

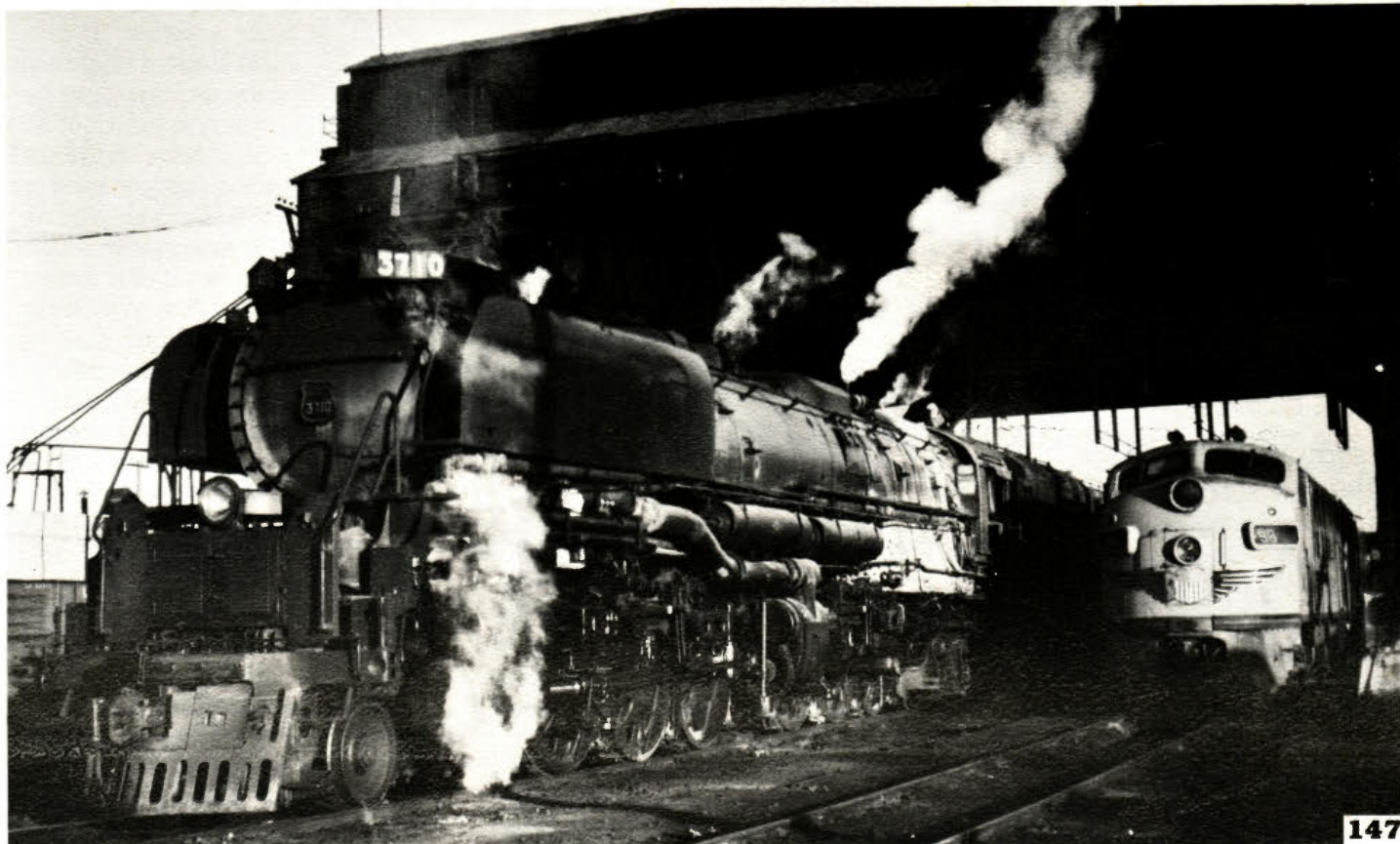


# ON THE SYSTEM

The Official Publication of the UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 1, Number 9, September, 1980

## THE LAST WEEKEND OF UNION PACIFIC STEAM OPERATIONS, NORTH PLATTE



147

My first acquaintance with Union Pacific and its engrossing steam power came when I was but 8 years old during the summer of 1948 when I spent an eventful two weeks in Kearney, Nebraska, watching a constant parade of 800 class 4-8-4s, 5000 class 2-10-2s, 7000 class 4-8-2s and 9000 class three-cylinder 4-12-2s pass over the Central Avenue crossing which was then protected by a nice old man with a paddle stop sign and police whistle to warn

motorists.

The intervening years provided little contact with the U.P. main line until 1954 when I took a trip to Colorado and got a taste of Sherman Hill, Cheyenne and Laramie still very much under the domination of U.P. steam power. Subsequent trips along the U.P. main line in 1953, 1956 and 1957 revealed fewer and fewer steam engines active on the U.P. and for shorter and shorter periods of time. The winter lull in business allowed

the U.P. to totally dieselize main line freights and big steam sat in long storage lines awaiting the summer upturn in business. I missed the fall rush of 1958 due to the demanding schedule of my Freshman year at the University of Nebraska, but second-hand reports of 800s through Valley and Fremont, Nebraska and larger power west of North Platte and around Cheyenne fueled my determination to not miss the show in

Continued to page 4.

# UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY is not affiliated with or supported by the Union Pacific Railroad.

Editor

**Greg B. Davies**

Associate Editors

**George R. Cockle**

**Richard E. Bulke**

Contributing Editors

**Mark W. Heinz**

**Tim Kaufman, S.J.**

Circulation Manager

**John H. Dow**

Production Manager

**Richard Bartholomew**

**ON THE SYSTEM** is published monthly by the UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY for the exclusive use of its membership. Contributions are accepted and invited and are subject to editing. Publication cut-off is the 15th of the month of issue. Address all correspondence, submissions and address changes to the UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 8082 'H' St., Omaha, NE 68127. Phone (402) 592-4811. Unsolicited material, manuscripts, photographs and artwork must be accompanied by a return SSAE. All photographs used will be reproduced at the discretion of the Editor and credit lines used when the information is known. UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY membership is \$20.00 per calendar year (12 issues). All rights reserved.

## COVER PHOTO —

Early in the morning of July 19, 1959, the 3710, an oil burning 4-6-6-4 sits under the coaling tower in North Platte in the company of F unit 1498.

Photo by R. L. Schmeling

# EDITORIAL

Since our beginnings we have been presenting mainly current happenings and material. Originally we planned on presenting historic type material with the idea of filling in the voids with current type material. The reasons we haven't presented more historic material is the fact that so much has been happening over the past several months of a current nature. Items such as the Rock Island equipment coming back and the appearance of the new power for this year and last and the changes in the fleet in general. This year has been a very active one so far. The historic material is still coming and will continue to come in the future, however, we do feel that presenting current material is just as important as presenting historic material in that what happens today will be historic tomorrow. We feel that once this event has happened it becomes history and since it is recent we can provide more accurate facts and information concerning the event. In later years the now current events will be the historical of the day and our hope is that our coverage today will have been better than trying to go back and figure out what happened several years after the fact.

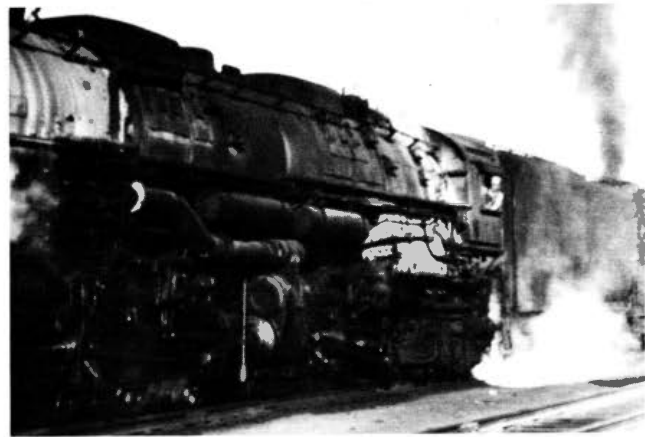
The original concept that was developed for the overall format of **ON THE SYSTEM** was to interface current events and historic material so as to keep everyone as interested and informed as possible. When we have no current material we will do nothing but historic material thus providing the continued issuance of our monthly publication. We have several more historic articles planned for this year and as more historic material becomes available we will present that in a manner we hope will be of interest to everyone.

If you would like to write an article, such as the one leading off this issue, please do so. If you have any historic material you would like to share with the other members of the organization please feel free to send us the material. We are always looking for contributions of any nature. Your contribution can be almost anything. It does not have to be as involved as our lead article. It can be as simple as a photograph or some factual information that an article could be built around. If you have any information, material or photographs which might be of interest please, at least, let us know what you have so if we need help with an article we will know who to go to get help from. If you do send material to us we will return any or all of it to you if you indicate what you want back. We are not collectors of historic material and photographs simply to be collectors. We want to share the material we have with you and would hope you would feel the same way and let everyone benefit from your collections and knowledge.

If you have any ideas for articles you would like to see and think would be of interest to the membership please let us know so we can go to work on preparing an article or two on that subject. We have all sorts of information available, from diagrams of all sorts to statistics and general information to either complete an article or idea or create an article around an idea from you. If you would like to see the historical society improve please contribute to it. This is your historical society not ours. We are only putting ideas and material together that are interesting and informative but without your feedback we have no idea if we are on the 'right track'.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

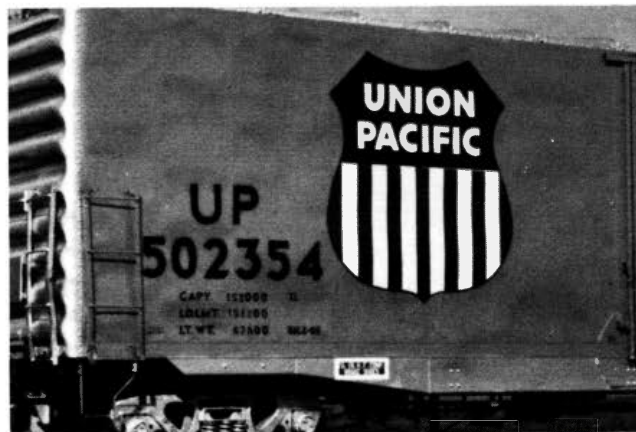
Volume 1, Number 9, September, 1980



The Last Weekend of Union Pacific Steam

Page 1

Freight Cars Leased to the Rock Island, Part 4



Page 9

Built	Builder Number	Weight	To Be Renumbered	Fast Forty Renumbering, Part 2
7/76	767021-1	392,000	3305	Fast Forty Renumbering, Part 2
7/76	767021-2	392,000	3306	
7/76	767021-3	392,000	3307	
7/76	767021-4	392,000	3308	
7/76	767021-5	392,000	3309	
7/76	767021-6	392,000	3310	
7/76	767021-7	392,000	3311	
7/76	767021-8	392,000	3312	
7/76	767021-9	392,000	3313	
7/76	767021-10	392,000	3314	
8/76	767021-11	392,000	3315	
8/76	767021-12	392,000	3316	

Page 7

# NEWS BRIEFS

On August 25th the I.C.C. issued a revised service order extending until November 30th the temporary operating authority for the U.P. currently providing voluntary service on portions of the Rock Island. The lines covered are Fairbury to Hallam, NE and Colby to Caruso, KS.

The I.C.C. approved U.P.'s application to acquire selected Milwaukee Road properties in the Pacific Northwest. Final approval on the purchase will come from the Reorganization Court of the Milwaukee Road.

Brand new C-30-7's received in August were 2500-2516, all built in August and starting with the builder number 43067. In all this order is for 40 units. Within several month the new SD-40-2's should be arriving. There will be another 160 to watch.

An order has been put out stopping the conversion of 'fast-forties'. Their were only nine changed and evidently they will stay changed. The units changed were 8017, 8042, 8049, 8035, 8036, 8043, 8047, 8059, and 8060.

SW-10, 1208, (ex 1828) was released from the Omaha Shops on August 4, 1980.

Sold to Precision National Corp. were DD-35, 77B, and GP-9, 328.

Bargins Galore again purchased units and sent them to J. Simon and Sons. This time it was GP-9, 330, GP-20, 475 and NW-2, 1027.

All of the DD-40X's are being prepared for long-term storage, at Las Vegas.

SD-45 (M?), 60, returned to North Platte this month for painting and numbering. The unit will be maintained in Salt Lake City, UT.

SW-10, 1206, was shipped to Albina, Oregon on August 30th.

# NEXT MONTH

1981 LOCOMOTIVE PROGRAM

U.Profile # 2: SD-7  
775

FAST FORTY RENUMBERING,  
Part 3

Continued from page 1.

1959.

By the summer of 1959 I had one year of college under my belt and was looking forward to some summer trips to catch the flood of steam that surely would be called out to help the yellow diesels and turbines handle the ever-increasing summer traffic. I worked in my home town of Superior, Nebraska, that summer, but I kept my intelligence network busy sending periodic status reports, all of which were negative as far as steam was concerned. The month of June of 1959 went by without a steam engine turning a wheel in main line service on the U.P., but the first part of July I received a phone call from Jim Seacrest, spending his summer in Lincoln, who had heard that some of the 3700 class oil-burning 4-6-6-4s had been placed in service between North Platte and Cheyenne. Jim and I arranged a trip for the weekend of July 18-19 which would have to begin Saturday afternoon because of my job. This put us into North Platte near dark, and we spotted no plumes of smoke nor wisps of steam at the North Platte roundhouse. The 1600 class Alco FA units dominated the freights east out of North Platte, and some 1400 class F units plus 200 and 300 class GP-9s powered the westbounds. We spent a listless evening watching 1100 class Alco switchers in multiples of two shove cars over the hump (which was the only hump in North Platte back in 1959) and marveled at the brand new 400 class SD-24 A and B units which had just been placed in service. As we bedded down for the night without having seen a sign of an active steam engine, we began to wonder if our trip had been a useless one. However, just before we drifted off to sleep, the deep tones of a steamboat whistle which belonged only to the big steam power of the Union Pacific gave us an

assurance that steam was running!

We were up early Sunday morning to catch what might be under the North Platte coaling tower in the good morning sun out of the east. Was the 3700 we had heard the night before still in town, or had a quick turn-around sent her back west before dawn? Now that was definitely smoke - not just a little puff of smoke from a diesel exhaust - but a good, big dose of smoke that meant STEAM ENGINE. The source of all the smoke proved to be the 3710 simmering next to F unit 1498 just east of the coaling tower. That was it. No other 3700s. Just one.

Even though it was July, the mornings in North Platte can be a bit chilly, and July 19, 1959, fit the pattern. It was just cool enough for the steam leaking out of the 3710 to gather in big clouds and hang just a bit - enough for a picture or two. As we stood burning up film the hostler on duty climbed into the cab. We saw him hesitate a bit, used to a steady diet of diesels for many months, and think carefully about proper procedure for moving a steam engine that has been sitting for several hours. One thing for sure, the cylinders had water in

them that had condensed over night, and it was standard procedure to open the cylinder cocks and blow the water out. A magnificent plume of steam came forth and almost completely concealed the 3710 as she was backed to the coaling tower, not for a load of coal since she was an oil burner, but to get a fresh load of sand.

A conversation with one of the roundhouse workers disclosed that the 3710 was not the only 3700 in use. Others were on their way east from Cheyenne and would arrive later in the morning. As the 3710 backed onto the turntable to enter the roundhouse for some standard servicing, we headed to the west end of the North Platte yards to catch the 3700s as they rolled in from the west. Several trains arrived with diesel power, and then a cloud of smoke in the west that meant another 3700. We got more than we had bargained for! The next freight had doubleheaded 3700s - something that normally didn't happen since a single 3700 was sufficient to haul even a very long train on the flatlands of the Platte Valley. The explanation was that traffic was not well balanced at that point in the summer. More westbounds were being run than eastbounds



Double headed U.P. 3715 and 3712 pass the small switchman's shack at the west end of the North Platte yard on their way east into the yard. Photo by R. L. Schmeling

148



**149**

The hostler on U.P. 3715 watches as the 3712 takes on a fresh load of fuel oil. The duo will then back up to allow the 3715 her turn. The engines will then be uncoupled and put in separate stalls in the roundhouse for further attention. Photo by R. L. Schmeling

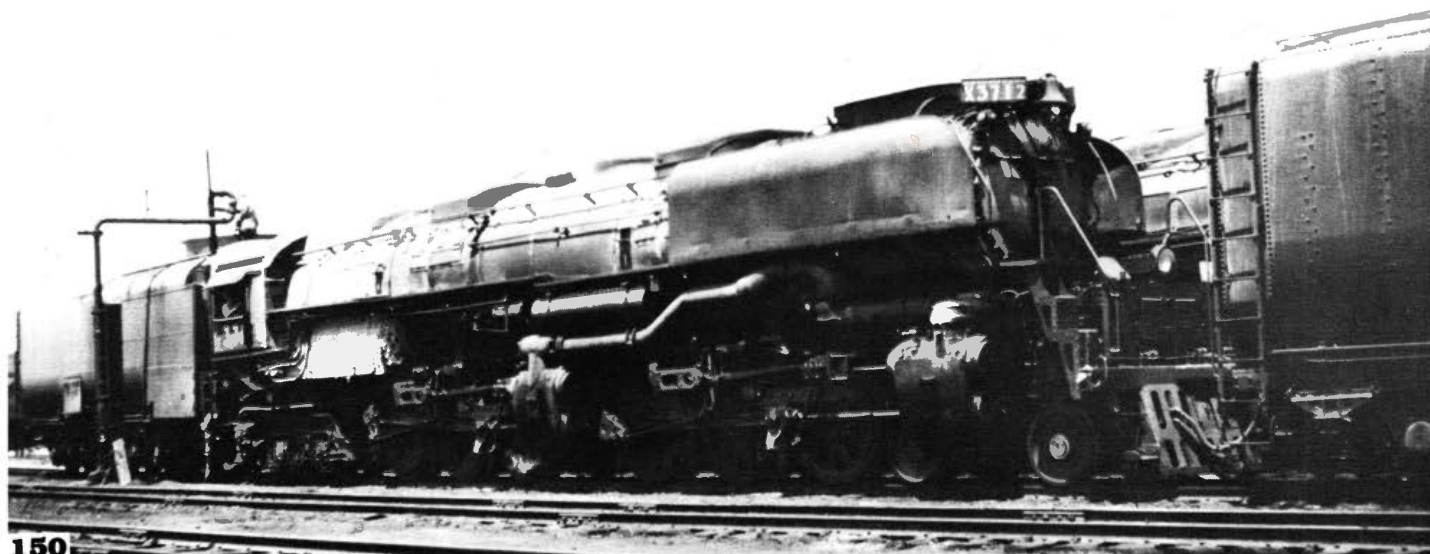
and the 3700s were coming back from Cheyenne in pairs to balance out power.

We followed 3715 and 3712 from the arrival yard where they were cut off as they ran light on the running track all the way to the east end of the yard where the roundhouse and steam servicing facilities were located. Their rods were a bit loose and gave out loud clanks as they drifted and the air pumps on the 3712 were in need of a little lubrication after her long period of storage and gave off a loud squeek. In turn the 3712 and

then the 3715 had their oil bunkers filled and then were uncoupled and backed individually into the roundhouse.

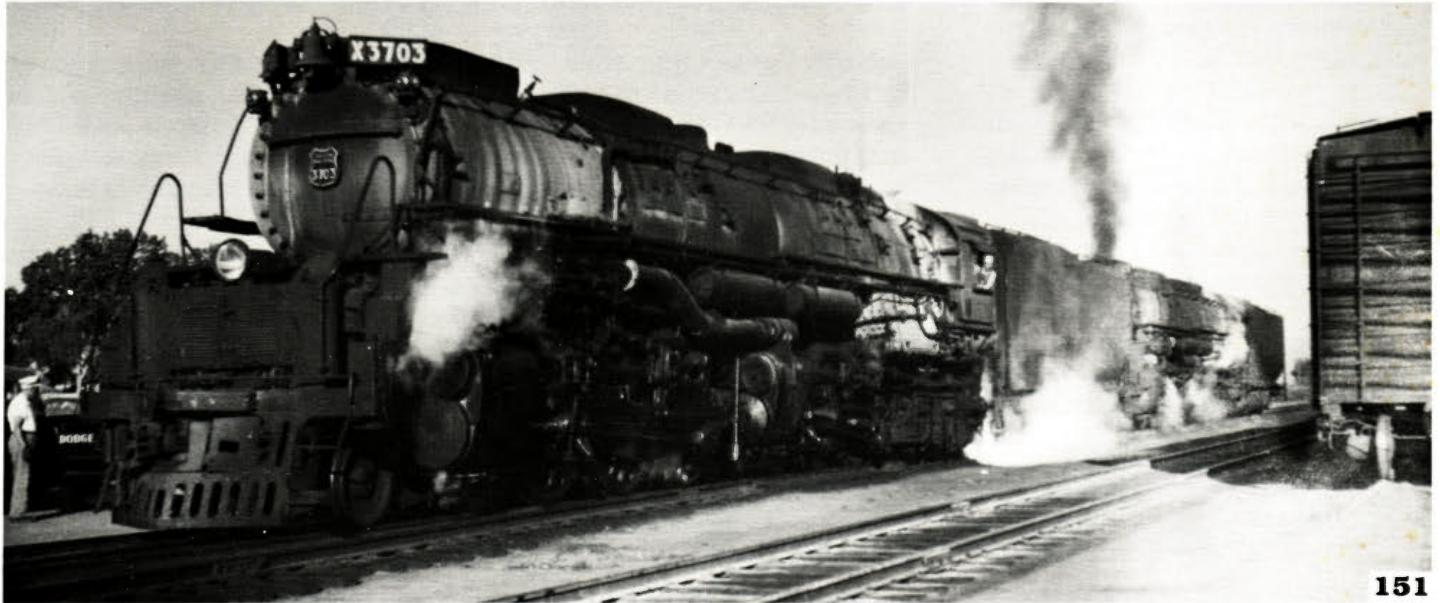
We raced back to the west end just in time to catch 3703 and 3707 blasting in from Cheyenne and then paced them on their leisurely journey east on the running track. As we caught some shots of this duo, the 3715 fully serviced and turned on the turntable, took off toward the west end of the yard to couple onto a westbound. We dashed west and found the 3715 already on her train and pumping air.

We decided to pace the 3715 west out of the yard by driving on a maintenance of way dirt road to the south of the tracks. 3715 wasted no time in getting the long westbound moving and the double exhausts went into and out of synchronization as the two sets of drivers dug in, slipped, and then caught again. The freight had worked up to about 35 mph and we were soaking up the show, paying little attention to the driving, when Jim gave a yell and we braked to a stop just short of a big pile of dirt where the MofW



**150**

The 3712, second engine of a double header gets her oil bunker refilled on the servicing track east of the North Platte roundhouse. Not all of the U.P. 4-6-6-4's were equipped with "elephant ear" smoke deflectors, but some of the 3700's wore them to the end. Photo by R. L. Schmeling



151

Even in their last moments of regular service, the 3700's, although a bit battered and worn, were equal to the task of moving heavy trains fast. Here 3703 and 3707 make their way back toward the coal tower and service area after bringing in an eastbound. Photo by R. L. Schmeling

road ended just opposite the dehydrating plant at Birdwood. It was now midafternoon, and a long drive would be necessary to put us back in eastern Nebraska in time for work on Monday morning. As we drove east out of North Platte, we made plans to return in a couple of weeks when traffic would build up to the point that the 800 4-8-4s and 3800 and 3900 4-6-6-4s would

surely be called out of storage to help move the tide of traffic. The middle of the next week negotiations between the steelworkers union and the nation's steel companies broke down and the workers went out on strike, shutting down the steel industry. The effect on railroad traffic was immediate and the 3700s quickly went back into storage. We waited in

vain the rest of the summer of 1959 for the steam rush that never came. Although we did not realize it at the time, we had witnessed the very last of Union Pacific steam in regular service that July weekend of 1959. Although it was ever so brief, that last glimpse of big steam on the Union Pacific will remain ever vivid in our memories.

R. L. Schmeling, Lincoln, NE



152

U.P. 3703 rests from the journey before backing under the coal tower and a short ride on the turntable where its ultimate destination will be the roundhouse where any necessary adjustments will be made before returning to the road. Photo by R. L. Schmeling

# FAST FORTY RENUMBERING,

## Part 2

On a cold but clear day in January of last year 8044 and several other units begin to move this train west from Council Bluffs. Photo by G. B. Davies



153



The combination of "fast-forty" and DD-40X has taken just about every possible order. Here 8047 lead two DD-40X's eastbound toward North Platte. The location here is Dix, NE on September 8, 1979.

Photo by G. B. Davies

154

Departing the North Platte yard on March 4, 1979 is 8049 and 8044. Their destination is somewhere west and from the looks of things will probably be on time. Photo by G. B. Davies



155

Current Number	Model	Builder	Built	Builder Number	Weight	To Be Renumbered
8035	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-1	392,000	3305
8036	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-2	392,000	3306
8037	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-3	392,000	3307
8038	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-4	392,000	3308
8039	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-5	392,000	3309
8040	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-6	392,000	3310
8041	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-7	392,000	3311
8042	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-8	392,000	3312
8043	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-9	392,000	3313
8044	SD-40-2	EMD	7/76	767021-10	392,000	3314
8045	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-11	392,000	3315
8046	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-12	392,000	3316
8047	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-13	392,000	3317
8048	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-14	392,000	3318
8049	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-15	392,000	3319
8050	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-16	392,000	3320
8051	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-17	392,000	3321
8052	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-18	392,000	3322
8053	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-19	392,000	3323
8054	SD-40-2	EMD	8/76	767021-20	392,000	3324
8055	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-21	392,000	3325
8056	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-22	392,000	3326
8057	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-23	392,000	3327
8058	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-24	392,000	3328
8059	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-25	392,000	3329
8060	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-26	392,000	3330
8061	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-27	392,000	3331
8062	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-28	392,000	3332
8063	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-29	392,000	3333
8064	SD-40-2	EMD	9/76	767021-30	392,000	3334



U.P. 8051 is leading 4 more 8000 class SD-40-2's west through Telecast, OR in May of 1977. All of this power will be needed for the ascent up the grades in the Blue Mountains which this train is headed for. Photo by G. B. Davies



# FREIGHT CARS LEASED TO THE ROCK, ~~TTT~~

## Part 4

Rock Island Car Number	A.A.R. Design.	Capacity (000 lbs.)	Inside Length	Built	No. of Cars	New U. P. Class	Union Pacific Car Number
88500-88549	HTS	154	56'-1"	1966	31	H-70-2	148125-148156
588500-588517	HTS	154	56'-1"	1966	<u>18</u>	<u>H-70-2</u>	148157-148174
					49	H-70-2	

Rock Island Car Number	A.A.R. Design.	Capacity (000 lbs.)	Inside Length	Built	No. of Cars	New U. P. Class	Union Pacific Car Number
102000-102097	HT	199	50'-10"	1971	94	H-100-21	41300-41393
602000-602004	HT	199	50'-10"	1971	<u>5</u>	<u>H-100-21</u>	41395-41399
					99	H-100-21	



U.P. 148159 is an ex R.I. chip car. Very few of these cars were changed in Council Bluffs as they were sent to the Northwest where they are to be used. This one is ready to leave on a westbound in May, 1980.

Photo by G. B. Davies

157

There were only five of these cars and I was in Council Bluffs when this one came over from the C&NW on a transfer run. R.I. 602001 is to be renumbered U.P. 41396. Photo by G. B. Davies



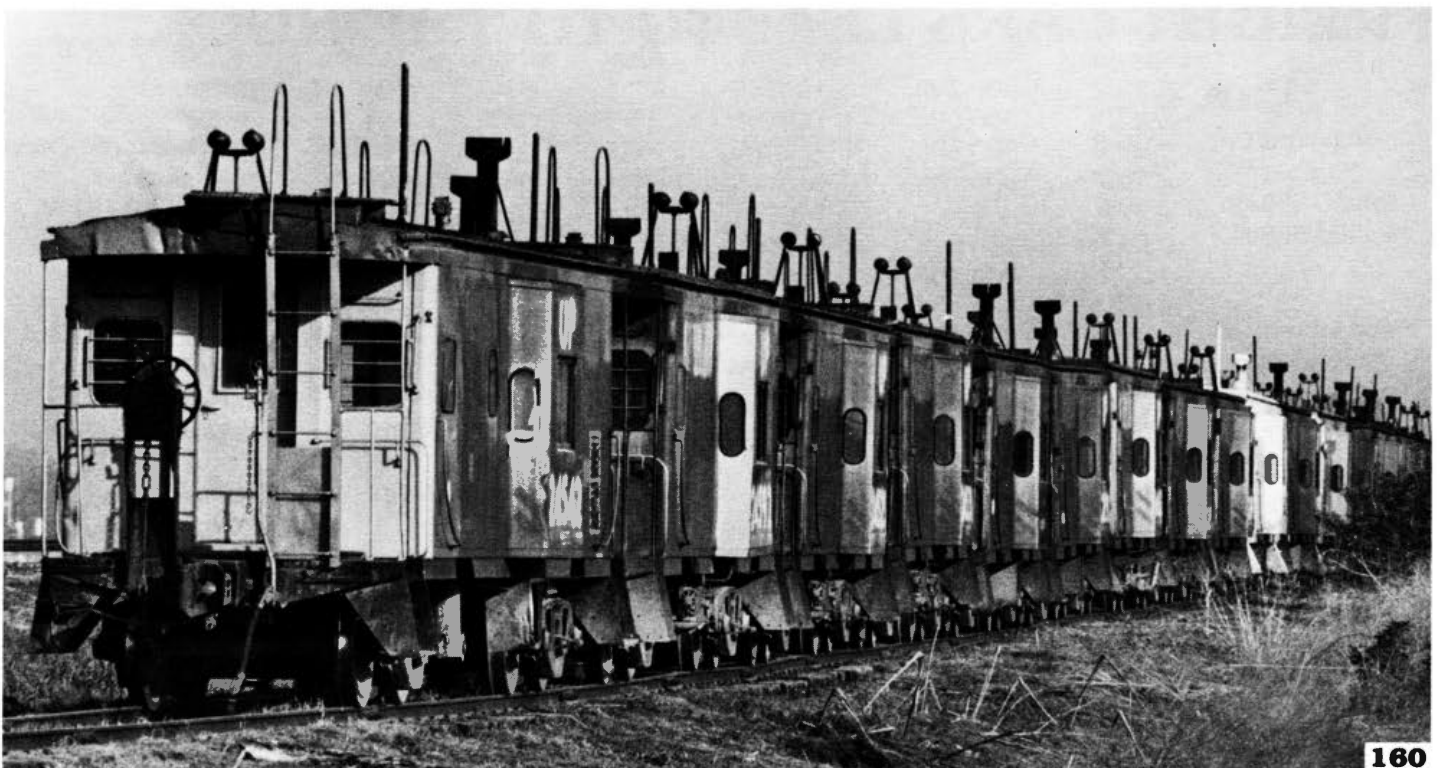
158



U.P. 41366 is in the Council Bluffs yard in May, 1980 after it had been changed over. The car is a box car red, well weathered, with white lettering. The above two cars are both in the blue schemes.

Photo by G. B. Davies

159



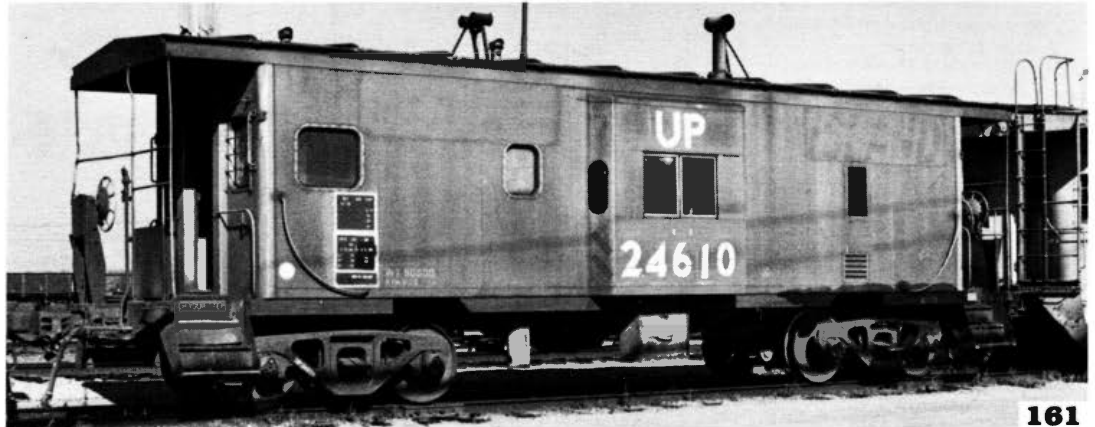
160

These are just a few of the ex R.I. cabooses located in Council Bluffs. Almost all have been renumbered but few are being used because they are not really equipped for interchange service. These cabooses comprise the new CA-13 class. Photo by G. R. Cockle

Rock Island Car Number	A.A.R. Design.	Capacity (000 lbs.)	Inside Length	Built	No. of Cars	New U. P. Class	Union Pacific Car Number
17082-17181	NE	-	-	1966/67	98	CA-13	24500-24599
17182-17211	NE	-	-	1970/71	29	CA-13	24600-24629
					<u>127</u>	<u>CA-13</u>	

U.P. 24610 is one of the R.I. cabooses the U.P. now owns. Very few of these have seen much service yet although most have been renumbered into the U.P. system. This one was in the Council Bluffs caboose service area in July, 1980.

Photo by G. B. Davies



161



162

This is the only CA-13 caboose to receive the complete repainting and renumbering into the standard U.P. caboose scheme. U.P. 24552 has been used as a prototype but it is doubted that many more will get this treatment.

Photo by G. R. Cockle

Rock Island Car  
Number  
97416-97421      Air Dump - Ballast

No. of  
Cars  
6      New U. P.  
Class  
M/W      Union Pacific Car  
Number  
907994-907999

U.P. 907999, M of W, air dump ballast car (ex R.I. 97421) has been lettered and is now ready for service again, only now on the U.P. Note the cars behind differing stages of behind in differing stages of work during May, 1980. The car is in basic box car red with white lettering. Photo by G. B. Davies



163

## RECAP, ROCK ISLAND LEASED FREIGHT CARS

288	BI-70-17	50'	Box Car - Insulated	50	F-100-16	61'	Flat Car - Bulkhead, Lumber
176	BC-70-9	50'	Box Car - Plain	49	H-70-2	56'	Open Hopper - Woodchip
371	B-70-13	50'	Box Car - Equipped	99	H-100-21	51'	Open Hopper - Coal, 100 ton
98	B-70-14	50'	Box Car - Equipped	6	M/W	-	Ballast - Air Dump
39	B-100-6	60'	Box Car - Equipped	<u>127</u>	CA-13	-	Caboose - Bay Window
464	CH-100-43	35'	Covered Hopper	<u>2837</u>	Total Cars		
9	CH-100-44	53'	Covered Hopper				
907	CH-100-45	49'	Covered Hopper				* 23 - Flat Car - Bulkhead, Wallboard
95	CH-100-46	49'	Covered Hopper				11 - Flat Car - Bulkhead, Brick
49	F-70-34	48'	Flat Car - Bulkhead*				<u>15</u> - Flat Car - Cable Reel
10	F-100-15	56'	Flat Car - Cable Reel				<u>49</u>



164

U.P. 502354 (ex R.I. 33341) is a B-70-13 class box car newly painted by the Omaha Car Shops in April, 1980. The car is painted yellow and silver with black lettering and colored shields. Photo by G. B. Davies

# LOCATION: Manhattan, KS

DATE: March 7, 1954 at mile post 120.5



165

U.P. 2860, a handsome 4-6-2, is departing the depot at Manhattan, KS with local train no. 40, the "Kansan" on March 7, 1954.

Photo by Thos. R. Lee

