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Trains

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Morgan recalls C.U.T.

4-6-4T to Auckland

Sole Leather Line

No snagged panty hose on this train!

From switchbacks to Salzberg—1

DAVID H. HAMLEY

I MOST of the residents of north-central Pennsylvania, in common with the rest of the East, were hoping for some relief from the heat and humidity in mid-July 1942. Temperatures over 100 degrees were commonplace for more than a week, and a little rain would have been welcome. When rain finally did come on July 18-19, 7 inches fell in a 24-hour period. A dam at Austin burst at the height of the storm, releasing a roaring flood that swept down the First Fork of Sinnamahoning Creek leveling everything in that narrow hill-guarded valley.

Although wartime news management shrouded all but the barest mention of damage to the railroads of the area, the damage was extensive. Hardest hit was the Buffalo & Susquehanna Subdivision of the Baltimore & Ohio. Its lines from Austin to Sinnamahoning and from Wharton to Burrows essentially were eliminated by the flood, and lesser damage occurred to the line from Galeton to Wellsville, N. Y. The flood was the last of a long series of misfortunes heaped upon those former Buffalo & Susquehanna Railroad lines most heavily damaged, and the lines promptly were abandoned. Thus the remaining B&O lines north of Burrows were isolated from the home system, and the physical separation eventually led to the sale of the disconnected portion in 1955. B&O had entered the picture when, during a period of ICC-promoted expansion in 1929-1932, it had acquired the B&S and the longer, more successful Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh. This extended B&O's system to Buffalo, Rochester, and northern Pennsylvania, where B&S and BR&P did a moderate traffic in coal and forest products.

LUMBER was the reason for building the B&S in the first place. This system had its beginning at the village of Keating Summit in May 1885 when Frank H. Goodyear secured a charter for the Sinnemahoning Valley Railroad, intending to build a line southeast to the town of Austin. Goodyear had owned forest lands in that area as early as 1880, including huge stands of hemlock. A connection was made at Keating Summit with the Buffalo, New York & Philadelphia, a predecessor of the Pennsylvania, and the line to Austin was opened in December 1885. The line grew almost continually as each tree fell before the advancing loggers, and by 1891 the main line had reached Hull, one third of the way to Galeton.

Frank Goodyear had been joined in his venture by his brother Charles W. in 1887, and the firm of F. H. & C. W. Goodyear Lumber Company became one of the most successful loggers in the East. Lured on by the promise of more timber and by the existence of several tanneries (which could use the bark from Goodyear's hemlock trees) in the Galeton area, the brothers planned an extension of their line over the hills to Galeton. In retrospect, the line from Hull to Galeton — built during 1891-1894 under the guise of several companies which existed only on paper — was a masterpiece of misplaced railroad. It made a frontal attack on the major ridge separating the towns by means of four switchbacks and plenty of 2.5 per cent grade. A branch to Cross Fork was laid in 1894 to serve a large sawmill there, and the many Shays and rod engines of both Goodyear Lumber and the Sinnemahoning Valley carried millions of board feet of lumber out of the area to the connection at Keating Summit. The initial success of their venture ballooned the ambitions of the Goodyear brothers, and in the midst of the Galeton line construction all of the railroad companies involved, real

B&S was a B&O orphan; successor WAG is a diesel museum

You mean, there really i

and paper, were combined to form the Buffalo & Susquehanna Railroad — a hint of what was to come.

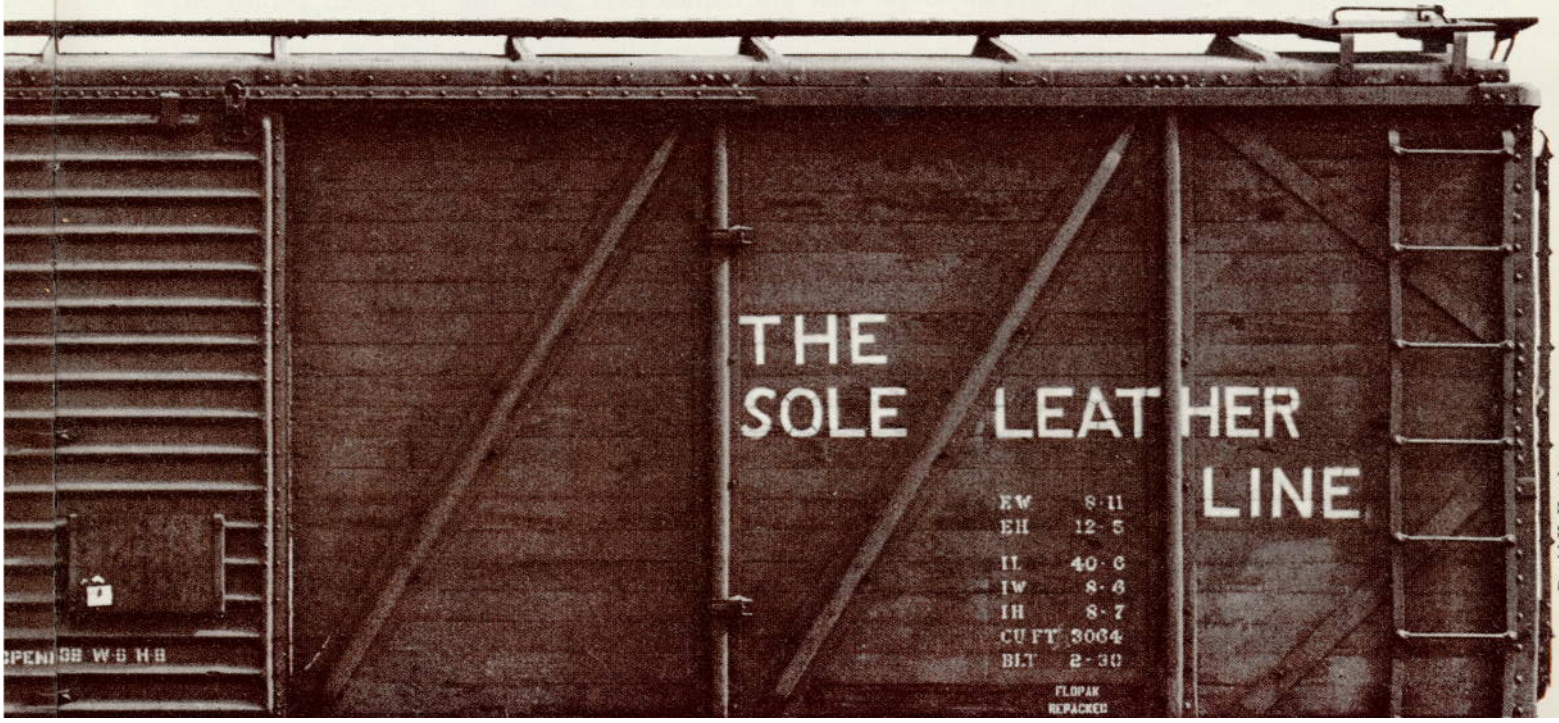
After pausing at Galeton only long enough to erect a roundhouse-and-shop complex in 1894, the B&S struck off in the direction of one of its corporate namesakes, Buffalo. The line from Galeton to Genesee was completed in 1895. Again a major grade was necessary: a twisting stretch of 2.85 per cent that lifted the line 587 feet in 5.1 miles to a crest at Cutler Summit. Near the crest an interchange was made with the Coudersport & Port Allegany, a former narrow-gauge line. The C&PA began life in 1882 and ran 32.36 miles from a Buffalo, New York & Philadelphia (PRR) connection at Port Allegany to an NYC (then the Corning, Cowanesque & Antrim) interchange at Ulysses, a few miles east of the B&S crossing at Newfield Junction. North of Genesee a railroad already existed to Wellsville: the Wellsville, Coudersport & Pine Creek, built between 1881 and 1890 — and as of 1895, possessor of but a single 4-4-0 and a few cars. When the Goodyears threatened to build their own line up the Genesee Valley to Wellsville, WC&PC became a quick if unhappy parcel of the B&S system. After their line had reached Wellsville and a connection with the New York, Lake Erie & Western (later Erie), the Goodyears rested temporarily from the drive toward Buffalo to concentrate on other parts of the line.

THE LINES extending east and north from Galeton had their beginning in July 1882 when the Addison & Northern Pennsylvania began laying 3-foot-gauge track south from Addison. The line reached Westfield, Pa., by November and Gaines by January 1883. Under the name New York & Northern Pennsylvania, the company built west to Pikes Mills (later Galeton) in 1884. At the same time a short branch was built from Davis to Gurnee to serve a coal mine — a rarity this far north in Pennsylvania. The line to Galeton opened in 1885, just in time for the A&NP to enter receivership. The line was renamed Addison & Pennsylvania when the receivership was lifted in 1887 and continued to run as a 3-footer until 1895. (In common with the C&PA, the A&P handled standard-gauge cars on temporary narrow-gauge trucks, *à la* East Broad Top. The unstable vehicle created in the process often wound up in the ditch.)

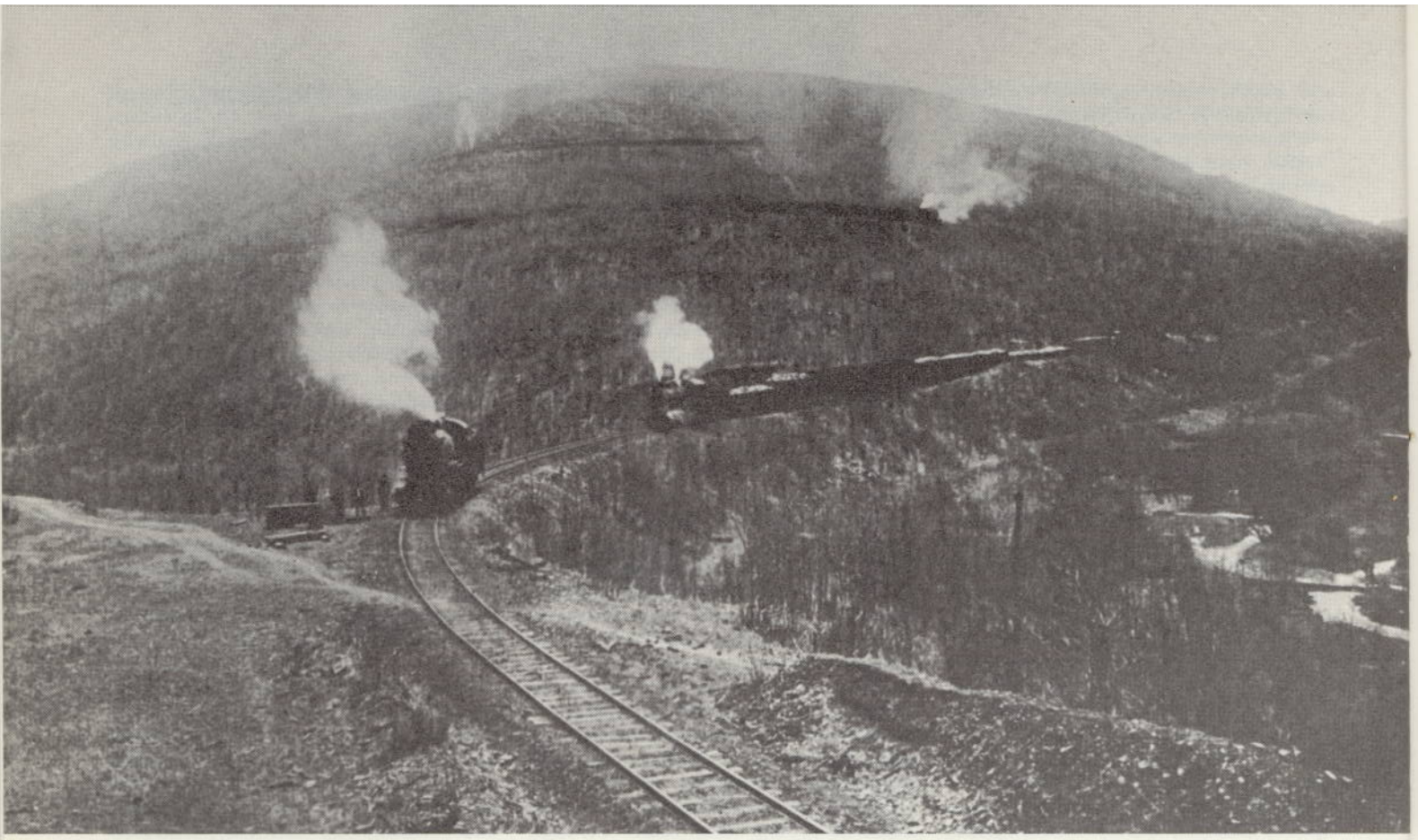
The arrival of the B&S in Galeton in 1894 made the A&P's 3-foot-gauge track that much less desirable — no interchange could be carried out with the new arrival without the truck-swapping act; and through traffic from the B&S over the A&P to the Addison connection was impossible, since the trucks of a car making such a move would be left behind at Galeton and another pair would be needed at Addison. In fact, the B&S had bypassed the Galeton-Gaines segment of the A&P by building its own line from Galeton through Gaines and on to an interchange with the Fall Brook Railway (NYC) at Ansonia during the summer of 1894. The A&P was promptly standard-gauged in 1895. Since large amounts of hemlock bark then moved from the B&S through Galeton to tanneries on the A&P, the Goodyears gradually acquired a controlling interest in the A&P during 1895-1898. Between 1898 and 1901 the actual transfer of ownership took place, shrouded in a maze of financial gyrations that left the New York portion of the A&P separately incorporated as the Addison & Susquehanna. A&S was leased to, but never actually was owned by, B&S after 1901. The redundant A&P line between Galeton and Gaines was lifted in 1898, and a short but sharply graded connection was built at Gaines, thereafter known as Gaines Junction.

DURING the 1900-1906 period, the Goodyear empire grew in scope far beyond the original lumber mills and the fledgling B&S. Coal mines and coke ovens in the Du Bois area were purchased, a large iron furnace was erected in Buffalo, iron-ore mines were built in Minnesota and Michigan, and a steamship company was formed to transport the ore to Buffalo. Further lumber interests were developed in Louisiana and a 130-mile railroad was built — the seed from which the Gulf, Mobile & Northern later grew. Extensions

y is a Sole Leather Line?



David H. Hamley.



SWITCHBACKS employed to move Buffalo & Susquehanna trains over the mountain between Galeton and Wharton, Pa., involved 2.5 per cent grades that limited one engine to 15 empties.

of the B&S were built in both directions: south to Du Bois, Punxsutawney, and Sagamore to pick up the fuel mined by the Buffalo & Susquehanna Coal & Coke Company; and north to Buffalo to deliver this coal to the Buffalo & Susquehanna Iron Company. Both extensions had been completed by late 1906 and the glow of success surrounding the Goodyear brothers was never brighter. They even talked of extending the 400-plus-mile B&S the last 50 miles to Pittsburgh and at one point spoke of going all the way to Louisiana with the line.

The glow was extinguished by the death of Frank Goodyear in early 1907, not to mention the business recession that year, and the cold harsh light of reality began to expose the flaws of the B&S. Moving the coal over the two crests on the line proved to be nearly impossible. The Goodyears' Shays made short work of the 2½ per cent on the switchbacks with a few cars of logs, but boosting a heavy coal drag up and over was another matter, particularly when the tail tracks limited trains to 15 cars. A multitude of the B&S's low-drivered 2-8-0's grunted and heaved on the switchbacks and farther north on the climb to Cutler Summit. Five to eight engines on a train were not unusual anytime of the year, but winter operations were a particular horror. The snow buried tracks, trains, and even snowplows with regularity.

The Goodyear empire fell apart between 1910 and 1914, beginning with the failure of the B&S to meet obligations in 1910. Charles Goodyear died in 1911; and one by one, the mines, iron furnace, lumber companies, steamship line, and railroads were sold off or disbanded. The original line from Keating Summit to Austin and the Cross Fork Branch were the first parts of the railroad system to go. That the Buffalo extension should never have been built in the first place became painfully evident to the new operators of the B&S. An effort was made to sell the line to other interests, and eventually in late 1915 the Wellsville & Buffalo Railroad was formed to operate the line. It then was quickly leased back to the B&S to operate. B&S tried it for six months before pulling out altogether in June 1916. The W&B staggered a few more months as an independent until the line was dismantled beginning in November 1916. Many early lines had short lives owing to overenthusiastic construction, but few could match the record of the unfortunate B&S Buffalo extension.

RELIEVED of the enormous expense of the coal drags, B&S became a more profitable operation on less traffic. A great deal of coal still was originated on the southern end, but most of this was handed over to BR&P or PRR interchanges before reaching the fearsome switchbacks. Tannery and lumber traffic supported the northern part of the line, and only when the mines began to play out around 1926 did the B&S again encounter financial problems. This time a rescuer was available in the form of the B&O.

Seeking extensions to its system, B&O had requested permission to acquire the B&S and the neighboring BR&P in 1929. The ICC gave its blessing in May 1930, and the takeover was effective on January 1, 1932. The two lines became the B&S and BR&P subdivisions of the Buffalo Division, although some southern sections of the B&S were made part of the BR&P Sub for convenience.

Along with the remaining trackage, 46 locomotives were acquired by B&O. Most of the early, more diverse B&S power (including a Baldwin 0-6-6-0 that carried Vauclain compound cylinders on each of two swivel trucks) was long gone, and only a fleet of 43 2-8-0's and 3 delicate 4-4-2's remained. The Consols, all fitted with 51-inch drivers, were given B&O Class E-60 road numbers 3100-3142. Many of these strayed far from the former B&S in later years, al-

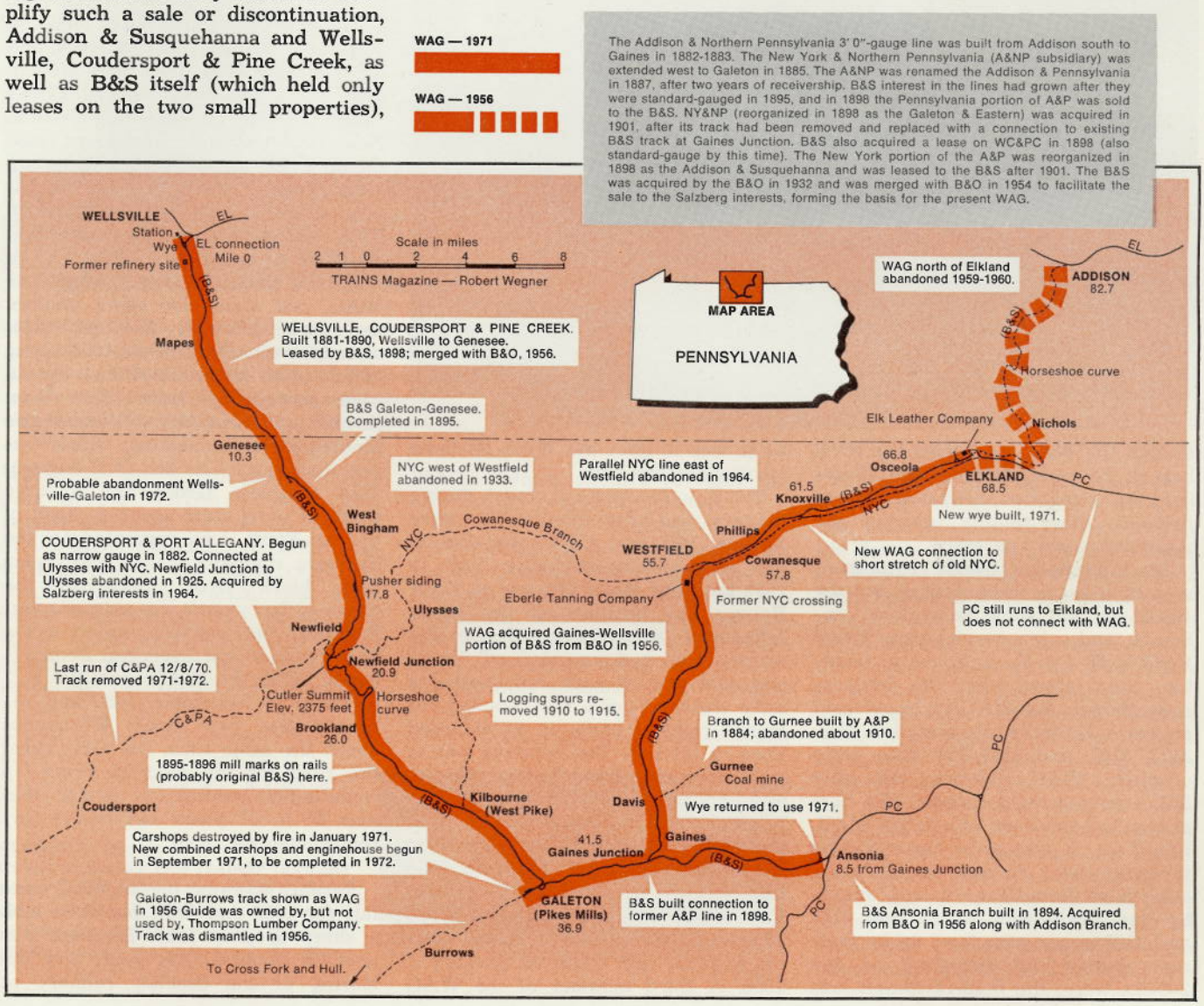
though all the power that did remain was ex-B&S. The 3 slim-boilered Atlantics, 1 with 73-inch drivers and a pair with 69-inch drivers, became B&O 1484-1486 and, like some of the 2-8-0's, stayed home. The shops at Galeton did most of the work on the little engines, but heavy repairs were performed at Cumberland, Md.

After the flood of 1942 severed the home-road connection, the locomotives had to be handed over to NYC and PRR for part of the trip to Cumberland, adding insult to injury. After a minor traffic peak during the war years, tonnage and revenue continued the slow decline evident before 1941. The daily round trip of passenger trains 478-479 from Galeton to Addison was 4-4-2-powered until the last 2 were junked in 1947. The small-drivered E-60's then did the honors until the trains died in 1949. Running passenger trains with 51-inch drivers doing the pulling was no problem: the schedule allowed 2 hours to cover the 46 miles. Seeing little future in the isolated lines, B&O began to consider selling or abandoning them in the early 1950's. To simplify such a sale or discontinuation, Addison & Susquehanna and Wellsville, Coudersport & Pine Creek, as well as B&S itself (which held only leases on the two small properties), were merged officially into the B&O on July 1, 1954.

Later in 1954 negotiations for the purchase of the lines were begun with Murray M. Salzberg. The Salzberg family had entered the shortline railroad business the back way — by dismantling a number of them for scrap value. Salzberg felt that not every abandoned line was entirely unprofitable and he undertook the operation of several lines due to be scrapped. In order to make this sort of line pay its way, frequently it was necessary to trim employment, operations, and some nonessential maintenance to reduce the costs that had caused the line to falter under its previous ownership. Although this procedure was not viewed with favor from all points, it was better to have some men working than none at all.

THUS Salzberg incorporated the Wellsville, Addison & Galeton Railroad Corporation in October 1954 to facilitate the purchase from the B&O. Permission to buy the line finally was received from the ICC in November 1955, and title was granted officially on January 1, 1956. For about $250,000 Salzberg received the 82.7 miles of the former B&S that connected the three towns of the WAG's name, plus the 8.5-mile Ansonia Branch. (Consider how few railroads reach the points their names imply. For worst examples, try the New Jersey, Indiana & Illinois and the Roscoe, Snyder & Pacific.) The line south from Galeton was nearly useless after the 1942 flood, and the WAG bought only that portion within Galeton city limits. Several more miles of line down to Burrows actually was owned by Thompson Lumber Company, although the trackage was shown on WAG maps in the *Guide* as if it were part of the system. This spur was lifted later in 1956 when its intended use didn't materialize. Al-

WELLSVILLE, ADDISON & GALETON: additions and deletions



Mike Runey.

IN the steam season, B&O's divorced Addison-Galeton branch was worked by ex-B&S hand-me-downs. (Above) Consolidation 3121 works the daily way freight through the Cowanesque Valley between Westfield and Knoxville, Pa.; (below) Atlantic 1485 starts uphill near Addison, N. Y. Ultimately, the 2-8-0 replaced the scrapped 4-4-2 on passenger runs.

H. D. Runey.

though the WAG paralleled the NYC branch between Elkland and Westfield, no connection existed anywhere between these points, making the Ansonia branch a necessity.

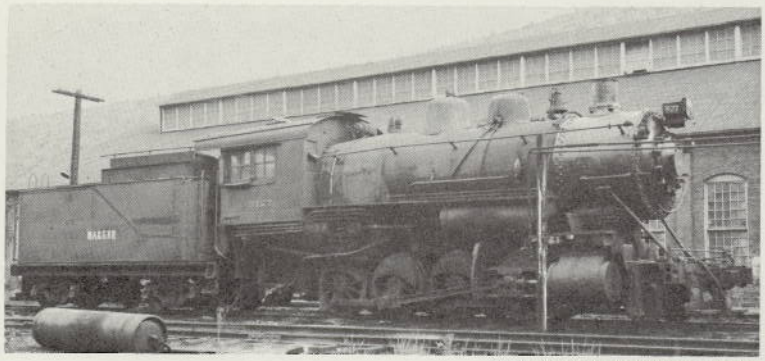
No interchange freight equipment was included in the purchase, but the WAG did get some snowplows, cabooses, and a few service cars. The 6 B&O E-60 2-8-0's stationed at Galeton went along with the bargain, even though the WAG had professed an early intention to dieselize. Nos. 3123, 3127, and 3132-3135 thus were officially WAG engines, but only 3127 ever carried the name. (No. 3134 also *may* have been relettered WAG, but if so, it was only for a trip to the junkyard.) At best the little inside-valve Consols were only standby and work-train power, and 3123 and 3132 never were fired up by their new owner. As appealing as the 2-8-0's were, the field of diesels was what was to gain the WAG its fame among shortline fans.

Three units were on hand during the new road's first months. Two were 125-ton 960 h.p. GE/Cooper-Bessemer center-cabs originally built in 1937 for Ford Motor Co. use at River Rouge. The business of the buyer influenced the styling of the big units; they had rounded-off hoods and cabs and on each end sported a nifty chromed grille that would have looked right at home on an enlarged Ford of the era. The lettering was in raised chrome-plated figures, all trim and handrails were chromed, and the original paint job was a tasteful black and reddish orange. Under each hood throbbed a big Cooper-Bessemer GN6 that emitted an authoritative bark. Ford Nos. 1000 and 1001 became WAG 1200 and 1300 in time to do the honors with the first trains on January 2, 1956. A third member of the WAG roster was a midget 50-ton diesel/battery center-cab, No. 300. The 300 had come to WAG's extensive shops at Galeton mainly to be overhauled for owner Unadilla Valley (another Salzberg line in New York) but may have been used a few times around Galeton. It was far too light for the WAG and was returned to UV in early 1956. Until the WAG could secure some additional diesels of its own, it leased a pair of 75-ton 650 h.p. Whitcombs from Rock Island. Even these temporary units had a history; they had been built for CN by Canadian Locomotive Company in 1948 and had been rejected by the CN. Whitcomb took them off CLC's hands in 1950 and rebuilt them with new engines and electrical gear. One went to Washington & Old Dominion, the other 17 to the Rock's growing collection of diesel orphans and oddities. Realizing that only the big GE's were heavy enough for the work, the WAG went after more of them.

Ford had purchased 6 more slightly heavier units of identical outside appearance during 1939-1940 (1002-1007), and of the 6, all but 1 eventually were acquired by the WAG. Nos. 1003 and 1007 became WAG 1400 and 1500 later in 1956, and 1002, 1004, and 1006 became 1800, 1600, and 1700 in 1958. Nos. 1002-1004 housed GN6's rated at 1000 h.p. for the pair, and Nos. 1006-1007 had similarly rated GNL6's. All of the 1002-1007 group were rated at 132 tons — the weight of a typical U-boat or Geep of today. They were sure-footed units that could get down and lug.

Having chosen its diesel roster, the WAG cast about for spare engines and parts, knowing that the units already were old and that anything which could be acquired then would save scrounging later. This hunt turned up a windfall at Pittsburgh's Monongahela Connecting, which was just disposing of its last C-B engines. Two complete GN6's and a large stock of parts were secured. Each of the ex-Fords was repainted in the Salzberg standard orange and cream with black trim. Much of the chromed fancywork was painted over; frills like that weren't needed in the backwoods of north-central Pennsylvania. After the WAG sent No. 3127 to scrap in November 1956 and returned the two Rock Whitcombs about the same time, the GE's ruled the road for the next 12 years — a remarkable record for power that was 28 to 31 years old before any replacements arrived.

FREIGHT REVENUES on the WAG were fair for 1956 and 1957, but they took a sharp drop in 1958. Business was poor in general that year, and the closing of the Sinclair refinery at

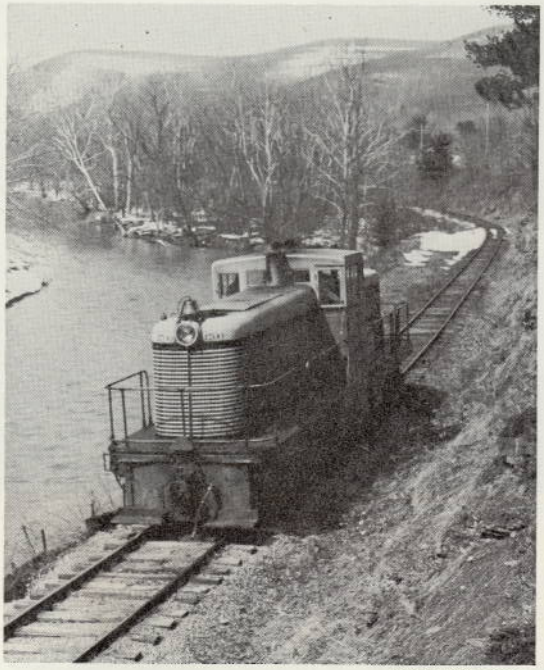


Collection of Frank Vollhardt Jr.

WAG'S INITIALS appeared on only one of six 2-8-0's acquired by Salzberg — No. 3127 (ex-B&O 3127, ex-B&S 153), photographed in Galeton, Pa.

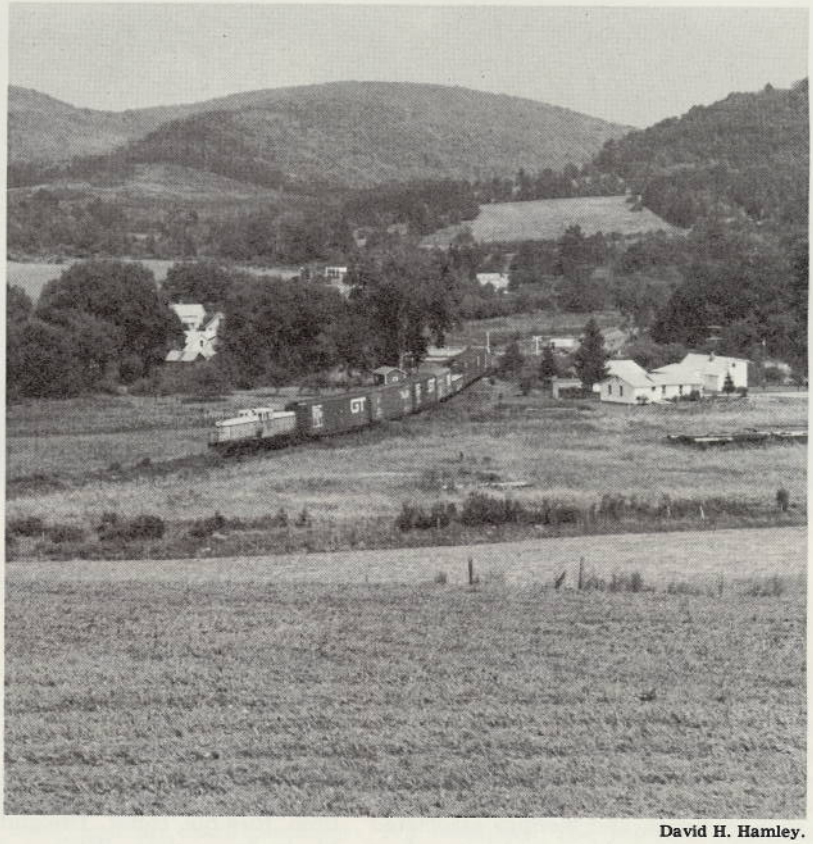
David H. Hamley.

INTERCHANGE at Newfield Junction, Pa., unites two GE's: WAG's 1800 and C&PA's one-third-as-big 44-ton D-2.



David H. Hamley.

RUNNING LIGHT, No. 1700 (above) squeezes along a narrow ledge beside Pine Creek on the return run from Ansonia to Gaines Junction. "To call WAG country merely beautiful would be a gross understatement," says Hamley. The evidence (right): 1800 at Hickox, Pa.



David H. Hamley.

Wellsville put a particularly large dent in the WAG's revenues. Expenses exceeded income in 1958, so WAG began searching for additional income. Noting that some relatively small roads (*e.g.*, P&LE) had much larger interchange car fleets than these roads ever could use themselves (solely for the purpose of gathering per diem payments), the WAG's owners decided to enter the interchange freight car business.

The large shop buildings at Galeton provided the needed work space, and by October 1958, 2 gons and 78 box cars were in interchange. All the equipment was secondhand for the WAG and was rebuilt by the shops at Galeton before being sent off. Although some gondolas were included, the majority of the car fleet was formed by outside-braced wood-side box cars. Most of these came from the Boston & Maine, but a few filtered in from other roads. Because several large tanneries were the major shippers on the line, and because the WAG had had a long association with the leather industry, the road began to call itself "The Sole Leather Line." The Wellsville, Addison & Galeton name was applied to the freight equipment, zigzagging up and down between the outside bracing ribs of the wood-sided box cars. It even zigzagged across the smooth sides of some of the few steel box cars in the fleet, where there was nothing to zig or zag around. As the fleet grew to more than 750 cars, the sight of WAG cars became commonplace; no major rail yard in the East was complete without one. I

NEXT MONTH

REMEMBER this photo in "Railway Post Office" in January 1969 TRAINS? You'll find these F's in fresh paint in March 1972 TRAINS as David H. Hamley concludes his WAG report with the explanation of how first-generation diesels became the second on the WAG.

C. D. Finney.