



# OBSERVER

December 1970



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. Dues for the Society are \$4.00 yearly.

ONTARIO & WESTERN OBSERVER

December 1970

Volume 2, No. 4

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**On The Cover**

Not too many years ago it was quite an event when a railroader made his last run before taking his pension. Here was a man who knew well the old days and just what a rough job railroading really was. Heaven only knew the number of tons of coal he had fed into scores of different fireboxes, the number of order boards that he squinted to find on stormy winter nights and the hours he had made up or lost while holding down the right hand seat. All this is now behind engineer Chester VanDemark (standing, right) as he stands beside his flag bedecked locomotive on this notable occasion. The train is number 1 and the date is September 29, 1937. Fellow trainmen A. Martin, fireman and C. Colloton, conductor, sit on the footboard. Photo from the Marv Cohen collection.

**EDITORIAL COMMENT ----- TO THE MOUNTAINS BY RAIL**

It is doubtful if any one individual will ever be able to fully understand and tell the entire O&W story. It is so multifarious and complex that we can only examine the individual phases of it and marvel at its history. Manville Wakefield has examined one of these phases in depth and presents to us his findings.

Many of us have read or otherwise knew of the Florida East Coast and its association with the development of that state as a resort. So, too, many knew of the C&O and its associated resorts in the Virginias. Few realized that again the O&W was a pioneer; this time in the development of a resort region. Given three major ingredients: a large city, a beautiful and inviting mountain region, and a rail line linking the two, it seemed to take but a short



Manville B. Wakefield

time for the inevitable to occur. The beginning of the resort industry in the pre-Oswego Midland period is the preface and the course of events unwinds from that point. (Comparison "then and now" photos help the week end rail fan to locate specific locations of interest.)

The arrangement of towns into chapters in a timetable manner is excellent and presents a smooth flowing format. Aerial views and maps are well done and make for a more complete understanding of the text. A generous number of photos from such men as John Ahrens, Jim Shaughnessy, Ed Weber and numerous archive collections are included. Photo reproduction is very good. For the modeler, the photos contain a wealth of detail that could be incorporated into a particular piece of rolling stock, building or landscape detail. We were very pleased to find in one picture the roof detail that was missing in one of our milk reefer plans. Accounts by veteran O&W men such as Oscar Pennett of Hancock add much authenticity to the book. Their years of first hand contact and observation cannot be substituted. There is much local history of the various communities along the line. Indeed one is amazed at the number of huge conflagrations that figure in that history. It seems that every town of some size between Bloomsburg and Liberty was at one time leveled by a blaze. Aid in the form of men and equipment was often rushed into such stricken towns via the O&W.

To The Mountains By Rail is a most welcome and necessary addition to that all too small collection of written data comprising the O&W library. The greater volume of the material will be new to most of us as will most of the photos. A few small technical errors exist, but they are more than made up for by the great amount of factual data. We congratulate fellow member Manville B. Wakefield on his excellent work and are proud of his achievement.

**O&W RAILROADER'S DAY**

**NORWICH, N.Y.**

April 25, 1971

Sponsored by the Chenango County Historical Society, Rexford St. Norwich, N.Y. There is no charge and all are welcome. Further details are in the addenda sheet with this issue.



The location is Summitville and the 453 is hard at work as she shoves mightily against the hind end of LB-4. 458 on the head end is already well

George Votava into the grade in this June 1938 scene. The steam on the tender is from the exhaust steam injector.



O&WTHS

Hopper car 919 was one of several battered veterans that were recently scrapped at Orangeburgh, N.Y. She ended her O&W days in work train and on-line service.

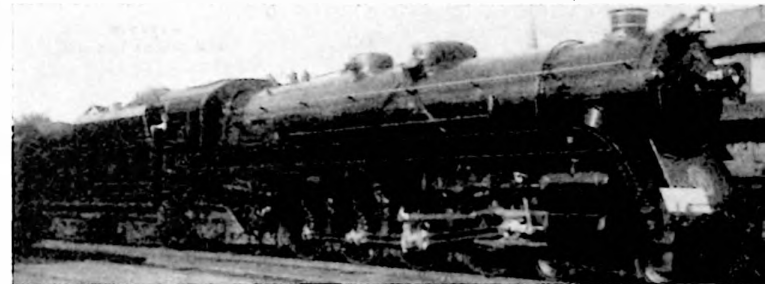


Marv Cohen

F-3 501 meets a Maybrook bound train at the Middletown station sometime in the early fifties. Wickham Ave. is in the background.



Bill Wilcox photo: Roger Hartshorn collection Somewhere in the vicinity of Hamilton, N.Y. the 35 handles the local freight. These light I-1 class engines were well suited to Northern Division tasks. They were originally built as 2-6-0's by Cooke in 1903 and 1904. Several of them were rebuilt into 4-6-0's.



D. Diver photo: Marv Cohen collection Polished and glistening, the pride of the O&W stands on display at the Middletown Station in a legendary Diver photograph.



**Owen W's  
photos**

# THE O&W LOOK

Jack W. Farrell

"The O&W Look" - - it took many forms. Buildings, rolling stock and locomotives: at one with good American railroad practice in the road's years of health, yet always distinctive, from the early Oswego Midland days to the very end.

Nowhere did this hold truer than in the motive power department. The Ontario enjoyed the good fortune of lengthy official "dynasties" that gave a man time to fulfill his concepts and to make improvements based on extended experience. Superintendent of Motive Power George Washington West's influence on O&W power, in both appearance and performance, stayed evident to the end of steam in the late 40's, for though he passed away at the end of 1908, Burton P. Flory, his successor, recognized good prior qualities for their worth and continued O&W power development along the same basic course. The West engines spanned the 1890-1908 period. The Flory era opened with a re-order for West-initiated switchers, constituting the later portion of the L-class 0-6-0 Camelbacks. Flory's own power, then, embraced everything from the 301-326 Long John's (Class W) of 1910-11 to the Y2 Mountains, Engines 451-460, delivered in 1929.

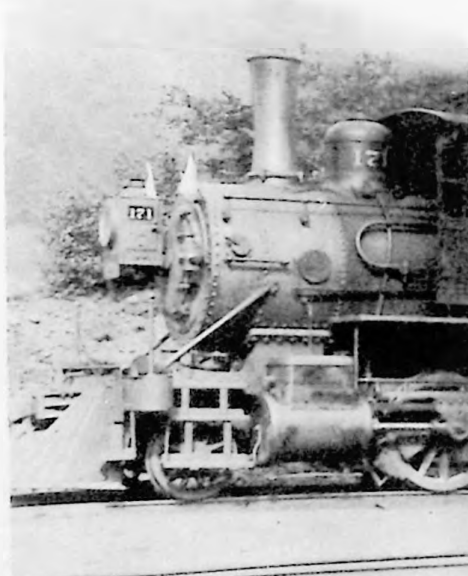
In fact, those last engines were a bit off the pattern, being twins to the New York Central L2c class. They were produced concurrently for manufacturing economy, although representing substantially what the O&W felt necessary and suitable. In many minor ways, they sharply differed from "standard O&W practice." The preceding Y-class, though a radical change in size and shape from any predecessors, still maintained long-standing road traditions.

It's little things in the main that spell the O&W look. Take headlights, for example. The 301-326 and 225-228 were delivered in 1910-11 with their lamps mounted on brackets fastened at the center of the smokebox door, thus placing the lamps themselves a bit above center. For all of the heavier power and most of the older engines this became O&W standard, holding over when electric headlights were introduced. The Y-class were delivered new with electric headlights so placed. Only the Y2 class had a mounting

with the light rather than the bracket centered. Even head-on, therefore, this one element alone could suggest "O&W" to the viewer. Except for the initial experimental equipment, the electric lights themselves were all in one or another of the "over-sized-tin-can" styles, never visored, and always with illuminated engine numbers on the light-body sides. Pre-electric headlights carried the engine number in the front glass as well.

Down to the pilot and we find either a boiler-tube cowcatcher or footboards in modern times. Very standard, from the 1890's to the end of steam, was the model railroader's nightmare; side steps over the pony truck lead wheel, both right and left -- try scaling THAT for HO snap-track fun-and-games!!! With the exception of the E's, road engines had either side ladders or literal flights of bent-steel steps from pilot to running board, the latter a particularly notable feature on the heavier Camelbacks.

The smoke box door merits note on O&W steam power. Before the Y2 class, it was unthinkable for an O&W engine to have more than eight lugs holding the door closed. This created a neat, almost European accent. Its acceptance on the Y2 class was clearly a grudging necessity,

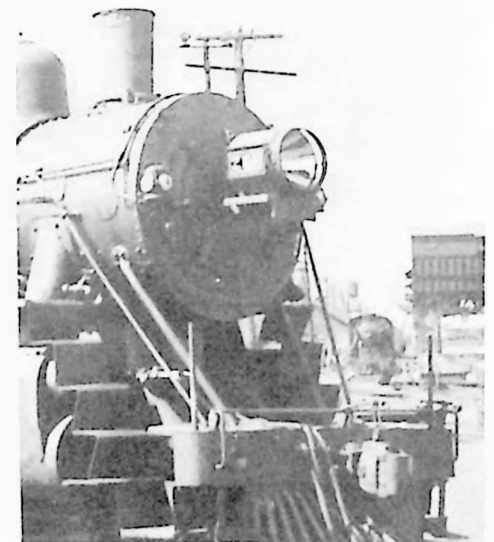


Above center mounting of headlights began in pre-electric days as 171 bears evidence of.

for not until the World War II era did any other power stray from this standard. Mr. Flory may have retired in 1937, but successor R. G. McAndrew, the former Mechanical Engineer at Middletown, was an O&W man of long standing, and only after he left the road in 1941 did a new Supt. of M.P., that "outsider" Otto C. Gruenberg, see fit to start cluttering the faces of a couple light 400's. The ghosts of assorted Minshulls, Daleys, Pohlman's and West's must undoubtedly have disturbed his slumbers for many a moon thereafter.

Boiler front purity of line benefited as well from another uniquely O&W practice. While other roads were going to the Elesco hot water bottle topside or the pumps and bumps characterizing Worthington units, Ontario practice for heavier power favored an "open" type feed water heater. Elesco exhaust steam injectors served not only the light and heavy Mountains, but the X-class Bull Mooses as well. This plumbing can be readily spotted in the trailer truck vicinity on all of these engines.

Simpler feed water plumbing on the larger engines plus straight-forward injectors on the rest of the fleet meant minimum external gadgetry along the boilers. This helped considerably in keeping running



Author's photo No mistake about it! Those steps, headlight and stairs mean O&W to the trackside observer.



board lines largely unbroken, a factor contributing markedly to the racy, classic look of the light 400's.

If any single contribution to the American steam locomotive can be attributed to the O&W, its work in furthering the development of Baker valve gear is it. A story for another time, suffice to say here that this was the gear on every O&W engine in service from the early 30's onward and was standard new equipment starting with 1916 after pretesting on "The Grasshopper", Engine 247. Found in several different configurations, it lent much to creating "The O&W look" for three decades.

O&W boilers generally sat high on their frames. Most noticeable on the W-class Consolidations and the E-class Ten-Wheelers, it was similarly true of earlier heavy camelbacks and even the light 400's. On the W-class, in particular, you could see a lot of daylight between the driver tops and the boiler. This relatively high mounting was particularly impressive climbing the "front stairs" from pilot to cab on the U and U1 class Camelbacks. Ground looked a long way down and your hand tended to grip the rail with enthusiasm.

In few details did the Y2 class Mountains differ more from their roundhouse sisters than in their

LOWER RIGHT: The summer of 1940 finds 304 switching at "Highlights" in Middletown Yard. The Baker valve gear and high slung boiler plus centered headlight bracket again spells O&W here, but there are also exceptions. 304 was the only engine on the roster equipped with a single cross compound air pump and the side step did not appear on the W class power until later on. BELOW: Twin single phase air pumps and straight running board identify this engine as a light 400. Note the boxy covering for the sander valve by the dome. Both photos: Author's collection

cab windows. The four small glass panes separated by mullions in a single sash spelled classic New York Central. All sashes in O&W cabs were otherwise single glass panes, top-to-bottom. On the Y and X class, by contrast, there were two separate single-pane sashes plus a small folding windscreen glass on each cab side. This particular "differentiator," however, only showed up notably in the dead of winter or when an engine was out of service and closed up for storage.

Tenders, as on many roads with a substantial number of engines, managed to get shuffled a good bit with the passing years. By the late '20s, however, cast steel underframes were standard on everything that wasn't clearly destined for early scrapping. Standard, too, was the practice of putting the abbreviation "T.F." -- followed by the appropriate engine number -- on each side of the tender frame, assuring against mis-matches following shipping, even if the cistern was ordered changed.

Air brake equipment was also somewhat distinctive. With the exception of the front-mounted Y2 dual-compound pumps and one compound on a lone Class W, two single-phase air pumps mounted on the left side was common to most power in service prior to World War II. At that time, a labor problem led to moving the pumps forward on a few of the W class. The other exception in pump placement was a class unique in many other aspects as well: The Class P Camelback Consolidations. Among their eccentricities, they had one single phase pump mounted on each side of the boiler.

Painting and lettering, of course, played a major role in building the particular charac-

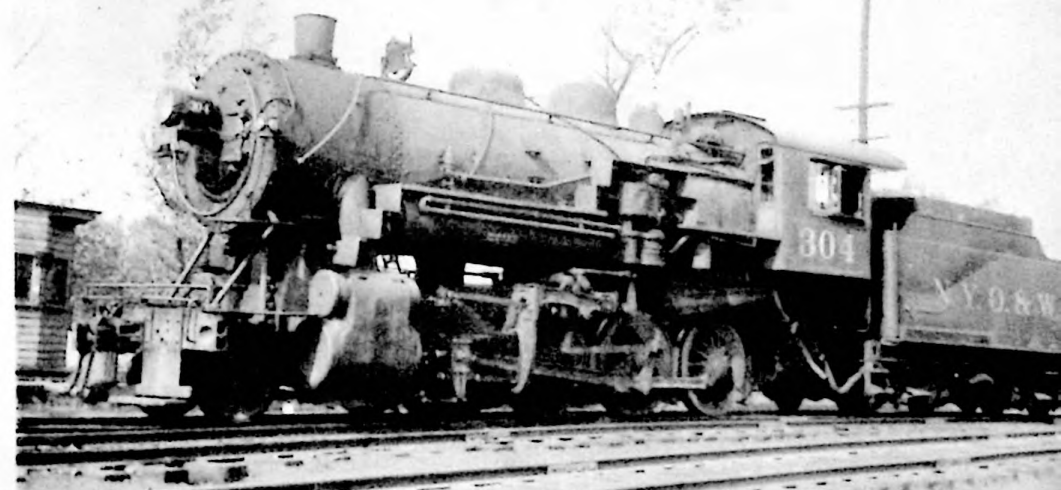
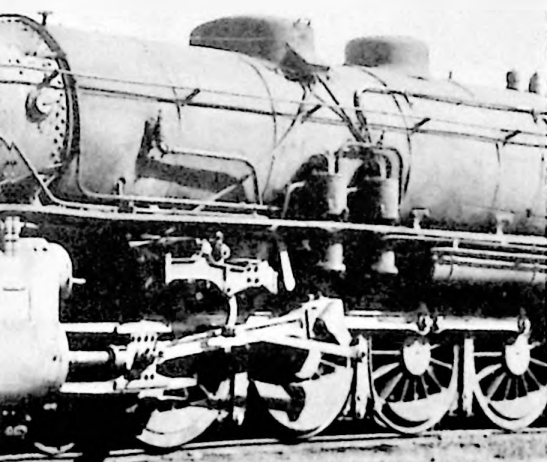
ter of O&W locomotives, but that too, we can give better attention another time. For the present, we've been just checking the measurements of the ladies, not the make-up they're wearing nor the perfume of their favorite brand of valve oil, for that matter. Paint styles changed a good bit down the years until what became, in effect, the final style, established in the spring of 1938. Before then, such changes made it pretty easy to date photographs within a few years of their taking.



Herb Trice collection

ABOVE AND BELOW: The two faces of the W class. Air pumps on several W's were moved forward to take weight off the drivers in a labor dispute with firemen.

Harold K. Vollrath collection



# Dewitt C. Littlejohn

## Man behind the Midland

by Dr. Charles M. Snyder Part II

Since many communities would not bond themselves unless they were directly on the line the railroad was tempted to delay the determination of the route, and to offer it to the highest bidders. For example, Syracuse, on one of the more feasible of the proposed lines, but athwart the main line of the New York Central, refused to purchase stock. A route further east by way of Oneida and Madison Counties was thereupon considered, and Syracuse's fate was broadcast as a warning to communities which hesitated to bond themselves. And once a tentative route had been selected, the Company threatened to follow an alternate one when bonding lagged. Construction would be delayed until municipal bonds were voted, one communication insisted. "If better lines can be found, or towns withhold their aid, we feel at liberty in carrying out our determination.. to reconsider our action and make necessary changes." On the other hand, when the situation required, the promoters offered special considerations: the promise of car-repair shops was

dangled before Middletown and Oswego to gain their cooperation; others were won over with prospects of becoming terminals for branches. And so it went.

Once the Midland had succumbed to the temptation to modify the line in search of bonds, its efficiency could only be a secondary consideration. Its critics were soon referring to it as "Mr. Littlejohn's Roundabout," and in other terms equally unflattering.

The case of Gerrit Smith is of interest in this respect. With an investment of a million dollars in Oswego, he was vitally interested in its railroads, particularly on the eastern harbor which thus far had no connections to the south. During the early stages of the promotion he supported it, and subscribed for \$20,000 in stock. When the decision was made to bypass Syracuse, and build it on the north side of Oneida Lake, however, he became a formidable opponent. Midland spokesmen, meanwhile, attributed his about-face to the decision to take the

road through Stockbridge rather than Peterboro, Smith's home, which was five miles distant, and to the taxes which might fall on his Oswego properties.

Smith circulated his criticisms in open letters which he scattered across the State. In one of his early productions addressed to Littlejohn, he underlined the importance of a direct route from Oswego to New York. "Will your company build this road?" he asked. "I fear it will not. It will perhaps build a road. But I fear it will not build this road." Pressure to accommodate intermediate localities, he insisted, would prevent it. The required road would have to be direct, with easy grades and fifty miles shorter than the Utica, Albany, New York route. Capital would be forthcoming from private investors, he maintained, if the road were direct. "You told me the other day, that I must increase my subscription to twenty-five thousand dollars," he continued. "I did not demur. I believe all Oswego will testify that I have evinced a submissive spirit under the numerous and sometimes heavy demands she had made upon me." He forecast rich benefits

if the lines were direct, "but if your road shall zig-zag here and there, to please an individual, or to accommodate a town or a county, then your road may, indeed, be still worth much to people who live along it, but the stock in it will be worthless."

As the details of the line took shape, Smith became more hostile. Some months after the property holders had sanctioned the bonding of Oswego, but prior to its implementation, he made a formal offer of a gift of \$20,000 (the sum he had invested in the Midland) to the City, "If the Common Council and the City can, by fair means, prevent the construction of the contemplated Midland Railroad on the route now designated, and the issuing of the \$600,000 City bonds." The City Fathers, still committed to the Midland, simply filed the communication.

Later, in an open letter to Alvin Bronson, Smith resumed his assault. "Many of us, who subscribed for stock, understood that the Road, however it might hereby affect or be affected by intermediate localities, was nevertheless, to be built upon a route, which, in respect to surface and length would be the best one." But the directors, he declared, had other thoughts which were made manifest in the route between Fulton and Hamilton, where ten extra miles were added by running north of Oneida Lake. Through this "penny-wise

and pound-foolish" course they had thrown away the benefits of a shortest route; a policy which promoters in Boston, Philadelphia and Norfolk would not have permitted.

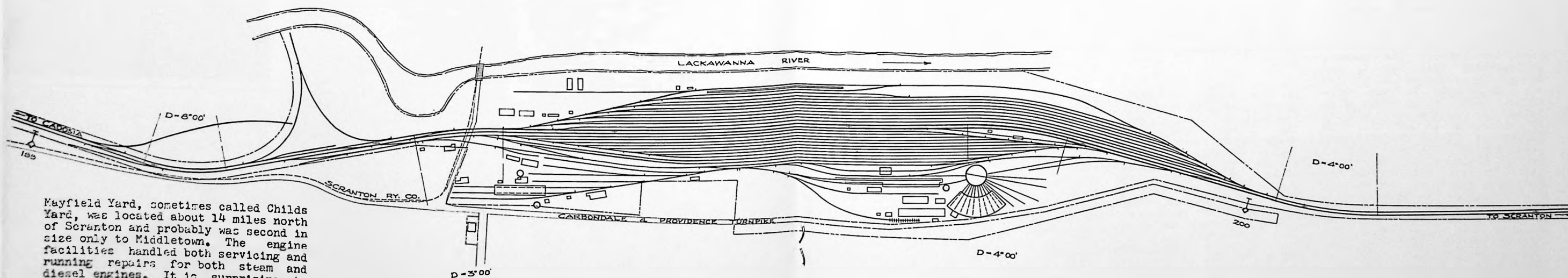
"Alas that our old and esteemed friend Littlejohn, usually so large, as well as clear-sighted, should now be expatiating before audiences kindled by his magnetic eloquence upon the immense advantage of turning aside the Midland Road some ten miles in order to reach a lot of cord-wood, a few saw-mills, tanneries and glass factories (on the north shore of Oneida Lake)! Who would have expected to find him amongst the little men that 'hold at the spigot whilst it runs at the bung.'" He then compared the policy of Massachusetts builders with that of the Midland; the former expending millions of dollars on tunnels (Hoosic) to save twenty or thirty miles, "while Littlejohn deviates ten miles and reconciles us with glowing descriptions of the splendid stores in Oneida." Concluding, he observed that the Midland presented a "piteous spectacle," in which Oswego's natural advantages were sacrificed for the sake of "little benefits."

Elsewhere Smith alleged that the bonding of Oswego would reduce the value of his property there by one-fourth, and that resulting taxes would turn shippers toward Sodus and other ports.

Smith's efforts to defeat the railroad can be seen in his correspondence with Edwards. The latter reported that Oswego people were "infatuated" with the line north of Oneida Lake, believing that it would open trade with this area and unite the County. He could get no critical comment from the papers, since Delos DeWolf, a Midland promoter controlled the Democratic Palladium, and Littlejohn, the Republican Times. "The strength of this place now consists in the millers and produce dealers," he advised. "They are unanimous for anything in the form of a railroad, whether it goes crooked or straight they seem to have no care; and this winter the same price is charged for carrying flour from Oswego (to New York) that is charged from Buffalo, that is \$1 per barrel. This is a circumstance for making the people furious for Midland."

Smith carried his battle to Albany, where he obtained a hearing before the committee in the Assembly considering the issuance of municipal bonds. The result was one minor concession: the bonds could be used only to build the line eastward from Oswego as far as the money would allow. No one from Oswego would testify against the route.

The decision to by-pass Syracuse was a boon to Littlejohn's sales campaign in Oswego County. It was now agreed to take the line along the north shore of Oneida



Mayfield Yard, sometimes called Childs Yard, was located about 14 miles north of Scranton and probably was second in size only to Middletown. The engine facilities handled both servicing and running repairs for both steam and diesel engines. It is surprising to find the number of railroad buildings that still stand at Mayfield today. Most of the former yard is now a vacant field. The area in which the wye was located is now a scrap yard in which some O&W baggage and RPO car bodies are located.

N.Y.O. & W. Rwy.

Mayfield Yard

1923

Lake, thence southward through the village of Oneida in Madison County. This would carry it across three additional towns in the County which might be drawn into the scheme.

One of his earliest successes was the City of Oswego, which capitulated just four months after the enabling legislation and just subsequent to the active promotion of the two local newspapers. The procedure was as follows: He first secured the adoption of a resolution, by a unanimous vote of the Common Council, which read in part:

"Whereas, the amount required from this city by the Directors (New York and Oswego Midland) is \$600,000, the Common Council do, therefore, give notice: that a special election will be held at the City Hall on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 27th, 28th, 29th of August, 1866... the bonds if issued to be exchanged for stock."

The ensuing referendum was an emphatic endorsement of the railroad; some 1,477 voting for railroad stock, and but 26 voting in the negative. Littlejohn was equally successful a short time later in the Town of West Monroe, where \$40,000 in bonds was voted. During the following year Volney (\$300,000), Hastings (\$80,000), Constantia (\$87,500), and Scriba (\$20,000) fell into line, and he was now freed to roam beyond the confines of the County.

Fortunately, several brief descriptions of his methods have survived. In Skaneateles, where a branch line was under consideration, an observer declared that "his flowery speech bewildered the audience in such a manner that they were ready to bond immediately. The manager anticipating this result, had previously prepared to receive the signatures to the petitions." And in the words of an authority on the early history of railroads in New York, "The flamboyant DeWitt Littlejohn, President of the New York and Oswego Midland, had a reputation for being able to lead his audience right up to the point of 'Hurrah for the Midland!'"

Littlejohn was particularly effective when teamed with State Senator Henry H. Low, a Director and large property holder of Monticello, Sullivan County. They toured the route and addressed dozens of audiences. They also joined forces in the Legislature. In the Senate, for example, the latter introduced the bill which permitted municipalities to bond themselves, and

in the Assembly the former facilitated the passage of the bill by having it amended to conform with the Senate's version. In the ensuing session Low introduced the bill to exempt from taxation the municipal bonds issued to aid the Midland. With other legislators from districts adjacent to the road, they presented a host of petitions requesting this tax relief. Littlejohn, meanwhile, reported the bill from the Committee on Railroads, and drew upon his parliamentary sagacity to guide it to a successful conclusion.

Three years later, Littlejohn resumed the drive to secure State aid for the Midland. In association with promoters of other lines he helped to secure the passage of an appropriation bill totaling \$5,500,000 to be paid to the Midland and other specified companies. The measure was greased by an unusually large number of petitions in its behalf: six Senators and twenty-five Assemblymen presenting one or more such entreaties. In the end it was vetoed by Governor Hoffman, and lost when the Assembly failed to pass it over his head. Again, a year later, Littlejohn and his associates tried to exact a subsidy from the State to "aid and expedite the construction of unfinished railroads in this State which are intended to connect the chain of western and northern lakes and rivers with tide-water, or to develop the resources of unimproved portions of the State." The bill was broad enough to draw support from most sections of the State, and the Midland's portion of one million dollars was the guarantee of its popularity along the road. The bill passed both houses by substantial majorities, but, as before, fell before the executive axe.

By the spring of 1868 stock sales permitted construction. The line ran along an axis linking Oswego, Oneida, Madison, Chenango, Delaware, Sullivan and Orange Counties. Beginning at Oswego, it skirted the northern shore of Oneida Lake, and crossed the New York Central Railroad at Oneida. Continuing southward, it reached Norwich, Sidney, Hancock and Middletown. Here a connection was made with the New Jersey Central at Unionville on the New Jersey border giving the Midland access to Jersey City. There were also branch lines linking Ellenville, Delhi, New Berlin, Rome and Utica to the main line; an Auburn and Buffalo branch was completed only as far as Scipio Center in Cayuga County. The latter were

added at an enormous cost, pushing the total sum far beyond original estimates. From a forecast of \$8,000,000, expenditures by 1873, when trains first ran along the entire main line, had soared to \$26,000,000.

Earth was moved on June 25, 1868. Sixteen months later, on November 1, 1869, the track was in place between Oswego and Norwich. The last spike between these two points was driven at Seneca Hill, just south of Oswego, amidst the roar of rifles fired by a local battery, and early the next morning "three visitors," that is, locomotives, the "Oswego", the "Orange", and the "Fulton", decked in bunting, puffed into Oswego. Hundreds turned out to view the scene and enjoy the festivities. Noting the locomotives and the rising terminal and shops, the local press hailed them as "monuments of the enterprise, industry and influence which has given us the Midland."

Progress was won more slowly, however, from this point, and at a higher cost. The line reached Sidney the following summer (1870), but the counties beyond, Delaware, Sullivan and Orange, were the roughest yet encountered, and the Shawangunk Mountain had to be tunneled. The latter was completed in September, of the following year (1871), but in March of the next year in his annual report, President Littlejohn had only local traffic to report. Early in 1873, however, he forecast the completion of the railroad within several months.

Meanwhile, Littlejohn accepted ever increasing responsibilities in the building of the Midland. To his promotional and legislative activities of the early years were added countless duties which kept him moving along the line with frequent junctures to New York and Albany. While much of the detail was handled by the Chief Engineer, Littlejohn exercised considerable latitude in the settlement of claims against the company, and in the approval and payment of bills. He negotiated with groups seeking branch lines and entered into arrangements to reach the coal fields of northeastern Pennsylvania. He also supervised the purchase of rails and rolling stock, including substantial quantities of Belgian and Welsh iron and steel. He also prepared numerous press releases and drafted detailed annual reports for the stockholders. (Dr. Snyder will present the third and final part in the spring issue of the OBSERVER.)



# O&W Caboose Development

Bob Mohowski

Caboose are probably the most uniquely individual pieces of rolling stock that a railroad owns. On many railroads they are built from plans that were developed by officials who had personal tastes and ideas which were influenced by their own experiences while train crew members. Cost of construction, type of service where it would be used, and accommodations for the train crew shaped final decisions for the choice of one plan over another.

No doubt the O&W inherited Midland cabooses, but we have no photos to show what they looked like. An 1873 report lists only 17 cabooses, but it is possible that coach and/or combines were also used. We can however, surmise that they were wood underframe and wood body, and probably four wheel types typical of the period.

The earliest records available dated back to 1916 and do not indicate any cabooses built prior to 1883. This meant that any Midland cabooses acquired by the O&W must have been retired by that time. Beginning in 1883, the 8000 series were constructed by the road's own shops. From this time on, the O&W built their own cabooses. Page 53 of Helmer's O&W has a photo of what is believed to be the 8010. Its large dimensions and full cupola contrast sharply with the short four wheel 8100's. The 8000's cost \$1200 apiece and were of all wood con-

struction. The numbers ranged from 8001 to 8014, but it's possible there were more. There were at least three cabooses in the 8000 series that were rebuilt during the early 1900's. While they looked somewhat like the more modern 8300's, they differed greatly in window size and placement. These cabooses were built and rebuilt as follows:

number	built	rebuilt
8001	1891	1909
8011	1883	1905
8014	1891	1907

A later rebuilding found steel underframes applied to these cars.

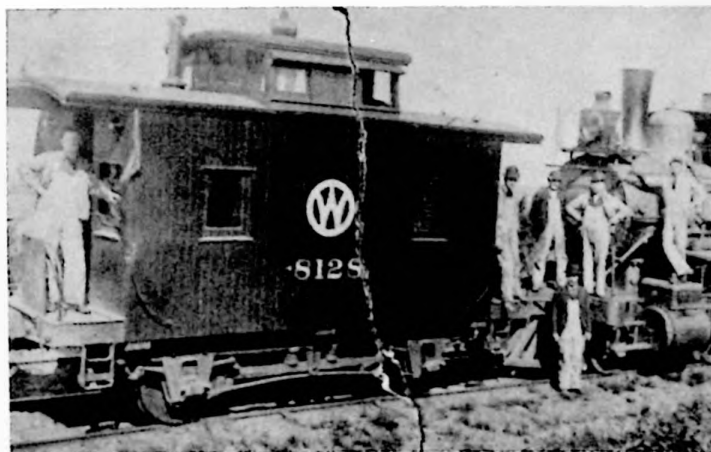
Some of these rebuilt 8000's lasted near, if not right up to, the end in 1957. One of them was assigned to the Monticello Branch local for many years. One of these rebuilds appears in the background of the photo at the top of page 22 in the March 1963 issue of BMC.

The 8100's seemed to be the most common type of caboose on the road. By carefully examining the photos of the 8105, 8128 and 8179, one can follow the evolution of the design. Originally the cupola was about a four foot projection from the roof and equipped with a front and rear window and marker light. Some type of provision must have been provided inside to allow a man to stand on something or climb a ladder so that he could peer out

the window. It's doubtful that a trainman would spend an entire trip in this position. Besides being uncomfortable, there would be the night time problem of fumes from the kerosene lamp even if some form of ventilation were provided. These marker lights are themselves interesting. They seem to be electric, but they were actually kerosene with an arrangement that permitted the lamp itself to be kept inside. Loss due to theft by other train crews (this was a period when cabooses and equipment were assigned), markers vibrating loose and broken lenses were lessened. The lenses themselves could be changed so that a variety of indications could be displayed. The fire hazard in the event of accident was heightened and in the winter there must have been a smokey haze due to the markers and table lamps. The original 8000's also had these inside markers. Another interesting detail of this caboose are the diagonal siding, lack of automatic couplers and air hoses and wood brake beams.

As time went on, the cupola was enlarged, the car itself was lengthened, a different truck arrangement was applied, markers went back on brackets, roof walks and ladders were applied and grab irons and steps were improved. Most important of all was the application of air brakes and automatic couplers.

To the left and below are the two earliest caboose photos that could be found. It's interesting to note that some features such as the bars across the end windows were carried through to the 8360. Both photos: Bob Harding collection



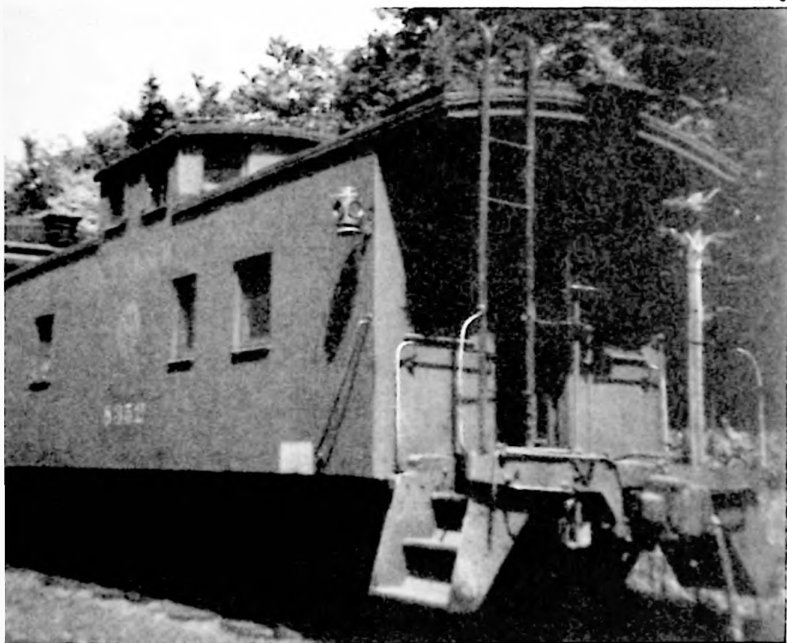


BELOW: Caboose and crew of trains 29 and 32 pose at Norwich about 1910. Trainmen are Bill Welsh, fireman; Fred Kingman, engineer; two unidentified; John Dorman, conductor and another unidentified. The 8179 was built about this time and gives every appearance of being new. The crew is no doubt proud of their new rolling office and probably took some degree of pain to keep it that way. Compare her markers with the 8352's below.

Robert Harding Collection



Walter Olevsky



Michael Caramanna



Walter Olevsky



Ken Martin



Mounted against one of the windows of the 8179 is a rather large lamp. Since the book of rules of the operation department dated May 19, 1913 states that there must be three red lights on the rear of a train by night while running, it might account for this third lamp. The other possibility is that it might have served as a headlight for back up moves.

If the 8200's were a continuation of the 8100 series (plans or photos would be positive proof) and if 8206 was the last of that series (which available records indicate), then there were at least 106 four wheel bobbers built by the O&W. Caboose in this series cost \$800 to build with a wood underframe and \$1000 if the underframe were steel. Construction dates are difficult to pin down, but it does seem that the O&W was building four wheel cabooses until 1911. Similar small cabooses served on many roads until the mid-fifties and no doubt some still roll on in short line service. On the O&W though, they were believed to be out of service by ten years earlier. The Lehigh and Hudson River's 81 seems to be the closest thing around today that can give a good idea of what a later 8100/8200 type looked like.

It is the 8300 series of cabooses that are easily the best known on the O&W. The first of these were built in 1916 at a cost of \$1250 each. Between that year and 1918, cabooses 8301 to 8340 were constructed in Middletown. They had a steel body superstructure and underframe and had wood sheathing inside and out. Cabooses 8341 through 8359 were built to very similar specifications between 1924 and 1935. The last caboose of this series was the 8360 built in 1937. Again the basic specifications were similar, but the body and cupola had peaked roofs rather than the curved type found on all other 8300's. The 8341-8359 series had a light weight of 41,700 lbs. and a capacity of 60,000 lbs. All 8300's had 33 inch cast iron wheels and wood roofs covered with tarred canvas. Some of the steel underframes applied to these cars are rumored to have come from old steam tenders. The 8301, 8304, 8306,

LEFT: 8352 has her markers as per regulations, but the left one is missing its lenses and top. The photo was taken near Liberty in August of 1953. LEFT BELOW: 8342 has trucks that once served passenger equipment. She is still in fair shape at Croxton in February of 1967. MIDDLE BELOW: Modified herald was applied to the 8300's. Note the effects of weathering as compared with photo on left. RIGHT BELOW: Ex-O-W hack on the Long Island is departing west end of Yard "A" on a freight approaching the Montauk Cut-off at Long Island City. Those that went to the L.I. are believed to be out of service now.

8308, 8360 and possibly others were said to be so equipped. For this reason helpers could be coupled behind them in pusher service.

How well did they ride? An O&W conductor would be best qualified to tell us that and this is what Fred Beck says, "My favorite was the 8351. She and this class were used on all fast freights. I have never ridden a better riding caboose and I'm not being prejudicial. They were supplied with ice boxes and cupboards in which we kept all our cooking utensils, dishes, silverware and everything that went for good housekeeping. I had a griddle made just to fit the stove; on this we had pancakes, sausages, eggs, etc. Our caboose was supplied with a complete line of food. Under the lower lockers were such supplies as knuckles, pins, chains, wrenches, air hoses, hammer and chisel, etc. They also had an oil locker for markers, lanterns and oil for same. These cabooses were equipped with heavy trucks and springs off old coaches and that was the main reason they rode so well."

The 8300's presented a utilitarian but pleasing appearance. Few railroads in the U.S. ex-

tended the car side up to the cupola. Equipment diagrams show a fascia strip just below the roof overhang which seemed to separate the cupola side from the lower car side. Either these were never applied or they were removed in later years since they do not appear in any recent photos. No belt driven generator or storage batteries or propane gas heaters were used. Kerosene and coal provided light and heat in the standard tradition. A dry hopper toilet was enclosed in a small closet. This was the reason for the smaller middle window on one side.

After the March 29, 1957 shutdown, the cabooses were stored at Middletown for awhile. Several were purchased by the Long Island and continued their active life spans. 26 of them (out of 33 still listed in the 1955 annual report) were obtained by equipment dealer Harold Gottfried along with most of the FT diesels. They were moved to Croxton Yard where they moldered for many years. Then, about 1966, they were moved to old Camp Shanks at Orangeburgh, N.Y. where they were burned and cut up for scrap 18 months ago.

Only two O&W cabooses are known

to survive today. The 8301 belongs to the Empire State Railway Museum and is located on the Middletown and New Jersey property in Middletown. The Empire State group purchased it from the Long Island. It was used by museum personnel as a bunk car during work week-ends. It had been repainted and re-lettered for the O&W. It's in fair condition since one end of it was damaged by fire when the Long Island caboose to which it was coupled was destroyed by fire some time ago. It is not clear at this time whether it will join other Empire State equipment that is being moved to Essex, Connecticut for a new steam tourist operation.

The 8304 was the property of Joseph Krajacek of Gardiner, N.Y. near New Paltz. He had a small museum and miniature steam operation of which the caboose was part. The 8304, like the 8301, was purchased from the Long Island by Krajacek. In 1970, he sold much of his collection of railroad items including the 8304. A traction fan group from a place near Camden is supposed to have purchased it and hauled it to their location. Both of these cabooses bear alterations done by the O&W in later years and the Long Island.

## Mail Stop

Could you tell me if the new AHM RPO can be "kit-bashed" into the type the O&W used on trains 1 and 2?

LES SITTLER, R-170  
Delhi, N.Y.

(Off hand, we'd say no. The O&W cars had two baggage doors and fewer windows. Perhaps other members have different opinions on this.)

I was surprised at how little East Branch has changed in the last 30 years. It looks identical to the D&N story photos in the September issue.

ART HOUSE, R-66  
Binghamton, N.Y.

The NW-2 plan on page 16 of the September issue shows the yellow area to be red and the emblems to be black. Is this a mistake or was it really like this.

STEVE WERSING, S-117  
N. Miami Beach, Fla.

(The editor accepts full responsibility for this error. The band should be yellow and the heralds should be red just as the road units. The 12 inch numbers on the front are black.

## Transfer Run

WANTED: Clear photos showing painting and lettering for the 44 ton switchers, the 6200-6399 gondolas, 9000 series wood box cars and the 100 series flangers. These are needed to supply data the future drawings for the OBSERVER and RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN. I can furnish certain plans or drawings in return. Photos of any other O&W freight equipment would likewise be appreciated. Ed Crist, 124 North Main St., Monroe, N.Y. 10950

WANTED: Will buy or trade for a photo of the O&W station in Bouckville while the road was running. Roger Hartshorn, Box 63, Bouckville, N.Y. 13310

WANTED: Will buy at reasonable price a photo of O&W F-3 822. Color preferred. Doug Ellison, RD 4, Earlville, N.Y. 13332

WANTED: Photos of O&W diesels 122, 124, 128, 131 and 125. Also ex-O&W diesels on other roads. Bob Harding, 40 Beech St., Marblehead, Mass. 01945. (Ed. note: Bob Harding has always helped the Society with photos and information. We hope

that some members can now respond in like manner to him.)

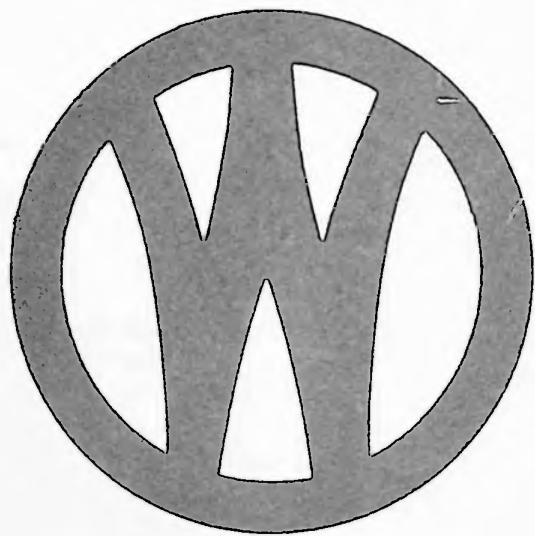
TRADE: O&W photos, both steam and diesel. Write for information. William Wilcox, 48 Madison St., Hamilton, N.Y. 13346

FOR SALE: Set of five O&W diesel slides: 805, 502, FT's, 807 and 822. One dollar per set. Audio-Visual Designs, P.O. Box 24, Earlton, N.Y. 12058

FOR SALE: O&W railroadiana, paperwork such as 19 orders, way-bills, clearance forms, interchange reports, station reports, etc. Richard Frieser, 2317 Country Club Road, Endicott, N.Y.

FOR SALE: O&W diesel colors by Scale Coat Paint. These are exact matches to EMD samples and come in large bottles. Set of three colors: gray, orange and yellow for \$3.50 including postage. O&WTHS, Box 405, Franklin Lakes, N.J. 07417

FOR SALE: All back issues of the OBSERVER except September 1969. One dollar each including postage. O&WTHS, Box 405, Franklin Lakes, N.J. 07417





The switch to three columns in this issue was done to allow us to get more information on a page. This will cut down on printing and mailing costs. We were mistaken when we thought that addendas would be eliminated by this move, but there is much additional information that we felt you should be aware of.

Many of you that are modelers probably know that Nickel Plate Products, a new brass model importing company, has very definite plans to produce a class Y 4-8-2 in HO scale. This is the best news that O&W modelers have ever had! It is suggested that you send a reservation to the company at 104 W. 144th St., Riverdale, Ill. 60627. Be sure to include a stamped-self-addressed envelope if you expect a reply. Cost of the engine has not been announced but our rough guess would put it near \$90 judging by the price trends of other companies. The Society and several of its members have been providing Nickel Plate Products with information and plans of the Class Y's. In fact, Nickel Plate Products is now a sustaining member of the O&WTHS and we are happy to have Dr. Dave Simon and his company with us.

Champ Decal Company now includes the necessary striping and numbers for O&W F units in their E-92 (O scale) and EH-92 (HO scale) sets. This is quite new and may not yet be in your local hobby shops. Don't forget that the Society still has correct O&W diesel colors in stock. The set of three bottles includes gray, orange and yellow. Scale Coat Paints custom mixed these from EMD color specifications for the Society. Price including postage is \$3.50 for the three two ounce bottles.

The O&WTHS and its members are in-

vited to the Chenango County Historical Society's "O&W Railroad-er's Day" to be held in Norwich, on Sunday, April 25th from 1 to 5 PM. There is no admission charge. Manville B. Wakefield will present a talk and there will be displays of railroading.

Plans for the Society's annual banquet are well underway and as things become more definite members will be notified. At this time it looks like it will be a May or June affair.

Jeff Winslow has a large size blueprint of an O&W wood coach for sale. It is available for \$3.00 from Jeff at 49 West 45th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036.

Again we ask that when you send in photos, please put your name and pertinent information on the back with a soft pencil. Be sure that you do not cause ridges on the front since this will show up in the reproduction.

While researching the caboose article in this issue, the editor was visiting Marv Cohen at his home in Middletown when Marv's Fire Monitor radio chimed frantically and voice directed volunteer fire fighters to a blaze, "at the O&W station." Marv, a member of Monhagen Engine Company, grabbed his coat, directed Jeff Otto and the editor to do likewise and dashed off to his car. We got to the blaze and were relieved to see that it was only burning debris in the old Adams Express office west of the station. This is the building near the main station with the O&W herald formed into the brickwork on the track side. It had seen varied use after 1957 and now is just an empty shell. Other than broken windows, the exterior of the structure was not damaged. Quite a coincidence!