



Soo Line Railroad Company
A Grain and Timber Products Carrier
Serving the Upper Midwest
1883-1992

CELEBRATING THE SOO LINE RAILROAD



SOO LINE ORIGINS IN GRAIN

By 1860, Minnesota was producing over seven million bushels of grain. Two years later, the first Minnesota railroad was built to serve the growing flour mills.



NEMESIS OF MINNEAPOLIS MILLERS JAMES J. HILL

Operator of Original Railroad and Steamship Lines to and from Duluth-Superior



The M.St.P.&S.M. was formed purposely to avoid the rail and ship lines operated by James Hill.

With only nine years of formal schooling and from humble beginnings in rural Canada, James Jerome Hill (September 16, 1838 – May 29, 1916), immigrated to the USA. He ultimately built a transportation empire serving a substantial area of the Upper Midwest, the northern Great Plains, and Pacific Northwest. He headed the Great Northern Railway - the first transcontinental built without public money and with only a few land grants.

Due to the vast size and economic dominance of his business interests, Hill became known during his lifetime as "The Empire Builder."

Hill not only controlled shipping but coal fuel supply lines as well. He was adept at how to make money. Under his management alone, the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Manitoba Railroad's (Great Northern) net worth went from \$728,000 in 1880 to \$25,000,000 in five short years. He expanded into banking.

While not Catholic himself, he was a generous philanthropist to Catholic entities in St. Paul, Minnesota where he finally settled. He was an ardent Democrat and was a hands-on entrepreneur.

What is now known as the Soo Line, was launched in 1883 by powerful Minneapolis industry titans who sought alternate and more economical transportation routes to obtain wheat and get their milled grain to market.

The Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie Railway Company (M.St.P.&S.M.) was formed with a firm purpose to avoid using existing independent railroads operating between Minneapolis and Chicago — an upcoming gateway to eastern markets, and the current eastbound route of railroad and steamship lines operating to and from Duluth-Superior.

The M.St.P.&S.M. was entirely financed by Minneapolis interests with the flour millers owning 75% of the stock.

Within five years, 1888, additional funds were needed to continue rail construction and operational plans. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company stepped in to provide the necessary financing. The partnering with the CP brought additional expansion opportunities.



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MARKETING
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PUBLIC RELATIONS
INTERACTIVE

SOO LINE TIMELINE

RAIL SYSTEM OF MANY PARTS

4 ORIGINAL LINES



Minneapolis Grain Mill Business Interests

The businessmen behind the formation of the M.St.P.&S.S.M. shared a number of common interests from Republican politics to a commitment to the city of Minneapolis. Yet, the primary business focus was grain.

● **1883 Minneapolis, Sault Ste. Marie and Atlantic Railway Company** incorporated to construct a line from Minneapolis through Wisconsin to Sault Ste. Marie. Line is operational in January, 1888

● **1883** Ordway, Bismarck and Northwestern Railway Company chartered and reincorporated as the **Aberdeen, Bismarck and Northwestern Railway Company** in 1887

● **1884 Minneapolis and Pacific Railway Company** chartered to build west and reaches Dakota Territory in 1886

● **1884 Minneapolis and St. Croix Railway Company** chartered

Consolidation of Original Lines

1888 Canadian Pacific gains control of the four original lines and incorporates them together as the **Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie Railway Company** – the soon to be known **Soo Line**. Under the **M.St.P.&S.S.M.** flag, a 781 mile line is created



GROWTH OF THE SOO LINE

In 1888 the Canadian Pacific acquired the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic Railroad, giving them access to Duluth. The DSS&A served the Michigan Upper Peninsula and Wisconsin's Lake Superior shoreline and became formally part of the Soo Line Railroad in 1961

● **1900 Rice Lake, Dallas & Menomonic Railroad** acquired

● **1904 Bismarck, Washburn & Great Falls** acquired

● **1909** Majority ownership of **Wisconsin Central Railroad** acquired (formed in 1871)

● **1915 Fairmount & Veblen and Minnesota Northwestern Electric** acquired

● **1921 Wisconsin & Northern** acquired

● **1961** Long known as the **Soo Line**, the name is formally adopted with the merger of the M.St.P.&S.S.M., Wisconsin Central Railway, and the Duluth South Shore & Atlantic Railroad

● **1982 Minnesota, Northfield & Southern Railroad** acquired

● **1885** Soo Line purchases the **Milwaukee Road** whose first railroad, the Milwaukee and Waukesha, had incorporated in 1847

● **1990** The Soo Line consists of a **3,450-mile core rail system and 2,350 miles of feeder lines** with three Canadian gateways: Portal, Noyes, and Detroit.

● **1992** The use of the **Soo Line name was discontinued** and formerly replaced with CP Rail System

The Men Behind the M.St.P.&S.S.M.

William Drew Washburn, served as first president of the Minneapolis, Sault Ste. Marie and Atlantic Railway Company - a predecessor of the M.St.P.&S.S.M.

Thomas Lowry, served as the first president of the M.St.P.&S.S.M.

Clinton Morrison
C. M. Loring
W. W. Eastman
Charles Pillsbury
H. T. Welles
John Martin

George R. Newell
Anthony Kelly
J. K. Sidle
William D. Hale
Charles J. Martin

CHARLES ALFRED PILLSBURY 1842–1899

During the 1880s, Charles A. Pillsbury was one of the most notable grain figures of his time. He built his company from a floundering enterprise into one of the world's largest milling organizations.

A New Hampshire shopkeeper's son, Pillsbury graduated from Dartmouth College in 1863. Six years later he moved to Minneapolis at his uncle's request - John S. Pillsbury, soon to be elected governor of Minnesota.

With no personal milling experience but with a loan of \$10,000 from his uncle and father, Charles purchased a third of a local flour business. He applied his education and made many improvements including installing purifiers and steam rollers (versus burr stones to crush the wheat) to the business. Within a year, the business turned a remarkable \$6,000 profit.

In three short years, 1872, he **founded Charles A. Pillsbury and Co.** and began purchasing and building more mills. The Pillsbury mills produced 10,000 barrels a day by 1886.

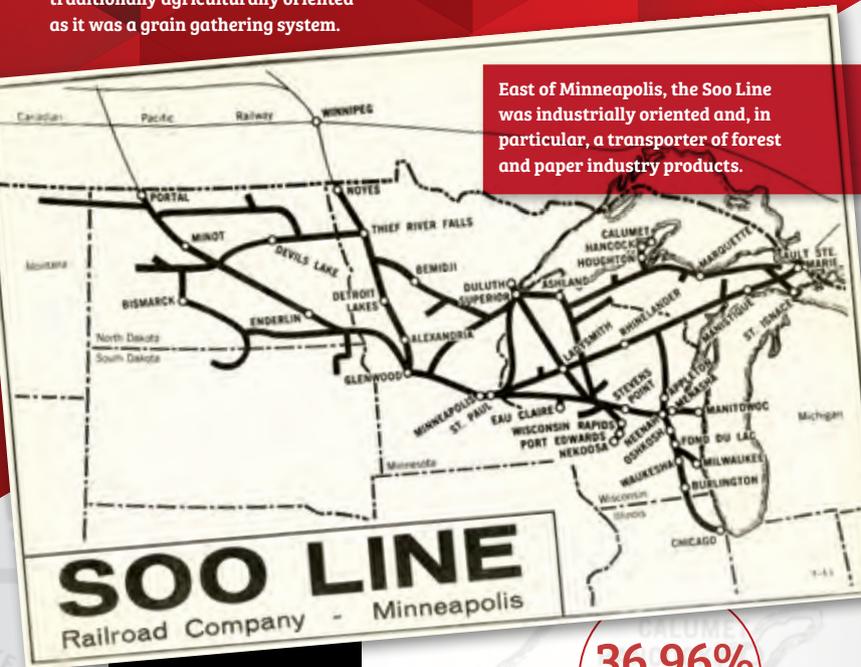


“DURING THE 1880s,
CHARLES A. PILLSBURY WAS
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NOTABLE GRAIN
FIGURES
OF HIS TIME.”



MAP OF SOO LINE

The Soo Line west of Minneapolis was traditionally agriculturally oriented as it was a grain gathering system.



In 1958, the line's revenue from carload freight traffic, by commodity groups, consisted of agriculture products (36.96%), animals and animal products (1.99%), products of mines (10.83%), forest products (19.02%), and manufactured/miscellaneous commodities (31.2%).

36.96%
AGRICULTURE
PRODUCTS

19.02%
FOREST
PRODUCTS

10.83%
PRODUCTS
OF MINES

1.99%
ANIMALS &
ANIMAL
PRODUCTS

31.2%
MANUFACTURED
COMMODITIES

NOTABLE FIRSTS



Originally the 600 was built as a Vauclain Compound, and renamed the 950 locomotive after being rebuilt by the Baldwin Locomotive Works as a simple locomotive with electric lights and a new valve gear.



UNIT TRAINS 1964

A historic first in rail transportation. Service began **January 8, 1964** from Duluth-Superior to Buffalo, NY. Each train carried about **10,450,000** pounds of grain at rates substantially lower than a single carload rate.

Unit train service earned the Soo Line:

- First U.S. application of the unit train concept for a commodity other than coal or ore
- First train service of its type in the Upper Midwest
- First unit train planned by two railroads across long distances and between rate territories (the Soo and Pennsylvania Railroad)

1966

PIGGYBACK SERVICE

The first piggyback service to Alaska by a U.S. railroad was established by the Soo along with the Canadian Pacific in 1966. The service handled piggyback traffic originating in Chicago and Minneapolis over the Soo or Noyes then over the Canadian Pacific to Edmonton or Dawson Creek, where trucks hauled the trailers over the Alcan Highway to points in Alaska.



◀ In 1900, the Soo purchased the world's largest locomotive, the 2-10-0 Decapod.



INDUSTRIES SERVED

The Soo Line was created to haul grain and milled products.

In later years the railroad would also carry lumber, iron ore, potash, liquefied petroleum gases, livestock, in addition to newsprint, primary metals, and steel scrap.



By law, livestock could only be confined in a car for 28 hours. A shipper could extend that period to 36 hours.

Special care was taken to keep animals cool while in the cars. Animals were sprayed with water at various points along their rail trek.

When transporting a mix of animals, strict separation regulations were in place. The most difficult to transport were hogs because of potential disease contamination issues in stockyards.

Livestock was handled from nearly all stations on the railroad as well as from specialty or private spurs until 1969 when the Soo Line discontinued animal transportation.

SHIPPING LIVESTOCK ON THE SOO

The Soo Line had a great reputation for efficiently and effectively transporting livestock – and staying within compliance of numerous federal and state laws pertaining to cleanliness, disease testing, separation of stock, and length of confinement in the cars – whether moving cattle, horses, hogs or sheep.



COMPANY ICE HARVEST

The Soo Line used about 50,000 tons of ice each year – from keeping summer travel passengers comfortable to refrigerated cars for produce and dressed meats.

The need for ice was easily fulfilled due to the line's geographic proximity along the shores of hundreds of lakes.

Every year the Soo Line would make use of the naturally forming ice during winter. As soon as the ice was thick enough, snow plows immediately cleared the area, where ice cutting was done for about a month each winter by companies such as The Hjelle Ice Company.

Ole Olsen Hjelle, a Norwegian immigrant to Barrett, Minnesota, formed The Hjelle Ice Company in 1893 and served the Soo Line until 1973. Nearly continuously during that time, the company was responsible for cutting 30,000 of the 50,000 tons used annually by the Soo.



Hjelle, a mechanical genius, designed and built an incline elevator with a chain and slates powered by a steam engine to raise the ice from the lake level to truck level. His engineering methods allowed him to fill two cars daily. His first contract paid him \$1.25 per cord of ice (128 cubic feet).

Photo courtesy of Ole Hjelle Ice Works & Threshing website

CHRISTMAS TREES AND THE SOO

Roy Halverson of Duluth contracted with the Soo to be a primary transportation arm of nearly a million and a half table size Christmas trees each year.

In his lifetime, Halverson selectively cut more than 130,000 acres of wilderness; partly his own land and partly acreage leased from Canada and the State of Minnesota.

Trees were ultimately shipped to all 48 contiguous states and then around the world.

Transportation of the trees was planned months in advance. A special lease arrangement between Soo warehouse facilities and Halverson helped accomplish the delivery of fresh trees.



NOTABLE SOO FACTS • 1937-1992

- 1937** Petition for bankruptcy filed on December 31 due to effects of drought and early '30's depression
- 1938** First Diesel Locomotive purchased
- 1942** The road emerges on Nov. 13 from jurisdiction of the bankruptcy courts
- 1944** A new corporation — the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie Railroad Company — is established on Sept. 1 after reorganization complete
- 1950** Soo Line Railroad adopted. Corporate name dropped except for legal matters. The MSTP&SSMRR acronym appears in small type under the Soo logo trademark
- 1950** The first automatic block signals placed in service between Spencer, Wisconsin and Wheeling, Illinois
- 1951** Freight equipment gets four-foot high "SOO LINE" letters
- 1955** The Soo Line Railroad is the first major line west of Chicago to be completely dieselized on Feb. 16
- 1961** The Wisconsin Central Ry. (jointly owned by the Canadian Pacific and the Soo Line) was consolidated with the Soo Line on Jan. 1, along with the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic (a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Canadian Pacific) and reorganized as the Soo Line Railroad Company
- 1961** Automatic block signals with CTC (Centralized Traffic Control) completed from Minneapolis to Buffalo, Minnesota
- 1962** The Soo Line adopts a new color scheme of red, white and black
- 1971** Automatic block signals with CTC completed from Spencer to Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin
- 1975** The Soo Line Railroad gives up the famous \$ sign insignia
- 1982** Soo Line buys the Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern
- 1985** The Soo Line Railroad acquires the Milwaukee Road, transferring most of it's Chicago - Twin Cities traffic to the Milwaukee Road's superior double-track mainline
- 1987** In an attempt to operate more profitably, most of the Soo's own track in Wisconsin is transferred to a subsidiary called Lake States Transportation Division
- 1987** 2,048 miles of the Lake States Transportation Division is sold to an investors group headed by Ed Burkhardt, the former Transportation Division Vice President of the Chicago & North Western Railroad
- 1987** On Oct 11, the Wisconsin Central Limited starts operations with a fleet of rolling stock and 98 locomotives, mostly ex-Soo and Burlington Northern
- 1992** Canadian Pacific Railway purchases the remaining Soo stock shares (it had owned 56% of outstanding stock for nearly a century), and makes the Soo a wholly-owned subsidiary of CP



Photo by John Brunner

MAKING OF RAILROAD TOWNS

With the construction of the Soo Line, railroad towns sprung up. Some were short lived like the Minnesota towns of Shovel Lake, Swatara, Palisade, McGregor, Lawler, Moose Lake, and Remer. Others flourished.

Interestingly, very few settlements were actually owned by railroads. Yet, the establishing of a railroad town was often part of a railroad's strategy to control its line's territory – and to maximize the railroad's profits.

1885 RAILROADS REACH RHINELANDER

In 1885, the population of Rhinelander, Wisconsin was about 1,500. Harvesting timber was beginning to explode. Lots of makeshift lumber camps were appearing along with a variety of immigrants.

Webster Brown of Rhinelander wanted to improve rail service for their city. The family had been successful a few years earlier in persuading the Milwaukee, Lakeshore and Western Railway to build a spur to the city.



News came that a forerunner of the Soo, the Minneapolis, Sault Ste. Marie and Atlantic Railway, was building eastward from Minneapolis and westward out of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. The proposed new line would pass about 20 miles south of Rhinelander.

Brown contacted the railroad in an effort to redirect the Soo through Rhinelander by offering to deed half of their remaining property to the railroad. A counter-proposal was made by Soo officials... they would build to – and through - Rhinelander for one third of the area's untouched timber lands.

The Browns persuaded the Milwaukee Lake Shore & Western to pool its land with them, and the agreement was made with the Soo with each of two railroads and the prominent Brown family retaining a third of the property.

Historically, this agreement was one of only a few times whereby a railroad conceded a grant of land to another railroad and broke its own monopoly in rail service to a community.

1971



“WEBSTER BROWN OF RHINELANDER WANTED TO IMPROVE RAIL SERVICE FOR THEIR CITY.”

RHINELANDER

1985



“THE ESTABLISHING OF A RAILROAD TOWN WAS OFTEN PART OF A RAILROAD'S STRATEGY TO CONTROL ITS LINE'S TERRITORY”

LOGGING ON THE RAILROADS

THE LOGGING INDUSTRY

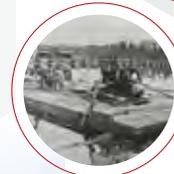
Prior to the 1860s, northern Wisconsin was primarily inhabited by the Menominee and Ojibwe Native American Indian tribes, and transient fur traders.

After the Civil War the demand for wood in Chicago and Milwaukee increased rapidly. Demand brought lumbermen to the north woods.

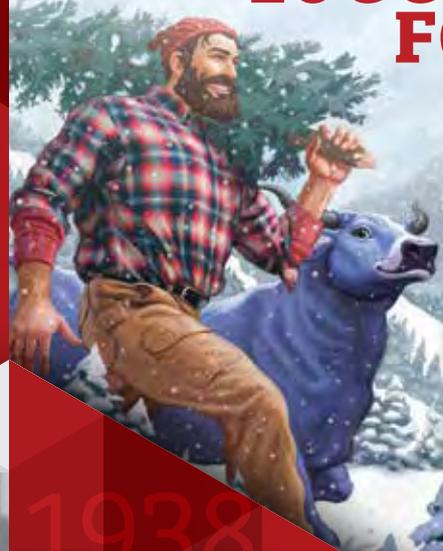
Initially the timber harvest focused on softwoods like pine as it could be floated down rivers – the major means of transportation at the time.

The expansion of railroads in northern Wisconsin in the 1880s allowed for the harvesting of hardwoods like maple, which does not float in water.

Until the 1930s, rail was the primary method of transporting logs when improved roads made trucking more economical.



LOGGING FOLKLORE



The vast majority of logging camps in the north woods were set-up in winter to take advantage of transporting logs on the hard ground. Sunday was the only day off. Food was typically monotonous – salt pork, navy beans and flour – in the camps of the mid-1800s. Flapjacks were a luxury. Entertainment during those long winter evenings consisted of telling stories and jokes by the campfire. It was here that logging folklore was born.

ONE OF THE MOST WELL-KNOWN LOGGING LORE CHARACTERS is the mythological figure **PAUL BUNYAN**.

His stories & exploits were told around campfires throughout WISCONSIN, MINNESOTA, AND CENTRAL CANADA.

RAILROAD FOLK SONGS

Railroad folklore songs are only surpassed in numbers by those songs written about – and for - lumberjacks. Yet, rail and timber are often found as subjects in the same songs.



THE WISCONSIN LUMBERJACKS IN RICE LAKE

1938



(Back row, left to right) Earl Schwartztrauber, Frank "Frenchy" Uchyl, J.H. Wallis, mayor of Rice Lake; (front row, left to right) Otto Rindlisbacher, Iva Kundert Rindlisbacher, Ray Calkins. James P. Leary Collection, courtesy of James P. Leary and Lois Rindlisbacher Albrecht.

THE WINNIPEG

LUXURY SERVICE

First-class overnight service between St. Paul and Winnipeg, Manitoba was offered on the Winnipeg.

The Winnipeg was the Soo Line's longest-lived named train. The last train left the station on March 25, 1967.

In 1903 the Soo began construction of the Winnipeg line north from Glenwood, MN. The line was completed to the Canadian border in the fall of 1904, connecting with the Canadian Pacific at Noyes, MN.

In October, 1904 a local was begun out of Thief River Falls and then, on November 21, through service was inaugurated between St. Paul and Winnipeg.

Over the years the train was officially named "Manitoba Express" (1904-1909), "Winnipeg Express" (1909-1928) and "Winnipeg" (1928-1967)



POWER OF THE ERA

As locomotives grew in strength, so had the lines they ran upon.

Locomotives, at first, were the 500 series, ten-wheelers, until the roadbed was more solid. Then Pacifics took over. Originally each road ran its own power to the border until May 30, 1930. After which Soo power went to Winnipeg part of the year and CP engines came to Thief River Falls part of the year. This arrangement lasted until Soo FP7's and GP9's were used.

In addition to passenger service, for many years express refrigerators of frozen fish were handled from Winnipeg to St. Paul.



ONLY THE BEST FOR PASSENGER TRAINS

Ten-wheeler 505 at Rhineland about 1905. #505 was the first of the E-1 class received from Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1902. With its large driving wheels, this high-stepper was put on the fast passenger runs.



“FOR MANY YEARS EXPRESS REFRIGERATORS OF FROZEN FISH WERE HANDLED FROM WINNIPEG TO ST. PAUL.”

PASSENGER SERVICE ON THE SOO



“THE ST. PAUL TO DULUTH DAYTIME TRAIN WAS KNOWN AS **TRAINS 62 & 63**”



LUXURY ON THE LAKER

Debuting on June 3, 1951, “The Laker” traveled from Duluth-Superior to Chicago. “The Laker” operated an overnight service from Chicago’s Grand Central Station to either Duluth-Superior or Minneapolis-St. Paul. Until 1959 Ashland, Wisconsin was also served.

Built by Barney & Smith Co., “The Laker” was created to provide passengers with an upscale, unique travel experience.

“The Laker” featured roomettes, bedrooms, and drawing rooms. **The dining-club lounge cars were not to be outdone.** They were **beautifully adorned** with light brown walls, ivory ceilings, lavish two-tone green carpeting, indirect lighting, and windows appointed with matching blinds.

The dining and lounge area were separated by a bar and kitchen. A walkway joined the two sections. **The dining car served full breakfast, lunch, and dinner menus for 18 people at a time.** The lounge featured comfortable and stylish chairs upholstered in rose and green that were set off by floor to ceiling mirrors.



UNTIL 1961 when passenger service was nearly eliminated, the Soo Line struggled to run an extensive passenger service to all major cities in its territories.

The biggest challenge for the Soo was that their Chicago and Minneapolis route was much longer than offered by either the Milwaukee Road, Chicago and North Western, and Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad railroads. Plus, the Soo Line had no direct access to Milwaukee.

Still the Soo was successful in carving out certain niches to serve passengers, from first class service offerings to mixed train services offering passengers unique travel one direction only options.

SOO COACH BUFFET CARS



CHANGES FOR 2111 & 2112

2111 and 2112 had both been constructed as first class coaches in 1913. Because of the styling of the era, their windows were arranged in pairs, under a wide sash and glazed with glass art. By the mid-20s this look was considered dated, and the “gothic” sash was covered with steel plates to give the cars a more modern appearance. Seats were installed in place of the kitchens.

In 1942, the Soo Line selected these two steel coaches and rebuilt them into unique coach-buffet cars.

Car 2112 was retired and sold in July of 1965. Car 2111 was sold in 1989 after being turned into a shower car X-1475 years earlier.

2111 is still in existence on the Sisseton Milbank Railroad tourist line at Milbank, South Dakota.



IN 1920, Chicago-Twin Cities trains 1 and 2 carried a full dining car. This was replaced by a cafe-observation car in 1925, but was back to full dining car in 1931. In response to the depression, 1935 saw all mention of food service in “the Official Guide of the Railways and Steamship Companies” gone for trains 1 and 2.

Three years later in 1937, food service returned to trains 1 and 2 when each received a ten-section restaurant-sleeping car.

In the 1940s, food service changed once again. The conversion to coach-buffet cars concept was introduced and consisted of installing a small kitchen compartment at the end of the car. The kitchen contained only a gas range, coffee urn, and icebox so a light meal could be served.

In February 1953, trains 1 and 2 were cut back to Chicago-Stevens Point and the dining service was permanently eliminated.

“THE SOO-PACIFIC RAN IN THE 1920S AND 1930S FROM MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL TO WESTERN CANADA”



“IN 1941 A CAFE-LOUNGE CAR BEGAN OPERATING BETWEEN **CHICAGO AND OWEN, WISCONSIN**”

NARROW GAUGE PASSENGER CARS

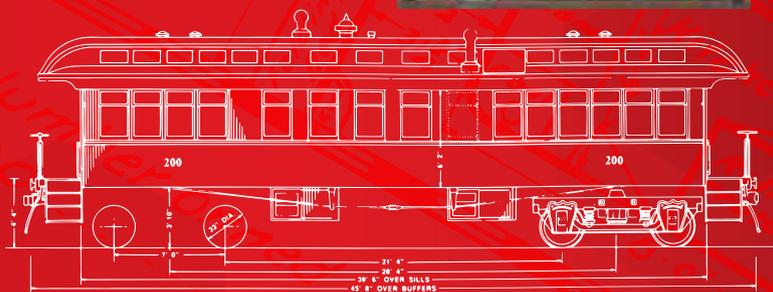
WAUKESHA AND THE SOO

MILLIONAIRE LUMBERMAN **WILLIAM H. BRADLEY**



worked tirelessly to promote the city of Tomahawk, Wisconsin and is considered the city's founder. Early in the 1880s, Bradley's lumber business used the Milwaukee Road for transportation, but by the late 1880s he became a Soo Line stockholder. The Soo Line began to both receive logs and ship his lumber to the West. In 1896 Bradley was elected to the Soo Line Board of Directors.

Bradley built a short railroad (5.6 miles) to Tomahawk (Marinette, Tomahawk & Western R.R.) In the summer of 1891 and the Soo provided him with the ML&M's 2-6-0 No. 13 which were converted to standard gauge.



BRADLEY'S PASSENGER CARS

Passenger cars were also needed by Bradley to handle the client end of his business. So in addition to the locomotive, three narrow gauge cars were acquired in 1893 from ML&M (they too had Soo origins).

The first car, a baggage-coach, was converted by Bradley into a smoker and numbered 1001. The second, a coach, was transformed into a first-class parlor car and numbered 2001.

The third car was transformed for Bradley's personal use. Initially Bradley added an observation room at each end with bedrooms in the center. The observation rooms served as dining rooms too. Due to no facilities for prepping meals, in February 1897, a kitchen was added in place of one of the bedrooms.



“ WILLIAM H. BRADLEY WORKED TIRELESSLY TO PROMOTE THE CITY OF TOMAHAWK, WISCONSIN AND IS CONSIDERED THE CITY'S FOUNDER ”

RAIL DELIVERS PASSENGERS SEEKING MIRACULOUS CURES IN WAUKESHA

Originally building a single track through Waukesha, the Wisconsin Central Railroad completed an entire line from Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin through Waukesha and Burlington and well past the Wisconsin-Illinois state line in 1886.

As passenger train service grew, Waukesha began to build more and more shops and later became known for them. Tourism grew rapidly in Waukesha, once known as Spring City.

By the beginning of the 19th century, stories were widely circulating of the miraculous cures experienced by people after drinking water from Waukesha mineral springs. Thousands of tourists flocked to Waukesha for the water's restorative claims.

Wisconsin Central ran both freight and passenger trains through Waukesha on a regular schedule by early 1887. By 1898, rail riding was so popular that the railroad was running eight trains a day through Waukesha. Double tracks were installed in the early 1900s to eliminate the congestion due to the amount of traffic running through the city.

In 1909, majority ownership of the Wisconsin Central was acquired by the Soo.

Passenger services were routed to and from Milwaukee to Waukesha via The Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company (TMER&L) interurban line by 1938. This transfer of operation between the two lines continued until June 30, 1951 when TMER&L ceased operations altogether.

In the 1930s, the Soo Line was operating eight time freights through the city of Waukesha (No. 21 and 22 being most well-known) and during World War II, the Soo Line was running troop trains through this area. After time went on, passenger business began to decline in the 1950s and only four trains were left operating through Waukesha.



“ IN 1909, MAJORITY OWNERSHIP OF THE WISCONSIN CENTRAL WAS ACQUIRED BY THE SOO. ”

TEN CHIMNEYS

BROADWAY LEGENDS **ALFRED LUNT & LYNN FONTANNE** built a beautiful estate in Genesee Depot, nearby to Waukesha.

Named after the number of chimneys found cumulatively in the main house, cottage and studio, Ten Chimneys is an elegant three-story home which hosted a star-studded guest list including George Burns, Helen Hayes, Vivien Leigh and Sir Laurence Olivier, Katharine Hepburn, Charlie Chaplin, and Joan Crawford.

The estate is filled with original collections of the Lunt's and is today open to the public.



BROADWAY LEGENDS **ALFRED LUNT & LYNN FONTANNE**



WINTER ON THE RAILS

During the cold winter months, the Soo line used snowplows to clear the snow off tracks. If the flangeways were filled with ice, the crew chipped the ice out with pickaxes and shovels in order to keep the plows, like the X-180, from derailing at crossings.

Other popular Soo plows include the W-261, the Jordan Spreader no. X-78, and the Soo Line homebuilt dozers W-213 and X-1652.

Even today, with more high-tech machinery available than 50 years ago, someone with a shovel still needs to clean out a switch or dig out ice and packed snow from flangeways in roads that see little rail traffic.



“WHILE THE SNOW GENTLY FALLS ON THE TRACKS, TRAINS TYPICALLY MAKE THEIR WAY TO THEIR DESTINATION WITH LITTLE INCIDENT.”



THE GREAT BLIZZARD OF 1923

One Monday afternoon in February 1923, a monstrous snow storm rolled out of the Pacific Northwest and Canada, striking the upper Midwest states of North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. The storm went on for three days, taking lives and causing millions of dollars in damage.

Entire communities, both large and small, were totally isolated when cyclonic winds knocked down power and communication lines.

“THE RAILROADS WERE COVERED IN SNOWDRIFTS 15 FEET DEEP AND OVER A MILE LONG!”

Particularly those in central and eastern Wisconsin were badly struck by the killer storm. The storm was so massive that the entire railroad, from Whitetail, Montana to Chicago was crippled. Without the advantages of 21st century weather forecasting methods, the weather caught the railroads and everyone by surprise.

At the beginning of the storm, trains were getting to their destinations hours late and by evening, the Soo lost its battle against Mother Nature. Trains were at a halt — wheels not literally able to move.

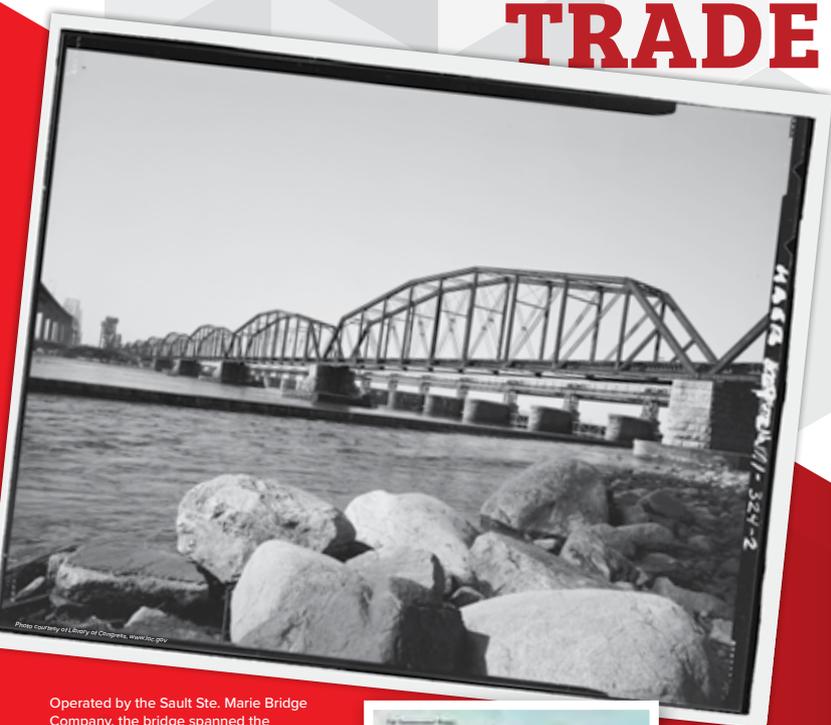
After the storm passed, the Soo Line made an effort to fight back with wedge and dozer plows. These plows were often pushed by as many as three or four burly freight locomotives, battling the 10- to 15-foot deep drifts a mile long.

A suffering 40 passengers aboard the Portage made it to their destination at Stevens Point five days later! The great blizzard of 1923 will remain a vivid memory of being the worst storm many have experienced.

By Friday of that week, the Chicago Division reopened and almost all priority trains began to roll — especially the trains carrying U.S. Mail.



THE BRIDGE TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE

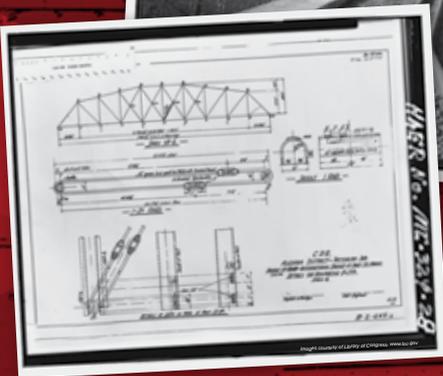


Operated by the Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Company, the bridge spanned the St. Mary's River between Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan and Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. (Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Company was part owned by the CP, DSS&A and Soo — majority ownership acquired by the Soo in 1909).



Rail bridge circa 1905, showing the 10 original Warren truss spans. The highway bridge officially opened in 1962.

Built as a single set of railroad tracks by the Dominion Bridge Co. in 1887, the bridge allowed for more efficient international trade and a speedier link to the East coast US markets. The original bridge featured a plate girder overpass, a double leaf bascule bridge, a vertical lift bridge, and swing bridge.



THE SOO LINE BUILDING

THE "LAST WORD IN MODERN OFFICE BUILDINGS"

AS REPORTED IN A 1915 MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE ARTICLE

THE TALLEST BUILDING IN MINNEAPOLIS AT 19 STORIES, the Soo Line Building was heralded when it officially opened in March 1915.

Designed by architect Robert W. Gibson, the U-shaped building was inspired by classical techniques from L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts to form a Renaissance Revival-style façade of gleaming white terra cotta. The building stood out as a beacon amongst the dark-toned Victorian structures of downtown Minneapolis at the time.

A 1915 article in the *Minneapolis Tribune* referred to the Soo Line Building as the "last word in modern office buildings", and waxed on about its combination of "beauty and utility."

More than 5,000 people were present for the opening ceremony — far more than invited. Since the onlookers were so eager to take a ride on one of the building's nine elevators, Soo Line officials allowed the people to attend the event.

Originally the building served as the headquarters for Soo Line (phonetic pronunciation of "Sault") and the First National Bank.

The First National Bank/Soo Line Building in 1915

Photo: Star Tribune archive.



Today, while the building's exterior remains unchanged, the interior has been recently converted into luxurious apartments and dining entertainment venues.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

During the first year of the depression in 1929, the Soo was profitable with a net income of \$1.6 million while the Wisconsin Central Division lost around \$189,000. The Great Depression really hit the Soo in the following year, 1930, when the total movement of iron ore decreased by one-third.

To make matters worse, the drought in North Dakota caused a total crop failure along the Soo's line causing many farms to be foreclosed. To put it in perspective, grain movement in 1915 was about 83 million bushels and in 1931 was only 12 million bushels.

The drought then extended to both Dakotas, and Montana, Minnesota and Wisconsin.



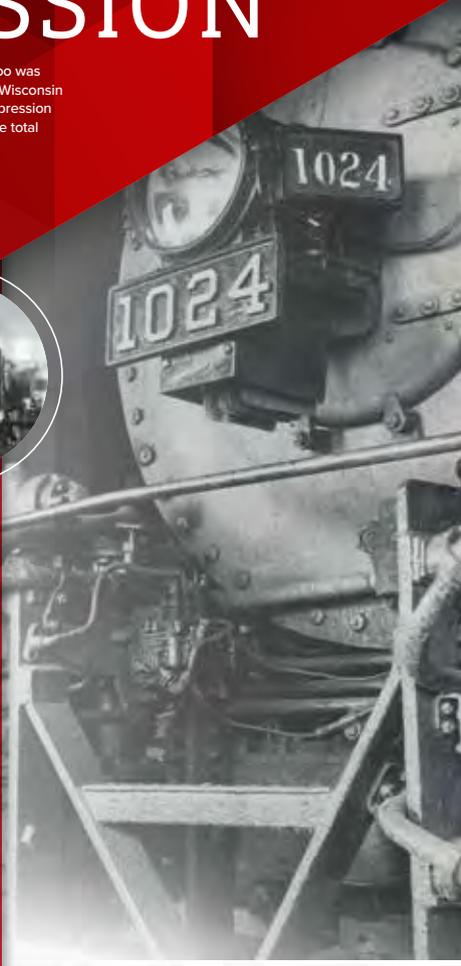
The Railroad Retirement Act was signed into law and became effective August 1, 1934 – causing an increase of over \$100,000 in general expenses. The Soo's operating deficit skyrocketed to over \$5 million annually in 1934 through 1936.

The depression brought large-scale manufacturing almost to a standstill and trucking became a major competitor in the movement of freight.

In 1935 the movement of grain had improved to 21 million bushels and crops were improving as the drought subsided. The movement of iron ore also increased by about 60%.

The economic upheaval caused the railroad to file for bankruptcy in December 1937. Ultimately the company was reorganized as the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie Railroad Company, effective September 1, 1944.

In 1940 freight revenues continued to rise with increase of grain movements. By 1943, there were increases in almost all types of traffic.



ON DECEMBER 3, 1932, the Wisconsin Central went into receivership as iron ore shipments for each railroad serving the Lake Superior district had fallen to only 3.6 million tons.



PASSENGER SERVICE ON ALMOST ALL BRANCH LINES WERE SCALED BACK. MIXED TRAINS WERE ALLOWED TO MAINTAIN MINIMUM SERVICE AS DEMANDED BY INDIVIDUAL STATE LAWS.



THE SOO AND WWII



THE EFFECT OF WWII

At the start of WWII, freight car production was immediately cut back by the War Production Board and continued at a relatively low level throughout the remaining war years. A total of 1,543 Soo employees were granted leave to serve in the armed forces.

The United States government opted to not take over the railroad industry as it did in World War I. As a result, the country was spared the severe transportation disruptions of the previous war.

When Alaska's Alcan Highway was being built during WWII, the route of the Mountaineer suddenly assumed importance far beyond its scenic reputation. Long freights sped across this route carrying vitally needed materials on their way to Alaska. The Soo was proud to do their part in the war effort.

By the end of World War II, 4-6-2-powered trains 5 and 6, carried an RPO-baggage, often a baggage car with one or two coaches and a standard sleeper.

To handle the returning troops during the last months of 1945, the government ordered temporary withdrawal of all sleeper runs of 450 miles and other Chicago-Twin Cities overnights.

Food and beverage services that were dropped before the War returned to 5 and 6 in 1948. It was then a 8-section diner-lounge car, previously having run between Chicago and Duluth, replaced the full sleeping car each way.

The Twin Cities sleeper lasted only until 1953, and after that 5 and 6 offered only a "through coach" for passengers.

While WWII ultimately brought prosperity to the nation's railroads, the physical state of the railroads had paid the price. Heavy loads and deferred maintenance left many railroads in shambles, especially the network of branch lines.

Due to a nationwide coal strike in December 1946, the Soo cut back service and many runs were dropped.

SABOTAGE POTENTIAL ON THE RAIL

During the war years, the government was concerned about the possibility of sabotage on the railroads and required that major rail bridges be manned with a watchman at night.

One of the bridges that required a watchman was over the Escanaba River in Michigan.

Approaching the bridge, there was a "shack" where the watchman stayed with a telephone installed.

With only a kerosene lamp to shed light, each hour the watchman would walk across the bridge and back to check that all was ok. They were also required to call the sheriff's department each hour to report all was well and if no hourly call was made, someone was sent immediately to check the problem.



MRS. ANITA BIGSBY FIRST WOMAN STEAM ENGINE WASHER

The war caused women to take on "men's" jobs. Mrs. Anita Bigsby was the first woman employed by the Soo Line as a steam engine washer. The year was 1944. Thousands of women followed and were especially important to the U.S. railroad operations during World War II. Bigsby was a laborer and diesel washer at the north Fond du Lac shops.

"Men were pretty scarce and a girl who wanted to work didn't have any trouble finding a job," said Bigsby. After the war, "most of the women left to get married and to raise families." But Bigsby stayed and was for years the only remaining member of the Soo's wartime female shops force until retiring in 1980 after 36 years of service.



“MEN WERE PRETTY SCARCE AND A GIRL WHO WANTED TO WORK DIDN'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE FINDING A JOB.”



TROUBLE ON THE RAIL

CRASHES AND ACCIDENTS

**AUGUST 27, 1892
AT 2:35PM,
A BRIDGE OVER THE
POMME DE TERRE RIVER
COLLAPSED UNDER
STRANGE
CONDITIONS.**

COLLAPSE OF A SOO LINE BRIDGE

Passenger train, no. 65, was headed westward on the bridge when it collapsed. The locomotive and tender, along with a palace (horse) car made it across. A baggage car, coach class car, and a first class car dropped into the river.

Seven were killed and dozens seriously injured.

The Grant County Herald newspaper article on the accident stated "There appeared to be no damage to the bridge from the floor, that the bridge was just plain rotten. The bridge was built in 1886 and the pilings were rotting off leaving nothing to support the trains except the stringers and ties. It is a wonder that it had not fallen long ago."



Mr. Frank Cedarburg, a bridge carpenter, testified that he examined the bridge in the forenoon of August 27th and found the bridge safe above the water but couldn't examine the bridge below the water.

After all the allegations, still today the real cause is still unknown but the coroner's jury blamed the Soo Line for negligence. The Grant County Herald reported "They found F. F. Underwood, General Manager of the Soo Line RR., A. Amos, General Bridge Foreman, and W. W. Rich, Chief Engineer guilty of gross and criminal negligence in the way in which they have maintained and operated the said railway. That the negligence and carelessness of said railroad company is the cause of death of the above name deceased persons..."



The bridge is located approximately a quarter mile east of Barrett, MN. This incident resulted in one of the biggest losses of passenger lives on the Soo Line. The repaired bridge continued to serve the Soo Line until 1907 when the railroad relocated the main line on another alignment across the river.



The Soo line responded to the incident claiming the bridge was potentially undermined by the heavy rains from the previous day but that five trains had safely crossed the bridge prior to no. 65 crossing and had noticed no signs of weakness. There was a hearing held on the accident to find probable cause.

THE ACCIDENT STREAK OF 1947

Between August and November of 1947, nine accidents occurred west of St. Paul, Minnesota.

Friday, August 1:

Derailment of no. 216 on the Drake Line in North Dakota

Wednesday, August 6:

11 carloads of creosoted REA poles where set on fire by a Soo Line weed burner, just after being unloaded at Ottertail, Minnesota

Thursday, September 4:

On the line to Winnipeg, time freight no. 71 derailed wrecking many cars at Halma, Minnesota

Sunday, September 14:

No. 110, the Winnipeg, sideswiped a freight train at Regal, Minnesota

Sunday, October 5:

At the east distant signal of the Erskine, Minnesota, interlocking tower, Extra 4018 West rear-ended time freight no. 71

Saturday October 18:

On the Drake line, 216 was standing within yard limits at Devils Lake, North Dakota when an Extra 478 East plowed into its rear end

Wednesday, October 22:

At the Gloster crossing in North St. Paul, Minnesota, a Soo Line passenger train no. 5 from Chicago and a Northern Pacific freight train no. 716 collided head on

Saturday, November 1:

A Soo Line westbound freight derailed near Kimball, Minnesota

Monday, November 24:

The Winnipeg (no. 110) sideswiped Extra 1010 West at Vergas, Minnesota



NINETEEN FORTY-SEVEN

TROUBLE ON THE RAIL

L'ANSE AND ITS TROUBLESOME HILL

In December 1951 a huge snowstorm hit the little town of L'Anse, Michigan in the Upper Peninsula. The L'Anse Hill is the longest sustained grade on the railroad between Nestoria and Calumet, Michigan.

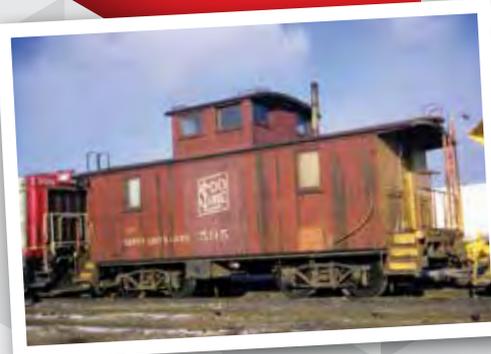
Due to this snow storm, the train stalled after climbing the first nine miles up the steep 10-mile grade. Then despite the crew's efforts, the train rolled back downgrade at a high speed.

The result was a tragic wreck at the bottom of the L'Anse Hill that some say sounded like "roaring thunder" as the train rolled down the hill.

Observing motorists said "the wheels of the runaway train looked like they were on fire."

At the bottom of the hill lay an overturned DSS&A 2-8-0 steam locomotive no. 717 and cranking fire of wood from caboose no. 590. A total of 22 freight cars were piled up along with their derailed load of 1,200 tons of copper, pulpwood logs, and scrap metal heading to Marquette, Michigan.

Fortunately, the crew walked away with no injuries.



...THE TRAIN ROLLED BACK DOWNGRADE AT A HIGH SPEED.



EVOLUTION OF FREIGHT CARS



An interesting history lesson played out between 1913 and 1957, as freight car construction evolved. During that 44-year span, the railroad's boxcar fleet transformed from sawtooth cars to the Fond du Lac built post war cars.

Designs changed from road-specific to industry-specific standard. Wood ends, sides and doors turned into all-steel construction. Interior height rose from 8'-0 to 10'-6". Box car capacity increased from 80,000 to 100,000 lbs.

Development in truck technology drove box car needs to carry higher loads and improve car stabilization due to transport at higher speeds.

These evolved box cars allowed for a huge shift in the Soo corporate image. The Soo went from an understated, frugal look of the dollar-sign logo to the bold and proud 4-foot high letters of the SOO LINE billboard paint scheme.

1936 Pullman-Standard

With a 40' 1932 AAR design with dreadnaught ends and six foot Youngstown steel doors, these cars marked the biggest change for the Soo. Unlike any other, these cars demonstrated Soo's commitment to meeting national standardization of freight car construction.

1940-41 Pullman-Standard

The 1937-Modified boxcar was widely adopted for the post-depression car building boom. More than 44,000 boxcars of this design were built for 25 roads between 1939 and 1945. Of which, 900 were delivered to the Soo and WC.

At a glance, they are distinguishable by their rectangular-panel roofs and wood running boards. All Soo '37-Modified boxcars had a 10'-5" inside height and the doors were of 6' Youngstown steel. Cars featured Murphy raised rectangular panel roofs.

The Soo cars were among the first of the '37-Modified cars to be built by Pullman-Standard and feature square corner ends rather than round. The original paint scheme utilized the dollar-sign herald with a black background.

Railroad modelers of today refer to this boxcar design as a "Modified 1937 AAR" design or "37-Modified" for short.



THE "SAWTOOTH" DESIGN

1920-23 H&B, AC&F, Pullman

One of the most characteristic designs of Soo rolling stock is the "sawtooth" design.

These cars were the most common Soo boxcar through WWII until the mid-50s.

However, by 1959, just six were still listed in the Official Railway Equipment Register. These cars had composite ends with four vertical "Z" braces and wood sheathing. Roofs were peaked and steel-sheathed. Cars featured 5-foot wood doors and rode on Andrew trucks.



1949-57 Soo Line

The 1949-57 cars represent the Soo's contribution to a nationwide, post WWII building boom. Manufacturing was motivated by past deferred replacement caused by heavy use and little new construction during the war.

Steel had once again become available for domestic purpose. The advance to all-steel boxcar construction at this time also coincided with a widespread adoption of standards for freight car construction.

Though there were few structural changes with these cars coming out of Fond du Lac, the paint and lettering applied to them saw major changes. At the beginning of the run, the Soo used the dollar-sign scheme with a car-color background. That logo display was replaced by 4-foot billboard block lettering.

Initially, the "SOO" and "LINE" were spaced close to the door and at the top of the sides. Later in the 1951 series, the "SOO" and "LINE" were spread out closer to the car ends.

All new block billboard-painted Soo cars from 1951 through 1958 had a sloping center bar in the letter "S". Those painted after 1958 have a horizontal center bar in the letter "S".

MODERNIZATION MAKES THE SOO STRONG

Customer demands and competition from highway transportation, water transportation and other railroads, placed constant pressure on the Soo to provide better service. The challenges made the Soo a better and stronger railroad.



1963

Twenty-two powerful new locomotives were acquired to replace 33 older units.

281 freight cars were put in service during the year 1963 and 127 of those 281 freight cars were custom-designed for custom service.

New rail, crosstie, track lining, ballast and other track maintenance projects gave Soo trains a faster and safer track to run on.

Modern two-way train radio was extended from Stevens Point to Minneapolis with the installation of five base radio stations. Centralized traffic control system was installed between Schiller Park and Wheeling, IL.

Accounting became more automated as the 1401 computer took on the new management reporting system and other projects. At this time, the computer was also being used to assist in analyzing operations and determining train schedules.

Faster trains began operating from Portal, ND to Minneapolis and Minneapolis to Chicago. Around 16 hours were cut off the old Portal-Chicago schedule.



1955

March 15th saw the first installation of two-way radios on freight trains. Two "Handle-Talkie" Radiophones were placed in each caboose starting with the Minneapolis and Schiller Park run. This new technology allowed a brakeman to talk to the engineer or conductor.



1964

Multiple electronic devices were installed to check the running gear of trains in 1964. These devices included: dragging equipment detectors, wheel checkers and scanners.

The dragging equipment detectors consisted of a row of "blades" placed between and outside the rails. The wheel checkers and dragging equipment detectors were the first devices of their kind on the Soo. Scanners used an infrared principle to spot overheated journal box.



1969

In 1969 nearly two million freight cars, including Soo cars, were branded with colored labels.

The labels were put in place for electronic trackside scanners. These scanners were able to determine a given car's ownership and number. The automatic car identification (ACI) scanners worked day or night, in any weather, with trains going up to speeds of 80 mph.

By 1970 every car used at interchange services on North American railroads was required to carry an ACI label.

1974

The Soo invested in their first Hy-rail inspection unit, designed to search and detect flaws in rail.

The unit was designed for the Soo Line by the AAR and cost more than \$60,000 to construct.

Equipped with its own power generator, the unit contained a number of electronic devices that could probe either standard or welded rail for flaws. As the unit passed over the rail, it magnetized the metal sending a message to on board electronics. Patterns produced were analyzed and transferred to read-out tape. Any unusual condition was immediately noted.



THE GREAT SOO LEAGUE



IN THE LATE 1870s INTO THE 1880s, life in Stearns County, Minnesota revolved around two things - **baseball and the railroads.**

EARLY BEGINNINGS

Two new east-west rail lines had been constructed in Stearns County, **The Soo Line and the Great Northern Railway.** It was now possible for community baseball teams and citizens to attend games between cities.

Baseball drew large dedicated crowds. **Many of the players were depot employees and section hands,** and some teams were completely made up of railroad employees.

To get a sense of a town's dedication to their baseball team, the 1897 issue of the *Paynesville Press* stated, "Monday mornings freight train took the entire population from this city down to Eden Valley to the celebrations there. Two cabooses were attached to the train and they were full both inside and outside, and overflowed onto the tops of the two or three box cars and a number of flat cars."



“ SOME TEAMS WERE COMPLETELY MADE UP OF RAILROAD EMPLOYEES ”



ORGANIZED LEAGUE

On **May 10, 1926,** eight communities from Stearns County in central Minnesota organized a regional baseball association which became known as **the Great Soo League.** The league went on to become one of the better known leagues in the state, and would stick around for 40 years.

Baseball in the Great Soo League was competitive, with rivalries developing between individual towns. It was considered community baseball, but communities took their teams very seriously. Strict residency requirements were taken very seriously. In order to be able to join the team, you had to live within a five mile radius of the town with residency being two months prior to the beginning of the season.

It was common practice for one or two players, especially the pitcher, to receive a small allowance for each game. Admission charged at the gate covered a portion of the expenses including uniform cost. Other expenses were covered by local businessmen or through fund raising events.

Post WWII, softball gained popularity in the Twin Cities. In 1950 Joe Perzel became the most talked about softball player in either Minneapolis or St. Paul. By day, the 6-foot, 21-year old, was a Soo Line accounting department employee. He broke and held softball records until the league disbanded in 1965.

SOO LINE ADVERTISING



THE 1952 summer edition of the *Soo Liner* magazine, reported that each month in an effort to get the "Soo Line Service" before the public, the company would place over 200 newspaper and national magazine ads monthly.

Many advertisements touted Soo Line freight services to ensure rapid and safe handling of shipments.

The Soo Line offered services of handling shipments for consumers as well as business. Messaging for both were aimed at allowing the Soo to solve shipping problems.

Advertisements aimed towards the Soo's passenger service was common. "Let the Soo Line take you on a fun and relaxing ride to the football games. Why stress with the crowd? Avoid that by taking the best and most efficient way to the game."

1962 SOO SLOGAN WINNER

Telegrapher **Anton (Tony) Kunst** in Antioch, Illinois won a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond and a congratulatory letter from company president Leonard Murray for coming up with the new internal Soo slogan, **"Move It as Though the Customer Were Watching."**

The slogan became a company mantra for years as the Soo continued to reduce the claims paid for damaged or lost freight - an important issue since the line had paid out nearly \$650,000 for damaged freight in 1961.

Kunst said "he realized satisfied shippers mean more business on the rails and more business means more rail jobs." Nationwide, 58 employees submitted 176 slogans. Kunst submitted four of them.



THE SOO'S STARING ROLE IN ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG MAN

SMALL TOWN MEETS HOLLYWOOD

The sleepy little town of Mellen, Wisconsin awoke in the fall of 1961 to meet three Soo passenger train steam engines carrying producers and Hollywood actors from Twentieth Century Fox. Mellen had been selected to be the set of a movie based on Ernest Hemingway's "Adventures of a Young Man". In short form, Mellen was transformed into the 1915 fictional town of Sidess, Michigan where the star of the movie, Nick Adams, grew up.

THE SOO, STAR OF THE RAILS

The Duluth and Northeastern 2-8-0 no. 14 were the locomotives used to play the mythical Soo no. 14 in the film. The D&NE was a Baldwin Consolidation engine built in 1913 as a small short line logging train for the Northwest Paper Company.

During the film, the Duluth and Northeastern lettering on the side of the locomotive was replaced by a Soo Line Dollar Sign logo. To complete the movie train, the Soo Line Railroad Company provided three heavyweight wooden passenger cars, numerous wooden box cars, a flat car, and a wooden caboose.

RICHARD BEYMER AS NICK ADAMS

ACTION SCENE

Directors attempted to recreate a head on train collision by setting up a giant mirror and having the Soo crash right into it. As the engineers hit the mirror they would duck down and hide to avoid being hit by flying shards of glass. After all the effort, the scene was never included in the final movie.



THE DISTINCTIVE GP30 LOCOMOTIVE



ROLLING OUT IN 1961, the diesel-electric GP30 locomotive made a statement in its very appearance. With its car body design, the GP30 looked like no other up until that time.

By 1963, twenty-two additional GP30s had come off the production line at La Grange, Illinois.

Distinctive painting in bright white and red was purposely used to contrast with the older predominantly maroon and gold hues. It was intended as a statement of the start of a new Soo era.

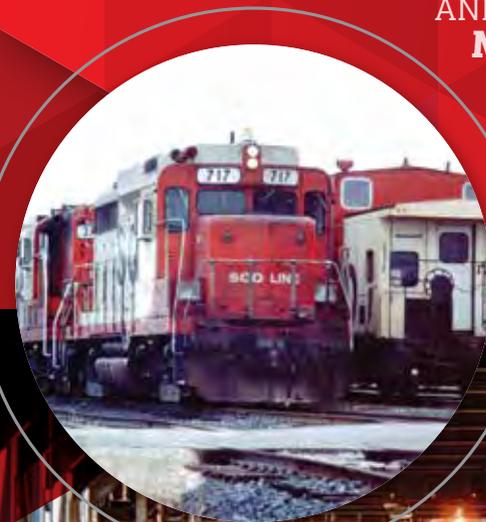
The GP30 was powerful in appearance and sounded the part. It commanded attention with its high-pitched whirl of the turbocharger layered over the familiar sound of the 567 engine.

Motive power assignments were rapidly transformed with the introduction of the GP30. The GP30s were frequently operated in groups of two or three and assigned to maintain on-time freight schedules between Chicago, Minneapolis and the Canadian border interchange points at Portal and Noyes.

“GP30s WERE PAINTED RED AND WHITE TO MAKE A STATEMENT OF THE NEW SOO ERA”



“THE GP30s WERE FREQUENTLY OPERATED IN GROUPS OF TWO OR THREE AND ASSIGNED TO MAINTAIN ON-TIME FREIGHT SCHEDULES”



With roughly the horsepower equivalent to three earlier road units,

a pair of GP30s heading a main line freight became a very familiar sight. Despite being only around 10% of the entire motive power fleet, the GP30s created a huge impact and logged a much greater percentage of miles on time freights.

During the 1974-75 severe nationwide recession, a number of the GP30 units were taken out of service until business conditions improved. By early 1976, all of the remaining twenty-one GP30s were in storage.

When the economy bounced back, traffic levels reached new highs in 1978-1980. All GP30s were again put into use.

It did not take long after the reappearance of the GP30s for the locomotives to begin to show their age. In turn, they became more costly to operate than the newer 4400-series GP38-2 locomotives.

Yet, the one strong advantage the GP30s had over the newer locomotives was that the turbocharged units were less likely to emit sparks – an important factor during extremely dry weather periods in the north woods. GP30s were in and out of use until 2002.



ROLLING OUT IN
1961
IN SERVICE UNTIL
2002

THE LAST NEW ROAD LOCOMOTIVES



FEBRUARY 1985 was a significant year for the Soo Line when a federal bankruptcy court awarded the company the right to acquire the assets of the Milwaukee Road. With the acquisition came expanded train operations and the opportunity to extend traffic to the Kansas City and Louisville gateways.

The acquisition of the Milwaukee Road brought a separate set of challenges including the integration of two locomotive fleets.

While the Milwaukee Road had a significant number (90) of the highly regarded SD40-2 models, the company didn't always have the financial resources to fully maintain its property and equipment. Therefore, the Milwaukee units required additional mechanical attention.

THE YEAR 1986 was a challenging one for the Soo Line because the company had recorded a loss the previous year and there was a continuation of financial problems stemming from the debt that the Soo had assumed from the Milwaukee acquisition, coupled with numerous integration issues. With these problems, the Soo continued to restructure and put its finances back in order into 1987.

The Soo Line announced they were ordering a series of six-axle SD60's. The first order of 21 were assigned order number 867164 by EMD and inaugurated the 6000 number series - chosen since it offered the largest, consecutive number slot that did not conflict with existing freight car numbers. They eventually ordered 42 more to make them the last new locomotives ordered by the Soo Line.

The single SD60s were periodically assigned to the fast intermodal Sprint trains between Chicago and St. Paul. They reliably demonstrated that one SD60 could effectively replace two GPs on these runs.

The SD60s soon found their way into the Chicago-Kansas City and Chicago-Louisville time freights as the units continued to take over for the SD40-20s they displaced.

Prior to the Canadian Pacific acquiring full ownership of the Soo Line in 1992, only a few changes had been made to the units during their fifteen-year tenure on the Soo. Namely, the earliest units with air horns that were offset to the side of the roof were relocated to above the prime mover and ditch lights were applied to all SD40s, SD40-2s, and SD60s for lead service in Canada.



**“THE LAST
LOCOMOTIVES
THE SOO LINE ANNOUNCED
ORDERING WAS 42 OF THE
SIX-AXLE SD60s”**

SOO LINE HISTORICAL & TECHNICAL SOCIETY



SOO LINE
HISTORICAL
& TECHNICAL
SOCIETY

The Soo Line Historical & Technical Society aims to preserve the rich history of the Soo Line, along with that of related roads like the original Wisconsin Central, the Duluth, South Shore and Atlantic, Wisconsin & Northern and many others which became part of the Soo. The Society also covers selected aspects of contemporary operations, including U.S. operations of the Canadian Pacific and the Wisconsin Central Division of the Canadian National.

As part of the Soo Line Historical & Technical Society's commitment to this goal, they created an Archives Committee in 1985. Since then they have saved and processed numerous photos, historical documents, railroadiana and other materials. They have purchased a building in Appleton, Wisconsin for the archives and office. They also own two diesel locomotives, an Alco RS-1 — DSS&A #101, and a Baldwin S-12 — CR #200, being stored at Lake Superior Railroad Museum in Duluth, Minnesota. The Society has also been instrumental in saving and restoring some historic Soo Line buildings, motive power and cars.



Celebrate-a-Railroad was envisioned by Trainfest Committee members; Ken Jaglinski, Harry Grieshaber, Bob Henderson, and Mike Carlson **to preserve America's rich railroad industry history.** The annual tradition launched at Trainfest 2015 in Milwaukee.

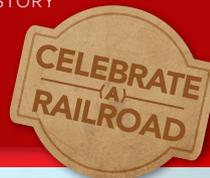
Trainfest is America's Largest Operating Model Railroad Show attracting thousands of model train hobbyists and train enthusiasts.

Held annually the second weekend of November, Trainfest is organized by the Wisconsin Southeastern Division, Inc. (WISE) of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA). The WISE Division is a non-profit organization with an educational focus as demonstrated by the creation of Celebrate-a-Railroad and these panels on the Soo Line.

For more information, visit trainfest.com.

CELEBRATE-A-RAILROAD PRESERVING OUR RICH HISTORY

- 2015** Chicago & North Western
- 2016** Milwaukee Road
- 2017** Soo Line
- 2018** BSNF and Great Northern



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