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GEORGE WASHINGTON'S RAILROAD

By R. W. Frederick

Part I, which appeared in the previous issue of Cinders contained an account of the author's rail trip from Washington, D. C. to Hinton, Va. via C&O No. 1, The George Washington, March 24, 1967.

Saturday, March 25th, I awoke about 6:30 A.M. and got myself moving again. After breakfast, I headed down to the depot, in time to watch No. 3 depart with 3 E-units on the headend and 15 cars trailing behind. Within minutes, eastbound manifest No. 94 rolled through and it was surely a scene worthy of Wagner or Verdi: The chant of Geeps above the roar of the rushing New River, set among beautiful mountain scenery. Couple that with the chime of air horns echoing off the mountains, the sun shining through the morning mists, and you have grand opera. Truly, this was railroading. It ended too soon, however, when No. 4 arrived and I realized it was time to start home again. No. 4, the Sportsman, was late but this did not create any problems for me. Three E-units had the usual 15 cars tagging along. We departed Hinton at 9:27 A.M., one hour and 23 minutes late and after clearing the yards, No. 4 went bounding alongside the Greenbrier River. About five miles east of Hinton I spotted, of all things, a PCC carbody sitting in someone's backyard. I guessed it had been a DC transit car. Has anyone else seen it? Old streetcars sure roam far from their old habitat these days.

The C&O up to White Sulphur Springs is a fine mountain line and I enjoyed every mile of the way. It criss-crosses the Greenbrier River, jumping from one rock shelf to another. In a little over an hour, we drew into the immaculate station at White Sulphur.

I was surprised that up to this time I had seen very little tonnage moving in either direction, but now the action was beginning. As we began rolling down the Allegheny Front, we overtook a long coal train wreathed in its brake-shoe smoke, its Geeps whining in dynamic to hold back the force of gravity. There was activity all the way into Clifton Forge, westbound empties, work trains, etc., quite a show. I noted that the Clifton Forge station tracks were filled with sleepers, mostly SP, UP, C&O, some PRR and one E-L. After the crews changed and the mail was handled, we were off again.

I was totally unprepared for what lay ahead. My knowledge of map-reading had failed me, for I had expected to see farm country from Clifton Forge into Staunton but, instead, it was forest and rugged mountains all the way to Buffalo Gap. It was even more impressive, viewed from the windows of the diner SWAN TAVERN, as I enjoyed lunch. Another pleasant surprise was that the line into Charlottesville was busier than I thought it would be. I also noticed that this line must have undergone considerable reconstruction at one time, as a number of tunnels had been bypassed and curves had been eased. After passing Staunton and Waynesborn, No. 4 assaulted the Blue Ridge in fine style. Up at Afton an eastbound local freight was in the clear for us and then at Crozet a westbound freight was waiting.

My brother was at the Charlottesville station to see me and we had a chance to catch up on family news while No. 4 was being split. I might add that few passengers were still on the train now, as it seems that most of the business for this train is west of Charlottesville. Anyway, after the switching was completed and brakes tested, No. 4 high-balled out of town. At Massie, just a few miles east of Charlottesville, we had a meet with a westbound freight and we took siding. Then at Lindsay there was

still another westbound freight to meet and a third freight was sitting on the Virginia Airline Sub-division. So you can see that this was a mighty busy piece of railroad into Gordonsville. By this time I had a conversation going with the flagman and he pointed out the old Virginia Central track and right-of-way at Orange. From there we zipped up the Southern main to Alexandria, where we met The George Washington going out for another try at making Cincinnati on time. We finally braked to a stop in Washington at 5:10 P.M.

My story doesn't end here. I had dinner at a nearby restaurant and then nipped back to the station to catch B&O No. 108 for Baltimore. I needn't have hurried as No. 8 was over half an hour late and this gave me time to look at the pitiful remains of a once proud train, B&O No. 1. The consist was one E-unit, one express car, one coach and one combination sleeper-lounge-diner. Well, No. 8 finally backed in at 6:47 P.M. and our 3 RDC's went tearing out of Washington with a vengeance five minutes later. I settled down for what I thought would be a short run but alas, up near Beltsville our brakes went into emergency as we were sailing by a southbound freight. Another agonizing wait ensued as the crew checked our train. Finally, we were rolling again and I began to calculate how much time I would have to catch my bus out of Baltimore if we didn't have to put up with any more delay. Fortunately, all went well and I made my bus with just a few minutes to spare.

Looking at this trip in retrospect, I decided it had been well worth the effort. But there was something about the journey that was bothering me and I didn't know what it was until I was almost home. Then I realized that the C&O is a terribly dull railroad in one respect: Nearly every C&O diesel I had seen was an EMD. That is kind of monotonous, isn't it?

NEWS FROM NORTH OF THE BORDER

CN has applied to discontinue passenger service to points on the eastern part of Prince Edward Island. The June Official Guide merely shows "Consult Agents".

A royal commission has recommended improvement of the narrow gauge passenger service in Newfoundland, even if not economically justifiable. It maintains that the railway is an essential transportation link and that the proposed bus service is not in the best interests of the province.

GO TRANSIT was inaugurated in the Toronto area on May 23rd, at 5:50 A.M. with a train from Oakville to Toronto. The cost of providing the commuter service over 60 miles is about the same as a mile of Toronto's Gardiner Expressway - \$16,000,000.

The Michigan Public Service Commission has approved the CP's request to discontinue passenger service between Windsor and Detroit.

Expo '67 - Montreal - New York City may purchase 48 air-conditioned cars now in service at Expo '67 to replace an identical number of 42-year old cars now rattling over Staten Island Rapid Transit system. The 75 foot cars will be on the market for about \$80,000 apiece when the Montreal Fair closes October 11.

THIS AND THAT

Happy Birthday to Pullman, Inc., this famous Car building firm, originally named Pullman Palace Car Co., celebrated its 100th birthday in August.

United Aircraft's Turbo Train built for service on the New Haven RR Boston-New York Run has arrived in Providence, R. I. and is now being prepared for testing. Part of the testing is to be done on PRR New Jersey High Speed test track.

Nelson Blount's Steamtown U.S.A. Bellow Falls, Vt. has moved all his equipment, right down to the last drive Rod, from the B&M N. Walpole, N.H. yard to his own property located just north of Bellow Falls.

Baltimore & Ohio RR has traded its private car #901 to the PRR for various Loco & Car Parts. It is understood that several of the PRR Business Cars are in poor condition.

PRR Buffalo Day Train Ends Thursday, August 3rd. It was the last day of operation for the PRR day trains between Harrisburg and Buffalo.

The OK to drop the trains was received that day. As the run had to be continued between Baltimore and Harrisburg, the train left Baltimore Friday morning. Upon reaching Harrisburg, passengers were directed upstairs to get a refund. The first word that railroad employees at Renovo had was the non-arrival of the southbound train on Friday morning.

Southern Pacific, once the largest user of Alco PA passenger units, retired the last five units on July 10th, upon delivery of new EMD SDP-45s. Seven units are now in storage at Oakland two others are stored at other points.

On June 26th, the SP abolished the use of train numbers in locomotive indicator boards, except on Peninsula commute trains (where they will continue for the benefit of riders).

For the Rugged: In California, the Lake Lyons Resort has leased the line of Fibreboard Corporation (ex Pickering Lumber Corp.) between Gurney and Lyons Dam Service is being operated with a pair of speeders and trailers. The 16 mile round trip takes three hours.

Reading Company's Two remaining : Famous T-1 Locos have been sold to Steam Tours, Akron, Ohio and Striegel Supply Co., Baltimore, Md., no other information is available at this time.

Pennsylvania Railroad is reported to be rebuilding six GG-1 Locos and regearing them to run in excess of 100 M.P.H., for backup use in the New High Speed service.

The new Pensy Silverliners from St. Louis Car Co. have started to arrive. A rather nice unit of equipment. Cars number 220, 221, 222, 223 and 224 are already in service.

TRANSIT NEWS

New York: The Metropolitan Commuter Transportation Authority and The Long Island RR have awarded a \$57 million dollar contract to the Budd Co. for construction of 270 commuter cars.

These cars will be 85 feet in length, electrically powered and equipped to travel 100 M.P.H. Deliveries will start in September, 1968.

Subway Buffs, Take Notice! - On New York City Subway Trains, it is now forbidden, under penalty of \$25 fine or 10 days in jail, to sing, dance in the aisles, play a musical instrument, carry a sling shot or other missile propellant, wave a flag or make a speech.

San Francisco: The San Francisco Municipal Railway has confirmed reports that it has under consideration new articulated streetcars for replacement of the former St. Louis PCC cars.

Los Angeles: While the Southern California Rapid District is preparing plans for the San Gabriel Valley route, the preferred route being in the San Bernardino Freeway, the "Friendly" Southern Pacific has made moves to divert freight movements from its main line to the former PE trackage.

Philadelphia: As of Sunday 7-9, PTC abandoned the turnouts and eastbound track in Olney Ave. between Broad St. and Park Ave. Complete re-surfacing of Olney Ave. in this half-block was the reason. The track was used only occasionally in recent years by Rt. 6 cars when out of schedule phase or order, with other cars on the route.

Rte. 41 Changes: Account of construction work at the 8th and market Subway Station which is being enlarged to accommodate the DRPA New Lindenwold Line.

The changes are: Southbound 47 street cars will turn back at Spring Garden St. and Route 47 buses will operate between Green St. and Wolf St. in South Philadelphia.

Boston: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, effective September 9th will replace Trolleys with buses on the Watertown Line. Trolleys now run from Park St. Station via Subway to Kenmore Sq., thence via Street to Watertown, a Western suburb. The buses will run to Watertown, connecting at Kenmore Sq. with the downtown subway trolleys. MBTA claims this is necessary because of a streetcar shortage and expects to save \$405,000 during the first 6 months.

The Budd Co.'s super salesmen are working on the MBTA to encourage them to buy cars for its new South Shore line, similar to cars now building for the South Jersey Lindenwold Line. Construction of the new line is progressing on schedule, expected opening mid-1969.

New Jersey: Erie-Lackawanna-A new lease on life has been given to E-L commuters. The State of New Jersey has announced completion of an agreement to subsidize E-L's commuter operations to the tune of \$80 million dollars over a five-year period. Sixty million dollars will go into a Capital improvement program, including the purchases of 255 new air-conditioned commuter cars.

BARGAIN BASEMENT

For Sale - 10-wheel 4-6-0 Standard gauge steam locomotive with 8-wheel tender. Built by Baldwin Locomotives Works, Philadelphia, Pa., May 1916. (Former Hampton & Branchville No. 32) Contact, Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad, York, Pa.

Pennsylvania Railroad - The PRR has purchased from the NYC 25 Pre-war long distance stainless steel coaches. Cars are at the Altoona Shops. PRR has numbered them 1400-1425.

For Sale - Two Jumbo Tank Cars PRR's two "Rail Whales" (PRR 50000 and 50001) are up for sale and awaiting new owners while resting comfortably in PRR's Edgemoor, Del. yard.

Railway Express - REA is up for sale, the directors of the railroad-owned small shipment carrier have authorized its sale. Exclusive railroad ownership stands in the way of greater development - the reason given for putting it on the market.

Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum - has for sale a 5 x 7 color photo of its famous Southern Railway Loco # 4501. It is attractively mounted in a card folder and is postpaid:

Send One dollar (\$1.00) to:

Smoke & Cinders, - Service Department
1006 Hibbler Circle
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37412

P.S. - Tell them "Cinders" sent you.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Phila. Chapter's tour of the Budd Co.'s Red Lion, Pa. plant is tentatively set for Saturday, October 14, 1967. A chartered bus will leave Broad and Erie at 9:15 A.M., stopping enroute at Frankford and Bridge St. Bus fare \$1.00. All members wishing to join this tour must use the bus, since Budd will not allow anyone into the plant **except** as a group on the bus. Further details in the next issue.

The West Jersey Chapter, NRHS, is running a tour to the PRR Electric Shop, Wilmington, Del. on September 30, 1967.

Any Philadelphia Chapter member who missed a similar trip last January may join this tour, subject to availability of space. Anyone interested please contact Bill Wagner immediately, as deadline for tour reservations has passed.

Schuylkill & Susquehanna Right-of-Way Open to Motorists:

This year October 8th is the "Open House" Day for Pennsylvania State Game lands No. 211. The road through this preserve is a portion of the right-of-way of the old S&S Branch of the Reading. Built over 100 years ago to reach coal fields, that proved to be a disappointment, the line was dismantled over 20 years ago after many years of

COMING ATTRACTIONS (Cont'd.)

Schuylkill & Susquehanna Right-of-Way Open to Motorists (Cont'd.)

light traffic. Except for traces of the railroad, the valley has completely reverted to nature.

For those who may wish to make this trip, this year, in contrast to some other years, the direction of traffic will be eastward. The gate at the west end (Ellendale Forge) will open at 1 P.M.

The entrance can be reached by turning right from Route 14 at Dauphin, north of Harrisburg.

Due to the sometimes crowded conditions, the Chapter hoped that it could arrange for a day other than that open to the general public. Unfortunately, this could not be arranged. It is suggested that anyone driving over the line, start out with a full tank of gas.

From the Desk of your Editor

Please Note, due to change in Editors and Staff, Vol. 3, Issue 3 and 4 of "Cinders" were never published.

I wish to thank the several members who used the coupon published in July "Cinders" to send your editor news items. We need more members acting as reporters for YOUR Chapter newsletter. Another coupon is furnished with this issue. Please use it!

Cinders, published monthly, does not necessarily reflect the position of the Editor, the Chapter, or the National Society.

Deadline for next issue - October 1, 1967.

Contributors this issue: W. Wagner, S. James, C. Vallette, J. Mannix, T. Janishock, R. Brown, R. Frederick, Railway Age, The Western Railroader, Steel Rails (Boston Chapter).

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NEWS FOR CINDERS

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ITEM OF INTEREST: _____

Submitted by: _____