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# CINDERS

## PHILADLPHIA CHAPTER

### National Railway Historical Society

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#### DIE GOTTERDAMMERUNG

or

#### It's All Over But The Shouting, Part I

The year 1967 was, without a doubt, the beginning of the twilight of the gods as two of America's greatest trains died, along with many lesser greats. And the year 1968 appears to be the mop-up year for the long haul limiteds. Virtually every passenger train in this country is a candidate for discontinuance.

A strange situation has developed in the midst of all this. It seems that our governmental bodies have their signals fouled. Just recently, the ICC permitted the Golden State to be dropped even though they acknowledged that the trains carried many people and served a wide area. However, when this was written, that same farcical body had stayed the Penn-Central from discontinuing its Boston-Albany trains Nos. 404 & 405, saying that it was not in the public interest. On the day that I rode No. 404 there were just 7 passengers from Albany, including myself.

Train No. 404 is the subject of my story. I had never traveled on the B & A; it had eluded me for many years and 404 was my only chance to ride the line through the Berkshires in daylight on a one day trip from Philadelphia. So I set out for New York City one Saturday morning in March even though the weather forecast was poor. It was raining when I arrived in Gotham but I decided to go on. Originally I had planned to ride the Chatham branch and then the B & A but a ten minute connection seemed too close for comfort so I went out on No. 73 to Albany. Motor 239 was on the point with coaches 2606, 2921, and 3621 and club car 46 trailing along.

We were away from Grand Central on time and 239 took us screaming through the rain toward Harmon. I noticed that the tunnel under Sing Sing had now been daylighted; a Central man told me that this was done to accommodate the high and wide loads. Harmon was reached on time and we traded our electric for diesel 4023. The ride up the Hudson was dismal and somewhere along the way we began to lose a little time so that Albany was reached 7 minutes late.

Albany station looked great, with each of its tracks lined with diesels and their trains. The star of the show, however, was the D & H "Laurentian". There she stood, ALCO PA No. 16 of the D & H, resplendent in silver and blue

with yellow trim and making the right kind of sounds. I took movies of the train as it backed down to Colonie Shops despite the heavy overcast. Quiet then descended on the station so I went over to the Station Master Office to see if I could get an employee timetable. He didn't have any extra copies of the current ones but said there must be over a hundred in the storeroom. So off through the catacombs we went. "How many do you want," he said? "Oh just one," I replied. "Hell, I was hoping you would take the whole box."

Train No. 404 looked sort of pathetic, just one E-unit (4027) and a grimy coach 2940. We left Albany on time and soon went bounding along the single iron to Chatham. The track was rough in spots and 2940 was banging quite a lot. As we reached higher elevations, snow could be seen on the ground. At Chatham I spotted an Alco road switcher with 3 coaches. A little further down the line we entered double track. Pittsfield was reached on time. The station looked forlorn and not one passenger got on or off the train here. There wasn't even a soul near the station; dismal is the only word to describe the scene. East of town we met a westbound frate and ahead lay the Berkshires shrouded in mists. Darkness was falling fast but there was still enough light to see this magnificent scenery. Fortunately, most of the lights were out in the coach. I was reminded of the Lehigh River Gorge as we round down through the chasm on the east slope.

Total darkness fell when we reached Chester and I was glad that the B & A had been on time; I had seen the best part of the line, at least. Our train began to hit restrictive signals east of Chester--frate ahead. As we rolled by him at West Springfield yard I did a double take; two C B & Q units were spliced in with the NYC Power, Springfield was reached about 7 minutes late.

My story doesn't end here; the New Haven provided a wild finale. I left Springfield on train 59 and as soon as we cleared the terminal I noticed a loud humming from the undercarriage of the coach. It grew louder as we rolled along until something cracked as we ground to a stop near Windsor Locks. Sticking brakes! The wheels were cherry red. Well, they dumped the miscreant on a siding and off we went again, only to be stopped north of Berlin for half an hour. A frate had broken down and, due to our lateness, train 86 was run around him on our track. After that things went fairly well but we were still 40 minutes late in arriving back at Grand Central and as a result I missed the last train on the Penn. What a day it had been. But it was not in vain.

BEN NEVIS

TO BE CONTINUED

#### PASSENGER NEWS:

The N & W has discontinued trains 121 & 124, the Blue Bird between Chicago and St. Louis. This train was last seen running with just 2 coaches & a dinner. The consist was 1706 N & W -P - 1428 (EX WAB.) and diner 1051 (EX WAB. 51).

The UP has changed the names of trains 9 and 10 from the City of St. Louis to the City of Kansas since the discontinuance of through cars on July 15th.

The UP Trains No. 35 & 36 (Butte Special) have been changed from a Daily to Tri-Weekly Service.

### Passenger News (Continued)

The CP has given notice of its intention to drop two round trips daily between Toronto and Windsor (opposite Detroit). These trains make the run in less time than the more frequent service of the CN. The equipment on these trains is RDC'S. CP has also sold 80 reclining seat coaches to the N de M. The CP shops repainted the cars and replaced the windows with new sash for sliding-type glass.

The Long Island Railroad has just recently acquired 15 air-conditioned coaches from the Kansas City Southern. The total purchase price was \$210,000 a bargain. The cost is equal to the price of one coach, if bought new today. These coaches are between three and six years old. The Long Island is still looking for more surplus coaches.

### RAILROAD NEWS:

The Seaboard Coast Line has just inaugurate a new all piggyback freight train to connect New York City with points in the southeast through Philadelphia and Washington D. C. This Train will run at passenger trains speeds from Kearny, N. J. to Hamlet, N. C. without being switched at any terminal. The new train will operate over the trackage of the Penn Central and over the trackage of the former Seaboard Air Line and the Atlantic Coast Line railroads.

The Association of the American Railroads is now bringing the NBC RADIO NEWS on the Hour. The Association is telling the listeners what the railroads do for them in our daily lives. Your Local station that carries this on behalf of the AAR is WPEN 950 on the dial.

### REMEMBER WHEN:

On September 30th, 1968, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, acquired the Philadelphia Transportation Company. In 1940, the Philadelphia Transportation Company acquired the Philadelphia Rapid Transit. What did the new PTC do in its earliest days in serving the transit riders of Philadelphia. In this article are herewith presented some interesting notes of interest.

The years 1940 to 1941, saw 333 New vehicles ordered. They were 130 Streetcars - 153 Buses and 50 Trackless Trolley.

The 130 Streetcars were placed on RTS. 13 & 42- Chestnut - Walnut Lines and on RT. 56 - Erie-Torresdale Line

The 152 Modern Single deck buses were placed on 12 Routes. These new buses also enabled the substitution of buses for streetcars on RT. 55 between Olney Avenue and Willow Grove.

The 153rd Bus was an experimental double deck bus.

The 50 Trackless Trolley were built by the J. G. BRILL CO., to replace streetcars service on RT. 61. These new Trackless Trolley were placed in service in the summer of 1941.

The following new Bus Routes were established in 1940 by the PTC:

RT. V. From 46th & Market St. to 47th & Woodland.

RT. U. From 72nd & Woodland to 84th & Eastwick.

RT. Ua. From Island Road & Eastwick to the Administration Building of the Philadelphia (Old) Airport.

Remember When (Continued)

The following bus extension were made by PTC in 1940.

RT. A. Extended from Broad & Filbert to Broad & Lombard.

RT. G. Extended from 28th & Passyunk to 20th & Johnson with a further extension to the Navy Yard.

RT. J. Extended from Wissahickon Ave. & Price St. to Wissahickon & Rittenhouse Street.

RT. T. Extended from Frankford & Rhawn St. to Cresco & Rhawn, with a later further extension for a trial period to Holmesburg County Prison.

The numbers of passengers increased from 649,624,934 to 671,672,126.

In 1941 the wage rate for PTC Trolley Operators was 83 cents an hour. For High-Speed Motormen was 85 cents an hour. Vacation were increased from one week to two weeks.

The fare was 8 cents - 2 tokens for 15 cents or 3 tokens for 25 cents, for streetcars.

The bus fare was 10 cents or 8-1/3 cents for a token. This fare applied to all routes except RT. A-C-D, which parallels high-speed lines.

Ridership increased from 671,672,126 to 743,559,939. This increase was due to war production needs.

In 1942 PTC placed orders for 10 more trackless trolleys to supplement those on RTS. 61 & 80. 110 new Streetcars are being built to replace the old cars on RT. 23. After repeated postponements of delivery dates. These cars were delivered in the Spring of 1942, under high-government priorities.

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