

The Headlight

Volume 8

JUNE, 1948

Number 6



Night view of the great San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, with San Francisco in the background. This bridge links Oakland and other East Bay communities with San Francisco, while the Golden Gate Bridge, containing the world's longest suspension span of 4,200 feet, links San Francisco with the Marin County communities to the north—Sausalito, San Rafael, Mill Valley, etc.

—Photo courtesy San Francisco Convention and Tourist Bureau

★ We hope you all saw and read **Rowland L. Williams'** story titled "What's Wrong with the Railroads?" in the May 22nd issue of the Saturday Evening Post. If you don't know, Williams is president of the Chicago & North Western Railway and he certainly offered, in a very refreshing manner, just what ails us. We think the railroads need more of such straight-from-the-shoulder talk.

The **Union Railroad**, of Pittsburgh, Pa., a few months ago began publication of a quarterly magazine for its employes called "The Headlight"! We failed to welcome the newcomer publicly. We do so now. We're flattered that they adopted our name and they've certainly done it proud with their first two issues. More power to them!

Lots of WP people missed **The Western Pacific Club's Second Annual Spring Dance** at the Palace Hotel (San Francisco, where else?) on April 24. But lots of them showed up... and they had a good time that night. From out of town, we were glad to welcome **Catheryne Ferrera** and **John Rossi**, of Sacramento; and **LeRoy Foster**, **Ed. Moss** and **Orvel Hatfield**, of Oakland. **Bill Dunbar** and **Jim Mills** were responsible for the success of this affair.

We were glad to see **Joseph Gillette Wheeler** promoted to passenger traffic manager early last month. Joe has been with the WP twenty-two years. He ought to be about ready to retire in another 22!

Met **Arthur Hayes**, marine fireman, enroute on No. 40 out of Oakland, April 30. Arthur, with Mrs. Hayes and their son, was headed for his native shores—England. He was born at St. Helens, Lancashire. They were booked for the "Queen Mary" going and the "Queen Elizabeth" returning. Hope they have a grand time.

Charles Rayfield Matheny was appointed traffic representative for the WP at Kansas City, succeeding **Joe Kirch**. Charles is a native of Terre Haute, Indiana, born there June 17, 1919. Welcome and good luck to him.

We can't help it... the temptation is too great... we gotta tell it! On May 10, the Toledo "Blade" carried a UP story datelined Cleveland the same day, announcing that the **B of LE**, scheduled to participate in a nation-wide rail strike the following morning, had a strike on its own hands... a walkout of AFL employes at the brotherhood-owned Park Lane Villa Hotel. Said the AFL business representative "Management of this hotel, in its anti-union way, has warned employes they will lose their jobs if they dare to strike to enforce demands for a contract." As a dear little friend of mine in the East says... "Holy Crow!" We've got the clipping, so please don't sue us!

Our good friend **Harold Walker**, of the **Railroad Unit, Treasury Department's Savings Bonds Division**, tells us that 330,000 railroad employes are still buying bonds the easy, payroll way. Of that total, according to the latest available figures from **Frank King**, 1,661 subscribers work on the WP. That doesn't look like much, but it's just about the national average. Since when have we been satisfied with an average performance? Are you saving systematically? Do you know not a single obstacle will be put in your way if you want to sign up? Name one!

Dana McCready, who retired as WP's eastern traffic manager in April, is now special representative—traffic, for **Acme Fast Freight, Inc.**, headquarters New York, though he appears to be an ambassador-at-large. Hope "at-large" includes San Francisco. Maybe we can stick **Gene Britt**, Acme's local star, for a lunch!

The AAR has just issued two rather interesting little publications... **Train and Engine Books for Children**... and **Colleges and Universities** offering courses in engineering, transportation and traffic management. Want copies? Ask the editor!

This **Chicago Railroad Fair** is really developing into something. It opens July 20 and will run into mid-September... cost two million bucks (almost wrote billions... a sign of the times!). The site will occupy the area between 20th and 30th Streets on the shore of Lake Michigan. It's a 50-acre tract, a section of Chicago's Burnham Park and a part of the former site of "A Century of Progress Exposition"—remember? At least 25 railroads and car builders will have exhibits. A pageant will depict the history of the railroads from their very beginnings and many famous old locomotives will be there... **The Stourbridge Lion**, **Tom Thumb**, **The DeWitt Clinton**, **The John Bull**, **The Pioneer**, **The William Crooks** and the **Jupiter**, among others. Sounds good!

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THE HEADLIGHT

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WATCH FOR THE NEW

DAILY STREAMLINERS between SAN FRANCISCO and CHICAGO

California Zephyr

Chief Surgeon Alson Kilgore to the WP Blood Donors

★ "With deep and sincere appreciation your Medical Department acknowledges contributions of blood to our account at the Irwin Blood Bank.

"Unless one has seen blood given and watched the flow of life come back after severe hemorrhage, or seen a patient take surgery he could not otherwise stand, it is hard to realize what blood transfusion means. And so all the more credit to those who give, as they must, blindly.

"To those who give blood for our fellow employes, let us assure you it is used carefully, given only when needed. There's nothing so comforting to your Medical Staff worrying about a bad case as to have a credit at the bank.

"WP blood donations go to WP employes only. Recently, six transfusions were necessary for one general office employe, which, in addition to our ten-pint deficit, has almost depleted the donations just made.

"Our most sincere thanks again to the following, who responded so generously to our urgent need:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Richard C. Beltz | Vennie P. Hess |
| Nathan Berel | Anthony F. Jakenovich |
| George Bowers | Mollie Lederman |
| Douglas Bruce | Anne Malfa |
| Pearl Cunha | LaVern P. Murry |
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Pacific Freight Tariff Bureau

| | |
|------------------|--------------|
| R. H. Berklite | G. H. Hensel |
| H. F. Harrington | Anita Lee |

LeRoy Foster Promoted

★ LeRoy Foster was promoted to assistant terminal trainmaster, Oakland, May 1st. He has served in that capacity for several months, relieving Charles Downs, who is ill.

Foster is a native of Oakland, born there October 29, 1905. He came to the WP as a messenger in the Sacramento Yard office in 1923 and three years later became chief clerk in our Sacramento traffic department office. Subsequently, he handled several posts for the operating department at Sacramento and Oakland, serving as assistant chief yard clerk when he relieved Downs.

Though we're glad to see Roy get this well-earned promotion, we regret that "Charlie" Downs has found it necessary, because of illness, to retire from active duty. He joined the WP as a switchman at Stockton in 1920; was cut-off several months later, but re-employed in August, 1924, at Oakland; promoted to yardmaster in August, 1928, and to assistant terminal trainmaster in February, 1942. We join his many friends in hoping for Charlie's ultimate recovery.

Statistical Highlights

THE WESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY

| | 1947 | 1946 |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| Average Miles Road Operated..... | 1,195 | 1,195 |
| Total Operating Revenues..... | \$39,990,009 | \$42,066,193 |
| Total Operating Expenses (Excludes Taxes and Rentals)..... | \$30,049,860 | \$32,215,935 |
| Ratio Operating Expenses to Revenues..... | 75.14% | 76.58% |
| Total Expenses (Includes Taxes and Rentals)..... | \$34,904,417 | \$37,565,900 |
| Ratio Total Expenses to Revenues..... | 87.28% | 89.30% |
| Tons of Revenue Freight Carried One Mile (Thousands)..... | 3,809,496 | 3,509,456 |
| Revenue Received per Ton Mile of Freight (Cents)..... | 0.97 | 0.98 |
| Revenue Passengers One Mile (Thousands)..... | 111,875 | 387,307 |
| Passenger Revenue per Passenger Mile (Cents)..... | 1.90 | 1.63 |
| Taxes, (Federal, State and Local)..... | \$ 2,219,321 | \$ 2,767,740 |
| Taxes (Pay Roll)..... | \$ 1,634,435 | \$ 1,253,088 |
| Average Number of Employes..... | 6,052 | 6,207 |
| First Mortgage 4% Bonds, December 31..... | \$10,000,000 | \$10,000,000 |
| General Mortgage 4 1/2% Income Bonds, December 31..... | \$ 6,546,000 | \$11,677,100 |
| Preferred Stock (5%) Shares..... | 318,502 | 318,502 |
| Common Stock Shares..... | 408,437 | 408,377 |

Retired from Active Duty

Western Pacific Railroad—

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Burch, George Alexander | Switchman | Oakland |
| Henry, Theron Leroy | Laborer | Elko |
| Mallinson, Charles R. | Signal Maintainer | Stockton |
| Miller, Norman Earl | Telegrapher | Lyoth |
| Pedersen, Halfdan | Marine Deckhand | Oakland |

Sacramento Northern Railway—

| | | |
|---------------------|----------|----------------|
| Govas, Peter George | Laborer | Vacaville Jct. |
| Russo, Rocco | Deckhand | Pittsburg |

Tidewater Southern Notes

By Frank Lindee

★ The California Centennials continue, with celebration after celebration. Turlock, on the Tidewater Southern, held a gala festival May 7 and 8 with a parade to fit the occasion. The Goodrich Oil Company, of Turlock, by connecting oil trucks, paper, wire and ingenuity, had a dragon float more than 350 ft. long . . . a record. **Link Hupp**, our Turlock agent, was a corner of a barber shop quartet on the Lions Club float. Street dances, horse shows and contests filled out the weekend. Valley parade chairmen are fortunate in having **Pierce Miller**, of Modesto, in our midst. His hobby is collecting old-time vehicles and keeping them in top shape. His huge immaculate barn is actually a museum and it's a generous person who will lend such rarities.

The trolley lines of the Tidewater Southern on Highway 99 have been dismantled with the advent of the Diesels. Many an unsuspecting tourist driving through Modesto was led to believe the town had a streetcar system!

If the ICC could watch the consternation on a shipper's face after **George Lyon** and **Walter Samuels**, of the Modesto office have explained a total charge by the base rate, then the first increase, then the second, and then government tax, plus this and that, we're sure they would gladly have reissued all the tariffs!

More Random

★ Recent welcome San Francisco visitor was **Paul Shelmerdine**, ex-WP employe, now handling labor relations and other chores for **The Alaska Railroad**. Still displaying the personal charm which made him so popular with fellow-WPers, Paul told us of his problems, which are many, and of life in Alaska . . . **Helen Dodd**, formerly of the GO law department, has deserted us for Japan's Tokyo to teach dancing . . . **Carl** and **Mrs. Mangum** were seen in San Francisco celebrating their 19th wedding anniversary May 27. It was here they spent their honeymoon . . . **Bob Waistell**, GO transportation dep't. reminds us to report to you that WP has lifted its restriction against employes riding in the Vista Dome coaches now in service.

Hy-Lites

By JACK HYLAND

★ We sincerely appreciate the fine article submitted last month (in lieu of Hy-Lites) by **Frank Rauwolf** (Frt. Claim) under the caption of "Low Lites." I'm sure most of us weren't tired of reading his column, as Frank so modestly indicated, and would possibly welcome a continuation.

Luella Cogdill (Gen. Auditors) just returned from a very unpleasant trip East, where she laid to rest her husband, **Leslie**, who had passed away from the result of injuries received in a boiler room explosion aboard ship. We know it was a sorrowful trip for Luella, and we wish to extend our very deepest and sincere sympathy.

In Reno, Nev. last April 18th . . . **George Gladden** (youngest son of the late **Roy Gladden**, former Supt. of Telegraph) became a married man, claiming as his bride . . . **Esther "Bunny" Salas**. The happy couple now reside in Oakland, Calif., and we extend to them our wishes for continued happiness.

An announcement card received from **Grace Kent** (formerly Traffic) states . . . "Things sure are changed at our house now, more toys and noise and joys; but that's the way it always is, when folks have baby boys." Master "**Gene Paul Kent**" arrived April 23rd and was a real boy . . . 9 lbs. 7 oz., which speaks very well for Santa Monica weather. The Kent family is now a foursome.

Following completion of our bowling venture at the "A.B.C. Tournament" last April 16th, Detroit, Mich., resembled a "railroad break-up yard" . . . for **Mrs. and Harold Heagney** (AF&PA) departed for New York City; **Mrs. and Bill Wilkinson** (Ass't Car Foreman—Oakland) left for Philadelphia; **Pete Casey** (Car Inspector) for Halifax, Nova Scotia; then **Janie** and myself boarded the N.Y.C. for Chicago-Madison, Wis., area. The next day found **Mrs. and Lee Brown** (Aud. Overcharge) headed for Chicago, from where they "United Air" lined to California.

Happened by chance to meet **Lou Jean Keller** (formerly Treas. Dept.) in the Anglo-California Bank last month . . . and learned the eventful date for Jeannie and **Timothy Moran** (Treas. Dept.) is scheduled for June 20th. The next day (May 18th) we learned Tim was in St. Joseph's Hospital having an appendectomy . . . but we hope he will be fully recovered by the time he claims his bride.

Speaking of hospitals . . . **Anthony "Tony" Quill** (Mail Dept.) is (or was) having his seige with them . . . for first his little daughter, **Judith Ann**, fractured her leg which required wearing a cast at Easter time, but we learned the Easter bunny didn't forget her . . . surprising her with just loads of colored eggs, etc. Shortly after Judy had the cast removed, their little dog was hospitalized for a short time. However, both are all right now . . . and the "Quill's" are again a happy family.

Last month mention was made that . . . **Al McQuaid** (Car Record) now "on leave of absence" was returning to the Western Pacific. We were correct "then" in reporting it, but we have since learned, he has changed his mind and will remain with the Goodrich Tire & Rubber Co., San Francisco.

Ruth Dorsey (Traffic), together with husband, **Dean**, departed on May 8th for a vacation trip via automobile to Minnesota, where Dean is scheduled to meet his "in-laws" for the first time. Their first stop enroute East was Reno, Nev., where Ruth witnessed the marriage of her sister.

At three o'clock on June 6th . . . **Dorothy Jane Peck** (Medical Dept.), will stroll down the aisle of the Mission Dolores Church, San Francisco, where she will exchange marriage vows with and become the bride of **Raymond Lee** (Treas. Dept.). After the reception at the Colonial Residence Club, the newlyweds will dash away to Coronado, Calif., for their honeymoon, after which they will reside in Berkeley, Calif. The well wishes of their many friends should continue their happiness for many years to come.

The Soroptimist Club of San Francisco, played hostess to over six hundred members and delegates from the eighty-eight Soroptimist Clubs of the Southwestern Region, from April 30th to May 2nd—at their regional Spring conference held at the Hotel St. Francis, San Francisco. Past President **Harriet P. Tyler** (Attorney—West. Pac.) acted as Chairman of the banquet committee.

Myrtle Bullock (Traffic) resigned last May 15th . . . which oddly enough was only a few days after "Mother's Day," and by an odd coincidence, her resignation was principally based upon the fact that sometime around October, she is . . . "infanticipating." Her many friends presented her with a very practical gift . . . "a high chair."

Lawrence Moe (TF&PA—Portland) was installed as president of the Junior Traffic Club of Portland at a dinner held last month in that city. The evening's principal speaker was **Fred McMullin** (Gen. Agent—Portland), so we know our Western Pacific's northern office is doing all right.

Charlie Harmon (Gen. Agent—Sacramento) dropped in on the General Office gang last month, and while it may not have been the main reason . . . we did hear him mutter something about "Where is my '20-year' service pin?" Congratulations, Charlie, and according to our checking . . . you were eligible for your pin as of April 16th. We also learned that **Irene Schuepbach** (St. Louis office) was mailed her "20-year pin" which service she completed as of April 10th.

A very welcome visitor last May 17th, was **Edward B. O'Connor** (Traffic—retired) who dropped in to say "hello" to all his many friends, having just returned from a better than a year—life of leisure, in Honolulu. The carefree life has agreed with Eddie, for he looked better than ever.

Henry Fred Neill Killed in Automobile Accident

★ Henry F. Neill, 66, superintendent of power, Sacramento Northern Railway, was killed in an automobile accident on May 10, at 4:30 p.m., on the River Road, two miles north of the Isleton Bridge. His car apparently went out of control and turned over several times, throwing him out. Upon arrival, the coroner pronounced him dead.

Neill was born at Waco, Texas, March 10, 1882; attended the local school and, when a young man, worked for that city's electric light company. In 1906, he went to San Francisco, where he worked for the PG&E in the line department. In 1913, he became superintendent of overhead for the Oakland, Antioch & Eastern Railroad, operating between San Francisco and Sacramento.

When that railroad was purchased by the WP in 1929 and merged with the Sacramento Northern Railway, Neill was placed in charge of overhead lines of the entire system. In '34, he became superintendent of power for the SN and held that post until his death.

He was a Shriner, a member of the Elks Lodge and the Pacific Railway Club. He is survived by his wife, Lillian, of Sacramento, and a son, Frank, of Oak Ridge, Tennessee. —R.C.

On The Sacramento Northern

By Ruth Crane

★ Newcomers . . . **Christine Wilkes**, steno, power department; **Eleanor Olsen**, secretary, traffic (WP); **Lois Trowe**, steno, transportation; a future draftsman, **Bill Holt's** 5½ lb. son "**Tim**," born May 5.

Wilmer Andersen happily celebrated his first wedding anniversary May 10 . . . **Norma Hughson**, secretary, power department, resigned April 15 (expecting company in July—Mr. Stork) . . . **Nelda Del Ponte's** baby boy arrived March 26 . . . he looked us over at the office one day!

Wedding anniversaries celebrated by **Glenn McDaniel** (5th); **Mel Parker** (9th); **Al Fippin** (13th); **Shirley Bice** (2nd).

We regretfully accepted **Glenn McDaniel's** resignation as Headlight staff reporter.

Lewis "Rodie" Rodebaugh is a frequent visitor in the general office . . . Rodie seems to be enjoying his retirement and appears to have grown younger on each visit. Also visited, less frequently, by **W. W. (Bill) Nelson**, looking hale and happy.

Merle Taylor, revising clerk at Sacramento freight station, was married March 21 to the former **Darlene Lott**. Merle and Darlene honeymooned in Colorado.

Spring weather is making the employes "vacation conscious" . . . straw-hat conscious . . . and . . . conscious!

Wendover Wires

By Elsie Hart

★ Well, it's a little late this year but Spring is finally in the air and the softball team has blossomed out again. Lineup for this season follows . . . **Chuck Lambert** (crew caller), pitcher; **Bud Moore**, catcher; **Ben Lambert** (relief clerk) at First; **Bruce Sinz** at Second; **Al Chambers** at Short; **Don Moore** at Third; **Bud Sweetwood** in Left; **Bob Anderson** in Center; and **Leo Powell** in Right. The games should provide some interesting entertainment on Sunday afternoons from now on.

If **Harlan C. (Boomer) Ford** has been looking a little inflated around the chest (yes, chest) it's because of that new grandson, born at Salt Lake City May 6. Hi'ya Grandpa?

Gus Zackerson, fireman, is a new grandpa too. Grandson Daniel Frank Parker, son of brakeman **Joe Parker** and Mrs. Parker, was born at Salt Lake City February 25. He's their third child, all boys. Only six to go, Joe, for a baseball team of your own! Gus is also a new bridegroom. He and Mrs. Z. are making their home in Salt Lake City. Congratulations and very best wishes, Gus.

Mrs. **Walter Parks** and son spent a few days in Wendover while Walter temporarily acted as "beanery" manager. We got a look at that new boy and he's a very handsome child. Grandpa **Frank Nelson**, engineer, has been flashing a picture of his lovely infant grand-daughter around, not to be outdone in the Stork department.

Quite a few of us ladies were seen sporting new nylons and boxes of candy on Mother's Day. Maybe it's just a commercial idea, but we like it anyway! Mrs. **Howard B. (Marty) Hellewell**, trainmaster's clerk, went to Logan, Utah, to spend the day with her mother. Made us feel a little sad that distance prevented our doing likewise, but we're glad Marty had such a nice day.

Lester Giffen, day yard clerk, made a trip to Sacramento to attend a school reunion during his vacation. He was relieved by **Creed Martin**, cut off fireman. Creed had some difficulty trying to become a yard clerk, but managed very well, anyway.

Art Morton, machinist helper, transferred to Sacramento, but, almost while the goodbyes were still echoing around, he popped back to Wendover again! The housing situation in Sacramento was too discouraging. That wasn't such a good idea anyway, Art; you really didn't want to live in Sacramento!

And who should drive up in a blaze of glory in a shiny new Hudson but **Charlie Clark**, second trick operator, Shafter. Quite a buggy. We're still a little overwhelmed.

Mrs. **Orville McKnight** and son, of Shafter, family of **Orville McKnight**, pumper, were through on 39. Junior is a fine sturdy boy; almost as big as Bev by now. Looks more like his father every day.

Our deep sympathy to Dispatcher **Reed Shaw**, Elko, whose father passed away in Idaho last month.

Changes in WP Provisional Retirement Plan

★ On May 1, President Charles Elsey announced two amendments to our so-called "pension" plan. They provide that women 60 years of age or over and having completed 30 years of service are eligible to receive payments under the plan; and that eligible employees must make written application for such payments within six months after retirement from service.

Elko Echoes

By Nevada Michelson

★ **Loren Ames**, chief clerk, has a new set of file boxes on his desk. Were they designed to make Loren's desk look more attractive, or to make the filing job more attractive? Anyway, the new boxes and the new steel filing cabinets are an improvement plus over the ones we struggled with. When someone invents an automatic filing cabinet, with a device that makes the ballast file "pop up" when you open the drawer and say "ballast file, please," we'll exercise our seniority and become the file clerk!

Carl Ross, water service maintainer, put in his appearance one morning smoking a cigar. When we asked him whether it was a boy or girl, he absent-mindedly said "girl . . . four of them!" Then, as a sort of afterthought, he added, "she used always to have eight." We didn't hear any more . . . when we came to, Carl had disappeared.

The clerks are very proud of their newest addition . . . little Johnny Jay Garteiz . . . and very happy that **Peggy Garteiz** (nee Phillips) has sufficiently recovered to have moved into her new home. We're all looking forward to helping Peggy with Johnny's vocabulary when he starts to talk!

The latest in our midst to take up pipe-smoking is Division Accountant **Tom Clark**. We can forgive the cigarettes . . . and we actually enjoy the aroma of a good cigar, but when **Alan Thorpe**, **Carl Pacini**, **Tony Primeaux**, **Kay Clark** and now **Tom Clark** all start puffing on those smelly pipes, that's where we draw the line. And if any one of them ever starts cleaning the pipe juice from the stem of the pipe, Loren will find an assistant accountant under the desk!

Western Pacific-Santa Fe Picnic June 13

★ Western Pacific and Santa Fe employees are getting together for a joint picnic at Linda Vista Park, Mission San Jose, on June 13. WP, SN and TS employees, their families and friends are invited to join the fun. Admission is free, but by ticket only. If you want tickets, contact any member of The Headlight staff.

There will be a ball game between WP and Santa Fe teams; music from 2 to 6 p.m.; the usual children's and adult races; swimming in the pool; "door" prizes; plus free ice cream and soft drinks.

Linda Vista Park is about 10 miles north of San Jose on State Highway 21. Frank Rauwolf is in charge of arrangements for the WP.

East Bay Notes

By Margery Glatt

★ Vacation time is once again approaching and **Mace Gordon, Jr.**, Oakland freight house, believes in the early bird having returned from Reno (still single) and Sacramento, the latter part spent at home helping out with the Spring gardening.

Beulah Kennedy vacationed in the southland with her better half, returning to work with that rested look we all seem to acquire after vacations are over.

In our "blushing bride" department we have **Opal Harrell**, who was married in April while on vacation and now answers to the name of **Mrs. Richard Jones**. Freight house and passenger depot employes presented her with a very lovely Toastmaster, a token of our affection for a very nice person. Also a blushing bride was **Lorna Holling**, city ticket office, who became **Mrs. Charles Gonsalves** last month.

Our congratulations to **Enoch Prow, Jr.**, who welcomed a baby daughter, Dorothy Ann, May 3, weighing 6 lbs. and 15 ozs.

'Tis a sight for sore eyes to see **Joe Hamer**, passenger agent, bending over that hoe in progress of getting the front lawn planted. However, toward eventide, Joe was pulling weeds from a prone position!

Speaking of lawns and such, "**Swede**" **Westman** has quite a garden at home, but we give Mrs. Westman most of the credit for all the beautiful flowers, as she's quite an authority, we understand.

We're sorry to hear of **Ross M. Ross**'s illness. Understand he underwent a stomach operation at Providence Hospital. From latest reports he's convalescing at home and we hope to see him back on the job in the not too distant future.

We regret to report that former Assistant Roadmaster **Bill Swanson** passed away last month at St. Joseph's Hospital, after a prolonged illness.

Girls that were chic
Have now become frowsy;
Glamor is sick
And the New Look looks lousy!

—from "Parts Pups," publication of the
Genuine Parts Company, Atlanta, Ga.

Thoughts On Flag Day

By Nevada Michelson

★ On the fourteenth day of June, in the year 1777, Congress resolved that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation. The first official American Flag was made by Betsy Ross in the same year. Not until the year 1818 was it decreed that each new state entering the Union be represented by a star in the blue field. Thus was created the Stars and Stripes, the banner that symbolizes love, unity, peace, freedom, liberty and justice . . . the banner for which men have fought . . . and the banner for which men have died.

Need we be reminded of those immortal words spoken by 90-year old Barbara Frietchie, during the Civil War, when, clutching the flag to her breast she said, "Shoot, if you must, this old gray head, but spare your country's flag." And the words of the rebel leader as he bowed his head in shame, "Who touches a hair of yon gray head, dies like a dog!" . . . And on down through the years to that memorable day at Corregidor, when our young American soldiers repeatedly climbed the flagpole, under ceaseless enemy bombing, to replace the banner that meant freedom for their children and their children's children.

While we're remembering to pay tribute to that grand and glorious flag and to the men who fought for it and the men who so nobly died for it . . . let us not forget the men at home . . . the men in our own little sphere . . . the men who worked through grease and grime . . . through mud and sweat and tears to keep production moving.

There were the machinists and the mechanics in the roundhouse, putting in a shift, and then another shift, and then half of another; dashing home for a couple of hours rest and back again for a new day. What new day? All days were alike . . . grease and more grease . . . noise and more noise! There were the train and enginemen tying up somewhere, anywhere, under the sixteen-hour law, called back to work on the expiration of their eight-hour rest period . . . only to have the sixteen-hour law catch up with them again . . . somewhere . . . anywhere! There were the trackmen and the roadmasters repairing this washout, clearing this derailment, clearing that

WP's George K. Wenig Reports on Liberalized Pension Legislation

Editor's Note: George K. Wenig, Jr., is chief clerk to our assistant traffic manager at Chicago. He is also a member of the National Railroad Pension Forum's Advisory Board and has made at least one trip to Washington, D. C. in support of the Forum's efforts to secure passage of legislation providing liberalized benefits under the Railroad Retirement Act. George tells us they're trying to get this legislation through Congress before adjournment. If you like what they're doing, George tells you to whom you should express your feeling!

★ Railroad employes should be interested in the purpose and activities of the National Railroad Pension Forum. Its purpose is to increase the benefits and/or reduce the tax under the Railroad Retirement Act.

To accomplish this it is necessary to have legislation passed by Congress. We have been successful in having H.R. 6298 filed by Rep. Clason (Mass.) and H.R. 6397 filed by Rep. O'Hara (Minn.).

The act as it now applies in certain instances; and as it would apply if these two bills are successfully passed by Congress, is briefly outlined below:

NOW

1. Retirement at 65 (with 30 years service) maximum \$120 per month.
2. Tax now 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ % which goes to 6% Jan. 1, 1949 and 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ % January 1, 1952.
3. Employes over 65, still working, are not given credit beyond 65 in figuring their pension, although full tax of 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ % is taken from their pay after 65. Some of their best pay years have been after 65.

PROPOSED

H.R. 6298 and H.R. 6397 Retirement at age 60 (with 30 years of service) based on $\frac{1}{2}$ pay of best five years. Maximum \$150 per month.

H.R. 6298—Reduction of tax to 3% when maximum of reserve seven hundred millions or more, with sliding scale increasing tax $\frac{1}{2}$ % for each fifty millions reserve declines, but no higher than 5%. Reserve now over one billion dollars.

H.R. 6298 and H.R. 6397 propose pension based on best 5 years of pay ir-respective of age at time of such pay.

Re HR 6298 write Rep. Harold Knutson (Minn.), Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, House Office Bldg., Washington, D. C. Rep. Bertrand W. Gearhart (Calif.), should also be written as he is a member of that committee and he should be written care of the House Office Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Re HR 6397 write Rep. Charles A. Wolverton (N. J.), Chairman of the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee; also Rep. Carl Hinshaw and Rep. Clarence F. Lea (both of Calif.), all c/o House Office Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Other representatives to write, all c/o House Office Bldg., Washington, D. C. (although not on either of above mentioned committees) are Representatives Charles H. Russell (Ely, Nevada), Walter K. Granger (Cedar City, Utah), William A. Dawson (Layton, Utah), as well as J. Leroy Johnson (Stockton) Franck Havenner and R. J. Welch (San Francisco), George P. Miller (Alameda) and John J. Allen, Jr., (Oakland).

Any railroad employe desiring more details and/or who cares to join the Forum (\$1.00 annually for membership) should handle direct with the National Railroad Pension Forum, 1104 W. 104th Place, Chicago, 43, Illinois.

Copies of latest issue of "Rail Pension News" and Forum membership applications are available where you work.

slide in temperatures ranging from 30° below zero to 110° in the shade—and no shade! There were countless others with the noise of the machines clanging in their ears, the chug-chug of the engines grinding on their nerves . . . and these were the men whose hearts were heavy with anxiety and grief for someone very near and very dear who was carrying a gun or flying a plane in a far-off land!

The conflict is over . . . but these men have work that goes on and on forever . . . making traffic safe that we may enjoy a vacation, visit relatives and friends, or send our children away to school. Their

step is a little slower . . . their shoulders are a little more stooped . . . their hair is more than a little grayer . . . but theirs are still the same old jobs . . . the same old grind . . . the same old grease . . . the same old noise!

And while the good writers all over the country are paying tribute to our flag and the men behind the gun who defended that flag with their lives, we hope our readers (if we have any) will forgive our humble efforts to pay tribute to the man behind the man behind the gun . . . and to say, "Thanks, Pal, for a swell job . . . well done . . . and God bless you!"

BRC General Chairman Frank James on Provisions of the Railroad Retirement Act

Editor's Note: In our February, 1948, issue we quoted a letter from Harry H. Warner, of the Savannah & Atlanta Railway, criticizing the Crosser Amendments to the Railroad Retirement Act. We thought it would be thought-provoking. It was! We've been criticized severely for our temerity in presenting, in a small way, both sides of this controversy . . . and we've been complimented too! We're quoting here the major part of a letter received from Frank James. We've deleted only two paragraphs . . . one because it had no particular bearing on Warner's letter and the other because we don't particularly care to see our intelligence questioned in print! Reproduction of these letters doesn't necessarily indicate our agreement with the statements made, in whole or in part. We've said before—and we repeat—we're for equitable liberalization of the Act and we're not particularly concerned about which group accomplishes that. We'd just like to see it done! James' statements follow . . .

★ "The 1937 Railroad Retirement Act did not provide that an individual account be set up on the basis of each employe's contributions, consequently no 'equity' had been accumulated by each employe. Congress modified the law by substituting other benefits having a different relation to the same service and compensation. As a result of this modification, the survivor benefits payable under the new law are on the average, three or four times as valuable as the old. The importance of the old lump-sum benefit as described in Mr. Warner's letter was distorted out of all semblance to the true situation.

"The experience of the Board has shown that practically all married railroad workers would designate their wives, widowers their children, and bachelors their parents as their beneficiary. Thus the new benefits will in virtually all cases be paid to the same survivors whom the employes would themselves have designated.

"It is not true that under the old law taxes were returned in case of death. The 4 percent lump-sum death benefit was generally paid only in case of death before retirement. This was because any retirement benefits that the employe may have received before his death were deducted from the benefits to his survivors. Because of this the survivors would, in most cases, receive nothing at all. The new family benefits, which are referred to in Mr. Warner's letter as a 'system of doles,' are paid as a matter of right and are not affected by any retirement benefits that may have been paid to the employe before his death. The insurance value of these benefits often run as high as \$10,000.00 or even more.

"The average age at which men enter the railroad industry is 28, and two out of three of them live to age 65. The fact that many who die before retiring leave minor children is proven by the thousands of annuities that have already been awarded to children under 18 and to widowed mothers under age 65.

"In cases where both husband and wife work for a railroad and one or the other dies, the lump-sum benefit is payable.

"The so called discrimination against men because of women being allowed to retire at age 60 while men must work until age 65 or take reduced annuities is not quite accurate. Women employes can retire at age 60, apart from disability, only after 30 years service. Few women work until they have 30 years service. Even if this provision seems to favor women as against men, there are other aspects in which women employes are in a less favored position. For example, the survivor benefit provision will not bring to their survivors as great a return as in the case of men, since monthly death benefits are not paid to widowers, and since women are less likely to leave dependent children.

"The maternity benefits for women railroad employes are not payable under the Railroad Retirement Act but under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act. The benefits payable under this law are supported entirely by contributions from employes.

"While the reserve in the railroad retirement account of

\$1,268,983,000 on December 31, 1947, may seem large, it must be pointed out that future obligations arising out of credits toward retirement and survivor benefits which have already been accumulated by railroad workers now amount to several times this figure. Eventually, the benefits paid out in any one year will exceed the taxes collected during that year; by that time the reserve must be large enough that the interest on it will be sufficient to make up the difference.

"Of the 2½ percent increase in the maximum tax rate, ¾ percent is for the purpose of placing the retirement system on a sound actuarial basis, while 1¾ percent is to meet the cost of liberalization in the retirement and survivor benefits contained in the 1946 amendments. Even without the new benefits, it would have been necessary to increase the old rate to 4½ percent to make the old system actuarially solvent. The amount Warner referred to as 'spent for general running expenses of the Government' undoubtedly refers to the reserve which is invested in interest-bearing United States Treasury Notes. To say that the Government does not 'intend to pay' the amount that has been invested in Treasury notes, is, to question the good faith and financial stability of the Government itself.

"The comparison Warner made between the benefits paid under the Social Security Act and the Railroad Act is rather distorted. The railroad retirement annuity to a man aged 65 who had averaged \$200 a month for thirty years would be \$90 per month, while the average primary benefit at the present time to an employe covered by the Social Security Act is only about \$25 per month. The comparison does not take into consideration the many benefits payable under the Social Security Act.

"The new railroad retirement tax schedule is expected to finance the system indefinitely, while social security taxes, even after they rise to 2 percent, are most probably inadequate. While taxes under both systems began at the same time, railroad retirement annuities were being paid in January 1937, while monthly social security benefits were not paid until 1940. The Railroad Retirement Act allows credit for service prior to 1937, while the Social Security Act does not. Under the railroad retirement system, all service, no matter how short or how scattered, is counted in figuring a retirement annuity. Under the social security system, a minimum period of service after 1936 is required or no benefit is payable. Of the 255,000 railroad employes awarded annuities by the end of 1946, 65,000 of them could not have met the minimum service requirement under the Social Security Act.

"The Social Security Act pays retirement annuities only after age 65 is reached. Under the Railroad Retirement Act, between one-fourth and one-third of all annuities will be awarded before age 65, in some cases as early as age 30.

"At the time the 1946 amendments were passed, the railroad retirement system was paying benefits to relatively three times as many families as the social security system, and in amounts that were almost two and one-half times as high per family."

Attorney John Emmett Hennessy Leaves WP to Enter Private Practice ... Is Succeeded by Elzo L. "Buck" Van Dellen

★ John E. "Spike" Hennessy, who has been an attorney on our legal staff from April 1943, through May 1948, resigned to enter private practice. He, Hugh Gordon and Wyman C. Knapp are



JOHN E. HENNESSY

forming a partnership under the firm name of Gordon, Knapp and Hennessy, with offices in the Citizens National Bank Building, Los Angeles, for the general practice of law.

"Spike" is a native San Franciscan, born September 18, 1902; received his education in San Francisco parochial schools and at the San Francisco Law School. He began his career with the Southern Pacific in 1919 and served in that road's operating, accounting and executive departments until 1940, the year he was admitted to the Bar. He then became attorney for the Pacific Southwest Railroad Association

and three years later joined the WP organization.

"Spike" acted as legal representative of the WP in all matters and cases before regulatory bodies, such as the ICC and state commissions. He capably represented us in such important cases as the Geneva steel rate case and the Pacific Coastwise case, involving rates by rail and water between California, Oregon and Washington.

We know the WP is going to miss the Hennessy ability and we're going to miss that snappy repartee! We wish him all possible success in the new venture.



ELZO L. VAN DELLEN

E. L. "Buck" Van Dellen succeeds to Spike's post as our attorney. "Buck" was born at Chicago, Ill., May 27, 1912, and was graduated from Stanford University (AB) in 1935 and from the Stanford Law School (LLB) in 1938 and admitted to the California Bar later that year. In 1940, he entered the Southern Pacific law department and has been there since, except for a World War II stint, lasting from April 3, 1942 to November 28, 1945, as a Lieutenant, USNR.

You may remember "Buck" Van Dellen's football exploits. He was a member of the great Stanford "Indians" varsity during the '32, '33 and '34 seasons, playing

in the Rose Bowl twice—against Columbia on January 1, 1934, and against Alabama on January 1, 1935.

He certainly is a welcome addition to our ranks and appears to be as difficult to insult as "Spike." We hope he'll be happy and wish him every success.

ANNOUNCING...

A National Railway Employees' Essay Contest Sponsored by the American Railway Magazine Editors' Association and Supported by The Western Pacific Railroad and The Western Pacific Club

\$1,000 FIRST PRIZE
250 SECOND PRIZE
100 THIRD PRIZE

In addition, WP, SN and TS employees will be shooting at local prizes of

\$50 FIRST PRIZE
25 SECOND PRIZE
10 THIRD PRIZE

Plus Three \$5 Honorable Mention Awards

SIMPLY WRITE (and write simply!) 500 words or less telling:

"Why I like to work for the Western Pacific Railroad" or the Sacramento Northern, or the Tidewater Southern, as your case may be.

★ Send your essay to Editor, The Headlight, San Francisco. Judges for the WP-SN-TS contest will be announced later. Essays received after September 1, 1948, will not be eligible for this competition. Essays awarded first, second and third places in the WP contest will be entered in the national contest, winners of which will be announced prior to Christmas, 1948.

National contest judges are **Frank Richter**, editor MODERN RAILROADS; **Henry B. Comstock**, editor, RAILROAD magazine; and **A. C. Kalmbach**, editor, TRAINS.

Members of The Headlight editorial staff and our publicity and advertising departments may not compete, but this DOES NOT exclude staff reporters.

You aren't a writer? Be not discouraged! Your effort will be judged on sincerity and originality, not on your writing technique or ability at composition. Typewritten, double-spaced copy will make your essay more readable, but essays submitted in longhand will be subject to no handicap!

Any employe of the Western Pacific, Sacramento Northern or Tidewater Southern, who has been in service at least six months prior to the date of his or her essay, is eligible.

Winning essays in our contest will be announced—and published in the October issue of The Headlight. Remember, though, that your essay must be in our hands by September 1.

All rights, publication or otherwise, in connection with essays submitted will rest with the American Railway Magazine Editors' Association.

Get started NOW. Don't delay!