

CINDERS

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JULY 1953

LAST MONTH'S MEETING

Everyone had a real treat last month in viewing Jim Dillon and Ray Miller's excellent color slides. Ray's shots of England, India, and especially South America reminded us there are many other attractions than just those in the U. S.

WHAT A JAUNT

Just for the record, and to point out what those who didn't go missed, we are happy to say that 20 chapter members had a swell time on the June 5th Perkiomen trip. The weather was perfect, and the Reading crew bent over backwards to supply a good time. The group was split in two, one half riding the caboose from Perkiomen Jct. to Green Lane, the other half riding it from there to Allentown.

IT'S LATER THAN YOU THINK

Summer is passing fast and it's nearly time for the NRHS convention to be held this year in St. Louis. Plan to attend this excellent tentative program:

- Sept. 5th - A visit to the Transportation Museum, and the banquet.
- Sept. 6th - A trip to Springfield over the I.T., with a possible side trip to the C. & I. M. shops.
- Sept. 7th - Local trolley trip.

STEAM WHISPS

It is with deep regret that we report the passing of passenger service on the East Broad Top R.R. Friday June 19th was the last day and as far as we can determine the final trip passed with no fanfare whatsoever. This marks the end of regular narrow-gauge passenger service in the U. S., the Rio Grande's "Silverton" hardly belonging in the class of regular service.

A decidedly happier note is that the B&O has ordered 5 more RDCs for Washington-Baltimore service, while the Rock Island with newly acquired John Barriger, also decided to get two RDCs.

The end of the Pennsy's passenger train between Oil City & Corry brought out the largest crowd in many years. The coach, combine, & baggage car were jammed to overflowing when the last train pulled out of Oil City on June 9th.

FROM THE LIBRARIAN

For those interested in the road which so generously supplies us with our quarters "A Pictorial History of B. & O. Motive Power," the latest addition to our library, will be a must. See Willard Hart to take out this book or any of our other large selection of reading material.

DIG THAT CRAZY TROLLEY

Take generous portions of people, flash bulbs, autos, general hubub - mix well; and you have written finis to the Charleroi interurban - only adequately described in "hep" phrases. FCC 1721 left Pittsburgh with a full load at 11 PM June 27th, although only about 15 were fans. Unlike the rides of the last few years the car got fuller as it went along. The entrance into Roscoe over many dozen torpedoes was an explosive experience. Large crowds greeted the car along the way, so many that the car left Roscoe nearly an hour late. To the accompaniment of police and fire sirens, and many auto horns the car left Charleroi well after 2 AM. It was indeed a worn-out group of enthusiasts that bid farewell to 1721 at South Hills about 4 AM, June 28th. Thus ends another of man's noble ventures - the Charleroi trolley.

AND THEN THERE WERE NONE

Monday June 8th brought an end to a very real era for most Phila. fans, for on that date the once great LVT system became all bus. Since we hope to do a feature article on the system and the events leading to its demise in the near future we won't deal on the event other than to say that the last car, bunting-bedecked 912, rolled off Minsi Trail line very early in the PM of June 8th after suitable ceremonies enroute. It might be noted that 916, another also-ran on the last trip, was not 916 at all, but 914 with a repainted number when it was discovered that 916, pictured in publicity releases, had already been scrapped. All 27 cars had reached trails end at Bethlehem Steel by the week's end.

CONTROLLER CLICKS

June was indeed a dismal month for Keystone state car fans. Besides the two last runs mentioned above many other routes bowed out. LVT lost Fullerton-Fairview prior to Minsi Trail in the wee hours of June 7th.

SIFAM WHISPS

The Chicago & Illinois Midland dropped their last passenger train Pekin to Springfield May 3th. Composed of a baggage and two passenger cars, all steel, the train was hauled by #502, which was certainly one of the last 4-4-0's in regular service in the U. S.

In opening their new railroad museum, the B&O probably startled many motorists, since many of the engines were moved from Baileys to Mount Clare under their own power.

On June 23th the Pennsy added numerous trains to the Main Line and West Chester branch in a novel switch on diminishing suburban service. It is an excellent beginning in the realization that there may be other ways of stopping passenger losses than constant train removal. We congratulate the company wholeheartedly, but fervently hope that some move may be forthcoming to stem the tide on main line service, the latest proposed casualty of which are to be several "clockers."

CONTROLLER CLICKS

Out Pittsburgh way Jefferson & Maiden, Washington's last local line, and the P&LE shuttle, one of only three remaining double-end lines, called it quits June 20th. Washington barn also closed the same day and the interurbans were looped around the block instead of into their former terminal.

Altoona trolleys went on a two week vacation, permanent for the outer end of Juniata, from July 4th to 19th. The reason - shutdown of Juniata shops for vacation gave the A&LV enough buses for rush hours during that period.

Scranton Transit scraped together enough paving money to take off Nay Aug and Petersburg June 20th. This leaves the city with only one line, Green Ridge Suburban, the systems first line.

PTC's Locust St. trackage finally opened June 23th, and with the end of the carpenter's strike, subway construction is again underway. On July 7th the company got permission to abandon route 18, so Market St. will have one less line shortly.

WE APOLOGIZE

Our somewhat flexible publication schedule bent completely out of shape with the coming of hot weather. We'll try to do better next month but working over a hot typewriter 'taint no fun this weather.

BANKED FIRES FOR THE LAST TIME

The big green and gold steam engines of the Southern Railway System, to your editor's mind, have always typified the true charm and grace of the Old South below Messrs Mason and Dixon's surveyed line. Presented herewith, then, is the passing of a bit of the Old South, summarized from an article in the Chattanooga Times of June 21st.

"A replica of "The Best Friend of Charleston," first of the Southern's steamers; engine 6330, last of the line's steamers, which ran its final run on Wednesday June 17th, and a slick oil bright new diesel unit, representing the type of locomotive that will now substitute for steam, posed for historic pictures at 3rd St. Bridge, Chattanooga - the conversion, which began in 1939, had been completed;

But the last run of Engine 6330, its round, slate face puffing jowls of hissing steam all the way, remains a sentimental paragraph to close this chapter of local transportation progress.

At 10:05 EST, on Wednesday, Old 6330 chugged out of the Southern's roundhouse at Oakdale and roared into position to haul a 50-car freight into Chattanooga and oblivion. Placed into service in May, 1926, 6330, we were assured, was "a good engine with plenty of years of service left in her yet.

But this run, scheduled as No. 55 - and to be scheduled was an honor not frequently granted to 6330 of late - was to be the "round belly's" last. In Chattanooga, at 3 PM, the fire would be "knocked out" of the fire box for good and the engine would be meekly hauled to Birmingham and reduced to the pile of metal that had been so laboriously put together a quarter of a century ago.

By 10:30, churning under the impatience of a 225 pound head of steam boiled up within her by the orange flames that licked her sides, 6330 screamed out a highball and tore along the tracks skirting the Emory River.

Twice during the course of the run she was shunted to a siding to allow a diesel freight and the Royal Palm to take the main track - no speed run even at the last. At Hixson, officials boarded the engine for the last leg of the journey. A short while later, with a fanfare of whistle blasts, 6330 drew abreast her historic companion at 3rd St. Bridge.

Then, without further ado, 6330 was shunted to ash pit and the bottom folded out of her boiler, the orange-red steaming coals dumped on the ground. She had come to the very end of the line. Her bell will go to a church; her whistle to a factory. That is all that will be saved."