

Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad

By GLOVER A. SNOW

THE STORY of the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad is so typical of dozens of other similar undertakings of the last century that it reads like a case history of the "Railroad Fever."

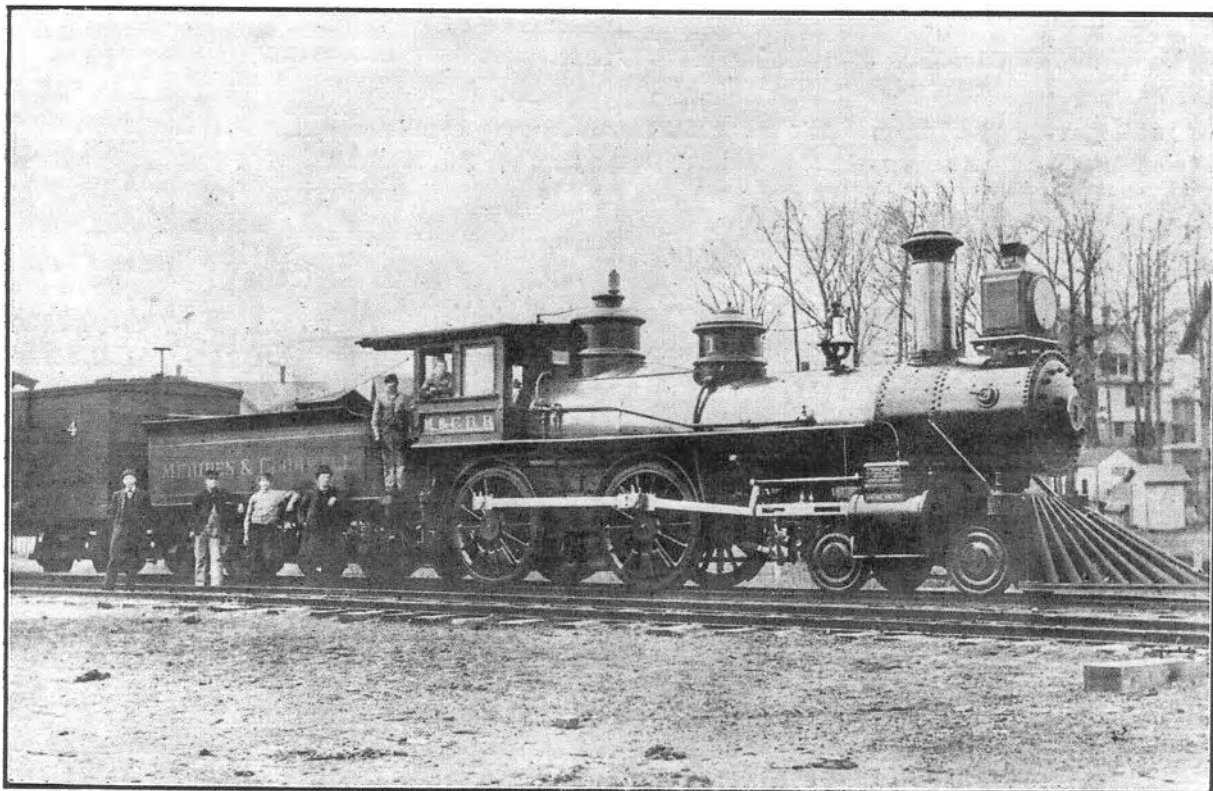
In the beginning every town wanted a railroad; just one—and any one would do. Meriden got its railroad early. Fortu-

nately, it was in a direct line with New Haven, Hartford and Springfield, so that when the first link of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad was proposed, not much persuasion was required to have it go through what was then West Meriden.

This, the first Connecticut railroad, opened in 1838 be-

tween New Haven and Meriden with stage coaches to Hartford for a year, by which time rails were completed through to that city.

Eventually, the Hartford & New Haven, as it was called, combined with the later-built Hartford & Springfield, and finally with the New York & New Haven to form the New York, New Haven & Hartford



—Photo from Collection of D. W. Peckham.

MERIDEN & CROMWELL RAILROAD NO. 1 photographed at Meriden, Conn.

Also In This Issue:

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Notes on 1952 Passenger Service Expansion

Railroad. The New York end was completed in 1849.

Since the Western Railroad was already running its trains between Worcester and Springfield, and the Eastern Railroad from Worcester to Boston (now Boston & Albany which is part of the New York Central System), the year 1949 was the 100th anniversary of the first all-rail route between New York and Boston.

One might think that with such a railroad Meriden would have been satisfied. It was for awhile. But before many years passed it was aware of what appeared to be rank discrimination on the part of the New Haven in favor of cities like New Haven and Hartford where there was water competition. The manufacturers of fast-growing Meriden were reluctant to accept this situation.

Until 1806 Meriden had been a parish of Wallingford. However, in that year Meriden was set off into a separate township. About the same time there were a number of enterprising small industries in the village which started to participate in the industrial growth of the country. They did so well in the 50 years from 1840 to 1890 that Meriden's population went from 1,800 to 25,423, which meant more than a two-fold increase between each census. The village grew into a city in short order, and the businessmen became more and more reluctant to pay the New Haven Road's high rates.

* * *

Meriden & Cheshire R. R.

THE FIRST attempt to break the railroad monopoly came in 1869 when a special town meeting appointed a committee to seek passage through the

Legislature of a bill to authorize the town to subscribe \$100,000 to the capital stock of a proposed Meriden & Cheshire Railroad. A little later the town of Cheshire authorized a subscription to the same enterprise.

At that time the only independent north and south railroad was the New Haven & Northampton Railroad, the Canal Line, and it is probable that the proposed line was to connect with it and thus form a new route to New York, to the South and the West, which would provide competition and lower rates.

This scheme probably failed because the New Haven got control of the Canal Line. There was active promotion in 1871 of a line between Norwich, Middletown, Meriden and Waterbury which would connect at Waterbury with the Boston, Hartford & Erie Railroad, but this scheme never really got started.

* * *

Meriden & Cromwell R. R.

BY THE YEAR 1881 Meriden was still groaning under what it considered were unfair and discriminatory rates, but there were several prominent citizens who had decided to do something. Manufacturers were particularly concerned with the cost of getting coal and heavy supplies. Their answer seemed to be a railroad from Meriden to the Connecticut River at Cromwell which would connect with boat and barge service on the river to New York and Atlantic Coast ports.

The mere announcement that such a railroad was contemplated brought unexpected results. The Consolidated, as the New Haven was known in those

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THIS is our seventh year of historical publications, but our first history of a Connecticut steam railroad. A listing of our previous publications, most of them about street railway lines, may be had by writing to the above address.

The Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad

THE WRITER wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the many people who have helped him with information, pictures and general encouragement. Special mention should be given to Mr. Frank Korten and Mr. James Ullman, both of whom loaned the author very extensive notes they had made from contemporary newspapers; to Mr. C. B. Burr for documentary evidence which makes statements conclusive which otherwise might have been surmises, and to Mr. D. W. Peckham for many of the pictures used herein. Unfortunately both these men passed away since work on the history was started.

If any reader of this history is in possession of additional facts on the MW & CR, or pictures, the writer would deem it a favor if he were notified through Box 941, Meriden. If a second edition is ever published, such information will help to fill in gaps, which while not too evident, perhaps, are nevertheless present.

GLOVER A. SNOW
Box 941
Meriden, Conn.

days, proclaimed a 25% reduction in freight rates to Meriden.

It was apparently hoped this would satisfy the clamor for lower rates, and at the same time indicate to the promoters the kind of competition they would be up against. Meriden newspapers warned businessmen of this trick, and suggested that if the proposed line did not pay any dividends for 10 years the savings on freight already accomplished would warrant the heavy investment.

* * *

THE MOST ACTIVE promoter of the Meriden & Cromwell Railroad was Horace C. Wilcox who was a pioneer and a leader in the rapidly-growing silver industry. He was determined to let nothing stop the project, and when he put his shoulder to the wheel of any project, it moved. The original capitalization was set at \$300,000, of which \$230,000 was

pledged before the first organization meeting.

In addition to his original subscription Mr. Wilcox stood ready to take any remaining stock. He realized, however, that if the road were to succeed financially the stock would have to be distributed into as many hands as possible. Every effort was made to get subscriptions from all kinds of citizens, with particular emphasis on storekeepers, manufacturers and businessmen. Without a financial stake in the road they might be amenable to temporary rate cuts on the part of the New Haven Road which would have driven the Meriden & Cromwell Railroad Co. out of business almost immediately after its inception.

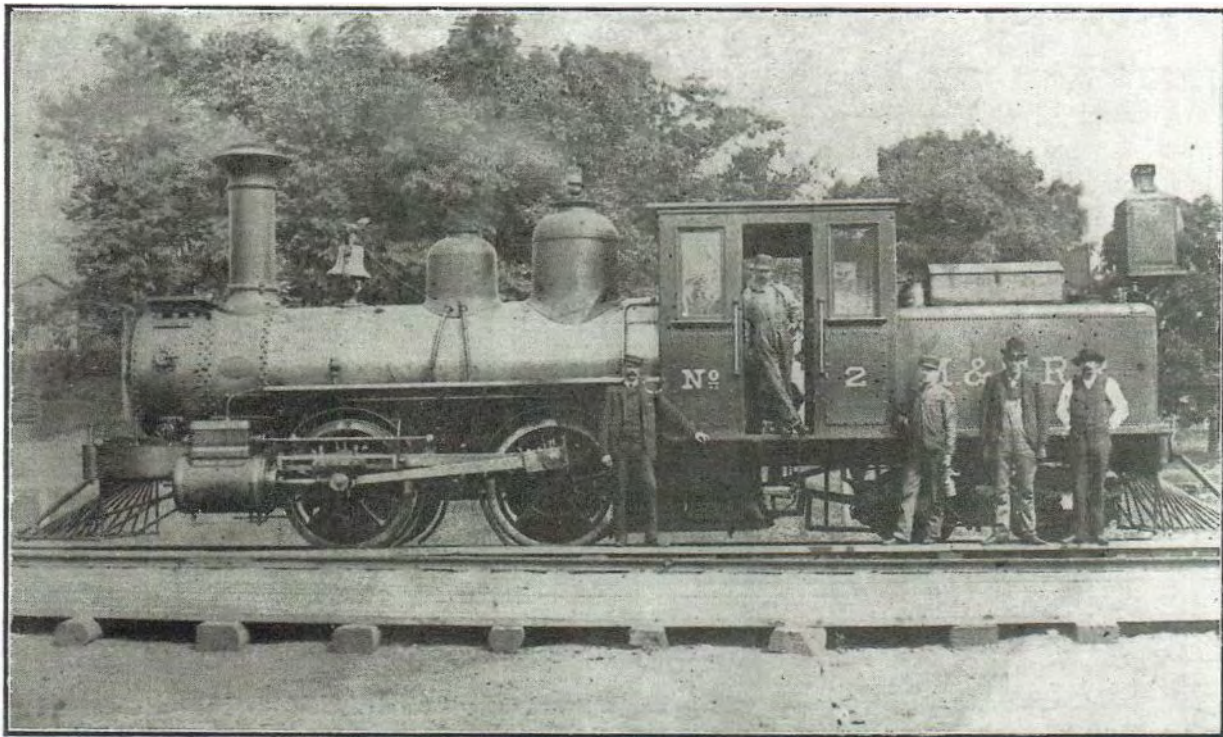
The initial meeting was held on July 5, 1882 with about 150 prominent citizens of the Meriden area attending. Seventeen directors were elected. On July

11th the directors met and chose a slate of officers which included Horace C. Wilcox as president.

* * *

EVERYBODY was optimistic. As one Meriden paper said: "It is fair to hope that the sound of the locomotive whistle will be heard on the road before snow flies." What such a hope was based upon is difficult to understand. At any rate it was reported in the public press on July 12th that "The Meriden & Cromwell Railroad Company are getting down to business. Stationery is being printed today." And on July 31st: "The company has an office in the Wilcox Block over the Post Office."

By September the layout for the proposed line was completed and submitted to the State Railroad Commission for approval. The original plan was for the western end to be "in



—Photo from Collection of D. W. Peckham.

MERIDEN & CROMWELL RAILROAD No. 2—The road's second No. 2.

the center of the south track north of the Wilcox & White Organ Co. factory situated on the north side of Cambridge Street and 131 feet west of the easterly wing." The petition to the commission stated that the company was trying to reach agreements with the New Haven for crossing its Berlin-Middletown branch, and the Hartford & Connecticut Valley Railroad for passing over its line.

* * *

THE hearing of the commissioners was held in Meriden. Presidents of both the New Haven and the Valley Roads, among others, thought it important enough to attend. This hearing on September 20th, was adjourned until the 27th at Cromwell. Once again President Watrous and Vice-President Reed of the New Haven, as well as President Babcock of the Valley Road, were there.

There was a long argument about a grade crossing with the Valley Railroad at Cromwell. The commission reserved its decision at the time, but within a couple of weeks gave assent to the layout. Engineer Drake of the new line said that it would be in operation within 12 months' time.

The next step was to make deals with the owners of the property over which the line would be built. Engineer Drake said that most of them wanted altogether too much money. He had to spend a lot of time with them, going over the individual maps he had to make of their properties. State laws compelled the new road to deposit with the town clerk of each town through which the line would run a map on a scale of 100 feet to the inch within

three months from the town's approval of the layout.

Then, as if that were not enough to keep the chief engineer busy, the powers-that-be decided to relocate quite a bit of the line, which meant doing the job all over again. On December 8, 1882, Consulting Engineer Crawford of New York City conferred with President Wilcox and they agreed that such relocations would considerably lessen the number of grade crossings and trim \$30,000 off construction costs. They then talked about getting the road running "by early fall, if not summer" (of 1883).

The formalities of petitioning for relocated sections got under way in January 1883, but it was not until May that the route was approved. To give some idea of the "red tape" incidental to these alterations, there were eight pages of small print in the notice of the hearing, all of which had to be sent to the 70 property owners who were or might be affected. The revision would, in addition to line changes, bring the road nearer the center of Meriden.

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ON THE DAY of the hearing the Railroad Commissioners came to Meriden and took carriages to Westfield station on the New Haven's Middletown-Berlin branch. Both presidents of the Consolidated and the Valley Roads were on hand with their engineers. The party examined every point where the new railroad was to cross a highway. The commission did not announce its decision over the changes at the time. A few days later, on June 27th, the Meriden & Cromwell made an agreement with the Valley Road to cross its tracks below grade.

It was a full year since the

Meriden & Cromwell had been organized, but no construction had started. The public had apparently become impatient and skeptical; the local papers carried quite a few items calculated to reassure the populace. It was stated that the ties had been purchased and delivered at Cromwell and that actual construction would begin "at the earliest possible moment."

In August of 1883 the directors voted to buy an engine and five freight cars for use in building the road. A contract was let for grading, and in September work actually commenced.

* * *

BY the middle of December engine house, turntable and water tank at Cromwell were nearly completed, but delays from bad weather and other causes confounded all previous predictions about the time of opening. Another change was made in the location for the Meriden terminus. It was decided to put the passenger and freight station, as well as the yards, between Camp and Center Streets (on property now owned and used by the New Departure Division of General Motors), which at the time was adjacent to the old woolen mill.

The right-of-way skirted Brookside Park (then called Camp's Meadows) and the south edge of Pratt's Pond. The plan to build the depot on State Street near the Meriden Britannia Company (now Factory E, International Silver Company) failed to materialize.

In May, 1884, President Wilcox and two other officers went to Springfield and bought 40 freight cars, as well as a passenger coach, from the Wason Manufacturing Company. Meanwhile, the Rhode Island Locomotive Works was building what the newspapers

called "a light engine to be used in the constructing of the road. Afterward a heavy engine will be put on."

The first half mile of track was laid in May at the Cromwell end, and by the 28th of June it was completed as far as Highland station. Ground was broken for the Meriden roundhouse at Center Street in July. By the first of September the track had gotten to Pratt's Pond in Meriden.

* * *

THE BIG SWAMP between Highland and Pratt's Pond gave much trouble—and was to give more later. October saw completion of the main track to Center Street, and by the fourth of the month inspection and work trains had been run over the whole road. The directors called for the ninth and last installment of 15% on the stock from subscribers.

Meanwhile, docking facilities were constructed at Cromwell. A passenger and freight depot was erected there, and a similar combined facility at Center Street in Meriden.

Winter brought a slowdown in finishing the road so that formal opening plans were made for April 1, 1885. At the last minute it was announced that the event would be put off for a week because the State Railroad Commission would not be able to inspect the road in time for the earlier opening.

According to the local papers "some very pretty passenger cars are on the way. They were in Springfield this morning, and much admired by passersby." Actually only one coach was purchased new from the Wason company in Springfield, No. 10, the combination car. Additional coaches were rented from the Valley Road when needed.

Meriden & Cromwell officials made a trip to Cromwell in No. 10 on April 25th, and everyone was much pleased.

The road's first conductor was C. H. Stebbins who had been gathering experience on the New York Elevated, although he was a Meriden man. M. S. Osgood, an engineer of 20 years' experience, was to be the throttle handler. And "in cases of necessity Master Mechanic Gilbert, who has been with the road a year, will take charge of the engine."

The papers further stated that the road would start "with two fine engines built by the Rhode Island Locomotive Works, with passenger and freight cars by Wason & Co. at Springfield. About 50 freight cars will transport merchandise of all kinds."

* * *

THE STATE Railroad Commission made a trip over the line on April 1st and signified its approval. Three days later the stockholders were given an excursion to Cromwell for a preview of their new railroad. Guests from around the state accompanied them, including numerous editors and other

newspapermen. A large crowd gathered at Center Street depot to see the train off. It was reported that the trip "was a smooth one—not the slightest accident to mar their enjoyment. The commodious freight depot and cozy passenger room at Cromwell were much admired by the visitors."

* * *

ON APRIL 6, 1885, without fanfare, regularly scheduled service began. The timetable gave trains 35 minutes to make the run to Cromwell. There were flag stops at Highland, Smith's crossing and Westfield, and three round trips, leaving Meriden at 8:45 a. m., 12:15 and 5:10 p. m. Returning trains reached Meriden at 7:05, 11 a. m. and 4 p. m. The schedules were set up to make connections with the Hartford-New York boats on the Connecticut River. If shippers got their freight to the Meriden station by 5 o'clock at night, it would be delivered in New York the next morning; freight from New York got the same overnight service.

The new road received extensive writeups in newspapers all over the state as an example of what the citizens of a city could



—Photo from Collection of D. W. Peckham.

CROMWELL—The station and dock facilities on the river.

do to eliminate railroad rate discrimination and improve service. Several editors warned Meridenites that although the road's mission had been accomplished they should not neglect to patronize it. From general comments it could be inferred that the Consolidated Road did not have too many friends in the state in 1885.

Completion of the road and its apparent success brought agitation for extensions in various directions. One proposal was to Bristol via Southington to connect with the New York & New England Railroad for the Western business. (The New York & New England connection was eventually made at Waterbury).

* * *

THE FIRST STROKE of bad luck to hit the Meriden & Cromwell was a Connecticut River Spring freshet. On the 25th of the road's first month of operation it was reported that 50 feet of the line near Cromwell was under two feet of water. Whether the trains were allowed to plow through was not stated, but it was claimed that no delays were being encountered in freight deliveries from New York. However, conditions became worse because trains ceased operation within a week. After the water went down, the embankment, damaged by river currents, had to be replaced. Trains were back on schedule by the end of the month.

During this freshet the tracks were under water in three places, "Puddock" meadows, Cromwell meadows and at the dock. The road announced that alteration of the grade would be made at these places to prevent recurrence of the trouble. Just how this was done at the docks is a little puzzling, be-

cause the following Autumn it was stated that the track was being LOWERED to bring it down level with the boat. "This will be appreciated by the steamship company, who on this account has found it hard to keep a crew longer than one or two trips." (If the steamship company had that much trouble with the crews, appreciation seems a mild word; but that's the way it was reported in the papers).

The 1880's were the great days of railroad excursions. There were no family automo-

biles to give them competition, and trolleys were yet to blossom beyond the horsecar stage. Rail trips of 8, 10 or more miles brought out big crowds. The churches, Sunday schools, clubs, lodges and all kinds of organizations, promoted excursions to beaches, lakes, parks, and groves, and they traveled by special train. The Meriden & Cromwell went after this business, usually in conjunction with the river steamers. The papers repeatedly contained notices of excursions down the river.

Copy of Advertisement in 1885 Meriden Papers

MERIDEN and NEW YORK

via

MERIDEN & CROMWELL RAILROAD

AND

HARTFORD & NEW YORK STEAMBOATS

Summer Arrangement — 1885

Steamers "City of Springfield" and "Capitol City" leave Cromwell daily (except Sunday) on arrival of 5:10 P. M. train from Meriden, stopping at all points on the Connecticut River, arriving at New York 7 A. M.

Returning, leave Pier 24, East River, N. Y., daily (except Sunday) at 4 P. M., connecting at Cromwell with Meriden & Cromwell Railroad, arriving at Meriden 7:10 A. M.

Meals served at reasonable rates.

Single tickets, Meriden to New York, with berth	1.45
Excursion tickets, Meriden to New York and return, with berth	2.75
State Rooms, one way	1.00
State Rooms, round trip	1.50
Fare, Meriden to Philadelphia, summer season (Railroad from New York)	4.30
Fare, Meriden to Philadelphia and return	6.50

ON SATURDAYS—Excursion tickets, good for the trip only, for one passage and stateroom to New York and return, including use of a room three nights, giving excursionists an opportunity to visit seaside resorts in and around New York, Coney Island, Long Branch, Rockaway, Glen Island, etc., Sunday and Monday, arriving at Meriden Tuesday morning

Fare 4.25

C. C. Goodrich
Gen'l Agent Hartford Steamboat Co.
Fred K. DePeyster
Supt. Meriden & Cromwell Railroad
Meriden, May 9, 1885

One popular run was via the steamer "Sunshine" to Sag Harbor, Shelter Island and Niantic. There were moonlight excursions on the river on the barge "Frolic." There were trips to Osprey Beach. The route would be Meriden to Cromwell by rail and down the river to the beach by the "Frolic." These are some of the popular things people did in the 1880's before movies, radios, automobiles and television.

* * *

REPRODUCED on the preceding page is an advertisement of the Summer schedule of the Meriden & Cromwell for 1885. Just look at those rates. And they included sleeping accommodations, too! Meriden papers extolled the trip, and reminded readers that they "were indebted to the managers of our railroad for having the facilities perfected" and suggested they would want to use them "as a matter of local pride as well as convenience."

A coal bin and coal-handling facilities were erected at Cromwell in the Spring of 1885, and were used not only for the railroad and its customers but by coal purchasers up the river. It was noted in the papers that a large three-masted schooner with 400 tons of coal was at the dock at one time, being unloaded with the new donkey engine, which could handle 200 tons a day. The coal was transferred to scows for the rest of the trip to Springfield.

In addition to promoting trips to New York via Cromwell and the river both ways, which consumed a minimum of two days and two nights, publicity was given to a circular trip—down via Cromwell and back via boat to New Haven, leaving New York at 3 p. m. and getting into Meriden via the "steamboat

train" at 9 p.m. This gave a day in New York and consumed a little over 24 hours, or considerably less than both ways via the river. This did not give much revenue to the Meriden & Cromwell, but it could use any passenger revenue to advantage even though the road was built primarily for freight.

In September 1885 the railroad commission had another inspection, by special train, "and found everything in first class condition. They were especially pleased with the 500-foot trestle." The president of the Meriden & Cromwell went along to call their attention to such things.

In October preparations were made for the Winter freeze-up on the river. Shipments would leave Meriden as usual, but would be transferred to the Valley Road at Cromwell and it would carry them to Saybrook Point. From there they would go to New York by boat. Freight would be accepted until 6 p. m. at Center Street and still be handled overnight.

Another change, effective October 16, 1885, was to advance the time of the 4:50 p. m. out of Cromwell to 3:30, with arrival in Meriden at 4 o'clock.

* * *

AT the annual meeting of the road in January 1886, the officers reported net earnings of \$1,781.37 for nine months since the opening for business. The road had carried 15,312 tons of freight and 17,366 passengers.

The Summer schedule, with boat service from Cromwell to New York returned April 1st. At the same time McGuire's Swamp near Bullis Crossing, about two miles from Meriden, began to have Spring fever and heave around. The track settled, and there were times when

it was unsafe to run trains over it. Freight then had to be taken off the cars at the crossing and brought to Meriden by horse-drawn truck. Passengers had to alight and walk to another train on the other side of the subsidence. Aside from minor troubles like this, life on the Meriden & Cromwell appears to have been reasonably smooth during the following several months.

* * *

Meriden & Waterbury Railroad

PROJECTED new railroads were as popular a topic of conversation in the 1870's and 1880's as the building of parkways and superhighways is now in 1952. In talk and on paper the Meriden & Cromwell was given extensions to New Britain, Plainville, Wallingford and even New Haven, as well as to Bristol, Waterbury and Middletown. Everybody wanted extensions but few were willing to put their money into them. The one with the most steam behind it was a projected extension to Waterbury.

In February, 1887, a Waterbury paper reported revival of "the old railroad scheme. There is a movement on foot to build a railroad from Waterbury to Meriden to connect with the Meriden & Cromwell road. This would give Waterbury another tidewater connection for eight months of the year, increasing freighting facilities, and be a great convenience for passenger travel, as it would intercept the Canal, the Consolidated and Hartford & Connecticut Valley Railroads. Many of our business men look with favor on this project."

The Middletown correspondent of the Hartford Courant reported that the New York &

New England Railroad would build a line from South Manchester to Gildersleeve, to which it would bring freight from Springfield and other points. This never happened, but similar rumors persisted for years. The companion to it, that the New York & New England would lease the Meriden & Cromwell, eventually became a fact five years later. However, the comment of one Meriden paper in 1887 was, "No, never! Meriden isn't so anxious to sell her railroad, and Waterbury is willing to try her hand before yielding up her stock."

* * *

A MEETING of Waterbury citizens was held late in February and a committee was appointed to look into the matter. So in spite of rumors to the contrary, the extension at that time was far from assured. However, the following month the directors of the Meriden & Cromwell expressed approval, and a heavy selling campaign was started in Waterbury to raise that city's share of the needed capital. Meanwhile, a bill was introduced in the Legislature authorizing consolidation of the Meriden & Cromwell with the proposed Meriden & Waterbury.

At this point, it might be well to stop and consider the situation. The History of Middlesex County, published in 1884, says, "The purpose of the Meriden & Cromwell Railroad was to afford the manufacturers of Meriden an outlet for raw materials and manufactured goods and thus relieve them from the extortions of monopolies. The stock is mostly owned by manufacturers and merchants in Meriden, and no debts have been incurred in construction of the road, either by issue of bonds or otherwise." This was

a fair statement of the road's purpose, and what it had accomplished. If it had never gone over the hill to Waterbury it probably would have gotten along well enough and kept out of trouble. Apparently nobody realized what it would eventually cost to complete the line, and more especially to go far enough in Waterbury to connect with the New York & New England.

* * *

STRENUOUS efforts had to be made to sell the stock in Waterbury. One of the proponents said at a meeting there, "When Meriden wanted to raise \$200,000 for the Cromwell road, the leading silver company took \$100,000 worth, what some of its directors thought was an extravagant sum. So careful account was kept during the past year, and it was found that in the second year of the road, the savings on freight for them were \$7,800, nearly 8% on the investment."

The question of the practicability of a railroad over the mountain came up at the same meeting. The speaker quoted said that the steepest grade would be 112 feet to the mile for 1,200 feet, the rest averag-

Highway Competition Even in the 1880's

At a meeting proposing the extension of the Meriden & Cromwell Railroad to Waterbury, it was brought out that quite a number of 4-horse teams were carrying metal over the hills from Waterbury to places like Cheshire and Wallingford, this being less expensive than any routing via the Naugatuck Railroad under the rates then prevailing.

ing about 90 feet, or a little under 2%.

The original Interstate Commerce Commission Act was passed in 1887, but according to the proponents of the new railroad, the published rates under the act were even higher than those used previously. The only exceptions were those brought about by the short haul clause. For instance, the rate on coal had been 80 cents to Meriden and 75 to Hartford. The Consolidated, in view of the Cromwell competition, decided to cut the Meriden rate to that of Hartford instead of raising the Hartford rate to the old Meriden figure. The new act prohibited the rate being lower to a point farther on than it was to any point through which the traffic passed.

* * *

EXTREME difficulty was experienced getting Waterbury to pick up its share of the check. The original idea was for Waterbury to finance it entirely, with \$200,000 in stock. Finally, in order to prevent the scheme from collapsing, Meriden took \$75,000. Waterbury, with great difficulty, obtained subscriptions, on paper, for \$125,000. Much of it was never paid for, as it later turned out.

The whole road from Cromwell west was to be bonded for \$10,000 a mile, or \$300,000. This, with \$200,000 in stock, would make the total of \$500,000 it was thought needed to build and equip the road. Rails and ties would cost \$140,000, grading and bridges about \$270,000 ("the very best iron bridges"), it was said. The New York & New England connection would be about \$30,000 more.

The Cromwell end was, of course, practically tidewater, and with minor ups and downs

the line got to Center Street terminus without reaching 200 feet elevation at any point. The new line took off from Meriden & Cromwell tracks east of Twiss Pond in Meriden, went under Britannia and Broad Streets, passed over North Colony Road just north of the old city line, bridged the New Haven Road tracks at about 200 feet above sea level, then turned southwest and crossed numerous streets.

* * *

IRON BRIDGES were used at North Colony Street, the New Haven Railroad and Gracey, Kensington and Lewis Avenues. These were all underpasses. Beyond Lewis Avenue the track was almost at street grade, but wooden overpass bridges were erected for the highways, except at West Main Street which overpassed the rails on a more substantial structure. Land was purchased north of West Main Street for a passenger station, yards, an engine house, shops, and turntable.

South of West Main Street

THE CRAWFORDS, whose names appear in this story as engineers and superintendent, were a well-known family of engineers. J. U. Crawford spent five or six years in Japan at the request of the Japanese government to get its new railway lines running. He also held important positions with the Pennsylvania Railroad, and returned to its employ after his work on the Meriden road. Charles M. Crawford, the superintendent of the line, was his brother; and a third brother, Norman, was an engineer for the P. R. R.

MERIDEN & WATERBURY RAILROAD CO.

30 Meriden Nolan & Co.

Contractors Oct. 1 to 17. Dr.

Meriden, Conn., August 1887

Aug 1 st	Estimate No. 1. For work done & material furnished upon the construction of the M. & W. R.R. under Contract dated June 17 th 1887	
	Section 1. Evaluation May, 1887 clearing	7897 60
	" 2. Evaluation clearing	1800 00
	" 3. Evaluation May, 1887 clearing	4800 00
	" 4. Evaluation clearing	2750 00
	" 5. " "	2640 00
	" 6. " "	1330 00
	" 8. " "	1635 00
	" 12. " "	1240 00
	" 15. " "	800 00
		<u>25592 60</u>
		2559 26
		<u>23033 34</u>

See 10% retained as per Contract
 Received Payment on 8/17 1887
 By Nolan and Co.

I certify that the above account is correct; that the items therein specified were duly authorized and contracted for on favorable terms, and were necessary for the use and benefit of the Company.

John Crawford
 Chief Engineer

Facsimile of one of the bills approved in construction of the Waterbury extension.

the line followed the valley down the west side of Hanover Pond, where it turned west and ran up the Quinnipiac valley to get over onto the Cheshire side of the ridge. Up to this point the gradients were not difficult. The track dropped (with some ups and downs) from the crossing of the New Haven Road to Hanover Pond, to about 80 feet above tide.

An overpass at the Canal Line in Cheshire was at 164 feet elevation. The real climb began there. From West Cheshire station, a little beyond the Canal Road, to Summit was three miles, with an elevation of about 549 feet. After the road was built the time allowed by timetable from West Main Street to Hough's Mill, 3.1

miles from Hanover Pond, was 8 minutes. From Hough's Mill to Summit, 7 miles, the allowance was 30 minutes. From Summit to Dublin Street Station in Waterbury, 5.3 miles, took 13 minutes. This is a little ahead of our story, but will give some conception of what the new railroad was attempting.

E. B. Moss, one of the surveyors on the Waterbury extension, says that the grade from the crossing of the Canal Road to the summit of Waterbury Mountain was two per cent, compensated for curves.

In May 1887, when the extension was actually being organized, it was stated that the amount raised for the undertaking might not be sufficient. Since Meriden, and Horace

Wilcox in particular, would shoulder the additional burden "even if it takes a million," it "seemed advisable to give Meriden control." In other words Waterbury having fallen down on financing, it was in no position to dominate the enterprise. The officers of the Meriden & Waterbury were all Meriden men except for Charles Dickenson of Waterbury who was the president. This was a temporary setup until the Meriden & Cromwell and the extension could be consolidated.

* * *

SPEED was necessary because there would be no income from the west end until it was in operation. Here the new line ran into real trouble. Over 200 property owners were involved in the acquisition of the right-of-way. The company thought that the trustees of the State School in Meriden, through whose land the line would go, had understood and agreed to what was necessary. The company soon found it was wrong. After wrangling and personal recriminations, the road paid more than had been planned rather than undergo further expensive delay in construction which it was claimed ran to several hundred dollars a day.

There were other rows over land, including a serious tangle with the Scovill Manufacturing Company which dragged on and on, and when finally compromised after great expense and delay had one very curious angle. The railroad was noti-

fied, sub-rosa, by an official of the company, that it intended to go into bankruptcy at noon the following day, and that if the railroad did not want to become involved with getting a signed agreement from the receiver of the court, it had better work up an agreement that could be signed in a hurry. The engineers and surveyors worked all night to get specifications in order, the agreement was signed before noon the following day, and Scovill duly filed a petition in bankruptcy directly thereafter.

Crossing of other rail lines, too, was not accomplished without fights. The New Haven which controlled the Canal Road and the Naugatuck Road, claimed that they "owned the land under the railroad from the center of the earth to the stars above"; no road had a right to cross their lines without a special act of Legislature, etc., etc. They also refused to have any track connection with the new road at the north end of Meriden. The Railroad Commission held hearings in May, at which the president of the New Haven said the Meriden & Cromwell was no friend of theirs, and they wanted nothing to do with it.

* * *

THERE was trouble, too, over certain street crossings and alterations in Waterbury, with hearings, city council meetings and uncompromising attitudes that were finally softened, and agreements reached. In Meri-

den there was a certain amount of trouble, most of which centered about the width of the roadway under North Colony Road crossing. A compromise was reached on the basis that it would be changed in the future if required, but the city of Meriden was still plagued by the narrow opening 60 years later. The only change since 1887 was the gaining of a little headroom when the tracks were raised a number of years ago. This crossing got into the headlines in 1951 when a contractor who was lowering the highway through the bridge set off too heavy a blast and cracked the abutment, as well as water and gas mains under the street.

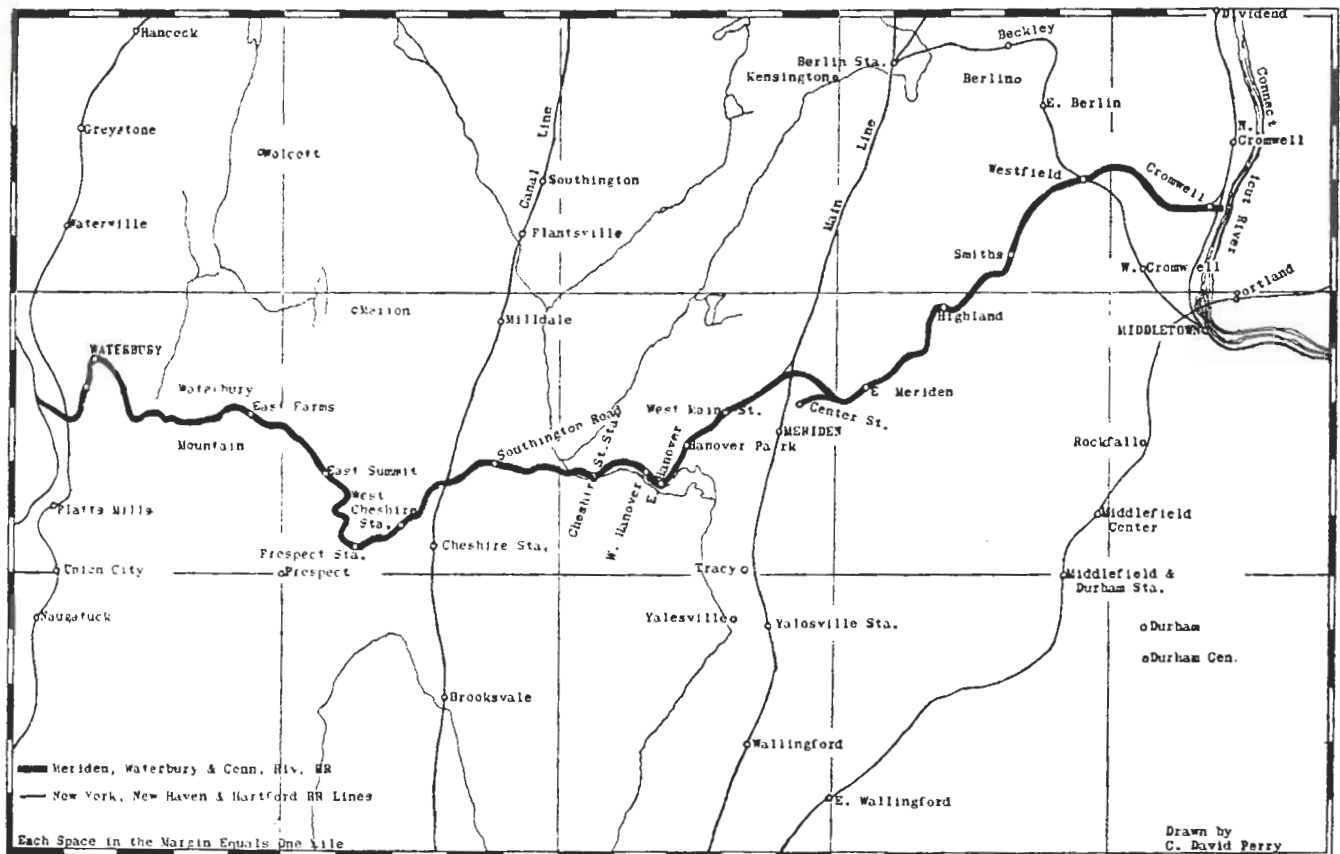
* * *

COLD weather and snow, including the big Blizzard of 1888 on March 12th, delayed construction of the Waterbury line. Operations were carried on as far as possible all Winter, but it took until March 20th to get the road shoveled out after the Snowstorm of the Century.

The State Railroad Commission's report for the year ending December 31, 1887, stated that approval of the location of the line was given June 30th, that its length would be 18.84 miles, "of which 11.6 miles are completed. It crosses the New Haven & Northampton and the Naugatuck divisions of the New York, New Haven & Hartford, being carried over them. It crosses 38 streets and highways, of which it was desired to cross 16 at grade, and the town authorities united with the railroad in urging that it be allowed. In view of the requirements of the law, we did feel justified in permitting any at grade." This of course added considerably to the cost of building the railroad.



On the Waterbury extension near Cheshire Street station.



Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad

ON MAY 24, 1888 the Meriden & Cromwell and the Meriden & Waterbury were combined as the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad Company. Construction was far enough advanced so that a special train was run from Waterbury to Meriden carrying stockholders to the meeting. The capital stock of the new company was \$500,000 plus bonds, and it began life with three locomotives and a fourth on order with the Schenectady Locomotive Works. In October of the previous year the company had acquired engine No. 3, a used Pennsylvania Railroad machine, "for construction work," it was explained.

There were five Pullman-built passenger coaches of the latest design. The Meriden & Cromwell had 100 freight cars of one kind or another, and the

consolidation was to start with a total of 160 in that category. The "new and fashionable Pullman coaches" proved to be higher than expected, so that the bridges at Broad and Britannia Streets had to be raised 18 inches to clear them.

The Waterbury stockholders' trip to the meeting at Meriden was enlivened by several incidents. One of the Meriden papers reported: "A Cheshire farmer in an old fashioned top carriage left Dublin Street station at the same time the train did, and raced all the way to Cheshire. He reached there two minutes ahead of the train, and was as happy as a clam."

* * *

AT MERIDEN horsecars met the passengers and took them downtown "... two large excursion cars and several closed cars. When the first car

of Waterbury visitors came down Linsley Hill heavily loaded, the horses began to run and the driver lost control of them. The car skated down the hill . . . and did not stop until it had crossed the Consolidated railroad track, but the passengers all jumped off at the corner."

* * *

THE Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad began business with Horace C. Wilcox as president; E. D. Steele of Waterbury as vice-president; George Rockwell, secretary and treasurer; H. L. Wade of Waterbury, assistant treasurer. The directors were the officers and Abiram Chamberlain (later governor of the State of Connecticut), George R. Curtis of Meriden and H. A. Matthews of Waterbury. This was substantially the same list

as the Meriden & Cromwell, with the Waterbury people added. In the original setup of 1882 Mr. Chamberlain was the treasurer, and Charles Parker vice-president. C. M. Crawford continued as superintendent, with H. L. B. Pond as general freight agent.

* * *

AFTER the meeting, many stockholders went to Cromwell to inspect the docks and other railroad facilities. In Meriden progress was being made at the new West Main Street yards. A roundhouse and turntable were being built, and bids for a passenger station had been asked. The Waterbury yards were being laid out. It was announced that "the usual summer-time train connecting with the steamer 'Sunshine' on the river will leave Meriden station at 8:55 a. m. and on return leave Cromwell at 10:20 a. m. Passenger engine No. 4, which has been building in Schenectady, is on its way to Meriden and will arrive in a day or two. It is said to be a powerful and handsome machine."

Fourth of July, 1888 was the day of the big opening, and

the newspapers devoted much space to the story:

The formal and public opening happened auspiciously on the nation's 112th birthday . . . and four trips of the long and well-filled passenger trains were made without accident. The glorious Fourth could offer no more . . . opening the people's railroad . . . built by the people. There is not a rough spot on the whole road. Horseshoe Curve on the steepest grade of the mountain is well worth seeing, in Cheshire Notch.

The nine cars were at the West Main Street crossing at 8 a. m. Six of them were the new cars and the other three were old ones purchased of the Philadelphia & Reading, and which have not yet been put in repair, as they will be used for the excursion business . . . The Resolute (Baseball) Nine boarded the train as did 300 other Meriden people who wished to go out on the first public trip, and who also wished to see the game at Waterbury. Tickets were sold from a temporary office at the north end of the platform.

At 8:30 the train, hauled by new engine No. 4, started. A second engine hauled three open cars filled with seats, and in climbing the heavy grade assisted in pushing the first train over. The train ran slowly, and gave plenty of time for inspecting the glorious scenery, arriving in Waterbury in an hour. Right on top of Cheshire Mountain, near Rag Hollow Ravine, Mr. Dunham of Cheshire has built up a beautiful picnic ground. Here a large company was assembled, and greetings exchanged as the train went by. At this point a flag station will be established.

* * *

REGULAR schedules began several days later. The first

timetable of the completed line listed three westbound and four eastbound trains. There were nine flagstops in addition to the regular stations and terminals at Waterbury, Meriden and Cromwell. Connections with north and south lines were listed, including one with the New York-to-Hartford boats on the river. One train ran non-stop between Waterbury (Dublin Street) and Meriden (West Main Street). The old Center Street station was not on the completed line but it was continued for freight.

* * *

FREIGHT began to contribute revenue, one Waterbury coal dealer taking 400 tons which had been barged up-river to Cromwell. All sorts of ideas cropped up for extensions, including one to Willimantic. Optimism ran high. Arrangements were made with the U. S. Express Company for service over the line and by boat to New York, and a mail contract was confidently expected. Excursions were the order of the day, to Mr. Dunham's grove, or down the Connecticut River, or to any and every point of interest, by various organiza-

Terms, Cash on Delivery of Freight.
All claims for Damages must be made on Delivery of Goods.

Waterbury, Conn. Oct 15 1888

To Meriden, Waterbury & Conn. River R. R. Co., Dr.

Transportation from Cromwell Date Oct 13 Car No. Initial

ARTICLES.	WEIGHT.	RATE.	DOLLARS.	CTS.
8 Cars Stone - 79-81-107-257-171-153-9-3	309460	4	55	46
Barge Blanche Oct 6				
Expenses Total			55	46

Received Payment for the Company. Agent.

Facsimile of waybill for 8 cars of stone from Cromwell to Waterbury, giving car numbers.

tions in Meriden, Waterbury and vicinity.

One job remained to be done, a connection with the New York & New England at Waterbury, and the contract for this was made the latter part of July. The distance was only three-quarters of a mile, but the undertaking was very expensive because of the terrain crossed.

* * *

THERE WAS great excitement in South Meriden on August 10th, when engine No. 1, drawing a mixed train and running backward, jumped the track not far from Red Bridge. The tender went down a ten-foot embankment and turned over on its side, smashing its trucks and dumping its coal. The engine stopped askew the track. A shoo-fly was built around the wreck and service resumed the next day. The papers reported that the cause of the accident was not known, as an examination of the rails indicated that they had not spread. The engine was raised, put on the track and taken away for

repairs. Meanwhile an engine was borrowed from the Hartford & Connecticut Western to keep up service, as there were no spare engines on the road.

In the latter part of August, 1888, construction was started on the new passenger station at West Main Street, Meriden. The first story was brownstone, the second wood, and the architecture of a pleasing type which was quite common in public buildings of the period. It had a small tower, and a slate roof. The offices of the company were on the second floor. The car shop, roundhouse and other facilities were on the same tract of land.

The road received delivery from Schenectady early in October of No. 5, a 4-6-0. It was the heaviest machine on the road and old-timers claim it was very seldom used west of Meriden.

* * *

IN SPITE of the Consolidated's distaste for the idea, plans were made to connect the two roads at the north end of Meriden, and it was actually accom-

plished in February, 1889. A certain amount of freight was routed that way to and from Boston and Waterbury, as well as from nearer points. Berlin bricks, 750,000 of them, made the trip over the hill in one shipment.

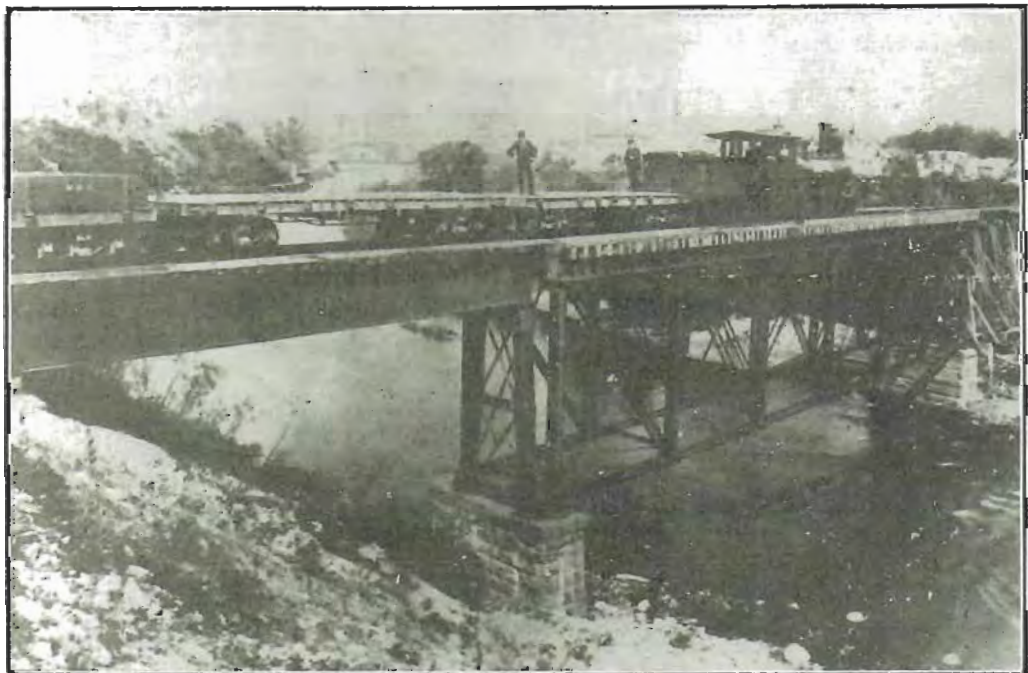
* * *

THE first annual meeting of the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad Co. came in November, 1888, and the stockholders were pleased, and surprised, to learn that in the short time it had been in operation, the road earned 7% on its investment.

When appraising these or any other figures on the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad, or for that matter any railroad or business enterprise in those days, it should be remembered that a charge against earnings for wear and tear, depreciation, or any other provision for eventual replacement of equipment, was completely ignored. As that was the happy time before income taxes, corporate or personal, were thought of, no one

—Photo from collection of D. W. Peckham.

BRIDGE over the Naugatuck River at Waterbury. Locomotive No. 1 and crew pose for this photograph.



Meriden, Waterbury and Conn. River R. R.										
	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	<i>Lv</i> 8 6 88 <i>Ar</i>	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
			4 00	New York			6 00			
	4 50	10 50	6 30	Cromwell	10 11	4 21	6 10	6 55	8 00	
	4 55	10 55	6 35	West Cromwell f.	10 06	4 16	6 05	6 50	7 54	
	4 58	10 58	6 40	Westfield f.	10 04	4 14	6 00	6 28	7 54	
	5 02	11 04	6 44	Smith's f.	10 00	4 10	5 56	6 24	7 54	
	5 06	11 06	6 48	Highland f.	9 56	4 06	5 50	6 20	7 44	
	6 30	11 25	7 15	Meriden	9 41	3 51	5 30	6 05	7 31	
	5 34	11 33	7 23	Hough's Mill f.	9 33	3 43			7 22	
	5 50	11 45	7 35	West Cheshire f.	9 21	3 31			7 11	
	5 57	11 52	7 42	Prospect f.	9 14	3 24			7 05	
	6 08	12 03	7 53	Summit f.	9 03	3 13			6 55	
	6 12	12 07	7 57	East Farms f.	8 53	3 03			6 49	
	6 21	12 16	8 06	Waterbury	8 50	3 00	4 30		6 44	

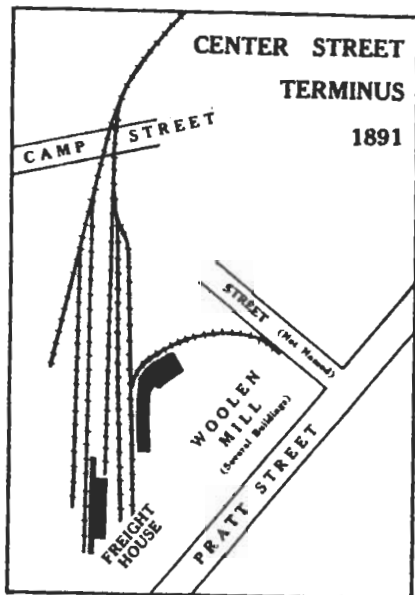
f. Flag Station.

Facsimile of a printer's proof of the new MW&CR timetable for August 1888. Note error in "Smith's."

was obliged to keep books to any further extent than he thought necessary. Probably this was one of the reasons why many early railroads, after a season of reporting earnings and paying dividends, would suddenly discover themselves insolvent and go bankrupt.

* * *

WHEN the New York & New England connection was finished early in 1889, it was expected that hard coal would come from the west that way, in addition to shipments up the Connecticut River. There were recurring rumors of an extension through Wallingford to tidewater at New Haven, but



the Wallingford people, who would presumably benefit most, did not come forward with any financial backing and the idea was forgotten.

The Hartford correspondent of the Springfield Republican said the Hartford-New York boats had a prosperous year chiefly because of the business coming to them from the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad. The Consolidated had taken control of the Valley Road, and there was no longer a combination Winter service by boat between New York and Saybrook and thence by rail to Cromwell.

"Meriden manufacturers who built the Cromwell road to escape extravagant freight rates can now ship to New York via Waterbury, the New England Road, the Housatonic, and then transfer to boat at Norwalk." This New England connection at Waterbury, therefore, took the road out of a rather tight spot.

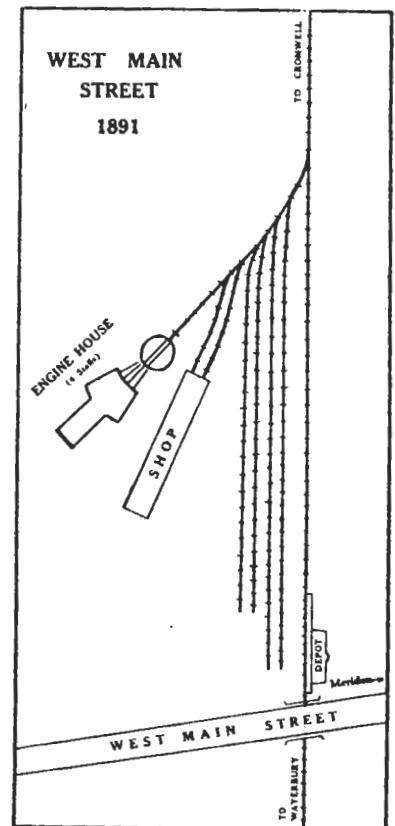
* * *

AFTER the New Haven took control of the Valley Road, the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad was obliged for one Winter season before the New York & New England connection at Water-

The 6:05 p. m. train out of Meriden was the only one leaving from the Center Street station after the line to Waterbury was put into service.

bury was in operation to take its New York bound freight to Cromwell, forward it to Middletown on the Valley Line, then over the Air Line to New Haven where it could be put aboard the New Haven-New York boat. A Middletown paper used this predicament as a peg to hang up a story that the Consolidated was going to "gobble up the MW&CR."

The writer professed to see "the hand of the Consolidated in this move" (killing the boat service from Saybrook to New York). He stated it was the intention of the New Haven to take over the MW&CR and run trains into Middletown instead of Cromwell. This brought a prompt reply from one of the Meriden papers whose editor declared that the "Graveyard City" (as he termed it) would never get a connection with the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad until its



"proverbially slow" people got busy and paid for it.

The same Middletown paper alleged that the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River was "doing practically no business," but against that must be placed the news item from the Deep River correspondent of a New Haven paper to the effect that low water on the river, together with the heavy amount of freight received from the railroad at Cromwell made the Hartford boat late most nights.

* * *

ABOUT this time it was reported that there was a curve at the dam of the American Brass Company's pond, "which never has given full satisfaction," and alterations were being made. In the same news item the ten-wheeler is mentioned as having "already proved itself such as was long wanted," which may indicate that this was the machine that had trouble on that curve.

On March 25, 1889, the railroad's stockholders held a special meeting at which second mortgage bonds of \$400,000 were voted. The Waterbury extension had been enormously more expensive than expected, so that the previously issued stock and bonds had been insufficient to cover the cost, and Horace C. Wilcox, true to his declaration that he would see the job through, had found the needed funds. The bonds were issued to him as a measure of security, although in the end they proved a rather weak one. These details did not come out in the newspapers at the time.

On the fifth of April, 1889, passenger trains began to run into the New York & New England station at Waterbury, using Dublin Street station as a way stop. The first freight train

made the run into the New England yards on the 15th of January previous, amid much gaping on the part of the citizens of Waterbury, as the bridges and trestles rose over the tops of houses and factories in a way which was quite novel to the inhabitants. It was claimed that the route showed engineering skill unequalled this side of the Rockies, which seems to be stretching the truth a bit, but it probably was unusual in these parts.

The New York & New England connection made possible the handling of a lot of business for the West. For example, Portland brownstone was sent to Bridgeport and even as far as Chicago. Full cars of merchandise went to many points west of the Hudson River via MW & CR. The connection with the New Haven at the north end of Meriden brought business, whether that road liked it or not.

* * *

IN THE SPRING of 1889 the Consolidated Road applied to the Legislature for an increase in its capital stock, which brought some unexpected reactions. The Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River and the Derby Road both sent dele-

gations to Hartford requesting that the Consolidated charter be amended to compel it to interchange cars with other railroads without prohibitive switching charges.

Several persons testified that President Clark of the Consolidated had told them that the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River was built "to injure" his road, that they could expect no favors, and that the switching charge was made on that basis. After much wrangling, it was left out of the charter, but an agreement was made that no road which got any of the haul could make a switching charge. "Everybody was satisfied," according to the final reports.

* * *

THE waiting room and ticket office at West Main Street station were put into use June 17, 1889. The depot and other buildings erected by the railroad there were on the old site of Fenn's Pond, a favorite spot for ducks. The improvements discommoded the ducks considerably, but they stayed around until the rails were right in their territory. One cold night during the Winter of construction, some of them tried to cross the cold rails with



West Main St. Passenger Depot, Meriden, Conn.

wet feet and wings. Probably much to their astonishment they found themselves stuck on the track, and kind bird lovers had to cut them loose the next morning.

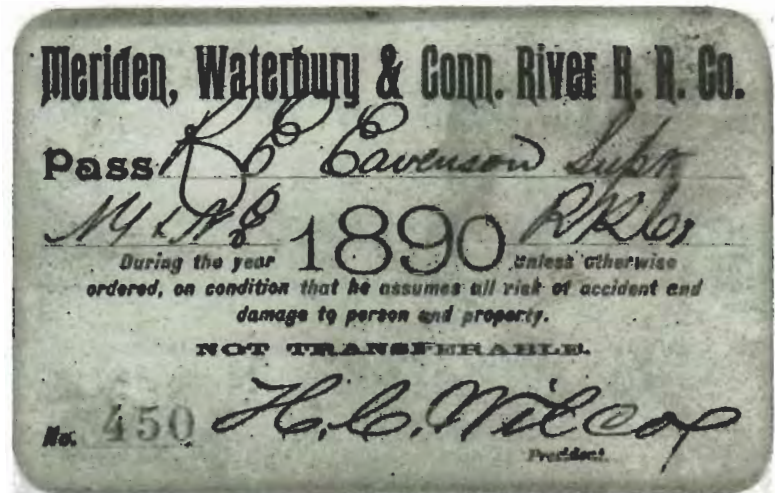
In the annals of the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad as chronicled in the papers there were many similar human interest stories. Many of them indicate changes in attitudes and customs over the past 70 years which make them like peeps into an entirely different world. Dirt roads, horses and buggies, immigrants on the railroad construction, many of them looked upon as curiosities by the townspeople, no electricity to any extent, very few telephones—almost the sole modern touch was the railroad. If you got off the rails, you either had to take a horse or walk. Freight had no way of moving to and from the depot except by horse-drawn vehicles.

* * *

WITH the New England connection it was possible to make some interesting passenger routings, and a West Point excursion was announced for September 12, 1889 with through coaches from Meriden to Fishkill Landing on the Hudson (now Beacon), a sail up and down the river, with dinner at Newburgh, and time to visit West Point. Note was made that the boat would pass under "the great cantilever bridge at Poughkeepsie," which was one of the wonders of the East at that time.

The annual meeting in November 1889 re-elected the incumbent officers and directors. Stockholders "were pleased with the report of President Wilcox. Business is increasing."

The road resumed use of



—From collection of Elmer Kressly.

Facsimile of a pass signed by President Horace C. Wilcox. Passes like these were exchanged with officials of all roads with which the MW&CR enjoyed friendly relations.

Dublin Street station as a terminus for passengers in August of 1890. Apparently the complications of getting down to the New England station offset the advantages. Seventeen minutes had been allowed on the timetable for the extra run of hardly a mile.

On the 26th of the same month Horace C. Wilcox, president of the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad, its original promoter, and head of several large industries, died. He, more than any other man, was responsible for the growth of Meriden from a small village to a busy city, and likewise, there would have no independent railroad without his efforts. "A Century of Meriden," published in 1906, says of him: "His last and largest enterprise was the organizing and construction of the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad. In this enterprise he invested more than a million dollars, with little expectation of any return except the benefits the community he loved so much would receive."

Mr. Wilcox was born in 1824 on a farm on the Highland Road, near the point where the Meriden & Cromwell Railroad crossed it—before there was a single mile of railroad in the whole state of Connecticut. He lived to see rails spread all over the country, including a close network in his own state, but his many accomplishments in other lines, which had brought him wealth, were hardly enough to take the sting out of his uphill struggle for the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River. His death was without a doubt hastened as a result.

* * *

HORACE WILCOX greatly loved the Highland section of Westfield, the place of his birth, and when the railroad project was first announced, he said it was his aim to build a good sized Summer hotel there to be ready as soon as passenger service was available. He was as good as his word, and for many years the Highland House, as it was known, catered to a large clientele. Meriden and Waterbury business men commuted in the Summer

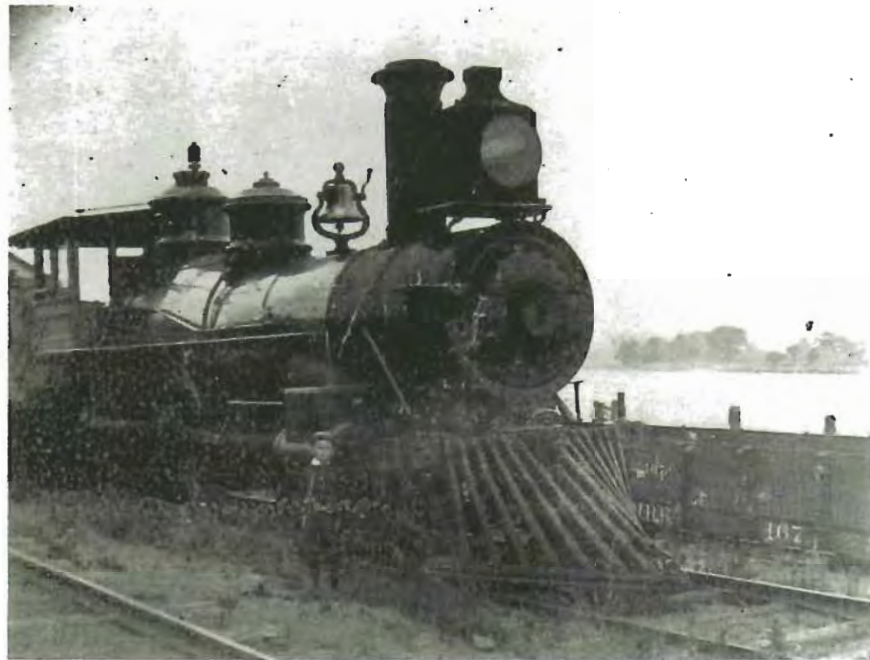
from their places of business, while their families enjoyed Highland Lake. When changes in the times made it no longer profitable, the building was taken over by the newly organized Highland Country Club. The original building burned down sometime after the turn of the century, but it was replaced, and when the country club disbanded it was made into apartments.

* * *

IN THE EIGHTIES the Boston to Washington trains went via Hartford and Waterbury, then to Fishkill Landing (Beacon) and across the Hudson by ferry. One day in December of 1889 there was an accident on the New York & New England at Forestville which tied up the line. The suggestion was made that the Washington Express be diverted to the New Haven Road from Hartford to Meriden and run over the mountain to Waterbury on the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad.

Superintendent Farley of the New York & New England decided against it because of the possible difficulty of "getting the long cars to run around the short curves." But on the first of March of the following year a rockslide occurred at Greystone, near Terryville, and this time it was decided to make the attempt. None of the details were recorded, but the papers reported that the Washington Express went over the mountain, and in doing so at least made history for the line.

The directors of the road met September 19, 1890, and made E. D. Steele of Waterbury the president pro-tem, deciding not to elect anyone regularly to that office until the annual meeting in November. Meanwhile, all kinds of rumors were



—Collection of Glover A. Snow.

No. 1 AT CROMWELL—Connecticut River in background.

rife on possible sale of the line. One despatch from Boston had several Philadelphians and Bostonians interested in purchasing it to form part of a line from Pennsylvania, with extensions to New Haven and Hartford. MW & CR officials "would neither affirm or deny reports of negotiations."

* * *

ONE STOCKHOLDER said that while he knew nothing official, he heard the road was for sale to the highest bidder. He went on: "The road, as is well known, has never been a direct paying investment, and should the sale be made, the stockholders would not receive a dollar in return for their holdings. The late H. C. Wilcox endorsed notes to the amount of \$1,100,000 for which bonds were finally issued, they being held as security by Mr. Wilcox. It is thought that the settlement of the Wilcox estate may have something to do with the bonds being placed on the market." This man thought the

Consolidated was most likely the interested party, and that the sale would not bring half the amount of the bonds.

This news came out in October, less than a year after glowing reports had appeared in the papers as to the road's success and condition. While Mr. Wilcox was alive, it was stipulated that the bonds should not be sold, so that the minority stockholders would be protected, but the general opinion seemed to be that his estate was not bound by this. As a matter of fact, if the financial condition of the road was as pictured by the anonymous stockholder, the estate could hardly afford to hold on any longer.

* * *

THE PUBLIC was informed that their fair-weather Waterbury friends had never lived up to their agreement to pay for their stock, and that even some Meridenites had not come through entirely.

At the 1890 annual meeting, George H. Wilcox was elected

Recorded in _____ 189
 Number _____ Meriden, Conn., AUG 31 1892 189

Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad.

To *Montpelier, Wells River, P.R.R.* DR.
 Address, *F. W. Moore, Cashier, Montpelier, Vt.*

Approved,	For mileage of Freight Cars, month of <i>July 1892</i>			
	<i>24</i> Miles, at $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	

Montpelier and Wells River
 AND
 Barre Branch Railroads.
 OCT 5 1892
 CASHIER'S OFFICE,
 MONTPELIER, VT.

Charge to _____
 Mileage. *10* Received from *The Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad Co.* 1892

Dollars, in full of above account.
\$0.75 *F. W. Moore Cash*

DATE and Sign this Voucher and return with all papers attached to Geo. Rockwell, Treas., Meriden, Conn.

FREIGHT CAR MILEAGE paid to other railroads was quite often for less than \$1.00.

president to succeed his late father. A gratifying increase in business was reported. Any negotiations for sale of the road — if there had been any — were not referred to in the published reports. The annual report to the Railroad Commission late in the same month showed there were gross earnings of \$81,793.07, but total operating expenses amounted to \$90,743.39. This was, of course, without provision for interest on floating and funded debt.

The number of passengers carried was 74,439 and tons of freight moved 108,672. The number of people employed by

**TYPICAL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE BUSINESS
 1892**

Mileage bills for use of other roads' cars on the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad show that it handled quite a few freight cars in interchange. In July, 1892, the road paid for 9,149 miles, and in August the total was 8,295. When it is recollected that most of such interchange at the time came onto the line at Waterbury and left at Meriden, or returned to Waterbury from Meriden after emptying, only 15 miles each way, it indicates many individual car movements.

For example, during the two months mentioned, there were 56 different railroads or car companies represented, 34 of which were paid for less than 100 miles and 22 for over. The New York & New England came in for the largest payment,

naturally enough, with over 3,000 miles a month. The Union Tank Line was paid for almost 500 miles per month, showing that the MW&CR was getting the business of the Standard Oil Company.

Car rental in most cases was figured at three-quarters of a cent per mile, with some at two cents. The small mileage accumulated by a lone car owned by a participating road meant issuing checks for considerably less than a dollar in many instances.

Evidence that a substantial amount of long haul business from the West was handled is shown in the total for the New York, Lake Erie & Western, whose cars averaged over 1,000 miles a month for July and August, 1892.

the road was given as 107. There were 10 passenger cars, 154 freight cars and five locomotives, and 21,342 cars had been moved during the year. Of the operating expense, over \$30,000 was for maintenance of way, structures and equipment. The road needed more business.

* * *

EARLY in January of 1891 the road met with a serious tieup when a bridge went down under a train just east of Westfield. Service from Westfield to Cromwell was tied up for two months until the bridge was replaced. But the road kept on going through the year and into 1892, hoping that some good angel, more specifically one of the bigger lines, would want it badly enough to buy it.

In February there was suddenly a lot of under-cover activity and many rumors. Finally, on the 25th, a few facts came out, accompanied by a vast amount of speculation. The fact was that a group, syndicate as they called it in those days, formed by Frederick H. Prince of Boston, W. H. Starbuck, J. A. Bostwick and N. Erb of New York, had bought a controlling interest in the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad. A new

board of directors had been elected and Mr. Prince was the new president. A. Chamberlain, Samuel Dodd and C. L. Rockwell of Meriden were still on the board, joined by Messrs. Prince, Erb, Bostwick, and Starbuck of the syndicate and A. S. Chase and E. D. Steele of Waterbury. Mr. Erb was vice president, Mr. Rockwell continued as secretary and treasurer and the operating management remained as before.

That was about the extent of the facts. Rumors took over from there. One was that a couple of people had spent the previous week getting what they thought were options on the stock only to find, after Frederick H. Prince arrived in Meriden, "the deal would not hold." Mr. Prince checked into Hotel Winthrop on a Sunday night, and the would-be purchasers did not learn they were out of luck until 9:30 a. m. on Tuesday.

* * *

NOBODY THOUGHT the syndicate planned to run the road for itself, and speculation as to whom they were acting for was rife. Some said it was for the Housatonic Railroad, and in fact quite a little later a Meriden business man claimed the only thing that killed this

deal was discovery of a state law prohibiting one railroad owning another unless the two were physically connected.

Reporters quizzed the vice-president and general manager of the New York, New Haven & Hartford, who volunteered the belief that it was the work of those interested in the New York & New England. "The Consolidated never cared for it," he continued. "It was not a paying company, in fact it generally ran behind from year to year." Mr. Prince was a director of the New York & New England, which strengthened his belief.

* * *

IN BOSTON it was said the Consolidated was bidding for it before the Prince group took it over. It was intimated that Standard Oil was involved—"more important than appears on the surface," according to the newspapers.

On the whole, a New York & New England deal looked more logical, but for a few months nothing further happened. The papers did carry more complete information about the financial history of the road than they had before: namely, that when built in 1883 "it was supposed that it would pay . . . after running four years without an all-



**DUBLIN
STREET
FREIGHT
STATION
in
Waterbury.
From
an old
wood cut**

rail route to New York and the West, the Meriden & Waterbury was formed. The Meriden & Cromwell had a capitalization of \$300,000, the Meriden & Waterbury of \$200,000.

"The Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River is mortgaged for \$1,000,000. Of this \$600,000 is the first mortgage, and the remaining \$400,000 the second. Meriden held \$375,000 of stock, most of the balance was in Waterbury. Of the Meriden part, the Horace C. Wilcox estate had \$176,000 and the Meriden Britannia Company \$100,000."

In other words, Mr. Wilcox and the company of which he was head had put up \$276,000, or over half. This in addition to \$1,100,000 in notes and bonds which he had taken, or lent his credit for. Thus, anyone who bought out the Wilcox Estate and the Meriden Britannia Company would control the railroad, and that is apparently what the Prince interests did.

* * *

STRANGELY ENOUGH, even though Frederick H. Prince was an important financial figure in the country and the deal was engineered by him and in his name, it later turned out that he had bought six-sevenths of the equity for J. A. Bostwick, and that the remaining one-seventh was divided among him and the other three members of the syndicate. This was disclosed because Bostwick died before the MW & CR could be leased to anyone and his estate had to go to court to obtain permission to carry out terms of the lease.

The lease in question turned out to be to the New York & New England. This touched off a bitter controversy among elements in the latter road, some of whom, headed by

The Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad from THE HOME OF THE WILCOXES

By E. B. Tyler — Printed about 1888

If we take the cars on the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad at their Center Street Depot, and start towards the river terminus, we are soon impressed with the 19th century spirit of business enterprise, that was bound to preserve a straight line in the railroad layout, even though it carried the road lengthwise through a swamp, where piles were driven, some of them 100 feet, to secure a permanent foothold.

But hardly have we passed the swamp, and crossed our Meriden town limits into the northwest district of Middletown—better known as Westfield—when the train, as if in sympathy with those of its passengers who admire the beauties of the New England scenery, checks its headlong career, and turns to the left and right and left again, now with Chauncey Peak standing boldly and defiantly north, then turning so that you hardly need move in your seat to get as good a view of the equally imposing Mount Higby on the south; now skirting a

pond almost concealed by its wooded banks, past the neat little cemetery, we pause at the pretty little station of Highland.

Starting on again, we see the Highland House on the hill at our left, and as we follow the shore of another bright little sheet of water that our fathers called a pond, but well deserves the name of lake, the view northwards toward the Highland House is excelled only by the opposite view southward from the broad piazzas of the same. With hills on our right and valleys on our left, through cut and turn and meadow, we arrive at the next station, Smith's Crossing. Then, as though the beauties of the place were past and forgotten business suddenly remembered, the road straightens and gets down to work. A moment's stop at the next station, Westfield, where a junction is formed with a branch of the Consolidated Railroad, and the train leaves Westfield and whirls its way to Cromwell and the river.

Paine, Webber & Co. of Boston, fought it tooth and nail. Summons were served by sheriffs on Prince and Rockwell, president and secretary-treasurer, respectively, of the Waterbury road, to go to court and testify as to the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad's affairs. All this seemed to do was to postpone the annual meeting, or rather adjourn it, until November 23.

Meanwhile the New York & New England was running the road, as of October 15, 1892. It was styled the Meriden Branch of the Western Division. Superintendent Crawford was out of a job. President Parsons and General Manager Mellen inspected the road for the NY & NE about a week before the transfer—the same Mellen who later took over presidency of the New Haven Road and attempted to gain control of all transportation in New England.

The stockholders of the New York & New England met on November 21st to act on the lease, as well as one on the Providence & Springfield. The group headed by Paine Webber opposed both leases. President Parsons said he would stake his reputation that it was a good move for the NY & NE. The MW & CR was not self-sustaining because it was a short line, and expenses were too heavy, but the New England got \$65,000 freight business a year from it. "Those who opposed the lease were there in the interests of the Consolidated."

* * *

THE PROPOSITION before the stockholders was to lease the MW & CR for 99 years at an annual rental of \$22,500 plus all charges, taxes and assessments and floating debt up to \$10,000. The opposition had already asked for a court order to prevent the lease, alleging

that the MW&CR was insolvent, and that the majority of its stock had been bought by Prince and two other directors of the New York & New England, who would personally benefit by the lease. It was further alleged that the road was in bad condition, that it had never earned operating expenses; that its stock was valueless and its bonds below par. The actual financial condition of the road was claimed to have been misrepresented.

* * *

THE ANNUAL REPORT of the Railroad Commission that Fall said that track was in generally good condition. "Some of the wooden structures at the east end have been renewed, while some have been partially filled, thus reducing the length of the openings. There are still some unsound ties in the structure first built which need to be renewed . . . The track on the end of the embankment which was substituted for the Cheshire trestles is somewhat out of line and should be put in proper shape before the coming Winter." This was at variance with the claim of the lease opponents.

The exact state of the finances of the New York & New England was also a subject of controversy at the meeting, with the juggling of figures claimed and the conduct of the meeting questioned. After much tilting, leasing of the MW&CR was voted by 168,227 out of the 169,677 shares of stock represented at the meeting, the opposition apparently having little backing from other stockholders.

Grand All Rail Excursion

To New York City.

Via Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River, and New York & New England, and New York & Northern Railroads.

Saturday, July 23.

Special train. Through cars.

Fare for the Round Trip, \$1.75.

Train leaves Meriden, West
Main street, . . . 7:02 a. m.
Hanover, . . . 7:06 "
Cheshire street, . . . 7:10 "
Southington road, . . . 7:15 "
Due, 155th street, New York, 11:00 "
Returning, special train leaves
155th street, New York &
Northern railroad, . . . 7:00 p. m.

Elevated Railroad Tickets Included in Above Rates.

Connections are made on same platform at 155th street with Sixth and Ninth avenue elevated trains for South Ferry, where steamers for Coney Island may be taken. The last train leaves South Ferry at 6 p. m. to connect with special train leaving 155th street at 7 p. m. Take elevated railroad train marked "Harlem."

Excursionists can have several hours for shopping or visiting the many places of interest in New York city, or proceed direct to South Ferry and take steamers for Coney Island, Manhattan and West Brighton Beaches.

H. L. B. POND,
Gen. Freight and Pass. Agt.
C. M. CRAWFORD,
Superintendent.
July 18, 1892. jy20t3

Ad from 1892 Meriden paper.

Two days later the MW&CR held its adjourned annual meeting and ratified the lease unanimously, with 4,000 shares represented. The new board of directors consisted of Frederick Prince, Charles Parsons Jr. of New York, E. D. Steele, D. S. Plume and A. S. Chase, all of Waterbury, Samuel Dodd, George Rockwell, W. H. Lyon and Cephas B. Rogers of Meriden. President Prince said that

the road would have better connections, better rolling stock, and would try to reduce the number of grade crossings, etc.

There were rumors, confirmed by Secretary Rockwell, that it was hoped to eventually extend the road to Middletown, but this did not take place until the New Haven took over in 1898.

The schemes went further than that. It was reported in the press that "The extension of the line from Cromwell to Andover is practically agreed upon . . . as well as the old-time scheme of the New England to control the leading routes into New England for the delivery of coal . . . there is more fire than smoke in today's assertion that the Pennsylvania Railroad is perfecting a gigantic deal. As the NYNE is on particularly friendly terms with the Pennsylvania it will be seen that control of the MW&CR will be another important factor in the Pennsylvania's already extensive system of output." (Presumably coal).

* * *

ANOTHER RUMOR had the New York & New England hooked up with the Reading. For this we refer you to other histories of the railroads in New England, but the claim was that the NY&NE could shorten its line from the east to Waterbury by a substantial number of miles if run from Andover through Cromwell and Meriden.

In October, 1892, the press noted that Engine No. 3 was in the shop for a complete overhauling. This was previous to ratification of the lease, or the unofficial taking over by the NY&NE, so apparently the

road's management was doing its best to keep the equipment in good condition.

* * *

THE Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad Company was no longer an operating organization, since its lines had been taken over by lease, but its corporate existence continued. The directors and stockholders must have been rather apprehensive about the future, watching the gymnastics, mostly financial, of its lessee, the New York & New England. This is not the place to go into details about that company, except to say that many people believed every move it made was to render itself more attractive—or more menacing—to the New Haven, and thus pave the way to selling out at a good price.

The New England was very much hampered—practically crippled—by not having a satisfactory entrance into New York City, and many were the efforts it made to get one. In almost every instance it was thwarted by some move of the Consolidated. The common stock was supposedly worthless, except for the control of the company which it carried, and it bobbed up and down from day to day and week to week as rumors of deals and counter-deals swept the financial market.

The crisis came on December 28, 1893. The NY&NE had not been paying its interchange freight bills, and the receiver for the Philadelphia, Reading & New England, to whom it owed \$200,000, decided to force the issue. He slapped an attachment on the company's property in East Hartford, everything in sight, 27 engines, the shops, the cars, and even the incoming trains as fast as they showed up. As Hartford

was the hub of the system, the road was practically paralyzed. Eventually a way to unfreeze the trains was found, but there was a terrific legal rumpus. Presumably the MW&CR kept running, as there was no stoppage by attachment in Meriden.

Receivers finally took over the New York & New England and the trains continued to roll over the Cromwell road. It was the Meriden branch of the NY&NE and not much in the news. Little is on record about the traffic hauled, but in June, 1895, it was reported that a week's freight business was 325 cars, an average of 45 a day. Business in May had been 20% better than the year previous, and "business was picking up."

In July, 1895, the property

FREDERICK H. PRINCE, 3d MW&CR PRESIDENT

THE THIRD PRESIDENT of the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad, and one of the most colorful people to have been connected with the line, Frederick H. Prince, died in February, 1953, at the age of 95.

Mr. Prince was reputed to be the richest man in New England, and it was claimed that at one time or another he owned 46 railroads. (Controlled, perhaps, would be a better word, because in our history we see that he by no means owned the MW&CR).

In later years he was perhaps best known for his "Prince plan" for combining the railroads of this country into a limited number of systems. John W. Barriger, former president of the Monon, and for a few months in 1953 vice-president of the New Haven, prepared this plan for Mr. Prince in 1932.

Mr. Prince was practically the last of the old school of railroad financiers, whose operations thread transportation history of the 1880's, 1890's and early 1900's. The little we know of his operations in our own Meriden-Waterbury-Cromwell line indicate that his memoirs, if ever written and published, would be very interesting reading.

of the New York & New England was sold at auction to the owners of the second mortgage bonds, who turned out to be mostly friends or employees of the Consolidated. It was the "New England Railroad," as of August 31, 1895. The New Haven acknowledged it had control a month later. On the 13th of December all special rates were abrogated; in other words, all that the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad had been built for was lost!

* * *

LAST payment on the lease had been made September 1, 1894. There were plenty of rumors that the New Haven had control of the MW&CR as well as the New England, but not until the Cromwell road's annual meeting November 12, 1895, did people have anything to confirm it. At that time the president of the New Haven, its vice-president, and some of its directors were put on the company board, plus a number of other known friends of the Consolidated. Reporters who asked about it were told to draw their own conclusions.

It is difficult to follow all the maneuvers, but there was apparently one million dollars' worth of MW&CR bonds outstanding, which the New England had acquired below par.

No interest had been paid. The bondholders foreclosed, and on May 19, 1896, the road was sold at auction for \$180,000 to A. Heaton Robertson of New Haven. The only other bid was that of the New England for \$110,000, but since the New Haven controlled the New England, and at the same time was believed to be behind Robertson, there was no real competition.

The New Haven manage-

ment was greatly impressed by the future of electric traction; it had just electrified its Nantasket line with the avowed purpose of finding out all it could about this new way of moving trains. It had big plans for running electric branches from main line cities to the small off-main-line towns.

* * *

WHILE Charles E. Mellen, who came along later, is usually thought of as the New Haven president who tried to walk off with everything on New England rails, it is apparent that the move had been started before he became the president.

The Meriden Horse Railroad, which had tried the Daft system of overhead two-wire trolleys for a time, but went back to horsecars, had by 1896 converted to electric traction again, this time to the single wire system, and changed its name to the Meriden Electric Railroad Company. This outfit apparently had ideas about interurban transportation, too, because there was talk of competition between an electrified MW&CR and a parallel line by the Meriden Electric.

Almost immediately it was discovered that the Consolidated had acquired all the stock of the Meriden Electric Railroad, so that there might be co-operation but not competition. However, the Consolidated name did not go on the street cars for some years, and then only briefly, to be followed by the Connecticut Company. The New Haven has, therefore, been in street transportation since at least 1896.

Mr. Robertson was very coy about his Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River purchase, but nobody thought that after getting on the board of direc-

tors of the Waterbury road the Consolidated was going to let the property slip away. The next news, therefore, was rather unexpected.

With less than 24 hours' notice, on May 30, 1896, it was announced that as of that evening the New England Railroad (which was still operating the MW&CR) had given orders to close it down completely.

"It is reported that the chief reason is that it can only be run as a steam road at a loss, and that it will remain closed until the Consolidated people get ready to equip it with electricity next year. Two specials were run over the line today. The first contained officials of the New England taking a farewell look." Another newspaper

article gave the mission of the second special: "A train went over the road and at every switch the locks were removed. All loose railroad ties along the line were gathered in, and all the coal in the depots and the yards. The road is shut up as tight as a clam."

Not only that, but one coal dealer, who had a full car on his sidetrack, saw the switcher come and take it way without giving him a chance to unload. The prize was a grain dealer who had already started to unload a car of grain. The switch engine carried the car off half unloaded, with the dealer's scales which he had been using still inside. All such cars were taken to the New Haven's yard in Meriden and the consignees were given the privilege of unloading there instead of on their own sidings on the closed railroad.

* * *

THE NEXT couple of years brought no operation on the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad, but there were plenty of rumors and accusations. The Legislature was petitioned repeatedly to compel whoever owned the line to run trains. Robertson insisted he had purchased the road "for individuals," but almost nobody believed him. He claimed that the charter didn't require running trains at any stated times, so he ran none at all.

Several groups or their legal representatives, including petitioners from Westfield and Cheshire, appeared before the Legislature's committee on railroads in the Spring of 1897, but were told that all the State could do would be to revoke the charter. Robertson said that if that were done he would still have the land and equipment,

DURING THE PREPARATION of this history two of the men who helped to make it possible, and who would have been most pleased to see it completed and in print, passed away.

One, Mr. D. W. Peckham of Middlefield, Conn., a retired dispatcher of the New Haven Road, died in February, 1953. He was especially active in getting photographs, and several of his pictures will be found in this history. He is missed by many railfans and others who enjoyed calling on him and reviewing old times.

The other, Mr. C. B. Burr of Derby, Conn., who passed away in December, 1952, was responsible for our being able to reproduce some of the old documents on the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad, and also for records which have enabled us to give an almost complete roster of rolling stock.

Mr. Burr had a notable collection of papers and photographs, some of which will go to the Baker Library of Harvard University. He was a quiet, reserved, but most friendly man, and generous to a fault. His sudden death interrupted plans he had for other histories similar to this, the next on the docket being the Air Line; the writer was to be given access to Mr. Burr's remarkable resources.

but be unable to operate the railroad. He "would do the best he could toward running the road now."

Whatever his best may have been, there were no tangible results for over a year. Finally the Railroad Commission, in 1898, told Robertson the charter would be lost if service did not start by Summer of that year. The State also placed an assessment of \$12,000 on the line.

* * *

Middletown, Meriden & Waterbury Railroad Co.

THIS brought action, and on July 1st a new corporation was formed, under the name of The Middletown, Meriden & Waterbury Railroad Company, with a capitalization of \$100,000. Robertson had 150 shares, the balance being in the hands of people who might be called "friends" of the New Haven Road. They were also the directors of the new corporation. One of them told a reporter, "The thing in a nutshell is this: the road has been reorganized and is to be leased to the Consolidated, and they are to run it. Repairs are already being made." The lease ran for a year, at a price of \$1,000.

The section between Westfield and Cromwell, 3.5 miles, was abandoned. Railroad officials said it would cost between \$12,000 and \$15,000 to put the rest of the road "in comfortable and safe" condition for passenger service. Trains were to run into Middletown from Westfield over the Middletown-Berlin branch of the New Haven, instead of going to Cromwell.

It was announced that an unusual kind of car would be used in the service. Instead of

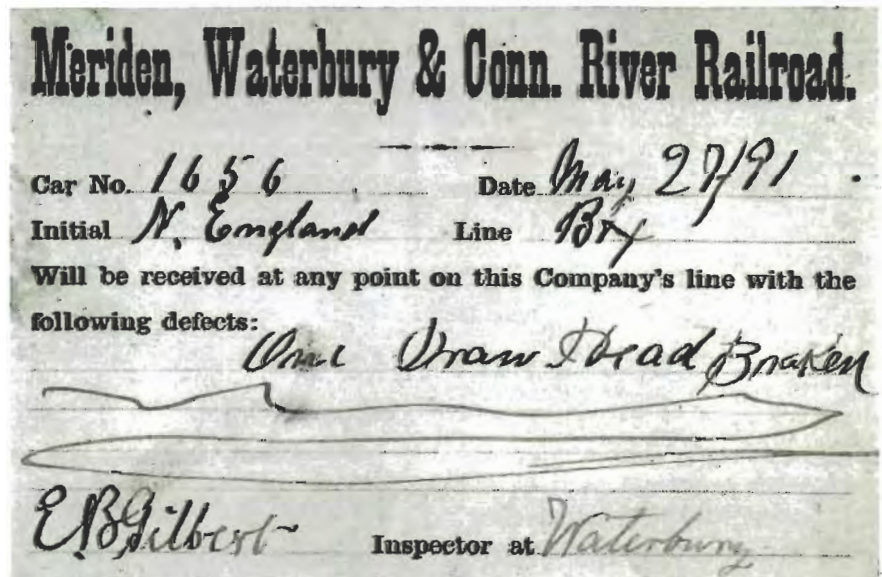
a locomotive-hauled train there would be a combined engine, baggage room and coach all in one long car, seating about 40 passengers, no smoker, "much like third rail cars." It was claimed that one of these cars on the Milford branch of the New York & New England had made a speed on trial "equal to 70 miles an hour." "Electricity might be adopted later." John L. Billard of Meriden, one of the directors, said that the road probably would not handle freight for the time being. H. L. B. Pond, MW&CR man, would be superintendent.

What actually happened was quite at variance with all these plans. In spite of the statement of the railroad director in July that repairs were already being made, a work train "on the cleanup job" did not start until November 16th. Some months before, President Clark of the New Haven Road had run over the line with Robertson and a group of officials in Clark's private car to check the condition of the road. It was stated in the press that this was the only train to operate during cessation of service on the line

All of a sudden there was a great fever to get the road going. On November 22nd President Clark once more inspected the line with numerous other officials, using one of the Consolidated's "standard observation cars." They managed to make it to Waterbury and back, but on the Westfield end a pile of sand across the track derailed one truck, and a half hour was consumed getting it back on the track.

* * *

THE NEW steam car never materialized, and the first train on December 5, 1898, with New Haven locomotive No. 142 and a combine coach, went from Meriden to Waterbury, the Middletown end not being ready. There were five passengers on the train that left at 7 a. m. and arrived in Waterbury at 7:50. The return from Waterbury began at 8:50 a. m., again with five people aboard (whether they were the same ones or not, the newspaper account does not state). At Hanover Park they were stopped by a derailed work train engine, and the passengers were transferred to a flat



Facsimile of "Bad Order" card used by MW&CR.

car for the rest of the ride to West Main Street.

The plan of not carrying freight was also given up, and the trains ran mixed. Mr. Pond, who was slated to run the road, almost missed out, but eventually he was rehired. He had been sort of caretaker for Mr. Robertson during the shutdown.

January 2, 1899, was the day slated for through service from Waterbury to Middletown. In spite of the rather inauspicious start of the Meriden-Waterbury service, it was reported in the latter part of December, the month of reopening, that passenger traffic had been very good. "Both cars are being filled on trains each day. Monday had 400, but that was way above the average."

An interesting news item appeared in the Meriden papers on January 2, 1899:

The first train from Middletown over the Middletown, Meriden and Waterbury RR left there at 6:20 this morning, and arrived here at 7 A. M. There was no special train from Waterbury this afternoon to the polo game in this city, as enough cranks in the Brass City did not secure tickets for a special. About 100 people from this city left for Waterbury on the noon train today.

The superintendent of the road said that business was "as good as could be expected," and on February 3, 1899, it was said that "travel on the road since it was opened has steadily improved. The trains are carrying about 100 passengers a day." There was quite a little freight to be carried and cars to be switched, and the market gardens along the line shipped their produce into Waterbury and Meriden by train. However, to discourage the agitation for electrification, it was given out that much money had to go into ties, bridge timbers, stations, etc., "to bring them up to standard."

* * *

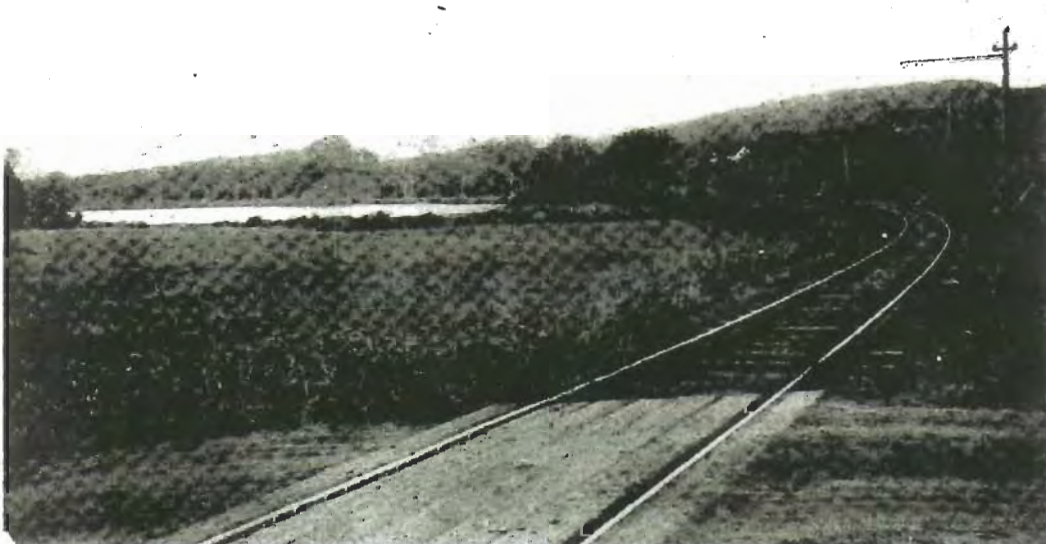
THERE was considerable discussion in the papers around 1899-1900 about the likelihood of conversion to third rail operation and more frequent service as had been done between Hartford and Bristol. A Middletown correspondent of a Meriden paper said that enough improvements were to be made in the line "so that there can be no complaint on which to base a petition to the General As-

sembly for construction of an electric road."

With no motor car competition, the railroad continued to do well. Excursions were an important source of business. The November 7, 1899, issue of one of the Meriden papers speaks of 2,200 spectators at a polo game in Hanover Park, between Meriden and Waterbury. Four hundred of these people came over in two special trains from Waterbury, flourishing cowbells and blowing horns. On this same date, incidentally, it was reported that the Middletown, Meriden & Waterbury Railroad had just passed into direct control of the New Haven Road, by action at a meeting of the stockholders. However, the New Haven continued to lease the road by the year until 1902, when the lease was made for 50 years. The tracks from Westfield to Cromwell were not actually torn up until 1903.

The lease made in 1902 was on different terms than the previous yearly ones. In place of the \$1,000 figure there was a payment of one dollar per

*View from Highland Station, Looking North,
Westfield, Conn.*



From
an
old
post
card.

share per year on the stock, plus the principal and interest on all outstanding indebtedness, taxes, charges, etc. This was apparently only preparatory to the final move in 1905, when the Middletown, Meriden & Waterbury was merged with the New Haven and completely lost its identity.

A Waterbury paper humorously referred to the MM&W as "The Boston Short Line," calling attention to the fact that Boston to Waterbury via Meriden and Middletown was four miles shorter than via Hartford, and warning Hartford that if it didn't behave Waterbury could short-circuit them. It further commented: "If ten years ago anybody had predicted that in 1898 the Consolidated system would have included the New York & New England lines and the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River property, people would have thought he was crazy, but perhaps it is all for the best." Actually, the seeds of trouble were being sown, but nobody realized it at the time. There were a few people who wondered about the complete safety of the usual 8% New Haven dividend, but for the time being the combined system seemed able to make a go of it.

* * *

WHEN the New Haven Railroad electrified its Nantasket Beach branch in 1896, the road at the time fully expected to eventually electrify its whole system. At the time a company official predicted that within 10 years electric trains would be running between New York and Boston. When the Meriden and Waterbury line was revived in 1898, it was stated that eventually electrification would take place, and that steam was only temporary.

By 1906 the New Haven was apparently convinced that the electrification could best be handled by overhead wires instead of the third rail system in use on the Hartford-Bristol run and New Britain-Berlin branch. The road moved swiftly to equip its Berlin to Middletown branch and the Meriden to Middletown part of the former MW&CR (via Westfield) with overhead wires. High speed cars were used, giving hourly service. They were an immediate success. Instead of running to West Main Street station, a connection was made at Brookside Park with the city trolley tracks in Pratt Street, and the New Haven Road's Meriden station was the terminus for the Middletown inter-

urban cars. While the Berlin-Middletown service was run by the New Haven Road, the Meriden to Middletown service was operated by the Connecticut Company, the street railway subsidiary, even though both services used the same track between Westfield and Middletown.

* * *

FOR some reason the Waterbury end was not electrified. A New Haven-Waterbury service via Cheshire was begun in 1904 after building a connection from the Canal Line tracks to the MW&CR at Cheshire. This service was well patronized for a couple of years before New Haven-Waterbury trolley service was established. In 1909 the Meriden-Waterbury schedule was cut to one train in the morning to Waterbury, with the return to Meriden in late afternoon. There were recurrent rumors of electrification, but it was never carried out.

At the beginning of World War I there was talk of making more use of the line because of the enormous congestion of freight traffic, but nothing was done. Later, when the United States got into that war, the New Haven Road, being short of manpower, equipment and about everything else, simply discontinued service between Meriden and Waterbury. On June 24, 1917, trains stopped running.

In those days permission of the Public Service Commission was not required, nor was that of the Interstate Commerce Commission needed. Just how many people were inconvenienced is a question. There are rumors that one man went to Washington to complain, but as the ICC couldn't do anything about it, this seems doubtful.

ACCIDENTS

WHEN the New York & New England Railroad took over the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River under lease, some of the press reports noted that the road had had a number of costly mishaps in its career. Actually, there doesn't seem to have been much trouble until the building of the Waterbury extension. The derailment of No. 1 near the Red Bridge in South Meriden has already been mentioned.

In February, 1889, the 10:26 train at Cromwell, with two freight cars and a coach, left the rails near the station, and poked its nose over the river in such a way that a little farther would have put it in the water. The cars stayed on the track, and nobody was badly hurt. There were no passengers in the coach. The fireman got a little banged up, and the locomotive required some repairs.

The worst accident occurred on July 19, 1889. The train which left West Main Street at 5:55 p. m. for Cromwell split the switch at the North End crossing of the New Haven Road. Four freight cars, the engine and tender fell 30 feet. The engine turned a complete somersault and came to rest under the bridge. The tender fell on the engine, and one box car landed on them both. The coach and combination cars left the rails, plowing

A man who traveled on the line just before World War I says he thinks a half dozen would be about the average passenger list, although at one time about 1912 a jewelry plant at the Cheshire Street station (near the Meriden city line) used so many workers who commuted that an extra car had to be put on the train.

* * *

FOLLOWING discontinuance of service in 1917, trackage west of West Main Street was frequently used for car storage, particularly for those in bad order, and tramps found in them made-to-order hide-outs. Occasionally they would set a car on fire, and the Meriden Fire Department would have to come to the rescue.

In 1920 the Interstate Commerce Act was amended to require assent of the ICC for abandonment, so that in 1924 when the New Haven Road decided it wanted to tear up the tracks, permission of Washington was required. Application was filed to abandon that portion from East Farms Station, Waterbury, to a point 1,000 west of West Main Street bridge (No. 2.69) Meriden, a distance of 11.78 miles. This left about six miles in Waterbury for switching purposes, and all the trackage east of West Main Street. Permission was granted February 25, 1924, and the tracks were taken up during the year.

Meriden-Middletown hourly interurban service was continued until 1927, when buses took over. However, Meriden-Middletown bus service was via Route 6A and trolley service continued to run as far as Westfield until 1932 when all street railway service in Meriden was abandoned. There was no high-

way route that could serve the section traversed by the old Meriden & Cromwell line and the area was left without public transportation.

The old Meriden & Cromwell tracks are still maintained from Meriden to the York Hill Trap Rock Quarry, and have been renewed with 107-pound re-lay rail in recent years, with tie plates and creosoted ties. One of the peculiarities of the line in the old days was its con-

struction with rail joints opposite, so that the interurban cars could be heard for a long distance as the wheels bumped over the parallel connections, particularly when the track needed attention. Probably the roadbed is better today than it ever was when regular service was maintained.

The tracks to the old Center Street yards are used for industrial switching, mostly for the New Departure plant of General Motors, which occupies all the land in that vicinity. The tracks in Waterbury are likewise used for industrial switching, and the Dublin Street station was not closed to less-than-carload freight until July, 1950. The tracks in Meriden are also maintained as far as West Main Street to take care of sidings in that vicinity. The overall distance from York Hill Quarry to West Main Street is about 5½ miles, with a mile or more for the Center Street spur.

The need for freight facilities like the old Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad largely passed with the advent of over-the-road trucking. But many of those who remember the old railroad find it rather sad to see most of the roadbed abandoned and overgrown with trees and bushes.

ACCIDENTS

through the ballast until they hit the bridge abutment, where they stopped.

Nobody was hurt in the coaches, but the engineer, fireman and brakeman were injured, and the fireman eventually died of pneumonia brought on by the accident. It was raining hard at the time, and fire from the engine which caught some of the splintered wood, was extinguished before it did any great harm.

A spike was found wedged between the rail and the switch point, and sabotage was alleged. The coroner was not so sure, but the road got the superintendents of both the Consolidated and the New York & New England Roads to testify that the wrecking was, in their opinion, a deliberate act.

This theory was given substance

WRECK AT RED BRIDGE on 10th of August, 1888, showing "shoo-fly" track around Meriden & Cromwell No. 1 which is being blocked up for re-railing.



ACCIDENTS

by the finding, about a month later in Cromwell, of five ties so placed across the track near a curve that if a trackman had not discovered them they would have caused another wreck. This latter attempt was kept secret for some time, but eventually it got into the papers.

The road offered a reward of \$1,000 for evidence which would convict the "fiend" who had been responsible for the North End derailment, but there is nothing to indicate that anyone claimed it.

The locomotive was shipped back to Schenectady for repairs, which would indicate that No. 4 was the one involved.

In September, 1890, a pair of horses crossing a bridge east of Southington Road station became frightened, and bolted through the railing, taking wagon and driver down onto the roof of a passing train. They fell off to the ground, the driver and one horse uninjured, but the wagon and the other horse were a total loss.

Southington Road was the scene of a much more serious accident on November 21, 1890, when Train

No. 2 was wrecked just east of the station at 6:15 a. m., injuring two men, one of whom later died from the effects.

A brake beam from a coal car dropped. The car kept to the rails until the Honey Pot River bridge was crossed and the 400-ft. embankment following it was reached, when it left the tracks and carried seven cars with it out of the 13-car train. Before the train could be stopped, the coupling broke and two coal cars went down the 30-ft. bank, with a half dozen other cars piled up along the track. The coach and three freight cars were left on the rails, and the engineer, having loaded the injured men into the coach, carried them to Meriden.

On the 12th of January, 1891, the rains and melting snow were too much for the bridge over the Little River, just east of Westfield station. The engineer of the early morning train from Cromwell found visibility at 6:30 on this particular day even poorer than usual, but as he came to the bridge he could see that it had sunk two or three feet. He whistled for the brakemen and reversed the engine, but before the brakes could take hold, the locomotive, tender and

smoking car crashed through into what was said to be 15 to 20 feet of raging torrent filled with ice cakes. The coach was left on the tracks at the bank edge.

There was one passenger in the smoker, and he, together with the conductor, engineer, fireman and two brakemen, were precipitated into the icy water. The engine remained upright, with only the top of the stack and cab visible, and the tender was completely submerged. The smoker was carried by the current 300 feet down the stream.

Miraculously enough, nobody was killed or seriously injured. The fireman managed to get to shore first, pulling himself up on the bridge timbers. He saw the engineer struggling in the water, and put out a plank which his comrade caught hold of, and was dragged ashore.

The conductor, although a good swimmer, was handicapped by his heavy Winter clothing and the icy water and went under twice, practically giving himself up for lost. By a mighty effort he grabbed a bush on the shore. Feeling himself slipping, he called for help. Fortunately, the two brakemen who had previously managed to get out themselves, heard him and pulled him up on the bank.

The passenger in the smoker was carried several hundred feet down the river, but was finally rescued. They were all taken to a nearby house, where the most exhausted were put to bed, and the rest lay around and dried out.

The trackwalker responsible for the section claimed the bridge was intact at 6 a. m., but people nearby said they had heard noises which led them to believe otherwise. They had no explanation as to why they had not notified anyone, except that they supposed the trackwalker would check up.

There were a number of conflicting stories as to the condition of the bridge before the freshet washed it out. It was of wood, with wood cribbing on the bank ends. Some claimed it had been held together with "iron rope" and had been unfit for use. Be that as it



NORTH END CROSSING WRECK

of July 19, 1889, showing four derailed freight cars and tender on its side under box car. Locomotive No. 4 is on bottom of the pile-up. Bank at right is connecting link from New Haven track in lower foreground.

FROM a New Haven Railroad timetable of 1900
when service was given between Waterbury
and Middletown.

HARTFORD DIVISION.										
Meriden Branch.										
994	990	Ms	June 10, 1900.				991	995		
P. M.	A. M.		LEAVE	ARRIVE	A. M.	P. M.				
6 15	7 50	0	Waterbury	7 50	4 00					
6 24	9 00	4	East Farms	7 40	3 50					
6 29	9 06	5	Summit	7 34	3 44					
6 35	9 12	7	Prospect	7 28	3 38					
6 40	9 18	8	West Cheshire	7 22	3 32					
6 45	9 24	10	Southington Road	7 16	3 26					
6 55	9 35	14	Hanover	7 05	3 15					
7 00	9 40	15	Meriden	7 00	3 10					
7 14	9 58	21	Highland	6 41	2 51					
7 23	10 03	25	Westfield	6 30	2 40					
7 26	10 12	28	Newfield	6 26	2 36					
7 31	10 18	29	Middletown	6 20	2 30					
P. M.	A. M.		ARRIVE	LEAVE	A. M.	P. M.				

ACCIDENTS

may, the road seemed rather tardy about making repairs—perhaps because the river boats were not running and there was little business out of Cromwell. Nothing could be done until the engine was fished out of the river, and it stayed in the water until February 9th, when it was hauled into an adjoining field, but was not re-railed immediately.

It was then reported that another wooden bridge was to be erected, but after considerable agitation the company had an iron bridge fabricated by the Berlin Iron Bridge Company, and this was put in place on the 13th of March, two months after the accident. Through service from Cromwell to Waterbury was then resumed.

Accidents were expensive in many ways. Aside from the cost of repairs, the road had no reserve of power to substitute, and had to rent equipment if its own were damaged. The wreck at Red Bridge on August 10, 1888, put Engine No. 1 out of commission for over a month, and necessitated rental of Hartford & Connecticut Western's No. 6 from August 11th to September 15th, at a cost of \$465.

Wrecks smashed cars of other roads, which had to be paid for. The Cromwell Road received a bill from the New Haven for its box car No. 2123, "destroyed near Meriden," about October 31, 1887. Evidently there was some discussion on the subject, because the bill was not paid until July, 1888, and was figured on the original cost of the car in 1880, less 6% depreciation per year, making a net loss of \$285.33 for the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad.

The Meriden & Cromwell Railroad started with two passenger trains each way daily, with freights and excursions as needed. This service was increased to three trains each way in the Summer of 1886. With the opening of the Waterbury extension, a fourth train was added.

Over the years there were variations. At one period shortly after the Waterbury line was opened, there were three passenger trains and one freight from Cromwell straight through to Waterbury, but in the Fall of the year this was changed so that two of the passenger trains terminated in Meriden.

Upon the opening of the connection with the New York & New England in Waterbury, passenger trains ran through to the New England station, although they also stopped at Dublin Street. This was to give good connections with trains for Danbury, Winsted and points west. This service was in effect only from April 8, 1889, to August 5, 1890, when Dublin Street again became the terminus.

A great deal of effort was made to attract special parties and groups. Lodges, clubs and church organizations were given special trains. During State Fair Week in Meriden a temporary station was set up near the Fair grounds. The Hartford Camera Club once made a trip from one end of the line to the other, and later presented the management with an album of scenes they had taken.

The timetable of December, 1892, showed a fourth train between Meriden and Cromwell. On the other hand, when the New York & New England took over, and up to the time they gave up the lease, there were three trains, one of which ran between Meriden and Waterbury only. When the line was revived as the Middletown, Meriden & Waterbury Railroad, two mixed trains were put on each way. (All scheduled passenger trains ran "mixed" if there were freight cars to haul).

In 1904 interurban trolleys were beginning to give the New Haven Railroad competition in many parts of the state, and to forestall this as much as possible the road tried to improve its local service. In that year, taking advantage of the fact that the shortest rail distance between New Haven and Waterbury was via the

Canal Line to Cheshire and thence via the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River to Waterbury—26 miles as against 32 miles via Derby and Ansonia—a new service of four trips a day was begun over the route via Cheshire.

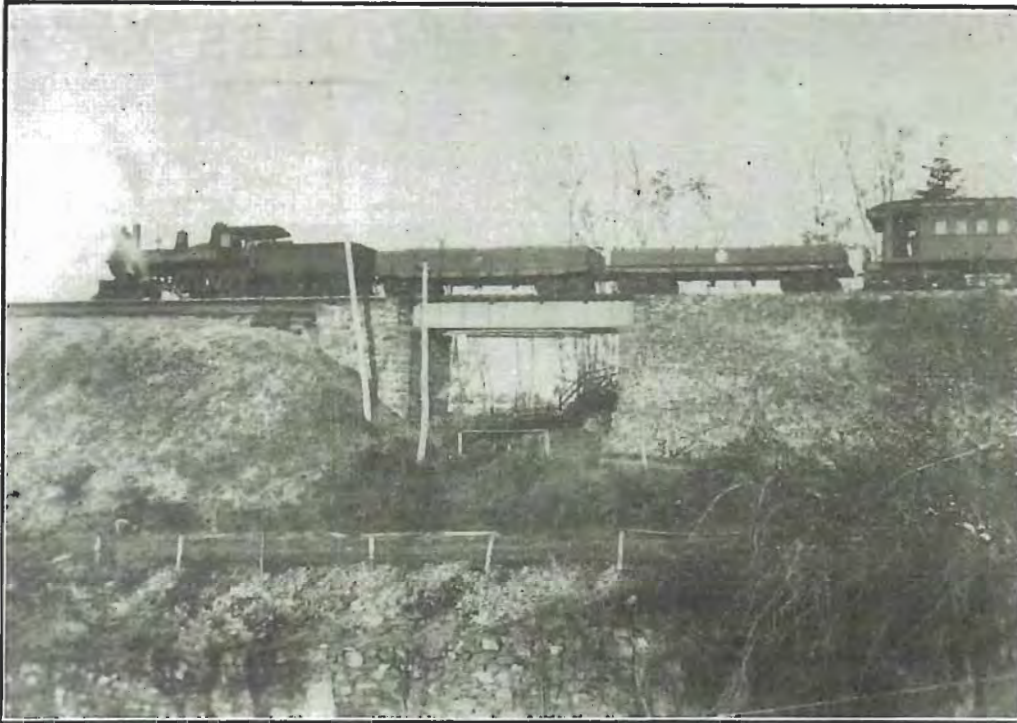
This New Haven-Waterbury schedule caused the building of a curved connection between the Canal Line and the Meriden-Waterbury line. Previously there had been no physical connection between the two lines, as the Meriden-Waterbury line crossed the old canal and its railroad line successor on bridges—iron over the railroad and a stone culvert over the canal. East of this crossing there was quite a high fill with one of the railroad's most ambitious structural jobs, the bridge over Honeypot Brook.

Running time on this New Haven-Cheshire-Waterbury route was 50 minutes northbound and 45 minutes southbound; five minutes extra were needed to climb from Cheshire to Summit. The service was immediately popular, and probably would have continued to be so if an even more direct trolley line had not been opened up, cutting both running time and fares. Trains were given up in 1906, but while they lasted, the west end was busier than it had ever been.

Up to 1906 there were still two trains a day each way from Middletown and Meriden to Waterbury, but with the opening of trolley service on the tracks between Meriden and Middletown, trains were run to what was called East Meriden Junction (where the Waterbury line joined the original Meriden & Cromwell tracks from Center Street) to give a connection with the new interurbans. However, it was not long before the steam trains made West Main Street their terminal.

Excursions continued to bring in revenue. One particularly fruitful time was Meriden's Centennial Week, in June 1906, when a land-office business was done from both Middletown and Waterbury to Meriden.

The Meriden-Waterbury service was cut back to one train a day each way between 1909 and 1910. The exact time schedule varied on this run, but in general it was based on a morning train from Meriden, and a return from Waterbury at night. During the day the engine and crew would do the switching in Waterbury to industries on the line such as Scovill. This schedule continued until trains stopped running June 24, 1917.



TICKET issued by the New Haven Railroad good between Meriden and Waterbury.

SCHEDULED passenger trains were always "mixed" (passenger and freight) when there was freight to haul on the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River—even after the New Haven Railroad took over. The train shown above at West Cheshire station shortly after the Waterbury extension was opened, was a typical MW&CR passenger train. In the scene below, the same West Cheshire station is shown about 1900, with a New Haven Railroad train at the station.

Fares, Notes

Passenger fares on the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad in 1888 were as follows: Meriden to Waterbury 50 cents, to Cromwell 30 cents, to Highland House 15 cents, Westfield 25 cents, West Cheshire 25 cents, Summit (Prospect) 35 cents. Passenger business was good, too.

A June 1, 1903, article in the Meriden Journal mentioned over 6,000 people at a balloon ascension at Hanover Park, saying that there were 1,000 excursionists from Waterbury—another indication of what the road did in excursion business.

In the days of the the horse and wagon, short hauls by railroad were common and profitable. As an exaxmple, the Meriden Ice Company, ice houses on Hanover Lake at South Meriden and Highland Lake in Westfield, found it most convenient to use the new railroad for transporting ice into Meriden, horse carts picking up their loads at the local platform.



INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT.

No. 105

The Meriden and Cromwell Rail Road Company



CAPITAL \$ 300,000.

SHARES \$100 EACH

This Certifies, that _____
is entitled to _____ Shares of the Capital Stock
of THE MERIDEN AND CROMWELL RAIL ROAD COMPANY, transferable only on the books
of said Company in person, or by Attorney, duly authorized, on surrender
of this Certificate.

Meriden, Conn. _____ 188__

SECRETARY. PRESIDENT.

INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT.

No. 532

The Meriden, Waterbury and Connecticut River Rail Road Company



CAPITAL \$ 500,000.

SHARES \$100 EACH

This Certifies, that _____
is entitled to _____ Shares of the Capital Stock
of THE MERIDEN, WATERBURY & CONNECTICUT RIVER RAILROAD COMPANY, transferable only
on the books of the Company in person, or by Attorney, duly authorized, on
surrender of this Certificate.

Meriden, Conn. _____ 18__

SECRETARY. PRESIDENT.

Copies of stock certificates of the original and the expanded "Cromwell Road."

ROSTER OF EQUIPMENT

PASSENGER CARS

Car No.	Type	Date Ordered	Builder	Cost
10	Baggage-coach combination	April, 1884	Wason	
11	Baggage-coach combination	Dec. 30, 1887	Pullman	\$3,700
20	Day coach, first class	Dec. 30, 1887	Pullman	\$4,500
21	Day coach, first class	Dec. 30, 1887	Pullman	\$4,500
22	Day coach, first class	Dec. 30, 1887	Pullman	\$4,500
23	Day coach, first class	Dec. 30, 1887	Pullman	\$4,500
	Excursion coach (ex-Philadelphia & Reading No. 12)	(delivered July, 1888)		\$900
	Excursion coach (ex-Philadelphia & Reading No. 344)	(delivered July, 1888)		\$900
	Excursion coach (ex-Philadelphia & Reading No. 360)	(delivered July, 1888)		\$900
	Excursion coach (ex-Chicago & Alton No. 501)	(delivered July, 1888)		\$900

FREIGHT CARS

No of Cars in Lot	Type	Date Ordered	Builder	Price for Lot
1-3-5-7-9	Platform flat cars (\$395 each)	Nov. 1883	Wason	\$2,035
11	Flat cars	June 30, 1884	Wason	\$4,510
4	Flat cars	July 31, 1884	Wason	\$1,640
10	Drop bottom coal cars	Aug. 22, 1884	Wason	\$4,250
8	Drop bottom coal cars	Sept. 9, 1884	Wason	\$3,400
1	22-inch side board coal car	Sept. 15, 1884	Wason	\$425
6	36-inch side board coal cars	Sept. 15, 1884	Wason	\$2,580
6	Box cars	Nov. 5, 1884	Wason	\$2,940
20	34-ft. flat cars with stake pockets	Sept. 23, 1887	Lebanon Mfg. Co.	\$7,000
20	20-ton 30-inch side board coal cars	Dec. 30, 1887	Pullman	each \$367.50
55	20-ton 36-inch side board coal cars	Dec. 30, 1887	Pullman	each \$382.00
10	20-ton box cars	Dec. 30, 1887	Pullman	each \$472.50

Form 1701. 31-288. 1000. M.

CERTIFICATE OF DELIVERY.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I have this day received from PULLMAN'S PALACE CAR COMPANY, PULLMAN CAR WORKS,

PULLMAN, ILL., at Pullman, Ill.

for account of Meriden and Waterbury R.R.

Cars, lettered, M. W. & Co. R. R.

Nov. 131, 133, 135, 137, 139, 141, 143, 145, 147, 149
151, 153, 155, 157, 159, 161, 163, 165, 167, 169
171, 173, 175, 177, 179, 181, 183, 185, 187, 189
191, 193, 195, 197, 199, 201, 203, 205, 207, 209

Pullman Mar 12th 1888 A. L. B. Ord
Inspector for M. W. R. R.

Facsimile of delivery order which gives the numbers of 40 coal cars which were built by Pullman.

ROLLING STOCK NOTES

Five freight cars were ordered, or authorized, in August 1883 when construction first began on the Meriden & Cromwell. Forty freight cars (mostly for coal) and a passenger coach were reportedly ordered from Wason in Springfield in April of 1884. By July of the same year the road had received several cars for use in construction, although track had been laid for only six miles.

Before the Waterbury extension was built, it was estimated that four passenger cars and one combination baggage-coach would be needed; but of those finally obtained, combination car No. 10 was the only one purchased new from Wason in 1884. The Meriden & Cromwell apparently got along with this one car, plus occasional rentals from the Hartford & Connecticut Valley, or some other neighboring road. On opening day two coaches were borrowed in this manner, and cost \$25 — \$12.50 apiece for use and hauling from Hartford to Cromwell and back before and after the opening ceremonies.

The extension to Waterbury called for more cars, and after getting comparative figures from Wason and Pullman, with much correspondence and visiting back and forth, the road made on contract with Pullman on December 30, 1887, for four first class passenger coaches, one combination car and a number of freight cars.

In these days of \$100,000 coaches, it is interesting to note that the best the Pullman Company had to offer came to \$4,500 each, and the combination car cost the railroad only \$3,700.

The equipment register of the New York & New England Railroad in September, 1893, gave a total of 155 freight cars on the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad as follows:

Nos.	Type	Capacity	No. in Lot
2-36 (even)	Box cars, 30 and 40-ft.	40,000	18
1-5 (odd)	Flat cars	40,000	3
7-77 (odd)	Coal cars	40,000	36
79-89 (odd)	Drop bottom coal cars	40,000	6
91-129 (odd)	Flat cars	40,000	17
131-169 (odd)	Coal cars, 34-ft.	50,000	20
171-279 (odd)	Drop bottom coal cars, 34-ft.	50,000	55

Nos. 7-53 and 57-77 had movable sideboards, No. 55 had a derrick.

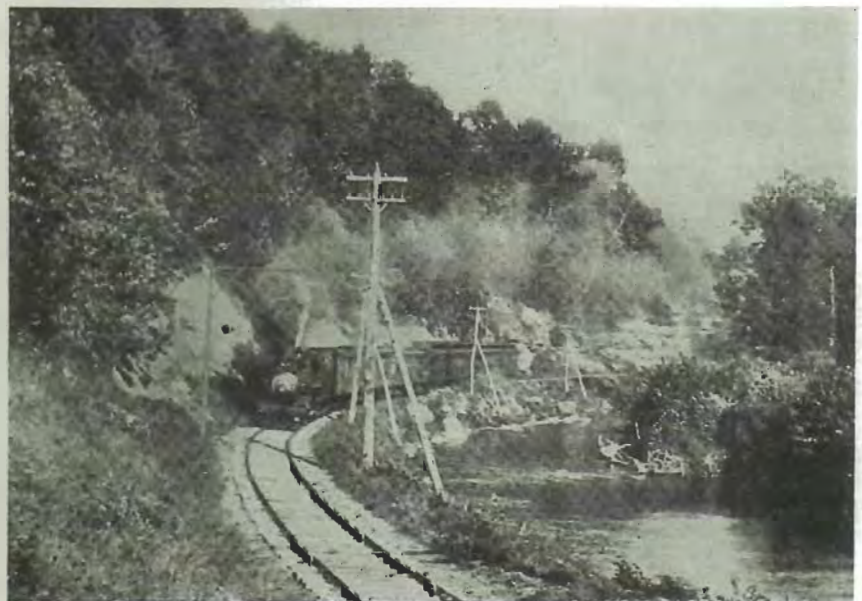
Nos. 97, 111 and 123 were vacant. (Probably scrapped after damage in wrecks).

The new cars were numbered 20, 21, 22, 23; the combine 11. For excursion business the road bought Philadelphia & Reading coaches Nos. 12, 344 and 360, also Chicago & Alton No. 501, from E. H. Wilson & Company of Philadelphia, for \$900 each. These were delivered at the time of the opening of the Waterbury extension, in July of 1888, and probably were in need of shopping, to judge from the references to them in the newspapers. Excursion cars were apparently not supposed

to be much more than transportation in those days.

There were thus 10 passenger cars owned, and the New York & New England evidently absorbed them into its own roster, as they do not appear in any inventory of rolling stock after the NY&NE took over.

Rolling stock of the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad is said to have been sold to the New Haven Railroad for \$21,444 when taken over from the New York & New England in September, 1897.



WESTBOUND "mixed" train along the Quinnipiac River, South Meriden, in the early 1900's.

ARRIVAL OF THE NEW CARS — ELEGANT SPECIMENS OF CAR MAKERS' ART FROM THE PULLMAN COMPANY

Standing on the sidetrack at the Center Street railroad station are the fine, brand new passenger coaches and one combination passenger and baggage car which are so extraordinarily neat and handsome that they would attract attention among the finest in the country.

They are the luxurious conveyances to be used in transporting humanity over the hill and far away to our sister city Waterbury on the Naugatuck. They arrived this morning (February 14, 1888)—that is, three did—and the remainder came over this afternoon from Cromwell. During the day they have been visited by many stockholders and others interested, and nothing but praise has been heard for the management in providing such handsome coaches.

The cars are painted dark olive green, and the trimmings are finely shown off by bright gold leaf. The length of the cars is a little greater than that of ordinary passenger coaches, and the trucks and running gear are of the the easiest and most serviceable make. The wheels on either end of the car are so set in the bearings as to be farther apart than ordinarily, making the rumbling sound less obnoxious. The jar of the

passenger car is reduced to a minimum by the use of both spiral and elliptical springs as in the very finest drawing room cars. The name at the top covers the entire length, and well it may. Here it is: "Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad Company." The cars are equipped with the most approved Westinghouse air brakes and connections.

Inside the cars present an even more luxurious appearance. The seats, 14 on each side, are of the most comfortable pattern, of the Hale & Kilbourn make, having an extra number of special springs so arranged in wooden frames as to be very durable, not solid stuffed, but open underneath. The arms are of carved cherry, and the sides of the car are of a very pretty cherry finish. The upper and lower decks of the roof have a maple veneer headlining, which are very ornamentally painted. The whole appearance of the interior of the car is very cheerful and light.

The saloons are models of their kind. In the ladies' toilets are arranged wash basins set in dark marble and with water to be pumped from a cistern conveniently located. A large plate glass mirror is also very convenient for the ladies, situated directly over the wash basin.

The heating is by means of the Baker heater, with pipes running the length of the car. This apparatus is so manufactured that the fire is extinguished if anything happens to the heater out of the ordinary course of events. The lighting is by means of three large and beautifully finished chandeliers, situated at equidistant points through the cars. The racks for storing light baggage are of highly polished brass of very pretty design. The cars were built by the Pullman Company at its old works in Detroit, Mich., and are fully up to the high standard set by George M. Pullman.

There are 80 freight cars to come and while it may not be expected that they will be built in the regal splendor of the passenger coaches they will undoubtedly be substantial and models in their line. . .

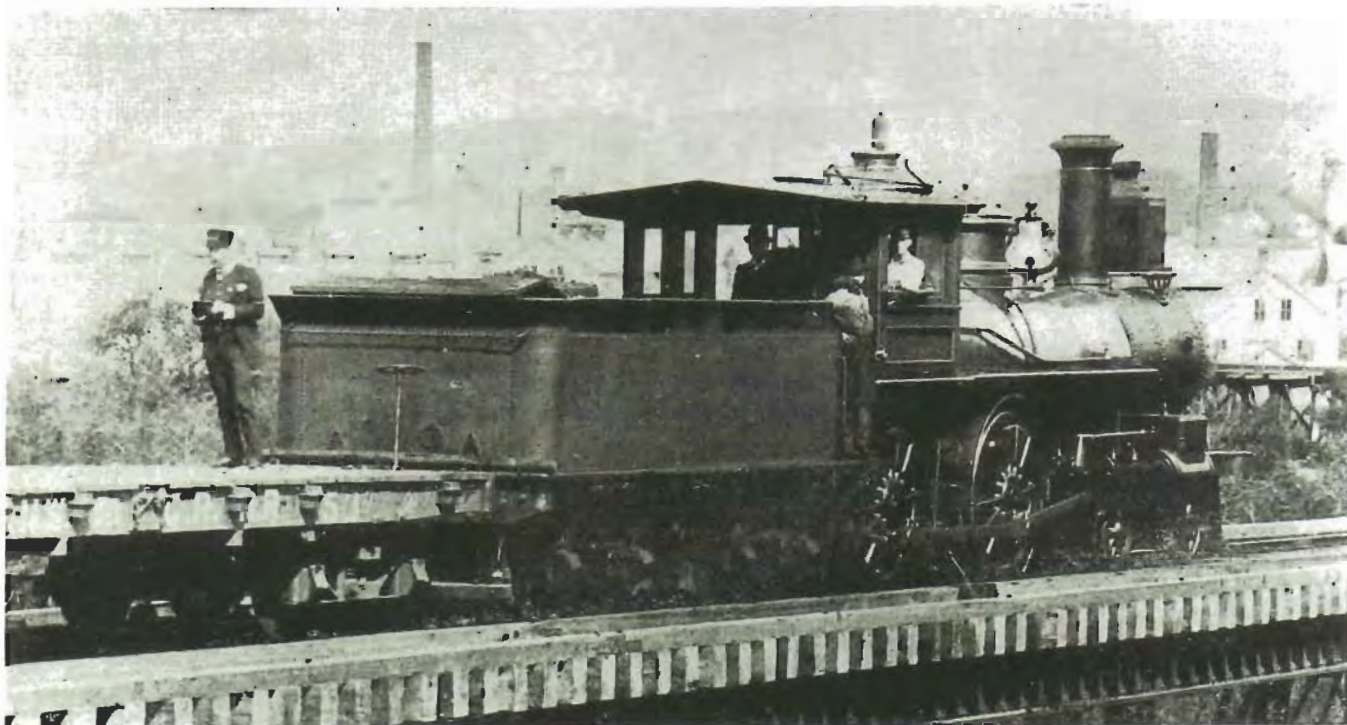
The combination baggage and smoking car is a beauty. It is modeled something after the style of the Boston & Albany smokers, having rattan seats, very durable and still very comfortable. The public will be not be obliged to stand in the baggage compartment while smoking on the new road, as was necessary on the Cromwell.

(Reprinted from the Meriden Journal, Feb. 14, 1888)



—Photo from collection of Glover A. Snow.

ORIGINAL COACH NO. 10, which was built at the Wason shops in Springfield, Mass., is shown after it was repainted in 1888 to match the new coaches bought from Pullman that year when the extension from Meriden to Waterbury was opened. Color was olive green with gold lettering.



NO. 1 as it looked about 1888, headed east on the bridge over the Naugatuck River, Waterbury.

MOTIVE POWER

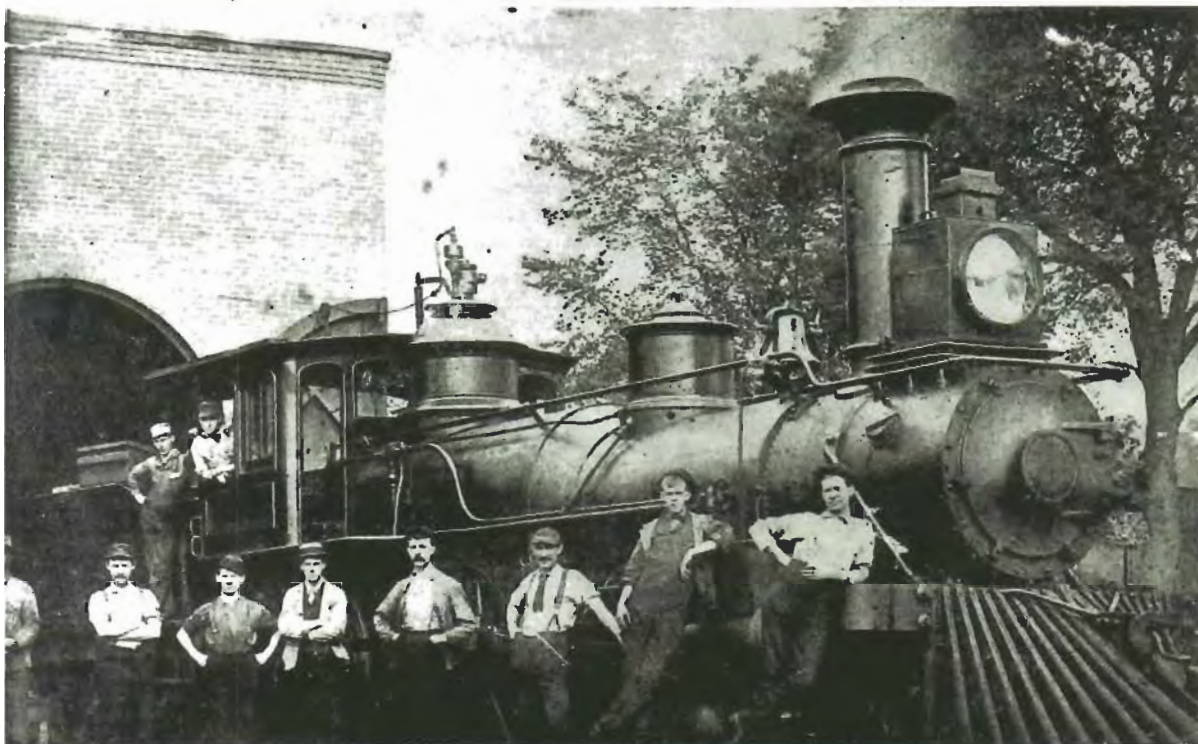
No. 1 In August, 1883, at about the same time that the first grading started on the Meriden & Cromwell, the directors voted to buy their first engine and five cars. The locomotive was built by the Rhode Island Works, Providence, as Meriden & Cromwell No. 1, builder's No. 1372, a 4-4-0 type with 54-inch drivers, cylinders 17x24, weight on drivers 52,000 pounds, total weight 80,000 pounds. The New York & New England gave it No. 198 when it took over. The New Haven when it purchased all the Cromwell engines in 1897 made it their No. 2. In 1904 it was renumbered 1898, and the machine was not scrapped until 1915.

First No. 2 First No. 2 was apparently somewhat of a boomer, and considerably the worse for

wear. A 2-4-0 type, it was built by Baldwin in 1868 as their No. 1761. It had 14x22 cylinders, 50-inch drivers, and it weighed 14½ tons. The Lehigh Coal & Navigation Company was the first owner, and listed it as their No. 54. Eventually it turned up with Philadelphia & Reading markings and their No. 10, on the Wilkesbarre Pier at Providence, working for the Providence & Worcester road. At that time it burned hard coal, had a straight stack and no extension arch. The Rhode Island Locomotive Works billed the Meriden & Cromwell road \$603.59 for repairing it as a construction engine. What the Meriden & Cromwell paid for it "as is" has not been learned. When it came to the Meriden & Cromwell in February, 1885, it had 52-inch drivers and 17x24 cylinders.

Second No. 2 On the first of November, 1886, original No. 2 was traded in for \$800 toward a new Rhode Island Forney at \$6,400. (Compare this with the price tag on the lightest Diesel switcher nowadays — around \$60,000 — or road Diesels at \$200,000!) Second No. 2 with builder's No. 1698, had 44-inch drivers, 17x22 cylinders, and weighed 56,000 pounds. New York & New England gave it No. 199, and on the New Haven its number was 14, which was changed in 1904 to 2826. The engine was scrapped January 29, 1914.

No. 3 Originally a Pennsylvania Railroad machine, various PRR numbers have been claimed for it, but Charles E. Fisher who has done exhaustive checking of many road lists, including the



—Photo from collection of Glover A. Snow.

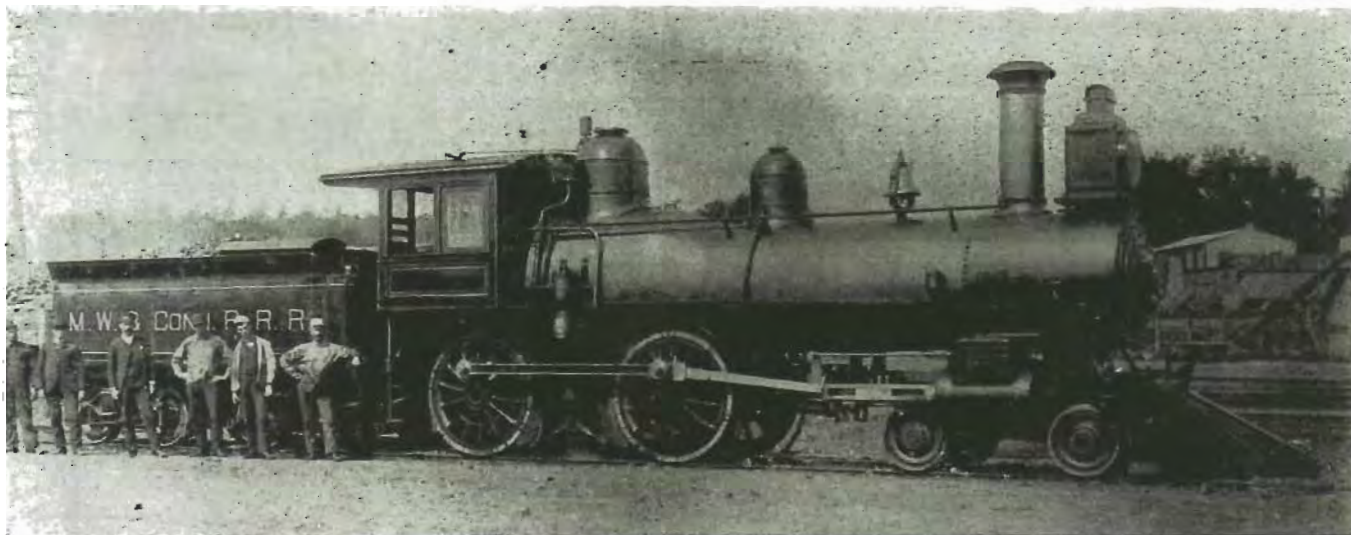
NO. 3 at the West Main Street engine house, Meriden. Photograph is believed to have been taken in the Fall of 1892 when No. 3 had its last overhaul by the MW&CR shop crew.

Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River, is convinced No. 3 was PRR No. 387, built by Baldwin in 1867, a 4-4-0 with 17x24 cylinders and 62-inch drivers, weight on drivers of 50,400 pounds, and weight of engine 75,700 pounds.

The other PRR numbers alleged for this machine have proved to have been used on locomotives of other wheel arrangement, or made and used by the PRR at times which would not have allowed them to have been sold to the

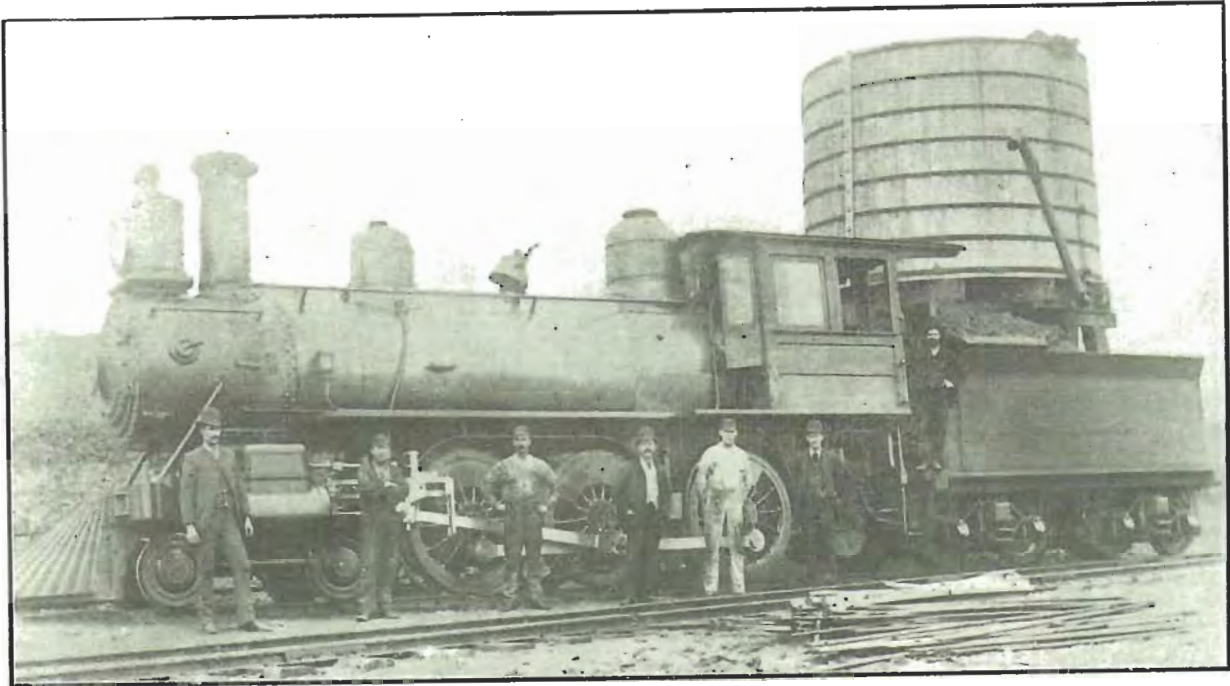
Meriden & Cromwell when it is known the engine was obtained.

The picture shows No. 3 to be of unmistakable Pennsylvania origin, but it did not come directly to the Meriden & Cromwell. It was purchased on October 6, 1887, for \$2,000



—Photo from collection of Connecticut Valley Chapter, N. R. H. S.

NO. 4 photographed at Meriden when new in 1888. Crew members identified are: third from left, William Varson, conductor; fifth from left, John Kline, fireman; Penrose H. Baker, engineer.



—From collection of D. W. Peckham.

No. 5 of the Meriden, Waterbury & Connecticut River Railroad photographed at Summit.

from a man in New York who had it stored at the Mason Machine Works in Taunton, Mass., under the name of the Standard Coal Company of Boston. Engineer Gilbert went to Taunton and brought it home via the New York & New England from Walpole to Hartford, thence down the Valley Road to Cromwell. The freight bill said it weighed 80,000 pounds "on drivers."

In February of 1889 it was reported that No. 3 had been thoroughly overhauled under the supervision of Master Mechanic Wilkinson, "and is now in regular service doing good work."

No. 3 took New York & New England No 200 — at least it was assigned, although it may never have been used, as most reports rated No. 3 ready for scrap at the time of the lease. It was still in storage, however, when the equipment was sold to the New Haven Road in 1897.

No. 4 A 4-4-0, which was built in Schenectady in 1888, builder's No. 2695, it had 54-inch drivers, 17x24 cylinders, weighed 60,000 pounds on drivers, 32,000 pounds on trucks. It received NY&NE No. 201, and New Haven No. 151, renumbered to 1849 in 1904. It was scrapped in 1917.

No. 5 The road's only six-coupled machine, a 4-6-0, it had 17x24 cylinders, 48-inch drivers, weighed 80,000 pounds thereon and 18,000 pounds on trucks, was built in 1888 as Schenectady No. 2741. It was said to have proven too heavy for the Waterbury line.

The New York & New England gave it number 202, and the New Haven turned it over to the Shepaug, Litchfield & Northern, which made it their No. 2. When the New Haven took it back they assigned No. 552, then 452 and finally 929 to the engine. It was scrapped

in 1922, the last MW&CR locomotive to pound the rails.

American Locomotive Company records on Nos. 4 and 5 are slightly at variance with our figures on one or two points. No. 4, according to Alco, was of 90,000 weight on drivers and had 60-inch wheels when it left Schenectady. No. 5, Alco says, weighed 101,000 pounds and had 55-inch wheels, with cylinders 19x24. Quite possibly alterations were made on these engines. In June 1897 the New Haven Road superintendent listed No. 4 as having 63-inch wheels, but he listed No. 5 as having 55-inch.

All five engines seem to have stayed on the property during the New York & New England lease. They were stored in Meriden when service ceased on June 1, 1896. The New Haven took them in September, 1897, and when the line reopened in 1898, it was with New Haven power.

NEW HAVEN ROAD RE-TRIES AN OLD IDEA TO

Restore Train Service To Abandoned Lines



TWO PT-boat type diesel engines, suspended at a 30-degree angle, were explained by Roy A. Nurtis, diesel expert (left) to Jim Evans of Windham Observer and Register's W. E. L. Lush.

THERE may be nothing new under the sun—but a novel twist to an idea the New Haven Railroad first tried 55 years ago—is not only paying off. It is restoring passenger train service to lines entirely killed off by intruders of the automobile. More than that, rail officials are hopeful it may reverse the downward spiral of rail travel in effect since 1920.

Some of the best features of the automobile and the World War II PT boat have blended into the new Budd-built RDC's (rail diesel cars), eight of which are in operation now; six more are on order, some of which may provide passenger service on the Naugatuck Division come winter.

Railroad men have to have a colorful name for every new train or type of service. Zephyr, Rocket, Comet or Mainliner—they call the New Haven's new stainless steel 30-minute-an-hour speedsters "the Shoreliners." Who? We dunno, (he operates on the Norwich branch, connecting Worcester and New London. Another, providing the shortest rail route to Boston via Williamstown leaves Hartford over the peaceful, picturesque, pastoral Highland division. Maybe the others do run to New Bedford or Cape Cod or some line that entitles them to be called Shoreliners. We'll settle for RDB's (Rusk Dumaine's Beauties).

A year ago Frederic C. Dumaine Jr., shortly after becoming president of the New Haven, told Norwich businessmen he hoped to restore passenger service on the Norwich branch, which, except for the State of Maine Express, had seen no passenger trains since 1920. Even the State of Maine rumbled through there in the small hours of even, unseen, until in 1946 it was re-routed via Providence.

FULFILLS PROMISE

On June he made good on the promise. Now a "Shoreliner" makes two round trips daily between New London and Worcester, connecting with the Mayflower and other fast trains. So well has the service been received, it is building not only through passenger but intermediate traffic.

Seating 300-passengers, the "Shoreliner" is a 100-horsepower self-propelled air-conditioned coach powered by two 275-horsepower

General Motors diesel engines, which are identical to those used by PT boats during the last war. Located beneath the floor, these engines operate through torque converters and drive one axle of either truck. The car is capable of a top speed of 43 miles per hour, cruises at 30 miles per hour, and will reach a speed of 44 miles per hour in one minute from a standing start—which is about four times the acceleration of a standard train.

In running, the "Shoreliner" gets about 27 miles per gallon of fuel oil, which isn't bad when you come to compare it with the performance of your automobile. Depending on the make and condition of your car you may be getting anywhere from eight or nine to as much as 25 or more miles per gallon of gasoline. For comparative purposes suppose we strike an average of 15 miles.

Your car probably seats six persons, whereas the RDC seats 83, or practically 15 times as many. Then, too, you are paying somewhere in the neighborhood of 25 cents a gallon for the gasoline you put in your car, whereas this new type of railroad car uses the same type of fuel oil you use in your oil burner at home, which costs only about half as much per gallon.

To copy the comparison a little further, for a trip of 270 miles, the new railroad car would use 100 gallons of fuel oil costing approximately \$12.00 which would mean about 15 cents per passenger if the car was loaded to capacity, or roughly 1/20 of a cent per passenger per mile. Your auto would use 18 gallons of gasoline costing approximately \$4.50, which would mean 75 cents per passenger if it carried six passengers, or slightly more than 1/4 of a cent per passenger per mile.

USED IN MULTIPLE

The "Shoreliner" can be driven from either end by one operator using simple controls. It requires only a two-man crew of an engineer and a conductor. If necessary it can be coupled to other similar cars to form a train of two or more cars, in which instance each car provides its own power. It does not have the necessary power to haul a trailer car and maintain the necessary speed to make schedules. But coupled to other similar cars each car does its share of the job.

The new cars have the same attractive appearance as the New Haven's famous stainless steel streamline cars, being built of the same metal which possesses three times the strength of ordinary steel.

One of the important new developments incorporated in the "Shoreliners" is an entirely new type of "disc" brakes which are claimed to represent the most substantial development in railroad brakes since the invention of the air brake. They enable the car to be brought to a complete stop, smooth and effortless stop.

Bright cheerful interiors, double-glazed picture windows, fluorescent lighting, air-conditioning, electric water coolers, rubber tile floors and sound deadening are among the features of the "Shoreliners" and special springs insure exceptionally comfortable riding qualities.

There is also the "Little Shoreliner" in operation in the Boston area, which looks for all the world like a bus on rails. Where the "Shoreliners" are known technically as RDC's, the Black-bull "Little Shoreliner" has been named the JED because Frederic C. Dumaine, the elder, was very much interested in its development. Seating 45 persons, its interior as well as exterior has much the



REBURECING passenger business for the New Haven, eight of these Budd RDCs are in operation, six more to be added shortly.

appearance of a modern bus. The comfortable seats have stainless steel frames, robe rails, arm rests and foot rests.

INSULATED WHEELS

As contrasted with the "Shoreliners" which have direct diesel drive, the "Little Shoreliner" has a supercharged six-cylinder diesel engine located at the rear, with each rail-truck equipped with two General Electric 55-horsepower motors for the actual transmission of power. The wheels are rubber-insulated for quiet running and it attains a maximum speed of 54 miles an hour.

It is interesting in connection with these newly developed cars to look back upon some of the previous efforts to solve the vexing problem of light-density passenger traffic. One of the earliest such efforts dates away back to the last century, when the Schenectady Locomotive Works built a "steam coach" for the New Haven Railroad. This was a railroad coach in one end of which there was a steam engine built right into the car. It was used on the line between Dedham, Mass., and Islington Junction, a two-mile route connecting with main-line trains. That line was discontinued in 1904.

Years later, in 1936, the New Haven again experimented with a similar type of train, taking two old coaches and remodeling them into a two-car streamlined train in one car of which was a high-pressure steam engine for its propulsion. It was painted blue, silver and gray and came to be familiarly known along the Naugatuck Valley as "the Blue Goose." It ran for several years between Bridgeport, Waterbury and Hartford, but too many mechanical difficulties were encountered and the experiment finally was abandoned.

BUS ON RAIL

In the meantime, back in the early 1920's, attempts were made to adapt automotive operation to the rails. The New Haven's first experiment along these lines was "Car No. 9008" which was a rather crude-looking bus with flanged wheels, with regular automotive drive. This type of car went through a stage of development and experimentation which used the gasoline engine to operate a dynamo for the creation of electricity to run the train, much similar to the present-day use of diesel power. They met with some success, but finally fell by the wayside.

In 1935 the New Haven



NEW Haven's first try at single-unit self-propelled car, built in 1897. A combination car and steam engine, it ran between Dedham, Mass., and Islington Junction, until 1904.



IN 1936 when revenues sagged, N. H. Road tried this vehicle with Mack motor and Brill body for passenger-baggage service. It lacked comfort but provided research for later models.



THEN came a full-sized rail coach, run by gasoline engine which generated electricity for its actual propulsion, much as today's diesel-electric engines function. It, too, had 'bugs'.



NOW at Readville Shops in the junkyard. The Comet was built in 1935 by Goodyear-Zeppelin, ran in Boston area and was suc-



NOW at Readville Shops in the junkyard. The Comet was built in 1935 by Goodyear-Zeppelin, ran in Boston area and was suc-



bought a three-car streamline articulated diesel-powered train, "The Comet," built by the Goodyear-Zeppelin Company at Akron, Ohio. This first ran between Providence and Boston and later was tried on a number of other runs, including the Waterbury-Hartford-Boston run via the "Highland" route. It was successful as a business getter, but it was a "headache" to the mechanical forces because it was the only one of its kind on the system and any time anything went wrong with it, it was a special job to fix it up. It was finally taken out of service permanently within the past year.

All of these various experiments, though, were attempts to solve the basic problem of trying to make passenger service pay on lines where the traffic is light. It looks now as though the solution has been found, and that the "Shoreliners" and the "Little Shoreliners" are the answers to the long sought question.

The six additional "Shoreliners" now on order will be assigned to the road's Naugatuck Valley line, according to present plans, for the run between Bridgeport, Waterbury and Winsted. This line has long been a "problem child" for the New Haven passenger-wise, and the recent shifting of mail carryings from railroad to truck have brought this passenger service very close to the margin where it is possible to operate at a profit. But with "Shoreliners" to take over the job, the road expects it will be able to continue to keep the line "in the black" and perhaps even to build it up to something of its old-time prestige.

Photos and article reprinted from
New Haven Register, Sunday, August 3, 1952.

Passenger Train Service RESTORED ON THE Worcester-New London Line



NEW SELF-PROPELLED "SHORELINER" RAIL DIESEL CAR, all stainless steel and air-conditioned, the type to be operated by The New Haven Railroad between WORCESTER and NEW LONDON.

To meet the demand for PASSENGER SERVICE to and from NEW YORK, THE NEW HAVEN RAILROAD will operate regular service on the WORCESTER-NEW LONDON Line, DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAYS, starting MONDAY, JUNE 9, 1952.

At NEW LONDON connections will be made with either the fast "MAYFLOWER" Express or the famous "MERCHANTS LIMITED", both to and from NEW YORK.

Passenger Train Schedule

(Daily Except Sundays)
Daylight Saving Time

From Worcester to New London - New York

	A.M.	P.M.
Lv. WORCESTER	7:50	4:50
WEBSTER	8:13	5:13
PUTNAM	8:28	5:28
Lv. DANIELSON	8:39	5:39
NORWICH	9:16	6:16
Due NEW LONDON	9:37	6:37
Lv. NEW LONDON	9(c)46	6(c)46
Due NEW HAVEN	10(c)37	7(c)37
Due NEW YORK (G.C.T.)	12(c)00	9(c)00
	noon	P.M.

From New York - New London to Worcester

	A.M.	P.M.
Lv. NEW YORK (G.C.T.)	7(c)30	5(c)00
Lv. NEW HAVEN	8(c)52	6(c)22
Due NEW LONDON	9(c)43	7(c)13
Lv. NEW LONDON	9:53	7:23
Due NORWICH	10:14	7:44
DANIELSON	10:51	8:21
PUTNAM	11:02	8:32
WEBSTER	11:17	8:47
Due WORCESTER	11:40	9:10
	A.M.	P.M.

(c) By connecting train between New London and New York.
Dining service available between New London and New York.

Passenger Fares, Incl. Federal Tax

	Coach Fares Only			Coach Fares Only	
	One Way	Round Trip 14-Day		One Way	Round Trip 14-Day
WORCESTER and:			PUTNAM and:		
WEBSTER	\$0.69	\$1.22	DANIELSON	\$0.35	\$0.60
PUTNAM	1.06	1.89	NORWICH	1.35	2.39
DANIELSON	1.35	2.39	NEW LONDON	1.86	3.31
NORWICH	2.33	4.14	NEW YORK	6.60	11.73
NEW LONDON	2.79	4.97			
NEW YORK	7.36	13.09	DANIELSON and:		
			NORWICH	\$0.95	\$1.70
WEBSTER and:			NEW LONDON	1.55	2.76
PUTNAM	\$0.35	\$0.60	NEW YORK	6.29	11.18
DANIELSON	.78	1.38			
NORWICH	1.71	3.04	NORWICH and:		
NEW LONDON	2.25	4.00	NEW LONDON	\$0.59	\$1.04
NEW YORK	6.99	12.42	NEW YORK	5.36	9.52

Children under 5 from under \$2 half fare.

It will be necessary for passengers from Webster and Danielson to pay fares on the train. FOR PARLOR CAR, COMMUTATION and all other TYPES OF PASSENGER FARES CONSULT YOUR LOCAL AGENT

YOUR PATRONAGE WILL JUSTIFY THE CONTINUANCE OF THIS SERVICE.



PHOTOGRAPH BY P. H. H. 1952

What Is RDC? 'New Haven' Wins 2nd FRP Award

(From a Budd Company brochure)

RDC stands for Rail Diesel Car. It is the all-stainless steel, self-propelled railway passenger car created by The Budd Company and introduced to the railroad world in September, 1949.

The need for such a car has always been recognized in this country. RDC is the only one ever built which not only meets that need adequately, but also provides such performance that it has widened to almost limitless horizons the field of usefulness for self-propelled cars.

Fundamental in the success of RDC is its high power-weight ratio of 8.68 horsepower per ton. RDC-1 weighs 112,800 pounds ready to run.

The car is powered by two 275-horsepower General Motors diesel engine power units which are mounted under the floor, so that there is no intrusion upon revenue space. Each engine drives one axle, providing independent action and notably increased traction. The power is transmitted by a General Motors torque converter and reverse gear built integral with the engine.

The trucks are equipped with Budd railway disc brakes, Budd Rolokron anti-wheel-slide devices and sanding applied both automatically and manually, and a shunt-block system which insures positive single-car actuation of signals and crossing gates.

RDC is air-conditioned, and is heated by what would otherwise be waste heat from the power unit cooling system.

Cost-per-mile naturally varies with the type of service, so there can be no fixed figure applicable to all RDC operations, but a typical example is found in a breakdown of actual operating experience over an 8-months' period, showing an operating cost of 64 cents per car mile.

RDC accelerates to 57 mph in one mile; to 44 mph in 60 seconds. From a standing start it will do 5 miles in 5 minutes.

The 1952 Passenger Service Progress Award of the Federation for Railway Progress went to the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad, which also received the award in 1949. An example of the improvements in passenger service which makes the New Haven outstanding in the country is shown below in the comparison of the April 30, 1952, Providence-Worcester service in Table 23 with that of April 26, 1953, in Table 14 at bottom of the page:

Providence-Worcester 23

Miles	Ex Sun	Sun only	Sat only	Ex Sat Sun & Hol A	Miles	Ex Sun & Hol A	Daily	Ex Sun & Hol A
	124	126	578	576		12S	57S	
0.0 Providence.....Lv	AM 1 14	AM 2 35	PM 3 40	PM 4 42	0.0 Worcester.....Lv	AM 2 10	AM 6 22	
4.5 Pawtucket and Central Falls.....			3 49	4 51	5.9 Millbury.....		6 33	
5.9 Valley Falls.....			3 53	4 55	8.5 Wilkinsville.....		6 38	
8.6 Berkeley.....			3 58	5 00	9.2 Saundersville.....		6 40	
9.2 Ashton.....			4 01	5 03	10.6 Farnumville.....		6 43	
10.7 Albion.....			4 04	5 06	12.6 Northbridge.....		6 47	
12.2 Manville.....			4 07	5 09	16.9 Whitins.....		6 53	
15.8 Woonsocket.....			4 12	5 14	16.9 Uxbridge.....		7 00	
17.5 Blackstone.....			4 32	5 44	23.5 Millville.....		7 12	
19.7 Millville.....			4 36	5 48	25.7 Blackstone.....		7 17	
24.3 Uxbridge.....			4 50	6 02	27.4 Woonsocket.....		7 21	
26.3 Whitins.....			4 54	6 08	31.0 Manville.....		7 41	
26.3 Northbridge.....			5 04	6 16	32.5 Albion.....		7 45	
30.6 Farnumville.....			5 13	6 25	34.0 Ashton.....		7 49	
32.6 Saundersville.....			5 18	6 30	34.6 Berkeley.....		7 51	
34.0 Wilkinsville.....			5 21	6 33	37.3 Valley Falls.....		7 58	
37.3 Wilkinsville.....			5 23	6 35	38.7 Pawtucket and Central Falls.....		8 05	
37.3 Millbury.....			5 30	6 42	43.2 Worcester.....	AM 3 20	AM 8 15	AM 8 15
43.2 Worcester.....	AM 2 24	AM 3 45	PM 5 42	PM 6 54				

e Leave Attleboro 8.42 PM; Pawtucket-Central Falls 9.12 PM.
 g Leave Mansfield 8.26 PM, Attleboro 8.03 PM; Pawtucket-Central Falls 9.27 PM.
 f Stops only on signal or on notice to conductor.
 y Will carry checked baggage only on Saturdays.

◆◆ SHORELINER—Rail diesel car.
 ▼♥ LITTLE SHORELINER—F. C. D. Car.
 ♦ No checked baggage service on this train.
 Holiday A—May 30, July 4 and Sept. 7.
 Holiday B—May 30 and July 4.
 Holiday C—Sept. 7.
 a Leave Attleboro 12.21 PM.
 b Leave Attleboro 5.38 PM; Pawtucket-Central Falls, 5.59 PM.
 c Stops only on Saturdays, at East Foxboro 2.01 PM.
 f Stops only on signal or on notice to Conductor.
 g Leave Pawtucket-Central Falls 8.50 PM.
 v Stops only to receive passengers.
 x Leave Woonsocket 4.22 PM.
 y Will carry checked baggage only on Saturdays and Sundays.
 z Leave Woonsocket 6.50 PM.

4-26-53-29

Providence-Worcester 14

Miles	Ex Sun	Sun only	Ex Sat Sun & Hol C	Ex Sat Sun & Hol C	Sat only Ex Hol B	Ex Sat Sun & Hol C	Ex Sat Sun & Hol C	Miles	Daily	Ex Sun & Hol A	Ex Sat Sun & Hol C	Ex Sat Sun & Hol C	Ex Sat Sun & Hol C
	124	126	582	584	578	586	576		12S	57S	581	583	585
0.0 Providence.....Lv	AM 1 04	AM 2 51	AM 8 50	PM 1 50	PM 3 40	PM 4 07	PM 6 08	0.0 Worcester.....Lv	AM 2 10	AM 6 35	AM 9 00	PM 12 35	PM 4 18
4.5 Pawtucket and Central Falls.....					3 49	4 15	6 18	6.0 Millbury.....		6 48			
5.9 Valley Falls.....			8 53	1 58	3 53	4 15	6 21	8.6 Wilkinsville.....		6 53			
8.6 Berkeley.....					3 58		6 26	9.3 Saundersville.....		6 55			
9.2 Ashton.....					4 01		6 29	10.7 Farnumville.....		6 58			
10.7 Albion.....					4 04		6 32	12.7 Northbridge.....		7 02			
12.2 Manville.....					4 07		6 35	17.0 Whitins.....		7 12			
15.8 Woonsocket.....			9 17	2 15	4x12	4 32	6:40	19.0 Uxbridge.....		7 18	9 29	1 04	4 47
17.5 Blackstone.....			9 21	2 19	4 26	4 36	6 54	23.6 Millville.....		7 25			
19.7 Millville.....					4 31		6 58	25.8 Blackstone.....		7 30	9 40	1 15	5 09
24.3 Uxbridge.....			9 35	2 30	4 40	4 53	7 05	27.5 Woonsocket.....		7 41	9 45	1 21	5 14
26.3 Whitins.....					4 44		7 09	31.1 Manville.....		7 47			
30.6 Northbridge.....					4 53		7 12	32.6 Albion.....		7 50			
32.6 Farnumville.....					4 58		7 16	34.1 Ashton.....		7 53			
34.0 Saundersville.....								34.7 Berkeley.....		7 55			
34.7 Wilkinsville.....					5 03		7 31	37.4 Valley Falls.....		8 02			
37.3 Millbury.....					5 10		7 38	38.8 Pawtucket and Central Falls.....					
43.3 Worcester.....	AM 2 13	AM 4 01	AM 10 02	PM 2 57	PM 5 22	PM 5 21	PM 7 51	43.3 Providence.....	AM 3 20	AM 8 07	AM 10 02	PM 1 38	PM 5 31
										AM 8 15	AM 10 09	PM 1 45	PM 5 38

Modern, Expanded Passenger Service Pays Off

The 'New Haven' Leads Again



The New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad is quietly going ahead with a program of improved and expanded passenger service, and is finding that it pays off in dollars and cents.

The New Haven's progressive and streamlined management holds no brief with the popular conception in railroad circles that the short-haul passenger traffic should be discouraged and abandoned. The addition of 50 trains, mostly in the Boston area, with the change from Daylight to Standard Time on September 23, 1952, was so successful that 20 more trains were added two months later in November. Most of these runs were 35 miles or less.

Although not the first railroad in the country to use the Budd RDC, the New Haven is now the largest user in the country. The road finds the RDC ("Shoreliner" on the New Haven) the ideal car for short-haul, lightly traveled runs. And where volume of travel will not warrant an 89-passen-

ger vehicle, the New Haven is pioneering with its "F.C.D. Car" or "Little Shoreliner." It is a standard Mack 50-passenger bus body mounted on P.C.C. trucks and driven by Diesel-electric power.

A pioneering move with the RDC was the reopening of the passenger service on the New London-Worcester route. Originally started on June 9, 1952, for a 3-months' trial period, the daily service of two round trips immediately became popular. Connecting with the Mayflower and the Merchants Limited to and from New York, it gives Worcester 4¼-4½-hour train service to New York for the first time in history.

One thing that surprised the New Haven management on reopening the New London-Worcester service was the amount of revenue received from purely local riders. The number of passengers carried between Worcester and Webster, for instance, was quite a revelation. Offtimes 25 or 30 people would take the 16-mile ride on shopping or business trips into the bigger city. More than once the conductor has had to ask the engineer to run slow in order

that he could collect all the fares.

So good was the local riding that stops were added at Jewett City and Plainfield, Conn., when the Fall timetable appeared in 1952, as well as a third round trip daily. Needless to say, bus travel in the New London-Worcester area has fallen off alarmingly.

The addition of one round trip, known as "The Nutmegger," between Hartford and Boston on a 2-hour, 40-minute schedule has proven successful. Now operated with a "Shoreliner," the train has been more than filled at times. For instance, Friday, November 29, the day after Thanksgiving (1952), there were 136 passengers to take the 89-capacity unit out of Boston. A second RDC was hurriedly coupled and at Hartford it was necessary to round up a crew to send the car back to Boston immediately to protect the Saturday morning runs for which it was scheduled.

From 4 train departures daily in 1949 to 12 daily in 1952 (14 daily in 1953 with the Summer-only "East Wind") is what the new and improved passenger service has done for Putnam, Conn. — three trains each way on week days and two on Sundays on the Hartford-Boston line, and the same schedule on the New London-Worcester line.

A SCHEDULE in the New Haven's April 26, 1953, timetable which hasn't appeared for the preceding two decades—an example of the expanded passenger service.

7 New York—New London—Norwich—Worcester

Change Trains at New London
Service between New London and Worcester is provided by a SHORELINER rail diesel car

Miles from New London	Station	New London		Worcester		Norwich		Putnam		Jewett City		Plainfield		Danielson		
		Ex Sun	Sun only	Ex Sun	Daily	Ex Sun	Daily	Ex Sun	Daily	Ex Sun	Daily	Ex Sun	Daily	Ex Sun	Daily	
6	New York, G.C.T. Lv	♦6	♦10	♦14	♦28	♦571	♦573	♦577	♦121	♦579	♦227	♦121	♦579	♦227	♦121	♦579
10	New Haven... Lv	♦570	♦572	♦574	♦580	7	♦9	13	2	13	♦27	2	13	♦27	2	13
16	New Haven... Due	7 30	8 03	12 30	5 00	7 30	7 48	12 15	2 03	7 48	8 03	12 15	2 03	7 48	8 03	12 15
26	New London... Lv	8 52	9 34	1 27	6 22	8 09	8 12	12 39	2 46	8 12	8 12	12 39	2 46	8 12	8 12	12 39
33	New London... Due	9 43	10 34	2 25	7 13	8 09	8 27	12 46	3 34	8 27	8 38	1 05	2 46	8 38	8 38	1 05
Change Trains																
0	New London... Lv	9 51	10 43	2 35	7 21	8 32	8 50	1 17	3 41	8 50	1 17	2 06	8 50	1 17	2 06	8 50
13.5	Norwich... Due	10 12	11 06	2 56	7 42	8 41	8 59	1 26	3 51	8 59	1 26	2 06	8 59	1 26	2 06	8 59
23.1	Jewett City... Lv	10 31	11 25	3 15	8 01	9 00	9 18	1 45	4 00	9 18	1 45	2 06	9 18	1 45	2 06	9 18
29.4	Plainfield... Lv	10 40	11 34	3 24	8 10	9 21	9 39	2 06	4 09	9 39	2 06	2 06	9 39	2 06	2 06	9 39
38.4	Danielson... Lv	10 52	11 46	3 36	8 22	9 30	9 51	2 12	4 18	9 51	2 12	2 12	9 51	2 12	2 12	9 51
46.3	Putnam... Lv	11 03	11 57	3 47	8 33	10 25	10 42	3 07	4 35	10 42	3 07	2 12	10 42	3 07	2 12	10 42
56.3	Webster... Lv	11 19	12 12	4 02	8 48	11 55	12 08	4 35	6 18	12 08	4 35	2 12	12 08	4 35	2 12	12 08
72.3	Worcester... Due	11 43	12 36	4 26	9 12	1 55	2 08	5 05	6 48	2 08	5 05	2 12	2 08	5 05	2 12	2 08

Additional train service and restorations on other branches awaited delivery of new equipment when 1952 drew to a close. At the year's end only 8 RDC's and one F.C.D. were in service. On order were 32 more RDC's (types 1, 2, 3 and 4—the first baggage-express-RPO units to be built); 9 F.C.D. Mack cars; 100 multiple-unit electric coaches for the New Haven-New York commuter service and 10 electric passenger locomotives (this electric equipment for 1954 delivery).

If the new equipment continues to make money for the road, the management sees no end to the added volume of business to be gained by even further expansion of service.

Substantial investments are being made not only in passenger rolling stock, but in all departments. The physical equipment of the railroad is in better shape than it ever was. New rail, ballasting and general roadbed improvements are keeping large crews continuously employed. The paint and car repair shops are working full time to keep rolling stock in first class condition. In the words of its energetic president, Frederic C. Dumaine, Jr., "We intend to make the New Haven Railroad the most modern railroad in the country. That's what New England deserves and if we give that kind of service the New Haven Railroad will make money."

In the financial reports, the place where this method of running a railroad contrary to ultra-conservative principles, and where management's policies are approved or disapproved in the long run, the New Haven shows a very healthy condition. For the year 1952 the New Haven carried 43,616,463 revenue passengers, or 1,372,173 more than in 1951. Passenger revenue was \$51,677,012, or \$2,410,704 more than in 1951, and it amounted to 31.62% of the New Haven's total gross income for 1952.

Freight revenue amounted to \$93,529,505, up 1.8% over 1951, while total operating income was \$163,419,622. Total net income was \$6,677,225.



NEW HAVEN ROAD'S RDC No. 22, regularly used on the "Nutmegger," Hartford to Boston weekday run, poses for a photo on old Central New England trackage at site of former roundhouse, West Winsted, Conn., on a Connecticut Valley Chapter, NRHS railfan trip, Sunday, February 1, 1953.