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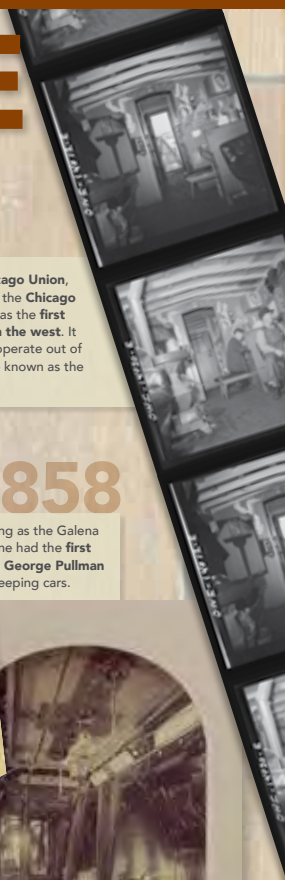
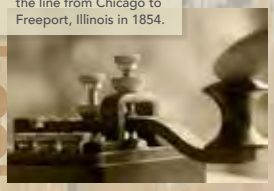
NOTABLE CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN FIRSTS



The **Galena and Chicago Union**, soon to be known as the **Chicago & North Western**, was the **first railroad chartered in the west**. It was also the first to operate out of Chicago and became known as the **"Pioneer" Railroad.**

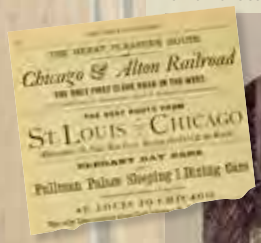
1854

The C&NW became the **first railroad to operate trains by telegraph** on the line from Chicago to Freeport, Illinois in 1854.



1858

While operating as the Galena in 1858, the line had the **first contract with George Pullman** for Pullman sleeping cars.



1863

The Railroad was the **first to introduce cupolas on cabooses** in 1863.

1865

In 1865 the C&NW built the **first railroad mail car** in the United States and put it into service in 1867.

The **first dining car service between Chicago and San Francisco** was operated as part of the Overland Route in the late 1800s.

1877

The **first two Pullman Hotel cars** were on the C&NW in 1877.

auto control

The C&NW originated the Safety First Movement in 1910 — the **first major railroad to institute a safety program**. It was also the **first Railroad to use Automatic Train Control** — a means to control speed through external input.

THE BEGINNING PIONEER RAILROAD

1836

The Galena and Chicago Union (G&CU), the first railroad constructed to run out of Chicago, was chartered January 16, 1836. The Railroad was intended to connect Chicago with the lead mines at Galena, a much larger Illinois town than Chicago at the time.

1846

In 1846 **William Butler Ogden**, the first mayor of Chicago, became the third president of the G&CU. **By 1848 he and his partner J. Young Scammon raised $350,000** in capital through subscriptions, to allow the Railroad to start laying track.

A Brief History of the Chicago and North Western Line

The Pioneer, the first locomotive of the Road, **arrived at Chicago from New Buffalo, Michigan on October 10, 1848**, nearly thirteen years after the charter was granted. **On October 25, 1848 the Pioneer pulled the first westbound train out of Chicago** to the end of the line in the present Chicago suburban town of Oak Park.

1850

In 1850, the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad was completed as far as Elgin and by 1853 it reached Freeport, Illinois. However, the Illinois Central had already reached Galena so the line was redirected away from Galena to take **a more direct route to the Mississippi River**.

Yesterday and Today, 100 years of Progress, 1848-1948

THE NAMING OF THE FIRST LOCOMOTIVE

The Baldwin Locomotive Works began work on **locomotive No. 37 in 1836**, and delivered it to the **Utica and Schenectady Railroad in New York in 1837**. After being renamed the No. 7, the locomotive served for several years between Utica and Schenectady before the Railroad decided it needed locomotives with greater pulling power.

№ 37

№ 7

1848

Alert

The No. 7 was then sold to the Central Railroad of Michigan (soon to be taken over by Michigan Central Railroad) and served as its first locomotive. **The Michigan Central renamed the locomotive *Alert* and it ran until 1848**, when the railroad finally reached New Buffalo, Michigan. **The *Alert* was then sold to the Galena and Chicago Union** where it became **the Railroad's first locomotive**.

The *Alert* was renamed the *Pioneer* and arrived in Chicago by ship on **October 22, 1848**. It took its first trip on October 24, 1848 to what is now Oak Park, Illinois. **In 1850 the *Pioneer* was loaned to the Aurora Branch Railroad** (later the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad) where it yet again was the first locomotive for a new railroad.

Reenactment Staged for Centenniel Celebration in 1948.

1865

The G&CU would begin operating under the Chicago and North Western (C&NW) banner in 1865.

1874

The Pioneer was retired in 1874. In Turner, Illinois, **a town created because it was at the junction of three railroad lines**, a resident of this now West Chicago area, appealed to the Railroad directors in 1880 to preserve the *Pioneer*. It was **restored in 1883 and went on exhibit for the first time at the National Railway Appliance Exposition**. Since then, the Pioneer has been on exhibit at major expositions, used for tours, and featured at several museums. It is **currently located at the Chicago History Museum**.

Chicago History Museum, ICHi-66416

The Pioneer is on permanent display at the Chicago History Museum.

CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN CHARTERED

EARLY DECADES

A telegraph line was run out to Freeport, Illinois and the **G&CU began to operate trains by telegraph in 1855** — the first in the nation to do so.

The **new line ran from Turner Junction (West Chicago) to Fulton, Illinois on the Mississippi River** and became the basis for **the C&NW's core route to the west.**

The G&CU laid a second track out of Chicago and started left-handed operation in order to avoid moving the depots to the other side of the tracks.

1855

In 1858, **the G&CU operated the first sleeping car west of Chicago** on the line to Freeport.

In 1862 **the G&CU leased the Cedar Rapids and Missouri River Railroad line in Iowa**. It would eventually become a **mainline portion of the transcontinental railroad** for the Chicago & North Western.

The C&NW built the **first railroad mail car** in the United States in 1865 and put it into service in 1867.

1858

1867

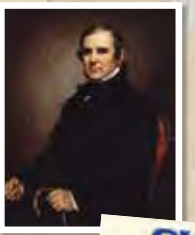
The G&CU expands across Iowa to reach the Missouri River

by 1869 the Railway Mail Service was in full swing

Mail car awaits sorting of mail.

In 1850, **the Galena and Chicago Union was contracted by the United States Post Office to carry "pouched mail" and small packages**. While trains had been carrying mail in the East for several years, delivery in the "West" was unchartered territory. In fact the Iowa Division of the Chicago and North Western Railroad, from **Chicago to Clinton, Iowa, became the first "West" railway postal route in operation on August 28, 1864**. The earliest complete railway post office cars were built for the C&NW in 1865, put into service in 1867, and **by 1869 the Railway Mail Service was in full swing** with virtually all mail being carried by railroads.

William Butler Ogden (1805-1877) was born in Walton, New York and went to **Chicago in 1835** to supervise a real estate deal for his brother-in-law. The profit from the sale convinced Ogden to settle in Chicago permanently in 1836. There he **became a real estate developer and the City of Chicago's (1837-1838) first mayor** working on improving streets, sidewalks, and bridges.



1846

Ogden became **president of the Galena and Chicago Union railroad in 1846**. When eastern investors showed no interest in the venture, **Ogden and his partner J. Young Scammon raised $350,000** in subscriptions from local farmers and small business owners.

Ogden left the Galena and Chicago Union in 1851, but went on to be the **first president of the Chicago & North Western railroad (1859 – 1868)** and thereby the first president of the Union Pacific railroad.

1851

He designed the first swing bridge over the Chicago River and donated the land for Rush Medical Center.

Before becoming involved with railroads, **Ogden was a leading promoter and investor in the Illinois and Michigan Canal**. When Ogden consolidated the Galena & Union and C&NW in 1864, **the system was at a whopping 1405 miles**.

1405 MILES

Ogden **resigned the presidency and left the board of directors in 1868** to retire to his estate in Bronx, New York. He passed away there on August 3, 1877.

CHICAGO'S FIRST MAYOR

LEFT-HAND RUNNING

The C&NW was known for running **"left-hand main" on double track mainlines**. In other words, **traffic was routed by default to the track on the left** rather than the track on the right. In the United States, **most railroads followed the "right-hand main" operating practice**, while "left-hand main" running was more common in countries where British companies built the railroads.

Running left-hand was a combination of chance and inertia.

WHY LEFT-HAND RUNNING?

The reason for the C&NW running left-hand was a combination of chance and inertia. When originally built as single-line trackage, **the C&NW arbitrarily placed its stations on the left-hand side of the tracks** (when headed inbound toward Chicago). Later, when a **second track** was added, it **was placed on the side away from the stations** so as not to force relocation of the stations.

Since most passengers waiting at the stations were headed toward Chicago, **the inbound track remained the one closest to the station platforms**. The **expense** of reconfiguring signals and switches has **prevented a conversion to a right-hand operation ever since**.

ACQUISITIONS AND THE GREAT CHICAGO FIRE

The **C&NW became one of the longest railroads in the United States** as a result of mergers and acquisitions. In **1864 it acquired the Peninsula Railroad in Upper Michigan**, though it disconnected the line and operated a shipping business in the area instead.

1864

The Chicago & Milwaukee was acquired by lease in 1866, which gave the C&NW a route from Chicago to Milwaukee. The next year, **1867, the Winona and St. Peter Railroad was added**.

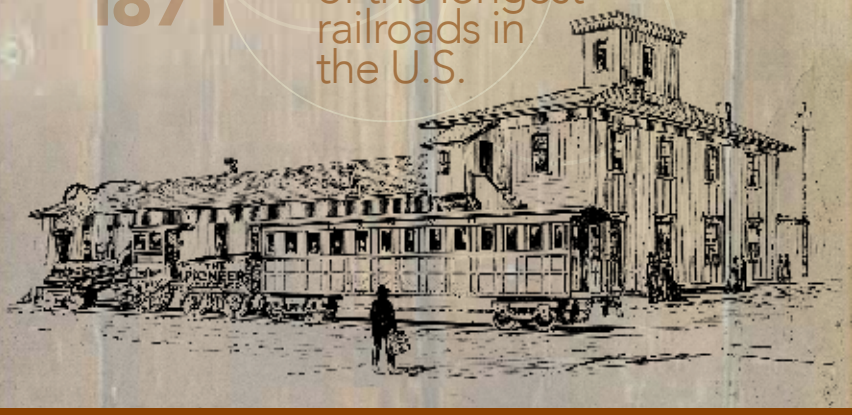
1866

In the last major acquisition of this period (1882), **the C&NW acquired stock majority of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway** (Omaha Road).

William Butler Ogden was at the helm at this time. His legacy flourished after his retirement in 1868 as the railroad continued to grow. **The Great Chicago Fire in 1871 destroyed the first Wells Street Station**, as well as many of C&NW's records including almost all of the records from the G&CU. A temporary wooden structure was put in place until **the new Chicago Wells Street Station was completed in 1881**.

1871

C&NW becomes one of the longest railroads in the U.S.



OVERLAND ROUTE

1869

The Overland Route was a train route operated jointly by the Union Pacific Railroad and the Central Pacific Railroad / Southern Pacific Railroad, between Council Bluffs, Iowa / Omaha and San Francisco. As today, the route went over the grade of the **First Transcontinental Railroad** (aka the "Pacific Railroad"), which opened on **May 10, 1869**.

The C&NW controlled the line from **Chicago into Omaha and was considered a major contributor to travel from Chicago to the Pacific**. Passenger trains operating over the line included the Overland Flyer, later renamed the Overland Limited, which made the connection to Chicago. Although these passenger rail trains are no longer in operation, **the Overland Route remains a common name for the line from California to Chicago**, now owned entirely by the Union Pacific.

Lamplighters lit the rail by hand. This Lamp Maintainer travels on a velocipede, c.1920.

1700 MILES

The **C&NW acquired stock majority of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway** (Omaha Road) in 1882. Up until that time, the CSt.PM&O was a smaller regional railroad that lived in the shadow of the C&NW as a semi-independent line. While **most of its trackage was in Wisconsin and Minnesota, there was additional trackage in Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota** for a total trackage of about 1700 miles. Although the C&NW controlled the "Omaha Road" for years, it was a troublesome arrangement and **in 1957 it leased the Omaha Road**, which ended CSt.PM&O semi-independent status. In 1972, the C&NW removed the "Omaha Road" as a paper entity, but this was largely symbolic as the CSt.PM&O had ceased to exist.

1882

Union Station, Omaha

CHICAGO PASSENGER TERMINALS

1871

The **Galena and Chicago Union** built **the first Chicago railroad depot at Canal and Kinzie Streets in 1848**. A second story was added in 1849 to provide office space as well as a large cupola to watch for incoming trains. **In the early 1850s, the depot was moved to Water and Wells Streets where a brick and stone building was built** for passenger use and office space. **It was enlarged in 1862-1863 but ultimately destroyed in the 1871 Great Chicago Fire**.

For the **next ten years a temporary shed was used** until an impressive $250,000 **red pressed brick and sandstone building was erected**. This station **served all trains on the three trunk lines** in and out of the city. As traffic increased, the station proved too small and underwent a series of renovations.

The architectural firm which ultimately designed 250 C&NW stations, was owned by the sons-in-law of C&NW President, Marvin Hughitt.

1911

In the first decade of the twentieth century the C&NW began planning a new station to be located across the river on Madison. The Chicago architectural firm of Frost & Granger, who had designed the massive Milwaukee C&NW depot in 1889, was commissioned. **The new station opened in 1911**. Named the Chicago and North Western Chicago Passenger Terminal, it **cost $23 million to build and received rave reviews for its opulence and state-of-the-art features**. The three-story structure with its **202-by-117-foot main waiting room**, boasted a dining room, women's rooms with writing desks and hairdressing services, smoking rooms for men, a barber shop, hospital rooms, and a variety of other features.

The bulk of **the station was razed in 1984 to be replaced with the glass-and-steel 42-story Citicorp Center**. It was renamed the Ogilvie Transportation Center in 1997 and today serves train, bus and commuter passengers.

1984

KATE SHELLEY

A NATIONAL HEROINE

1881

On the afternoon of July 6, 1881, **heavy thunderstorms caused a flash flood of Honey Creek in Iowa**, washing out timbers that supported the railroad trestle. A pusher locomotive was sent from Moingona, Iowa, to check track conditions. It safely crossed the Des Moines River bridge, but **plunged into Honey Creek when the bridge fell away at about 11 p.m.** with its crew of four: Ed Wood, A.P. Olmstead, Adam Agar, and Patrick Donahue.

saved 200 people

Seventeen-year-old Catherine Carroll "Kate" Shelley (December 12, 1863 – January 21, 1912) heard the crash and the resulting "fierce hissing of steam" as the engine plunged into the swollen stream. Her next thought was **an eastbound passenger train was due in Moingona around midnight and would very soon try to cross the same washed out bridge**.

Shelley ran out into the storm and found two surviving crew members clutching tree branches. **She started running for help by crossing the damaged span of the Honey Creek bridge** and heading for the long, high Des Moines river bridge.

The lantern she had failed. **With only lightning for illumination, she began to cross the bridge** which even in fair weather was never easy and always dangerous. In fact, **the railroad had discouraged anyone from walking on the bridge by removing some of its flooring** – leaving large gaps between the ties.

Kate braved the wind gusts and crawled the span on her hands and knees. Once across the Des Moines River bridge, **she ran a half-mile to the Moingona depot to sound the alarm**. The passenger train was **stopped at Ogden, Iowa, with 200 people safely aboard**. She then led a party back to rescue the two engine crew survivors. Ed Wood, perched in a tree, grasped a rope thrown to him, and came ashore hand-over-hand. Adam Agar couldn't be reached until the flood waters began to recede but recovered from the ordeal. Patrick Donahue and A.P. Olmstead, the fireman, did not survive.

washed out bridge

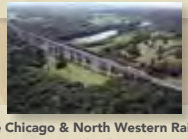
KATE SHELLEY

PERSON, TRAIN, BRIDGE

The passengers who had been saved took up a collection for Shelley. **The children of Dubuque, Iowa gave her a medal, and the state of Iowa gave her another, crafted by Tiffany & Co.**, as well as $200. The C&NW gave her $100, a half barrel of flour, half a load of coal, and a **life-time rail pass**. The Order of Railway Conductors gave her a gold watch and chain.

News of Shelley's bravery spread nationwide, and poems and songs were composed honoring her. **She became a teacher and finally in 1903 accepted the Railroad's multiple time offer to assume the post of station agent at Moingona,** which she held until shortly before her death. It was the same station to which she had carried the news of the bridge washout.

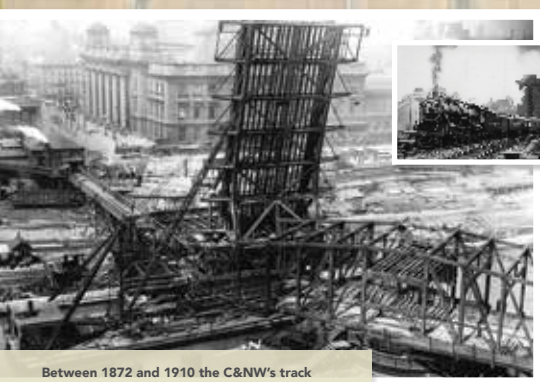
News of Shelley's bravery spread nationwide



The Chicago & North Western Railroad built a new steel bridge over the Des Moines River in 1901 and named it the Boone Viaduct. **People quickly nicknamed it the Kate Shelley Bridge**. **In 2009, the Union Pacific opened a new bridge next to the old span and officially named it the Kate Shelley Bridge**. The C&NW also **named one of their passenger trains after her – the *Kate Shelley 400***.

The new Kate Shelley High Bridge opened in 2009.

THE BEST OF EVERYTHING



1872-1910

Between 1872 and 1910 the C&NW's track mileage increased from 1,383 to 9,761 – a seven fold increase mostly attributed to the absorption of independent roads. **By 1910 the C&NW was one of the nation's largest railroads**. One such purchase contributing to the C&NW mileage growth was that of the Milwaukee Lake Shore & Western in 1893. Later known as the Ashland Division, it added its many routes between Milwaukee and Ashland.

1887

In 1887, **Marvin Hughitt became the sixth president of the C&NW** and guided the Railroad for more than a half century. Like James J. Hill of the Great Northern and Collis P. Huntington of the Southern Pacific, **Hughitt's long tenure allowed him to have a profound effect on the Golden Age of Railroads**.

New lines were also being built during the "Golden Age." Between 1903 and 1904, **a new line was built between Chicago and Milwaukee to allow trains to avoid the more "congested" cities along Lake Michigan**. In 1906 the C&NW reached Lander, Wyoming, which proved to be the extent of westward expansion for the line. Plans to reach the West Coast never materialized.

Travel between Milwaukee and Chicago was brisk.

It was during this era, **the Madison Street Station (the C&NW Chicago Passenger Terminal) opened in 1911 making the Wells Street Terminal obsolete**. In that same year, **the "Adams Cutoff" was laid to provide a shortcut from Milwaukee to Minneapolis-St. Paul** — the last major line constructed by the C&NW in Wisconsin.

In addition to guiding increased trackage, **Hughitt spearheaded important safety measures along with improved track and train conditions**. While Hughitt could be combative with his rivals and not adamantly anti-union, he did block Eugene V. Deb's American Railway Union (ARU) in 1894. Nonetheless, **Hughitt treated his employees fairly well for the time, and labor relations were generally good.**

MARVIN HUGHITT

Hughitt was **born on August 9, 1837 in Cayuga County, New York**. His early career was in telegraphy, which brought him to Chicago in 1854. **In three short years Hughitt became Trainmaster and Superintendent of Telegraph for the St. Louis, Alton & Chicago Railway** (later the Chicago & Alton).

He moved to the Illinois Central Railroad in 1862 and was named Assistant General Manager of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad in 1870.

Two years later **he became the General Superintendent of the Chicago & North Western and would be named its President in 1887** to guide the Railroad through its Golden Age. **In 1910 Hughitt stepped down as President, but remained Chairman of the Board** allowing him to still exert considerable control until 1925 when he retired. Hughitt died at his home in Lake Forest, Illinois after a stroke on January 6, 1928.

DIESELS AND WIG-WAGS

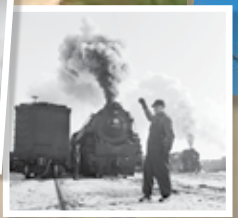
1920s

In the 1920s the C&NW considered electrifying its lines around Chicago to serve commuter traffic. The high cost – $60 million – and the fact that commuter trains were not particularly profitable, caused the idea to be shelved. Instead the C&NW made various improvements to commuter lines including the update of select suburban depots and introducing new aluminum-alloy commuter cars. However, **as the popularity of the automobile increased, there was a drop in commuter railroad use**. While some of the C&NW commuter trains were already using internal combustion engines, **the first diesel engine was purchased in 1926 as a means of smoke control**. In **1928, Automatic Train Control, a way of controlling train speed in response to external input**, began to be gradually added to C&NW locomotives.

THE WIG-WAG

The Chicago & North Western was **known for its installation of Western Railroad Supply Company's Autoflag #5 Wig-Wag signals** at many of its crossings between 1920–1940. Almost every town on their route had at least the main crossing in town protected by them. Wig-Wag signals were originally designed by Albert Hunt in 1909, a mechanical engineer at Southern California's Pacific Electric, and the Center Harp was the most common style used in the Upper Midwest. **The C&NW was particularly known for the Center Harp shorties, which became an unofficial icon for the Railroad.** The Federal Railroad Administration **ruled them inadequate protection in 1949, yet many were still in use until the 1970s** having been grandfathered in. A **few remain still today in Wisconsin** on lines previously sold off to other Railroads, but most have been replaced due to a lack of available parts and upgrades to roads.

WIG-WAG



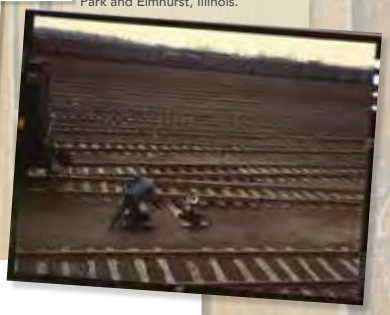
HUGE WORKING YARDS

The Proviso Yard is still being used today!

1929

The **Proviso Yard opened on July 1, 1929 in the western Chicago suburbs** and at one point was the **largest classification yard in the world**. This major freight classification yard featured retarder devices at the top of the classification hump to help control cars as they moved around. Eventually the yard housed a huge LCL freight house for sorting Less-Than-Carload-Lots.

Today, **the Proviso Yard is still in use by the Union Pacific Railroad** and is located between Melrose Park and Elmhurst, Illinois.

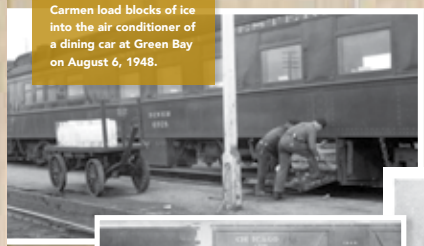


POTATO YARD

The **C&NW Wood Street Yard** was once the largest **"potato yard"** in the U.S. **Potatoes came to the yard from every point in the United States to be bought or traded by produce dealers and brokers**. It was the marketplace for potatoes. While the facility came to be known as the "potato yard," it was also a site where other vegetables could be bought, sold or traded.

A January 2, 1948 news article in the *Ellensburg Capital*, a newspaper in Ellensburg, Washington, described the Wood Street Yard as... "The world's largest potato yard is located – not in Idaho, nor in Maine – but in the largest city in the geographical center of the nation – Chicago. In the Wood Street Yards of the Chicago & North Western Railroad, an average of 20,000 car loads of potatoes are handled annually. Many thousands of tons of other vegetables also pass through this yard. The yard is the central marketing point for potatoes, which come in from virtually every state in the union. Dealers and brokers assemble in the yard each day before dawn to buy, sell, or consign an average of 36,000 bushels daily. The Wood Street Yard is a far cry from the wooden platform that served as a terminal years ago."

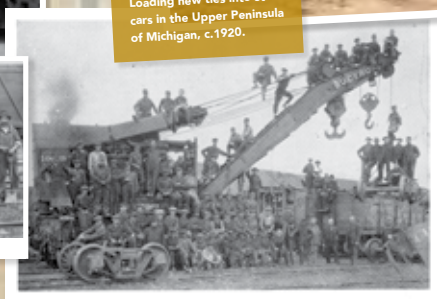
WORKING THE RAIL



Carmen load blocks of ice into the air conditioner of a dining car at Green Bay on August 6, 1948.

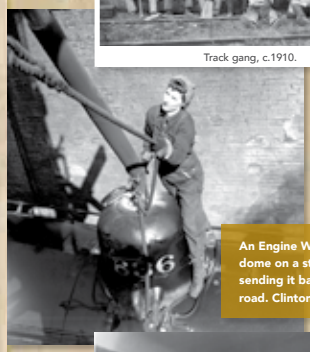
Loading new ties into stock cars in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, c.1920.

Track gang, c.1910.



Car Department Force at Escanaba–1925

The car department force at Escanaba in 1925 is shown in this photo from Edward F. Lakaie, now car foreman at Ashland. All of the men are not identifiable, but second from extreme right is John Boyce, now at Butler; Hugh Blake, assistant car foreman, now at Ashland, is seventh from right on top of boom. Lakaie is sitting on wrecker at right near base of boom. Louis Larson, assistant foreman at Escanaba, is on the ground standing near man in straw hat. Ed. Vanderboom, retired, was foreman in roundhouse, and stands to left of Boyce.



An Engine Wiper fills a sand dome on a steam engine before sending it back out on the road. Clinton, Iowa, c.1943.

Beginning in the 1950's, track maintenance became increasingly mechanized. Burro crane at Carrollville, WI, July 1990.

A uniformed conductor punches a ticket in a parlor car, c.1950.

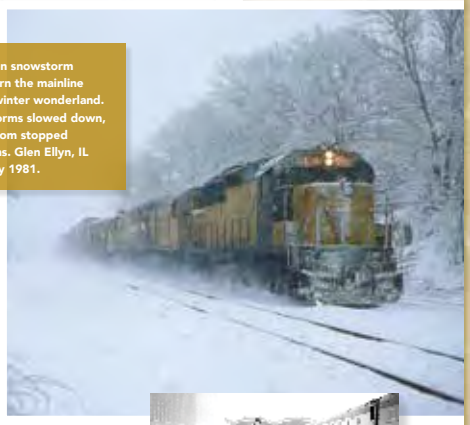
This Lamptender maintained kerosene lamps at Butler Yard in 1948. They were employed throughout the C&NW system until the 1960's.

Latino track gang with an undercutting sled renew the roadbed at Upton, Illinois, June 1957. C&NW ran several Spanish-speaking track gangs.

WINTER CHALLENGES

Engine 1619 fights its way into Milwaukee with a crew of snow shovelers from Chicago during the blizzard of 1947.

Trackmen shoveled out switches, platforms, and tracks in winter. There was little protection from the weather on a Fairmont M2 motorcar in 1940.



A sudden snowstorm could turn the mainline onto a winter wonderland. Snowstorms slowed down, but seldom stopped the trains. Glen Ellyn, IL February 1981.

Steam and smoke blast skyward on a bitter cold day in January 1951, as a Chicago-bound train accelerates out of Racine, WI.

While the snow falls, trackmen adjust the gas heaters to keep the double slip switches in the throat of the Chicago Passenger Terminal free of snow and ice. December 1955.

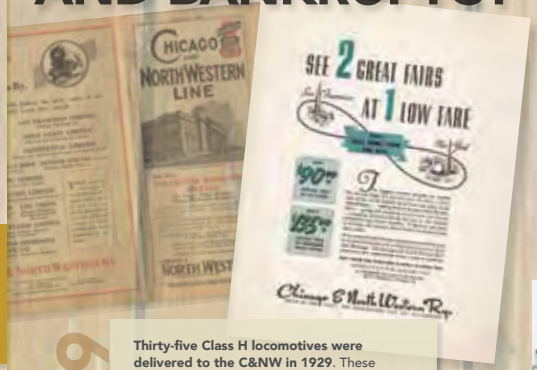
Winter railroading on the prairies was severe. Snowdrifts the height of boxcars near Tracy, Minnesota were dug out with plows and by hand during the Great Blizzard of March 1881.

Chicago Daily Tribune

Four Engines Bring Train Thru Wisconsin Drifts—City Dig

The Northwestern Limited arrived in Chicago 13 hours late after the blizzard of January 31, 1947.

EMERGING FROM THE DEPRESSION AND BANKRUPTCY



1929

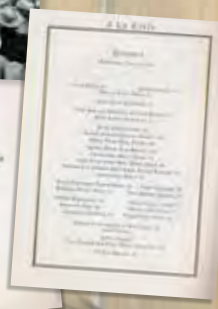
Thirty-five Class H locomotives were delivered to the C&NW in 1929. These heavy steam locomotives were the most powerful the Railroad had at the time, but they could only be used on the main line from Chicago to Council Bluffs. However as the Depression took hold of America's economy, **the C&NW suffered and entered a nine-year bankruptcy beginning in the mid-1930s**. All stockholders were wiped out in the bankruptcy, resulting in them loosing the entire value of their investment. Despite the economic challenges, there were some bright points for the railroad as **the Twin Cities *400* was introduced in 1935**. This high-speed steam locomotive **could make the 409 mile trip between Chicago and St. Paul in about 400 minutes** and offered coaches with **reclining seats and a luxurious lounge car**.

In the mid-1930s, several lines introduced streamlined diesel locomotives. Unfortunately the C&NW was not able to introduce its first diesel locomotive until 1939 after the approval of the bankruptcy court. **The new streamlined Twin Cities *400* was an immediate success** and held its own against many rival railroads like the Milwaukee Road. **During World War II, many passenger lines were seen as luxurious and service was suspended to allow the C&NW to run many long troop trains instead**. Once the war ended, the **C&NW celebrated its centennial in 1948** – using the G&CU's inauguration as the starting date.

ZEPPELINS OF THE RAILS

1939

The Class H Locomotive was a 4-8-4 Locomotive that could be used in either freight or passenger service. **These massive engines were capable of pulling twenty-six passenger cars at 85 miles per hour or 150 freight cars at 50 miles per hour.** Built by Baldwin, the first of the series, #3001, was introduced in 1929. The C&NW's #3020 was the heaviest 4-8-4 built (weight of locomotive alone) at the time of its use. The 103-foot-long Class H had 76 inch diameter driving wheels and a total tractive power of 84,200 pounds. **These locomotives were called the "Zeppelins of the Rails," and featured automatic train control, which would stop the train when it approached another train or slowed it to 20 miles per hour in restricted areas.** The C&NW continued to use the Class H well into the 1950s, when they were then replaced by diesel locomotives.



Presidential hopefuls traversed the country by rail and the U.S. citizens came out in droves to hear the candidates.

"THE TRAIN THAT SET THE PACE FOR THE WORLD"

THE "400"

The first *400* train was pulled by a steam locomotive and could make the **409 mile trip from Chicago to St. Paul, Minnesota in as little as 390 minutes**. Unlike the lightweight streamliners that had emerged in 1934, **the first *400* was a conventional train with standard heavyweight cars**. The train generally ran with six cars that had air conditioning, updated interiors, and hot water in the coach lavatories.

1934


"North Western" ENLARGES ITS GREAT "400" FLEET

BUILT BY PULLMAN STANDARD

Pullman-Standard CAR MANUFACTURING COMPANY

CHICAGO · ILLINOIS

1939

Despite the success of the *400*, **in 1938 the C&NW made plans to purchase 20 streamlined cars and four diesel-electric units** for the *400*. The diesels were introduced in 1939, but the original *400s*, renamed **the *Twin Cities 400*, continued to run with non-recliner coaches until 1963**.

The first full C&NW streamlined train made its **inaugural roundtrip from Chicago to Milwaukee on September 18, 1939**. The standard order of cars was a **baggage-taproom-lounge followed by four 56-seat coaches, a 56-seat dining car, three 27-seat parlor cars, and a club-observation car**. All were appointed with the most modern decorations, lighting, and conveniences. **The trucks of the cars were also redesigned to provide an exceptionally smooth ride**.

Regular service for the streamlined ***400s* began on September 24, 1939**. These trains were immensely popular in their early days and proved to be **worthy competition for the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy's Twin *Zephyrs*, and the Milwaukee Road's *Hiawathas***. In addition to the Chicago to St. Paul route, the **C&NW operated several other routes with a number of *400s* bearing names such as the *Minnesota 400*, the *Flambeau 400*, the *Peninsula 400*, and the *Kate Shelley 400***.


1942 Breakfast Card

Breakfast

Fastest Train Title Goes to C&NW

With the addition of a stop at Waukegan the Chicago & North Western's 9:05 a. m. City of Milwaukee "400" from Milwaukee to Chicago now makes the 15.66 miles from Kenosha ... Waukegan in 11 minutes ... average of 85.4 mil... ... becom- ... scheduled ... formerly ... of ... the ... but ... up to ... is ... line ... block signaled, and has no grade crossings of other than secondary roads. Curvature is very slight and the lake front flat offers a natural speed...

about a mile from Waukegan. Acceleration is helped a little by the fact that Waukegan station is 40 feet lower than Kenosha, and while the first mile out of Kenosha is very slightly upgrade, the loss in elevation follows immediately and before the train is up to full speed. The rest of the run is along the lake shore flats.

Examination of the train sheets shows that No. 156 has been making the difficult time day after day. The train is pulled by a 2000 horsepower Electro-Motive Diesel and is made up of six light weight Pullman-built cars totaling 350 tons behind the locomotive. The line is double track, automatic block signaled, and has no grade crossings of other than secondary roads. Curvature is very slight and the lake front flat offers a natural speed...

WOMEN GO TO WAR

ON THE HOME FRONT

During WWII, the men went to war. Women were encouraged to take on jobs which traditionally had been held by men.

ROUTE OF THE 400's, THE STREAMLINERS AND THE CHALLENGERS

MEET NORTH WESTERN'S "WIPES"

—all busy on the Transportation Front

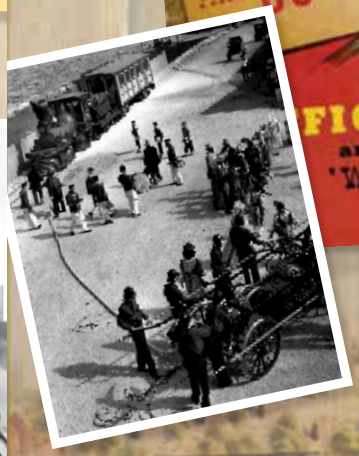
The women of Clinton, Iowa answered the call to maintain and clean C&NW locomotives.

The official job classification was "Wipers." It was a very dirty but essential job, and was not normally thought of as "women's work."

A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

1948

The **C&NW celebrated its centennial in 1948** – using the G&CU's inauguration as the starting date – **coinciding with the Railroad Fair held in Chicago**.



C&NW NOTABLE PASSENGER TRAINS

TWIN CITIES *"400"*

CHICAGO – ST. PAUL – MINNEAPOLIS

CHALLENGER

CHICAGO – LOS ANGELES – SAN FRANCISCO (C&NW, UP)

CITY OF DENVER

(C&NW, UP)

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

(C&NW, UP)

CITY OF PORTLAND

(C&NW, UP)

CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

(C&NW, UP, SP)

ASHLAND LIMITED

CHICAGO - GREEN BAY - ASHLAND, WISCONSIN

DAKOTA *"400"*

CHICAGO - MADISON - HURON, WISCONSIN

DULUTH-SUPERIOR LIMITED

CHICAGO - MADISON - DULUTH, MINNESOTA

KATE SHELLEY *"400"*

CHICAGO - BOONE, IOWA

NORTH WESTERN LIMITED

CHICAGO - TWIN CITIES

SHORELAND *"400"*

CHICAGO - MILWAUKEE - GREEN BAY

PENINSULA *"400"*

CHICAGO - GREEN BAY - ISHPEMING MICHIGAN

FLAMBEAU *"400"*

CHICAGO - GREEN BAY - ASHLAND, WISCONSIN

VALLEY *"400"*

CHICAGO - GREEN BAY - MENOMINEE, MICHIGAN

BI-LEVEL CARS

1950

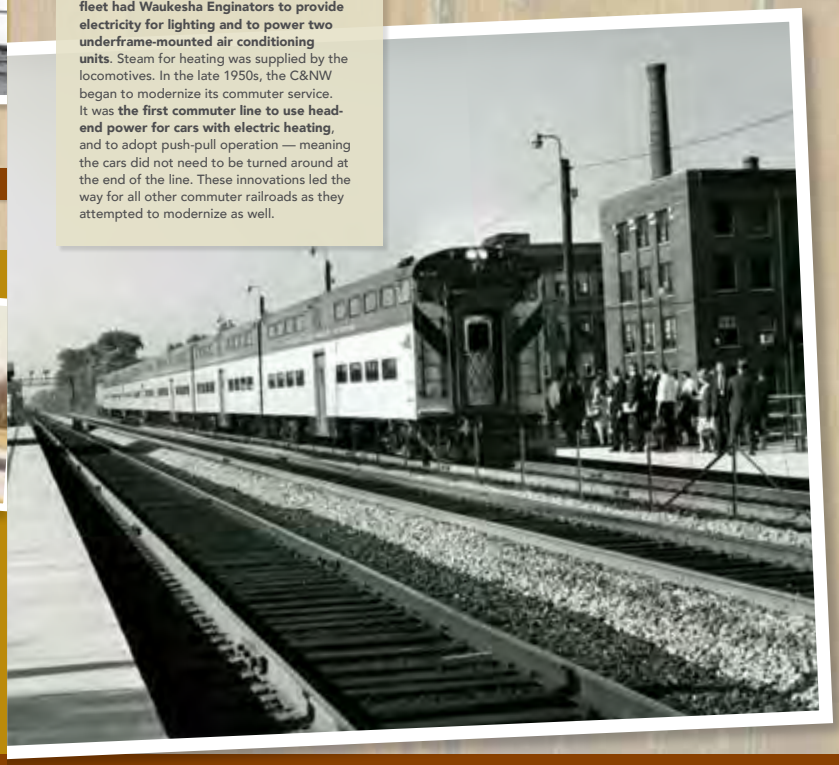
1971

In 1950, **the Burlington Route was Chicago's first commuter railroad to use bi-level commuter cars**. Five years later, the C&NW introduced bi-level cars, the first sixteen of which were made by St. Louis Car Company. Pullman-Standard built the rest of **the C&NW fleet of 292 bi-level cars**; 280 of those cars were for Chicago commuter service. The cars remained in use until they were sold to the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) on December 31, 1977. In addition to the bi-level commuter cars, **C&NW ordered 14 new and four remanufactured bi-level cars from Pullman-Standard for long-distance service in 1958**. These cars were used on C&NW's *400* trains to Green Bay, Wisconsin, and northern Michigan.

THE END OF C&NW PASSENGER SERVICE

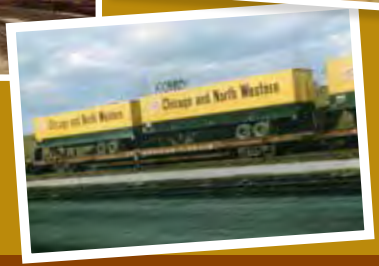
By the 1960s, bi-level cars and services on the *400s* began to be reduced. It was an era where many routes or scheduled services were eliminated. By 1968 the *400* name began to disappear. **As of 1969, the trains began to be designated as "Bi-Level Streamliners"** or if they did not have bi-level cars, "Streamliners." In 1969 and 1970, services were further reduced as passenger train mileage lagged. **April 30, 1971 marked the date private long distance passenger service operated by the C&NW ceased to exist**.

The first 48 cars of the C&NW commuter fleet had Waukesha Enginators to provide electricity for lighting and to power two underframe-mounted air conditioning units. Steam for heating was supplied by the locomotives. In the late 1950s, the C&NW began to modernize its commuter service. It was **the first commuter line to use head-end power for cars with electric heating**, and to adopt push-pull operation — meaning the cars did not need to be turned around at the end of the line. These innovations led the way for all other commuter railroads as they attempted to modernize as well.



FALCON SERVICE INTERMODAL TRAINS

In addition to giving time freights numbers, the C&NW would uniquely name them. The first "Falcon" went into service in 1973 and was a C&NW success story of double digit growth at the onset. Piggyback revenues during this same mid 70s era were a fraction of the Falcon's but experienced steady growth.

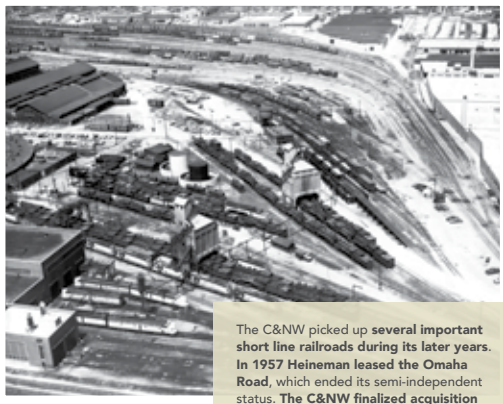


ADVERTISING

The C&NW was an aggressive marketer and took advantage of putting its logo on virtually everything they owned. Ads flourished through the decades encouraging usage of every feature the C&NW offered.

RETOOLING THE C&NW

In 1955, the C&NW railroad came perilously close to bankruptcy again as poor management and the cost of an obsolete plant took their toll. That same year, the passenger agreement with the Union Pacific/Southern Pacific was ended by the C&NW, a major departure from decades of cooperation. **Ben Heineman became Chairman of the Board of the C&NW in 1956 and worked hard to resolve the Railroad's financial problems**. The Heineman era included **catching up on deferred maintenance, modernizing ticketing and collection methods, revising schedules, and adjusting fares. On May 11, 1956 the Railroad retired the last steam engines in the Chicago commuter district by more efficiently assigning diesels. The old commuter cars were later replaced with bi-level cars.**



Except for commuter trains, **steam engines were replaced on most mainline trains by 1952.**

The C&NW picked up **several important short line railroads during its later years. In 1957 Heineman leased the Omaha Road**, which ended its semi-independent status. **The C&NW finalized acquisition of the Litchfield and Madison Railway on January 1, 1958 and on November 1, 1960, acquired the rail properties of the 1,500-mile Minneapolis and St. Louis Railway**. In spite of its name, the M&SL only ran from Minneapolis, Minnesota to Peoria, Illinois. This acquisition provided traffic, modern rolling stock, and eliminated competition. **On July 1, 1968 the 1,500 mile Chicago Great Western Railway was merged into the North Western**. The CGW duplicated the North Western's routes from Chicago to the Twin Cities and Omaha, but went the long way. However, **the merger provided access to Kansas City** and further eliminated competition. In addition to rail lines, **Heineman and the C&NW began to acquire other businesses and companies, eventually creating a conglomerate called Northwest Industries (NWI) in 1968**.

ROLLING FREIGHT

Domestic and international container traffic contributed to the success of C&NW in the 1980-1990 era.

C&NW

"CHEAP AND NOTHING WASTED"

The C&NW was **known for purchasing a great deal of its equipment second-hand, economizing wherever possible by re-building and re-purposing existing equipment**. These efforts earned the railroad the nickname **"Cheap and Nothing Wasted,"** and **sometimes employees referred to the condition of equipment as "Cardboard and No Wheels."**

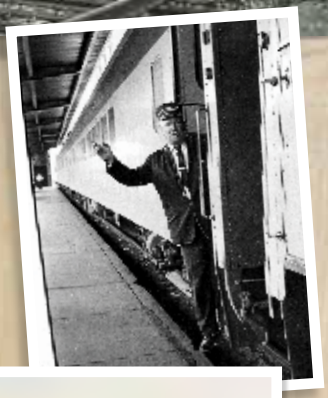
Like other railroads in the 1960s and 1970s, **the C&NW sought to deal with losses by diversifying**, and by 1970 the railroad was actually a money-losing component of its parent company, Northwest Industries (NWI). **Chairman of the Board Ben Heineman** wanted to **spin the C&NW off from Northwest Industries** and — after abandoning a plan to merge with the Milwaukee Road in 1970 — **he agreed to a deal with C&NW President Larry Provo to sell the line to an employee-led investment group**. This group, called **the Chicago & North Western Transportation Company, took over on June 1, 1972** and remained in control until the end of the railroad in 1995. The words **"Employee Owned" became part of the company logo** during that period, but **only about 1,000 out of 14,000 eligible employees actually purchased stock**.

BEN HEINEMAN

1914-2012

Ben Walter Heineman (February 10, 1914 – August 5, 2012), **a Wisconsin native and Northwestern University trained lawyer**, first gained attention in the railroad industry **in 1954 when he orchestrated a successful proxy battle for control of the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railway**. When **he became chairman of the Board of Directors in 1956**, equivalent to the chief executive officer of the C&NW, **the railroad was teetering on the brink of bankruptcy**. Heineman enacted **a series of difficult cost-cutting measures that returned the railroad to solvency**.

Many of Heineman's changes were effective and **by 1964, the railroad's $5.5 million deficit turned into a $23.2 million profit**. After an effort to merge with the Milwaukee Road failed, **Heineman agreed to sell the line to an employee-led investment group**. In 1972, Heineman retired from Northwest Industries in 1985 and passed away in Waukesha, Wisconsin at the age of 98.



C&NW relied heavily on second-hand locomotives that were rebuilt at the Oelwein, Iowa shops.

1970s

The C&NW was profitable throughout the 1970s largely because **it abandoned a number of low-density branch lines that cost more in upkeep than they made in earnings**. During this same period, the railroad upgraded its major lines, especially the Omaha stem, which was used to interchange cars with the Union Pacific. **By the time Amtrak took on passenger service in the United States in 1971, the C&NW had more or less eliminated its non-commuter passenger lines**.

C&NW partnered with UP to move Wyoming coal to Midwest power plants.

Railfans flocked to C&NW to photograph second-hand locomotives.

In **1976, Larry Provo, C&NW President, passed away** from complications associated with lung cancer and was replaced by **James Wolfe who proved to be an effective, if authoritarian, leader**. He negotiated a favorable deal with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) in Chicago that made money for the company and meant that it no longer operated any passenger trains. **It took a decade, but Wolfe also completed the Coal Line Project, which had begun in 1973, and opened the Wyoming coalfields to the C&NW. However, the move made the C&NW less dependable on the grain market**. Not every move worked though — "Safety Yellow" mandated to replace the older "Traditional Yellow" on all equipment in 1980 was a costly error, as was in 1981 an expensive rebuilding of the soon-to-be eliminated cabooses. Nonetheless, **by the early 1980s, the C&NW felt it was in a position of power in the contentious Midwest rail industry**.

It was the end of an era for streamliners and the Chicago Passenger Terminal.

C&NW emerged from the 1970's with strong intermodal traffic.

Repairing and rebuilding the Railroad was critical to survival.

Bright yellow cabooses declared, "We're Employee Owned!"

"Pink Lady" quartzite ballast from Rock Springs, WI was used during track improvements, and gave the roadbed a distinct pink color.

CHICAGO'S COMMUTER SERVICE

The three Chicago area commuter lines that are now operated by Union Pacific spent much of their existence as part of the C&NW. **Each began independently before becoming part of the Railroad:**

- **THE NORTHWEST LINE**, started as the Illinois & Wisconsin in 1854, and became part of the C&NW when the system was formed in 1859.
- **THE WEST LINE**, which began as the Galena & Chicago Union in 1848, became part of the C&NW system in 1864.
- **THE NORTH LINE**, began as the Chicago & Milwaukee in 1854, was leased by the C&NW starting in 1866, and finally purchased by the C&NW in 1883.

Intercity travel was made easy with Chicago's coordinated commuter service

In the 1940s, complimentary use of umbrellas was offered to commuters.

Commuter service on all three lines developed gradually, particularly in the years following the Civil War and the Chicago Fire of 1871. **The fire especially made living in the suburbs more appealing – being away from the congestion and noise of the city – and the railroad promoted and benefitted from the trend**.

In 1915, a committee sponsored by the Chicago Association of Commerce **recommended that the C&NW electrify its tracks between Chicago and Waukegan, Des Plaines, and Elmhurst**. The company considered it in the 1920s, particularly after the Illinois Central electrified its commuter service (today's METRA Electric Line) in 1926. **But the cost – at least $60 million at the time – and the fact that commuter trains were money-losers, deterred implementation**.

In the same decade, **the Railroad improved several suburban depots and introduced some new aluminum-alloy commuter cars**. It also leased a private car, the Deerpath, to wealthy businessmen on its North line in 1929. (The descendant of that car is still in service.) **Yet it was an era witnessing growing popularity of the automobile**, and unsurprisingly, the company began to notice **a severe drop in local train passengers**.

Commuter service developed gradually following the Civil War and the Chicago Fire of 1871.

ORIGIN OF METRA SERVICE

Like the rest of the country, **the Railroad was battered by the Depression in the 1930s**, leading to a nine-year bankruptcy starting in 1935. The **C&NW's introduction of its famed "*400*" intercity trains that decade was one of the few bright spots**. Nonetheless in the 1930s, the C&NW provided **service to about 50,000 commuters from and to the Chicago suburbs utilizing 100 trains and crews**.

In 1974, the RTA was formed and it began to subsidize the region's commuter trains. The C&NW entered into a purchase-of-service agreement with the RTA. That agreement now continues for the three lines, although the agreement is now between METRA, formed in 1984, and the Union Pacific which bought the C&NW in 1995.

In the 1940s and 1950s, passenger trains continued to lose riders to the automobile and airplane. Commuter trains fared better than intercity trains, but still were declining in profits and passengers. The C&NW sought to reverse that trend in the 1950s and 1960s by catching up on deferred maintenance, modernizing ticketing and collection methods, revising schedules, and adjusting fares. **The railroad also replaced the commuter fleet with new bi-level coaches and shuttered about 20 close-in stations** so it could concentrate on suburban service.

Ironically the C&NW was transporting the very same thing they were losing business to – the automobile.

END OF CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN

UNION PACIFIC ACQUIRES C&NW

After the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad (Rock Island) stopped operating on **March 31, 1980 the C&NW won a bidding war with the Soo Line Railroad for purchase of the roughly 600-mile "Spine Line" from the Twin Cities to Kansas City, Missouri** via Des Moines, Iowa. The line was well-engineered, but because of deferred maintenance on the part of the bankrupt Rock Island, a major rehabilitation was undertaken in 1984. Also **in the 1980s, the C&NW tried to take over the bankrupt Milwaukee Road but was defeated in 1985 by a combination of the Soo Line's bid and a decision of the courts**.

In 1982, employee-ownership ended and C&NW stock was no longer reserved for employees. In 1985, after the failed bid for the Milwaukee Road, the C&NW restructured itself and created a holding company called C&NW Corporation to allow more diversification. **Later in that decade, the C&NW recognized the benefits of container shipping and became a leader in piggyback trains**.

Throughout the 1980s, management made efforts to reduce its workforce and by 1991, the number of employees had dropped to 6,841 less than half the number employed in 1981.

UNION PACIFIC

In 1989 the C&NW was taken by surprise when Japonica Partners L.P. attempted to acquire the outstanding shares of C&NW Corp., after already acquiring 8.8% ownership. Management considered employee-ownership again, but decided to find a "friendly" takeover partner. **The C&NW then approved a "definitive merger agreement" with Blackstone Capital Partners, L.P., which quickly outbid Japonica**.

The **Union Pacific** and an insurance-based financial company backed the Blackstone Group, and **kept the Omaha to Chicago line safe from Japonica's grasp**. The C&NW corporate structure was completely changed, and the Railroad was effectively saddled with heavy long-term debt and high interest payments. **Drastic cuts had to be made all over the system.**

In 1993, an initial public stock offering was tendered and Union Pacific investments were transferred to non-voting common stock, representing 25% ownership. **In March 1995, UP announced its intent to acquire 100% of the C&NW's publicly traded stock** at a price of $35 per share. Management had negotiated with the UP for the best possible deal, since a takeover seemed inevitable.

April 24, 1995 was the last day of operation for the C&NW as it was merged into the Union Pacific. **Though it was a tough loss for a once proud railroad, the merger meant the C&NW was not broken up in bankruptcy court like many of its competitors.**

CELEBRATE (A) RAILROAD

Celebrate-a-Railroad was envisioned by Ken Jaglinski, Harry Grieshaber, Bob Henderson, and Mike Carlson **to preserve America's rich railroad industry history**. The annual tradition launched at Trainfest 2015 in Milwaukee. Trainfest is America's Largest Operating Model Railroad Show and the C&NW was the first Railroad to be featured.

Trainfest is a public event attracting thousands of model train hobbyists and train enthusiasts. Trainfest is held annually the second weekend of November. The event is organized by the Wisconsin Southeastern Division, Inc. of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA). The WISE Division is non-profit organization. For more information, visit **www.trainfest.com**.

THE BAR AND BALL

In 1891 the C&NW adopted the famous "ball and bar" logo, which survived a few modifications **throughout the Railroad's 104 year existence**.

1891-1902

1902-1944

1944-1957

1957-1971

1971-1982

1982-1995

CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY

Photos courtesy of the Chicago & North Western Historical Society

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Preserving our rich history

2015	Chicago & North Western
2016	Milwaukee Road
2017	Soo Line
2018	Great Northern

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