

CENTRAL STATES

Challenger

SPECIAL

Monday, July 19, 1993

St. Louis

Villa Grove, Ill.

Chicago

Sponsored by the St. Louis Chapter, National Railway Historical Society
In Cooperation with Union Pacific Railroad

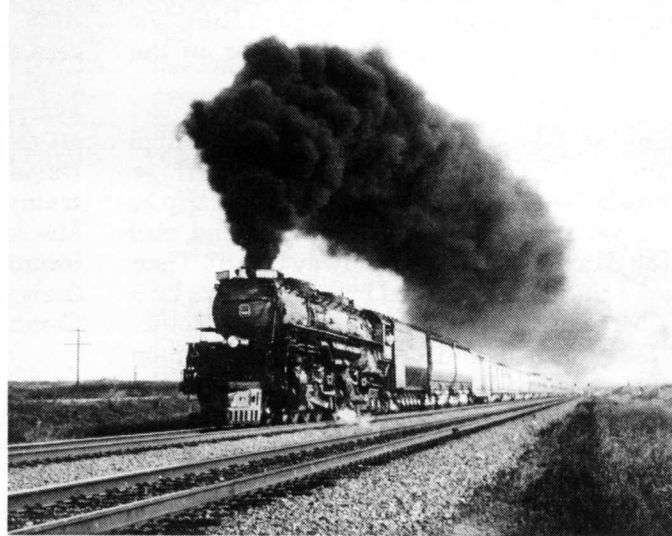
Welcome Aboard!

Your hosts in the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (NRHS), along with members of the St. Louis Steam Train Association, and Union Pacific Railroad, welcome you aboard this special steam-powered excursion train.

Today's excursion is powered by the world's largest operating steam locomotive, Union Pacific 3985. Built in 1942 by the American Locomotive Company of Schenectady, N.Y. for the Union Pacific, the 3985 was a powerful workhorse pulling freight trains across the railroad's rugged territory in the West.

Our trip today is also part of the 1993 Union Pacific Steam Excursion Program, the nation's oldest continuous program of steam-powered rail passenger excursions. Of all American railroads, only Union Pacific never fully retired its entire steam locomotive roster, maintaining its big Northern-type locomotive no. 844 (formerly 8444) in service without retirement to the present day. Later, the 3985, the world's only operating Challenger-type, was returned to service through restoration.

We are pleased and privileged to host this unusual summer steam excursion, made possible as the 3985 and its train head to Chicago for the 1993 Annual Convention of the National Railway Historical Society. Our sincere thanks to the Union Pacific Railroad and the Chicago Chapter NRHS for their generous cooperation in making this very special excursion possible.



Union Pacific 3985 with a special excursion for the Union Pacific Historical Society convention in 1992. Photo courtesy Union Pacific Historical Museum.

For Your Safety and Comfort

Safety First! These are the two most important words on the railroad, and they should be your two most important words today, too. For safety's sake:

- * **Always watch your step!** Be especially careful...
- * Getting on or off the train, or
- * When walking about the train or between cars.
- * At stops, watch your footing on uneven ground, gravel, and track ballast stone.
- * Always step **over**, *never* on top of, a rail.
- * Always **walk**, *never* run.
- * Keep your head, hands and arms fully inside the train at all times!
- * Please always follow the instructions of your car host or other NRHS or railroad crew members, especially at photo stops.

- * If you get a wind-blown particle in your eye in a vestibule area or while in the baggage car, *do not rub the eye*. Let the eye's natural watering action remove the particle.
- * A medical team is on board. **For medical assistance, contact any crew member.**
- * Children should not play in the aisles.
- * Packages, camera bags, suitcases etc. must be kept out of the aisles and off the seats. Please use the overhead baggage racks.
- * Union Pacific does not permit coolers to be brought aboard the train. Your cooperation is appreciated.
- * No sandals, thongs or bare feet permitted. We reserve the right to insist on appropriate, safe footwear.
- * **Alcoholic beverages may not be brought aboard or consumed on the train, nor anywhere on railroad property.**

THREE RAILROADS ACROSS THE PRAIRIES

Our trip today operates over a routing historically associated with five different railroads, but today operated by only three companies as the result of various mergers, consolidations and purchases. We begin in St. Louis for the first 3.4 miles on Union Pacific rails which were operated for many years by the Missouri Pacific Railroad. Most of this track was constructed in 1851 by the Pacific Railroad of Missouri, the first locomotive-hauled common carrier railroad west of the Mississippi.

Our train then briefly enters the trackage of the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis (TRRA) for the 1.25 mile trip across the Mississippi River on the MacArthur Bridge.

After leaving St. Louis and crossing the Mississippi River, our train operates over lines associated with three different railroads for all of the remainder of the trip to Chicago. First, we travel over the line built and still operated by the Alton & Southern Railway (A&S). Then our train follows the route operated for many years by a former New York Central subsidiary, the Big Four Route. This line is today owned and operated by the Union Pacific. Finally, we follow line built and operated by the former Chicago & Eastern Illinois and predecessors. This part of the route is also today owned and operated by the Union Pacific Railroad.

The Alton & Southern Railway

The Alton & Southern Railway is a major switching and terminal railroad which serves the busy Illinois portion of the St. Louis terminal district. The railroad's main line forms a rough semi-circle around St. Louis' Metro-East area, with its northern terminal and interchange point located at Lenox Tower in Mitchell, Ill. Its main southern terminal and yard is Gateway Yard (formerly Davis Yard) in East St. Louis. From Gateway Yard a spur runs 2.5 miles southwest to Fox Terminal on the Mississippi River. In addition, the A&S has operating rights on the Union Pacific (formerly Missouri Pacific) for access to UP's ex-MP Dupo Yard on the Illinois side of the Mississippi southeast of downtown St. Louis. It also connects with the Burlington Northern and Manufacturers Railroad in St. Louis via the MacArthur Bridge. The length of the entire railroad is 21 miles. On the excursion today, we will be traversing the portion of the line between the MacArthur Bridge and Mitchell, Ill., which is nearly the entire railroad.

The Alton and Southern Railroad was incorporated in 1913 and was owned by the Aluminum Ore Company (later to become the Aluminum Company of America, or Alcoa). It served the company's large aluminum reduction plant at Alorton (an acronym for ALuminum ORe TOWN), near East St. Louis, Ill. In its heyday in the 1940s, the A&S served 53 other industrial and commercial customers in addition to Alcoa. In addition to

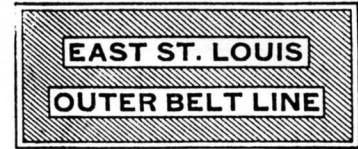
the large number of industries served, the A&S interchanged freight with 20 different railroads.

The large number of on-line customers combined with its many interchange partners produced heavy traffic for the Alton & Southern. In the 1940s and 50s, the A&S classified 4500 cars daily. This traffic level generated an average of 50 trains of

40 cars per day entering, and 50 more trains leaving Davis Yard (today Gateway Yard). An additional 14 trains a day were forwarded to St. Louis via the MacArthur Bridge. This heavy traffic resulted in good income, and qualified the railroad for a Class I designation under the old Interstate Commerce Commission classification system.

As times changed, the Alton & Southern adapted to serve its customer's needs. In 1941 the A&S installed a "two-way talk-back speaker communication system" in Davis Yard. This system consisted of 31 speaker phones strategically located so yard workers could communicate with the yardmaster in the tower. This was the first of its kind in the country, and increased classification capacity by 20 percent. When dieselization swept the railroad industry, the A&S was an early player, receiving in 1947-48 fifteen of the first twenty 1500-horsepower RS-model locomotives produced by the American Locomotive Company (Alco). In 1948 Alton and Southern installed two-way radios in all its locomotives making it a pioneer in the use of this technology as well. And in the 1950s and '60s, Davis Yard was greatly expanded to become today's vast Gateway Yard, the largest yard in the St. Louis terminal district.

Today's Alton & Southern has evolved from its earlier days. Many of the industries it once served have closed down, significantly reducing large portions of its traffic. In 1958 Alcoa closed its plant at Alorton, and began looking for a buyer for the railroad. Ten years later, in 1968, the Interstate Commerce Commission approved the sale of the A&S to the Missouri Pacific and the Chicago & North Western. In 1973, the C&NW sold its half to the St. Louis Southwestern, or Cotton Belt. In 1982, the MoPac merged with the Union Pacific, giving the UP the MoPac's interest. Thus



1926 A&S logo



1984 logo

the A&S is today jointly owned by the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific's Cotton Belt subsidiary.

Due to abandonments and mergers, the number of other railroads with which the A&S interchanges has been reduced by almost half compared to earlier years. A major portion of today's business derives from interchange traffic between the above-mentioned railroads and A&S-owners Cotton Belt and Union Pacific.

The Alton & Southern has never had scheduled passenger service, although Amtrak traverses a small portion of the line from the MacArthur Bridge to NS Crossing to reach the Norfolk Southern line to Centralia, Ill. In June of 1990 the St. Louis Chapter NRHS sponsored a Union Pacific steam excursion for the NRHS Convention in St. Louis which followed the same route over the A&S as today's trip. This trip is part of a ferry move for locomotive 3985 and train to this year's NRHS Convention in Chicago.

- Matt Taylor, St. Louis Chapter NRHS

The Big Four Route

The portion of today's excursion via Union Pacific's Pana (pronounced Pay'-na) Subdivision is the end result of many years of mergers and acquisitions, beginning in 1852 with the organization of the Terre Haute & Alton Railroad. Its backers favored a railroad to Indiana across coal-rich Southern Illinois to bolster the trade of the town of Alton, Ill., located on the Mississippi River above St. Louis, in the hope that it would gain dominance over St. Louis. The TH&A soon combined with the Belleville & Illinoistown Railroad to form the Terre Haute, Alton & St. Louis, which opened for business in October, 1856. After an 1861 reorganization, this road emerged as the St. Louis, Alton & Terre Haute.



1888 logo

In 1867 the line was leased for 99 years by the Indianapolis & St. Louis Railroad, which was building between Indianapolis and Terre Haute.

However, both

the St. Louis, Alton & Terre Haute and the Indianapolis & St. Louis came under the control of the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati & Indianapolis Railroad (The Bee Line) in 1882. Seven years later, the Bee Line in turn combined with the Vanderbilt-backed Cincinnati, Indianapolis, St. Louis & Chicago Railroad to form the Big Four Route: the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad.

In December of 1904, the Big Four completed a "cutoff" into St. Louis, diverging from the original line at Hillsboro, Ill. and rejoining it at Lenox Tower at Mitchell, Ill., northeast of St. Louis. The cutoff was in places heavily engineered with cuts and fills; it did not follow the existing topography as the old route had over some surprisingly rugged countryside. The cutoff saved twelve miles and bypassed Alton, which by that time had lost the river commerce race to St. Louis. The Big Four immediately rerouted fourteen of its daily passenger trains onto the cutoff, including the route's premier train, the **Southwestern Limited**, leaving only five passenger trains to serve the eleven stations on the old line until 1942, when passenger service ended on the original route.



1895 logo

The Big Four Route operated semi-independently until 1930, when it was leased by the New York Central System. The NYC's ill-fated merger with the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1968 brought the line under the control of the new Penn Central. The Pennsylvania, however, had its own line into St. Louis at the time of the merger, which left the merged Penn Central with two closely parallel routes across Illinois. This situation continued into the period of Conrail ownership beginning in 1976 after the resolution of the Penn Central bankruptcy.

In April 1982 Conrail sold the Pana Subdivision to the Missouri Pacific Railroad, opting to use its ex-Pennsylvania line between St. Louis and Terre Haute, Ind. The MoPac single-tracked the Pana Sub and extensively rebuilt it into a 60 mile-per-hour railroad, with remote dispatching from North Little Rock, Ark. via Centralized Traffic Control (CTC). The Missouri Pacific's merger with the Union Pacific Railroad in 1982 finally completed the long list of owners. Today, the Pana Subdivision forms an important link in the Union Pacific System, and hosts about eight freight trains daily.

- Brian T. McQuitty, St. Louis Chapter NRHS

The Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad

The Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad did not exist under its famous name until 1877. However, its predecessors date to as far back as 1849. From its origins, the railroad expanded from Evansville, on the Ohio River in southern Indiana, to the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers in Southern Illinois, and to Chicago and St. Louis.

The C&EI's earliest predecessor, the Evansville & Illinois Railroad, was chartered in 1849 to build a line north from Evansville on what would become the C&EI's

southern end. By 1854 it had become the Evansville & Crawfordsville Railroad (E&C), and was operating the route from Evansville to Terre Haute, Ind.

At the northern end of what would become the C&EI, the Chicago, Danville & Vincennes Railroad (CD&V) was chartered in 1865. Its first tracks were laid from Dolton, near Chicago, to Momence, Ill., in 1869. Due to the effects of the Franco-Prussian War on the bond market, track work slowed, but construction was finally completed to Danville, Ill. in 1871. That same year, the Evansville, Terre Haute, & Chicago (ETH&C) Railroad completed track construction between Danville and Terre Haute, completing a through route between Chicago and Evansville.

Financial difficulties hit the CD&V hard soon after reaching Danville and, as a result, the railroad was foreclosed in 1875. The company was reorganized in 1877 as the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad. That same year the E&C became the Evansville & Terre Haute (E&TH) Railroad.

It did not take the new C&EI long to begin making acquisitions and setting goals. Among them was the lease of the ETH&C in 1880; purchase of 40 percent of the E&TH in 1881 (and eventually consolidation with the E&TH); and renewal of the efforts to build its own tracks into downtown Chicago, a goal that the CD&V was unable to achieve.



1894 logo

To reach Chicago from Dolton, both the CD&V and the C&EI had to pay a high rental fee to the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati & St. Louis Railroad (the Panhandle Route, later part of the mighty Pennsylvania Railroad). Efforts to build a separate route into Chicago encountered numerous problems.

The first effort to reach Chicago was made by the CD&V in 1873, but financial problems halted the effort. The Chicago & Southern Railroad was then formed to complete the project. The C&S reached 26th Street in Chicago later that year on a roundabout routing from Thornton Jct. via Blue Island. But in 1877 the C&S was foreclosed, and then sold to a group that later formed the Grand Trunk Railway.

With the C&S route into Chicago no longer available, the C&EI decided to set up a subsidiary, the Chicago & Western Indiana Railroad, to construct and operate a new line from Dolton into downtown Chicago. Construction began in July 1879. An important junction at 22nd Street in Chicago was reached in April 1880, but the C&WI's ultimate goal was Van Buren Street, further to the north on the southern edge of Chicago's downtown area, the Loop.

Anytime the C&WI's construction crew approached another railroad, various delaying tactics were used to keep the C&WI from crossing. An example was its crossing of the Illinois Central. On September 10, 1880, the courts cleared the way so C&WI could proceed. Then on the night of September 15, the crew was able to lay track to northward 12th Street—but it required police protection to do so! Several more streets were crossed the next night.

However, due to the heavy congestion at nearby LaSalle Street Station, the C&WI altered its plans to reach Van Buren Street in late September, looking instead to 14th Street. On November 12, 1880, the C&WI crew built over the Lake Shore Railroad (later the New York Central), again under police protection. Later that day, 14th Street was reached. At last, the C&WI was in operation from Dolton to 14th Street on the outer edge of downtown Chicago.

In 1883 the C&EI signed an agreement to permit joint ownership of the C&WI by five railroads. These were the C&EI; Erie; Grand Trunk Western; Chicago, Indianapolis & Louisville (Monon); and the Wabash. The first step for this "new" C&WI was the construction of a new passenger station at Polk and Dearborn Streets on the south edge of the Loop. This depot, Dearborn Station, was completed in 1885. It subsequently would also serve the Santa Fe.

The C&EI slowly expanded into Southern Illinois via acquisitions and construction. Expansion occurred southwesterly from Danville to Findlay, then due south. The C&EI reached Thebes, on the Mississippi River, and Joppa, on the Ohio River, in 1900.

However, the C&EI's strongest desire was to reach St. Louis. This did not occur until after the railroad was acquired on October 1, 1902 by the B.F. Yoakum interests, who already owned the St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad (Frisco). One month later, rather than constructing a rail line of its own into St. Louis, the C&EI signed an important agreement with the New York Central's Big Four Route. Pursuant to the agreement, the Big Four agreed to double-track its route from Pana to Hillsboro to Mitchell. The C&EI would then be granted trackage rights on the Big Four between Pana and East St. Louis. Both projects were completed by the Big Four in 1904. The only construction required of the C&EI in the agreement was the building of its own track from Findlay to Pana. This, too, was completed in 1904.

But the C&EI decided to go one step further. In order to bypass congestion at Danville and to shorten the travel time between Chicago and St. Louis, a new 62-mile cutoff was constructed between Woodland Junction and Villa Grove. This cutoff, which we will travel over today, was also completed in 1904.

The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific bought the Frisco, and thus the C&EI, from Yoakum in 1903. However, both were sold back Yoakum in 1909. Four years later, the Frisco and C&EI entered separate receiverships,

putting an end to Frisco's influence on the C&EI.



1934 logo

The C&EI remained independent until two of the legendary railroad investors of this century, the brothers Oris Paxton and Mantis James Van Sweringen, of Cleveland, bought the C&EI in 1928. The Van Sweringens, who already controlled such railroads as the Nickel Plate, the Chesapeake & Ohio, and the Missouri Pacific, did very little to integrate the C&EI with the

rest of their empire. They lost the C&EI in 1940, part of the collapse during the Great Depression of the financial pyramid supporting their holdings.

In April of 1940, a new trademark was adopted by the C&EI: an oval with "Saturday Evening Post" lettering. The road's new leadership went on to improve its physical plant. This including installation of its first welded rail between Chicago Heights and Glenwood in 1952. Innovative freight and passenger services were also initiated, including trailer-on-flatcar (piggyback) freight service between Chicago and St. Louis in 1949.



1946 logo

Since coal was always the C&EI's biggest commodity, large new electric power generating plants built along its lines near Clinton, Ind. and Joppa, Ill. were of great importance. Illinois and Indiana coal had always been shipped from C&EI-owned mines to power plants elsewhere. A rail-to-barge coal transfer was built at Joppa on the Ohio River in 1954 to keep a

rail haul for some of this traffic, which was increasingly being handled by barge instead of rail.

By 1959, the Missouri Pacific began to discuss merger with or purchase of the C&EI, but the Louisville & Nashville, New York Central and Southern Pacific were also interested. The NYC and SP subsequently dropped out of the bidding, leaving the MoPac and L&N Both to purchase C&EI stock in 1961. These roads then petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission for control of the C&EI.

In 1963, the ICC ruled in favor of the MP, but only on the condition that MoPac would agree to sell the line from Woodland Jct. to Evansville to the L&N. This occurred in 1969. The agreement further stipulated that both railroads would own 50 percent of the common track from Woodland Jct. to Dolton. The L&N also bought one-half of the C&EI's interest in the C&WI from Dolton to Chicago.

The remainder of the C&EI became a subsidiary of the MP. In 1976, the MoPac completely absorbed the C&EI. After 99 years of service, the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad existed no longer as a corporate entity.

Six years later, the MoPac's sections of the former C&EI became a part of the Union Pacific Railroad when the Interstate Commerce Commission approved the merger of the Missouri Pacific with the Union Pacific. This merger was formally consummated on December 22, 1982.

Because of its relatively small size, the C&EI was primarily a bridge-route railroad. It handled freight and passenger trains between gateway junctions, such as Evansville, Thebes, Ill. (site of an important bridge over the Mississippi for traffic bound to and from the Southwest), Chicago and St. Louis. Most of the C&EI's passenger trains were extensions of L&N into Chicago. Most common were L&N's "Dixie" trains, including the **Dixie Flyer**, the **Dixie Mail**, and the **Dixie Flagler**. These trains all traveled south from Chicago to Florida and/or New Orleans via Terre Haute and Evansville on the C&EI, and Nashville, Tenn on the L&N. Only The **Dixie Flyer** remained by 1960. Two other L&N trains, the **Georgian** and the **Hummingbird** also served Chicago over the C&EI.

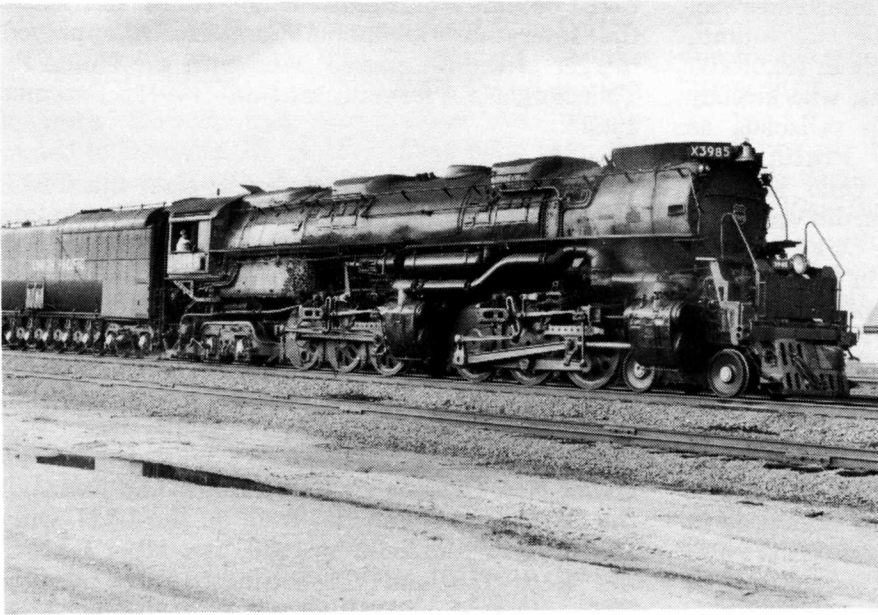
Passenger service between Chicago and St. Louis on the C&EI did not fare as well as it did on the Evansville line. This was due to tremendous competition from paralleling railroads, including the Alton (later the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio), the Illinois Central, and the Wabash. In 1916 three trains were offered by the C&EI; the **Chicago-St. Louis Limited**, the **Chicago-St. Louis Special**, and the **Chicago-St. Louis Express**. The latter two traveled overnight; all bypassed Danville.

By World War II, the C&EI had changed its Chicago - St. Louis trains considerably. The **Zipper** was a day train which traveled via Danville. The only other train, the **Silent Knight**, travelled overnight bypassing Danville. By the end of the 1940s, competition from automobile and airplane had such an impact on the C&EI's passenger revenues that the company ran its last Chicago - St. Louis train on April 20, 1949. Service into Southern Illinois lasted until 1962 when the **Meadowlark** was discontinued.

Amtrak took over most of America's passenger train service in 1971. The only service then left on the C&EI was the **Chicago-DanvilleFlyer** between its namesake cities; it did not become part of the Amtrak network. Today, there is speculation that Amtrak might select the former C&EI's Evansville Line if service between Chicago and Florida is once again restored.

- Dan Gassen, St. Louis Chapter NRHS

THE WORLD'S LARGEST OPERATING STEAM LOCOMOTIVE



The steam locomotive powering our train today, Union Pacific 3985, was built in 1943 by the American Locomotive Company (Alco) of Schenectady, N.Y. based on designs developed by Union Pacific.

The design was known as the "Challenger" type, having a 4-6-6-4 wheel arrangement. At the front of the locomotive, a four-wheel pilot truck guides the engine into curves. Six coupled driving wheels, with their massive connecting side rods, are powered from a forward pair of steam cylinders. Another set of

six coupled driving wheels follows, powered from a second set of steam cylinders in the middle of the locomotive. Finally, a four-wheel trailing truck supports the rear of the locomotive, including the cab and the enormous firebox. The 3985 is the only operating Challenger-type in the world today, and it is also the largest steam locomotive currently in operation anywhere.

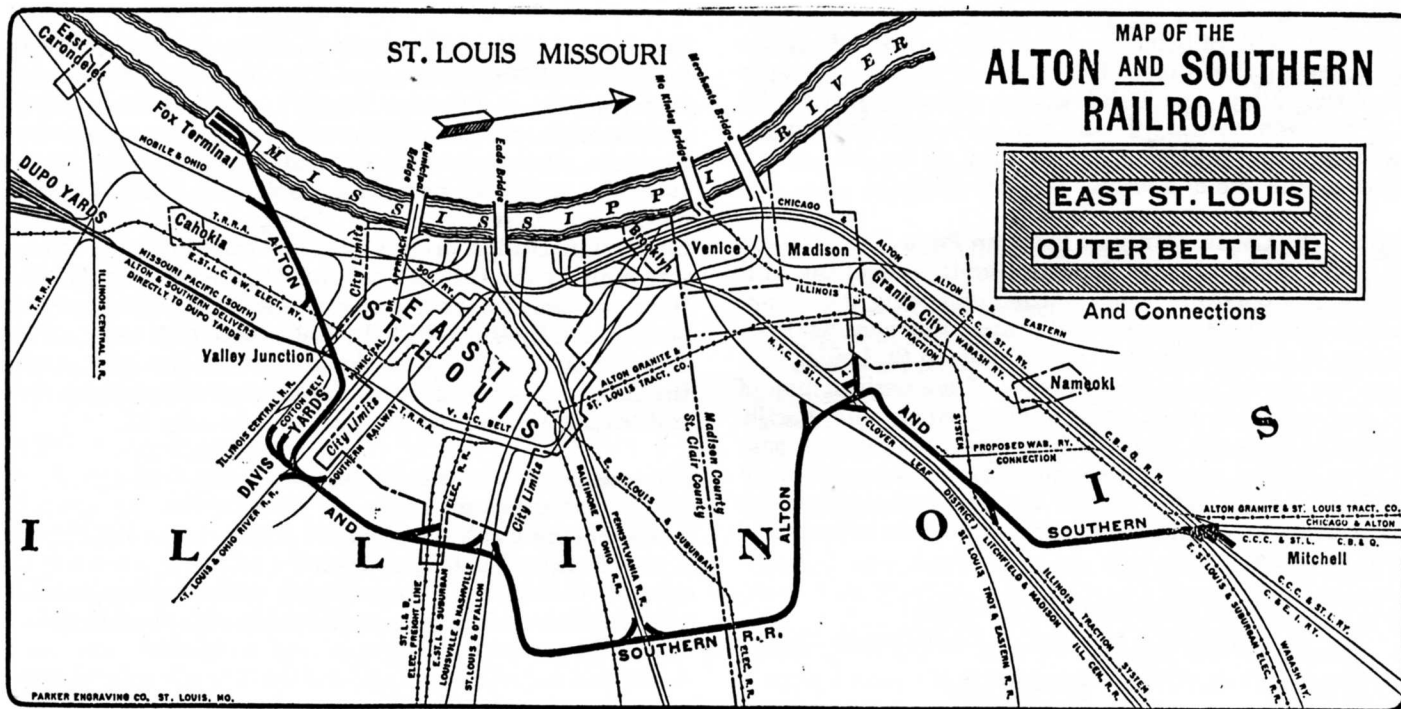
The 3985's twelve driving wheels offer tremendous pulling power. But the long wheelbase (over 24 feet) would, if rigid, severely limit the engine's ability to operate on any but straight track and the gentlest curves. To gain the efficiencies of more driving wheels on the rail (and thus more pulling power), but to avoid excessive wheelbase length, locomotive designers turned to *articulation* to allow them to effectively break the long wheelbase in two. A specially hinged frame allows the two sets of driving wheels to rotate on independent axes, in effect permitting the locomotive to "bend in the middle."

With twelve driving wheels, the 3985 can support an enormous boiler for the production of steam, and it can use that extra volume of steam to provide more pulling power. Union Pacific designed the Challenger-type for fast freight service on the company's rugged operating profiles in the West, especially over its crest of the Rockies at Sherman Hill in Wyoming. The company purchased 105 Challengers from 1936 to 1943. Used mostly in freight service, they did sometimes pull passenger trains. After a distinguished career, including hustling freight during World War II and the Korean War, the 3985 was retired in 1962.

Upon retirement the engine was stored in the roundhouse at its home terminal of Cheyenne, Wyoming. Later it was placed on display near the Cheyenne depot. A group of volunteer employees restored the engine to service in 1981. In 1990 it was converted from coal to fuel oil, and it began more regular excursion service. The trip today is one of a series of movements ferrying the locomotive and its train to and from Chicago, where it will attend the 1993 Annual Convention of the National Railway Historical Society (NRHS). Our sincere thanks go to Union Pacific for allowing us the opportunity to experience this marvelous machine on our trip today.

Some vital statistics on the Union Pacific 3985 :

Built	American Locomotive Co., 1943
Total Engine Weight	627,900 pounds, in working order
Weight on Drivers	404,000 pounds, in working order
Tender Weight	441,900 pounds, loaded
Main Driving Wheels	69-inch diameters
Fire Box Dimensions	15.58 feet x 9 feet
Tender Fuel Capacity	5,945 gallons fuel oil
Tender Water Capacity	25,000 gallons
Boiler Pressure	280 pounds per square inch
Cylinders - Bore/Stroke	21 inches x 32 inches
Length, Engine & Tender	121 feet 10 inches
Weight, Engine & Tender	1,069,800 pounds
Tractive Effort	97,350 pounds (pulling power)
Length, Engine & Tender	121 feet 10 inches
Weight, Engine & Tender	1,069,800 pounds



1926 Map of the Alton & Southern

Along the Way: A Guide to the Route

Union Pacific Railroad – St. Louis Division Sedalia, Pana and Chicago Subdivisions and the Alton & Southern Railroad

Former stations (named locations in railroad operating timetables) no longer in service are indicated by brackets []. Other non-station locations of interest are indicated by an asterisk *.

Milepost (MP) and station name or point of interest

Union Pacific Sedalia Subdivision Milepost

3.4 Compress Track *

This siding in central St. Louis is named for its location near the site of the former St. Louis Cotton Compress Company. Today's excursion begins here on the Union Pacific Railroad's ex-Missouri Pacific Sedalia Subdivision line from St. Louis to Kansas City.

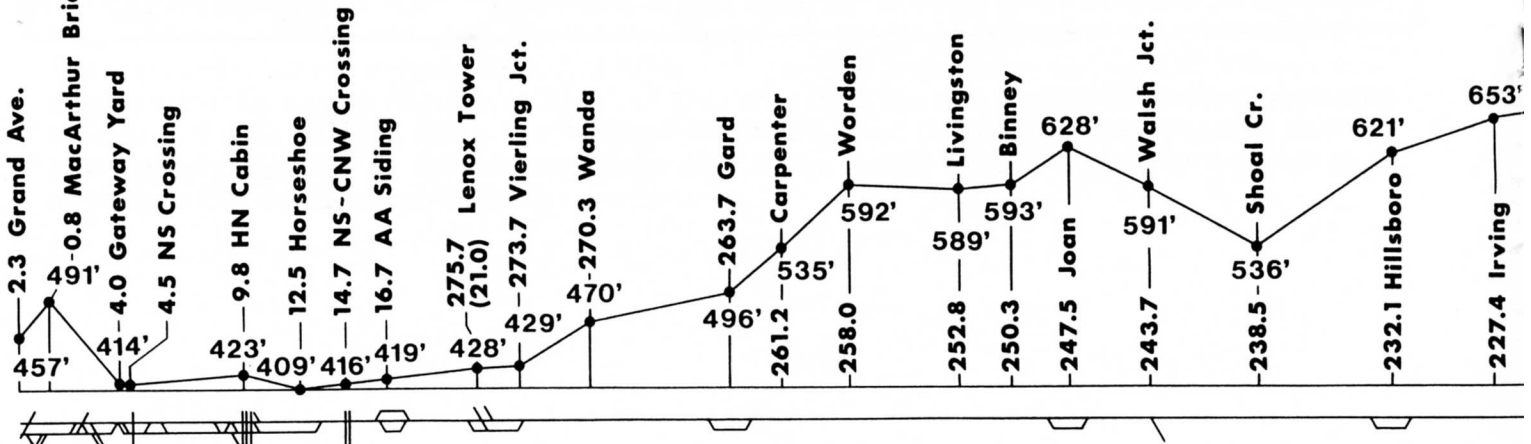
2.3 Grand Avenue

Junction with the Burlington Northern (ex-St. Louis – San Francisco Railway, or Frisco Lines) and the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis (TRRA). The new MetroLink light rail line is visible just to the left of the train following the former TRRA right-of-way on the north side of the valley. The TRRA is now relocated just to the south between MetroLink and our UP track, following a new alignment built recently as part of the MetroLink project on the site of a former Wabash yard.

0.5 St. Louis (Milepost 290.0 on Pana Subdivision)

Our train continues east along the south side of the Mill Creek valley opposite Union Station, following the Union Pacific's former Missouri Pacific line, the historic low-gradient east-west corridor for railroads in St. Louis. The alignment we follow is close to that of the earliest line of the first railroad west of the Mississippi, the Pacific Railroad of Missouri. Near the 14th Street viaduct just east of Union Station, we will pass near the site where on July 4, 1851 St. Louis' mayor Luther Kennett broke ground for the construction of this, the earliest of western railroads in North America.

Route profile and track schematic
by Brian T. McQuitty, St. Louis Chapter NRHS



0.0 Gratiot St. (Tower and MacArthur Bridge West Approach)

This busy tower, operated by the TRRA, controls all movements in and out of the east end of the Mill Creek valley. Here we enter TRRA trackage for the trip across the Mississippi River on the rail-only lower deck of the MacArthur Bridge.

The dramatic skyline of downtown St. Louis is visible to the north (left) as we cross the bridge. Above it all is the magnificent stainless steel-clad Gateway Arch, 630 feet tall, designed by noted architect Eero Saarinen. The Gateway Arch symbolizes St. Louis' historic role as the gateway to the exploration, settlement and development of the West in the 19th century, a role made possible by Thomas Jefferson's purchase of the vast Louisiana Territory from France. The Arch and its surrounding park and museum, operated by the National Park Service as the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, commemorate this watershed event in our nation's history.

Proceeding up the west approach of the MacArthur Bridge (built 1910–1916), the dramatically situated south approach from the UP's ex-Missouri Pacific Lesperance Yard and the Anheuser-Busch-owned Manufacturers Railway joins from the right. At the east end of the main spans on the Illinois side, the north approach to the former Relay Depot at downtown East St. Louis diverges to the left. The MacArthur Bridge, originally called the Municipal Bridge, was built by the City of St. Louis to provide a competitive river crossing to the Eads and Merchants Bridges, then both owned by the TRRA. In 1989 the TRRA swapped the Eads Bridge to the city for the MacArthur Bridge to enable the Eads' lower rail deck to serve the new MetroLink light rail transit system, which will open on July 31.

Alton & Southern Railroad Milepost

4.0 Gateway Yard (North End) and MacArthur Bridge East Approach

Alton & Southern trackage begins at the east approach to the MacArthur Bridge near the A&S' office building.

To the right is the A&S' vast Gateway Yard, the St. Louis area's largest classification yard. Here thousands of freight cars are switched, or classified, by the A&S daily for several major railroads, including Union Pacific, CSX, Southern Pacific and Conrail. The yard has two *humps*, small manmade hills. Switch engines push groups of cars up one side of each hump. At the top of the hump, the cars are uncoupled and allowed to roll by gravity down the other side of the hump. They are braked by computer-controlled *retarders* located in the track to roll at a safe coupling speed. As the cars roll down into the vast multi-track yard, track switches are remotely set by computer to direct each car into the proper track for inclusion in its outgoing train.

We will travel the next 17 of the first 21.2 miles of our trip to Chicago on the A&S.

4.5 NS Crossing

Norfolk Southern's ex-Southern Railway line to Louisville crosses here. Amtrak's *River Cities* leaves the A&S here en route from Kansas City and St. Louis to Carbondale, Ill. and its *City of New Orleans* connection. From this point north to Lenox, this A&S route has never hosted scheduled passenger service. Our train today is only the fifth public passenger train known to have operated over the northern part of this line from NS Crossing to Lenox. All of them have been UP steam excursions sponsored by the St. Louis Chapter NRHS.

[6.8 L&N Crossing]

Abandoned crossing with the former Louisville & Nashville. This line was abandoned with successor CSX in 1989 from East St. Louis to Belleville, eliminating the ruling grade on the western end of the former L&N as it climbed the bluffs to head east to Evansville, Ind. CSX now routes all traffic in and out of St. Louis over its former B&O line, which we cross at HN Cabin.

9.8 HN Cabin (Hanover)

Three tracks of two railroads are crossed in quick succession: the first track is CSX's ex-B&O line to Cincinnati, and the next two tracks are Conrail's ex-Pennsylvania Railroad line to Indianapolis.

10.5 Long Siding

The tracks here cross Horseshoe Lake twice on causeways. This is an oxbow lake, a silted-off meander of the Mississippi River. Watch to the east (right) for a glimpse of Monk's Mound, the largest man-made earthen structure of pre-Columbian origin in the nation. It was built by a civilization which occupied the area from about 800 to 1500 A.D., and may have had a peak population of 40,000. Designated a World Heritage Site by the United Nations, it

is within Cahokia Mounds State Park.

12.5 Horseshoe

The lowest point on our route at 409 feet above sea level.

13.6 Double Track Junction

14.6 NKP Siding

14.7 NS-CNW Crossing

After passing through a sharp curve to the right, the track crosses first Norfolk Southern's ex-Nickel Plate line, then Chicago & North Western's ex-Litchfield & Madison line before paralleling both. To the left are the blast furnaces of the Granite City Steel Division of National Steel Company. The next two miles of track to AA Siding was the final segment of the A&S to be built. It was finished in 1926, about 13 years after completion of the rest of the road's main line.

16.7 AA Siding

20.7 Mitchell Yard

21.0 Lenox Tower

Alton & Southern location for Lenox.

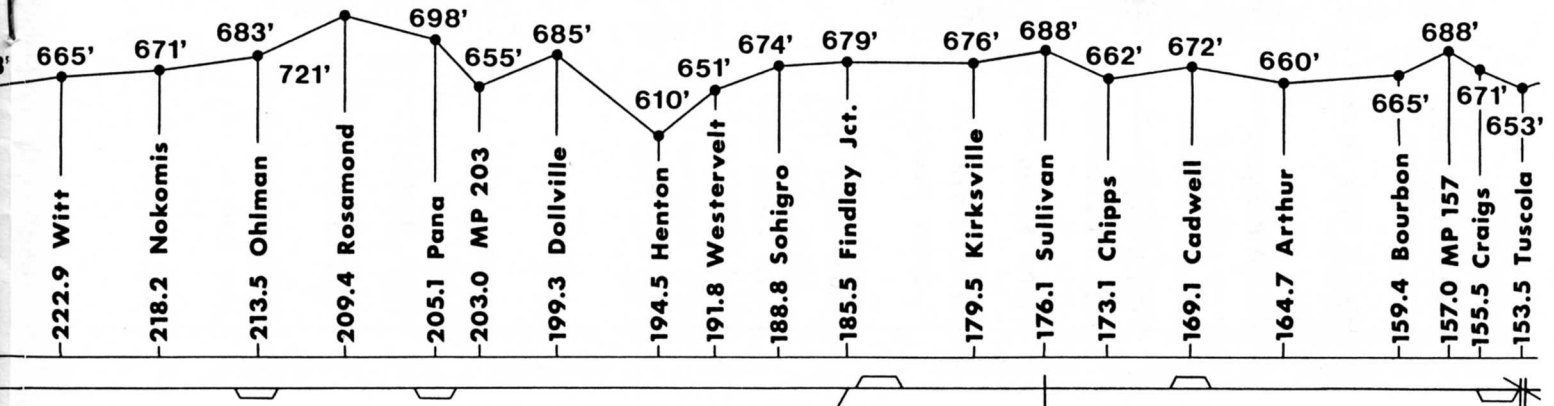
Union Pacific Pana Subdivision Milepost

275.7 Lenox

Junction with manned interlocking tower located at Mitchell, Ill. It is adjacent to I-270, the St. Louis area's belt expressway. Our train here leaves the A&S and enters Union Pacific's Pana Subdivision, a line for many years operated by the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad (Big Four Route), a longtime subsidiary of the New York Central. This trackage subsequently was owned by the Penn Central and Conrail before sale to UP's Missouri Pacific in 1982.

From Lenox to Hillsboro, our train follows a heavily engineered "cutoff" route built by the Big Four in 1904 between Lenox and Hillsboro. This route, with many heavy bridges, cuts and fills, provided a shorter and more efficient route than the original line via from Lenox to Hillsboro via East Alton and Litchfield. The Chicago & Eastern Illinois (C&EI), whose route we will follow for the rest of our trip today, operated over this route between Lenox and Pana under a trackage rights agreement with the New York Central.

Leaving the A&S we cross the Norfolk Southern (ex-Norfolk & Western, nee-Wabash) Detroit-St. Louis main line. Tracks to the west (left) include the joint SPCSL-Gateway Western line to Chicago and Roodhouse (ex-Chicago, Missouri & Western, nee-Illinois Central Gulf and





An Illinois Terminal interurban car southbound from Alton crosses over the interlocking plant at Lenox on April 13, 1952. Courtesy of the TRRA Historical & Technical Society.

Gulf, Mobile & Ohio, nee-Alton); and Conrail's branch to East Alton. The latter is all that remains of the original Big Four line to Hillsboro, much of which was abandoned beyond East Alton in early 1966. Illinois Terminal's electric interurban route from Alton once crossed over the junction here. Two bridge piers from the IT still remain about 75 yards south of the tower.

273.7 Vierling Junction

East end of the C&EI's former switching yard for the St. Louis area, now only a weed-grown expanse.

[270.3 Wanda]

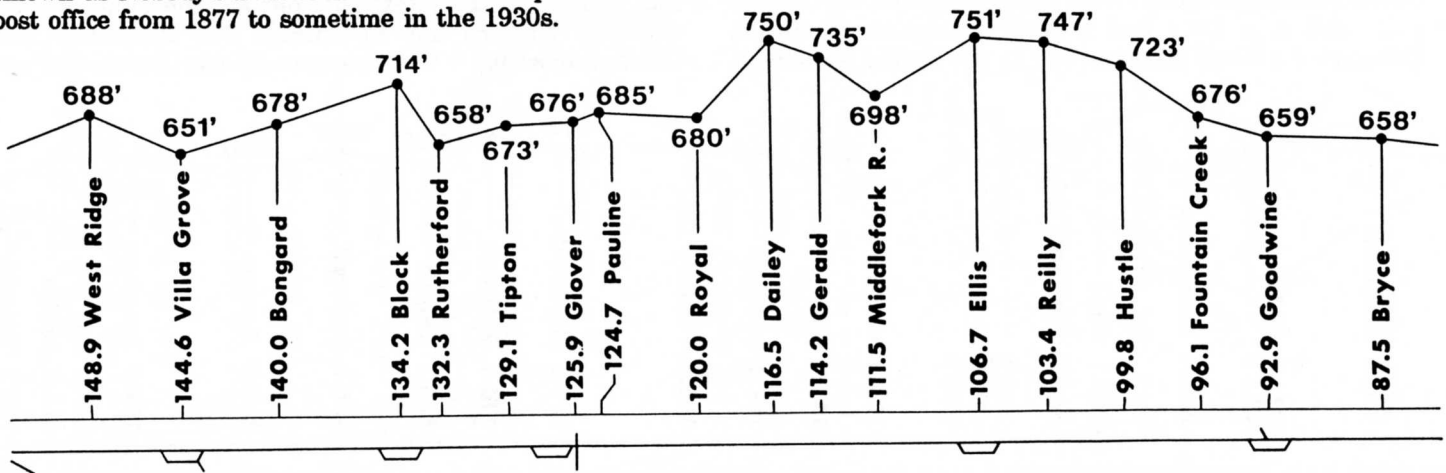
The line crosses the abandoned Edwardsville Terminal Co. line (ex-Norfolk Southern, nee-Norfolk & Western and nee-Illinois Terminal steam-powered) line from Edwardsville to Alton. Wanda had a post office from 1859 to 1916. The line here begins the gentle ascent up the Indian Creek valley from the vast Mississippi River flood plain, known locally as the American Bottoms, climbing 130 feet in 12 miles.

265.1 Gard

10,540-foot passing track.

[261.2 Carpenter]

Known as Nobody's Switch in the 1880s. Carpenter had a post office from 1877 to sometime in the 1930s.



[258.0 Worden]

Traversing a high fill built in the 1904 "cutoff" construction, the line here crosses over the Norfolk Southern (ex-Norfolk & Western, nee-Wabash St. Louis-Detroit line); the Chicago & North Western's ex-Litchfield & Madison line to Pekin; and the abandoned Illinois Terminal electric interurban line to Springfield.

[252.8 Livingston]

Population 928. Incorporated in 1905, it has had a post office since 1904.

[250.3 Binney]

Named for the nearby town's first postmaster, Walter P. Binney, who opened the post office in 1898. It closed in 1906. Illinois Central's now-abandoned Chicago-Springfield-St. Louis line crossed overhead here. That line was abandoned in the early 1980s, roughly 10 years after the IC and the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio merged to form the Illinois Central Gulf. The ICG moved Chicago-St. Louis traffic to the former GM&O main line via Alton. The abutments of the former bridge are in a small cut.

248.1 Joan

9,852-foot passing track.

243.7 Walsh Junction

Named Toland on the Burlington Northern's ex-Chicago, Burlington & Quincy line from Galesburg to Metropolis, Ill., under which the UP passes. BN trains enter and leave the Pana Subdivision here to the right, using trackage rights on the Pana Sub to reach St. Louis.

238.6 Shoal Creek Bridge *

234.4 Taylor Springs

[232.1 Hillsboro]

Population 4,408; 64.8 miles from St. Louis. Milepost location of the town of Hillsboro, the seat of Montgomery County. Nearby lies one of the largest known coal reserves in the country, unfortunately of a high sulfur content. The town was settled in 1818 by families from Hillsboro, N.C. Abraham Lincoln spoke at the courthouse in 1844, and in 1858 debated Stephen A. Douglas at the fairgrounds.

The Big Four's original alignment via Litchfield and East Alton converged here on the right near the barely-visible site of the now-demolished depot.

231.4 Hillsboro

East end of an 11,736-foot siding. Near here the track will pass between two small bodies of water - Lake Hillsboro to the west, and Big Four Reservoir to the east.

227.4 Irving

Population 516. A post office has been here since 1856. The village was incorporated in 1869.

222.9 Witt

Population 1,205. Early settlers arrived here in the 1830s. Witt grew when Big Four predecessor Indianapolis & St. Louis came through in the 1860s. A coal mine opened nearby in 1894, and the village incorporated in 1898. The town's population eventually reached 5,000, with mines in the area employing 2,200 people. The Great Depression closed the mines and ended Witt's prosperity. The town is still a farm trade center, with grain elevators served by the Union Pacific.

218.2 Nokomis

Population 2,656. Incorporated in 1867, and named for the storyteller of Longfellow's narrative poem *Hiawatha*. Industries here today produce crushed stone, agricultural lime and other minerals.

213.5 Ohlman

Population 178. 10,473-foot passing track.

209.4 Rosamond

Originally named Rosemond, the post office opened under the current (mis)spelling in 1923:

205.7 Pana

Population 6,040; 91.2 miles from St. Louis. Formerly known as the City of Roses for its hothouse floriculture industry. Pana's location in this once thriving coal mining region provided abundant fuel to heat the hothouses in winter. In its heyday, Pana shipped over 15 million cut roses annually, with New York Central and C&EI passenger trains handling the "rose traffic" to St. Louis, Chicago, and Indianapolis.

Pana was incorporated in 1856, three years after construction of the Illinois Central's original "charter line" down the middle of Illinois brought the first settlers. This IC line was abandoned here in mid-1982. Two other railroads, the Baltimore & Ohio and the Big Four, crossed the IC here at a complex junction. The former B&O line between Beardstown, Ill. and Shawneetown, Ill. via Springfield, Pana and Flora was abandoned in 1986, after a short stint as the Prairie Trunk Railway. The Big Four line from Pana east to Terre Haute was abandoned by New

York Central successor Conrail about 1982; the line west of Pana is still in use, and was our route today. Only the abandoned IC tower remains visible to the right at the site of this junction.

The restricted speed curve our train passes through near the tower is part of the old connection between the Big Four and the former C&EI proper, which we enter at this point for the remainder of our trip to Chicago.

[199.3 Dollville]

Former siding location.

[194.5 Henton]

Named for the first postmaster, Isaiah Henton. The post office was open from 1884 to sometime in the 1930s.

191.8 Westervelt

Business track. Post office established in 1904.

188.8 Sohigro

Business track location.

185.5 Findlay Junction

Here, 111.4 miles from St. Louis, UP's Pana Subdivision from St. Louis joins the Chicago Subdivision from Mt. Vernon and Gorham, Ill. This Wednesday's Union Pacific excursion train for the NRHS convention will turn on the wye track here before returning to Chicago.

185.2 Findlay

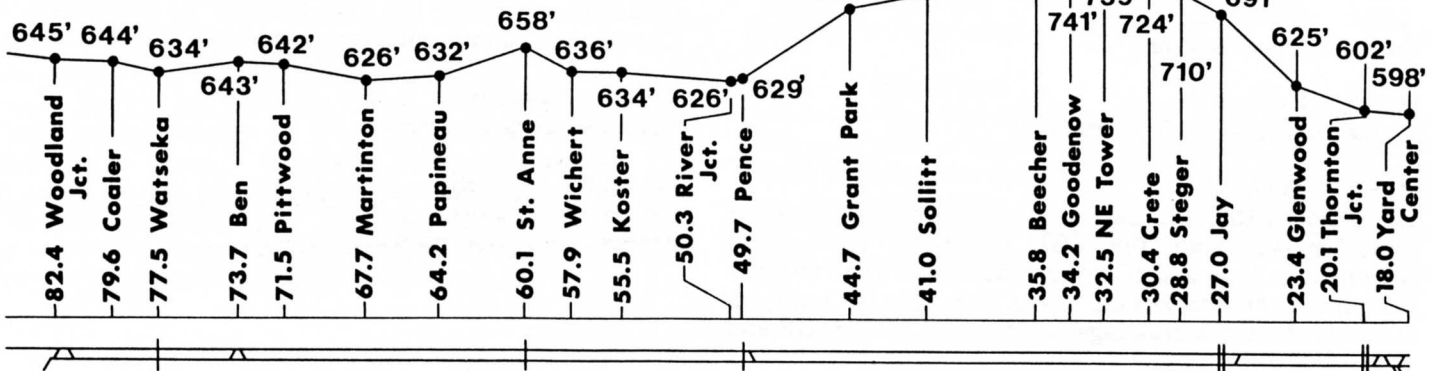
Population 787. Milepost location of the town, a small agricultural community also serving visitors to nearby Lake Shelbyville. The town's post office has been in existence since 1884, while Findlay itself has most likely been here since construction of the railroad.

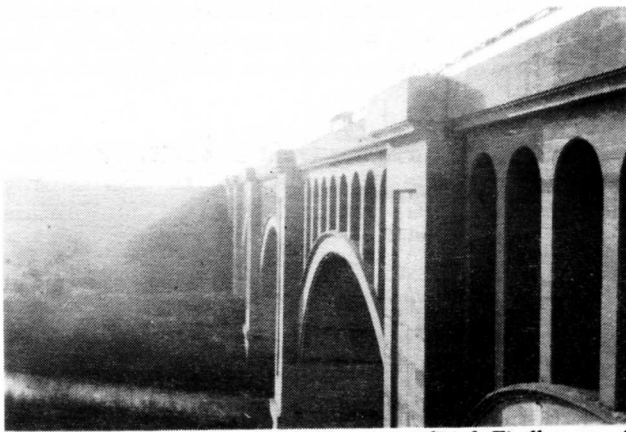
183.1 Findlay

East end of the 11,361-foot passing track.

181.8 Lake Shelbyville Viaduct *

The lake was created in 1970 when the Kaskaskia River was dammed at Shelbyville, about 10 miles to the south. The line here crosses an arm of the lake which is the flooded Okaw River valley. The impressive concrete arch viaduct formerly had two tracks. Local railfans and some railroaders occasionally call the structure "Little Tunkhannock", for its resemblance on a smaller scale to the huge Tunkhannock Creek Viaduct, the world's largest concrete arch structure, located on the former Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad at Nicholson, Pennsylvania.





The viaduct over the Okaw River north of Findlay, as it appeared in 1936 before the impoundment of Lake Shelbyville. Barriger Collection, St. Louis Mercantile Library.

[179.5 Kirksville]

The town had a post office from 1895 to sometime in the 1930s, along with a business track.

176.1 Sullivan

Population 4,354. Seat of Moultrie County, established in 1843 and incorporated in 1872. It honors Sullivan's Island, site of William Moultrie's victory over the British fleet in Charleston Harbor, S.C. during the Revolutionary War. We cross the IC's line to Peoria south of town.

173.1 Chipps

Business track location.

169.1 Cadwell

9,989-foot passing track. A post office from 1891 until recent years, its name change to Fairbanks lasted only a month in 1892. The depot has been moved and is visible on the west (left) side of the tracks at the highway crossing.

164.7 Arthur

Population 2,112. This is the trading center for a large colony of Amish, who settled the surrounding farms in 1864 after emigrating from Germany and Switzerland. Skilled agriculturalists, their many products and fine crafts may be purchased here, and in nearby Arcola.

Here the line crosses route of the former Conrail (ex-Penn Central, nee-Pennsylvania) line from Terre Haute, Ind., to Decatur, Ill., which was abandoned in 1985 after operating briefly as the Prairie Central Railway.

160.6 Kaskaskia River Bridge *

159.4 Bourbon

Business track location.

[155.5 Craigs]

Former business track location.

153.5 Tuscola

Population 4,155. The seat of Douglas County. Here our route crosses both the CSX (ex-B&O) Decatur to Indianapolis line, and IC's busy Chicago to New Orleans main line at an interlocking tower. To reduce the numbers of diamonds (track crossings) at the interlocking, UP and

CSX now share a single track to cross the IC. The tower is still manned.

[148.9 West Ridge]

Former business track location.

144.8 Embarrass River Bridge *

The name of this river is pronounced "em-baraw" locally.

144.6 Villa Grove

Population 2,734. 152.3 miles from St. Louis. A division point on the old C&EI, Villa Grove was also a major maintenance point, complete with repair shops and a roundhouse. Today it is a UP crew change point. The 42-mile Westville Industrial Lead to Danville, part of the original C&EI main line via Danville, diverges to the east (right). Our Villa Grove - Woodland Jct. route was built in 1904 to create a more direct Chicago - St. Louis route, by-passing Danville.

Villa Grove is our scheduled intermediate stop. If you are leaving us here, thank you for traveling with us today. If you are continuing on to Chicago, the locomotive will be serviced here during the stop. Operating conditions permitting, you may be able to briefly leave the train. Your car host will inform you if this is possible, and give you instructions. Please be back on board well before the scheduled departure time announced by your car host.

140.0 Bongard

Business track location.

134.2 Block

12,111-foot passing track.

[132.3 Rutherford]

The track passes beneath the Norfolk Southern (ex-Norfolk & Western, nee-Wabash) Lafayette District between Decatur and Danville, Ill. The town just to the west (left) is Sidney.

[129.1 Tipton]

Former business track location.

125.9 Glover

The track crosses the Conrail (ex-New York Central) Pekin Secondary line between Pekin and Danville, Ill. This line was built as the Peoria & Eastern, and operated under that name for many years as part of the New York Central System.

120.0 Royal

Originally settled in 1882, the town was moved to its present location on the railroad in 1904. It has the distinction of being the last town to be established in Champaign County, after gaining its post office in 1886.

116.5 Dailey

Business track location.

[114.2 Gerald]

Originally founded as Griffith, the town's name was changed after the railroad was built.

111.5 Middle Fork Vermilion River Bridge *

Former crossing over an IC branch from Rantoul to Potomac, abandoned in the early 1980s.

106.7 Ellis

Now just a passing track, the town had a post office established in 1908. It closed in the 1930s.

103.4 Reilly

Business track location.

[99.8 Hustle]

Former crossing of the Norfolk & Western (ex-New York, Chicago & St. Louis, or Nickel Plate Road) line between Peoria and Lafayette, Ind., abandoned in the 1980s.

96.1 Fountain Creek

Business track location.

92.9 Goodwine

The 5.9-mile Cissna Park Industrial Lead diverges to the west (left).

87.5 Bryce

Business track location.

82.4 Woodland Junction

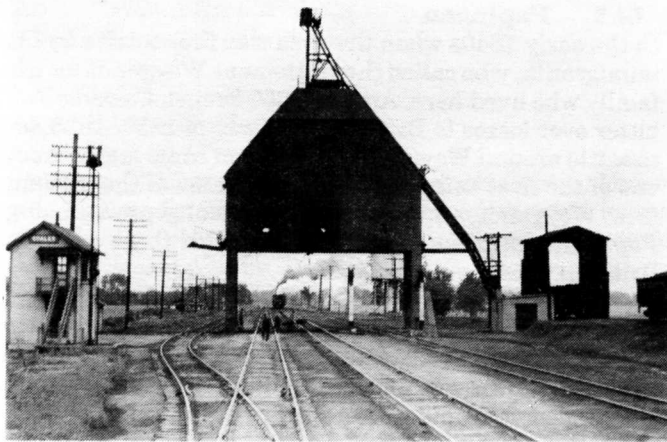
214.5 miles from St. Louis. Junction with the other main stem of the former C&EI. That line, joining from the right, extends to Evansville, Ind. via Vincennes and Terre Haute. It is owned by CSX Transportation.

This division at Woodland Jct. results from the sale in 1969 of the former C&EI to the Missouri Pacific (today Union Pacific) and the Louisville & Nashville (today CSX Transportation). This sale divided the C&EI in half. The western half, from Yard Center to Woodland Jct., from Woodland Jct. to Findlay, from Findlay to St. Louis, and from Findlay to Gorham, Ill. was purchased by the MoPac. The eastern half, from Woodland Jct. to Evansville was purchased by the L&N. As a condition of the sale of most of the C&EI to the MP, the L&N was given traffic rights over the MP's northernmost trackage between Woodland Jct. and Yard Center to allow its trains to reach Chicago.

The final 64 miles of our route today is thus not only traversed by trains of the Union Pacific, but also by those of CSX. And Soo Line trains also use the line from Woodland Jct. to near Chicago, and the eastern stem from Woodland Jct. to near Terre Haute, Ind. under trackage rights agreements with both UP and CSX. This arrangement allowed the abandonment of the parallel and underutilized Chicago to Terre Haute line built by Soo Line predecessor Milwaukee Road.

[81.8 Woodland]

Population 350. Platted in 1876 and incorporated about 1896. In the mid-to-late 1800s, the Woodland Clay Company was known for producing clay tile for draining the marshy areas in the region for agricultural use. The demand for clay pipe dropped when most usable land had been drained. In the 1920s the company began producing clay building block instead. However, use of concrete block for construction forced the firm to close.



The large concrete coaling tower at Coaler was a landmark on the north end of the C&EI. Barriger Railroad Collection, St. Louis Mercantile Library.

79.6 Coaler

A large concrete coaling tower spanned both tracks here. It allowed steam locomotives to make a quick stop for coal while remaining coupled to their trains.

77.5 Watseka

Population 5,424. Platted in 1860 as South Middleport, it was renamed in 1865 in honor of Watch-e-kee (meaning "pretty woman"), Potawatomi wife of early Chicago trader, Gurdon Hubbard. Hubbard arrived in the region in 1818 in the employ of the American Fur Company, and established trade relations with the Potawatomi. He married 15-year-old Watch-e-kee, niece of Chief Tamin, more for business advantage than for love. Two years later the marriage ended, according to Hubbard, by "mutual agreement because I was about to get out of the Indian trade." Watch-e-kee died in 1878 on the Potawatomi Reservation in Kansas.

Watseska was designated the seat of Iroquois County and incorporated in 1867. Today, Watseska is an agricultural center for the region.

At Watseska our train crosses the Toledo, Peoria & Western, built in 1860. It was acquired jointly by the Santa Fe and the Pennsylvania Railroad in the late 1950s. In 1983 the Santa Fe bought Pennsylvania successor Conrail's half and absorbed the TP&W. The line was sold by the Santa Fe in 1989, and today is once again an independent railroad.

73.7 Ben

Crossovers between main tracks.

71.5 Pittwood

Business track location.

67.7 Martinton

Population 299. The village, named for its township, was laid out in 1871 when the railroad was built on the land of Adam Wamba, who conveyed the land to the railroad so that a depot could be established there. The railroad in turn deeded the land to John L. Donovan to plat the village. Incorporated 1875.

64.2 Papineau

In the early 1840s when the area was first settled by Dutch immigrants, who called the settlement Weygandt for a huge family who lived here. Around 1850 French Canadians, still bitter over losses to Britain in the war of 1837-1838, began to settle around Weygandt. With them came many changes, one of the first being to change the name of the settlement from Weygandt, which they had difficulty pronouncing, to Papineau, after the general who had led them against the British.

60.1 St. Anne

Population 1,153. Located on the Chicago - Vincennes Trace, the town was founded by Father Charles Chiniquy. Suspended from his pastorate in nearby Bourbonnais, he came here in 1852, accompanied by most of his French-Canadian parishioners. Fr. Chiniquy was excommunicated in 1856, and many of his congregation again followed him in organizing a new church, which he named Christian Catholic, and which later became the French Presbyterian Church. The first post office, with horseback service to Kankakee, was established in 1854. After the arrival of the railroad in 1872 St. Anne became an agricultural center.

On July 26, Ste. Anne's Day, people assemble here to venerate a relic of *le bonne Sainte Anne*. The relic is believed by the devout to be a fragment of a finger bone of Ste. Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary. Miraculous cures have been attributed to the relic and its shrine. The bone, in a glass case, was sent here by the archbishop of Quebec from among those at the Shrine of Ste. Anne de Beaupre near the city of Quebec. His purpose was to rally the congregation around a new pastor after the excommunication of Fr. Chiniquy.

Our train here crosses the tracks of an ex-New York Central line from Kankakee to Indianapolis, now the Kankakee, Beaverville & Southern. The KB&S' historically interesting motive power roster consists entirely of diesel locomotives built by the former American Locomotive Co. (Alco). Alco locomotives are increasingly rare on North American railroads.

57.9 Wichert

Business track location.

[55.5 Koster]

Former business track location.

[50.3 River Junction]

The former C&EI State Line branch, abandoned in the 1940s, left the main line here to head southeast.

49.9 Momence

Population 2,968; 247 miles from St. Louis. Located on the Kankakee River, the city was platted in 1844 by Dr. Hiram Todd and rumored to be named for Momenza, a Potawatomi chief. Gurdon Hubbard and Noel LaVasseur built a trading post here in 1826 when it was a ford of the river on the Hubbard Trail, and later the Chicago - Vincennes Trace.

49.7 Pence

Within the corporate limits of Momence, and site of the former MG Tower. Previously, two railroads crossed the C&EI here. Today, our train crosses only Conrail's ex-New York Central Kankakee Belt. This belt line runs from

Elkhart, Ind. to a connection with the Santa Fe at Streator, Ill. It has long been an important bypass route around the congested Chicago terminal area. The other line which previously crossed here was a Milwaukee Road branch to Joliet, built as a portion of the Illinois, Iowa & Minnesota in 1905. That branch left the Milwaukee's ex-Chicago, Terre Haute & Southeastern line to southern Indiana a few miles east of town at Delmar Junction. The branch was abandoned west of here in 1978, while the track east of Momence was abandoned with some of the Indiana line in 1979.

44.7 Grant Park

Population 1,024.

[41.0 Sollitt]

Former business track location.

[37.6 Beecher]

Population 2,032. Milepost location for the town. Beecher is named for Henry Ward Beecher, a famous preacher and abolitionist of the mid 19th century. T.L. Miller, a local stockman who named the town, had George Dolton lay out the town in 1870 after Miller learned of the building of the Danville & Vincennes, and secured a station. The community was incorporated in 1885.

35.8 Beecher

Business track location.

[34.2 Goodenow]

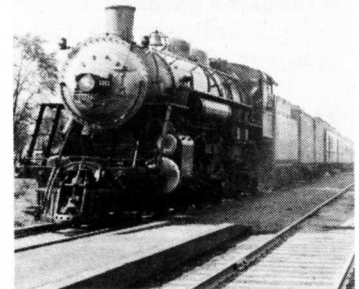
The town was laid out by George W. Goodenow in 1872, in response to the building of the C&EI. Mr. Goodenow built a store and, by the end of the year, a hotel, saloon, wagon shop and several dwellings had been constructed.

[32.5 NE Tower]

The highest point on our route between Chicago and St. Louis at 759 feet above sea level. In 1926 Lincoln Fields Race Track, now Balmoral Park Race Track, opened just east of here. This was also the location of NE Tower, with a crossover between the two main tracks. A spur track served the race track.

[30.4 Crete]

Population 6,773. Incorporated in 1880, it was named by its founder, William I. Wood, who arrived from Vermont with his wife and child in 1836. He built a log cabin and staked a claim to 80 acres. When a post office was established in 1838, Wood is said to have opened his Bible at random and picked the name Crete to replace Wood's Corners. The earliest settlers were from New England, but in the 1840s large numbers of German immigrants arrived, soon dominating the makeup of the village. Samuel Cushing ran a "station" on the "underground railroad" here until arrested in 1843 for harboring runaway slaves. He was never convicted: the prosecutor was not ready on trial day, and Cushing was released.



C&EI's passenger trains to St. Louis tended to be short and powered by smaller engines. Here a light Pacific leads near Sullivan in 1936. Barriger Collection, Mercantile Library.

28.8 Steger

Population 8,584. The village was platted in 1891 as Columbia Heights by James Keeney, a Chicago promoter who organized excursions by train from Chicago to sell his townsite. John V. Steger started a piano factory here in 1892. In 1897, when the town incorporated as Steger, it was known as "the Piano Center of America." Two other piano manufacturers were located here but both sold out to Steger in 1900. The peak years of piano sales were from 1920 to 1922, before radio became popular. By 1925 Steger Piano had closed its doors. Steger straddles the line between Cook and Will Counties.

27.8 Chicago Heights

Population 33,072. A crossroads of two of the most important roads in earliest Illinois history: the east-west Sauk Trail between Detroit and Rock Island, and the north-south Chicago - Vincennes Trace. The first settler, Absalom Wells, built a log cabin on Thorn Creek in 1833. He was followed by an influx of German immigrants escaping a failed revolution in their homeland in 1848. The settling of the prairies and the 1849 California gold rush brought a steady stream of pack horses and covered wagons over the Sauk Trail, which followed a low ridge of the Valparaiso Moraine through the flat, often swampy, glacial lake-bottom land of southern Cook County. Chicago Heights was the birthplace of Inland Steel in 1893, before its present much larger plants were built at Indiana Harbor near East Chicago, Ind. Charles H. Wacker, George H. Jones and other Chicago industrialists descended upon the small town during the 1890s, forming a land company and building factories for various firms they controlled. Chicago Heights today remains an industrial and residential community.

27.0 Jay

Crossing of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern, the "Outer Belt" railroad around Chicago.

25.9 Twelfth Street

Crossover between main tracks.

[23.4 Glenwood]

Population 9,289.

21.7 Thornton

Population 2,778. Thornton's founders were mainly of German descent, having come from Indiana. Although city records were lost in a fire, it is widely thought that the town was incorporated in the early 1860s. On the south side of town is Thorn Woods, one of the units of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. Its various preserves form a broad, green belt around Chicago.

Thornton has one of the largest stone quarries in the nation, operated by the Material Service Corp. It may be seen to the east (right) of the train. Its dolomitic limestone is one of the most important sources for crushed rock for construction use in the Chicago region. The quarry is split into two sections, subdivided by the Tri-State Tollway (I-294), Chicago's belt expressway.

20.1 Thornton Junction

Grand Trunk Western crossing.

19.8 162nd Street

Crossover between main tracks.

19.4 159th Street

18.1 Sibley Blvd. (147th St.)

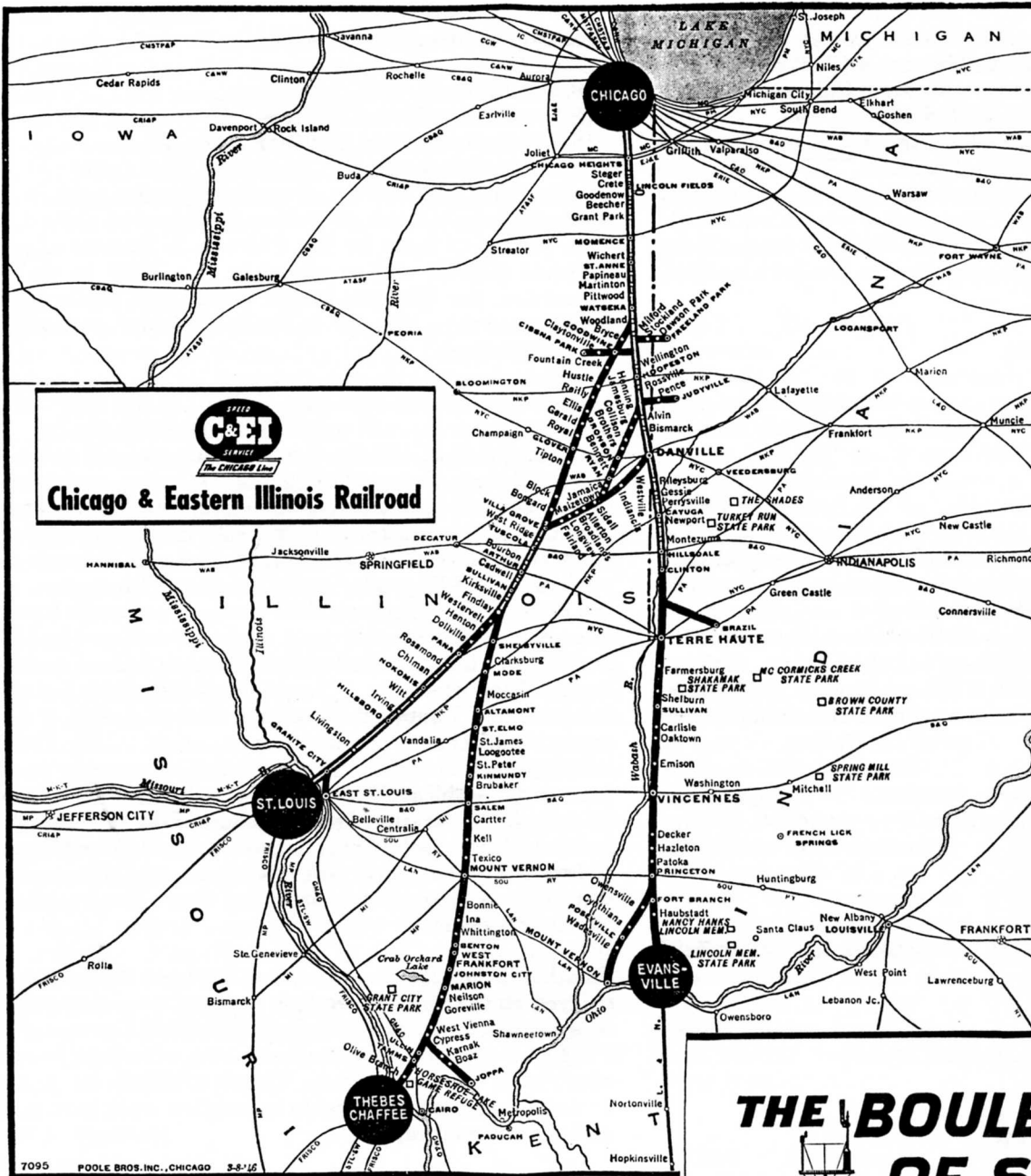
18.0 Dolton (Yard Center)

We end our 278.9 mile trip at or near Yard Center, Union Pacific Railroad's Chicago area classification yard in the south Chicago suburb of Dolton (pronounced Dahl-ton). This yard was built by the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad (C&EI), and improved in the 1970s by its two successors, the Missouri Pacific (today part of the Union Pacific) and the Louisville & Nashville (today part of CSX Transportation).

Dolton (pop. 23,930) was first settled by the four Dolton brothers, who moved south from Chicago during the financial panic of 1837 to farm the rich alluvial soil near Lake Calumet. George Dolton built a house, and later a tavern and toll bridge across the Little Calumet River. He became the first postmaster in 1866. In 1857 the Illinois Central became the first railroad to build through the settlement. C&EI predecessor Danville & Vincennes, and the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati & St. Louis ("Panhandle Route", later part of the Pennsylvania Railroad) followed in 1872. In 1890 the Indiana Harbor Belt connected them to other lines radiating out from Chicago. Early industries included brickmaking, lumber milling and alcohol distilling from sugar beets. The village was incorporated in 1892. Dolton is today an industrial and residential community in the inner ring of Chicago's south suburbs. It is served by some 40 daily freight trains of six railroads: Union Pacific, CSX, Indiana Harbor Belt, Conrail, Soo Line and Grand Trunk. Dolton is also our entry to the Chicago area, the nation's third largest metropolitan area, and the railroad capital of North America.

Thank you for traveling with us. We hope that you have enjoyed your trip, and we look forward to seeing you on board again. If you are attending the NRHS Convention in Chicago this week, we extend our best wishes to you and your hosts in the Chicago Chapter NRHS for a very successful and most enjoyable convention week here in the nation's railroad capital.

- Rick Sprung, St. Louis Chapter NRHS



1948 Map of the Chicago & Eastern Illinois

This brochure was edited by Mark Cedek of the St. Louis Chapter NRHS. Maps, logos and other graphics from the collections of the Barriger Railroad Library, St. Louis Mercantile Library.

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