



*Official Bulletin of the Northeastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association*

# PROGRAM SET FOR TRENTON CONVENTION MAY 5<sup>th</sup> AND 6<sup>th</sup>!

## THE DISPATCHER'S TOWER.

Signs of Spring are at hand, so our thoughts naturally turn toward the May Convention to be held in Trenton. Our committee, in conjunction with MER, have been extremely active and their results, to date, promise a full and worthwhile program. Trenton has relatively easy access so I look forward to a large and enthusiastic attendance from NER.

This month you are reading the first results of our new and permanent Editor, Charles Ogren of Pittsfield, Mass. (Roy Gardner had to resign in December because of a new position.) Chuck has volunteered his services so on behalf of the officers and membership, I welcome him and extend our sincere appreciation for doing so. Chuck has already submitted a program for the betterment of the paper which has excellent merits and which has been given the "Green Light". First of all, he wants reporters in the various sections of the Region and I urge all those who can, to give the needed assistance.

As part of the planned program for the good of NER, studies have been made of the activities of the membership. Closer relationship and increased benefits for the individual is the object and to promote this idea, it appears desirable to sponsor the creation of several divisions within the Region. This idea has been most successful in several of the other Regions. To date, NER has only one, namely the Metropolitan District of New York City, which has grown to the extent of attracting approximately 200 to its meetings. Letters have gone out to a number of individuals in an effort to have some ten units organized through-out the Region. It is my hope to have reports presented at the May Convention of the progress made in the various areas selected.

I wonder how many of us realize the leadership NER has assumed in the past. 1955 showed practically equal membership, and I believe activity, with PCR. These two Regions top the list, but can't NER move out in front? Since October, renewals and new memberships have been most encouraging. With this start for the year, let us all make an effort to secure at least one new member. There are approximately 75 out of every 100 NMRA members in our area who do NOT hold NER memberships. This should make for good hunting! Of course, if any of you can bring in a new NMRA membership as well, we will be most happy about that too.

See you in Trenton for a grand week end.

JAMES E. SEE,  
President, NER

Headquarters for the Spring '56 Convention will be the Stacy-Trent Hotel in Trenton, New Jersey, Saturday and Sunday, May 5th and 6th. This promises to be a weekend of fun and railroading for those attending. Being a joint meeting, the Committee, headed by Doug Brown, for NER and Cecil Matthews, for MER, have worked over time to make this a top notch meeting. They, and their committee have lined up a full and active week end.

Convention planning is not without headaches and heartbreaks. This is evidenced in the fact that there will be no rail fan trip during the convention. This was due to spathy on the part of the Pennsylvania Railroad Operating Department, in Newark, in making up their minds as to schedule, or not to schedule the train. By the time they finally came through with something, it was too late and the Committee had to abandon the plan. However, the Pennsy station is only a few blocks from the hotel and New York-Washington traffic is fairly frequent, which will afford the railbirds adequate opportunity to get prototype pictures.

After the big disappointment over the Pennsy trip, Paul Mallery jumped into the breach and more or less saved the day by arranging a trip through the John English plant in nearby Morrisville, for Saturday afternoon. This will be of interest to those who have toyed with the idea of manufacturing kits, or needed parts. Also to see how the English products are made.

John English, by the way, has donated a train set to be used as one of the door prizes at the banquet.

Another feature of Saturday Afternoon will be a clinic on "Prototype Operation" or, more specifically, "How to Operate a Peddler Freight and is a Time Table Essential to such an Operation." This seminar will be conducted by two brave men, W. Watson (Watty) House and Phillips (Pop) Houghton, Co-chairmen of the NER Committee on Prototype Operation, and any others that they can draw into an argument. Think you operate a "model" railroad??? here is your chance to find out!

The third feature planned for Saturday is a trip to Edwin P. Alexander's model railroad exhibit and museum at nearby Yardley. This is something to look forward to. We all have seen pictures of Mr. Alexander's work, now it can be seen first hand. Being a professional model maker, Mr. Alexander is well known throughout the country for his work and his collection of early toy and scale railroad cars engines and equipment.

(Cont'd on Pg. 3)

# THE COUPLER

Official Bulletin of the Northeastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association

## OFFICERS

JAMES E. SEE, President, 1 Orchard Drive, White Plains, New York  
IRWIN LLOYD, Vice President, 11 Case Street, Hartford, Connecticut  
ROGER MARBLE, Secretary-Treasurer, 169 Lovell Road Holden, Massachusetts

## DIRECTORS

LYMAN B. HURTER, 36 Marshall St., Somerville, Mass.  
GEORGE W. RIEZ, 359 Moshulu Parkway, N.Y. 67, N.Y.  
CHARLES McK. WELLING, 156 Sandford Avenue, North Plainfield, N.J.  
DOUGLAS C. BROWN, 21 Leland Ave. Plainfield, N.J.  
WAYNE ROUNDY (Ex-Officio) 69 Ocean Avenue, Old Orchard Beach, Maine

Convention Coordinator. . . . CHARLES McK. WELLING  
Convention Chairman . . . . . DOUGLAS C. BROWN  
Publicity Director. . . . . (Vacancy)

## COUPLER STAFF

CHARLES OGREN, Editor, 16 Weller Ave., Pittsfield, Massachusetts  
WILLIAM DIETZ, Mailing, 3348 Hull Ave., New York, 67, New York  
GERALD NEEFUS, Mailing, 16 Winthrop Ter., Meriden, Connecticut



\*\*\*\*\*

## THE HOSTLER SEZ:

I think I had better stop corresponding with one Stan Bradley. It seems that every time we exchange letters, I have a job with NER. First the Burlington Convention.....now this!!! Seriously speaking, though, I'm more than glad to take this on. It goes back to the old adage that, "A person only gets out of an organization what he, or she, puts into it." I have found this to be very true. The next time someone complains about a club or group they belong to, ask them what they are doing FOR the group. Chances are that you will get a negative answer. So, thanks, Stan for the chance to do something worthwhile for the Region, and I intend to keep up the high standards you have set.

The Trenton Convention is shaping up into quite a meet. It will be a full weekend of railroading, from the prototype to models. Also a good chance to meet our neighbors from the Mid-Eastern Region. I'm looking forward to the trip through E.F. Alexander's museum and to the London Broil. Leave it to me to think of food on a weekend like that. I hope that the Committee has good luck weather wise. Let's turn out in fine fashion, fellows, and show the MER boys how we support our Region meets.

During the nomination of Directors at the recent Metropolitan District Meeting, a voice, we were told, from the floor nominated Margaret See. This was in addition to the slate drawn up by the committee. There were a few snickers from some who thought lightly about having a female Director. After the ballots (Heavy weight paper, of course) were counted the snicker came from the

other side. Mrs. See had won by a landslide. Congratulations, Margaret. (Could this be another "first" for NER???)

With an eye to the future and in order to present the fullest round-up of news from every corner of the Region, I would like to set up a staff of reporters, who would feed news of club activities, meets, shows, etc., to me. This would help make the COUPLER a truly Regional paper. At present there is just a smattering of news of members activities reaching this office. With reports coming in from all around the Region, we would have the best paper in the NMRA. Also it would help in giving your Editor the news required to be able to put out four issues a year. Perhaps this reporting could be handled by club secretaries, i.e., Dave MacDonald of the South Shore Club in Weymouth, Mass. He has volunteered to act as reporter for that area. How about you? Give it a thought and drop me a line.

Many thanks to Bill Schopp for his fine article on manufacturing. I hope that we will be able to have more articles from Bill in the future. If any one has ideas for articles or would like to write one for the COUPLER, just send it along. We are always open for material.

According to the calendar, not the weather man, Spring is just around the corner with its warmer temperatures...a fine time to start planning those fan trips...railroading out of doors, with the family. There are many places along the rail lines that can be photographed and then when the time comes, modeled. It's surprising how many "little" things along the right-of-way there are to build and how they would enhance your own pike. Many railroad scenes can be used for Christmas cards, etc. Take a look at your maps. There are, undoubtedly, many places within your immediate area that offer a world of railroading. Most railroads are very cooperative and will give permission to take pictures in yards and around engine facilities. Why not give it a try? It's loads of fun and educational, as well.

We'll see you in Trenton, May 5th. Lets have a good turn out for this joint meeting and while you are at it, why not try to bring a new member.

CHUCK OGREN, Editor.



## REPORT FROM THE VEEP

In an effort to promote the Northeastern Region, and to boost membership, some 23 members donated a few evenings to address, stamp and mail about 1,500 promotional letters. These were sent to NMRA members in the Region who did not belong to NER. Of this group, about 179 NER members were enrolled.

From the reports of NER Treasurer Roger Marble, the 1956 membership status is as follows: 215 Renewals and 193 New Members paid for so far. This makes a total of 408 in the Region. This is less than one-third of the total NMRA membership in the Region. This is a good example of why every member should do his best to get at least one new member this year.

I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the fellows who worked on this promotion for a splendid job, well done. This is beginning to pay off very nicely in new members.

To those who responded to the promotional letter, on behalf of the Northeastern Region, may I extend a cordial welcome to greater Model Railroading fellowship. We will be looking forward to seeing and meeting you at the next convention in Trenton, New Jersey, May 5th and 6th. We hope your association with us is a pleasant and long one.

IRWIN LLOYD,  
Vice President.

TRENTON CONVENTION (Cont'd from pg.1)

The final attraction scheduled for Saturday will be the model contest and draw-bar contest. These will be open to members of both Regions, and will be under the supervision and rules of N.E.R. A room is being provided that is large enough to display models and still have the draw-bar contest in one end. This room will be kept locked at various times during the afternoon, when no one will be able to enter. The time of the draw-bar contest will be decided at Trenton and will depend on the number of entrants and at what time they wish to hold the contest. Be sure to bring your favorite engine along with your prized model for these contests.

Larry Sagle, of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the Baltimore Society of Model Engineers, will be the speaker at the banquet Saturday evening. Having all read articles in the various magazines by Mr. Sagle, we can look forward to an inspiring talk on railroading.

The banquet will feature a menu quite a bit different from the usual fare served at such affairs, called "London Broil". This is a form of beef steak, and comes highly recommended by those who have had it.

Sunday morning breakfast will be joint N.E.R.-M.E.R. After the breakfast the Mid Eastern members will retire to another room to hold their business meeting, while the Northeastern members stay in the main dining room to take care of the business at hand.

There will be an added attraction for the ladies attending, who do not wish to sit through the business sessions. This will be a bus trip, Sunday morning, to old, colonial, Pennsbury Manor, William Penn's country estate located on the original 40 acres purchased from the Indians. The fare for this bus trip is not included in the package deal, and will cost \$1.75

All in all, this shapes up as a fine convention, with activities to suit everyone attending. One that will be remembered for a long time to come. Don't forget to bring models for the contest.

All advance Convention registrations are to be directed to J. Cecil Matthews, at 1000 Edgerly Road in Glen Burnie, Maryland. For ease in handling, make all checks and money orders payable to the Mid-Eastern Region. This money will be for the Convention ONLY! All hotel reservations will be made directly with the hotel. Advance registrations will be received, but not guaranteed, after Monday, April 30th. It would be advisable to include the fare price for the trip to Pennsbury Manor along with the package fee, this being over and above the convention price.

The package price, which includes the bus trip Saturday afternoon, the banquet and Sunday morning breakfast, is \$7.50 per person, and \$7.25 a person for NER and MER members and their family.

Prices at the Stacy-Trent per day are: Single: \$5.75; \$6.50; \$7.00; \$7.50; \$8.00; \$8.50. Double: \$8.75; \$9.50; \$10.00; \$10.50; \$11.00; \$12.00. Twin Beds: \$10.50; \$11.00; \$12.00. Additional folding bed in room: \$3.00 per day.

Here is the schedule of events as decided upon by the Convention Committee:

Saturday, May 5th

- 11 a.m. Registration in Stacy-Trent, Trenton
- 2 p.m. Bus trip to John English plant at Morrisville, and visit to E.P. Alexander railroad exhibit and museum at Yardley.

Clinic on Prototype Operation at the Stacy-Trent Hotel by Houghton and House. Open to all interested.

Exhibit of models and draw-bar contest at hotel. Exact time to be posted at registration.

- 7 p.m. Banquet at Stacy-Trent. Introduction of guests, awarding of door prizes, Guest Speaker: Larry Sagle

Sunday, May 6th

- 9 a.m. Breakfast at Stacy-Trent
- 10 a.m. Business meetings in separate rooms.
- 10 a.m. Bus trip to Pennsbury Manor for those not attending business meetings.

Here is a good opportunity to meet our neighbors and friend from the MER. Let's have a good turnout and show our enthusiasm for supporting the Region and hobby.



METROPOLITAN DISTRICT ELECTS OFFICERS

The Metropolitan District of the Northeastern Region held an interesting winter meeting at the Consolidated Edison Company building, 4 Irving Place, New York City, last March 2nd.

With an attendance of 198 model railroaders, new Directors and officers were elected. They are: Mrs. Margaret See of White Plains, N.Y.; Roger G. Ramsdell, Jr. of Rockville Center, N.Y.; Charles Bruns and George W. Riesz, both of the Bronx, N.Y. There were four holdover Directors, Douglas C. Brown of Plainfield, N.J.; Bruce Coughlin of Brooklyn, N.Y.; William Dietz of the Bronx, N.Y. and James E. See of White Plains, New York.

At the meeting of the new board, the following officers were elected: President, Roger Ramsdell, Jr.; Vice President, Charles Bruns; Secretary, Mrs. Margaret See; and Treasurer, George Barclay of Mt. Vernon, New York.

Traction and juice fans were in their glory during the meeting, as Mr. M.R. Deckinger, of the New York City Subway System, described how the subways were operated like the surface railroads, under dispatcher's orders and block control signaling. Many new facets of subway operation were brought out during his talk and new angles to the business of running a subway were discussed during a question and answer session after the talk.

Along the same lines, Maurice Helpert and Ernest Huebner, both of the New York Society of Model Engineers, Inc., showed their O and HO gauge electric equipment.

To help round out an evening of railroading, Louis J. Schmidt, of the Bronx, showed his collection of slides of New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad locomotives. These were on a varied assortment of motive power, both past and present.

For information on joining the Metropolitan District, contact the Secretary, Mrs. Margaret See at 1 Orchard Drive, White Plains, N.Y.

WANTED

Back issues of the COUPLER. These are wanted by Jim See for his collection, and by the Editor, for the Region. Jim would like to have copies of the COUPLER from 1952 on back. Contact him at 1 Orchard Drive, White Plains, N.Y.

The Editor's file is to give this, and any subsequent editor a complete set of COUPLERS for his information. These would belong to the Region, not the Editor. Any and all back copies would be appreciated.





#### SO YOU WANT TO BE A MANUFACTURER?

A lot of us from time to time have figured we'd like to manufacture something for the model trade and some of us have. But brother, we are up against a rough time in many respects and never was this brought home to me so forcefully as recently when my friend, Al Schrader, of Trenton, bought out George Stock's HO GG-1 kit, intending to put it on the market immediately. He will get it on the market all right, but not quite so immediately as he at first thought. I have been sitting in on much of the work on this engine and have already learned as much, or more, than I have learned in the past twenty years in the hobby and the business.

First of all is the selling price. Your price is set not only by your tooling and production costs, but by how you sell and what you can get for the item. If you sell direct to the consumer, you can keep price down quite a bit but your volume is likewise down. In the case of the GG-1, the way it is tooled up would make this practicable, except that such items as drivers and gears must be purchased by the thousand in order to get a reasonable price. Sell through dealers, you must give them a 40% discount. If you sell through jobbers you must give them a series of discounts of 50%, 10% and 2% so an item listing for \$50 would have to be sold to jobbers for around \$22. But, of course, you get a much bigger volume, especially good if you get paid promptly --- which is not always the case.

Then there is the question of obtaining materials. A company like Mantua has learned this lesson all right and turns out 90% of their own parts, maybe more. Otherwise, you must see the foundry for GG-1 "boilers"; a rubber mold process casting outfit for outer frames (compare prices of lost wax method); a motor manufacturer; a gear manufacturer or two; a screw-machine products outfit; an importer for pantographs and a box manufacturer, as well as do a lot of the work yourself. All this takes time and some shopping around, especially difficult to do if you already hold down a good, full-time job.

The GG-1 is never going to be a real mass production item like the Globe diesel or even the Mantua Shifter, because its appeal is largely to people along the Pennsylvania electrified main line. It has been off the market as both Stock and Famoco had them out at the same time some years ago and more or less knocked each other off. Why Famoco, the second comer, didn't choose another prototype for an electric loco (such as the Milwaukee bi-polar) I don't know. The Penn-Line has been talking GG-1 for several years, but when I spoke to the fellows in late fall they had it on the shelf and told me that they doubted that it was economically practical to bring out a new locomotive kit at this time --- which would not apply to some other Pennsy steam engine for which they had a great many of the parts already tooled up. There is a possibility of a Japanese importation, of course. In fact, a pilot model has been made over there, but an increase in import duties as well as a sometimes justified aversion to Japanese engines makes this a considered risk. It may never be mass produced.

BILL SCHOFF

THE BIG IVY. by James McCague. 306 pp.  
Crown Publishers. \$3.50

There have been a number of novels written in the past few years against a railroad background. Now there is a novel about a railroad. James McCague makes his Indiana Valley Railroad as much a character as any man or woman in the book. Mr. McCague knows railroad practice, equipment, and the problems of operating well and presents them with the realism of thorough understanding.

Jem Gander is the main character, perhaps the hero, of the book. Beginning in the roundhouse, he gets a chance to become a student fireman. Since he had left home to become an engineer, he makes the most of the opportunity.

With seeming casualness the not easy lot of the student fireman is depicted. This reviewer's muscles ached and hands burned,

The pace of the book is as fast as that of the "New York Flyer" making up time. Beginning on page 70, there is a five page description of a just avoided rear-end collision. The work and worry of the dispatcher's department, from the dispatcher, down the line to the local station telegrapher, is showed so clearly one immediately sympathizes with each man.

The book is written with the stark realism of the steel rails themselves. The fight between Jem and the division is brutal, as such a fight was bound to be. But, there was nothing revolting about the fight, nor the celebration afterwards. This reviewer could not say the same about equivalent passages in many best sellers. The sketches of the men who congratulate Jem are masterly.

Every railroad fan is familiar with the legendary Broken-Neck Crane. Mr. McCague recounts the story with the ring of freshness only one nearly acquainted with it could give.

The account of the excursion train which became the victim of the rear-end collision is familiar to almost every one of us. Change the class of the train and it touches, personally, almost every family in the land. It is a horror story which gives each reader the chills. In THE BIG IVY the horror story is told in eight economical pages.

The effect of the wreck upon the engineer of the victim train is so clearly shown in two pages, and summed up in the words, "-----too long a lay-over." The style of the author is very spare. He never wastes words, except maybe, in the heart interest passages. Since this reviewer wants a book about railroads to be all railroads, the romance and such, was lost. Granted it is true to life and was part of the characters of the particular people shown, but I did not find it particularly interesting, thats all.

The nicest thing in the book, to my mind, is the description of the Brooks built "Prarie" engine of 1904. You smell the hot oil and the burning soft coal. You dry steam off your face and wipe cinders out of your eyes as you read that page.

A man will find the book hard to put down. A woman who likes railroads and railroading will too. It is not recommended for impressionable youngsters.

Margaret See



Of his first ride on a railroad train ( in April 1834.) Congressman Davy Crockett wrote: "This was a clean new sight to me; about a dozen big stages hung onto one machine.... by and by she began to take short breaths, and away we went with a blue streak after us."

# THE DISTAFF SIDE

When a certain fellow, named Bruce Coughlin, changed my name, I hadn't realized how much he would change my attitude toward railroads. You see, I had informed him I don't like to ride on them...period! Well, I did have to admit they were the only practical means of travel...at times, that is. Everything whizzed by before you could really see it. And what do you see, anyway? Back yards and the wrong end of buildings.

Oh, he was sly, that one! By way of introduction, we first visited a club layout somewhere in New Jersey, I think. It was interesting and the scenery was attractive, but Bruce kept saying, "Just wait 'till you see ours." I waited. He gave me some pamphlets on railroads and railroading. I waited. He talked about signals and switches, etc. I waited. After a long two months, the N.Y.S.M.E. had their show. ---All kidding aside, it was really worth waiting for. It hadn't been too hard to sell me on the model end of RRing. Now the problem of selling me on the full scale R.R.s remained. What to do?

Margaret and Jim See can probably guess. Yes, that's right, Margaret. He took me to the Montreal Convention. Some introduction!!! To start with, sleeping in a pullman was a new experience. The private club car making it so easy to get acquainted was just the thing I needed. I even met the "Monster"...didn't get that name straight then as well as most of the folks I met. This didn't seem to matter at all. Everyone was so friendly and so many things happened there just wasn't a full moment. The inspection when we crossed over into Canada was something new too. It was amusing when the Customs man asked where I was going, I didn't know, so just said I was with the Model Railroad group. His reply was only "Oh." But it said so much! He hardly even looked at the open suitcase or driver's license.

Checking into the hotel was a little confusing. Not for us, but to the clerk. You see, my room was originally reserved for Herb Ruddock. When we finally decided we could make the trip, Bruce just reserved a room for two. He, the clerk, could not understand why I wanted the single room and Herb and Bruce the double one.

Not being a Mrs. yet, I didn't join the "Widows" on their tour of the stores; instead, tagged along with the signal tower bugs. This was quite an experience...something not to be missed. We visited the tower down by the lift bridge where all the trains seemed to pass. What a board...lights popping on and off all over the place. I think there were three sections, with a man at each and another in back of them in charge of all. Now add to this the fact that a call would come in, in English, some even with an Irish brogue, and the answer might be in French, or it could be the other way around...asked in French and answered in a mixture of English. It was a little confusing, but even more interesting.

There were also controls for the bridge and a man just for that. We were told that if we went out and stood on one of the spans we could ride up on it in a few minutes. So...out we went. It was like riding on a very smooth running elevator; no jerks or jolts at all. What a view!!! You could see all over the place. It gave you a funny feeling to be up so high on a platform with no guard rail around it. Then we went back to the tower. While Bruce made his usual copy of the board, one of the fellows insisted that I have tea and "biscuits". He was so polite about it I couldn't refuse. They didn't offer it to the men. I understand they don't have

feminine visitors very often, so it was quite an occasion.

It was on the railfan trip that I was introduced to Bruce's, and I must say several others, too, point of observation...the rear platform. It certainly does give one a different view. If they only had seats out there! Well they don't. So I decided, after a sample of it, now in the time to get better acquainted with the wives. There is, at least, one pleasant advantage to this situation. I don't have to look all over the train for Bruce. I know where to find him.

The trolley ride was quite something too. A real sight-seeing tour of the city. The ride up and down the mountain was something not to be forgotten quickly, either. In fact, the Montreal trip was one I'll remember a long time.

When we got on the train to leave, the Monster was there, all set to go. I just couldn't resist pushing the little button a couple of times to make him toot. Harry Towers remarked, "Boy, she's catching on fast!" Honest, Harry, I didn't know until several months later, two toots meant to go. It just sounded right.

Shortly before the next convention, this time at White Plains, I had to admit the bug had bitten. On a trip downtown to get some curtain material, I saw a railroad print. Yes, I came home with enough for a skirt. Then I had to go back and get more for a shirt to keep peace in the family. Thus, the Coughlins became known as the shirt with the skirt to match, thanks to Marny Padin.

There is no question about it.....another rail fan has been added to the roster. Any visitor to our house isn't there long before he has caught on to the fact that someone is interested in Railroads. First bit of evidence is likely to be the engine ashtray that puffs smoke, or the top of the piano, sporting a little black china engine and one car. Last Christmas a little angel, two inches high, arrived carrying a tiny engine. It really is amazing how these little bits of evidence have accumulated. I must say it is a lot of fun!

I still think there is plenty of room for improvement in making passengers comfortable on a lot of trains, but I must confess I really have changed. The fact is, I now spend a good part of my time, on any trip, with my eyes glued to the windows (this is also true in an automobile) looking for abandoned right of ways.

MARY COUGHLIN



## WHAT ONE DOLLAR WILL BUY

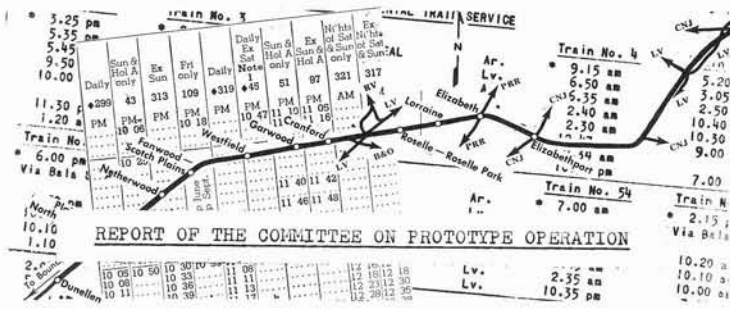
\$1.00 will hire a plumber for 1/3 hour  
\$1.00 will buy about three gallons of gas  
\$1.00 will buy 1-1/4 pounds of sirloin steak  
\$1.00 will buy two model railroad magazines  
\$1.00 will buy 2/3rd pair of mens socks  
\$1.00 will buy two pair of HO gauge couplers  
\$1.00 will buy about 1/3rd of an HO freight car  
\$1.00 will buy about 1/8th 0 gauge reefer  
\$1.00 will take you about 25 miles on a train

BUT

\$1.00 will hire 1 President, 1 Vice-President, 1 Treasurer, 1 Secretary and 4 directors, all for 365 days, simply by joining or renewing your membership in Northeastern Region.

HOW CAN YOU BEAT THAT FOR VALUE?

adapted from MER LOCAL



Although there will be no exhibitions or demonstrations of prototype operations at the Trenton Convention next May 5th, the committee on Prototype Operation has arranged the following tentative program:

- 1 Freight Switching: Reports on two layouts, possibly three, which run peddler freights. These layouts are practically unknown to the majority of the members of the NER.
- 2 Main Line Operation: Reports on two layouts which use special methods to give the effect of increased length of Main Line. Report on a third layout which combines both Switching and Main Line running.
- 3 A Review of Methods: Of prototype operation, and their application to small layouts.
- 4 Club Exhibitions and Their Operating Problems: This program has been called "tentative", as it has not yet been approved by both MER and NER Convention Program Committees.

The Committee on Prototype Operation, which was set up by a majority vote at the Garden City Convention last Spring, has fallen down on its primary assignment, which was to arrange for demonstrations of realistic operations at Regional conventions. It was thought at first that it would be possible to adapt existing layouts near the convention for such demonstrations. This has proved to be impossible because convention locations are apparently chosen by other considerations than the type of operation of the available layouts. This situation exists in the case of national as well as regional conventions. There was no realistic operation at Baltimore last summer, and we hear that there will be none at St. Paul next August.

While clinics and lectures are more easily arranged, and have been received with great interest, the Committee has seen no evidence that they have had much effect in changing the style of operating in the Region, which has been mostly continuous loop running. The answer, which has occurred to several people simultaneously, is to construct a portable layout similar to the MODEL RAILROADER'S "Evergreen Central", but designed to demonstrate to the members of the NMRA that realistic operation is easy and can be fun.

Allen Hazen, formerly a member of the NER, has invited the Co-chairmen of the Committee to bring such a portable layout with them to the Convention at St. Paul in August. Jim See, NER President, has asked for the loan of the "Evergreen Central" for the Trenton Convention, but has been told that it is neither suitable nor available for the purpose. While there is not enough time left to build a portable layout for use in Trenton, it looks as if it is going to be a "must" for future meetings.

Generally speaking, the Committee has been reassured by letters from various parts of the country that there is more sentiment in favor of realistic operation than the evidence as shown by the continuous-loop type of operating at club and private layout exhibitions would indicate. Minority members of several large clubs have agreed with the statement in the Garden City Report in

the October issue of the NMRA Bulletin that the clubs are doing harm to the hobby by using the continuous-loop method of operation, so that many do not know that there is any other way to run trains. There has been enough of this kind of encouragement to make the Committee keep on with its "Operation-Realism", as it has been called.

There has been talk in different parts of the West about "cycles of freight operation", which should be of help to both scenery building and train operation. A "cycle" in this sense would mean the origin of the traffic and the final destination together with possible intermediate stops should be included for a single industry. The examples that come to mind are: lumber, coal, oil, cattle, sugar beets, to mention only a few. Lumber would entail logging, sawmills, re-sawmills, lumber yards and furniture factories. Coal would involve a branch line to a coal mine, retail coal yards, factories, power plants, engine yards, etc. Oil would mean oil fields, refineries, local oil dealer's tanks. Cattle would require stock pens and packing plants, both using stock and refrigerator cars. The latter would give an excuse for an icing platform. Sugar beets call for beet loaders and pilers as well as sugar mills, which require in addition to hopper cars full of beets, carloads of coal and limestone, as well as house cars to haul away the finished product to the wholesale grocers.

While it is obvious that these industrial cycles will increase the scenic possibilities as well as the opportunities for switching, there is an additional advantage in the fact that they will make freight switching easier to understand. The clubs have argued for years that the public neither enjoys nor understands switching. The cycle idea answers these objections by making switching self-explanatory. Of course, smaller layouts will not have room for all these industries, and will be forced to fall back on interchange tracks to make a pretence at completing the cycle. This will make these tracks as useful on the model layout as they are on prototype railroads.



PHILLIPS HOUGHTON  
W. WATSON HOUSE

After the Burlington Convention, your Editor was presented with two classification lamps from Central Vermont's engine #219, their last 4-6-0. These were presented by Mr. Walter Regan, the CV's General Passenger Agent. One of these lamps has been cleaned up and at present is being used by the Berkshire Model Railroad Club in a rather unique way.

The club, for the time being, meets in members homes. Some of these homes are rather hard to find on a dark night and for the first time in particular, So, one of the lamps was rewired for 110 volts and fitted with a 40 watt bulb, then put to use as a location marker. The system works this way: When a meeting is over, the member to whose house we go next takes the lamp. On the next meeting night, the host member lights the lamp and puts it in a prominent place. This gives the members a guiding beacon to the meeting place. You'd be surprised at how nice it feels to turn into a dark street and see the friendly glow of the green "first section" light shining from the house we are looking for.



An early railroad in Texas----the 23 mile Bartlett Western---- was called "The Road of the Apostles." Stations along the line were named St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John, and copies of the four gospels were placed on the wall of each waiting room.



After reading the report of the Committee on Prototype Operation, I looked through some of the correspondence I've had with other model railroads around the country and came up with the train order and consist forms. They were made up and are being used on the South Side Lines owned and operated by Bill Wilt in Nyssa, Oregon. The South Side Line is an all electric interurban pike that also has many freight cars. Train orders and consist lists, along with time table operation, would add an infinite amount of pleasure and good railroading to an evenings operation.

A number of consist lists could be made up and chosen like drawing cards. Each list would have to have different car numbers (if possible). One list would be drawn for each train operating. Copies of the consists should be made in duplicate so that the Yard Master, or yard switching crew, can make up the trains in the yards and have them ready for the road crews on time.

Another big item that helps make the operation prototypical, is the ever important time table. We have part of a time table from the Greenbrook Lines and Central Lehigh Railroad. I believe this pike is out of business as they are not listed in the Official Guide for 1956. At any rate, it will give a good idea of how a time table is set up.

Further information can be had by attending the clinic in Trenton.

EDITOR

FORM 4

### SOUTH SIDE LINES

Form

Train Order Number .....

Date .....

To Conductor .....

Train Number .....

At .....



Rec'vd. .... M. Rep'td. .... M.

Signed Conductor .....

Time ..... M.

Remarks:

FORM 3

### SOUTH SIDE LINES

Record of consist Train No. ....

Class of Train .....

Leaving time ..... M.

From .....

To .....

Date .....

	INITIAL	NUMBER	TYPE	SET OUT AT	REMARKS
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

Conductor .....



There was an innovation in the way of clinics at the convention. There were five booths set up in the exhibit room, in each booth was an expert on one phase of model railroading. He had samples of his work that could be examined, then question are asked on any part of the model that seem baffling to those attending the clinic. Some of the booths could be: Locomotive Detailing; Electrical Control; Scenery; Track work and Design; Scratch Building; and any other category that could be useful.

LSR MARKER LAMP

CREW	GREENBROOK LINES & CENTRAL LEHIGH R.R.				GREENBROOK LINES & CENTRAL LEHIGH R.R.						
	A	G	W	A	W	G	A	W	G	A	
TRAIN NO.	101	106	121	108	196	195	111	103	110	114	
ENG NO.	38	46	14	3	22-32	46	34	38	6	39	
CONSISTS	BROOKER 107&9 BAG 220 DINNER	BANKERS SPEC 206,202,212 BAG 221, TOUR	BRANCH MIX'D CONT'D	BRANCH COMM 62, 63	COAL DRAG HOP B CAB	RED BALL FRT 10 FRT B CAB		GREEN FLYER 266, 268, 269	ELSIE BORDEN PASSAPR REEF CAB # 8		
WEST											
SOMER- VILLE	236	136		436				112	1000		
NORTH BRANCH	224	148	312	448	512	836		1100	1012		
WHITE HOUSE		200	300	500	524			1048	1024		
LEBANON	212 * D MAIL D DINNER 136	212 * B-221 224 *	248 D 211 224 *	512	536	824 D 2 48		1036 *	D1 * 1036		
HIGH BRIDGE	124 *	236	212	524	548 D1-PU 4 HOP	736		1024	1048 * D4XPR		
ENGINES 231, 3, 414 AT HIGHBRIDGE HOUSE			BRANCH MIXED 2 HOPPERS CAB 6	BRANCH COMM CONT'D			BRANCH LOCAL 201, 203	ELSIE BORDEN CONT'D	PASS MIXED-6 XPR REEF COMB 267		
HIGH BRIDGE	D BAG 220 100	248	PU2 NO HOP 124	536	648 *	D3 PU1 648 *	948 *	PU201 203 * 1000	1136	1124	
MIDDLE VALLEY			112 PI EACH SIDING 100	548			936		1148		
LONG VALLEY			1248	600			924		1200		
HAMPTON							948		1136		
PHILIPS- BURG	1248	D TOUR 300 312			700 D 4 736	636 P&D 536	936		1148		
EASTON	1236	324			748	524	924		1200		
EAST											

7

# Sidetracks

In his column, the DS wrote about forming "divisions" within the Region. This would go a long way in making the hobby of model railroading more interesting to more people, but there has to be a starting point.

There are many model rails in the region who do not belong to NMRRA, much less the NER. Fellows who, "just haven't gotten around to joining," or, "I didn't know about the organization, what can they do for me?" At the Division level they could see the start of the Regional workings and thence the National.

There are many of us who have never been to a National Convention, or even a Regional meet, for that matter. Some can't get the time off to attend in some city in the far end of the Region, while still others may not have the money to spare for such a weekend. I know from experience in my own profession that it is quite difficult, at times, to get the two, or three, day weekend required to attend a convention, or the four days to a week needed for the National meet. However, with a division, the meeting place would be only a few miles from home and only take one day or evening. Costs in attending would be very little.

Aside from those who have definite occupational and financial restrictions, there are those who do not fully exert themselves to attend the Regional conventions, unless it is held in their own back yard, therefore missing out on the comradeship and exchange of ideas, etc., that goes on at such an affair.

Then, of course, there are the "Lone Wolves", those who railroad by themselves. Whether they are ashamed of their hobby or not is a matter of conjecture...nobody knows. Some have a very good reason for working by themselves, while others might be new to the hobby and never thought about getting together with others because of inferior knowledge. It is all of these that we want to get out.

One way to get people into the fold is through the medium of the local club. The club being the starting point. This would not only help the individual, but a group of clubs within a given area could form a division, a joint meeting of all the clubs (and anyone else who wishes to hold membership in the division) three or four times a year.

Getting back to the club...and the "Lone Wolves"...this is the medium to get them out of

their caves. Clubs offer many benefits to their members. Model railroading is a very complex hobby, many different facets, sometimes too many for any one man to learn. In the club there is bound to be someone who can solve any given problem concerning model railroading, whether it is a complicated electrical problem, or just assembling a plastic car kit. Most model rails are a good bunch of fellows, always willing to help others in the hobby, even to the point of neglecting their own pikes. BUT... other model rails can't be met by staying home. A person has to get out and get into their organization to do it.

Many clubs work in different ways. Some meet once a month, some twice and others weekly. Some clubs have meetings in members' homes, while others rent rooms, and still others own buildings of their own for their layouts. Some clubs are small, or have small layouts causing membership to be limited, while others are large and have no restrictions on the number of members. The clubs that meet in the members' homes usually use the pike of the host member as the club layout for that meeting, with all hands pitching in to help with any work that has to be done. The host member usually makes out a list of things to do, possibly including operation, and the visitor members do what they can. The work session lasts about two hours, then the club members retire for an armchair session (over coffee) to try to solve any problems that the other members may have. Many times this type of club is desirable in communities where most of the members are new to model railroading as it gives each member a chance to get his own pike operating.

Regardless of what type club is in your area, they will welcome your membership. Don't think that just because you are just starting in the hobby that you will be rejected...you couldn't be more wrong. As with industry, clubs are always looking for new blood. Why not look up a club in your area? You will find that it will be worthwhile. The hobby shop proprietor can give you the information on where and when the club meets and who to see. If there is no club in the area, see the hobby supplier again. He'll be only too glad to put you in touch with other model rails in the region.

For the existing clubs, why not have a visitors' night once a month or so. This would be limited to model rails, of course. Visiting nights could be posted in the hobby shops and, perhaps, in the newspapers' club activities column. These guests would not be treated like the general public, but taken in hand by one or two members while the rest of the club goes on with the scheduled work. This would help boost not only club membership, but also NMRRA, NER and Division, and that is our aim.

CHARLES OGDEN

**NORTHEASTERN REGION**

**OF THE**

**NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSN., INC.**

**169 LOVELL ROAD, HOLDEN, MASS.**

**(RETURN AND FORWARDING POSTAGE GUARANTEED)**

**POSTMASTER: FORM 3547 REQUESTED**

**N.E.R. COUPLER**



FOR

JACK ALEXANDER  
1087 WARREN AVENUE  
BROCKTON, MASS.