

ROCK ISLAND REPORTER

**E-NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO, ROCK
ISLAND AND PACIFIC RAILROAD**

ISSUE NUMBER 27

AUGUST 2020



COVER: It is August 1972 and Butterworth Tours' Observation Car "BIG BEN" is bringing up the rear of Rock Island train #5, the Quad Cities Rocket which is running behind schedule near Geneseo Illinois. The intense thunderstorm transforms the darkness with flashes of erie daylight and the train glows as it moves. Tom Brugman paid the extra fare to ride Big Ben, and was treated to a once in a lifetime experience, recreated here in digital graphics. Even the Material Services limestone ballast that would contribute to the Rock's demise glowed ghostly in the dark. 30" X 30" Vector Graphic by Thomas Brugman.



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ROCK ISLAND REPORTER

1. IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS-EVENTS AND SHOWS:

**NOVEMBER 2020 FRIENDS OF THE ROCK ISLAND
CHICAGOLAND MEET HAS BEEN CANCELLED.**

*WE have no word on future meetings, but there is hope if they ever
get this COVID 19 thing under control. Stay tuned.*



HEY DUDE.

**BETTER SUPPORT RIR OR
THE NEXT ONE WILL BE
RIGHT BETWEEN THE
MARKER LIGHTS.**

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to submit via PayPal may use our PP address:
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2. NEW PRODUCTS:

STILL AVAILABLE

1925 ROCK ISLAND (CRI&P and CRI&G) GENERAL ROSTER BOOK

1925 ROCK ISLAND (CRI&P AND CRI&G) GENERAL ROSTER BOOK.
300-PAGE BOUND VOLUME reprint.

***Individual numbers* and detailed statistics** shown for each type of equipment as follows: Steam Locomotives, Motor cars, Passenger cars, Freight cars, MofW equipment, Stations, Shops, Engine houses, Turntables, Coaling stations, Stock yards, Junctions/Interchanges, Personnel ...and MUCH MORE.

A wealth of fascinating information. You will not be disappointed!

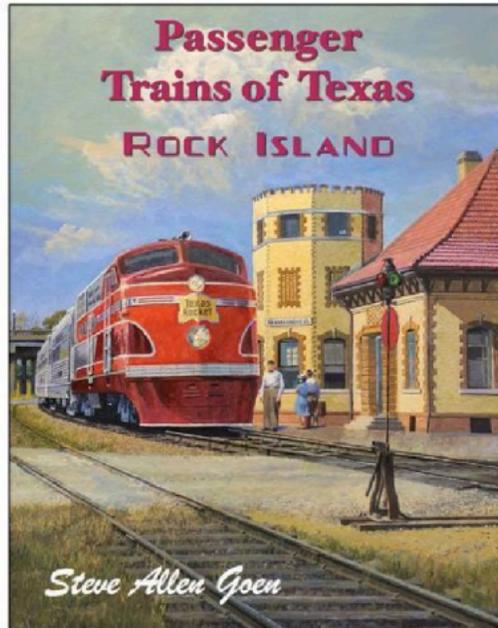
300 pages: \$12 + \$2.50 postage (lower 48).

Please email to <PHunnell@yahoo.com> for simple ordering info and/or request to see sample pages.



**NEW STEVE GOEN BOOK: PASSENGER TRAINS OF TEXAS -
ROCK ISLAND**

Arriving Soon on Track 2



***“Rock Island”... the second volume in a series of books featuring
the Passenger Trains of Texas by Steve Allen Goen***

Includes 148 pages, hardback with both B&W and color images of Rock Island's passenger operations in Texas. This rare book will be a very limited run so don't miss out!

The list price is \$59.95 but we are offering an exclusive pre-publication discount of \$49.95 if you order no later than July 11, 2020. The book is expected to be out by late August.

Shipping is \$6.00. Texas residents must add 8.25% state sales tax.

Checks, money orders or PayPal are accepted. Send mail orders to:

**Steve Goen
1519 Sweetbriar drive
Wichita Falls, TX 76302-2911**

**Or order online on our new website at
www.texaszephyrpublishing.com**

The book is 148 pages and features an Intro section followed by 14 separate chapters featuring 14 different routes or passenger trains that operated in Texas. In order the 14 chapters are:

Graham Branch
ACR Line
Short Line Flyer (B-RI)
Arizona Limited
Texas Rocket (B-RI)
Choctaw Rocket

Memphis-Californian
Oklahoma Rocket
Fort Worth to El Reno RDCs
Choctaw Rockette
Twin Star Rocket
Imperial
Cherokee
Golden State

All chapters are arranged in the order of discontinuance.

ALSO: As a footnote, The cover painting for this book may be for sale. If interested, please contact Steve Goen. <https://texaszephyrpublishing.com>



STEVE GOEN ANNOUNCES A BRAND NEW ROCK ISLAND BOOK: LAST OF THE ROCKETS.

Steve Goen is announcing his third book featuring the Rock Island Railroad. "Last of the Rockets" will feature Rock Island passenger and commuter operations in Illinois during the line's last decade. This all color book will begin at LaSalle Street Station and will follow the line in milepost order westward out to Rock Island and Peoria. Steve is looking for high quality Kodachrome slides or high quality tif scans of Kodachrome slides of:

1. All depots located on the Chicago-Rock Island line and Bureau-Peoria branch. These can even be closed stations as long as the photos are pre-Rock Island shutdown, such as Sheffield, etc.
2. Action shots of the Quad Cities and Peoria Rockets, especially at locations west of Blue Island. Key locations needed are LaSalle-Peru, Morris, Ottawa, Seneca, New Lenox, crossing the river at Blue Island, crossing the river at Joliet, passing any depot on the line, out at Rock Island. Action shots please, not static roster shots.
3. Passenger and commuter trains with either E, F or AB6 motive power.
4. Freights over this route powered by E or F units. If its a cab unit leading a freight after 1970 its fair game as I am willing to include some freight as long as its a cab unit leading.

Steve says that he's pretty good for Chicago proper except for at the Rocket House and action along the Suburban line.

Feel free to contact Steve at texaszephyr@sw.rr.com if you have any questions. If you have HQ tif scans you can send them to him via "We Transfer". All slides will be promptly returned. All photographers will be given full photo credit. Anyone having photos accepted for publication will receive a complimentary copy.

The book is expected to be 128 pages, possible horizontal format.

[Editor: I suggest giving Steve some encouragement to produce this book. Email him at the above address.]



ATHEARN NEW N ACF 3-BAY CENTERFLOW HOPPER, RI



N ACF 4600 3-Bay Centerflow Hopper, RI (3)

[ATH12924]

\$96.98

Due Late May, 2021

Detailed Information

BN FEATURES:

- Era: 1979+
- BN: As-Delivered. Late style body with stiffener ribs and low brake wheel.

ROCK FEATURES:

- Era: 1978+
- The Rock: As-Delivered. Late style body with stiffener ribs and low brake wheel.

EX-ROCK FEATURES:

- FURX: These cars over their life time went through a few different owners. Due to the expense of repainting an entire car, it was easier to just patch the new road name and number over the previous one. Era: 2000s+
- SSW and MILW: After the bankruptcy of the Rock in 1980, these cars were quickly leased to railroads with a simple patch, still using the original numbers. Era: Mid 1980s+

MODEL FEATURES:

- Three body styles:
 - Early- High side ladder & brake wheel, single side stiffener
 - Mid- Low brake wheel, short side ladders both ends, single side stiffener
 - Late- As above but with double side stiffeners (post 1971)
- Round or trough hatches
- Photo-etched metal roofwalk
- Separately applied wire grab irons and stirrup steps
- Numerous detailed outlet versions
- Separate brake cylinder, valve and air reservoir with wire brake plumbing
- Multiple roadnumbers
- Fully-assembled and ready-to-run out of the box
- Accurately painted and printed
- Highly detailed, injection molded body
- Separately applied brake wheel
- Screw mounted trucks
- Body mounted McHenry operating scale knuckle couplers
- Weighted for trouble free operation
- Minimum radius: 9¾"
- Detailed outlets
- 100-ton trucks with 36" machined metal wheels

PROTOTYPE AND BACKGROUND INFO:

The 3-bay CenterFlow covered hopper first entered service in the mid-1960s, built by American Car and Foundry. The cars handle loads such as grain, corn and similar bulk commodities. The Centerflow design relies on the car's rounded body to provide structural strength - eliminating the traditional center sill, and making gravity unloading easier. Our 3-bay car represents the common 4600 cu.ft. capacity version. The railroads looking to replace their aging 40' box cars in grain service needed a modern hopper design - one that could operate within the tighter Plate B clearances for light branchline and industrial service. ACF's design won them many contracts from a plethora of railroads. One can find these cars still in revenue service today in grain trains and other similar service.

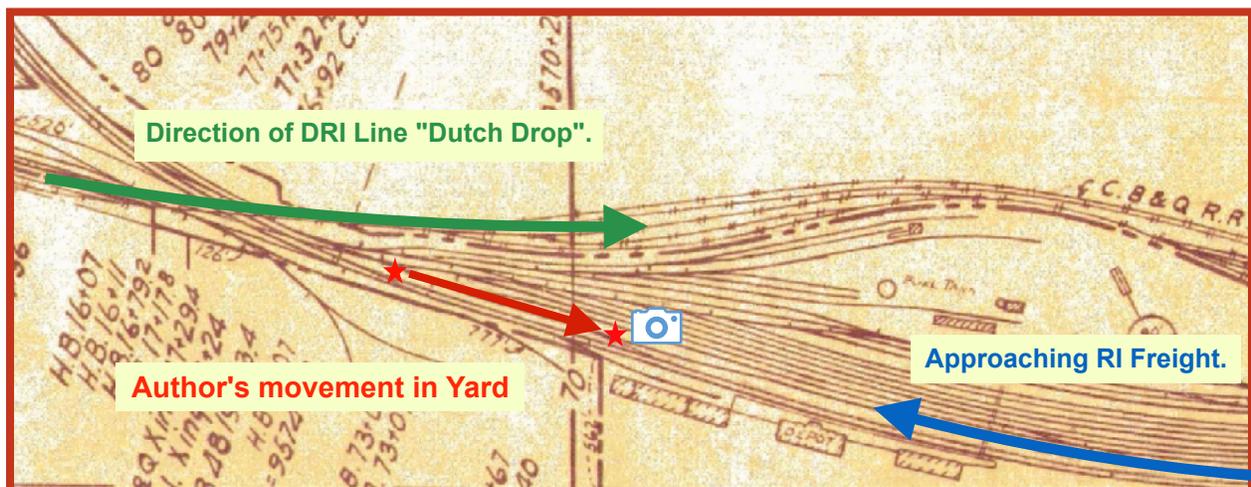
ROCK ISLAND REPORTER

3. ROCK ISLAND IL 1969 PHOTOS TO GRAPHICS

By Tom Brugman

In August 1969 I was using my bright orange Rock Island folder with my photo pass signed by VP John Buffalo, to walk freely through Rock Island railroad property in it's namesake city. Camera at the ready (a Miranda Sensorex with either plus-X or Tri-X film), I was doing my best to record RI equipment in the yard and caught a Davenport, Rock Island and Western S-1 or S-2 moving Eastbound through the Rock Island diamonds performing the only "Dutch Drop" switching movement I have ever seen. The DRI line crew neatly placed 10 or more tank cars into an adjacent yard track in one smooth movement. In a Dutch Drop, the crew keeps the train moving, uncoupling the locomotive on the fly, and hurries past the switch while a switchman on the ground throws the switch to the adjacent siding, allowing the tank cars to coast unpowered into the adjacent track, and then realigning the switch back to the locomotive's track. Trailing all this, the cabooses which was also uncoupled from the train slowly drifts through the switch to recouple with the locomotive. An amazing ballet on rails, now completely illegal by every Federal regulation in existence.

Following this I had plenty of time to amble back toward the Rock Island Depot and spotted a Westbound RI freight approaching.



In 1969 the majority of freights through this area were powered by U-25Bs, U-28Bs, and U-33Bs. In fact I considered U-Boats to be rather plain Jane at that time - too common to get excited about. But as this freight approached it became obvious that a cab unit was in the lead. The holy grail itself.

As F-7 #116 got closer, I quickly photographed it, tried to re-cock the SLR only to hit - you guessed it - the end of the plus-X roll. You digital photographers will probably never experience this moment of panic. And what a shame it was, because I was missing a classic RI lash up of F units, Geeps and an SW-1500. As I frantically cranked the manual rewind lever to replace the film cartridge, The rest of the power sailed by me to be lost in time forever. Overly dramatic I know, but I had traveled 1000 miles from the East Coast to record moments like this, and I felt I had blown a great opportunity.



The engineer of F-7A 116 notches up the throttle in preparation for the grade leading up to the Government Bridge at Rock Island, Illinois in August 1969. Graphic by Tom Brugman from an original B&W photo by Tom Brugman.

So having finished the camera reload, I waited as the rest of the freight passed me, slowly accelerating up the grade to the Government Bridge over the Mississippi. Then, coming into view came the caboose, a bay window, with a rather suspicious conductor hanging out of the open window glaring at me at nearly eye level. So I photographed him and waved my bright orange photo pass at him.



Bay Window caboose 17143 rolls by the station at Rock Island, Illinois in August 1969, bringing up the rear of a Westbound freight. Graphic by Tom Brugman from an original B&W photo, also by Tom Brugman.

Frankly, the black and white images were disappointing. I was doing my own darkroom work at the time and the locomotive shot in particular was off center and at the end of the roll, and as such was far from perfect. The caboose was better, but never up to my memories.

In researching details for these graphic drawings, many photos of F-7s and bay window caboose are used. In doing the F-7 more than 36 photos were referenced, both RI and non RI locomotives.

A couple of detail images follow to show the level of detail.



Close-up of the lead truck detail on caboose 17143 shows the Barber - Bettendorf foundry markings on the truck sideframe. Graphic by Tom Brugman.



Close-up of the nose and building details on F-7A 116. Note the headlight, marker and herald reflections, as well as the brick and window details on the station in the background. Graphic by Tom Brugman.

And finally, the original pictures from 1969. Neither were well centered or framed, but my interests in graphic drawing has given them a second chance. Photos by Tom Brugman.





4. ROCK ISLAND HO MODULE IN NEW ZEALAND BY STAN AGAR

This is the story of my HO scale Free-Mo module based on the Rock Island's engine terminal in Amarillo, Texas.

First off, it's confession time. I'm not really a Rock Island modeler, my main interest is the Louisville and Nashville in the early 1950's. However, when I discovered Amarillo it struck me as an ideal junction module that fitted in a relatively small space. I work for a charitable organization called SkillWise in New Zealand (www.skillwise.org.nz) that supports adults with intellectual disabilities and I had been running model making groups for some time. We had built an HO scale layout based on Lyttelton in Christchurch, which had been seen at three train shows. I had been modeling the American prototype for many years and had shown and run some American stock on Lyttelton and the people I was working with were getting keen on things American. Then two things happened, one minor and one major. The minor thing was Billy Connolly's 'Route 66' travel documentary which got people even more interested in things American. (You can find it on YouTube). The major thing was the 2011 Christchurch earthquake. Thankfully everyone got out OK (it happened just after lunch on a weekday) but we lost the Lyttelton layout when our building had to be demolished.

Once our organization had new premises and were up and running again, I put the idea of Free-Mo to people as a way of having a layout that wasn't fixed in shape or form and would allow us to have different size set ups at train shows. So we started building and exhibiting again. I use the model railroad as a teaching tool – woodworking, electronics, scenery, research, computers and photography etc. Nobody else was working in Free-Mo locally, although it had been talked about for years. Once we started showing it around other modelers began building their own modules to connect with ours. As of writing this we have organized

10 Free-Mo meets at the Skill Wise premises and attended 15 train shows in the South Island of New Zealand with layouts put together from our modules, including an epic road trip (by NZ standards) of 350 miles to the Invercargill train show in 2017.

So how does Amarillo fit into all of this? Fairly early in our Free-Mo journey we built a single-track module called 'Mitchell Junction', named after a member of our group who had passed away. This gave us a branch line although most of our modules were double track, which better suits operations at train shows. I was thinking about building my own module so I had something I could say was mine, rather than club property. At this point I came across an article called 'A facility made to model' by David Lustig in the July 1976 issue of 'Railroad Modeler' magazine. The Rock Island in Amarillo seemed an excellent prototype with a double track main, wye, two track engine house, RIP tracks and 2 industrial tracks which could be used as branch lines in a Free-Mo set up. So research began and I became a Rock modeler, rather than someone who had a few RI freight cars. David Lustig's article was the starting point, I found some pictures on the net and in books and other magazines. And of course, Google Earth and Google Street View.

Luckily the engine house still survives, along with some of the industrial buildings and ghost images of demolished buildings can be seen on Google Earth. An online search has turned up some Sanborn insurance maps, but not quite the ones I wanted. Many state and university libraries have Sanborn collections but often membership is required to access them.

Although I have been lucky enough to have visited the States on three occasions I have never been to Texas. However, when I mentioned what I was up to one of our regular Free-Mo group members he told me he used to live in Amarillo driving trucks! It's a small world really.

The bench work is constructed from various thicknesses of plywood and currently is 15 feet long by 6 and a half feet wide, made up from 5 separate boards.

Under construction now is the 6 th board which will include some industries that were rail served west of the yard, roads passing over and

under the mainline and at the suggestion of a friend two long loops to better give an impression of the yard. This will bring the total length to 20 feet.

In keeping with the Free-Mo standards the main line uses commercial code 83 track and switches, in my case from Peco. The yard switches are hand laid code 70 using wooden ties, with PCB ties every 2nd or 3rd.

Most of the yard tracks are wooden and PCB ties or Central Valley plastic tie strips. Some of the yard tracks are deliberately rough in places, anything running into the caboose track from the east end has a satisfying lean to one side but usually stays on the track. The mainline was drawn using XTrak CAD and the yard drawn using Templot software which generated the templates to build the switches. The engine house is scratch built from Evergreen corrugated sheet and Tichy windows from drawings I produced from photos of the original found online and from Google Earth as the original still stands and like the rest of the site appears to be used for Maintenance of Way equipment storage. The Google Earth view has a 40' boxcar sitting on the through road just outside so this made scaling much easier. I don't profess that it's 100% accurate but I think it matches the photographs quite well. Like most of my buildings it was painted with enamels and weathered mainly with oils. Each road has a Scalescenes inspection pit.

This is a free download from their website (www.scalescenes.com/product/r002c-inspection-pit).

Between the pits is a battery powered welding simulator which can be seen through the windows.

The industrial building in the rear is kit bashed from a Walther's Clayton County Lumber kit, again painted in enamels and oils. It is a mirror image of the original so that it fits the benchwork. A scratch-built house from a previous layout sits at the end of North Arthur Street. The diesel fueling cranes and sanding tower are from American Models (now discontinued). The main sand unloading and storage bin still need to be built as does the yard office. Various sheds and equipment are grouped around the RIP tracks. A Tichy oil storage tank sits off to one side.

You will notice from my photographs a wide variety of locomotives passing through or stabled. This is Free-Mo so anything can turn up during a running session. Amarillo has seen a variety of British steam engines passing through, an Italian EMU plus German and Czech diesels not to mention locos from all over North America.

Operationally Amarillo is the only double to single track junction our Free-Mo community possess, so at the moment it forms the centre of our set ups. Much of this module has been built from the limited number of photos I have been able to find. There are several locomotive pictures on line that show tantalizing details or parts of buildings in the background. If anyone has any more information or photos to help with this project, I can be contacted at stanrail@xtra.co.nz and thanks in anticipation.

Stan Agar

Following five photos of the Amarillo Free-Mo Module by Stan Agar. Modeling by Stan Agar.









5. ROCK ISLAND EMPLOYEE BILL SCHULTZ RECOLLECTIONS

i am a former employee of the RI who worked mostly in Blue Island during my college years. The picture of the tower at 103rd and Vincennes in South Chicago in the recent issue of the Reporter brought back some interesting memories. I worked summer vacation relief jobs mostly in the yard office at BI from 1956 to 1961.

In the summer of 1959 I was approached by Norb Simon, the tower operator supervisor, who asked if i would like to become a relief operator at the towers at Washington Heights (103rd and Vincennes) and also at the tower at 91st and Brainerd. Both towers controlled the RI/ Pennsy Panhandle line. Brainerd was on the old suburban line while Washington Heights was on the RI main out of Chicago. I jumped at the the chance and thus my story begins.

One Sunday, my dad, asked me if he could go to work with me to see what I did. i said sure. I was working 1st trick at Washington Hgts. Both of these towers had the old "Armstrong" levers although they had been electrified to ease their operation. Also, the tower operator manually controlled the street crossing gates and had to activate them when a train approached. i went about my business of running my railroad not paying a lot of attention to my dad. Suddenly he got up, picked up his coat and said " I am going home." I asked him why since my shift was just half over. He said, "You are making me a nervous wreck just watching was you are doing. Do you have any idea the disasters you can create if you make a mistake?" Being all of 20 years old and full of youthful confidence i said "no, i really never thought about it." He left rattled by what he had seen.

The next story also occurred at Wash Hgts. We had three RI tracks through the interlocking, two main lines running north and south and a side track used by local switchers to serve industries along the line. I cleared a switcher through the interlocking but forgot to lower the crossing gates for both Vincennes Ave and 103rd st. Only the loud blowing of the switcher's horn woke me up and I lowered the gates just as the switcher reached the crossing. So much for youthful confidence.

The final story occurred at 91st and Brainerd where one morning during commuter rush hour an outbound Commuter train (affectionately known as

"dummies" by the employees) came around a curve in front of the tower and hit an elderly woman who was walking between the tracks. She had no idea there was a train behind here even though the engineer was frantically blowing his whistle. I can only assume that she thought the whistle was from an inbound dummy that she could she approaching her.. She was struck by the lead grab iron on the engine and thrown into the weeds at the side of the track. Passengers were waiting at the Brainerd station and saw the whole thing. i immediately left the tower with a red flag to slow down the inbound dummy even though he had a clear signal and was going to make a station stop. I decided to let the crowd call for help while i looked after the trains and passengers milling around. I learned later that she survived the incident but i never learned how serious here injuries were.

That's the saga of my career as a interlocking tower operator which was probably the most interesting job I ever held on the railroad.

Feel free to use these stories and edit them as necessary.

If you need to contact me, you have my email address.Thanks for the great work you do documenting the history of "a mighty fine road."

Bill Schultz



Photo provided by Dean Schirf.



**WE CAN CURE WHAT
AILS YOU
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REPORTER!**

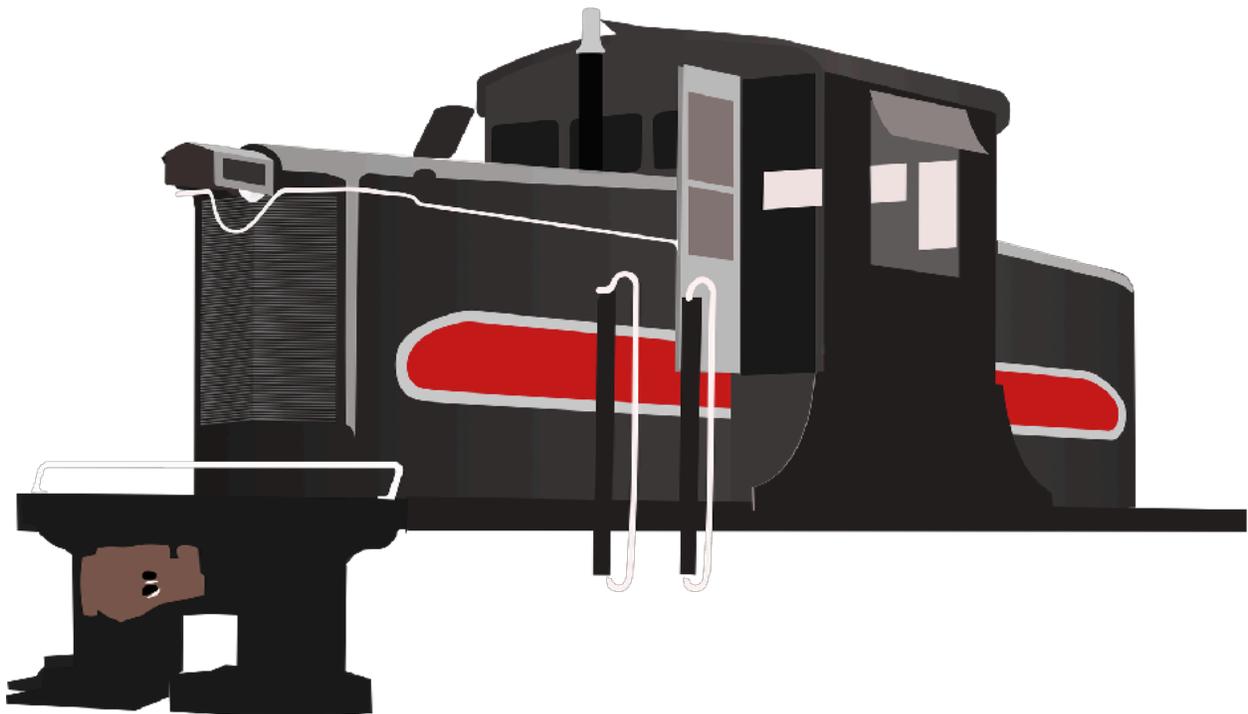
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On the Drawing Board

By Tom Brugman





6. IOWA NORTHERN RAILWAY BEGINS HANDLING STACK TRAINS BY DAN SABIN

[Editor: Dan Sabin's Iowa Northern Railway {INR} is one of the most innovative short lines in the country. Besides operating the Hawkeye Express, and creating a large and growing intermodal transloading operation, INR is also taking steps to give grain customers improved container access to international markets via LA-Long Beach, CA.]

We have an operation involving UP, IANR, Watco and a freight forwarding firm from Minneapolis called Valor-Victoria. Watco Terminals is the terminal operator at our Butler Intermodal Terminal and Watco Logistic Services handles the back office work for Valor-Victoria.

Currently UP delivers containers from LA-LB to IANR at Manly Yard three days per week and we have an outbound block for their pickup.

The Chinese New Year and COVID-19 have been quite disrupted to our container movements, complicated by shipping lines' reduction in sailings. A large number of containers are withheld from loading at Asian Ports without considerable surcharge premiums to use limited capacity on fewer sailings. We have now added the Port of Tacoma to the sailing schedule, but continue with reduced sailings, blocking loads in Asian ports.

Initially we have been using the inbound containers for export Ag products. This will continue, but we are also working with Iowa based manufacturers to access inbound containers for export. (Iowa exports 8 loads for every inbound import load, so there are always commodities to move back west). We are also working on new industrial development that will be positioned and designed to take advantage of the new service. This additional volume will result in larger blocks of traffic and more frequency in service.



Photos of GATX 2276, a former Long Island Railroad GP-38-2, leads the first container stack train into Manly IA in April 2020. Photos provided by Dan Sabin.





7. THE NIGHT THEY BROUGHT OLD 253 DOWN

By Ken Vandervoort

It was one of those extremely cold days during December 1978. It was now night and I had settled down in my apartment in the back of my hobby shop in Pella, Iowa. Suddenly, there was a call on the police scanner about a train derailment on the Central College campus. I quickly called a rail buddy, told him about it and headed to his house to pick him up. I grabbed my Conger lantern on the way out the door.

We drove as close as we could to the campus and found a place to park. The train was headed eastbound toward the yard when it went down. The caboose cleared West 3rd St. which was a busy north-south street. All of the other streets were blocked. The loco had gone on the ground just past the walkway from the library over what had once been Peace St.

We found GE U28B on the head end. It was leading long hood forward. The front truck was on the ground. The engine was still running (you wouldn't want to turn it off with that temperature) and the headlight was still on. There was a large crowd of students gathered around the locomotive. A couple of guys climbed on and tried to enter the cab, but the crew had been smart enough to lock the door. I was curious to see if I could find out what happened and took the Conger and went under the locomotive. I got back out and was approached by Dean of Students, Bill Hinga.

He said, "Where is the crew?"

I said, "They probably called the dispatcher and went home."

He said, "Well, they can't leave it here."

That had to be the dumbest statement I ever heard from an educated person.

Early the next morning, I went back to take photos because I knew it wasn't going to be left there very long. What happens next is interesting.

What follows is unverifiable information that I picked up from a couple of sources, including Hank Shetterly, a retired Rock Island agent that now worked for the Central College Maintenance Department.

The Rock Island was ready to bring the sidewinders on campus. The college told them “no”. The boxcars on that train were loaded with lumber ready to be made into Pella windows. Guess who one of the largest benefactors is to Central College? The college basically told their largest benefactor that they couldn’t have their lumber. One phone call took care of that and the sidewinders did their business. I was working, so I missed it.

Hank told me what he believed caused the derailment. The college had cleaned snow off of the walkway to the library. It was piled alongside and also on the tracks. It was so horridly cold, it froze as solid as concrete. The loco truck hit it and it worked just like a derail.

I never heard any more about the derailment after that. If you look at the photos of 253, that is one of those Rock Island “use any door that fits” locomotives. Anybody want to model it? I have a Charley’s Slide of 253 at Erie, PA in 1966. It sure didn’t look like this.



Photos of RI U-28B #253, on the ground at Pella, IA, by Ken Vandevort.



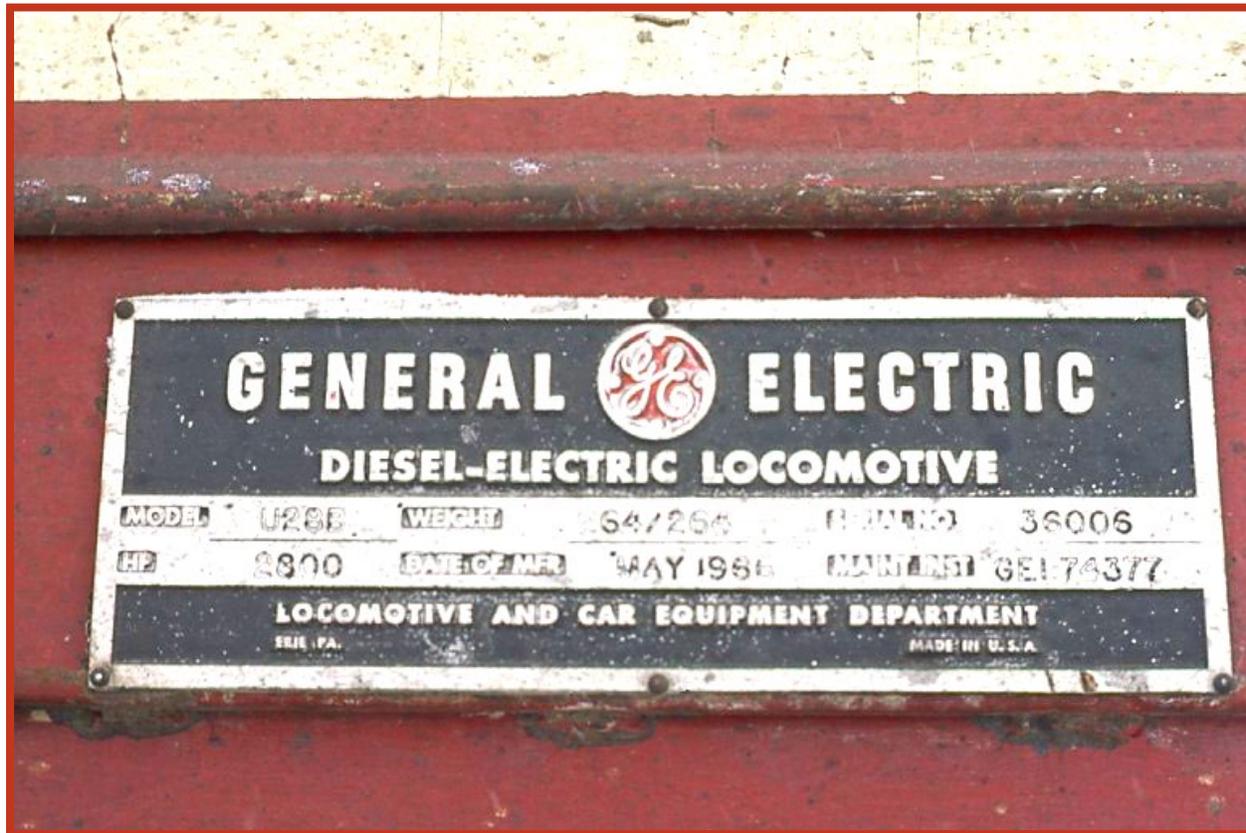


Photo of RI U-28B #253, at Pella, IA, by Ken Vandevort.



RI U-28B #253, at Pella, IA, by Ken Vandevort.





Builders Plate of RI U-28B #253, by Ken Vandervoort.



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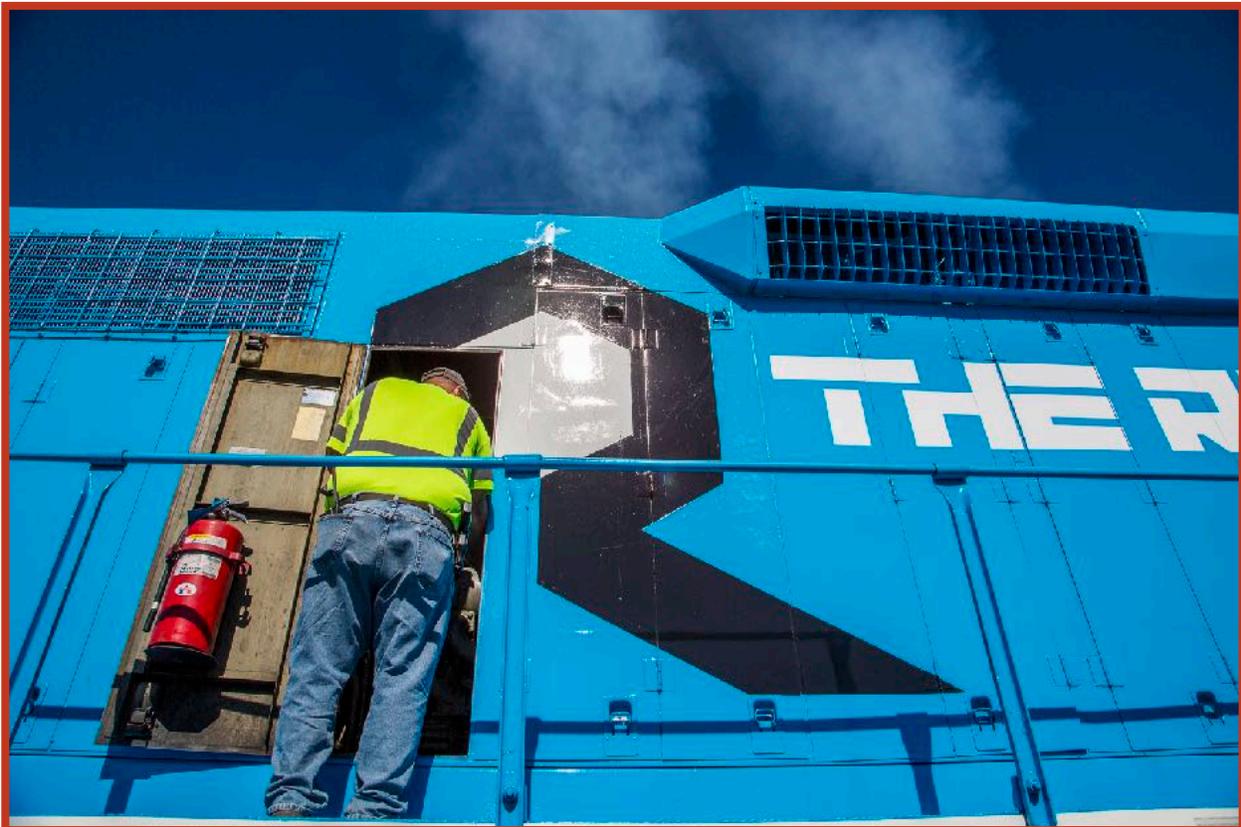
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ROCK ISLAND REPORTER

8. THE NEW CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC RAILROAD LLC IN COAHOMA COUNTY, MS.

By Tom Brugman; Photos by Bryan Bechtold.



ROCK LLC employee starts a GP-38 for the start of a new workday in Sumner, MS.
Photo by Bryan Bechtold

There is a new Rock Island Railroad in the world. As of March 2020, the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, LLC (ROCK) began serving 61 miles of former IC track between Swan Lake and Jonestown, Mississippi. The line of track is actually owned by Coahoma County, and was purchased to protect rail service after abandonments and shortline failures combined to threaten industry in the area. ROCK LLC is contracted to provide service on the line.



Above: Nose portrait of GP-38 4373. Below left: GP-30 not yet lettered for ROCK. Below right: GP-38 4310 lettered for the American Railfan. Photos by Bryan Bechtold



Below: ROCK LLC offices in Sumner, MS. Photo by Bryan Bechtold



Becoming a Class 3 short line railroad with common carrier status in the United States can be challenging, and ROCK LLC has had its share of obstacles to overcome. Not only did the prior shortline operator oppose ROCK assuming service over the line, but Canadian National through its subsidiary Illinois Central RR also opposed an interchange agreement at Swan Lake, MS.

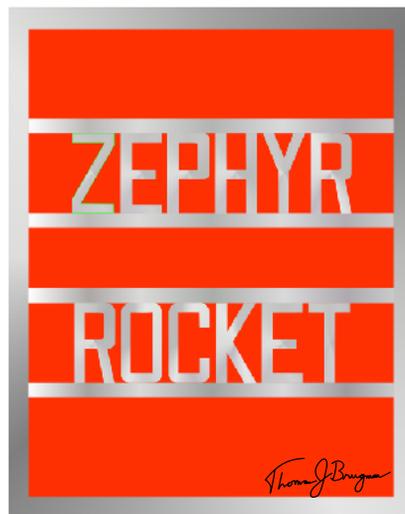
C&J Railroad had its operating contract terminated by Coahoma County for lack of payment and insufficient equipment to provide service. ROCK LLC then comes along with five locomotives: two GP-38s in ROCK Blue, two GP-15s, and one GP-30.

ROCK LLC acquired the trademark rights to the ROCK logo, which was sitting unused for years. They have not acquired the rights to the red Rock Island Shield, which belongs to Iowa Interstate RR.

The railroad's website is <https://rockislandrail.com/>

A youtube video of one of the GP-38s can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4W8DH7exDY&feature=em-lsp>

While not on original Rock Island territory - IC was the last Class one RR to own the line, ROCK LLC deserves our applause for helping to preserve the memory of one of our favorite railroad.



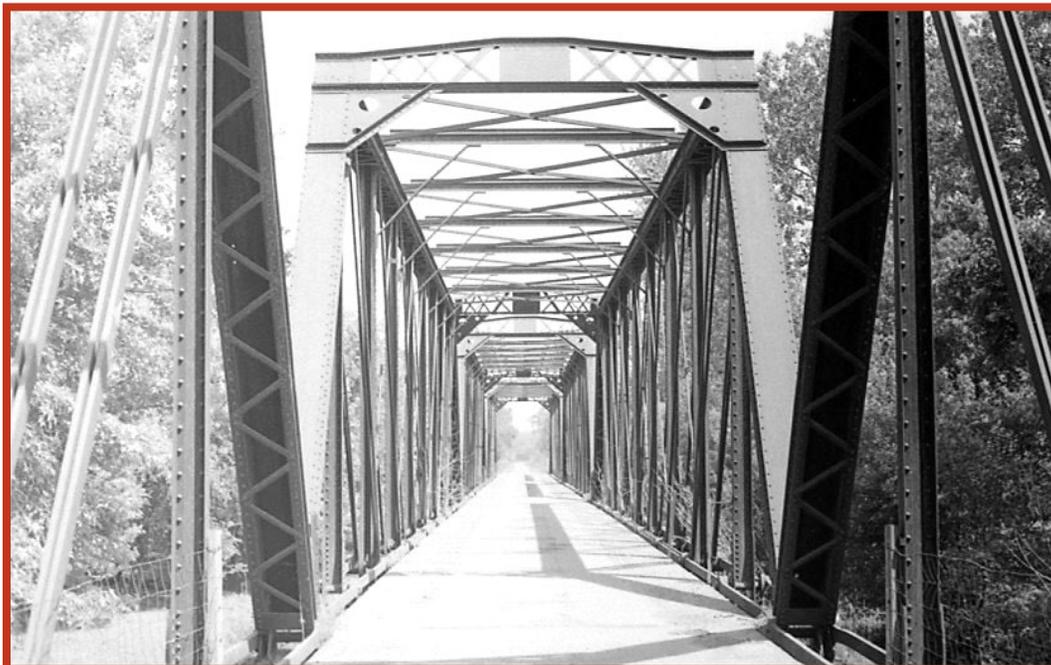
ROCK ISLAND REPORTER

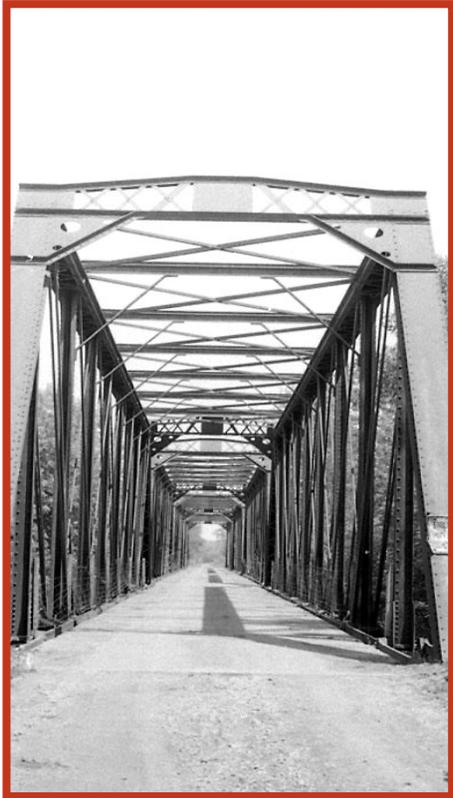
9. LAST ROCK ISLAND BRIDGE ON THE EVANS TO KNOXVILLE LINE AT HARVEY, IA

By Ken Vandevort

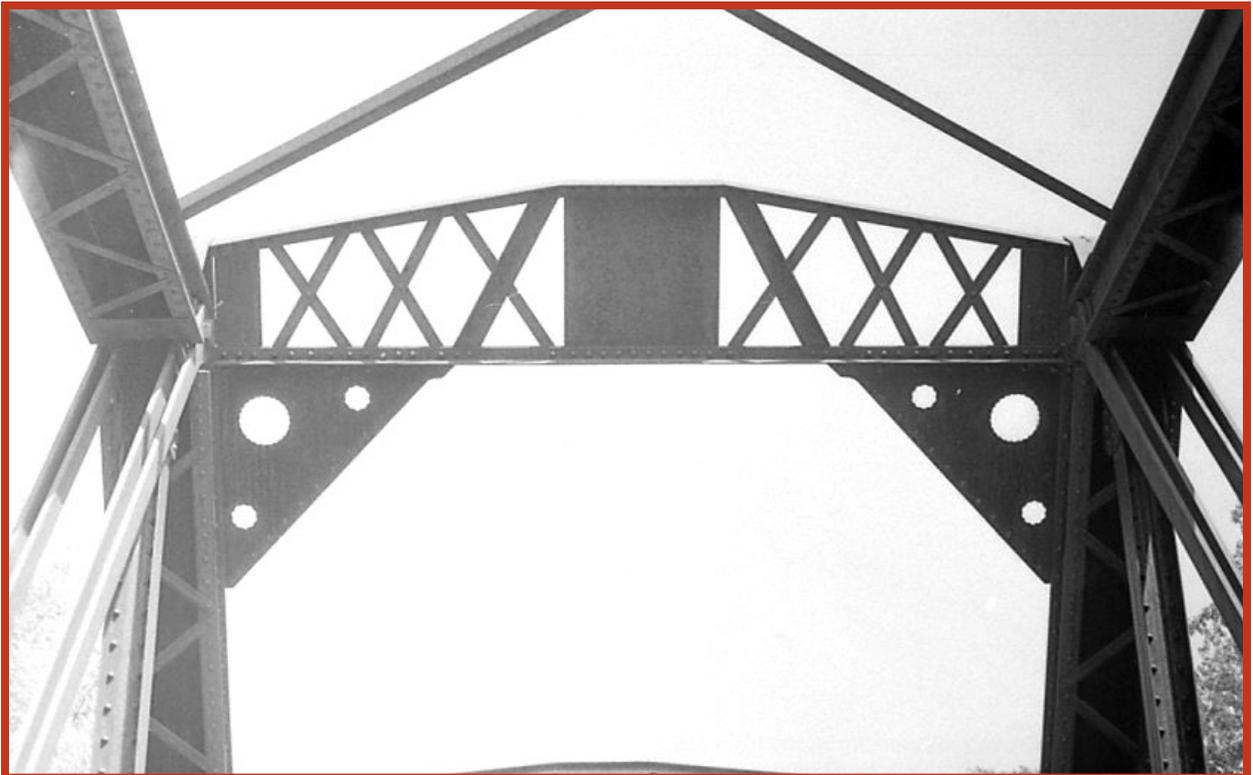
There isn't much remaining for structures on Rock Islands line from Evans to Knoxville, Iowa. Actually, it is the Washington to Knoxville line and if you look at an old timetable, you will see a dotted line between Knoxville and Indianola. There were obvious future plans that did not happen.

One remaining structure is the Rock Island depot in Knoxville. The other is a bridge on the east side of Harvey. This is not the Des Moines River bridge at Harvey, but one that went over a creek and low area. It was built in 1878 by the American Bridge Company out of Chicago.





Four photos of the Harvey IA bridge. All photos by Ken Vandevort.





10. CONTINUOUS WELDED RAIL ON THE ROCK ISLAND

by Stephen Eudy

The Rock Island started using continuous welded rail (CWR) back in 1952 on a five mile stretch of mainline between Peru and Spring Valley, Illinois. Over the years there were Rock Island CWR facilities in Summit, Ill. near Chicago, Eldon, Ia., Goodland, Ks., and West Des Moines, Ia., which this article is about.

The CWR facility in West Des Moines would weld rail in quarter of a mile lengths to be used all over the system. The equipment used in the welding process was an R.I. flat car with a rail rack which fed the rail into the welding car that was owned and operated by National Cylinder Gas. It was N.C.G. 506 which was an electric flash butt welder and also contained a belt grinder and a power feeder.

Next was an R.I. ex. Baggage-RPO car 95819, the grinding car where the welds were polished smooth. Rail was unloaded, inspected and graded according to weight. It was then delivered to the rack car where the ends were cropped with special saws. The rail was then stacked on top of the rail rack, where it was fed into the welding car. Before the rail ends enter the welding car, they were polished to prevent electrode burns which could lead to possible rail failures.

In the welding car the two rail ends were lined up, but were not butted together. A tiny air space was left between the two. Current was then turned on and the rails were heated by a series of electrical charges. When the proper temperature was reached and the rail ends were tacky, the two rails were rammed together under great pressure and forged together. At the joint a ring of metal forms, completely encircling the rail. It is shaved off with a shear block, which was shaped to the contour of the rail. It was then a relatively smooth surface on all sides.

The welding car then moves the rail along to a belt grinder which further smooths the head and base of the rail. The rail then passed into the grinding car R.I. ex. Baggage-RPO 95819 where it was magnafluxed, checked for straightness and polished with even more grinders.

Next the CWR rides over two flat cars with roller assemblies for letting the rail down into twenty five gondolas with special roller assemblies for holding the CWR. The gondola assemblies could hold as many as 30 strings of ribbon rail. The center car, number 13 in the train had a clamping device to tie down the rails to prevent any movement while the train was in motion. Another safeguard when CWR moved in a train, a loaded ballast car was placed on each end, then if an emergency should occur, causing the rail to move, they would run into the ballast cars instead of loaded freight cars, a caboose, or a locomotive.

The Rock Island operated two trains for CWR movement. After the 1980 shutdown, at least one train was stored at Colfax, Ia. before it was sold to an unknown buyer.

All photos by Stephen Eudy or from his collection.



National Cylinder Gas welding car N.C.G. 506 north side W. Des Moines, Ia.
10-4-1973.



National Cylinder Gas welding car N.C.G. 506 south side W. Des Moines, Ia. 1974.



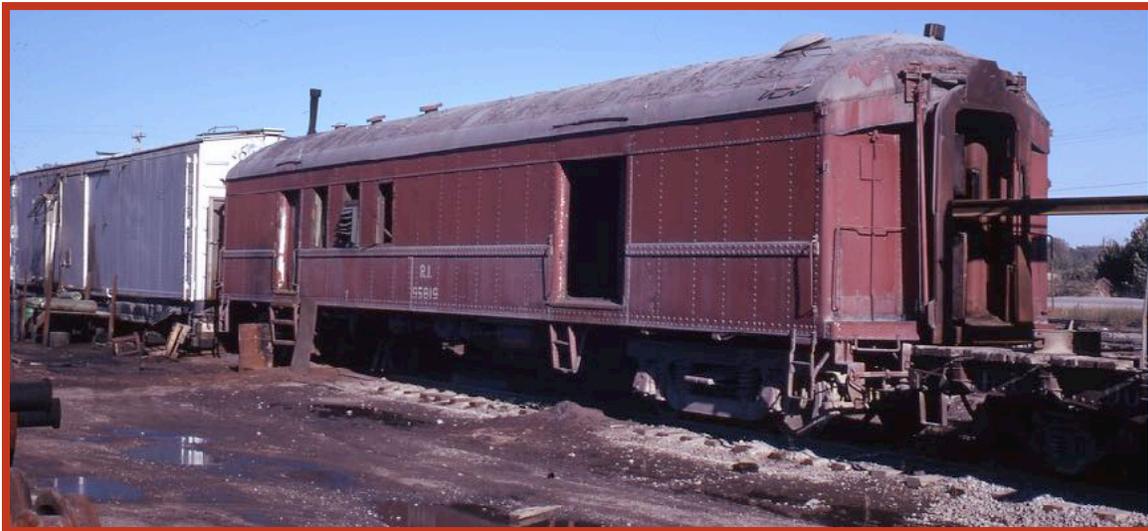
National Cylinder Gas employee at welding machine Rock Island Lines photo Collection of Stephen Eudy.



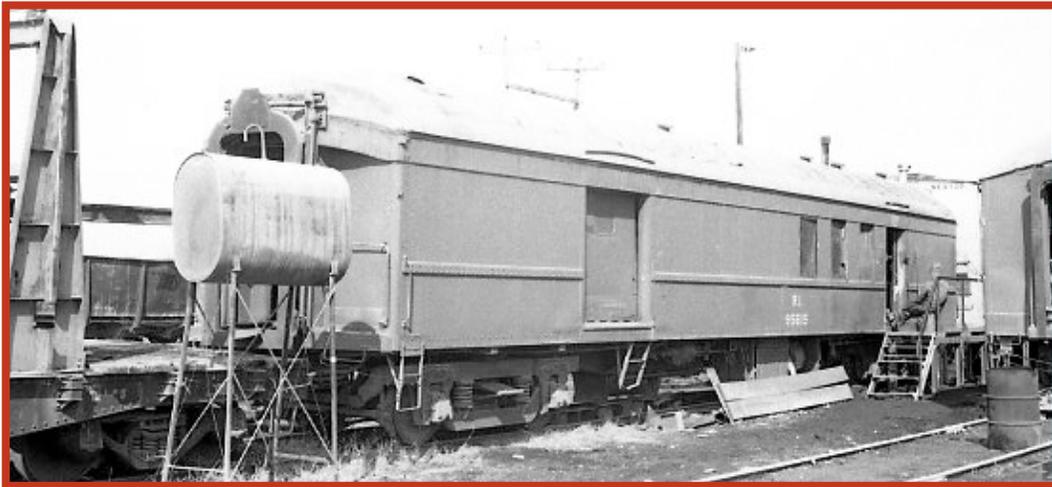
Rail ends and saws West Des Moines, IA 1974.



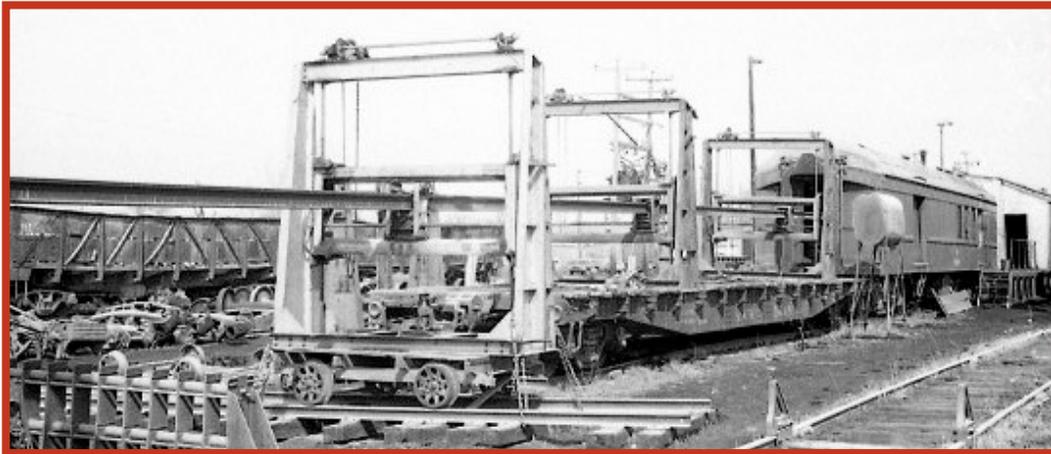
Burro crane CT-4 unloading rail at rail saws 4-21-1975.



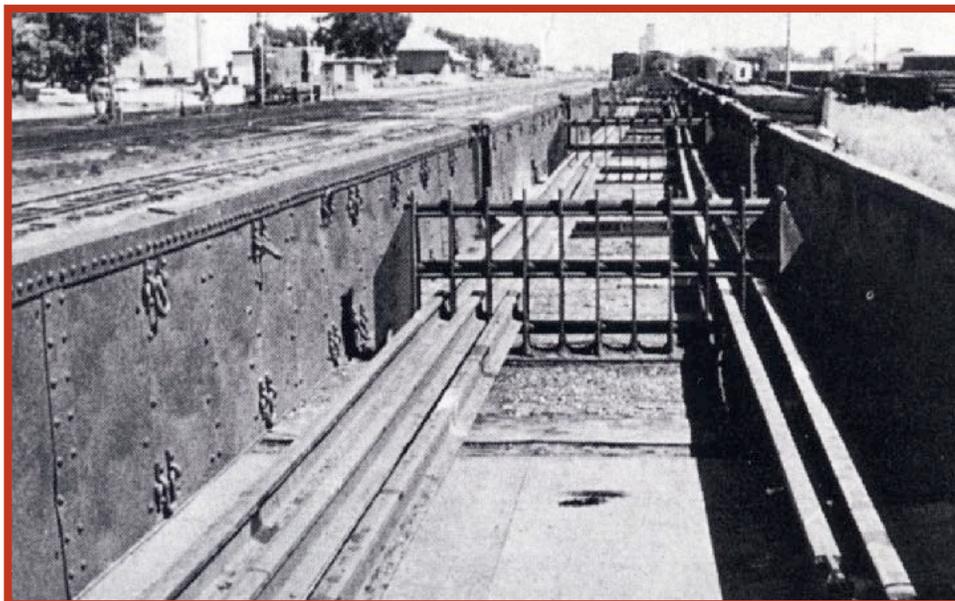
R.I. 95819 rail grinding car north side 10-4-1973.



R.I. 95819 rail grinding car south side 1974.



R.I. flat with roller assemblies 1974.



CWR loaded into gondolas for transport. Rock Island Lines photo. Collection of Stephen Eudy



R.I. ex. Suburban passenger car 2537 used as a lunch room 4-1973.



Yard office 1974.

Burro crane CT-4
43 unloading rail
in the storage yard
4-1973. West Des
Moines IA.



Link-Belt
Speeder crane
DL-9 unloading
rail in the storage
yard 6-15-1974.
West Des Moines
IA.



Rail storage yard
cranes DL-9 (left)
and Burro CT-5 44
(right) in W Des
Moines, IA 1974.



Rail storage yard 1974.



Welded rail train 47U23 westbound at Booneville, Ia. 1-23-76.



Rail Guide car 97157 on train 47U23 Booneville, Ia. 1-23-1976.



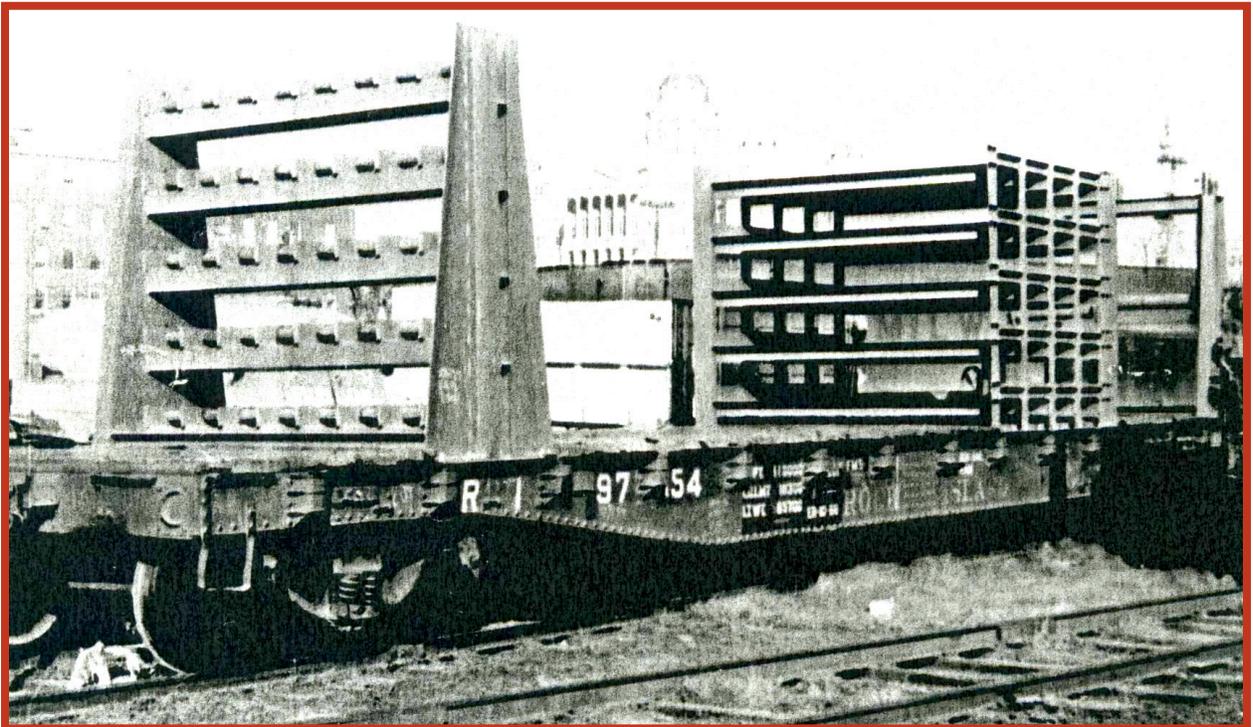
Rail Guide car 97157 on train 47U23 Booneville, Ia. 1-23-1976.



Rail Guide car 97157 W. Des Moines, Ia. 6-30-1974.



Rail Guide car 97157 W. Des Moines, Ia. 6-30-1974.



CWR car 97154, ex. 80893, built 12-1942, Des Moines, Ia. date unknown. Riebe photo from Stephen Eudy collection.



11. DEAN SCHIRF'S TRAIN OF THOUGHT

- A. RI S-22 44 TON SWITCHERS AT CHICKASHA, OK**
- B. FA-1 DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES**
- C. BRIDGE TO NOWHERE**

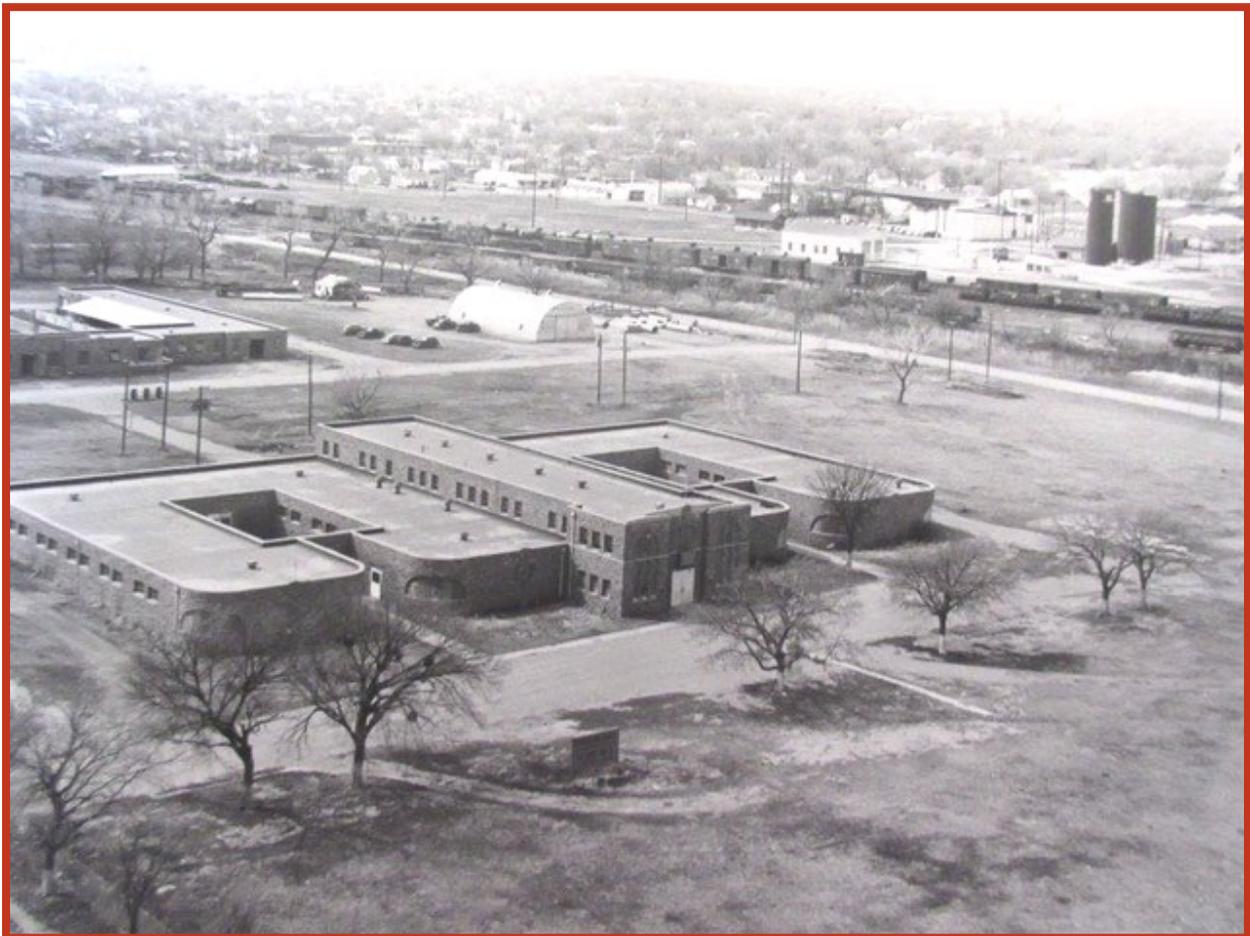
DEAN SCHIRF REMEMBERS THE ROCK ISLAND S-22 44 TON DAVENPORTS AND WHITCOMBS ASSIGNED TO CHICKASHA, OK

You don't read a lot about the S-22 44 ton Davenport and Whitcomb switch engines that played a prominent role switching small but key Rock Island rail yards. The Rock Island purchased the first 44 ton Davenport in 1935 and ultimately acquired a total some 28 Davenports and 5 Whitcombs. These switchers were bought and placed into service between 1935-1945. They were popular because they weighed less than the "90,000 pound rule" at the time meaning locomotives less than that weight would need only a one man crew.....the engineer.

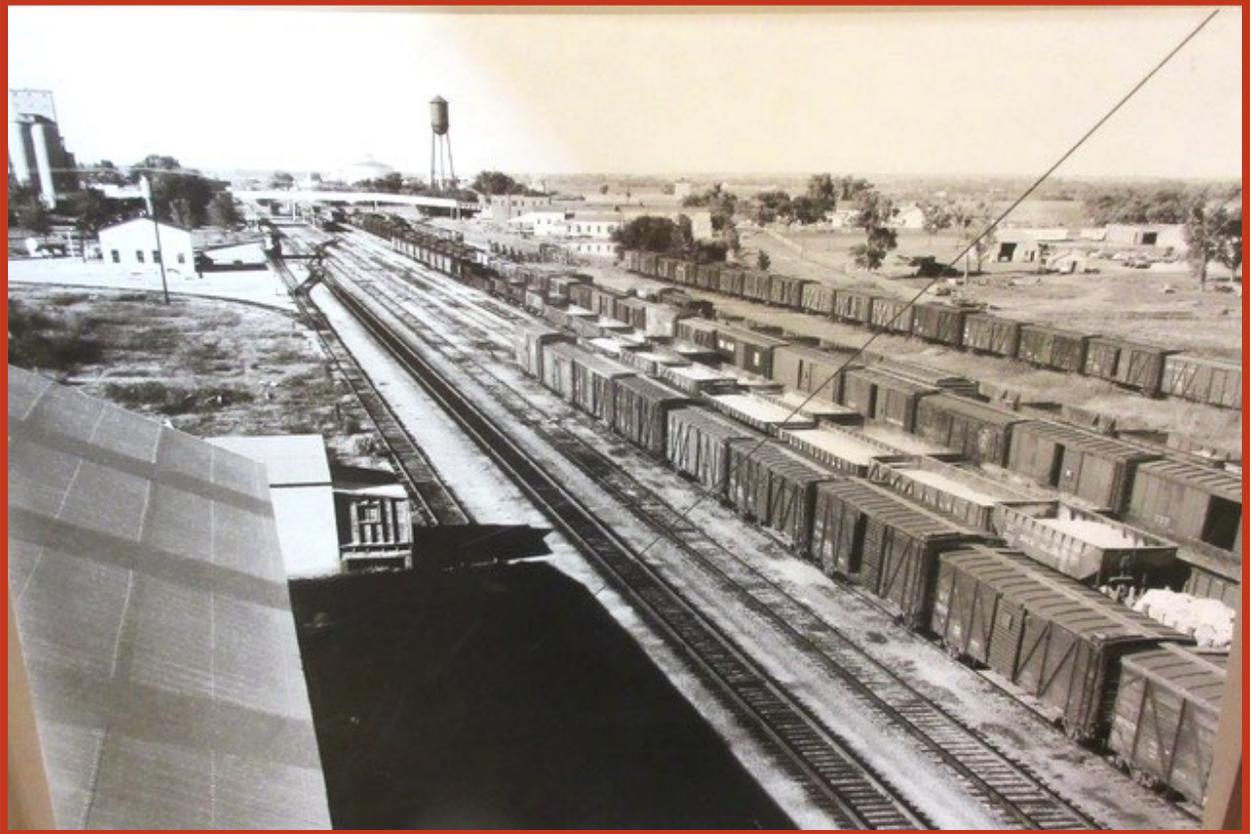
Throughout the 1940s and the 1950s, the 44 tonners were assigned to the switching duties of Rock Island's Chickasha, Ok. rail yard. Growing up there in the 1950s, I spent countless hours standing on the station platform or looking down from the viaduct watching these little "mighty mites" faithfully go about their daily switching duties. I loved it when the engineer would hook on to a cut of 30 or so cars and then notch out to see that little engine with its "I think I can, I think I can" attitude bear down and throw out a steady blast of stack smoke, shake and rattle as if it was going to explode at any minute. The 44 ton Davenports and Whitcombs had a faithful and commendable record of 25 years of service to the Rock Island.

At the end of the day, during the school summer vacation days, I would often spot myself at the switch leading from the main line to the two bay engine house in the hopes the engineer would give me the ok to join him in the cab for the approximately 400 foot ride into the engine house.....and more often than not I made that little cab ride with someone that was to me bigger than life.....the engineer.

Here are several pictures of the Chickasha rail yard taken around 1950. One shows the rail yard looking southwest. The buildings in the foreground were used to house German Prisoners captured during World War Two. Beyond the cars in the rail yard you will spot the newly constructed 2 bay engine house just right of upper center. Another picture shows the rail yard looking north showing the south end of the engine house in the upper left. In 1992 I took a color picture of the still standing engine house all be it hardly recognizable. The tracks have long since pulled up and additional storage had been built on each side of the structure. Today the little engine house is gone like so many maintenance and service facilities that once dotted Rock Island's 8000 mile rail system. I wanted to close this out with a picture showing Whitcomb #368 framed by the entrance of a similar engine house when the good ole CRI&P was in far better financial shape. What great memories. (All pics, Dean Schirf Collection)

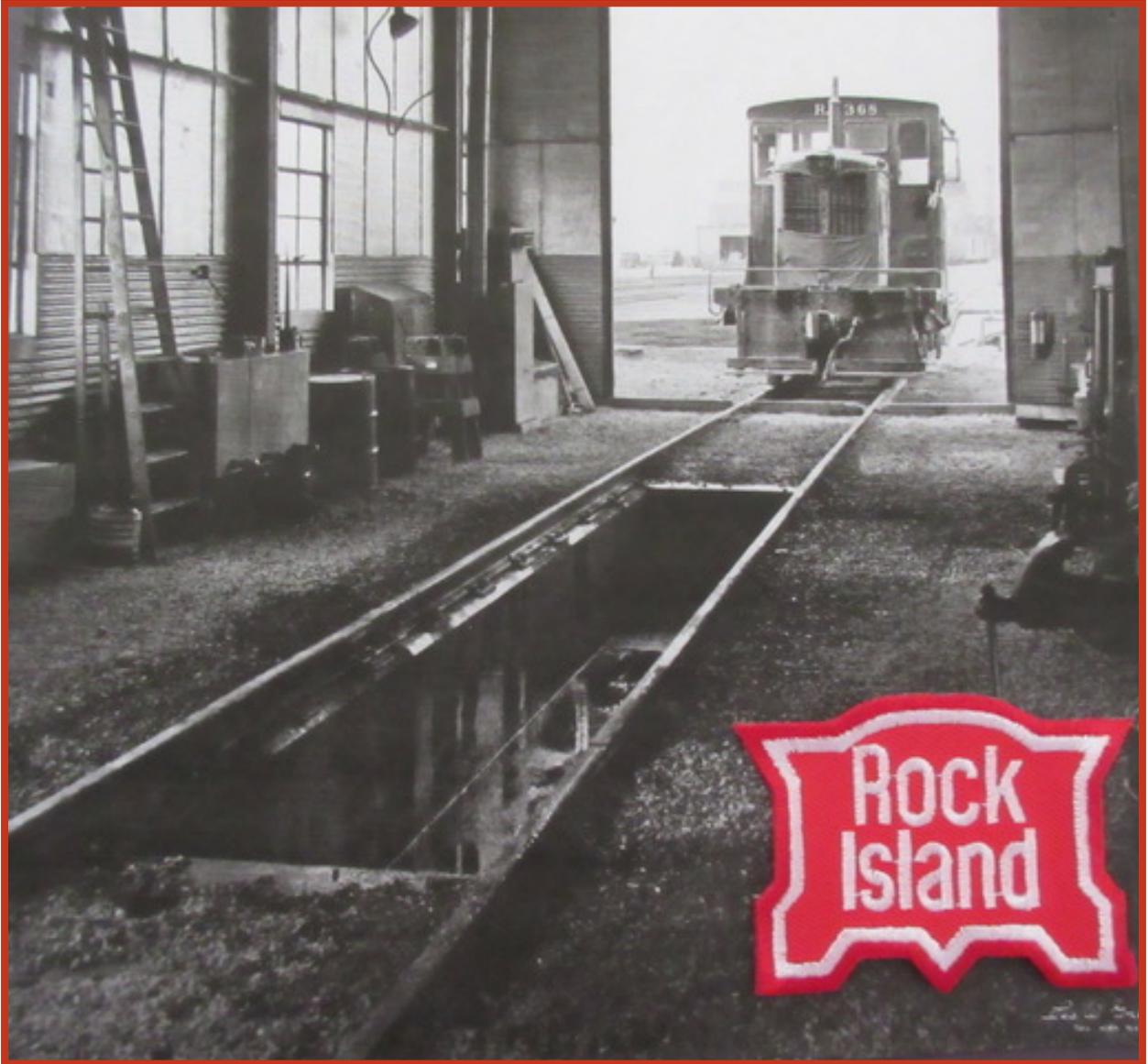


Above: The rail yard looking southwest. The buildings in the foreground were used to house German Prisoners captured during World War Two. Beyond the cars in the rail yard you will spot the newly constructed 2 bay engine house just right of upper center.



Above: The rail yard looking north showing the south end of the engine house in the upper left. Below: In 1992 I took a color picture of the still standing engine house all be it hardly recognizable.





Interesting interior detail shot of Whitcomb #368 framed by the entrance of a similar Rock Island engine house. Note engine pit details.

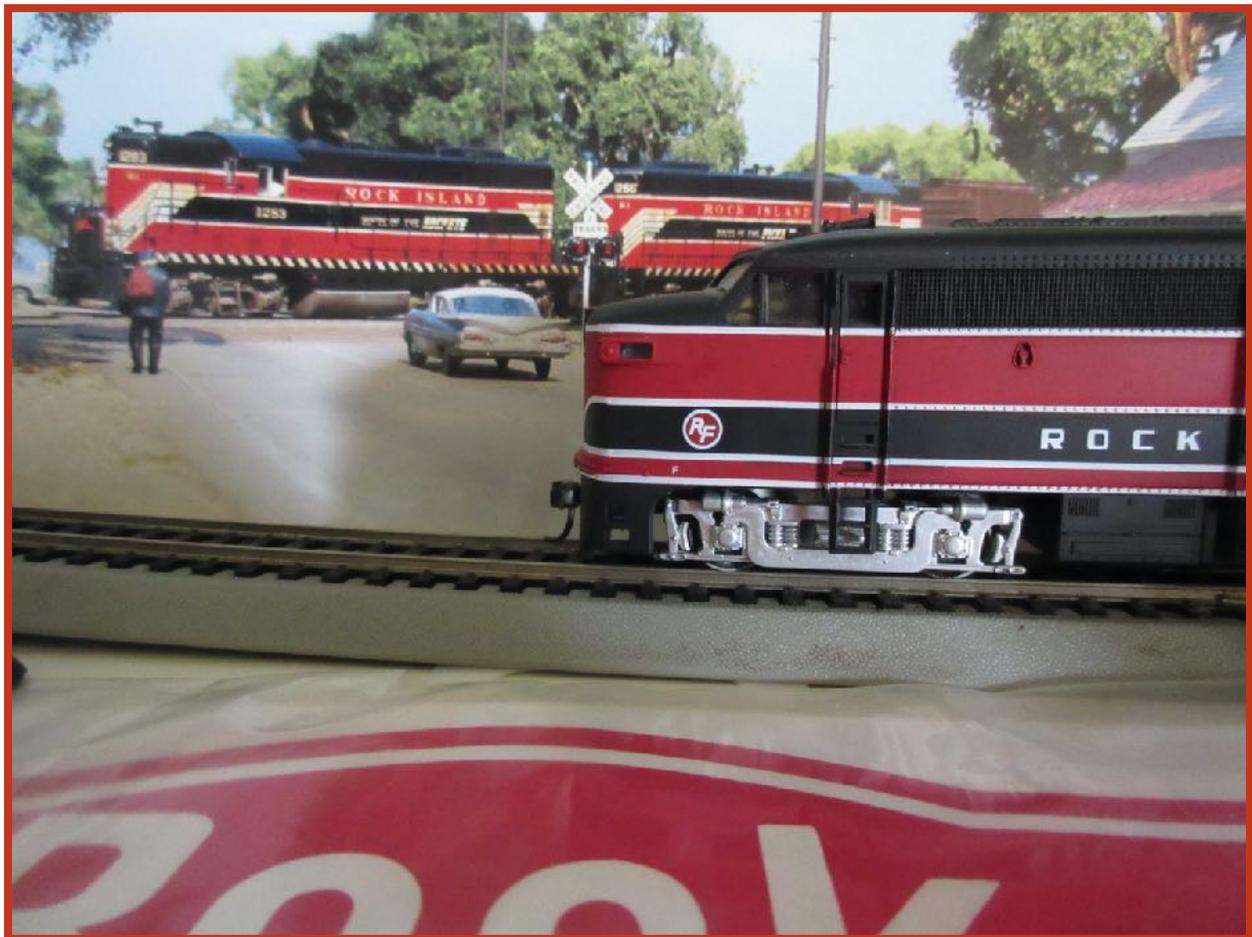


ROCK ISLAND'S FA-1 ALCO DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES

By Dean Schirf

In September, 1948 the Rock Island purchased from ALCO sixteen FA-1s for freight service....#'s 145-160. In addition 8 FB-1 units were also purchased to make up eight ABA sets. They made an imposing impression pulling "Rocket Freights" at the time. Many rail fans believe that ALCOs FA & PA diesel units to be the most handsome of all diesel locomotives that rode the rails in the 50s and 60s. Sadly the exterior good looks did not carry through to the interior "244" engine of the locomotive. Starting in 1954, the Rock Island started to replace the ALCO engines with EMD motive power at LaGrange. All units were gone by April, 1970.

Here is a picture of a Rock Island FA-1 (in HO Scale) showing its striking "Rocket Freight" (RF) red, white and black paint scheme against Ken Patterson's wonderful GP-7's in the background.



BRIDGE TO NOWHERE

By Dean Schirf

BRIDGE EAST OF SHAWNEE, OK. When Rock Island went into its third bankruptcy in 1975, it limped on for another five years before the feds finally pulled the plug. One of Rock's last efforts to restore a rail line was the east/west Choctaw line that ran between Memphis and New Mexico. This effort included welding the joints to form a continuous smoother riding service as the line was the shortest connector from the deep south to the west coast (with a hand off at Tucumcari to the SP). When the end came in March, 1980 the state of Oklahoma quickly stepped in to purchase some 800 miles of Rock Island track rather than let it go to salvage, including the Choctaw line. The Katy RR then entered an agreement with the state to operate the Choctaw line from Oklahoma City east to McAlester where it connected with its north/south Texas/Missouri main line. This operation continued through 1988 whereupon the UP purchased the Katy and took over the line. A few years later a major wash out of the approach to the Canadian River Bridge some 3 miles east of Shawnee occurred discontinuing service to the eastern side of the state. It stayed that way for years when the A-OK RR took over service operating the line from Shawnee back west to Oklahoma City, a distance of some 30 miles. Years went by before the A-OK, using its own maintenance equipment and crew built back the approach to the bridge clearing the line of tree stubs and years of neglect to a point several hundred yards further east. And that is where it stands to this day. The line east of the bridge to McAlester still remains on the ground (barely visible among weeds and trees) awaiting any final disposition for clearance and/or future operations. The line no longer connects to Memphis or Tucumcari as it has been removed beyond the borders of Oklahoma.

Here are several pictures I took some years back showing the bridge wash out approach and the condition of the rail line at that time along with a picture showing the restored approach to the bridge today. Dean Schirf, Harrah, Ok.





ROCK ISLAND REPORTER

12. L. A. REED COLLECTION - TWIN STAR ROCKET, AND CHOCTAW ROCKET BROCHURE



Handsome image of the might Twin Star Rocket streamliner with service between Minneapolis-St.Paul and Houston, 1363 miles. Introduced January 14, 1945, as the ONLY streamliner permitted to enter service in WWII by the U.S. government. Photo dated November, 1940.

This page and next. Three images of the Choctaw Rocket Brochure circa 1940. Since all the states this train served had "Jim Crow" laws, The coaches used had to have separate entrances and wash facilities for both colored and white passengers. This can clearly be seen on both the brochure and the following coach diagram of the RI 324-328 series.



The Rocket Engine

2000 horse-power developed from two huge Electro-Motive 12 cylinder V Type two cycle Diesel engines drive the Choctaw Rockets by means of 600 volt electric generators and traction motors geared to the wheel axles. This tremendous power is controlled easily by simple levers and switches. High vision windows provide an open view of the road ahead. Their top speed is easily controlled by electro-pneumatic brakes and a system of safety devices under which the train is controlled more quickly than the heavier conventional trains.

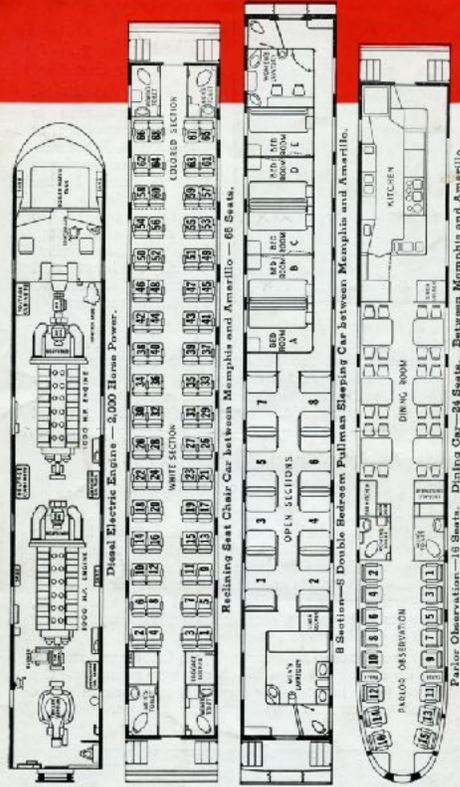
Schedule of "Choctaw Rocket"

Memphis-Amarillo (approximate)			
Train S1		Train S2	
8:30 PM Lv	MEMPHIS	Ar	8:00 AM
10:53 PM Ar	LITTLE ROCK	Lv	5:25 AM
10:55 PM Lv	LITTLE ROCK	Ar	5:23 AM
1:42 AM Ar	BOONEVILLE	Lv	2:37 AM
1:44 AM Lv	BOONEVILLE	Ar	2:35 AM
6:07 AM Lv	SHAWNEE	Ar	10:15 PM
7:00 AM Ar	OKLAHOMA CITY	Lv	9:23 PM
7:08 AM Lv	OKLAHOMA CITY	Ar	9:20 PM
7:42 AM Ar	EL RENO	Lv	8:43 PM
7:44 AM Lv	EL RENO	Ar	8:41 PM
10:14 AM Lv	SAYRE	Ar	6:06 PM
1:05 PM Ar	AMARILLO	Lv	3:15 PM

THE CHOCTAW ROCKETS are NOT EXTRA FARE trains. Tickets sold at regular coach fares are honored in reclining seat chair cars. Passengers holding space in Pullman sleepers or Parlor cars must have transportation valid for the type of accommodations selected.

For reservations, tickets and information, consult your nearest Rock Island Agent or telephone or call at

- MEMPHIS, Tenn.** Phone B-3911
 70 Meador St.
 G. J. Cissel, District Passenger Agent
 L. M. Hunt, City Passenger Agent
 H. W. Buckley, City Ticket Agent
- LITTLE ROCK, ARK.**
 Second & McLean Sts. Phone 7643, 6197-4-1593
 F. W. Edgington, Division Passenger Agent
 Thurman B. Piers, City Passenger Agent
- OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.**
 407-B Commerce Exchange Bldg. Phone 3-9552-3-4457
 J. K. Gillette, Division Passenger Agent
 K. T. Connor, City Ticket Agent
- AMARILLO, TEX.**
 Rock Island Station Phone 5206-5209
 H. W. Clutter, City Passenger and Ticket Agent
- T. W. ROWDRY, General Passenger Agent, Fort Worth, Texas
 P. W. JOHNSTON, General Passenger Agent, Kansas City Mo.
 A. D. MARTIN, Passenger Traffic Manager, Chicago, Ill.



DIAGRAMS OF POWER UNIT AND EQUIPMENT CHOCTAW ROCKET

Diesel-powered electric engines, luxurious, deep-cushioned, reclining seat chair cars, latest type Pullman sleeping cars with double bedrooms and sectional accommodations. Delightfully appointed Diner and Parlor-Observation Car. No Extra Fare.

THE ROUTE of the Choctaw Rocket is rich in history and in variety of landscape and industry West from Memphis it bisects the fertile rice lands, orchards, and abundant truck gardening country of Arkansas. It continues through Oklahoma's cotton fields and myriad of oil derricks to the heart of the cattle country at Amarillo, Texas. This section has shown by its rapid growth a continued importance in American economics.

The history of the construction of the railroad through this territory is filled with the struggles of early pioneers, dating from 1853, when the first railway charter was issued in Arkansas. Today the fine, streamlined Choctaw Rocket speeds over this route formerly traversed only by wagon trains and herds of cattle.

The Choctaw Rockets...

latest additions to the Rock Island fleet of Rocket trains, have been built for speed, safety and comfort. They are roller bearing equipped and operate smoothly, on the fastest schedule between Memphis, Little Rock, Oklahoma City and Amarillo.

The two trains — each built of stainless steel, streamlined, and colorful, are Diesel powered. They afford the latest in modern train travel in reclining seat chair cars, double bedroom sleepers with sectional space, and a diner-parlor-observation car.

The decorative treatment of the interiors was planned to carry unity of color throughout all of the cars. The windows are of unusual width and equipped with shatter-proof glass. The cars are air-conditioned throughout assuring a constant change of clean, cool air at all times. The luxurious comfort, makes certain that your journey will be delightful and long to be remembered.



The Reclining Seat Chair Car

The chair car equipment is available to patrons traveling at coach fares. These new roomy cars have chairs with reclining backs, and adjustable to a desirable position to assure restful sleep. The cushions, scientifically contoured and luxuriously stuffed give maximum comfort.

The floors are covered with resilient rubber tiling, which is sound-deadening and provides firm footing. Luggage racks are streamlined to complement the interior beauty and are ample for all luggage and packages. The lighting is of improved type, to closely resemble daylight, and is so subdued at night that it does not interfere with sleeping.

The Pullman Sleeping Car

In the Pullman sleeping cars will be found

THE DOUBLE BEDROOM — an enclosed private room with a wide comfortable sofa. At night this sofa becomes a roomy bed, above which is an upper berth that also makes down into a bed. Conveniences include private toilet facilities, a hinged table, individually controlled heat, light and ventilation, vacuum water bottle, clothes hooks, full length mirror and ample luggage space.

Where double bedrooms adjoin there are connecting doors or partitions which open up permitting the rooms to be made into a spacious compartment. Ideal accommodations for family groups.

THE SECTION combines upper and lower berths and may be reserved for one or two persons. In the former case it is called a single occupancy section, in the latter, double occupancy section and in either case the upper is raised to give full head room. The upper and lower berths can also be occupied as individual units of space.

THE LOWER BERTH includes electric lights, adjustable shelf for luggage, hanger for clothes, and will accommodate one or two adults. The spring mattress is of the finest hair-type and two pillows are provided. In the daytime the passenger holding the lower berth is entitled to the seat facing forward.

THE UPPER BERTH Pullman's most modest accommodation, includes a window, electric lights, ample space for luggage or clothing, hangers for clothes and an electric bell for summoning the porter. It may be occupied by one or two adults.

The Diner—Parlor Observation Car

The Parlor Observation has sixteen inviting chairs, magazine library and radio. This section is reserved exclusively for patrons traveling on first-class tickets who hold seat ticket for the parlor car or have accommodations in the Pullman sleeping car.

The Dining Room Merely being seated in its luxurious atmosphere is enough to whet your appetite. There are seating accommodations for twenty-four persons. The well selected table service is especially designed to make the best possible appearance.

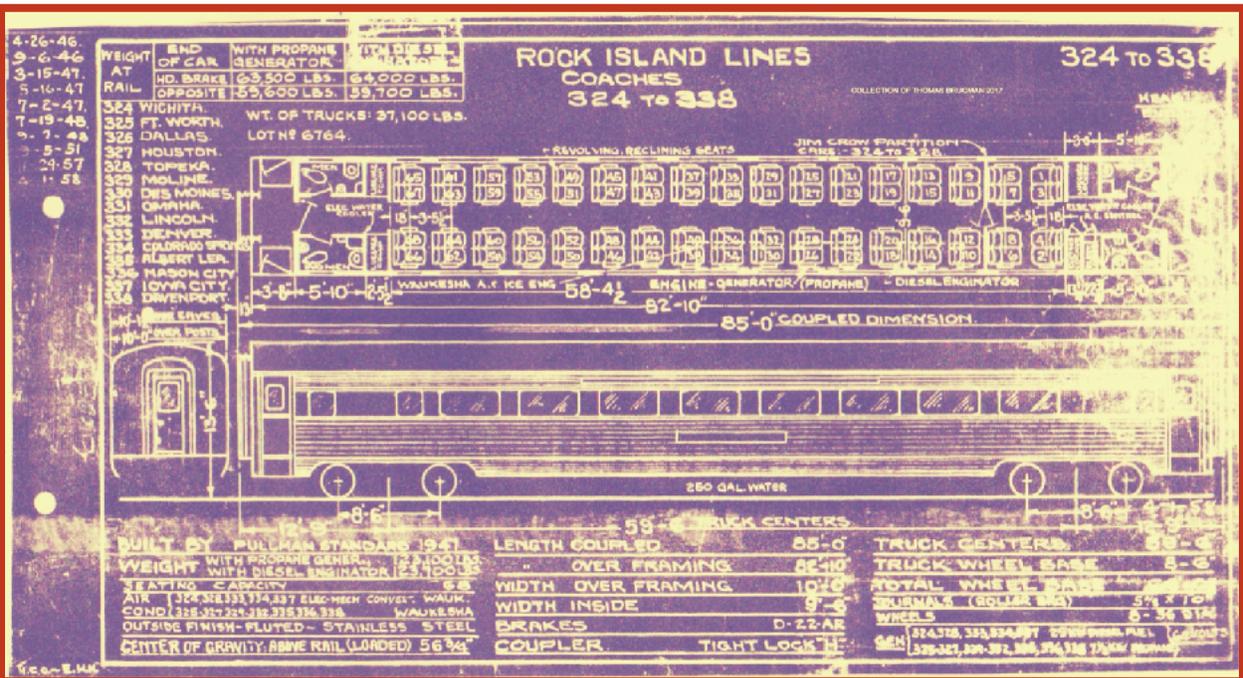
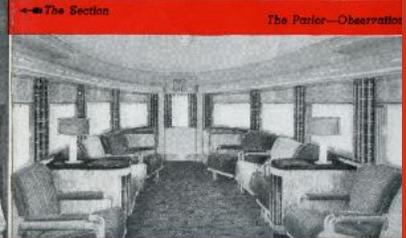
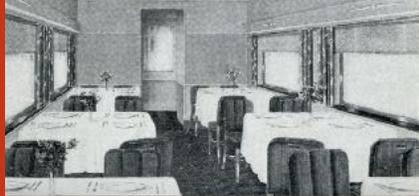
Chefs and waiters have been carefully chosen, and are competent and courteous, ready to serve you silently and quickly the "Best Meals on Wheels". Menus are varied and wholesome, providing an excellent choice for the most jaded appetite.

The Dining Room

The Bedroom

The Section

The Parlor—Observation





11. ROCK ISLAND FANS AND PHOTO SECTION

DENMARK
SWEDEN

UNITED KINGDOM

QUESTION ABOUT THE NORTON, KS TRAIN ORDER BOARD SIGNAL

From: Peter North
To: editor@rockislandreporter.com
Date: July 4, 2020 1:54 PM

I have seen photographs of the Norton, KS depot with what appears to be a bi-directional color light signal with triangular target/backplates. Am I right in assuming this is a modern train order signal ? Steve Hile and David Engel seem to think so but none of us are sure; if it is train order signal, did it display red (31) yellow (19) and green?

Best regards to all RI supporters from the UK,
Peter North, Norfolk, England

[Editor: This question was put to the very knowledgeable people on rockislandlines@groups.io. And their responses were very educational. Peter, you are invited to join rockislandlines@groups.io. Tom]

	Tom Brugman, Rock Island Reporter	Aug 9
A question has come up on the Norton train order board. No clear pictures have been found. It's a triangular signal but we only see it in b&w		
Can anyone describe the operation and appearance of the signal?		
Your answer may be used in the upcoming RIR.		
Tom		

 Jeff Aug 9 #3121 

Sounds like the color flashing light train order signal used to replace the semaphore style. The one I saw in person was at Vinton, IA. It was a seachlight type with the triangular head to differentiate it from a block signal. There was a control box for this type of signal on e-bay once. As I recall, two toggle switches for the different aspects. I also seem to recall that the signal had to be lit continually, even when there was no operator on duty.

Here's a picture of the one at Ola, Arkansas. <http://www.city-data.com/picfiles/c/picc76617.php>

Jeff

 Richard Hansen Aug 9 #3122 

Tom, per Jeff's response same goes for Mills tower in Iowa Falls. The aspects were a constant white light or flashing white. I think it was solid on (white) when orders or a clearance were to be picked up. That was many moons ago. Too the white color on the signal was not "Lunar" as that would indicate proceed at restricted speed and the order signal is not a block signal.

Anyway, we used to set out and/or pick up at Purina which is just on the south outskirts of Ia.Falls and at Argon which is on the north side. We'd wrap the waybills for the set out around a fusee (not lighted) and toss them out when we went by the tower. The operator would step out onto the stairway landing to make his roll by inspection and his dog would make his way down the stairs, grab the waybills and deliver them up to his master. We'd sometimes toss half a sandwich or some such off for the dog as a reward. If we picked up off Purina or Argon the operator (not the dog) would have the outbound waybills hanging in the high speed hoop.

Keep 'em on the rails,
rich hansen

 Zack Hilton Aug 9

Or are the signal lights in a triangle arrangement? There is a couple of them still on the mast at Howe, OK were RI and KCS crossed.

Zack

 Tom Brugman, Rock Island Reporter Aug 9 #3125 

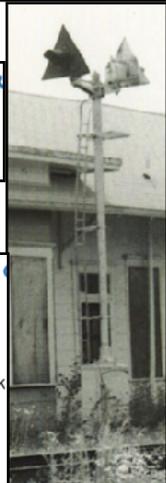
Here is an enlargement of the picture Jeff linked to. This is the critter.

 Tom Brugman, Rock Island Reporter Aug 9 #3124 

The picture Jeff provided a link for matches the blurry image I was previously looking at.

So the signal face is one lens in the center of an upward facing black triangle. And the aspects are clear white (not lunar) on continuously for stop and pick up orders, and then flashing clear white for proceed. And the mast is silver

Do I have that right?



THE ROCK ISLAND REPORTER, AUGUST 2020
PAGE 57

 Richard Hansen

Aug 9 #3127 

All,
Same kind of set up at IA Falls as I recall. One lens one color.

rich

 Aley, Jeff A

Aug 10 #3128 

Hi Folks,

Here's a crop of an image of the Norton, KS depot. I didn't want to post the whole image because it is the property of the Topeka Chapter, NRHS, and is available from them.



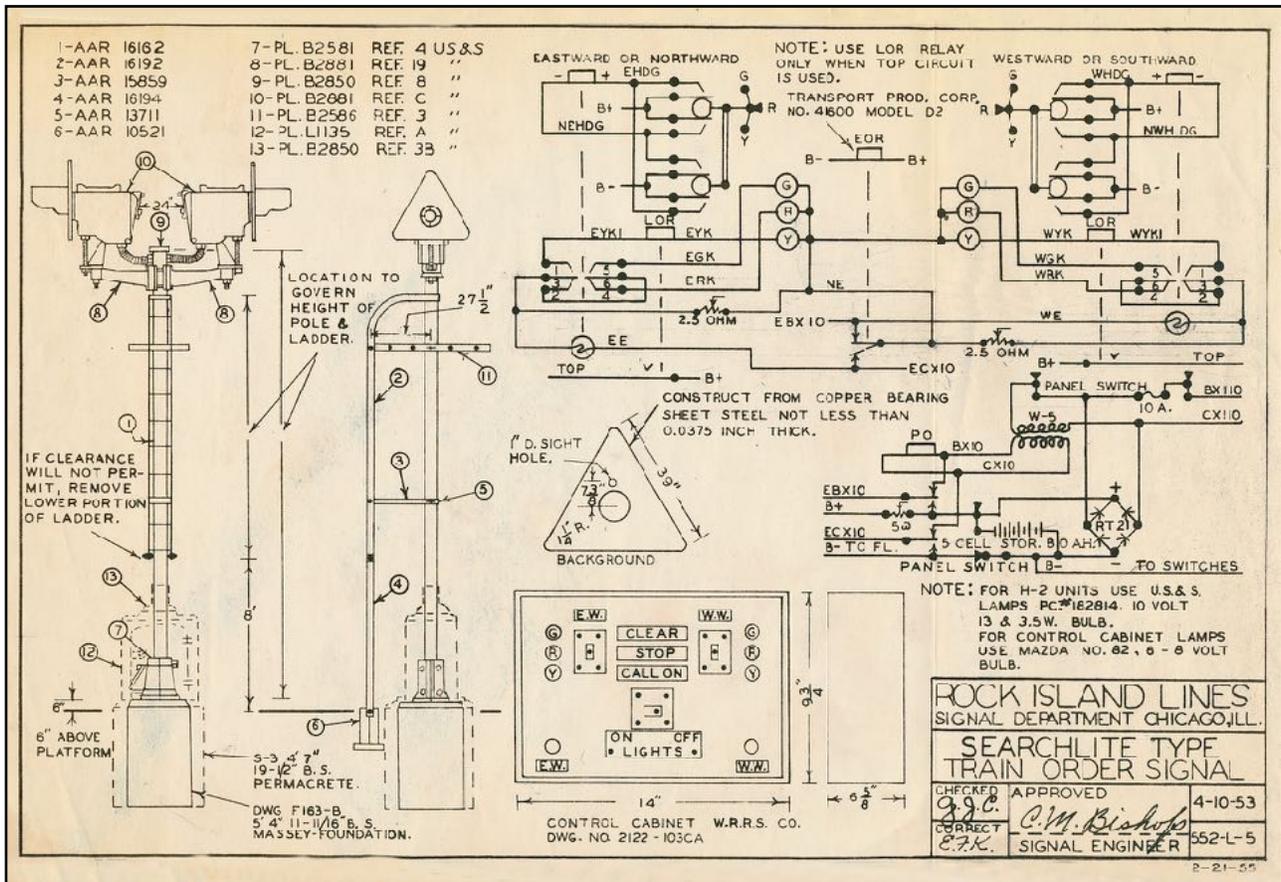
Bill Pollard via groups.io

8/10/2020 7:59 PM

Via rockislandlines <rockislandlines@groups.io>

These train order signals were used as replacements for semaphore train order signals in Arkansas at Forrest City, Hazen, and Ola. The signal was a standard USS searchlight signal with red, yellow and green roundels in the mechanism, just like a searchlight block signal. Flashing identified these as T.O. signals rather than block signals, which at that time on the RI were all lit continuously. Red meant orders, green clear, yellow "calling on". An inoperative signal remains at the restored depot in Hazen, and the signal from Ola was rescued, rebuilt, and currently functions inside the Arkansas Railroad Museum at Pine Bluff. Other locations on the Southern Division having these signals included Ruston, LA, as well as Holdenville, McAlester and Wister, Oklahoma. See the Arkansas Railroader April 1985 for additional details.

Bill Pollard



ARIZONA

ARKANSAS

A NEW LIFE FOR THE OLD PERRY DEPOT

Bryan Bechtold

7/20/2020 10:25 PM

To Tom Brugman

The Little Rock and Western wanted to modernize its engine house, which meant the 100 year old Rock Island depot grafted to it had to go. Thanks to a heroic preservation effort, it didn't go far, just across the tracks, and few hundred feet to the east.

Photos by Bryan Bechtold



Dennis Opferman provided the following link for additional information and photos of the Perry Depot Roof restoration.

<http://hibblenradio.com/railroads/rock-island-in-arkansas/repairs-begin-to-roof-of-the-rock-island-depot-in-perry/>

STEPHEN EUDY AND BILL POLLARD ON HORSE CARS AND PAY CARS.

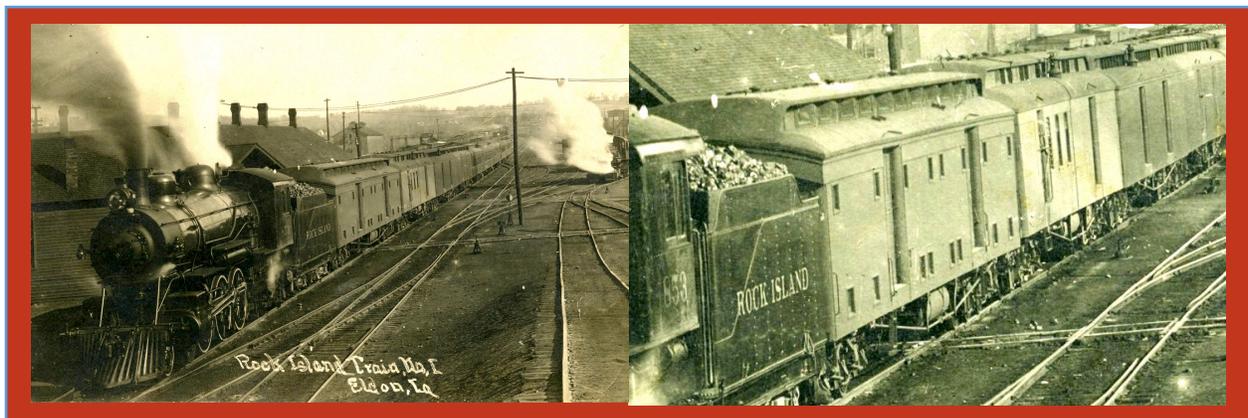
I have a question about a couple of passenger cars on two of my postcards.

I sent these to Bill Pollard who is as close to an expert about Rock Island passenger equipment and trains as I know. He said, just a guess, but the car on the Eldon, Ia. train #1 card may be a horse car, and the car on the card with the cabooses may be a pay car.

Do you have any idea what they were used for ?

If not, how about putting these images in the August issue of RIR to see if any of your knowledgeable readers might know ?

Stephen Eudy, Sherwood, Ark.



Car #1. Readers: Is this a Rock Island Horse car?



Car #2. Readers: Is this a Rock Island Pay Car?

STEPHEN EUDY SHARES LIST OF RI "SHIP ROCKET FREIGHT" BOXCARS

I thought this sheet from my collection of Rock Island papers might be of interest to you and fellow R.I. fans if you want to use it in RIR.
 Stephen Eudy

Files 54-17
CD-7

ALL STEEL BOX CARS STENCILLED
"SHIP/ROCKET FREIGHT"

25094	145557	146239	146972	147616	148285
148	565	305	973	633	304
240	576	313	976	634	318
266	584	326	146982	638	323
371	635	335		639	356
442	650	352	147009	640	379
25822	652	354	013	657	387
	669	421	070	674	392
145079	684	451	075	697	420
083	719	455	088	740	424
090	748	466	098-093	752	477
100	749	469	104	765	485
108	755	478	122	805	490
152	783	492	125	831	491
197	801	531	132	867	510
206	880	543	141	887	512
213	145935	568	149	923	516
223		580	209	930	519
225	146000	598	245	934	524
269	001	646	249	946	569
270	031	658	257	978	591
298	034	701	270	147990	592
319	078	725	291		633
322	081	726	307	148014	664
343	083	730	315	102	766
347	102	743	371	108	773
361	125	785	389	114	775
410	127	830	428	172	848
429	156	859	443	199	896
437	175	872	541	202	911
441	180	892	562	215	931
457	185	942	564	238	148945
475	186	947	147590	252	
533	146187	146957		148260	149001
145534					

CALIFORNIA

QUESTION ABOUT ROCO ISLAND GRAPHIC ART

Hi Tom, are you using your artwork in any train simulator creator tools? I've seen some really good artwork for Rock Island modeled into these Trainz type of software tools. This might be an interest level that makes a regular RIR section.

The area that I'm interested in is the map making, track laying and scenery details that are provided in Trainz software – I think they call it Terrain Builder. But, I want to tie into the data layer and connect to geo locations points, related data, time line data and timeline based scenery.

Curious if others have mentioned this
Cheers!

[Editor: Ive received a little bit of interest, but not much. If you are interested in leading a discussion on this, we would be happy to feature it.]

CONNECTICUT

COLORADO

THE LOUISVILLE (ROCK ISLAND) CABOOSE TAKES TO THE AIR

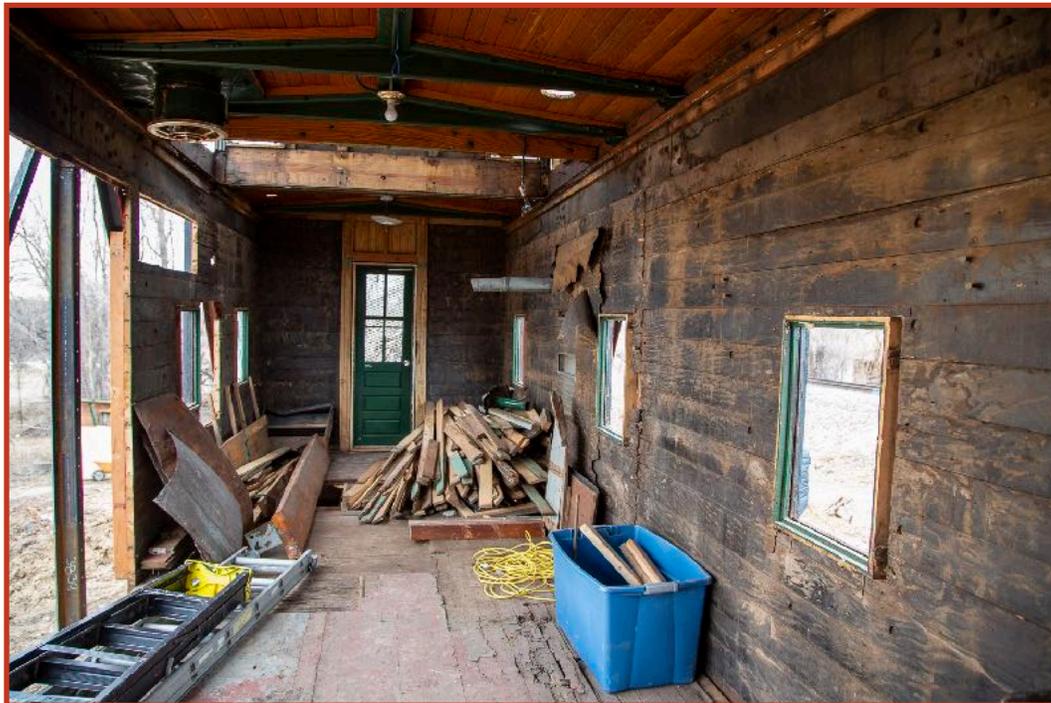
Bryan Bechtold

7/20/2020 10:07 PM

To Tom Brugman

The Ramos family of Louisville, Colorado, started a community project to move a former Rock Island outside brace caboose from its long-time residence as part of a theme restaurant, to a new home yet to be decided on. The caboose had been incorporated into the restaurant building, and had its interior gutted for seating. The closed restaurant building was torn down, leaving the caboose and two boxcars to be demolished onsite. The boxcars were cut up, with the proceeds from their parts to go toward the caboose's restoration. All photos taken February 29, 2020, the day the caboose flew.

All photos by Bryan Bechtold







FLORIDA

JEROLD CRAWFORD ASKS WHAT HAPPENED TO RITS?

Can you tell me what the hell happened to the RITS. Just the Readers Digest version. One day I was getting magazines and the next day it was gone. I thought we had a place in Fairbury, NE for the archives. Were they all lost when the RITS imploded. Can you do an article on the demises of the RITS

I grew up in Corydon, IA on the old shortline. I model the Rock Island at home although I have not had time to work on it for years with everything else that has going on. I thought I would be able to do it when I retired. PFFFTTT! Like that happened!

I thought they and the Milwaukee Road would be around forever. I can not believe it has been 40 years. That was an eventful month. Mt. St. Helens exploded and so did the Rock.

Keep the faith:

Jerold Crawford

[Editor: Sorry I don't have room in the August issue for this, as this is a loaded topic. As a former member of RITS, I was always a geographical outsider to the organization. The heart of RITS was a closely integrated group of people committed to the preservation of the RI, largely in the Midwest US. It has been difficult for me to gather an understanding of everything that happened, but my best guess is the heart of the organization lost its cohesiveness due to several things:

- ***The working core got older, retired, and in some cases relocated to other areas of the US.***
- ***Membership in RITS was on the decline and they couldn't agree on what to do about it. Younger fans were not coming in as fast as older ones were dropping out.***
- ***The working core stopped working together, and started more and more to work against each other. Disputes broke out over money, strategy and working assignments.***
- ***Gradually, several began to work against each other until no one was left to do the work.***

All this was happening in the background and was not shared with the general membership. In fact, RITS was never dissolved, it was simply abandoned.]

JEROLD CRAWFORD SCORES A RARE FIND AT TAMPA. FL MODEL TRAIN SHOW IN DEC 2019

The last model train show that we had here in Tampa Bay, FL, before the COVID-19 outbreak netted me this gem for \$5.00 including the box: a vintage Lionel HO scale Rock Island caboos model 0817-7 from the middle 1960's in mint condition. This photo shows it after I put McHenry couplers in it to be able to operate it on my layout. I did not hesitate, but snapped this up right as soon as I saw it, especially since Midwest road names are so rare here in CSX country.

My first model train layout was a Lionel HO in 1961 when I lived in Milwaukee, WI and was 8 years old. It was a Santa Fe F7 A-B unit with a rocket launcher that launched a rocket to blow up a special box car and a helicopter on a flat car that would launch the helicopter with the push of a button. It cost my dad \$49.95 which was a lot of money back then. That was \$431.30 in 2020 dollars. I can't remember if it was for him or me. He had more fun with it than I did and I had a LOT of fun with it!



Lionel Rock Island caboose 0817-7. Photo by Jerold Crawford.

HAWAII

ILLINOIS

**ROCK ISLAND ENGINEER GEORGE LAMORE HONORED ON
ROCK LLC LOCOMOTIVE 4373**

On Jul 4, 2020, at 8:37 PM,
George Lamore wrote:

Tom, i was quite shocked (in a good way) when I was contacted by Mr Robert Reilly of the new ROCK LLC, that they were using my name on one of their locomotives.

I was especially surprised that he knew I was the last Rock Island trained engineer working on the Rock Island lines. They even sent me a picture. See Below.



BLACKHAWK CHAPTER NRHS WORKS WITH CITY OF JOLIET IL TO PRESERVE UD TOWER

Bill Maloney from the Blackhawk Chapter of the NRHS lead an effort to get he City of Joliet to preserve UD Tower as a museum. He has been working with the Joliet Area Historical Museum and City of Joliet staffers on the project to get it ready to open to the public, but everything has been put on indefinite hold due to the pandemic. The good news is that it has bee cleaned up and quite a bit of restoration work has been done.

Tom Mitoraj



Aerial photo of the redesigned Joliet, IL station provided by Tom Mitoraj.

IOWA

DEAN HEARN ROCK ISLAND PHOTOS



Rock Island #3002-#3003
Des Moines Iowa
Short Line Yard
10-1980
DPH

Rock Island GP-40-2 #3002-3003 at Fuel Track-Short Line Des Moines, Iowa 10-1980 Photo by Dean Hearn



RI #325
Oelwein, Iowa
9-1980
DPH

RI GP-35 #325 at Oelwein, Iowa-Dead Line-9-1980 Photo by Dean Hearn



RI GP-38-2 #4355 South at South St. Paul, Minnesota 4-1978 Photo by Dean Hearn



RI # 927
East End of Short Line Yd.
Des Moines, Iowa
10-1980
DPH

RI SW 1200 #927 at East end Short Line Yard Des Moines, Iowa 10-1980 Photo by Dean Hearn

FRED BLANK ON THE LESTER IA DEPOT

A follow up on the Lester, Iowa Rock Island depot post card historical pictures from the last two issue of the Rock Island Report, The attached artist's view of the depot is on display in the Peoples Bank in Lester.



JEROLD CRAWFORD PROVIDES LINK TO IOWA RAILROAD MAPS

I was looking for some maps of Iowa railroads and ran into a treasure trove of things on the Iowa Department of Transportation website. This is the link.

<https://iowadot.gov/search-results?q=railroad>

Of interest was a fantastic map map on Iowa Railroad abandonments, I have included a copy as an attachment.



Above: Postcard image dating 1904-1925 of Rock Island depot in Toulon, IL. That portion of the Peoria & Rock Island RR that stretches from Peoria north to Toulon became a public trail in 1989. Collection of L. A. Reed



Real photo postcard of Rock Island Depot in Popejoy, Iowa. 1912. Located in Franklin County. Collection of L. A. Reed

KANSAS

ROCK ISLAND REQUIEM AUTHOR MODELS PULLMAN JUNCTION IL

We spoke a few years ago via email--I am the author of Rock Island Requiem and want to definitely want to see this publication (RIR). I am also modeling Pullman Junction on the south side of Chicago. Lance Mindheim built the layout for me and did this scene (I will do the rest). It will be installed in my home in May after the Covid diminishes.

Best,

Greg Schneider
Emporia State University



LOOKING FOR PHOTOS OR DATA ON GOODLAND KS

Jim Rowland <century430@hotmail.com>

6/27/2020 10:26 PM

To Tom Brugman, rocket@att.net



KENTUCKY
LOUISIANA
MICHIGAN
MASSACHUSETTS
MINNESOTA

MISSOURI

EX RI COVERED HOPPER SIGHTINGS BY MARK HUFF

Couldn't believe my eyes today on the way to work. Unfortunately my best shot didn't happen because I didn't press the button right. Good thing I thought to switch the angle to the other side of my car before it went out of view. It would be great to contact GATX to see if they can backtrack the actual RI number.

Mark Huff



Saw this on the way to work in almost the exact same location as the previous week. I spotted both cars on the BNSF/UP joint trackage between I-635 and Antioch Rd along I-35.



NEBRASKA
NEVADA
NEW MEXICO

OHIO

ADAPTO CAR PRESERVED AT THE AGE OF STEAM MUSEUM IN SUGAR CREEK, OH

From: Paul Hunnell

To: Web email Support <editor@rockislandreporter.com>; David Engle <rirocket@att.net>

Sent: Friday, July 17, 2020, 08:59:47 AM CDT

This former Adapto car has fortunately been saved. It is at the Age of Steam museum in Sugar Creek, Ohio, and I shot it October 19, 2019.

Never looked so good.

Paul Hunnell





**YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO
STAY AFTER CLASS,
IF YOU HAVEN'T
SUPPORTED ROCK ISLAND
REPORTER YET.**

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Go to Paypal <https://www.paypal.com/us/signin>

OKLAHOMA

LINK TO ANDREW HARMANTAS ART

From: Bill Wasinger

Thanks Tom!

I will go ahead and respond to Alex. And, should you get any further inquiries, I did manage to toss up a website to expedite things, so just send them straight to the source of all the images and the contact info:

[Andrew Harmantas Art](#)

Thanks!

BW

OREGON

TENNESSEE

ROBERT HULTMAN <hultman@bellsouth.net>

7/4/2020 6:40 PM

To editor@rockislandreporter.com

Tom,

I have these RI matchbooks that I'd like to send on to a RI fan. Let me know what I need to include for the Aug 2020 issue of R I R.....

Thx much,
Bob Hultman in Brentwood TN

[Editor: Any interested parties please contact Bob Hultman.]



TEXAS
UTAH
VIRGINIA
WEST VIRGINIA
WASHINGTON STATE

WISCONSIN

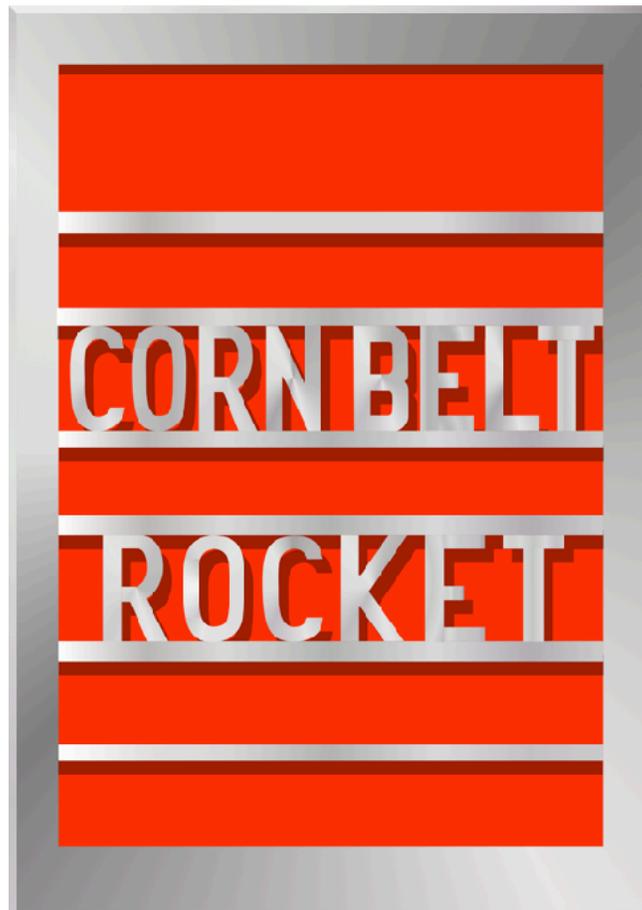
PHILIP WEIBLER URGES RIR READERS TO VISIT THE LAKE STATES RAILWAY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

All -

If you have the time (and right now that seems to be all we have) you'd enjoy seeing what the Lake States Railway Historical Association has at [Lake States Railway Historical Association](http://www.lakestatesarchive.org)

<http://www.lakestatesarchive.org>

PAW



ROCK ISLAND REPORTER

14. ROCK ISLAND PERSONALS

FOR SALE: **\$55.** HARD COVER BOOK THE ROCK ISLAND LINE BY BILL MARVEL 2013. Jacket, pages, binding and errata sheet all in excellent condition. Rarely opened. Postpaid to US 48 states. Payment via PayPal. Contact Thomas Brugman tbrug@aol.com.



FOR SALE: **\$300.00.** BRASS. DENVER & RIO GRANDE WESTERN DOME CHAIR CAR PALACE CAR COMPANY #1248/50. **AKA BUTTERWORTH TOURS BIG BEN.** EXC COND, ORIGINAL BOX V GOOD COND, VG FOAM. CAR UNPAINTED. PLATING IN EXC COND. Wheels new and clean. See photos. Postage paid to US 48 States. Payment via PayPal. Contact Thomas Brugman tbrug@aol.com.







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This e-newsletter, resides on its website: <http://rockislandreporter.com>

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