



# GREEN DIAMOND

ILLINOIS CENTRAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ISSUE 34

\$2.75

**COLOR!**

DECATUR 1992

ROCKFORD 1920

NEW I.C. ART BY

**FRED CARLSON!**



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**AUGUST 22, 23 1992**  
**DECATUR IL**  
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**ON THE COVER:** The Decatur turn operating from Mattoon to Decatur is seen at Dalton City IL in April of 1990.

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Thanks to the following people who make up the **mailing staff** for the society. Their folding, stuffing, stapling, stamping, sorting, counting and labeling is how the society's publications finally get in the mail to you.

Gary Barnes  
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Abigail Kubajak  
Jack Laude  
George Rondelli  
Dale Windhorst

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#### GREEN DIAMOND

The **Green Diamond** is in need of articles and photographs for publication. Materials submitted are done so with the understanding that no monetary compensation is paid. Photographs and written materials will be returned if requested. Send materials for the Green Diamond to Publications Chairman Tom Grant. Items for inclusion in the newsletter should be sent to Newsletter Editor John Thomas. Addresses are on page 2.

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Thanks to the following people who contributed photos or information for this issue of the Green Diamond:

Tom Biscan  
Fred Carlson  
David J. Daisy  
Richard Hill  
Jim Kubajak  
Dennis Meeker  
Paul Meyer  
Scott Muskopf  
Charles Werner

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See page 30 for ICHS Depot news and the ICHS newsletter for modelers news and more society news.

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Fred Carlson.
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  31. Pile Driver saved!
- 

#### ICHS ANNUAL MEETING

This years meeting will be held August 22 & 23 in conjunction with the Decatur Train Fair at the Decatur Civic Center. Reservation forms for the ICHS Banquet Dinner, model contest, and patch contest have been included in the mailing package with this magazine. Dealer table reservation forms have also been included. Please note that **all table reservations are being handled by the Decatur Civic Center** and table reservations must be sent directly to the Decatur Civic Center. All other ICHS activities are being handled by the ICHS. For more information about the Decatur show contact either David Daisy or Tom Grant. Their addresses appear on page 2.

**Please return the reservation forms as soon as possible** so that the convention committee can make all of the arrangements needed for the show.

This years meeting will feature a large **model contest**, and a **patch contest**. See separate entry forms for all of the details. Also **Operation Lifesaver** will have a display set up at the show - sponsored by the **Illinois Central RR**. We're glad to have the I.C. participating in our show for the first time. We will also have movies and slides and a few other surprises including door prizes and prizes for model contest winners.

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#### PUBLICATIONS

This Issue did not get finished and delivered to you as soon as we would have liked. Part I of "Decatur and the I.C." was therefore "pushed up" into this issue to make sure that you received some of the Decatur story before our annual meeting. We are uncovering so much good information that we have split the "Decatur and the I.C." article into two parts. The second part will follow in our next issue (#35) which may not be ready before the show in August.

Also, I'm sure the first thing that you noticed about this issue was the **color photos**. We're glad to be able to use color in the Green Diamond, but it won't appear in every issue, at least not yet. We do have some budget restrictions that we have to work within.

We are pleased to be able to offer another color print from artist **Fred Carlson**. The new print is shown on page 29 of this issue. Also, shown in color on page 28, is the first print that Fred painted for the society. Compare the painting of the Gilman coaling chute to the photo by Paul Meyer on page 25 if you have any doubts about the accuracy of the scene.

We have continued the photos and profiles of the Chicago Madison & Northern in this issue. The first part appeared in issue #32-33. We will show the Freeport terminal in the next issue.

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#### MEMBERSHIP

Membership chairman Jim Kubajak would like to remind members to **keep us informed if you change your address**. Since most of our mailings are sent "bulk mail" and are not forwarded or returned by the post office, we don't know that you have moved unless you tell us. The ICHS membership address is on page 2.

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# DECATUR and the I.C.

## Part I

by Tom Grant

I would like to thank Tom Biscan, David Daisy, R.L. Gillum, Dennis Meeker, Scott Muskopf and Jim Kubajak for their help in preparing the Decatur article. The first part of this article on Decatur covers railroad activity in and around Decatur in 1992. Then there is a reprint from IC magazine that appeared originally in 1958.

**WARNING** - Railfan activity in the Decatur area can be hazardous. Much of the trackage in Decatur is in congested areas with multiple tracks and the possibility of multiple trains working on adjacent tracks. The railroads and private companies in the area are generally not friendly to railfans trespassing on private property. There have been fatalities on their properties and their policies vary from asking you to leave to arrest and prosecution, so be forewarned and keep off the property!

### ILLINOIS CENTRAL OPERATIONS

Decatur, Illinois is still a busy place on the Illinois Central. The I.C. serves a number of industries in Decatur. Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) and A.E. Staley Manufacturing are probably the two best known and most recognized corporate names associated with Decatur. (see short sketches elsewhere in this issue) The I.C. also serves some other familiar company names in the Decatur area; Allis-Chalmers, Caterpillar Tractor, Firestone Tire & Rubber Co., Illinois Power & Light Co., Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co., and York Division of Borg Warner to name a few. This concentration of industries makes for a lot of local switching work, which is primarily what the I.C. does in the area. As many as 500 carloads of business move into and out of Decatur on the Illinois Central each day, and CSX, Norfolk Southern and Indiana High Rail also serve the Decatur area.

Power on I.C.'s road jobs is usually 6 axle units, with 4 axle power becoming a rarity in the area. Some of the road trains that work in the Decatur area on the I.C. as of this writing are as follows;

The **Decatur - Mattoon turn (LDEMA 1)** covers the 95 miles on the original P.D.& E. line. LDEMA 1 operates during daylight hours, departing Decatur about 10:30 am. LDEMA 2 operates during the night, departing Decatur about 10:30 pm.

A **Decatur - Reed's Switch turn** works a few miles north from Decatur on what was the original charter line of the IC to various industries.

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Below: An IC switcher works near the A.E. Staley elevator in Decatur. ICRR photo - ICHS archives



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## DECATUR and the I.C.

I.C. Train RDE01 runs at night also, from Decatur to Mt. Pulaski and back.

A Peoria - Mt. Pulaski turn (LPEMP) works the old P.D.& E. line from Peoria at the north end to Mt. Pulaski, a distance of 55 miles.

Train LCLSP works from Clinton to Mt Pulaski and back. In Mt Pulaski he switches out the northbound and southbound cars and makes up the cuts for the Peoria turn and the Decatur turn. Although his letter designation (LCLSP) indicates that he works from Clinton to Springfield, he rarely works beyond Mt. Pulaski.

Train RSP01 runs from Crown Mine #2 at Farmersville (south of Springfield) to Mt. Pulaski on Wednesday and Saturday nights with coal for the ADM cogeneration plant in Decatur. One of the Decatur - Mt Pulaski jobs then brings the coal back to Decatur and delivers it to the ADM plant.

There is also a Clinton to Heyworth turn (RCL01) that works north out of Clinton. This job is the last remaining job held down by an old I.C. Iowa Division crew by prior rite.

### I.C. SWITCHING

In addition to the scheduled road jobs, there are up to seven switching jobs working in and around Decatur on the I.C. Switchers, usually in pairs can be seen working all three shifts moving the hundreds of cars each day to the industrial yards and sidings served by the I.C.

The I.C. has a special agent on duty in Decatur. Try not to meet him on "official business" by staying clear of railroad property.

### CSX OPERATIONS

CSX runs a regular road job out of Decatur each day with a departure about 10am eastbound. The westbound counterpart can arrive any time between noon and 8pm depending upon the work load. CSX also switches their yard with day and night switchers working.



I.C. switchers work day and night at Decatur. The old I.C. yard office, recently replaced, is in the background. 3-1-90.

photo by Scott Muskopf.

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### NORFOLK SOUTHERN OPERATIONS

Norfolk Southern (NS) runs a bunch of trains through Decatur daily. With the former Wabash shops located in Decatur there are also engines serviced and some repair work done in Decatur. Visitors are not welcome on NS property.

### INDIANA HIGH RAIL OPERATIONS

Indiana High Rail is the hardest road to catch a glimpse of in Decatur. They run on an irregular schedule, only coming into Decatur when they have enough cars to interchange or cars to pick up. There are no regularly scheduled High Rail jobs. Indiana High Rail keeps their engines at Assumption, Illinois. They operate with

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A Decatur turn headed southbound in Decatur. 4-23-90

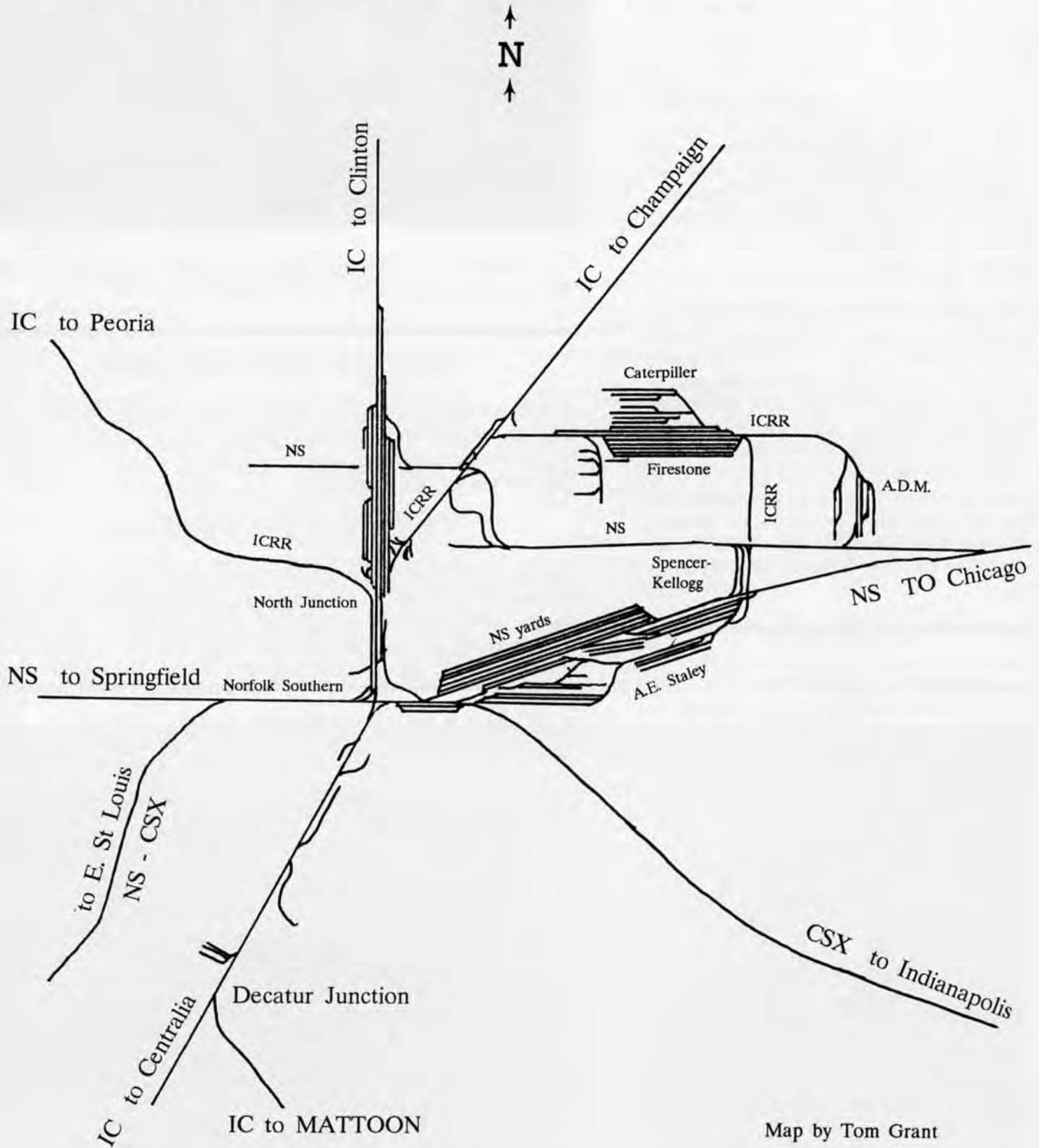
photo by Scott Muskopf.



### GREEN DIAMOND #34

# DECATUR ILLINOIS & VICINITY

This Decatur area railroad map shows the relative location of Illinois Central lines and CSX and Norfolk Southern lines in Decatur. The major Decatur industries are also shown.



Map by Tom Grant

### A.E. Staley and the Corn Belt Connection

Today, A.E. Staley Manufacturing Co. is an international company with a wide diversity in agribusiness. As a corn processor they produce ingredients such as starches and sweeteners that are used by all major food and beverage companies as well as paper companies and others.

In 1906, a determined man from the East named Augustus Eugene Staley bought an abandoned factory in Decatur, IL so that he could produce his own corn starch to sell. As business picked up after World War I, a corn syrup refinery began operating along with the mill. With farmers telling Staley of the worsening condition of their land after the many years of planting only corn, Staley fiercely pursued the idea of rotating corn with a seed from the Orient called the soybean. He got friends to start planting soybeans on a rotating basis with corn and, in 1922, the company opened the first soybean processing plant in the nation. A.E. Staley pioneered the soybean industry and Decatur proudly bears the name of Soybean Capital of the World.

Through the growth of the company in the agribusiness line, A.E. Staley also played a significant role in other ways in Decatur. With his company growing, Staley was in desperate need of a new water source. He along with Decatur's city fathers, mapped out Lake Decatur, Decatur's only source of water for the city and its companies. The Staley family is a well known benefactor to Millikin University and Decatur Memorial Hospital along with many other local charities.

The "castle in the cornfields" known as Staley's Headquarters was completed in 1929. The building was totally planned out by Staley himself and is of unique architectural form even 60 years later. Today, it is surrounded by a research center and many different plant buildings that complete the Staley complex.

photos: top - A pair of switchers at the old I.C. yard office; center - The new yard office and a train being made up; bottom - I.C.'s Engine facility and the yard in Decatur.

photos by Tom Biscan.



## DECATUR and the I.C.

a pair of ex BN geeps.

### ADM & STALEY OPERATIONS

ADM has a former Illinois Terminal SW 1200 switcher, now in ADM blue, which can be seen on their property. Staley also operates some SW 1200's which are leased from Railco at their elevators in Decatur. ADM and Staley will not tolerate trespassers and they will prosecute!

### PIECES OF THE PAST

There are only few remaining structures from the "old days" in the Decatur area. The I.C. has a new yard office, and the old office is still standing as of May 1992. The baggage section of the Decatur Depot is all that remains of that magnificent structure. The Wabash\IC tower (WABIC) still stands but it is closed. It's not hard to figure out how they named that one. The Wabash Decatur division yard office is also still standing. And, Moser tower on the Norfolk Southern is still standing, although remotely controlled.

In our next issue we will go back and look at some earlier photos from Decatur and we will use some of the information from the valuation reports that shows Decatur circa 1915.

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Above photo: A Decatur turn leaves town northbound. 8-91.

photo by David J. Daisy.

Below: A northbound Decatur turn at Dalton City, IL on 4-3-90.

photo by Scott Muskopf.

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### ADM - Based in Decatur

Archer Daniels Midland Company is Decatur's second major employer with more than 2,300 people employed. ADM operates the largest network of agricultural processing plants in the United States and is a leading agricultural processor on a worldwide basis. Originally based in Minneapolis, ADM's first appearance in Decatur was in 1939 when they opened a soybean processing plant at what today is known as the east plant. Company headquarters were moved to Decatur in 1969.

Prior to the 1976 construction of the corn processing plant, ADM had only processed soybeans in Decatur. Today, both the largest soybean processing and corn wet milling operations in the U.S. can be found at ADM Decatur. ADM's Specialty Food Ingredient Plant currently produces 12,000-15,000 frozen Harvest Burgers, a soybean-based food that looks and tastes like ground meat, each day.

The ADM Hydrofarm markets Boston lettuce, cucumbers and assorted herbs in a 200 mile radius of Decatur. ADM is continuing to make great progress toward clean air, energy conservation, and the freeing up of valuable landfill space by burning a 90/10 percent blend of high sulfur coal and used tires in the Cogeneration Plant that provides both steam and power to 7 Decatur plants and Richland Community College.





# Decatur and Illinois Central are Developing Together

City, shippers, receivers, railroad personnel, all cooperate  
to increase business and move freight faster.

Reprinted from Illinois Central Magazine  
November 1958

October and November are turning out to be two of the busiest months in history for the city of Decatur, Ill., and for Illinois Central Railroad operations at that point.

With record and near-record soybean and grain crops pouring into the city's processing mills from the nation's farms and with an increase in general business and manufacturing activity, Decatur people, including Illinois Central personnel, are working early and late to keep pace with the surge and flow of increased business and plant production demands. Heavy though the demands be, the Illinois Central is prepared to meet them.

For more than a century the Illinois Central Railroad and the city of Decatur, Ill., have been growing and progressing together. It was in 1854 that the 22 miles of track between Clinton, Ill., and Decatur were completed and the first Illinois Central train entered the city. A year later, what constituted the main line of the original charter line was completed at Ramsey Creek, south of Decatur, and trains began operating between southern Illinois and Chicago through Decatur.

Now, more than 100 years later, the railroad has grown from a 705 mile line entirely within the state to a more than 6,000 mile, 14 state system serving the heartland of America from the Missouri River on the west to the Appalachian Mountains on the east, and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Decatur in this same period has grown into a city of some 75,000 persons, a shopping center for the central Illinois populace of nearly half a million people. Known as the "Soybean Capital of the World" because of its large soybean processing plants, the city is also known for products made from corn. Metals, meat packing, wood, plastics, textiles and a good showing of miscellaneous products combine to make Decatur a city of diversified industry.

Such a growing city needs good transportation and the Illinois Central, and the four other railroads serving the

city, have sought to give it. It is often difficult to say which is the "biggest" or which is the "best," but as Assistant Superintendent Harold A. Schmitt puts it, "If the Illinois Central is not the leading railroad in Decatur, we're certainly running about neck and neck with the one that is." Substantiating his comment, Col. Schmitt adds, "Most of the industries at Decatur are track-served by the Illinois Central."

Numerous improvements to upgrade the quality and increase the extent of the railroad's service in Decatur have been put into effect in recent years through the company's various departments including Operating, Traffic, and Engineering. One step of prime importance was the establishment in 1951 of the new Post of assistant division superintendent at Decatur. By establishing at Decatur this position of "second in command" of the Springfield Division, the railroad demonstrated its regard for the increasing importance of the city, its vital location and its industries. Col. Schmitt now occupies this important post. His title, by the way, is not merely honorary but was earned in service in World War II in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. He served with the Illinois Central sponsored 715th Railway Operating Battalion and he became lieutenant-colonel commanding the 715th. Another mark of recognition by the Illinois Central of the increasing importance of Decatur was the establishment in 1954 of a new traffic sales and service office there. John E. Koessler, who is there today, was appointed general traffic agent to head the office. At the time this office was established, President Wayne A. Johnston said, "Decatur is unchallenged as the Soybean Capital of the World. The Illinois Central is proud to have played a role in the growth of this city as an outstanding industrial community. Our decision to have an active traffic office here is evidence of the Illinois Central's continuing interest in Decatur and of our desire to provide the industries of this city with the finest kind of railroad transportation."

## Decatur and Illinois Central.

Mr. Koessler, a native of Mattoon, Ill., a graduate of the University of Illinois, saw service with the U.S. Navy during World War II and worked for the Illinois Central at many points - Chicago, Kankakee, Ill., Peoria, Ill., Carbondale, Ill., St. Louis, Mo., and Milwaukee, Wis., before coming to Decatur.

Mr. Koessler's office is located in a portion of the Illinois Central Freight Station which was remodeled in recent years at a cost of some \$50,000 to accommodate the freight office staff and the general traffic agent. Increased accessibility of the offices achieved by these changes has been much appreciated by shippers and enables the railroad to do a better job of serving them. Freight Agent Andrew U. Given heads freight activities. The freight office force is comprised of 19 employees, and the adjoining warehouse is under the supervision of Warehouse Foreman Virgil A. Whitehurst who has an additional four employees working with him. The Decatur freight office is one of the most important on the railroad for it has long ranked among the top 10 in freight revenue. Leonard B. Moser, chief clerk to freight agent, says: "We'll average more than a million dollars a month total revenue, in and outbound. We have hit more than a million and a half."

In addition to these Operating and Traffic department contributions to the improvement of railroad service for Decatur industry, the Engineering Department has been doing its part to improve facilities at Decatur. Particularly noteworthy in this connection has been the cooperation of the Engineering Department with state and city overpass and subway projects to alleviate automobile and truck traffic problems. Decatur has developed rapidly, and has outgrown several of its street facilities. At some points it became nearly impossible to handle street traffic over grade crossings. Both state and city, particularly the city, developed a traffic plan to correct this situation. One principal bottleneck was at Grand Avenue where most of the Illinois Central switching is done. It is the Illinois Central's main yard at Decatur and all its trains are handled through this yard. With this heavy rail traffic passing over the grade level crossing it was almost impossible to keep from delaying the city vehicular traffic on Grand Avenue. The city, therefore, developed a plan in conjunction with the railroad for a grade separation in the form of an underpass or subway and agreement was reached between the parties for building of the structure.

The Grand Avenue subway is one of four similar structures being built or recently completed. This project was started in the spring of 1956 and completed in the autumn of 1957. The Garfield Avenue overpass, the

only overpass of the four, was started in March of 1957 and was completed on September 15, just a couple of months ago. This overpass takes vehicular traffic over rather than through the middle of the big yard. Toward the north end of town, passing under an Illinois Central temporary trestle, is the subway for highways 48 and 121. This underpass was started in May of this present year and is still under construction. Toward the south side of Decatur, construction of another underpass, to correct the highway alignment and provide for a four lane structure to replace the present two-lane underpass, was begun in August 1957. This, too, is yet to be completed. Strangely enough, it was partly because of new housing developments in the area that the Garfield Avenue overpass became necessary. An increase in the number of children in the area coming from these new homes necessitated additional school facilities. The new school was located two blocks west of the tracks and thus the number of children crossing the railroad was greatly increased. The city requested that the Illinois Central join with it in protecting the crossing and the railroad installed a part-time flagman during the school year. However, continuing increase in pedestrian and vehicular traffic made it imperative that a grade separation be made. The city proceeded with plans for construction and the railroad contributed an easement over its property for the necessary substructure.

In connection with the underpass for highways 48 and 121, both the city and state agreed that grade separation was necessary and plans were developed by the Illinois Central for the grade separation structure. The State of Illinois assumed the major portion of the cost of construction, and again the railroad contributed by granting an easement the subway structure and certain temporary work required in its construction.

There is a limited convenience for the railroad resulting from the construction of the overpass and the subways, which enables the railroad to serve Decatur industries somewhat more rapidly. But because the grade separations are for the primary benefit of state and local automobile and truck traffic, it is the railroad's position that the expense of such construction should be borne by the city and state.

The Engineering Department is also frequently engaged in building new track in Decatur and in assisting Decatur industries in planning and constructing trackage into their Plants- Examples in the Past few years include 500 feet of track for a Plywood firm; 325 feet for a baking firm; 330 feet for a sand and gravel company; for construction contractors about 2,300 feet; and so on for other new or expanding firms in Decatur. In round numbers the total cost of this track work was \$52,000. Other important track laying which speeds freight in the Decatur area

## Decatur and the Illinois Central.

includes two interchange tracks laid in connection with the Illinois Terminal Railroad at a total cost of some \$26,000.

Engineering work on the Springfield Division, which includes Decatur, is under the general supervision of Division Engineer Frank T. Kraft of Clinton, Ill., division headquarters.

Another important development, in effect only a few years, is the practice of "blocking" cars at Clinton for movement to Decatur. In the large classification yard at division headquarters the cars for various industries in Decatur are blocked or grouped together and then switched into Decatur bound trains. When the trains arrive in Decatur there is no time consuming switching to be done. The blocked cars are quickly cut out as a single unit and sent on their way to the individual Decatur plants for which they are destined.

Also important in speeding up concentrated freight movements is the presence of trouble-shooters and pinch-hitters brought to Decatur at certain periods, such

as the soybean rush each autumn. Among those on hand this year to help out were three transportation inspectors: Edgar E. Lang of Chicago, Herman Marx, Jr., of Memphis, Tenn., and Ray D. Mitchell of Champaign, Ill. On hand also for these particularly busy times is Springfield Division Superintendent Herbert L. "Hub" Williams, a third generation Illinois Central man. His grandfather was agent at Boaz, Ky., and his father, H. W. Williams, was division superintendent of the old Tennessee Division. In addition he is related to many other Illinois Central employees, past and present, including his uncle, Thomas K. Williams, who retired as superintendent of the Memphis Division after more than 53 years of railroad service.

One and all from whatever department-Illinois Central railroaders are working skillfully and effectively to give Decatur industry the fast, dependable rail service it has come to expect from the Main Line of Mid-America. Thus Decatur and the Illinois Central continue to grow and prosper together after more than a century of progress.



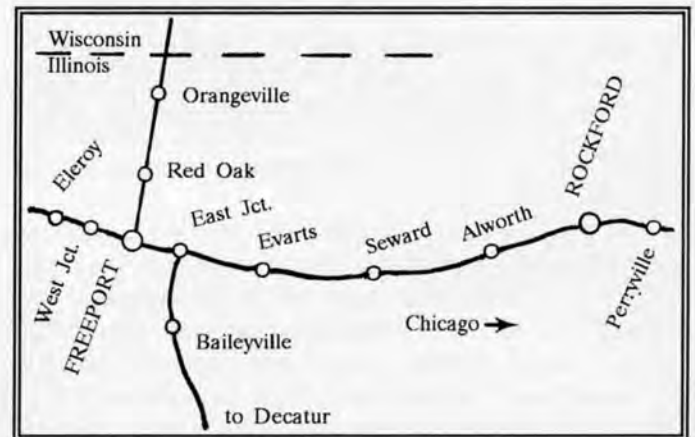
SW 9 # 9478 switches at ADM in the 1950's.

Hedrich-Blessing photo, ICRR. ICHS archives.

# THE CHICAGO MADISON & NORTHERN RR

## part II PROFILES & PHOTOS

In our last issue (#32-33) we presented a history of the Chicago, Madison & Northern written by David Fiore. Accompanying his history of the line from Chicago to Freeport and north to Madison we used a series of photographs from the valuation reports in the ICHS archives and the profiles of the line from Hillside to Perryville, just east of Rockford. Due to a lack of space we were unable to cover the entire line in photos and profiles in that issue. We are continuing with the profiles and photos of the CM&N line in this issue, from East Rockford to Freeport. A few members have written to express their approval of this format. Many members have asked us to use profiles of the IC in the magazine. I think this is an excellent way to present a story on a particular section of the IC. The drawback is that it takes many pages to present a small part of the railroad. Still, this seems like a good way to show everyone some of what is in the valuation reports and tie it together with the profiles. Just remember when you look at the profiles that they date from the 1950 era, and the valuation photos date from the 1915-1920 time period. Some things shown on the profiles were built long after the valuation photos were taken. For example references to type "C" depots on the profiles refer to the depots that were rebuilt in the 1940's, not the ones in the photos. The type "A", "B", "C", & "D" depots were all rebuilt from existing structures, as the railroad no longer needed the larger stations.



East Rockford Station. Valuation Photo.

Map of area covered in this issue.

Below: CM&N construction photo at Rockford, IL. May 30, 1887.

ICHS Collection.



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Rockford Terminal car repair house.  
Valuation Photos - ICHS Collection.



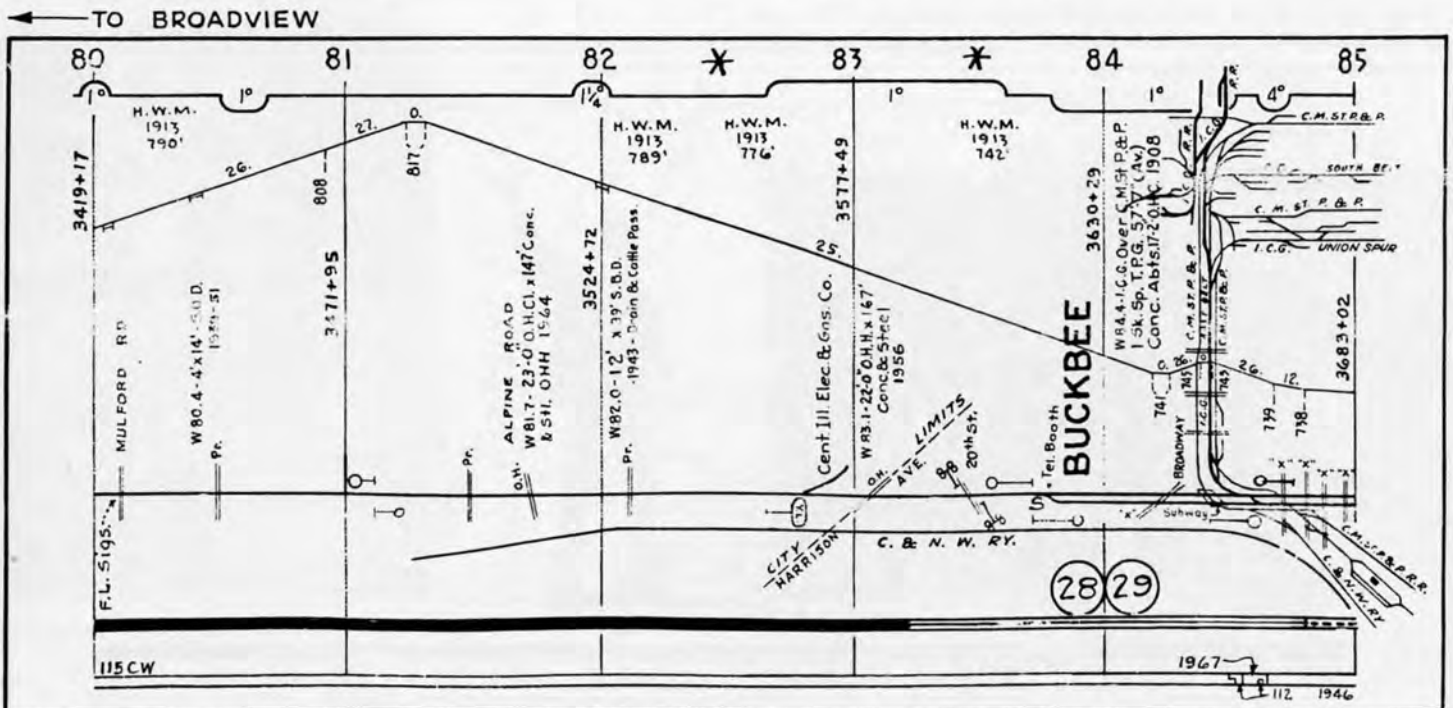
Rockford Terminal watch house - Corbin street.  
photos circa 1915.



Rockford Terminal coal chute.



Rockford Terminal freight house.





Rockford Terminal watch house - 14th ave.  
Valuation Photos - ICHS Collection



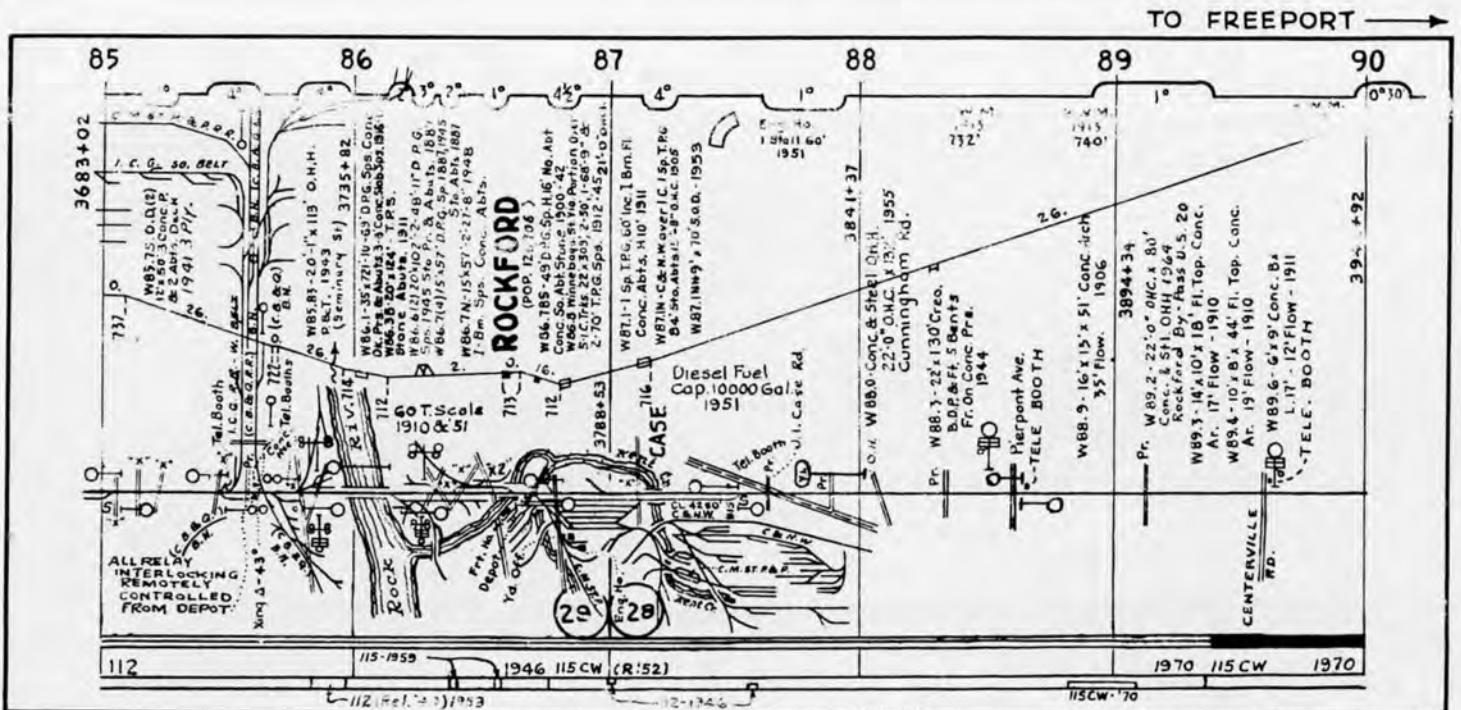
Rockford Terminal section house - 11th street.  
photos circa 1915.



Rockford - furniture warehouse.



Rockford Terminal - freight house.



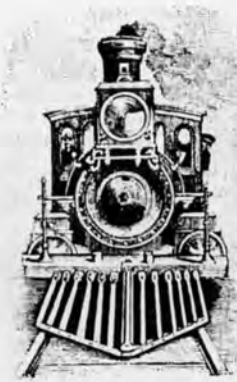
GREEN DIAMOND #34



Rockford Terminal watch house.



Rockford Terminal watch house.



Rockford Rock River - bridge W86.06 under construction. 694' long - 10 spans. Masonry piers built 1887.

Valuation Photos - ICHS Collection

photos circa 1915.

Following Pages:

Page 16 top: Rockford freight house - photo - 1894. This building is a 32' x 220' brick structure with slate roof and stone foundations erected in 1888 and last painted in 1910. Records indicate that in 1903 the original building was enlarged and that it was again enlarged in 1911, a portion being raised to two stories.

Page 16 bottom: Rockford turntable - 60' long built of wood. - 1894.

Page 17 top: Rockford Station area.

Page 17 bottom: Rockford Passenger Station - photo - 1894. This is a 32' x 220' brick structure with slate roof and stone foundations. The building has an ornamental tower and covered platform. The building was built in 1888 and last painted in 1910. Repairs were made in 1894 and the platform built in 1898. In 1907 and 1908 extensive improvements were made in the park and grounds - 200 shrubs being planted.



Timber Coal trestle for Malleable Iron Works. 2 miles N. of Rockford - 537' long, built 1907.



GREEN DIAMOND #34





**GREEN DIAMOND #34**



Alworth Station.

Valuation Photos - ICHS Collection.



Alworth Section tool house.

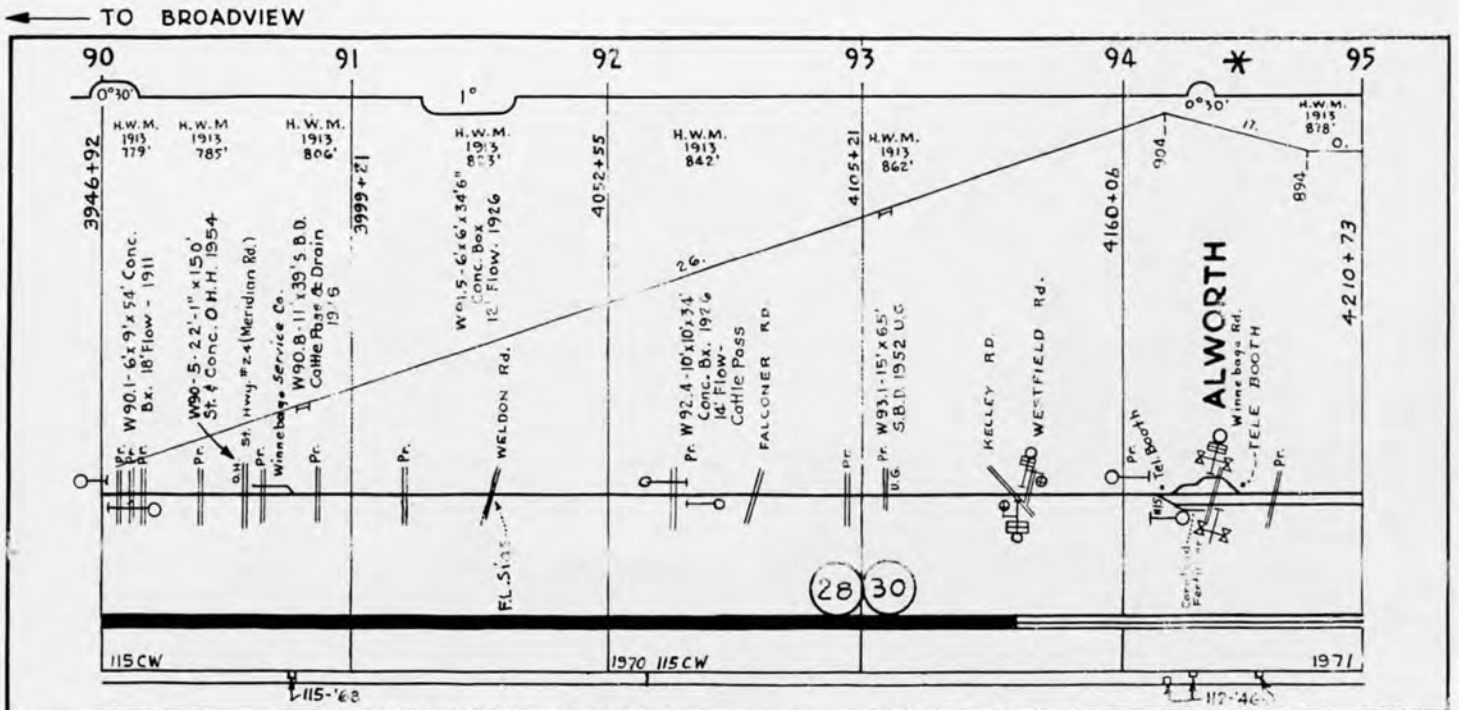
photos circa 1915.



Alworth section foreman's dwelling.



Alworth section laborers house. (boxcar)



GREEN DIAMOND #34

By now you have noticed the similarities in the structures along the CM&N. Most of the stations are nearly identical. The stations at Alworth, Seward and Evarts had finished second floors. They were constructed in 1888 and measured 20' x 54'. The Seward water tank was 16' high (tank only) and 18' in diameter. The section tool houses were 14' x 20' and were also built in 1888.

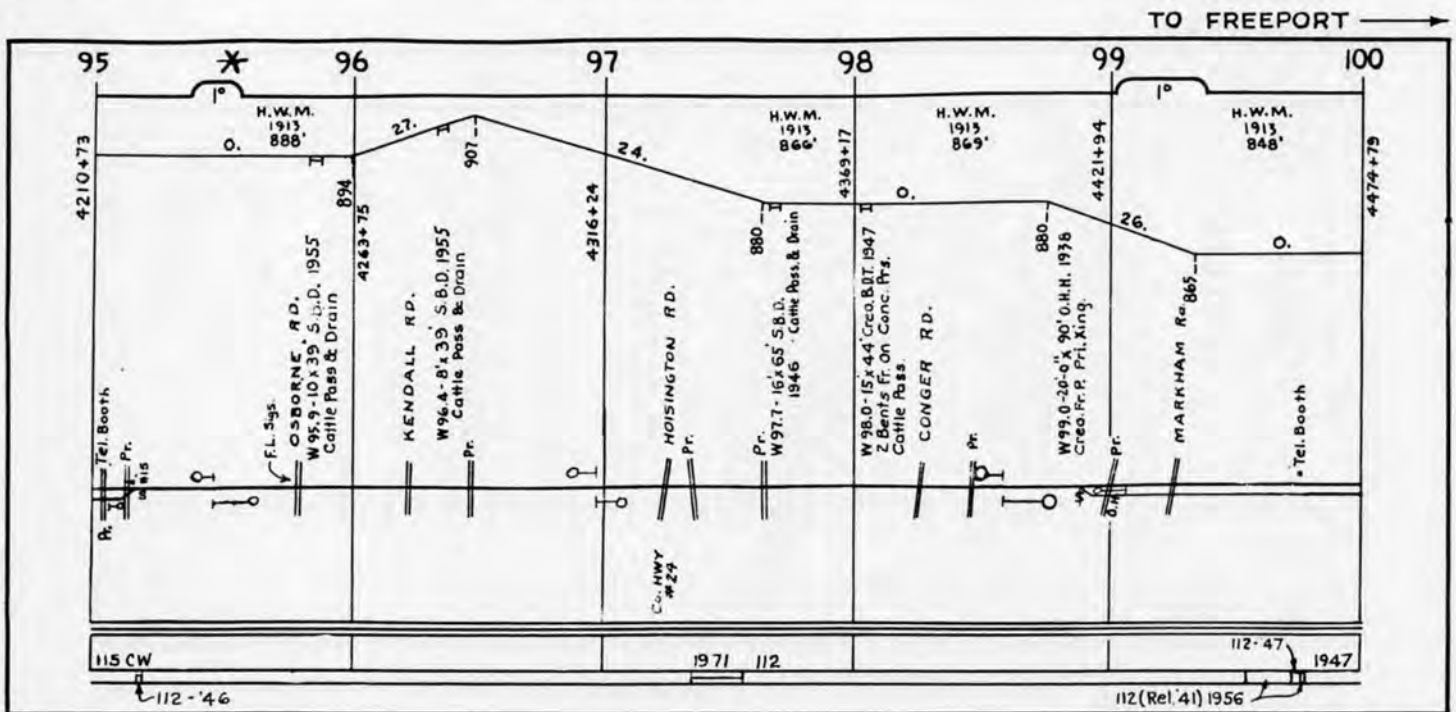
The section foreman's dwellings measured 16' x 40' and were also built in 1888. The section laborers house measured 8'8" high x 35' long x 7' wide and certainly looks like a boxcar set down on the ground. The valuation report shows that the Alworth stock pens were not built until 1902.



Alworth "facility".

Seward water tank.

Seward "facility".



GREEN DIAMOND #34



Seward Station.

Valuation Photos - ICHS Collection.



Seward tool house.

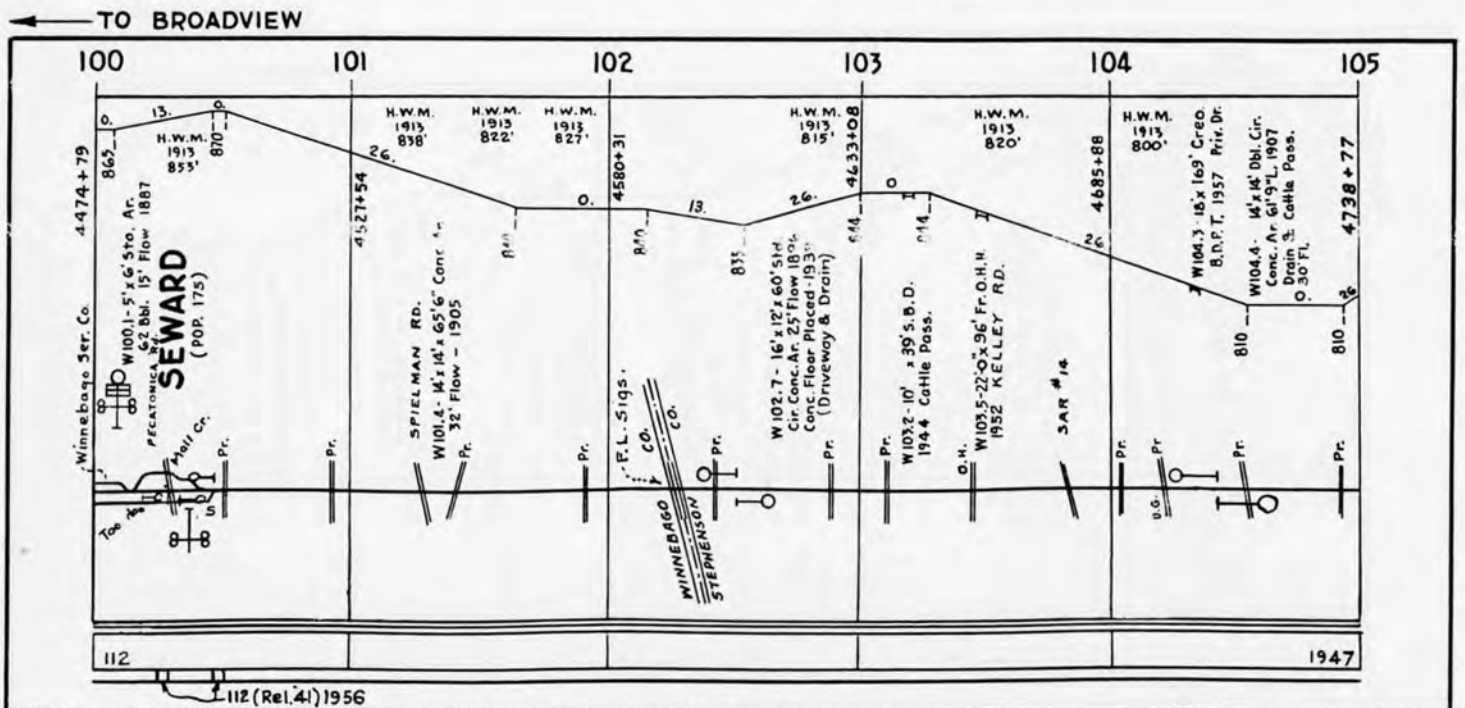
photos circa 1915.



Seward Pump House.



Seward stock pens.



GREEN DIAMOND #34



Everts Station.

Valuation photos - ICHS Collection.



Everts tool house.

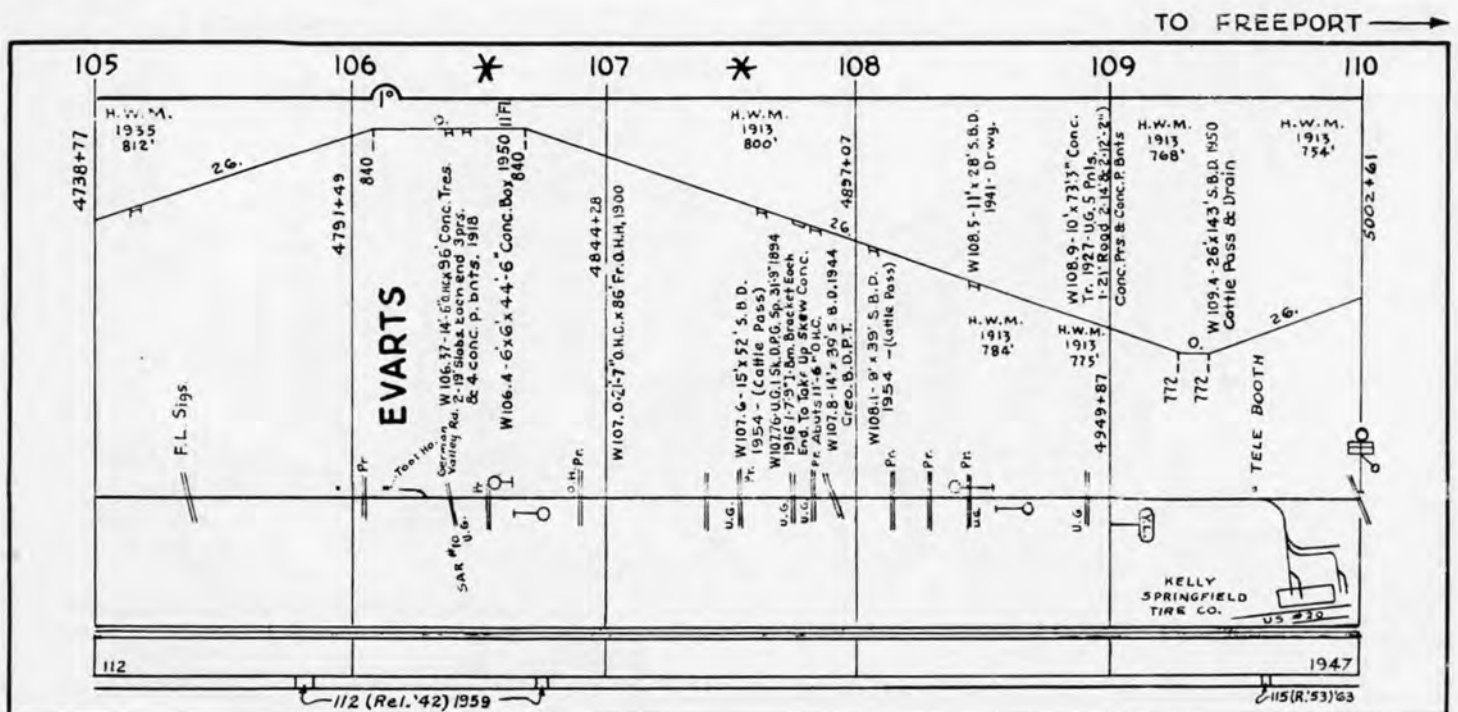
photos circa 1915.



Everts section foremans dwelling.



Everts stock pens.



GREEN DIAMOND #34



East Junction yard office.  
Valuation Photos - ICHS Collection.



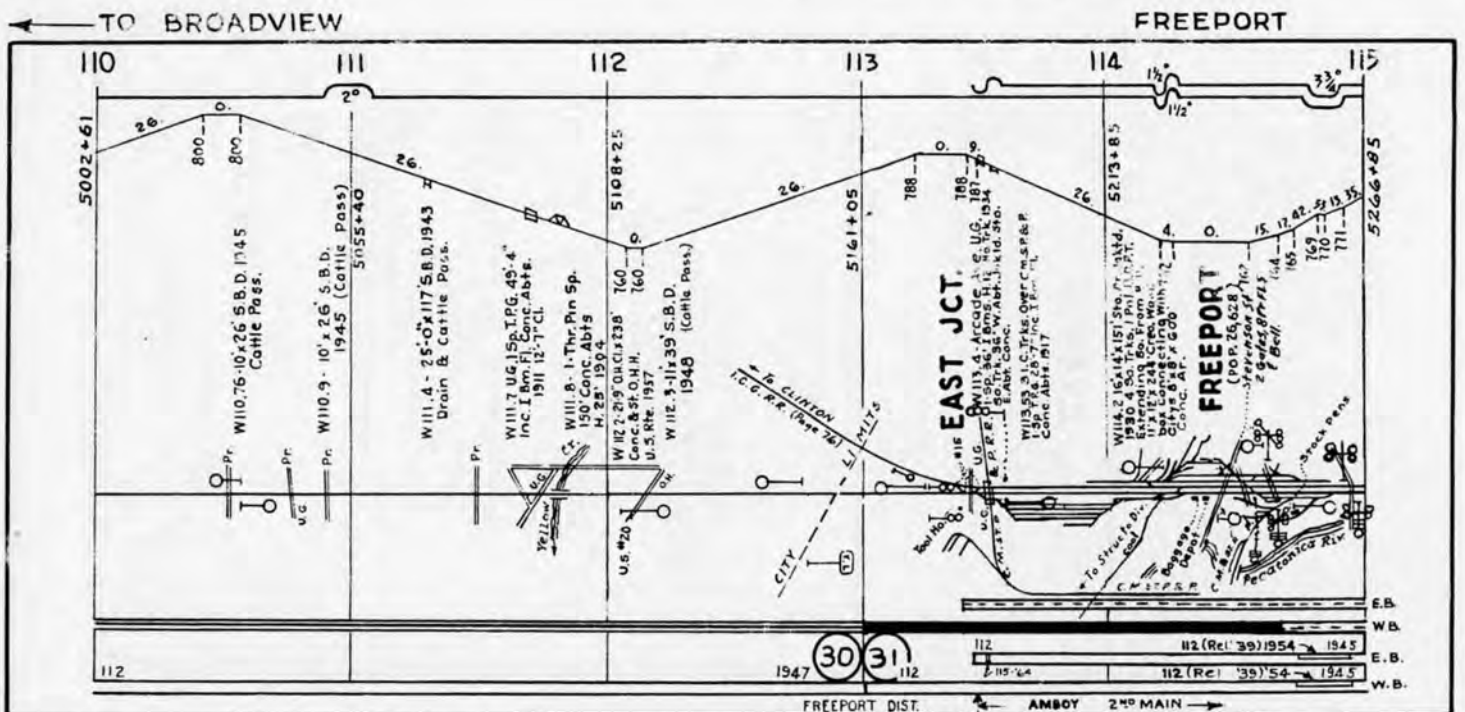
Freeport blacksmith shop.  
photos circa 1915.



Freeport B&B Buildings.



Freeport carpenter shop. (boxcars)



GREEN DIAMOND #34



Freeport Terminal Watch house Van Buren St.  
Valuation photos -ICHS Collection.



Freeport Ice House.

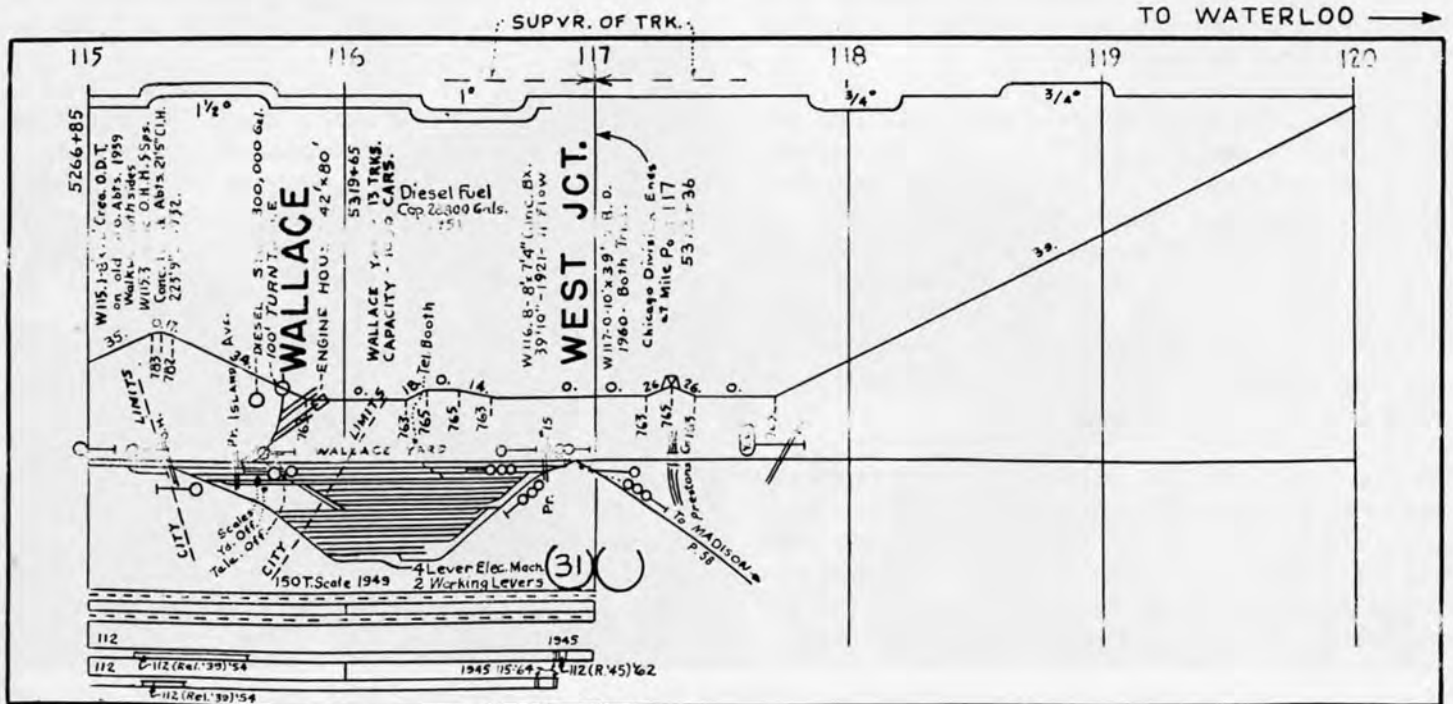
photos circa 1915.



Freeport Motor car house.



Freeport Terminal Icing Platform.



GREEN DIAMOND #34

# LELAND CRABBE and the GILMAN COAL CHUTE

Mr. Crabbe was interviewed by Charles Werner on April 1, 1990 at the Gilman Nursing Home.

Leland Crabbe was 96 years old this day and his wife was with him during the interview. He stated that he had only a third grade education, which kept him from better jobs, but as I talked to him it became apparent that he had a lot of common sense. He said that he had "worked hard all his life."

Mr. Crabbe started working for the I.C. on the Indianapolis line about 1920, working on the valuation reports. His job was to bore holes in the fills to find out how much fill was used. The section gang worked near Dugger, Indiana. The foreman said he would try to get him steady work with the railroad, and after that he worked steady. He remembers that the engineers from Chicago in the Valuation Department were mighty fine people. A new man was needed to operate the coal chute there and the section gang was asked if anyone wanted the job? Mr. Crabbe took the job after looking it over.

He came to Gilman November 1, 1940. The roundhouse at Gilman was still there, and there were four water tanks in the Gilman area. The chute hadn't been greased or oiled for some time. "It cussed so loud that you could hear it in Gilman." (The chutes are about a half mile north of town.) He ordered oil, grease, and waste from Champaign and after a week nothing had shown up. "I called the dispatcher in the morning and said that I was goin to shut the coal chute down until I received those supplies. They arrived on a passenger train and a supervisor brought them to the coal chute that afternoon!"

"The Gilman chute held 300 tons of coal on the East side and 600 tons on the West side in two bins. In the early days much of the coal had to be unloaded by hand from flat cars with sides. I found some loose floor boards and removed them to unload the coal. The cars were new and a car inspector accused me of tearing them up! The inspector called the dispatcher and the next morning a carman was sent out to oil the journals and inspect the cars. Not a splinter was missing and the carman reported that nothing was wrong with the cars!"

"The "aprons" were the sheet metal chutes that were lowered to put the coal in the tenders. When I started at Gilman the aprons would blow off in high winds. I went to town and got a wire stretcher to put them back on and added more weight to them. It used to just take one hand to pull it down. After adding more weight it

took both hands to pull them down, but they didn't blow off any more."

"Once some small boys showed up at the coal chute and said that their mother had told them to go there. I told them I wasn't a babysitter and to get out. I didn't have any trouble with them after that."

"I supervised three eight hour shifts a day to keep the trains moving. Ten fifty ton coal hoppers were delivered to the coal chute each day. The coal was emptied into a pit under the tracks. A bucket conveyor lifted the coal up into the towers. Loading and unloading coal and working on the chutes was a dangerous and dirty job. I gave up trying to wash my overalls. They'd get so full of coal dust that they'd just stand up by themselves. After awhile we'd just burn them."

The railroad was a demanding place to work too. When his first wife died, he was allowed just three hours off to attend the funeral. From 1920 to 1942 he had no vacations, and if he needed a day off he had to pay his replacement out of his own pocket.

"We always worried about fire in the coal. The first thing I did in the morning was to check for fire. I could tell by the smell if the coal was on fire in the chute. It would catch fire by spontaneous combustion. One winter when the gate hatch froze up, I put some oil soaked waste on it and set it on fire. It got the coal in the chute on fire. I asked for six empty cars to unload the coal into. The burning coal was hauled down to the water tank and the fires put out."

"We cleaned the bins out once a month. One time the coal crusted over and wouldn't come out. I went up to the top and stepped on it. It collapsed and I went down feet forward and out the gate with the coal. The helper was surprised and said "Where the hell did you come from?", but I didn't even get a scratch."

"The coaling towers were a busy place during steam days. At Christmas of 1940 there was one eight hour shift where I counted 50 passenger trains past the coal chutes."

The Gilman coaling towers kept the steam engines running until 1963 on the Illinois Central, and Leland Crabbe kept the coaling towers running. When the last of the steam engines was retired, so were the coaling towers, and so too Leland Crabbe, one of the hard working railroaders of the Mainline of Mid-America.



## SOUTHBOUND at GILMAN



The City of Miami southbound at the Gilman coaling chute in 1961.

photo by Paul Meyer.



The tragic wreck of Extra 8908 South and No. 92 North at McManus, Louisiana on July 7, 1969.

photo by C. W. Witbeck

# Head-On Collision

by **Richard Hill**

## Introduction:

The following report is based on actual facts that led to the collision of two freight trains No. 92 North and Extra 8908 South, which occurred at approximately 10:35 a.m., Monday, July 7, 1969. The location of the collision was one mile north of McManus, Louisiana, on the Vicksburg District of the Mississippi Division of the Illinois Central Railroad. The accident left four men dead, two seriously injured and four others with minor injuries. Over one million dollars in damages was done.

At 6:10 a.m., July 7, 1969, Extra 8908 South left Vicksburg, Mississippi with a five man crew and their destination was Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The train crew was Conductor J.L. Smith, Engineer J. W. Cunningham, Fireman H. P. Sadler, Brakeman G. B. Allred and Flagman R. E. Bearden. Their train had four engines and forty-nine cars. Their train orders gave them the right of track to go to Slaughter, Louisiana and wait in a side track for No. 92 North to pass. Maximum speed for a freight train was 40 m.p.h. and Extra 8908 South passed Port Gibson, Mississippi, which is 28 miles from Vicksburg, at 7:07 A.M.

Extra 8908 South arrived at Harriston, Mississippi at 7:45 A.M. After setting out fourteen cars they left Harriston at 8:05 A.M. with only thirty-five cars. Having such a light train and plenty of engine power, they maintained maximum authorized speed. They arrived at Roxie, Mississippi at 8:35 A.M. stopping clear of the Mississippi Central Railroad crossing to set out four cars on the interchange track. The train then pulled about one mile around a sharp curve to downtown Roxie near a boarding house, at which railroad crews often stopped to eat. Extra 8908 South shoved the train back over the street crossing and the whole crew went to eat breakfast at 8:45 A.M. After eating breakfast, Conductor Smith and Flagman Bearden climbed onto the caboose, instead of the engine, and 8908 South left Roxie, Mississippi at 9:00 A.M.

After stopping at Norwood, Louisiana for fifteen minutes, Extra 8908 South departed at 10:15 A.M. The radio on the engine went out shortly after leaving Norwood. The engine crew had a walkie-talkie handset with a range of one or two miles. The caboose radio was still in good working order. Conductor Smith tried to call No. 92 North at Gurley, Louisiana, which is located about one mile from where the collision occurred, but did not receive any response.

No. 92 North left Baton Rouge at 9:05 A.M. heading for Vicksburg. its crew was made up of Conductor P. H. Duck, Engineer J. R. Livingston, Fireman J. W. Lard, Flagman C. L. Tingle and Brakeman G. W. Gunckel. Their train had four engines and forty-seven cars. According to their train orders,



they were to go to Slaughter, Louisiana and wait on the mainline until Extra 8908 South arrived and cleared them.

No. 92 North arrived at Slaughter at 10:00 A.M. and set out 21 cars in the house track. The house track is a track adjacent to the main line where trains drop-off cars to be unloaded at the depot of transported elsewhere. The train order board was red for north bound trains, which meant that there were orders to be picked up by the conductor inside the depot. Conductor Duck and Flagman Tingle came into the depot after setting out the cars in the house track. Train No.92 North received two train orders, #109 and #110. Order #109 was a work extra order on the Port Gibson road switcher working from Vicksburg to Port Gibson. A work extra is a train that can work both directions of the track and therefore move back and forth along the track as much as needed without new orders. This order had No. 92 North waiting at Lorman, Mississippi till 3:00 P.M. Order #110 stated that Extra 8908 South meet No. 92 North at Gloster. Operator C. D. Robinson asked Engineer Livingston if their train would fit into the siding at Gloster, Mississippi. He said it would since they only had 26 cars left in their

## HEAD-ON COLLISION

train. Since extra 8908 South had track rights over No. 92 North from Cedars to Slaughter, No. 92 would have to take the siding at Gloster. Conductor Duck asked operator Robinson where the Extra 8908 South was located. Operator Robinson said it was at Roxie. No. 92 North left Slaughter, Louisiana at 10:15 A.M. with 26 cars. The crew was on the engine with the exception of Flagman Tingle, who was on the caboose. Tingle heard the engineer trying to talk to someone on the radio but there was too much static for either party to understand the other. This failure of communication happened just prior to the collision of the two trains. At 10:35 A.M. Extra 8908 met train No.92 North head-on, approximately 665 feet south of a sharp curve, one mile north of McManus, Louisiana.

Between Baton Rouge and Vicksburg the Illinois Central Railroad, at that time, had nine railroad depots. Each depot had an agent to handle the prescribed business. The agent copied train orders to move or restrict the movement of a train. In the middle sixties, the Illinois Central Railroad closed many stations and established a Customer Service Agent. The Customer Service Agent handled several stations instead of just one. He was furnished a van with a complete office. Instead of the customer coming to the station to handle business, the Customer Service Agent would go to their place of business. C. R. Pope was the C.S.A. for the depot stations at Harriston, Fayette, Roxie, Bude, and Meadville. On July 7, 1969, Pope's first stop was Harriston, Mississippi. He arrived at Harriston at 7:40 A.M. and found a train setting out cars in the north passing track approximately 350 yards north of the depot. He could not see the engine number, but assumed it was the Extra 8908 South train. After leaving Harriston at 8:00 A.M., he went to Fayette, Mississippi. After leaving Fayette, he arrived at Roxie at 9:17 A.M.

The Illinois Central Railroad had two operator jobs on the Vicksburg district, one at Slaughter and the other at Roxie. L. L. Ables was the operator at Roxie. July 7, 1969, was the first day operator Ables worked at Roxie. She had worked as a student for one and one half days, a week before. Operator Ables took notes of what her duties were. Arriving at Roxie at 8:10 A.M. she went to the Mississippi Central depot and checked all the tracks around it. The Mississippi Central depot is about one half mile from the Illinois Central Railroad depot. She arrived at the depot at 8:55 A.M. and tried to contact the dispatcher, but could not get in touch with him. At 9:05 A.M. she left walking southward on the Illinois Central Railroad mainline. She had to check two storage tracks, which were about a mile in length.

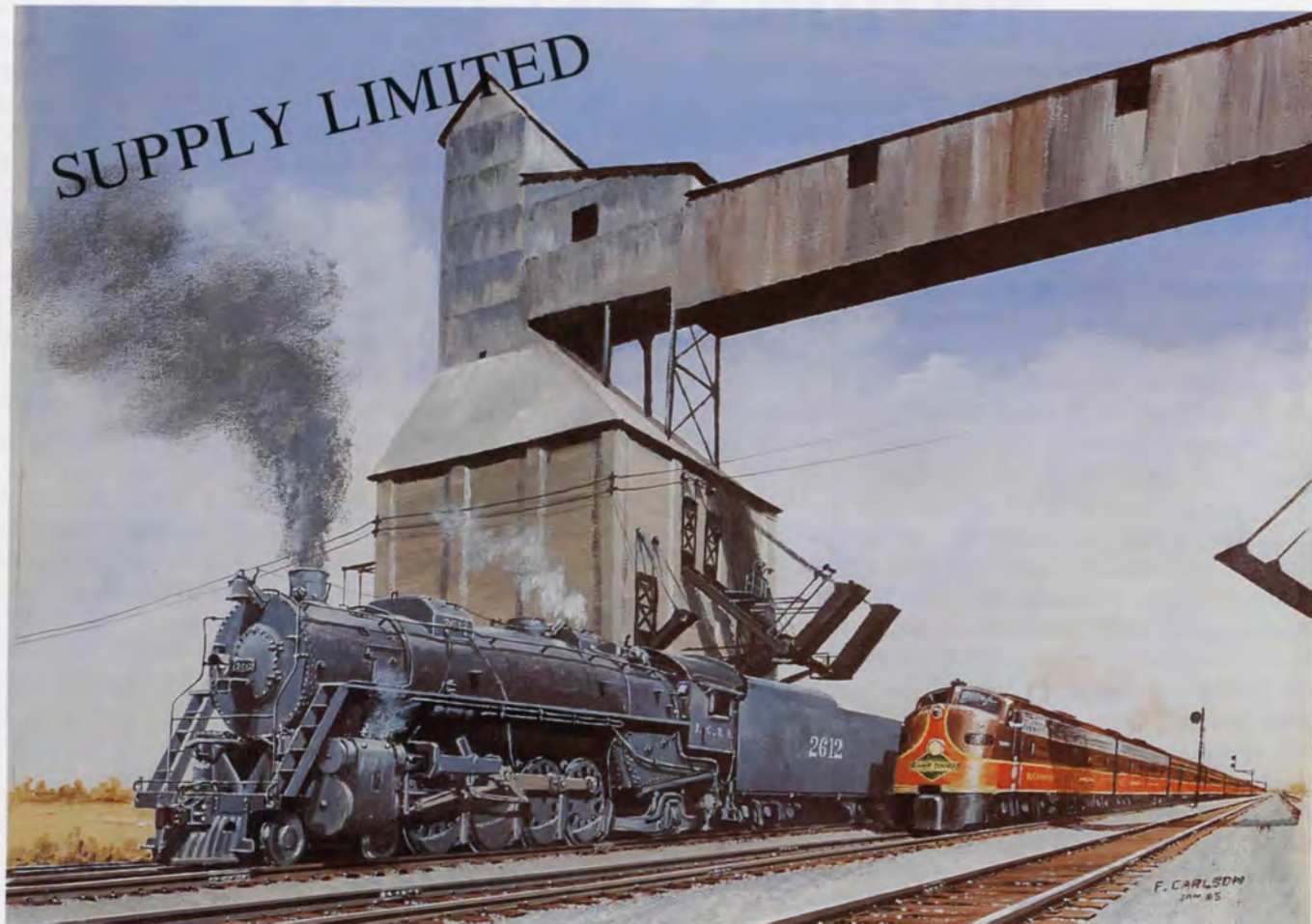
The IC track makes a sharp curve to the left starting about 300 feet south of the depot. While proceeding down the track and around the curve operator Ables saw a caboose on the main line at the south end of the Roxie siding. The train was leaving when she noticed it. She finished checking the tracks and arrived back at the depot at around 10:00 A.M. C.S.A. Pope was at the depot. He asked operator Ables if she had checked the stud mill tracks. She had not, so Pope told her to go and check them. A Mississippi Central crew went to work at Roxie at 10:00 A.M. and Pope wanted to get their switch list ready. Operator Ables returned to the depot around 10:20 A.M. C.S.A. Pope told her he had copied a train order for the Extra 8908 South and when they saw his headlight they would clear him up. Operator Ables told C.S.A. Pope that she had seen a caboose down at the south end and Pope told her that it was the Roxie switcher caboose. Pope assumed it was the Roxie switcher caboose because it was normal for that caboose to be at that location at that time of the day waiting for its crew to go to work.

The dispatcher, P. C. Calhoun, called Roxie a few minutes after 10:00 A.M. and asked the C.S.A. if he had seen anything of the Extra 8908 South. Pope said he had seen them at Harriston, and that they were out of Harriston, but had not yet arrived at Roxie. The dispatcher then put out an order #110, first to Roxie for the Extra South and then to Slaughter for No. 92 North. Order #110 stated that Extra 8908 South meet No. 92 North at Gloster. The dispatcher and Pope were both unaware that Extra 8908 South had already passed Gloster and was at Norwood, Louisiana stopped at a Red Flag, 43 1/2 Miles south of Roxie, Mississippi.

At 10:25 A.M. the dispatcher again called Roxie and spoke with Pope about some engine swapping at Harriston. During this conversation, for the first time, the dispatcher realized that Extra 8908 South may already have passed Roxie. He became afraid that No. 92 North and Extra 8908 South would hit head-on. Pope stayed on the dispatcher line trying to reach Slaughter when, shortly, he heard Slaughter's C.S.A. Perry reporting a collision.

In all accidents, people making mistakes and rule violations are the main causes. At the close of the investigation it was established that many rules from the Illinois Central Transportation Rule Book had been violated. Fate played a big role in this collision between the IC freight trains at McManus, Louisiana.

The results of the accident left four men dead, three disabled, one off from work for one and one-half years, and two with minor injuries.



## SOUTHBOUND AT GILMAN

BY Fred Carlson

The first in a series of limited edition prints depicting the trains of the Illinois Central Railroad, presented by the

### **Illinois Central Railroad Historical Society**

Illinois Central Mountain type # 2612 at the Gilman, Illinois coaling chute is being overtaken by a classic chocolate-and-orange streamliner on the Mainline of Mid-America.

Image size is 15" X 18" on 18" X 21" stock.  
\$15 postage paid, shipped in mailing tube.

**ICHS COMPANY STORE**  
P.O. Box 288  
Paxton, IL 60957

Special price to ICHS members is \$10.00.

**GREEN DIAMOND #34**



## TRAINS PASSING AT PAXTON

BY Fred Carlson

The second in a series of limited edition prints depicting the trains of the Illinois Central Railroad, presented by the

### Illinois Central Railroad Historical Society

An Illinois Central Streamlined Train passes under the Nickel Plate Road in Paxton, Illinois as NKP mike #587 leads a freight eastbound from Peoria on the old Lake Erie & Western main line at Mid-Century.

Image size is 15" X 18" on 18" X 21" stock.  
\$15 postage paid, shipped in mailing tube.

ICHS COMPANY STORE  
P.O. Box 288  
Paxton, IL 60957

Special price to ICHS members is \$10.00.

GREEN DIAMOND #34

# DOWN AT THE DEPOT

## PROGRESS REPORT

Work at the Paxton freighthouse has been proceeding at a good pace this spring, with a good deal of progress visible. Installation of the Air Conditioner Compressor unit has been completed and it has been hooked up to the high efficiency Carrier furnace installed last fall. This unit will provide for the heating and cooling of the front half of the building; which houses the Company store, Library/Archives room, Archives storage, the gift shop area and a new bathroom. Work on these rooms will continue through the summer in an effort to finish this part of the building this year (1992). Work on the building exterior will continue this summer to take advantage of the good weather for painting and exterior repairs. Remodeling work on the back half of the building is planned for 1993. The back of the building will house the society's IC museum and a workshop for the museum. We cannot speculate on a completion date for all of this work at this time.

The variables involved in this project are time and money. A small but dedicated group of volunteers have donated many hours to the work at the depot. More help will make the work go faster. If you ever have the urge to help at Paxton, call Chuck Werner and find out how and when you can help, or just come on down, or up, or over, on any 2nd or 4th Saturday of any month. We may be there on other Saturdays too, call first. A letter soliciting donations for the depot project was mailed out in April 1992 to all members. Response to our appeal for donations has been gratifying but we will have a continued need for extra funds over the next few years as capital improvements to the property are made. These expenses, such as the furnace, air conditioning, electrical wiring, bathroom improvements etc... require money to purchase the materials even if the labor is supplied by volunteers.

The following members have made donations to the depot/museum fund in response to the letter that was mailed out recently. Over \$1000 has been raised as of this writing in May of 1992. Thanks to all who have made a donation. If you would like to contribute; address your donation to: Depot fund P.O. Box 288 Paxton IL 60957. Checks should be made payable to ICHS.

Frank E. Ardrey Jr.	Birmingham AL
John W. Dodge	Waterloo IA
David W. Hayes	Hardinsburg KY
Walter L. Kevern	Dixon IL
Lance R. Lane	Fayetteville NC
James A. Ligon	Tuscaloosa AL
Pat Lyman	Cedar Falls IA
Donald A. MacGregor	Chicago Ridge IL

Kenneth Mailloux	Scottsdale AZ
Phillip D. Marvin	Flint MI
Hon. Curtis Mckee	San Diego CA
Robert E. McMillan	Peoria IL
Dennis L. Meeker	Mattoon IL
Jerry Megee	Riverdale IL
B.G. Miller	La Conner WA
Ronald E. Morris	Yorkville IL
Mark A. Nelson	Oregon WI
C.B. Newman	Valley Park MS
David A. Ohms	Galena IL
Royal V. Pinkston	Dresden TN
Gus J. Rapp	Palestine IL
C.W. Schildt	Staunton IL
Scott R. Williams	Reedsville PA
Charles R. Young	Homewood IL

## VOLUNTEERS

We would like to recognize and thank the following group of people who have donated their time to the Depot project in Paxton. This list is growing all the time as do the accomplishments of this dedicated group;

James Anderson	Paxton IL
Adam Bendele	Paxton IL
Jeff Birkey	Paxton IL
Joe Burgess	Paxton IL
Josh Burgess	Paxton IL
Marvin Christensen	Clifton IL
Lew Concklin	Oak Park IL
David Daisy	Springfield IL
Tonya Daisy	Springfield IL
Paul Eklund	South Bend IN
Dave Fraser Jr.	Jackson MS
Cris Goodrich	Paxton IL
Tom Grant	Richton Park IL
David Hayes	Hardinsburg KY
Jim Kubajak	Midlothian IL
James Kubajak	Midlothian IL
Jack Laude	Burr Ridge IL
Margaret Steiner	Champaign IL
John Manship	Paxton IL
Phil Marvin	Flint MI
Reggie Meese	Paxton IL
John Pitts	Chicago IL
Jon Roma	Champaign IL
Terry Shearer	Champaign IL
Norris Skonberg	Paxton IL
Paul Somers	Champaign IL
Dick Stairs	Champaign IL
Jason Swan	Paxton IL
Charles Werner	Paxton IL
Andy Werner	Paxton IL
Charles Werner II	Paxton IL
Mary Werner	Paxton IL
Jeannie Werner	Paxton IL
Albert Werner Jr.	Paxton IL
Dale Windhorst	Chicago Heights IL

My apologies to anyone whose name may have been omitted. Corrections will be included next time.

## IC PILE DRIVER SAVED!

Thanks to the fund raising efforts of member Dennis Slone, an IC steam powered pile driver has been saved from the scrappers torch. Dennis approached the ICHS Board of Directors last year with his plans to save what is in all probability the last remaining piece of Illinois Central steam powered equipment; an IC pile driver. Although the ICHS board decided it was not possible for the society to sponsor the fund raising effort, they did vote their support to the project. Dennis was provided with the ICHS membership list and publicity was given to his project in the society's publications. The pile driver, idler flat, and tender have been moved to Watson, Illinois, south of Effingham, where restoration work will be done with the hope of eventually returning the pile driver to operating condition. Many ICHS members contributed to the effort to save the pile driver. Congratulations are in order for all involved, especially for Dennis Slone. The IC pile driver shown in this photo from the Kalmbach negative collection is IC X29.



GREEN DIAMOND #34

# HOBBYSHOP DIRECTORY

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The following dealers carry the **GREEN DIAMOND** and other ICHS items. Please mention that you saw them listed in the **GREEN DIAMOND** when you visit their store.

**Lexington Model Shop**

211 New Circle Road N.E.  
Lexington KY 40505

**Hammers Hobbies**

1959 E. Pershing Road  
Decatur IL 62521

**The Right Track**

6521 W. 127th Street  
Palos Heights IL 60463

**Model Railroad & Hobby Shop**

3436 Park Ave.  
Memphis TN 38111

**The Right Track**

1015 W. Jackson Street  
Sullivan IL 61951-9231

**Des Plaines Hobbies**

1464 Lee Street  
Des Plaines IL 60018

**Hobby Corner**

1534 North First Ave.  
Laurel MS 39440

**The Owl's Roost**

Model Railroad Shop  
342 S. Washington Ave.  
Kankakee IL 60901

**End of Track Hobbies**

9706 Franklin Ave.  
Franklin Park IL 60131

**Pro Custom Hobbies**

721 Frederick Road  
Catonsville MD 21228

**Don's Hobby World**

18447 S. Halsted  
Glenwood IL 60425

**Hobby Hill Inc.**

10 Prairie Ave.  
Park Ridge IL 60068

**Box - Kar Hobbies**

109 3rd Ave. S.E.  
Cedar Rapids IA

**Park Lane Hobbies**

15415 Cottage Grove Ave.  
Dolton IL 60419-2798

**Al's Hobby Shop**

121 Addison  
Elmhurst IL 60126

**Les's Bicycle & Hobby Center**

900 La Porte Road  
Waterloo IA 50702

**Scale Models Ltd.**

Pacesetter Park Plaza  
1048 E. 162nd. St. (Rt.6)  
South Holland IL 60473

**Ron's Mundelien Hobbies**

431 N. Lake Street  
Mundelien IL 60060

**The Whistlepost**

2347 West Monroe  
Springfield IL 62704

**Chicagoland Hobby**

6017 Northwest Highway  
Chicago IL 60631

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**ICHS ANNUAL MEETING  
DECATUR TRAIN FAIR  
AUGUST 22 & 23 1992  
DECATUR CIVIC CENTER  
RAILRODIANA SHOW-BANQUET DINNER  
MODEL CONTEST-PATCH CONTEST  
SLIDE & MOVIE PRESENTATIONS**

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