

The ONTARIO & WESTERN OBSERVER is published by the Ontario and Western Technical and Historical Society. It is distributed on a quarterly basis to dues paying members and to contributors of information and photos used herein. Address correspondence to the magazine at P.O. Box 405, Franklin Lakes, N.J. 07417. No part of the magazine should be reproduced without specific permission of the editor and contributor of information. Cover photo by Steve Maguires: Milt Pulis Collection - A heavy 400 on the Mayfield table.

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Editorial Comment ----- See It While It's There

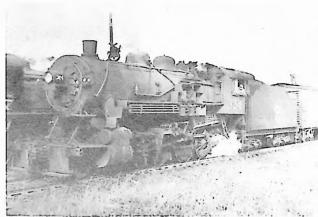
Those of you that make frequent trips along the O&W realize that we are involved in a race against time to record the physical remnants of the road. Each year finds changes, some large and some almost imperceptible, wrought by both man and nature. A look at this month's Mail Stop only too clearly shows this to be the case. Several sections of the road are in areas of residential and industrial development where new changes take place almost daily.

There is much work to be done with camera, tape measure and sketch pad. Many plans for structures are now in private collections, but no

one knows the full list. Recently a few members were discussing the High View Station and its unique design. No one knew if anyone had the plans for it, so an upcoming weekend will find them sketching, measuring and photographing its details. Someday, perhaps, we might be able to establish a central listing of all such plans and information. This would be open to all members for their own research. No one person can do it all and so one of the purposes of the Society becomes quite clear. Let's have as many members as possible pitch in on this task. A more formal program can be discussed at the May meeting.



John P. Scharle collection This trim 4-4-0 was built by Cooke for the 0&W and served on that road until 1935. She was then shopped and re-lettered at Norwich and sold to the Middletown and Unionville.



Harold K. Vollrath collection A versatile W does yard work at Middletown. Road, yard, local and helper service might all be in a day's work for a W class.



Herb Thieme Looking east at Cadosia in 1947. The coaling tower's days are numbered, but it still sees use as evidenced by the loaded hopper. Note lower quadrant semaphore distant signal for single track at Hawk Mountain Tunnel.

Owen W's photos



Roger Cook Sacramento Northern paid \$135,000 for the three 500 series F-3 units. The 801-D was leased to parent company, WP. The SN spent an additional \$2,290 for modifications.



William Wilcox Sidney was home terminal for "mighty midget" 103. The other four were usually found at Fulton and Oneida.

What OB, LB, and SU were all

about by FRED R. BECK and ROBERT MOHOWSKI

At the time of its conception, the New York and Oswego Midland was viewed as being the great avenue of commerce between the port of New York and the eastern end of the Great Lakes. The intervening distance was a great farming and dairy region that would provide the railroad with carloads of agricultural products beyond counting -- or so the promoters said. They were right to a degree. The railroad did provide farmers with a more accessible route to the market areas and the management, realizing a good thing, did much to promote and this type of traffic. Fruit and livestock specials carried the wealth of farms to populated regions. Although freight would never reach the tonnage figures of New York Central or Erie, it did lay the groundwork of what was to become known as symbol or time freight service.

During the post Civil War period, several railroads were being built and others were being planned to reach into the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania. The recent conflict and its assoindustrial growth had pointed to coal as the fuel of the future. These railroads realized the profit potential it offered and made their moves. No doubt the Oswego Midland at various times cast longing eyes toward the Lackawanna Valley of Pennsylvania. Time proved this longing to be in vain for the Midland itself. For its successor, however, it was another story.

After bankruptcy, receivership,

and finally, reorganization, the New York Ontario and Western came into being. The new company. with the aid of European capital, was able to achieve success in its attempt to reach the coal area. How it did so is a story in itself. If the railroad failed in its original Buffalo trunk line connections, then it would achieve its place in the sun as a coal hauler of the first magnitude. As soon as the Scranton Division was finished, the black diamonds began to move northward in trainloads. Coal was truly "king" for the NYO&W until the 1930s. It moved in ever increasing amounts until the peak year of 1932 when it amounted to over five and one-half million tons and accounted for 80% of the revenue. Then the bottom fell out. Oil and gas began to replace coal as a major source of heat and power. Costs for labor and material and certainly the depression were also factors that brought down the anthracite tonnage figures very sharply. The O&W had to find a replacement for coal.

As a result of the 1937 bankruptcy and reorganization proceding,
Frederic E. Lyford was appointed
trustee of the company. Realizing that the days when coal was
the greatest source of revenue
were gone and that it would be
hopeless to try to revive this
sort of traffic, he directed all
efforts of the company to the
building up of bridge tonnage.
How well the O&W was situated to
handle this traffic is debateable, but it certainly was not
hopeless. The line connected
with major roads at three impor-



Extra 821 west, her tonnage trailing off in the distance, has cars to go into symbol freights at Middletown. Looks like she'll get out of Maybrook ahead of the L&HR job to the right.



A symbol freight out of Maybrook winds it up passing through Crystal Run. The noteable 601 heads the four unit FT combo.

tant gateways. These were: the Scranton area, Utica, and Maybrook. Traffic from the west routed via the Lehigh Valley and the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western to New York Central or New England points could easily be routed via the NYO&W.

Lyford had spent several years with the Lehigh Valley and knew both the scheduling and setting up of its symbol freight service. No doubt he also had a knowledge this type of service on the Lehigh Valley's competitors (in-cluding the DL&W) and connections. As a former executive of the Baldwin Locomotive Company, he had an overview of all railroad operations. A successful bridge line must have close cooperation and teamwork between all departments. The traffic department must have aggressive salesmen to solicit the cars. Offices must be maintained in major cities across the country and even abroad. Motive power must be maintained in top condition so that schedules and connections can be met. Finally, the operating men must make the run from one connection to the other in the best possible time. It is an operation in which past performance determines future carloads.

Competition is stiff and frequently missed connections are not acceptable. This would mean quite a change in philosophy for the road that had been handling a commodity that required very little in the way of special handling. Coal seldom had to make connections either. Most users had stockpiles that would carry them through periods of bad weather, strikes, and rail tie-ups.

The O&W was in a position to handle New England freight although its route from Scranton to Maycertainly not brook was straight line. This route was a little less than 140 miles in length. Considering the fact that the total system mileage was in excess of 550 miles, it is evalent that the average bridge haul was small compared to system mileage. Freight arriving Scranton the south and from billed to New York Central destinations could utilize the Scranton Division to Cadosia, the mainline north to Randellsville, and then the Utica branch to Utica. This was a 170 mile run. Some quick arithmetic shows that out of a total of some 550 miles of line, only 260 miles were used for the heaviest of the bridge traffic. Whether or not one-half



J. A. Kilker, J. Kilker and Fred Beck were the OB-2, BO-1 crew in 1942. They prepared their own meals on board their regular caboose, the 8351.

of the system mileage could or should support the lightly trafficked other half is a good question. It is true that a through freight did cover the entire mainline, but it could not be considered a true time freight since it did much local switching.

The O&W was not a newcomer to the fast freight business. As far back as 1890 and possibly earlier, the road had established the Ontario Central Despatch. This fast freight line existed somewhere up to the time of the USRA takeover in 1917. The LB and OB symbols dated back to 1925. At that date, shop records indicate that several cabooses were given high speed passenger trucks and running gear for service on these trains.

A look at the Schedule for Symbol Freight Trains shows that two trains handled the Scranton to Maybrook service: one went from Scranton to Utica, and one worked

the main line from Weehawken to Oswego. BL-1, BO-1, OB-2 and LB-4 were the most important freights on the railroad. They did both pick up and set out work at Coxton Yard and Cayuga Jct. Westbound, the O&W ran on its own track to Sibley Jct. where the engine would run around its train and push it back onto what was called the tail track of the L7. Then it went onto the Austin Branch of the LV over which the O&W had trackage rights and on into Coxton Yard at Pittston. The O&W crews worked right through to Coxton and this is where they tied up.

Leaving Coxton, the O&W trains would be pulled by LV yard engines to Pittston Jct. where they would enter the tracks of the DL&W Bloomsburg Branch. The O&W men, qualified to run on this portion of the Lackawanna, would bring the trains through Duryea, Old Forge, Taylor and Hampton Yards, and then finally get on to home rails at Cayuga Jct. It was here that cars were interchanged with the DL&W. Continuing east (geography north), the main line of the Scranton Division would be entered at Dickson, no stop at Jermyn Transfer, and then the train would arrive at Mayfield Yard.

Yard engines would work the train to get refrigerator cars on the head end so that upon arrival at Maybrook they could be spotted at the ice platforms for re-icing. CNJ, D&H, and Frie cars might be added to fill out the tonnage. Pusher engines in the days of steam would couple onto the rear and then be off for the climb to Poyntelle. Upon reaching this high point, the pusher would be cut off, wye and then head back to Mayfield. The rest of the run to Cadosia was mostly downhill. At this division point, cars to or from the Northern Division (SYMBOL, cont. on pg. 14)

To Auburn via THE MIDLAND

Part II "WESTWARD HO"

by RICHARD F. PALMER

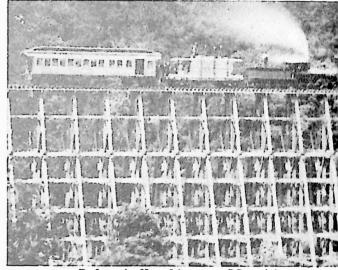
Construction on the Auburn branch continued through the autumn of 1871. By mid-November, the rails had reached Truxton, and work crews would soon be in sight of Cortland. On the afternoon of January 2, 1872, the engine "De-Ruyter," No. 15, coming into Norwich from the west with the afternoon train, collided with the switch engine "Clinton," No. 21, at the junction with the mainline. No one on the train was injured, although there was some lively jumping on the part of the employees.

A seat in the coach, occupied by a passenger, was reversed, causing the astonished traveler to turn a somersault, and "go for" the wood box, head first. Picking himself up, he came to the conclusion that the train had stopped at Norwich 15 minutes for refreshments.

As the rails neared Cortland, the Midland management went into negotiations with the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad for trackage rights from Cortland to Freeville. From there, construction also was well underway on the "Western Extension" northward to Auburn. A contract was consumated on March 22, 1872. In turn, the Midland granted trackage rights to the UI&E over its road from Cortland to DeRuyter for the transportation of coal.

Regular mixed trains commenced running from DeRuyter to Cortland on June 5, 1872. Now heavy concentration was centered on the "Western Extension." On September 6th, 500 people congregated

at Osmun's to witness the union of the Midland with a previously built embankment called the "Murdock Line." "About 4 PM, Superintendent Murphy summoned his forces and commenced placing ties and rails to finish the connection. The systematic manner in which the work progressed proved him a master of his profession,"



Robert Harding collection Midland Trestle at North Lansing, called "Beardsley's"

wrote a reporter. "In about one hour he had completed his work of laying 30 rods of track necessary to intersect the old line. Giving the signal, the engineer of No. 16 moved his engine forward, and when firmly upon the Murdock Line, blew the whistle." He also commented that "the work goes bravely on" and that "it looks somewhat strange to see a locomotive steaming along through Lansing, which has held out so long against railroad innovations."

(cont. on pg. 10)



The MOUNTAINEER at Winterton

'ROUND THE FAR TURN AND INTO THE HOME STRETCH - It's a tight schedule and many stops for THE MOUNTAINEER LIMITED from Roscoe to Summitville, followed by a stiff climb to Mamakating and restricted speed through the High View Tunnel. That's all behind train #4's observation platform now. Engine 405, its proud maroon and orange livery glistening, tenses to spring as it takes Winterton curve, eager for the tangent up Lockwood's grade and the fast Fair Oaks straightaway to Middletown Yard. If that's "Schoony" Schoonmaker at the throttle, those passengers back yonder will have some extra minutes to enjoy good coffee with outstanding pasteries at the big Wickham Avenue Station restaurant. It's July 1, 1939, in a summer when Southern Division throttle artists made an impressive on time performance record for Trains 3 and 4 and performed daily outrages against O&W and West Shore speed limits. JWF



(cont. from pg. 7)
At this point, it may be appropriate to mention the way in which the railroad was financed-through bonding. Earlier, several acts had been passed by the State Legislature granting towns and municipalities the right to bond in aid of railroads.

This is where Little john was at his best. He could talk anyone into buying anything if he set his mind to it. Because of this, they many times over extended themselves and were "left holding the bag," so to speak, after the railroad had been long abandoned.

Some towns managed to repudiate their bonds through long, drawn out legal procedures. Others weren't so lucky and wound up paying them off 35 to 40 years after the rails had been torn up on the Auburn branch. The following is what the several towns invested in this ill-fated branch line:

Plymouth -- \$100,000 Otselic -- \$83,700 DeRuyter (town) -- \$103,000 DeRuyter (village) -- \$20,000 Cuyler -- \$64,000 Truxton -- \$124,000 Genoa -- \$75,000 Venice -- \$75,000 Scipio -- \$100,000

Synonymous with the construction of the Auburn branch was an outcrop of similar schemes on the part of the Littlejohn faction and, usually, some local promoter. All of these came to naught, however, and never got beyond the paper stage. These included:

Auburn & Deposit Air Line, Incorporated Aug. 30, 1871; Deposit to Homer, 60 miles, thence northwesterly to Auburn, 30 miles. Dissolved 1875.

Cayuga Midland, Incorporated Feb. 10, 1871; Auburn to Itha-

ca, with branch to Dryden and Freeville, 46 miles. Dissolved 1873.

Auburn & Homer Midland, Incorporated Oct. 24, 1871; Auburn to Cortland, 33 miles. Dissolved 1876.

New York Western Midland, Incorporated Jan. 2, 1872; Hancock to Lake Ontario Shore RR. Dissolved 1876. Was to utilize the five-mile Skaneateles RR, but scheme was defeated in bonding.

On September 17, 1872, there was another celebration in the town of Lansing "upon the event of the arrival of the cars on the Midland at the great trestle bridge over the Gulf." This structure, called the Beardsley Trestle, was 480 feet long and 74 feet high; a typical Midland contrivance.

October 30th saw another grand celebration at Venice Center with the arrival of the locomotive "Plymouth" and its contingent of cars. The local intelligentsia celebrated the event in a mammoth tent. The "railhead" at Scipio Summit (later called Merrifield) was reached on December 16th. And here would be the end of tracks as Auburn would have no part of such a scheme. Eventually, the line would be extended into Auburn, but under a different management.

On January 1, 1873, a newspaper correspondent boasted that the Midland "is now running regular passenger and freight trains from the City of Utica to the village of Scipio Centre, a distance of 135 miles." From there, stage-coach service was provided into Auburn, some 15 miles to the north. "The people of the towns of Venice, Scipio and Genoa are rejoicing in the fact that they can go to New York without change of cars and save 80 miles of travel." (cont. on pg. 13)

O&W modeler's notes

The Symbol Freight

If you have or plan to model any section of the O&W mainline east of Randellsville, you might consider the operational possibilities of symbol freights. The whole train might come off one of your "connections" or it might be brought in on transfer cuts from other lines. In either case you might make up a schedule that would call for some challenging running. Many roads would preblock the trains into groups of cars that could quickly be switched out or serviced at some major point. The O&W put refrigerator cars on the head end for servicing at Maybrook. There are various ways to add additional interest at some major points. Consider this: you are running a model OB-2 out of Mayfield. There are three loads that missed US-2 that morning and are urgently needed at some point on the Northern Division. Middletown might order the three cars to be put on the hind end of OB-2 just in front of the caboose. As soon as the train gets into Cadosia, a waiting switcher oulls the caboose and the three hind cars off, drops the cars on another track and puts the caboose back on. After a quick air test, OB-2 is eastbound once more.

The consists of most important symbol trains included mostly box and refrigerator cars. Coal loads, high and wides, and cars being moved under slow order would not be found in the consists. If you are looking for prototype realism, do a little digging to find out just who owned the cars that travelled the O&W route. We have just purchased several of Trains Miniature wooden Swift reefers. These as well as URTX, ARMOUR, and various others were quite common.

Any connecting road such as NYNH&H or NYC would have large numbers of their cars on the O&W. Steam motive power on these trains were the class Y-2 with class Y, X or W providing helper service. US-2 and SU-1 very frequently had several class W 2-8-0s on the head end due to the lighter Northern Division roadbed and the confines of Northfield Tunnel. In diesel days, FT and F-3 combos headed up the trains.



Roger Cook

For those of you who might be converting the Athearn F-7 to an F-3, we have shown here the side air intake openings of 503, now WP 801D. The Western Pacific has removed the screening that extended the distance between the two portholes. This screening was similar to the type seen along the top. Note that fuel tank skirts have been removed.

Trains Inc. has been importing the caboose truck that was part of their CB&Q wood caboose in brass. This truck bore a close resemblance to the passenger type truck that was applied to some O&W road cabooses. Check at hobby shops or write to Trains Inc. in Chicago.

drawn by ED CRIST

F-3B

3/16" Scale

KEY TO COLOR NUMBERS

1 Gray 2 Yellow

3 Red

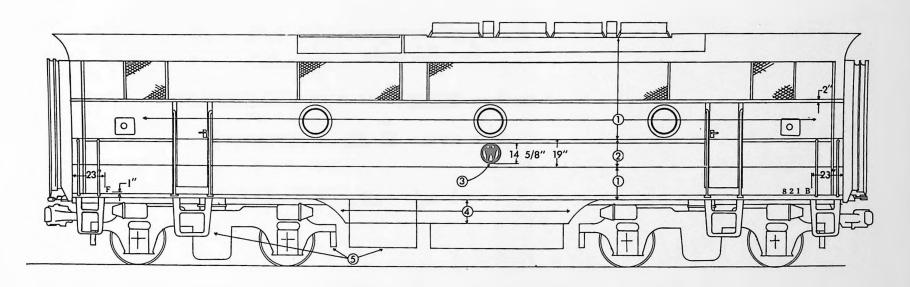
4 Black (gloss black)

5 Black

Note:

The F-3 type shown in these drawings is not the late model F-3 that the O&W had. It does serve the purpose though, of illustrating the paint scheme.

A request for technical data sheet #2 and an SSAE will bring you the exact color mixing information as formulated by Flo-quil. Send the request to the Society at the regular address.



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(cont. from pg. 10)

In glittering prose, the newspaper "Ithacan" termed the Auburn branch a "genuine first class road, right lively these days." However, the other end wasn't faring as well, since the line had been snowed in for several weeks. The DeRuyter New Era commented that some 20,000 cords of wood were piled along the route from there to Otselic, awaiting trans-shipment.

On August 19, 1873, the Midland advertised two trains a day on the Auburn branch; one express and one mixed. Running time for the express train between Norwich and Scipio was four hours; the mixed, six hours and 20 minutes. Trains were met at Sicpio by John Snyder's stage.

But financial troubles soon set in and the Midland management apparently thinking an express train on the Auburn branch was superfluous, removed it in November. Service was cut to one train a week from Cortland to Scipio going west Wednesday and returning Thursday.

This caused quite a furor among the population and the railroad was taken to task by the local press. The Cortland Standard said "it is a shameless violation of good faith and a brazen disregard of the rights of the towns." It called this an "insidious attack of Oswego to destroy and abandon this end of the road." But nothing could be done. The Midland was in the midst of receivership and every penny counted.

Eventually, an agreement was worked out with the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad to operate the Freeville-to-Scipio segment. On October 6, 1874, after nearly a year of erratic service, the Cortland Standard reported that the UI&E "has made arrangements

to run the Midland from Cortland to DeRuyter, giving the public two trains daily each way."

The doldrums the Midland found itself in are well described by the Auburn News, which said "..no plumes of steam floating on the frosty air; no more daily mails; no nothing but the silent track and the deserted depots."

Finally, in April, 1875, the UI&E commenced running daily trains between Ithaca and Norwich. These were the "Morning" and "Evening" expresses. But the Midland became more and more financially hard pressed. Soon, the local constables were out attaching coaches and property because the railroad had failed to pay taxes. An interesting incident concerning the Midland's troubles is found in the Chenango Union of Feb. 5, 1875:

"Conductor Baldwin, of the DeRuyter Branch, has frequently
since the snow fell, left his
passenger coach at the Otselic
Station on his way out, rather
than draw it through the Crumb
Hill drifts--the few passengers
finishing their journey in the
postal and express car. One fine
morning last week, Jud came down
as usual, and was about to couple
to the coach when a gentleman informed him that he was the collector of the town, and that he
had levied on the coach for unpaid taxes. The coach is still
there, but Jud makes his passengers comfortable in the express
car, and the trains move as usu-



Richard Palmer Collection

al. Marshal Tucker took the afternoon train for Otselic and De-Ruyter on Tuesday. DeRuyter has levied four boxcars; and Plymouth levied upon a box and platform car, but afterwards released them."

Finally, Receiver Abrom S. Hewitt found it necessary to suspend operations on the entire Midland system, as of midnight, Saturday, Feb. 27, 1875, "in consequence of the levies being made by tax collectors upon the property of its shippers, as well as the unwarranted seizure of so large of an amount of its rolling stock and the consequent cessation of shipments and travel..." Nothing moved on the Auburn branch until April 6th, when the "scream of the locomotive whistle" came as "music to the ears of residents along the line who have been without railroad service several weeks." As stated earlier, the Auburn branch was now being operated by the UI&E.

About a month later, the UI&E made an offer to purchase the branch. The president of the road proposed, however, to take up rails from DeRuyter to the trestle at Otselic and use the rails to connect with the Syracuse & Chenango Valley Railroad at Georgetown. He, naturally, wanted to abandon the trestles.

The scheme met with general disfavor and never materialized, although the UI&E continued to operate the Auburn branch until May 1, 1876. (Final part in next issue)

(SYMBOL, cont. from pg. 6) would be switched in or out of the train. There would be no crew change here since Scranton and Southern Division crews ran inter-divisional miles in symbol freight service.

There were two hard pulls between

Cadosia and Middletown and push. ers might be necessary at both points. The first was the climb from Livingston Manor, where an engine and crew were kept to assist eastbound trains, to Young's Gap. (The second place where a boost might be necessary would be out of Summitville. Frequently the pusher might be an engine breaking in after a heavy shopping at Middletown. The top of the grade east of here was High View Tun-nel. The rest of the run to Middletown and Maybrook was relatively easy going. Check the schedule carefully to note places where extra time is shown for switching, coupling on helpers. air tests, etc.

It is interesting to note that the O&W had adopted inter-divisional runs at a time before most other roads. The mileage arrangement, based upon 95 miles on the Southern Division and 61 miles on the Scranton Division. gave roughly a two to one ratio in favor of the Southern Division. This meant that two Southern Division crews and one Scranton crew would work the trains for the most part of each year until enough extra mileage accrued for a two to one ratio in favor of the Scranton men. This would last until such extra miles were run out or equalled.

The lengths of these trains varied from approximately 50 to 90 cars and a great variety of commodities were carried. They were often referred to as "beefers" but other perishables such as fruits and vegetables were marked on waybills. Machinery, petroleum products, building supplies and chemicals also provided carloads.

Quoted below is what the traffic department had to say in a 1940 period booklet about its fast freight expeditors:

"The Y-2 class Mountain type

locomotives handle the fast freights between Mayfield Yard (Scranton) and the New Haven Railroad connection at Maybrook. This is a distance of 135 miles and the schedule for this run is 5 hours and 15 minutes, or an average speed of 25 3/4 miles per hour. Large locomotives of the Santa Fe type are used as pushers on some of the heavy grades in order to maintain this fast schedule."

Remember that 25 3/4 miles per hour wasn't considered bad time 30 years ago.

Sometime around 1942 or later, there was a change in symbols and some new ones began to show up. BC-1 and 3, and NE-2, 4 and 6 were in Mayfield-Maybrook service. NW-10 and WN-9 were the remnant of the milk trains 9 and 10. They worked the mainline from Weehawken to Norwich. NO-1 and ON-2 handled the far end of the road, working from Norwich to Oswego. US-2 and SU-1 carried the same symbol from the 1930s right up to 1957. The AW and WA probably became NW and WN.

Mail Stop

The Kingston Urban Renewal Agency has torn down the O&W freight house in Kingston. The passenger sta. still stands, I presume, although the company which owned it has recently moved to new quarters, so it maybe a candidate for destruction.

Stephen Hanson Saugerties, N.Y.

Understand a party in Buffalo, N.Y. originally bought the "WAR-WICK" for a private car but the I.C.C. would not let him use it in passenger service account being of wooden construction.

C. B. Conrow Sidney, N.Y.

The state plans to realign Rt. 209 from Spring Glen to Hurley. One of the alternatives is to bring it over the O&W right-of-way for almost this entire length. If this happens, and it seems that it will, what's left of the Kingston Branch will be eradicated from the current scene. Shutterbugs; please note!

Gene Dauner Port Ewen, N.Y.

Transfer Run

WANTED: Information on the lens colors of marker lamps used for: freight caboose, passenger trains and locomotives of the NYO&W. Information must be verifiable from rule books, maintenance instructions, etc. All letters answered. Glenn L. Van Winkle, P.O. Box 7121, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49510

WANTED: Photos, black and white or color, of O&W steam, diesels, equipment, stations and property. Also any railroadiana. Stephen Wersing, 1411 N.E. 155th Terrace, North Miami Beach, Fla. 33162

FOR SALE: NYO&W steam, diesels, etc. Photos are $3\frac{1}{2}$ by 5. SAE for list and details. W.S. Wilcox, 48 Madison St., Hamilton, N.Y. 13346

WANTED: Information on Adams Express & Ontario-Central Despatch in relation to the O&W. Kenneth Hojnacki, Box 180, Funnelle Hall, SUCO, Oswego, N.Y. 13126

WANTED: Information, including color scheme of Southern Division milk station. Wayne Daniels, P.O. Box 405, Franklin Lks., N.J. 07417

