



## **Office And Shops Were Among The First On The Northern Division** **By Richard Palmer**

The years 1869 and 1870 were among the busiest for the New York & Oswego Midland. One of the most impressive structures built by the Midland during that period was the three-story headquarters building at the northwest corner of East Bridge and Third streets in Oswego, NY. The three-story brick building had a Mansard roof and was 100 feet long. On the first floor were the gentlemen's waiting room, ladies room, baggage room and ticket and telegraph offices. A covered verandah, 17 feet wide, skirted the building on Third and Bridge streets.

Located on the second floor were offices of the company. It was divided by a hall six feet wide running the entire length of the building. On the east side of this hall were located the superintendent's, engineer's, general roadmaster's, general ticket and secretary's offices. Adjoining the President's office were the Treasurer's office, along with a fire and burglar proof vault. It was put into use in September, 1870. Contract price for building this structure was about \$34,000.

A short distance away down East Third Street work progressed on the original shops, 360 feet long and 80 feet wide. Adjoining was a 220-by-80-foot woodworking shop. The new roundhouse was 267 feet in diameter and contained 20 locomotive stalls. At that time the equipment on the road consisted of 22 locomotives, 12 coaches, nine baggage cars, three mail and smoking cars and 335 freight cars. Locomotive and car facilities were later moved to the eastern outskirts of Oswego.

The old headquarters building continued to be used jointly by the NYO&W and New York Central.

Passenger service ended on the NYO&W in 1931 and on the New York Central in 1951. Having no further use for it the station was sold to William W. Kessler, a local car dealer, in 1940, who remodeled it for his purposes. In 1949 he sold it to Loblaws supermarkets and it was demolished.

Jay Knox, a columnist for the *Oswego Palladium-Times*, wrote on March 26, 1946:

“The Wabash Flyer would lay over for three or four hours, while it was being shifted to the R.W. & O. tracks, and would leave over the Hojack the next morning around 4 o’clock and often later. The train was always greeted by large groups of people.

Those emigrants were a happy lot and many of them would be bound for states as far west as Idaho, Nevada and California. Most of them were Germans; and a majority of them were seeking homes in Detroit, Chicago and Minneapolis - and other cities.

They used to leave quite a little money with the eating house near the station. After a period of years the Wabash Flyer was re-routed and became almost forgotten as far as Oswegonians were concerned.

"Well do we recall the time when we stayed up all night in order to take the train at 4 o’clock, only to learn that it was three hours late. And probably that is where we got our reputation for being ‘night hawks.’ It then proceeded across the river to make a stop at the New York Central station” (on the west side of the Oswego river on West Utica street).



Previous page photo caption: Another view of the station along East Bridge Street. It served as the railroad’s headquarters until about 1880 when it was moved to New York City. Thereafter it served as the depot until passenger service was discontinued on December 15, 1931. (Oswego County Historical Society)

Photo above: Famed New York Central locomotive “999” while working on the “Hojack,” in front of the N.Y.O. & W. station in Oswego. (Oswego County Historical Society)