

# CINDERS

## PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

### National Railway Historical Society

CHRISTMAS  
EDITION

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EDITION

Volume 3

Issue 14

#### DIE GOTTERDAMMERUNG

or

#### IT'S ALL OVER BUT THE SHOUTING, PART II

The year 1968 is more than half gone as I am writing this article and the Grim Reaper is cutting down passenger trains as fast as scythe cuts through a wheat field. In the midst of this despair I have found a branch line which boasts daily passenger service, a cinder-ballasted weed grown right of way, and wonderful scenery. I am referring, of course, to the Central's Chatham branch---a real anachronism in this day and age. If you have never traveled over this branch it might be a good idea to ride it before it is too late.

With the realisation that tomorrow MIGHT be too late, I found myself once again in Grand Central Station waiting to board train No. 987, the Saturday afternoon train to Chatham. Unfortunately, my schedule would allow me to go to Hillsdale only, as Chatham is a dead-end town. There is no other transportation out of Chatham when you arrive there on a Saturday. Train 987 had motor 225 on the point, and 6 heavyweight coaches as the consist. I was puzzled by the fact that the equipment was facing south; when I asked a trainman why, he said that we would go around the loop, something new for me. Although 987 was off on time, traversing the loop cost us time and we were 5 minutes late into 125th Street, just 4 miles away.

We picked up a few more fares at 125th St., and then ran non stop to White Plains. On the way, I got a real shock: Mott Haven yard was abandoned. The tracks were gone and high rise apartments were sprouting on the site. White Plains North Station was reached at 1:55 P.M., where we exchanged our juice jack for an Alco RS-3, No. 5514. As a matter of fact, RS-3's were all over the place, resplendent in fresh black paint with big white worms, and making the right sounds. I could almost hear the cheers from the Alco crowd.

After leaving North Station the friendly conductor allowed me to go out on the back platform of the last coach where I was joined by another Harlem Division conductor who was off duty. I was glad for his company as he kept me posted on interesting points along the line. We began making local stops and lost more time

in the process, as the load was a bit heavy for the 5514. There is a tough grade north from Croten Falls into Brewster, an especially scenic ride alongside the reservoir and our train took quite some time over this stretch of the road.

At Brewster we met Alco 5517 with 3 ex-mainless stainless steel coaches on the southbound local. Most of our passengers left us here. Finally, after a long wait, we began rolling north again, moving past Putnam Jct. and the Brewster yards, where the line becomes single iron. On the right, the Maybrook line of the New Haven came into view and the NH obliged by having a freight come along at the proper time. At this point my conductor friend mentioned that the Maybrook line might be abandoned as the Poughkeepsie bridge is in a dangerous condition. Is the L & HR on the road to oblivion also?

The character of the line became more rural now as we jolted through the woods and along streams. At Pawling my companion mentioned that Lowell Thomas and Tom Dewey had big estates near here and that the Central had plans to double track the line from Brewster to Pawling if Dewey had been elected President back in 1948. Alas, that was not to be. At Dover Plains my friend got off and I had the platform to myself. I noticed that the track was cinder ballasted now, quite weed grown too, and the ride was rougher. We ran through a brief rain shower near Amenia and then at milepost 88 we passed an old gem of a station, all boarded up and lonesome.

The Taconic Range of mountains comes into view near Millerton and I remembered that the previous Fall we had our special train to Canaan, on the other side of those mountains. Millerton has an impressive station too and rightly so. This is where the Central New England met the NYC. One of the CNE tracks is still in use as a siding at the station and some of the CNE right of way is seen near Boston Corners. This is beautiful country up here and the sun was shining brightly, making the scenery all the more glorious. For shame, America, that your people no longer take the time to see your country as it should be seen: un-hurried and in comfort.

All good things must come to an end and we reached Hillsdale at 4:50 P.M. about half an hour late. I jumped off as soon as the train ground to a stop and ran up to the headend to shoot up 5514 as it re-started its train again. Quite then descended on the little station and now I had to hunt for the bus stop. Fortunately I had about 40 minutes to find it and get a bite to eat, before the bus was due. Of all the idiotic things to do: I almost missed the bus by turning my back to the highway while taking pictures of the scenery!

The bus ride back to New York was anti-climatic but it had some interesting points, aside from a cowboy driver. The highway into Amenia parallels the Chatham branch at times so I had another look at the railroad from a different perspective. And down at the little town of Copake I spotted a familiar piece of architecture. It was a very small station sitting in someone's backyard, probably from the CNE. At Hopewell Jct. we crossed over the Maybrook freight line and then at Peekskill I had a fine view of the Central's train No. 61 crossing the bay north of the station. It seemed a bit symbolic in the gathering dusk: the twilight of the gods.

#### PASSENGER NEWS:

The Northern Pacific Railway has announced that it is going to scrap all passenger cars not being used by presently running passenger trains.

The Interstate Commerce Commission refused to let the Southern Pacific drop its Sunset passenger train service between New Orleans and Los Angeles. The ICC charged that the road has 'deliberately downgraded the Sunset service' in order to discourage passengers. The ICC told SP that it must continue to operate the Sunset for a period of one year, and that the road may again seek discontinuance the ICC said. (It must be stated here although the SP does not want passengers to ride any of these trains. It can be said, that the SP does have clean trains both inside and outside, as compared to a railroad that is known to all fans in this part of the country.)

Trains that formally ran into La Salle Street Station of the New York Central, have now been moved over to the Union Station in Chicago. This does not effect the two Central's trains to Indianapolis, which will continue to use the Central Station of the Illinois Central.

The Kansas City Southern has announced its intention to discontinue their last two passenger trains No. 1 and 2 "Southern Belle" between Kansas City and New Orleans. The KCS in announcing their intention cited the lack of passengers and revenue from mail and express to support these trains.

#### RAILROAD NEWS:

The Norfolk & Western in the year 1969, plans to spend \$78 million dollars for car acquisitions. Cars to be purchased include coal hoppers, boxcars for auto parts, jumbo covered hoppers for bulk commodities, boxcars for general service and trailers for piggyback freight. The program calls for purchase and construction of 4,769 freight cars and 1500 trailers. The coal hoppers cars will be constructed at the N & W's carshop in Roanoke.

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#### EUROPE 1968

by

J. DAVID ENGMAN

I left New York on the last day of May upon the SS Rotterdam. I landed 7 days later in Rotterdam, having missed the stop in Le Harve, France due to the strikes. I spent several days in The Hague, taking day trips to Amsterdam and Northern Germany. On the trip to Germany I saw the last major main line still in steam on the DB, the line from Osnabruck to Bremen. That line went electric this fall and leaves the steam pretty well scattered in Germany, although most sections still have a fair amount, especially on freight.

I rode the trams in the The Hague and Amsterdam, and visited the Railway Museum in Utrecht, as well as rode a lot of local trains about the country.

I saw, but didn't get the chance to ride the New Rottendam Metro.

I left Holland on the Rheingold, the TEE train that links Holland with Switzerland. At Utrecht, the two portions from Amsterdam and Hook of Holland are combined. At Duisburg in Germany, the train is taken apart and is combined with the Rheinpfail, which comes from Dortmund, and runs to Munich, cars are interchanged between the two trains at this point, and then they follow each other up the Rhine River. It is one of the few European trains with a observation car. 100 MPH was exceeded many times along the trip through Germany until we got to Basel in the early afternoon. Here the train is split again into parts for Milan, Chur, and Geneva. I rode the Geneva portion as far as Lausanne, where I was to stay.

Switzerland is a traction fans paradise. Almost every town on the main line has a small interurban tran line running out into the country, which connects with the main line railroad. As they are almost all under separate management, it makes for a great deal of interest as there are many different liveries and car styles to savor. The railroad engineering required to build rail lines through the Alps is really something to wonder at. Trains were almost without exception clean and punctual. Traffic density is generally quite heavy, especially over the main routes through the Alps such as the Gotthard line. It has train density approaching that of the PC's NY division, but all double track and over the mountains. Really great action.

To get into Lausanne, from where I stayed, I could take a trolley bus, train or lake steamer (or of course walk). A great choice of transportation! While I was in Switzerland, I took short trips to all parts of Switzerland. I also got over to Vienna for a couple of days, traveling one way via the Transalpine, which is an electric train similar to those used on the Vienna Schnellbahn, but much better fitted out and running on a close to TEE train timings. The Austrian RRs don't want to run a full TEE train as there are no 2nd class accomodations. In Vienna I visited the #11 tram route which still has the ex 3rd Ave NY cars running, some of them have been recently painted.

I took off for another weekend to Copenhagen to visit a rail fan friend, and to ride the trams and trains. Denmark still has some steams, but hardly any in the Copenhagen area. I rode one way there in a DSG (German sleeping car Co) sleeper which was an interesting experience. The cars ride very well and are very quite.

Other trips were made into Eastern France where there are still a lot of US and Canadian Built 2-8-2s running. They also have an interesting 3rd rail electric operation thru the Mt. Cenis tunnel toward Italy, with some great old electric locos running.

I left Switzerland in a Wagon Lits sleeper for Calais, France. I woke up the next morning in Paris where they have some steam on suburban service out of Gare du Nord, mostly 2-8-2- and 2-8-2T. I left Paris behind a BB electric which took me as far as Amiens where we seitched to a 231 K class Pacific which took me the rest of the way to Calais. Thence we go the cross-channel ferry to Folkstone, England.

While in England, I managed to ride most of the major lines out of London and sample equipment and track. The best track I think is either the Great Western or the East Coast main toward Scotland. I rode the new electrified line



to Manchester and the speed here topped 100 MPH many times. It was somewhat rougher riding than the other though. I must have ridden hundred of miles of the underground, including a portion of the new Victoria Line which is to go into full operation in 1969. It will be semi- automatic, like the new South Jersey line here. Rolling stock is quite similar to the stock running now on other lines. I also visited the Bluebell RY, which is comparable to the Strasburg. They have about 4 miles of track and several fine old historic locals. The British are more serious about their railfanning and equipment preservation than we are, perhaps it's because there are so many railfans there.

I finally left London on the big tin bird and arrived in Boston, where I spent a few days before returning to Philadelphia. I wasn't too happy about coming back, but I sort of had to; my money ran out!

#### FAREWELL:

The Chapter at this time would like to say Farewell, to one of our younger members. His name is Thomas Janisheck. Mr. Janisheck is going on active duty on the first of December, 1968, with the United States Navy. The Chapter wishes you every success, as you serve your Country.

Cinders, at this time wishes to extend to all Philadelphia Chapter members, and all others that read Cinders a very Merry Christmas, and a very Happy New Year.

Cinders, would also like to thank all who contributed articles in putting this little newsletter together.

In the coming issues of Cinders, there will be more and better articles for all taste.

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CINDERS, now published on a bi-monthly schedule, does not necessarily reflect the position of the Editor, the Chapter, or the National Society.

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