Merry Christmas

Railroad Deregulation Is Important Issue For Carriers In 1955

Before the next issue of the News has been published, a New Year will have dawned. It is the natural time for reflection and for resolution.

Most of those persons who read the News are personally interested in the welfare of the railroad. There are those who have invested their money in the property in expectation of a fair return for its use. There are those who use the services of our railroad and who rely on dependable service. And there are those who give their labor and their loyalty in pursuit of their work. Together, these interests are the GM&O Railroad.

This year's business will show a decline in both traffic and earnings, in comparison with last year. Net income for the year, based on eleven months' figures, will be an estimated 25% below that of 1953.

While the general economy appears relatively stable now, the New Year will challenge railroad effort and ingenuity.

We hope that during the coming year the laws regulating the railroads will be modernized so that we will be free to compete, on an equal basis, with other modes of transportation for all available traffic. Should this come to pass, we will be in position to provide efficient service at a price to attract increased business. Our shareholders, our customers and our employees, who would thereby benefit, can be helped by urging their congressional representatives to support legislation for this purpose.

To all of you, whose association has been so helpful in the past, we extend season's greetings and best wishes.

F. M. Hicks, President

Throughout the Christmas season, hostesses on GM&O trains have candy favors for small passengers. When the family of Station Passenger Agent W. E. Ferry, St. Louis, caught the Christmas spirit and called on dad on his job, GM&O Hostess Nancy Williamson was on hand to invite them into the Abraham Lincoln for Christmas candy.
RAILROADS DISCUSS I. T. RAILROAD PURCHASE PLAN IN SERIES OF MEETINGS

Representatives of the nine railroads who have filed application with the Interstate Commerce Commission for permission to purchase the 359-mile-long Illinois Terminal Railroad, met with shippers and other interested parties recently in a series of meetings throughout the territory.

Principal spokesman for the group was GM&O Vice-President, R. E. Stevenson (St. Louis) who is chairman of the Contact Committee. Application for the purchase of the I. T., which originates or delivers a substantial amount of traffic handled by the nine railroads asking to purchase it, was filed on November 22 after I. T. stockholders had approved the sale of the railroad by a vote of over 99 per cent of those voting. An I. C. C. hearing is expected soon.

The I. T. management had previously entertained offers for the purchase of its properties and assets. The shipper meetings were for the purpose of acquainting the territory with future plans for operation of the railroad upon I. C. C. approval.

The railroad group explained at the several meetings that the purchase of Illinois Terminal by the nine lines which directly interchange business with I. T. would (1) be wholly consistent with and promote the public interest in all respects, (2) assure continuance of service now rendered by I. T. under an independent management, (3) increase the stability of the company owning and operating the properties of Illinois Terminal so that employees will have greater assurance of continued employment and industrial development on its lines will be promoted, (4) make capital available on favorable terms which will be used to modernize and improve said properties and provide more efficient service, and (5) preserve the present competitive position of the rail carriers connecting with Illinois Terminal.

The line has extensive switching operations in the St. Louis-East St. Louis-Alton area and line haul operations from this territory to Springfield and East Peoria, Illinois and from Springfield to Ogden, Illinois. GM&O-I. T. interchange points are at Alton, Wood River, East St. Louis, Springfield and Peoria. The proposed new railroad is known as the Illinois-Missouri Terminal Railway Company.

John W. Platten

John W. Platten, prominently associated with this railroad in an executive capacity during the early 1900's, died in New York City on November 4. He was 92 years of age and is fondly remembered by those who had occasion to know him while the company was in its early formative stages.

A railroad man, who started his career as a clerk with the Erie and rose to become Treasurer and later second Vice-President of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, he retained many railroad directorships after becoming a prominent New York banker. He was president of United States Mortgage and Trust Company (now Chemical Corn Exchange Bank) for twenty years. His first connection with this railroad was in 1913 when he was named Chairman of the Committee of Bondholders of the New Orleans, Mobile and Chicago, formed after that company was placed in the hands of a receiver. Upon formation of Gulf, Mobile and Northern, another GM&O predecessor line, he became Chairman of the Board of Directors and a Vice-President of the company.

Mr. Platten made regular inspection trips on the line until his resignation from the Board Chairmanship in 1938 because of illness.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. J. W. Platten of New York City.

GM&O Agent Meets Queen

GM&O Passenger Agent Alfreda topping Lowe of New York had the privilege last month of attending a reception and luncheon in honor of the Queen Mother of England during her visit in the United States. Mrs. Lowe, with her husband, was among forty-six guests at a luncheon for the Queen at Williamsburg, Virginia. Mrs. Lowe was one of ten presented to her.

The luncheon was held in the Great Hall of the Christopher Wren building on the campus of the College of William and Mary. Among the guests were Sir Roger Makins, British Ambassador, and Lady Makins.

Said Mrs. Lowe, "The Queen Mother is a lovely, serene person and she has a complexion that a sixteen-year old girl might well envy. Her coloring is really exquisite." Mrs. Lowe, who is British, added, "Needless to say, I was quite nervous... but I managed my curtsey without falling flat on my face!"
Scholarship Winners
Hear Mr. Brock

GM&O Executive Vice President and General Manager G. P. Brock, himself a graduate of the University of Illinois, was invited to address GM&O scholarship winners attending the University at their scholarship dinner held on November ninth. Thirty-one young men and women, winners of GM&O scholarships during the years 1959, 51, 52 and 53, heard Mr. Brock speak on the subject of “Loyalty.”

“Loyal emotions, loyal sacrifice of life, loyal steadiness in obscure service,” said Mr. Brock, “are but various symptoms of a spirit which lies beneath everything we do. This spirit is a well known one. We see it here today as enthusiasm on an occasion like this, or as contempt for death on the battle field, or as quiet service on the job, or as cool fidelity in the office, workshop, or kitchen. Loyalty was called by Josiah Royce, a Harvard Philosophy teacher, the thoroughgoing, the voluntary, and the practical devotion of a self to a cause . . . .”

The young men and women attending the dinner had been selected from the rural youth in sixteen counties in Illinois served by GM&O for their outstanding contributions to the life of the community during their high school careers. The scholarships are a part of GM&O’s program for the education and development of the youth in its territory, and are awarded in cooperation with the University of Illinois College of Agriculture, Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics. GM&O’s contribution to the scholarships amounts to $2200 yearly.

Loyalty Is Not Enough

But passive loyalty to one’s cause or country, warned Mr. Brock, is not enough. “My advice to you is — be not merely loyal, but be also enlightened, because your personal service — your special life cause — your task — your vocation — is your way of furthering the ends of universal humanity. And if you are enlightened, you know this fact.”

“And just as you can never be genuinely loyal to an individual human being, just as a detached creature, because friendship immediately creates a tie, a unity, a sum of your separate and private lives, and just as you’ve become a part of this university and you’ve had an effect on it — so you have an effect on every cause which is a subject for your loyalty — your class, your community, your church and your country.”

Also attending the banquet were GM&O Director of Agriculture and Forestry S. A. Robert of Jackson, Tennessee and Agriculture and Forestry Agent A. F. Stephens of St. Louis. Mr. Robert welcomed the guests and performed the introductions.

Earl Goslee Passes

It was with deep regret that friends on GM&O learned of the death on December ninth of Earl W. Goslee, retired freight traffic manager for the company. Mr. Goslee died at his home in Glendale, California, where he had lived since his retirement in 1951.

Well known in shipping circles throughout the country, Mr. Goslee had represented GM&O’s Traffic Department in Chicago, Detroit, New York, Mobile and Los Angeles.

He was employed by the former G&N Railroad in 1923 as traveling freight agent in Chicago and served several years with the company in New York as Eastern freight agent and general Eastern agent. In 1933 he was promoted to assistant general freight agent in Mobile, Alabama, where he lived until his promotion to freight traffic manager in Los Angeles.

THEY’RE STUCK WITH IT

When Agent McKinney entered the GM&O station at Lucedale, Mississippi the morning of November 16th, he found the 400 pound safe missing.

Burglars had entered the station and carted off the safe and its contents — which consisted of nothing except a gallon of glue.

Mr. McKinney said he wasn’t too upset about the loss, for he had forgotten the combination to the safe anyway.

Executive Vice President and General Manager G. P. Brock, center, greets GM&O’s scholarship recipients at the University of Illinois on the occasion of their scholarship dinner on November ninth. Also in the picture at right is Director of Agriculture and Forestry S. A. Robert. The students shown won scholarships offered by GM&O over a four year period.
Santa Claus swished into Alton, Illinois aboard GM&O's Ann Rutledge the day after Thanksgiving, with half the town there to greet him. He was welcomed at trainside by Mayor Strull and Chamber of Commerce President Paul Ruthacher. Santa's house was set up at the station, and from there he dispensed candy and fruit to all small children in the crowd.

The little folks were there en masse, with letters ready for personal delivery to St. Nick.

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Walter T. Woodcock, left, and GM&O Passenger Agent Bruce Pate of St. Louis, were among the crowd awaiting the train's arrival.

RETIREMENTS

Tennessee Division Conductor Earl Pegram, Jackson, Tennessee, retired on December 6, 1954. Mr. Pegram entered service as a brakeman in 1905 and was promoted to conductor in 1907.

Machinist Adolphus D. Allen, Jackson, Tennessee, retired on November 30th after serving as a machinist for this railroad for approximately fifty years.

Mrs. Edith Lambert, head M. C. B. clerk in the Disbursements Department, Mobile, retired on December 3, 1954, after having completed thirty-six years of continuous service in the Accounting Department.

Mrs. Lambert entered service of the former Mobile and Ohio on July 1, 1918. At her retirement she was presented with a Westinghouse electric roaster and grill by her fellow employees.

Mr. G. G. Derden, Columbus, Mississippi, retired on November tenth after having been "a faithful, loyal and efficient Bridge and Building Foreman since May 1, 1911 and an employee in our Bridge and Building Department since October 24, 1905."

Engineer James V. McLeod, Jackson, Tennessee, retired on November 23, 1954, after having been in the employ of this railroad since 1905.

Agent J. M. Conely, Falkner, Mississippi, retired on September 30, 1954. Mr. Conely was employed by this company on March 25, 1917.

Conductor J. M. Ackelberry, Slater, Missouri, retired on November 30, 1954. Mr. Ackelberry entered service as a brakeman on October 19, 1912, was promoted to conductor August 10, 1920.

THE MAIL TRAIN

Mr. Jack Wheatley,
Agent, Elwood, Ill.

Dear Sir:

It is with considerable satisfaction that I quote a letter from Mr. Paul Lawnick, of the Dannen Grain and Milling Company, in regard to the assistance which you furnished them in connection with the storage of 750 cars of wheat at your station recently:

"Because of the cooperation received during the last two months by the station agent Jack Wheatley, of the GM&O at Elwood, Ill., we feel a letter should be written telling you of the satisfactory way he handled business for us during the filling of the bin site of approximately 750 carloads of wheat.

"Mr. Wheatley was largely instrumental in seeing that we had cars of grain to unload at all times and when asked a question he always gave us an answer with a smile on his face and he did not shirk any part of the work and seemed only too glad to work along with us in every way possible.

"During this summer we have filled tanks with grain at eleven different locations and have had dealings with different railroads and whereas it was difficult to work along with some of these station agents, it was a pleasure to work with Mr. Wheatley . . . . .

"His efforts have left in our mind a good impression of the GM&O railroad. We intend to further expand this tank storage next year and if any of these are on the GM&O we will not hesitate to make a deal, as our first experience with your road has been a very pleasant one."

Yours truly,
J. R. Conely, Supt.
Bloomington, Ill.

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NEWS AT A GLANCE

WHO ELSE COULD DO THIS BIG CHRISTMAS JOB

If you could picture a vast array of 5,000 speeding trains, you would have an idea of the tremendous mountain of holiday packages and greeting cards that the railroads are being called upon to handle during this peak mailing period before Christmas.

These 5,000 trains — which, placed end to end, would stretch over a distance of 685 miles — are what it takes to move the 5½ billion pieces of holiday mail that are expected to go by rail to mail boxes across the country during the 24 days between December 1 and Christmas Day.

About 35 billion pieces of mail, or 35 per cent of all intercity postal traffic, move by train each year. So economically do the railroads perform this big job of transporting mail that last year their total mail revenues accounted for just 12½ per cent of the Post Office Department’s total expenses.

Another indication of the economy of railroad mail service is shown by the fact that for transporting each letter or piece of first class mail, the railroads receive less than one-eighth of one cent or about one-twenty-fourth of the three cents’ worth of postage thus used.

ANNUAL RAILWAY TAXES EQUAL TO A TRAINLOAD OF GOLD

A trainload of gold — or its equivalent in value — is required to pay the annual tax bill of the American railroads.

Taxes paid by Class I railroads in 1953 to federal, state and local governments were $1,185,000,000.

Gold is valued at $35.00 per fine troy ounce. This equals about $500 per pound avoirdupois, or $1,000,000 per ton.

Therefore, to pay their taxes in 1953 the Class I railroads of the United States had to shell out the equivalent of 1,185 tons of gold.

If all this gold were loaded in railway express cars, containing 40 tons each, a train of 30 cars would be required to transport it.

THE PUBLIC IS THE BIG LOSER

Waterway carriers use free a 4.3 billion dollar public investment in river and harbor facilities. Inter-city truckers benefit from about 5 billion dollars worth of highway construction and maintenance yearly. Airlines, through public tax money, operate with some 2 billion dollars worth of civil airports and airways.

What about the railroads? They pay their own way — all the way.

NEW MOBILE INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY

In Mobile state and civic interests have joined in a project which will add four more miles of industrial waterfront to the city, through the development of an island formerly used as a U. S. Quarantine Station. Adjacent to GM&O rails, and near the Fascati Yards, GM&O will serve this important area exclusively with tracks over a dual highway and rail earthern causeway. The newly developed property is located at the Mobile River harbor entrance and is on the main Mobile Ship Channel to the Gulf.
FAMILIAR FACES NEW PLACES

E. E. Powell

C. O. Jones

L. B. McEachin

I. B. Cole

Agents receiving recent appointments to new locations incident to the retirement of Agent R. R. Greenfield at Bloomington are, left to right, E. E. Powell, formerly agent at Chicago; to Bloomington; C. O. Jones, formerly agent at Alton, Illinois; to Chicago; and L. B. McEachin, formerly agent at Meridian, Mississippi, to Alton, Illinois. I. B. Cole, formerly chief clerk at Meridian has been promoted to agent at Meridian. Succeeding him as chief clerk (picture not shown) is R. W. Fraser Sr. Mr. Fraser, in addition to his railroad duties serves as a commissioner for the city of Meridian.

COMMENDATIONS

Brakeman M. L. Gardner, Laurel, Miss., was commended by Supt. Currie for discovering a broken rail.

Baggage clerk Arthur M. Neal, Jr., Bloomington, Illinois, was at home off duty one evening when he heard a crash near railroad tracks nearby. Upon investigation, he found an automobile had run over the embankment at a railroad intersection. He immediately telephoned the dispatcher’s office and advised the dispatcher to hold all trains until investigation by Trainmaster Pennebaker revealed that the southward main was fouled, but the northward main was all right.

For service of unusual merit during the month of November, the following men were commended:

B&B Foreman H. Jensen, Bloomington, Ill.

Brakeman U. Wilkite, Slater, Mo.

Agent C. M. Smith, Williamsville, Ill.

Brakeman T. L. Donnelly, Slater, Mo.

Brakeman W. W. Wenzel, Slater, Mo.

Brakeman L. E. Patterson, Slater, Mo.

Agent A. A. Lepp, Waterloo, Ill.

New Journal Test Machine For Railroad Research Lab

A machine being installed at the Research Center of the Association of American Railroads in Chicago will make it possible to match the extreme operating conditions encountered by freight car journal bearings across the American continent in all seasons of the year, and thus to measure within a few days of testing the equivalent effects of years of bearing service under all kinds of conditions, it was reported at a meeting of the association’s board of directors in the Waldorf-Astoria in New York.

The machine will reproduce for test purposes the combined effects of load, speed, lubrication and temperature upon freight car axles and bearings, according to the report which summarized progress during the past year in a far-reaching research program carried on by the A. A. R. on behalf of the railroad industry. The new journal test machine, the report pointed out, will be used to progress several projects now under way dealing with bearing metals, designs, lubricants and oiling methods.

Covering scores of individual research projects ranging from those dealing with track components like rail and crossties to those concerned with the working parts of cars and locomotives, the report provides documentation for much of the research story behind dramatic developments of recent years in railroading.

FOR CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

How should we approach Christmas? Surely with the desire to enter into the joy and gaiety of children; with the desire to be at peace with all men; with a high resolve to forgive all those who have injured us; with an equal determination to lift our own lives to a higher level. God is a spirit, and the spirit of Christmas should ever be a unifying force amongst the children of men.

—Martin Murrell
DECEASED

Retired Switchman A. Ernest Jackson, Jackson, Tennessee, on December 4, 1954 at Little Rock, Arkansas. Mr. Jackson was employed by this company on July 13, 1914 and retired on August 13, 1942.

William Forrest Newson, Meridian, Mississippi. On December 3, 1954. Mr. Newson last worked on May 23, 1950, when he was stricken at Okolona, Mississippi. At that time he was General Chairman for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen. He is survived by his wife.

Retired Engineer Grover Cleveland Lawrence, Bogalusa, Louisiana, on November 18, 1954 at Bogalusa. Mr. Lawrence entered service of the company on December 5, 1915 and retired on April 19, 1953. He is survived by his wife.

Chief Clerk David E. Long, Alton Freight House, Alton, Illinois, died at his home in Alton on November 9, 1954. He entered service as a yard clerk at Alton in 1915. He is survived by his wife.

L. D. Holt, Chief Clerk to the Master Mechanic in Mobile, at Mobile, on November 12, 1954. Mr. Holt has been with this company since October 12, 1925. He is survived by his wife.

Freight Conductor D. F. Collins, White Hall, Illinois, on November 9th at his home in White Hall. Mr. Collins came to work for this company as brakeman on September 14, 1942 and was promoted to freight conductor on December 26, 1951. He is survived by his wife and one daughter, aged thirteen years.

Charles A. Hayes, retired GM&O architect, died at his home in Arnold, Mo. on October 6, 1954. He was 76 years old. Mr. Hayes worked as architect for several railroads for thirty-five years, most of which was spent with GM&O. He retired in 1946.

Section Foreman Ira Hobson, Duncanville, Alabama, on October 29, 1954 at Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Mr. Hobson was employed as a section laborer on December 18, 1918 and was promoted to section foreman on December 1, 1927. He is survived by his wife.

Retired Conductor Claud Rufus Burleson, Jackson, Tennessee on November 26, 1954, at Birmingham, Alabama. Mr. Burleson, who entered service in 1908 and retired in 1942, is survived by his wife and one son.

He Worked Fifty Years
Won Five Dollar Bet

Frank Snyder was eighteen years old and weighed 130 pounds when the section foreman on the Chicago and Alton at Carrollton, Illinois asked him if he didn’t want a job.

When Snyder took the job, his friends bet him five dollars he wouldn’t stay a week.

On December first, Snyder retired after fifty years with a section gang of this company. Since 1917 he has been foreman of his own crew, and, for thirty years this crew has not had a loss time accident.

A good part of Snyder’s family was on hand at his retirement when he was presented with a billfold and cash by Supervisor H. E. Stewart of Brighton. “We have been interested in his work too,” said Mrs. Snyder, who married the railroad man forty-two years ago. She remembered the times that they had talked safety together at home.

Of their four children, the Snyders have one son, D. G., who is yard clerk with the GM&O at Wann, and a son-in-law who is a switchman in Alton.

“We had many a disappointment in the family,” recalled Mrs. Snyder, “when dad had to leave to work on the track.”

They both remembered particularly the winter of 1917-18, when it was twenty below zero in Alton, and the snow was fourteen inches deep.

“The winters used to be colder, anyway,” said Mr. Snyder. “I can remember in 1901, when the ice on the Illinois River was four feet deep, and I skated across the river to see my granddad.”

The Snyders have lived in Alton since 1917 when Mr. Snyder was promoted to section foreman, and plan to remain there, where “I’ll help my son-in-law a little with his farm,” plans Mr. Snyder, and (with eyes twinkling) “wait for them to bring my breakfast to me in bed.”

Mrs. Snyder smiled indulgently, “We’ve had a wonderful life together,” she said.

GT Safety Awards

Each month Gulf Transport Company takes pleasure in giving safe-driving awards to its Bus and Truck Operators completing their safe-driving year during the month.

The following operators received awards earned in the month of November, 1954:

**Bus Operators**

A. G. Smith, 9 year award.
Robert Suemmicht, 3 year award.

**Truck Operators**

L. M. Andrews, 11 year award.
T. C. Peterson, 10 year award.
C. M. Poe, 1 year award.
Sam Quimby, 11 year award.
C. F. Sandifer, 11 year award.
G. L. Tyler, 5 year award.

America’s railroads make up the mightiest single agency ever put together by man for the efficient carriage of vast volumes of freight and passengers.

It was a family affair when Section Foreman Frank Snyder, center, retired after fifty years with the GM&O, most of it at Alton, Illinois. Mrs. Snyder was on hand, as well as D. G. Snyder, who works with the company as yard clerk at Wann.
After Four Christmases As POW

HE WILL NEVER COMPLAIN AGAIN

When GM&O Steward Willard Watts and his wife light the Christmas tree for their three children this month, Watts will be haunted by the specters of four other Christmases, when, for him, Christmas joy was dependent upon a Red Cross box, the fellowship of imprisoned buddies, and the fact of just still being alive.

Ten years ago, Watts was in a Japanese prison camp. Captured on December 10, 1941, just three days after Pearl Harbor, he spent three Thanksgiving Days and four Christmases as a prisoner in Japan.

"When we were captured at Guam, we were herded into the hold of a ship with no living accommodations, to make the tedious trip to Japan. We were shifted about in Japan as one place after the other was bombed out. Our longest stay was at Osaka."

It was for morale building at Osaka that Watts was recommended for a citation by a fellow-prisoner officer.

Throughout his imprisonment, Watts labored as a stevedore in shipyards and railroad yards, working ten hours a day, including Sundays, with only two days a month off. "All our locations were military objectives, so we were frequently bombed out. We were frightened when American planes came over, but we knew it had to happen if the war was to be over. "And," he added, "we never really felt that we'd get home anyway."

Only a little more than half did get home. "Most of the men we lost had pneumonia, which the doctors had few drugs to treat. Some contacted T.B. Although I got down to 110 pounds, I was lucky, for I could eat fish-head soup."

Rice and soup were the only meals the prisoners had in the years in Japan. At rare intervals, a domestic rabbit would be added to the soup. "Our mouths were almost always raw inside from vitamin deficiency."

Christmas as POW

It was at Christmas that the only change in the diet occurred. On Christmas Day, a Red Cross box was delivered to each prisoner. "In it were ten packages of cigarettes, a can of powdered milk, a can of spam, one corned beef, two chocolate bars and some canned cold cuts."

"We rationed it to ourselves to make it last." One Christmas, said Watts, his group was moved in with another group of prisoners who had arrived from the Philippines, to whom no Red Cross boxes had been delivered. Watts' candy was stolen from him by an 18 or 19 year old who had made the death march on Bataan.

As punishment, the officers told him he had to give Watts his bread every third day.

"I couldn't take it. I could be the meanest guy on earth and still not take bread from a guy who is hungry when I'm hungry too." The boy died shortly after that.

Christmas was a sad time and "yet we looked forward to it." The stevedores packed up bits of paper with the water front, and all year long they saved wrapping from last year's Red Cross boxes. On Christmas they utilized it all for decorations. "One year we had a little tree," he said. "Some fellows were clearing land and were allowed to bring it in."

On Christmas Day, the men dressed in their extra suits (which they were allowed to wear only on their two days a month off). They sang carols, presented skits, and told stories. One Christmas they enacted "The Christmas Carol," having written the words from memory. In the group were all types of men, some talented artistically, who drew Christmas pictures to decorate the room. "It hurt - but we always looked forward to it."

Cited as Morale Builder

Growing out of the Christmas celebration was a quartet, organized by Watts. Each night after rice, the quartet would go to every room, housing twenty to forty men each, and sing and tell stories. For his work toward re-building morale among the men in this way, Watts received a citation and was recommended for the Marine Corps Medal of Honor (see box).

The weather was about like that of Chicago, and the men were supplied with blankets something like burlap, but no heat. "We slept together on straw mats on the floor. Sure we got cold." If they had worked in the rain, they had to wear (Continued on Page 9)
He Will Never Complain Again
(Continued from Page 8)
the same damp suit the following day, and this was partly responsible for the high incidence of pneumonia in the camp. Cold and hunger threatened the camp continuously, and the men resorted to any possible means to alleviate either. When they unloaded cars or barges, they sometimes could pick up rice, sugar or fruit and hide it in their clothes, although, of course, this was forbidden. Watts still carries the marks of a beating received for disobeying this order.

"Once I ran into a carload of saccharine crystals in glass jars," he said, "I foolishly tasted it (some fellows had died from tasting cyanide.) We filled our pockets with crystals for the whole camp. We got by the guards and distributed it throughout the building. We all had it hidden. One night we were enjoying a cup of sweetened tea when the guard called me." Watts admitted to stealing the saccharine, his reserve was found, and he was severely beaten. "We nick-named everybody. There was one guard we called Babe Ruth. He would beat you with a stick until you fell."

Peace—and Thanksgiving
Toward the last, "when three days passed and we didn't work, we knew something had happened. Then a Jap sergeant told us we should pray for peace. Our officers, who suspected that war had ended, got permission to go aboard a ship to use the radio. They contacted the U. S. 8th Army, and we were told of the Japanese surrender. We were ordered to stay where we were and to mark our buildings POW. We took over the town.

"We had not expected to get home. We were happy, but it came in such a way that we were stunned. There were so many problems, and we kept thinking of the fellows who had missed it by such a few days."

They really got excited; he remembered, when the B-29s first flew over and dropped supplies by parachute. "It was like setting a gallon of milk before a hungry puppy . . . ."

The steward shifted the silver-vased roses on a table of the dining car of the Rebel on Thanksgiving evening. "I have lived with fleas, lice and bedbugs, and have known earthquake, typhoon, cold, hunger, and sorrow," he mused. "I think that now I'll never really complain about anything again. That's why Thanksgiving means so much to me."

With Odds One Million To One, It Happened
To Agent J. C. White of Corinth, General Suppt. P. B. Bridges of Meridian, General Suppt. of Transportation C. E. Lanham of Mobile and several others, the NEWS is indebted for clippings of a syndicated cartoon entitled "Strange as it Seems" by Hix.

The cartoon appearing during November in newspapers throughout the country showed two boxcars end to end and said:

"Bearing identical numbers — 2 freight cars of different railroads, one from Baltimore, the other from Chicago, arrived in Virginia and were spelled end to end on a consignee's siding. Chances of such an occurrence are about one million to one."

The cars were numbered 52134, one plainly marked GM&O and the other appeared to be RI&W.

In The Service
Bobby L. Behue, Transportation, Mobile, Ala.
Chester H. Mattis, Jr., Transportation, Meridian, Miss.
Lawrence O. Gann, Transportation, Corinth, Miss.
Fred Lee Friend, Transportation, Lowpoint, Ill.
William M. Richardson, Jr., Traffic, Chicago, Ill.

CITATION RECOMMENDED
BY LT. COL. JOHN A. BURNS
For heroic service displayed while in a Japanese prison barracks with a group of American Sailors and Marines, Osaka, Japan, during the period 15 May, 1943 to 15 January, 1944. During this period, Private First Class Willard W. Watts, U. S. Marine Corps, helped organize and acted in several plays and skits, and took an active part in many impromptu entertainments. Due to the labor he was forced to do for the Japanese, the lack of food and adequate clothing, and the attitude of the Japanese, all the work necessary in the preparation and giving of these entertainments was done at considerable danger to his health and well being. Private First Class Watts never hesitated, but so well did his part that the morale and cooperative spirit of the barracks was brought from an extremely low point to a high level. He helped in saving many men from severe mental suffering. His actions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the U. S. Naval Service.

Mrs. Mary Frances Crosswell of the Jackson, Tennessee Traffic office took her daughter, Serena, above on the Rebel for her first trip to St. Louis. Serena found the Jewel Box at Forest Park decorated with chrysanthemums a high light of her trip.
Engineer J. A. Woodrick, Meridian, Mississippi, was commended for discovering a broken rail.

When train No. 19 struck an automobile at Chenoa, Illinois, damaging pilot of the train so that its removal was necessary before the train could be moved, Section Foreman W. H. Sullivan of Chenoa rendered valuable assistance to the crew in removing this pilot as well as checking the track conditions, although he was not on duty at the time.

On October 26, while train No. 1 was pulling into Springfield station, Section Foreman M. E. Laffey, Ridgely, Illinois, noticed a door on the diner open on one of the gas tank boxes which had been dragging and striking the right of way. He called this fact to the attention of the flagman and assisted him in tying it up so that no further damage could occur.

On November 24, when train 130 pulled a drawhead and broke a knuckle, Conductor O. U. Thomas, Engineer C. O. Lawley and Flagman J. W. Hansford of Meridian, Miss. were the crew of a Sperry Car in a siding nearby. They assisted the crew of 130 greatly in passing signals, chaining car and bleeding air, reducing delay to the train considerably.

Eleven year-old Joe West can't remember the first time he stood with his father, Section Foreman J. L. West of Reform, Alabama, and watched a train go by, carefully noting if everything seemed all right. As Joe grew older, he often went out alone to see No. 130 pass. One night last month Joe discovered a hot box on 130, twenty-five cars from the caboose. He signalled the conductor, who set the car out at Reform.

Brakeman W. E. Early, Jackson, Tennessee, was on the Dyersburg Branch Switcher when he discovered a broken rail and reported it.

WE TAKE IT KINDLY THAT:

Mr. Jack Moore of Springfield, Illinois called our agent to notify him of a hot box which he had noticed in passing.

Mr. Tommy Lewis of Jackson, Tennessee went to the ticket office at Jackson and told the operator that when train No. 32 passed him north of Jackson, a hopper car middle way of the train was smoking badly.

Mr. Eugene Musbocher, Waterloo, Illinois, on finding a broken rail on GM&O main line and not knowing railroad representatives, sought information from Mr. Herbert Hoffman at a nearby filling station. Mr. Hoffman called Supervisor Lipe and reported the broken rail found by Mr. Musbocher.

Mr. Webb Sledge, Jr., Pontotoc, Mississippi called the dispatcher's office at New Albany, Mississippi to report a hot box on a northbound train.

Mr. William Campbell, Moscow, Ky., when enroute to Moscow discovered a broken rail and flagged an oncoming train, which resulted in the section foreman being notified and track repaired.

The employees of the Standard Paving Co. of Chicago, Illinois, used their acetylene cutting torch and assisted in removing a pilot damaged by the train's collision with an automobile.