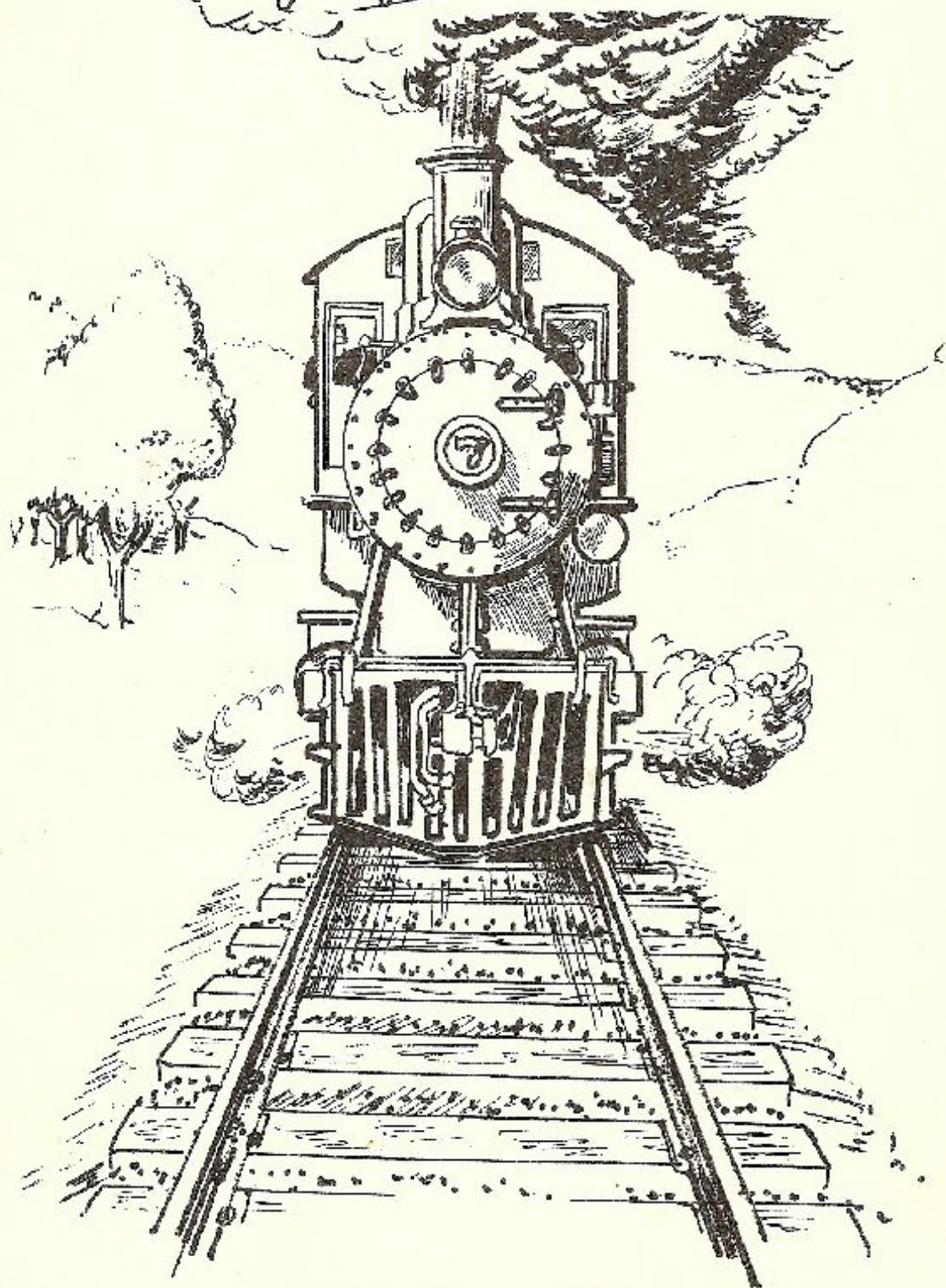


RAHWAY VALLEY RAILROAD

Saga of a Shortline



HISTORY
OF THE
RAHWAY VALLEY RAILROAD

Saga of a Short Line

by John J. McCoy

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FORWARD

In this, the two hundredth year of the Great American Experience, we find ourselves surrounded by the marvels of the Twentieth Century. We have watched our television screens while man walked on the surface of the Moon. Europe is just a few hours away via jet plane, and we are being told of still greater reduction in travel time about to become reality with the introduction of the supersonic transport plane.

With our environment structured by vast technological sophistication, where yesterday's unheard of is today's commonplace, it may be difficult for the reader to envision another time, a different era, when life moved much more slowly. A time when accomplishments now regarded as insignificant, took on the dimensions of inspirational and heroic achievements.

In the period following the Civil War, our Nation experienced a three-fold expansion; The opening of the West, The dawning of the machine age and the vast movement of populace brought on by immigration from Europe. In each of these phenomena, no other single factor played a more important part than the railroads.

The joining of the rails of the Union Pacific with the Central Pacific at Promontory Point, Utah in 1869, set the stage for rapid expansion, and as the "big fellows" threw lines across the length and breadth of the land, connecting major centers, it frequently remained the mission of the "short lines" to provide the needed service from the hinterland out to the "Main Line". The arrival of the railroad was celebrated here with all the enthusiasm and verve that the little country towns could muster.

This then, is the story of one of those short lines that survived the transition and carries on to this day.

The Author.

1976.

Kenilworth, N.J.

The RAHWAY VALLEY RAILROAD

The Saga of A Short Line

Early in 1894, a group of businessmen met in Elmira, New York to explore the feasibility of developing an industrial complex amid the hills and valleys in central New Jersey. The area had much to offer, inasmuch as it lay close to the New York industrial marketplace, as well as it's close proximity to the busy cities of Newark and Elizabeth, where skilled factory help could be found. Land was cheap in this largely undeveloped area, and transportation via main line railroads was also available.

This group made numerous trips to the Union County-Middlesex County area, and finally agreed on the choice locality in central Union County, close to Central Railroad of New Jersey's main line, at a juncture between Roselle and Cranford, known as Aldene.

The founding industries of the "cartel" were the Wright Saw and Machine Co., The Rica Musical Instrument Co., The Circular Loom Corp. and the Decorative Leather Co. This group incorporated as the New Orange Industrial Association, and soon broke ground for four factory buildings, which formed the backbone of the Association.

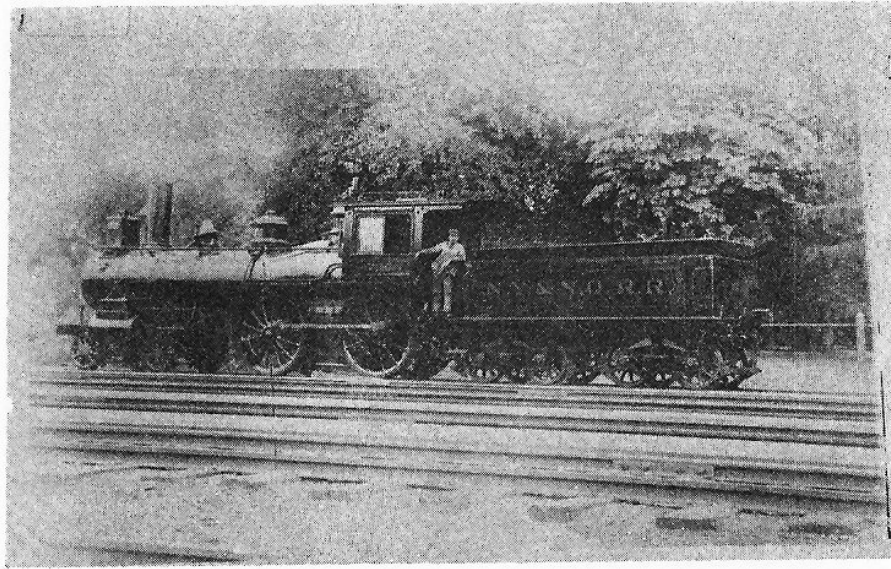
An integral part of the development and planning was the construction of a standard-gauge, privately-owned, short line railroad. This would be an essential link between the infant industries and the outside markets. The original application for a charter identified the railroad as the "JUNCTION FOUR R.R. " Examination of old records indicate this meant a joining of four industries, rather than a later definition of joining four railroads.

In April, 1897, the Legislature of the State of New Jersey granted a Certificate of Incorporation to the New Orange Industrial Association, and a Charter for a railroad to be known as the "New York and New Orange Railroad". This document provided for 11.8 miles of right of way, connecting the Industrial complex with the Central Railroad of N.J. at Roselle Park to the south, and extending north-west to the City of Summit, where a connection was to be made with the Lackawanna Railroad.

The first board of officers for the little pike were; W. W. Cole; President, C. M. Tompkins; General Manager, H. F. Dankel; Secretary Treasurer, and Levy Naylor; Trustee. These gentlemen engaged a well-known local civil engineer and topographer, Mr. J. Wallace Higgins, to lay out the initial right of way for the four mile stretch, Roselle Park to New Orange, temporary terminal of the line, with a spur linking the line with the Lehigh Valley Railroad, at the Chestnut St. Freight house, also in Roselle Park, as provided for in the charter.

Surveys were started in the heat of summer, 1897. Mr. Higgins was assisted by Anthony Grippo, a local surveyor. Working north from Aldene, the crew found the approach to New Orange obstructed by a well known landmark; "Tin Kettle Hill", an eminence rising 80 feet above grade, and 140 feet above the average mean level of the surrounding countryside. The engineers overcame this obstacle by laying the line with a 90° right curve around the base of the old hill and reversing with another 90 left, thereby avoiding much cut and fill operations. Due to inadequate funding, the line was terminated 100 yards beyond the factories, and the depot built and proudly named "New Orange."

Local drag-line crews were hired, timber cut, and as grade, ballast and rails were laid, a Central engine and several flat cars were leased to complete the line thru the poultry farms and orchards to the end of track.



Engine No. 1, on the day it arrived.
Photo: Warren Crater.



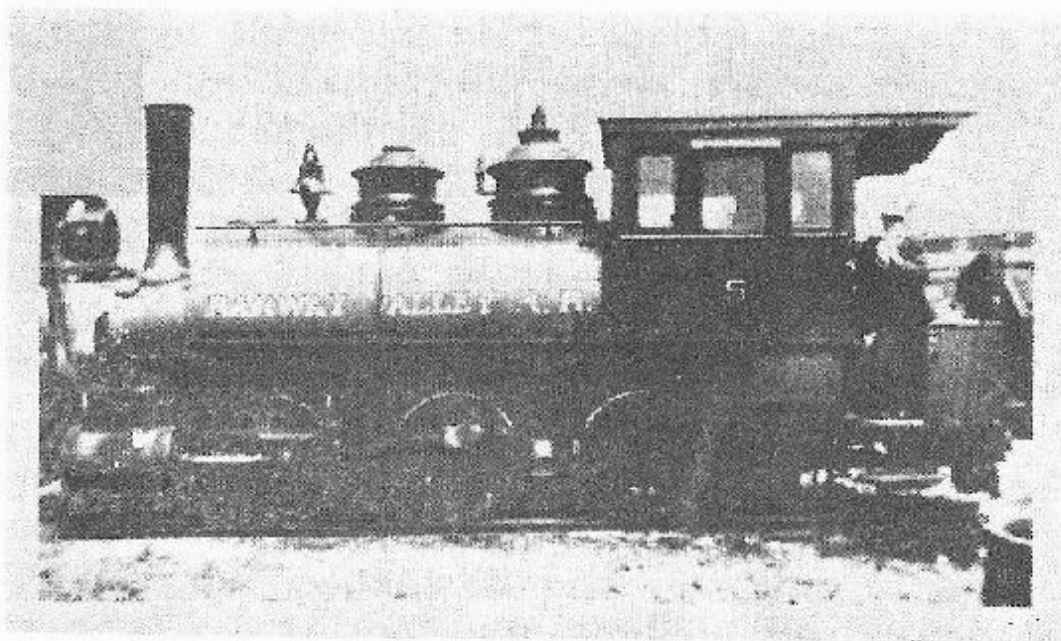
New Orange Depot, Headquarters of N.Y. & N.O.
photo taken in 1902. Still standing in 1976.

The trustees purchased the first locomotive, a tall-stacked American 4-4-0, second-hand, from the Northern Central Railroad. Freshly back-shopped, painted and lettered "New Orange No.1", the pride of the infant pike arrived July, 1898 at the Roselle Park yards in an eastbound freight. Her long pilot, piston rods and slide valves crated in the tender. She was turned over to Duane Kimball, a qualified engineer hired from the Jersey Central, and a few days later, under steam, glided over the new 70 lb. rails into New Orange, amid much whistle blowing and cheering from the local populace gathered along the right of way. The new depot was the scene of great speech making.

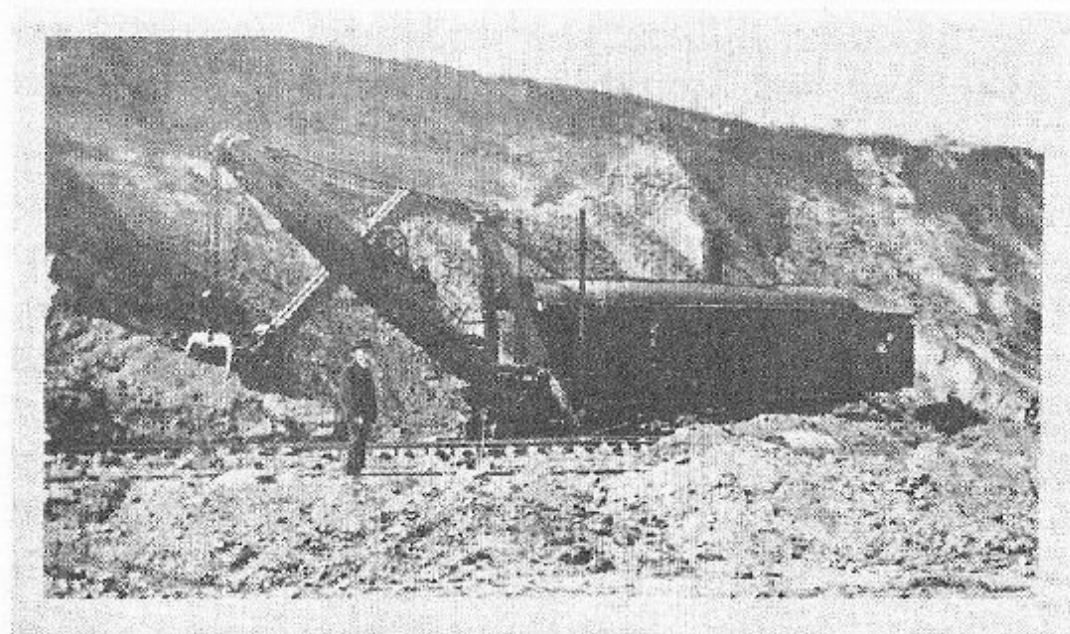
An open-end day coach and combine were secured, again second hand, from the Jersey Central, and made up the regular daily passenger consist. No.1 handled both the "varnish" and the drilling of freight. No freight cars were ever purchased or built by the line, and foreign freight cars were leased as needed.

The arrival of the Eastern Tanning Corporation's new tannery on the banks of the Rahway River, now the Monsanto plant area, one mile west of the line at New Orange, required the construction of a spur in two tangents, connected mid-way by a reverse curve. This double curve was to become the scene of many derailments

Between 1900 and 1904, freight traffic fluctuated with business conditions. Another 4-4-0 was purchased, a former C.N.J. camelback and an 0-6-0 T saddle tanker, known as "Dinkey" No. 5, all came to the railroad and saw service. While freight business was marginal, passenger service boomed in the early days. The area had few roads, mostly wagon trails, impassable during prolonged bad weather. Students commuting to Upsala College in New Orange, city dwellers from Jersey City, Bayonne and Elizabeth crowded aboard the Central excursion trains, changing at Aldene for the N.Y. & N.O. for the remainder of their trip to one of the many picnic groves along the line.



Engine No. 5, saddle tank, known as "Dinkey"



Removal of "Tin Kettle Hill" in 1903.

In 1903, a bold and expansive development by one of the rail giants made a brief but tremendous impact on the N.Y. & N.O., as well as the surrounding countryside. The original main line, New York to Philadelphia on the Pennsylvania Railroad ran thru Newark to the terminus at Jersey City, on the banks of the Hudson, where passengers and freight were transhipped via steam ferryboat and lighter to Manhattan. An enterprising railroader from Georgia, Mr. W. G. McAdoo, constructed a tunnel beneath the river, from New York to Jersey City, thru which he ran an electric railway, and on across the South Kearny meadows, paralleling the Penn. main line to a terminal in Newark, with a passenger interchange with the Penn, at a point called Manhattan Transfer. This service reduced the arrival time for Penn. R.R. trains from the west and south by thirty minutes. Encouraged by Mr. McAdoo's success, the Penn built a tunnel under the mighty Hudson at the site of their projected multi-million terminal at 33rd. St. Manhattan.

The approach required the construction of a 4-mile electric rail line, elevated well above the tidal marshland, connecting with the old main line at Manhattan Transfer. For the enormous job of back-fill, embanking and grading, millions of cubic yards of fill dirt were required.

Among other sites, Tin Kettle Hill was purchased, the removal of which brought intense activity to the little N.Y. & N.O. Railroad. Wide eyed locals watched as gigantic steam shovels recently brought up from the newly-completed Panama Canal, began "moving the mountain". Long trains of earth filled gondolas moved out to the connecting lines eastward to the "Kearny high line".

When completed, the Pennsylvania rode serenely over the transplanted soil where General George Washington's colonial soldiers kept watch for the British at Elizabeth in 1776.

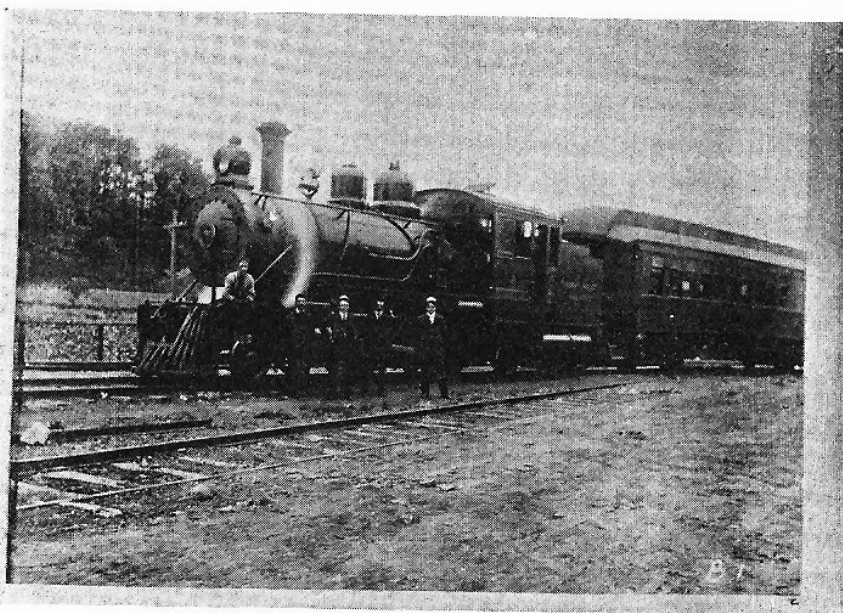
In 1904, a series of financial crisis overtook the N. Y. & N.O. and it's parent company; the New Orange Industrial Association. Brought about by the failure of the Baron Hirsch Clothing Co., plus a nation wide business recession, the sharp decline in freight car loadings brought the little pike to the brink of disaster. Default and reorganization followed.

The new Board of Trustees was headed by Louis Keller a distinguished citizen of Summit, N.J. Mr. Keller was the well known publisher of the Social Register, the Blue Book of High Society.

Mr. Keller and his associates recognized the problems of the little railroad, and discerned it's potential as a money maker if it could be completed to the City of Summit, as originally chartered. In his planning, Mr. Keller, who was a member of the Board of Stewards of the Baltusrol Golf Club, provided for a station near the Clubhouse on the new line, to accomodate golfing friends from New York.

Reorganization brought new financing and a new name; RAHWAY VALLEY RAILROAD, so called as the line follows in a general way, the contour of the Rahway River across Union County. The name New Orange no longer existed as a locality, the area having been incorporated as the BOROUGH of KENILWORTH in 1907, and the old depot so designated.

Construction began anew, rails were laid northward, where, one mile from the old end of track, a local farmer, one John Doty persuaded the railroad to erect a freight and passenger station to serve the area. "Doty's Station" was built where U.S. Route 22 now crosses the right of way. This depot was later moved 600 yards north in 1911 when a 3-mile spur was built thru Union Township, the stop being called "Branch Junction Station". This spur is of interest as it was the only railroad entering Union Township, with it's own depot called "Unionbury", the line leaving Union and entering Essex County at "Newark Heights", now called Maplewood.



Engine No. 7, Baldwin 2-4-4 Tank, and crew of
Passenger train, taken at Kenilworth, 1910



Crew of Passenger Train poses beside No. 3
Photo taken in 1909, (l.to r.)
Jack Shallcross, Glen Halliday, Mike Tiroley,
Frazee Haines, Charlie Lang and Joe Shallcross.

NEW ORANGE

TO

PARK VIEW

Via NY&NO-LV

Form L

246

Agent's Stub. Not Good for Passage



GOOD FOR ONE FIRST CLASS PASSAGE FROM

NEW ORANGE TO PARK VIEW

VIA ROSELLE

When officially stamped and dated and presented with coupons attached
In selling tickets and checking baggage to points on other roads,
this Company assumes no responsibility beyond its own road. Free
transportation allowed for 150 lbs. baggage (weighting apparel) only,
and Company's liability expressly limited to \$1 per lb. The coupons
relating to this ticket will be void if detached.

Form L

E. W. Thompson
Gen'l Manager

RETURN BY



On account LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD

One First Class Passage

ROSELLE to PARK VIEW

This coupon is not good if detached

New Orange to Park View

Form L

246



One First Class Continuous Passage

NEW ORANGE to ROSELLE

This coupon is not good if detached

New Orange to Park View

Form L

246

The main line had previously been extended north-westward thru Springfield, where another freight and passenger station was built, and eventually reached it's terminal at Summit.

The story is told how disaster struck, as the line was being built toward Springfield. The grading crew knocked off work at sundown, about 450 yards west of Branch Junction. Returning the next morning, found that about 100 cubic yards of fill had disappeared into the marshland on the approach to the Rahway River. Considerable delay in the construction timetable resulted while a coffer dam was built and the soft footings removed. A firm bed was found somewhat lower and grillage dropped. The Rahway River span itself redesigned from the original plate span to a heavier truss bridge, mounted on stronger reinforced abutments.

The earth of Tin Kettle Hill, hauled away for another railroad, could have very well served the Rahway Valley itself.

Westward, stations and freight houses were built at Mountain Ave., Springfield and Baltusrol, near the Shunpike. After some cutting and considerable fill the stiff 4° grade reached Summit. Here a passenger station was erected near Russel Place, the freight depot itself was built at the end of track at Broad Street. The terminal was equipped with a passenger platform, team tracks and a water tank.

Altho the New Jersey State Charter granted a connection with the Lackawanna, the bigger road, operating under Federal I.C.C. rules chose to ignore the many court orders served on him by the Rahway Valley for access to his main. It would be many years before the big Class I carrier would consent to the connection.

Meanwhile, the little 4-4-0's were finding the Summit grade too stiff. Cutting the train at Springfield and "doubling the hill" became standard operating procedure. The management met this problem with new motive power acquisition. A second-hand Mogul and the road's first new locomotive, No. 7, a custom

built 2-4-T, double ended, built by Baldwin in 1905. This locomotive proved equal to the grades and tight curves with the passenger consist, it operated economically on this run, where frequent stops required constant acceleration and braking. Since the arrival at Aldene was timed to make connections with New Jersey Central trains, the schedule had to be closely maintained.

As freight traffic became heavier, the 2-6-0's with smaller drivers took over from the American, which went into limbo.

Other improvements included the erection of a new station at Warren St. and the roundhouse, both located just west of the Kenilworth Depot.

Just prior to the dark years of World War I, another giant industry was beginning to stretch it's infant arms. The French invention; Lumiere's Moving Picture was perfected by Thomas A. Edison for mass viewing in 1904, and "plot pictures" were developing into a new world of entertainment. By 1909, the young industry, based in Bergen County, N.J. began scouting nearby areas for locations for outdoor thrillers. The bucolic countryside and the leisure schedule of the Rahway Valley Railroad, brought the movie makers to Kenilworth. Horses were rented from a nearby livery stable, and train crews were enlisted and production of the 2 and 3 reelers began. Edison, Biograph and Esanay did several films, including such epics as "The Switchman's Daughter" and "The Midnight Flyer".

The railroaders enjoyed the \$1.00 per day bonus as well as the free beer and lunch furnished by the movie makers.

This pleasant activity came to an abrupt end when a movie technician accidentally blew up a shack along the right of way, sending 4 actors to the hospital in Elizabeth, blowing out all the windows in the depot, and bringing down the curtain on a glamorous era for the Rahway Valley.

From the first day rails were laid, the railroad provided employment for many local residents. Old timers still living in the area, recall old Mike Tirole, engineer and Charley Lang, Frasee Haines and Glen Halliday. "Handsome Jack" Shallcross was the popular conductor on the passenger run, and the brakeman was Joseph Shallcross. All operating railroaders were heroes to the local children. The sadness felt by all when brakeman Buck Hurden lost both legs in a switching accident at Summit.

The Maintenance of Way crew included the names of Rego, Scaramuzzino, Rustelli, Romeo, Vitale, Amoroso and genial Pietro Moscaro, all of whom have descendants still residing in the area today. Henry Snyder was the engineer who later made the transition from steam to diesel locomotives.

The friendliness between the railroad and the local citizenry was an indication of the high regard and dependency upon the rails felt by the public in those times.

Freight business before World War I was only fair to marginal, until an influx of new industry; Eastern Tanning Corp., American Can Co., The Chiclet Co., American Laundry and Machine Co., and numerous coal and ice "docks", lumber yards and a big gravel quarry on the Summit grade, all became important shippers of increasingly heavier freight manifests.

For a brief period preceeding the entry of the United States into the war, the Government adopted the policy of "cash and carry" in the sale of munitions to the belligerent nations. Two munitions plants were built along the Rahway Valley tracks. A gunpowder plant was built by American Can Co., in a desolate area on the banks of the Rahway River in Kenilworth. Early production from both this plant and the "Fireworks Factory" on the Unionbury Branch was consigned to Czarist Russia, and shipped via the Rahway Valley to east coast ports for transshipment overseas.

One tragic day in October, 1915, an explosion in a loading cell rocked the area, killing several workers and injuring many more. The ensuing fire threatened a cut of several boxcars loaded with munitions. The plant's armed guards threw a cordon around the perimeter in expectations of a major disaster.

A crew from the Rahway Valley coolly backed their locomotive into the string of loaded cars, now beginning to smoke, coupled up and slowly withdrew from the scene. As the wood sheathed boxes rolled across the 8th. St. crossing, hose crews of the Kenilworth Volunteer Fire Dept. wet down the train, preventing the tragedy which seemed certain to destroy the plant.

A similar disaster virtually destroyed the Union-bury plant, and rumors of spies and saboteurs of Imperial Germany were rife. Railroad officials hired a number of local sharpshooters and railroad property was guarded around the clock.

Upon the entry of the United States into the Great War, American Can Co. increased it's facilities and stepped up production, which was now going to the U. S. Armed Forces. To provide the large numbers of war workers needed in this sparsely populated area, the N. J. Central Railroad ran several special trains daily from Jersey City, Bayonne and Elizabeth, over Rahway Valley tracks directly to the plant. The C.N.J. brought in as many as 5,000 arsenal workers for the three shifts.

Faced with the tremendous effort of all-out war production and troop movements, The U.S. Government took over the railroads. The Office of the U. S. Railroad Administration issued a directive that, where possible, all main and branch lines were to be connected to facilitate the movement of war material. This offered the Rahway Valley another chance to press for it's long sought connection with the Lackawanna, a scant 300 feet from it's Summit terminal. The Federal order read, in part; "necessary trackwork, frogs and switches shall be laid at the convenience of the receiving line."

During the several attempts to make the connection, the Lackawanna found it convenient to move a switch engine up and down the line, frustrating the track gang. No switch was installed until many years after the war.

In 1922, Mr. Keller died. Publication of the Social Register continued under the able hand of his secretary; Miss Bertha Eastman. There was no able hand however, to run the Rahway Valley. Before long, it became evident that an able hand, and a strong hand would be required to put the railroad back into shape. Passenger service was on the wane, freight revenues declined, and the property deteriorated.

Mr. Keller's heirs sought and found their man; Roger Clark, a railroader with much experience in managing short-line railroads in the Pacific Northwest.

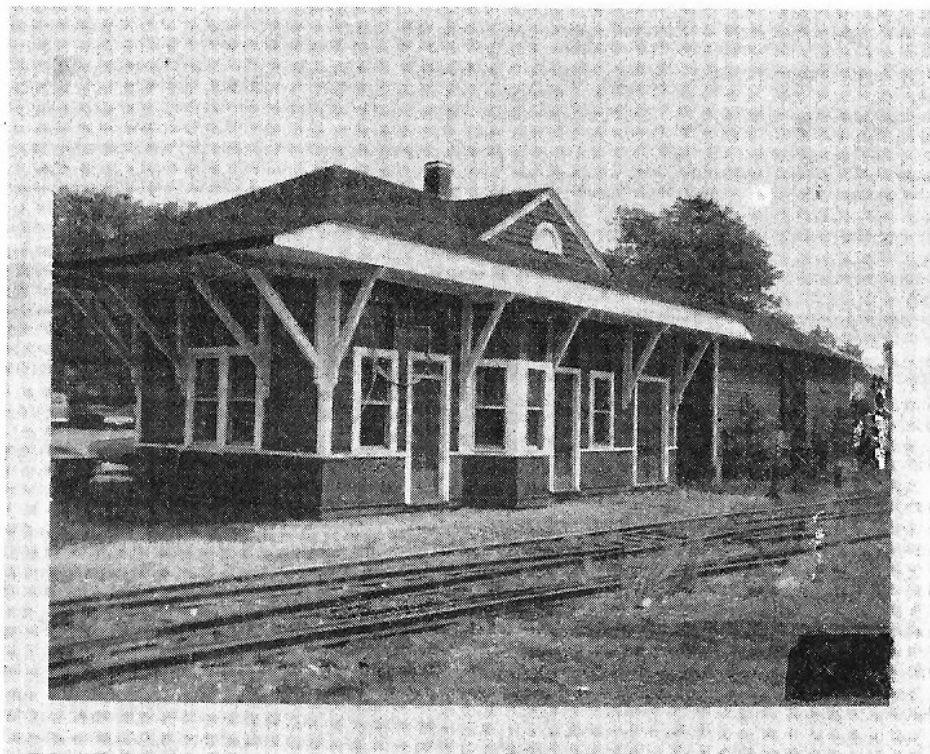
Arriving with his son, George Clark, he found upon taking over as General Manager, the little pike was sadly neglected and in default. As realistic men, the Clarks applied their hard-nosed business experience to rebuilding the road and cultivating the freight accounts.

Meanwhile the automobile had made it's entrance upon the American scene. Improved roads had begun to erode railroad passenger service, until in 1919, all daily passenger service was terminated. Occasionally, the Rahway Valley ran a mixed train, the passenger coach coupled to the end of the freight to Summit, to keep the State Franchise alive. No. 7, pride of the line, was sold, and was last seen running somewhere in South America, as late as World War II. A gas motor coach was tried experimentally but also discarded. A trolley car line was built between Aldene and Kenilworth, and gave partial service in replacing the railroad.

The Clarks gradually replaced the worn out locomotives with newer engines. Soliciting new business and re-establishing old customers aggressively, the new management gradually moved the balance sheet from red to black.



Springfield Station, photo taken Feb. 1913



Springfield Station, September, 1975

At long last, in 1931, the Lackawanna, feeling the effects of the great depression finally agreed to the long delayed connection with the Rahway Valley. The switch was installed, and at last the R.V.R.R. became a trunk line.

Upon the death of Roger Clark in 1938, his son, George succeeded his father as General Manager, as well as president of the road. Treasurer and V. Pres. posts were filled by Paul Donovan. The depression dragged, and hard times kept the Rahway Valley's profits marginal. George Clark managed the road with firmness and frugality. His vigorous personality soon became legend. Many antidotes are still told about this giant of a man. There was the time he attended the annual conference of Presidents of Eastern Railroads. Upon conclusion of the final session, it was the custom for these officials to exchange passes. As one prominent head of a 10,000 mile Class I carrier exchanged cards with Clark he joked that it was a poor trade to exchange with the little 14-mile single track pike. Whereupon the Rahway Valley's president cracked " your lines might be longer, pal, but mine is just as wide.

Housewives along the R. V. were occasioned to phone complaints about the short-stacked Baldwin spotting their laundry, drying on back yard lines, with soot. Clark's replies are not considered quoteable in polite company.

The old roundhouse near Warrent St. had been destroyed by a hurricane, and was replaced by a 2-stall engine house near the Kenilworth depot, which remained railroad headquarters.

Engine repairs and service was conducted in the Kenilworth shop. Heavy back shopping was done under contract with the Lackawanna's Kingsland, N.J. shops. Bad order cars were repaired at the Kenilworth shops. Coaling the Baldwins was done every morning by hand, the most arduous task of the day. Old caboose No. 101 succumbed to termites and rust and was replaced by a newer hack, No. 102, purchased second-hand from the Lackawanna in 1932. The old passenger combine served as maintenance of way car, until it to, went the way of rust and rot.

During this period, motive power included No. 12, a Baldwin consolidation (ex- Bessemer & Lake Erie) and identical twins, Baldwin 2-8-0's Nos. 13 & 14, (ex-Lehigh & New England), both built in 1905.

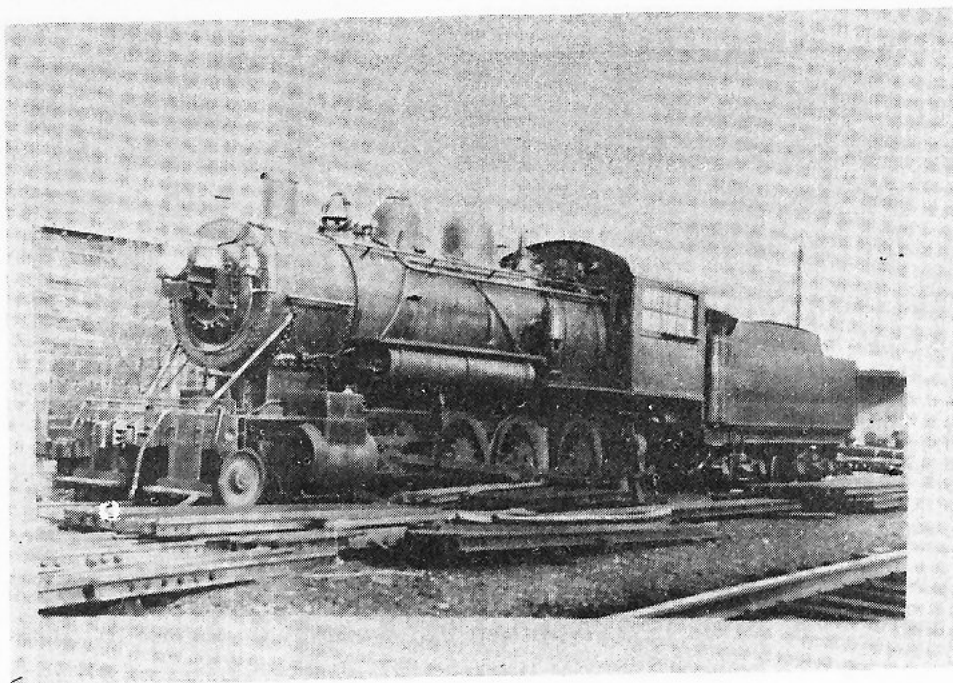
With the casting of the long sinister shadows of the approaching of World War II in 1939, the Rahway Valley purchased it's last steamer, No. 15, another 2-8-0, built by Baldwin in 1916.

The boom and bustle of the second great war found new plants springing up along the Rahway Valley right of way. the railroad's subsidiary Rahway Valley Realty Co. skillfully sold off it's adjacent parcels to industries who would provide the road with business.

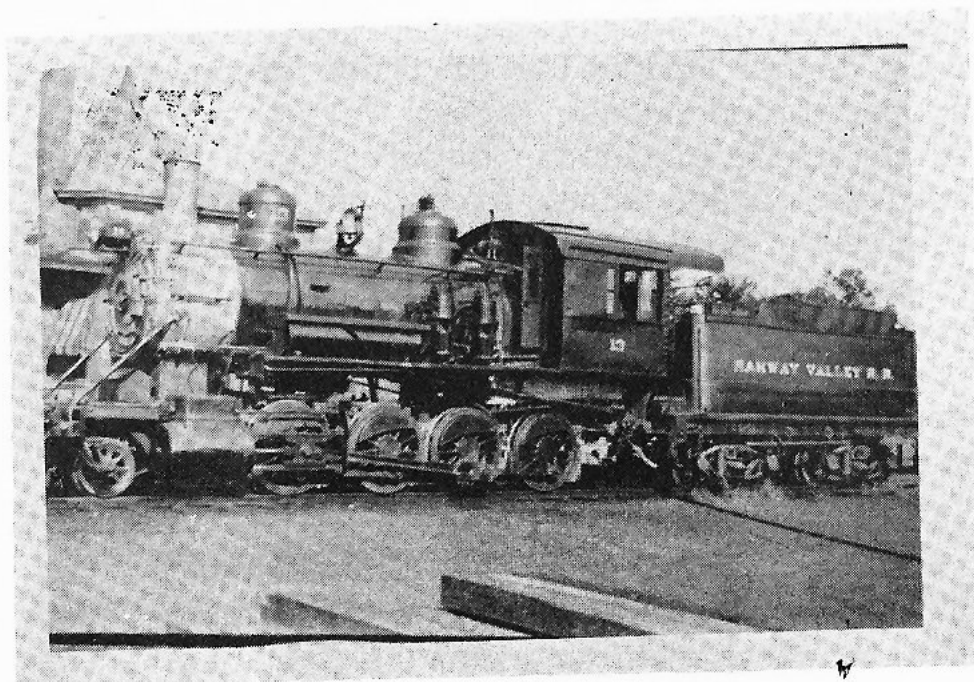
Competition became brisk and sometimes unfair. As far back as the late twenties, the constantly improving motor vehicle proliferated. It's rapid growth pushed the construction of many new and improved highways, which began to crisscross the rail lines with grade crossings. The Rahway Valley was no exception to this hazard. New Jersey Routes 28 and 29 (now U.S.22) as well as numerous county and local roads began laying their macadam rugs across the right of way.

Not only the loss of local freight, but the ever-present danger and delay of these grade crossings made operations on the Rahway Valley arduous. Numerous minor accidents occurred over the years, none of serious consequence, except an incident in 1969, when a heavy New York-bound tractor trailer hit the front end of Diesel No. 17, derailling the engine and extensively damaged the truck. Service was restored on the railroad almost immediately. The Route 22 crossing remains a threat to rail traffic to this very day.

While the R.V. has been spared the grief of disastrous wrecks, one serious derailment occurred on Nov. 20th., 1970, when four heavy closed hopper cars, consigned to the Monsanto plant in Kenilworth went on the



Engine No. 12, ex- Bessemer & Lake Erie,
Photo taken April, 1939 : Warren Crater.



Engine No. 13, and twin, No. 14 were bought
from Lehigh & New England, built 1905.
Photo : Warren Crater.

ground on the S-curve at the 14th. St. crossing. The street was blocked for 12 hours, while the wreck crew, aided by Civil Defense volunteers flood lighting the area, jacked up the heavy cars, rails were re-laid and the cars removed.

A full generation before, shortly after the completion of the Summit grade, a cut of four freight cars, improperly dogged down, commenced a merry trip down hill, careening around curves, storming across many wagon road crossings, flashed thru Springfield. Except from frightening a team of merchant's horses, the "Phantom" sped thru town without incident, rolling to a stop on the Rahway River span, a distance of three miles.

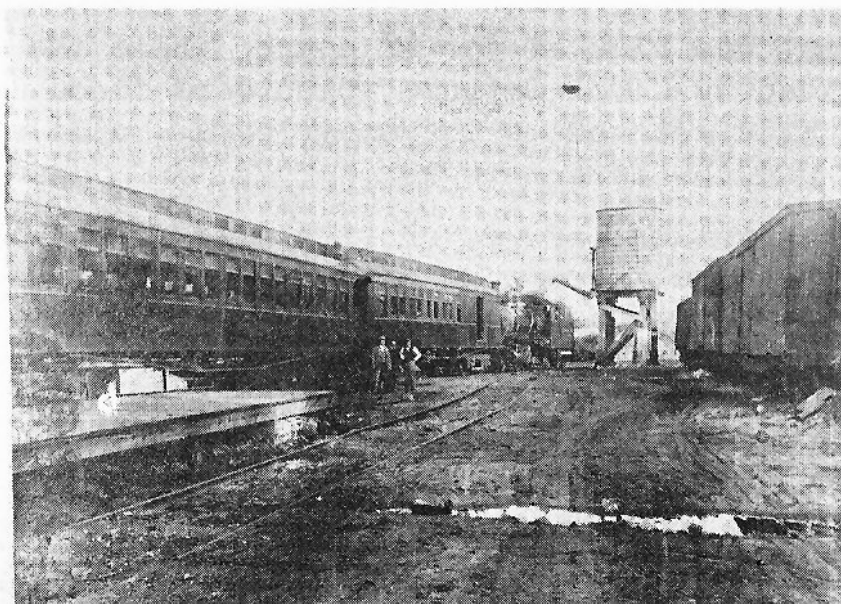
In the spirit of economy, cinders from the ash pit were used along the right of way to keep weeds under control. During the dry spring and fall months the steamers, with the Johnson bar well down, barked out with a shower of sparks, picturesque perhaps, but a dread to the local volunteer Fire Departments.

In 1951, George Clark, faced with heavy repairs on Nos. 13 and 14, resolved to scrap both, the profit going toward the purchase of the first Diesel.

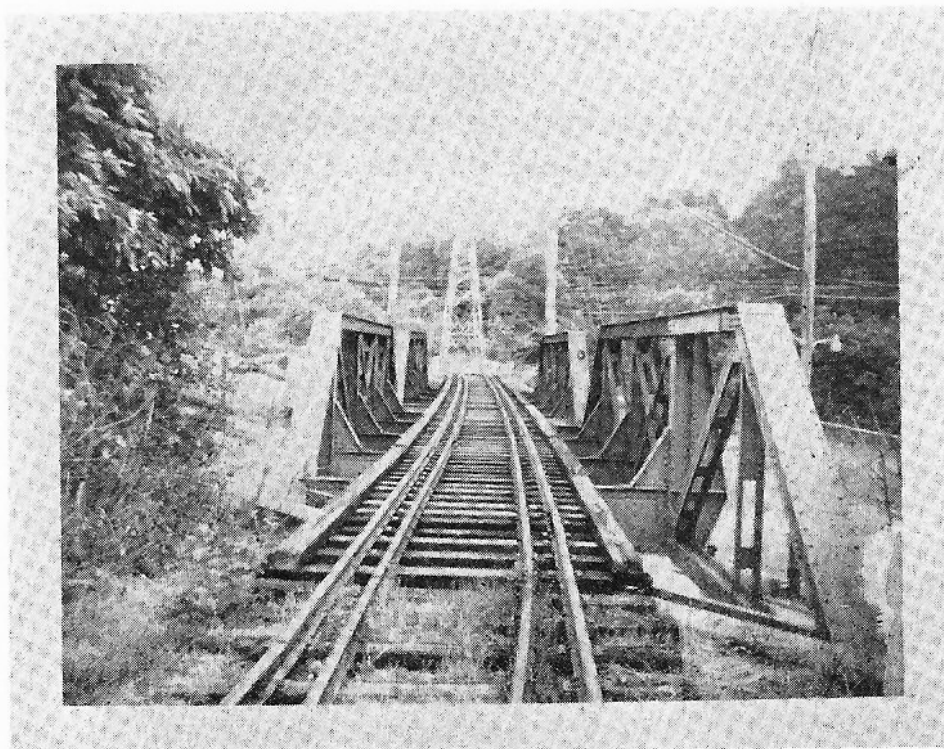
General Electric built a 600 hp. engine weighing 70 tons, which was delivered Jan. 15, 1952, and numbered No. 16. The Baldwin, No. 15 was given new boiler tubing, wedges and bearings and continued in service on standby duty until the following year when the diesel was pronounced a success, and an identical unit, No. 17 was ordered and delivered.

The road's last steamer, No 15 was purchased by Mr. Nelson Blount of Bellows Falls, Vermont for his Steamtown Museum, where it can be seen today.

The post war years favored the road with fair and steady profits. Operating thru the Rahway Valley Co., lessee, saw 1946 as the banner year with a net of \$70,800.00 Economies continued and per diam charges kept minimal.



Summit Terminal, Engine 7 taking water., 1915.
 Connection with Lackawanna not yet made.
 Photo : Warren Crater.



Summit, showing Rahway Valley bridge and
 connection with Lackawanna main line in
 background. Photo taken September, 1975.

In time however, the railroad's industrial land development faded, the last plants to locate on the line being the Berry Steel Co. (later the Jones & Loughlin Co.) and the White's Pharmaceutical Laboratory (later Schering Inc.), both with freight sidings. By the early 1960's the Rahway Valley Co. had little land left, and motor truck competition keener than ever.

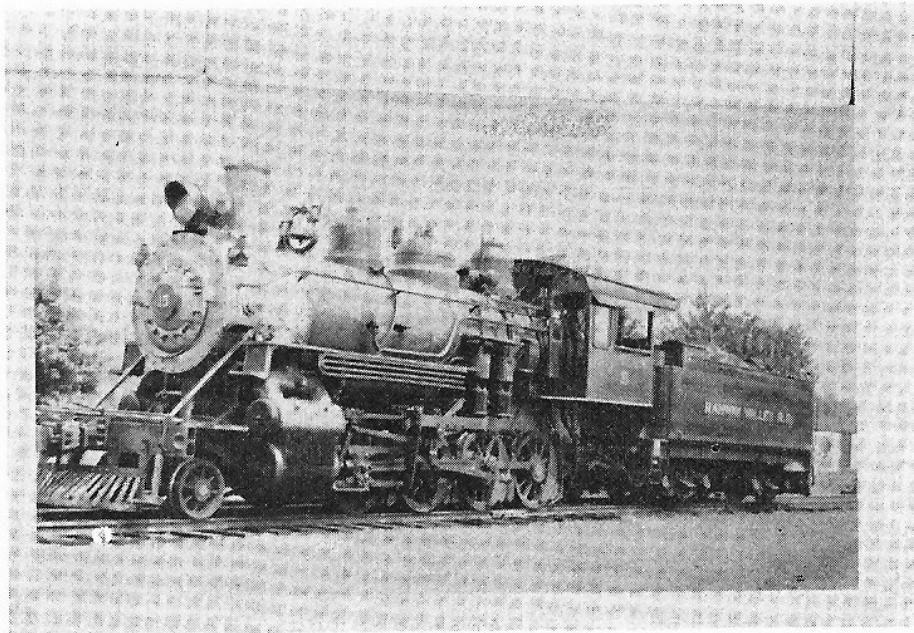
The death of George Clark gave a serious blow to the railroad and it's trustees, and the industry lost one of it's most colorful personalities. A third generation of Clarks took over the reins. George's son; Robert Clark was named president, and directed operations until his untimely death in 1975.

Meanwhile the State Highway Dept. was constructing Route 78, Easton Pa. to Newark, and the route was planned over the Watchung Mountain thru Springfield. The result was a realignment of the Rahway Valley tracks at Baltusrol, straightening the curves and demolishing the picturesque "Golfer's Station".

Several miles east the same highway project cut the Rahway Valley's Unionbury Branch, two miles from the Maplewood terminal, and since there were no freight customers left along the section, it was decided not to bridge the highway, and the last two miles were abandoned, the end of track now locates at the highway. In other development, the railroad sold off a parcel of land alongside the Summit terminal, site of the old freight house which was torn down in the winter of 1975.

Tragedy again struck on August 22nd, 1974, when fire broke out in the Kenilworth depot, the railroad's headquarters. By now, recognized as a local landmark.

The former Baggage and L.C.L. room, joined to the main structure by a shed roof, was destroyed. The roof of the office section was also badly damaged, and many old records were destroyed. Thru the efforts of the Kenilworth Volunteer Fire Dept. the frame of the building was saved. It remains the hope of



Engine No. 15, Baldwin-built in 1916, and
purchased by Rahway Valley in 1939.

Photo; courtesy Warren Crater.



Engine No. 17, a twin of Diesel No. 16,
built by General Electric, delivered: 1954.

the Kenilworth Historical Society to move the old depot, a classic of Victorian design, to another location and preserve it as a museum.

Following the death of Bob Clark, the trustees surveyed the property and found it a run-down and worked-out streak of rust, without the will to live.

To this situation came Mr. Bernard Cahill, a soft-spoken man with the assurance that comes from considerable experience in short-line management. Securing the road's accounts and rehabilitation became first priority. A turnover in personnel has resulted in a new breed of railroader on the Rahway Valley, as young men apply themselves to an old magic, "railroading".

As would be expected of a true railroader, Cahill purchased a heavy steel passenger-lounge car, (ex-Lehigh Valley), had it spotted on a stub track across from the old depot, from which he conducts business.

The two diesels are kept in top shape, and along with the headquarters car, are painted Cornell red, with white strips. The right-of-way is getting attention to accommodate today's heavier freight cars.

More than any other factor, however, is the confidence both management and employees express in the leadership and fresh ideas, such as radio-equipped locomotives in contact with headquarters, that Bernard Cahill has brought to the little pike.

So, as it is with every rail system in the nation today, the future of the Rahway Valley is at best, uncertain. The end result of Conrail, Amtrak and Chessie Consolidation will have an impact on railroads' future, just as Hill, Vanderbilt, Drew, Fisk and the Cr dit Mobilier dictated the course of rail history in the past.



Rahway Valley shops in background,
the ruins of old depot, left foreground.



Rahway Valley Headquarters Car.
(ex Lehigh Valley bought 1976)
Photo taken Mar. 1976

But let us indulge in a brief moment of pleasant fantasy. We allow our imagination to drift back to a long ago day in May, early in this Century. The clear blue sky, across which a few fleecy white clouds slowly drift. The green countryside dozes in the warm afternoon sun, with only a gentle breeze to give movement to a cluster of birches on the nearby hillside.

When, from the west, comes the far-off hoot of the steam whistle. A gray smudge of anthracite dots the sky and nature seems to awaken to the growing bark of a cap-stacked 4-4-0, now rounding the curve into New Orange. Amid the ringing of her brass bell and the thumping of couplers, Eastbound No. 4 hisses to a stop. Conductor Jack Shallcross, handsome in blue and gold drops down to the cinders. A pair of Upsala College girls in starched white and butterfly hair ribbons are gallantly assisted up the step, followed by a drummer in straw hat, complete with his sample case.

The US Mail pouch is handed up, Shallcross glances at his big gold watch and dramatically waves highball to Big Mike Trioly, crying "BOARD!" as he swings up on the last coach.

The air is released, the cylinder cocks jetting steam and the little American barks a stuccato exhaust and No. 4 picks up speed. With diminishing sound she disappears down the main. Her distant whistle wails for Faitoute's crossing, a last reminder of her brief visit. The tranquility of the scene returns, a tranquility this generation will never know.

This then, is the history of a short line railroad. Once it was one of many such lines, now rapidly fading away into the archives of a romantic era of the American scene.

The End.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In our effort to construct and authenticate the history of the Rahway Valley Railroad, both in fact and legend, and thereby present the reader with as accurate account as possible, the author has searched many sources, and interviewed many persons. They are credited with thanks, as follows;

New Jersey State Archives, Trenton, N.J.

Union County Engineer's Office, Elizabeth, N.J.

TRAINS, The Kalmbach Publishing Co. Milwaukee, WI.

Official Railway Guide, 1900, 1905.

Jane's Railways of the World.

The Shallcross Family.

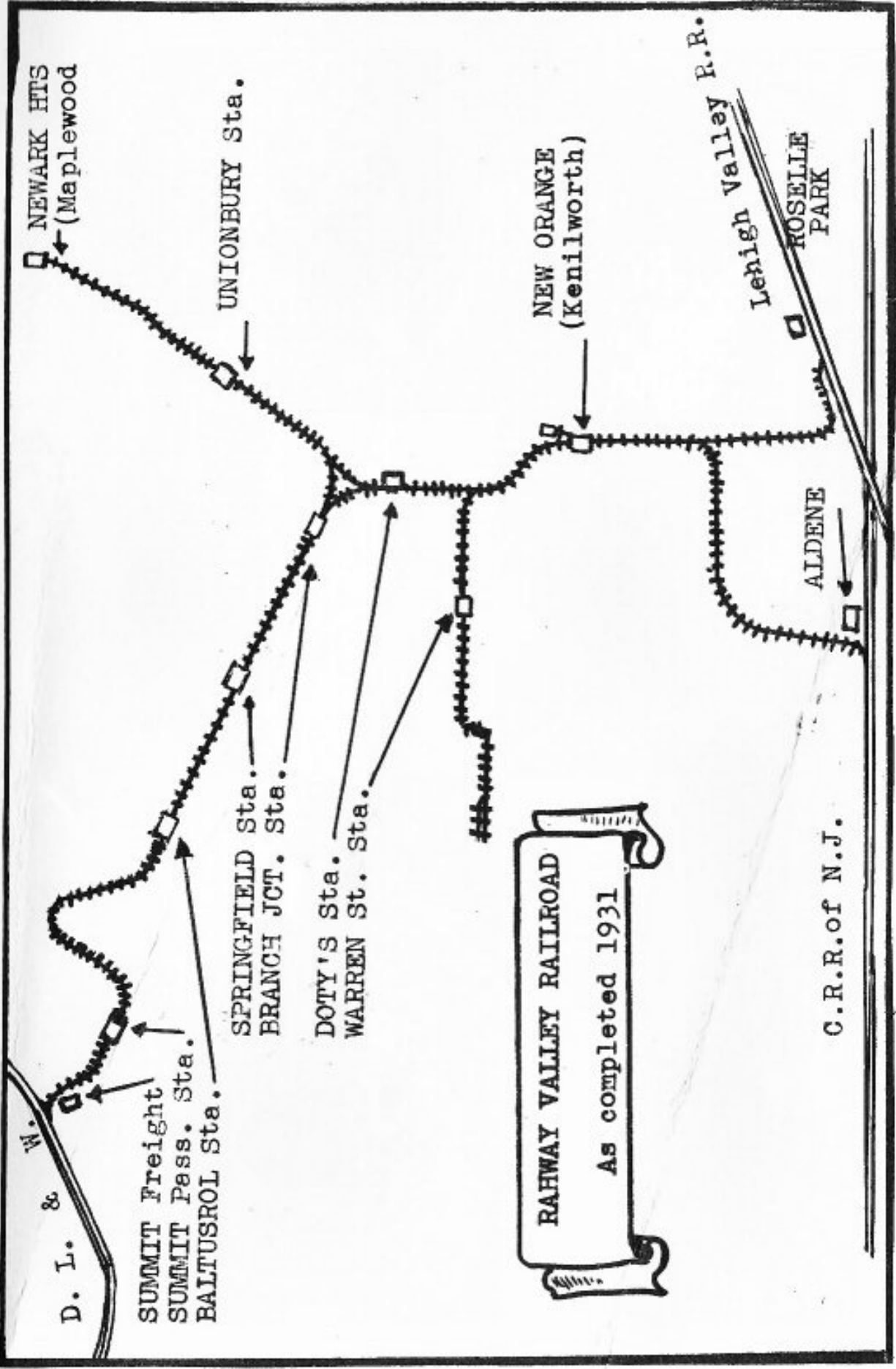
The Haines Family.

Mr. Bernard Cahill, Pres., Rahway Valley Railroad.

And that kindred soul to all rail buffs;

Warren Crater,
of Roselle Park, N.J. for his photographs.

April, 1976.



NEWARK HTS
(Maplewood)

UNIONBURY Sta.

NEW ORANGE
(Kenilworth)

Lehigh Valley R.R.

ROSELLE
PARK

ALDENE

D. L. & W.

SUMMIT Freight
SUMMIT Pass. Sta.
BALTUSROL Sta.

SPRINGFIELD Sta.
BRANCH JCT. Sta.

DOTY'S Sta.
WARREN St. Sta.

RAHWAY VALLEY RAILROAD
As completed 1931

C.R.R. of N.J.

8-14-05-2-1003

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