The PALIMPSEST

The Burlington Power That Opened and Built the West.

The Burlington In Iowa

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The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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Illustrations

All illustrations were collected by the author. Unless credited otherwise, all photographs came from the Burlington Railroad which also provided the colored illustration used on the cover.

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Frank P. Donovan, author of *Mileposts on the Prairie,* has contributed several articles to *The Palimpsest.* Mr. Donovan acknowledges the assistance of A. M. Rung, director of public relations for the Burlington.

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THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

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Burlington and Missouri River

The Burlington was not the first railroad to build across Iowa, nor was it the last. But it was the only Federal land grant railroad to span the state that did not go bankrupt in the process. It came in third in the trans-Iowa race—and solvent. As a matter of fact, the Burlington is outstanding in that it is one of the very few roads in Iowa which has never been in receivership.

The story of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad in Iowa begins with the river town on the Mississippi from which it derives its name. Burlington in the 1850's had no railroad. The people in that community, however, were clamoring for better transportation. To this end they formed the Burlington & Mount Pleasant Plank Road which was completed in December 1851. But this was not enough—the town had developed "railroad fever."

Meanwhile, Davenport also was agog with plans for a line due west to the Missouri River. This was the forerunner of the Rock Island, which

later crossed Iowa. Clearly, Burlington must look to the railroad or fall behind.

Mindful of this fact, two exponents of the plank road now turned their sights on an iron road. William F. Coolbaugh, a local merchant, and James W. Grimes, lawyer and businessman, along with other Burlingtonians incorporated the Burlington and Missouri River Rail Road on January 15, 1852. Coolbaugh headed the enterprise. Grimes, who was soon to be governor of Iowa, was sent to Washington to seek a land grant.

The astute Grimes, by a felicitous chain of events, got the so-called "Boston Group," under the leadership of John Murray Forbes, interested in his "paper railroad." This group, with Forbes furnishing the capital, James F. Joy, the legal talent, and John W. Brooks, the operational "know-how," was pushing the Michigan Central on to its Chicago destination. They were also quietly acquiring a group of Illinois railroads, from which was to emerge the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. Grimes found Forbes and his associates interested. On the other hand they looked with greater favor on building across more populous Missouri to St. Joseph and Kansas City.

What clinched the matter for Grimes, however, was the discovery by the Boston Group that Rock Island Railroad interests had secured a charter to build across Iowa. The Rock Island, it may be added, was promoted by the Michigan Southern,

which was racing its northern competitor, the Michigan Central, into Chicago! Messrs. Forbes, Joy, and Brooks saw the light. From that time on the Boston Group backed the Burlington and Missouri River project. In 1853 John Brooks became president of the B&M. On March 17, 1855, the Burlington reached the Mississippi and the stage was set for construction across Iowa.

Brooks and Joy dispatched Hans Thielsen, a Danish-born civil engineer on the Michigan Central, to survey the Iowa line from Burlington to Ottumwa. They also sent Alfred Hebard, a Yale graduate, to select the best route from Ottumwa to Council Bluffs. Although born in Vermont, Hebard had lived in Iowa for sixteen years and knew the terrain well. Finally, Forbes persuaded his brother, Robert Bennet Forbes, to make a trip across Iowa and report his findings.

On New Year's Day, 1856, the citizens of Burlington cheered at the sight of a brass-trimmed, wood-burner puffing along a few miles of track in town. Then, on May 15, President Franklin Pierce signed the Land Grant Act of 1856 giving aid to four east-west lines in Iowa. The B&M's share was about 300,000 acres.

The road was built to Mount Pleasant by July of 1856. Yet, by the end of the following summer, it had only reached the hamlet of Rome on the Skunk River, five miles beyond Mt. Pleasant. The Panic of 1857 stalled further construction.

Meanwhile Forbes, desiring to have a man on the spot who could keep close tab on the finances, selected 23-year-old Charles Russell Lowell for the job. Nephew of the poet, young Lowell was appointed assistant treasurer with headquarters in Burlington.

It was soon apparent that Lowell had too much work for one person. Besides his treasury duties he was responsible for managing the land department. In choosing a competent assistant, Forbes picked Charles Elliott Perkins, a mere boy of eighteen, who hailed from Cincinnati where he was clerking in a local wholesale fruit store. The lad was a second cousin of Forbes, at whose house Lowell had made his acquaintance.

Perkins eagerly took the job at $30 a month. Early in August 1859, he came to Burlington and gladly accepted Lowell's invitation to share his cottage. A brief sketch of this remarkable young man is in order, for he was to head the entire Burlington system by 1881; and for nearly two decades thereafter he shrewdly and conscientiously guided its phenomenal growth. Moreover, for the rest of his life he proudly regarded himself as an Iowan: a Burlington man from Burlington.

Charles E. Perkins was born in Cincinnati November 24, 1840. The oldest of five sons of a Unitarian minister, Perkins learned to accept responsibility early, for his father committed suicide when he was nine. Finishing high school at six-

teen, he set out to support the family by working in a Queen City wholesale fruit firm.

Having reached Iowa in time for the "Grand Railroad Celebration" in Ottumwa, Perkins no doubt thrilled to what the Iron Horse meant to the town, and what it would mean to the growing West. The festivities to honor the arrival of the B&M were held on September 1. About 12,000 visitors swarmed the streets for the occasion. With all passenger coaches filled to capacity the pioneer line resorted to flat cars fitted with benches to take care of the overflow. Not to be outdone by the bountiful spread Fairfield had put on with a 986-foot table to celebrate the B&M's coming the previous year, Ottumwa countered with eight tables of delectable food each 460 feet long.

Under the helping hand and friendly counsel of Lowell, Perkins learned railroading. The two became good friends. Lowell, who graduated from Harvard at the head of his class, would sometimes spend an evening reading the *Philosophy of Immanuel Kant* or the latest works of Charles Darwin. Perkins more than likely got a smattering of philosophy by osmosis, sitting nearby under a sperm-oil lamp. The perceptive and inquiring mind of Perkins nevertheless matched the cultured and scholarly intellect of Lowell. Both were hard workers, keen students, energetic railroaders. But late in 1860 Lowell decided to return to the iron business, in which he was earlier asso-

ciated. Before resigning, however, he highly recommended Perkins for his job. And so, not yet twenty, Charles Perkins became assistant treasurer and land agent at a salary of $800 a year.

Much to the disappointment of Perkins, the railhead continued to remain at Ottumwa. While the B&M was marking time its competitors were not. Ottumwa was also served by the Des Moines Valley Railroad. It had built up from Keokuk and passed through Ottumwa on its way to Des Moines. Ultimately to become a secondary branch of the Rock Island, the Des Moines Valley was of considerable importance in its earlier days. Meanwhile, running parallel to the B&M on the north were the rapidly advancing extensions of the Rock Island and of the North Western. Each line had its own bridge spanning the Mississippi—the Rock Island completed in 1856 and the North Western in 1865. The B&M, on the other hand, still relied on ferries to make the crossing.

Would the Burlington & Missouri River be relegated to an inconsequential local line? No, insisted Perkins. Made superintendent in 1865, he now had more say in management. Although Brooks was replaced by the more energetic James F. Joy as president in 1866, it was Perkins who got action from Boston. Tactfully, yet persistently, the youthful executive outlined the dilemma of the road. Forbes understood, but had trouble convincing his New England associates. But in the

end he won them over to his point of view.

Spurred on by fresh capital, tracklaying went on with vigor following the Civil War. The Burlington reached Chariton in the summer of 1867, and Woodburn by the end of the year. It was now halfway across Iowa. Trains steamed into Osceola late in January 1868, and on November 12 the railroad was in Red Oak.

In the meantime, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy board of directors had finally authorized a bridge across the Mississippi at Burlington. Completed in 1868, the iron span measured 2,237 feet, with a drawbridge in the center. It linked the rails of the CB&Q with those of the B&M.

The Mississippi bridge proved a boon to Burlington track construction in Iowa. Track laying redoubled as the company pushed eastward from East Plattsmouth. On November 26, 1869, the Burlington rails met at Hastings. There was no formal ceremony. Superintendent Perkins, on hand to witness the event, wrote in his notebook, "Last rail laid and spiked at noon today—went through with special train to Plattsmouth."

On January 3, 1870, regular service was established into Council Bluffs by the way of Pacific Junction over the rails of the St. Joseph & Council Bluffs Rail Road.

FRANK P. DONOVAN

Branch Line Construction

There was no marking time, once the dynamic Perkins was given free hand. When the B&M pushed westward beyond the Missouri River, Perkins went with it, soon becoming its vice president. The line was called the Burlington & Missouri River Rail Road Company in Nebraska, to distinguish it from its Iowa counterpart. It reached Kearney, a point on the Union Pacific, in 1872.

One reason for the westward course was that the B&M had expected, and hoped, Plattsmouth, Nebraska, would be the termination of the Union Pacific. Instead, the UP decided on Council Bluffs. Not to be daunted, the B&M continued its southern route as a short cut to Kearney.

From the early 1870's, and for nearly twenty years thereafter, the Missouri River was crossed by car ferry, the first transfer boat being the *Vice President,* built in Jeffersonville, Indiana. Later a railroad bridge replaced the ferry, and, while Omaha-Council Bluffs became the favored passenger gateway, the Plattsmouth route loomed increasingly important in expediting freight.

Westward expansion or not, Charles Perkins had a warm spot in his heart for Burlington. Although he spent most of the time in Nebraska, his

home and his family remained in Burlington, and his employers allowed him to keep his headquarters there. Moreover, he had a deep affection for the B&M and stood by Iowa and the railroad when other officials looked elsewhere. James F. Joy, for example, was a partisan of the Hannibal & St. Joseph, another "Boston Group" railroad, which crossed northern Missouri. Then, too, there was intense competition from the other east-west railroads in Iowa. And, finally, there was the sinister hand of Jay Gould!

Because of the above circumstances the B&M's branch line building had no hard and fast pattern. One feeder might be constructed to fill an economic need, another to tap new territory, a third to fend off competition, or a fourth to acquire an independent railroad to keep a rival from gobbling it up first. Expansion was afoot, unbridled competition reigned, and there were no holds barred.

The first branch line left the main stem at Red Oak and went in a southwesterly direction to Hamburg, on the Missouri River. Completed in 1870, it measured 39 miles. Three more feeders, all to the south, were completed by 1872. One veered southwest from Creston to Hopkins, Missouri, just over the state line. At the latter terminal it connected with a railroad which had been built up from Amazonia, Missouri, also on the "Big Muddy." Then there was a stub line from Villisca to Clarinda, and a much longer mid-Iowa branch

linking two county seats—Chariton and Leon.

By the end of 1872 the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad leased the B&M, and the Hawkeye road became an integral part of the larger system. The parent company now continued expanding with renewed zeal. Before the decade was over it had flung out a half dozen more feeders. Perhaps the most important branch was the northwesterly line from Albia to the state capital. Governor Samuel Merrill was president of one of the component companies of the line. This 68-mile property not only put the Burlington directly into the Rock Island preserves in Des Moines, but it also paralleled the latter's Des Moines Valley road. We have seen that the "Valley" had been a thorn in the side of the B&M—halting progress across Iowa in the late 1850's. Now the thorn changed hands—the Burlington did the pricking.

The Burlington's "branching out" of component roads from 1870 to 1880 is listed below. The towns connected, the mileage, and the years of initial construction are indicated:

Albia, Knoxville & Des Moines RR
Albia-Knoxville, 32 mi.; 1871-1875.
Brownville and Nodaway Valley Ry.
Clarinda Jct. (Villisca)-Burlington Jct., Mo., 35 mi.; 1872-1879.
Burlington & Missouri RR
Chariton-Leon, 36 mi.; 1871-1872.
Chariton, Des Moines and Southern RR
Chariton-Indianola, 33 mi.; 1878-1879.

Creston and Northern RR
Creston-Fontanelle, 27 mi.; 1878-1879.
Creston Branch of the Burlington & Missouri River RR
Creston to Iowa state line near Hopkins, Mo., 42 mi.; 1871-1872.
Des Moines & Knoxville Ry.
Knoxville-Des Moines, 35 mi.; 1879-1880.
Hastings and Avoca RR
Hastings-Carson, 15 mi.; 1880.
Leon, Mount Ayr and Southwestern RR
Leon-Grant City, Mo., 78 mi.; 1879-1880.
Nebraska City, Sidney and North Eastern Ry.
Hastings-Sidney, 21 mi.; 1878.
Red Oak & Atlantic RR
Red Oak-Griswold, 18 mi.; 1879-1880.

Considerable credit for the aggressive expansion of the "Q" must go to Perkins, who became vice president in 1876. To quote Richard Overton, distinguished Burlington Railroad historian: "From the time that Charles Elliott Perkins became vice president of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy . . . until he resigned as president of the system in 1901, he *was* the Burlington."

Another facet of the Burlington's growth required getting control of roads already built. In western Iowa the Council Bluffs & St. Joseph Rail Road, originally incorporated in 1858, had undergone little construction until after the Civil War. In 1867, however, this road had a line following the east bank of the Missouri River from Council Bluffs to the Missouri border. At that point it

linked hands with affiliated roads continuing south to St. Joseph and Kansas City. In 1870 these roads were consolidated to form the Kansas City, St. Joseph & Council Bluffs Railroad.

The Boston Group had an interest in the above property which, at the end of the decade, had turned into virtual control. It will be recalled, the B&M's pioneer line had used the road from Pacific Junction to Council Bluffs. In other hands this Council Bluffs-Kansas City line could retard the Burlington's growth by severe competition.

In eastern Iowa two roads came into the Burlington's domain. Both terminated in Keokuk. The Iowa portion of the St. Louis, Keokuk & Northwestern, which was completed in 1881, stretched some 48 tenuous miles to Mount Pleasant on the main line of the "Q." It had a checkered and precarious history, beginning life as the Iowa Northern Central chartered in 1866.

The other road, the Keokuk & St. Paul, never went beyond Burlington, a distance of 42 miles. Completed in 1869, it formed a link in an important through route from St. Louis to the Twin Cities. It, too, had a hectic past, going back to the high-sounding Fort Madison, West Point, Keosauqua & Bloomfield Rail Road in 1853. John Edgar Thomson, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, had an interest in the company. This line, along with the other Keokuk road, passed on to Burlington control upon completion.

An interesting sidelight during this decade was joint control, with the Rock Island, of the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern in 1879. Going from Burlington to Albert Lea, Minnesota, it was part of the through line from St. Louis to St. Paul mentioned above. The Burlington later sold its interest in the BCR&N to the Rock Island.

Brief mention should be made of the so-called River Roads episode culminating in more unified Burlington management. The trouble arose from questionable construction contracts and irregular financing of two lines along the Mississippi River. Both were based in Dubuque. One went north to the Minnesota line; the other south to Clinton. They both were built by Joy and his associates with the financial support of the Burlington. The outcome was a disastrous receivership of the River Roads in 1875. Subsequently reorganized, they were bought by the Milwaukee Road in 1880.

Meanwhile, Joy had been dropped from the Burlington's directorate. Forbes, determined to tighten the reins of management, headed the road for a three-year period. After that he had a man selected for the job, and that man was Perkins.

FRANK P. DONOVAN

Perkins—Man From Burlington

Prior to his becoming president, Perkins had been described as the Burlington's strong man of the West; Forbes the strong man of the East. After that Charles Elliott Perkins alone was the road's strong man. Forbes, who gave up the presidency in favor of Perkins in 1881, was active, however, in the road's affairs, but his role was like that of an elder statesman. Perkins was at the helm, sure of himself, of his railroad, and of the road's future. In fact he, more than any other man, made the Burlington one of the leading railroads of the West, and of the Nation.

The year 1881 was one of continued instability in Burlington territory. Jay Gould was at the height of his power. He has been aptly described by Julius Grodinsky, his biographer, as a "competitive bull thrown into the stabilized china shops." Always a trader, he "obtained results on one property by exploiting another."

The Burlington needed a strong man to do battle with the crafty, unprincipled, and piratical "Wizard of Wall Street." Physically a weakling, Gould was nevertheless a mental giant. Perkins complained bitterly that "Gould moves so rapidly it is impossible to keep up with him. . . ." And well

might Perkins complain for Gould tried to checkmate the Burlington at every turn.

During the mid-1870's Gould bought heavily into the Union Pacific and soon had working control. After that he used the UP to harass the Burlington at every opportunity. He tried to break up the Iowa Pool, formed by the Burlington, North Western, and Rock Island railroads to stabilize trans-Iowa rate making. Failing in this, he sought to control the Council Bluffs-Kansas City road and shunt traffic to and from the UP across Missouri instead of Iowa. Thwarted again, the quick-acting Gould turned to the Hannibal & St. Joseph. He had been buying into that road and now had enough stock to control its policies. In the meantime he had corralled the much larger Wabash and Missouri Pacific systems. The upshot was new and cutthroat competition for the Burlington, not only across Missouri, but over much of the Midwest.

Gould's getting the "St. Joe" hurt Perkins the most because it severed the Burlington's best route to St. Joseph and Kansas City. It infuriated Perkins, for he long regarded the H&StJ as basic to the Burlington system.

Worse still, Gould planned forthwith to invade the Burlington's territory in Iowa. He achieved this end in purchasing the Missouri, Iowa & Nebraska Railway from under the nose of Perkins. The MI&N, headed by General Francis

M. Drake, ran from Alexandria, Missouri, west and northwest to the Iowa border near Sedan, thence through Centerville and Humeston to Van Wert. Chartered in Missouri in 1857 as the Alexandria & Bloomfield, it had a succession of names and mishaps before it became the MI&N. By 1880 the entire 142-mile line was in operation.

Gould now proceeded to extend the MI&N toward Council Bluffs. If completed to that destination, it would make a through line, in conjunction with the Wabash and affiliated properties, from Toledo and Chicago to the Council Bluffs-Omaha gateway. Perkins countered by organizing his own company to parallel that of Gould's. Both parties bought right of way and did considerable grading. Finally an agreement was reached for a jointly-owned road which would terminate at Shenandoah. The line was completed in 1882 under the name of the Humeston & Shenandoah Railroad.

The inroads of Gould also prompted Perkins to lease the Chicago, Burlington & Kansas City Railway in 1881. At that time the road went from Viele, on the Mississippi River, west and southwest through Bloomfield and Moulton to the Missouri state line near Cincinnati, Iowa. From the latter hamlet it continued south into Missouri through Unionville to Laclede. The two-state property totaled 146 miles, not including trackage rights over the Wabash between Bloomfield and

Moulton, and over a Burlington affiliate from Viele to Burlington. Generally known as the Burlington & Southwestern, its antecedents went back to the Iowa & Missouri State Line Railroad in 1859. Perkins intended to extend the line on to Kansas City to compete with the Gould roads. With Burlington money the company had reached Carrollton, Missouri, in 1885, when the collapse of the Gould empire made further construction unnecessary.

Gould's invasion of the "Q" territory had much to do with the plethora of branches jutting from the main line in Iowa down to points on the Council Bluffs-Kansas City road. All these provided alternative Chicago-Kansas City routings now that the "St. Joe" was in enemy hands. Excluding the Red Oak-Hamburg line, completed before Gould came on the scene, most of the branches seem to have been built to ward off the "Railroad Wrecker" or other competition.

The first (going eastward) was from Villisca to Corning, Missouri, via Northboro. When the Iowa segment was finished in 1882 its Missouri counterpart had come up the Tarkio Valley to meet it.

A little further to the east the same situation obtained. Here a branch went from Clarinda down to Bigelow, Missouri, through Burlington Jct., Missouri. That part north from Burlington Jct. opened for traffic in 1879. Next year the

southern section was constructed up through the Nodaway Valley to make it a through line.

A third route, connecting Creston with Amazonia, Missouri, via Hopkins, Missouri, was an earlier pre-Gould undertaking, being spiked down in 1872.

Finally, the last branch in this category began halfway across Iowa at Chariton. It went in a southwesterly course through Leon, thence down to the Missouri towns of Bethany and Albany, reaching the latter in 1881. Here it met an independent narrow gauge road which had been built up from St. Joseph in 1879. Probably to strengthen its position against Gould encroachments, the Burlington leased the slim-gauge property in 1885 and widened it to standard the same year.

With the exception of the narrow gauge, it should be noted that all these extensions from the south were built under the auspices of the Council Bluffs-Kansas City road, controlled by the Burlington. Had it not been for the obstreperous Gould, probably two-fifths of these branches would never have been completed to their ultimate destination.

During Perkins' tenure as president, from 1881 to 1901, the following branch lines were completed by the Burlington in Iowa:

Clarinda, College Springs and South Western RR
Clarinda-Northboro, 15 mi.; 1881-1882

Humeston and Shenandoah RR
Van Wert-Shenandoah, 95 mi.; 1881-1882
Leon, Mount Ayr and Southwestern RR
Bethany Jct. (Togo)-Albany, Mo., 46 mi.; 1880-1881
Western Iowa RR
Fontanelle-Cumberland, 20 mi.; 1884-1885

Under Perkins' steadying hand the Burlington moved forward in many directions. Rather than temporize with Gould any longer Perkins ordered the "Q's" rails westward to Denver. In 1882, after less than a year in building, the road entered that mile-high city.

During Perkins' administration Postmaster General Walter Gresham queried several western roads about putting on a special mail train between Chicago and Council Bluffs. He wanted a connection for mail arriving from New York so that it could be hurried to Council Bluffs in time for early evening departure for California. The first road Gresham contacted turned him down flat; the second wanted a substantial bonus; and the third—well, that was the Burlington. Vice President Thomas Potter agreed to the proposition with no strings, no subsidy—just an exclusive mail contract. When asked when such a train would be ready, Potter promptly replied, "Tomorrow morning, General."

Thus began the first run of the famed *Fast Mail* on March 11, 1884. It pulled out of Chicago at 3 a.m. with a car of mail from New York, a bag-

gage car filled with local papers and a special coach for the postmaster and his party and Tom Potter. It reached Burlington at 7:40 a.m. having made the 205-mile run, including five stops, at an average speed of nearly forty-four miles an hour. Then like a jack rabbit it sped across Iowa, arriving in Council Bluffs on time!

Charles Perkins for some time eyed the rapidly-growing Twin Cities, generally regarded as Milwaukee Road territory. He prodded John Murray Forbes and was given the nod from Boston to build up to St. Paul. A separate company was formed with the backing of the Burlington, and the road reached the Twin Cities in 1886. An important by-product for Iowa resulted; it put the "Q" back in Dubuque for keeps. With trackage rights over the Illinois Central from East Dubuque, Illinois, to Dubuque, that thriving city was reached under more auspicious circumstances. The River Roads fiasco had irked Perkins. He made sure while he headed the railroad that it had no direct or indirect association with off-color financing. A man of great personal integrity, that policy carried over into all his business dealings.

Putting the "Q" into the Twin Cities, however, angered the Milwaukee. They in turn retaliated by building to Kansas City. Fortunately Perkins had regained the Hannibal & St. Joseph from the Gould interests, and the Burlington was in a better position to meet the new competition.

During the summer of 1886 and 1887 the road aided in the technology of railroading by fostering air brake tests on its West Burlington hill. George Westinghouse had already invented the remarkable "triple-valve," which sets the brakes by releasing the air. Hence, if a train parted, the brakes would automatically be applied. This device, while satisfactory for passenger trains, was not well adapted for heavy freights. So, exhaustive tests were made; and in the fullness of time an improved heavy-duty triple valve evolved, thanks largely to the testing in Iowa.

The year 1888 was memorable because of the great Burlington strike. The conflict, among other things, stemmed from the fact that enginemen were paid on a trip basis, the main line runs being more lucrative than the branches. This practice the men deemed unfair, and they pressed for uniform mileage pay. One thing led to another. The fact that Vice President Thomas J. Potter, who was highly respected by men and management, resigned to go with the Union Pacific did not help matters. His place was taken by Henry B. Stone, an able and honest man, but unfortunately more aloof and impersonal than the genial Potter. As a consequence, the men struck all over the system.

At the height of the walkout Governor William Larrabee of Iowa urged Perkins to arbitrate. Perkins, however, was against arbitration on prin-

ciple and backed Stone on management's position. Pinkerton detectives were called in to protect company property and non-strikers hired to operate trains. After much violence and some bloodshed the strike finally petered out. In the end the railroad "won," but it caused hard feelings and bitterness for a long time thereafter.

Also, in 1888, the road completed its high bridge across the Missouri River between Payne and Nebraska City, Nebraska, at a cost of half a million dollars. Prior to that the Plattsmouth bridge, built in 1880, was the Burlington's only structure crossing the "Big Muddy." Incidentally, the Plattsmouth span had the distinction of being the second steel railway bridge in America, the steel employed being made by the "Hay" process, an invention of Abram Tuston Hay of Burlington.

The last major extension made by Perkins was northwest to Billings, Montana, which the Burlington reached in 1894. Here the "Q" met the Northern Pacific and in conjunction with it formed a new transcontinental line.

During Perkins' administration three relatively unimportant Iowa roads were leased or controlled, all of which curiously enough began as narrow gauge lines. The earliest to come under the Burlington's protective wing began in the city of Burlington itself. This was the Burlington & Western, which left town by trackage rights (and another rail for it was of three-foot gauge) over the

standard-gauge Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern to Mediapolis. From the latter point it ran over its own iron through Winfield to Washington, a distance of 37 miles. At the time of completion in 1880 it operated under the name of the Burlington & Northwestern.

Probably to keep rival lines from picking it up, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy got control and extended the road from Winfield to Oskaloosa by the end of 1883. In going to "Osky" it met the Iowa Central's construction crews at Brighton. Both roads raced each other to the crossing, and a pitched battle ensued in the classic tradition of early-day railroading. In the end, after pulling up each other's crossing frogs, a truce was signed and the crossing permitted to stand. The Oskaloosa extension went under the label of the Burlington & Western, which absorbed its predecessor.

The second slim-gauger was the Chicago, Ft. Madison & Des Moines Railroad. Organized in 1871, as the Fort Madison, Oskaloosa & Northeastern, it underwent another name-change before constructing from Fort Madison to Collett in 1884. Under the banner of the CFtM&DM it was widened to standard gauge in 1891. The next year the road was extended through Batavia to Ottumwa. In 1900 the 71-mile property was leased by the Burlington. Shortly thereafter the Batavia-Ottumwa segment, which paralleled the main line of the "Q," was abandoned.

Finally, the last three-foot gauge carrier to be acquired under Perkins went from the state capital to Osceola. Appropriately called the Des Moines, Osceola & Southern, it began life in 1879, and was completed three years afterward. An extension from Osceola via Leon to coal mines in Cainsville, Missouri, brought the total length to 111 miles by 1884. Following a foreclosure, a name-change and a gauge-change, the road emerged as the Des Moines & Kansas City Railroad, 4′ 8½″ wide. It was known as the "Blue Grass Route of Iowa."

More financial legerdemain ensued; and that road, along with Gould's earlier Missouri, Iowa & Nebraska, came under the umbrella of the Keokuk & Western. (When the Gould empire collapsed in 1884 the MI&N went down with it. Out of the chaos emerged the Keokuk & Western.) Then at long last the Burlington, in 1900, leased the K&W, making for order and stability.

Under Perkins' presidency the Burlington grew from a 2,924-mile road to a major western trunk line embracing 7,992 miles. He became a symbol of the railroad. Whereas most of his predecessors had other interests not associated with their executive responsibilities, Perkins was first, last, and always a professional railroader. His life was the Burlington and the Burlington was his life. He frowned upon divided responsibilities. Then, again, as we have seen, he was scrupulously hon-

est in all his dealings. He despised the policies of Jay Gould and the way the Union Pacific was run during Gould's overlordship. In this connection he disdainfully observed: ". . . two generations of speculators have grown rich out of it [UP]—one out of the construction and another out of the profits of operating the Road."

Aggressive, and a tireless fighter if provoked, Perkins was above all a strategist. As the writer, Frank H. Spearman put it:

> The Burlington management has always been characterized by astuteness, and its people have cultivated the art of making friends. Mr. Perkins, who made that wonderful road what it is, never liked to have enemies or trouble. His motto was, briefly, eighty per cent of the business and peace. . . ."

On the other hand, Perkins was extremely modest as a person and shunned publicity. He, from all available accounts, never made a speech. If it were not for his voluminous correspondence, many of these policies and ideas would have been lost to posterity. Fortunately he left about 50,000 letters and some 50 copies of memoranda outlining his managerial policies, objectives, and philosophy. One finds, for example, a 30-page text on railroad administration directed to Vice President Thomas J. Potter, and files of letters probably averaging two a week to John Murray Forbes. Nearly all of them were addressed to the Boston financier as "Mr.," very rarely as "Cousin John."

Basically conservative in his views on labor, legislation, and welfare, he differed little from the average executive of his day. While he adjudged the Interstate Commerce Act as "wrong in principle" and feared regulation would be a step toward government operation, which would be "the sum of all folly not to say wickedness," he could also postulate, "It is well to bear in mind that most of the improvements to which the world largely owes its progress have been opposed in the beginning by the most level headed men, level headed men being naturally conservative."

In railroad stewardship Perkins showed great courage, never avoiding responsibility and occasionally advocating bold policies far in advance of his time. During one of his bouts with Gould he advised taking over the Santa Fe to strengthen the Burlington's position. But "Cousin John" reneged. Perhaps if Perkins had gotten the financial backing from Boston, it might have drastically altered the course of western railroad development.

The grand old man of the Burlington resigned from the presidency in 1901. All during his term as chief executive he had put "Burlington, Iowa," opposite his name in the annual reports, and to that city he retired. He died in 1907. An appropriate monument to him stands alongside the tracks today on West Burlington hill.

FRANK P. DONOVAN

The Hill Regime

In the late 1890's James J. Hill, seeking a Chicago outlet for his St. Paul-based Great Northern, determined to acquire the Burlington. The "Empire Builder" had the GN and the Hill-controlled Northern Pacific secretly buy into the "Q." Meanwhile, E. H. Harriman wanted the Burlington to achieve the same purpose for his Union Pacific. In order to do this Harriman tried to buy the NP and thereby get half interest in the Burlington. The outcome was a titanic struggle between the two giants of American railroading. Northern Pacific stock zoomed upward, and on May 9, 1901, during the peak of the battle it reached $1,000 a share. In the end, Hill won.

Now firmly in control, Jim Hill dictated the Burlington's policies. Apart from being a director or on the executive committee, Hill never held an office on the CB&Q. But whatever he controlled he managed. So for the rest of his life the ex-Canadian was "boss." Top management was accountable to him at all times, and not infrequently Hill brought in the men he wanted for key positions.

With the resignation of Charles E. Perkins as president, George B. Harris, his right-hand man,

took over that post in 1901. Harris ably held that office for a decade. When he in turn retired, Jim Hill saw to it that Darius Miller was made president in 1910. It was Hill who had brought Miller from the Michigan Central to the Great Northern as vice president and later had shifted him to the same post on the Burlington in 1902. Known as Darius the Silent, Miller generally listened quietly in conferences before giving his opinion.

After Miller's sudden death in 1914, Hale Holden, formerly vice president and head of the road's legal department, took his place.

During Hill's regime the Burlington was known for its galaxy of managerial talent. Indeed, the road became widely acknowledged as a training school for railway executives. On the Hill team was a series of vice presidents who went on to achieve fame elsewhere. The first was Howard Elliott, vice president under Harris, who left the road in 1904 to assume the presidency of the Northern Pacific and still later the New Haven.

James J. Hill thereupon brought in Daniel Willard from the vice presidency of the Erie to a similar post on the "Q." Willard is remembered for having advocated the use of the Prairie-type locomotive (oOOOo) and track modernization. "Uncle Dan," as he was later affectionately called, left the Burlington, after a six-year stint, to rehabilitate the Baltimore & Ohio. Since Hill was not the easiest man to work for, Willard no doubt

reasoned he would have more freedom on the B&O. Willard's job then went to Harry E. Byram; and the latter in turn, a few years afterward, departed for the top position on the Milwaukee.

Even before Hill's stewardship of the Burlington, the road's alumni had been impressive. Robert Harris, president in the late 1870's, subsequently held a like post on the Northern Pacific. More than any other road, however, the Santa Fe recruited its top echelon from the Burlington. In this category fell William B. Strong and Edward P. Ripley. Before "graduating" from the "Q," Strong had been general superintendent in the 1870's, and Ripley vice president late in the next decade. To this list may be added the name of W. C. Brown, superintendent of the Iowa line in the 1880's. He, several decades later, became president of the New York Central.

The Hill years of the Burlington were years of great expansion, although almost entirely outside of Iowa. An exception was the building of the Iowa & St. Louis Railway from 1901 to 1903. This 52-mile feeder went from Sedan to Elmer, Missouri, where it tapped coal mines. Upon completion in 1903 it was leased by the Burlington. (The road also had a short branch from Centerville to Sedan which was abandoned in 1903.)

That same year the Burlington & Western was extended from Oskaloosa to Tracy—13 miles. Built to standard gauge, it met the Albia-Des

Moines branch at Tracy. Meanwhile, the entire B&W had been widened from narrow to standard gauge, and it was bought by the Burlington in 1903.

Apart from construction, the "Q" in collaboration with the Milwaukee Road jointly leased the Davenport, Rock Island & Northwestern in 1901. The 41-mile short line had its own bridge crossing the Mississippi between Rock Island and Davenport with tracks extending along the Iowa bank of the river up to Clinton. It gave access to many industries in the area not hitherto accessible to the Burlington.

Outside of Iowa important developments were afoot, for Hill was desirous of promoting a new short route from Billings to the Gulf of Mexico. He unceasingly strove for a better traffic balance. With such a line he could ship goods from the Orient and lumber from the northwest directly to the Gulf. From there it would go on to eastern cities by water. In the reverse direction manufactured goods from the East and the Gulf area would flow readily to the Pacific Northwest.

To implement this plan he had the Burlington construct a new line from western Nebraska to Billings by way of Casper and the Wind River Canyon. In conjunction with this project the Burlington acquired the Colorado & Southern in 1908. With some additional construction and trackage rights the "Q" had now a new direct

route from Billings to Houston via Casper, Denver, and Fort Worth.

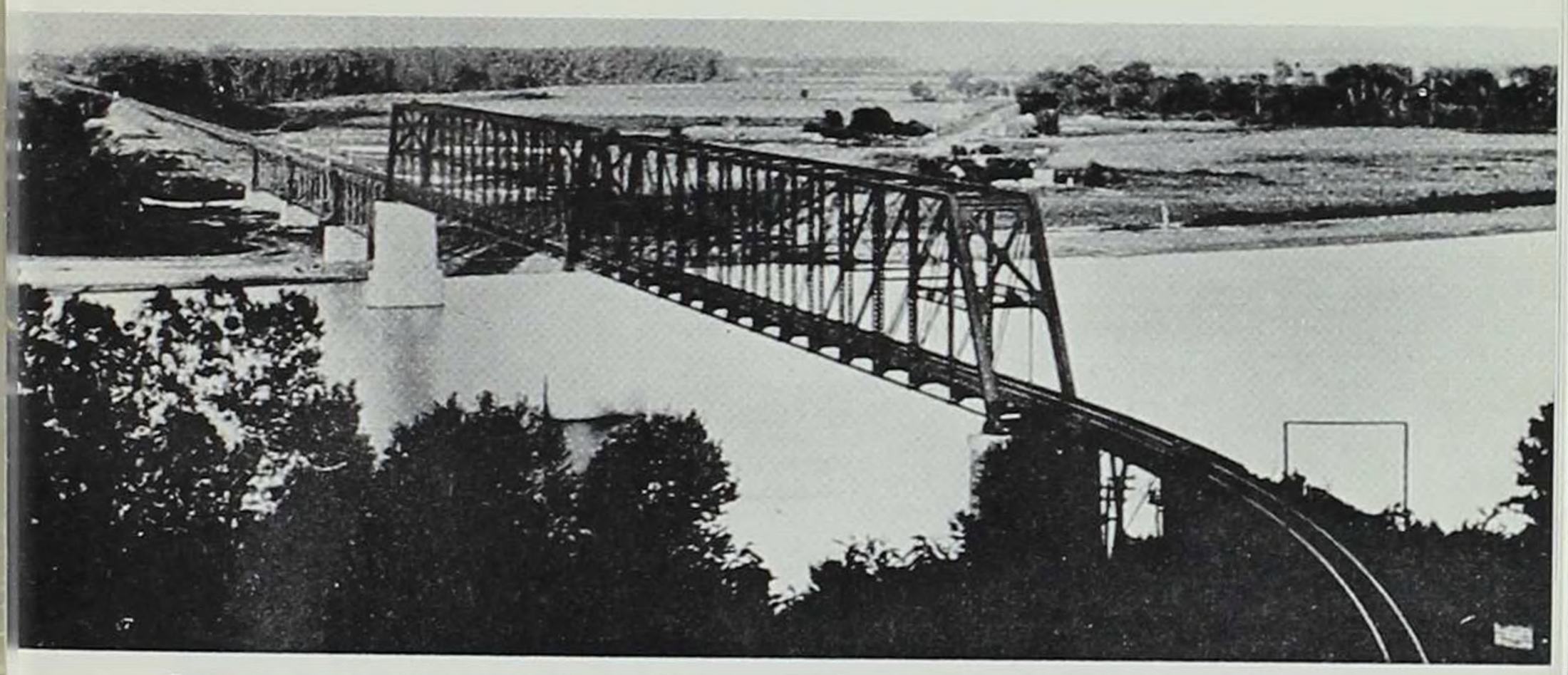
Meantime, the Burlington, as always, was intent on developing the territory it served. One aspect of this purpose in Iowa was the operation of a Silo Train, calling at 42 towns in the state during 1913. Agents on the train made talks concerning the proper storage of corn and distributed thousands of pamphlets urging construction of silos. A "Dairy Special" was likewise run during February 1914, visiting 24 Iowa locales in the interest of better dairying.

The Hill regime gave employment to Harry Bedwell, a young man from Kellerton, near Mt. Ayr in southwestern Iowa. He lived on the longer line of the loop connecting Giles with Albany Jct., Missouri. (The loop was in the middle of the extensive Chariton-St. Joseph branch.) When the little local trains paused at his village they spelled adventure and romance to country-bred Harry. He was soon helping around the depot in return for being taught "Morse" by the friendly agent. Upon mastering "the key," he fudged his age a bit and got a job as operator at Andover, Missouri, a tiny station on the other side of the loop. Later he pounded brass as relief operator on branch lines in Iowa and Missouri as well as on the "high iron" between St. Joseph and Council Bluffs. Having gotten a "good going over" on the Burlington, the young "lightning slinger" lit out

for the West to become an "op" on the Rio Grande, Southern Pacific, and Pacific Electric railroads.

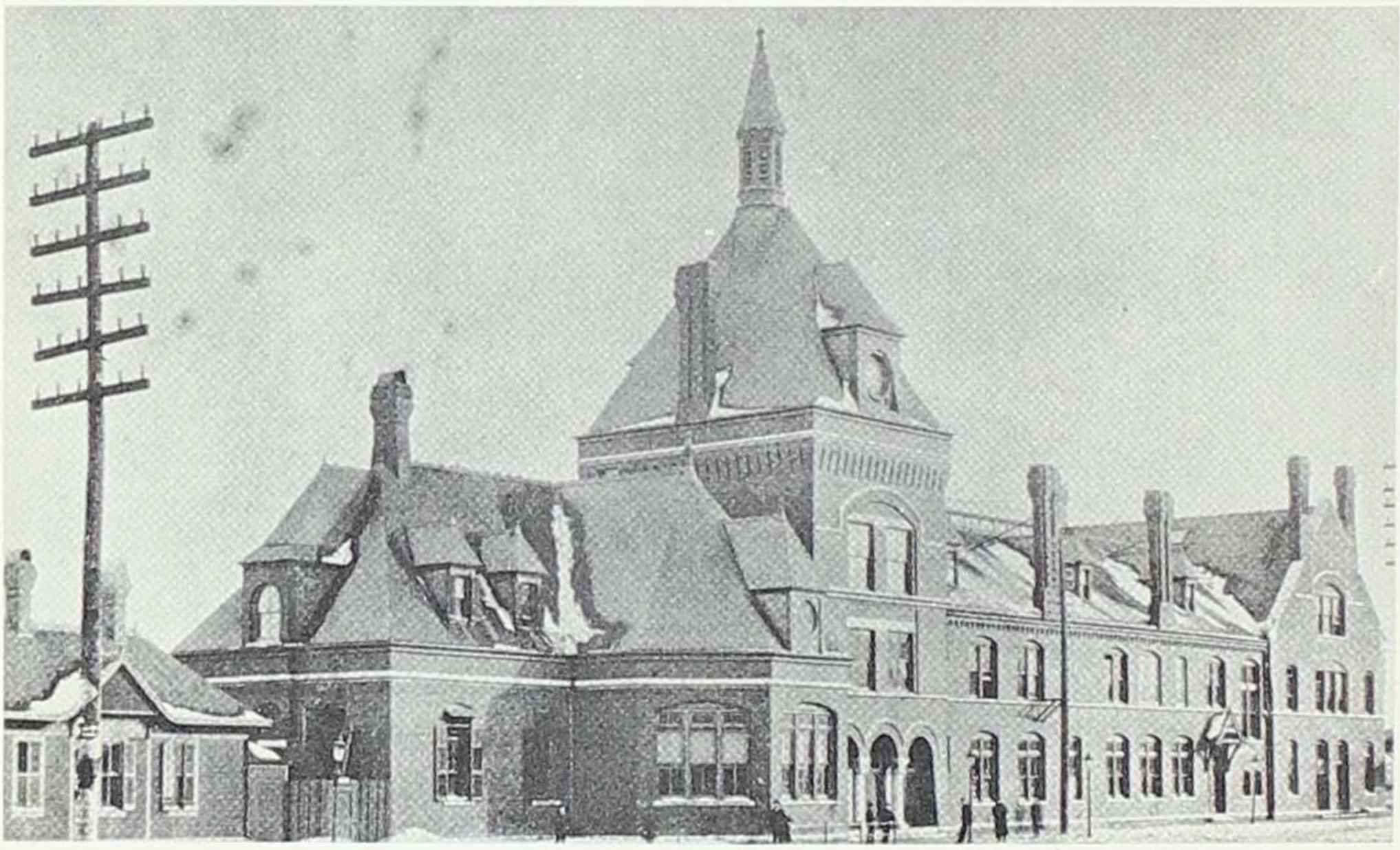
All this time the itinerant railroader was committing to paper his experiences and those of his fellows. Bedwell's first significant article, an autobiographical account of "The Mistakes of a Young Railroad Telegraph Operator," ran as a two-part serial in *The American Magazine* for November-December 1909. Throughout the years he wrote thirty-five stories for *Railroad Magazine* and its predecessors, and had fictional tales in ten issues of *The Saturday Evening Post* as well. Some of these yarns were woven into a novel called *The Boomer* (1942). He died in 1955, but his remarkable and authentic short stories continue to appear in anthologies. Harry Bedwell, last of the great railroad storytellers, was at his best in portraying the colorful "boomer" of yesteryear when steam was king and railroading more of an adventure than a science.

FRANK P. DONOVAN



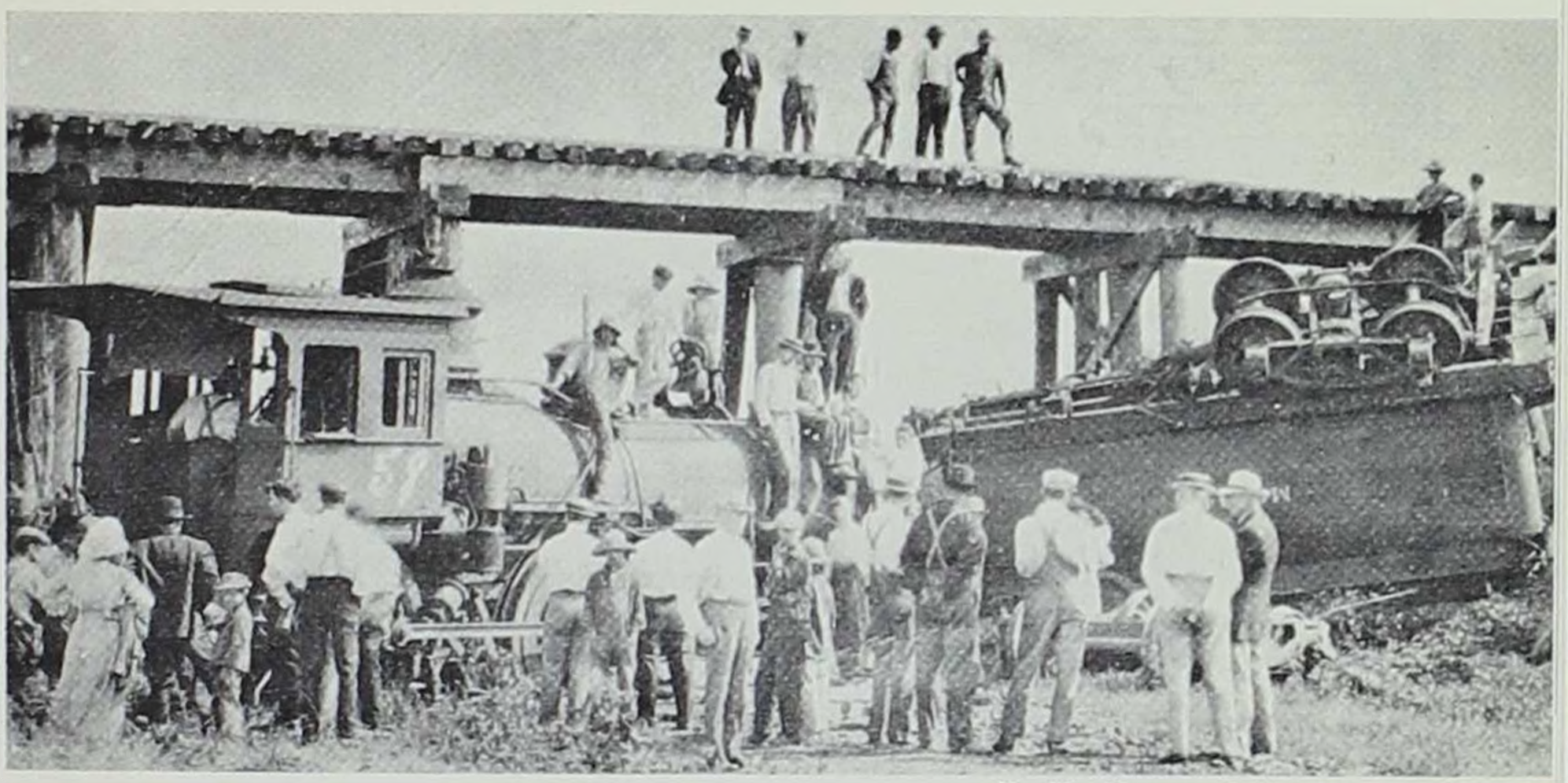
Spanning the Missouri River between Plattsmouth, Nebraska, and Pacific Junction, Iowa, the first Plattsmouth bridge was built in 1879-1880 and rebuilt in 1901-1902.

A long freight emerges from the Plattsmouth bridge today. The bridge provides a short cut for Burlington freight trains to and from Nebraska by avoiding the longer and more congested Council Bluffs-Omaha gateway.



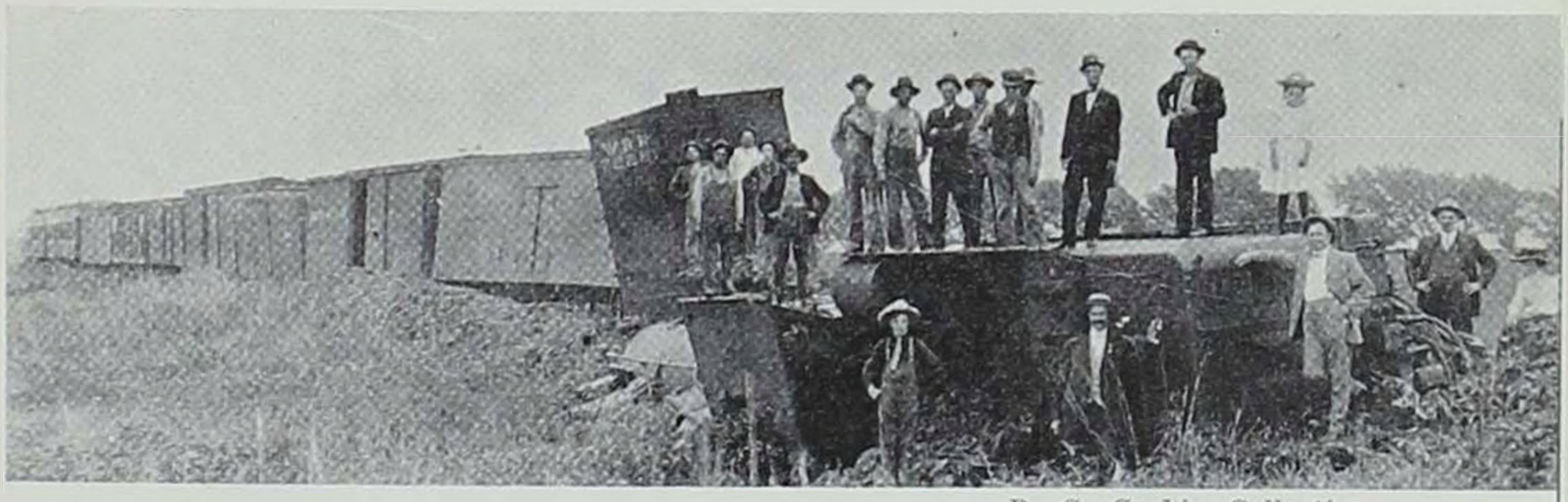
Belfry, dormer windows, and a profusion of chimneys characterized this Victorian-style station at Burlington. Built in 1882, it was destroyed by fire in 1943.

A new Burlington station replaced the burned structure in 1944. On the west wall is a panel honoring Charles E. Perkins, who lived in Burlington for nearly a half century after his arrival in August of 1859.



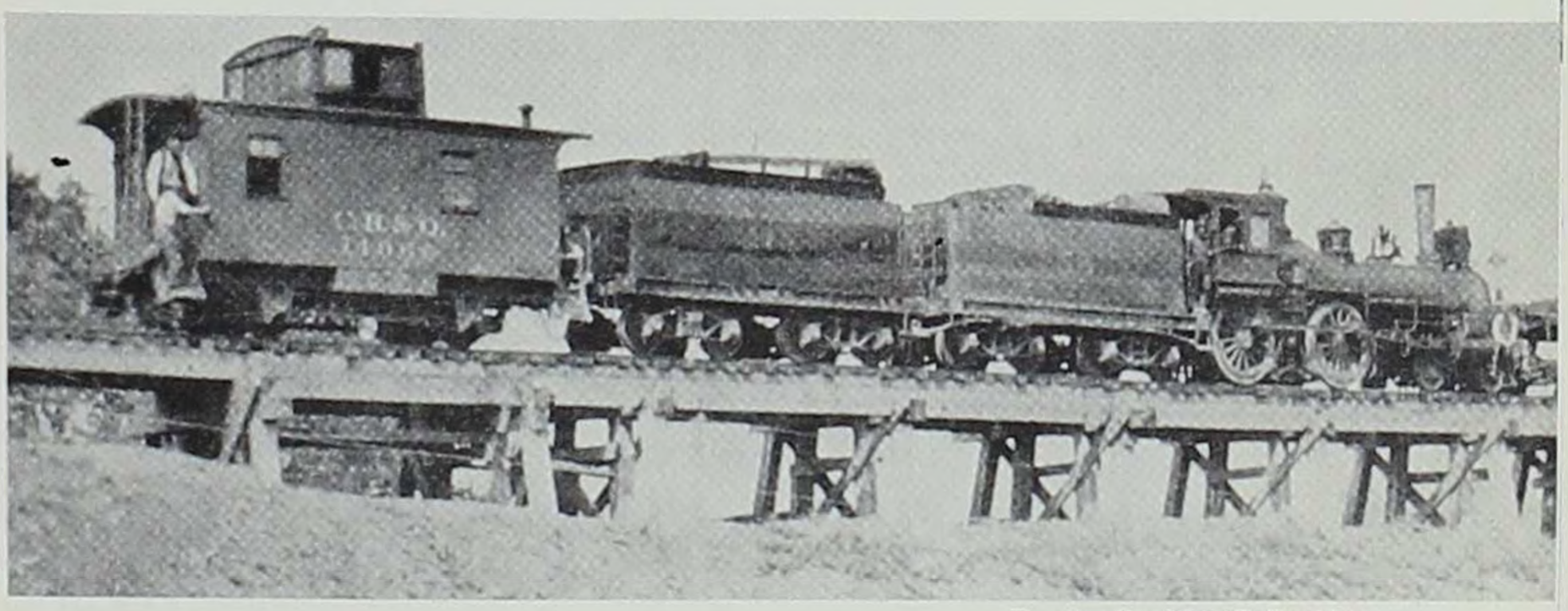
E. H. Meyers Collection

Work train derailment at New Market in 1912. Engine is an American Standard used extensively on secondary lines around the turn of the century.



B. G. Corbin Collection

Derailment of a mixed train on the Creston-Cumberland branch three miles north of Orient in June of 1909.

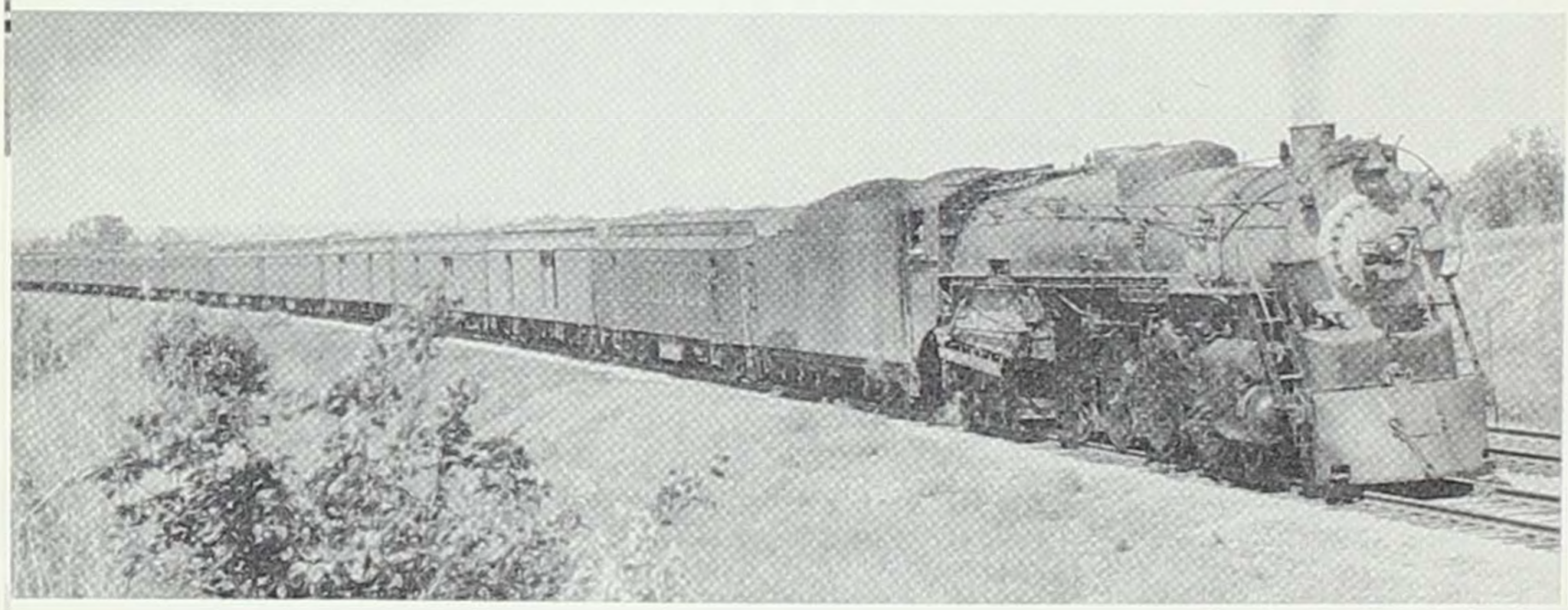


B. G. Corbin Collection

Work train, with little four-wheel "bobber" caboose, making a fill to replace trestle west of New Market in 1912. This part of line abandoned in 1945.

B. G. Corbin Collection

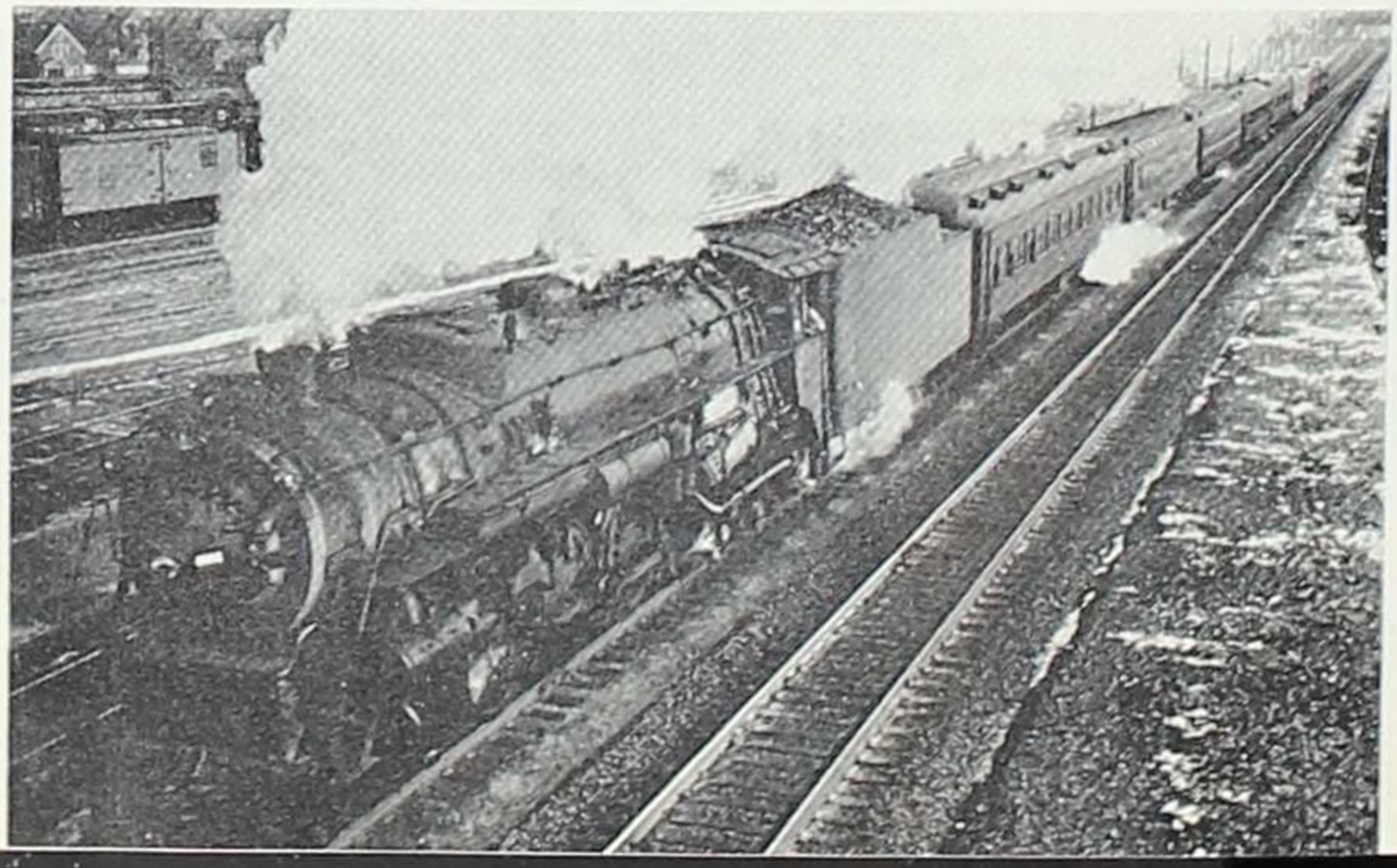
Steam locomotive, Aeolus, pulls No. 6 out of Burlington. It was the second streamlined engine of that name and the only Hudson-type locomotive featuring a vestibule cab.



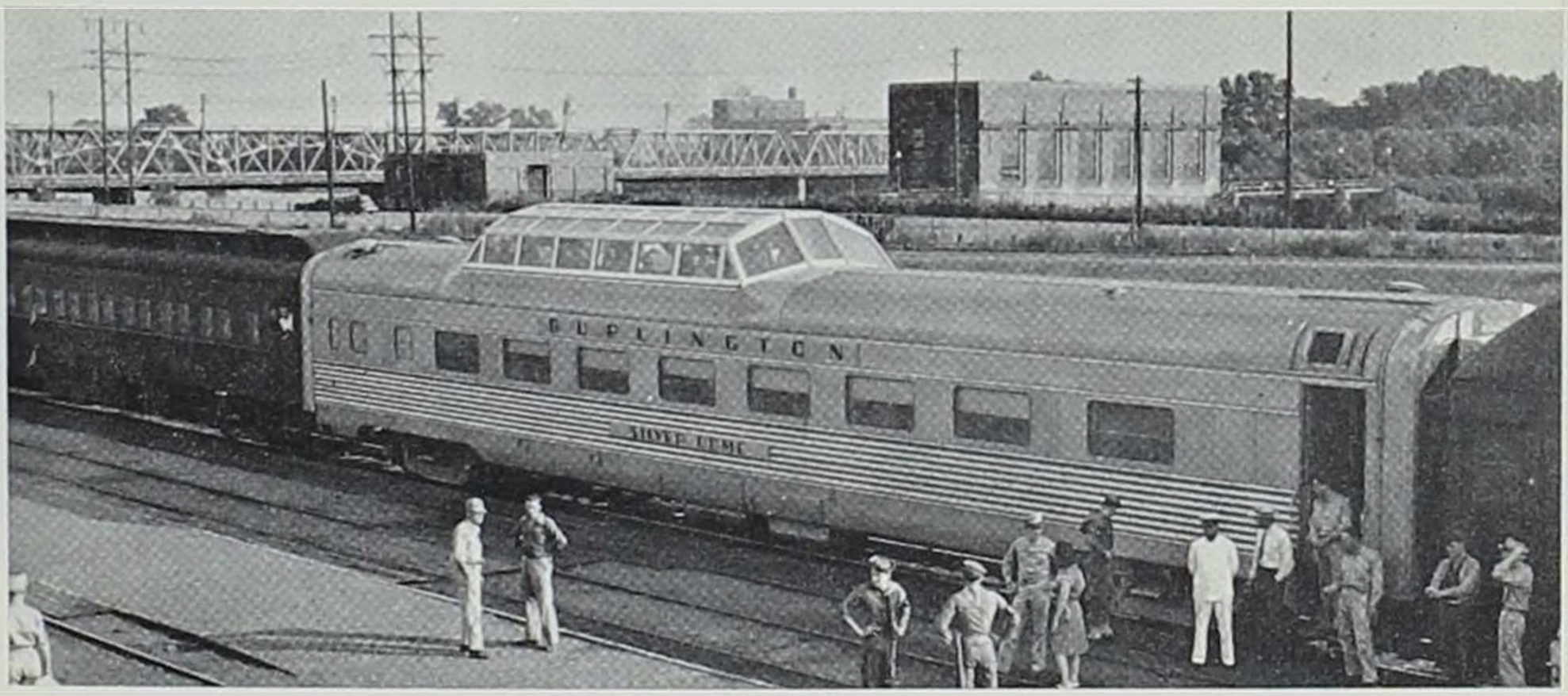
B. G. Corbin Collection

No. 6, the Chicago local, powered by a Baldwin-type locomotive, near Red Oak. It was the only eastbound passenger train crossing the Plattsmouth bridge.

The Exposition Flyer was placed in service in 1939 and was superseded by the Dieselized California Zephyr. It crossed Iowa mostly in daylight and was popular with Iowans.



The Pioneer Zephyr passing through Aurora as it neared the end of its historic dawn-to-dusk non-stop run from Denver to Chicago on May 26, 1934.



The nation's first dome car at Ottumwa on a test run, July 27, 1945.

Chicago-bound California Zephyr glides through Stanton in May of 1965. Its passengers had an excellent opportunity to view the Rockies and other scenery from the train's five dome cars.

B. G. Corbin Collection

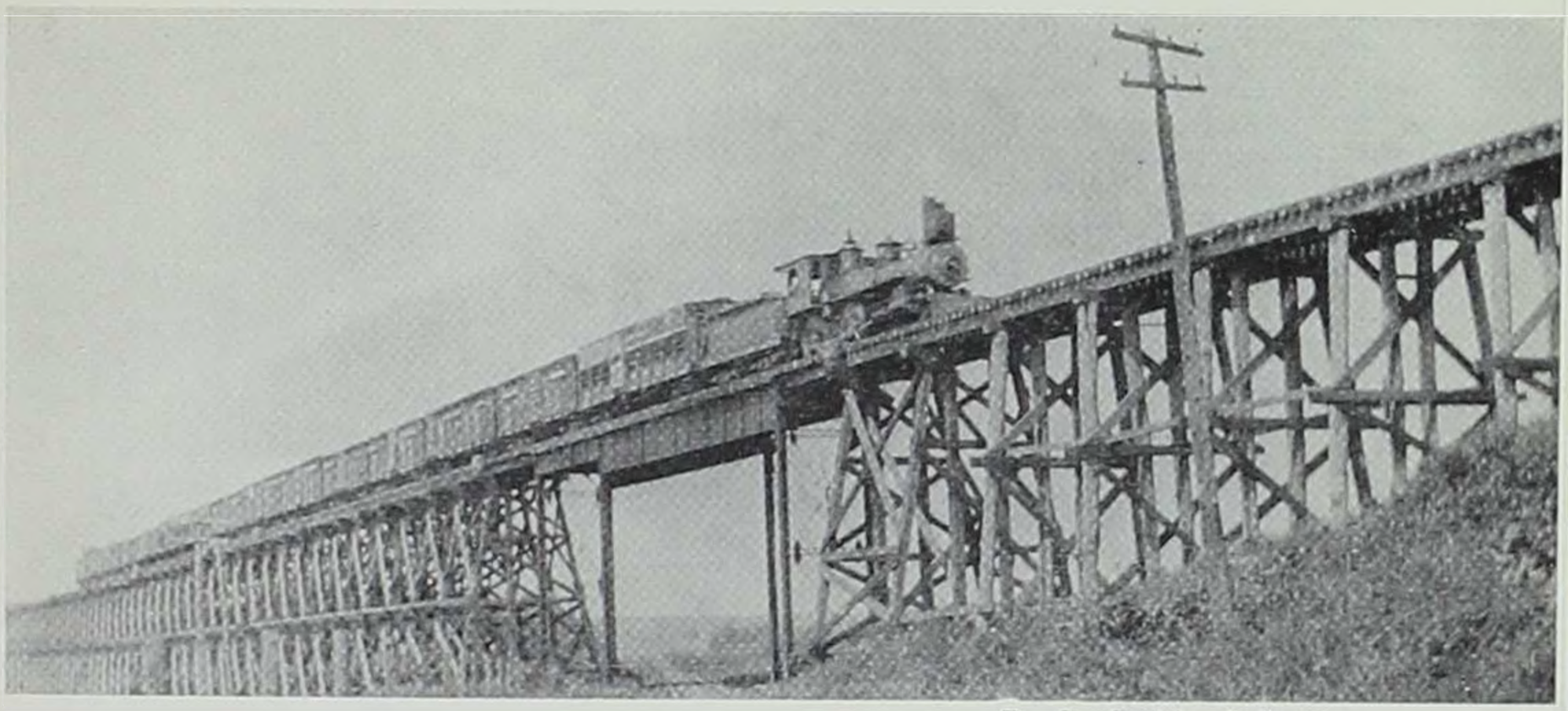
B. G. Corbin Collection

(Left) Double-header main line train on a cold winter's day at Osceola in 1915. (Right) Engine, with link-and-pin coupler, on old grade and depot site at Red Oak. Track and grade was rebuilt and relocated in 1902.

B. G. Corbin Collection

"Armstrong" turntable at Sidney. It was the end of the branch running north to Hastings. Photo taken in the winter of 1945.

Switch engines and crews in front of the former Pacific Junction station in 1915. The Kansas City-Council Bluffs line crossed the Burlington's main stem at Pacific Junction. Engine on the left is a four-wheeler; the others eight-wheelers.



B. G. Corbin Collection

Stock train on a spidery trestle crossing the Wabash near Coin. This stock "extra" is pictured on the Villisca-Corning, Missouri, branch in Iowa.

B. G. Corbin Collection

Steaming up the grade into Red Oak on its run from Shenandoah is this 10-car train of nursery stock.

Poultry was an important item of freight as the "chicken" car behind the engine would suggest. This was a local freight on the Mt. Ayr "loop line" between Giles and Albany Jct., Missouri, located on the Chariton-St. Joseph branch.

Mogul, or 2-6-0 type, locomotive at West Burlington shops in 1913. It was built by Rogers in 1892 and retired in 1927.

B. G. Corbin Collection

Last steam freight through Red Oak on September 21, 1956. The engine was a powerful Texas-type steam locomotive, attractive in appearance and among the most efficient in the Burlington system.

Modern fast freights, like this four-unit job, highball tonnage from Chicago to Council Bluffs and beyond on passenger-train schedules.

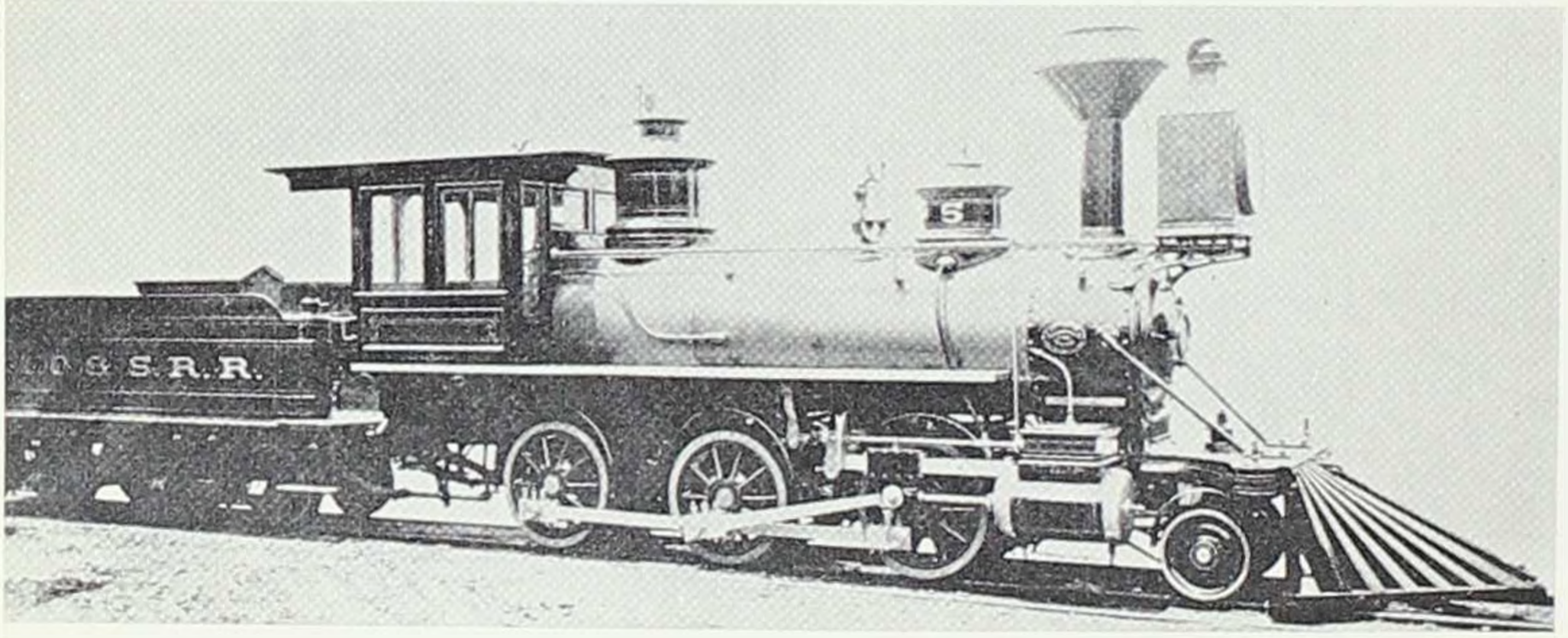
The Fast Mail, taken with instantaneous exposure, near Monmouth, Illinois, on May 27, 1887. Speed photography was in its infancy at this time.

This is the cover of a song, the Fast Mail, which commemorated the Burlington's Fast Mail service. The words and music were by A. M. Bruner and the song was published by the Burlington's Passenger Department.

Postal clerks sort letters as The Fast Mail speeds over the track. The famous train was started in 1884 and terminated operation in 1967.

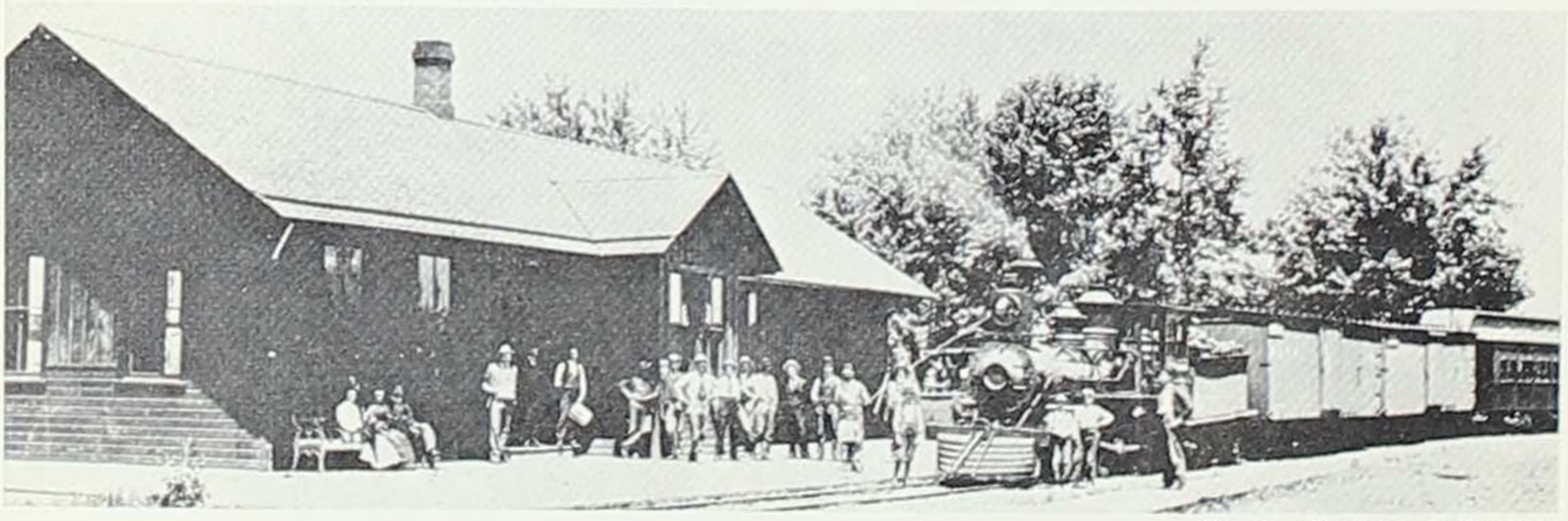
B. G. Corbin Collection

R.P.O. and baggage motor car with an older coach as a trailer at Villisca in 1939.



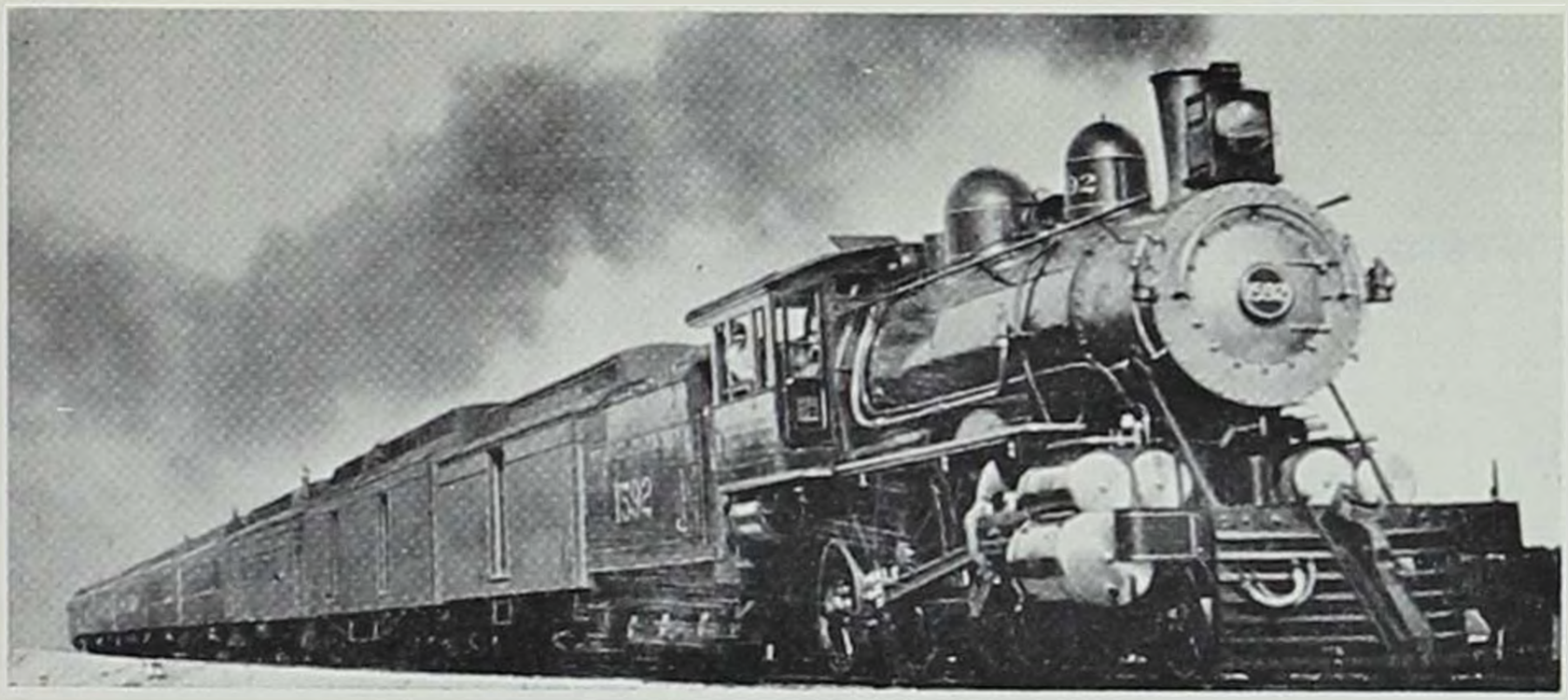
B. G. Corbin Collection

Narrow gauge locomotive on the Des Moines-Osceola & Southern. Line formerly went from Des Moines to Cainsville, Missouri.



B. G. Corbin Collection

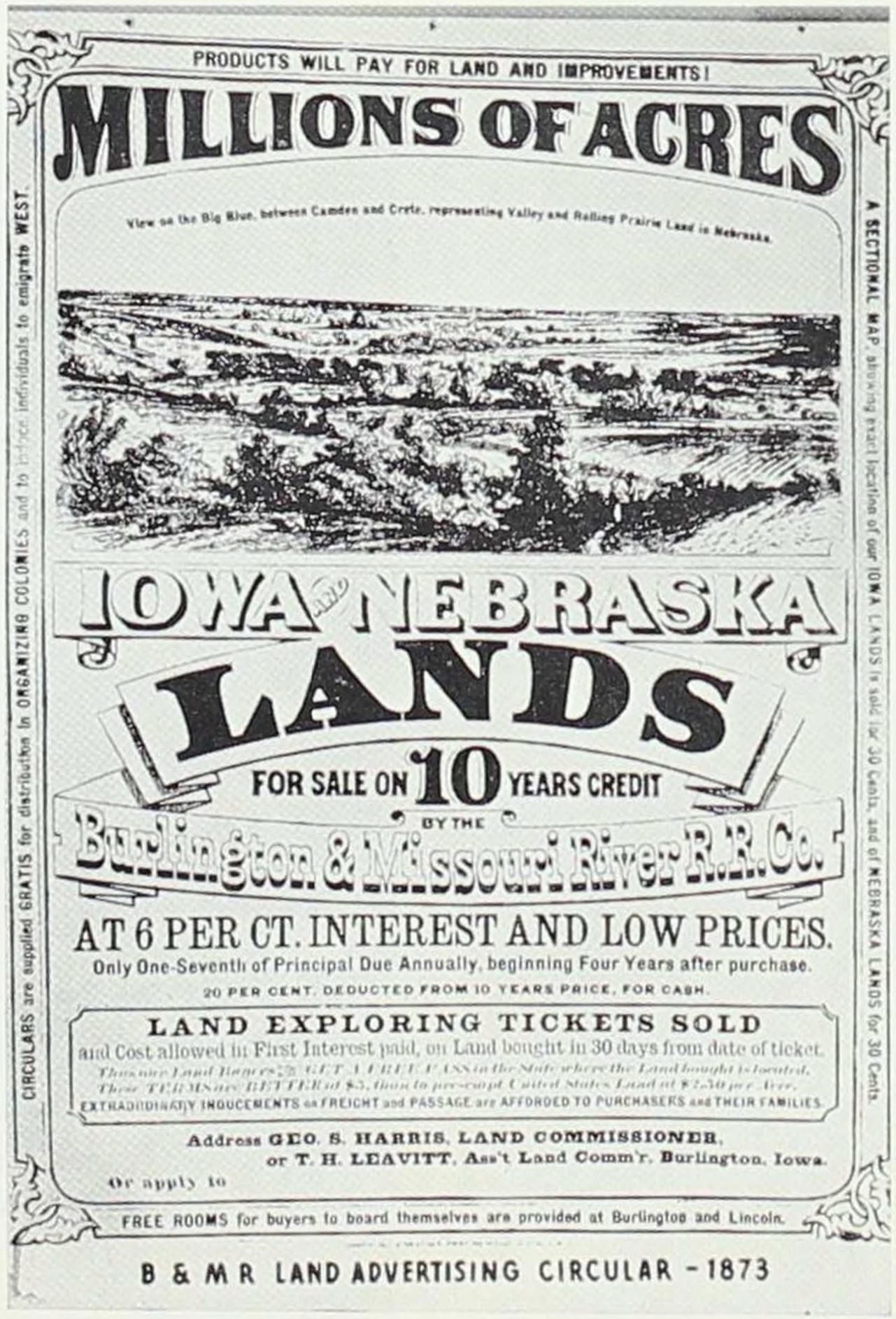
Narrow gauge train on the Burlington & Northwestern at Washington.



A classic pose of the Denver Flyer in 1899. Powered by a fleet Atlantic-type engine, the Flyer raced across Iowa on its way to Denver.

Passenger coach of the 1890's.

Parlor car of the 1900's.



These are typical of the land-office broadsides and early advertisements issued by the Burlington and Missouri River R.R. Through such enticing broadsides thousands of prospective settlers bought land at an average of $12.17 per acre and opened up their farms along the right-of-way of the Burlington Railroad.

War and the Post-War Era

James J. Hill died in 1916, and his place on the Burlington directorate was filled by the Empire Builder's understudy—Ralph Budd. This Iowa-born railroader later carried out many of Hill's policies, and he in due time would head the "Q." In the meantime, war clouds were on the horizon. Then, on that fateful Good Friday, April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on the Central Powers. Just before the end of the year the Nation took over the railroads.

In the shake-up during Federal control Hale Holden was called upon to be a regional director. Thereupon Charles E. Perkins, Jr., became president of the corporation for the duration. Son of the former president, 37-year-old Perkins was born in Burlington. Educated at Harvard, he had been a director of the "Q" since 1914 and was familiar with its policies.

Fortunately, during 1917, the West Burlington locomotive repair and machine shops were rebuilt. Completed in 1883, these facilities had become inadequate to meet the demands of the larger engines rapidly coming into use. After modernization, however, they were able to cope with newer motive power, already hard-pressed to expedite

the greatly expanding war-time railroad traffic.

With the Armistice signed on November 11, 1918, and the subsequent return of the railroads to their owners, Holden resumed his role as chief executive of the Burlington. During this time the old Adams Express was replaced by the American Railway Express Company.

The post-war years again brought up the plan envisioned by Hill to consolidate the Burlington, Great Northern, and Northern Pacific into one unified, compact system. This giant corporation would be called the Great Northern Pacific. Hearings were held over the years. Finally, early in 1930, the ICC gave its official approval for the two Northerns to merge. But in doing so the Commission specified that the Burlington be divorced from control by the Northerns. It meant, in effect, the cornerstone of the new "house" would be left out. Management felt that such a plan without the strategic Burlington would not be desirable, and the matter was reluctantly dropped.

For the most part traffic held up fairly well during the post-bellum decade except for passengers. Better highways, more automobiles, and the rise of the motor bus took their toll, especially of short-haul riders. To combat this declining patronage and still provide passenger service, the Burlington made widespread use of rail motor cars. At first they were of mechanical transmission, but with the perfection of gasoline-electric

propulsion the latter soon predominated. In 1928, for example, the road acquired 31 "gas-electrics," principally for branch-line use, in a valiant effort to reduce expenses. With the traditional steam power a minimum of five men was required; whereas the "doodlebugs," as the motor units were dubbed, needed only a three-man crew.

On the twenty branch lines in Iowa, some of which spilled over into Missouri, ten made use of the motor units by 1929. Usually supplanting steam passenger trains, they in some instances merely supplemented the steamers. Occasionally mixed trains and even "freights" provided an additional service of sorts.

On the Shenandoah branch a motor unit traversed the 244-mile run in slightly under 10 hours, making 37 stops en route. The little train, which left Keokuk and thence dipped down to Alexandria, Missouri, went west by northwest through Missouri and Iowa to its Shenandoah destination. It made a 20-minute lunch stop at Sedan. Its counterpart, leaving Shenandoah on the eastward run, took a little longer, due in part to a half-hour meal stop at Clarinda.

A few lightly-traveled branches, such as between Keokuk and Mt. Pleasant, the two stub lines out of Hastings, and the 19-mile Red Oak-Griswold feeder, had, by this time, degenerated to mixed train service only.

The year 1929, better remembered for the stock-

market crash, saw a new man at the helm. Hale Holden had left the road, in the traditional Burlington manner, to become chairman of the executive committee of the Southern Pacific. His place was filled by Frederick E. Williamson, formerly vice president, who came to the "Q" from a similar position on the Northern Pacific.

After the Wall Street debacle traffic began to decline and a sharp falling off continued for the duration of the depression. That tragic year, too, marked a relatively high point in passenger miles although not in riders. It forms a suitable bench mark from which to take a look at the over-all picture of Burlington passenger service.

The road's "candy" train was its *Overland Express* with through sleepers from Chicago to San Francisco (Oakland), via Omaha, Denver, and Salt Lake City. Also between its headlight and markers were an observation-lounge, a diner, plus a full assortment of chair cars and coaches. It operated over the Rio Grande west of Denver and the Western Pacific beyond Salt Lake City. This was in the days before the Rio Grande went "through the Rockies, not around them" with its Dotsero cut-off. As a result, the *Overland* had to detour south from Denver to Pueblo, before heading west. Scenic-wise the ride was "tops," but in elapsed time it could not compete with the much shorter Union Pacific-Southern Pacific route.

On the Burlington one left Chicago at 11:30

p.m.; and, what with an hour layover in Denver plus a nearly two-hour rendezvous in Salt Lake City, the train pulled into the Oakland Mole at 4:20 p.m., four days later. Actually the scenic sojourn took three full days plus the better part of a fourth. Commercial travelers in particular would fortify themselves for the long jaunt. It was waggishly observed that when one found four drummers in the cars one usually found "a fifth."

In comparison with the *Overland's* figurative "dog trot" across Iowa, the schedules of the *Colorado Limited* and the *Chicago Nebraska Limited* were more of a sprint. The former train linked Chicago and Denver, and the latter, Chicago and Lincoln. Both trains, of course, went across Iowa from Burlington to Council Bluffs. They had the usual make-up of pullmans, diners, coaches, and chair cars, plus an observation-lounge unit, the latter being described as "a palatial rear car." The Nebraska train also trundled a Peoria-Lincoln sleeper, which it picked up from a connecting local at Galesburg.

The 1929 timecard shows only one through train using the Plattsmouth, Nebraska, bridge in crossing the Missouri River. This was No. 4, a plodding accommodation, leaving Omaha at 9:35 a.m. and stopping everywhere before pulling into the Windy City's Union Station at 10:55 a.m. the next day. In crossing Iowa it made exactly 49 stops, only a few of which were on flag! Leaving

the state, it gained more stature with a Chicago sleeper picked up in Burlington. The sleeper had come up on a connecting train from Keokuk.

The Burlington, in addition, had fairly good trains north and south through Iowa. Best of the lot was the *Twin City Limited* northbound and its southern counterpart, the *St. Louis Limited*. They shuttled between St. Louis and St. Paul-Minneapolis via Keokuk, Ft. Madison, and Burlington. North of Burlington was the responsibility of the Rock Island.

In the western part of the state there were more and better trains on the line running south from Council Bluffs to St. Joseph. Over this route came sections of the *Overland Express* and the *Colorado Limited* from St. Louis with cars designed for sleeping, eating, lounging, and just "sitting up."

To make the record complete, the "Q" had shuttle service from Dubuque to East Dubuque, Illinois, connecting with all Chicago-Twin City Limiteds. On the western border the Burlington came in from Nebraska to Sioux City over trackage rights on the North Western.

The depression was in full swing when Frederick Williamson resigned at the end of 1931 to head the New York Central, where his railroad career had started. Thereupon Ralph Budd was given a dual title: director *and president*.

FRANK P. DONOVAN

Budd—Master Railroader

Ralph Budd was born on a farm near Waterloo on August 20, 1879. He was one of six children, three boys and three girls. Being patient and gentle by nature, Budd was usually given the chore of coaxing the young cows into being milked. When he was thirteen the Budds moved to Des Moines, and it was there he went to high school. Meanwhile, his older brother, John, had graduated from Highland Park College in Des Moines, as a civil engineer.

Ralph often helped John in surveying locally, and he regularly attended lectures at Highland Park College while still in high school. An aptitude for mathematics plus a strong interest in engineering aided him in combining high school and college in six years. Even before graduating he was enthralled by his older brother's tales of railroad building in Iowa, Nebraska, and Wyoming.

Upon getting a degree in civil engineering, Ralph persuaded the Chicago Great Western to take him on as a draftsman. Later he went out on the line and helped ballast track and relay rail between Des Moines and Oelwein. Rapid advancement on the CGW led to an even better job with the Rock Island. By 1903 he became the

first division engineer of the latter road, then building between St. Louis and Kansas City. On the Rock Island he met Vice President John F. Stevens, an outstanding engineer of his time. Stevens took a liking to young Budd and observed how competently he worked. As a result, when Stevens was later appointed chief engineer of the Panama Canal he sent for Budd to help rehabilitate the railway across the isthmus. Thereupon Budd went from Iowa to Panama to "railroad" in the tropics. When Stevens left, Budd continued under his successor, Major George W. Goethals.

In the interim Stevens was back in the states working for James J. Hill. The Empire Builder was projecting his Oregon Trunk Line into central Oregon to give the Hill roads access to that area. Stevens needed a capable assistant, and he again sought Ralph Budd. Heeding his former chief's call, the Hawkeye engineer left Panama to take up reconnaissance work in Oregon. He subsequently became chief engineer of the Oregon Trunk and soon afterward, of the Hill-controlled Spokane, Portland and Seattle.

In the course of his work, Budd met the shaggy-bearded Hill, then past seventy but as alert and domineering as ever. Jim Hill, likewise, was much impressed by Budd's ability, not to say his amiable disposition and modesty. The result was that late in 1912 Hill called Budd to St. Paul as assistant to the president of the Great Northern.

Thereafter the rail magnate took a personal interest in his 33-year-old appointee. Soon Budd became chief engineer of the GN and a confidant of the man who dominated its management.

James J. Hill was a hard taskmaster, yet Budd met his exacting requirements and pleased the old man. Hill could be severe, arbitrary, and almost ruthless at times, but there was also a lighter, more human side to his nature.

A former GN employee tells of an occasion when Budd, then chief engineer of the road, was discussing a matter of policy with Hill. The engineer held one point of view, the railroad tycoon another. Lunch time came, and an attendant brought in some sandwiches, milk, and beer. In observing the latter, Hill remarked with a twinkle in his one good eye, "Ah, Anheuser-Busch to make Budd wiser."

But Hill never seriously doubted the wisdom of his talented protege. In fact, he was all the time grooming Ralph Budd for the top job. Moreover, he ordained that when a new president was needed the opening would go to Budd. The time came in 1919, three years after Hill's death. Then, as Richard Overton expressed it, "Budd inherited the office and responsibilities of the Empire Builder."

When Budd came to the Burlington in 1932 after his Great Northern stewardship he came to head a road which was bigger, hauled vastly more

tonnage and earned substantially more revenue than the "Big G." The CB&Q, with its affiliated Colorado and Southern and Fort Worth and Denver City lines, had a combined mileage of 11,314.

All during the Depression the Burlington had made a better showing than its two "parents," the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific. In fact, the parental "interest" in the "Q" had helped the two Northerns remain solvent during the lean years of bank closings, business failures, and mortgage foreclosures. In Iowa nearly all of its railroads sought the protection of the courts. Among them were the Milwaukee, Rock Island, North Western, Great Western—but never the Burlington. Even so, things were far from rosy on the big Granger Road. In the month that Budd took office (January 1932) the net railway operating income had slipped 72 per cent in comparison with the same month of the previous year.

Budd trimmed costs by reducing the operating divisions from seventeen to eleven. On the positive side he sought more traffic. For one thing, he felt the Burlington was not getting its share of transcontinental tonnage. True, the "Q" interchanged with the friendly Rio Grande at Denver, which in turn connected with both the Western Pacific and the Southern Pacific at Salt Lake City for the West Coast. But the Rio Grande, as we have seen, went south to Colorado Springs and

Pueblo before it headed west. It interchanged with the Rock Island at the Springs, and the Missouri Pacific at Pueblo. Inasmuch as the Rio Grande received the same rate for through traffic from all these gateways, it naturally favored Pueblo first, Colorado Springs second, and Denver last. The reasoning behind this was, of course, to reduce the length of haul for the same rate of pay. So, in the eyes of the Rio Grande's traffic men, the "Mopac" was their fair-haired connection, with the Rock Island second in favor, and the Burlington a poor third.

Budd studied the matter. He looked at the map. Yes, there was a way out. A railroad called the Denver and Salt Lake had completed the remarkable six-mile Moffat Tunnel through the Rockies on its line going west from Denver. It terminated at a small community named Craig but on the way went only forty miles from the Rio Grande's main line. By building a cut-off one could, as if by magic, shorten the Rio Grande's main stem from Denver to the west by 175 miles. Furthermore, the proposed line would have better grades than the roundabout route through Pueblo.

The Iowa railroader carefully planned his strategy. He discussed the matter with his friend, Arthur Curtiss James, the power behind the Western Pacific and a Burlington director of long standing. James was amenable. On the other hand, James thought the Rio Grande was doing a

fairly good job in keeping up its main line and was reluctant to intercede. Budd clinched his support when he said, "I've learned that one party in such a deal can stop improvement work, but it takes two of them to go ahead and do it."

James quickly grasped the idea. Work soon began on the project, and in 1934 the Dotsero cut-off was completed. In a few years the "Q" quadrupled its transcontinental tonnage through Denver. Formerly that gateway ranked only sixth as an interchange point on the system, but within a decade it moved up to third, being exceeded only by Chicago and Kansas City. Later the cut-off was of tremendous importance in handling unprecedented traffic occasioned by World War II.

Even before America entered the conflict Ralph Budd was active in expediting defense traffic on a national scale. Appointed Commissioner of Transportation by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in May 1940, he was soon shuttling between Chicago and Washington.

From the date of Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, until the end of 1946 the Burlington hauled 3,526,151 military personnel in 11,591 special trains. Another 1,667,176 servicemen were handled on special cars on regular trains. Overton in his *Burlington Route* summed this feat up by saying, ". . . every type of rail transportation smashed records." Budd himself pragmatically declared, "During the war years we at the Bur-

lington did twice as much as we thought we could."

Both the pre- and post-war years were noteworthy for the role the Burlington played in developing the streamlined train and in inaugurating diesel power. Another significant improvement envisioned by Budd was the construction of a cut-off to shorten the Burlington's route to Kansas City.

Being seventy in 1949, Budd retired from the Burlington, as he himself had advocated that retirement age for the road's officers. But he continued on the directorate for another five years. Meanwhile, John M. Budd, president of the Great Northern, was made a director. So it was that father and son sat on the board.

Apart from railroading, Ralph Budd was a man of many interests and every inch a scholar. All his life he was an avid reader. It was only natural for him to serve on the boards of such institutions as St. Paul's James Jerome Hill Reference Library, Chicago's Newberry Library, and its Museum of Science and Industry. After his "retirement" he was asked to lecture at Northwestern University. Another invitation came to become chairman of the Chicago Transit Authority. He chose the latter. During the next five years he did much to modernize and consolidate the Windy City's urban transportation facilities. In 1954 Budd moved to Santa Barbara where he died in 1962.

FRANK P. DONOVAN

Way of the Zephyrs

The *Zephyr* saga goes back to 1933. Its principal actors were a railroad president, a manufacturer, and an inventor. Ralph Budd sought a fleet of light-weight, internal-combustion trains to reduce expenses and win back passengers from the highways. (Budd had experience with diesel-electric power units in building the Cascade Tunnel when he was with the Great Northern.) He gave Edward G. Budd, Sr. (no relation), of Philadelphia's Budd Manufacturing Company, a carte blanche to build such a unit. And he left it up to Charles W. ("Boss Ket") Kettering, General Motors vice president of research, to design the engine. Thus it came about that the two Budds and Boss Ket evolved America's first diesel-powered streamlined train. It was out-shopped on April 7, 1934, and two days later made a shakedown run over the Reading Company rails from Philadelphia to Perkiomen Jct., about twenty-five miles.

In the words of David P. Morgan, editor of *Trains,* the creation "was like nothing else on rails." From slanted nose to rounded solarium-lounge, the bantam-weight, snake-like train tipped the scales at 97½ tons. The three-unit job was

articulated, thereby having only four trucks instead of the normal six. The lead car, powered by a 600-h.p. diesel generator set, was the "working unit." It also had a Railway Post Office and mail storage compartment. Next came a combination baggage-express, buffet-grill and coach unit. Finally, there was the coach and observation-lounge car at the end of the silvery streamliner.

Indirect lighting, pastel shades of pleasing gray and green, silk drapes, air conditioning, carpeted floors, radio reception, trays for meals while seated, made it so far removed from the orthodox day coach or pullman as to seem almost preposterous on any railroad. Apart from this, it was the first stainless steel train. Unorthodox, new, daring, little wonder Boss Ket characterized Budd, who sparked the idea, as "a very nervy railroad president."

The little streamliner was called *Zephyr,* the Greek personification of the West Wind. Much to the amazement of a Chicago columnist, Budd explained the derivation of the word and nonchalantly quoted a passage from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* which he deemed especially appropriate. The *Zephyr* soon took off on a five-week barnstorming tour of the East before the acid test: a 1,000-mile non-stop run on the "Q."

Budd, for all his modesty and engineering exactness, had a bit of showmanship in his make-up. He and his associates set out to really dramatize

the new train. The *Zephyr* would make a dawn-to-dusk run without a stop from Denver to Chicago, where, as a grand climax, it would be on hand for the reopening of the Century of Progress.

Once committed to the idea, Budd never faltered. The day before the run an inspector discovered a cracked armature bearing in one of the *Zephyr's* traction motors. Mounting tension was temporarily released by an unusual phone call from a Denver newspaper editor. He asked Vice President Edward E. Flynn if he could bring along a Rocky Mountain canary as a gift to the Century of Progress.

"What's a Rocky Mountain canary?" queried Flynn.

"A burro."

"A what?"

"A donkey, a small one."

Flynn was nonplussed. He contacted Budd and received the now classic reply.

"Why not? One more jackass on this trip won't make any difference!"

That evening Ralph Budd went on the air before a nation-wide radio audience and announced "Tomorrow at dawn we'll be on our way!"

By this time a new armature had been discovered in the UP's Omaha shops, and it was being flown by chartered plane to Denver. It was, however, en route when Budd was at the "mike." In fact it did not arrive until after midnight.

Scheduled to leave at 4:00 a.m. on May 26, the *Zephyr* did not get under way until 5:05 a.m. Ahead lay a 1,015.4-mile route. This was less than the regular run, for a short cut into Iowa was made by using the Plattsmouth bridge instead of going via Omaha and Council Bluffs. As a precaution against accidents, a flagman was stationed at each of the 619 private roads, and two men at each of the 1,070 grade crossings. In switch-shanty lingo, "The *Zephyr* was given the railroad."

Speed was moderate at first so the new bearing would not run hot. Later on the train averaged 90 miles an hour. Then it was revved up to 106.2. Top speed was 112.5 m.p.h. Budd was exultant, as were all the other road's officials on the epoch-making ride, not to say members of the press. But their hopes were soon dashed. A short circuit, caused by a slammed steel door, burned out the engine starter cable. The train slowed down to a mere 15 m.p.h. At this point a courageous mechanic grabbed and held the ends of the wires together, and with a flash, the engine started up. The man's hands were burned, but the streamliner did not stop.

Later the prolonged blowing of the horn for crossings reduced the air pressure to where the brakes were automatically set. Again the train was about to halt. A quick-thinking technician, however, jammed the throttle wide open. The

motors pulled against the brakes and speeded up the air pumps fast enough to supply more air. The brakes finally released as the streamliner zoomed ahead.

The train dashed across Iowa, going through Burlington like a flash. At 7:10 p.m. the *Zephyr* broke the timing clock tape at Halstead Street, Chicago, making the run in 13 hours, 4 minutes, and 58 seconds. It was a world's record for a non-stop run. Soon afterward the party, including the donkey, rolled onto the stage of the "Wings of a Century" at the Century of Progress Exposition.

The pioneer *Zephyr* went into revenue service between Kansas City, St. Joseph, Council Bluffs, Omaha, and Lincoln on Armistice Day, 1934. By this time the Union Pacific had two aluminum non-diesel streamliners on the rails. But they were still on tour, thereby making the Burlington's tri-state run the nation's first streamliner in revenue operation.

After that came a rash of lightweight streamliners gliding over the Burlington. The next train of this type in Iowa was the *Mark Twain Zephyr*. As its name would suggest, the train ran through Samuel Clemens' home town of Hannibal, Missouri, on its 217-mile run between St. Louis and Burlington. The four-car articulated unit began operation October 28, 1935.

Meanwhile, management was thinking of a gen-

uine long-distance streamliner with full pullman, dining, and coach facilities. The remarkable Hudson-type steam locomotive at the head end of the *Aristocrat* did a splendid job. With coal and water stops, the *Aristocrat* took 28 hours and 40 minutes to make the Chicago-Denver trip. Could the run be sliced to 16 hours? Budd and his colleagues thought so. The goal became a reality with the inauguration of the *Denver Zephyr* on November 8, 1936. Actually, there were two 10-car trains having non-articulated locomotives, with up to five times the horsepower of the original *Zephyr*. And they ran the gamut of accommodations, from reclining coach seats to open-berth and private-room sleeping accommodations. (For the record, it may be added that while the deluxe long-distance streamliner was in the process of construction, the original *Zephyr* equipment was run on the 16-hour schedule as a forerunner of what was to come, as well as to protect the mail contract.) Four years after the Denver streamliner went into service the road put in operation its *Ak-Sar-Ben Zephyr* between Lincoln and Chicago.

The first north-and-south stream-style train to go from border to border in Iowa was the *Zephyr-Rocket,* a joint Burlington-Rock Island creation. It entered service between St. Louis and the Twin Cities on January 7, 1941. That part of the run north of Burlington was over the Rock Island.

Iowa had to wait until the end of World War II for more "Q" streamliners. During the summer of 1947 the road put in effect what was a form of commuter *Zephyr*. Leaving Hannibal, Missouri, at 5:50 a.m. and calling at Quincy, Keokuk, Fort Madison, and Burlington, it gave patrons of the river communities a chance to reach Chicago before noon. Returning, the mini-"light-weight" departed from Union Station at 6:15 p.m. and finished up at Hannibal by 12:40 a.m. Later that year saw the *Nebraska Zephyrs* gliding across Iowa on their daylight runs between Chicago and Lincoln.

But the road's flagship, "America's most talked about train," was in the works. First, however, some background history. With the formation of a shorter route through the Rockies via the Moffat Tunnel and the opening of San Francisco's Golden Gate International Exposition in 1939, a new travel market beckoned. The one through sleeper on the old *Overland,* jogging along on its 80-hour schedule from Chicago to the West Coast, was pitifully inadequate. So the collective heads of the three interested roads, viz, the Burlington, Rio Grande, and Western Pacific decided to "do something." They came up with the *Exposition Flyer* on a 60-hour "transcontinental schedule." Mostly steam powered, it had standard equipment, was air-conditioned, and featured economy meals as low as 90¢ a day. It was popu-

lar in peace time and infinitely more so during the war years. Later on, after the conflict, it boasted of coast-to-coast sleepers. East of Chicago transcontinental pullmans were handled to and from Gotham on alternate days via the New York Central's *Commodore Vanderbilt* and the Pennsylvania's *General*.

Success of the "Expo" convinced management that the time was ripe for the grandest, most luxurious streamliner to polish the rails of the three component roads. The tab was approximately $15 million. For that money the roads got six 11-car streamliners. Each train was amply supplied with five of the new Vista Domes. Meals of culinary splendor were made by reservation—no waiting. A pretty and efficient hostess, known as a "Zephyrette," was on beck and call to minister to the travelers' needs. Called the *California Zephyr*, the train was a success from the start. Time and again the "CZ" established new highs in occupancy, and for the first 10-year period it operated at 89.4 per cent of capacity.

FRANK P. DONOVAN

Midcentury and After

Ralph Budd's successor was his associate, Harry C. Murphy. Murphy worked closely with Budd in Chicago from the time the latter first came with the Burlington. It made for continuity in management and, incidentally, brought together two men reared in small Iowa towns.

Born in Canton, Illinois, August 27, 1892, Murphy as a child moved with his family to Eldora. He spoke of his youth in that town with affection and found the people much to his liking. Not afraid of work, young Murphy had a variety of part-time jobs while in grade and secondary schools. He also gravitated to the depot, as did many boys, to watch the old Iowa Central trains steam by. Sometimes a friendly engineer would let him ride in the cab of a little American Standard locomotive. Later he worked for the Iowa Central as a laborer and station-helper in Eldora.

After graduating from high school, Murphy went to Iowa State College at Ames, where he took up civil and mechanical engineering. Finishing college, and still interested in railroading, he got a job as a clerk in the Burlington's Chicago accounting office. Later he switched to the engineering department as rod and instrument man.

During World War I Murphy served as a pilot in the Air Force. Upon his discharge from the Army in 1919, he returned to the Burlington as assistant engineer at Centralia, Illinois. The next few years found him at various points as division engineer, engineer of maintenance of way, assistant superintendent, and division superintendent. In 1933 he was promoted to executive assistant to the president. Six years later found him assistant vice president of operation and by 1945 he became operating vice president. With Budd's retirement in 1949, Murphy succeeded to the presidency.

As a line officer prior to becoming chief executive, Harry Murphy had assisted Budd in replacing conventional passenger trains with *Zephyrs,* in switching from steam to diesel motive power, and in extending centralized traffic control. Murphy's place, by the way, as operating vice president, was taken by Samuel L. Fee, who had started his Burlington career as a station helper in Knoxville, Iowa, where he was born.

In 1952 the Kansas City cut-off was completed, reducing the distance of the Chicago-"KC" line by 22 miles. This bit of "super railroad" meant completely rebuilding almost 30 miles of the Carrollton branch. In addition, it called for an entirely new 42-mile line to Missouri Jct., where trackage rights on the Wabash were held jointly to Birmingham, thence over the Burlington rails to Kansas City. Besides being much shorter than the

old line, it had far less curvature and only half the ruling grade of the former route. So rugged was the terrain that the track went through a mile-long cut 95 feet deep at one point.

Murphy, being very passenger-minded, chalked up another "first" for the Burlington when he put Slumber coaches on the new *Denver Zephyr* in 1956. These cars provided the coach rider with a small room by day and a roomette-type bed for the night, including a built-in toilet. Passengers paid only coach fare plus a nominal charge for the room. Four years later the road reported the highest passenger revenue since 1946.

Freight service perhaps showed even more improvement. In 1962, for example, the road inaugurated a meat train from Omaha to Chicago that took less than ten hours for the 488-mile run. This carding was comparable to the schedule of the *Nebraska Zephyr*. The train handled a complete line of specialized equipment including standard refrigerator cars, refrigerated trucks and containers on flat cars. Fresh meat from Omaha reached the East 12 to 24 hours earlier.

Murphy, while he was thoroughly committed to diesel power, had a nostalgic fondness for steam. In his wood-paneled office there was a color painting of a powerful Baldwin-built 2-10-4 type locomotive steaming through Thayer, Iowa, along with a signed photo of Ralph Budd and an oil painting of James J. Hill. Furthermore, he

endeared himself to railroad buffs by donating a majestic Hudson type engine (4-6-4) to the City of Burlington along with other cities.

The railroad has always favored its namesake community. When Burlington's depot burned in 1943 a modern fieldstone structure replaced it. The new station was dedicated by Governor Bourke B. Hickenlooper, Mayor Max A. Conrad, and Ralph Budd on March 28, 1944. During the ceremony a large panel on the west wall was featured honoring Charles E. Perkins.

It is significant that the busy West Burlington Shops still gives employment to many local people. Originally built on a 1,000 acre tract, the facility was opened in 1883. At its peak it employed about 1,600 men. The shops had facilities for building freight and passenger cars, along with locomotive repair. Some of the road's finest steam engines were also constructed at West Burlington.

The shops are now considerably smaller due to fewer men needed for diesel repair. While construction and repair of rolling stock, other than locomotive, is currently done elsewhere, West Burlington is the sole facility for heavy diesel repair with 500 employees on the payroll.

When Harry Murphy retired in 1965 after 51 years of railroading, West Burlington had seen its last steam locomotive. He, next to Budd, had done most to effect this transition.

FRANK P. DONOVAN

Pruning the Branches

When the Burlington built its branches in Iowa there were no motor vehicles and modern highways. During the horse and buggy era it was desirable to have a plentiful supply of feeders so that any point had a railroad within a day's wagon drive. The automobile and truck changed this. What was formerly an all-day trip for Old Dobbin now took hardly an hour by car. Furthermore, the flexibility and convenience of the motor car made such inroads into branch-line travel that all Iowa passenger trains in this category were discontinued by 1959. The final run of this type was the little motor train shuttling between Creston and St. Joseph.

It was inevitable that some branches faced partial or total abandonment due to changing conditions. A few should never have been built and others had outlived their usefulness. Again, some sections of a line faced retirement because of track relocation to provide better grades and more efficient operation. Occasionally floods made rehabilitation of marginal branches unfeasible.

Iowa's first abandonment came in 1889 when the 11-mile Albia-Moravia stub line quit. It had been constructed as the Albia & Moulton Railway

in 1880 to forestall Jay Gould's extending a line from southern Iowa to Des Moines. It served no purpose, for Gould completed his extension anyway, and the Burlington-backed company died.

The influence of Gould, as we have seen, also led to the extension of the Alexandria, Missouri-Van Wert line another 95 miles further westward to Shenandoah. The addition was never profitable, and most of it was abandoned by 1945. In 1958 the 28-mile stretch of original line between Centerville and Corydon was likewise scrapped.

Main line relocation between Fairfield and Batavia, nine miles, and between Murray and Creston, 21 miles, rendered the pioneer routes in these segments unnecessary, and they were abandoned in 1900 and 1901 respectively. On the Albia-Des Moines branch, completion of the Red Rock Dam made relocation imperative. The Burlington's rails between Swan and Des Moines accordingly were pulled up in 1967, and trackage rights were arranged over the Norfolk & Western from Swan.

Probably the branches most vulnerable to highway competition were the marginal lines originally built to narrow gauge. They were the old Burlington and Western, the Fort Madison-Batavia branch and the Des Moines-Cainsville, Missouri line. Most of what was the B&W took the count when the Winfield-Oskaloosa line folded in 1934.

That portion, however, between Coppock and Martinsburg was sold to the Minneapolis & St.

Louis, which then bought the 13-mile Oskaloosa-Tracy section but later abandoned it.

Thin traffic brought about the retirement of the upper end of the Fort Madison-Batavia branch. First the Batavia-Birmingham section was lopped off, and by 1956 the line was cut back to Stockport. Insufficient tonnage also accounted for the abandonment of most of the Keokuk-Mt. Pleasant line in 1932 save the Salem-Hamill portion.

Scrapping of the Des Moines-Cainsville route was due to several factors. To begin with, the entire line was built with curves and grades acceptable for narrow gauge running but quite unsuitable for modern railroading. Then, coal mines at the Missouri end of the line were worked out. This prompted abandonment of the road south of Osceola in the 1930's. A bad flood, in June 1947, severely damaged the road north of Osceola, dooming that section, too. Piecemeal curtailment of service resulted in the whole Des Moines-Osceola portion becoming a memory by 1957. To protect freight service from the state capital to the West, trackage rights were secured over the Chicago Great Western from Des Moines to Talmage, on the "Q's" main line.

Other total abandonments included the Sedan-Elmer, Missouri, line in 1936, and the Indianola branch by 1961. The former's demise resulted from unprofitable coal mines in northern Missouri, the latter because of meager traffic. Indianola,

however, is still served by the Rock Island road.

Turning again to southeastern Iowa, one finds the long branch extending from Viele to Carrollton, Missouri, partly dismembered. First the Unionville, Missouri-Moulton segment was abandoned early in the 1950's, and by 1969 the remainder of the line in Iowa ceased operation.

Railroad competition, which prompted building of most of the five lines running in a southwesterly direction from the main stem to points on the Missouri River, became economically redundant by the mid-1960's. One by one, parts of four of these failed to earn their keep and were subsequently abandoned. The lower end of the Red Oak-Hamburg branch was cut back to Riverton in 1961 after a washout. The Clarinda-Corning, Missouri, and the Clarinda-Bigelow, Missouri, branches were likewise severed. The former abandonment between Clarinda and Westboro, Missouri, was effective partly in 1958 and the remainder in 1961; the latter, from Clarinda to Skidmore, Missouri, was authorized piecemeal in 1941 and 1961. Finally, the "long side" of the loop of the Chariton-St. Joseph, Missouri, line was separated between Mt. Ayr and Grant City, Missouri. This resulted in the "Burlington Formula" of 1944 protecting an employee, in the event of abandonment, from reduction in pay by the use of a displacement allowance.

FRANK P. DONOVAN

The Greater Burlington

The mid-1960's and thereafter was one of change in top management and in traffic characteristics. Louis W. Menk succeeded Murphy to the presidency in October 1965. Menk, who had headed the St. Louis-San Francisco, remained with the Burlington for only one year when he left to become chief executive of the Northern Pacific. The Burlington's top post then went to William J. Quinn, formerly Milwaukee Road president.

It was evident that the Burlington, along with most of the other railroads in the United States, found passenger trains becoming increasingly unprofitable. What precipitated a crisis, however, was the Postal Department's policy of shifting mail from train to truck and plane. Heretofore many passenger trains just about paid their out-of-pocket costs, thanks to income from carrying first class mail. The annual report for 1967, for example, laments that in dropping 22 Railway Post Office cars the Burlington suffered a revenue loss of $900,000. The grim fact is that unless it is subsidized, passenger service cannot meet its out-of-pocket costs, much less operate at a profit.

A casualty of the trend from rail to airway and highway was withdrawal of the famed *Fast Mail*

in 1967. This 83-year-old train, renowned in story and song, was a Burlington institution.

One by one the road's proud streamliners operating through Iowa were discontinued, until only the *Denver Zephyr*, the *California Zephyr*, the *Ak-Sar-Ben Zephyr* and the *Nebraska Zephyr* remained. The "CZ," up for abandonment in 1968, was given a year's reprieve by the ICC, and its future is very much at stake. Similarly, the Burlington has petitioned the ICC for permission to end its *Nebraska Zephyr*.

From the days when the first trains steamed across Iowa on the old Burlington and Missouri River until the present, however, freight was and is the backbone of the railroad and its main source of income and reason for being. The future of the big Granger Road lies in carload tonnage by the trainload. Time freights now speed across the state on passenger-train carding. Specialized equipment, such as "piggybacks" hauling trailer trucks on "flats" and tri-level cars toting a dozen automobiles in one unit, bring new traffic formerly considered lost to the highway. Unit trains of one commodity, and use of "jumbo" freight cars reduce the unit cost and keep the railroad competitive with truck and barge competition.

Indeed, the road's main stem linking Burlington and Council Bluffs is admirably suited to heavy mass-movement of tonnage. Virtually double tracked with rail mostly in the 129 to 136 pound

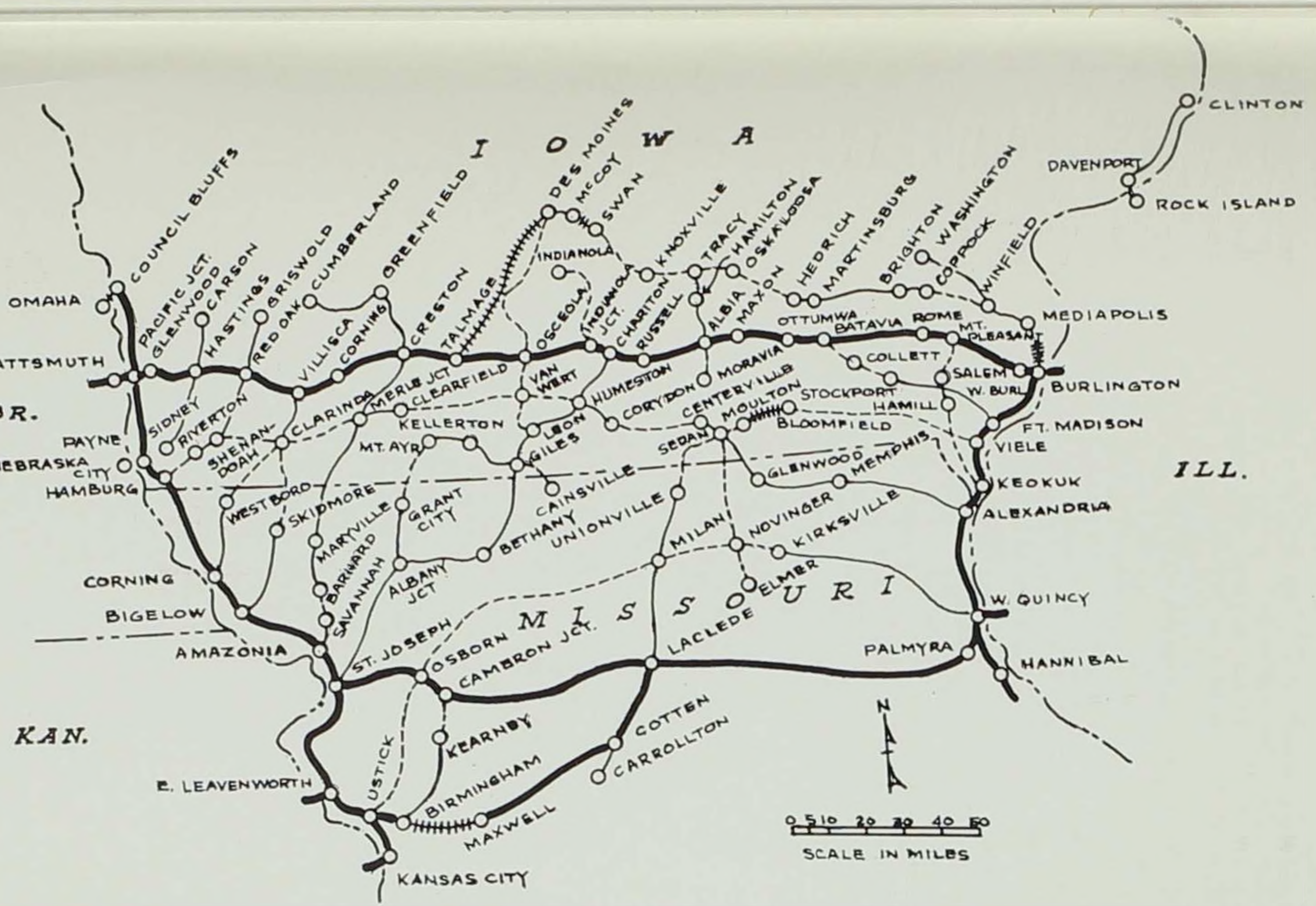
(per yard) category, the line has few curves and limited grades. Moreover, the "high iron" is fully protected by either Centralized Traffic Control or automatic block signals.

In concluding the story of the modern Burlington, mention should be made of the proposed merger with the Great Northern, Northern Pacific and lease of the Spokane, Portland & Seattle. As we have seen, James J. Hill tried to bring the two Northerns into the fold with the Burlington. Again in the late 1920's another attempt was made to consolidate the roads. Finally, during the 1960's the matter was brought up with renewed vigor.

In 1967 the ICC lent its support to the long-sought merger only to have the Justice Department bring it before the Supreme Court, where it should be decided in 1969. In light of several major consolidations already consummated, some of which have similar characteristics to the "greater" Burlington, there is every indication the Northerns and "Q" will be in one family in 1970.

At first it was decided to call the new 25,000-mile railroad the Great Northern Pacific & Burlington. This cumbersome title was later given up in favor of the shorter Burlington Northern. But Iowans, and probably most of the Nation, will strive for further brevity. They will call it Burlington. Charles Perkins would have liked that, too.

FRANK P. DONOVAN



BURLINGTON LINES IN SOUTHERN IOWA AND NORTHERN MISSOURI

LEGEND

MAIN LINE —— BRANCH LINE ----- ABANDONED LINE

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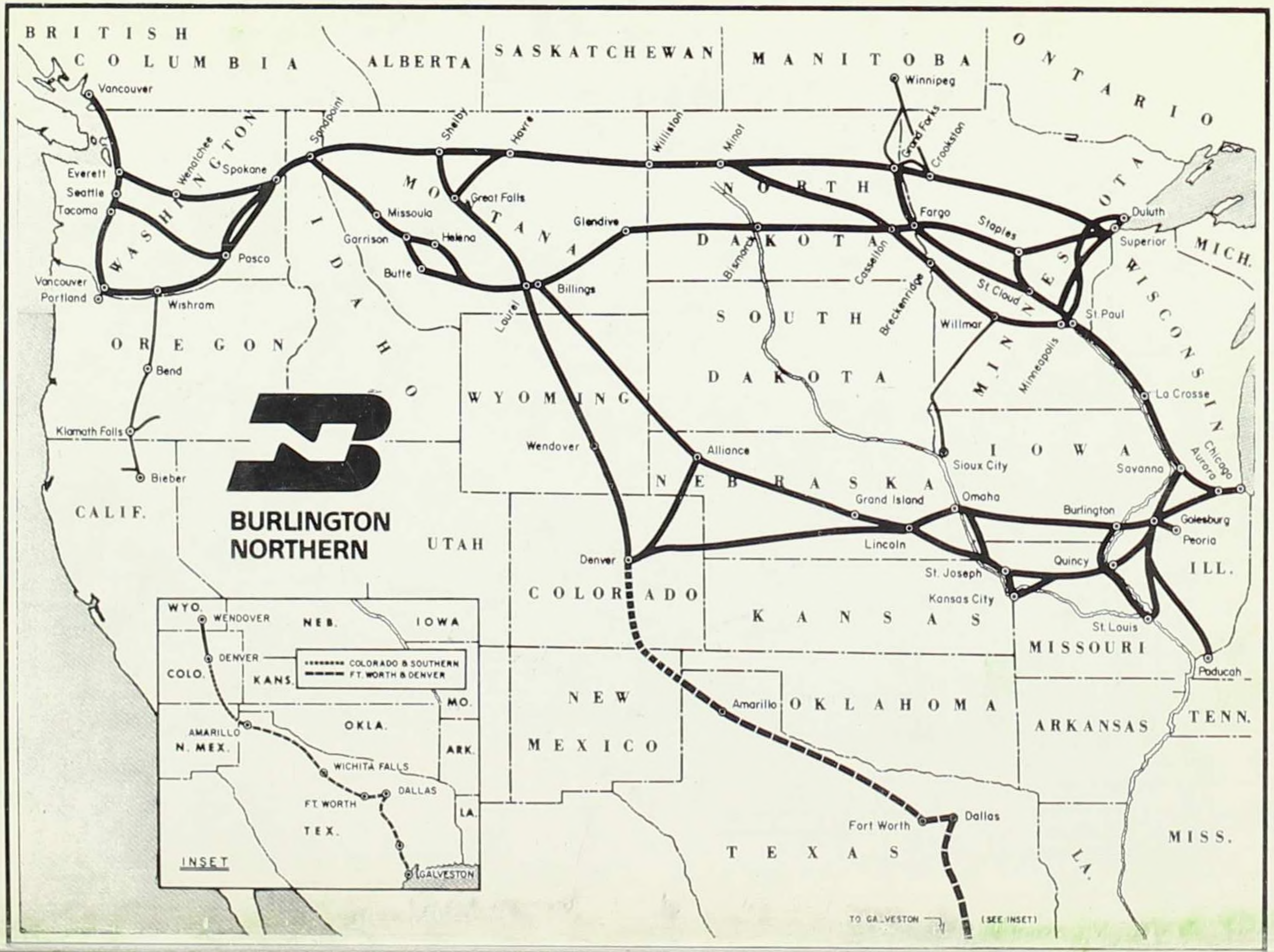
BRITISH COLUMBIA
ALBERTA
SASKATCHEWAN
MANITOBA
ONTARIO
Vancouver
Winnipeg
Everett
Seattle
Tacoma
Wenatchee
Spokane
Sandpoint
Shelby
Havre
Williston
Minot
Grand Forks
Crookston
Great Falls
Missoula
Garrison
Helena
Butte
Glendive
Fargo
Staples
Duluth
Superior
MICH.
WISCONSIN
Pasco
Billings
Bismarck
Cassellton
Brecken ridge
St. Cloud
St. Paul
Vancouver
Portland
Wishram
Laurel
Willmar
Minneapolis
La Crosse
Bend
Klamath Falls
Bieber
Wendover
Alliance
Sioux City
Savanna
Chicago
Aurora
Grand Island
Omaha
Burlington
Galesburg
Peoria
Lincoln
Quincy
ILL.
Denver
St. Joseph
Kansas City
St. Louis
Paducah
Amarillo
Fort Worth
Dallas
MISS.
TO GALVESTON
(SEE INSET)
BURLINGTON NORTHERN
INSET
WYO.
WENDOVER
NEB.
IOWA
DENVER
COLO.
KANS.
MO.
COLORADO & SOUTHERN
FT. WORTH & DENVER
OKLA.
AMARILLO
N. MEX.
ARK.
WICHITA FALLS
DALLAS
FT. WORTH
TEX.
LA.
GALVESTON