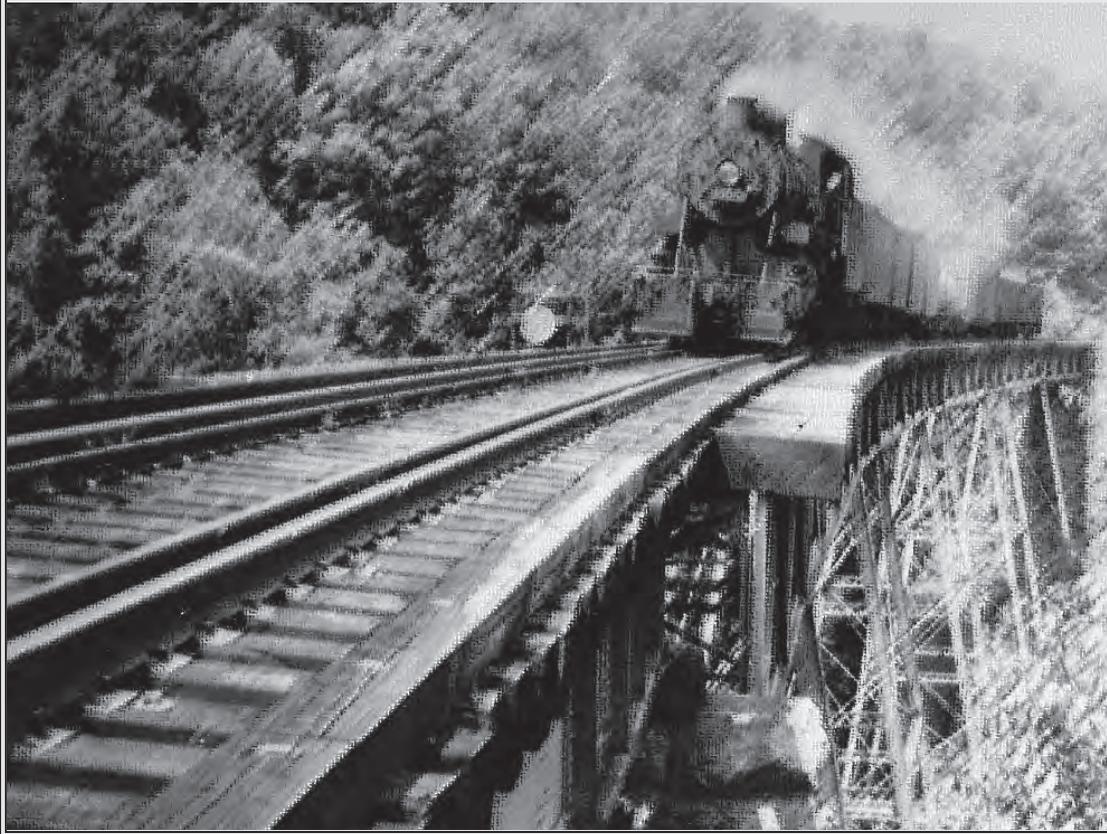


THE

UPS & DOWNS OF A RURAL LINE

ELMIRA, CORTLAND & NORTHERN RR
1867 TO 1967 AND ON



BY

DAVID MARCHAM



A large number of railroads pass through the Finger Lakes Region, home of the Elmira, Cortland & Northern, shown on this 1898 New York State rail map.

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EDITED BY

JOHN MARCHAM

DeWitt Historical Society
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Ithaca, New York 2009

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COVER: The Elmira-Van Etten Lehigh Valley local
freight makes its way over the 75-foot-high Deep
Gorge trestle in the spring of 1938. The Lehigh had
absorbed the Elmira, Cortland & Northern RR at the
turn of the century, but lack of business led it to begin
severing segments in the mid-1930's on the south end
of what had been its Elmira and Cortland Branch.



To my wife, Elizabeth;
to our son Father David Shay Marcham;
and to all the great employees,
friends and neighbors of the
Lehigh Valley Railroad.



Perils of early railroading: A trainman in winter sets a hand brake atop a boxcar, the only way to slow or stop a train quickly before air brakes were required on all cars during the 1890's. Air brakes are applied from the engineer's cab. Until then many trainmen were maimed or died falling off or between cars along which they had to move to set brakes on other cars. From a *Railroad Magazine* of the 1930's.

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A southbound train crosses the Brookton trestle about 1900, before automobiles, when passengers provide significant income for the Elmira and Cortland branch of the Lehigh Valley Railroad.

PREFACE

This book is both a railroad history and memoir. The author vividly reconstructs the life of the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad, its predecessor lines, and successors over the one hundred years the route was in operation.

He does so as someone who worked for the Lehigh Valley Railroad as a towerman at Cortland Junction and five other Lehigh Valley interlocking towers and as a rail historian who has gathered stories, photos, and artifacts from men who worked this line and fellow historians across several states.

I am his brother, a retired journalist, and now book editor. As noted in his earlier rail memoir, *Lehigh Valley Memories, A Tour of the Lehigh Valley Railroad in New York's Finger Lakes Region, 1941-1959*, David and I were bitten early by the railroad bug, while on summer vacation on the west shore of Cayuga Lake, near Ithaca, New York, traveling by gas-electric motor to a farm roominghouse and watching across the lake where the Lehigh switched cars and we tried to figure out the track layout.

David has since spent a lifetime in transportation, as a railfan, towerman and station agent for the Lehigh while a Cornell University student, as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army Transportation Corps, and with the Chesapeake & Ohio, Washington & Old Dominion, and New York Central railroads, and Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority before retirement from a wide variety of management positions in operating and finance departments.

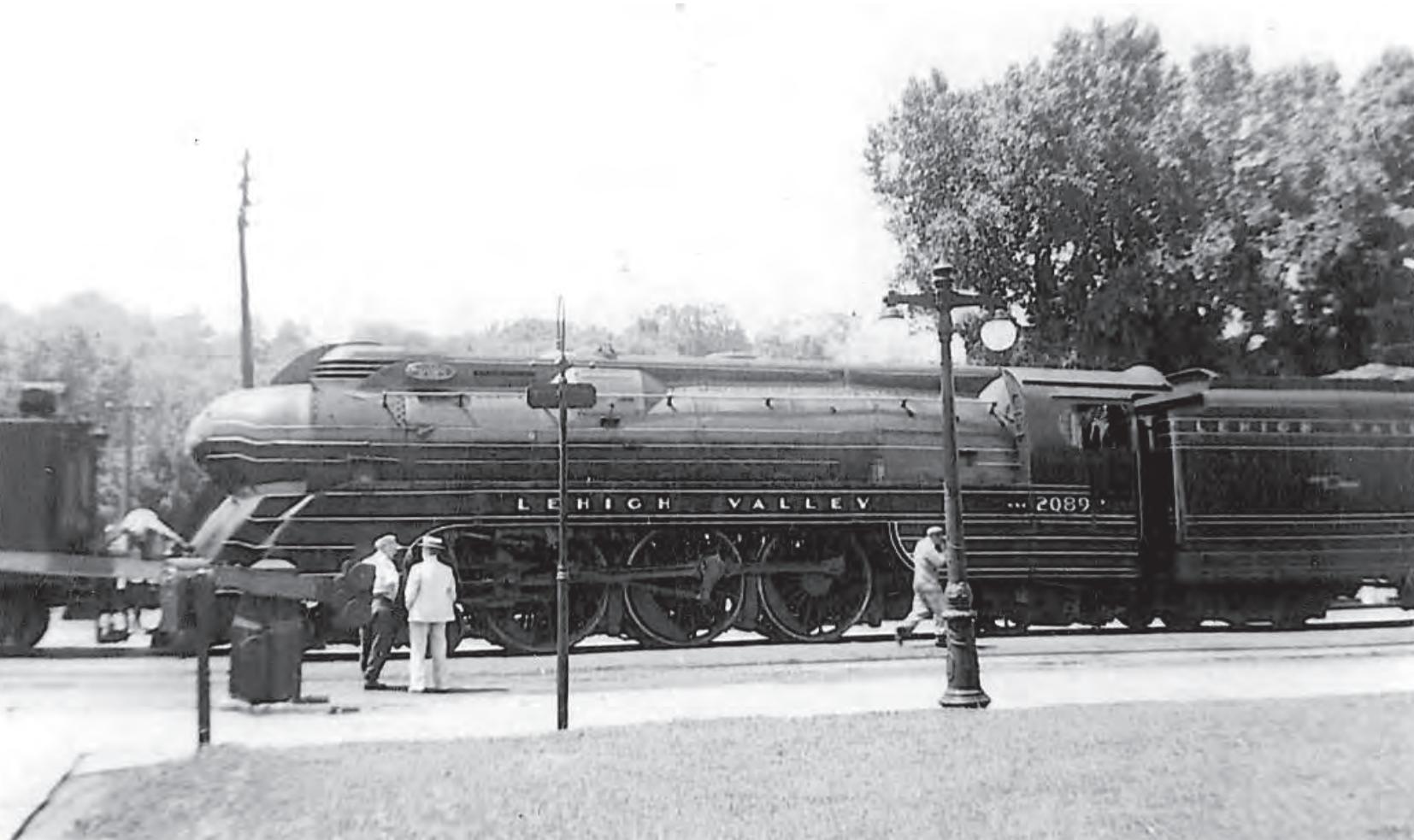
He is the editorial “we” and the “young telegrapher-station agent” who speaks in these pages.

David has undertaken to recall how the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad came into being as a hastily crafted rural line, and its continued existence under the Lehigh Valley, Conrail, and other owners.

The book follows the arc of a railroad, through the coming of competition from other lines, the automobile and truck, canal and lake boats, and airlines.

Many of the photographs are David Marcham's. He includes a locomotive roster, station list, maps, timetables, more than 150 illustrations, a bibliography, acknowledgements, a list of illustration sources, and an index.

JOHN MARCHAM, JULY 2009



Lehigh Valley RR's crack Black Diamond passenger train prepares to leave Ithaca for New York City in the early 1940's. A helper engine is coupled to the streamlined locomotive to help pull the Diamond out of the deep Cayuga Lake valley.

MAINLINE—BRANCH LINE

We are on board Lehigh Valley Train 10, the eastbound Black Diamond, returning home to Ithaca from a vacation in northern Ontario. The company has advertised The Black Diamond as “The Handsomest Train in The World.” It’s late morning on July 26, 1941, a mild, sunny day in the Finger Lakes region of New York State. On the headend is the recently streamlined bullet-nosed, high-wheeled K-6b 4-6-2 Engine 2089, the last of the locomotives built at the railroad’s Sayre, Pennsylvania, shops. Trailing the mighty locomotive with its 77-inch drivers are two mail and baggage cars, four recently acquired air-conditioned coaches, and recently refurbished café-dining and reserved-seat parlor-observation cars. The entire train shines in a gleaming new Cornell red and white paint scheme.

The train leaves Geneva, passes near the shore of Seneca Lake, leaves the double track mainline at Geneva Junction and picks up speed to 70 miles per hour as it races along the single track Ithaca Branch. It passes dairy and chicken farms, corn and hay fields, and an abundance of rich land where farmers earn a living growing fruits, vegetables and other products of the earth for consumption by folks in far-off cities and towns. The Black Diamond, with its train full of passengers and cargo, speeds gracefully through a series of small villages and hamlets at full speed, riding on heavy duty rail, new ties and perfectly maintained rock ballast right of way. The engineer has one hand on the throttle and the other on the whistle cord as he watches the

right of way and semaphore signals to be certain he has a clear track ahead. Thousands of people come each year riding by rail to vacation along the many lakes in the Finger Lakes Region or study at its renowned colleges and universities.

Traveling U. S. Post Office personnel drop off pouches of first class mail and pick up mail bags from wayside mail cranes at rural stations along the branch. Agent-operators at stations along the line promptly report Train 10’s passage to the Buffalo Division train dispatcher. The progress of the Black Diamond is of prime importance to division officials in Buffalo and company headquarters in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and New York City. Delays are not tolerated.

The Black Diamond speeds through Trumansburg at full speed, slows for the curves near the top of 215-foot-high Taughannock Falls, and begins its 400-foot descent down the steep 1 percent grade toward Ithaca. The veteran engineer carefully applies the brakes to keep the train’s speed within the 70 mile per hour limit. The south end of Cayuga Lake comes into sight and the train’s speed is reduced to 35 miles per hour rounding the final curves before arriving in Ithaca. The engineer deftly stops the Black Diamond with care not to disturb the passengers or spill any food or beverages in the café-dining or parlor-observation cars.

Train 10’s schedule allows only seven minutes for station personnel to perform their work and the helper engine crew to couple onto Engine 2089. The activity involves personnel working for the U. S. Postal Service, Railway Express Agency and Lehigh Valley Railroad. At 12:15



Engine 1150 and the five-member train and engine crew off Train 324 have completed their chores at East Ithaca and are resting before leaving at 5:17 p.m. for Freeville, Cortland and Canastota as Train 325.

p.m., the Black Diamond is on the move again headed for the mountains of eastern Pennsylvania, the flatlands of northern New Jersey and its final destination, Pennsylvania Station in New York City. Agent-telegraph operator John Clapp promptly reports the train's on-time departure to the dispatcher in Buffalo.

Not long after the Black Diamond's departure, the sound of another train's whistle can be heard far above the water's of Cayuga Lake. The single long whistle blast warns of the approach of Lehigh Valley Train 324, the daily milk train from Canastota. Its destination is East Ithaca Station, two miles east of and nearly 500 feet above the downtown Ithaca station. Train 324 nears East Ithaca at about 25 miles per hour on relatively light rail, old ties and a right-of-way of cinders and gravel.

The leisurely train approaches the outskirts of Ithaca and the Cornell University campus on tracks built by the Ithaca & Cortland Railroad

in 1871, a railroad that once had a station on the university campus albeit for a short time. It used to continue past East Ithaca with a trainload of milk to Spencer and Van Etten where it entered the Ithaca Branch, then the mainline at Van Etten Junction and proceeded at full speed to its final destination in Sayre, Pennsylvania. Once there, the milk cars were combined with milk cars off Auburn Branch Train 282 and Ithaca Branch Train 128 to become Lehigh Valley Train 36. The big milk train would leave Sayre about an hour after the Black Diamond's departure and follow it to the Lehigh Valley's terminal at Jersey City across the Hudson River from New York City.

Until eleven years earlier in 1930, East Ithaca was a busy railroad station with at least ten trains passing each day: four passenger, two milk and four freight trains. Years earlier, the station was even busier handling college students, athletic teams, faculty members and vis-

MAINLINE-BRANCH LINE

iting celebrities. Even the Metropolitan Opera cast came from New York City in Pullman cars to perform on the Cornell University campus. A trolley line from downtown Ithaca provided service for passengers choosing to transfer from and to the downtown Ithaca station.

Trains passed by East Ithaca station headed by vintage eight-wheelers (4-4-0's), ten-wheelers (4-6-0's), moguls (2-6-0's), and camelback consolidations (2-8-0's) until the Lehigh Valley built new ten-wheelers in 1917. Freight trains headed to Freeville and Cortland were sometimes double headed because of the steep grade from East Ithaca to Varna. There was enough activity here to keep two telegraphers and a freight handler busy. The Great Depression and loss of passenger traffic to automobiles in the early 1930's caused the Lehigh Valley to reduce passenger

service and eventually abandon the tracks between East Ithaca and Spencer. The daily milk train was diverted from Freeville to Sayre over its Auburn Branch through Owego. By 1940, Train 324 was routed again to East Ithaca but added its milk cars to the Auburn Branch Train 282 at Freeville and picked up freight cars for delivery to Etna and East Ithaca.

Today, the train consists of a half dozen or so freight cars followed by an old combination baggage/passenger coach. The train halts at the sixty-five-year-old combination freight and passenger station while a neighborhood youngster watches the activity. A lone passenger steps down from the combination car to the platform with the help of veteran conductor "Doc" Hunt and disappears down Maple Avenue toward Collegetown.

Yes, this part of the Lehigh Valley is of an entirely different nature and daily pace than the line that passes through downtown Ithaca. The men and women who work on this obscure branch line receive their paychecks from the same accounting office in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, as those who work on the high speed mainline and Ithaca Branch. The locomotives, other equipment and stations are lettered Lehigh Valley but this is a much different kind of railroad with a history and story of its own.



ABOVE: Train 323 leaves East Ithaca with Conductor "Doc" Hunt on the rear platform in 1946.

RIGHT: Train 325 about 1925, the afternoon Elmira-Canastota passenger train, leaves East Ithaca and passes the Cornell University heating plant .





Passengers and coaches wait as two trains meet at DeRuyter about the beginning of the twentieth century. The view looks south toward Cortland and Elmira.

THE EC&N

A RAILROAD WITHIN A RAILROAD

This is the story of the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad which became a corporate entity in 1884 and was purchased by the Lehigh Valley Railroad in 1896. The EC&N once extended almost 140 miles from Elmira through Van Etten, East Ithaca, Freeville, Cortland, Cazenovia, and Canastota to Camden, New York. It became the Lehigh Valley's Elmira and Cortland Branch. While the old EC&N officially became part of the larger company, it continued to function as an obscure branch line with separate train and engine crews and personnel, almost as if it was a separate railroad.

The Lehigh Valley's Elmira and Cortland Branch became the company's longest branch line and represented 10 percent of its total route mileage. Yet it produced only a very small percentage of the company's total revenue-ton miles. Camden, its northern terminal with a population of less than 2,000 situated in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains, was almost as far from the New York City area by Lehigh Valley rails as Buffalo, New York, the LV's western terminal with its population of over 250,000. The heart of the Lehigh Valley Railroad was in Pennsylvania but its traffic through the Buffalo area gateway was an important contributor to the carrier's revenues and net income.

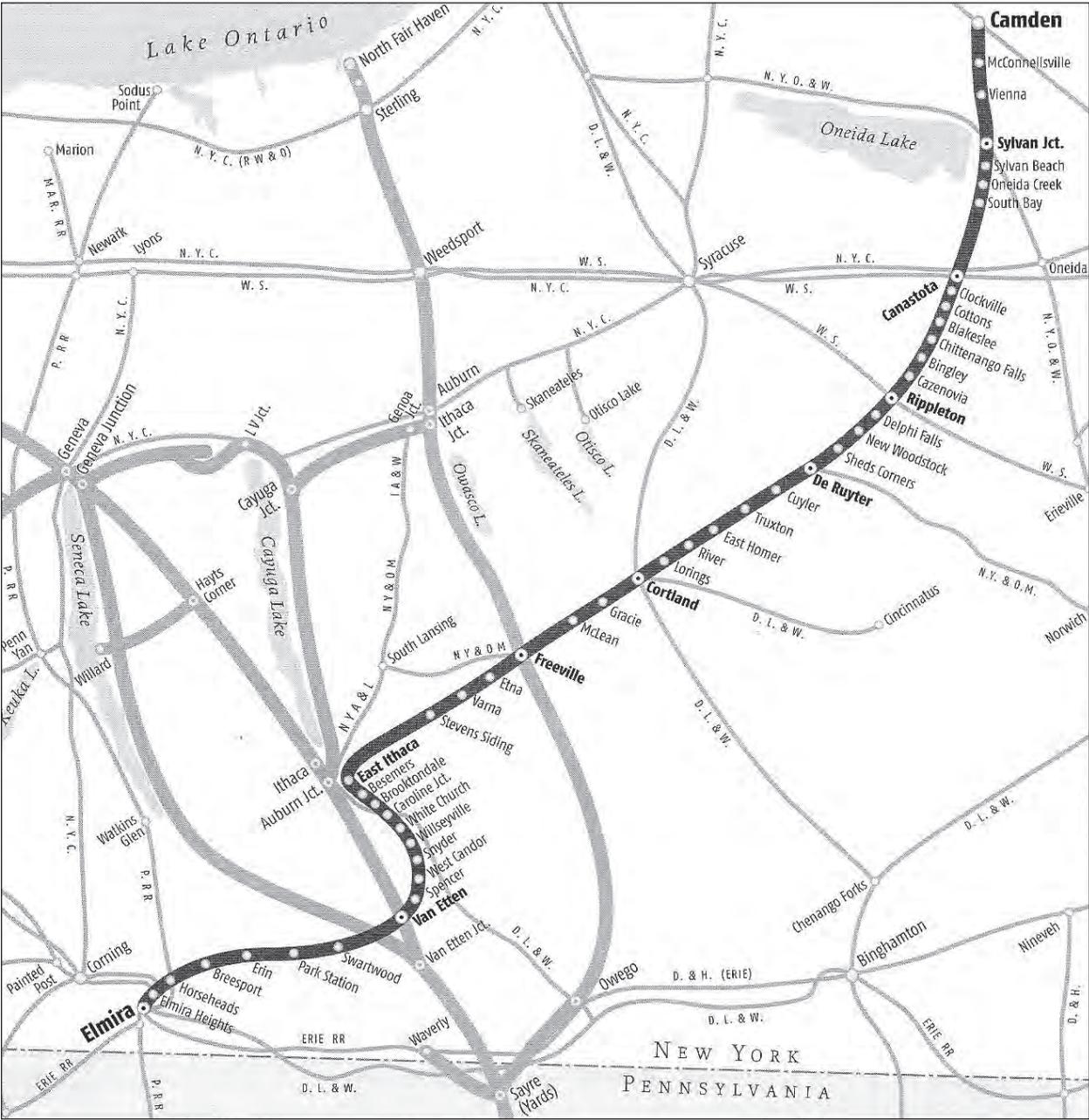
This, too, is the story of some of the several thousand men and women who had a hand in building and running the EC&N during its 100

years. Many of them grew up on nearby farms and were attracted by the opportunity to earn a steady wage although the hours were long and working conditions difficult.

The most prominent of these men was Ezra Cornell, born in 1807 in the New York City area but raised on a farm near DeRuyter, New York. As a young adult, he moved to Ithaca but traveled extensively, often by foot. He became associated with Samuel Morse, inventor of the telegraph, and began stringing telegraph wires in eastern and midwestern states. Mr. Cornell was a founder of the Western Union Telegraph Company and became a wealthy businessman. He used his fortune to build Cornell University and two Ithaca-based railroads. The first was the Ithaca & Towanda (Pennsylvania) Railroad and the second the Ithaca & Cortland Railroad.

The EC&N was a colorful and fascinating railroad. For the young train enthusiast, what the EC&N line lacked in big locomotives and high-speed trains was more than compensated for by a friendly down-home relationship with customers, friends and neighbors. Almost everyone who showed an interest in the railroad was made to feel welcome. This was my experience when I first began to visit East Ithaca at train time in 1944. While only 13 years of age, I was invited to ride the rear footboard of the locomotive's tender after it was uncoupled from the train and headed down to be turned on the turntable. Later, after helping turn the engine

THE EC&N



Elmira, Cortland & Northern RR route map shows all stations before any segments were abandoned. Other Lehigh Valley RR branches show as thick gray lines and other railroads as thin gray lines.

THE EC&N

on the turntable and watching the crew place the inbound cars on customers' sidings, pick up empties and back the reassembled train down beyond the station crossing, I would sit in the combination coach-baggage car and talk to the crew members while they played cards until the train departed for Cortland at 2:30 p.m.

I recall only a few of the crew members' names from years ago. "Doc" Hunt was the regular conductor. Jim Shevlin and the Ludwig brothers were often engineers or firemen. Most of the train and enginemen were old-timers with seniority dates most certainly going back to the early 1900's. Never would I have imagined that one day years later I would read an ICC Accident

Report that told of Engineer Shevlin's close call in a deadly train crash at Van Etten in 1920.

The EC&N had steep grades, sharp curves, high trestles and severe winter weather problems. The company had many accidents during its early years as did many other railroads. Aside from its operating problems, its success was limited by competition from other railroads in the Finger Lakes and Southern Tier regions of western upstate New York. Four major carriers operated as east-west trunk lines through the area situated between the Pennsylvania border to the south and Mohawk Valley to the north: the New York Central, Erie, Lehigh Valley and Delaware, Lackawanna & Western railroads.



Results of a runaway train at Canastota on June 10, 1910, encountering a heavy derailer intended to keep LV trains from running across tracks of the West Shore RR.



Brookton station and the hamlet in the Six Mile Creek valley at the south end of the Brookton trestle. The hamlet was first named Mottville and years later renamed Brooktondale. BELOW: Morning southbound milk train arrives at the Sheds Corner station about 1900.

These lines prospered from handling large volumes of passengers and freight moving across our great country.

There were five major north-south routes originally built as independent companies but eventually acquired by the major carriers: Fall Brook Railroad by the New York Central, the Northern Central by the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Geneva, Ithaca & Sayre by the Lehigh Valley, the Southern Central by the Lehigh Valley, and Syracuse & Binghamton Railroad by the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western. These railroads carried large volumes of coal from mines in Pennsylvania to Lake Ontario port facilities and destinations in upstate New York and New England. (Also see the map on the inside front cover.)

Most of the railroad routes in the Finger Lakes Region were built to serve populated areas, followed rivers and valleys and avoided steep grades wherever possible. The EC&N's route, like the New York, Ontario and Western,



its neighbor to the east, somehow avoided populated areas and crossed the two highest railroad summits in the region.

The EC&N story dates back to the post-Civil War years. About the time the first transcontinental railroad was nearing completion,

many of the nation's cities and towns began clamoring for access to railroad service. Bankers, business men, lawyers, potential shippers and politicians started organizing carriers to serve their own communities. In the 1860's and 1870's, new railroad lines were being built in almost every part of the Finger Lakes area.

The arrival of the new railroads and train service was greeted with great enthusiasm by local citizens. Towns, villages and remote hamlets gained access to year-round transportation service far superior to that provided by horse-drawn stagecoaches and wagons. Passenger train service averaging 25 to 30 miles per hour was far superior to stagecoaches moving at less than 10 miles per hour. Freight trains replaced horse-drawn wagons and brought in goods at great cost savings. The new railroads became the conveyors of passengers, mail, express shipments, and carload and less-than-carload freight. Coal became the major freight commodity and

made it possible for homes and businesses to convert from wood to coal powered heating systems. The railroads provided a means for farms, factories and other local businesses to ship their products in a faster and more economical way.

The railroads brought another recent invention—telegraph communication. Telegraph wires were strung from pole to pole along the railroads' rights of way bringing instantaneous communication to neighboring communities and far off cities and towns. Railroad stations were built at three- to ten-mile intervals to serve remote locales and population centers. Each was staffed by an agent-telegrapher who represented the railroad, the express company and the telegraph company in all their business matters.

The stage was set for construction of new rail lines that would serve a multitude of cities, towns, villages and hamlets that had previously been dependant on horse-drawn stagecoaches and wagons to transport people and goods.



Southbound passenger train stopped at Truxton about the turn of the twentieth century.



Cazenovia & Canastota RR track is laid near Perryville in 1870.

BEGINNINGS, 1867 TO 1883

Cazenovia, New York, is located in Central Upstate New York on the eastern outskirts of the Finger Lakes Region. It's a small, picturesque village on the eastern shore of Cazenovia Lake. The community is located some 125 miles west of Albany, 160 miles east of Buffalo, and about 15 miles south of and 750 feet above the Mohawk Valley. Cazenovia is situated in an uplands area along the Cherry Valley Turnpike, now identified on highway maps as U.S. Route 20. One hundred fifty years ago, this road was a busy thoroughfare for horse-drawn stagecoaches and wagons that were the main forms of transportation for local citizens and throngs of people migrating to the west.

FIRST SEGMENTS OF THE EC&N

In September 1867, the town fathers of Cazenovia met to consider financing and building a railroad to link their upland community of some 2,000 people with the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad mainline in the village of Chittenango fifteen miles north or via a more easterly route through Perryville to the village of Canastota. A rail line would largely replace the need to travel by stagecoach or wagon down the steep, narrow and winding Chittenango Creek gorge on a thoroughfare often made impassable by flooding. After consultation with engineering experts, it was decided to build a line through Perryville around the top of Perryville Falls and the Canaseraga Gorge. This involved following a route three miles downgrade from Cazenovia (elevation 1,188 feet) to Bingley

(elevation 1,037 feet), a three-mile grade up to a point near Perryville (elevation 1,153 feet) and then a steep nine-mile grade down to Canastota (elevation 430 feet).

The Cazenovia & Canastota Railroad was chartered in April 1868, construction undertaken in April 1869 and completed December 7, 1870. The brand new railroad scheduled three trains Monday through Saturday from Cazenovia to Canastota and return, one in the morning, one at noontime and one in the afternoon. The service was designed to connect with the arrival and departures of New York Central & Hudson River Railroad trains in Canastota. The Cazenovia & Canastota Railroad handled mail, express, and freight shipments as well. The first freight shipment was a carload of cheese dispatched from Perryville. The owners and citizens of Cazenovia and rural communities along the way were indeed proud of their very own railroad.

Not all the citizens were happy about the new railroad. The trains brought in goods manufactured in far off communities at lower costs



The C&C closed-shed station in Cazenovia in the 1870s.

BEGINNINGS, 1867-1883



ABOVE: Steep and twisting drop from Perryville to Canastota on the original Cazenovia & Canastota RR will cause many a runaway on the EC&N and later LV line.

RIGHT: The EC&N/LV line winds from Perryville at bottom left to Canastota at top right on this New York State topographical map.

BELOW: The segment north from Cazenovia toward Perryville.



than those produced in nearby factories. This caused a loss of jobs which adversely affected many families in the area.

In June 1869, the New York & Oswego Midland Railroad began construction of a branch line from its mainline at Norwich in a generally westerly direction toward DeRuyter, Cortland and Freeville for the purpose of establishing a

“Western Extension” to Buffalo, New York. At the time, the NY&OM was nearing completion of its mainline from the west shore of the Hudson River near New York City through the Catskill Mountains to Oswego, New York on Lake Ontario. Construction of the Western Extension was completed to DeRuyter in May 1871 and Cortland in the spring of 1872.

RIDING THE NEW CAZENOVIA & CANASTOTA RR IN 1873

“... It is just to ride on that road. The engineer who surveyed the route did not mar the fair face of nature by planning any cross cuts, or deep cuts, or extra work. He took the country as he found it; and the road winds around the sides of romantic hills, and follows the direction of beautiful glens, for all the world like a play-road built by boys.

The road does not miss many places between Canastota and Cazenovia. You see, going in every direction, it must naturally strike nearly all the hamlets in that section of country. It is amusing to see the engineer on the short curves, watching the platform of the last car over the smoke stack of his engine, and blowing brakes to prevent running into his own train.

Then when the conductor comes around for tickets, you know he is only in play, and when you give him your ticket you do it just to keep up the joke, but of course it is all in sport. Why, these little cars are as clean as wax and bright and shining as a silver dollar. On the Central, where you find six inches of cinders in your seat, you naturally expect to pay something, but these clean cars do not mean railroading for dollars and cents. Then there is the baggage car, as neat as a china closet, and almost as big. No profane baggage man will ever throw

a heavy trunk into that. If he does he will break the car all to pieces. They are obliged to play railroading carefully on those cars. It is not so much fun for the baggage men, perhaps, but it is a great deal more comfortable for the public.

Leaving Canastota, the cars climb up 700 feet and over in going nine miles. The scenery is delightful. Below is a brawling brook, bordered by grove, or open field, or forest. Beyond, broad cultivated acres of farm land, and as you gradually creep toward the sky, all the rich teeming valley between Oneida Lake and the range of hills on which you ride is spread out before you. Not exactly before you, either, because you must ride backward to enjoy it best, and then, as the road winds through the rear and through each side of the car.

You cross romantic country roads, which wind from Heaven or somewhere up there, down through the woods, and you see signs “Look out for the engine when the bell rings.” These are necessary to prevent teamsters from driving over the trains and spoiling the whole fairy arrangement. Then you stop at a station where there is no depot, but no one gets on, because the boys who live there are busy skating. I notice that the conductor does not take his train off the track to

pick up passengers. If you want to ride on those cars you must go to the road. The train will not leave the track to get you. The course of the road is crooked, but the rules of the road are inflexible.

Thus, almost in a dream, you ride up the steep sides of a valley that is always growing deeper until you reach the summit. In the valley somewhere runs the outlet of Cazenovia Lake-Chittenango Creek. You look down at the ice-bound streamlet, at the snow-laden forests, at the little farm-houses, and you wonder whether it would hurt if the train should run off the track, and a car should roll over your foot.

Probably it would, but it does not seem so to think of it. So you reach Cazenovia, a quiet, picturesque village, well fitted to stand at the end of this picturesque railway line. Were it not that Cazenovia is so liable to incursions by heathen from Syracuse, it would be the pleasantest village in the state; as it is, it does not come far short of it.

Those readers who have never made a trip over the Canastota and Cazenovia Railroad can not call life complete until they take the ride. Those who have will agree with me that there is nothing like it.” — *Excerpt, Dec. 29, 1873 article reprinted in the Cazenovia Republican.*

BEGINNINGS, 1867–1883

In July 1869, the Ithaca & Cortland Railroad was chartered to build a rail line between these two cities. A contract was awarded in May 1870 to build a segment from Freeville to Ithaca. Construction was completed from Freeville where it connected with the newly built Southern Central Railroad to a point east of Ithaca in May 1871 and to a western terminus on the Cornell University campus in late 1871. Another contract was awarded in the spring of 1871 that provided for construction from Freeville to Cortland. This work was completed in February 1872 shortly before the arrival of the NY&OM construction crews. Meanwhile, in October 1871,

the Ithaca & Cortland Railroad merged with the dormant Utica, Horseheads & Elmira Railroad to form the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad, a new carrier that would presumably link the three cities. In March 1872, the NY&OM agreed to exchange trackage rights with the newly established UI&E, the NY&OM over the UI&E between Cortland and Freeville and the UI&E over the NY&OM between Cortland and DeRuyter. The NY&OM proceeded to build its own rail line northwest from Freeville to Scipio Center in the direction of Buffalo.

Also in the spring of 1872, the UI&E began construction of a rail line from Horseheads to

THE FIRST RAILROAD TRAIN FROM HORSEHEADS TO “SUMMIT”

It was during the summer of 1873. The long-awaited day had at last arrived. At every crossroad from Horseheads to Erin, happy, jolly groups—men, women and children—in joyous anticipation; talking, trying to imagine what the new era which was about to dawn upon their communities might bring forth. And they were eagerly awaiting the thrill of their lives. The railroad, which was to become the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira, had been completed from Horseheads to “The Summit” and those little groups along the way were to be among the first passengers of the road.

They were not to ride in luxurious coaches or parlor cars (no passenger carrying equipment or rolling stock had yet been acquired) but they had been invited by the management to ride, as their guests, on the “observation cars” which had been especially equipped for this memorable occasion. At Horseheads the tender had been loaded with cordwood to be used as fuel for the “Dolly Varden,” the same engine which was used to haul the work trains back and

forth in the construction work. The train was made up of flat cars with seats of plank running lengthwise of the cars for the ladies and children, while the men folks were to sit on the edges of the car floors, with feet hanging off.

Because of this arrangement of open cars, it was deemed advisable to employ some sort of spark arrester to prevent sparks and embers from the burning wood falling on the passengers. For this purpose, a wire screen was placed in the smokestack.

The train was considerable late arriving at the way stations in the town of Erin. Somewhere down the line, the improvised spark arrester had become clogged, shutting off the draft to the firebox to such an extent that the fireman was unable to keep sufficient steam to haul the train. Considerable time had been spent trying to overcome the difficulty but to no avail. After a long delay, in desperation, a member of the crew climbed atop of the engine and with a pole poked the screen down out of the smokestack. The fireman was

now able to get up steam and soon the train was again on its merry way.

Soon, the Erin folks, who had become anxious during the long wait, again became joyous hands as the “Dolly Varden” hove in sight, exhaust steam whistling, bell ringing, and her smokestack belching forth a cloud of smoke which carried with it many sparks and flying embers. But such little things as a few sparks could not dampen the ardor of those who had made elaborate plans for this ride of all rides. Many of them had never ridden on a train of any sort, and this was to be not only their first train ride, but also an historical occasion never to be forgotten.

Among the passengers boarding that train at Breesport was Elias Wheaton, then a mere boy, who, 65 years later, was to have the distinction of riding on the last train over the same road, before it was taken up in 1938. Among the passengers taken on at the first crossing above Erin was Fred Kellogg, now 84 years old and the oldest resident of Erin at the present time,

BEGINNINGS, 1867-1883

ward Van Etten. Work was completed in December 1873 and service inaugurated between Elmira and Ithaca utilizing trackage rights over the Erie and Northern Central railroads between Elmira and Horseheads and the Ithaca & Athens (formerly Ithaca & Towanda) Railroad between Van Etten and Ithaca.

During this time period, Ezra Cornell had championed a plan to build an incline railroad from the Ithaca & Athens Railroad mainline in the western section of downtown Ithaca up the steep hill to the western terminus of the original Ithaca & Cortland Railroad on the Cornell University campus. Many thought the plan was im-

practical. Mr. Cornell's death in December 1874 signalled the end of this plan and the implementation of a previously developed alternative plan to link the Elmira-Van Etten segment with the Ithaca-Cortland segment by building a line from Van Etten to East Ithaca by way of Wilseyville and Brookton. The route was relatively level and required construction of only one major bridge, a 1,600-foot-long, 90-foot-high trestle over Six Mile Creek just north of Brookton.

Construction of the new line was completed and service inaugurated December 11, 1875 using trackage rights over the Ithaca & Athens Railroad between Van Etten and Spencer thence the



Early Utica, Ithaca & Elmira RR passenger train crosses Deep Gorge trestle near Park Station in the late 1870's.

who furnished much of the data for this paper. With him were his mother and little sister. Mr. Kellogg tells me that one thing in particular which he remembers of that trip is that his little sister was crying nearly all the way because one of those pesky sparks had burned a hole in her new dress. Although many holes

were burned in the wearing apparel of the other passengers, they somehow managed to avoid a conflagration, and finally arrived at "The Summit" where those annoying sparks had raised blisters before they could be brushed off.

Upon arriving at "The Summit" a good old-fashioned basket picnic was

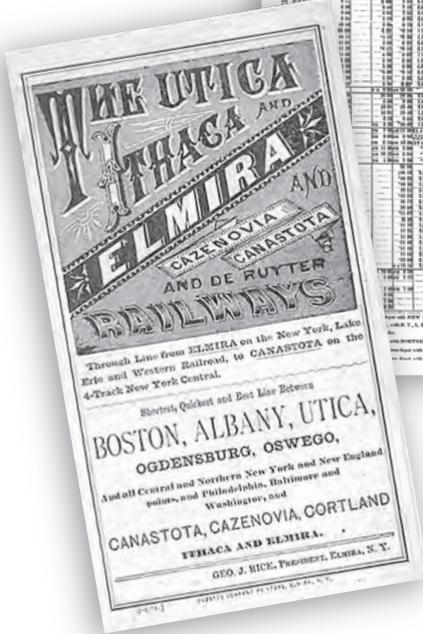
in order. Each family had brought with them large baskets filled with chicken and other delicacies which went to make such a feast for the sturdy country folks of those bygone days. Tablecloths were spread and the bounteous feast prepared on the "green" at about the spot where, a few years later, the Beckwith Hotel was built. The hostelry, located at the edge of the dense virgin forest, soon became a famous rendezvous for the sporting fraternity of Southern New York and Northern Pennsylvania.

Soon after that memorable day of which we have written, "The Summit" became Park Station, so named in honor of Alexander H. Park, a resident of that section, who served the town of Erin as supervisor several terms...Faded memory fails to tell us anything of the return over that newly constructed railroad, but the "Dolly Varden" and little train of flat cars which she hauled, with the crude seats of plank; the falling sparks and the thrill of his first train ride, still linger among the lifelong memories of one who made the historic trip.

—Excerpts, James L. Smith, *Erin Historical Society*, Elmira Star-Gazette, Jan. 18, 1953

BEGINNINGS, 1867–1883

Joint timetable of the UI&E and CC&D railroads in 1872.



The image shows a detailed joint timetable for the Cazenovia, Canastota, and DeRuyter Railways. The title is "UTICA, ITHACA & ELMIRA Cazenovia, Canastota and DeRuyter Railways. IN EFFECT MONDAY, MAY 20, 1880." The timetable is a grid with columns for "STATIONS" and "TRAIN SERVICE WEEK". The stations listed include Elmira, Cortland, Ithaca, Canastota, Cazenovia, and DeRuyter. The train service is shown for various times of the day, including morning, afternoon, and evening trains.

new rail line headed northward to a junction with the previously built Ithaca–Cortland line near Judd Falls Road on the eastern outskirts of Ithaca. The UI&E completed its trackage between Van Etten and Spencer in early 1876 thus providing a through UI&E-owned route from Horseheads to Cortland. The railroad built a station named Ithaca where the new line crossed Maple Avenue. Service to the Cornell University campus was discontinued in 1876 and the tracks removed.

Early the previous year, the New York & Oswego Midland Railroad encountered financial difficulties and shut down service between Norwich, Cortland, Freeville and Scipio Center. The UI&E inaugurated regular service in April 1875 between Ithaca, Freeville, Cortland and Norwich and also between Freeville and Scipio Center. The UI&E issued a new timetable effective that date showing service between Elmira and Cortland and between Freeville and Scipio

Center. This arrangement continued for a year until May 1, 1876 when the NY&OM resumed service between Norwich and Cortland.

During this period, the owners of the Cazenovia & Canastota Railroad sought to build a rail line from Cazenovia to DeRuyter under the name Cazenovia & DeRuyter Railroad. Construction was undertaken in 1877 and completed in 1878. The two properties were merged under the name Cazenovia, Canastota & DeRuyter Railroad, and then secured trackage rights from DeRuyter to Cortland. The new railroad encountered financial problems with operating expenses in 1877 exceeding operating revenues by a substantial margin.

Like many other hastily built new railroads, the UI&E became insolvent and was sold under foreclosure to British investors in 1878. The same investors gained control of the CC&D in 1878 and appointed George J. Rice as president of both companies. During the same year, UI&E interests chartered the Canal Railroad to build a rail line south from Horseheads to Elmira to replace trackage rights operations over the Northern Central and Erie railroads. The new railroad was completed in 1881 and leased to the UI&E. By 1882, the two railroads were issuing a joint timetable advertising service between Elmira, East Ithaca, Cortland, Cazenovia, and Canastota, with connections to points to the east including Utica, Albany, New York City and Boston.

The two railroads suffered from poor management, lack of traffic and deferred maintenance of tracks, right of way, bridges and trestles. The properties were forced into receivership in May 1882. George J. Rice was appointed receiver but was soon cited for contempt of court for not following its directions.

Rice was charged with forgery, embezzlement and larceny. He was indicted for over-issuing stock of the UI&E and using the shares as collateral security for obtaining a personal loan. He was found guilty and sentenced to jail.

AUSTIN CORBIN ARRIVES

Rice was replaced by Austin Corbin, a New York City and Long Island businessman and railroad president. Corbin was credited with successfully acquiring and consolidating the various railroads on Long Island into the Long Island Railroad. He and several business associates bought the UI&E and CC&D properties later in 1882 and immediately began repairing the run-down property and planning for its future. They apparently envisioned that this 120-mile line could be rebuilt into a profitable railroad operation.

Corbin, the major stockholder, was named president, J. Rogers Maxwell vice-president, and Archibald A. McLeod general manager of both railroads. The companies' headquarters and offices of the president, vice-president, and secretary and treasurer were located in New York City. The directors were listed with New York City addresses except McLeod whose office was established in Elmira.

Austin Corbin was born in Newport, New Hampshire in 1827, grew up on a nearby farm, studied law and received a degree from Harvard in 1849. He traveled west to Iowa in 1851 where he joined a banking firm and became very wealthy. He returned east in 1865 to organize his own bank in Brooklyn, New York. He gained a reputation as a successful businessman and developer of hotels and other properties. Corbin was admired by some and thoroughly despised by others no doubt because of his autocratic and ruthless dealings with fellow businessmen and employees.

Responsibility for managing the EC&N was delegated to Archibald Angus McLeod, a native of Compton County in southern Quebec. McLeod was born in the late 1840's and grew up on a farm, the oldest of fifteen children. He left home as a teenager and traveled west to work in Texas and Colorado before securing a job as a rodman-surveyor for the Northern Pacific Railroad in Duluth, Minnesota. He became associ-

ated with Austin Corbin through marriage.

General Manager McLeod had two railroads to coordinate, consolidate, manage, and rebuild. The properties consisted of 120 miles of main track between Elmira and Canastota and 15 miles of sidings. The mainline rail was both iron and steel weighing between 56 and 60 pounds. There were approximately 100 switches, almost all stub switches. There were 4 iron and 76 wooden bridges and trestles measuring a total 7,349 feet in length. The entire mainline was equipped with wayside telegraph lines.

The CC&D owned 2 passenger engines, the UI&E owned 5 passenger, 2 freight, and 2 switching locomotives and leased 1 locomotive. The CC&D equipment was maintained in Canastota and the UI&E equipment in Breesport. The UI&E facility was destroyed by fire in 1883 and replaced by a repair and maintenance shop in Cortland. Construction of a new building in Elmira was undertaken that would serve as a combination passenger station, freight station and general office.

The two companies had approximately 320 employees receiving an average \$375 per year. The 1883 annual report to the state Board of Railroad Commissioners stated the two railroads earned \$119,145 carrying 28,648 tons of coal and 48,467 tons of other freight. The companies received \$103,634 from carrying approximately 170,000 passengers, plus \$14,151 from other passenger train services including hauling mail and express. The UI&E and CC&D reported \$237,696 in total revenues but incurred a combined \$68,852 loss after all expenses were deducted.

A major factor in the loss was the expenditure of almost \$100,000 for repair of tracks, bridges, trestles and other structures. The new management almost immediately began installing new ties and rail and repairing the numerous bridges and trestles.

The poor physical condition of the two rail-

roads was described in a New York State Railroad Commissioners' Inspection Report issued in 1883: "...There are 33 miles of 60 pound steel rail in the road, 1,400 tons of which have been laid this year, the remainder of the road is 56 and 60 pound iron much of which is battered at the ends and splintered and broken between. The sharp curves between Canastota and Cazenovia are braced outside of rail, the curvature often reaching between eight and twelve degrees [explained below] and upon heavy grades...the superstructure in the main is in poor surface and line; joints down and bad gauge, owing in part to the insufficiency of ties, lack of ballast and imperfect drainage. A portion of the superstructure, however, is in fair order.

"Except between Cazenovia and Canastota and on the south end of the road, the ballast (gravel) is quite thin. The cuttings...are generally too narrow for proper ditching, and for the accumulation of snow, causing a serious obstacle to the regular operating of the road in winter season. Fifty-five thousand new ties have been placed in the road this year; yet, as an entirety the average condition is below a proper degree of strength...weeds are uncut and old material scattered more or less along the line. Considerable of the fencing is composed of slats held vertically in place with wires strung from post to post; other portions have usual post and board and barbed wire fencing.

"...The bridges from decay and lightness of construction, being insufficient to uphold the in-

creased weight of motive power found necessary to be used, have all been supported with bents of timber or piles placed beneath the chords and in some instances the track stringers are directly supported with bents of timber or piles placed beneath the lower chords and in some instances the track-stringers are directly supported. It would be advisable at once to rebuild the structures or, if pile bridges will afford sufficient waterway, that they be thoroughly constructed. All the wooden trusses, trestles, small timber openings and cattle guards, are destitute of proper flooring ...repairs are in progress and undoubtedly these timber structures are receiving close attention; but it would be infinitely better if these trestles were filled so far as possible.

"The passenger outfit is in good repair, neat and comfortable, but old in style and dingy in appearance; furnished with automatic couplers and brakes...the motive power has been increased by the addition of several engines for freight service. The other and older machines are in good order. Generally this line of road was much run down at the time the new owners took over the property. Very much had to be done to keep the road open at all..."

Note: Degrees of curvature, mentioned in the Railroad Commissioners report above, is expressed in degrees of direction change in 100 feet of a chord, the distance between two points on track centerlines. As examples, a 1-degree curve has a radius of 5,730 feet, a 10-degree curve has a 573-foot radius, and a 15-degree curve has a 382-foot radius.

THE EC&N FROM 1884 TO 1890

The Elmira, Cortland and Northern Railroad was incorporated on March 7, 1884 under the New York State General Railroad Act of 1850 and acquired the assets and liabilities of the UI&E and CC&D railroads. It was established with practically the same owners, directors, officers and managers as the former companies. The EC&N assumed the leases of the Canal Railway from Elmira to Horseheads, and the New York, Ontario & Western Railway (formerly New York & Oswego Midland Railroad) from Cortland to DeRuyter and acquired the assets of the former Utica, Ithaca, & Elmira Railway from Horseheads to Cortland, and the Cazenovia, Canastota and DeRuyter Railway from DeRuyter to Canastota. These properties were bought us-

ing the proceeds from the sale of \$2 million in common stock and \$2 million in first mortgage thirty-year bonds. The new company took over \$324,000 in unfunded debt to employees, various railroad companies and other corporations.

The EC&N became owners of CC&D and UI&E engine houses in Cazenovia, DeRuyter, Cortland and Elmira and equipment repair facilities in Cortland as well as eighteen locomotives:

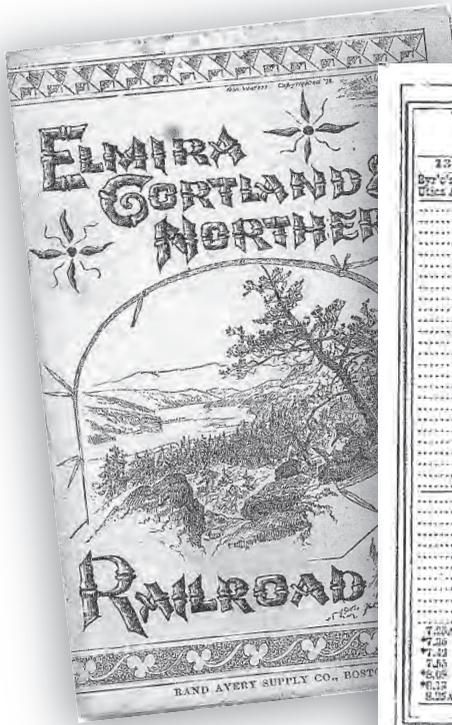
- 2 4-4-0 passenger engines (#1-2) from the CC&D
- 5 4-4-0 passenger engines (#3-7) from the UI&E
- 1 4-4-0 passenger engine (#8) from an unknown source
- 2 2-6-0 freight engines (#9 and 10) from the UI&E
- 1 0-4-0 switch engine (#11) from an unknown source
- 7 4-6-0 freight engines (#12-18) purchased new

Its freight car fleet consisted of 19 box, 18 flat, and 73 gondola cars. The new company also



Elmira, Cortland & Northern coal trestle built in 1885 and 1886 for unloading coal into Erie Canal barges, a breakthrough that greatly increased freight tonnage for the line.

1885 public timetable reflects the consolidation of two railroads.



ELMIRA, CORTLAND & NORTHERN RAILROAD.													
EASTWARD							WESTWARD						
12	11	9	5	3	1	Distance	2	4	6	10	12	14	
Byr's	Tr'nd	Tr'nd	Sunday	Express	Albany	From	STATIONS.	Albany	Albany	Sunday	Tr'nd	Tr'nd	Distance
Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	ELMIRA		Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	ELMIRA
8:00AM	7:40AM	7:20AM	7:00AM	6:40AM	6:20AM	0	ELMIRA	11:45AM	11:30AM	11:15AM	11:00AM	10:45AM	0
8:16	7:52	7:32	7:12	6:52	6:32	1.10	D. L. & W. Junction	11:46	11:31	11:16	11:01	10:46	1.10
8:30	8:09	7:49	7:29	7:09	6:49	2.15	North Elmira	11:52	11:37	11:22	11:07	10:52	2.15
8:40	8:19	7:59	7:39	7:19	6:59	3.20	Brookport	11:59	11:44	11:29	11:14	10:59	3.20
8:55	8:34	8:14	7:54	7:34	7:14	4.25	Trin	12:11	11:56	11:41	11:26	11:11	4.25
9:10	8:49	8:29	8:09	7:49	7:29	5.30	Park Station	12:22	12:07	11:52	11:37	11:22	5.30
9:25	9:04	8:44	8:24	8:04	7:44	6.35	Southwood	12:34	12:19	12:04	11:49	11:34	6.35
9:40	9:19	8:59	8:39	8:19	7:59	7.40	VAN DYKE	12:41	12:26	12:11	11:56	11:41	7.40
9:55	9:34	9:14	8:54	8:34	8:14	8.45	Spencer	12:53	12:38	12:23	12:08	11:53	8.45
10:10	9:49	9:29	9:09	8:49	8:29	9.50	West Canad.	1:02	1:17	1:02	1:17	1:02	9.50
10:25	10:04	9:44	9:24	9:04	8:44	10.55	North Canad.	1:10	1:25	1:10	1:25	1:10	10.55
10:40	10:19	9:59	9:39	9:19	8:59	11.60	White Church	1:17	1:32	1:17	1:32	1:17	11.60
10:55	10:34	10:14	9:54	9:34	9:14	12.65	Willsville	1:24	1:39	1:24	1:39	1:24	12.65
11:10	10:49	10:29	10:09	9:49	9:29	13.70	Brookton	1:32	1:47	1:32	1:47	1:32	13.70
11:25	11:04	10:44	10:24	10:04	9:44	14.75	Beacon	1:39	1:54	1:39	1:54	1:39	14.75
11:40	11:19	10:59	10:39	10:19	9:59	15.80	Caroline Junction	1:47	2:02	1:47	2:02	1:47	15.80
11:55	11:34	11:14	10:54	10:34	10:14	16.85	Varma	1:54	2:09	1:54	2:09	1:54	16.85
12:10	11:49	11:29	11:09	10:49	10:29	17.90	Snyder	2:02	2:17	2:02	2:17	2:02	17.90
12:25	12:04	11:44	11:24	11:04	10:44	18.95	East Canad.	2:10	2:25	2:10	2:25	2:10	18.95
12:40	12:19	11:59	11:39	11:19	10:59	19.00	Freeville	2:17	2:32	2:17	2:32	2:17	19.00
12:55	12:34	12:14	11:54	11:34	11:14	20.05	Holleyville	2:24	2:39	2:24	2:39	2:24	20.05
1:10	1:09	1:09	1:09	1:09	1:09	21.10	McLean	2:32	2:47	2:32	2:47	2:32	21.10
1:25	1:04	1:04	1:04	1:04	1:04	22.15	Chilhowe	2:40	2:55	2:40	2:55	2:40	22.15
1:40	1:19	1:19	1:19	1:19	1:19	23.20	South Cortland	2:48	3:03	2:48	3:03	2:48	23.20
1:55	1:34	1:34	1:34	1:34	1:34	24.25	CORTLAND	2:56	3:11	2:56	3:11	2:56	24.25
2:10	1:49	1:49	1:49	1:49	1:49	25.30	Canad. Junction	3:04	3:19	3:04	3:19	3:04	25.30
2:25	2:04	2:04	2:04	2:04	2:04	26.35	Lorain	3:12	3:27	3:12	3:27	3:12	26.35
2:40	2:19	2:19	2:19	2:19	2:19	27.40	East River	3:20	3:35	3:20	3:35	3:20	27.40
2:55	2:34	2:34	2:34	2:34	2:34	28.45	East Homer	3:28	3:43	3:28	3:43	3:28	28.45
3:10	2:49	2:49	2:49	2:49	2:49	29.50	Trin	3:36	3:51	3:36	3:51	3:36	29.50
3:25	3:04	3:04	3:04	3:04	3:04	30.55	Crain's Mills	3:44	3:59	3:44	3:59	3:44	30.55
3:40	3:19	3:19	3:19	3:19	3:19	31.60	Cayler	3:52	4:07	3:52	4:07	3:52	31.60
3:55	3:34	3:34	3:34	3:34	3:34	32.65	Canad.	4:00	4:15	4:00	4:15	4:00	32.65
4:10	3:49	3:49	3:49	3:49	3:49	33.70	Sheep's Corners	4:08	4:23	4:08	4:23	4:08	33.70
4:25	4:04	4:04	4:04	4:04	4:04	34.75	Woodstock	4:16	4:31	4:16	4:31	4:16	34.75
4:40	4:19	4:19	4:19	4:19	4:19	35.80	Empress	4:24	4:39	4:24	4:39	4:24	35.80
4:55	4:34	4:34	4:34	4:34	4:34	36.85	Empress	4:32	4:47	4:32	4:47	4:32	36.85
5:10	4:49	4:49	4:49	4:49	4:49	37.90	GAZENOVIA	4:40	4:55	4:40	4:55	4:40	37.90
5:25	5:04	5:04	5:04	5:04	5:04	38.95	Empress	4:48	5:03	4:48	5:03	4:48	38.95
5:40	5:19	5:19	5:19	5:19	5:19	39.00	Chittaugus Falls	4:56	5:11	4:56	5:11	4:56	39.00
5:55	5:34	5:34	5:34	5:34	5:34	40.05	Perryville	5:04	5:19	5:04	5:19	5:04	40.05
6:10	5:49	5:49	5:49	5:49	5:49	41.10	Oriskany	5:12	5:27	5:12	5:27	5:12	41.10
6:25	6:04	6:04	6:04	6:04	6:04	42.15	Cockville	5:20	5:35	5:20	5:35	5:20	42.15
6:40	6:19	6:19	6:19	6:19	6:19	43.20	Canastota	5:28	5:43	5:28	5:43	5:28	43.20
6:55	6:34	6:34	6:34	6:34	6:34	44.25		5:36	5:51	5:36	5:51	5:36	44.25
7:10	6:49	6:49	6:49	6:49	6:49	45.30		5:44	5:59	5:44	5:59	5:44	45.30
7:25	7:04	7:04	7:04	7:04	7:04	46.35		5:52	6:07	5:52	6:07	5:52	46.35
7:40	7:19	7:19	7:19	7:19	7:19	47.40		6:00	6:15	6:00	6:15	6:00	47.40
7:55	7:34	7:34	7:34	7:34	7:34	48.45		6:08	6:23	6:08	6:23	6:08	48.45
8:10	7:49	7:49	7:49	7:49	7:49	49.50		6:16	6:31	6:16	6:31	6:16	49.50
8:25	8:04	8:04	8:04	8:04	8:04	50.55		6:24	6:39	6:24	6:39	6:24	50.55
8:40	8:19	8:19	8:19	8:19	8:19	51.60		6:32	6:47	6:32	6:47	6:32	51.60
8:55	8:34	8:34	8:34	8:34	8:34	52.65		6:40	6:55	6:40	6:55	6:40	52.65
9:10	8:49	8:49	8:49	8:49	8:49	53.70		6:48	7:03	6:48	7:03	6:48	53.70
9:25	9:04	9:04	9:04	9:04	9:04	54.75		6:56	7:11	6:56	7:11	6:56	54.75
9:40	9:19	9:19	9:19	9:19	9:19	55.80		7:04	7:19	7:04	7:19	7:04	55.80
9:55	9:34	9:34	9:34	9:34	9:34	56.85		7:12	7:27	7:12	7:27	7:12	56.85
10:10	9:49	9:49	9:49	9:49	9:49	57.90		7:20	7:35	7:20	7:35	7:20	57.90
10:25	10:04	10:04	10:04	10:04	10:04	58.95		7:28	7:43	7:28	7:43	7:28	58.95
10:40	10:19	10:19	10:19	10:19	10:19	60.00		7:36	7:51	7:36	7:51	7:36	60.00
10:55	10:34	10:34	10:34	10:34	10:34	61.05		7:44	7:59	7:44	7:59	7:44	61.05
11:10	10:49	10:49	10:49	10:49	10:49	62.10		7:52	8:07	7:52	8:07	7:52	62.10
11:25	11:04	11:04	11:04	11:04	11:04	63.15		8:00	8:15	8:00	8:15	8:00	63.15
11:40	11:19	11:19	11:19	11:19	11:19	64.20		8:08	8:23	8:08	8:23	8:08	64.20
11:55	11:34	11:34	11:34	11:34	11:34	65.25		8:16	8:31	8:16	8:31	8:16	65.25
12:10	11:49	11:49	11:49	11:49	11:49	66.30		8:24	8:39	8:24	8:39	8:24	66.30
12:25	12:04	12:04	12:04	12:04	12:04	67.35		8:32	8:47	8:32	8:47	8:32	67.35
12:40	12:19	12:19	12:19	12:19	12:19	68.40		8:40	8:55	8:40	8:55	8:40	68.40
12:55	12:34	12:34	12:34	12:34	12:34	69.45		8:48	9:03	8:48	9:03	8:48	69.45
1:10	12:49	12:49	12:49	12:49	12:49	70.50		8:56	9:11	8:56	9:11	8:56	70.50
1:25	1:04	1:04	1:04	1:04	1:04	71.55		9:04	9:19	9:04	9:19	9:04	71.55
1:40	1:19	1:19	1:19	1:19	1:19	72.60		9:12	9:27	9:12	9:27	9:12	72.60
1:55	1:34	1:34	1:34	1:34	1:34	73.65		9:20	9:35	9:20	9:35	9:20	73.65
2:10	1:49	1:49	1:49	1:49	1:49	74.70		9:28	9:43	9:28	9:43	9:28	74.70
2:25	2:04	2:04	2:04	2:04	2:04	75.75		9:36	9:51	9:36	9:51	9:36	75.75
2:40	2:19	2:19	2:19	2:19	2:19	76.80		9:44	9:59	9:44	9:59	9:44	76.80
2:55	2:34	2:34	2:34	2:34	2:34	77.85		9:52	10:07	9:52	10:07	9:52	77.85
3:10	2:49	2:49	2:49	2:49	2:49	78.90		10:00	10:15	10:00	10:15	10:00	78.90
3:25	3:04	3:04	3:04	3:04	3:04	79.95		10:08	10:23	10:08	10:23	10:08	79.95
3:													

Corbin replied in a strongly worded letter on April 10, 1884, that the management was doing everything possible to rebuild the railroad including repairing the track, bridges and trestles, and buying new locomotives, all for the purpose of putting the whole road in first class condition. He added that he was reducing the speed of trains to a rate that was entirely safe.

On May 8, two state commissioners visited the railroad and made a thorough inspection of the property. Their report indicated that they found “abundant evidences” that the management was making good progress in rebuilding the entire line but described a series of areas that should be attended to as soon as possible. Regarding the section between Cazenovia and Canastota, they found “...that while much has been done and is being done to put it in safe condition; it is exceedingly tortuous, being but a succession of curves, some being as high as fourteen degrees of curvature...” The commissioners stated that “the sense of insecurity, indeed of absolute danger, is so great to a passenger traveling at a high rate of speed around curves that he will not ride except when positively compelled to.” They recommended that the rate of speed should never exceed 20 miles per hour.

On September 13, a supplementary inspector’s report commended the railroad for its effort to place the line in a “proper condition.” It described the installation of steel rail over the entire road, extensive renewal of ties, improved ballasting and drainage, renovation of stations and acquisition of new rolling stock. However, by the end of the fiscal period September 30, 1884, the railroad had spent \$236,196 for repairs to tracks, bridges and structures which exceeded operating revenues of \$152,140 by \$84,056. After accounting for all other expenses in the twenty-eight-week period from March 15 through September 30, the railroad recorded a net deficit of \$217,453.

The EC&N reported an average 405 em-

ployees earning a total of \$117,226 in salaries and wages in 1884. This was an average pay of \$1.72 per employee per day working 8 to 12 hours per day, 6 days per week, the equivalent of 15 to 20 cents per hour depending on the job classification and hours worked. The work force included several dozen additional track laborers hired during the spring and summer months to reduce the amount of deferred track, right of way and bridge maintenance.

THE COST OF IMPROVING

The railroad also spent \$97,340 for additions and betterments to the property including \$74,578 for the seven new locomotives, \$8,392 for a new Elmira station and headquarters facility, and \$14,370 for additions and improvements to equipment maintenance facilities, new freight cars and other projects.

The new company’s passenger trains averaged 144 passengers carried per trip of which about 80% were local and 20% through riders. The average passenger load per train mile was 28 passengers and the average passenger trip 23.6 miles. The EC&N typically operated three freight trains each way daily except Sundays and averaged 12 cars per train. About 73% of the tonnage in 1884 was northbound and 27% southbound. The freight traffic consisted of 35% coal, 26% lumber, 19% merchandise and manufactured goods and the remaining 20% agricultural and other products.

During the 1885 fiscal year, EC&N carried 174,552 passengers, a slight improvement over 1884 and 1883. Freight traffic increased in most categories but particularly in coal tonnage carried. On an average daily tons carried basis, coal increased from 91 tons in 1883 to 620 tons in 1885. Total freight traffic rose from 246 tons in 1883 to 868 tons in 1885. Average daily freight revenues climbed from \$381 in 1883 to \$647 in 1885. Average revenue received per ton carried

dropped from \$1.55 in 1883 to \$0.75 as coal traffic rose from 37% of total traffic in 1883 to 71% in 1885. Revenue earned for carrying a ton of coal was less than half that yielded from hauling other types of freight traffic. Transportation service became more efficient with freight train lengths increasing from an average 12 to 20 cars. The average northbound train carried 250 tons of revenue freight while the average southbound train carried only 34 tons of freight.

In the fiscal year ending September 30, 1885, total revenues of \$325,147, including \$202,541 from freight operations and \$122,606 from passenger operations, were 37% above the 1883 level. The EC&N reported net income of \$3,436 in 1885 due to the increased revenues and sharp cutback in expenditures for maintenance of tracks, right of way and structures. This would be the last year a profit would be recorded until 1889. The railroad spent \$67,239 on property additions and improvements including \$42,900 for 100 new coal cars and \$2,183 for the first phases of construction of a trestle at Canastota for transfer of coal from rail cars to barges on the Erie Canal.

In early 1886, the EC&N's owners began construction of a twenty-mile extension north from Canastota to Camden. The new line was

built as a separate property, named the Canastota Northern Railroad, to be leased to the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad for \$18,000 per year. The new line would serve the communities of South Bay, Sylvan Beach, Verona, Vienna, McConnellsville and Camden and would interchange at Sylvan Junction with the New York, Ontario & Western Railroad and at Camden with the Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburg Railroad.

The EC&N completed construction of the Canastota coal transfer facility in 1886. This was a major factor in the railroad's 43% increase in coal tonnage above 1885 levels with coal climbing from 71% to 78% of total freight tonnage handled. With other freight traffic declining by 1%, total freight revenue grew only \$39,664 (30%). Passenger service revenue rose \$4,454 for a total operating revenue increase of \$44,117. Expenses in 1886 climbed at a faster rate reflecting an additional \$42,247 spent for rail replacements and maintenance of track and structures, \$18,000 interest charges for the Camden extension and costs associated with increased traffic levels. As a result, the railroad incurred a loss of almost \$38,000 in spite of receiving over \$44,000 in additional revenues.

A NEW STATION FOR DELPHI

The community of Delphi is in high expectation of soon having a railroad station, that better means may be had for reaching the outside world. On Tuesday last, Superintendent Sadler, of the Elmira, Cortland and Northern Railroad visited the people in the valley to consult their wishes as regarded the project of opening a station for the convenience of the people in that vicinity. The most available point that entered the discussion was a locality

two miles from the village of Delphi, the two points being connected by easy roads. This selection proved agreeable to all parties and it has been decided the new station should be called Union.

On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, men with teams from Delphi, rendezvoused at Union and worked industriously, grading a site for a depot and digging out stake lines for side tracks. People from miles around were glad enough to contribute their time, and for

three days they dug, scraped, plowed and drained as diligently as a colony of beavers. The foundation for the building has been commenced, and in a few days the rails and ties will be ready to be laid. The proposition of giving Delphi and the adjacent country the benefit of approximate railway facilities was opposed by nobody, and the Superintendent of the road has gone above par in popularity in that country.
—*Cazenovia Republican*, Jan. 15, 1885



A key to added summer traffic, an excursion train has backed to the EC&N's Sylvan Beach station at the end of the line's wye track, looking north toward the bridge over Wood River to the beach area. This service came as part of the line's extension from Canastota to Camden.

CORBIN BRANCHES OUT

The Corbin-McLeod sphere of railroad activity and influence expanded in 1885 with the appointment of EC&N General Manager McLeod as acting general manager of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad with headquarters in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The P&R had rail lines from Philadelphia west through Reading to Harrisburg, north to Williamsport, Pennsylvania and a network of routes serving the anthracite coal mines in east-central Pennsylvania. P&R President Franklin Gowen was replaced by Austin Corbin in 1887. Corbin became, in fact, president of three railroads: the Long Island, the EC&N and now the P&R. During the same year, McLeod was promoted to vice-president and general manager of the P&R while retaining

the title of general manager of the EC&N. Albert Allen was named EC&N general superintendent with headquarters in Elmira. He moved his headquarters to Cortland in 1889.

Construction of the extension to Camden was completed and regular service inaugurated in July 1887. Although the six communities served had a combined population of less than 2,500, summer traffic to Sylvan Beach provided a major source of seasonal passenger revenue. Interchange with the NYO&W and RW&O railroads brought a new direct outlet for and source of freight traffic. The RW&O

had an extensive network of rail lines extending from Suspension Bridge across the Niagara River from Ontario eastward to Oswego then north through Watertown toward the Canadian border. EC&N service between Canastota and Camden normally consisted of one or two passenger and one freight-accomodation train in each direction daily except Sundays. Additional service to Sylvan Beach was provided during summer months.

EC&N's passenger and freight traffic volumes continued to grow during 1886, 1887, and 1888, and the railroad benefited by more efficient transportation and equipment maintenance activities. However, the additional revenues and savings from operating economies were more than offset by large expenditures for installation of new rail, expanded track and bridge repairs, and increased interest charges. As a result, the railroad's cumulative deficit rose by more than \$100,000 in the three year period. Finally, in 1889, the EC&N reported a modest profit of \$6,330 thanks to reductions that year in transportation, equipment maintenance and interest expenses.

REVENUE PICKS UP

The fiscal year of 1890 was the most successful of all the EC&N years from the standpoint of freight tonnage, total revenues, and net income. The railroad carried 261,802 passengers, 50% more than in 1885. A significant portion of the increase in ridership was from operation of popular reduced fare excursion trains to Sylvan Beach and other destinations. Total passenger service revenues including income from mail and express traffic climbed 34% from \$118,551 in 1883 to \$158,499 in 1890.

EC&N freight traffic and revenues also grew dramatically from 1885 to 1890. Annual freight tonnage rose 80% to 490,792 tons including coal tonnage up 69% to 327,104 tons and freight tonnage up 110% to 163,688 tons. However, freight revenues rose only 59% due to a decrease in average per ton freight charges from 74 to 65 cents. Total revenues were \$480,416 (up 48% from 1885) and net income of \$67,705 was \$64,294 above the recorded 1885 level.

Freight transportation service was expanded and became more efficient during this five year span. Total annual train miles were increased 62% while freight ton miles rose 90%. Average

ton miles per train mile grew 17% and average train lengths rose from 20 to 23 cars. Freight crew expenses increased only 33% as the average miles per day per freight train crew increased from 104 to 132 miles.

Annual equipment maintenance costs were reduced 12% from \$35,970 in 1885 to \$31,634 in 1890 in spite of the overall 54% increase in train miles operated. This expense reduction produced a 55% cut in equipment maintenance costs per train mile no doubt because of the acquisition of six new locomotives, improvements to maintenance facilities and more efficient utilization of personnel.

The new motive power was purchased in 1886 and included 4 4-6-0's (#19-22) and 2 2-8-0's (#23-24). The 22-ton switching locomotive list-

Stub switch used on the EC&N has a movable pair of mainline rails on the right and fixed rails on the left, later replaced by movable-point switches.



A BUSY TWO WEEKS AT CAZENOVIA

A serious accident occurred on the EC&N R.R. [Dec. 28, 1887] which happily resulted without loss of life or injury to employee. The local freight drawn by engine No. 12 arrived at its usual time. In switching to make up the train the engine was run on to the bridge just north of the depot. As the engineer reversed his engine there was a crash, the engine doubled up like a jack knife and went to the bottom of the creek, a distance of about fifteen feet. Engineer Phillip Brown and fireman Edward Dwyer crawled out

through the debris and remarkable as it may seem were uninjured. A young lad named Thurston who had jumped on the engine while in the yard, had his arm severely burned by being thrown against the boiler. Superintendent Allen arrived as soon as possible with the wrecking train and crew. About four o'clock this morning the tender was raised and they will probably get the engine upon the track to-day. The loss is estimated at from \$5,000 to \$7,000.

—*Cazenovia Republican*, Dec. 29, 1887

A good strong bridge takes place of the one which collapsed last week and trains are crossing it regularly and on time. Superintendent Allen says the damage will not exceed \$2,500.

The passenger traffic on the EC&N RR is rapidly increasing as everyone could testify who came up on the train Tuesday. Standing room was almost at a premium. Their freight and coal business taxes the capacity of the road to the utmost.

—*Cazenovia Republican*, Jan. 6, 1888

ed on the 1884 roster was sold or scrapped the next year. Between 1884 and 1890, the EC&N expanded its freight car fleet from 19 to 30 box cars and 10 to 138 coal cars, and disposed of all 73 gondola and 18 flat cars.

The reported financial position of the EC&N at the end of the 1890 fiscal year was greatly enhanced by two major accounting entries. The company reported receiving \$463,617 from sale of twenty-year debenture bonds, then stated that the liability for principal and interest payments on the bonds had been canceled. Thus the cumulative deficit of \$225,825 was converted into a cumulative profit of \$222,864. The EC&N had suddenly become a profitable railroad. By some coincidence, this dramatic improvement happened during a time when President Corbin was trying to sell his railroad.

Austin Corbin resigned as president of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad in 1890 and was replaced by Archibald McLeod who then resigned from his position at the EC&N. The position of EC&N general manager was abolished and the day to day responsibility of managing the company was passed to General Superintendent Albert Allen.

On May 22, 1890, Corbin announced he was traveling to Watertown to confer with prominent men in that city regarding extension of the EC&N to Watertown, Clayton and Ogdensburg. He stated that the Philadelphia & Reading and the Erie railroads were interested in a new line to be built from Williamsport, Pennsylvania, north to Elmira. Further, he said surveys had been completed and construction was expected to commence in the near future. The new line together with the extended EC&N railroad would give the P&R a direct outlet for its coal to points in northern New York State, Canada and Vermont and would also furnish it a through and quick passenger route to the Thousands Islands area according to the announcement.

There was no immediate progress in these

THE READING DOES THE EC&N DIRT

A letter dated Jan. 15, 1888 from the EC&N master mechanic and train master to A. A. McLeod, general manager of the Elmira, Cortland & Northern and Philadelphia & Reading railroads:

Regarding three EC&N engines loaned to the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad.

Dear Sir:

I take the liberty of writing you a few lines regarding our engines #16, 17 & 23 when we received them back from the P&R road. We have been quite busy since we had the misfortune of the Cazenovia Bridge giving away and letting our Engine #12 in the creek. We had quite a job getting her out. The engine is not but very little damaged. [Don't know] you have had the full details of it.

I am sorry that you were not present when they came back to us. You might have sympathized with us in receiving them. Such dirty filthy engines you ever saw being away but such a short time. They must not have been cleaned since they left us. This is a very poor example for our Enginemen and Firemen. The engines were lent to use I believe but to abuse the Company's property like these engines have been used is simply outrageous.

I will not go into any details but will give you some of the careless work of some one. The driver brakes have been used on #16 & 17 so as to slide the driving wheels causing flat spots on them. The men can hardly ride on them with them hammering on the rails. The driving wedges were all down. Brasses have been reduced so as to leave them open and chawed around the straps. There have been holes picked in the back ends of tank wings to let the water out. They have used open torches inside the cabs.

This will give you some idea the usage they had hoping we will have enough work to keep them from going again.

Yours truly

Thomas Kearsley

plans until later in the year when Corbin learned that the citizens of Watertown were increasingly dissatisfied with service and freight rates offered by the Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburg Railroad. The RW&O was the only railroad of consequence serving the North Country. He had also heard of a potential of major ore and other mineral deposits in the area north of Watertown. Corbin organized a new railroad, the

Camden, Watertown & Northern to be built northward from Camden to Watertown and possibly beyond. Meetings were held with Watertown officials. Meanwhile, the New York Central sent representatives indicating that they might extend their railroad to Watertown. The year ended with great excitement among the people of Watertown believing they might soon be served by a second or possibly third railroad.

THE EC&N GIVES FIREMEN A BIG HAND

Probably New Woodstock's most spectacular fires were the E.W. Gunn fire in October 1890, and the destruction of the mill of the New Woodstock Milling Company's property on Railroad Street on February 13, 1879, which wiped out another of the community's enterprises. The first of these conflagrations destroyed five businesses. It originated in the store of E.W. Gunn on the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and Mill Street, shortly after noon on October 9, 1890, a sunny, fall day. Mr. Gunn was producing one of his patented and popular wire tooth rakes. The fire burned west to the store and residence of Dr. A.D. Smith, and north on Mill Street to the residence occupied by L. Smith. It resulted from the explosion of benzene. Mr. Gunn used the second floor as a workshop, while the lower floor was occupied by P.E. Jaquith as a general store. Mr. Gunn, with his hand in a tank of benzene, accidentally spilled some of it into a lamp and an explosion instantly occurred.

Mr. Gunn was badly burned. He was too much stunned to take instant measures to extinguish the fire, which

immediately communicated with dry lumber stored overhead, and a first class conflagration was under way before anyone knew what happened. So rapid was its progress that flames were bursting from the upper windows before the first alarm was sounded. It was evident that a big fire was on hand, and that the sources for fighting it were totally inadequate.

At 2:30 p.m. a call for aid was telegraphed to Cazenovia, and in eighteen minutes their hook and ladder truck was run to the Elmira, Cortland and Northern Railroad depot, having been loaded onto a flat car and made the run of six miles to Main Street of New Woodstock in six minutes. Because of the probable lack of water, only the hook and ladder was brought down. Further inspection indicated several cisterns available, so the locomotive was returned for the hand pump and hose. In eighteen minutes, the equipment was on the scene. For all time these were the fastest runs over that section of the railroad. Engine No. 18 in charge of Conductor Shepherd made the run. The name of the daring engineer has not been ascertained.

The run back to Cazenovia was made in six and a half minutes; the return to New Woodstock in about eight more.

George T. Atwell, who was on the train, directed vigorous measures which helped stay the progress of the fire. After a hard fight in which local citizens fully participated, the fire was brought under control. Burned out, besides the corner store, was the meat market occupied by P.E. Jaquith, the hardware owned by Henry Rider, S.S. Hayes boot and shoe store and residence, M.C. Wood's Justice Office, and the AOUW Lodge (Ancient Order of United Workmen) rooms. The property remained as burned out cellar holes for several years.

The exhausted firemen were given a substantial lunch, using an entire hurriedly emptied counter in the center of C.A. Fox's store. There is no record of thanks to the engineer or the dispatcher in Cortland who gave them the railroad. The Elmira, Cortland and Northern Railroad was notable for extending help to villages and shippers along its line.

—From a 1992 account of the New Woodstock Fire Department by Walter F. Mann

A DAY BY THE RULES, 1891

We're walking down South Main Street in Cortland, New York, about 6:30 a.m. on Thursday, New Year's Day, 1891. There's plenty of snow along the streets of this city of 8,000 people situated in western upstate New York. None is predicted for today, a welcome break from two weeks of heavy snows that have slowed but not stopped activity. The snows caused the roof of the gas works tank house in a community east of Cortland to collapse resulting in the escape of 40,000 cubic feet of gas. The village's gas street lights were out of order for a period of time. Reports from other communities indicated people are not housebound in spite of a second heavy snowfall in little over a week. They are said to be getting around in their sleighs in spite of some difficulty with the drifts.

We've arranged to visit the EC&N train dispatchers' office to learn more about how this 140-mile long railroad functions on a daily basis and later to visit the yards and equipment maintenance facilities. We meet the first-trick dispatcher who began his day at 6 a.m. and the relay telegrapher who handles the routine copying and routing of railroad messages. The dispatcher welcomes and invites us to sit near him at his desk with telegraph keys and

sounders before him as well as his dispatcher's train sheet, train order book, operating timetable, special instructions and other tools of the trade. The 24-inch wide, 18-inch high train sheet has a list of stations in the center column and 25 blank columns on each side—northbound trains to be listed on the left side and southbound trains on the right. The dispatchers will be filling in the times of trains as they leave each of the stations along the EC&N. The dispatchers' room is silent except for the sounds of chattering telegraph instruments, and the ticking of the large wall-mounted, hand-wound clock which has an important role in management of the railroad.

This may be New Year's Day but it is no holiday for the railroad or its employees.

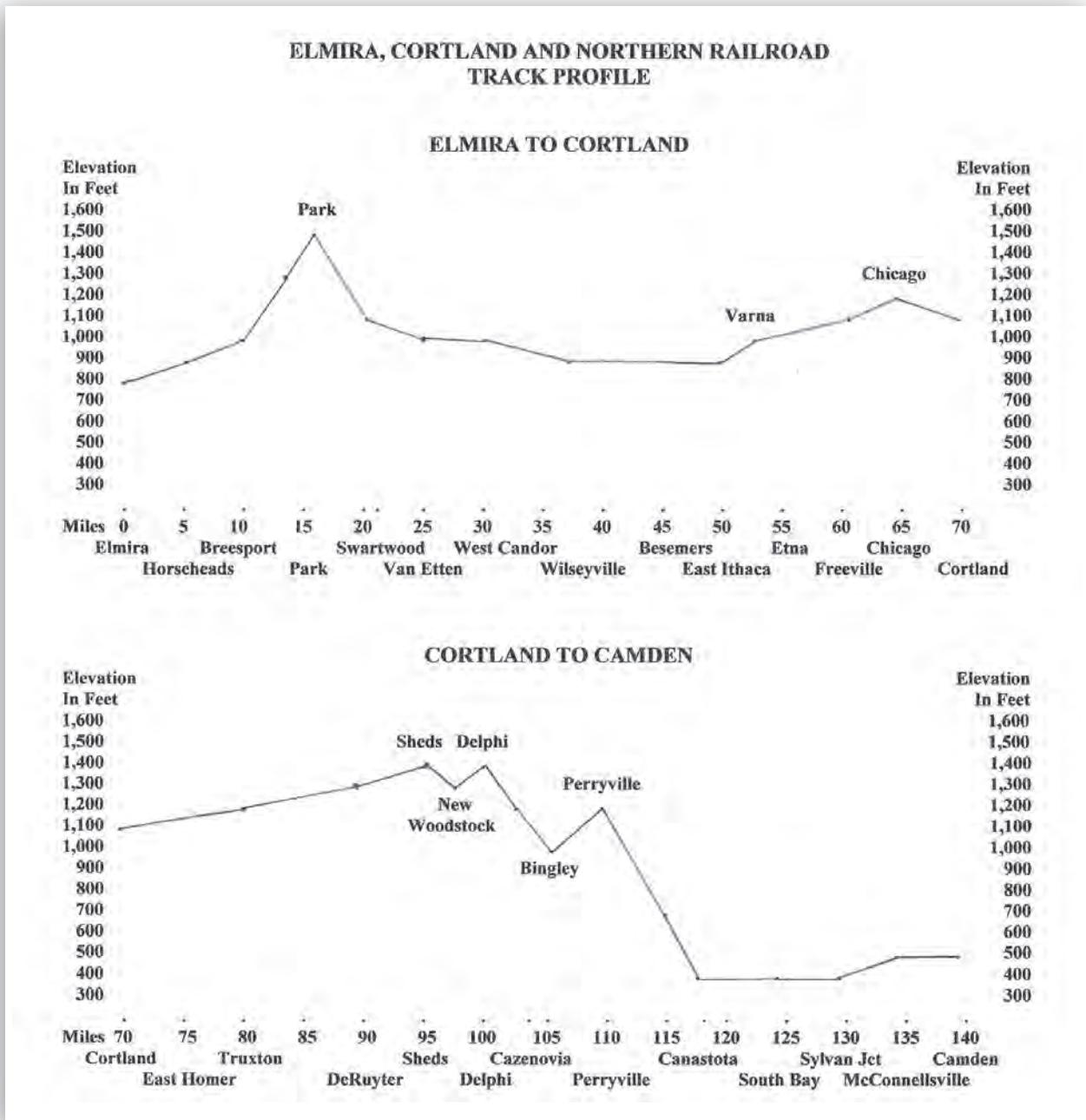


Engine 5 at Cortland Station with a southbound passenger train about 1889. According to the EC&N Book of Rules, as a southbound first-class train it has rights over all northbound and all inferior southbound trains.

A DAY BY THE RULES

The train dispatcher is the hour by hour, moment by moment, decision maker who General Superintendent Albert Allen holds responsible for the movement of every train from origin to destination. He is the critical link between the railroad's top management, the telegraphers and

the train and enginemen who operate the trains. The dispatcher relies on the telegraphers to keep him informed of all train arrivals and departures and forward his orders and messages to the conductors and engineers. The telegraphers are his eyes and ears.



The EC&N schedules two first class passenger trains each way weekdays between Elmira and Canastota and a third each way between Cortland and Camden, plus two accommodation (mixed freight and passenger) trains each way between Canastota and Camden. Two second class freight trains normally operate each way between Elmira and Cortland and two between Cortland and Canastota. There are three yard engines: one each at Elmira, Cortland and Canastota. The Canastota yard engine is based in Camden, leaves there at 6:50 a.m. with Train 10, arrives at Canastota at 7:55 a.m., spends its day in Canastota as the yard engine, and returns to Camden as accommodation Train 9 leaving Canastota at 6 p.m.

The typical EC&N daily train and engine crew requirement calls for 4 passenger train, 4 freight train and 3 yard crews, a total of 11 train and engine crews. Two freight crews originate in Cazenovia and one each originate in Cortland and Elmira. The two Cazenovia crews typically handle the freight service between Canastota, Cazenovia and Cortland while the Cortland and Elmira crews each do a round trip between those cities. All the crews report for work between 6 and 7:30 a.m.

The dispatcher indicates there are 145 loads and 16 empties to move northbound today including 26 loads at Elmira, 21 loads and 5 empties at East Ithaca, 59 loads at Cortland, 25 loads and 10 empties at Cazenovia, 11 loads at Perryville and 3 loads and 1 empty at Canastota. The southbound situation is much lighter with 6 loads expected to move from the Camden extension, 5 loads and 23 empties from Canastota, 10 loads and 5 empties from Perryville, 9 loads and 4 empties from Cazenovia, 5 empties from Cortland and 9 empties from Swartwood for a total of 30 loads and 46 empties.

With General Superintendent Allen's approval, the dispatcher has decided to call three helper engine crews and "abandon" the four

northbound and three of the four southbound scheduled freight trains. Instead, he plans to run all the crews as extras with the exception of Train 12 which operates south from Cazenovia to Cortland each day picking up milk from the creameries and processing plants. The extra trains have no schedules and their movements are established by train orders at the discretion of the train dispatcher to move cars as needed. He will use the Cortland-based freight crew that usually goes to Elmira and back to go to East Ithaca to pick up the 21 loads and 5 empties and take them north to Cazenovia. The Elmira crew will do a round trip to Cortland and back. One Cazenovia based crew will operate as Train 12 to Cortland and return as an extra while the other crew will be instructed to move all the accumulated cars between Cazenovia and Canastota.

One helper engine will assist the northbound freight from Elmira to Park Station. A second will assist the Cortland based crew from East Ithaca to Freeville and later the Elmira crew from East Ithaca to Cortland. The third helper engine will assist the two northbound freights to operate from Cortland to Cazenovia.

A LOOK AT THE RULE BOOK

The dispatcher encourages us to review the railroad's rule book and employee timetable to learn more about how the railroad functions and the responsibilities of the various key employees. The railroad's operations are governed by the company's *Book of Rules* issued November 4, 1888. The 46-page booklet sets forth 312 rules that apply to operations and maintenance employees. They include general, timetable, signal, train, train order and telegraph order rules as well as the specific responsibilities of all major classifications of operating and maintenance employees. Of special importance, we're told, are Rules 12 through 147 which govern the movement of trains and handling of cars and

A DAY BY THE RULES

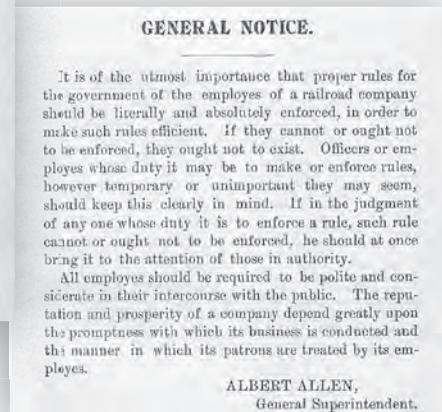
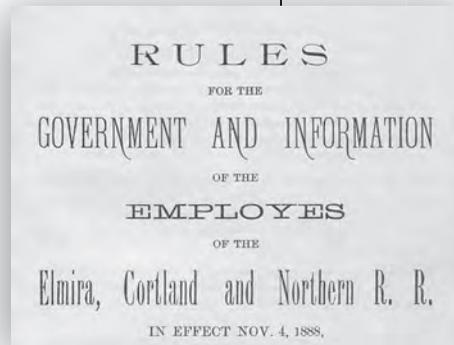
Rules 148 through 267 which specifically apply to train dispatchers, telegraphers, yardmasters, train and enginemen and the master mechanic.

There are thirty-four stations from Elmira to Camden staffed by telegraphers. All report to work at 7 a.m. except those at five key locations. Telegraphers at Camden, Canastota, Cazenovia, Cortland and Elmira begin up to an hour earlier. Some are staffed with a second-trick telegrapher who remains on duty until 11 p.m. All the telegraphers at intermediate stations must remain on duty until the last passenger trains depart from their respective stations. They report to and receive their instructions from the train dispatcher and are required to be constantly on duty during their assigned hours and can't leave their offices without his permission. All communications between dispatchers and telegraphers are by Morse Code. There are two telegraph lines: one for train dispatching and a second for company and Western Union messages.

The EC&N has no automatic, manual block or train order signals. Each of the thirty-four stations staffed by telegraphers has a white train order board in the front of the building where the proper flags by day or lamps by night are displayed in accordance with Rules 24 through 28. Red signifies danger and to stop, green signifies caution and to go slowly and white signifies safety and to go on. Green and white is used to stop trains at flag stations for passengers or freight.

Rules 79 through 86 specify that all trains are designated as regular or extra with only regular trains represented on the timetable. An engine without cars in service on the road is considered a train. All regular trains are classified on the current timetable with regard to

their priority of right to the track; trains of the first class are superior to those of the second class. Extra trains are of inferior class to all first and second class trains. Extra trains may be distinguished as: Passenger Extra, Freight Extra or Work Train Extra. Southbound trains have the absolute right of track over northbound trains of the same or inferior class. *A train of inferior class must in all cases keep out of the way of a train*



of superior class. Trains of inferior class or same class in inferior direction must take the siding and clear the superior train by ten minutes. Rule 92 (a) states in part that no train may leave a station in advance of its schedule leaving time.

Rule 126 describes the format for train dispatchers to issue Form 31 train orders to change the meeting place of trains moving in opposite directions. It typically instructs the conductor and engineman of an inferior train to run to a specified station "...regardless of..." the timetable rights of the designated superior train. This order must also be given to the conductor and engineman of the superior train to inform them that their operating rights have been restricted. Form 31 train orders can also be issued to conductors and enginemen for other purposes.

Under the railroad's *Book of Rules*, telegraphers must make three copies of each order from the dispatcher on manifold paper, must

read the train order to the receiving conductor and engineer and obtain their signatures, repeat the order to the dispatcher. The dispatcher then responds "correct," indicates the time and dispatcher's signature which the telegrapher adds to the train order before delivering it to the involved conductors and engineers.

In accordance with Rule 136, he sends a "31" order to all telegraph stations advising them that all second class trains have been abandoned today except Train 12 between Cazenovia and Cortland and "...to prepare copies to deliver to all concerned." The dispatcher begins receiving reports from wayside stations regarding the progress of the various trains. The first reports involve passenger trains leaving their originating stations: *Train 10 departed Camden at 6:50 with Engine 10, Train 2 left Canastota at 7:05 with Engine 8 and Train 1 departed Elmira at 7:10 with Engine 7.*

DEALING WITH SNOW

He advises us that an extra crew has been called at Cortland for snow plow service from Cortland to Camden and return. He issues an order to the conductor and engineer of Engine 16 at Cortland to: *"Run to DeRuyter regardless of Train 2, run to New Woodstock regardless of Train 12, and run to Camden ahead of Train 5."* This order is given to the engineers and conductors of trains #2, #5 and #12 advising them of their restricted rights. It is issued by the train dispatcher so that the plow extra, an inferior train according to Rule 82, will not have to keep out of the way of Trains 2, 12 and 5 as required under Rule 83. Train orders are issued to three of the four freight crews authorizing them to run as follows: *Engines 21 and 20 from Cortland to East Ithaca, Engine 18 from Cazenovia to Perryville and Engines 19 and 24 from Elmira to Park Station.*

Within the next ninety minutes, the dispatcher receives reports that Extra 16 North de-

parted Cortland at 7:25 followed by Train 5 with Engine 12 at 7:30, Extra 21 South left Cortland for East Ithaca at 7:45, Train 12 left Cazenovia with Engine 13, 9 loads and 4 empties, Extra 18 North left Cazenovia for Perryville with 8 loads and 2 empties, and Extra 19 North with Engine 24 assisting left Elmira for Cortland at 8:50 with 26 loads and no empties.

By 9, there are 3 passenger trains, 1 plow extra, 4 freight trains and 3 helper engines moving on the EC&N. The dispatcher is receiving telegraph reports from wayside stations every two or three minutes.

Shortly after 9, we walk down to the station platform to watch the arrival of Train 2 from Canastota. It's running almost a half hour late after being delayed at DeRuyter waiting for the slow moving plow extra and Train 5. After Train 2 arrives at 9:22, Engine 8 is cut off and moved to the roundhouse to be turned, serviced and readied to return to Canastota on Train 1. It's replaced by Engine 6 and Train 2 departs at 9:29 for a meet at Freeville with Train 1.

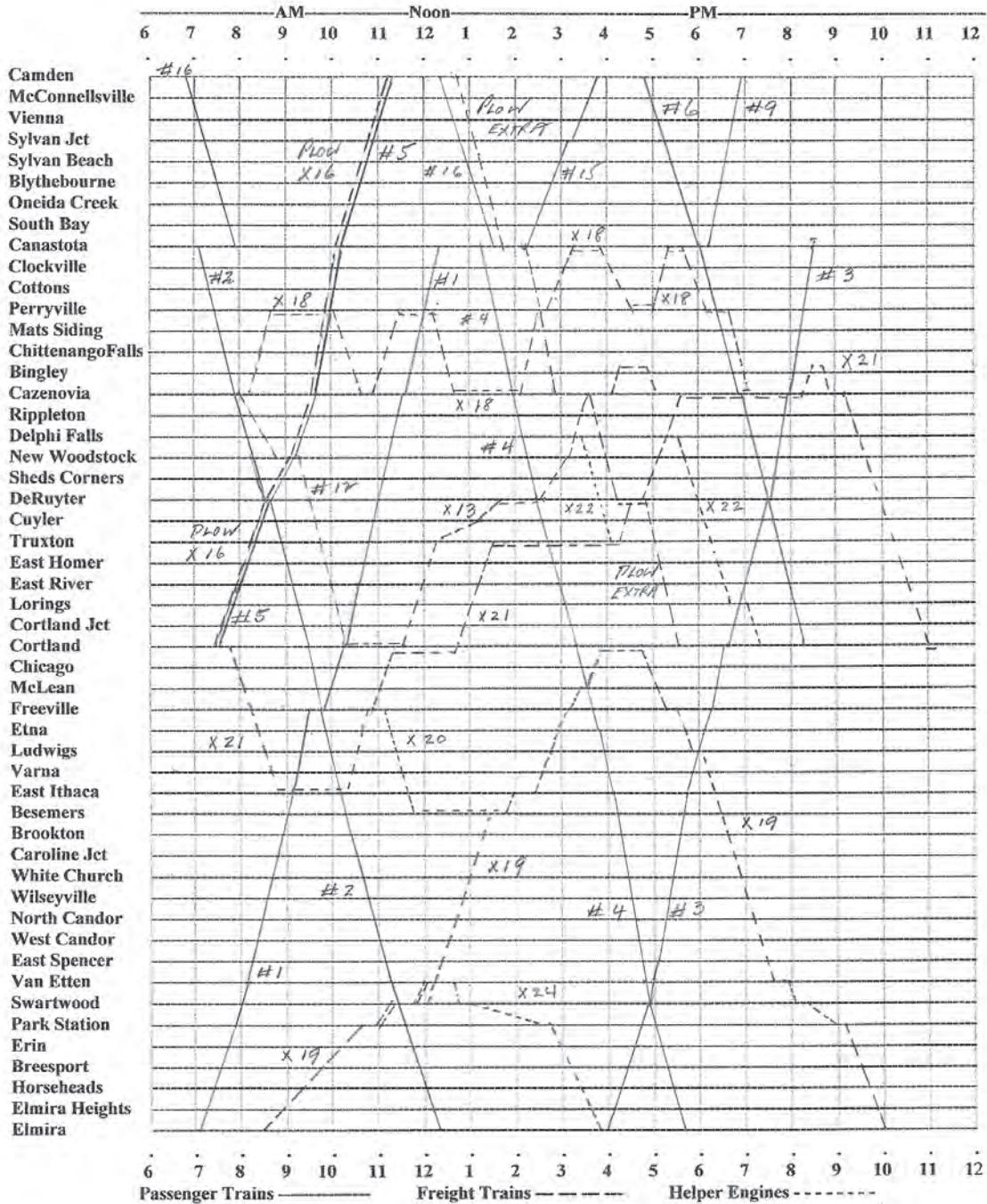
Back up at the dispatcher's office, we learn that Train 12 is running about a half hour late, having waited for the plow extra and Train 5 at New Woodstock. To avoid further delay to Train 12, the dispatcher issues a train order to Train 1's conductor and engineer at Freeville and Train 12's conductor and engineer at DeRuyter for Train 12 to meet Train 1 at Cortland. Train 1 arrives at Cortland at 10:10 and Engine 7 is replaced by Engine 8, Train 12 arrives at Cortland at 10:20, and Train 1 departs at 10:22.

When figuring the meeting points of delayed trains, the dispatcher takes into consideration Rule 114 which states: *"Passenger trains, when late, must not run faster than is consistent with perfect safety. Freight trains will be allowed to run fifteen miles per hour, and twenty miles per hour in order to regain schedule time, but never to exceed twenty miles per hour under any circumstances."*

Meanwhile, Engine 18 and crew had been

A DAY BY THE RULES

ELMIRA, CORTLAND AND NORTHERN RAILROAD TRAIN MOVEMENT GRAPH -- JANUARY 1, 1891



waiting at Perryville for the arrival of the plow extra and Train 5. After the two northbound trains depart, the dispatcher issued a train order for Engine 18 to: *“Run as work extra between Perryville and Cazenovia from 9:55 am until 12:55 pm.”* Work Extra 18 departed southbound at 9:57 with 4 loads and 5 empties.

At East Ithaca, Engines 20 and 21 arrived with caboose at 8:45 and coupled on to the 21 loads and 5 empty cars that had been on the passing siding since the previous evening. They waited until trains 1 and 2 departed before heading north. The dispatcher issued a train order for Engine 21 to run from East Ithaca to Cortland with Engine 20 assisting to Freeville. They departed at 10:18 arrived Freeville at 10:45, cut off the helper engine and left at 10:51. The helper engine received a train order to run to East Ithaca and departed southbound at 11:07.

Earlier at Park Station, Extra 19 North with Engine 24 assisting arrived at 10:33. The helper was cut off and the dispatcher issued a train order for Engines 19 and 24 to run to Swartwood and meet the late running #2 at Swartwood. Extra 19 North left at 10:57 followed by Extra 24 North at 11:02.

THE DANGER TO BRAKEMEN

Rules 210, 212 and 213 are of particular importance on the 2.4 percent grade from Park Station down 3.8 miles to Swartwood. They state that brakemen: *“...must manage the brakes properly...not leave the brakes while the train is in motion, nor take any other position unless authorized by the conductor...when necessary they must stop their trains at stations and control them when descending heavy grades without the signal of the engineman; the brakes must not be applied so as to slide the wheels, and they should be frequently changed from one car to another, to avoid heating of wheels.”*

We leave the dispatcher's office again and walk over to the yard office to check on the

work of the Cortland yard engine. The yardmaster brings us up to date explaining that the yard engine has been assembling the forty loads to be taken north by the engine and crew that arrived at 10:20 on Train 12. A few minutes later, Engine 13 and Helper Engine 22 appear and tie on to forty loads plus the caboose off Train 12. At 11:35, Extra 21 North arrives from East Ithaca with 17 loads and 5 empties. The locomotive cuts off and heads for the roundhouse area for servicing. Extra 13 North departs at 11:40. The yard engine begins to switch the cars that arrived from East Ithaca and build the train that will be leaving for Cazenovia behind Engine 21. The northbound train will be leaving Cortland with 36 loads and 5 empties. After lunch, the yard crew will be switching the cars that arrived off Train 12 and building the train that will be leaving Cortland for Elmira later this afternoon.

We'll take time for lunch now and think back to our visit to the yard office and watching the yard crew at work. There's still plenty of snow on the ground and the local sectionmen have done their best to clean out the switches and snow from the yard wherever possible. The work of the yard and road brakemen under good weather conditions is difficult if not dangerous because of railroads' continued use of link and pin couplers. The brakemen have no choice but to stand between the cars to drop the pins into the links as the cars are brought together.

We've brought along the railroad's rule book and re-read Rule 147, which states that: *“Great care must be exercised by all persons when coupling cars, that inasmuch as the coupling apparatus of cars and of engines cannot be uniform in style, size and strength, and is liable to be broken, and from various causes to render it dangerous to expose the hands, arms, or persons of those engaged in coupling between them, all employees are enjoined, before coupling cars or engines, to examine, so as to know the kind and condition of the draw-head, draw-bar, link and coupling apparatus, and are prohibited from placing in the train*

any car with a defective coupling until they have first reported its defective condition to the Yard Master or conductor. Sufficient time is allowed, and may be taken by employees in all cases, to make the examination required. Coupling by hand is prohibited in all cases where a stick can be used to guide link or shakel; and each Yard Master, switchman, brakeman or other employee who may be expected to couple cars, is required to provide himself with a stick for that purpose. Every employee is required to exercise the utmost caution to avoid injury to himself or to his fellows; and especially in switching or movement of trains. Jumping on or off trains or engines in motion, entering between cars in motion to uncouple them, and all similar imprudences are forbidden..."

Yard crews, road crews, and all other employees are also governed by General Rule 8: *"If an employee shall be disabled by sickness or other cause, the right to claim compensation will not be recognized. An allowance, if made, will be a gratuity justified by the circumstances of the case and the employee's previous conduct."*

The EC&N's accident record over the past six years is testimony to the hazards of working on the railroad. The railroad's annual reports to the state indicated there were over sixty injuries or fatalities involving the sixty employees in freight service since 1884 including an average of one employee fatality every twenty weeks and one non-fatal employee accident per month.

A MIDDAY REPORT

Back at the dispatcher's office about 1 p.m., we get another update on the railroad. The plow extra with Engine 16 arrived at Camden at 11:14 followed by Train 5 with Engine 12 at 11:15. Train 16 departed Camden at 12:20 p.m. with Engine 12 followed by Engine 16, the plow extra at 12:36. Train 1 arrived at Canastota at 12:20. The same crew with Engine 8 should leave as Train 4 at 1:22. Work Extra 18 returned to Perryville from Cazenovia at 11:20 with 9 loads and 2 empties,

dropped them, picked up 6 loads and headed south again for Cazenovia after Train 1 left Perryville. They are at Cazenovia and should leave northbound with 8 loads and 6 empties upon the arrival of Train 4 about 2.

The first northbound freight left Truxton at 12:22 and is overdue at Cuyler. Helper Engine 22 on the first northbound freight will be cut off at Delphi and return to Truxton. It will assist the second freight, which left Cortland Junction at 12:50, to Delphi. Helper Engine 20 is waiting at East Ithaca for the freight from Elmira which is now approaching Wilseyville. Helper Engine 24 from Elmira turned on the wye at Van Etten and received a train order to return to Elmira. Ed Tripp, the engineer, received instructions to pick up 9 empties at Swartwood and take them to Elmira even though he has no train crew. The helper engine left Swartwood at 12:50. (Also see an article by Ed Tripp's son Frank Tripp in Chapter 6.)

Afterwards, we stop over to visit the relay telegrapher. He is responsible for handling all the routine company telegraph messages between the telegraphers at the thirty-three outlying stations and the superintendent's office. He is also responsible for connecting the EC&N message line to the DL&W message line in order for Western Union and railroad messages to be sent to and received from locations on other railroads.

About 2:45, the second-trick dispatcher arrives to relieve the first-trick dispatcher. They begin reviewing the locations of the various trains, outstanding train orders, special instructions and plans for the helper crews. There are seven trains and three helper crews on the road at this time: Train 15 has departed Canastota with 2 loads and 1 empty for the NYO&W at Sylvan Junction and is approaching Sylvan Beach. Work Extra 18 is coming down the grade toward Canastota with 36 loads and 9 empties, the southbound plow extra is at Cazenovia wait-

A DAY BY THE RULES

ing for Extra 13 North, the first northbound freight, to arrive. The freight is approaching Sheds Corners and will drop its helper Engine 22 at Delphi. Train 4 is approaching East Homer and Extra 21 North is waiting at Truxton for the helper engine to return from Delphi. The Elmira crew with Engine 19 and helper Engine 20 is approaching Freeville and will need a train order to meet Train 4 at McLean. Helper Engine 24 is approaching Erin southbound with 9 empties for Elmira.

A LOOK AT THE EQUIPMENT

We leave the office again and walk over to the enginehouse for a tour of the equipment maintenance facilities. The locomotive maintenance and servicing facility consists of an eight-stall roundhouse, turntable, coal trestle and other servicing facilities. The master mechanic greets us and describes his work. He is responsible for management of all EC&N enginehouses, shops and personnel involved in maintenance of EC&N rolling stock. The engineers and firemen report to him except while they are on the road. He is responsible for fuel and stores required for maintenance and servicing of the equipment. The storekeeper and enginehouse foremen report to him.

There are four outlying enginehouses under his supervision located at Elmira, Cazenovia, Canastota and Camden. The largest is Elmira which normally maintains 4 locomotives overnight, Cazenovia and Canastota with 2 locomotives each and Camden with one locomotive. The Cortland roundhouse has 8 stalls, not enough to house all 14 locomotives that are kept here each night. The EC&N fleet of twenty-three locomotives consists of:

- 8 4-4-0's #1 through 8
- 2 2-6-0's #9 and 10
- 11 4-6-0's #12 through 22, and
- 2 2-8-0's #23 and 24.

Four 4-4-0's are required each day to power the Elmira-Canastota passenger Trains 1-4, one of the two 2-6-0's is used between Camden and Canastota and in the Canastota yard, the two 2-8-0's are often used in freight or helper service out of Elmira, one 4-6-0 is typically used on Trains 5 and 6 between Cortland and Camden and Trains 15 and 16 between Camden and Canastota, and the remaining 4-6-0's are used in freight service between Elmira and Canastota, as the Elmira and Cortland yard engines or are held as spares or to fill in for engines undergoing maintenance.

Across the mainline is the car repair shop which maintains and also builds passenger and freight cars and other rolling stock. The railroad is in the process of buying 3 new first class passenger-carrying coaches which will increase its passenger service fleet to 14 coaches, 2 combination cars and 4 baggage, mail and express cars. The Eames braking system and Miller couplers



A vintage EC&N Engine 7 at Cortland station about 1890 was built in 1871 as UI&E Engine 4.



Cortland enginehouse lead tracks with coal trestle on left, looking toward Camden.

are used on passenger service cars. The railroad installed steam heating equipment in all its passenger service cars in 1889.

The freight car fleet consists of 138 coal cars and 30 box cars. The company owns 3 service cars and 6 four-wheel cabooses. The EC&N is building 10 box and 5 gondola cars in its shops during the current fiscal year and expects to retire 6 older box cars. All of the freight cars owned by the EC&N and foreign cars received in interchange are equipped with various types of link and pin couplers.

Under company rules, no work is performed in the shops at night or on Sunday unless absolutely necessary. Lights are prohibited in the shops after working hours except those required by the watchman on duty.

WRAPPING UP THE DAY

We leave the master mechanic and his shops and return to the train dispatchers' office. It's 6 and we've come for our final check of the railroad

for the day. In Canastota, Engine 10 and crew have completed their yard work and are leaving for Camden as Train 9. Train 6 with Engine 12 is departing for Cortland. Engine 18 and crew have arrived at Perryville from Canastota and set off their consist of 1 load and 16 empties. They'll be following Train 6 to Cazenovia before quitting for the night.

At Cazenovia, the conductor of Engine 21 North which arrived from East Ithaca at 5:40 has advised the dispatcher that there isn't room to store all 40 cars they brought from Cortland on top of the 28 cars left from Extra 13's train and 7 of the 15 cars Extra 18 brought over from Perryville today. The dispatcher gives them an order to run to Chittenango Falls and return and to take a dozen cars down to Bingley or Chittenango Falls to store overnight. Engine 21 and crew will be heading back to Cortland about 9 with 1 load and 7 empties and should be back in Cortland by 11.

Further south, helper Engine 22 departed Cuyler at 5:58 but will have to clear for north-

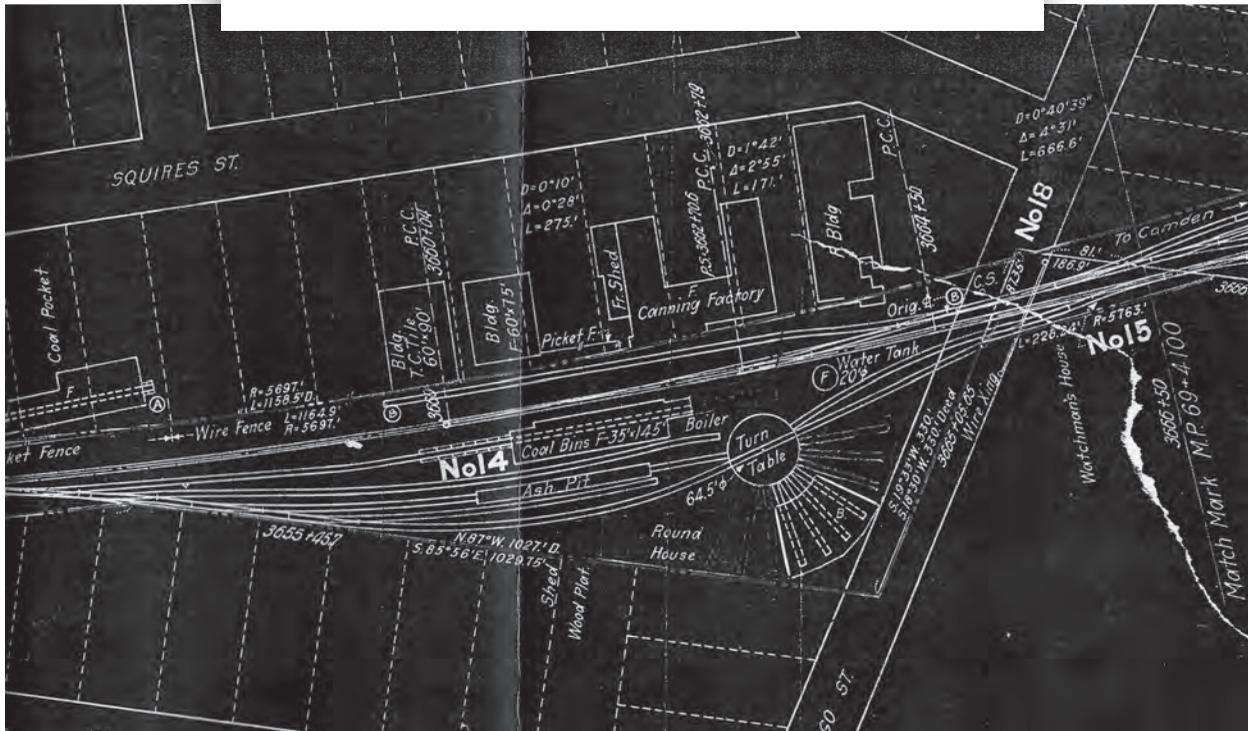
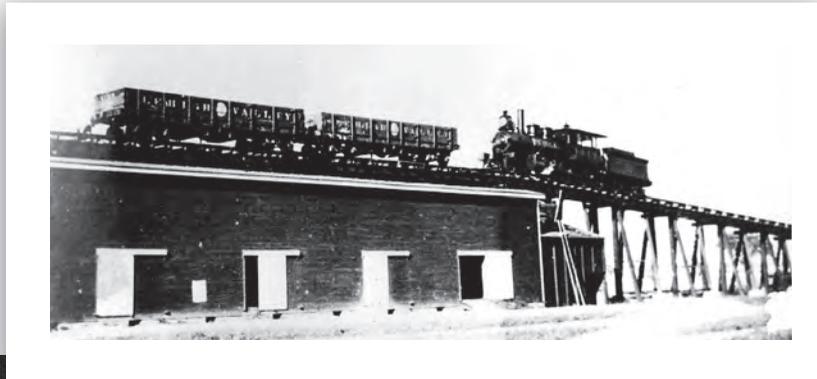
A DAY BY THE RULES

bound Train 3 probably at Lorings. The plow extra arrived back at Cortland at 5:30. Train 3 is leaving Etna at 6:02 after meeting the south-bound Elmira freight there. The freight arrived in Cortland at 3:50 with 28 loads and no empties, turned and left at 4:45 with 9 loads and 8 empties. It should be back in Elmira about 10.

Tomorrow will be another day and there will be plenty of cars to move. There are 28 cars

at Perryville plus 8 cars at Cazenovia to move south, and 80 cars at Cazenovia, Bingley and Chittenango Falls to move north. There are at least two dozen loads at Cortland to go north. There should be plenty of other cars to move that have arrived at interchanges at Elmira, Van Etten, Freeville, Rippleton, Canastota and Sylvan Junction. It should be another interesting day on the EC&N.

Cortland coal trestle with Engine 12.



A drawing of the enginehouse area at Cortland about 1920.



Vienna freight and passenger stations. Telegraph poles carry two lines and rails lie directly on ties, without tie plates.

THE LEHIGH VALLEY TAKES OVER

The events of the six years beginning in 1891 were about to produce a profound change in the fortunes of the owners, management and employees of the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad. Indeed, the entire railroad industry and national economy would go through a turbulent period. In the North Country, Austin Corbin continued to promote his plans to build the Camden, Watertown & Northern Railroad to Watertown and possibly beyond. Encouraged by local citizenry, Corbin even acquired land for a right of way in the Watertown area. But on March 1, 1891, a telegraph message was received by RW&O personnel announcing that the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad had leased the RW&O for 999 years. New York Central representatives immediately sought to win the favor of local Watertown officials indicating that they would provide better service and more reasonable freight rates than the former owner of the RW&O.

This was not the end of Corbin's efforts to extend his railroad. Even though he lost most of the Watertown people's support, Corbin continued to promote his plans and sought the support of financiers from the United States and abroad to provide the needed funds. He developed an even grander scheme which envisioned building the CW&N 18 miles beyond Watertown to Carthage, acquisition of two recently built railroads in the Adirondack region and linking them to create a route through to Canada. The first acquisition would be the 46-mile Carthage & Adirondack Railroad which extended from Car-

thage to Newton Falls in an area known to contain substantial iron ore deposits. The second railroad was the 52-mile Northern Adirondack Railroad which linked Tupper Lake with Moira, a community close to the Canadian border. Two railroad links would have to be built: one to close the 40-mile gap between Newton Falls and Tupper Lake, and second a 20-mile stretch north of Moira to and possibly beyond the Canadian border in the direction of Ottawa.

Corbin envisioned a 75-mile connection between the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad near Williamsport, Pennsylvania, and Elmira, New York. Once completed, the Corbin-McLeod railroad empire would extend approximately 640 miles from Philadelphia to the Canadian border with the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad being the important central link in the north-south route.

On July 24, 1891, the Associated Press reported that Mr. Corbin had brought the group of financiers to Carthage, New York, to promote his plan. Apparently it was already known by top New York Central Railroad officials. A story in the following day's *New York Times* quoted New York Central Vice-President H. Walter Webb as saying that President Corbin's scheme was "improbable." Indeed, there was little more heard about the CW&N or Corbin's plans to extend his railroad north of Camden.

Meanwhile, another scheme was being developed in Philadelphia and New York City that would dramatically expand the influence of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad and all but eliminate the ongoing anthracite coal rate war

among the several railroads serving the mining areas of Eastern Pennsylvania. For years, the P&R had been engaged in a costly rate war with the Lehigh Valley and Delaware, Lackawanna & Western railroads that undermined the financial viability of these and other coal carriers including the Elmira, Cortland & Northern. McLeod was well aware that much of the anthracite coal mined on land owned by his company was destined to New England traveling by rail to Philadelphia, thence by barge or ship to New England ports. His plan envisioned a railroad empire that would become known as

the “Reading Combine.” It would stretch from the Great Lakes to eastern Pennsylvania, the New York City area and east to New England. An important part would be an all-rail route from the mines in eastern Pennsylvania across the recently built Poughkeepsie Bridge over the Hudson River (75 miles north of New York City) thence through eastern New York state, Connecticut and Massachusetts. The Philadelphia & Reading would have to gain the cooperation and/or control of the various railroads to make this plan work.

McLeod developed an agreement that gave

RUNAWAY CIRCUS TRAIN

Maybe every boy will feel the urge to ride on a diesel—even to run it. Still there doesn't seem to be the juvenile affection for the diesel that was bestowed upon the puffing locomotive. There's something about whirling drivers and exhausting steam which the diesel lacks.

All of which prefaces an urge to tell of wonderful hours spent as a boy in the cab of my father's engine. It is

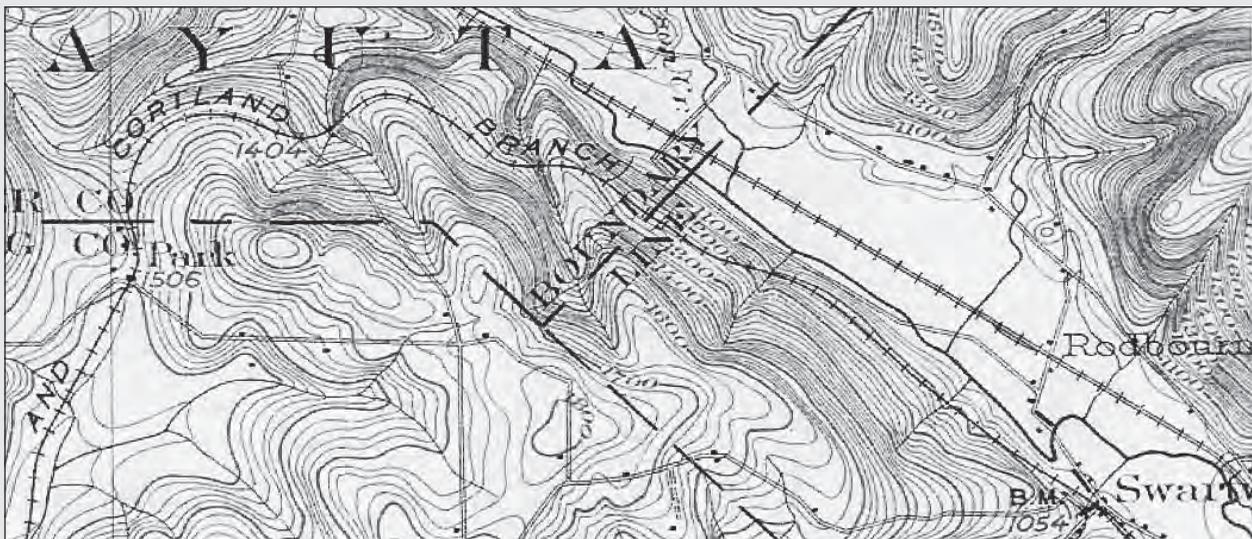
the one thing for which I can remember being envied; something I couldn't share with my playmates, for even in those days I rode the risk of pop's job.

The ride that stands out in my memory was [during 1892] in the night, on a runaway circus train. To ride on any engine was a thrill, but to ride the engine of a circus train! And then to have it run away, down a hill with 140

foot grade to the mile—oh boy!

The original Barnum & Bailey, “greatest show on earth,” was leaving our town over my father's road and he was to haul one section. Days of teasing finally won me a ride. I was only 10 and my first midnight ride on an engine had been granted with parental reluctance.

We were the first to leave, with the menagerie section, or part of it. I saw



P&R control of its arch-rival Lehigh Valley Railroad in exchange for certain guaranteed income. The Lehigh Valley under the leadership of Asa Packer, had grown from a company with only 71 miles of mainline from White Haven to Easton, Pennsylvania in the early 1860's to a sprawling railroad in 1876 with a mainline stretching from Jersey City, New Jersey, across the Hudson River from New York City, to Buffalo, New York, a distance of in excess of 400 miles utilizing trackage rights over the Erie Railroad between Waverly and the eastern outskirts of Buffalo. After Packer died in 1879, the property

was managed first by his two sons who died only five years later and then by nephew Elisha Packer Wilbur beginning in 1884. By 1891, the Lehigh Valley was in the process of building its own mainline between Van Etten Junction and Buffalo. It had also acquired or gained control of a number of feeder railroads that produced a railroad network of over 1,000 miles. In the process, it had acquired a substantial debt and large annual interest obligations. The railroad owners welcomed the financial support of the Philadelphia & Reading. The expanding Lehigh Valley Railroad was leased to the P&R by early 1892.

the elephants loaded; camels and caged wagons of lions, tigers, jaguars, monkeys and snakes. Then I took my place in the engine cab, in front of my father, on a nail keg. Back past the trainload of wild beasts the conductor's lantern semi-circled and we were off. The greatest night any boy ever lived was under way.

What would I not give to live again those moments as I peered into the dark, saw the shining rails and jumping phantoms ahead, felt the thrust and rumble of the driving rods beneath me and heard the roar of wheels and shriek of whistle.

On curves I looked back at the gaudy cars loaded with animals from every clime. I conjured strange thoughts about them. How they took this ride every night; about their life in captivity and what they would do if released into the forests through which we were passing. For an hour these muses possessed me, until I became sleepy and could barely keep my eyes open.

Then the engine cab filled with steam. My father whistled frantically for brakes. We were running away down Swartwood Hill.

This was in the day before air brakes. Trainmen rode on the tops of cars carrying hickory sticks with which to wind up the brakes on each separate car. The only power brake was the steam brake on the engine. This night the engineer's brake valve blew out, filled the cab with burning steam and rendered the engine brakes useless. On the steep grade the heavy train was out of control. Brakemen could not get from car to car. They clung on their stomachs to the runways atop the cars.

Speed gathered. The wild ride was frightening. I was thrown to the floor of the cab. I could not see my father. He was groping for the master valve to shut off the flow of scalding steam which was enveloping us.

The wheels crunched and shrieked against the rails. We were rounding curves, dashing through cuts and over high trestles. My dreams of animals might come true, but would I be alive to see them?

A dozen times the engine leaned off the rails, first on one side, then the other, but landed back on them

again. My father lifted me from the cab floor, braced himself against the boiler, hugged me close to him, kissed me—goodbye, I guess he thought. We were beyond human ability to save us.

But God rode with the circus that night. Telegraph poles dashed past like fence posts. We passed Swartwood station as fast as man ever till came [air]planes. Miraculously we reached the base of the grade.

We were safe at last, on a level straightaway. Pop whistled for brakes again. Slowly, the brakemen could crawl from car to car. Gradually speed slackened. Floyd Zimmer came over from the fireman's side. "My god, Ed, what ever kept her on the rails?"

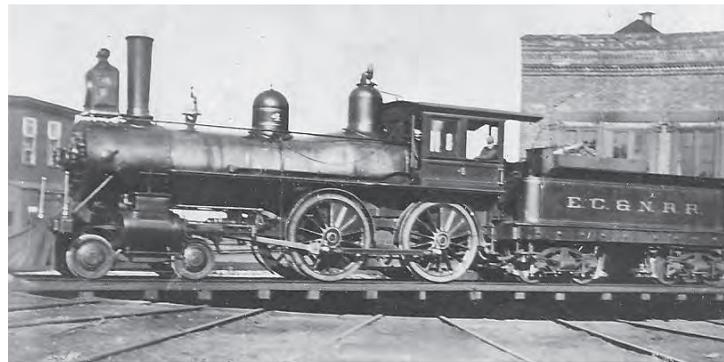
"It was the boy, I guess," my father patted me and said.

Then he spoke to me and made me very sad: "Boy, enjoy yourself tonight, for this is your last ride"—but it wasn't.

No, we didn't have any autos, radio or movies. Kids then only had minor thrills like this.—*By Frank Tripp, Elmira Star Gazette, Sept. 17, 1951*

During this same period, it gained control of the Central Railroad of New Jersey Railroad and installed J. Rogers Maxwell, a close associate of Corbin and McLeod, as president. McLeod obtained the cooperation of the DL&W without becoming financially involved with the neighboring anthracite hauling railroad that originated substantial coal carloadings in the Wilkes-Barre and Scranton area. Next, he secured control of the Pennsylvania, Poughkeepsie & Boston Railroad (later known as the Lehigh & New England RR) that linked Slatington, Pennsylvania and Campbell Hall, New York, two other carriers that were consolidated to form the Central New England RR, and the New York & New England RR. The combination of these carriers would bring the emerging “Reading Combine” almost to Boston. The Philadelphia & Reading invested heavily in the stocks of the Boston & Maine Railroad and by late October 1892 McLeod was installed as its president.

During the year, President McLeod was heralded as one of Philadelphia’s most prominent and highly acclaimed citizens. In a publication *Philadelphia and Popular Philadelphians* he was

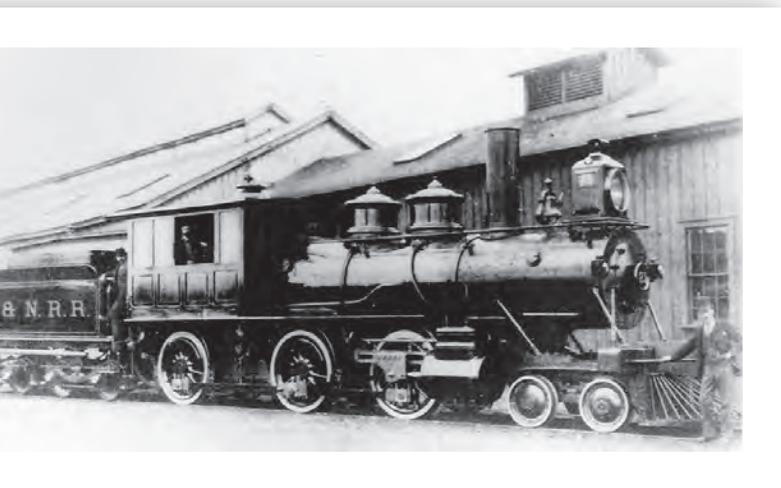


Engine 4 on the Cortland turntable.

described as one of the ablest managers of the country having a great force of character, executive ability and devotion to duty. The extremely complimentary story attributed his success to “...his powerful and magnetic personality, one day throttling a great and vindictive strike with armored and relentless grip and the next day as tender-hearted and sympathizing as a woman to some humble subordinate who approached him with a story of suffering or injustice.”

The Lehigh Valley completed construction of its rail line from Van Etten Junction to Buffalo, New York, in September 1892 and discontinued using trackage rights over the Erie Railroad. Meanwhile, the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad continued to function without McLeod’s direct involvement but experienced a 50 percent drop in coal traffic in 1892 possibly as the result of the Lehigh Valley’s expansion of routes in western New York State. Nevertheless, the EC&N managed to report a \$51,590 profit down only \$3,145 from 1891 because of sharp cuts in maintenance and transportation costs.

By mid-1892, the Pennsylvania and New York state legislators and regulators were becoming alarmed that a vast railroad monopoly was being developed. It was estimated that McLeod and his associates would soon have control of 85 percent of the nation’s anthracite



Engine 21 about 1891, had been built in 1886 and would be scrapped in 1912.

coal mining and transportation activities. The scheme was increasingly opposed by some Lehigh Valley, NY&NE and B&M stockholders and the prominent Vanderbilt and Morgan families who controlled the expanding New York Central and Pennsylvania railroads. The Attorney General's Office for the state of Pennsylvania undertook an investigation of alleged monopolistic practices.

McLeod's scheme soon began to unravel in part because of the nation's financial instability. Excessive borrowing by the nation's railroads and other emerging industrial giants caused a severe national crisis. Many companies simply couldn't generate sufficient net income to cover their borrowing costs. One by one, like dominoes, they entered receivership. One of the first was the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad which declared bankruptcy on February 20, 1893, the third time in less than fourteen years. Mr. McLeod was named a receiver by the court, resigned soon afterwards and disappeared from the railroad management scene. Later that year, Austin Corbin resigned as president of the EC&N and was replaced by his son-in-law, George S. Edgell. The Lehigh Valley disengaged itself from control by the Philadelphia & Reading, claiming the P&R had failed to fulfill its part of the agreement.

Meanwhile, other businesses declared bankruptcy under similar circumstances. These developments triggered a financial upheaval that gradually spread across the country and abroad. The panic and depression that followed forced many railroads into bankruptcy. It caused the failure of hundreds of banks, thousands of businesses and unemployment for millions of workers. As railroads suffered financially, some resorted to cutting of wages which provoked employee strikes.

Amid the turbulence of the nation's railroad, industrial and financial activities of this period, Congress enacted the Safety Appliance Act on

February 27, 1893, a measure that would have a great impact on and benefit to the railroad industry, its employees and the traveling public in future years. The railroads were given seven years to fully equip their fleets of locomotives and cars with Westinghouse Air Brake equipment and the Janney automatic couplers.

In spite of the nation's financial problems, the EC&N reported profitable operations each year from 1891 through 1895. Passenger traffic and revenues remained within a range of a few percentage points above and below 1890 levels. The EC&N lost over two-thirds of its coal traffic between 1890 and 1894, undoubtedly due to the nation's growing economic problems, the EC&N worsening relationship with the Lehigh Valley Railroad and that company's expansion of its lines to Rochester and Buffalo. Coal tonnage dropped from 327,104 tons in 1890 to 105,555 tons in 1894, followed by an increase to 265,799 tons in 1895.

Annual freight tonnage other than coal varied from 5 to 12 percentage points below record 1890 levels. Agriculture products other than grain, flour, meat, and livestock rose 73 percent from 1890 to 1895 influenced largely by growth in dairy products traffic. Overall, annual revenues fell from \$480,416 in 1890 to \$363,375 in 1894, but rebounded to \$432,718 in 1895 as a portion of the lost coal traffic returned.



A bright red, white and black banner advertises coal sold in Cortland for many years. Competition cost the Elmira and Cortland Branch coal tonnage in the late 1800s.



Busy DeRuyter station at milk train time about 1895

Reductions in freight train operations, maintenance activities and other activities from 1892 through 1895 produced a significant savings in operating expenses. The workforce was cut from 390 in 1890 to 309 in 1894 but returned to 346 in 1895. Freight crew personnel were cut by a third from 1890 to 1894 but partially restored in 1895.

Compared to net income before adjustments of \$67,705 in 1890, and \$54,735 in 1891, the railroad reported net income of \$51,590 in 1892, \$57,268 in 1893, \$25,157 in 1894 and \$6,313 in 1895. However, the reported financial position of the Elmira, Cortland and Northern Railroad was drastically altered in the EC&N's last full fiscal year as the result of two accounting entries. The annual report to the New York State Railroad Commissioners explained the transactions as: (1) a \$573,810 charge for interest on first mortgage bonds issued in 1884 not previously reported and entered, and (2) a \$448,689 charge for the issue of 20-year debentures in 1890 that was cancelled and credited to profit and loss. Totalling \$1,022,499, these entries produced a cumulative deficit of \$1,053,261 instead of a cumulative profit of \$417,927.

On February 20, 1896, the Lehigh Valley

Railroad announced it had purchased the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad from Austin Corbin and his associates for "a nominal consideration." The EC&N would continue to exist as a corporate entity under LV ownership until 1905 but would be operated by the Lehigh Valley. All the EC&N's top officials were dismissed.

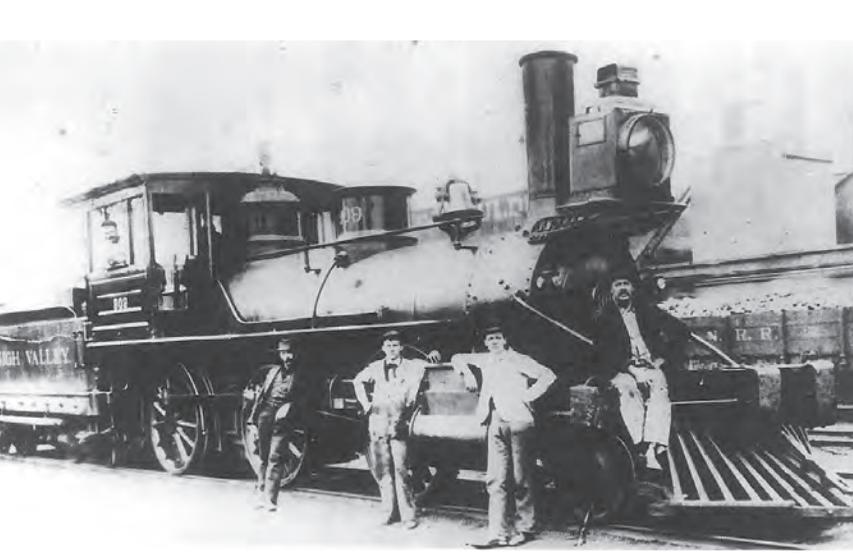
Austin Corbin died later in 1896 as the result of an accident on his estate in New Hampshire. His financial interests were inherited by his son-in-law George S. Edgell and son Austin Corbin, Jr. Archibald McLeod remained out of the public sight and died six years later in New York City from complications following an appendectomy.

The Lehigh Valley's acquisition of the EC&N practically completed its program of expansion. In slightly over thirty years, the company had grown from a system with less than 100 route miles operating almost entirely in the state of Pennsylvania to a 1,200-mile system with a mainline from Jersey City, New Jersey, through eastern Pennsylvania to Buffalo, New York, a distance of 448 miles plus a 750 mile network of branch lines serving the Pennsylvania anthracite mining territory and rural upstate New York.

The Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad from Elmira to Camden became the Lehigh Valley's Elmira and Cortland Branch. It was absorbed into the LV's Auburn Division with headquarters in Auburn, New York. Former EC&N train dispatchers continued to work from their second floor offices in the Cortland passenger station. In many respects, the new LV E&C branch operating functions remained unchanged. The EC&N crews and locomotives continued to operate on the E&C line. EC&N engines 1 through 10 and 12 through 24 were renumbered 901 through 910 and 912 through 924. Train schedules were almost the same as before except that two through passenger trains were

BELOW: Portions of the EC&N's summer 1894 timetable shows the addition of service north of Canastota, before the Lehigh Valley took over the line, and connections east and west.

ELMIRA, CORTLAND & NORTHERN R. R.			
Station	Mo. 1	Mo. 2	Mo. 3
Elmira	7:30	8:30	9:30
Edridge Park	7:35	8:35	9:35
Horseshoe	7:40	8:40	9:40
Breesport	7:45	8:45	9:45
Erin	7:50	8:50	9:50
Park Station	7:55	8:55	9:55
Swartwood	8:00	9:00	10:00
Van Etten	8:05	9:05	10:05
Brookton	8:10	9:10	10:10
Besemer	8:15	9:15	10:15
Delphi	8:20	9:20	10:20
Freenville	8:25	9:25	10:25
North Canton	8:30	9:30	10:30
West Canton	8:35	9:35	10:35
White Church	8:40	9:40	10:40
Caroline Junction	8:45	9:45	10:45
Brookton	8:50	9:50	10:50
Besemer	8:55	9:55	10:55
Delphi	9:00	10:00	11:00
Freenville	9:05	10:05	11:05
North Canton	9:10	10:10	11:10
West Canton	9:15	10:15	11:15
White Church	9:20	10:20	11:20
Caroline Junction	9:25	10:25	11:25
Brookton	9:30	10:30	11:30
Besemer	9:35	10:35	11:35
Delphi	9:40	10:40	11:40
Freenville	9:45	10:45	11:45
North Canton	9:50	10:50	11:50
West Canton	9:55	10:55	11:55
White Church	10:00	11:00	12:00
Caroline Junction	10:05	11:05	12:05
Brookton	10:10	11:10	12:10
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White Church	10:40	11:40	12:40
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West Canton	11:55	12:55	1:55
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Caroline Junction	12:05	1:05	2:05
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Besemer	12:15	1:15	2:15
Delphi	12:20	1:20	2:20
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West Canton	12:35	1:35	2:35
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Caroline Junction	12:45	1:45	2:45
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North Canton	5:10	6:10	7:10
West Canton	5:15	6:15	7:15
White Church	5:20	6:20	7:20
Caroline Junction	5:		



Engine 909 and its train crew about 1897. It was built as UI&E Engine 9 in 1879, became EC&N Engine 9 in 1884, was rebuilt, became LV 909 in 1896, and was scrapped by 1905.

added each way on a daily basis between Sayre and Elmira via Van Etten.

Initially, the greatest changes occurred in track, bridge and structure work. A New York State Board of Railroad Commissioners' 1896 Inspection Report stated that the property was "...run down in many respects." The track maintenance force was increased by 20 percent and 60,000 ties ordered. Three miles of 70-pound steel rail were laid and 6 miles of woven fence erected. The report produced a long list of work to be done including installation of 34 train order semaphore boards (one for each open station), 190 whistle boards, 200 clearance posts, 24 switch frogs, 14 point switches to replace a like number of stub switches and 10 sets of cattle guards. Additional work to be performed included: painting, repair and renewal of passenger stations, switch targets to be lighted and raised to at least 6 feet above rails, remaining stub switches to be replaced by split point switches, rail fully spiked and bolted, ballast installed, shoulders filled out, crossing planks

renewed, grass and weeds cleared, trees cut down that were too close to the tracks and water placed in barrels at trestles. Bridge and trestle structures were described by the inspector as "...very poor as a rule." He added that many were decayed and beyond safe limits.

Elmira and Cortland Branch milk traffic volumes grew in the 1890's with the establishment of milk processing plants at almost every station stop between Delphi and Freeville. Hundreds of milk cans and cases were being loaded each morning along the route.

The Lehigh Valley Railroad experienced a major change in leadership in 1897 when Philadelphia financier J. Pierpont Morgan gained control of the company and installed W. Alfred Walter as president. Great emphasis was placed on rebuilding and upgrading the railroad property and equipment. By 1899, six of the older EC&N locomotives were removed from service and replaced by three former Ithaca and Athens Railroad locomotives that had been rebuilt in the Lehigh Valley's Sayre shop plus three others of LV ancestry.

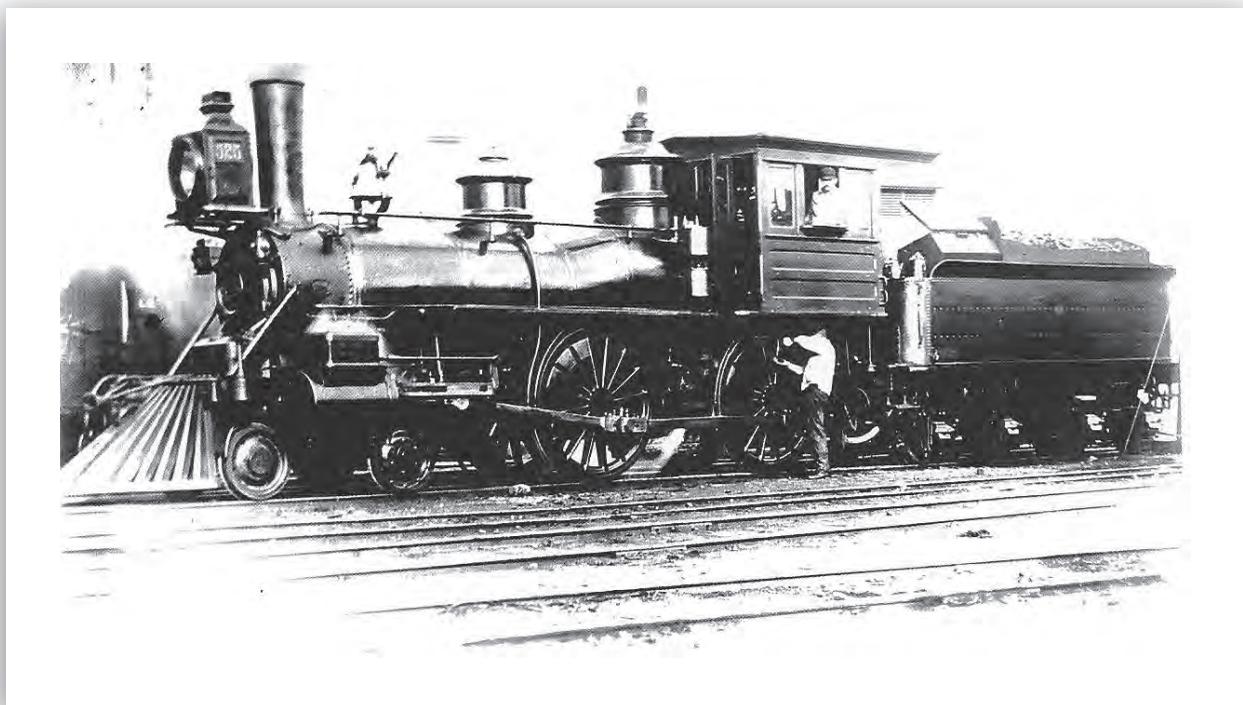
Meanwhile, railroad activity in the Cortland area was expanded by construction of the Erie & Central New York Railway. Actual planning for the railroad that would link Cortland and the villages of McGraw and Cincinnatus had begun more than a decade earlier but with little accomplished. Promoters had originally envisioned a route from Cortland through Cincinnatus to Utica but this plan was eventually dropped although some grading was done. Finally, on August 27, 1895, the first spike was driven near Cortland Junction. A news report indicated that the company intended to build the railroad to Hancock or Deposit on the Erie Railroad.

Construction was soon delayed because at least one property owner objected to having a railroad right of way through his farmland

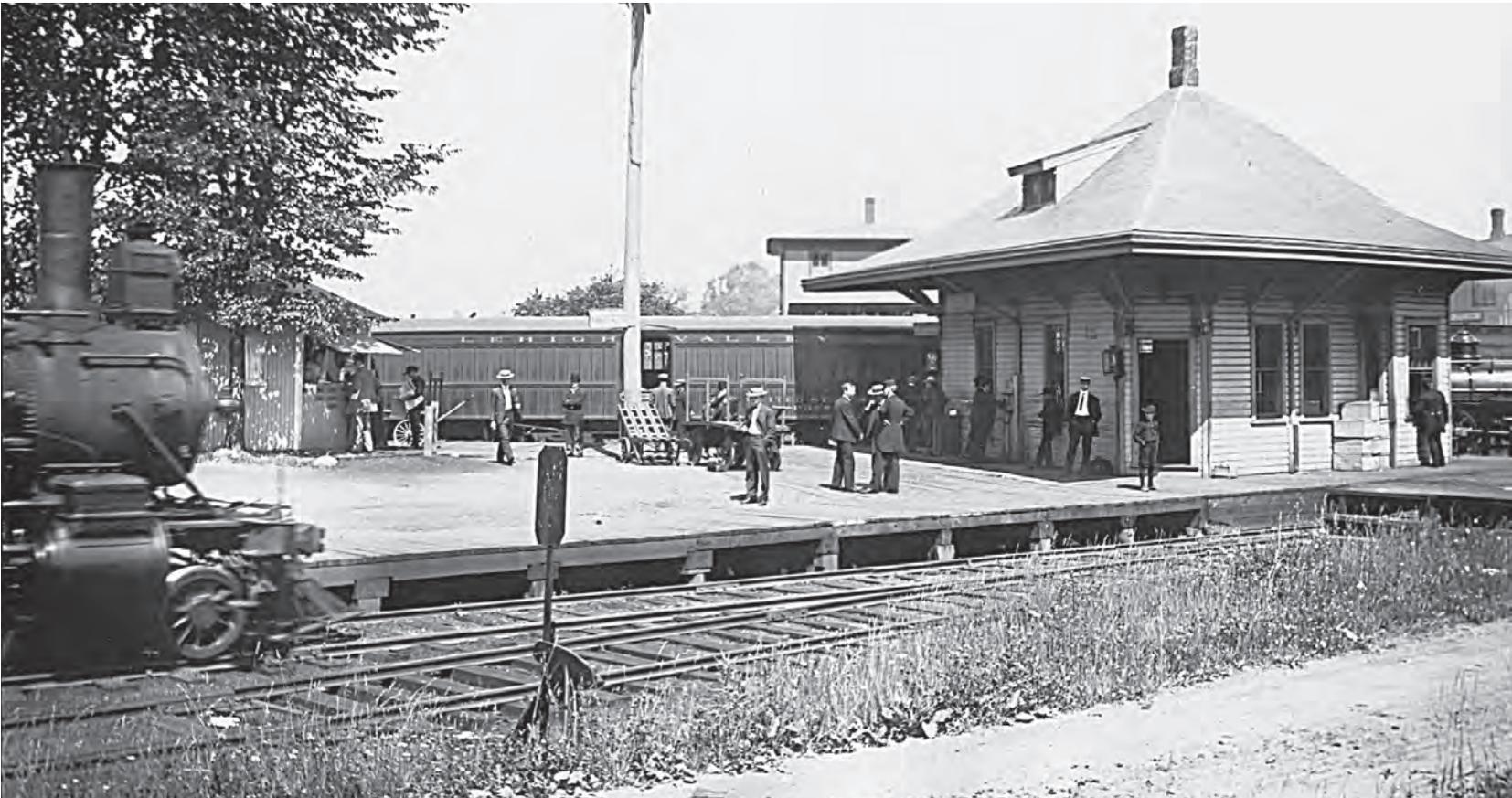
without adequate compensation. Two years passed before the first train arrived in McGraw in September 1897 and three years before service reached Cincinnatus in September 1898. Enginehouses were built in Cortland and Cincinnatus but regular service normally operated from Cortland. Trains began each morning from the Lehigh Valley Cortland station and operated over LV tracks to Cortland Junction then entered E&CNY tracks at a switch just beyond the crossing. Three trains were scheduled in each direction each weekday between Cortland and Cincinnatus. Besides handling passengers, carload and LCL freight, the E&CNY brought two to three hundred cans of milk each day to Cortland to be added to the Lehigh Valley's growing volume of milk traffic.

As the decade and century drew to a close, the 350 or so former EC&N employees could

look back at a turbulent ten-year period. The transition from being part of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad organization dominated by Austin Corbin and Archibald McLeod to an obscure branch line in upstate New York with division headquarters in Auburn was a big adjustment. The offices in Elmira had been closed and work transferred from Elmira to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Some of the equipment repair work was in the process of being transferred from Cortland to Sayre, Pennsylvania. EC&N locomotives were being replaced by engines from the former Geneva, Ithaca & Sayre Railroad and coal mine branches in Pennsylvania. All of the top officials had been replaced. Thankfully, the hard-working and durable engine and trainmen, telegraphers, shop personnel and track workers were still on hand to keep this fine railroad providing service to the public.



Engine 525, an old-timer, about 1900, was built as Ithaca and Athens RR Engine 2 (named "C. L. Grant") in 1871, became Geneva, Ithaca & Sayre Engine 2, rebuilt at the LV Sayre Shops in 1889, became LV Engine 525, renumbered Engine 2544 in 1905 and scrapped in 1912. This is one of four GI&S locomotives to come to the LV's E&C branch.



The original Freeville stations built in 1870 first served the Southern Central Railroad, later the LV Auburn Branch (in the foreground) and the Ithaca & Cortland Railroad, later the LV Elmira and Cortland Branch (the background). The two stations are situated in the southwest quadrant of the crossing of the two rail lines. Freeville is sixty miles from Elmira and ten miles from Cortland and is an important junction between the two rail routes. The photo was taken about 1900 looking in a north-westerly direction.

FROM ELMIRA TO CORTLAND, 1899

The time is 6:45 a.m. as we enter the former Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad passenger station at the corner of Fifth and Baldwin streets in downtown Elmira, New York. This is the largest community served by this railroad line, with a population of roughly 31,000. The date is September 26, 1899 and we've come to take a two-day trip on the Lehigh Valley's Elmira and Cortland Branch. We could see the entire branch in one day by riding on Train 147, the morning northbound passenger train to Camden and returning in the afternoon on Train 148. But we'll learn far more by spending two days riding second class mixed trains 525 from Elmira to Cortland today, 523 tomorrow morning from Cortland to Canastota and Train 147 tomorrow afternoon from Canastota to Camden.

We've entered the two-story building built in 1883 and 1884 to serve as the combination passenger terminal and general offices of the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad. It became the headquarters of the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad in March 1884 and housed the general manager's office, as well as his staff, the accounting and sales offices and operations headquarters on the second floor. The superintendent's and dispatchers' offices were also located here and the freight station nearby. The offices were partially vacated five years later after General Manager McLeod resigned, his job was abolished and the superintendent and train dispatchers moved to Cortland. Almost all the remaining offices were closed after the Lehigh Valley took over EC&N operations and the accounting personnel moved

to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

The Lehigh Valley's main track and yard are situated between the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad mainline to the east and the Erie Railroad mainline to the west. All three railroad routes pass through downtown Elmira on a generally north-south axis. The Northern Central Railroad has trackage rights over the Erie mainline from Southport south of Elmira to a junction several miles north of the downtown.

We buy our round trip tickets for a two-day 140-mile trip to Camden and return. We've obtained passes to ride the locomotives but decide to ride the combination baggage-coach car on the rear end for the first few miles. Elmira yard Engine 913, a 4-6-0, has backed our train down from the yard to the station. The yard job was on duty at 6 a.m. and our road crew shortly afterward. Once the yard engine leaves, Engine 919, a newer 4-6-0, backs down and is coupled on to our train. Train 525 has 3 loads, 9 empties and the combine on the tail end. At exactly 7 a.m. Conductor Kiernan gives the highball signal to the engineer. We begin our daylong ride moving slowly past the small freight yard and roundhouse on our left, cross the multi-track DL&W mainline about a mile and a quarter north of the station and pass near Eldridge Park, a popular amusement area. Our train picks up speed until we stop at Elmira Heights at 7:14 to deliver some less than carload (LCL) freight from the house car.

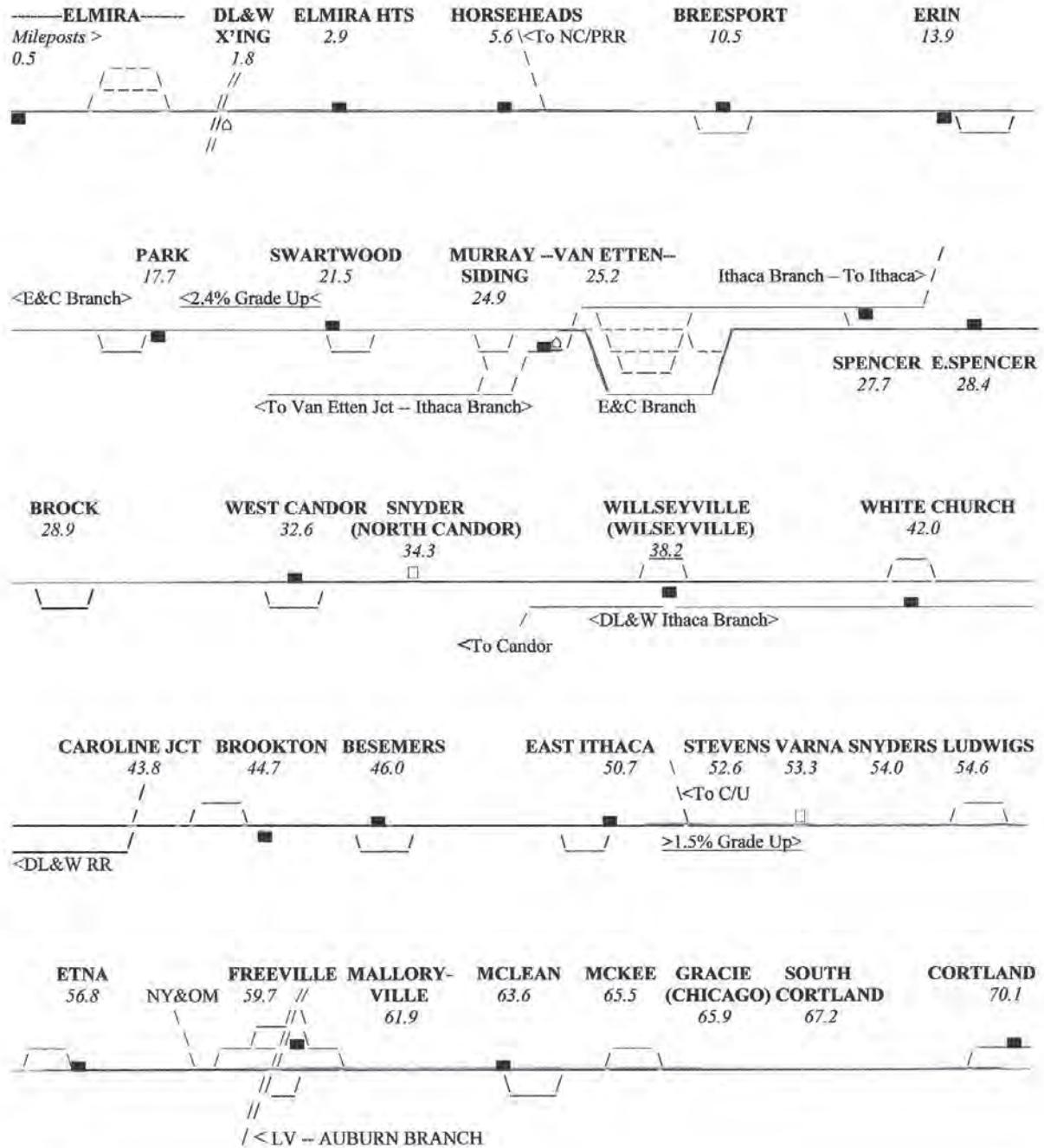
We learn that the LV line between Elmira and Horseheads was built as the Canal Railroad

ELMIRA TO CORTLAND

TRACK LAYOUT: ELMIRA TO CORTLAND

EC&N/LV Elmira and Cortland Branch main track, stations, yard locations, passing sidings & grade crossings.

SCHEMATIC MAP: ■ = OPEN STATION, □ = FLAG STOP, △ = INTERLOCKING TOWER



ELMIRA TO CORTLAND



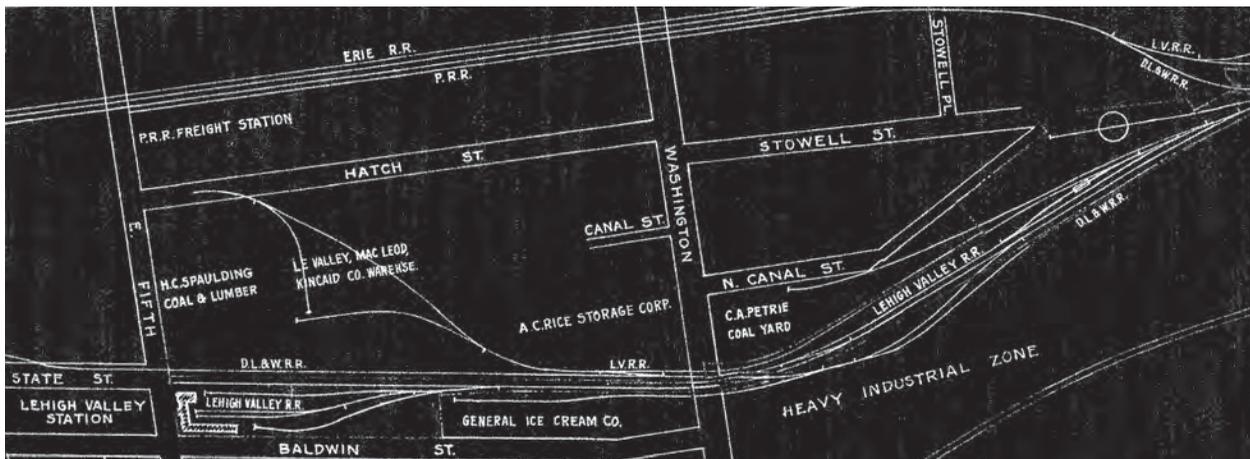
LEFT: EC&N passenger station and headquarters at Fifth and Baldwin streets, Elmira, completed in 1884. Operating and sales personnel moved to Cortland in 1889.

BELOW: The Horseheads station looking north with the main track in front of the station curving to the right, to Breesport.



as a subsidiary of the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad along the right-of-way of the abandoned Chemung Canal. The Canal Railroad was leased to the UI&E upon its completion in 1881. The ill-fated canal had been opened in 1833 to provide a connection between a Corning-Elmira canal and Seneca Lake, which at the north end was connected to the Erie Canal. Waterways were popular in the second quarter of the nineteenth century for transportation of freight and passengers. This one was built and owned by private investors and required fifty-three locks to compensate for the 450-foot difference in elevation between Elmira and the southern end of Seneca Lake in Watkins Glen. The venture proved unsuccessful due to poor construction and lack of traffic.

At 7:25, we're moving again heading due north to Horseheads, home to some 1,700 people.



Latter day map of Elmira shows the relation of Erie, DL&W, and EC&N (LV) routes, roughly as they were in the late 1800s.

ELMIRA TO CORTLAND

At 7:35 we pull up to the station to unload LCL freight. Once completed, our engine places a car for unloading, reassembles the train and backs it behind the station on the track that once served as a connection to the Northern Central and Erie mainlines. UI&E trains originally reached Elmira from Horseheads by using the connection to the Northern Central and Erie mainlines and then trackage rights into their joint passenger station in Elmira. We walk forward with Conductor Kiernan, meet Engineer Stapleton and his fireman and climb aboard Engine 919. Train 147 arrives at 8:05, unloads and loads passengers, mail and express items and departs at 8:12. The train consists of 4-4-0 Engine 907, one baggage-mail car and one coach.

About ten minutes later we're given the signal to head north again. The tracks have curved from north to a generally easterly direction around the base of Bowman Hill. Our train picks up speed as we begin a gradual climb along the Newton Creek valley. We left Elmira at an elevation of 856 feet, departed Horseheads at 890 feet and will soon reach Breesport at an elevation of 1,074 feet. This is the easy part of the climb to the summit at Park Station.

As we approach Breesport (population of almost 450) our engineer points out the location of a serious accident that occurred in 1888 involving an excursion train running from Horseheads to Park Station. Tom Durrant, the engineer, didn't see an open switch ahead until it was too late to stop the train. The engine running about 30 m.p.h. derailed, went down into the creek and over on its side. Tom was found dazed but still holding on to a lever, badly shaken up but not seriously injured. The fireman jumped and escaped with slight bruises. The tour passengers comfortably seated in four coaches, members of The Third Ward Literary Club, were tossed around in the cars in what a *New York Times* article described as in a "...promiscuous manner." They suffered only slight bruises. Later,

we learned that there were two men in the baggage car along with beer kegs, boxes of clams and other food for consumption at Park Station. The baggage car went into the creek on top of the engine and two occupants were thrown to the front of the car with the contents piled upon them. They suffered severe injuries but there was no report given about the condition of the car's contents. Another train was sent to pick up the literary club members most of whom continued their journey to Park Station for their outing and, one hoped, to enjoy the scenery, food and beverages.

We arrive at Breesport at 8:40. The engine takes on water, pulls our train forward to the station to drop and pick up LCL freight. Breesport was the original headquarters of the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad. The company, as originally conceived and built between Ithaca and Elmira, owned no tracks in either terminal. Instead the trains used trackage rights over the Ithaca & Athens Railroad between Ithaca and Van Etten and the Northern Central and Erie railroads between Horseheads and Elmira. The location of the headquarters and route alignment between Van Etten and Horseheads were influenced by the Rodbourn brothers, James and Joseph, who were among the original promoters and investors in the UI&E. They owned businesses in Breesport and Erin and not surprisingly became top officials of the company. The brothers owned large sawmills in each community which provided many carloads of lumber and wood products to the UI&E and EC&N.

We're on our way again at 9:05, picking up speed to about 25 m.p.h. on a 1 percent ascending grade. In less than ten minutes, Train 525 is slowing on the approach to Erin on tracks that turn from east to north. The agent-telegrapher has the train order board against us. He has a train order for us changing the meeting point for our train and southbound Train 522 from Park Station to Swartwood. Park Station is the

ELMIRA TO CORTLAND

scheduled meeting location for the two trains but Train 522 has been delayed at Van Etten. The southbound train on the E&C is a daily except Sunday mixed train that operates from Sayre to Elmira via Van Etten.

Off to our right is one of the Rod-bourn's large sawmills surrounded by piles of logs on skids waiting to be brought into the sawmill. We can see workmen loading a flat car with lumber. We have only a brief stop today at Erin (population 167 at last count) and are moving again at 9:16. This becomes the steepest part of our climb to the summit at Park Station. Our train is passing through a heavily wooded area climbing a 1.2 percent grade at slightly over 15 mph. Our engineer points to the location where Train 4 derailed on St. Patrick's Day in 1887. Its two coaches were tossed off the track and the day coach turned over injuring fifteen of the twenty passengers aboard. Some experienced severe injuries but all survived the very unsettling experience.

Number 525 arrives at Park Station, a lonely stop in the woods at an elevation of 1,509 feet where approximately 37 people are said to reside. This is the highest railroad summit in the Finger Lakes region. We stop for a few minutes while the trainmen set up the retainer valves on each car. The retainer valves are provided to keep ten pounds of air pressure in the brake valve of each car so that the brakes can't fully release while the train descends the steep grade. The fireman finally relaxes after shoveling coal more or less continuously since leaving Elmira. Close to Park Station



The Breesport station with track to the right in the direction of Erin.



The Erin station looking upgrade toward Park Station. The building on the left side of the track is a milk station.



Swartwood Station looking upgrade toward Park Station



ERIN'S BUSY SAWMILL

The J. H. Rodbourn & Company sawmill is the largest in Erin and a big user of the EC&N. Its owners are leading figures in the railroad. Thirty men are normally employed in the mill and a similar number cutting down trees in the woods, skidding logs, peeling bark, cutting cordwood, hewing railroad ties and other tasks. Not only is the lumber sawed at the mill but a variety of items are made such as picket fence pickets and Kendall potato crates.

The Kendall crate is manufactured in large numbers and shipped by the carloads throughout the vegetable growing areas of the East. A salesman rides the trains to various areas to get orders for the crates. He works in the local general store during the winter.

Around the mill are about ten acres covered with a couple of million board feet of logs piled high on skid ways. The logs are hauled in from the woodlots during the winter months.

One section of the huge building is a planing mill that turns out planed lumber including clapboards, door and window frames and casing, house trim and more. There is a shingle mill and a specially designed saw-rig lathe.

is the popular Beckwith Inn which serves as a resort for many people living in this area.

We are moving again around a sharp right hand curve from a north to east direction and begin our descent down the twisting 2.4 percent grade. In the 3.8 miles from Park Station to our next stop at Swartwood (elevation 1,055 feet), there are 22 curves including six six-degree curves plus two long curving high iron viaducts. The first is the Block House Viaduct consisting of thirteen 59-foot spans 75 feet high above a creek and road. Less than a mile ahead is Deep Gorge Viaduct which has ten 46-foot spans, 460 feet in length situated 122 feet above a stream bed. The railroad's right of way is descending along the side of a hill high above the Cayuta Creek valley to our left.

As our train slows approaching the water tank at Swartwood, we see Train 522 in the passing siding. The crew has cut the ten-car train in two in preparation for doubling the hill to Park Station. They have 2-8-0 Engine 924 in charge, the last of the locomotives purchased by the EC&N. Number 522's crew is in for a long day as they're not scheduled to leave Elmira for Sayre until 7:25 p.m. We're told that they'll be filling in as Elmira yard engine this afternoon while the regular yard engine and crew travel over to Van Etten to bring back a two-car passenger extra carrying twenty-five members of the Sol Smith Russell Company. Sol Smith Russell is a famous actor and mimic who has entertained people around the country. He, like many other entertainers and celebrities, often charters trains to move his cast from city to city. Swartwood is a hamlet with a recorded population of ninety-two located near the bottom of the steep grade from Park Station.

We're at the location of one of the worst accidents so far on the former EC&N line. It was here one October night in 1885 that a runaway twenty-car coal train overtook its helper engine that had been uncoupled at Park Station

and preceded it down the grade. The coal train had only two of the three brakemen required on freight trains and one of those was young, inexperienced and making his first trip on the line. The train began moving before sufficient brakes were applied and ran out of control down the steep and winding grade. When the helper engine arrived at the passing track switch, it was struck from the rear at a high rate of speed by the coal train. According to news reports, there were cars and locomotives "...mixed up in a terrible wreck...cars piled up in great confusion and the wildest scene presented."

"People from the vicinity rushed to the scene and everything possible was done to extricate the unfortunate employees. After much difficulty in which many hands took part, Helper Engineer Brown's remains were taken from the wreck and soon after the lifeless form of Brakeman Judd was placed on the track beside the wreck. The fireman was taken from the wreck in an insensible condition with his skull crushed and the conductor of the train was found to have a broken leg..." The story ended stating that the track was badly torn up and the damage to the property was considerable.

At 9:50, Engineer Stapleton gets the go-ahead signal from Conductor Kiernan, whistles off, releases the brakes, opens the throttle and we are moving again. We are on a gradual downgrade with our next stop at Van Etten less than four miles ahead. We cross a bridge over the newly built Lehigh Valley Railroad double track mainline from Van Etten Junction to Geneva Junction and then on to Buffalo. The new low-grade route was opened for business in 1892 and allowed the Lehigh Valley Railroad to discontinue using Erie Railroad tracks to gain access to the Buffalo gateway.

We pass Murray Siding on our right and the wye track that provides a direct connection from the old EC&N Elmira line to the Lehigh Valley's Ithaca Branch east to Van Etten Junction.

Engineer Stapleton stops Train 525 briefly at Van Etten station at 10:05, sees the semaphore signal at a stop position but gets a go ahead hand signal from the telegraph operator at the E&C and LV crossing just ahead. The telegrapher has a train order for us changing our meeting point with the morning southbound passenger train from East Spencer to Wilseyville. We're practically on time but Train 116 is running about a half hour late. We pass the junction and pull up to Van Etten yard where our train has cars to pick up and drop. Van Etten is a railroad town (population about 567) situated at the crossing of two busy rail lines where passengers and freight transfer from one line to the other.

At this location, we learn about two other fatal accidents. The first occurred in November 1884 when the engineer of an EC&N freight train was making a "flying switch." This practice, typically frowned upon by officials, is used to speed up switching of freight cars. A locomotive, with freight car coupled behind, accelerates to a few miles per hour, a brakeman uncouples the car while it's moving, the engineer speeds up the locomotive past a facing point switch, another brakeman throws the switch and the car coasts into the siding. Now the locomotive can couple onto the car nose first and place it on a siding. In this case, the engineer didn't notice that a work train was on the track ahead and crashed into a flat car attached to the train with several laborers aboard. Newspaper reports indicated that one man was killed and a second received probably fatal injuries.

The other fatal accident involved two Lehigh Valley enginemen who had been hired during a system-wide strike late in 1893. Their locomotive exploded when the amount of boiler water dropped below a safe level. Both men died instantly.

Number 525 leaves Van Etten yard at 10:30 with 20 loads and 3 empties and proceeds easily on a gentle downgrade toward East Spencer

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West Candor's station.

BELOW: Wilseyville Union Station, with EC&N tracks toward Caroline Junction at left, and Lackawanna's Ithaca Branch tracks behind.



through a swampy area parallel to the Ithaca Branch. The LV's Ithaca Branch has the distinction of having been operated under six different railroad names in the past thirty years. It began as the Ithaca & Towanda, became the Ithaca & Athens; Geneva, Ithaca & Sayre; Geneva, Ithaca & Athens; Pennsylvania & New York and finally the Lehigh Valley Railroad. The LV gained control of the P&NY and most of its predecessors years ago. The EC&N men still refer to it as the P&NY.

We stop at Lehigh Valley E&C branch's East Spencer station located near downtown Spencer (population 810). The LV Ithaca Branch's so-called Spencer station is located slightly west of the downtown area. Train 525 departs at 10:40 after a seven-minute stop and heads again in an easterly direction along Catatonk Creek. We're on a slight downgrade and stop at West Candor (population slightly less than 100) at 11:10 and North Candor, a flag stop, at 11:15. Our tracks turn north and we are soon roughly paralleling to our right the Wilseyville Creek and Ithaca Branch of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad. That railroad, built in 1830, was the first in Tompkins County and one of

the first in the United States. It was originally named the Ithaca & Owego and renamed the Cayuga & Susquehanna before being acquired by the DL&W.

Train 525 arrives at Wilseyville (population 562) at 11:30, just in time to head into the passing track and meet Train 116. The southbound passenger train with one baggage car and two coaches is led by Lehigh Valley Engine 525, one of six non-EC&N locomotives recently assigned to service on this branch to replace six former EC&N engines. Engine 525 is former Geneva, Ithaca & Sayre Railroad Engine 2, a 4-4-0 built in 1871 and rebuilt at Sayre Shops in 1889. It's similar to the EC&N eight-wheelers in size and weight.

Wilseyville is a joint LV-DL&W station with LV tracks on the west side and DL&W tracks on the east side. We leave at 11:35 and head north alongside the DL&W, passing White Church before slowing down at unattended Caroline Junction, a LV-DL&W crossing. Under the governing Elmira and Cortland Branch Special Instructions, the red ball (red light at night) displayed indicates that our Lehigh Valley train may proceed.

ELMIRA TO CORTLAND



ABOVE: Caroline Junction, looking north with EC&N tracks crossing Delaware, Lackawanna & Western track from left to right. Signal tells which line's train has the right of way.

We arrive at Brookton, a community of about 420 people, at 11:57. Our crew sets out two cars then pulls up to the station to unload LCL freight. The station is located at the south end of the 1,600-foot long, 90-foot high Mottville (a.k.a. Brookton) trestle. This wooden trestle was rebuilt in 1889 with steel. At 12:16, Train 525 moves carefully out over the long, straight and level trestle high above Six Mile Creek.

Safely on the north side of the deep chasm, Engineer Stapleton opens the throttle briefly as we curve left and arrive at Besemers, a station that serves some thirty-two local residents and many others in the outlying area. Here, we again unload LCL freight, take on water and meet agent-telegrapher Willis Besemer. He has a message from the dispatcher that there's a helper engine waiting for us on the passing siding at East Ithaca and to stop short of the north end. Besemer's station not only serves the railroad but is the center of community activity and houses the local post office as well as a coal, lime, flour and feed business managed by Willis Besemer.

Train 525 leaves Besemers at 12:35 heading in a northwesterly direction on a slight downgrade

BELOW: Besemers station and water tower with Agent-Telegrapher Willis Besemer standing outside.



and arrives at 12:45 at the East Ithaca passing siding located about a quarter mile south of the station. We pull up beside Engine 923, a 2-8-0. Engineer Stapleton introduces us to the Engineer Floyd Zimmer and his fireman and we climb aboard the helper engine after it couples on to our train. We head north slowly and stop with the rear end opposite the East Ithaca station which is situated at the top of Maple Avenue on the eastern outskirts of the city of Ithaca and adjacent to the large Cornell University campus.

Engines 923 and 919 restart Train 525 at 1 around a sharp right hand 8-degree curve at the beginning of a steep grade toward Varna and Etna. As we cross over Judd Falls Road, we see to our left the abandoned right of way of the original Ithaca and Cortland Railroad. The right of way was the route to Cornell University along Cascadilla Creek first used by Ithaca & Cortland RR trains.

The tracks were abandoned and removed after the UI&E line was built from Van Etten and Spencer northward to the new station at East Ithaca and the junction located just north of Judd Falls Road. Our train is now riding on

ELMIRA TO CORTLAND

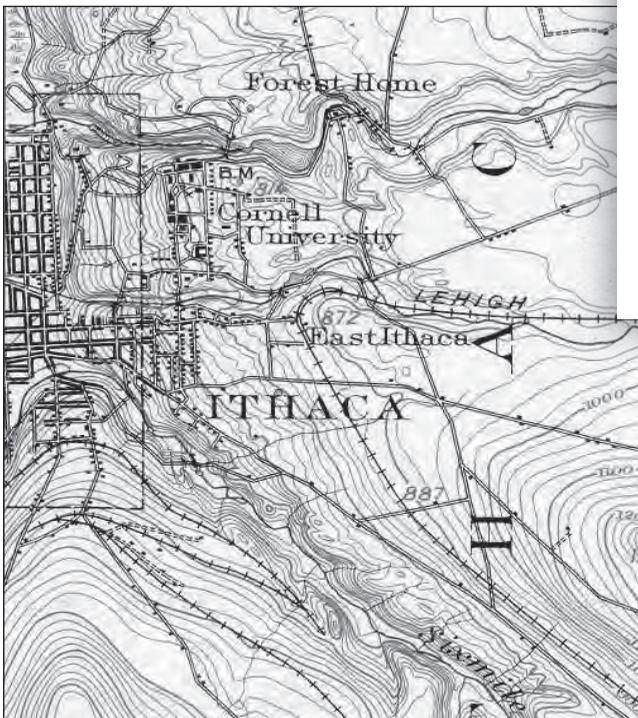
the original I&C right of way as it climbs the 1.5 percent grade to Varna at a speed of about 10 miles per hour. The track becomes almost level after we pass the flag stop at Varna (population 208) and we are soon moving about 18 miles per hour, now following Fall Creek. Train 525 arrives at Etna (home to approximately 200 folks) at 1:25 and leaves two minutes later having averaged about 14 m.p.h. from East Ithaca.

We reach the busy railroad village of Freeville (population a little over 300) at 1:35 and pull up to the water tank just a few car lengths south of the station and the LV Auburn Division mainline crossing. On our left as we approached Freeville is the abandoned right of way of the New York, and Oswego Midland Railroad that headed west toward Scipio Center.

Up ahead we see Engine 916 on the head-end of Train 524, our southbound counterpart. Both trains are scheduled to spend about an hour switching cars to and from the mainline.

Our conductor confers with the conductor off Train 524 to coordinate their switching moves. The southbound train has milk cars to deliver to the southbound milk train and freight cars to be picked up by northbound and southbound freight trains. It left Canastota at 6:35 this morning and began picking up cans and cases of milk at Delphi Falls, New Woodstock and seven other stations before arriving at Freeville. The train picked up over 400 cans and 68 cases of milk at wayside creameries and milk processing plant plus 260 cans and 13 cases of milk from the Erie & Central New York Railroad midday train in Cortland. They have a fresh crew that boarded at noon in Cortland.

We'll have to wait beyond our scheduled 2:30 departure time for a northbound freight



ABOVE: East Ithaca's station, looking east with the main track beyond the building. Trolley track in the foreground ends at the station.

LEFT: U.S. topographical map of the early 1900s shows tracks of the Lehigh Valley and DL&W east of Ithaca. The LV from Besemers enters at the lower right, goes through East Ithaca, and leaves heading east toward Varna. The DL&W enters from the bottom center and heads down into Ithaca by way of switchbacks.

ELMIRA TO CORTLAND

that's bringing cars for us to take to Cortland and beyond. While waiting, we learn from Engineer Zimmer that his day and the day of his fireman and brakeman started at 6 in Cortland. They left Cortland at 6:30 and ran light to East Ithaca arriving at 7:30. They picked up three carloads of company stone and a section foreman and headed south a couple of miles to meet the local section gang. The gang unloaded and spread the stone on a stretch of uneven track. With the job done, they followed Engine 923 with its three empty cars back to East Ithaca and got in the clear to allow Train 116 to leave at its scheduled departure time of 8:40. Due to delays in Cortland and Freeville, Train 116 actually left East Ithaca at 9:10. Afterwards, Engineer Zimmer, his crew and a couple of section men helped turn Engine 923 on the turntable.

Our connection on the Auburn Branch has arrived and dropped ten cars for us to pick up.

We've coupled on to the cars, added them to our train and are ready to leave town. Engineer Zimmer gets the highball from Conductor Kiernan and we are finally moving at 3:19. We are still following Fall Creek on a slight upgrade. We arrive at McLean (a community of about 450) at 3:30, place a car for unloading, and leave about ten minutes later. Train 525 reaches the top of the grade at Gracie (formerly known as Chicago) and begins its descent to Cortland, arriving at 4 with 26 loads and 6 empties.

Engineer Zimmer, his fireman and Engine 923 will be assisting Train 525 to Canastota. Conductor Kiernan and his crew will be waiting for southbound Train 528 to arrive and they'll be taking it down to Freeville and returning to Cortland as Train 527 about 10.

We will end our day by walking up Main Street to have dinner, then we'll go over to the Owego House to rest up for tomorrow.



LEFT: Etna station with the main track to the right in the direction of Freeville.



BELOW: McLean station with building on west side of track; main track in the direction of Cortland.



Passenger, baggage and more wait for a southbound passenger train at DeRuyter on the northern stretch of the EC&N.

FROM CORTLAND TO CAMDEN, 1899

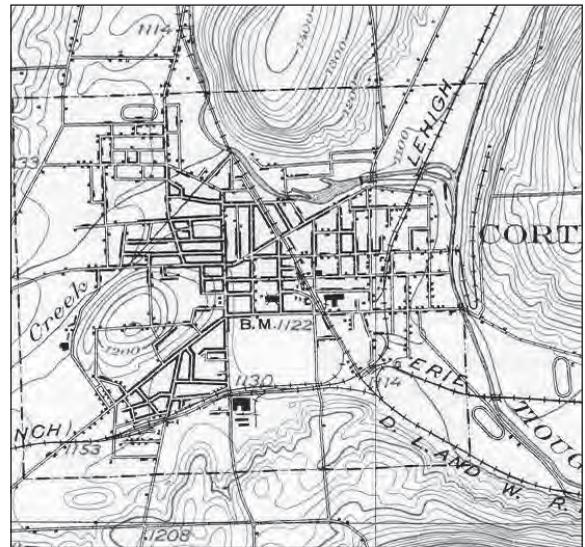
It's Wednesday morning, September 27, 1899. The time is 6:15 and we're back standing on the Cortland station platform waiting to board northbound Train 523, the daily except Sunday mixed train from Cortland to Canastota. This is the second day of our tour of the Lehigh Valley's Elmira and Cortland Branch from Elmira to Camden. Yard Engine 914 backs our train down to the station. It consists of 2 milk cars, 16 loaded box cars, 1 empty flat, 1 empty stock car and a combine on the rear end. We meet Conductor Warden who will be taking the train to Canastota and return this afternoon with Train 528. Our Engine 920 couples on and the car inspectors conduct a brake test.

Conductor Warden shows us his train order to have Train 523 take siding and meet Train 116 Engine 524 and Train 524 with Engine 921 at DeRuyter. He tells us that we have 1 car to set off at Truxton, 3 cars for DeRuyter and 3 cars for Cazenovia. He figures we should make the twenty-mile trip to DeRuyter in 2 hours for our meet with Train 116, the morning southbound passenger train.

We walk forward, board Engine 920, and meet Engineer Byers and his fireman. At 6:55, the headend gets the highball from Conductor Warden and we are on our way north. Our train moves slowly past Erie and Central New York Railway Engine 1, a 4-4-0 with a consist of 2 freight cars and a combination car. It will be leaving Cortland for Cincinnatus as E&CNY Train 1 at 7, the first of three daily trains. The railroad has trackage rights over the Lehigh Valley from

Cortland to Cortland Junction, a distance of 0.7 miles. We're told that this one-year-old company has just survived its first financial crisis and has resumed paying its employees on a current basis.

In four minutes we receive the proceed signal from the agent-operator at Cortland Junction, and cross the single-track Binghamton-Syracuse-Oswego Branch of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad. On the right, we see the beginning of the E&CNY main track toward Cincinnatus. Now our track takes a sharp left hand turn to a northerly direction on the outskirts of Cortland.



Cortland area railroads about 1900. LV Elmira and Cortland Branch enters from the lower left and exits at upper right. DL&W enters lower right and exits top left center and the Erie & Central New York exits from Cortland at lower right.

CORTLAND TO CAMDEN



East Homer Station looking north.



Truxton station looking north.



Cuyler station looking north, built by the New York & Oswego Midland Railroad.

We're traveling over the track originally built by the New York and Oswego Midland Railroad in 1872 as part of its Western Extension from its mainline in Norwich through DeRuyter on its way to Buffalo. Their construction crews arrived at South Main Street in Cortland shortly after the Ithaca and Cortland Railroad builders arrived from Freeville. Fortunately, both railroads reached an arrangement of trackage rights and joint operation in the Cortland area.

Our train proceeds slowly over several road crossings in Cortland and then picks up speed as we begin following the East Branch of the Tioughnioga River upstream. We are traveling on the left hand side of a wide valley and pass flag stops at Lorings and East River. We make a brief stop at East Homer (population of almost 100) and depart at 7:26. We are speeding along at almost 20 miles per hour on a very gentle upgrade and arrive at Truxton (population of about 575 souls) at 7:40. Our headend brakeman makes a cut behind the first car and we set it onto the station siding. Next, the crew unloads several pieces of LCL freight from the waycar.

At 8:11, our train is moving north again. Almost 5 miles and 15 minutes later, we arrive at Cuyler (home to about 125 residents) and our crew unloads several more pieces of freight. Engineer Byers gets the go-ahead signal and we're moving again at 8:31.

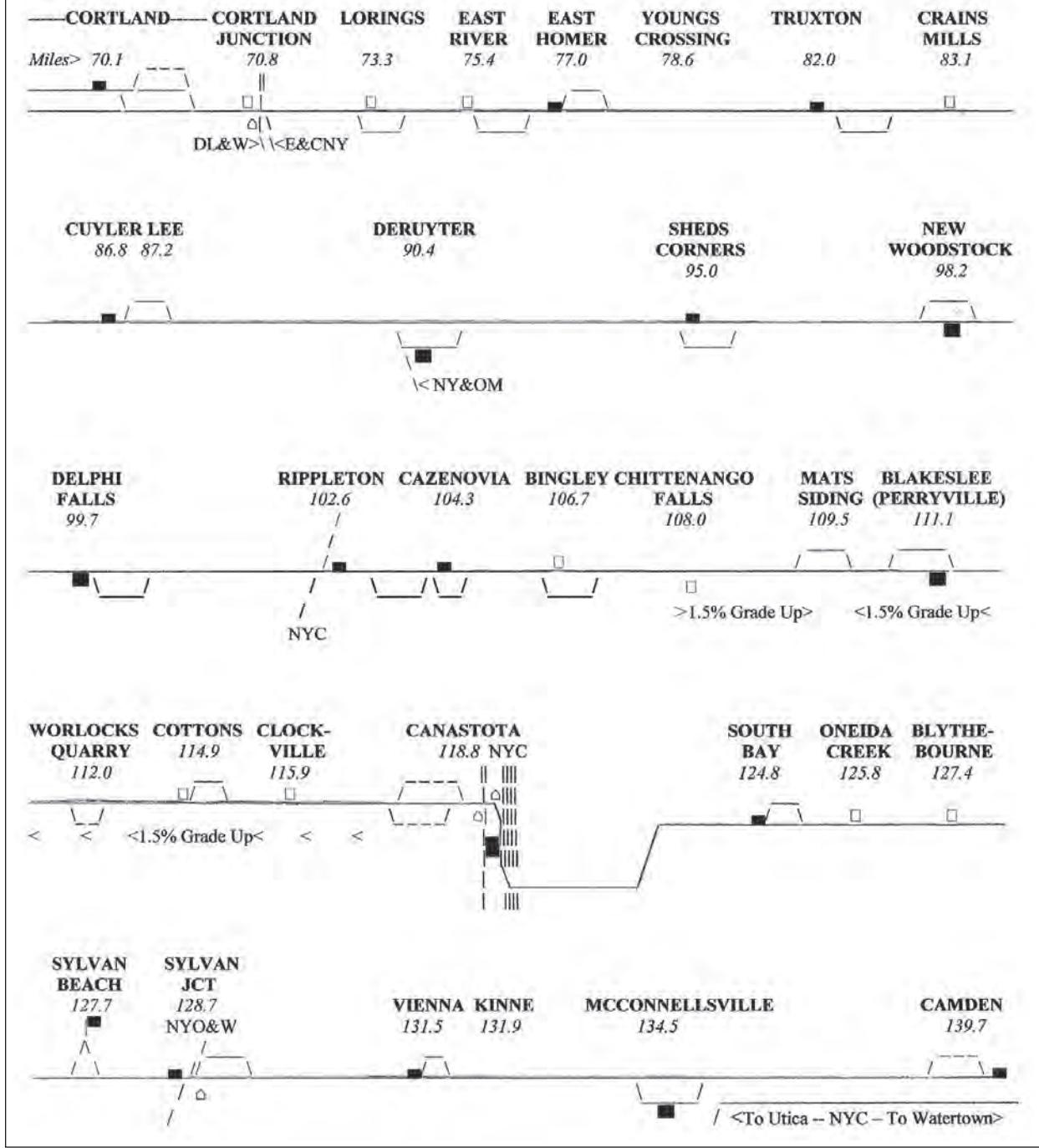
We arrive at the south switch of the DeRuyter (population of over 650 people) passing track at 8:45. Our head brakeman opens the switch and we head in for our meets with trains 116 and 524. About ten minutes later, Train 116 arrives with 2 headend cars and a coach.

CORTLAND TO CAMDEN

TRACK LAYOUT: CORTLAND TO CAMDEN

EC&N/LV Elmira and Cortland Branch main track, stations, yard locations, passing sidings & grade crossings.

SCHEMATIC MAP: ■ = OPEN STATION, □ = FLAG STOP, ◊ = INTERLOCKING TOWER



CORTLAND TO CAMDEN



Sheds Corners Station looking west, located just south of the 1,390-foot summit of the EC&N between Cortland and Cazenovia.



The station at New Woodstock looking north.

Engine 524 is a 4-4-0 high wheeled former Ithaca & Athens locomotive that served its successor the Geneva, Ithaca & Sayre Railroad and was later rebuilt at Sayre Shops after the Lehigh Valley acquired the property.

Almost 15 minutes later, Train 524 arrives with a dozen cars. We watch as their crew loads 51 cans and 17 cases of milk and departs south. Our crew sets off 3 box cars: one each at the local feed mill, lumber yard and team track. This involves traveling a short distance over the former New York & Oswego Midland Railroad's tracks in order to reach customer sidings originally served by the now defunct railroad company. Finally, our trainmen unload several pieces of LCL freight. DeRuyter is a village steeped in railroad history. First served by the NY&OM in 1870, it eventually had two enginehouses: one for the NY&OM and one for the CC&D and UI&E. Shortly after the NY&OM abandoned its tracks in 1882, the company entered receivership and reemerged as the New York, Ontario & Western Railroad.

One hour after arriving, Train 523 heads north climbing toward the railroad's summit at an elevation of 1,390 feet just beyond Sheds Cor-

ners station. Our speed drops to about 15 miles per hour as we climb the final portion of the grade. We stop for just a moment at the unique style station situated in a distinctly rural area. The summit, almost 1,000 feet above Canastota, is the watershed between waters flowing north toward the Mohawk Valley, Erie Canal and Lake Ontario and flowing south through Cortland, Binghamton and then via the Susquehanna River through Pennsylvania and Delaware to the Atlantic Ocean. The land area is deceiving because it is relatively flat.

Our train is moving at 10:04 minutes before we arrive at New Woodstock (home to some 650 or so people), a bustling village with a milk processing plant and a variety of online freight customers including a feed mill, lumber yard, coal yard and cheese plant. We have no cars to set off today. We're moving again at 10:17 headed on a slight incline to Delphi, a hamlet of some 300 souls where we stop briefly. This station is situated midway between the communities of Delphi and Union in rich dairy farming land. It too has a milk processing plant and coal yard.

Next stop is Rippleton, less than two miles south of the village of Cazenovia and the loca-

CORTLAND TO CAMDEN



Rippleton Station with building in the northwest quadrant of the crossing. The Elmira and Cortland Branch track runs from lower left toward Cazenovia.



View of the second passenger station at Cazenovia, rebuilt without a covered shed about 1894. The freight station is at the right.

tion where the EC&N's predecessor company, the CC&D, first crossed the main track of the Syracuse & Chenango Valley Railroad. The latter company built a line from Syracuse past the west side of Cazenovia Lake on its way in a southeasterly direction to Earlville where it connected with the New York & Oswego Midland Railroad mainline. It opened for business in 1872 and was eventually absorbed into the West Shore Railroad which had become part of the New York Central Railroad System.

Since the S&CV laid its tracks through this area first, the CC&D was responsible for building the railroad diamond crossing, maintaining the diamond and providing a telegraph operator to control operations over the grade crossing. Our train makes its mandatory stop before the crossing, receives the appropriate proceed indication from the operator, pauses for a moment at the tiny station and platform and accelerates toward the village of Cazenovia, home to 2,000 residents and a new opera house. In just a couple of moments, we're entering the village outskirts, cross the Cherry Valley Turnpike, and stop at the south end of the passing track. Our headend

brakeman lines the switch for the passing siding and we pull in the clear and up to the passenger station at 10:50. Train 523 is being overtaken by Train 147 which is due at 11. Our crew has a half hour's switching to do leaving box cars at the freight house and feed mill.

We note that the Cazenovia passenger station is not the original closed shed-type building built in 1870 by the Cazenovia & Canastota Railroad to protect its passengers from the winter weather. Instead, it is a modest-looking facility rebuilt by the EC&N management about 1894 much to the disappointment of some local citizenry. The local newspaper lamented that it could not be distinguished from stations found on the New York Central Railroad. Cazenovia was the headquarters and southern terminus of the Cazenovia & Canastota Railroad from 1870 until 1878 and afterwards the Cazenovia, Canastota & DeRuyter Railroad. The companies were a source of pride for the community and its local owners in early years but were a great disappointment after the properties were acquired by British investors in 1878.

The northbound morning passenger train

CORTLAND TO CAMDEN



The Cottons station, an unattended flag stop, looking toward Clockville.

arrives at 11 and departs at 11:03. It consists of two headend cars and a coach led by 4-4-0 Engine 906, formerly UI&E second Engine 8, later EC&N Engine 6, and rebuilt in 1895 before becoming part of the Lehigh Valley fleet. We leave Cazenovia at 11:17 and pass the original Cazenovia & Canastota Railroad enginehouse that was used by the Lehigh Valley until last year. We're soon following the winding Chittenango Creek in a narrow gorge with the railroad having fifteen curves ranging up to 15 degrees in about 2 1/2 miles down a 150-foot drop in elevation. This stretch of railroad is frequently affected by high creek levels. (See the map in chapter 3.)

The track becomes almost level for a mile between flag stops at Bingley and Chittenango Falls, then turns away from the Chittenango Creek gorge. The train begins a mile and a half, 100-foot climb encountering two 10 degree curves before reaching the summit at Mats Siding. We're at an elevation of 1,153 feet and the beginning of the nine-mile grade down to the floor of the Mohawk Valley in Canastota, elevation 430 feet. The siding is used by freight trains to set off cars when they have excessive tonnage and must leave half their train partly up the grade and double the hill to the summit.

Our train arrives at Blakeslee station at 11:50, a mile and a half and 109 feet below the summit. Our crew sets up retainers on our train of 11 loads, 2 empties and 1 combine to provide extra braking on the steep eight-mile down-grade to Canastota. This small hamlet was named after the Blakeslee family, some of the earliest settlers in the area. It was originally named Perryville for the nearby larger hamlet having a population of almost 300 people. The station is located near a very sharp 14-degree left hand curve close to the top of Perryville Falls. The Canaseraga Creek provides water power for grist and lumber mills.

Train 523 is moving again at 11:55 with the Canaseraga Gorge to our left and a steep hillside to our right. We pass a large quarry and encounter the first of fourteen curves including several 8-, 9-, 10- and 11-degree curves in deep cuts. The track turns from a northwest to due-east direction. We are high above the Mohawk Valley and have a great bird's-eye view of the valley and Oneida Lake far off to our left. The tracks have dropped 310 feet in four miles on a 1.5 to 2% grade. This is the area where the right of way is exposed to high winds and lake-effect drifting snow that makes winter operations especially difficult. We can only imagine what it was like for brakemen in the years of link and pin couplers and before installation of Westinghouse air brakes on each car. Brakemen were required to ride the tops of freight cars and control the speed of trains by hand.

We've reached a one-mile-long straight stretch of track passing flag stops at Cottons and Clockville. Next, the track turns sharply left to a northerly direction and our final three-mile descent along Canastota Creek to the village of Canastota. In this stretch of winding track, we drop 260 feet on a roughly 2% grade and encounter thirteen curves including, among others, 3 very sharp 11-degree, 2 12-degree and two extremely sharp 15-degree curves. Our engineer

CORTLAND TO CAMDEN

TOP: The Canastota Union Station in 1917, with a New York Central RR track in the foreground and the LV Elmira and Cortland Branch in front of the men. The West Shore Railroad track passes behind the station.

CENTER: Looking in a southwesterly direction from the New York Central mainline in Canastota, with the Lehigh Valley track curving to the left and crossing the West Shore Railroad single-track mainline past an interlocking tower.

BOTTOM: Canastota looking east along Lehigh Valley track on right and NYC mainline on left with Union Station in background



has held the train's speed to the maximum authorized 20 miles per hour and brought us safely down this treacherous grade from Blakeslee. Not all trains are so fortunate.

The time is 12:15 as we finally reach the level Mohawk Valley, cross the Seneca Turnpike and pass the railroad's roundhouse, turntable, freight yard and station. Our train slows for the West Shore Railroad crossing then turns from north to east on a 19-degree curve and arrives at the Canastota Union Station with the station building on our right and New York Central Railroad tracks to our left. This is the final stop for Train 523.

The Seneca Turnpike, like the Cherry Valley Turnpike, was once a busy toll road built by private interests at the beginning of the nineteenth century to provide a thoroughfare for settlers heading west in covered wagons, drovers bringing cattle, horses and sheep east to markets as well as horse-drawn stagecoaches and wagons of all types. The toll roads were owned and maintained by local businessmen who staffed the toll gates along the route and charged a fee to open the gates for passage. They lost their traffic and income during the second quarter of the nineteenth cen-



CORTLAND TO CAMDEN



Second Sylvan Beach mainline station built after reconstruction of the Wood River bridge in 1907.



McConnellsville is one of the busiest stations on the Camden extension; the community is also served by the New York Central Railroad's Rome-Richland Branch.



The Lehigh Valley's modest station at Camden; the branch line's rails end in front of the station. The New York Central main track is behind the photographer.

tury with the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 and inauguration of railroad service along the Mohawk Valley.

We have plenty of time to walk north along Peterboro Street, cross the Erie Canal and have lunch before returning to the station to catch Train 147 when it resumes its trip to Camden shortly after 2:30. Canastota is a village of about 2,800 residents located along the Mohawk Valley, 127 miles west of Albany, 21 miles east of Syracuse and 167 miles east of Buffalo, New York.

The large Canastota Union Station once served three railroads: the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad, controlled by the Vanderbilt family, which opened for service as the Syracuse & Utica Railroad in 1839; the Cazenovia, Canastota & DeRuyter Railroad which opened in 1870 as the Cazenovia & Canastota Railroad; and the New York, West Shore & Buffalo Railway which began service about 1880. The latter railroad was built by Pennsylvania Railroad interests to parallel and compete with the NYC&HR. After the Vanderbilt family began building a paralleling and competing railroad across the state of Pennsylvania, a truce was arranged between the two rival companies, the New York Central interests acquired the so-called West Shore line and stopped construction in Pennsylvania.

At 2:30, we board the afternoon Canastota to Camden train for a 20-mile trip to the north end of the 140-mile Elmira and Cortland Branch. This is the continuation of Train 147 from Elmira and will be led again by Engine 906. It has 8 loads, 5 empties, one headend car and one coach. The

CORTLAND TO CAMDEN

crew includes Conductor Coe and Engineer Barlow. The conductor and trainmen left Elmira this morning at 7:45 and should be back tonight about 11. The engineer and fireman relieved the Elmira engine crew at Cortland at 11 a.m. and should return there about 8:20.

Train 147 leaves the Union Station at 2:38 heading east paralleling the New York Central mainline and the Erie Canal for a quarter mile. Between the railroad and canal is the large coal trestle built to empty coal from railroad cars to canal boats. This large unloading dock was built in 1885 and 1886 by the Corbin administration to facilitate movement of coal from Pennsylvania mines to consumers along the canal and points on connecting waterways.

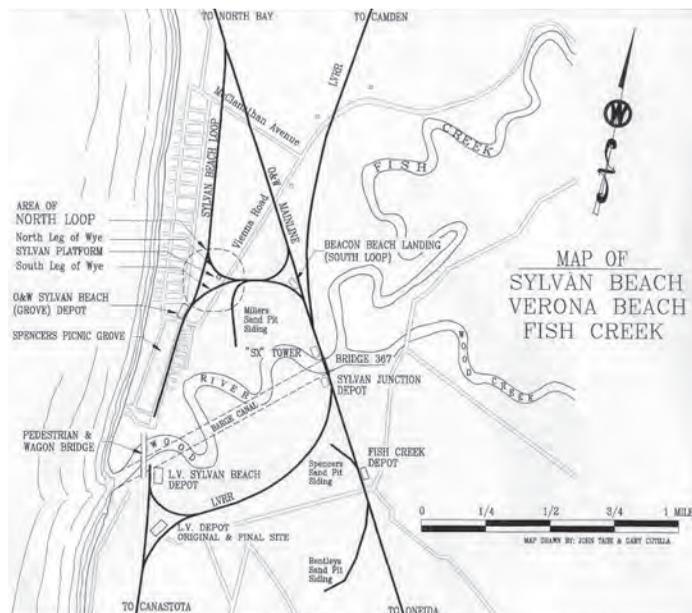
The E&C main track curves left from east to north, crosses the canal on a high bridge and continues straight across flatlands toward our next stop, South Bay. The Lehigh Valley maintains a station here for this small community situated near the southeast corner of Oneida Lake. We stop there briefly and leave at 3 in a northeasterly direction and soon pass the Sylvan Beach wye and stop at Sylvan Junction at 3:18. Sylvan Beach is the very popular summer resort on Oneida Lake that attracts thousands of summer visitors and vacationers. The Lehigh Valley line reaches its Sylvan Beach Station, which is situated on the tail end of a wye track. Passengers cross a bridge over the Wood River to reach the Sylvan Beach area.

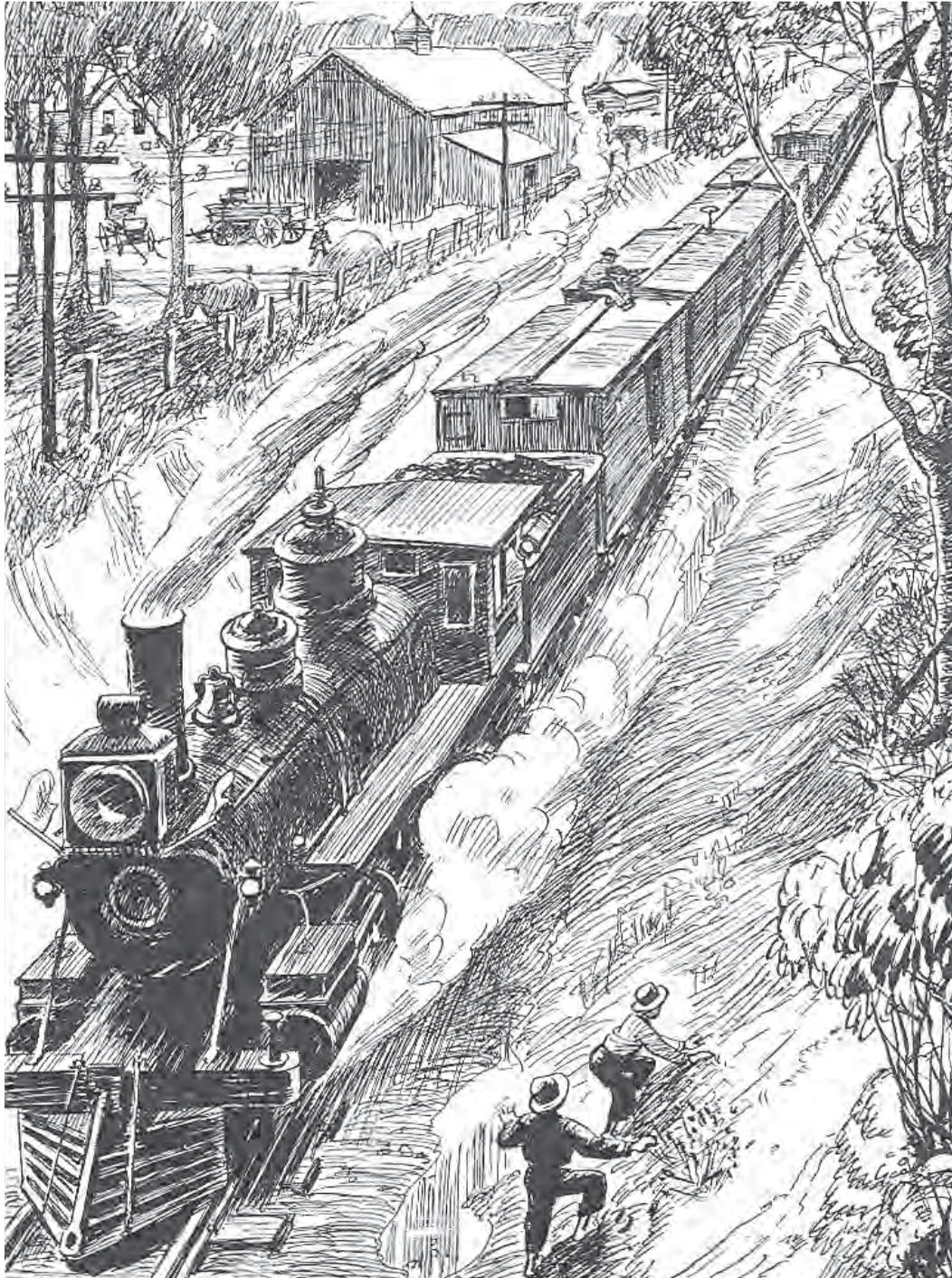
Sylvan Junction station is located at the southern end of the Wood River bridge, a point where the Lehigh Valley and New York, Ontario & Western Railroad main tracks cross the river with a crossing diamond in the center of the bridge. Just south of the bridge is a siding used as an interchange track between the two railroads. The several switches and signals protecting the junction and bridge are controlled

by the Lehigh Valley Sylvan Junction agent-telegrapher-towerman.

Train 147 sets off 5 loads and 3 empties on the interchange track for the NYO&W. We leave Sylvan Junction at 3:40, stop briefly at Vienna (population 179), arrive at McConnellsville (population 127) at 4 and leave at 4:05. As we approach Camden (population about 1,900) we see the former Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburg Railroad main track paralleling us on the right. We enter the outskirts of our final destination passing the LV enginehouse, turntable, and run-around track on our left. Train 147 arrives at the station at 4:20 with 3 loads, 2 empties, 1 headend car and coach.

After we leave the locomotive and enter the small station, the crew quickly backs the train out of the station and sets the freight cars over on the New York Central interchange track. The crew turns the locomotive on the turntable, and returns with the two-car consist ready to leave for Elmira. We climb aboard the coach and settle down for a relaxing trip home. At 4:40, Train 148, with Engine 906 in the lead, departs Camden for points south.





Before the 1890s, train engineers relied on brakemen to control the speed of their trains. Most passenger train equipment was equipped with air brakes. After that, railroads were required to install Westinghouse air brakes on all rolling stock to be controlled by engineers from their cabs. *From Railroad Magazine in the 1930's.*

RAILROADERS AND SAFETY

From the outset, the new railroads' managers had no trouble hiring the workforces needed to operate the trains, staff the stations and maintain the equipment and facilities. Many a man and even some women left their jobs to become part of this new industry. The opportunity to receive a regular paycheck appealed to thousands of people across the country.

Railroading became an exciting new profession even though the hours were long and work hazardous, particularly for those in train and engine service. Many a new railroad employee felt fortunate to have a steady job. Once a young man had a steady railroad job, he could get married and begin to raise a family. His family's well-being depended on his paycheck. With the growth of the railroad industry from its infancy in 1830 to the end of the nineteenth century, there developed a wide spectrum of issues in the relationships between employees and managements. The most prominent were safety on the job, collective bargaining, length of the work day, and rates of pay.

SAFETY

Through the 1860's, 1870's and 1880's, the public became increasingly aware of the dangers of railroad travel and operations. In the West, passenger trains were frequently attacked by Indian tribes resentful of the coming of the railroads into their territories. Jesse James and other roving gangs frequently robbed trains. Passengers and crewmen were often left wounded or dead.

In the East, there were numerous railroad accidents resulting in loss of life and injuries because of defective equipment, tracks and bridges and/or employee carelessness. Yet the greatest harm came to train and engine crews because of the continued use of link and pin couplers and lack of proper braking systems. Brakemen were required to stand between cars while they were being coupled. Thousands of brakemen lost fingers, hands, arms, legs or their lives particularly during inclement weather and hours of darkness.

Brakemen were required to ride on tops of freight cars and climb from car to car to apply brakes because engineers had little control over their trains. Hundreds of brakemen were fatally injured when they lost their footing on slippery tops of cars or were struck by overhead structures or objects. Others were severely injured or crushed to death standing between cars while trying to complete the coupling process. By 1890, the unions claimed that 70 percent of train service employees could expect injury or death within five years. Subsequent published statistics indicated that an average of one in ten enginemen and trainmen was injured or killed each year from 1890 through 1900.

The EC&N's injury and fatality rates varied from year to year, and were especially high between 1885 and 1891 when 13 employees died and 84 were injured. The accident rates on the EC&N improved in the four-year period 1892 through 1895 when only 3 died and 14 were injured. Most of the casualties were employees working in train and engine service like

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those involved in the Swartwood Hill accident. Among those injured was Conductor Thomas Lynch who fell to the ground from the top of a box car in McConnellsville after a brake wheel broke and he lost his balance. His skull was fractured when he struck the ground. Trainman M. T. Perry was seriously injured while working in freight service. His arm was caught between two malfunctioning couplers during a switching move in DeRuyter.

Beginning about 1860, manufacturers, railroad companies and some independent inventors began trying to develop an effective and reliable braking system that could be controlled by locomotive engineers. Others began trying to invent a standard coupler that could be installed

on all rolling stock. The Master Car Builders' Association took an active role in testing new systems. Extensive tests were carried out.

The nation's railroad managers and owners were less than supportive of these efforts and many completely opposed, claiming that the cost of reequipping all the railroads' rolling stock would be prohibitive. By the early 1890's, there were over a million freight and passenger cars and over 30,000 locomotives in service on the nation's railroads that would have to be reequipped.

After a great struggle in Congress, the Safety Appliance Act was enacted on February 27, 1893 prescribing use of the Westinghouse Air Brake System and the Janney Automatic Coupler.



Crew of passenger train 324 at Freeville about 1904.

Yard engine crew with Engine 592, a Camelback 2-8-0, at Canastota in the early 1900's: from left, Bud Fisher, Ed Rounds, Leonard Smith, Doc Hunt, and Mart Mahon.

The railroads were given seven years to fully equip their rolling stock. In spite of their previous resistance to the legislation, railroads began installing the new air brake system and automatic couplers well before February 1893. By mid-year, eighty percent of all locomotives and over 20 percent of all cars were properly equipped. Seven years later on June 30, 1900, practically all locomotives and nearly all cars were equipped with the standard air brake and coupler equipment.

While the national rate of trainman injuries and deaths declined as a result of the introduction of standard automatic couplers and trainline braking systems, the growth of train lengths and train speeds together with the increasing number of trains on individual rail routes posed new safety problems. National statistics indicated that the rate of injuries to train and enginemen was almost the same in 1900 as in 1890. The railroads had taken advantage of the new braking systems and stronger and more efficient couplers to operate longer, heavier and faster trains. The lack of signaling systems on most railroad lines, growing congestion, faster trains, and more heavily laden cars produced a growing accident rate. More derailments occurred because some tracks and bridges had not been upgraded to carry the heavier locomotives and cars.

By 1910, the accident rate per engine and



train crew member was 30 percent higher than in 1890 or 1900. On average, personnel operating trains could expect to be injured once every eight years. During this period, the Interstate Commerce Commission began investigating accidents and imposing safety rules particularly with regard to signaling and train speeds. The railroads established new rules involving dispatching and control of trains and installed heavier rail and stronger bridges.

One step towards greater rail safety was taken by Congress in 1907 with the passage of the Hours of Service Act. Prior to this, there was no limit to the hours train and engine crews might be expected to spend on duty before getting rest. It was not unusual for crews to be on duty for as many as twenty-four hours without rest, especially during severe weather conditions. Employee fatigue and exhaustion were contributing factors in the alarming accident rate. The issue was resolved when Congress passed the Hours of Service Act which limited the work

day to sixteen hours and required eight hours rest before work could be resumed. Dispatchers and telegraphers were limited to a nine hour day except telegraphers could be expected to be on duty up to twelve hours at one-man locations.

COMPENSATION FOR INJURIES

For decades in the nineteenth century, railroad employees injured on the job had no assurance that they would be compensated for injuries or time lost because of their injuries nor would their survivors in case of death receive any compensation. Under the circumstance of an employee's death or total disability, some railroad unions established lump sum payments, \$1,000 for example, to the severely injured party or to his or her survivor. Railroads assumed little if any responsibility, arguing that the employees automatically accepted the risks of employment when hired.

Congress enacted the Federal Employers Liability Act in 1908 in response to the great increase in railroad employee injuries and deaths during the preceding years and lack of any procedures to reimburse employees for their injuries, pain and suffering and/or lost time. Survivors would be compensated in the cases of fatally injured employees.

FULL CREW LAWS

On September 1, 1913, New York State enacted the Full Crew Law that required an engineer, fireman, conductor and at least two brakemen on all passenger trains of five cars or more, at least three brakemen on all freight trains of twenty-five cars or more and a baggageman whenever a baggage car was attached to a train. This law was established in recognition of the growing length of passenger and freight trains. On passenger trains, Rule 99 required the rear brakeman serve as flagman to protect the rear



Breesport track section crew in the early 1900s.

of the train when stopped, the baggageman to work in the baggage car and another brakeman (trainman) to help the conductor assisting passengers. On freight trains, one brakeman was required to act as flagman, and two were needed to handle switching and other duties on longer trains.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

There was practically no collective bargaining process in the railroad industry throughout the nineteenth century. Rates of pay, work assignments, hours of work and other aspects of employment were handled arbitrarily by managers. Wage rates were set by management, typically between 1 and 3 dollars per day depending on job classifications. There were few if any constraints upon railroad managers or owners. Workers could be fired without hearings. There was little if any compensation to families left by workers killed on the job. For the typical railroad worker, there was almost no recourse if he or she was injured on the job.

The first railroad union was initially a fra-

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ternal organization, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers organized in 1863. Next came the Order of Railroad Conductors established in 1868. At least a dozen other craft unions were organized in the following decades. Throughout the nineteenth century, railroad employees and the unions that sought to represent them had practically no bargaining power or legal status.

The nation's railroad workers' patience became increasingly tested. Railroad managers resorted to cutting wage rates during difficult financial times to preserve dividend levels. Finally in 1877, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad's reduction in wage rates triggered a strike in Martinsburg, West Virginia that spread to other locations on the B&O, then to other carriers. Police and militia were brought in and there was great loss of life and widespread injuries. After the strike was put down, railroads continued to resort to similar tactics. As new unions and locals

were established, some railroads fired employees who joined unions. One of the most notorious railroad presidents was Austin Corbin.

Meanwhile, employee anger and frustration increased because of railroad managements' failure to recognize the newly established unions and continuing selective reductions in wages. The Lehigh Valley Railroad's President Wilbur refused to recognize or negotiate with the Federated Railway Union. Workers went on strike in late November 1893 and all but closed down the railroad. Strikebreakers were hired but much damage was caused because of their inexperience. The strike ended in about three weeks with the employees unable to obtain recognition of their demands.

Less than a year later, the newly established American Railway Union struck the Pullman Company, manufacturer of sleeping cars, in Pullman, Illinois. The strike, caused by the compa-



Track crews start to work on a washout near Breesport.

ny's reduction in wage rates, provoked railroad workers in nearby Chicago to walk off their jobs in sympathy. Railroad service in Chicago and surrounding communities were severely affected and the delivery of food, coal and other commodities reduced dramatically. Police and militia were brought out. In the end, the strike was a failure but prompted the U. S. Congress to examine the railroads' labor relations problems and lack of a collective bargaining process.

Four years later, Congress enacted The Erdman Act which provided for mediation and voluntary arbitration of disputes and outlawed railroads from firing employees because of their union membership or activity. The law was not effectively utilized for several years and the section of the law preventing employers from firing employees because of their union membership was overturned by the Supreme Court in January 1908. However, the several operating unions, the engineers, firemen, conductors and trainmen began pressing their demands for improved working conditions and rates of pay utilizing the mediation process about 1910 and began to get results in 1912. On July 15, 1913, Congress enacted and the president signed the so-called Newlands Bill that corrected certain deficiencies in the original Erdman Act and established a more effective mediation and arbitration process for resolving railroad labor disputes. This did not eliminate railroad workers' right to strike.

In 1926, Congress enacted the Railway Labor Act to establish procedures for resolving disputes between employees and railroads and to protect the rights of employees to organize and bargain collectively. It prescribed a comprehensive and time-consuming process designed to produce agreements satisfactory to both parties. This would involve negotiations and, if necessary, mediation and cooling-off periods for the purpose of avoiding disruption of railroad service. The act was to be administered by a National Mediation Board.

RATES OF PAY AND THE BASIC DAY

In addition to the important safety and collective bargaining issues were the extremely important unresolved issues of pay rates and length of the basic work day. There was no uniformity among railroads. Generally speaking, most employees worked twelve hours per day, six days per week with Sundays off and no allowances for paid vacations or holidays. While most railroads initially provided no Sunday service, this began to change and train and engine crews were expected to work seven rather than six days per week. Some other operating crafts including telegraphers were also expected to work seven rather than six days.

Railroads typically built their freight yards and crew change points about one-hundred miles apart and a trip from one major yard to another constituted a day's work. Crews that needed more than twelve hours to cover the one hundred miles were paid extra in direct proportion to additional miles traveled or hours consumed but at a straight-time rather than a time and one half rate.

By 1900, individual unions representing train and enginemen were attempting to bargain with separate railroads to establish shorter basic work days. Among the first of the eastern railroads was the Delaware and Hudson which agreed to an eleven hour day in 1904. The Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad granted train and enginemen the ten-hour basic workday in late 1906. Unions representing Erie and other railroad employees continued to pressure managements to gain similar agreements. The Lehigh Valley negotiated separate agreements with the operating brotherhoods in early 1910 establishing the basic ten-hour day and adjusting rates of pay accordingly with no loss in pay. In a number of cases, the unions obtained agreements only after threatening to strike the specific carriers. Separately, other railroads finally agreed to similar conditions.

Not long afterwards, the individual unions began pressing their demands for improved rates of pay and working conditions on a regional basis. In November 1912, the 30,000 locomotive engineers working on the fifty-four eastern United States railroads won a joint uniform minimum wage guarantee from the National Arbitration Board.

Of great importance for all enginemen were the efforts of the firemen's union to obtain a uniform ten hour day and wage rate structure that took into consideration the size of the locomotives and service performed. The workload of the firemen had grown dramatically as the railroads placed in service much larger locomotives. The old 4-4-0's and 4-6-0's of nineteenth century were being replaced by bigger and faster locomotives with six, eight and ten or more driving wheels and larger tenders with greater coal capacity. The number of tons of coal a fireman had to shovel from tender to firebox during a one-hundred mile journey had grown with the size of the locomotives. The original EC&N locomotives (without tenders) weighed about sixty tons as were the newer 4-6-0's that would eventually replace them. The heaviest engines regularly used on the LV Elmira and Cortland

Branch were K-4 Class 4-6-2's that weighed about 130 tons. The newest and heaviest main-line locomotives built in years to follow weighed about 200 tons but were equipped with screw-drives that mechanically moved the coal from tenders to fireboxes.

In April 1913, the Board of Arbitration established uniform wage rates for the same class of service for the 31,000 firemen working on the fifty-four railroads operating in the northeastern portion of the United States. The pay scale increased about a third from the lightest to heaviest locomotives. The engineers' union sought and obtained similar concessions from railroad managements by bargaining on a regional basis.

Three years later, the four major unions sought adoption of an eight-hour basic day with hourly rates increased to offset the fewer hours. Under the threat of a nationwide strike, Congress passed and the president signed a bill that established the eight-hour basic workday as demanded by the unions but continued payment beyond the basic day at a straight rather than a time and one-half basis. This final issue continued to be a serious unresolved problem for many years afterwards.



Train 321 with Engine 907 down the bank of the Tioughnioga River, near the East River station north of Cortland on Feb. 15, 1901. Two employees were injured, no passengers. The tender left the tracks before this point; the tracks were found to be spread after the accident. This view looks west across the river.



Four-way meet at newly built Freeville passenger station about 1911, looking north on the Elmira and Cortland Branch. The Lehigh Valley invested heavily in structures and rolling stock in this period. Passenger traffic and revenue increased in the early 1900's.

THE GOLDEN YEARS, 1900 TO 1924

The first decade of the twentieth century saw many changes on the former EC&N railroad line. The expansion of the coal dock at Canastota for transfer of coal from rail cars to canal boats brought more traffic to the E&C Branch. Former EC&N locomotives were gradually replaced by motive power of Lehigh Valley ancestry. Management began experimenting with train schedules in an effort to attract more passengers. A dedicated milk train service was established between Canastota and Sayre.

On January 1, 1900, the Elmira and Cortland Branch scheduled four trains in each direction between Elmira and Canastota (two first class passenger and two second class mixed or freight trains) with one less second class train initially scheduled in each direction between Van Etten and Freeville. Two trains were scheduled in each direction each weekday north of Canastota including one first class passenger and one second class mixed train.

Total typical weekday service added up to about one thousand train miles and involved eleven regularly assigned road and yard crews. No Sunday service was provided except that the southbound freight from Van Etten to Elmira operated on Sunday morning instead of Monday morning.

Beginning in early 1900, Elmira and Cortland Branch first class trains were renumbered into the 320 and 330 series and second class trains into the 820 series. This system was maintained almost until the demise of scheduled service a half century later.

On May 27, 1900, the schedules were adjusted to have both round trip passenger trains operate between Elmira and Camden and the previously scheduled Camden-Canastota accommodation train round trip eliminated. Sunday service was re-established from Elmira to Sylvan Beach and return.

In December 1902, the Lehigh Valley added a weekday late morning passenger train from Elmira to Auburn via Freeville that connected with a New York Central train to Syracuse and a late afternoon return trip from Auburn with connection from Syracuse that operated through Freeville to Elmira. The Elmira-Auburn direct service lasted for only two months but was a forerunner of changes to come along the E&C branch.

As the year 1902 closed, stockholder pressure culminated in the resignation of Lehigh Valley President Alfred Walter, largely because the company had paid no dividends in several years while profits had been used to upgrade the property and equipment. Eben Thomas was installed as president with the expectation that he would resume dividend payments suspended by his predecessor while continuing to modernize the system.

The February 8, 1903 schedule provided for a dedicated milk train from Canastota to Sayre and return, operating on the Auburn Branch between Freeville and Sayre via Owego. The southbound and northbound trains carried no passengers on weekdays but carried passengers on Sundays between Canastota and Freeville with schedules arranged to connect with

Auburn Branch trains. These trains replaced one southbound and one northbound second-class mixed train that heretofore had operated between Canastota and Freeville.

The Lehigh Valley Railroad issued a new *Book of Rules* in May 1903 with significant changes in rules and responsibilities for operating employees. Some of the changes had no application on the Elmira & Cortland Branch because they related to automatic signal systems, double-track rail lines and other aspects of mainline operations. The duties of brakemen were modified to have them "...take the positions assigned them on the head or rear end of the train...they must attend to the brakes, make couplings, etc..." No longer were they required to spend their workdays and nights riding on the tops of the freight cars in order to control the speed of their trains.

A second train order form was established to facilitate the movement of trains. Form 19 train orders were established that did not require signatures of conductors and engineers. They were copied by telegraphers, read back to the dispatchers and completed by the dispatchers as before. The telegrapher would simply hand copies to the conductor including one for him to deliver to the engineer while the train was stopped or hand them up separately to a passing train's engineer and conductor.

Telegraph operators were provided with wooden hoops to facilitate handing up orders to passing engine and train crews. Train order hoops were eventually modified to consist of a "Y" shaped wooden "hoop" with a string around the "V" and across the top with the folded-up train order attached to the string. Engine- and train-men would take the string and train order and leave the hoop behind.

A typical train order might simply state, for example, "No. Three twenty two 322 meet No. Three Twenty One 321 at Cortland," or another example, "Engine 592 run extra from Cortland

to Canastota." In later years, train order formats were modified to include engine numbers of scheduled trains to facilitate identification of trains at meeting points.

Rules were further defined for movement of trains utilizing a manual block system to prevent the collision of trains operating in opposite directions or following each other. A block was defined as, in effect, the main track between two adjacent open block stations staffed by telegrapher operators. Manual block signals at each station were used to indicate whether the next block was occupied and/or that the telegrapher had a train order to be delivered. Operators in adjacent stations were required to communicate to determine whether their blocks were clear or occupied. The color green eventually replaced white to indicate that the block ahead was clear and there were no train orders for passing trains. The *Book of Rules* no longer provided speed restrictions for trains. They were specified in the divisional employee timetables or special instructions issued by the superintendent.

The 1903 summer schedules brought the elimination of through passenger service north of Camden except for summer service to Sylvan Beach. Henceforth, most schedules provided for two round trips of mixed or passenger trains operating between Camden and Canastota on weekdays. These trains originated in Canastota and resulted in the closing of the Camden enginehouse.

At the same time, the afternoon southbound passenger train was scheduled to leave Canastota before 4 and arrive at Freeville about 6 to meet its northbound counterpart and connect with north and southbound Auburn Branch trains. Schedules were arranged so that passengers originating or terminating at stations between Elmira and Cortland traveling to or from Syracuse and points east along the New York Central Railroad were encouraged to travel via Auburn instead of Canastota.



Cortland Junction tower on left and station building on right at LV-DL&W crossing, taken about 1910. DL&W track is in the immediate foreground; the LV track crosses between tower and station. Railroads exchanged freight cars in Cortland.

In mid-November, 1903, word was received in Cortland that unnamed capitalists had purchased the Erie and Central New York Railroad. By the end of the month, it was apparent that the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad was the buyer. In early February 1904, Cincinnati Branch trains began originating and terminating at the DL&W station in Cortland, entering their main track just south of Cortland Junction. The connection between the Lehigh Valley and the former E&CNY was removed.

An interlocking tower was built at the LV-DL&W crossing to control movements over the crossing, and to and from the DL&W double-track and side track which began just north of the crossing. A northbound advance home signal was installed almost a half-mile south of the crossing to protect movements to and from the Cincinnati Branch and roundhouse lead, which remained hand thrown switches.

Winter weather continued to cause serious operating problems. The winter of 1904 was no exception. Newspapers reported on March 1 that a southbound Elmira and Cortland Branch passenger train was stalled near DeRuyter, was two days overdue and not expected to be freed for another twenty-four hours. Passengers aboard

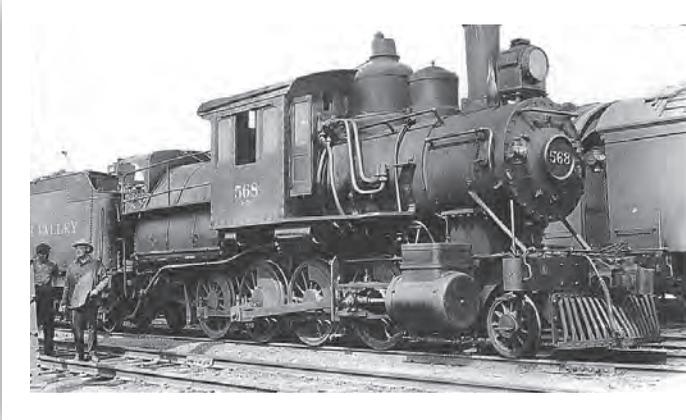
the train were reported to have taken refuge in nearby farm houses. The railroad between DeRuyter and Cortland was buried under drifts up to twelve feet high for a distance of sixteen miles.

Later in 1904 the Lehigh Valley completed the expansion of Sayre Shop facilities which allowed the further concentration of locomotive building and major repair work at that location. This was followed by adoption of a plan to standardize and simplify the locomotive roster. The Lehigh Valley concentrated building and purchase of new locomotives in four types: 4-6-0, 4-6-2, 2-8-2 and 0-8-0. It continued to rebuild some older engines while scrapping many others. The railroad continued its preference for acquiring distinctive camelback-style locomotives, a policy undertaken in the 1880's. These had wide Wooten fireboxes designed to burn anthracite rather than bituminous coal.

In 1905, the railroad began renumbering its locomotives into a uniform numbering system based on wheel arrangements. Thus, former UI&E Engine 8, which became EC&N Engine 6 in 1884, then LV Engine 906 in 1896, became LV Engine 2535 in 1905. Many of the 2500 series 4-4-0 type locomotives which saw service on the Elmira and Cortland Branch were originally from the UI&E, EC&N, Ithaca and Athens or



Engine 2617 at Elmira in 1912 was built as LV Engine 614 at the LV Delano Shops in December 1891, renumbered LV 2617 in 1905 as Class E-30 and scrapped in December 1917.



A vintage 2-8-0 still in use in the 1900's, before the LV replaced the last former EC&N locomotives in 1917.

Geneva, Ithaca and Sayre railroads. Most of the ex-EC&N 4-6-0's were rebuilt at Sayre Shop into 2-6-0's or 0-6-0's and given numbers in the appropriate number ranges.

As time passed, many former EC&N and GI&S locomotives disappeared from the scene and were replaced by 2-8-0 camelback-style and 4-4-0 hand-me-downs from mainline or anthracite mining country service. By 1912, nearly all the ex-EC&N power had been scrapped.

Also in 1905, a daily except Sunday freight train service was established to operate from Sayre through Van Etten to Cortland and return. Train 825 was scheduled to leave Sayre about 10:30 a.m., Van Etten at 11 a.m. and arrive at Cortland at 3 p.m. The crew would return as Train 826 leaving Cortland at 8 p.m., arriving at Van Etten at 11 p.m. and Sayre at 11:30 p.m.

Later that year, Lehigh Valley and NYO&W officials met to discuss plans for a new bridge over the Wood River at Sylvan Junction. New York State officials had developed engineering plans to widen and realign the Wood River to accommodate barges and make it part of the Erie Canal system leading to Oneida Lake. The project involved building and installing a longer single track bridge to replace the old one that had separate LV and NYO&W tracks crossing

in the center of the bridge. The extensive construction project was to be paid for entirely by New York State. It required raising the level of the bridge and both railroads' approach tracks. Furthermore, it provided for a new interlocking tower and signal system to control train movements through the area. The massive project was undertaken in 1906 and completed in 1907. John Taibi and A. Bruce Tracy's fine book *When the Railroads Went to the Beach* describes the work in great detail, together with NYO&W and Lehigh Valley operations in the area. It also provides a complete history of the EC&N/LV operations between Canastota and Camden



Newly built Van Etten tower about 1907. Engine 1394 is on the Elmira and Cortland Branch facing north.

from its construction in 1886 until its demise in 1938. The realignment of the Erie/New York State Barge Canal route through this area was a forerunner of the eventual downgrading of the original canal route through Canastota. Years later, the Lehigh Valley's coal dock in Canastota would be abandoned and coal traffic diverted to an all-rail routing.

The telegrapher's position at Park Station was permanently eliminated in 1907. The station, actually a small shack, continued as a flag stop. Tickets were sold at the nearby Beckwith Inn, a popular resort.

Toward the end of the first decade, it became apparent that the station arrangement at Freeville was inadequate for the growing number of passengers transferring at the twice a day meeting of four passenger trains. The two original railroads, the Southern Central and the Ithaca and Cortland had built adjacent passenger stations in the southwest quadrant of the crossing about 1870. A single large station was opened by the Lehigh Valley on January 31, 1910 in the northeast quadrant with ample space both inside and outside the building to accommodate the twice daily influx of passengers changing trains. The new station had a large waiting room, restaurant, agent and telegraphers' office, baggage and express rooms and modern facilities including steam heat and running water with separate toilets for men and women. A freight station and transfer facility was located in the southeast quadrant of the crossing.

The meeting of the four trains took place between 9:15 and 9:40 each weekday morning and between 6:10 and 6:35 early each weekday evening with each train scheduled to be in the station area for about fifteen minutes. The phys-

ical transfer of baggage, express and mail was accomplished using locally based section workers. There was a large open space between the tracks of each branch line that provided ample space for movement of passengers, baggage, express and mail from one train to another and to and from the station. It was not a particularly comfortable place to change trains during times of rain, wind, snow and/or cold weather.

Freeville had become a very busy railroad town with over two dozen trains passing over the diamond crossings between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Employees familiar with the operations said it was not unusual to have seven trains including freights at Freeville at the same time.

Operations on the Cortland-Elmira section of the Elmira and Cortland Branch were typically conducted around the clock with night freight trains originating at Cortland and Elmira together with the milk train returning from Sayre to Cortland. Business on the northern end was normally completed by midnight and the sounds of train whistles were usually not heard until sunrise. Only an occasional extra freight train was operated in the early morning hours.

Up in Canastota, the residents were used to hearing the sound of trains on the New York Central mainline throughout the night but only infrequently on the Lehigh Valley. However, about 5:30 a.m. on June 10, 1910, the residents did hear the sound of an approaching Lehigh Valley train. It was Extra 605 coming down the hill with twenty-nine loaded cars in charge of Conductor Fred Redmore and Engineer C. D. Davidson.

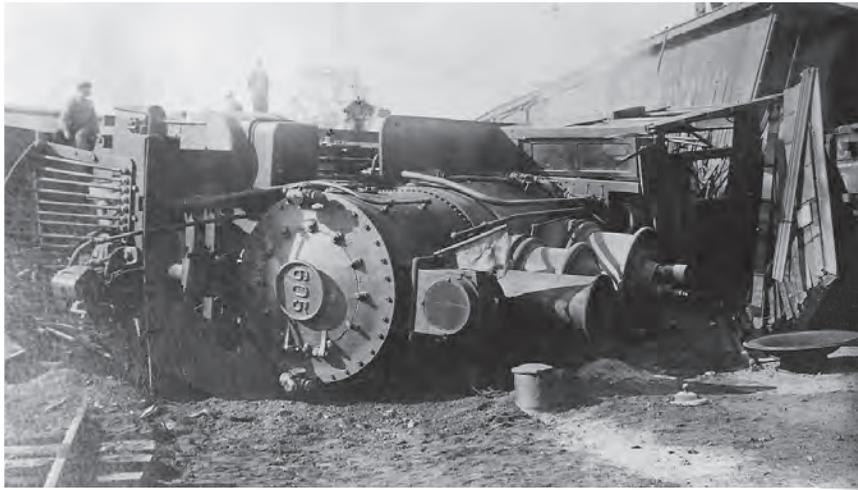
The residents in the south part of the village heard what they later described as the continued unearthly whistling of the locomotive. Many thought it was for a fire alarm. In reality, it was a runaway train coming down the hill from Clockville. As reported in the *Canastota Bee* on June 11, "Heroic efforts were made by the train crew to stop the train but there was a slight frost on



Engine 2644, a Class E-37 4-4-0, seen at Cortland about 1915, was built at LV Shops in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, in 1892 as LV Engine 644, rebuilt in 1916 and scrapped in 1924.

LEFT: Engine rests after striking the heavy duty derail that protects tracks of the West Shore Railroad at Canastota from Elmira and Cortland Branch trains. The locomotive had led a runaway Lehigh Valley coal train down the steep grade from Perryville in June 1910.

BELOW: New Cortland passenger station built in 1910 along with a new freight house, and new quarters for repairing cars at the roundhouse on Owego St.



the rails and when the wheels started slipping it was difficult to stop the momentum of the train with all brakes set. After blowing for brakes, Engineer Davidson, when he saw it was impossible to hold the train, blew for the signal to cross the West Shore. When the train reached the yard the speed was not more than fifteen miles per hour and the crew said that if they had been permitted to cross the West Shore that the train could have been stopped before reaching the trestle over the New York Central mainline and the Erie Canal. When the men on the train saw the signal set against them and were certain of derailment they jumped and all escaped in safety.

“The train, just before reaching the West Shore crossing, was thrown from the track by the heavy derail which was set against the train. The Mother-Hubbard-style (camelback) engine was thrown over towards the west, landing against freight cars standing on the siding and eleven of the cars in the train were badly wrecked. The New York Central’s wrecking train from Utica was brought to Canastota and in twenty-four hours had the wreck practically cleaned up.”

The Lehigh Valley made substantial changes in Cortland facilities beginning in 1910. The original combination passenger-freight station was removed and replaced by separate passenger and freight stations. The car shops were dismantled and new quarters for car repair work were built adjacent to the roundhouse. A new two-story freight house was constructed in the vicinity of the old car shops which were situated on the geographically north side of the main tracks.

Major schedule changes were introduced in 1910 which would remain in effect for two decades. A new weekday passenger train service was introduced through Freeville that provided a coordinated southbound passenger schedule from Auburn to East Ithaca with change at Freeville about noon and northbound from East Ithaca to Auburn with change at Freeville

about an hour later. This involved the addition of a new southbound passenger Train 332 leaving Cortland at 11:30 a.m. for East Ithaca and northbound Train 331 leaving East Ithaca at 12:35 p.m. for Cortland. These schedules were coordinated with Auburn Branch trains 286 and 287 which in turn provided connecting service with New York Central trains operating between Auburn and Syracuse.

A new arrangement of milk train schedules and routing as well as train and engine crew assignments was established. Three Cortland based crews worked a three-day cycle beginning and ending at Cortland. Each morning, a crew left Cortland for Camden about daybreak as Train 323 delivering empty milk cars and cans to milk processing plants. At Canastota, Train 323 became the first of two daily mixed trains headed for Camden. About 10:15, the crew departed Camden southbound for Canastota as Train 830, a second-class mixed train arriving at Canastota about an hour later picking up freight cars along the way to be delivered to the New York Central at Canastota or handed over to the daily except Sunday freight train crew upon its arrival about noon-time from Cortland.

The milk train crew left Canastota northbound in mid-afternoon as Train 829 as a second-class mixed train dropping off passengers, baggage, freight cars and LCL freight at the various stations enroute plus delivering freight cars to the New York, Ontario and Western Railroad at Sylvan Junction and the New York Central Railroad (former RW&O line) at

Lehigh Valley Railroad

AUBURN DIVISION.

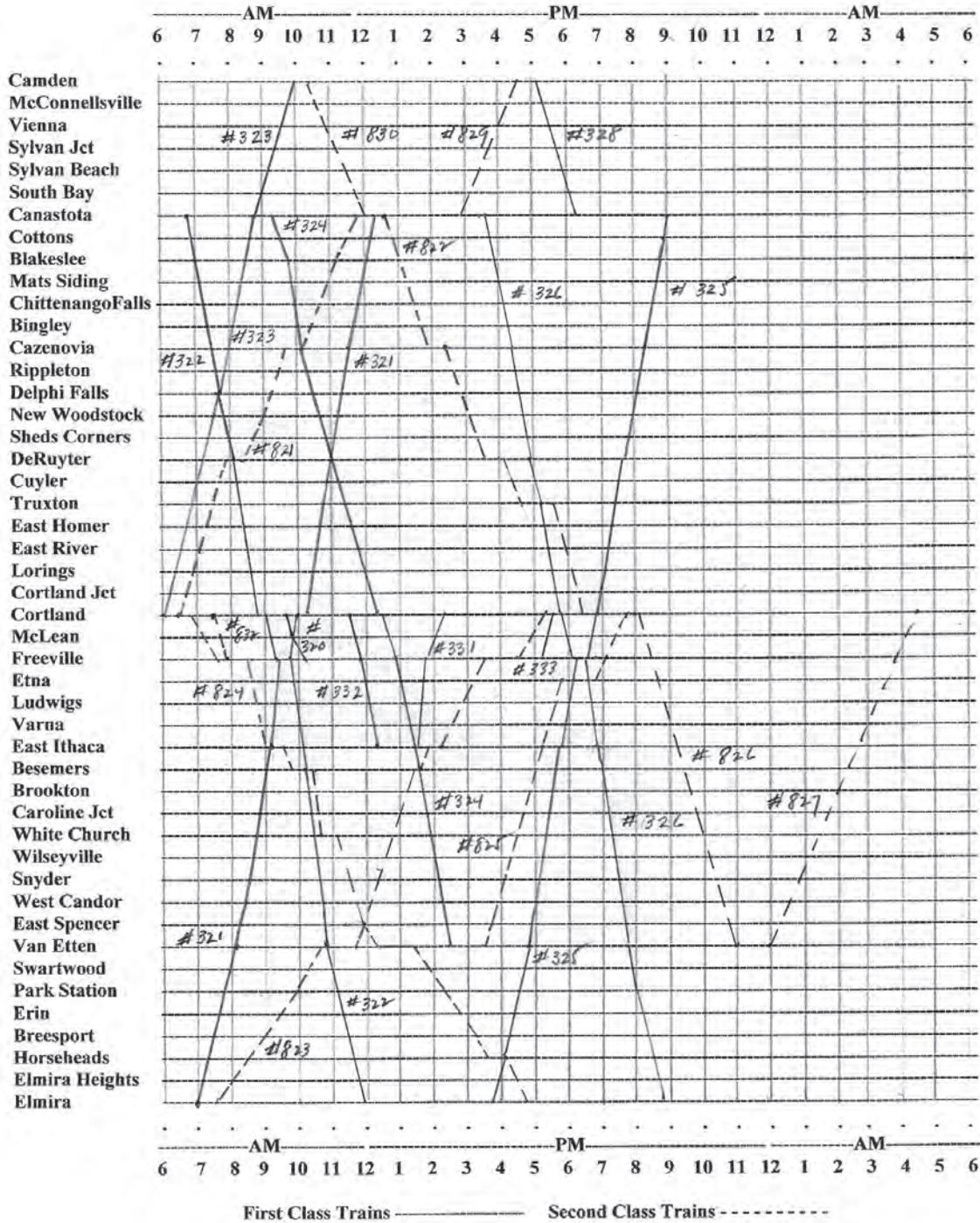
Sundays		Eastward Week-days				Miles	STATIONS.	Westward Week-days				Sundays	
286	287	286	287	288	289			281	287	288	283	291	293
AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM			AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
7 50	8 00	3 35	3 40	7 50	8 00	0	North Fair Haven	12 10	6 55			8 30	8 30
8 06	8 14	3 45	3 52	8 06	8 14	1.9	FALL HAVEN	12 05	6 50			8 25	8 20
8 22	8 32	3 52	4 02	8 24	8 32	5.7	Sterling	12 01	6 45			8 20	8 14
8 41	8 51	4 02	4 08	8 32	8 41	10.1	Martville	11 55	6 38			8 07	8 00
8 59	9 09	4 08	4 18	8 41	8 51	14.0	Ira	11 47	6 32			7 51	7 44
9 15	9 25	4 18	4 28	8 51	9 01	18.5	Cato	11 40	6 25			7 37	7 30
		4 28	4 38	9 01	9 11	22.9	Brick Church	11 31	6 18			7 24	7 17
		4 38	4 48	9 11	9 21	28.0	WEDSPORT	11 24	6 09			7 03	6 56
		4 48	4 58	9 21	9 31	31.4	Throop	11 12	6 00			6 42	6 35
		4 58	5 08	9 31	9 41	34.8	AUBURN Lv.	11 00	5 54			6 30	6 23
		5 08	5 18	9 41	9 51	38.2	Lv. SYRACUSE N.Y.C.A.R.	1 00	5 45	8 45	1 00	10 50	10 43
5 20	5 30	5 00	5 10	9 51	10 01	41.3	AUBURN Ar.	10 54	5 36	7 30	1 00	11 35	11 28
5 35	5 45	5 15	5 25	10 01	10 11	44.7	Owasco Lake	10 40	5 27	7 17	11 21	11 14	11 07
5 49	5 59	5 25	5 35	10 11	10 21	48.1	Essence	10 32	5 17	7 10	11 13	11 06	10 59
6 03	6 13	5 35	5 45	10 21	10 31	51.5	Cascade	10 24	5 08	7 02	11 05	10 98	10 91
6 17	6 27	5 45	5 55	10 31	10 41	54.9	Moravia	10 17	4 59	6 55	10 57	10 50	10 43
6 31	6 41	5 55	6 05	10 41	10 51	58.3	Locke	10 10	4 50	6 45	10 50	10 43	10 36
6 45	6 55	6 05	6 15	10 51	11 01	61.7	Groton	9 55	4 41	6 32	10 34	10 27	10 20
6 59	7 09	6 15	6 25	11 01	11 11	65.1	Denota	9 47	4 32	6 23	10 27	10 20	10 13
7 13	7 23	6 25	6 35	11 11	11 21	68.5	Ar. FREEVILLE (Lv. George J. Republic) Ar.	9 40	4 23	6 10	10 22	10 15	10 08
7 27	7 37	6 35	6 45	11 21	11 31	71.9	Ar. ELMIRA Lv.	9 30	4 14	6 00	10 22	10 15	10 08
7 41	7 51	6 45	6 55	11 31	11 41	75.3	Dryden	9 20	4 05	5 50	10 15	10 08	10 01
7 55	8 05	6 55	7 05	11 41	11 51	78.7	North Harford	9 11	3 56	5 41	10 07	10 00	9 53
8 09	8 19	7 05	7 15	11 51	12 01	82.1	Mills	9 02	3 47	5 32	9 59	9 52	9 45
8 23	8 33	7 15	7 25	12 01	12 11	85.5	Berkshire	8 54	3 38	5 23	9 50	9 43	9 36
8 37	8 47	7 25	7 35	12 11	12 21	88.9	Newark Valley	8 46	3 29	5 14	9 42	9 35	9 28
8 51	9 01	7 35	7 45	12 21	12 31	92.3	Flemingville	8 38	3 20	5 05	9 30	9 23	9 16
9 05	9 15	7 45	7 55	12 31	12 41	95.7	O WEGO	8 30	3 11	4 56	9 22	9 15	9 08
9 19	9 29	7 55	8 05	12 41	12 51	99.1	Tioga Centre	8 22	3 02	4 47	9 14	9 07	9 00
9 33	9 43	8 05	8 15	12 51	1 01	102.5	Smithboro	8 14	2 53	4 38	9 06	8 59	8 52
9 47	9 57	8 15	8 25	1 01	1 11	105.9	Barton	8 06	2 44	4 29	8 58	8 51	8 44
10 01	10 11	8 25	8 35	1 11	1 21	109.3	SAYRE Lv.	7 58	2 35	4 10	8 30	8 23	8 16
10 15	10 25	8 35	8 45	1 21	1 31	112.7		7 50	2 26	4 01	8 20	8 13	8 06

AUBURN DIVISION—ELMIRA AND CORTLAND BRANCH.

Sundays		Southward Week-days				Miles	STATIONS.	Northward Week-days				Sundays	
330	331	332	333	334	335			333	331	332	331	325	330
AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM			AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
		5 10	5 25	10 25	10 40	0	Lv. CAMDEN Ar.	9 58	4 30				
		5 25	5 38	10 45	11 00	5.2	McConnellsville	9 45	4 13				
		5 38	5 51	11 00	11 15	8.2	Vienna	9 37	4 01				
		5 44	5 57	11 22	11 37	12.0	Sylvan Junction	9 25	3 49				
		5 50	6 03	11 37	11 52	13.9	Sylvan Beach	9 19	3 38				
		5 54	6 07	11 43	11 58	14.9	Oneida Creek	9 16	3 28				
		6 15	6 28	12 03	12 18	20.8	South Bay	9 08	3 08				
7 50	7 58	6 40	6 48	12 18	12 26	26.8	Ar. Canastota Lv.	8 56	2 58	8 55	5 55	8 55	5 55
8 04	8 12	6 54	7 02	12 32	12 40	32.8	Lv. Canastota Ar.	8 45	2 47	8 45	5 45	8 45	5 45
8 18	8 26	7 08	7 16	12 46	12 54	38.8	Clockville	8 35	2 36	8 35	5 35	8 35	5 35
8 32	8 40	7 22	7 30	1 00	1 08	44.8	Cottons	8 25	2 25	8 25	5 25	8 25	5 25
8 46	8 54	7 36	7 44	1 14	1 22	50.8	Blakeslee	8 15	2 15	8 15	5 15	8 15	5 15
8 59	9 07	7 49	7 57	1 28	1 36	56.8	Chittenango Falls	8 05	2 05	8 05	5 05	8 05	5 05
9 13	9 21	7 53	8 01	1 42	1 50	62.8	Casenovia	7 55	1 55	7 55	4 55	7 55	4 55
9 27	9 35	8 07	8 15	1 56	2 04	68.8	De Ruyter	7 45	1 45	7 45	4 45	7 45	4 45
9 41	9 49	8 21	8 29	2 10	2 18	74.8	Rippleton	7 35	1 35	7 35	4 35	7 35	4 35
9 55	10 03	8 35	8 43	2 24	2 32	80.8	Delphi Falls	7 25	1 25	7 25	4 25	7 25	4 25
10 09	10 17	8 49	8 57	2 38	2 46	86.8	New Woodstock	7 15	1 15	7 15	4 15	7 15	4 15
10 23	10 31	9 03	9 11	2 52	3 00	92.8	Shed's Corners	7 05	1 05	7 05	4 05	7 05	4 05
10 37	10 45	9 17	9 25	3 06	3 14	98.8	De Ruyter	6 55	0 55	6 55	3 55	6 55	3 55
10 51	10 59	9 31	9 39	3 20	3 28	104.8	Cuyler	6 45	0 45	6 45	3 45	6 45	3 45
11 05	11 13	9 45	9 53	3 34	3 42	110.8	Traxton	6 35	0 35	6 35	3 35	6 35	3 35
11 19	11 27	10 00	10 08	3 48	3 56	116.8	East Homer	6 25	0 25	6 25	3 25	6 25	3 25
11 33	11 41	10 14	10 22	4 02	4 10	122.8	River	6 15	0 15	6 15	3 15	6 15	3 15
11 47	11 55	10 28	10 36	4 16	4 24	128.8	Cortland Junction	6 05	0 05	6 05	3 05	6 05	3 05
12 01	12 09	10 42	10 50	4 30	4 38	134.8	Cortland	5 55	0 00	5 55	3 00	5 55	3 00
12 15	12 23	10 56	11 04	4 44	4 52	140.8	McLean	5 45	0 00	5 45	3 00	5 45	3 00
12 29	12 37	11 10	11 18	4 58	5 06	146.8	Lv. AUBURN Ar.	5 35	0 00	5 35	3 00	5 35	3 00
12 43	12 51	11 24	11 32	5 12	5 20	152.8	Ar. FREEVILLE (Lv. George J. Republic) Ar.	5 25	0 00	5 25	3 00	5 25	3 00
12 57	1 05	11 38	11 46	5 26	5 34	158.8	Lv. FREEVILLE (George J. Republic) Ar.	5 15	0 00	5 15	3 00	5 15	3 00
1 11	1 19	11 52	12 00	5 40	5 48	164.8	Etna	5 05	0 00	5 05	3 00	5 05	3 00
1 25	1 33	12 06	12 14	5 54	6 02	170.8	Varna	4 55	0 00	4 55	3 00	4 55	3 00
1 39	1 47	12 20	12 28	6 08	6 16	176.8	East Ithaca	4 45	0 00	4 45	3 00	4 45	3 00
1 53	1 61	12 34	12 42	6 22	6 30	182.8	Besemers	4 35	0 00	4 35	3 00	4 35	3 00
2 07	2 15	12 48	12 56	6 36	6 44	188.8	Brookton	4 25	0 00	4 25	3 00	4 25	3 00
2 21	2 29	1 02	1 10	6 50	6 58	194.8	White Church	4 15	0 00	4 15	3 00	4 15	3 00
2 35	2 43	1 16	1 24	7 04	7 12	200.8	Wileyville	4 05	0 00	4 05	3 00	4 05	3 00
2 49	2 57	1 30	1 38	7 18	7 26	206.8	Snyder	3 55	0 00	3 55	3 00	3 55	3 00
2 63	2 71	1 44	1 52	7 32	7 40	212.8	West Candor	3 45	0 00	3 45	3 00	3 45	3 00
2 77	2 85	1 58	2 06	7 46	7 54	218.8	Spencer	3 35	0 00	3 35	3 00	3 35	3 00
2 91	2 99	2 12	2 20	8 00	8 08	224.8	Lv. Ithaca Ar.	3 25	0 00	3 25	3 00	3 25	3 00
3 05	3 13	2 26	2 34	8 14	8 22	230.8	Lv. Wilkes-Barre Ar.	3 15	0 00	3 15	3 00	3 15	3 00
3 19	3 27	2 40	2 48	8 28	8 36	236.8	Van Etten	3 05	0 00	3 05	3 00	3 05	3 00
3 33	3 41	2 54	3 02	8 42	8 50	242.8	Swartwood	2 55	0 00	2 55	3 00	2 55	3 00
3 47	3 55	3 08	3										

1900-1924

**LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD
TRAIN SCHEDULE GRAPH
EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 28, 1914**



Camden. Finally, the crew left Camden southbound in the late afternoon as Train 328 and tied up for the night at Canastota about supper-time.

After a night's rest in the railroad's Canastota bunk house, the milk train crew came on duty about 7 a.m. and departed Canastota Yard at 8 a.m. The train climbed the steep grade to Blakeslee where it met northbound Train 323. The train picked up speed after departing Cazenovia, pausing briefly at milk plants and creameries situated at almost every hamlet and village along the way to pick up cans, cases and carloads of milk. The train crews were known to be particularly adept at rolling the milk cans down the platforms from the plants into the waiting milk cars.

Along the way, Train 324 met northbound local freight train 821 and northbound passenger train 321. The milk train hustled between stations on a fairly tight schedule with the knowledge that they were due to arrive promptly in Sayre at 1:20 p.m. At Freeville, the new schedule called for Train 324 to meet Train 331 and then proceed straight ahead to Van Etten, continuing to pick up milk at several intermediate processing plants while meeting northbound local freight Train 823. After covering the sixty-nine miles from Cazenovia to Van Etten in a little over four hours at an overall speed of sixteen miles per hour, the engineer, his high-wheeled engine and first-class milk train turned onto the Ithaca Branch and less than a mile later the mainline at Van Etten Junction. From there to State Line Tower at the west end of Sayre Yard, Train 324 was scheduled to cover the 13.2 miles in fourteen minutes, the same time allowed the Black Diamond and other first class mainline passenger trains. The E&C branch milk cars were added to milk cars that had arrived off the milk train from Auburn and local passenger train from Geneva via Ithaca to become the daily hotshot milk train headed for Jersey City across the Hudson River from New York City.

This first-class high priority train was scheduled to follow the Black Diamond within the hour from Sayre to its destination on the west bank of the Hudson River opposite New York City.

In many respects, the prompt handling of milk from dairy farms in upstate New York to the metropolitan New York City area was almost as high a priority as the on-time arrival of the Black Diamond at Pennsylvania Station on 34th Street in Manhattan. The importance of the on time arrival of Train 324 at Sayre became evident one day years later to one Lehigh Valley agent-telegrapher who decided to ride the train when work was light. In a story recounted in the late Ken Rice's excellent book *From Richford's Rails to Freeville Stationmaster: Ken Rice Remembers*, we learned of Harold Miller's trip to Sayre on the daily milk train. On this particular day, the train was running very late. The story goes that after the train crossed over onto the mainline at Van Etten Junction, the engineer opened the throttle and headed for Sayre at a high rate of speed. Harold said the mileposts were going by every forty-some seconds, the equivalent of almost ninety miles per hour. Harold described his experience "... bouncing all over the place while George Griffith, the conductor, sat in his seat calmly smoking his old corncob pipe."

The milk traffic from the various Lehigh Valley branches in upstate New York provided a substantial supply of milk to the greater New York City area. The E&C Branch train alone handled 7, 8 or more cars a day carrying over 20,000 gallons of milk per train. This was an important revenue-producer for the railroad and a dependable supply to people who lived in the metropolitan area.

The return trip was scheduled to leave Sayre upon the arrival of the mainline milk train from Jersey City, usually in the late evening. The crew had a long layover in Sayre and didn't return to Cortland until almost daybreak, some twenty hours after leaving Canastota and almost two

days after beginning their northbound journey in Cortland. They had little more than twenty-four hours rest time before resuming their three-day cycle.

The Sunday milk train operation varied in two respects. The southbound train originated at Canastota Union Station, departed at 7:50 a.m. as Train 330 and carried passengers locally to Van Etten before proceeding to Sayre. The crew returned to Cortland as on weekdays but as an extra train. There was no northbound morning Train 323 on Sundays. The crew operated southbound from Cortland in the late afternoon as an extra, turned at Freeville and departed northbound as Train 329 at 6:30 p.m. picking up passengers from Auburn Branch Train 293 after its arrival from Sayre. It proceeded to Canastota and tied up there after making local stops on approximately the same schedule as weekday Train 325. There was no scheduled Sunday service north of Camden except for the popular summer-only trains that operated from Elmira to Sylvan Beach and return.

The Sunday afternoon schedule was changed with the southbound late afternoon departure from Cortland designated as Train 334 carrying passengers and departing at 4:50 p.m. for East Ithaca. Northbound Train 329 originated at East Ithaca at 5:50 p.m. and departed Freeville for Canastota at 6:10 p.m. after exchanging passengers with Auburn Branch Train 293.

The southbound milk train schedules were altered in 1914 with Train 324 departing Canastota at 9:15 a.m., meeting Train 331 at Freeville, departing Van Etten at 2:23 p.m. and arriving Sayre at 2:45 p.m. The Sunday schedule of Train 330 was set back to leave Canastota at 9:15 a.m.

This three-day, three-crew milk train cycle remained basically unchanged until 1935 when the East Ithaca–Spencer segment of the Elmira and Cortland Branch was abandoned.

Meanwhile, the passenger train schedules



A milk processing plant in Delphi Falls uses the E&C branch to move its products.

and crew assignments remained unchanged from the pattern that existed at the turn of the century. The two round trips each weekday between Elmira and Canastota required two Elmira-based and two Canastota-based train crews. The Elmira crews worked alternate days traveling to Canastota and back a total of 238 miles and almost sixteen hours on duty. The same alternate day arrangement applied to Canastota based crews. Two engine crews handled the passenger trains north of Cortland and two engine crews handled the trains south of Cortland.

North of Cortland, one freight train engine and train crew manned the daily except Sunday round trip from Cortland to Canastota and return. South of Cortland four sets of crews were required. One crew left Cortland each Monday morning for Elmira and returned the following day, then worked alternately down one day, back the next through Saturday. A second crew left Elmira for Cortland on Monday morning returning from Cortland the following day and continued this two-day cycle through Saturday. A third crew made a round trip each weekday night from Elmira to Van Etten and return. The fourth crew left Sayre each weekday morning

for Cortland via Van Etten and returned the same day.

There were a total of four yard engine crews assigned to work at three locations: one each at Elmira and Canastota plus two at Cortland. Presumably, one of the two yard jobs at Cortland also made the weekday-only midday round trip to East Ithaca.

Overall, Elmira and Cortland Branch operations required sixteen regularly assigned crews from 1905 until 1930 when freight traffic dropped and the management began curtailing service.

Major changes in train dispatching procedures occurred shortly after 1910 with introduction of telephone communication. Telephones were installed at all stations strictly for use by dispatchers and telegraphers. Telephones were also installed at eight sidings where no telegraphers were located so that train crews could contact the dispatchers if necessary. These were: Park Station, Brock, White Church, Stevens, East River, Lee (near Cuyler), Worlocks Stone Crusher (north of Blakeslee) and Cottons.

Winter weather conditions disrupted operations almost every year. For example, on February 24, 1912, a snowplow was sent north from Canastota to clear the tracks after a particularly heavy snowfall. The plow derailed as it neared South Bay Station after striking ice in a road crossing flangeway. The plow failed to stay on the curving track, demolished a double out-house, struck a box car and plowed through the station destroying the building and nearly killing the occupants including the agent-telegrapher and several sectionmen. It was a miracle the occupants survived without serious injuries.

Operating problems weren't necessarily confined to winter months. The daily routine on the line between Perryville and Canastota was interrupted on a Wednesday afternoon in early September 1913 according to an article published in the *Canastota Journal*. It was

a little after 1 o'clock that Conductor Mathew Dowling's crew was switching a flat car at the Conley quarry at Perryville, when it was found that the brake was defective and could not hold it. Two brakemen on the car jumped off when they saw it was beyond control, and the Canastota office was notified to look out for it. Agent Lathrop got busy on the telephone and secured men to guard the crossings and gave warning of the runaway. Frank Lawyer guarded the Turnpike crossing while the employees of the Middle States creamery warned all near Rasbach Street. It was feared that the car might not make the sharp curve near the Canastota creek and would be dashed across the New York Central tracks, and an eastbound passenger train on the Central due just then was held up for a few minutes till the derelict passed.

The track was clear and in a few minutes the big car came down the hill with constantly accelerating speed. It navigated all the curves safely including the sharp turn approaching the New York Central mainline. The wayward flat-car shot past the Union passenger station going at a rate of a mile a minute. After crossing Peterboro Street and beginning the ascent of the steep grade approaching the crossing over the New York Central and the Erie Canal, it slowed down and at Walker's crossing, a mile and a half north of the village, its wild flight came to an end. Not the slightest damage was done.

The success of the railroad's operations depended largely on the dedication and conscientiousness of its employees. For trainmen in passenger service, it involved being courteous toward passengers while complying with the railroad's rules. This was especially important with respect to the collection of fares from passengers. At times this put conductors and trainmen in awkward situations. One incident was reported by the *Cortland Democrat* and reprinted by the *Cazenovia Republican* August 25, 1915.

According to the story, everybody in the

area knew Conductor Thomas Lynch of the Lehigh Valley who had charge of a passenger run between Canastota and Elmira for many years. After leaving Freeville with his train one afternoon, this most durable railroad man who had survived a fall from a boxcar in 1888, collected a cash fare from one Aretus Washburne of Etna, with the customary ten cent excess, for which a redeemable receipt was given. Washburne objected to paying the ten cent excess and remarked to a fellow passenger, "Wait until the train gets to Etna and you'll see some fun."

He was right, according to the news account. Washburne left the train and when the conductor started to board the last coach as the train pulled out of the station, the Etna resident proceeded to mix things up and the two were seen rolling about on the ground. When the train was backed to the spot, a brakeman settled the affair in favor of the conductor. Washburne was arrested on complaint of Conductor Lynch and taken before Justice of the Peace Reynolds

at Etna and fined \$35 and costs.

The railroad unions began pressing their demands for a basic eight hour workday and threatened to strike if the demands were not met. The railroad owners refused, thus presenting a serious dilemma at the national level. The federal government seized the railroads, established the United States Railroad Administration to oversee operations and granted the four train and enginemen unions' employees the basic eight-hour workday. The shorter workday was eventually extended to all crafts.

All the railroads experienced a growth in traffic as the nation entered World War I. The country was very dependent on the rail system to move war materials and troops besides conducting its regular business. The growth in traffic placed an extra burden on the tracks, equipment and personnel. The wear and tear undoubtedly was a factor in the number of railroad derailments.

The Lehigh Valley announced in December

'BUS WRECKS A LOCOMOTIVE



Roof of a bus that struck an LV engine in Horseheads in 1919 is separated from the bus's radiator, headlights and front wheels, in the background.

The Ithaca bus was struck and completely demolished by the southbound Lehigh Valley passenger train 322, at the Van Duzer crossing, near Horseheads [the] afternoon [of August 21, 1919] at 12:35 o'clock. Harry Sewall of William Street, this city, driver of the bus, is at the Arnot-Ogden hospital with slight cuts about the head and body. Edward C. Rounds of Cortland, engineer of the train, and James Shevlin, fireman, also, Cortland, were buried under the engine, but escaped with minor injuries. Rounds was slightly bruised about the legs, and Shevlin sustained a gash in the hand, which was treated at the Arnot-Ogden hospital.

The locomotive was derailed by the collision, but continued for 300 yards,

1916 it was modernizing its transportation equipment for movement of trackworkers. According to a *New York Times* article, the railroad accepted recommendations of so-called efficiency engineers and ordered 140 motor driven cars, each to carry ten men at a speed of twenty-five miles per hour, a move which signalled the eventual abolition of the old manually-pumped handcar from the entire LV system. The article stated “...the engineers showed that the section men, in traveling to their work from their bunk houses along the right of way, became so tired from operating hand-cars that they were unable to do their work properly. Impairment of the men’s efficiency, the investigators reported, consisted of undue fatigue and a “winded” condition which prevented them exerting their full strength to the work in hand.” Another factor



Men from several track crews head to work at a washout after LV bought powered cars for track workers to replace handcars, which were found to wear men out before they got to their work site.

not mentioned in the article was the ability of motorized track equipment to more efficiently move rails and other track material to and from work sites.

when it turned completely around and fell to the side of the track. The tender was tipped up on one side, the baggage car and two coaches left the tracks, but did not topple over, thus preventing any injury to the passengers. Only one coach was left on the track and the rails were bent and twisted. A wrecking crew arrived late in the afternoon and worked during the night clearing up the tracks.

The evening train due in Elmira at 9 o’clock [that] night could come only as far as Horseheads, where the passengers were transferred. It is expected that the tracks will be clear so that train 321, leaving Elmira at 7 o’clock, can go through. At a late hour last night, the tracks were being repaired and the coaches put on the rails. The engine, which is

badly damaged, will be removed, it is thought, so that traffic may be resumed.

The ‘bus was occupied only by the chauffeur, Harry Sewalt, for the passengers were transferred to another ‘bus when trouble developed in the transmission. Sewalt was proceeding back to the city when the accident occurred.

According to a statement by Engineer Rounds, the train was coasting into Horseheads at about twenty miles an hour. Not until almost upon the crossing could he see the car which came upon the tracks just as the train approached. The brakes were applied but the momentum carried the train about 300 yards with the bus impaled on the front of the engine. When the locomotive began to leave the rails as the track

split, the engineer jumped from his cab.

Harry Sewalt was carried some distance with his car, then thrown to one side underneath the top of the ‘bus which is the only part of the large eighteen-passenger automobile which remains intact to any degree. It is thought that he did not hear the approaching train on account of the noise of his engine.

George Griffiths of Cortland, formerly of this city, was the conductor of the train. There were about seventy-five passengers in the coaches. An official investigation will be made.

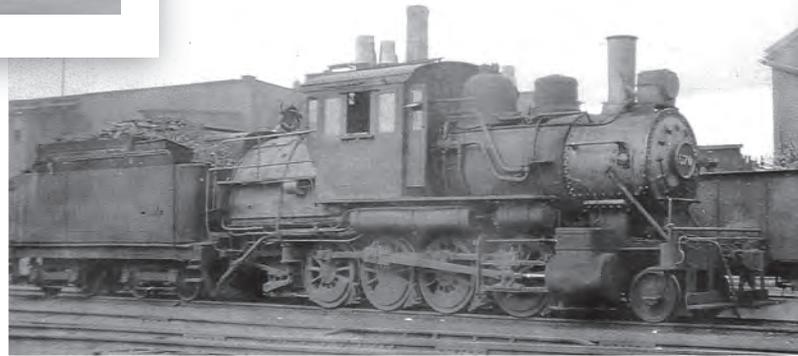
The bus is the property of J.L. Hicks of the Elmira-Ithaca ‘Bus Line. He stated that he valued the car at \$3,000. It is now only junk.—*Elmira Advertiser*, Aug. 22, 1919



ABOVE: Engine 1155 was built by Lehigh Valley personnel at Sayre shops in 1918 as a class J-25 4-6-0, one of 35 such locomotives built by the LV in 1917 and 1918 for branch line duty. The J-25's were equipped with 63 inch drivers and weighed only 104,500 pounds on drivers. Engine 1155 saw regular service for over thirty years on the Elmira and Cortland Branch through the 1940's and was not scrapped until May 1950. It was involved in the May 1920 accident at Van Etten, discussed in the next chapter.

World War I placed an additional burden on daily operations, particularly on the aging fleet of hand-me-down locomotives that began service twenty-five or more years earlier. The company built thirty-five 4-6-0 locomotives in its Sayre shops for branch line service particularly where bridges and trestles could not safely bear the weight of heavier and larger power. About half this order was needed to protect the E&C Branch passenger and freight schedules, provide for extra service as needed and have a couple of spares at Cortland. The 4-6-0's were used interchangeably in passenger, freight and yard service with some equipped with footboards to facilitate switching work. The order was not sufficient to cover all the various branch line power requirements and so vintage M-Class 2-8-0's were employed as needed, particularly between Elmira and Van Etten.

BELOW: Engine 570 at Elmira on July 18, 1921 is the regularly assigned locomotive on the Elmira-Van Etten night freight. Built in October 1889 as LV Engine 510, she became LV 570 in 1905, Class M-17, and would be scrapped in March 1928.



The Lehigh Valley eliminated freight train schedules from Auburn Division operating timetables about 1920. Henceforth, all freight trains were operated as "extras" with no specified departure or arrival times at stations. Each freight crew would continue to have designated reporting times for engine and train crews. Each crew would receive a train order giving them authority to operate as an extra train from origin to destination and as needed would receive orders to meet opposing extra trains at specified stations.

On some branch lines where only one extra train was operating, the crew would receive a "work order" giving them authority to operate in either direction between the limits of their designated work area and might also be instructed to "...not protect against extra trains..." This would relieve them from having to provide flag protection as required under Rule 99.

Freight train crew assignments were changed about this time south of Cortland. The Sayre-Cortland job (train) was eliminated and a weekday freight job established which left Cortland in the late evening for Van Etten where it dropped its cars, turned and picked up northbound cars for Cortland. Freight cars to and from the Elmira and Cortland Branch were handled east and west from Van Etten by Ithaca Branch crews or Sayre–Van Etten turns. The night freight from Cortland occasionally operated through to Sayre and returned later when traffic was especially heavy.

Van Etten Tower was a busy railroad crossing in the early 1920's. Tower records from this period indicated the passage of 25 to 30 trains a day with about two-thirds operating on the Ithaca Branch. During these years, local passenger trains were hauled by F-Class Atlantics

in the 2400-2499 series and through passenger trains by the newest K-3 and K-4 Class Pacifics in the 2010-2064 series with 77-inch drivers built by Baldwin between 1915 and 1921. Freight trains on the Ithaca Branch were hauled by J-Class 4-6-0's, M-Class 2-8-0 Consolidations, and an occasional K-5 Class 2100 series dual service 4-6-2 with 73 inch drivers. R-Class 2-10-2's appeared almost daily from Sayre, turning at Van Etten but occasionally going through to Ithaca.

Elmira and Cortland Branch trains were handled almost exclusively by J-25 4-6-0's except that a camelback Consolidation arrived almost every night from Elmira, turned and headed back. With traffic often heavy on the Elmira-Van Etten line, the Consolidation would often have to make two trips from Van Etten to Park Station to hoist its train up the steep 2.4 percent grade.

Northbound passenger train is led across the Brookton bridge by a vintage eight-wheeler in the early 1910's. The iron trestle replaced an earlier wooden one in 1889. Passenger business grew during the early 1900's.





Wrecking equipment, railroad personnel and bystanders at the scene of a fatal collision at Van Etten Yard on May 31, 1920. A northbound E&C Branch freight train on the Swamp Siding derailed and fouled the path of eastbound Lehigh Valley passenger Train 6 on the adjacent Ithaca Branch main track. All but two cars of the freight train have been removed. The engineer and firemen perished as well as a passenger who was struck by a broken telegraph pole that entered her coach. Thirty-eight passengers were injured.

THE ANATOMY OF AN ACCIDENT

On the morning of May 31, 1920, there was a derailment of an E&C branch freight train, followed by a side collision with a passenger train on an adjoining track on the Lehigh Valley Railroad at Van Etten yard which resulted in the death of one passenger and two employees, and the injury of thirty-eight passengers. After investigation, the chief of the Bureau of Safety of the federal Interstate Commerce Commission reported:

This accident occurred on the Ithaca Branch

of the Seneca Division, a single track line extending between Van Etten Junction and Geneva Junction, N. Y., a distance of 59.5 miles. Trains are operated by timetable, train orders, and an automatic block-signal system. The accident occurred about 3,120 feet west of Van Etten tower. Approaching the point of accident from the west, the grade is slightly ascending; the track is tangent for about one-half mile, followed by a 2-degree curve to the left approximately 400 feet in length. The accident occurred near the east

Passenger Train Crashes Into Wreck; Engineer And Fireman Killed Outright

Fast Passenger Train on Lehigh Valley Dashes Into Derailed Freight Engine Near Van Etten—Engineer Jacob Laux of Sayre, Pa., and Fireman Frederick Douglass of Waverly Are Buried Beneath Wreckage—Several Passengers Are Injured.

A serious passenger train wreck occurred Monday morning at 12:15 o'clock on the Lehigh Valley railroad, near Van Etten, in which Engineer Jacob Laux of Sayre, Pa., and Fireman Frederick Douglass of Waverly, lost their lives. The victims were buried under the wreckage of several of the passenger train. The last train were injured.

ENGINE DERAILED

A west bound coal train hauled by two locomotives, derailed out from Van Etten at 12:10 p. m. on the Auburn division of the Lehigh Valley railroad. These rails are parallel with the main tracks and only a few feet separate them. A brake being on one of the engine tenders on the side of the Auburn division track as the motive locomotive started in the east only about one-fourth of it was raised. The upper part of the boiler rested on the east bound track of the main line.

Before a flagman could be sent out to warn main line traffic, passenger train No. 2 from Buffalo to New York City, lumbered down at a high rate of speed and crashed into the derailed engine.

The passenger engine was crushed into a mass of twisted iron and steel. The engineer and fireman were buried under the wreckage with three cars of the train.

WRECKING CREW CALLED

Wrecking crews were called from Sayre and in a short time the work of raising the wreckage was in progress and

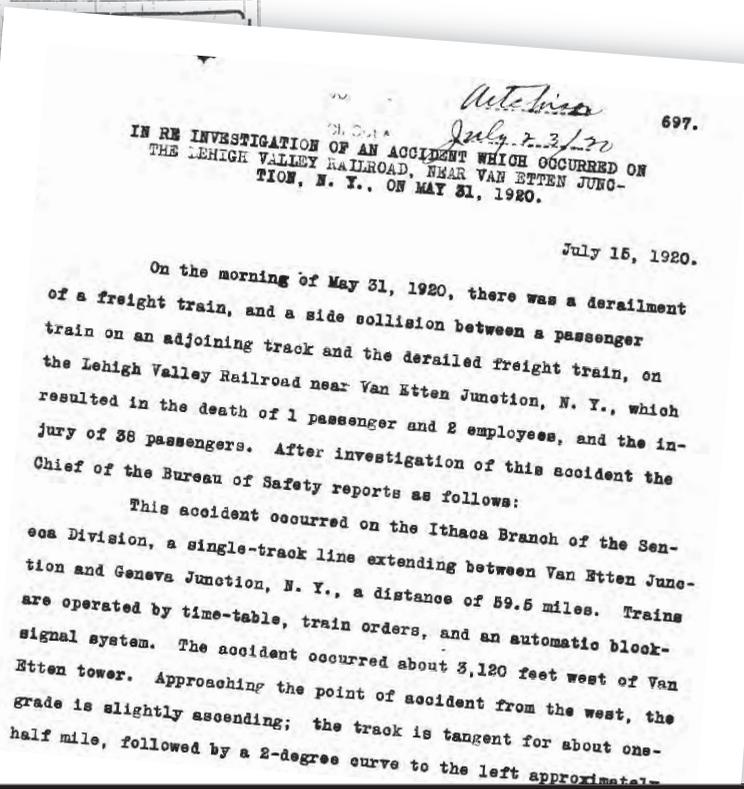
the bodies of the engineer and fireman were removed a few hours later. A number of the passengers received slight injuries. These were attended by a nurse and later were able to continue their destination. The more seriously injured were Mrs. M. Segal, Harrison, Pa.; Mrs. Augusta Ringel, Easton, Pa.; Mrs. Mary Nolan, Waverly, and Mary Polakoff, Durysa, Pa. They were removed to hospitals in Sayre and are reported in satisfactory condition. One of the women was struck on the body by a broken telegraph pole, which struck through the pile of wreckage.

Mrs. Segal received seven-bruises. Her daughter suffered shock. Mrs. Nolan of Waverly received bruises but was otherwise unharmed. Mrs. Ringel of Harrison, Pa. was the most seriously injured of the passengers. It is thought she will also require to her home in a few days.

The Lehigh Valley train wreckers jammed by the thousand of sight who visited the scene of the accident. The first report had it that between 100 passengers had been killed.

The nightmen crowded around the wreckage and it became necessary to call police to be called and to place their hands.

The wreckage was cleaned up yesterday and the derailed freight train was shifted to the east bound track on the rails. The crew of the passenger train were injured, and their engine



ABOVE: Report of the accident in the June 1, 1920 edition of the *Elmira Star-Gazette*.

RIGHT: The first page of the formal ICC report on the accident, reproduced in this chapter.

1920 ACCIDENT

end of this curve. At the time of the accident the weather was clear.

The freight train was made up in Van Etten yard on a track known as the Swamp Siding, which parallels the Ithaca Branch main track. This track is tangent for nearly its entire length, approximately 2,200 feet. At the west end of this siding there is a switch which diverts trains toward the Ithaca Branch when set to lead to the left, and to the Elmira and Cortland Branch, Auburn Division, when set to lead to the right; it was set in the latter position at the time of the accident. At a point 13.4 feet east there is a

switch leading to the Van Etten yard tracks at which the derailment occurred.

Westbound freight train extra 1155, enroute from Van Etten to Cortland, N. Y., consisted of engines 1155 and 1162, 34 cars and a caboose, in charge of Conductor Mack and Enginemen Hutchinson and Shevlin; this train started to pull out of Swamp Siding between 12:15 a.m. and 12:20 a.m., and had proceeded about 12 car lengths, attaining a speed of 4 or 5 miles an hour, when the rear brake beam of front tender truck of engine 1155 came down and the hanger became wedged between the guard rail and stock rail,



Bystanders and railroad personnel at the north end of the Van Etten yard after the May 1920 accident. Extra 1155 North with Engine 1162 assisting was traveling from left to right on the Swamp Siding when it derailed at the switch at the extreme right. Engine 2059 leading Passenger Train 6 traveled at 50 miles an hour from right to left and slammed into the tender of the freight train's lead Engine 1155 and into its second engine, 1162. From right to left are the fourth, third, second and first cars of Train 6 and two derailed hopper cars from Train 1155 North. BELOW: Train 6's Engine 2059 rests on its right side in the swampland, viewed from the Ithaca Branch main track.



1920 ACCIDENT



Wrecking cranes have uprighted the severely damaged fifth car of Extra 1155's train and prepare to remove it from Swamp Siding. The first and second cars of Train 6 are visible.



The third car of Train 6 with its headend in swampland.

just east of switch leading to the Van Etten yard tracks. The wheels of the rear tender truck of engine 1155 and engine truck and driving wheels of engine 1162 were derailed as they passed over the brake hanger, so that when the wheels on the right side of the tender and engine came into contact with the transfer rail of the yard switch the rear end of the tender of engine 1155 and the front end of engine 1162 were thrown over to the left, projecting out far enough to obstruct the main track of the Ithaca Branch, at a point 336 feet east of automatic signal I-2872.

Eastbound passenger train No. 6, enroute from Buffalo, N. Y., to New York, N. Y., consisted of 3 coaches, 1 club car, and 4 Pullman sleeping cars in the order named, hauled by engine 2059, with Conductor Arner and Engineer Laux in charge. This train left Ithaca, the last open telegraph office, at 11:43 p.m., on time, and about 12:15 a.m., while running at a speed estimated to have been 50 miles an hour, collided with the derailed portion of extra 1155.

Train No. 6 struck the cistern of the tender of engine 1155 about 5 feet from the rear end, the engine, the first four cars, and the front trucks

of the fifth car being derailed and diverted toward the right or south side of the track. Engine 2059 remained on the ties for a distance of 150 feet after being derailed and then began to leave the track and ran about 200 feet before it came to rest on its right side clear of the right of way. The tender swung around at right angles to the boiler and came to rest against the boiler head. The smoking car followed the engine and came to rest with the front end buried nearly to the roof in the muck land, while the rear end rested upon the track in an upright position. The second coach came to rest with the front end resting on the track near the first coach and the rear end swung towards the swamp, forming a "V" with the first coach; the forward end of the second coach also struck the fifth car from the headend of extra 1155. The third coach came to rest with the forward end in the swamp and the rear end resting on the track. The fourth car remained upright on the track. The engineman and fireman of train No. 6 were killed.

Shortly after starting Extra 1155, Engineer Hutchinson's attention was called to the fact that the tender was derailed by his fireman and

1920 ACCIDENT



The rear end of Train 6's third car and a wrecker.



The front end of the third car, in swampland.

head brakeman, and also by the engineman of engine 1162 calling for brakes. He immediately applied the brakes in emergency; he looked back and noticed engine 1162 was leaning over at about the same time train No. 6 struck his train, which was practically stopped at the time of the collision.

Fireman Reeves, of engine 1155, jumped off the engine as soon as he called to the engineman that the tender was derailed, but train No. 6 was too close to be flagged before the collision occurred.

Engineman Shevlin of engine 1162 felt his engine riding on the ties, applied the straight air brake, sounded the whistle signal for brakes, called to his fireman and then jumped off; he thought train No. 6 collided with his train before he jumped.

From the evidence and an examination of the various parts of the brake rigging found after the derailment, it is believed a pin came out of the top end of the left hanger for the rear brake beam of the forward tender truck of engine 1155, allowing the hanger to fall down and become

wedged between the guard rail and stock rail of the switch leading from Van Etten yard to Swamp Siding. While the construction of the tender truck affords a view of the brake hanger pins, keys, and lugs, which are cast, on the under side of the bolster, they are located back of the side frames of the truck, so it would be an easy matter to overlook a missing key, especially at night, or in making a hurried inspection of the equipment. The derailment occurred at the time train No. 6 was approaching the point of accident, and there was no opportunity for either train crew to take any action to prevent No. 6 from striking the derailed engine.

This accident was caused by fallen brake rigging becoming wedged in a guard rail, resulting in the derailment of the freight train, and a passenger train on an adjoining parallel track colliding with the derailed engines and cars of the freight train.

All the employees involved in this accident were men of experience, with good records, and none of them was on duty in violation of the hours of service law.



Engine 1133 on the Cortland turntable with fireman John Ludwig in cab window, engineer Harry Coates in gangway and assistant machinist Floyd Reinhart on the turntable.

END OF AN ERA, 1925 TO 1949

The Lehigh Valley's Elmira and Cortland Branch reached its apex of traffic, service, and operations during the 1920's. Well-conceived freight and passenger schedules, new equipment and reliable operations served a growing volume of traffic early in the decade. For a half century, this railroad within a railroad had grown from a fledgling and sometimes erratic operation to a reliable service which customers could depend on. People from all walks of life traveled via the old EC&N line including United States President Grover Cleveland and president-to-be Theodore Roosevelt. Celebrities, entertainers, college professors, politicians and just plain ordinary folks rode the rails.

The trains carried people and freight to and from the cities, villages and hamlets along the 140 mile line. The railroad and its employees had become key players in the day-to-day lives of thousands of people living between Elmira and Camden. The train and enginemen, station and other employees were well-known members of the communities they served. They provided a valuable, indeed critical, service of transportation and communications from the 1870's into the 1920's.

But times were changing. By 1925, passenger traffic began to decline as people took advantage of automobiles, newly established bus service and improved roadways. The Elmira and Cortland Branch was especially vulnerable because many of its riders traveled for short distances and found auto travel more attractive. The Lehigh Valley responded by substituting

self-propelled gas-electric cars on many routes throughout the system. In late 1926, gas-electric motors 30 and 31 were assigned to the Elmira and Cortland Branch in place of steam powered passenger trains. The new equipment eliminated the need to employ firemen on the four regular trains and released four locomotives for service elsewhere. Another economy move was made two years later when service to Camden was reduced to one second class mixed train leaving Canastota for Camden about 8 a.m. and returning about noon.

The Lehigh Valley's freight traffic reached a plateau in the 1920's with a peak 32 million tons carried in 1926. Locally, Elmira and Cortland Branch freight operations remained unchanged except daytime through freight service between



Train 321 hustling northward near Malloryville about 1926 led by Engine 1155, not long before this equipment was replaced by Motor 30. Engine 1155 had been involved in the fatal collision at Van Etten in 1920.



One of two regularly assigned gas-electric motor cars which began to replace LV steam engines on short trains in the 1920's. Motor 30 operated between Elmira and Canastota in the late 1920's and early 1930's, northbound in morning and southbound in the afternoon.

Elmira and Cortland was replaced by two turn jobs, one originating in Cortland and the other in Elmira. The two would meet at Van Etten about noon each day and return to their respective terminals in the afternoon.

The Great Depression which began in 1929 had a devastating impact on EC&N traffic and, soon after, its day to day operations. Overall, Lehigh Valley freight traffic levels fell almost 50 percent from 30 million tons in 1929 to just over 15 million tons in 1932. The sharp decline in the nation's industrial activity and freight revenues produced a severe financial challenge for all railroads.

Lehigh Valley management began looking for ways to reduce costs. It wasn't long before top brass in New York City and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, remembered the oft-forgotten Elmira and Cortland Branch with its light traffic, high trestles and costly operating problems. By April 1931, the morning northbound and southbound passenger trains between Elmira and Canastota were discontinued. The southbound milk train

was made available for passengers from Canastota to East Ithaca on a daily basis and to Sayre on Sundays. Midday service between Cortland and East Ithaca was eliminated. East Spencer, West Candor, Delphi and Rippleton stations were closed. Breesport and Erin were paired and staffed by one agent-telegrapher. Up north, Sylvan Beach and South Bay were combined with one man splitting his day between the two locations.

In 1932 the railroad's six operating divisions were consolidated into three: the Lehigh, Wyoming and Buffalo divisions. The Auburn and Seneca divisions became part of the Buffalo Division.

By 1933, the afternoon passenger trains were discontinued, replaced on the public timetables by trains 324 and 325, the daily milk trains carrying passengers between Canastota and Sayre via Van Etten, and daily except Sunday mixed trains 825 and 826 operating between Elmira



Two ten-wheelers on the headend and a third behind the caboose team up to move the northbound daily Cortland-Canastota freight at the south end of the East River passing siding on March 16, 1934. Note two telegraph wires near the center of the crossarm and a third telephone wire on the right side with connecting wire leading down to a telephone booth for crews to contact their dispatcher when necessary.

and Van Etten. Another casualty was the three-day milk train crew cycle and Train 323, the early morning train from Cortland to Canastota. Henceforth, only two crews working alternate days were needed to handle the daily milk trains. Passengers could avail themselves of newly established daily except Sundays mixed train 831 operating each morning

from Cortland to Canastota and Train 832 operating from Canastota to Cortland each afternoon. These, in reality, were the former freight trains which were provided with a combination baggage/passenger car and timetable schedules to accommodate the dwindling number of people traveling along the line. Only one crew was needed to perform switching work at Canastota and make the daily trip to and from Camden.

Elmira and Cortland Branch tracks between Van Etten and Spencer were abandoned and trains began using the adjacent Ithaca Branch main track. This enabled the railroad to eliminate the diamond crossing at Van Etten, the interlocking tower, associated towerman jobs and whatever track maintenance might be needed on the two miles of the E&C track between Van Etten and Spencer.

The next blow came in 1934 when the Lehigh Valley applied to the Interstate Commerce Commission for permission to abandon the twenty-three mile Spencer-East Ithaca segment. Management argued that most communities along this line could use parallel DL&W service. Only Brooktondale and Besemers would be completely without service and there was insufficient traffic to warrant the continuation of service to these stations. The railroad cited a

LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD COMPANY
 TRAIN ORDER No. 3 Auburn, Dec 18 1934
 To: Eng 1139 At: Cortland
 X _____ Opr: _____ M.
 Eng 1139 works extra 9:05 a.m.
 until 6:05 p.m. between Cortland and
 Spencer not protecting against
 extra train
 J.M.B.
 Conductor and Engineers must each have a
 copy of this order.
 Made Complete time 6:30 a.m. _____ Opr.

A Form 19 Train Order issued by the train dispatcher at Auburn in 1934 to the conductor and engineer of Engine 1139 at Cortland granting Engine 1139 the right to operate as work extra from 9:05 a.m. until 6:05 p.m. between Cortland and Spencer. The train order was copied by Cortland telegraph operator Lloyd Webster and did not take effect until he repeated it correctly to the train dispatcher, was made "complete" by the train dispatcher with the initials of Buffalo Division Superintendent F. M. Barker added. Only then could operator Webster add the time the dispatcher made the order complete and add his signature to the order.

system net income deficit of \$2.8 million in 1933 and projected a deficit of almost \$2.0 million in 1934. It claimed that it could no longer support losing branch line operations. Despite strong public opposition, the ICC decided in favor of the railroad. On June 30, 1935, Train 325 made its last trip north over the line and the books were closed on sixty years of dependable rail service.

Meanwhile, scheduled trains between Elmira and Van Etten and between Canastota and Camden were discontinued in the spring of 1935. The Etna agency station was closed at the same time. Another cost-saving change was implemented when the Lehigh Valley discontinued service into Canastota Union Station and originated Train 324 and terminated Train 325 at the freight station just south of the NYC West Shore crossing. There was very little passenger traffic left on the north end of the Elmira and Cortland Branch and the change enabled the LV to avoid sharing in the cost of operating and maintaining the large New York Central passenger station.

On July 1, 1935, the daily Canastota-Sayre milk trains were rerouted to the Auburn Branch between Freeville and Sayre. On the return trip, the crew made a side trip to East Ithaca before resuming service as Train 325 leaving East Ithaca at 5:27 p.m. The weekday local freight job from



Winter-time milk can handling at a creamery at New Woodstock creamery. Ray Taylor is at left, Wendell Preston at right.

Cortland to Van Etten and return was abolished and the night freight rerouted between Freeville and Sayre via Owego. A late morning trip was added from Cortland to East Ithaca available for passengers but returned as an extra. It was created to serve what was left of passenger traffic from Cortland and Auburn to East Ithaca but more importantly to provide freight service between Freeville and East Ithaca.

Further job losses occurred for Cortland-based crews when Auburn Branch men insisted on sharing the rerouted milk and night freight train jobs. When all was said and done, the former Elmira and Cortland Branch requirements had been reduced from sixteen to the equivalent of seven regular crews in only five years and rail service cut 48 percent from 6,852 to 3,576 miles per week.

The sound of passing Lehigh Valley trains would no longer be heard between East Ithaca and Spencer and the telegraph instruments became silent. The highway crossing signals were deactivated. Top officials in Buffalo, Bethlehem and New York City would no longer be burdened by this troublesome portion of their vast railroad. But Mother Nature had something else in mind for the Finger Lakes Region. One week later, a vast storm passed over the region with

tremendous amounts of rain producing swollen streams and creeks. By nightfall, water levels were rising to dangerous levels. Trains were moving through blinding rainstorms with scant visibility. On the Ithaca Branch, an eastbound passenger train barely stopped in time near Trumansburg thanks to the watchful eyes of the enginemen. They missed falling into a huge washout by a matter of feet. One by one, every active Lehigh Valley route through the Finger Lakes area was closed due to severe washouts. The storms caused loss of life in several communities. But the railroad sought to maintain passenger service while it struggled to restore service on the mainline and assorted branches.

There was only one combination of rail lines available to maintain passenger service. And so it was that Train 6, the overnight Buffalo to New York City passenger train headed east to Geneva, then over the Seneca Falls Branch to Auburn, then over the New York Central to Syracuse and down the DL&W to Cortland. Historian Herb Trice's father, a Lehigh Valley signal maintainer based in Auburn, was sent over the closed East Ithaca–Spencer trackage to reactivate the crossing signals. With his mission accomplished, Train 6 could proceed safely over the old and the unwanted East Ithaca to Spencer line including the high bridge between Besemers and Brooktondale. Other trains no doubt passed over the abandoned line before mainline and Ithaca Branch tracks were repaired.

The abandonment of all rail service between Spencer and East Ithaca resulted in closing Willseyville (previously spelled Wilseyville), Brooktondale and Besemers stations. Other crafts experienced elimination of jobs. Equipment maintenance jobs were cut as motive power requirements were reduced. Track maintenance work forces were also reduced.

The closing of Besemers station prompted the retirement of Willis Besemer who had served as agent-telegrapher there continuously for fifty-

nine years. The story of his career was unique. In 1875 when the Utica, Ithaca and Elmira Railroad was building the last segment of its new rail line between Van Etten and East Ithaca, the engineering firm selected a right of way alignment that required building a 1,600 foot long, 90 foot high trestle over Six Mile Creek in Brookton. At the north end of the trestle, the projected route required acquisition of land belonging to the Besemer family. The property contained a valuable water source for the locomotives. Willis's father, Josiah Besemer, was a tough bargainer. He agreed to sell a portion of their land and build a station and water tank with the understanding that a member of the family would be the station agent. Willis Besemer, age 18, and his father cut the timber from their family woodlot and built the station and water tower with their own hands.

Young Willis Besemer learned the Morse telegraph code and became the station agent-telegrapher. As years passed, the family opened a post office in the station and a feed and grain business as well. Willis Besemer built a home just a short distance away. Life was not the same for the former station agent after the railroad closed down and the trestle was removed. He



Fireman's view of the 15 m.p.h., 15-degree curves on the steep grade south of Canastota.



Elmira-based freight train crew crosses DL&W main tracks in Elmira in the 1930s.

passed away just over a year later.

Alas, although the old EC&N line saved the day for the Lehigh Valley in July 1935, there was no second chance that the railroad would restore service. Indeed, by late 1937 Lehigh Valley officials were seeking to abandon two more segments of the once-140-mile Elmira and Cortland Branch. On October 1, 1937, officials applied to the Interstate Commerce Commission for permission to abandon the 20-mile Canastota-Camden segment and on November 3, 1937 the 19-mile Horseheads-Van Etten segment of the Elmira and Cortland Branch.

Once again, the railroad told federal regulators that it could no longer support apparently unprofitable branch line segments when it was in a dire financial situation. The company stated that most of the small communities north of Canastota were already served by the New York, Ontario and Western or New York Central railroads. Only South Bay and Vienna with small populations would be totally without rail service. The Camden line was said to carry an average of less than ten local and ten overhead cars per week. The ICC approved the application on June 24, 1938 and the last train operated on August 7, 1938.

The abandonment application for the Horseheads-Van Etten segment sought permission to

serve the remaining Elmira–Horseheads segment with a weekday freight train to operate over the Lehigh Valley between Sayre and Waverly thence via Erie Railroad trackage rights to Elmira.

Management argued that the stations between Horseheads and Van Etten, namely Breesport, Erin, Park and Swartwood, handled only 102 carloads and very little LCL freight in 1936. The railroad moved an average 75 loaded cars per week (15 per weekday) over this line to or from the Elmira–Horseheads section and that could be more efficiently handled via the Erie Railroad. They stated that a locomotive could haul only 3 loaded cars at a time up the 2.4 percent grade from Swartwood to Park Station. The ICC decided the case May 14, 1938 and the last train operated over the line on June 25, 1938.

With the drastic cutback in former Auburn Division operations during the 1930's, the Lehigh Valley saw fit to transfer the dispatchers and support personnel from Auburn to Sayre in the late 1930's and then to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in the early 1940's. Some of the dispatchers moved south and others chose to exercise their seniority rights as telegraphers and return to serving as agent-telegraphers along the old Auburn Division rather than uproot their families and move to Pennsylvania.

The day-to-day operation and supervision of the several upstate New York branch lines became even further removed from the oversight and interest of Buffalo Division headquarters with these changes. Wilkes-Barre was the headquarters of the Lehigh Valley's very busy Wyoming Division, almost 100 miles south of Sayre, 163 miles from Cortland and over 200 miles from Canastota. Operating officials in Wilkes-Barre had their hands full with their own problems especially after the beginning of World War II. It was difficult for the top brass in Buffalo to become particularly concerned about day-to-day business on the former EC&N line for the same

reasons. The operating men on what was left of the Elmira and Cortland Branch were left to manage their own railroad and solve their own problems.

In 1941, the daily southbound Cortland Branch milk train 324 was rerouted to East Ithaca, adding its milk cars to Auburn Branch milk train 282 at Freeville. Northbound Train 325 left East Ithaca at 5:17 p.m. and stopped at Freeville to pick up the empty milk cars from Train 283. The trains operated as mixed trains between Freeville and East Ithaca to satisfy local freight customers. The public timetables indicated the trains' departure times from Canastota and East Ithaca and arrival times at their destinations but no times at intermediate stations. Not until just before the beginning of World War II in December 1941 did the railroad post notices at all stations showing the scheduled departure times of trains 324 and 325.

Further changes were introduced several months later with the elimination of milk train service between Canastota and DeRuyter. The daily except Sunday and holiday Cortland-Canastota freight trains were designated as



Daily northbound freight train with K Class 4-6-2 at New Woodstock about 1940, when the Cortland Branch still carried the freight.

mixed trains operating northbound as Train 325 and southbound as Train 324. Daily milk train service was provided leaving Cortland at 8:30 a.m. as Train 327, leaving DeRuyter at 10:20 a.m. for Freeville and East Ithaca as Train 322, and returning to Cortland from East Ithaca at 2:30 p.m. as Train 323. Train 322 typically met Train 325 at Truxton, added its loaded milk cars to Auburn Branch Train 282 at Freeville then picked up freight cars and LCL freight at Freeville for Etna and East Ithaca. The empty milk cars were returned to Cortland on the overnight Cortland-Sayre freight run. These changes allowed the railroad to permanently close the Canastota enginehouse. Public timetables cautioned riders that the aforementioned trains provided: "Combination Freight and Passenger Service: Trains Subject To Delay." And they were. Variations in freight traffic volumes affected on-time performance but the public couldn't complain after taking into consideration the wartime conditions.

The tremendous growth in Lehigh Valley freight and passenger traffic and operations during World War II did not have a major impact on Elmira and Cortland Branch. The nearby Auburn Branch felt a surge in traffic including movement of troop trains and military equipment. But the terrain and location of what was left of the E&C Branch was not conducive to efficient handling of military traffic. The line did carry important local freight traffic including coal and other commodities.

After World War II ended in 1945 and the railroad's traffic volumes declined, lighter K Class 4-6-2's became

Elmira & Cortland Branch							
WESTWARD			No. 10 STATIONS	EASTWARD			
Second Class	First Class	Distance from New York		First Class			Second Class
831	325			324	326	328	832
Daily Except Sun.	Daily			Daily	Daily Except Sun.	Daily	Daily Except Sun.
A. M.	P. M.		A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	
	5:27	332.7	EAST ITHACA	D	\$12.10		\$ 5.10
	5:38	346.6	ETNA		\$12.01		
	6:00	323.7	FREEVILLE (Jct.)	D	\$11.88		4.50
	6:08	327.6	McLEAN	D	\$11.80		
	6:11	329.5	McKEE		11.27		
	6:24	334.1	CORTLAND	D	\$11.14	11.30	
	6:26	334.8	CORTLAND JCT.		\$11.08		\$ 4.15
	6:37	341.0	EAST HOMER	D	\$10.58		\$ 4.12
	6:38	346.0	TRUXTON	D	\$10.48		\$ 3.58
	6:48	350.5	CUYLER	D	\$10.85		\$ 3.48
	6:58	351.2	LEE		10.34		\$ 3.20
	7:08	354.4	DeRUYTER	D	\$10.25		\$ 3.18
	7:17	359.0	SHEDS CORNERS	D	\$10.12		\$ 3.08
	7:23	362.6	NEW WOODSTOCK	D	\$10.06		\$ 3.00
	7:26	363.7	DELPHI FALLS		9.58		\$ 2.52
	7:32	366.6	RIPPLETON (Jct.)		9.46		2.45
	7:39	368.3	CAZENOVIA	D	\$ 9.48		\$ 2.40
	7:49	372.0	CHITTENANGO FLS		9.27		\$ 2.00
	7:51	373.5	MATS SIDING		9.25		\$ 1.60
	7:55	375.1	BLAKESLEE	D	\$ 9.22		\$ 1.45
	8:06	379.9	CLOCKVILLE		9.06		\$ 1.21
	8:15	382.8	CANASTOTA (Jct.)	D	9.00		\$ 1.15
		388.8	SOUTH BAY	D			
		391.7	SYLVAN BEACH	D			
		392.7	SYLVAN JCT.				
		395.5	VIENNA				
		398.5	MCCONNELLSVILLE				
		403.7	CAMDEN (Jct.)	D			
A. M.	P. M.				A. M.	A. M.	P. M.

Nos. 831 and 832 will carry passengers.
Nos. 831, 832 and 324 will stop on signal at River.
No. 325 will stop on signal at Varna and River.
No. 326 will stop on signal at Varna.

Cortland Branch							
WESTWARD			No. 7 STATIONS	EASTWARD			
Second Class	First Class	Distance from New York		First Class	Second Class		
325	323			327	322	324	
Daily Except Sunday & Holidays	Daily	Daily		Daily	Daily Except Sunday & Holidays		
A. M.	P. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.			
	2:30		EAST ITHACA				
	2:42		ETNA				
	3:05		FREEVILLE				
	3:13		McLEAN				
	3:30	9:00	CORTLAND		\$ 5.25		
		9:02	CORTLAND JCT.	11.12	5.20		
		9:18	EAST HOMER	\$11.00	\$ 5.08		
		9:30	TRUXTON	\$10.45	\$ 4.59		
		9:42	CUYLER	\$10.28	\$ 4.50		
		9:50	DeRUYTER	10:20	\$ 4.40		
			SHEDS CORNERS		\$ 4.30		
			NEW WOODSTOCK		\$ 4.20		
			DELPHI FALLS		\$ 3.59		
			CAZENOVIA		\$ 3.55		
			MATS SIDING		\$ 3.20		
			BLAKESLEE		\$ 3.15		
			CANASTOTA		2.50		
P. M.	P. M.	A. M.		A. M.	P. M.		

Nos. 322, 323, 324, 325, and 327 available for passengers.

Elmira and Cortland Branch employee timetables on the Cortland Branch. Top schedule effective July 1, 1935. Bottom schedule effective March 5, 1944.

Train 325 setting off cars behind the New Woodstock station in late 1940s.



available for occasional use on the Cortland and Auburn branches. After the company purchased fourteen 2,000 hp PA diesels for mainline passenger service, the K-6b 2088-2099 series 4-6-2's also became available. Locomotives 2088 and 2089 were equipped with 8,500 gallon tenders, short enough to be turned on the Canastota turntable. Famed En-

JIM LATHROP AND THE INSPECTION TRIP

Jim Lathrop was born in 1915, the son of Guy Lathrop, a Lehigh Valley Railroad fireman who was hired in 1911. His father worked on the Auburn Division, was promoted to engineer and worked on the same division for forty-one years until he retired in 1958. Jim Lathrop was hired as a fireman on the Auburn Division in 1937, was promoted to engineer in 1947 and to the position of assistant road foreman of engines in January 1953. He resigned from that position in June 1955. After the Auburn Division engines were added to the mainline roster in the late 1960's, Jim qualified for road service and began working first as fireman and later as engineer from Sayre west to Buffalo and Suspension Bridge and east to Lehigh, Pennsylvania.

He retired on September 25, 1975 after bringing the hotshot Apollo piggyback train west from Lehigh to Sayre. Jim has resided in Sayre for many years and has a wealth of stories about his railroad experiences. He is one of the very few Auburn or Cortland train or enginemen still alive to tell about his years working for the Lehigh Valley.

Jim, like almost every railroad man, can relate many fascinating stories about his experiences including those battling upstate New York snowstorms. Probably the most unusual story occurred one

day about 1946 when he was called as a fireman on an inspection train. It was the annual custom for Lehigh Valley Railroad presidents to inspect every mile of main track throughout the 1,200 mile system. On this summer day, a crew was called, "boarded" in Lehigh Valley terminology, for 7 a.m. at Sayre to take President Felix Gerard in his private observation car over the entire former Auburn Division from Sayre to Canastota to North Fair Haven to Geneva and back through Cayuga Junction to Ithaca and finally back to Sayre by 11 p.m. within the sixteen-hour time limit for crews.

The five crew members were all Auburn men qualified to operate on the five lines within their seniority district: from Sayre to North Fair Haven, Sayre to Binghamton, Freeville to Cortland, Auburn to Ithaca, and Cayuga Junction to Geneva. The train consisted of a K-4 class locomotive, the heaviest allowed on these branches because of bridge weight restrictions, a rider coach for the trainmen and the president's private car. The passenger extra moved without incident, stopping in Cortland to pick up a pilot engineer from the Cortland Branch seniority district who was qualified to handle the train to Canastota and back. The train would stop occasionally along the way for the president to inspect the property

or talk to an important customer.

It was the custom for train and enginemen to be served lunch and dinner in the private car dining room by the cook and waiter who rode with the president. The train and enginemen took turns having their meals while the train continued on its journey. They were impressed by the hospitality of the cook and waiter as well as the opulent furnishings in the dining area. The president was invariably accompanied by an assistant, the general manager, the division superintendent and one or two other local operating officials all of whom rode in the rear of the car.

While the Lehigh Valley Railroad had been led through the years by many well respected presidents, Felix Gerard was not one of them. It is not clear whether this was because he had come over from the Pennsylvania Railroad, his actions as president or previously as vice-president and general manager or his obvious personal shortcomings. Of course, many men who worked their entire lives on these obscure and distant branch lines in upstate New York felt the people in the New York City headquarters had little interest in their well-being. The fact was that the mainline men bore the same feelings about this particular president.

The railroad property and its employees had been worn down by the

gine 2089, former power for the mainline Black Diamond and now without streamlining, began appearing in Cortland on a regular basis.

In 1947, rumors circulated that Lehigh Valley Railroad President Felix Gerard had contacted milk producers encouraging them to switch to trucks for transportation of their dairy products to markets. When the shippers complied and milk traffic revenues vanished, the railroad

sought regulatory permission to discontinue the remaining milk trains. The April 25, 1948 public timetables appeared without trains 327 and 322 operating between Cortland and DeRuyter. One year later, the timetables suggested that riders consult agents for the times of trains 322 and 323, the remaining daily except Sunday and holidays trains operating between Cortland and East Ithaca.

tremendous volume of traffic during World War II. The veteran railroaders, especially train and enginemen, worked successive sixteen-hour days handling the surge of war materials, troop trains and passenger traffic. On the former Auburn Division, the heavy volume of traffic was handled primarily by the thirty-year-old Class J-25 hand fired 4-6-0's. The newer and larger locomotives were needed on the mainline.

Whatever ill feelings the men had toward President Gerard, it didn't detract from their proper and prompt movement of his train over the several branches that day. The Cortland Branch pilot engineer was especially careful to slow down on the winding track between Cazenovia and Canastota so as to not to unsettle the very important people on the private car. Nor would he want to damage the carefully maintained eighty-three-foot observation car when the tree branches that grew along the right of way would scrape the sides of the car.

By early evening, the train was moving along the shore of forty-mile-long Cayuga Lake on the Auburn and Ithaca Branch. It backed into the Ithaca station about 8 p.m. At this point, a pilot passenger engineer qualified on the mainline and Ithaca Branch climbed into the locomotive to take over from the Auburn man. The conductor came forward with a clearance card, train order and instruc-

tions to make good time to Sayre so that the private car could be serviced and readied to move back to New York City on the rear of one of the overnight trains. The new engineer was a stranger to Fireman Lathrop and the rest of the crew.

The engineer received the proceed signal from the conductor and opened the throttle. By the time the train had passed the first curve east of Ithaca, the train was climbing to the maximum speed of 70 miles an hour. It is 21.3 miles from Ithaca to Van Etten Junction and 14.8 miles beyond on the mainline to Sayre. The first 13.9 miles from Ithaca to North Spencer features a 2 percent ascending grade and 17 curves with speed restrictions varying from 60 down to 40 miles per hour. Eastbound passenger trains were allowed 21 minutes or an average 40 miles per hour to climb the grade to North Spencer out of deference to the steep and winding track.

There is a long straightaway from the first to the second curve which was posted in the employee timetable as limited to 50 miles per hour. Fireman Lathrop, not familiar with the route, nevertheless noticed that the train barely slowed down for the second curve or the third curve which was posted for 55 miles per hour. The locomotive was lurching on each curve. The train slowed slightly for next two curves which were supposedly limited to 40 miles per hour. The locomo-

tive and train were whipping from left to right to left to right around the reverse curves that were part of the railroad's climb to North Spencer. Fireman Lathrop could hear the four sharp blasts on the communicating whistle signal from the officials in the rear of the train instructing the engineer to reduce speed but the engineer continued to round each curve well above the proper speed limits.

One can only imagine the turmoil in the private car as the officials, furniture, fancy dinner ware and beverages were tossed from side to side, not just once but on every one of the 21 curves on the winding Ithaca Branch plus through the 25 m.p.h. turnout and 15 m.p.h. crossover at Van Etten Junction. The four blasts of the communicating signal were being sounded repeatedly but the engineer paid no heed.

The train finally came to stop at Sayre station and within a moment or two Jim Lathrop could hear the loud voices of angry officials as they approached the right hand side of the locomotive. Jim said he moved discretely to the right side to hear what was to transpire. The engineer was ordered off the locomotive and asked to identify himself. The next words to the engineer were: "Get off the property! You are fired!" He was fired.

Six months later, Jim Lathrop learned the engineer had been rehired.



From an era gone: Train 324 takes on water at Cazenovia in the late 1940's. Passenger traffic had dwindled, so freight trains became mixed freight and passenger trains with the addition of a coach at the end. Engine 1140 provides the power. Diesels will soon replace steam.

In 1948, the Lehigh Valley purchased its first 1,500 horsepower diesel road switchers including one Baldwin (#200) and two Alco (#210 and #211) locomotives for branch line and main-line local freight service. This power appeared occasionally on the overnight Sayre freight run and continued north to Canastota on Train 325 and returning on Train 324 to Cortland and the night job to Sayre. Five more Alcos were ordered.

In 1949, the five-day work week was established for telegraphers and many other crafts but not for train and enginemen. Henceforth, most wayside stations were closed on Saturdays as well as Sundays.

The September 25, 1949, timetable showed a 3 p.m. departure of Train 322 from Cortland and 4:30 p.m. departure of Train 323 from East Ithaca subject, of course, to delay. Four months later, the service was cut to Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays only.



Train 323 leaves East Ithaca in 1946, approaching Judd Falls Road.

FIGHTING SNOW IN THE 1940'S

Throughout EC&N history, winter weather conditions frequently hindered daily operations. The 1940's were no exceptions. Wind-driven snow often covered the right of way and filled the numerous cuts, especially north of Cortland. This area was part of the Snow Belt which extends south and east of Lake Ontario. Snow plows were sent out to battle the elements but the passage of regular trains and occasional use of snowplows was often not enough. Any interruption of service for more than a day or two had a serious effect on the delivery of anthracite coal used in heating of homes, schools and businesses. Every winter produced stories of trains, often pushing snowplows, heading north from Cortland only to vanish for hours or days in blizzard conditions.

The winter of 1946 was a particularly tough year with the E&C branch becoming plugged at one time both north and south of Cortland. First, two locomotives and a plow encountered fifteen-foot high tightly packed drifts north of Cazenovia and became trapped. The crew was rescued and brought back to Cortland. Another plow was sent but became damaged before it could reach the first plow. Then the southbound Cortland-Sayre night freight became snow-bound at Malloryville between Cortland and Freeville. An emergency crew worked into the next day in an attempt to dig the freight train out of the drifts. Thirty shovelers were brought from Sayre by special train to help dig out the train along with switches and sidings which had to be cleared before badly needed loaded freight

cars could be moved. Almost two weeks passed before the line to Canastota was cleared and back to normal

In 1947, a double-headed freight train became derailed near Chittenango Falls and the crew stranded in a nearby farmhouse for four days and nights. Several more days passed before the train was re-railed, the line cleared and service resumed.



Snowplow Extra north of New Woodstock, ready to go back into battle with hardpacked drifts that have derailed engines and plows near Delphi.



Digging out the tender of a derailed snowplow train near Delphi Falls.

Two years later, operations became snarled again after the area experienced a steady fall of snow and forty-eight hours of howling winds which reached a velocity of more than 40 miles per hour at times. Train 325, the daily mixed train northbound from Cortland, due in Cazenovia about 9:45 a.m., failed to arrive one morning and until just before noon the next day was still snowbound in a pass between New Woodstock and Delphi Falls station. This train left Cortland shortly after its scheduled 8 a.m. departure time the first day but was delayed at Truxton waiting for a southbound plow extra returning from Canastota.

Train 325 then proceeded north until it reached a pass north of New Woodstock, where it became stalled in deep snow at 3 o'clock. The

plow was again sent for, returned to New Woodstock but was unable to reach the snowbound train. Late that day two engines and a coach arrived with a crew of fifty men to help shovel out the train. Working all night and until noon the following day, the men finally broke the train loose and one by one its nine cars were drawn back to New Woodstock.

Service north of New Woodstock was further delayed when the snowplow sent to clear the line was derailed near Delphi Falls and it was necessary to bring a wrecker from Auburn to re-rail and remove the damaged plow. Still another plow was obtained and the line finally cleared to Cazenovia and Canastota.

Undoubtedly, the worst winter of the decade was in 1945 when heavy snows and high winds snarled the area from January through late April. The railroad was still plowing snow in late April. The most difficult stretch of time that year was in late January and early February when the line between Cazenovia and Canastota was closed for sixteen days. The last trip over the route was on January 22.

Keeping the Cortland Branch open was hardly a priority in the Buffalo Division headquarters or in the Bethlehem system-operating headquarters with wartime mainline traffic of much greater importance. Normal communications went through the dispatchers' office in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. There were times when the railroad's telephone and telegraph lines were out of order between Cortland and division and system headquarters. Local officials were expected to solve their own problems.

However, track supervisors were supposed to get approval from higher ups in the system operating headquarters in Bethlehem before calling out the snow plow and men to clear the

SNOW IN THE '40'S



Packed snow has derailed this plow near Delphi Falls.

Wrecking crane has pulled a snowplow back on track near Delphi Falls.



SNOW IN THE '40'S

Train order dated April 27, 1945 for Snowplow Extra Engine 2017 and regularly scheduled trains dealing with another heavy snow storm on the northern end of the E&C branch.

tracks. Ken Rice remembers the local supervisor of tracks ordered the snow plow and men in late January only to be overruled by system headquarters officials.

Six days later, a rotary plow tried to open the line but became disabled as it tried to clear the hard packed drifts. Three days later on January 31 a double-headed plow with a train carrying a gang of laborers headed north from Cazenovia only to be buried in snow between Chittenango Falls and Blakeslee. Clearing snow north of Cazenovia was further delayed when a plow headed north from Cortland became stuck near Truxton and had to return to Cortland to be coaled and serviced. A shortage of crews further delayed clearing the line.

Meanwhile, a shortage of coal for heating homes and businesses developed in Cazenovia and other communities. The local fuel administrator in Cazenovia reported that a very small supply of coal was on hand and it was necessary to ration amounts for home heating. Only 150 to 200 pounds of hard (anthracite) coal were dealt to each customer and each customer had to make his own delivery.

Finally on February 7, a train with three locomotives, two plows, one facing forward and a second on the rear facing backward, a coach carrying a gang of fifty shovelers and a caboose for the train crew, headed north from Cazenovia. The shovelers dug out the train that had been stalled since January 31 north of Chittenango Falls and brought it back to Cazenovia. It headed north again and finally reached Canastota. It was several days before the supplies of coal were replenished along the line.

The situation confronting the crew that was buried in snow north of Chittenango Falls on January 31 was another story, one that was reported in the *Syracuse Post Standard* on February 14, 1945:

Railroad Men Recover from Perils of Storm

CORTLAND—Two veteran Lehigh Valley Railroad men, both of Cortland, nearly lost their lives in an effort to get assistance to a snowplow crew trapped northeast of Cazenovia in a blizzard two weeks ago—January 31.

The two veterans are Ara E. Woodworth, conductor for nearly forty years, and William E. Steimer, who had charge of the snowplow and is present supervisor of tracks for the Lehigh Valley. Mr. Steimer recovered quickly, but Mr. Woodworth, older, is just getting around after the ordeal which nearly cost them their lives. Railroad men as a group are pretty close mouthed. They do not talk much. Being accustomed to hard going year after year out of doors,

they accept the weather pretty much as it comes and let it go at that.

But in this instance, one of the worst blizzards in years nearly cost Woodworth and Steimer their lives. Unusually heavy snowfall this winter resulted in snowbound conditions on the Lehigh Valley between Cazenovia and Canastota.

It was on January 22 the last trip was made over that route. A big rotary plow went into the area on January 28, but was disabled before it got far into the huge drifts, packed tight as concrete. On January 31, two locomotives, a plow and a car were sent into the area to try to break open the drifts. As the snowplow crashed into the drifts, there was a cave-in of high snow walls behind the train and the locomotives could neither go forward or backward.

The train was trapped and so were the crew of 30 men with it. Conductor Woodworth in the afternoon had a few moments with his pocket camera for snapshots. Then the blizzard set in. Woodworth, on the road since 1905, was familiar with the territory having worked nearby in previous years of railroading. Personally he knew Donald Ball, Chittenango RD, and he knew just about where the Ball house should be and that Mr. Ball should have a telephone. The veteran conductor started alone in the storm to bring aid to his fellow workers.

When eight-foot drifts blocked a roadway he started on a different route through the field. This was about 4 p.m. Somewhere in the middle of that field, Mr. Woodworth knew he was doomed if he kept on. The 50-mile an hour wind and snow strangled him. He could hardly breathe and going was extremely difficult because of the drifts. He had decided to turn back and was finding the way by traces of his own footsteps when Mr. Steimer overtook him. "We have got to get to that house," Woodworth recalls Steimer yelling at him in the storm. Then it got dark. Both men struggled against the fury

of the storm.

Frequently they sat down. Then when they felt renewed strength and "got their wind" back they started on. It was 4 p.m. when Woodworth left the trapped train and it was 10 p.m. when the two men lurched into the Ball home.

During the ordeal both men suffered much, it is now revealed. Steimer at one point fell thru a spring-like place where it was soft and struck a boulder injuring his knee. Finally, Woodworth glimpsed a clump of trees and he located the Ball house. The family was asleep. Mrs. Ball used all the flour she had in baking bread and rolls. She found eggs and some pork and had plenty of hot coffee. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Ball cooked all night long and by morning had enough food prepared to give the blizzard trapped train crew a hearty breakfast.

Despite blizzards and everything else, railroad men have orders and railroad lives are regulated by those orders. An annulment order had to be gotten out before anything else could move on the division. That annulment order was gotten into proper hands and Steimer fought his way back to the trapped crew and they got plenty hot coffee and food.

The next problem was to get the crew back home. The highway was blocked. A county snowplow from Oneida battling for hours finally smashed open the road and the crew got aboard a truck. From Cazenovia they went by train to Syracuse and then back to Cortland.

Later on February 7, three big locomotives attached to a plow went into the area and snaked out the trapped train and then broke open the drifts to Canastota.

"There were three hours we did not know where we were," said Woodworth in telling Wednesday of the ordeal. "I've never heard Chittenango Valley roar like it did that night," said the veteran conductor who was finally getting around for the first time since the ordeal near Blakeslee.



Train 324 Engine 217 approaches the DL&W crossing at Cortland Junction tower in the summer of 1951, a part of the final years of the Cortland Branch.

END OF THE LINE, 1950 TO 1967

The year 1950 was a turning point for the Elmira and Cortland Branch. Passenger service was discontinued between Cortland and East Ithaca on April 30, 1950, leaving only the daily except Sundays and holidays mixed trains 324 and 325 operating between Cortland and Canastota. Freight service between Freeville and East Ithaca would henceforth be handled by the Cortland-Sayre night freight as needed. Engine and train crew requirements were cut to four crews, one each for the Canastota run, the Cortland yard engine, the Cortland-Sayre night run and the Sayre-Horseheads job. Only three locomotives were needed: the yard engine at Cortland (#115), the Sayre-Horseheads job (often #232), and a road switcher (#200 or #211) or a steam engine to cover the road work from Sayre to Cortland to Canastota with a side trip to East Ithaca.

Train dispatching of the Elmira and Cortland Branch and the rest of the former Auburn Division was transferred from Wilkes-Barre to division headquarters in Buffalo. Stations along the branch were being closed or paired one by one and company telephone and telegraph lines abandoned on the northern end of the Elmira and Cortland Branch.

Steam locomotives were quickly disappearing from service on western upstate New York railroads. The Erie and DL&W as well as the Lehigh Valley were mostly dieselized on the western ends of their systems. The New York Central was converting to diesel power. Only the Delaware & Hudson, Pennsylvania and Balti-

more & Ohio railroads still relied on their steam rosters for motive power.

For one young student of transportation turned Extra List towerman, Cortland Junction was the place to work in the summer of 1950. From his vantage point at the crossing of the Lackawanna's Binghamton-Oswego branch and Lehigh Valley's Elmira and Cortland Branch, he could watch former mainline steam locomotives in passenger and freight service day and night. The DL&W was using 1150 series 4-6-4's that once hauled the Lackawanna Limited. Their freight trains were being pulled by 1600 series 4-8-4's that, until recently, had been charged with responsibility for moving the DL&W's top priority mainline freight traffic. The Lehigh Valley was using K-6b 4-6-2 Engine 2089 between Sayre and Canastota.

Cortland Junction was like a scene from the past. Just a stone-throw away was the DL&W roundhouse, turntable and servicing facility which until recently had housed the 0-6-0 Cortland yard engine and a 2-6-0 road engine used on the Cincinnatus Branch. The vintage steam locomotives had just been replaced by a newly-acquired 44-ton diesel yard engine. A half dozen migrant labor camp cars were kept on a side-track to house imported laborers who maintained the heavy-duty Binghamton-Syracuse-Oswego tracks during summer months.

Towermen wrestled with near half-century old armstrong levers that moved the trackside rods, switch-points, switch-locks and lower quadrant signals including one signal a half mile south of the tower. The tower had a pot-bellied



Engine 211 at New Woodstock with Train 324 in 1951.

coal stove, hand-wound wall clock, 32 levers, overhead track display board, and four bare light bulbs. Telephones and telegraph instruments were located on a table overlooking the crossing. At the far end of the tower was a bunk-bed for the comfort of towermen and a closet which contained a home-made combination of wires, clips, battery and door-bell that were brought out after midnight and connected to help alert the third-trick towerman of approaching southbound DL&W trains. A very loud alarm bell was in service to warn of approaching northbound trains. There was no running water or other conveniences. An old outhouse was located under a nearby shade tree.

By September 1950, two 1,500 horsepower Alco road switchers in Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad paint schemes began appearing on the mainline in local freight service. Several months later, they emerged from Sayre shops in gleaming Cornell red paint schemes numbered 217 and 218. By the spring of 1951, they were assigned to the Cortland and Auburn branches on a more or less regular basis thus ending the era of steam

power that began eighty years earlier. Gone were the reassuring sounds of steam locomotives passing through the valleys, rural villages and hamlets. The sounds of a half a dozen or more steam-powered trains passing by each day and night had been reassuring signs that all was well to the folks who lived in isolated communities and farmhouses along the line. Somehow the sound of a diesel that came perhaps once a day was not the same.

Meanwhile at Cortland Junction, the mighty Lackawanna steam locomotives had been replaced by 1,500 horsepower Alco road switchers operating in pairs on freight trains and GM F Class diesels powering the passenger trains. The steam era was over in this part of western up-state New York.

By late 1951, the Lehigh Valley under the leadership of President Cedric Major had succeeded in revitalizing the railroad's financial position by realigning its debt structure, modernizing its locomotive fleet and introducing other cost saving measures. The railroad's common stock increased in value from \$5 to \$20 in less than two years much to the surprise of many observers. Unfortunately, these steps were soon offset by a serious decline in operating revenues. Several factors contributed to the railroad's problems.

Anthracite coal traffic which once comprised a major share of the railroad's traffic and over two-thirds of the Elmira and Cortland Branch freight tonnage plummeted as home-owners and businesses converted to oil and natural gas fuel. Half the nation's consumption of anthracite coal disappeared between 1920 and 1950 and half the remainder between 1950 and 1960.

Competition from for-hire and private truckers climbed dramatically in post-World War II years. Federal and state governments launched a major highway building program that made truck transportation faster and more cost-effective. Construction of the east-west New

York State Thruway across upstate New York in the 1950's and the north-south Interstate Highway 81 through Cortland in the early 1960's gave truckers high-speed low-grade routes to move freight in direct competition with area railroads. Development of multi-axle tractor-trailer combinations powered by high-horsepower motors brought down the cost of moving freight over new publicly-funded super-highways and local roads. Newly established for-hire and private truckers were poised to compete with local railroads and they did. Less-than-carload freight that had been handled for decades by railroads was soon lost as truckers were able to provide door-to-door service. It wasn't long before significant amounts of carload freight were lost to truckers who typically offered competitive

freight rates combined with faster and more dependable service.

The railroad industry was encumbered by an elaborate fare structure developed decades earlier when it had a monopoly over nearly all interstate and intrastate freight traffic. Rate changes were subject to regulatory approval in a process designed to prevent carriers from selectively discriminating against shippers.

Railroad managers were ill-prepared to cope with fast growing competition from a new breed of trucking companies that were hungry for business. Many executives grew up in the days when railroads were monopolies and competition was scarce. Indeed, for many years most of the competition was among paralleling railroads not with the emerging trucking industry. Senior railroaders were reluctant to give up operating and sales practices in spite of the changing times.

Other sources of railroad income were declining in the 1950's. Passenger service revenues dropped as mail and express traffic was diverted to trucks and people found auto travel superior to rail travel. Teletype and long-distance tele-



ABOVE: Alco-built Engine 530 and second unit are ready to leave Cortland for Auburn with a circus train on a Sunday morning in August 1951.



RIGHT: Engine 218 passes near McLean in 1951, bringing the Sayre night freight run back to Cortland.

phone service rendered telegraph communication obsolete.

At the corporate level, railroad management focused its attention and resources on mainline long-haul service and had little incentive to maintain branch-line service or operations. The Cortland Branch was especially vulnerable to

trucking competition. Rail service became even less competitive as traffic volumes declined and schedules curtailed.

Beginning in 1950, the Lehigh Valley closed an average of one station each year on the former Elmira and Cortland Branch until there were only eight agent-telegraphers left out of

THE WITHIAMS, A FAMILY OF TELEGRAPHERS

Alfred T. Withiam was born March 11, 1892 in Burdett, New York, the son of Fred and Ella Withiam. By some coincidence, this was the same year the Lehigh Valley Railroad was completing construction of its mainline from Van Etten Junction through Burdett, Geneva and beyond to gain access to its terminal facilities in Buffalo, New York. His father was hired as an agent-telegrapher by the Lehigh Valley to work on the new railroad while his extended family was in the fruit and vegetable business in the nearby Town of Hector. A second son, Archie Withiam was born in 1900.

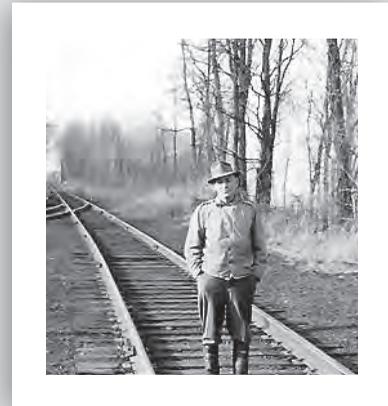
Al Withiam was hired by the Lehigh Valley as an assistant baggage agent in Geneva, New York at the age of 18 in the fall of 1909. He studied telegraphy in his spare time and passed the telegrapher's exam the following spring. His first assignment on the Extra List was at North Spencer on the Ithaca Branch. From there, he received assignments at a variety of stations on the Seneca Division mainline and Ithaca Branch between Athens, Pennsylvania and Manchester, New York. Two years after beginning his railroad career, he left the Lehigh Valley, was hired by the New York Central, and worked as a telegrapher at their many signal towers between Syracuse and Buffalo.

Like many other men his age, Al Withiam decided to explore the West. He headed for Chicago in late summer

of 1912 and was hired by the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad as a telegrapher. His first assignment was in Casper, Wyoming, 1,127.8 miles west of Chicago near the end of a C&NW 800 mile long rural branch line. Casper was a developing oil-producing town thirty hours by train from Chicago, halfway across the country from Chicago to San Francisco and two days by train from his hometown of Burdett. From Casper, he was given temporary assignments at a variety of rural towns along the branch line as far east as Fremont, Nebraska. Three months later in December 1912, he apparently had seen enough of the West and headed home to upstate New York.

His next venture was to Montreal, Quebec, in late December 1912 where he was hired by the Canadian Pacific. His assignments were in a variety of communities in Quebec in the province where French is spoken almost exclusively. Three months of exposure to Canadian winter weather were enough and he left the CP and returned home. He was re-hired by the Lehigh Valley in the spring of 1913 at the age of 21 and returned to work on the Seneca Division. Two years later in June 1915, Al Withiam decided to migrate to the LV's Auburn Division and began working in the division headquarters in Auburn.

Ten months later in early 1916, he bid on the position of relay telegra-



Al Withiam, fifty years a telegrapher.

pher in Cortland and within six months was promoted to the position of train dispatcher at the age of 24 years. His brother Archie was hired as a student telegrapher in November 1917 at the age of 17 years and joined the Extra Operator List on the Seneca Division several months later. His work took him to stations and towers from Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania to Manchester, New York. He remained with the Lehigh Valley until 1943 when he left the company and went to work as a telegrapher for the New York Central Railroad on the Fall Brook Line between Corning and Geneva.

As a dispatcher, Al Withiam worked by telephone and telegraph with the telegraphers at the thirty-three open stations from Elmira to Camden. One of these was a 20-year-old telegrapher in Erin named Anna Hollenbeck. The young

thirty-three who worked through 1930. Cortland Junction tower was closed in 1954 and the interlocking remotely controlled by the agent-telegraphers at Cortland Station. Truxton and DeRuyter stations were paired with one man covering both locations. Trains 325 and 324 continued to operate between Cortland and Canas-

tota as daily except Sunday and holiday second class trains but were not advertised as available to passengers after 1954. The venerable combination baggage/coach passenger car that trailed the trains was replaced by a caboose.

In early 1960, the leadership of the railroad changed with the death of President Cedric Ma-

lady lived on a farm only 300 yards from the station. She was raised by parents who had resided in this very rural area for many years. It wasn't long before they became acquainted and were married in 1919. Anna Hollenbeck Withiam left her job with the Lehigh Valley to raise a family. A year later, the Cortland train dispatchers were transferred to Auburn and the Withiams moved as well. Al Withiam worked as an Auburn Division train dispatcher until 1932 when the division was absorbed into the Buffalo Division with headquarters in Buffalo. The dispatcher's jobs were transferred to Sayre, Pennsylvania.

Rather than uproot his family and move to Sayre, Al Withiam decided to exercise his seniority rights as a telegrapher and became agent-telegrapher at Locke. He bought a home there which would become the family home for over forty years. There Al and Anna Withiam raised their children including Louis Withiam who was born in 1933.

During World War II, a shortage of qualified telegraphers developed as older men retired or died. The railroad's management persuaded Mrs. Anna Withiam to return to work as an extra telegrapher to fill temporary vacancies as needed. She returned to the Lehigh Valley as an Extra List telegrapher on March 10, 1944 and worked at several stations not far from Locke. One winter's day in 1945 with a major storm approaching, she took her 12-year-old son

Louis with her to fill in at Owasco Lake, a remote hamlet between Moravia and Auburn. A huge storm dumped several feet of snow on the area and the railroad came to a complete standstill. The roads and tracks were blocked with snow. Mrs. Withiam and son Louis were marooned there for several days. When the first train arrived the following day, the trainmen dropped off food and other supplies. It was several days before the railroad got back to normal operations, highways were re-opened and Mrs. Withiam and son could return home.

Al Withiam transferred to Moravia as agent-telegrapher in 1945 and Mrs. Withiam became the assigned agent-telegrapher at Owasco Lake in 1947. When Owasco Lake Station closed in 1951, Mrs. Withiam returned to the extra list but became agent at East Ithaca for several years beginning in 1956. Young Louis Withiam joined the Lehigh Valley as an Extra List telegrapher in June 1954 while attending college. He worked at several locations on the Cortland Branch including Sheds Corners before graduating from college and entering military service as a U. S. Marine in 1956. Al Withiam returned to Locke in 1957.

Lou Withiam, when recalling his youth and time working for the railroad, especially remembers that the railroad employees were like a family, invariably helping each other during difficult times. One memorable occasion occurred one day in Locke when the local freight was

switching cars. A brakeman slipped while getting off a moving freight car. One leg slipped under the wheels of the car and was severed. A fellow trainman saw the accident and saved his life by using his bandanna to serve as a tourniquet to stop the bleeding. Another crew member rushed to a doctor's home fortunately located only fifty yards away. Another crew member summoned the funeral director located in Locke who used his hearse as an ambulance to rush the badly injured trainman to the closest hospital. The trainman's life was saved thanks to the quick thinking and fast moving trainmen.

Both he and Mrs. Withiam retired on February 1, 1960, he with over fifty years of railroad service as a telegrapher and she with twenty years of service. On February 5, 1960, Buffalo Division Superintendent J.E. Crowley wrote Al and Anna Withiam a letter saying:

"Please accept my congratulations upon having completed, both of you, many years of service with the Lehigh Valley Railroad, and retiring with perfectly clear records. You not only have outstanding lengths of service with the Company, but your records, having no marks against them, are in themselves worthy of recognition. I want to express to you in this manner my wishes for many happy years of retirement and to give you the recognition which your records deserve."

Mr. Withiam died in 1970 and Mrs. Withiam died in 1998 at the age of 100.



Venerable combination baggage-coach on the rear of Train 324 after arriving at Cortland Yard in 1951.

for. He was succeeded by interim presidents C. W. Baker and C. M. Chester until the Pennsylvania Railroad gained control in 1962 and installed their own Allen J. Greenough as president. The October 28, 1962 operating timetable still carried trains 325 and 324 as daily except Sunday and holiday trains between Cortland and Canastota. In the years to follow, more stations were closed throughout the system and portions of the mainline reduced from double track to single track CTC operation. The Cortland Branch freight trains were eventually dropped from the operating timetables and run as extra trains two or three times a week as traffic warranted.

In October 1965, John F. Nash, former vice-president of operations of the New York Central Railroad, was installed as president of the Lehigh Valley. Mr. Nash had directed the modernization of the vast NYC System and abandonment of countless under-performing branch lines. It came as no surprise in 1966 when the railroad filed a petition with the Interstate Commerce Commission to abandon the Cortland Branch between a point a mile north of Cortland Junc-

tion and Canastota. There was strong public opposition since there were still freight customers along the forty-eight mile route that found the Lehigh Valley's service and freight rates preferable to trucks. Hearings and proceedings dragged on into 1967. A local group offered to buy and continue to operate the northern portion of the branch as a shortline railroad. Meanwhile, the track conditions deteriorated and derailments became common. The shortline promoters were unsuccessful in gaining support for their venture. Finally in November 1967 the ICC authorized the abandonment of the railroad north of Cortland Junction but delayed the effective date until December 26, 1967 at the request of freight customers.

The fateful last day came on December 30, 1967. Engine 215 left Cortland in the morning with a crew of five, a supervisor and two invited guests to handle and witness the end of service that began almost 100 years ago. Their job was to pick up the empty cars that had delivered the final loads of freight to loyal customers several days earlier. The locomotive and caboose headed north on a bright sunny morning plowing through about a foot of snow past closed stations that had been the centers of activities in villages and hamlets decades ago. They picked up two cars on the 18.6-mile stretch of track between Cortland and DeRuyter built in 1872 by the New York and Oswego Midland Railroad. From DeRuyter, the train headed north on the 13.9-mile original Cazenovia, Canastota and DeRuyter Railroad which had opened for service in November 1878.

The short train reached the 1,390 foot summit at Sheds Corners and soon stopped at New Woodstock where the crew set off the empty cars behind the station to be retrieved on the return trip. The train passed Delphi, a site of many a snowbound train and Rippleton before making a brief stop at Cazenovia. Engine 215 and caboose departed for Canastota over the treach-

erous 14.5-mile line that had been an operating hazard if not nightmare since the Cazenovia and Canastota Railroad began service ninety-seven years earlier. The locomotive treaded gingerly over the track that had been cause of countless derailments and unsuccessful snowplowing expeditions. Once over the summit at Mats Siding, it headed down the steep grade, curving around the top of Perryville Falls, past the abandoned Worlocks Quarry and along the steep hillside. This was the route of many a runaway car or train. Extra 215 arrived about noontime in Canastota without any mishaps.

The crew turned their locomotive on the turntable, paused briefly for photographs, picked up an empty box car, tied onto the cabooses and headed south for the last time. The train twisted and turned around the multitude of sharp curves climbing the 1.5 to 2 percent grade on a right of way that looked out over snow-covered farm land and distant farmhouses. This was the line that one early writer described as so crooked that you had to ride backwards to see the scenery. This is the line described by one state commissioner as "...exceedingly torturous, being but a succession of curves...giving the sense of insecurity, indeed of absolute danger, so great to a passenger traveling at a high rate of speed around curves that he will not ride except when positively compelled to." And these words were written in springtime weather.

This was the area where chronically high winds blew heavy winter snows without mercy across the tracks and filled the cuts. This was the part of the railroad that challenged every operating man since the first train rode the 56-pound rails almost a century ago. As the crew passed the distant farmhouses, some undoubtedly would recall the times when their trains became snowbound. The train and enginemen had no choice but to trudge through deep snows to the safety of the nearest farmhouse, call the dispatcher by telephone when available or send

for help, report their location and situation and then wait hours if not days for help. This, of course, was before the days of two-way railroad radio communication.

Fortunately, the farmers along the way had become accustomed to the railroad's annual fight against nature and sympathized with the crews' predicaments. They were invariably hospitable and prepared to provide food and shelter until the train and enginemen were rescued and trains moving again. This was practically an annual problem although the location varied from year to year. The crew members became acquainted with the farm families and their cooking prowess. One passenger on this last trip, an engineer from another line, later quipped that when the crews simply could not complete their trips because of the snow-packed right of way, they made sure to stop within walking distance of a farmhouse where the lady of the house was



Engine 214 with snowplow ahead is buried in a snow-filled cut headed north on a grade known as Falls Hill between Chittenango Falls and Blakeslee. The Cortland yard Engine 115 in the distance waits for snow-shovelers to clear snow from around the locomotive.



In later years, two Alco units are in Cortland to try to clear tracks to Canastota.

known to be a good cook.

Extra 215 passed by Perryville Falls, crested the summit just beyond Blakeslee, and headed downhill towards Chittenango Falls past more remote farm houses. No doubt Engineer Nick Fiske thought of a cold winter night twenty years ago when he was a fireman on a double-headed freight train that left Cortland earlier that day. The train reached Canastota but had problems switching in heavy snows in the Canastota yard. On the way back to Cortland, the train encountered wind-driven snow climbing the grade to Blakeslee and down the grade to-

RAILROAD SNOWPLOW RACES UNCHECKED THROUGH TOWN

Residents were still shaking their heads wonderingly yesterday over the fantastic ride of two men and a railroad snowplow unchecked over a seven mile downhill run, past unguarded highway crossings and into a railroad signal tower in the heart of Canastota Monday evening (February 24) without causing death or serious injury

Listed in good condition at the Lenox Memorial hospital Monday evening were the plow's driver Nicholas Yacovone, 57, and Michael Stack, 70, Lehigh Valley Railroad employees from Cortland. Yacovone, who rode the deadly bladed plow throughout the trip, suffered first and second degree burns of the face and arms and Stack suffered a shoulder fracture when he jumped into a snowbank about three miles south of the village.

Workmen righted the plow Tuesday and started the work of repairing hundreds of feet of twisted rail damaged in

the Lehigh Valley switching yards just south of the New York Central tracks.

Officials said the Lehigh Valley Railroad push plow, No. 96613, nearly as big as a locomotive but with no power except to raise and lower its deadly V-shaped blade, became uncoupled from the engine which was pushing it at Perryville at the top of a 7-mile grade.

The plow has its own braking system but either it failed or was burned out in the two men's breathless battle to stop it.

The plow streaked down the snow-covered hillside, gathering speed behind its 15-foot blade extending four to six feet to either side of the track.

It crossed a country road at Cottons and careened onward, reaching the village of Canastota shortly before 5:30 p.m. On Route 5 (the Seneca Turnpike), automatic signals attempted to halt auto traffic as the plow shot past, a

streak of bright metal and red paint. Three more crossings were ahead, Rasbach, Hickory and James Streets.

"It was just plain luck there was no one there," Patrolman John James said.

In the switch yards, No. 96613 jumped its tracks, tearing rails behind it, clipped the stairs of a New York Central signal tower, and fell on its side against the tower, crushing beneath it the signalman's parked auto.

The plow dragged the parked car along for several feet before it smashed into the tower and toppled onto it. The car was owned by the operator of the tower. He lives at 234 Liberty Street, Oneida. Kaier was working upstairs in the tower at the time, said he did not see the plow until he heard the crash.

Moments before the plow hit the tower, the engineer it had left behind got word to Canastota police and fire departments of the loose menace on

wards Chittenango Falls. One of the two locomotives derailed in a snow-filled cut. Crew members remained with the train all night believing help would arrive. The following morning, the firemen drew the fires and the seven man crew hiked a half mile through snowdrifts to the Merrill family farmhouse. It was three days before the roads to the farmhouse could be cleared, the train crew rescued and even longer before the service would be restored between Cazenovia and Canastota.

Soon, Extra 215 was now climbing up the grade to Cazenovia. The one-car train paused for the crew and passengers to have a meal break. Unlike the day, almost 100 years ago, when the first train arrived at Cazenovia to the cheers of

a waiting crowd, only a couple of men were there to greet the final trip or bid the railroadmen farewell. Times had changed. The departure of the last train was of little consequence to the town fathers or people who had little knowledge of the role the railroad played in their village years ago. It would be twenty-five years later when historian Russell Grills, in his fine book *Upland Idyll*, would write a detailed account of life in this community during the nineteenth century and the impact of the coming of the railroads.

The one-car train was heading south now passing Rippleton, site of the former grade crossing with the Syracuse and Chenango Valley Railroad. The S&CV was the first company to arrive in Rippleton back in 1872 and the first

the tracks. Firemen reached the switch yards moments after the plow hit the tower. The alert had been too late to provide guards for the village crossings.

Today, Yacovone smiled from behind his bandages. "It hurts when I smile," he said, "but I'm too happy to do anything else. I'm alive and I can't get over it." He was speechless when taken to the hospital, "It happened so quick I didn't figure there was anything to do but pray. I told Mike that this was it, we were going to be killed for sure.

"Mike told me he was going to jump and not just hang on to die. I told him not to try because we stood a better chance if we rode that blasted plow all the way.

"But he jumped."

"The brakes didn't work and I thought death was waiting for me," the 57-year old Yacovone said.

The engineer who was left behind, Francis Clow of Cortland, chased the plow all the way from Perryville to Canastota. The plow must have reached speeds

of 70 to 80 miles per hour, Clow said.

The plow weighs about 50 tons. Like a giant monster it picked up more speed as it zoomed downhill after reaching the village limits.

Many villagers who reside near the tracks were horrified when they saw the giant machine race by with the engine in hot pursuit. Many expected a major disaster. —*Article from Canastota Bee, February 27, 1958*

Snowplow rests near steps of the New York Central tower in Canastota after a runaway trip downgrade from near Perryville in 1958.





Extra 215 prepares to leave Cazenovia on Dec. 30, 1967 with the final train for Cortland.

to tear up its tracks. After passing Delphi, Extra 215 arrived at New Woodstock under darkening skies. The engine backed onto the station track, coupled onto a handful of empty box cars, and returned to the main track. In a few moments, the last train would leave New Woodstock for the final time, 89 years, 1 month and 22 days after the first scheduled train arrived to be greeted by an excited crowd of people.

Almost 200,000 trains had stopped in New Woodstock through the years bringing passengers, mail, express shipments, and freight of all types and sizes. The railroad had helped this small community and many others in rural upstate New York to market its milk, cheese and other products and improve its way of life. The railroad brought instant communication via telegraph and allowed townspeople to send and receive messages to and from points all over the country and world. The railroad's agent-telegraphers, first George Hugg in the late nineteenth century and then George Thompson from 1902 to 1945, became prominent members of the community. They served in various civic capaci-

ties and owned businesses besides working for the railroad as its local representatives.

Much had changed through the years since the railroads replaced the horse drawn wagons and stagecoaches. Autos, trucks, highways, telephones, radios and many other modern conveniences had rendered railroad service obsolete except to a few loyal customers. The station, trains and people who provided the service were no longer a part of New Woodstock's everyday life.

Engine 215 with its freight cars, caboose, crew and passengers left New Woodstock at 3:20 as sunset was approaching, reached the summit at Sheds Corners and soon passed DeRuyter, once center of considerable rail activity. Here was the junction with the old New York and Oswego Midland Railroad branch line that brought the first trains to this area almost a hundred years ago. The promoters of the old NY&OM had a vision of a railroad line reaching all the way to Buffalo but unfortunately not a clear idea how to get there or the financial resources to accomplish their goal. Fortunately, there were other

railroad owners ready to take over segments of the original line including the 18.6 miles of track from here to Cortland.

It was on Crumb Hill near DeRuyter that Ezra Cornell grew up as a teenager and earned a reputation for hard work. The local historians say he built a home with his own hands and cleared four acres of woodland so he could go to school and pay his way.

The train approached Cortland for the final time with its crew of five: Conductor George McFall, Trainmen Bill and Paul Morse, Engi-

neer Nick Fiske and Fireman Bill Dries, as well as Road Foreman of Engines Victor Cole, Local Union Chairman William McLane and noted rail historian Herbert Trice. They, in effect, represented the hundreds and more train and enginemen and others who had brought reliable railroad service to the dozens of communities in this rural area of upstate New York for almost a century. Wisely, Bill McLane and Herb Trice had the foresight to record this last trip on film so students of transportation like this author could more accurately tell of this historic day.



Last Cortland Branch train picks up freight cars at New Woodstock about 3 p.m. December 30, 1967.



A seemingly ageless photo of the last Freeville station, with Elmira and Cortland Branch tracks running left to right.

THE YEARS SINCE & BEYOND

With the abandonment in 1967 of the Cortland Branch from a mile north of Cortland Junction to Canastota, only 26.3 miles of main track remained of the former 139.2-mile Elmira, Cortland and Northern Railroad. This included the 5.1 mile branch from Elmira to Horseheads and the 21.2-mile section from East Ithaca through Freeville to a point just north of Cortland Junction. The Horseheads section continued to be served by a daily except Sunday freight train originating at Sayre that reached Elmira via the Erie Railroad. The East Ithaca-Cortland Junction section was served by a daily except Sunday freight train that operated between Sayre and Freeville and then beyond to Moravia, East Ithaca and/or Cortland Junction as required. As the condition of the track deteriorated, speed restrictions slowed the progress of the train from Sayre to the point that it would have to operate north one day and south the next. The track became so poor that a 10 mile per hour speed limit was established to minimize the likelihood of derailments.

Freeville became the focal point of the remaining section of the Cortland Branch. It seemed only fitting that this important crossing of the Cortland and Auburn branches would be manned by Kenneth Rice, a veteran telegrapher who had been in charge there for almost a quarter-century. Ken's career as a Lehigh Valley telegrapher began in 1937, only two years after Willis Besemer retired as agent-telegrapher at Besemers when the Spencer-East Ithaca segment of the line was abandoned in 1935. The careers of

these two men encompassed almost the entire history from the first day trains began operating in 1875 from Elmira through East Ithaca, Freeville and Cortland to DeRuyter until 1976 when all the tracks had been abandoned. Both Willis Besemer and Ken Rice were conscientious and loyal railroad men who had devoted almost all their adult lives to caring for the railroad and its customers.

The elimination of service north of Cortland caused the further loss of work for the former Auburn Division employees including the station agents and telegraphers, the enginehouse employees, track workers and others. Years earlier, the Cortland and Auburn rosters of train and enginemen had been merged. With the future of work on the former Auburn Division lines very much in doubt, the firemen sought through their union to be added to the bottom of the Lehigh Valley Railroad mainline seniority rosters in the hope there would be work for them as older mainline men retired. They fully expected to be considered like brand new employees working as firemen even though many had worked for years as qualified engineers. In the interim, they would still be able to exercise their seniority working on what was left of the old Auburn Division. There were almost a half dozen firemen still working on the remaining trains that originated in Sayre, Ithaca and Geneva.

The Lehigh Valley management initially refused to honor the requests of the local firemen's chairman, Bill McLane, even though the railroad would appear to benefit from having a pool of experienced operating employees to fill

vacancies when mainline men retired. Finally, a union representative from Cleveland headquarters persuaded the management to accept the Auburn Division men on mainline rosters. As time passed, the Auburn men began working as firemen on runs east from Sayre to Coxtan and Lehighton and west from Sayre to Buffalo and Suspension Bridge. Eventually they were promoted to work as engineers. These men who had spent most of their working lives moving trains along the rural branch lines of upstate New York were handling trains over two-thirds of Lehigh Valley's mainline stretching from Lehighton, Pennsylvania, to the Niagara Frontier.

Finally in August 1975, the 6.1-mile East Ithaca-Etna segment was taken out of service because of poor track conditions, specifically a washout that was not to be repaired. Later the Etna-Freeville section was closed. In December, 1975, the 5.1 mile Elmira-Horseheads segment was removed from service and Lehigh Valley trains reached Horseheads using the Erie and Pennsylvania Railroads.



Freeville station agent Kenneth Rice at his post in 1958. He started with the Lehigh Valley in 1938 and retired in 1974, working his last 25 years at Freeville.

The Lehigh Valley Railroad was acquired by the newly formed Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) on April 1, 1976. One of the other carriers brought into the new railroad system was the former Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad including its branch line through Cortland. In short time, Conrail discontinued service between Freeville and a point about three miles south (geographically west) of Cortland. Former Lackawanna locomotives and crews traveled over the former Lehigh Valley branch to serve the two lumber yards situated at the end of the track.

Mile by mile, the former Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad tracks were removed except for the three mile segment in Cortland that remains to this day. Most of the right of way was acquired by nearby landowners or the state for walking trails. It became increasingly difficult to find where the trains once ran from village to village, hamlet to hamlet. Most of the railroad's buildings were destroyed or in a few cases moved to other locations. Today, there are only a few traces of this once busy railroad.

Fortunately, several former EC&N stations have been preserved to remind people that a railroad once served their communities. In Cazenovia, the former passenger station has been restored and is now used as a photographer's studio. The stations in Cuyler and New Woodstock have been preserved and maintained by the local historical societies. The Erin Historical Society maintains a center for people to examine memorabilia from years ago including many railroad artifacts. The History Center in Tompkins County in Ithaca, the Cortland County Historical Society in Cortland, and Cornell University Library in Ithaca have large collections of railroad and other historical records. Several other old stations are situated along or near the old railroad.

There are but a few people about today who can recall the days when the old Elmira, Cort-

SINCE & BEYOND

BELOW: Northbound freight train arrives at Canastota with a brakeman ready to protect at road crossings.

RIGHT: Train 324 with Engine 1140 at Cazenovia in the late 1940's.



land & Northern Railroad line was alive, active and provided a valuable service to the public. Only the historians and a few old-timers can recall the days when the Lehigh Valley Railroad played an important role in the lives of the people who lived near its lines. Long gone are the days when farmers brought their milk cans to the creamery each morning seven days a week for loading onto the daily milk train. Long gone are days when buggy whips, horse drawn wagons and penny postcards were part of everyday life.

Locomotives whistling as they approached highway crossings heralding the arrival of trains are now just memories for a handful of people who lived here years ago. Gone are the station agent-telegraph operators who would serve as travel agents and plan a person's vacation trip

looking up train schedules in the 1,200 page *Official Guide*, looking up the train fares and selling the tickets which often required issuing a long series of connected ticket coupons, one for each leg of the journey. No longer is there a station agent to look up the proper freight rate in a freight tariff book for an outgoing freight or express shipment, prepare a bill of lading, waybill and other paperwork, and order an empty freight car for an outgoing shipment.

No more can the youngsters along the old EC&N line wave to the friendly enginemen as the trains passed by or will we hear the trainmen call out "all aboard" before their train left town. We can no longer hear the chatter of the telegraph instruments inside the stations that only a railroad telegrapher, a so-called brass-pounder, could translate into a message to be delivered to a nearby home or business. Gone is the agent-telegrapher's duty to listen while he worked for the distinct combination of dots and dashes of his station's two-letter Morse identification code repeated over and over by a telegrapher miles away to catch his attention and let him know that there was message or telegram to be copied and delivered. No longer will he or she copy train orders from a train dispatcher for

THE MIDNIGHT FREIGHT

By Kenneth W. Rice

In memory oft my thoughts return
 To childhood days, at night I lie
And on my pillow toss and turn
 From eating too much apple pie.
From distance far a muffled roar,
 Was wafted to my listening ear;
Like tempest on a foreign shore,
 The midnight freight was
 drawing near.
The sound increased, 'twas like a gale,
 Upon a stormy crest it seemed.
An earthquake's thunder filled the vale
 And o'er it all its whistle screamed.
Its beaming light shone on ahead,
 And made the darkness light as day,
And from the firebox gleamed a red
 That lighted clouds along the way.
The bell and whistle warned each one:
 "Keep off the track, stay in the clear,
Until I'm safely past and gone
 And then you've naught to dread
 or fear."
The train shook window, door and shade,
 ('Twas near our home the track
 passed by)
And roared on through field and glade,
 Until its sound began to die.
When fin'ly in the distance then
 We could no longer hear the train,
Our clock struck twelve, just like "Big Ben"
 And off to sleep we'd drift again.
And ever and anon would we
 Awake and listen all in vain,
And wonder if 'twould ever be
 No longer runs the midnight train.

SWITCHMAN'S SHANTY

Adapted from poem by George M. Miller
from Railroad Magazine

When I turn back memory's pages
 With mingled smiles and tears,
And review the scenes
 Of many bygone years
I see in the distance
 A little wooden shack;
A dingy, narrow structure,
 Beside the railroad track
The wind blew through its many cracks,
 And whistled 'neath the door,
The juice of many tobacco brands
 Had stained the creaking floor.
I see it 'neath the summer sun;
 Through the winter's drifting snow
As I stood near the station
 In the days of long ago.
There was a dust upon the windows
 And soot upon the wall
The stove was like a smudge-pot
 And seemed about to fall.
Yet around this little shanty
 Was an air of peace and calm;
At night the flickering switchlights,
 At times a fragrant balm
Came on the summer breezes
 That would soft and quiet blow,
As I stood there near the station
 In the days of long ago.
'Twas a jolly bunch who gathered there,
 None happier in the land
When the signals worked by levers,
 All switches thrown by hand.
The shanty's gone, the boys have drifted,
 And scattered far and wide.
Some dwell in distant places;
 Some have crossed the great divide.
Yes, I know 'twould give me pleasure,
 Could I see my pals once more;
Approach that old switch shanty
 As they did in days of yore.
Through the dusty, grimy windows,
 See the lanterns dimly glow
From the little old switch shanty
 As in the days of long ago.

ENGINE 2089

Adapted from a poem by Garnett
Laidlaw Eskew in Railroad Magazine

She stands by herself near the big
 Sayre yard,
 Cold, silent and alone,
By the Auburn Branch on an old side track,
 Where the tall weeds have grown,
A Pacific, as fine and proud
 And pretty as any maiden. . .
Does she recall the days when she pulled,
 The Diamond heavily laden
With cars filled with passengers,
 Going by the lakeside shore,
And the hills gave back, in echoes loud,
 Her whistle's triumphant roar?
She pulled her cars with a speedy grace
 Over the singing rail.
If she could talk she would charm our hearts
 With many an interesting tale
Those were wonderful times we all knew
 When seventy miles an hour
Was damn fast going. 'Twas years ago. . .
 Now she's bereft of power.
In and out of the big Sayre yard
 The diesels rumble and whine--
Alcos, Baldwins and GM type
 As they head on down the line;
But the big iron horse stands alone
 And sighs as they all go past,
And dreams of nineteen forty-one
 When she was shiny and fast.

delivery to the engineer and conductor of an approaching train. Gone is the telegrapher's job to properly set the manual block signal to alert an engineer to slow down or stop for a train order or to wait for the block ahead to be clear. We can no longer join the people who came to the station at train time just to swap the latest news and see who had come to visit their village or hamlet. Also departed are the old oil lamps that lighted the stations and pot-bellied stoves that warmed them during the winter months. At least we have a few sturdy old stations standing as reminders of the years long past.

The residents of upstate New York still have the snow and winds that bring back memories of stormy winters of years long past. The snows still fall across the Snow Belt that lies south of Lake Ontario and between the Finger Lakes. Strong winds still blow across the area to form deep drifts of snow. It's not surprising to see the wind turbines mounted on top of the hills south of Canastota. The engineers who selected this site were well aware that this location, high above the old railroad grade from Canastota through Clockville and Cottons to Perryville, was one of the windiest in upstate New York.

While the old EC&N line that served Canastota has passed into oblivion, the former New York Central Railroad mainline tracks now carry high speed passenger and freight trains operated by Amtrak and CSX railroads. Dozens of trains race through Canastota every day but rarely slow or stop at this once busy hub of railroad traffic. The passenger and freight stations, interlocking towers, turntable, engine-house, coal trestle and other railroad facilities have disappeared together with the fine men and women who worked for the railroad.

The thousands of hardy railroaders who worked for the EC&N and Lehigh Valley should be remembered for having brought a new way of life and prosperity to the folks in the once iso-

lated communities along the line over the course of 100 years. We're fortunate to have with us a handful of old-timers who worked on the Lehigh Valley years ago. They have vivid memories and countless stories about the days when they were "working on the railroad." They enjoyed their work and the people they met along the way in spite of the long hours and sometimes difficult working conditions. They were sturdy, dependable men who handled the trains and cared for the passengers, day in and day out. They were men for all seasons.

There are scores of people who lived along the old EC&N line years ago that remember the sounds of locomotives and trains as they passed near their homes, night and day, in good times and bad times. These were friendly and reassuring sounds for all to hear. Thankfully, time cannot erase our memories of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, the Route of The Black Diamond and the old Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railroad.



A silent sentinel stands guard along the abandoned Elmira and Cortland Branch after the last train has passed.



Newton L. "Doc" Hunt stands by the Freeville station in June 1948, next to the combination coach that trails Train 323 on its daily trip from East Ithaca to Cortland. He was conductor of the mixed train that arrived at East Ithaca shortly after noon each day during the 1940's and who, with other train and enginemen, welcomed my interest in railroading. "Doc" Hunt was a veteran Lehigh Valley Railroad brakeman, trainman and conductor who worked for over 45 years until his retirement

in 1952. Pictured on page 73 as a brakeman on the Canastota switcher, he worked through the years at one time or another on every passenger, mixed and freight train and yard job. He lived at various times in Canastota, Cortland and Elmira. Like nearly all his fellow trainmen, he experienced several train accidents including separate incidents in 1907 and 1944 caused by track washouts at Varna. He carried scars from these accidents to his death at the age of 67 in October 1952.

THANKS

Almost sixty years have passed since I began working for the Lehigh Valley Railroad as an extra towerman and station agent. Most of the assignments were at towers and stations on the mainline and Ithaca Branch. The exception was Cortland Junction where I spent many weeks in 1950 and 1951 doing vacation relief work for the regularly assigned towermen. At first, my knowledge of Cortland Branch operations was limited to the daily mixed trains, the night freight run to Sayre and the milk trains which were discontinued in the late 1940's. One August day in 1950, Lloyd Webster, first trick Cortland agent-operator, gave me an EC&N 1891 train dispatchers' sheet, an 1899 LV Elmira and Cortland Branch train dispatchers' sheet and a LV Auburn Division 1903 employee timetable. That's when I first realized that this quiet Lehigh Valley branch line was once a busy railroad line operating as many as two dozen trains a day.

Ever since then, I've often recalled those early years visiting, riding and eventually working for the Lehigh Valley Railroad. To me, railroading was all about the trains, the sights and sounds of mainline and branch line operations, and the durable men and women who worked for the railroads. The sounds of an approaching train were like the sounds of the big bands of the time, they were music to my ears. Thankfully, my recollections of those days in the thirties, forties and early fifties never left me. They are as clear now as if they had occurred just yesterday.

My purpose in writing this book has been to tell the history of the EC&N and the Lehigh Valley Elmira and Cortland Branch from the days of horse-drawn wagons on dirt roads to the era of intermodal trains and tractor trailers on paved highways. I've tried to capture the "ups and downs" of day-to-day railroading and de-

scribe the contrasting worlds of railroad owners, managers and workers.

I'm greatly indebted to over a score of generous men and women who responded to my requests for help. They supplied many of the documents and photographs that appear in this book. At the top of the list for credit is Herbert V. Trice of Auburn, New York, a true gentleman, a great railroad historian and author of the fine book *Gangly Country Cousin*. He got me started on this project by loaning me his vast files on the UI&E, EC&N and LV Elmira and Cortland Branch. Next are his close friends including Bruce Tracy of Locke, New York, co-author of *When The Railroads Went To The Beach*. This avid collector of Lehigh Valley memorabilia offered his files on the EC&N and Lehigh Valley Elmira and Cortland Branch operations and provided much-needed encouragement and advice.

Other friends of Herb Trice helped out. John (Jack) Koehler of Weatherly, Pennsylvania, a collector of Lehigh Valley locomotive and other rolling stock photographs as well as public and employee timetables, provided a wealth of photos, timetables and other information. William (Bill) McLane, a retired Lehigh Valley Auburn Division engineer and former local chairman of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers, provided an important background perspective on railroading through the years as did James (Jim) Lathrop of Sayre, Pennsylvania, a retired engineer, who offered stories of working for the Lehigh Valley. John Taibi of Franklin, New York, an expert on the New York, Ontario and Western Railroad history and co-author of *When The Railroads Went To The Beach*, and his latest book: *A Ride through the Countryside on the Syracuse & Chenango Valley Railroad*, donated photos and other background information.

Mrs. Robert (Sara) Chevako of New Woodstock, New York, treasurer of the New Woodstock Regional Historical Society, produced a wealth of historical documents and photographs about EC&N and LV operations in the New Woodstock-Delphi area. Mrs. Ronald (Patricia) Wainwright of Erin, New York, curator of the Erin Historical Society and Museum, did extensive library research and provided an array of EC&N and Lehigh Valley photos and documents pertaining to the railroads' operations between Elmira and Van Etten. Ms. Sharon Cooney, interpretive programs assistant, Lorenzo State Historical Site, Cazenovia, New York, performed valuable library research and granted permission for our use of the early photographs of Cazenovia and Canastota Railroad operations. Ms. Mindy Leisenring, director of the Cortland County Historical Society, and her staff made available their library of UI&E, EC&N and Lehigh Valley railroad photographs and other documents. Mrs. Elsie Gutchess of Dryden, New York, editor of *From Richford's Rails To Freeville Stationmaster: Ken Rice Remembers*, granted the author permission to quote from Ken Rice's excellent book about his career as Lehigh Valley telegrapher.

David Sadler, Canastota village historian, did the research on the June 1910 accident in his village. Lyman Gray of Chittenango, New York provided several excellent photographs and performed valuable research. Lou Withiam of Ithaca provided the information about his parents' careers as Lehigh Valley telegraphers.

Chris Baer, curator of the Hagley Museum

and Library, Greenville, Delaware, provided a valuable insight into Archibald McLeod's years as president of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad and granted permission for us to use Thomas Kearsley's letter. Herbert Harwood of Baltimore, Maryland, a highly respected railroad historian and author, supplied additional background information on the McLeod era. Robert Freer of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a life-long personal friend, railroad enthusiast and retired civil engineer, provided needed engineering expertise.

The late Harry Talada, a Lehigh Valley engineer and friend and mentor of Bruce Tracy, deserves credit for preserving and donating to Bruce the EC&N and early LV rule books. This writer benefitted from the books authored by Richard Palmer of Syracuse and Russell Grills of Cazenovia.

This book would never have been completed without the steady and professional work of my brother, John Marcham of Ithaca, New York, and graphic designer Mo Viele. They deserve all the credit for converting pages and pages of text, anecdotes and illustrations into an attractive book.

I'm greatly indebted to my wonderful wife Elizabeth who has patiently endured a year of my devotion to preparing this book. My thanks, also, go to our son, Father David Shay Marcham, who has offered me advice and prayers. Without them and the help and support of many other good people, I could not have completed this book.

DAVID MARCHAM, OCTOBER 2009

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ENGINE ROSTER

EC&N AND LEHIGH VALLEY RR – ELMIRA AND CORTLAND BRANCH 1884 through 1904

TYPE	NUMBERS			LV CLASS	DRIVERS	FOR	AS NO	BUILT		YEAR SCRAPPED
	EC&N	LV-1	LV-2					YEAR	BY	
4-4-0	1					C&C	1	1870	SCHENECTADY	1895
4-4-0	2					C&C	2	1870	SCHENECTADY	1895
4-4-0	3					UI&E	5	1872	PORTLAND	1895
4-4-0	4	904	2522	E-6	62.5"	UI&E	13	1879	BROOKS	s 1906
4-4-0	5	905	2523	E-6	62.5"	UI&E	6	1874	PORTLAND	1905
4-4-0	6	906	2535	E-9	63"	UI&E	8	1879	PORTLAND	1910
4-4-0	7	907	2528	E-7	68.5"	UI&E	4	1871	PORTLAND	1910
4-4-0	8	908	—			Unknown				b 1899
2-6-0	9	909	—		56"	UI&E	9	1879	COOKE	b 1905
2-6-0	10	910	—		54"	UI&E	12	1883	ROGERS	1895
0-4-0	11	—	—			Unknown				x 1885
4-6-0	12	912	1714h	H-5	56"	EC&N	12	1884	COOKE	1911
4-6-0	13	913	1037	J-9	54"	UI&E	13	1883	ROGERS	1911
4-6-0	14	914	3371g	G-12	56"	EC&N	14	1884	COOKE	1916
4-6-0	15	915	1168	J-35	56"	EC&N	15	1884	COOKE	1911
4-6-0	16	916	1719h	H-5	56"	EC&N	16	1884	COOKE	1909
4-6-0	17	917	3451g	G-12	56"	EC&N	17	1884	COOKE	1933
4-6-0	18	918	1721h	H-5	56"	EC&N	18	1884	COOKE	1910
4-6-0	19	919	1170	J-36	56"	EC&N	19	1886	COOKE	1911
4-6-0	20	920	1718h	H-5	56"	EC&N	20	1886	COOKE	1911
4-6-0	21	921	1720h	H-5	56"	EC&N	21	1886	COOKE	1912
4-6-0	22	922	1722h	H-5	56"	EC&N	22	1886	COOKE	1909
2-8-0	23	923	515	M-5	51"	EC&N	23	1886	GRANT	1911
2-8-0	24	924	516	M-5	51"	EC&N	24	1886	GRANT	1913

FORMER GENEVA, ITHACA AND SAYRE RAILROAD LOCOMOTIVES USED ON E&C BRANCH

4-4-0	GI&S-1	524	2543	E-12	61"	I&A	1	1871	BALDWIN	1910
4-4-0	GI&S-2	525	2544	E-12	61"	I&A	2	1871	BALDWIN	1912
4-4-0	GI&S-3	526	2545	E-12	61"	I&A	3	1871	BALDWIN	1913
4-4-0	GI&S-4	527	2546	E-12	61"	I&A	4	1871	BALDWIN	1910

LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD LOCOMOTIVES ASSIGNED TO E&C BRANCH BY 1899

4-4-0	LV-48	48		E-48	n/a	LV	48	1865	MASON	b 1905
2-6-0	LV-201	201	1706	H-6	n/a	LV	201	1874	RHODE ISLAND	1907
2-8-0	LV-390	390	612	M-22	51"	LV	390	1883	LV-DELANO	1909

NOTES

LV-1 LV numbers assigned in 1896

LV-2 LV numbers assigned in 1905

b Scrapped prior to indicated year

g Rebuilt to 0-6-0

h Rebuilt to 2-6-0

s Sold to NYA&L in 1906

x Sold or scrapped by 1885

ENGINE ROSTER

LEHIGH VALLEY RR – ELMIRA AND CORTLAND BRANCH

1905 through 1976

STEAM LOCOMOTIVE SERIES AND CLASSES

1905 through 1951

TYPE	NUMBER SERIES	LOCOMOTIVE		BUILT BETWEEN	BUILT BY	USED BETWEEN
		CLASSES	DRIVERS			
4-4-0	2610-2617	E-29 & E-30	63"	1871 & 1891	LV-DELANO	1905 & 1918
4-4-0	2626-2680	E-31 to E-44	69"	1864 & 1895	LV-VARIOUS	1905 & 1918
4-6-0	1131-1165	J-25	63"	1917 & 1918	LV-SAYRE	1917 & 1950
4-6-0	1800-1819	J-56 & J-57	69"	1911 & 1918	LV-SAYRE	1917 & 1945
2-8-0	564-594	M-17	50"	1888 & 1892	BALDWIN	1905 & 1926
2-8-0	598	M-18	50"	1891	BALDWIN	1905 & 1918
2-8-0	600-601	M-19	51"	1869 & 1872	BALDWIN	1905 & 1918
2-8-0	603-613	M-20 to M-22	51"	1880	LV-DELANO	1905 & 1918
2-8-0	700-812	M-35	62.5"	1899 & 1902	BALDWIN	1905 & 1918
4-6-2	2010-2035	K-2 & K-3	77"	1913 & 1921	LV-SAYRE	1940 & 1951
4-6-2	2050-2064	K-4	77"	1915 & 1917	LV-SAYRE	1940 & 1951
4-6-2	2088-2089	K-6	77"	1925 & 1926	LV-SAYRE	1948 & 1951

GAS-ELECTRIC AND DIESEL POWER

1926 through 1976

TYPE	LOCOMOTIVE		HORSEPOWER	MANUFACTURED BY	MODEL	YEAR
	NUMBERS	CLASS				
PSGR	30-31		500g	BRILL		1926
YARD	115	DS-2	600	EMC	SW-1	1940
RD SW	200	DRS-1	1500	BALDWIN	DRS-44	1948
RD SW	210-211	DRS-1	1500	ALCO	RS-2	1949
RD SW	212-214	DRS-1	1500	ALCO	RS-2	1950
RD SW	215-216	DRS-1	1600	ALCO	RS-3	1950
RD SW	217-218	DRS-1	1500	ALCO	RS-2	1949 x
RD SW	230-243	BS-12	1200	BALDWIN	S-12	1950

NOTES

- g Gas-Electric
- x Purchased by C&O in 1949, sold to LV October 1950

STATION LIST

Elmira, Cortland and Northern RR, 1884–1896, Lehigh Valley RR, 1896–1976

ELMIRA TO CORTLAND

Station	Mile	Elevation		Population (1895)	Station Type	Passing Sidings	Other Information
	Post	Feet	Change				
Elmira Station	0.5	856		30,893	B		Original EC&N Headquarters
Elmira Yard	1.0	853	-3		Y	Yard	Elmira Yard and Enginehouse
DL&W Crossing	1.8	857	+4		C		Interlocking Tower staffed by DL&W
Eldridge Park	1.8	857			F		Discontinued by LV in 1896
Elmira Heights	2.9	870	+13		A		
Horseheads	5.6	890	+20	1,716	A		Originally North Elmira, Connection to NC/PRR RR's
Breesport	10.5	1031	+141	439	A	26	Original UI&E headquarters
Erin	13.9	1255	+224	167	A	48	
Park Station	17.7	1509	+254	37	A	28	Non-agency flag stop after 1906
Block House Trestle	18.6	1375	-134				767 foot long, 75 foot high curving trestle
Deep Gorge Trestle	19.3	1285	-90				460 foot long, 122 foot high curving trestle
Swartwood	21.5	1055	-230	92	A	33	At bottom of steep 2.4% grade
Murray Siding	24.9	1010	-45				Wye connection to Ithaca Branch
Van Etten Station	25.2	1005	-5	567	B		Also serves Ithaca Branch
Van Etten Tower	25.2	1005			C		Interlocking installed 1907, eliminated 1933
Van Etten Yard	25.7	1000	-5		Y	Yard	
Spencer	27.7	990	-10	810	A		Serves Ithaca Branch, then E&C beginning 1902
East Spencer	28.4	986	-4		A		Closed in 1902
Brock	28.9	980	-6			26	Passing Siding
West Candor	32.6	957	-23	92	A	24	
North Candor	34.3	950	-7		F		Renamed Snyder by LV 1903
Wilseyville	38.2	942	-8	562	A	34	Respelled Willseyville about 1926
White Church	42.0	973	+31	48	F	26	Joint station with DL&W
Caroline Junction	43.8	980	+7				DL&W staffed crossing, unattended in later years
Brookton	44.7	957	-23	420	A	22	First Mott's Corners, later Brooktondale
Brookton Trestle	44.9	958	+1				1600 foot long, 90 foot high trestle
Besemers	46.0	960	+2	32	A	25	
Ithaca	50.7	870	-90	11,079	A	30	Renamed East Ithaca by LV in 1896
<i>Switch to Cornell U.</i>	<i>51.4</i>	<i>900</i>	<i>+30</i>				<i>Original I & C RR connection to Cornell University</i>
Stevens	52.6	990	+90				Also called Stevens Siding
Varna	53.3	1000	+10	208	F		
Snyders	54.0	1013	+13		F		Flag stop discontinued about 1890
Ludwigs	54.6	1015	+2			27	Passing siding established about 1920
Etna	56.8	1020	+5	377	A	40	Became non-agency station in 1935
Freeville	59.7	1045	+25	312	C	35	Crew-operated signal at SC/LV crossing
Malloryville	61.9	1075	+30		F		Flag stop discontinued by EC&N
McLean	63.6	1116	+41	453	A	14	
McKee	65.5	1180	+64			39	Passing Siding established about 1920
Chicago	65.9	1190	+10		F		Flag stop discontinued by LV, renamed Gracie
South Cortland	67.2	1170	-20		F		Flag stop discontinued by LV in 1896
Cortland	70.1	1130	-40	8,590	B	Yard	Enginehouse, EC&N headquarters and shops

NOTES A = One agent-telegrapher B = Agent-telegraphers on duty to 11 p.m. C = Open continuously
 F = Unattended Flag Stop Y = Yard Freeville station hours eventually reduced to sixteen, later eight hours.

Capacity of Passing Sidings measured in car lengths exclusive of engine and caboose as of 1914; some sidings shortened or eliminated in later years. Others established in 1920's as indicated.

Populations shown are for indicated communities but do not include surrounding rural areas.

STATION LIST

Elmira, Cortland and Northern RR, 1884–1896, Lehigh Valley RR, 1896–1976

CORTLAND TO CAMDEN

Station	Mile Post	Elevation		Population (1895)	Station Type	Passing Sidings	Other Information
		Feet	Change				
Cortland	70.1	1130		8,590	B	Yard	Enginehouse, EC&N headquarters & shops
Cortland Junction	70.8	1115	-15		C		Interlocking installed 1904, remotely controlled 1954
Lorings	73.3	1104	-11		F		Flag stop eliminated 1935
East River	75.4	1131	+27		F	17	Renamed River 1905, Flag stop discontinued 1938
East Homer	77.0	1137	+6	90	A	21	
Youngs	78.6	1140	+3				Milk Station
Truxton	82.0	1150	+10	581	A	44	
Crain's Mills	83.1	1175	+25		F		Milk Station, Flag Stop discontinued 1896
Cuyler	86.8	1240	+65	142	A		
Lee	87.2	1245	+5			26	Passing Siding
DeRuyter	90.4	1284	+39	667	A	42	Enginehouse & connection to NY&OM in early years
Sheds Corners	95.0	1390	+106		A	18	Named Sheds Corners to 1886, also Sheds
New Woodstock	98.2	1285	-105	659	A	34	Named Woodstock until about 1890
Delphi Falls	99.7	1340	+55	328	A	8	Also named Delphi
Rippleton	102.6	1261	-79		A		Named SC&NY Jct until 1886
Cazenovia	104.3	1188	-73	1,987	A	34	C&C RR HQ; Enginehouse until 1898
Bingley	106.7	1037	-151		F		Bottom of grade
Chittenango Falls	108.0	1056	+19		F		
Mats Siding	109.5	1153	+97			29	Siding at summit
Perryville	111.1	1042	-111	273	A	34	Renamed Blakeslee by LV
Worlocks Quarry	112.0	970	-72				Large stone quarry
Cottons	114.9	732	-238		F	20	
Clockville	115.9	695	-37	190	F		
Canastota Yard	118.8	430	-265		C	25	Enginehouse and Yard
West Shore Xing	118.8	430			C		Interlocking staffed by West Shore (NYC) personnel
Canastota Station	119.0	430		2,774	C		Union station with NYC and West Shore RRs
Erie Canal	119.4	450	+20				Bridge over NYC mainline and Erie Canal
South Bay	124.8	380	-70		A	7	Near east shore of Oneida Lake
Oneida Creek	125.8	378	-2		F		
Blythebourne	127.4	376	-2		F		Discontinued about 1902
Sylvan Beach	127.7	375	-1		F	20	Seasonal station open at end of wye track
Sylvan Junction	128.7	377	+2		B		Interlocking at NY&OW; Crossing staffed by EC&N/LV
Vienna	131.5	420	+43	179	A		
Kinne	131.9	430	+10				Established about 1903
McConnellsville	134.5	485	+55	127	A	25	
Camden	139.7	520	+35	1,902	A		Interchange with NYC/RW&O; Enginehouse closed 1903

NOTES A = One agent-telegrapher B = Agent-telegraphers on duty to 11 p.m. C = Open continuously
 F = Unattended Flag Stop Canastota Yard hours eventually reduced to sixteen, later eight hours.

Capacity of Passing Sidings measured in car lengths exclusive of engine and caboose as of 1914; some sidings shortened or eliminated in later years. Others established in 1920's as indicated.

Populations shown are for indicated communities but do not include surrounding rural areas.

ILLUSTRATIONS

In this listing, the page or location in the book appears first, followed by the name of the owner of the illustration (or an abbreviation).

COLLECTIONS OF:

- ABT A. Bruce Tracy, Locke
 AV Arthur Volbrecht, Brooktondale
 CCHS Cortland County Historical Society, Cortland
 CNY Central New York Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, Syracuse
 DM David Marcham, owner, photographer
 EHS Erin Historical Society
 HC Harvard College, Cambridge MA
 HVT Herbert V. Trice, Auburn
 ICC Interstate Commerce Commission
 JK John Koehler, Weatherly PA
 LG Lyman Gray, Chittenango
 LHS Lorenzo State Historical Site, Cazenovia
 LW Louis Withiam, Ithaca
 NWHS New Woodstock Historical Society
 RP Robert Pastorkey, Binghamton
 THC The History Center in Tompkins County, Ithaca

COVER HVT

INSIDE COVER *State of New York Sixteenth Annual Report – 1898*

FRONTISPIECES iii, *Lehigh Valley Memories*; iv, *Railroad Magazine*; vi, AV

CHAPTER 1 viii, DM; 2, DM; 3, DM, ABT

CHAPTER 2 4, HVT; 6, DM; 7, ABT; 8, HVT, HVT; 9, HVT

CHAPTER 3 10, LHS; 11, LHS; 12, LHS, HC; 15, HVT; 16, CCHS

CHAPTER 4 19, ABT; 20, HVT; 23, HVT; 24, DM; 25, Hagley Museum and Library, Greenville, Delaware

CHAPTER 5 27, ABT; 28, DM; 30, ABT; 32, DM; 35, ABT; 36, ABT; 37, HVT

CHAPTER 6 38, HVT; 40, HC; 42, HVT; 43, ABT; 44, HVT; 45, ABT; 46, HVT; 47, HVT

CHAPTER 7 48, THC; 50, DM; 51, HVT, HVT, HVT; 53, EHS, EHS, EHS; 54, EHS; 56, HVT, HVT; 57, HVT, HVT; 58, HC, HVT; 59, HVT, HVT

CHAPTER 8 60, HVT; 61, HC; 62, DM, HVT, HVT; 63, DM; 64, HVT, HVT; 65, HVT, LHS; 66, HVT; 67, HVT, HVT, HVT; 68, HVT, HVT, HVT; 69, ABT

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CHAPTER 10 78, HVT; 81, ABT, JK; 82, JK, HVT; 83, JK; 84, ABT, HVT; 85, CCHS; 86, DM; 87, HVT; 88, NWHS; 90, EHS; 91, HVT; 92, HVT, JK; 93, ABT

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CHAPTER 12 100, ABT; 101, CNY; 102, HVT, CNY; 103, DM; 104, NWHS; 105, HVT, DM; 106, NWHS; 107, DM, DM; 108, ABT; 110, DM, DM

CHAPTER 13 111, NWHS; 112, NWHS; 113, NWHS, NWHS, 114, DM

CHAPTER 14 116, DM; 118, DM; 119, DM, DM; 120, LW; 122, DM; 123, ABT; 124, TP; 125, ABT; 126, HVT; 127, HVT

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The engineer watches closely for hand signals from trainmen in the 1940's at East Ithaca. Train 324 has arrived and the crew is placing the waycar behind the station so LCL freight can be unloaded. Before the introduction of two-way radios, enginemen relied on hand signals from trainmen by day and lantern signals by night while switching cars.



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Riding into the sunset, from a *Railroad Magazine* in 1941.

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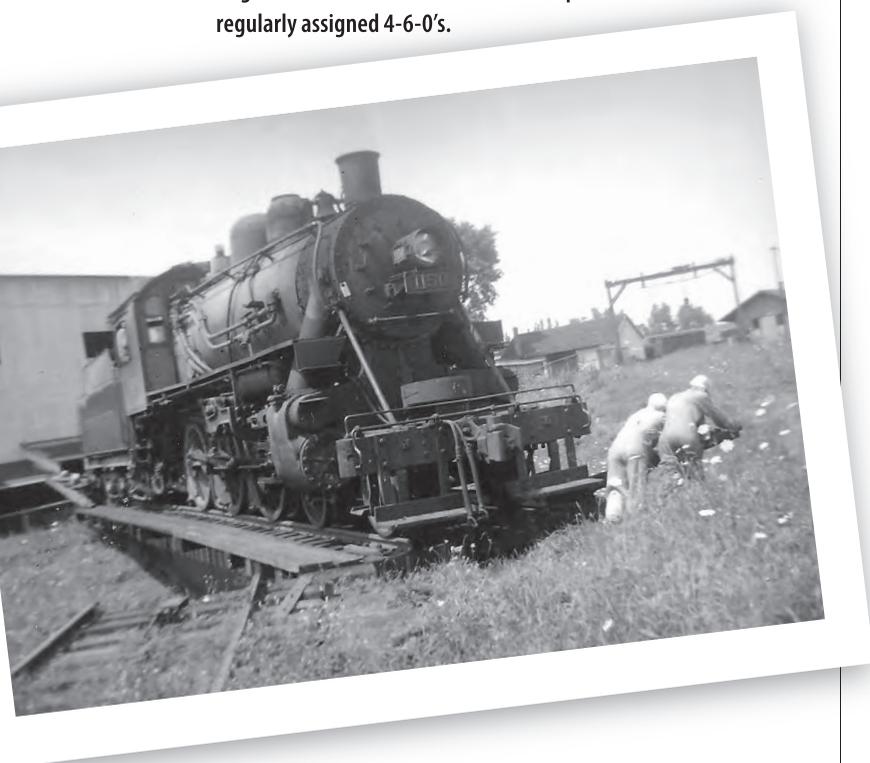
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