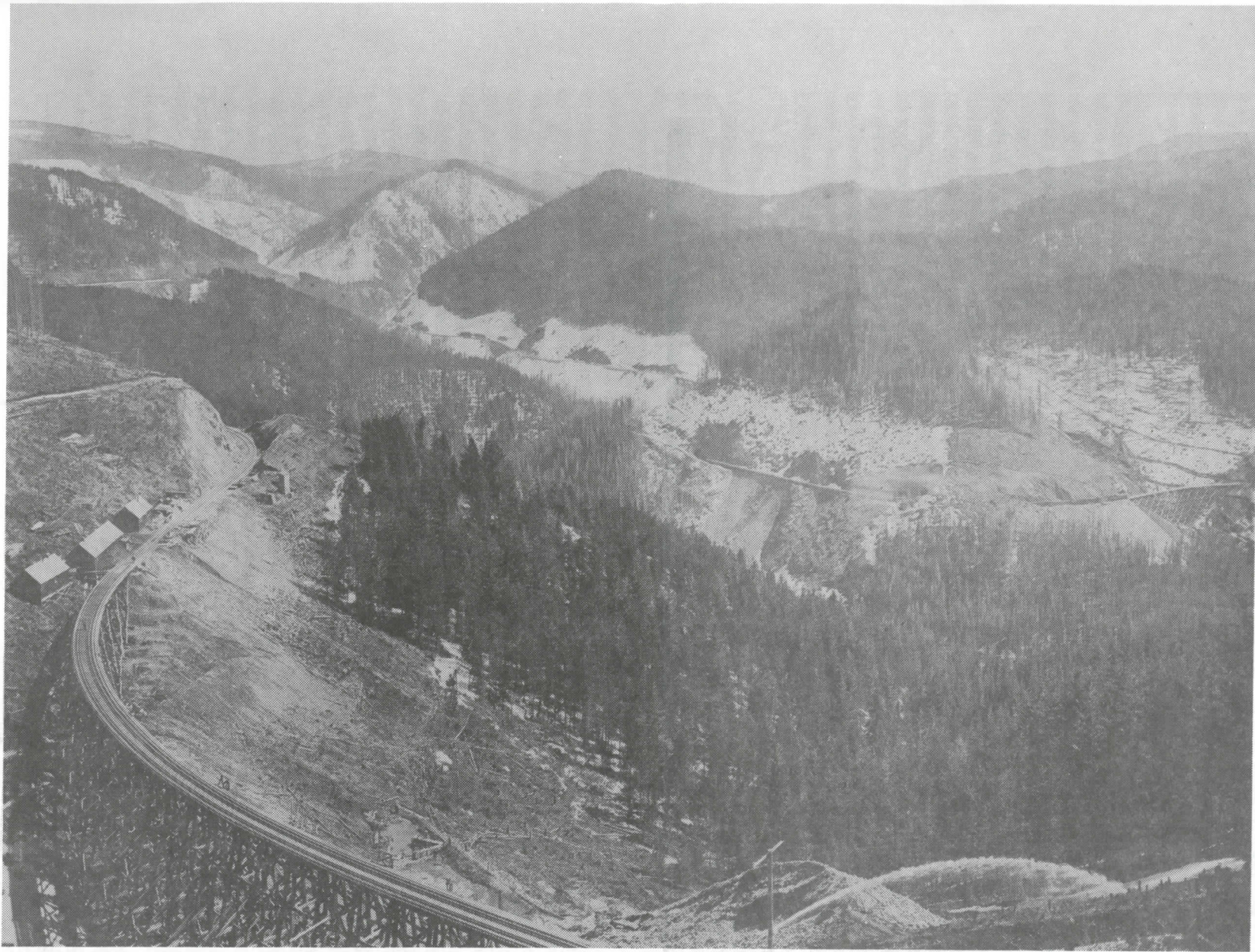


Photo is labeled "43 Loop west of C.M.& P.S. pass". Photo by H. English of Wallace, ID. 1910, and is now in the MilWest archives. This has to be taken from near Roland as you can see a large portion of the entire Loop Creek area. This photo shows clearly that the original construction used wooden trestles, which were latter replaced with the steel trestles we are more familiar with. This photo would also be before the 1910 fire which burned this entire area bare. Perhaps that is what happened to the wooden trestles. Across the valley is a work train. It appears to have a string of like cars, perhaps carrying fill material for dumping.

Letters to the Editor

In the November 1994 Dispatch, the photo of the train wreck near Marengo caught my attention. I have some further information on that wreck to pass on to the rest of the members.

The train in the photo is the brand new eastbound Columbian train No. 18 on her maiden trip. Note the date on the photo. On the previous day, May 29, 1911, the CM&PS Ry. inaugurated its new all steel passenger train service with the departure of its premier train, the Olympian, No. 16 from Seattle's new Union Station (called Oregon-Washington station then) at 9:00 A.M.

That evening, the Columbian, No. 18, made its initial departure from Union Station at 7:15 P.M., for Chicago. The exact location of the wreck is difficult to determine as my newspaper article describes the wreck as occurring at a sharp curve seven miles east of Ralston, twenty-six miles east of Lind. This would put it either two miles west of Marengo, or two miles east of Marengo, respectively.

The most likely place is about one and one-half miles west of Marengo, between mileposts 1927 and 1928, where a long three-degree curve existed. My profile shows a line change made in early years. The old line is shown as temporary and probably carried excessive curvature. This wreck may have been the reason for the line change.

The wreck occurred about 5:00 A.M. the morning of May 30th and was the result of excessive speed going into the curve. Seven coaches were derailed, along with the F-class Pacific type locomotive. (*Ed Note: Were not 4-6-4's called Baltics on the Milwaukee, or was this at a later time?*). One passenger was seriously injured and engineer E.H. Talmadge and fireman Scholenburg of Malden were killed instantly. I have been told that engineer Talmadge was so thrilled at being appointed engineer of this completely new train that he forgot about the reduced speed curve until too late.

Coast Division employees will remember E.H. Talmadge's son, Earl Talmadge, who retired as traveling engineer in the late 1950's. Earl started as a callboy at Malden in the summer of 1909. He went firing in the fall and worked helpers out of Moncton (Cedar Falls) under engineer John Brownlee. He made his engineers date of October 21, 1913 in the cab of N-1 Mallet No. 9521, also in helper service out of Cedar Falls. - Allen Miller

The photo published of the trestle under construction is the first evidence I have seen that shows that some of the steel trestles in the Bitterroots were originally built as timber trestles and later changed to steel. I have photos of bridges on Snoqualmie Pass undergoing this transformation. I was wondering if this construction method was unique to the Cascade - Coast Division. - Allen Miller

Are the photos published in the Dispatch available as copies to the members? I realize many photos are from member collections, but what about the photos in the MilWest archives? While the photos published in the Dispatch are nice, at times it would be nice to have the same scene in a photo album. What, if any, is MilWest's policy on making copies of archival photos for members? - Allen Miller

Ed Note: I don't have an answer to Allen's question as it has not come up before. We will put this question on the agenda of the next Board meeting for discussion. My own feeling is that we would have no restrictions about making copies of MilWest photos, the problem would be the logistics of getting the copies made (time, who does it, etc.). It should go without saying that the member would have to pay all costs for each copy. Of course, we could not make copies of any photos not belonging to MilWest. There are also photos that are given to MilWest with the stipulation they can be printed in the Dispatch once, and then kept in the Archives so we could not reproduce those either. For members wishing to offer an opinion on this subject, please send your comments to GM, Tony Dell. His address is in the masthead on page 2.

Editors Desk Notes

I wish to remind contributors of articles and material to MilWest for possible publication in the Dispatch, of commonly accepted practices regarding publishing. There have been recent incidents of authors sending the same article to two or three publications simultaneously, while not informing any of the publishers of that fact. This has resulted in incidences of the same article being published in different Milwaukee publications. Common practices in publishing dictate that you submit material for consideration to only one publication at a time. When submitting, please ask for a response as to whether your article will be used or not. If your article is accepted for publication, it becomes the property of the publisher and you can not send it to anyone else. If your article is rejected, then you are free to submit it elsewhere for publication.

I have contacted the editors of some of the other Milwaukee publications and we have all agreed to reply in a timely manner to anyone submitting for publication, so they will know if they will be published or are free to send elsewhere. We have not done this previously but we will in the future. Even with that, it is always best to request a reply when you submit for publication. - Rocky Gibbs

DFW

This column serves for miscellaneous new 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.

I have had numerous requests for an update on Ed Lynch and his activities. I am happy to report he has successfully returned to California. He is working as a Conductor for the California Western RR, which serves the Napa Valley wine country among other areas. Ed is no longer a MilWest officer but will remain active in the group and will continue to promote MilWest in his new area. For those who may want to contact him, he has permitted us to publish his address as follows: Ed Lynch, 1007 Whistler Drive, Suisun City, CA 94585. I'm sure he would enjoy hearing from his friends. - Rocky Gibbs.

Changes are about to take place on the Boyleston Mountains west of Beverly. I have reviewed a set of plans for expansion of the Yakima Firing Center north to I-90 between the Vantage hill and Kittitas. Basically, all the area seen to the south of I-90 in this area will be included. The area will be enclosed behind a seven foot chain link fence. This area will enclose virtually all of the former MILW grade from Beverly, up the hill and through the tunnel at Boyleston, and down towards Kittitas. The grade is now part of the "John Wayne Trail" under the control of the Washington State Park system. I could not determine from the plans if the trail is to remain open or not. I would be surprised if it does as it will all be enclosed behind new fencing.

A new fire station/administration building, car wash, and wastewater system will be constructed adjacent to the old grade at Doris. This means it is probably already too late to explore any of the area and former grade as most likely the area is under U. S. Army control and no longer accessible. You were only allowed on the former grade by permit, and no motorized vehicles were allowed. However, there were 4x4 trails throughout the area adjacent to the grade that would give access without getting on the grade. I explored all the area on both sides of the mountain three years ago and I'm glad I did. I'll report any further developments in the future as I learn them. - Rocky Gibbs

DEBUNKING THE BUNK ABOUT THE MILWAUKEE

By John Elliott

Previously, an article appeared in another publication on the Twin Cities Western, a new corporation that has been

formed to operate the old Milwaukee line from the Twin Cities to Ortonville.

What outraged me was a statement by the author to this effect, "At last some good has come of the old Milwaukee line to the coast". To me this demonstrated a complete lack of understanding by the author of the significance of the Milwaukee's Puget Sound extension.

As an old Puget sounder I have always believed that first, the coast extension was not the "great mistake". To me the Milwaukee was the best thing that ever happened to Montana and the Northwest. Also, that when the electrification is considered, the Milwaukee had the best line from the Twin Cities to Puget Sound. I will confine my remarks to the line from Terry to the Twin Cities, and the "blunder" of the Soo and Burlington Northern managements in selecting the old NP line through Glendive and Mandan for their joint coal route.

The two routes from Terry to the Twin Cities are about equidistant, but not similar. In terms of gradient the Milwaukee is far superior. Between Glendive and Mandan the BN line is a "roller coaster". For the NP, this was their worst operating division between Seattle and St. Paul, even worse than the Cascades and the Rockies. This was the first division to be dieselized.

In 1929 the Northern Pacific bought the largest locomotives in the world, the Yellowstone 2-8-8-4. Prior to this time it required two double-headed Mikado types to move the same tonnage. Consider now the Milwaukee. A heavy USRA Mike on the Milwaukee could handle 4000 tons from Miles City to Mobridge SD. It did require helper assistance out of Marmarth to Rhame, a distance of 15 miles. In the late thirties the 4-8-4's arrived. They could haul 5000 tons from the Yellowstone River to the Missouri with like the Mikados, helper assistance for 15 miles. After 1937 the much smaller Milwaukee engines were pulling 1000 more tons than the almighty Yellowstone. The superiority of the Milwaukee cannot be disputed. From Rhame to the Twin Cities it is downhill for all practical purposes. With diesels, the advantage of the Milwaukee line are even more apparent in the movement of coal. May I point out that the BN has had to set up a new helper district for coal trains from Mandan to Bismark. Coming out of Mandan you have to climb a stiff bluff up to Bismark. Again on the Milwaukee its clear sailing from Rhame to Bismark.

Let's take a look at the so-called "south" line. In 1982 the state of South Dakota bought the Milwaukee out to Terry and leased it to the BN. The BN has now purchased the line to Ortonville and has trackage rights to Appleton. The BN now uses its own line from Appleton to Bendon on the old GN to move its traffic into the Twin Cities. I'm not faulting them for this. It makes sense to utilize its old GN line to the fullest possible extent.

Let's have a look at the line out to Ortonville. In 1951 I rode the Olympian Hiawatha from Chicago to Montana. We were late out of Minneapolis and so we went the 280 miles to Aberdeen in four hours flat - averaging over 70 mph. A line in that good condition in 1951 couldn't have deteriorated to the point that you can't move coal trains over it. The Milwaukee rebuilt its line to the coast after the war so it could handle the

Hiawatha. All it would need is a good ballast job. I know ballast as my first real job was on a ballast crew at Pocatello in 1942. A little ballast here and there can do wonders.

What has the SOO done? It has created a switching district out of one of the best pieces of main line railroad in the country. Did they get their orders from Montreal who seems to have a hangup about Ortonville, MN, without realizing the full potential of this line? - John Elliott

HILLMAN LETTERS

Following are reprints of a letters produced in 1978 concerning the reorganization of the Milwaukee Road. For those of us not directly involved at the time, they provide an interesting insight into the decisions that went into the final outcome of the reorganization. Copies of these letters were provided by MilWest member Tom Burg.

OFFICE OF DIVISION MANAGER
WISCONSIN DIVISION MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN
August 3rd, 1978 NOTICE NO. AC-92 B
C-84 CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 316
TO ALL CONCERNED ABOUT THE MILWAUKEE
ROAD AND ITS FUTURE:

The Federal Court has given me two interdependent responsibilities with respect to the future of the Milwaukee Road. First, while minimizing the erosion of the debtor's estate, I must operate the railroad while I seek a plan of reorganization, and second, if possible, I must devise a plan of reorganization and secure its approval from creditors, stockholders, the Interstate Commerce Commission and the reorganization court.

I have said publicly that I believe it will be possible for the Milwaukee Road to continue to operate many of its traditional routes and services. I have testified that, given the successful conclusion of certain programs, I believe that there is a reasonable possibility that the Milwaukee Road can be reorganized as an operating railroad. Yet I have also testified that the Milwaukee Road cannot be made profitable as it exists today.

It should be clear from the steps which I have already taken to minimize the operation of light-density branch and secondary lines that I believe that the route to successful reorganization cannot lie in attempting to operate the Milwaukee's entire 10,000 mile system. The Milwaukee's physical plant is far too extensive and too thinly spread to be supported by the available revenue base. The inability of the Milwaukee to be consistently profitable is evidence of this fact.

There are also portions of the railroad's light-density main lines which are not being operated, and which cannot be operated, to make a positive contribution to earnings, at least to any reorganized Milwaukee Road. However, some of these lines, by reason of the locomotives, cars and manpower they require, could represent valuable contributions toward

reorganization if the resources they consume could be deployed elsewhere within the Milwaukee's system. In order to preserve the debtor's estate in the short range and to enhance the possibility of a successful reorganization in the longer run, I must stop the losses from these lines promptly and undertake to utilize more productively the resources they represent.

The principal main line which I have determined, represents a drain on the railroad is the extension from Minneapolis-St. Paul to the Pacific North Coast. The Milwaukee Road can no longer afford to operate as a transcontinental carrier. Seldom since the Pacific Coast extension was completed in 1909 has the Milwaukee been able to attract sufficient business to the route to justify the hundreds of miles of totally unproductive line that are included within it, and never in recent years has it been able to do so.

In accordance with this determination, and leading to what I hope will be a partial, and satisfactory solution to the problem of the Pacific Coast extension, I have entered into preliminary negotiations with the Union Pacific Railroad for the sale of certain segments of the Milwaukee's Lines West of Butte, Montana to the company.

The Milwaukee and the Union Pacific presently are engaged in setting up joint task forces and outlining the work which the teams will be doing. Without prejudging the agreement which I am confident the negotiators will achieve, I can indicate some of the areas which we expect the agreement to cover:

Ultimately, certain segments of the Milwaukee Lines West of Butte upon which rail customers are concentrated, and which are directly tributary to the Union Pacific's present routes, would become part of the Union Pacific System. The balance of the Milwaukee's Lines West of Butte would be abandoned. The precise limits of what would be the Union Pacific's acquisitions are yet to abandon its crossings of three mountain ranges, railroad which is very expensive to operate yet produces very little revenue. Geographically, both competitive and noncompetitive points of rail traffic generation on the Milwaukee's western lines tend to be concentrated. Close to four percent of the Milwaukee's route mileage west of Butte generates only six percent of its revenues west of Butte.

The Union Pacific and the Milwaukee will endeavor to reach an understanding by which, to the extent that can do so, the two railroads would work to minimize the loss to the Milwaukee of its long-haul revenues from traffic now originating and terminating on the Milwaukee's Pacific Coast extension.

At present, I foresee this time schedule for the work ahead: negotiating teams from the two railroads are now beginning to identify the particulars of the Union Pacific's interest in the Milwaukee's lines. We hope to conclude these negotiations by the end of 1978. Thereupon, I would file the necessary applications with the ICC and the reorganization court. The sale of properties to the Union Pacific would be subject to the full regulatory processes of the ICC, I hope expeditiously. I have indicated that I expect to have my plan

of reorganization for the Milwaukee Road by July 1979. It is likely that considerable time, perhaps a year or longer, would be consumed in actions before the ICC and the court relative to the reorganization plan. I hope to convey to the Union Pacific the properties and operations which it desires, and to do so to the financial advantage of the Milwaukee Road, as part of the implementations of my plan of reorganization.

In concerning myself with the problem of the Pacific Coast extension, I intend to keep well in mind the effect of my decision upon rail labor. Many of the Milwaukee employees have protective provisions embodied in their union agreements. The ICC routinely prescribes employee-protective conditions in regulatory cases of the type which will be involved here. The Milwaukee will of course honor all of its labor agreements and conditions which are imposed upon it. Beyond that, I have instructed my officers to endeavor to minimize the personal impact of this or of any disposition of rail line to the degree that the Milwaukee is able.

The preliminary studies which we have concluded with respect to the Union Pacific matter indicates that there would be a number of advantages to this approach to a partial solution to the problem of the Pacific Coast extension:

A serious, and inevitable, drain on the railroad will be eliminated. Operating losses attributable to the transcontinental line would be greatly reduced. Very large expenditures for maintenance and rehabilitation of the line would be necessary were the Milwaukee to attempt to keep it as a transcontinental route would be avoided. In my judgement, the Milwaukee will never be able to meet these expenditures; and funds for the work are not available elsewhere.

The Milwaukee's customers from Butte west at common points would continue to be served by other lines. Customers at local or common points to which the Union Pacific's greater capabilities. At the same time, I would expect that the Milwaukee would retain the optimum proportion of its present freight revenues from its transcontinental line. It will be very important to the Milwaukee and to the reorganization process that the Milwaukee's present customers work to make effective any mechanism which maximizes the Milwaukee's future participation in traffic to and from the points formerly served by the Milwaukee's Pacific Coast extension. The Milwaukee's marketing forces will be in contact with all affected shippers with further details.

The balance of the Milwaukee's rail network would be strengthened. I shall be able to redeploy locomotives and cars to other areas of the railroad.

The goal of the National Rail Transportation Policy, the elimination of unnecessary duplicate rail facilities without adversely affecting rail customers, would be attained. An objective of the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 is to encourage railroads to rationalize and restructure themselves in order to improve their economic vitality.

The possibility of reorganizing the debtor company as an operating railroad would be significantly enhanced.

I want to emphasize that my decision to withdraw the Milwaukee Road from direct participation in the

transcontinental market is not lightly made. Present and future economic considerations afford me no other choice. I acknowledge that my decision may require adjustments by many individuals and communities associated with the Milwaukee Road for a long time. To the extent that my officers and I are able, we shall work to minimize any adverse impact on everyone and every locality. I hope that you will view this forthcoming change in the Milwaukee objectively and dispassionately. When all of its ramifications are considered, the ultimate and early disposition of the Pacific Coast extension is essential to and in the best interests of the Milwaukee Road and all who are concerned with it. Thank you. Sincerely, Stanley E. G. Hillman, Trustee.

August 4, 1978 CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 320
TO ALL CONCERNED:

I want to correct immediately any impression that you might have that my decision to withdraw the Milwaukee Road from transcontinental operations at some point in the future is the beginning of the liquidation of the railroad. In reporting on my decision at least one newspaper speculated, with the help of the Chicago and North Western, to that effect.

I made my decision for just the opposite reason. If I do not eliminate as promptly as possible the losses the Milwaukee incurs from its transcontinental operations, it will be much more difficult for me to prepare a plan to reorganize the Milwaukee as an operating railroad.

Terminating transcontinental operations and selling portions of the Pacific Coast extension will help me, I hope, to avoid liquidation. I have absolutely no desire to liquidate the Milwaukee Road and I shall do whatever I can to see that liquidation isn't the outcome of my trusteeship. I am satisfied, and have said so, that there is the strong likelihood that the Milwaukee has a viable core in the Midwest. Our problem is simply that when we spread our available resources over 10,000 miles of line, we don't really have enough to work with satisfactorily at any one point. If we concentrate our resources on fewer miles, it will be better railroad.

Would you please help me see that all who are concerned about the Milwaukee and its future, including our customers, understand that through this newspaper story the North Western was speaking for itself and not for me. Thank you. Stanley E. G. Hillman, Trustee.

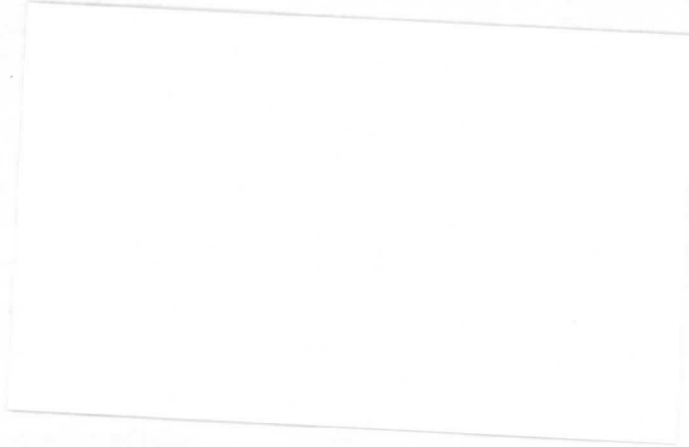
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MilWest Dispatch

444 W. 15th

Spokane, WA 99203-2110



Saltese MT, looking east, just after the steel bridge had replaced the wooden trestle. March 14, 1911. The NP line over Lookout Pass is to the left, at grade level. Notice there does not appear to be any sort of road in evidence at this time. Photo in MilWest Archives.