GRAVITY SWITCHING

BY THE

NEW YORK CENTRAL

ON THE

EVE OF MERGER

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(Part I)

Jeremy Taylor

Merged properties in due time lose many of their patterns of operation as new yards are built, new switching classifications are devised, and new trains are established which run intact through former interchanges and by former breakup points. These changes are among the principal means by which merger efficiencies and hence savings are realized, having as their corollaries such primary benefits as improved utilization of equipment, less investment in fixed plant, and reduced labor costs. With the approach of the Pennsylvania merger, it became apparent that the composition of the New York Central's operating picture, altered as it had been during the years of the Perlman management, was about to undergo further changes which would result ultimately in blurred identity. Whereupon this perusal, which was intended to preserve in detail the premerger freight car classification function of the NYC operation.

On the eve of the merger, the Central's traffic flow was shaped primarily by twelve to fourteen major train yards, allowing some latitude for looseness of definition and fluctuation in production. Of this total, eight were gravity yards equipped with controlled retarder systems. Those eight, which are the subject of this scrutiny, accounted for more than 75% of the output of the major yards, and in peak periods reached a total production of more than 18,000 cars switched per day. Although most of this activity took place at four locations, all eight hump yards were reviewed, not only for completeness of coverage but also because each, old and new, contributed materially to the increased efficiency of freight car classification which was achieved in the Perlman years on the NYC. In addition, it appeared that each of these yards in existing, expanded, or altered form would be an important part of the classification picture of the merged system. The facts, figures, and photographs which follow are descriptive of the facilities and activities at these yards in the period from late 1966 to early 1968.

THE EIGHT COMPARED — TRACKS BY COMPONENT YARDS

(Capacities measured in 50-foot cars)

Facility	Receiving Trks	Receiving Capy	Classifications Trks	Classifications Capy	Departure Trks	Departure Capy	Other Trks	Other Capy	Total Capy
Selkirk	15	1345 (65-135 cars)	26	1625 (35-100 cars)	18	1950 (90-125 cars)	13	275 (15-20 cars)	5195
Dewitt-W	11	1305 (115-120 cars)	27	2385 (50-160 cars)	18	1290 (50-90 cars)			4980
Dewitt-E	15	1985 (110-145 cars)	42	2695 (35-105 cars)	16	1175 (60-80 cars)			5855
TOTALS	26	3290	69	5080	34	2465			10835
Frontier	14	1295 (65-125 cars)	63	2805 (25-110 cars)	8	1040 (120-140 cars)			5140
Elkhart	15	1759 (55-150 cars)	72	3048 (29-63 cars)	12	1620 (135 cars)	11	391 (24-45 cars)	6818
Big Four	11	1094 (50-150 cars)	55	2080 (20-65 cars)	8	1161 (135-150 cars)			4335
Sharon	8	1020 (110-210 cars)	31	1575 (35-65 cars)	12	870 (65-80 cars)	8	365 (35-55 cars)	3830
Stanley	8	1050 (80-150 cars)	42	2600 (35-100 cars)	use class yard		19	1440 (50-105 cars)	5090
Junction	19	1390 (44-104 cars)	32	2048 (28-79 cars)	25	1599 (41-128 cars)	17	492 (18-60 cars)	5529

NOTES

Selkirk: Other yard - "MDI" and reclassification yards, used for hold and industrial cars.

Dewitt: Westbound Class Yard - includes 9 long tracks on north side, length 140-160 cars, and 18 tracks on south side, length 50-70 cars. Long tracks used also as departure tracks.

Eastbound Class Yard - includes 18 long tracks on north side, length 70-105 cars, and 24 tracks on south side, length 35-50 cars. Long tracks known as North Yard and used also as departure tracks.

Frontier: Receiving Yard totals include South Yard (11 tracks, length 85-125 cars, capacity 1095 cars) and East Yard (3 tracks, length 65-70 cars, capacity 200 cars). South Yard occasionally used for departure. Departure Yard, known as North Yard, sometimes used for receiving.

Elkhart: Other Yard - local yard. Departure Yard consists of two separate yards, the Eastbound (7 tracks) and the Westbound (5 tracks).

Big Four: An indication of the efficiency of this yard is that, while it is one of the smallest in capacity, it is a leader in production.

Sharon: Other Yard - "Evendale," used for hold and industrial cars, and (one track) for doubling rear ends on trains departing eastbound.

Stanley: Other Yard - Yard "O," used for bad order and lake coal storage, local cars, and occasionally for departure.

Junction: Other Yard - consists of "Old Westbound" (7 tracks, capacity 222 cars), "Southbound Yard" (5 tracks, capacity 114 cars), and "Stockyard" (5 tracks, capacity 156 cars), used for holds, bad order storage, and repair of bad orders.

Receiving Yard totals include North Receiving yard (11 tracks, 44-62 cars, capacity 650 cars) and South Receiving Yard (8 tracks, length 75-104 cars, capacity 740 cars).

Departure Yard totals include Advance Departure Yard (4 tracks, length 118-135 cars, capacity 506 cars), Departure Yard (6 tracks, length 68-77 cars, capacity 436 cars), and Eastbound Class Yard (15 tracks, length 41-56 cars, capacity 657 cars).

(Although their primary uses were those indicated above, the North Receiving, South Receiving, and Eastbound Class Yards were used interchangeably for receiving and departure.

Units 1011, 3305 and 1010 lead a VEG train out of the westbound departure yard at Selkirk, N.Y., January 1953. Photo by J. Taylor.

THE EIGHT COMPARED – HARDWARE

	SELKIRK	DEWITT	FRONTIER
COMPUTER			
Weight	none	none	lite-med.-heavy
Curve Resistance			yes
Rolling Resistance			master-group
Distance To Go			RO hs near-med.-far switch
TELEVISION			
Car Checking	none	none	two-Broadway Bailey Ave.
Surveillance	none	none	Bailey Ave.
RADIO			
Hump	E,C,YM	**(EB Freq.:** E (all)	E,C,YM,**TM**
Pullout	E,YM,GYM	(AGYM(2), Hump Bldg.	E,C,YM (2), **TM**
Pullout (Ground)	none	(WB Freq.: E (all) (AGYM(3), Hump Bldg.	none
Car Department	yes	yes, incl. AGYM(2)	yes
End to End	YM (2), GYM	AGYM (2)	TM, Hump Bldg. Bway.
SIGNALS			
Hump (Wayside)	yes (2)	Yes (4)	yes (3)
Hump (Cab)	none	none	none
Trimmer	yes	yes	yes
Shove Lights	none	none	WE North Yard EE Groups 5-6-7 (being installed)
Track Indicators	none	none	yes (1)
COMMUNICATION CONSOLES	one	six	six
SPEAKER SYSTEMS	one	three	four
CAR COUNTERS	none	none	yes - (being installed)
PRESENCE DETECTORS	none	none	none
SLACK RETARDERS	none	none	yes
INERT RETARDERS	none	WB Class (7) EB Class (all)	Class (all but trks. 61-62-63)
RAIL OILERS	none	none	Group 6
BRO. FLANGE/LOOSE WHL., DET.	yes (SK)	none	yes
DRAGGING EQUIP. DETECTORS	none	none	none
WEIGH-IN-MOTION SCALE	none	none	none
POWER YARD SWITCHES (excl. hump end of class yards)	none	none	(leads, base of hump (South Yd., both ends (North Yd., east and (Bailey Ave. area

(E-engine, C-Conductor, YM-Yardmaster, RO-Retarder Operator, AGYM-Asst. General Yardmaster, GYM-General Yardmaster, TM-Trainmaster (where underlined in re Radio, indicates monitor only)

THE EIGHT COMPARED – EMPLOYES

	TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISION				YARDMASTERS				YARD CREWS				OTHER YARD			
Facility	**1**	**2**	**3**	**Total**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**Total**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**Total**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**Total**
Selkirk	2	1	1	4	1	2	3	6	20	30	30	80	0	6	6	12
Dewitt	3	2	2	7	4	4	4	12	70	70	65	205	9	9	9	27
Frontier	3	1	2	6	3	3	3	9	35	35	35	105	4	4	4	12
Elkhart	3	1	2	6	2	2	2	6	30	30	30	90	2	2	2	6
Big Four	4	1	2	7	2	2	2	6	25	25	25	75	3	3	3	9
Sharon	3	0	1	4	2	2	2	6	15	15	10	40	3	3	3	9
Stanley	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	6	30	25	15	70	3	3	3	9
Junction	3	3	3	9	4	4	4	12	35	35	35	105	2	2	2	6

These figures represent an average weekday, and would increase on peak days and decrease on light days and (in some cases) on weekends.

HEADINGS EXPLAINED

"Yard Crews" include engineers, firemen, conductors and brakemen, counted individually. Divide by five in all cases to determine the number of switching crews employed.

"Other Yard" figures include retarder operators, as follows: Selkirk 0-3-3, Dewitt 6-6-6, Frontier 1-1-1, Elkhart 1-1-1, Big Four 1-1-1, Sharon 3-3-3, Stanley 3-3-3, and Junction 2-2-2. Also included are route directors (Frontier 2-2-2, Elkhart 1-1-1), bleeders (Big Four 2-2-2), skatemen (Selkirk 0-3-3, Dewitt 1-1-1, Frontier 1-1-1) and hump riders (Dewitt 2-2-2).

THE EIGHT COMPARED — HARDWARE

ELKHART	BIG FOUR	SHARON	STANLEY	JUNCTION
lite-med.-heavy	lite-med.-heavy	none	none	none
yes	yes			
master-group	before master			
by car count	by track circuits			
two-on WB and EB Rec. Yd. leads	two-Rec. Yd., both ends (playback)	three-Gano lead, W. Sharon tower, byp. 50	none	one-So. end So. Rec. Yd.
none	none	none	none	none
E,C,YM,RO,TM	E,C,**YM**,RO-(separate	E,C,YM,GYM	E,C,YM	E,C,YM
E,C,-(sep. freq. each	E,YM frequency	E,YM	none	E,YM
yes **(YM)** crew)	yes each crew)	yes	none	none
yes, incl. YM(2), **TM**	yes, incl. YM (2)	yes, Incl. YM (2), GYM	yes	yes
Hump YM, **TM**	YM (2), TM	YM (2), GYM	YM	TM
yes (1)	yes (1)	yes (6)	yes (2)	yes (15)
yes (with speed control)	yes (with speed control)	none	none	none
yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
WE Groups 1 & 8	EE Departure Yard	EE Dept. Yd., trks. 1-4;	none	none
WE EB Dept. Yd.		pullout sigs. heavy		
middle WE Dept. Yd.		hump, Bypass 50		
yes (2)	yes (2)	none	none	none
six	twelve	five	three	four
seven	six	three	two	four
yes (Hump YM)	yes (hump, east end YM)	none	none	none
yes	yes	yes	none	none
yes	yes	none	none	none
Class (all)	Class (all), EE Dept. Yd., Rec. Yd. trks. 7-11 (six ea.)	Class (all)	No. End Yard K (tracks 1-41)	none
all groups	all groups	none	none	none
none	loose wheel only	none	none	none
yes (1)	yes (5)	none	none	none
yes (hump, 94-ft.)	none	none	none	none
(leads, base of hump;	(leads, base of hump	none	pullout leads,	Livernois
(Rec. Yd., both ends;	(EE Rec. Yd., trks. 7-11		north end	Ave. leads,
(WB Dept. Yd. EE-	(leads, pullout/Dept. Yd.		Yard "K"	Junction Ave.
(trks. 3-4-5 and				
(cleanout, Xover to				
(EB running track				

THE EIGHT COMPARED — EMPLOYES

YARD CLERKS				CAR FOREMEN				CAR INSPECTORS				
1	2	3	Total	1	2	3	Total	1	2	3	Total	GRAND TOTAL
6	4	6	16	1	1	1	3	10	6	10	26	147
11	8	9	28	3	3	3	9	31	27	28	86	374
17	11	12	40	3	3	3	9	23	17	21	61	242
10	8	8	26	2	2	2	6	12	16	16	44	184
5	4	4	13	1	1	1	3	13	12	13	38	151
6	4	4	14	1	1	1	3	6	7	6	19	95
8	4	4	16	1	1	1	3	7	9	5	21	128
18	14	16	48	1	2	2	5	12	14	11	37	222

"Yard Clerks" figures include only those employes involved in classifying and dispatching cars, and exclude crew dispatchers, timekeepers, car distributors, DICCS clerks, stenographers, messengers, and janitors.

"Car Foremen" figures include chief inspectors at Junction (0-2-2), but in no cases include General Car Foremen.

"Car Inspectors" figures do not include forces at repair tracks, caboose tracks, Flexivan tracks, multilevel sites, etc., but are confined solely to yard car inspectors, including pit inspectors where employed.

THE EIGHT COMPARED – PERFORMANCE

These figures were taken from the four weeks ending 10/4, 10/11, 10/18 and 10/25/66, which it was felt were fairly representative, with October a good business month and with no holidays involved. Of course, that old adage "figures don't lie, but liars figure" has definite application here; yard statisticians (stimulated by their bosses) are ingenious at finding ways to "lose" cost items and to increase cars dispatched, thereby lowering their numerators and raising their denominators. There are obvious flaws, too, such as humping totals for the four weeks being higher than dispatchments at Frontier, Sharon, and Dewitt (the latter even when a high 20% of humping is subtracted for rehump cars). It is estimated, for instance, that Frontier humping figures were overstated by 14-15000, in one of the most blatant examples of padding for the sake of reputation. Nevertheless, the comparisons are interesting and generally valid and the cost figures unquestionably relate to the statistics previously presented. This relationship is thoroughly explored in the introduction and photographic commentaries for each yard.

I. COST PER CAR DISPATCHED

YARD CREW		SUPERVISORY & CLERICAL		TOTAL TRANSPORTATION		CAR DEPARTMENT		GRAND TOTAL
1. Sharon ... $0.57		1. Big Four .. $0.30		1. Big Four .. $0.94		1. Stanley ... $0.32		1. Big Four .. $1.35
2. Big Four .. 0.64		2. Elkhart ... 0.55	E	2. Elkhart ... 1.41		2. Big Four .. 0.41	E	2. Elkhart ... 1.92
3. Elkhart ... 0.85	P	3. Frontier .. 0.88	Q	3. Sharon ... 1.47	P	3. Elkhart ... 0.52	Q	3. Sharon ... 2.01
4. Stanley ... 0.90	L	4. Sharon ... 0.90	U	4. Frontier .. 1.80	L	4. Sharon ... 0.55	U	4. Stanley ... 2.12
5. Frontier .. 0.93	U	5. Stanley ... 0.91	A	5. Stanley ... 1.80	U	5. Junction .. 0.62	A	5. Frontier .. 2.67
6. Junction .. 1.15	S	6. Dewitt 1.05	L	6. Junction .. 2.87	S	6. Selkirk ... 0.84	L	6. Junction .. 3.49
7. Selkirk ... 2.25		7. Selkirk ... 1.56	S	7. Dewitt 3.38		7. Frontier .. 0.87	S	7. Dewitt 4.56
8. Dewitt 2.33		8. Junction .. 1.72		8. Selkirk ... 3.81		8. Dewitt 1.18		8. Selkirk ... 4.65

II. TOTAL PRODUCTION

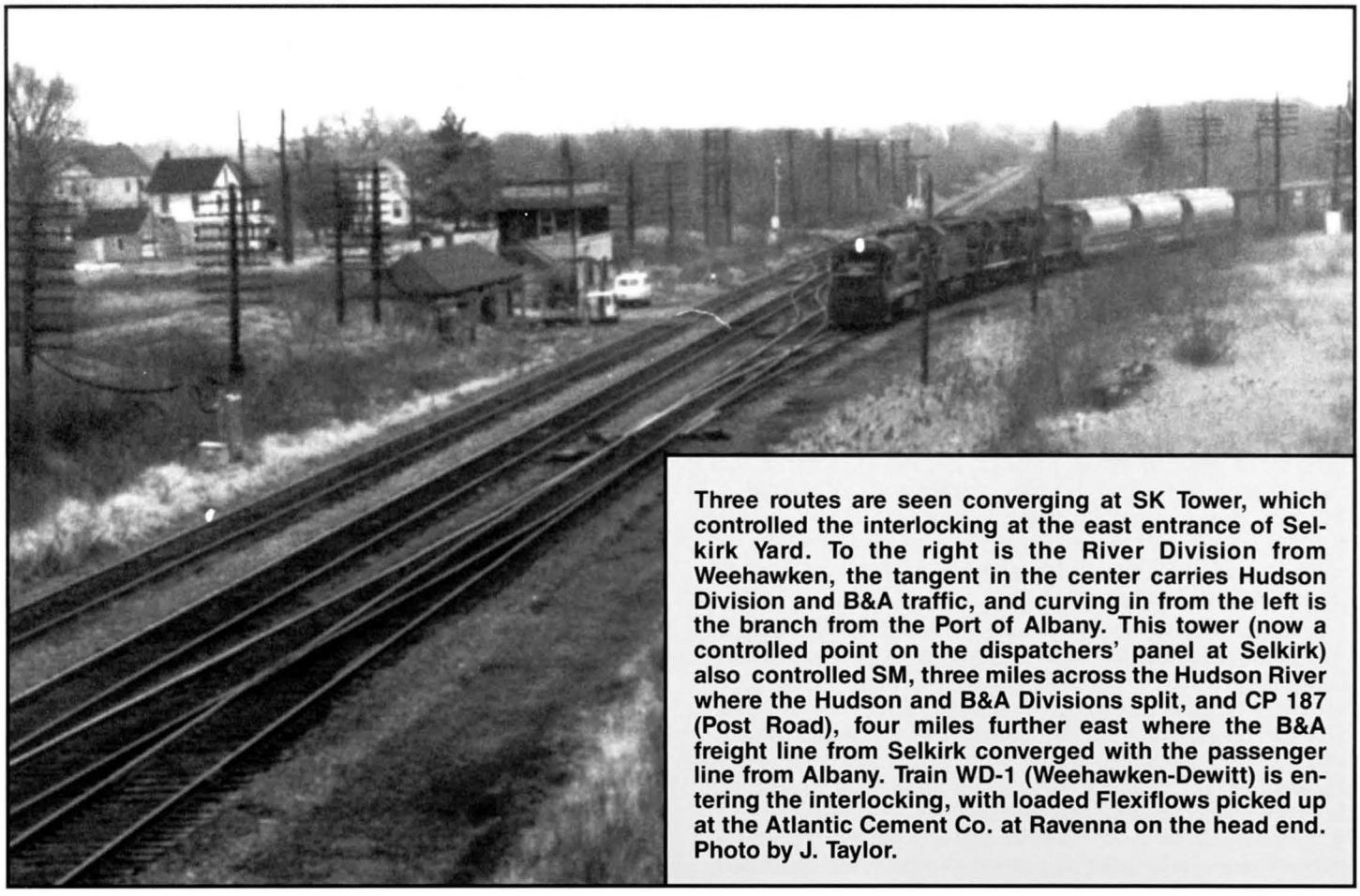
CARS DISPATCHED

1. Elkhart 87392
2. Big Four 74538
3. Dewitt 68884
4. Frontier 66660
5. Junction 52445
6. Stanley 50540
7. Sharon 32393
8. Selkirk 24478

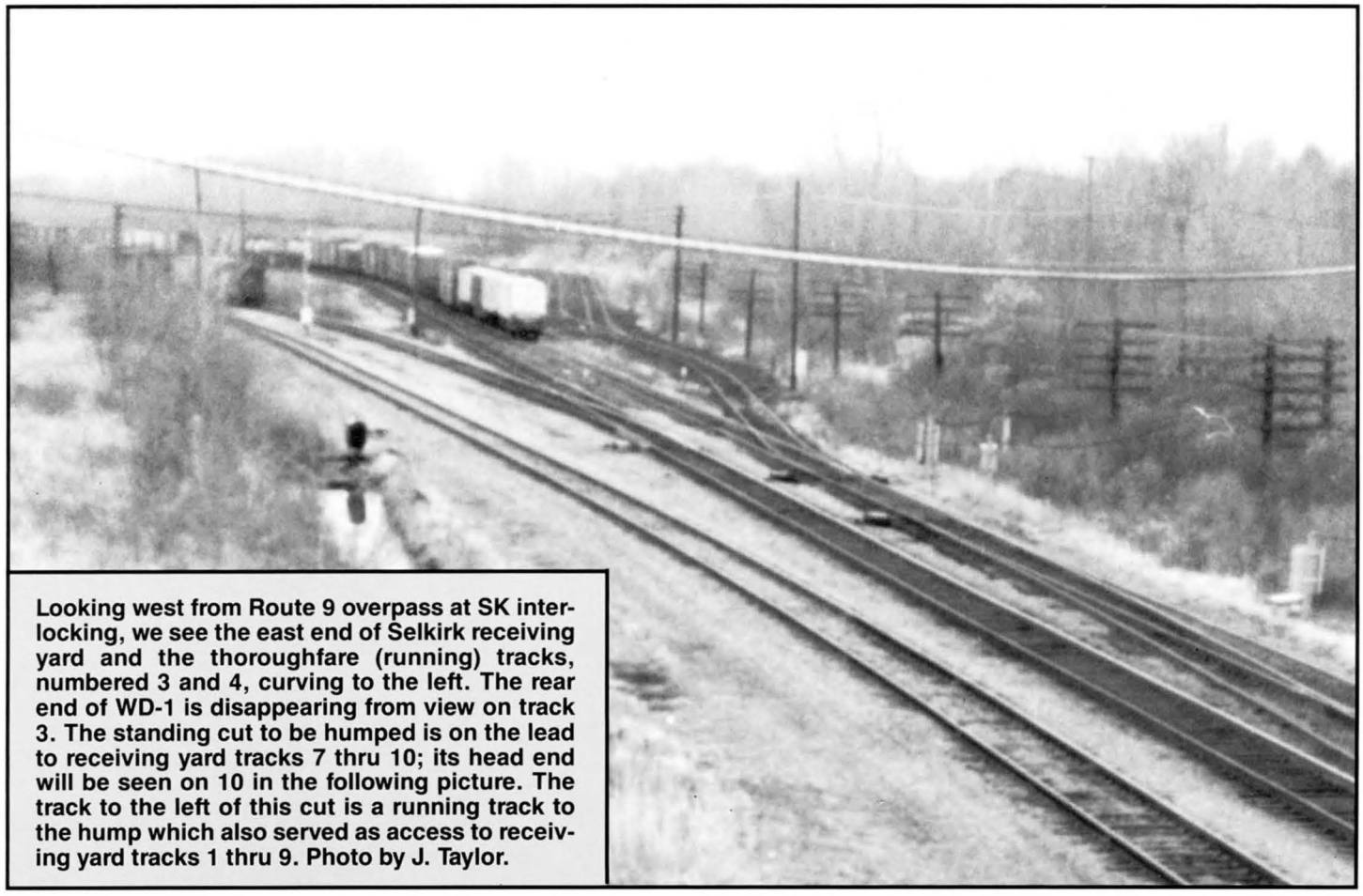
CARS HUMPED

1. Dewitt 92047
   (50973 eastbound,
   41074 westbound)
2. Elkhart 77847
3. Frontier 76914
4. Big Four 73507
5. Junction 48588
6. Stanley 36547
7. Sharon 35744
8. Selkirk 19399

Hump conductor pulling the pin, Selkirk, N.Y. Photo by J. Taylor.



Three routes are seen converging at SK Tower, which controlled the interlocking at the east entrance of Selkirk Yard. To the right is the River Division from Weehawken, the tangent in the center carries Hudson Division and B&A traffic, and curving in from the left is the branch from the Port of Albany. This tower (now a controlled point on the dispatchers' panel at Selkirk) also controlled SM, three miles across the Hudson River where the Hudson and B&A Divisions split, and CP 187 (Post Road), four miles further east where the B&A freight line from Selkirk converged with the passenger line from Albany. Train WD-1 (Weehawken-Dewitt) is entering the interlocking, with loaded Flexiflows picked up at the Atlantic Cement Co. at Ravenna on the head end. Photo by J. Taylor.



Looking west from Route 9 overpass at SK interlocking, we see the east end of Selkirk receiving yard and the thoroughfare (running) tracks, numbered 3 and 4, curving to the left. The rear end of WD-1 is disappearing from view on track 3. The standing cut to be humped is on the lead to receiving yard tracks 7 thru 10; its head end will be seen on 10 in the following picture. The track to the left of this cut is a running track to the hump which also served as access to receiving yard tracks 1 thru 9. Photo by J. Taylor.

SELKIRK

One of the largest construction projects in New York Central history, completed in 1924, produced not only Selkirk but also the magnificent Castleton Cutoff. The A. H. Smith bridge over the Hudson River and other less spectacular (and less expensive) components of the Cutoff provided a low-grade freight bypass around the Albany-Schenectady area between Hoffmans on the Mohawk Division and Post Road on the Boston and Albany Division, 38.4 miles. Hudson Division traffic diverged at SM and West Shore traffic at SK, on the east and west sides of the Smith bridge respectively. Without the Cutoff, there would have been no Selkirk; with it, an ideal site was made available for what became one of the country's major classification yards. And, although the combination of Depression and Dewitt started a process of attrition at Selkirk which continued right up to merger time, proof of the desirability of this location was furnished by the construction of Alfred E. Perlman Yard amidst the Selkirk remains. (Perlman Yard is not a subject of this series, since the first car over its hump in mid-1968 was in the account of the Penn Central Transportation Company.)

As built, Selkirk was a classic product of the thinking of yard planners of the 1920s, with separate and parallel complexes for traffic in opposing directions, each made up of receiving, classification and departure yards laid out in the "in-line" configuration. The result was a medium-width, extremely long yard (6.5 miles from SK to the west end at Unionville). In its early years, the yard was a primary classification point for both westbound and eastbound traffic. Lean business in the 1930s and the emergence of Dewitt as the major break point for eastbound traffic resulted, however, in the relatively premature downgrading of the eastbound side at Selkirk and no doubt combined to deprive the eastbound hump of the installation of retarders. (The westbound hump was so equipped in 1927.) Nevertheless, production continued, and under the extreme high volume conditions generated by World War Two, Selkirk eastbound provided the extra capacity without which the "Lines East" certainly would have become badly disorganized. The drastic decline in carloads of the postwar period again resulted in anemia, with Dewitt assuming more and more functions, until by the early '50s the eastbound receiving and departure yards were mere storage bins for a growing accumulation of heavy bad order cars. These components of the yard were cannibalized in the late '50s and early '60s for replacement rail and new projects until finally in 1962 the balance of the eastbound switching was assimilated in the westbound yard and virtually all of the eastbound was removed.

Long after the loss of the eastbound "glamour" work, Selkirk westbound continued to be a key facility in the makeup of high-priority manifest trains. Well into the '60s, such hotshots as BF-1, LS-1, MC/LS-1, WB-3 and UM-1 continued to originate entirely or in large part from cars switched over the tired old hump. In addition, the dispatchment of extra empty trains to be run through to a variety of final terminals (Elkhart for reefers, Buffalo, Bellefontaine, Toledo and Detroit for boxcars, and Avis and Ashtabula for hoppers) was a daily occurrence. But, as time went on, repeated campaigns for economies and service improvements brought about the removal of this work to Dewitt and Buffalo by means of overhead trains built up at points east of Selkirk. The result was that by the time the eastbound cars were shifted to the westbound side, normally one and at the most two tricks of humping were sufficient to keep current. At the approach of the merger (and this is the version of Selkirk detailed on the following pages), the yard was performing almost solely as a collection and distribution center for cars moving to and from local stations on adjacent divisions. The word "almost" is advised; vestiges of prestige left were the reshuffling of the westbound Flexivan trains in the advance yard and the humping of the gargantuan automobile train ML-12. (The latter task, which at times required the humpers to begin shoving from the east bank of the Hudson, was tranferred to Dewitt after the gathering of the data submitted.)

As this work was prepared, there was actually more activity at Selkirk involved with construction of the new yard than with switching of revenue traffic. It was heartening to note, however, that the strategic value of the location was being vindicated and that it would again be the site of one of the most important facilities of its kind in the country.

SELKIRK — INBOUND TRAINS

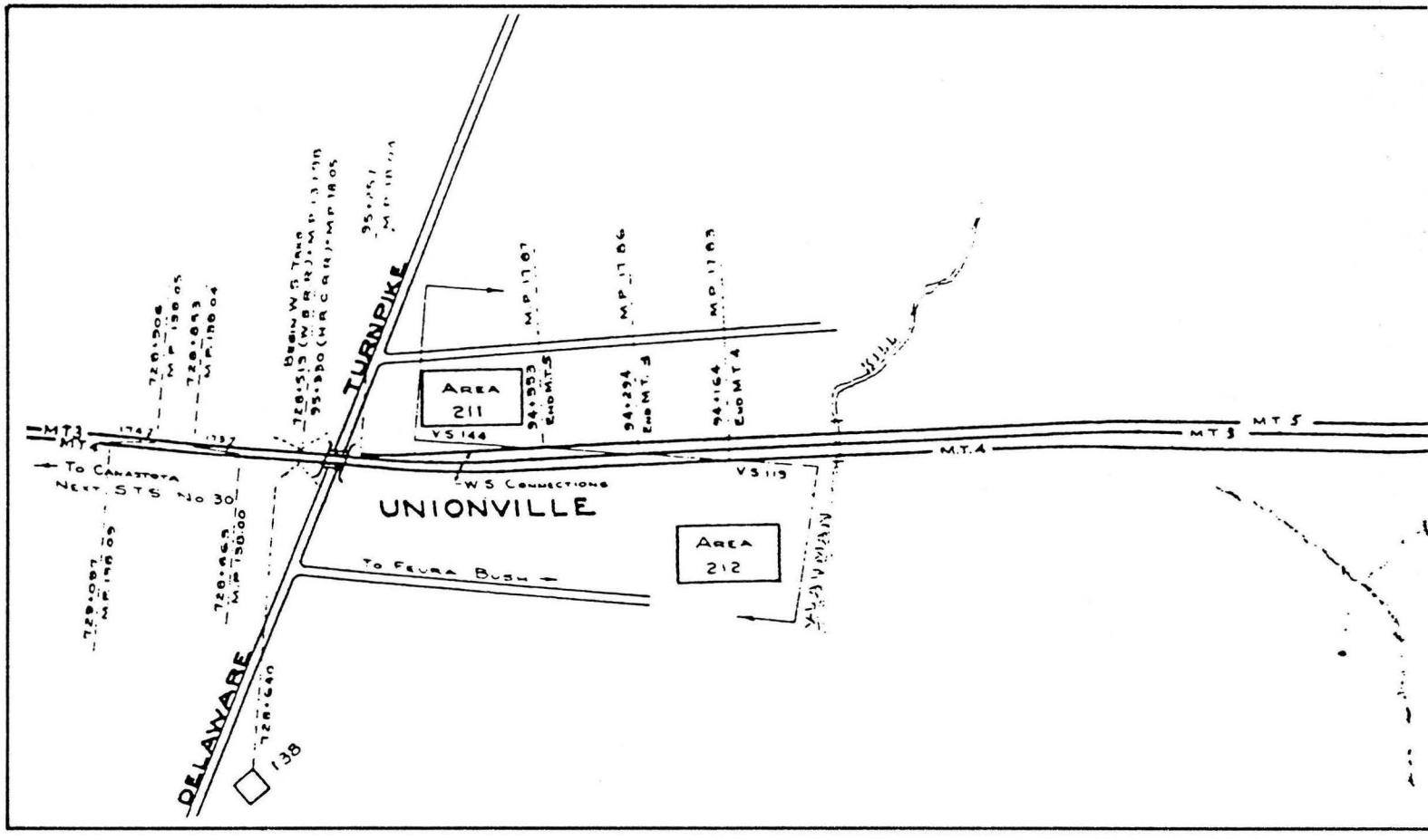
SYMBOL	FROM	ARRIVAL SPAN	FREQUENCY	REMARKS
SV-11	North Bergen	1245A- 115A	XMon.	flat-switched in advance yard
SV-3	Beacon Park	100A- 145A	XMon.	flat-switched in advance yard
SV-1	High Bridge (reswitch)	200A- 230A	XMon.	flat-switched in advance yard
TS-2	So. Schenectady	100A- 300A	XSun.	traveling switcher
BA-4	Dewitt (fill off)	630A-1030A	XFri.-Sat.	fill off rear end
XB-2	Dewitt (fill off)	1030A-1230P	Fri.-Sat.	fill off rear end
DV-4	Dewitt	230P- 800P	XSun.	picked up on Mohawk Division
M-1	Mechanicsville	300P- 600P	Daily	B&M crew
TV-1	Kingston	400P- 600P	XSun.	local freight
ML-12	Detroit	600P- 200A	XMon. nite/Tues. AM	automobile train
BV-3	Beacon Park	600P- 900P	Daily	
TS-1	West Albany	600P- 900P	XSun.	traveling switcher
GE-1	No. Adams Jct.	600P- 900P	about 3 days/week	dimension train and local
Albany T/S	Port of Albany	630P- 730P	XSat.	traveling switcher
WV-5	Weehawken	700P-1030P	Daily	
NV-5	72nd St., New York	830P-1159P	XSat.-Sun.	
So. Bethlehem	So. Beth. Quarry	900P-1030P	about 3 days/week	traveling switcher
Canajoharie	South Fort Plain	900P-1130P	Tues.-Thurs.-Sat.	local freight

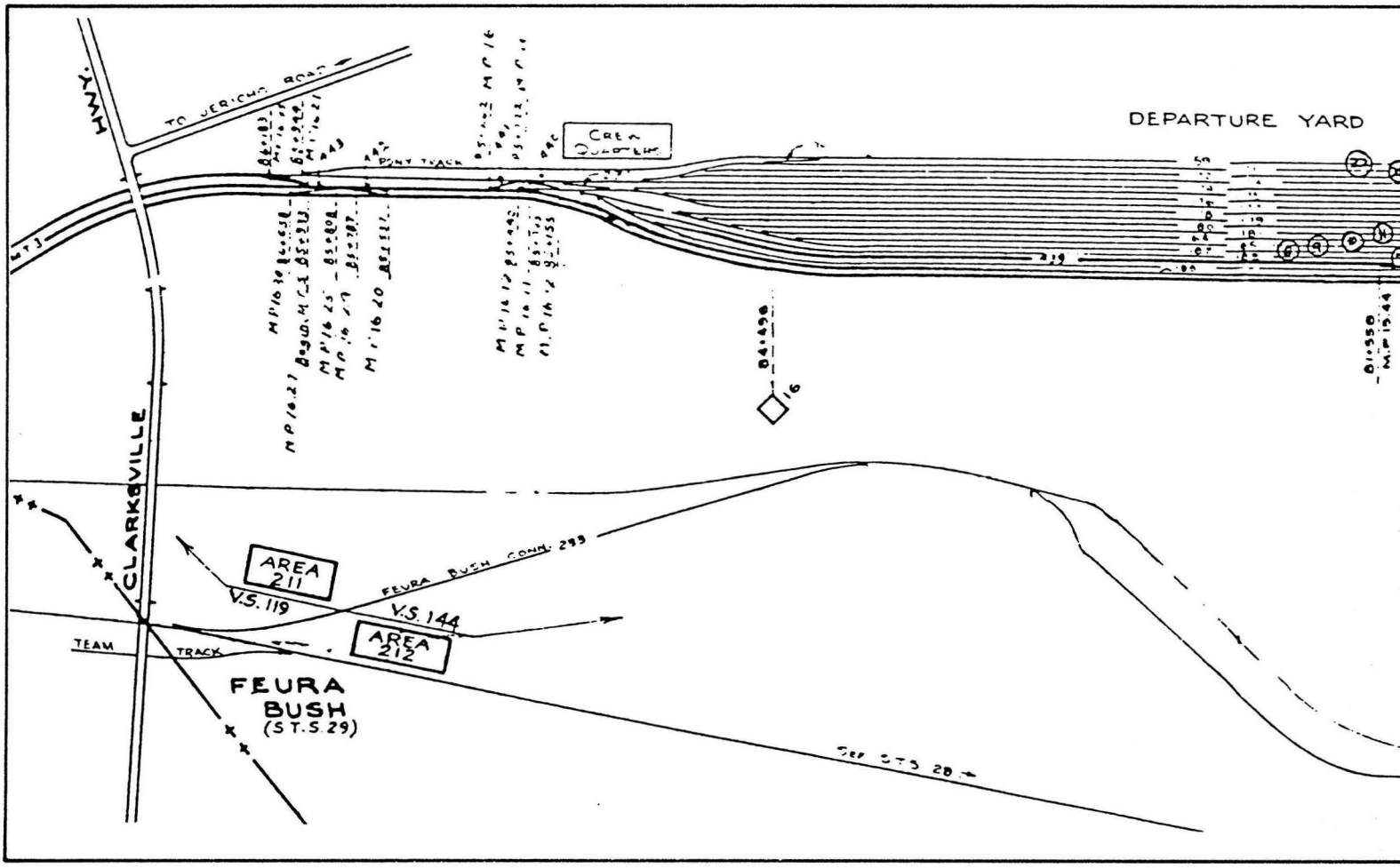
SELKIRK - OUTBOUND TRAINS

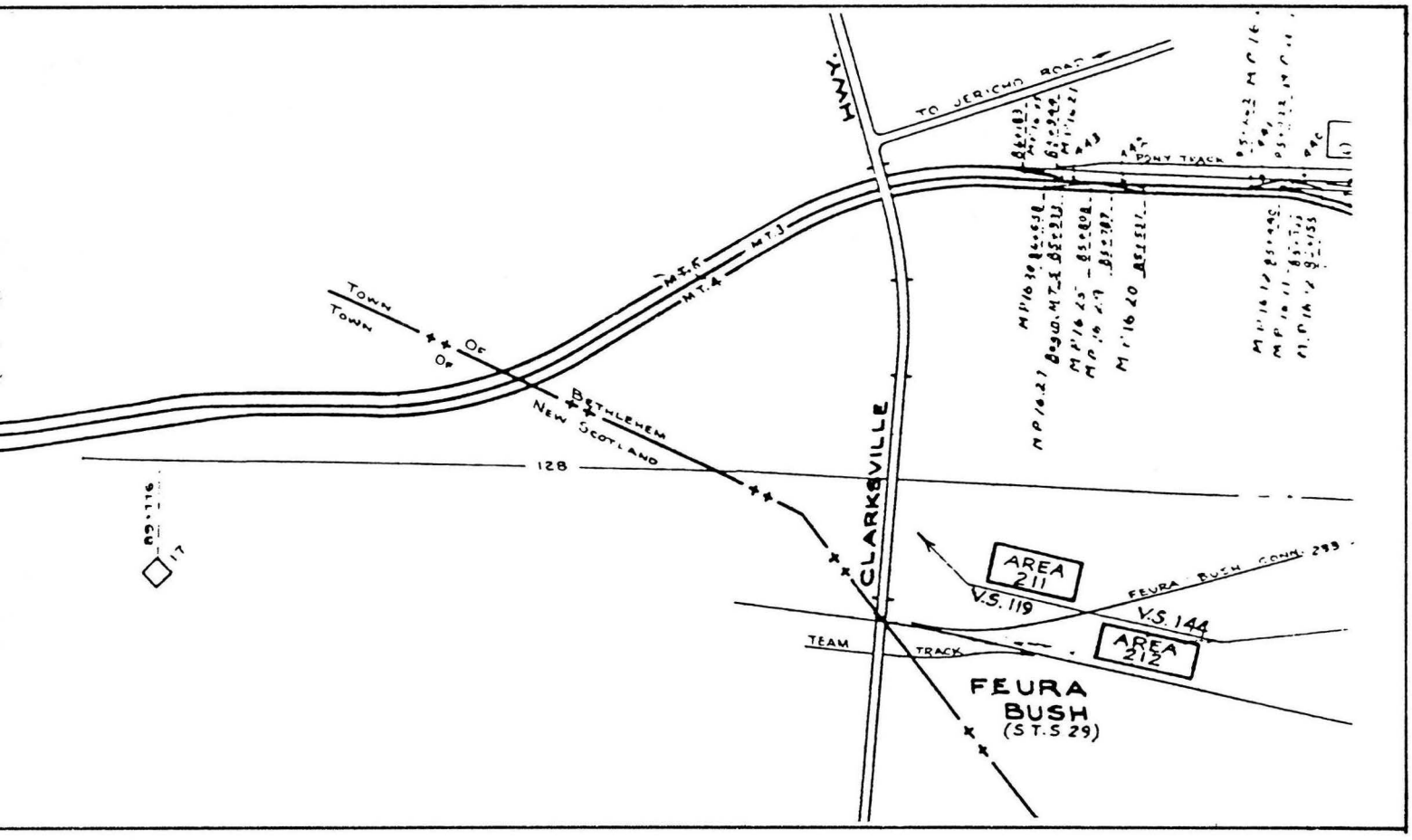
SYMBOL	TO	DEPART - FREQUENCY	GROUPING
BA-10	Beacon Park	1230A- 600A Daily	Worcester-Framingham-Boston-pool cab-Springfield
SV-1	Chicago	315A- 400A XMon.	Chi PB lds.-Chi FV lds.-Chi/CBQ FV and PB lds.-Chi FV and PB mtys-Milw/RI/ATSF FV and PB-Cleve and Tol FV-pool cab-Detroit FV
SV-5	East St. Louis	400A- 500A XMon.	St. Louis FV and PB-pool cab-Indpls. and Louisville FV plus PB for SSW and MP- Cinc. and Cols. FV and PB
VT-2	Kingston	300A XSun.	Station order, Ravena-Kingston
Canajoharie	South Fort Plain	600A Tues.-Thurs.-Sat.	Station order, Rotterdam Jct.-So. Fort Plain (West Shore)
TS-1	West Albany	830A XSun.	Albany
NB-3	Frontier Yard (fill on)	900A-1200P XSun.-Mon.	Added Buffalo fill on rear end (unless BB-1 got this)
CE-2	North Adams Jct.	1000A about 3 days/week	Station order, Niverville-No. Adams Jct.
VN-4	72nd St., New York	1030A XSun.	Hudson-Croton-Yonkers-New York
VD-75	Dewitt via Schenectady	1120A or later about 3-4 days/week	Schenectady-Amsterdam-Fonda-Little Falls-Utica-Dewitt (at least one Dewitt per agreement)
VW-6	Weehawken	1205P Daily	CNJ-PRR-Weehawken
Albany T/S	Port of Albany	1245P XSat.	Wemple-Glenmont-Port of Albany
TS-2	South Schenectady	100P XSat.	Station order, Unionville-South Schenectady
WD-1	Dewitt (fill on)	100P- 400P Daily	Added Dewitt fill on rear end if train had room
BB-1	Buffalo (fill on)	400P- 700P Daily	Added Buffalo fill on rear end (unless NB-3 got this) ahead of Syracuse and Rochester Flexivans
M-2	Mechanicsville	500P- 800P Daily	B&M
VD-7	Dewitt	700P or later about 4-5 days/week	Utica-Rome-Oneida-Canastota-Dewitt
So. Bethlehem	So. Beth. Quarry	700P- 830P about 3 days/week	Empty hoppers for stone loading
BA-8	Beacon Park	830P XMon.	Worcester-Framingham-Boston-pool cab-Springfield (also took B&A drops on head end when GE-2 did not run)
WS-12	Little Ferry	1030P- 600A XMon. nite/ Tues. AM	Little Ferry autos-Weehawken autos
FMA-9	Dewitt (fill)	1130P- 130A Daily	Added fill of empty multilevels to rear end

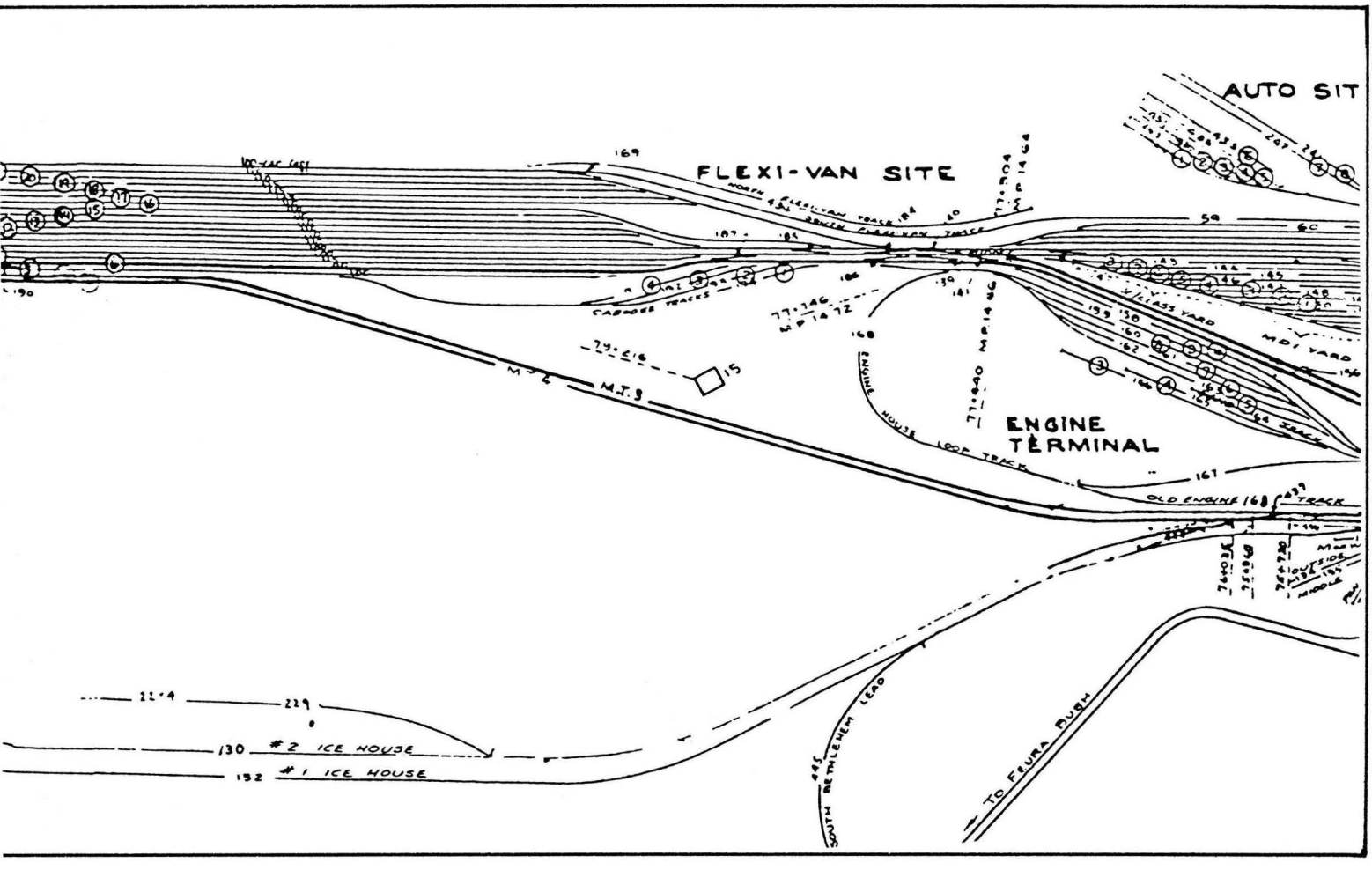
SELKIRK — CLASSIFICATIONS

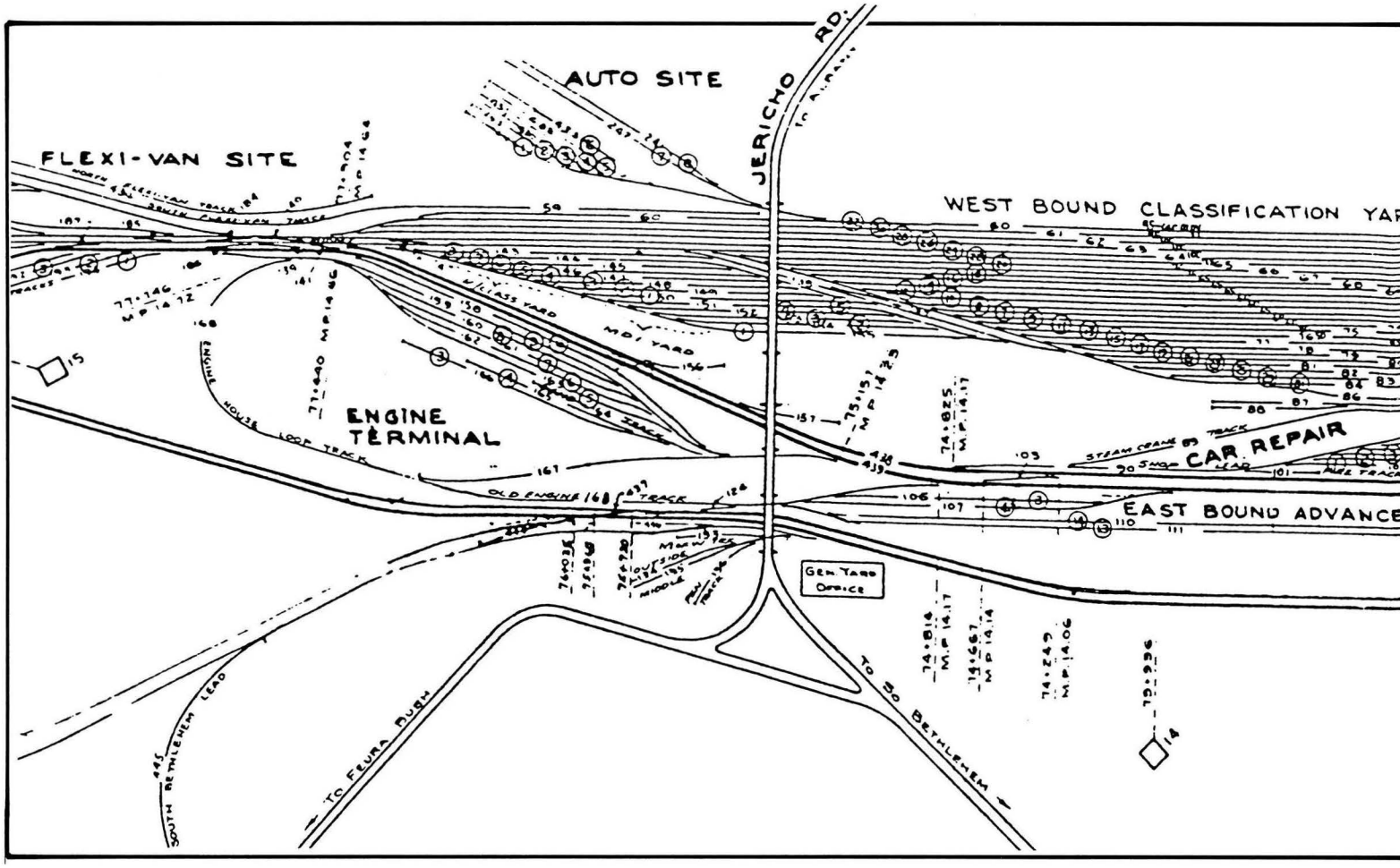
GROUP	ASSIGNED TRACK
box and gons to clean	31
covered hoppers to clean-Texas Eastern empty tanks-no bills-co. matl.	29
Port of Albany (including Wemple and Glenmont	27
cripples	25
Croton	23
Hudson	21
New York	19
Yonkers	17
Worcester	15
B&A drops (Niverville-No. Adams Jct.)	13
Boston	11
Springfield	9
Framingham	7
CNJ	8
PRR	10
Weehawken	12
covered hoppers for cement loading	14
Albany	16
River Division drops Ravena - Kingston)	18
Mohawk Division drops (including TS-2 cars and Canajoharie local cars)	20
Schenectady including D&H	22
B&M	24
Dewitt	26
Buffalo including Elkhart empties	28
Amsterdam-Fonda-Little Falls-Utica-Rome-Oneida-Canastota	30

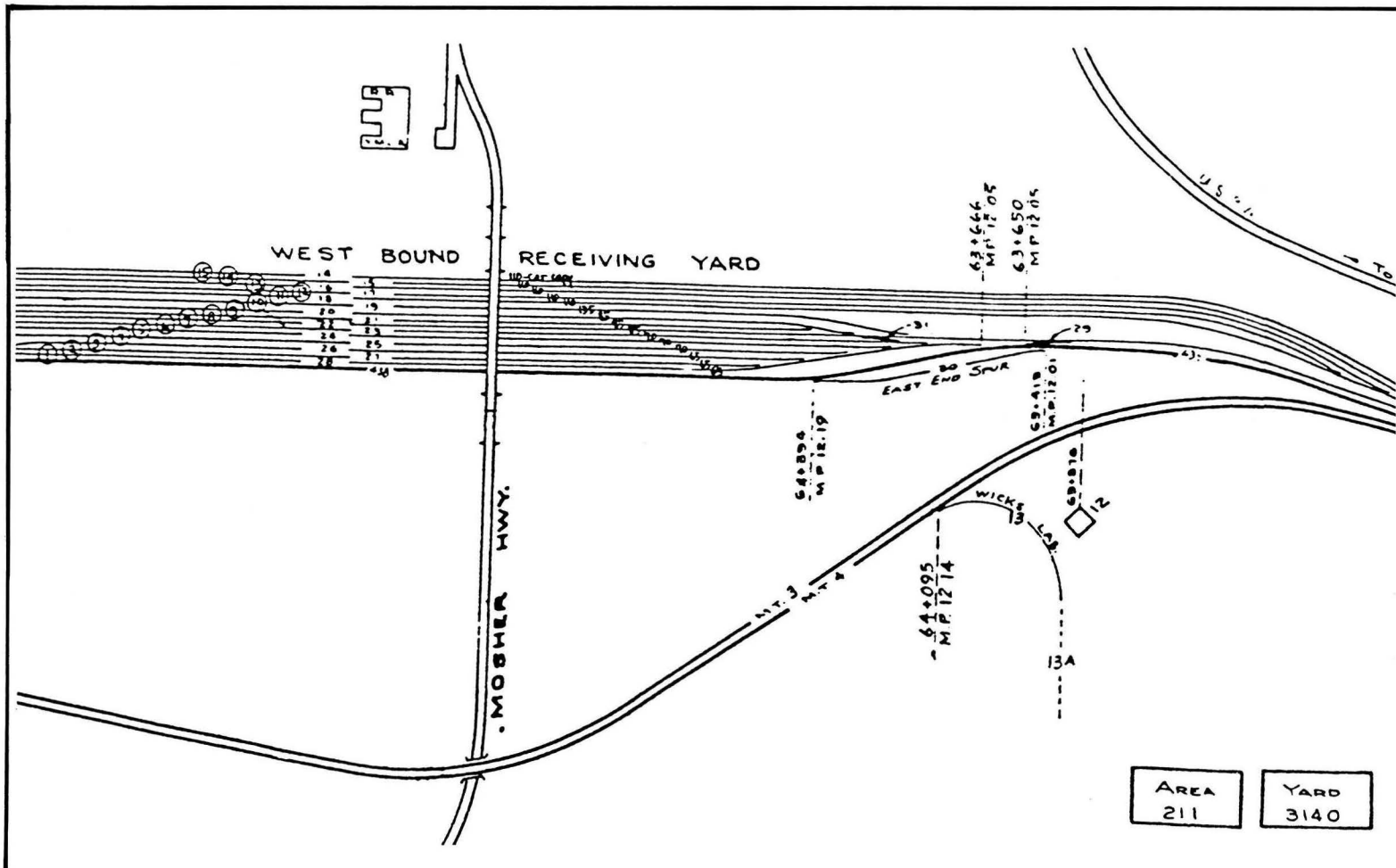

TURNPIKE
AREA 211
AREA 212
MT 3
MT 4
MT 5
VS 144
VS 119
W S CONNECTIONS
UNIONVILLE
To Canastota
Next STS No 30
To Feura Bush
DELAWARE
138

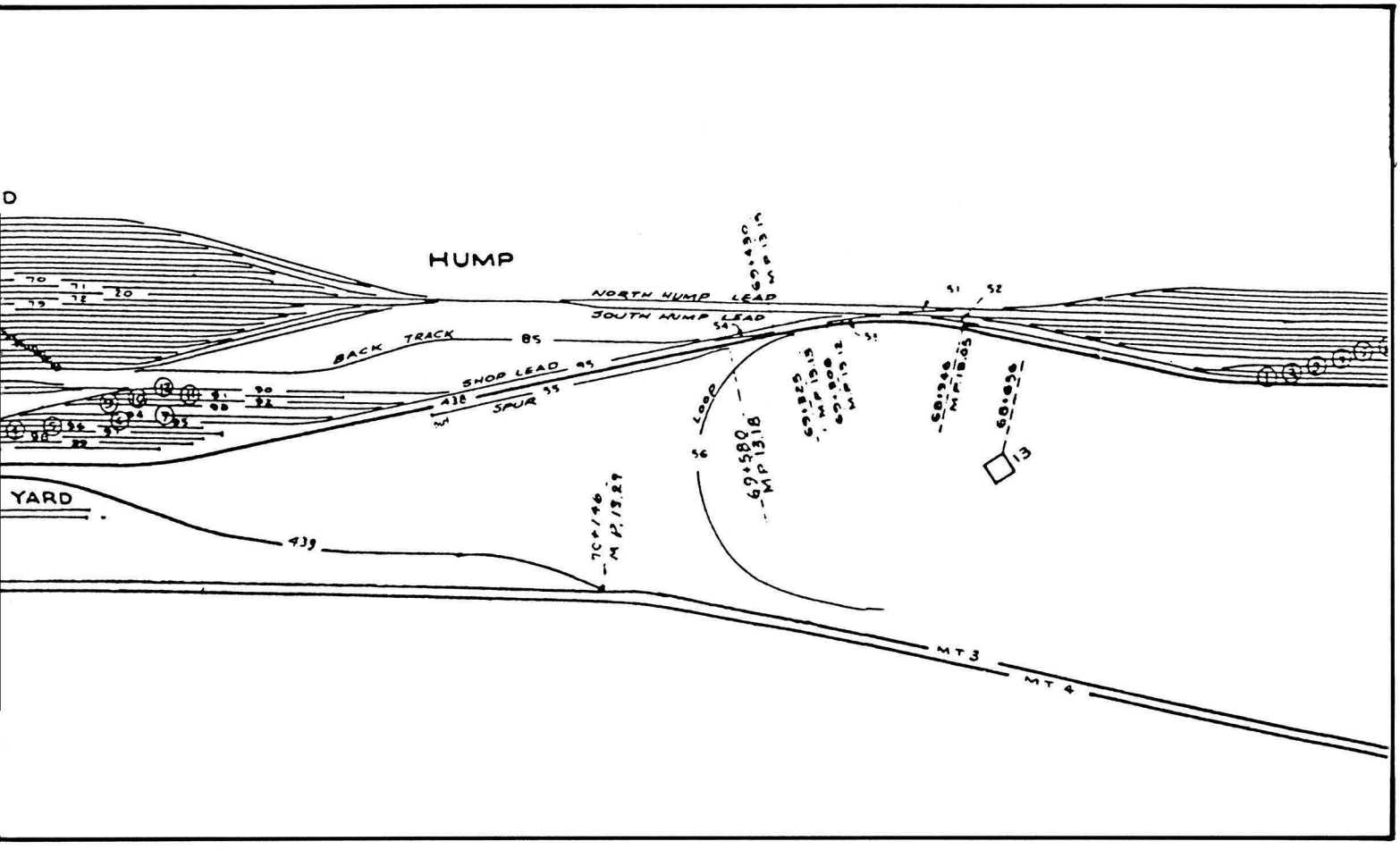

HWY.
To Jericho Road
DEPARTURE YARD
CLARKSVILLE
AREA 211
AREA 212
V.S. 119
V.S. 144
FEURA BUSH CONN. 293
TEAM TRACK
FEURA BUSH (S.T.S. 29)
16

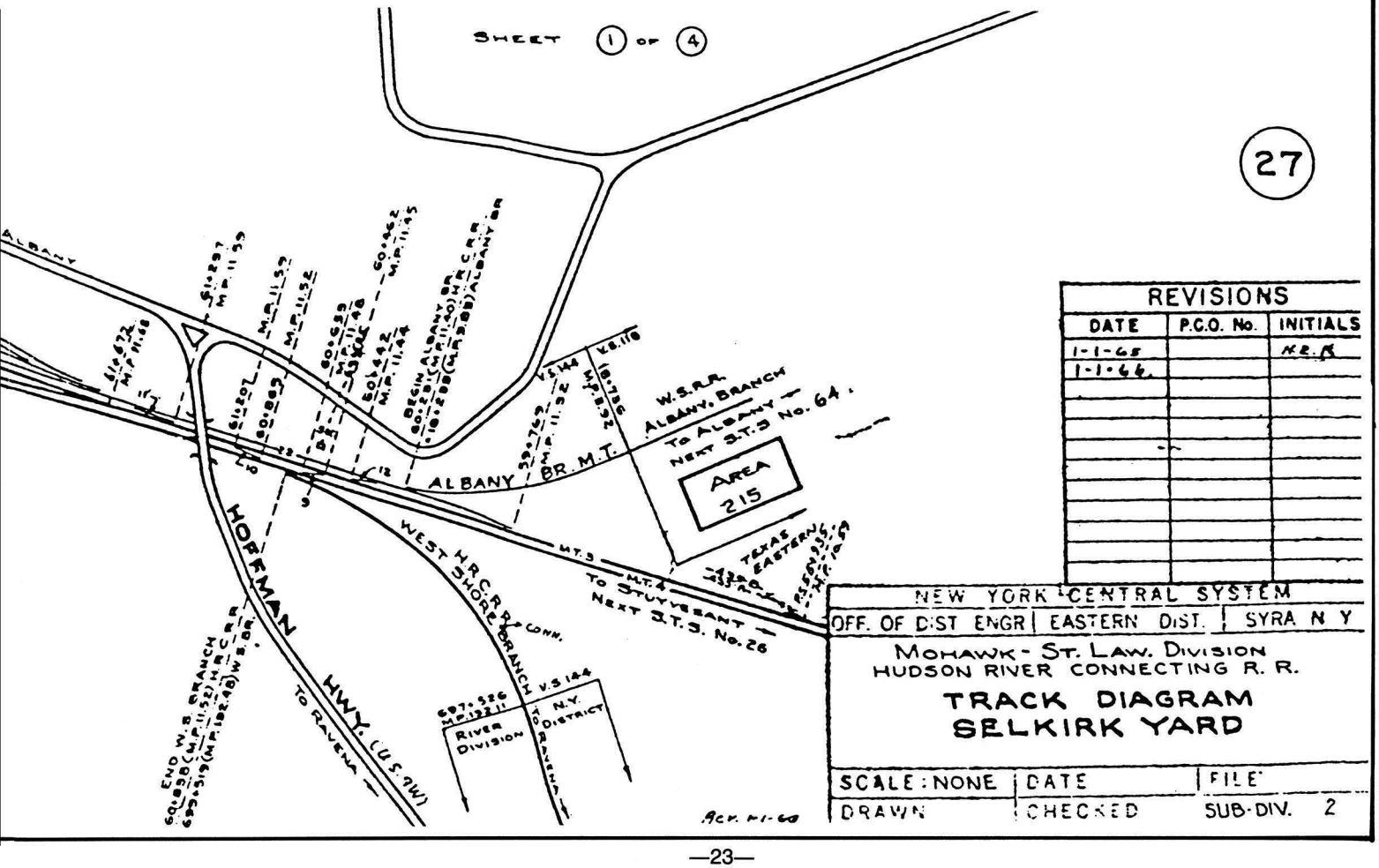

HWY.
TO JERICHO ROAD
PONY TRACK
TOWN OF
TOWN OF
BETHLEHEM
NEW SCOTLAND
128
CLARKSVILLE
AREA 211
V.S. 119
FEURA BUSH CONN. 299
V.S. 144
AREA 212
TEAM TRACK
FEURA BUSH
(ST.S 29)


AUTO SIT
FLEXI-VAN SITE
CABOOSE TRACKS
MDI YARD
ENGINE HOUSE LOOP TRACK
ENGINE TERMINAL
OLD ENGINE 168 TRACK
#2 ICE HOUSE
#1 ICE HOUSE
SOUTH BETHLEHEM LEAD
TO FEURA BUSH

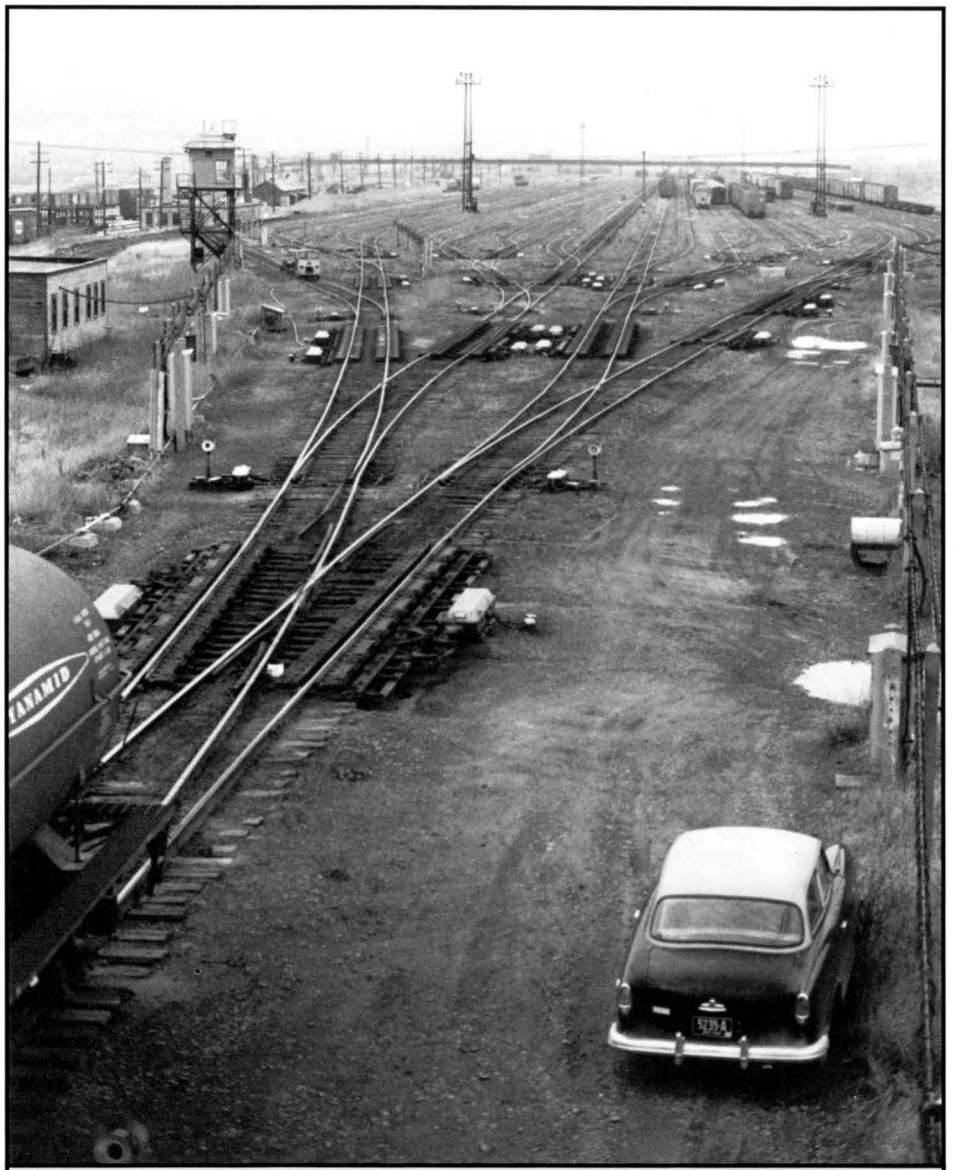

AUTO SITE
JERICHO RD.
FLEXI-VAN SITE
WEST BOUND CLASSIFICATION YAR
ENGINE TERMINAL
CAR REPAIR
EAST BOUND ADVANCE
Gen Yard Office
TO FEURA BUSH
TO BETHLEHEM
SOUTH BETHLEHEM LEAD


WEST BOUND RECEIVING YARD
MOSHER HWY.
EAST END SPUR
WICKS
RT. 3
RT. 4
13A
AREA 211
YARD 3140


HUMP
NORTH HUMP LEAD
SOUTH HUMP LEAD
BACK TRACK
SHOP LEAD
438 SPUR
YARD
439
MT 3
MT 4
LOOP
13

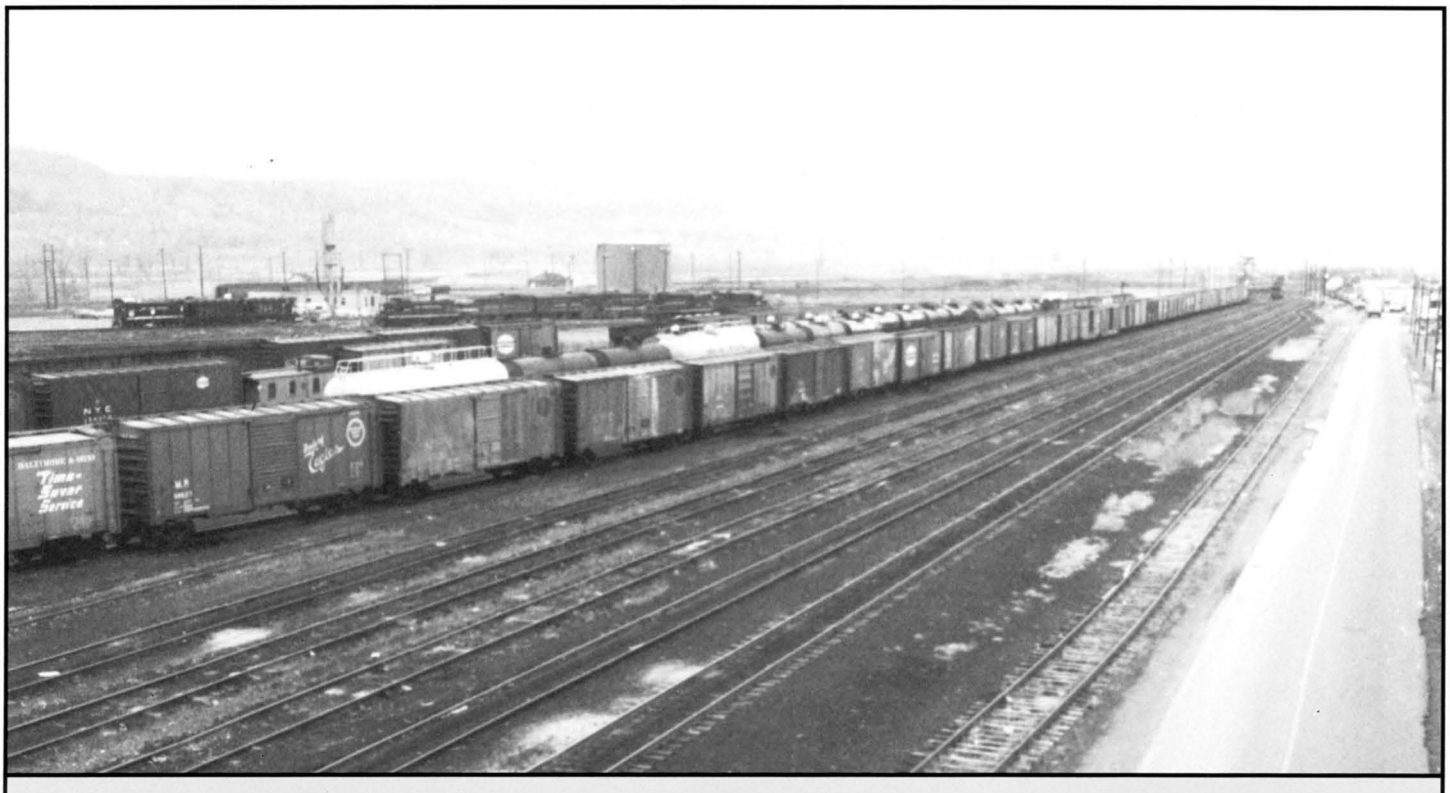

SHEET (1) OF (4)
27
ALBANY
ALBANY BR. M.T.
W.S.R.R. ALBANY BRANCH
To ALBANY — NEXT S.T.S No. 64
AREA 215
MT 3
MT 4
To STUYVESANT — NEXT S.T.S. No. 26
WEST SHORE R.R. CONN.
HOFFMAN HWY. (U.S. 9W)
To RAVENA
RIVER DIVISION
N.Y. TO DISTRICT
TEXAS EASTERN
REVISIONS
DATE | P.C.O. No. | INITIALS
1-1-65 | | M.R.R.
1-1-66 | |
NEW YORK CENTRAL SYSTEM
OFF. OF DIST ENGR | EASTERN DIST. | SYRA N Y
MOHAWK - ST. LAW. DIVISION
HUDSON RIVER CONNECTING R. R.
TRACK DIAGRAM
SELKIRK YARD
SCALE: NONE | DATE | FILE
DRAWN | CHECKED | SUB-DIV. 2

Mosher Highway overpassed Selkirk receiving yard at about its middle and from this vantage point looking west towards the hump, we see cuts to be switched on tracks 14 (foreground) and 10. Through use of track 10 and the lead extending to SK, the maximum of approximately 135 cars could be yarded without blocking other tracks. BV-3 from Boston in the instant case filled up this slot. The hump crest and hump office building are visible in the distance. Photo by J. Taylor.

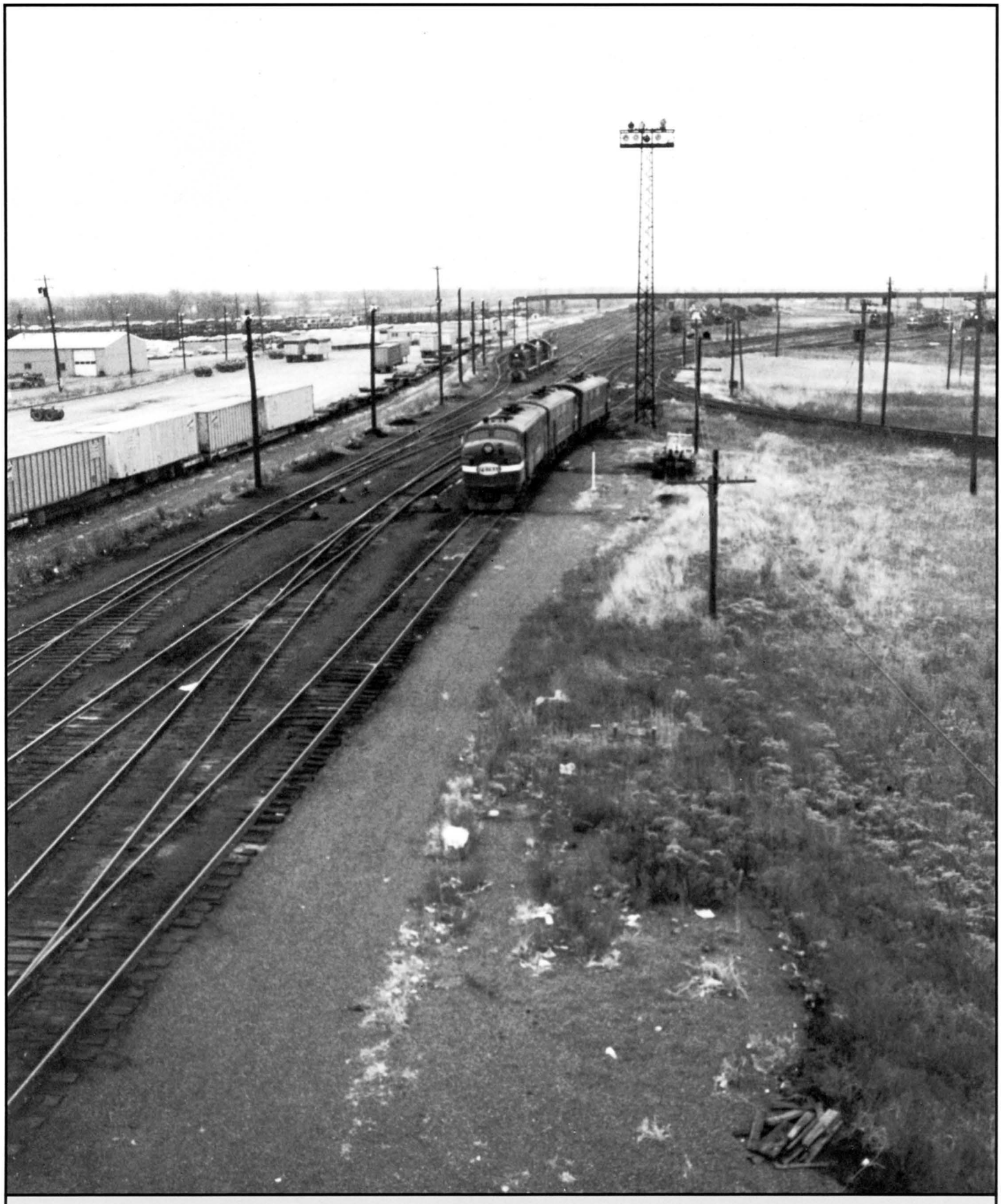


From retarder tower "A" near the foot of the hump, we look out towards the class yard, flanked by towers "B" on the right and "C" on the left. The operator in "A" controlled the retarder in the foreground and others between it and the hump crest, as well as the three divide switches in the foreground. Operators in "B" and "C" split up the balance, the former handling the even-numbered side and the latter the odd numbers. Tracks 10, right, and 8, left, run down the middle. The car shop is on the left behind tower "C", and Jericho Road bridge is in the background. Photo by J. Taylor.

The dual ladder at the west end of class yard track 22 thru 8 (even numbers) and 7 thru 31 (excluding 27, odd numbers) was paralleled by the ladders at the east end of the ''MDI'' (for Merchants Dispatch Incorporated) and reclassification yards. In addition, this view east from Jericho Road bridge includes the car shop, right background, and hump, center background. That the bulk of classification work at Selkirk was then confined to second and third tricks is evident from the clear tracks and lack of activity. Photo by W. M. Gardiner.

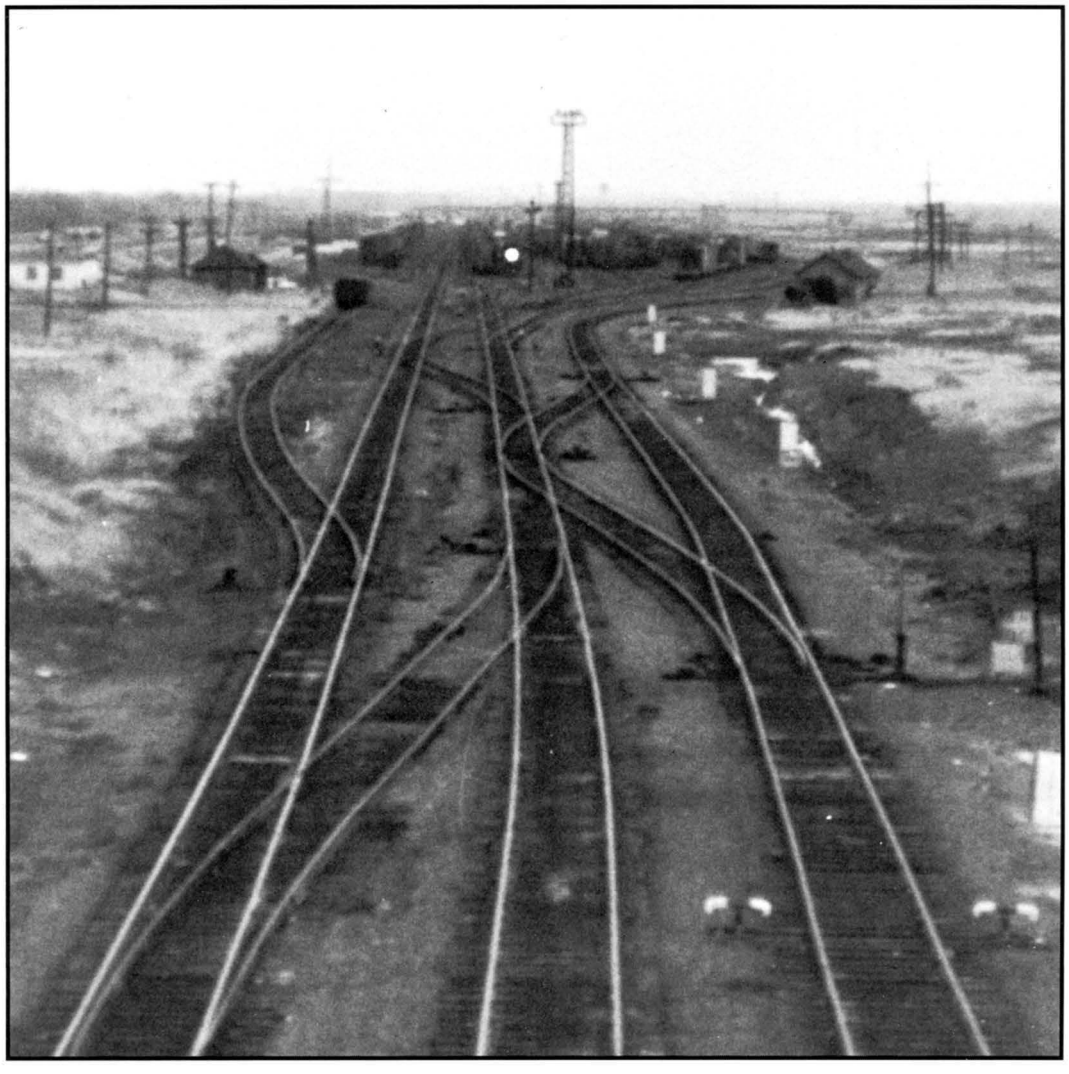


The boxcars were part of a cut being advanced from the class yard to the departure yard in this scene looking west from Jericho Road bridge. Approaching the camera, the long tracks in the class yard were numbered 24, 26, 28, 30, and 32. The track in the foreground stubbed just out of the picture, and ran down into the Flexivan pad in the right background. The multilevel unloading site was (and is) across the paved road, and the fueling station was in the left background. Photo by J. Taylor.



The two-track Flexivan pad and eight-track multilevel unloading site at Selkirk contributed a good deal of color and class to the otherwise drab and obsolete yard complex. Of course, they also contributed considerably to the local switching activity. Here, from the yardmaster's tower, these facilities are evident along with the west end of the class, reclass, and MDI yards and Jericho Road bridge. Power for VW-6 to Weehawken emerges from the fueling station as a pair of switchers in multiple handle the caboose. Photo by J. Taylor.

On the day trick, the yardmaster in the tower (known as the "bubble") between the class and departure yards was on his own, but on second and third tricks when the hump came to life, another yardmaster arrived to supervise that operation. In addition, on third trick when the westbound Supervans were handled in the departure yard, yet a third was stationed at the "top end" (west end). Day-trick activity depicted here at the east end of the departure yard consisted of a yard crew handling empty cement cars. The empty tanks awaited placement orders from Texas Eastern, whose gas pipeline from the southwest extends to a point just east of SK on the Port of Albany branch. Photo by W. M. Gardiner.



This was the stamping ground of the night yardmaster whose wages were earned if he got SV-11, SV-3 and SV-1 reshuffled into SV-1 and SV-5 in the proper order and allotted time. Known locally as the "top end" it was not only the west end of the departure yard but also the west end of the entire complex. The five northerly tracks of the 18-track departure yard (in the left background) have been retained to this day for the reshuffling of westbound trailvan trains, so not quite everything has changed here. From this point to Unionville, two miles west, there are three freight mains (5, 3 and 4, from left to right). Mains 3 and 4, which continue through to Hoffmans on the main line are the ones which bypassed the yard on the south. Noteworthy also in this scene are a "VD" train (Dewitt extra) ready to leave from track 16 and third rail protectors flanking main 4 in the foreground. Photo by W. M. Gardiner.

DEWITT

Of the five older hump yards still in operation at merger time, Dewitt came closer than any to performing the tasks it was originally designed to perform in the way it was designed to perform them. Notwithstanding major service and equipment changes and drastic reductions in volume in previous decades, the same basic physical plant received the cars from east, west, north and south, put them through its rituals of humping and advancing, sometimes crossyarding and rehumping them, and sooner or later spewed them out again in complex assortments for myriad destinations all over the system. Because of the backdrop of obsolescence against which its activities were conducted, Dewitt more than any other yard advertised by paradox the new look which had come over railroading by then. On a visit to the eastbound side some afternoon or evening, you'd have seen the same old hump, but instead of the solid reefers of NY-4 or CD-4, you'd have noted the refrigerated piggybacks of SV-2 or SV-6; instead of the double-door auto racks of WD-4, there would have been the bilevels and trilevels of ML-12. On the somber side, comparative productions figures for Dewitt belied its appearance of bustling activity and illustrated all too well what had happened to railroad business in that part of the country.

Physically, the changes made and improvements affected over pre-merger years at Dewitt involved mostly auxiliary facilities. Dieselization, of course, resulted in construction of the locomotive shop, reflecting the importance of Dewitt as a dispatching terminal for power. In the same vein was the fueling station, located initially between the two humps and later in the shop area. The original car repair facilities were retired, first on the eastbound side at the "Gooseneck" in a consolidation move, then in 1966 in a move from the "Midway" on the westbound side to the vacated area between the humps, this for the sake of efficiency. (Among other handicaps, there was no access for motor vehicles at either of the original locations!) Except for a crossover here or a turnout there, the basic layout remained the same, however, and new-look trilevels were handled through the yard in much the same manner as their predecessor auto racks. As already indicated, the yard, built in 1904 and equipped with retarders in 1929, was an early model of its type and featured separate eastbound and westbound portions. The westbound side was essentially a three-yard in-line layout, although nine (out of 27) of the tracks in the class yard ran through to the west end. The eastbound side was a hybrid, with a receiving yard in line with the hump and a class yard which was a real curiosity - the birthmark of Dewitt, as it were. In the latter, the northerly portion of 18 tracks constituted one long yard running from the hump to the east end at Minoa, while the southerly portion of 24 tracks coverged in three leads halfway to Minoa at the location already referred to as the "Gooseneck." Two of these three leads crossed each other on a diamond and then diverged into 16 tracks which continued down to Minoa. These two southerly segments of the yard were known as the Eastbound Class Yard and the Eastbound Advance Yard, respectively, while the long tracks on the north side were called, appropriately enough, the North Yard. North Yard tracks were used for both classification and departure as conditions warranted. (The eastbound layout was altered significantly in a Conrail modernization project completed in 1979.)

Functionally, the yard for the most part served as it always had, as the system's major breakup point. This was especially true of the eastbound side, where everything from Flexivans and multilevels to the lowliest locals and pullers were thoroughly reshuffled. (Exceptions: Chicago-North Bergen Flexivan SV-10 and occasional unit coal trains for eastern utilities and Hudson Valley cement plants.) Westbound, Frontier chewed up two or three trains which formerly died at Dewitt, and the B&A originated an Elkhart manifest (LS-3) which, while worked at Dewitt, formerly took to the receiving yard as a mixed train. The Supervans and an empty multilevel tran were also handled on outside tracks, but otherwise, the westbound hump kept busy two and more often three tricks a day on pretty much the same old diet.

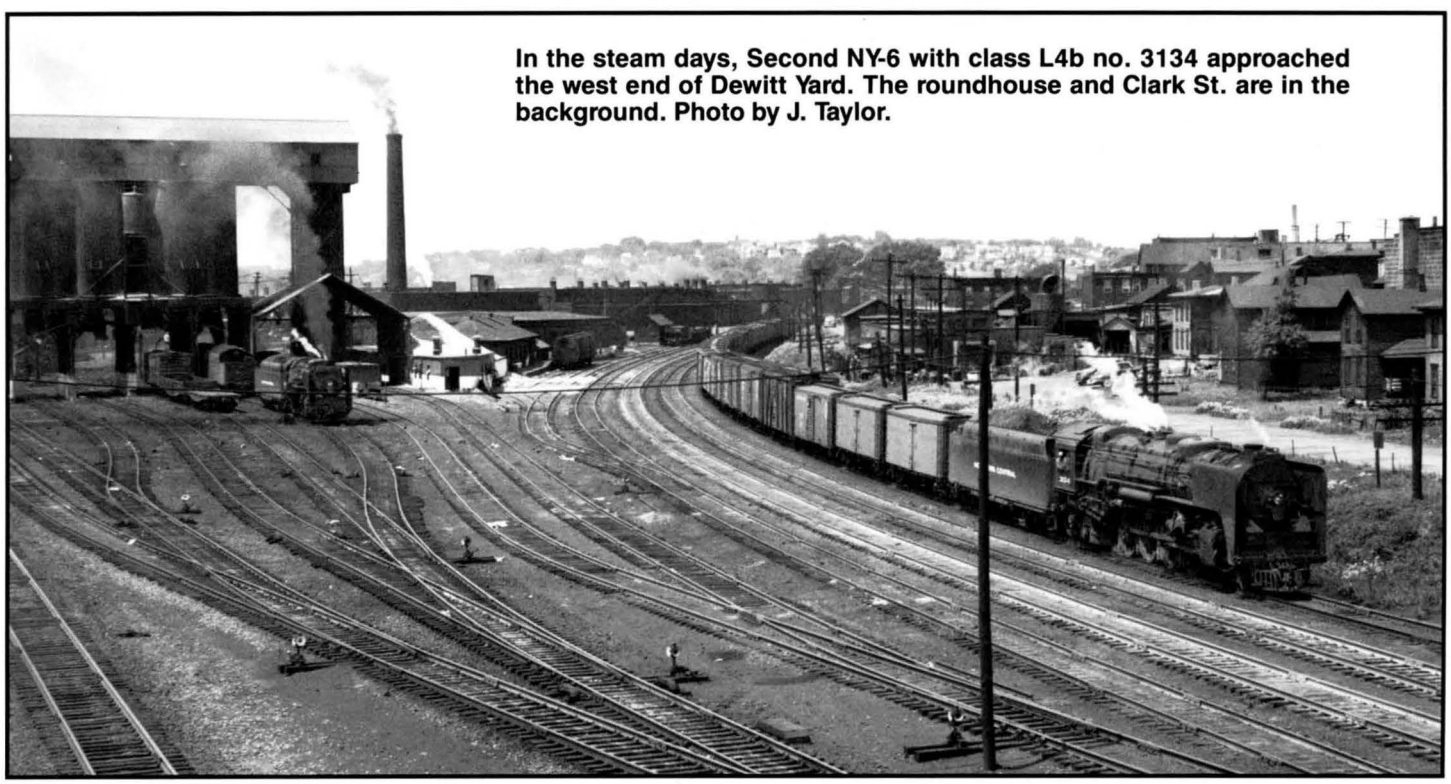
If all of this seemed to defy President Perlman's often-expressed philosophy of change, no way, for the message had been heard and heeded. Soon after the warmup sessions at Selkirk were completed, Dewitt westbound was vacated, and only the relative tidbits of northbound, southbound, local, and city traffic remained to provide exercise for the eastbound. Progress had finally overtaken the bellweather of New York Central terminals.

DEWITT — INBOUND TRAINS (EASTBOUND)

SYMBOL	FROM	ARRIVAL SPAN	FREQUENCY	REMARKS
BD-4	Frontier Yard	1201A- 800A	XMon.	
BW-10	Suspension Bridge	600A- 900A	Daily	
NY-6	Big Four Yard	630A- 930A	Daily	Had small group thru from East St. Louis
CD-2	Newberry Junction	630A-1000A	Daily	
Puller 1	Geddes St., Syracuse	700A- 900A	Daily	
NY-2	Blue Island	730A-1030A	Daily	
A/NY-2	Elkhart	800A-1100A	Daily	
CD-6	Sharon	800A-1100A	2-4 days/week	
MC-4	Detroit	1201P- 300P	Daily	
FRD-4	Frontier Yard	1201P- 800P	Daily	
MD-12	Montreal	330P- 700P	Daily	
SV-2	Chicago	330P- 430P	XMon.	Solid Flexivan and piggyback. Humped.
SV-6	E. St. Louis	400P- 500P	XMon.	Solid Flexivan and piggyback. Humped.
QD-2	Cayuga	500P- 800P	XSun.	
NY-4	Blue Island	700P-1100P	Daily	
NY-8	Big Four Yard	730P-1130P	Daily	
Southport	Southport (PRR)	irregular	3-4 days/week	

DEWITT - OUTBOUND TRAINS (EASTBOUND)

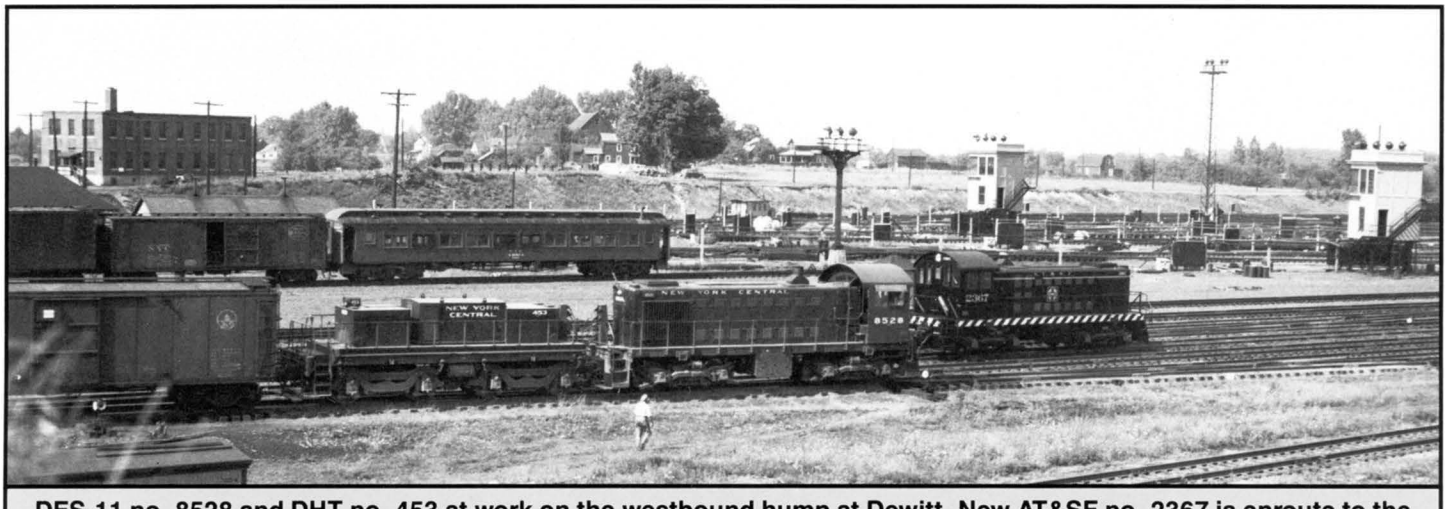
SYMBOL	TO	DEPART - FREQUENCY	GROUPING
BA-4	Boston	200A XFri.-Sat.	No. Adams Jct.-Worcester-Framingham-Boston-Springfield/NHRR-Springfield-Selkirk (fill)
DM-11	Montreal	400A Daily	Malone-Massena-cut cab-Governeur-Ogdensburg
BY-4	Mechanicsville	500A XMon.	Utica-B&M RR
XB-2/4/6	Boston	600A (2-3 trains/week)	Operated in lieu of BA-2 and BA-4 on Fri. and Sat. Same groups. Schedule irregular.
DW-5	Watertown	800A XSun.	Station order, Clay-Watertown
DFO-1	Oswego	1100A XSun.	Electronic Park-Fulton-Oswego
NY-2	New York (33rd St.)	1100A XFri.-Sat.	33rd St. meat-33rd St. other-60th St.-130th St.-LIRR
WS-2	Weehawken	1130A Daily	Kingston-National Jct./CNJRR-Weehawken lighterage-Weehawken-Little Ferry multilevels-North Bergen piggybacks
BA-2	Boston	1230P XFri.-Sat.	Springfield/NHRR-Springfield-Worcester-Framingham-Boston
BY-2	Mechanicsville	100P Daily	Utica-B&M RR
DCN-2	New York (Westchester Ave.)	430P XFri.-Sat.	Croton-Yonkers-Kingsbridge-Port Morris/NHRR-Westchester Ave. Combined with NY-2 2-3 days/week
XN-2/4/6	New York (33rd St.)	500P (3-4 trains/week)	operated in lieu of NY-2, NY-4 and DCN-2 on Thurs.-Fri.-Sat. Same groups. Schedule irregular.
SV-4	Boston	615P XMon.	Worcester-Boston-Springfield-Selkirk (solid Flexivan and piggyback)
SV-2	New York (Highbridge)	630P XMon.	Solid Flexivans for Highbridge
SV-12	North Bergen	645P XMon.	Solid Flexivan and piggyback for North Bergen. Usually combined with SV-2, with SV-12 cars on rear end
NY-4	New York (33rd St.)	1000P-1159P XThurs.-Fri.	Croton-Yonkers-Kingsbridge-Port Morris/NHRR-Westchester Ave.-33rd St. meat-33rd St. other-60th St.-130th St.-LIRR
DA-18	West Albany	1100P Daily	Utica-Amsterdam perishable-Schenectady-Albany
DV-4	Selkirk	1130P XSat.	Canastota-Oneida-Rome-Fort Plain-Fonda-Amsterdam-Selkirk dimensions



In the steam days, Second NY-6 with class L4b no. 3134 approached the west end of Dewitt Yard. The roundhouse and Clark St. are in the background. Photo by J. Taylor.

DEWITT — INBOUND TRAINS (WESTBOUND)

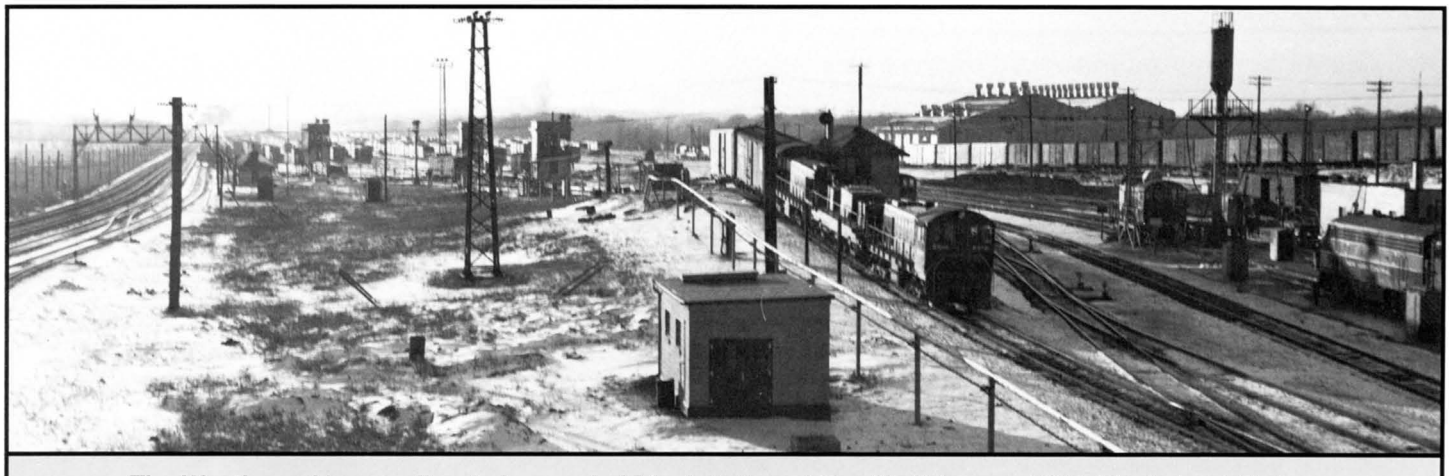
SYMBOL	FROM	ARRIVAL SPAN	FREQUENCY	REMARKS
2nd Lake Line	Lake Line industries	1201A- 200A	XSun.-Mon.	from north side Lake Line industries and Ternstedt
Puller 1	Peat St., Syracuse	1230A- 130A	Daily	yarded in west end of Westbound advance yard
VD-75	Selkirk	100A- 900A	3-4 days/wk.	picked up on Mohawk Division
SLX-1	New York (72nd St.)	400A- 600A	XMon.	had Indpls. group on head end for outbound SLX-1 after being flat-switched into Columbus and Big Four groups. Sometimes had Detroit mdse. and bananas, on rear end for FMA-9. Balance of train humped.
BM-7	Mechanicsville	430A- 700A	Daily	
ML-9	Little Ferry (groups off)	500A- 700A	Daily	Fairlane and Springfield, Ohio, multilevels off rear end for FLE-9
VD-7	Selkirk	500A- 100P	4-5 days/wk.	had Dewitts X Selkirk and picked up on Mohawk Division.
LS-3	Boston (groups off)	600A- 800A	XMon.	Dewitt fill (Gibson empties) and Southern District cars off rear end; flat-switched into Columbus and Big Four groups for SLX-1
FMA-9	Boston	600A-1000A	Daily	
SV-1	New York (Highbridge) (group off)	715A- 800A	XMon.	Detroit Flexivans off rear end behind cut caboose for FMA-9
AB-21	West Albany (fill off)	100F- 300P	XMon.	Dewitt fill off rear end. Occasionally humped if Frontier was unable to handle.
NB-3	New York (Westchester Avenue	300P- 700P	XSun.-Mon.	normally a main-track train but occasionally humped if Frontier was unable to handle.
1st Lake Line	Lake Line industries	400P- 600P	Daily	from south side Lake Line industries and Ternstedt
Industrial Switcher	Industrial Park	400P- 600P	XSat.-Sun.	from Carrier, Chrysler, etc.
Puller 3	Geddes St., Syracuse	600P- 800P	Daily	
WD-1	Weehawken	800P-1100P	Daily	
BM-5	Mechanicsville	900P-1100P	XMon.	
BB-1	Boston (group off)	1000P- 200A	Daily	Syracuse and Rochester Flexivans off rear end. Occasionally humped if Frontier was unable to handle
OFD-2	Oswego	1100P- 200A	XSun. PM/Mon. AM	



DES-11 no. 8528 and DHT no. 453 at work on the westbound hump at Dewitt. New AT&SF no. 2367 is enroute to the Santa Fe from Alco-Schenectady. Photo by J. Taylor.

DEWITT - OUTBOUND TRAINS (WESTBOUND)

SYMBOL	TO	DEPART - FREQUENCY	GROUPING
Puller 1	Geddes St., Syracuse	100A Daily	Market perishable-Geddes St.
DQ-1	Cayuga	630A XSun.	station order, Camillus-Cayuga, with Geneva on rear end
SLX-1	Big Four Yard	630A- 800A Daily	Columbus-Big Four-empty boxcars (fill)
LS-3	Elkhart (fill on)	700A- 900A XMon.	Elkhart fill added to rear end
SV-1	Chicago (Vans on)	745A-830A XMon.	Chicago FVs and PBs off strip added to rear end on days A/SV-1 not operated on previous evening
1st Lake Line	Lake Line	759A Daily	to south side Lake Line Industries and Ternstedt
Industrial Switcher	Industrial Park	759A-XSat.-Sun.	to Carrier, Chrysler, etc.
SV-5	East St. Louis (Vans on)	830A- 930A XMon.	E. St. Louis FVs and PBs added to head end and Cincinnati and Columbus FVs and PBs added to rear end
FMA-9	Detroit	1000A- 200P Daily	Willow Run/Wayne/DT&I/Cadillac multilevels-Chrysler multi-levels-GTW multilevels-Detroit-Detroit FVs
Puller 3	Geddes St., Syracuse	1030A Daily	Market perishable-Geddes St.
DRS-7	Suspension Bridge	1100A Daily	Brockport-Rochester-Lockport-Susp. Bridge/CNRR-Susp. Bridge/C&O RR
FLE-9	Gibson	1230P Daily	Painesville-Fairlane-Toledo-Gibson-Collinwood
DB-3	Frontier Yard	200P or later, 4-6 days/wk.	Lyons-Buffalo. Combined with AB-21 1-3 days/week
AB-21	Frontier Yard (fill on)	200P- 600P XMon.	Buffalo fill added to rear end. (Combined with DB-3 1-3 days/week
NB-3	Frontier Yard (fill on)	330P- 730P XSun.-Mon.	Buffalo fill occasionally added to rear end if there was room
2nd Lake Line	Lake Line	359P XSat.-Sun.	to north side Lake Line industries and Ternstedt
WB-5	Suspension Bridge	730P Daily	Maplewood/B&O RR-Black Rock-Batavia-Suspension Bridge
A/SV-1	Collinwood	900P 3-4 days/week	mixed FVs and PBs for Collinwood and beyond off strip
DH-3	Newberry Junction	900P Daily	Avis-Reading RR-PRR-Corning
BB-1	Frontier Yard (fill on)	1030P- 300A Daily	Buffalo fill occasionally added to rear end if there was room
PB-2	Benson Mines	1100P or later, Daily	Deferiet-Benson Mines
Puller 1	Peat St., Syracuse	1130P Daily	Peat Street
Southport	Southport (PRR)	irregular, 3-4 days/wk.	Himrod Junction/PRR
DGX Train	Gibson	irregular, 0-3 trains/wk.	Gibson (empties)
DB-5	Frontier Yard	irregular, 1-3 days/week	Buffalo (handled overflow Buffalos, which developed especially when AB-21 and/or NB-3 and/or BB-1 were humped at Dewitt)



The Westbound hump, diesel shop and old fuel station at Dewitt. February 1953. Photo by J. Taylor.

DEWITT - CLASSIFICATIONS

EASTBOUND

NY 33rd St. (including meat)
NY 60th St.
NY 130th St.
LIRR
No. Adams Jct.
Springfield
Springfield/NHRR
Worcester
Framingham
Boston
Croton
Kingsbridge (including Yonkers)
Westchester Ave.
Port Morris/NHRR
Kingston
National Jct./CNJ RR
Weehawken lighterage
Weehawken
Utica
Schenectady
Albany
Selkirk
Rotterdam Jct./B&M RR
DV-4 (includes Canastota-Oneida-Rome-Ft. Plain-Fonda-Amsterdam-Selkirk dimensions)
Fulton
Oswego
St. Lawrence Division shorts
Watertown
Governeur
Ogdensburg
Malone (including Montreal)
Massena
Deferiet
Syracuse
Lake Line
Westbounds
No bills (including Electronic Park)
Cripples

WESTBOUND

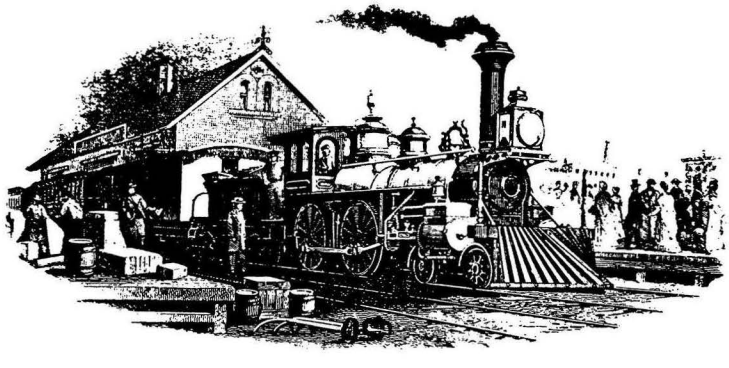
Gibson
Elkhart
Indianapolis
Detroit
Toledo
Collinwood
Painesville
Suspension Bridge/CNRR
Suspension Bridge/C&O RR
Suspension Bridge
Buffalo
Batavia
Maplewood/B&O RR
Lockport
Rochester (including Brockport)
Reading RR
PRR
Avis
Himrod Jct./PRR
Old Road (Locals for DQ-1)
List (included Lyons, Corning, Black Rock)
Benson Mines
cleanout (empty boxcars)
Lake Line (included Lake Line, Industrial Park, Peat St.)
Eastbounds
No bills
Cripples
Syracuse

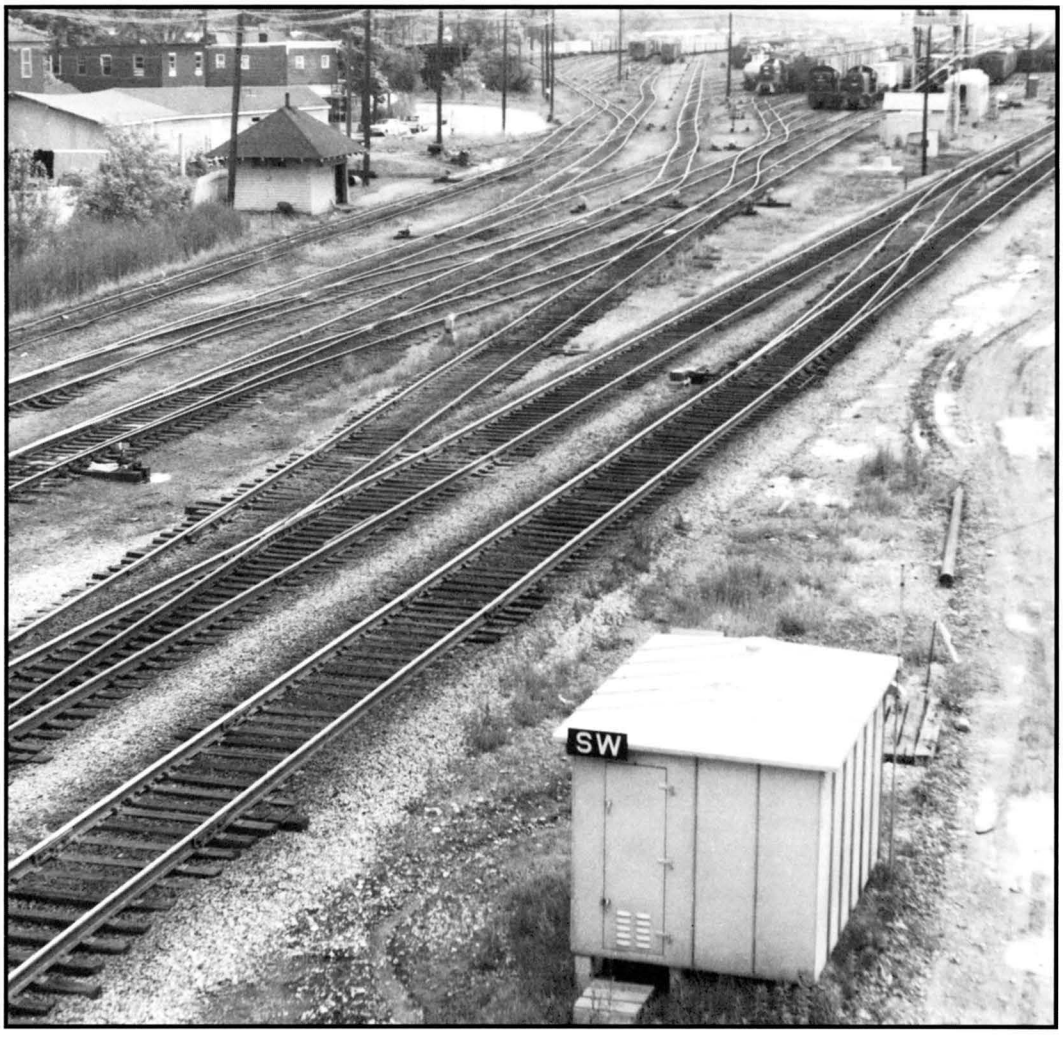
NOTES

There were no assigned tracks other than 50 Eastbound and 13 Westbound for cripples, 11 Westbound for Syracuse, and 27 Westbound for cleanout. In the Eastbound, however, tracks 17-15-13-11 were known as the Electric pocket into which DCN-2 groups were switched, tracks 12-14-16-18-20-22 were known as the New York pocket into which NY-2 and NY-4 grups were switched, and B&A and St. Lawrence Division groups were switched into even-numbered tracks 24 thru 48.

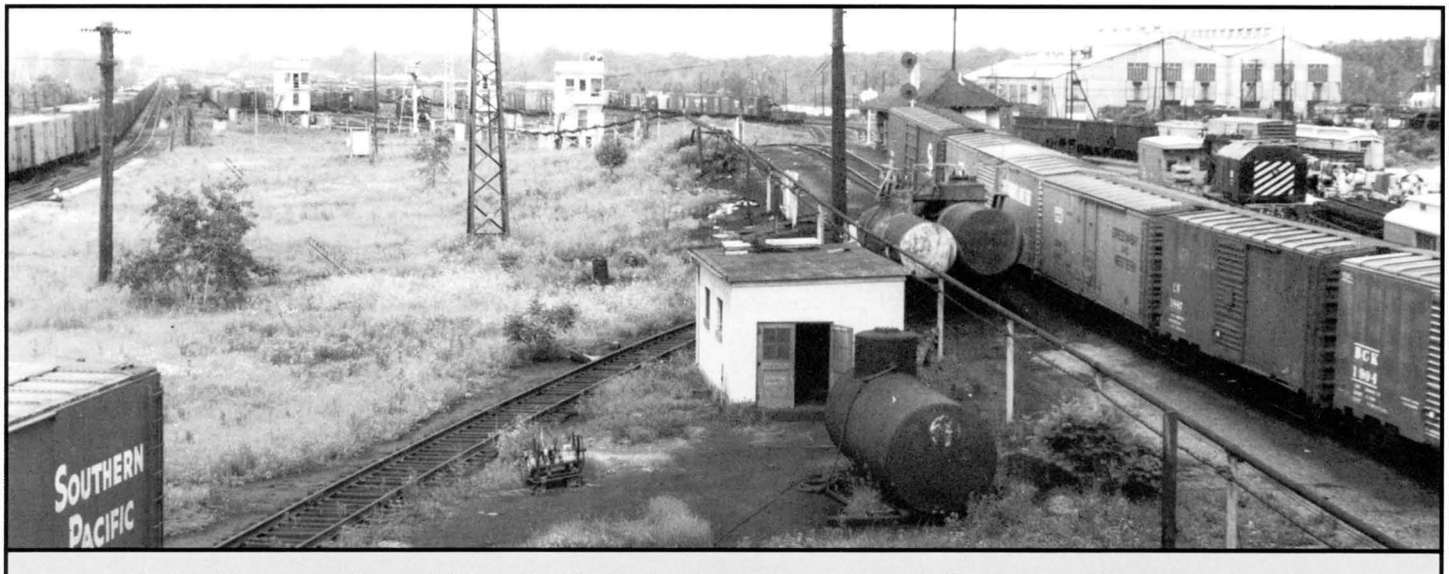
Flexivan groups (6) for SV-2, SV-4, and SV-12 were spread from inbound SV-2 and SV-6, and multilevel groups for FMA-9 (3) and FLE-9 (1) were spread from inbound FMA-9.

Little Ferry multilevels for WS-2 arrived in MC-4 or BW-10 and were held out, as were North Bergen piggybacks for WS-2 off NY-2 and NY-6.

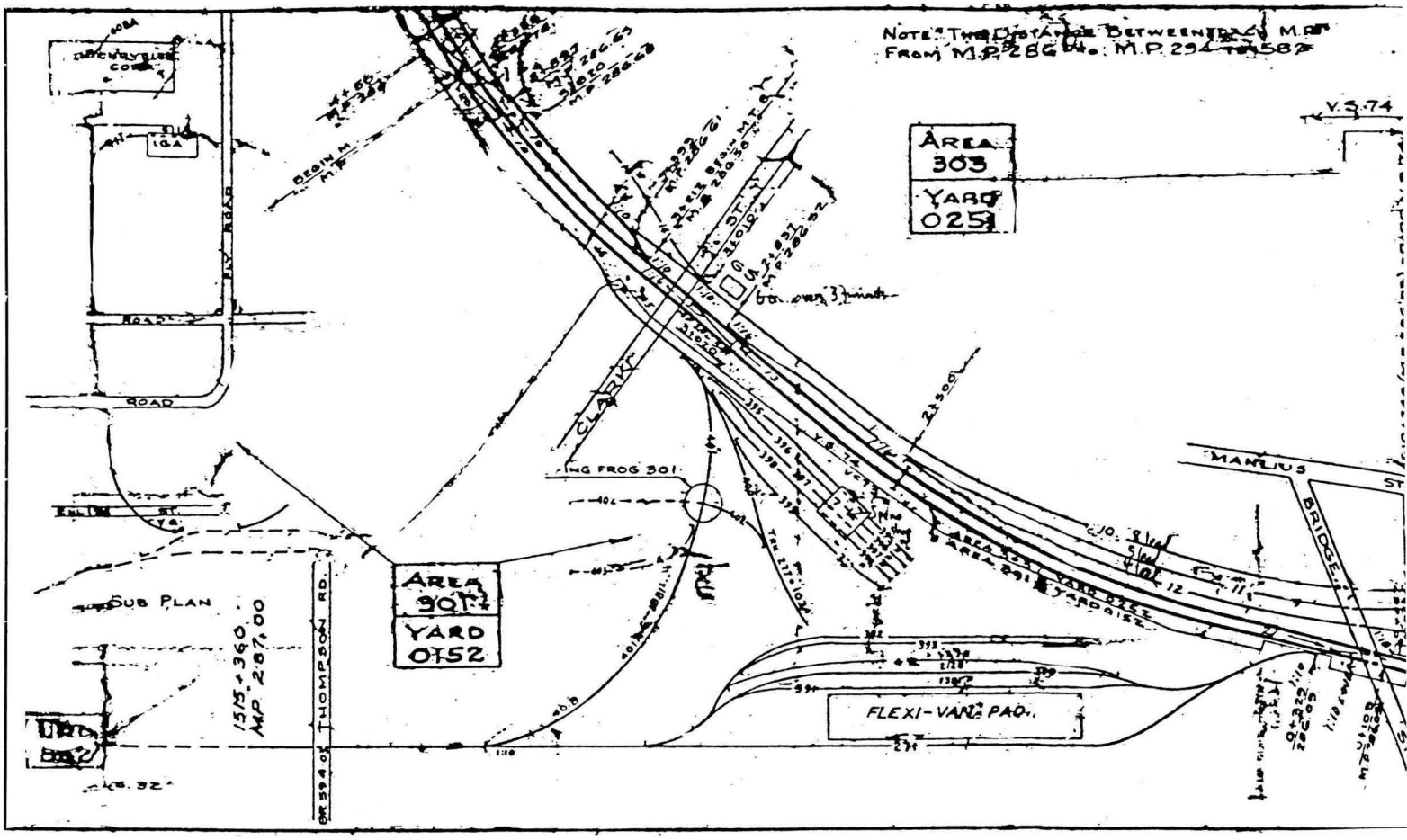


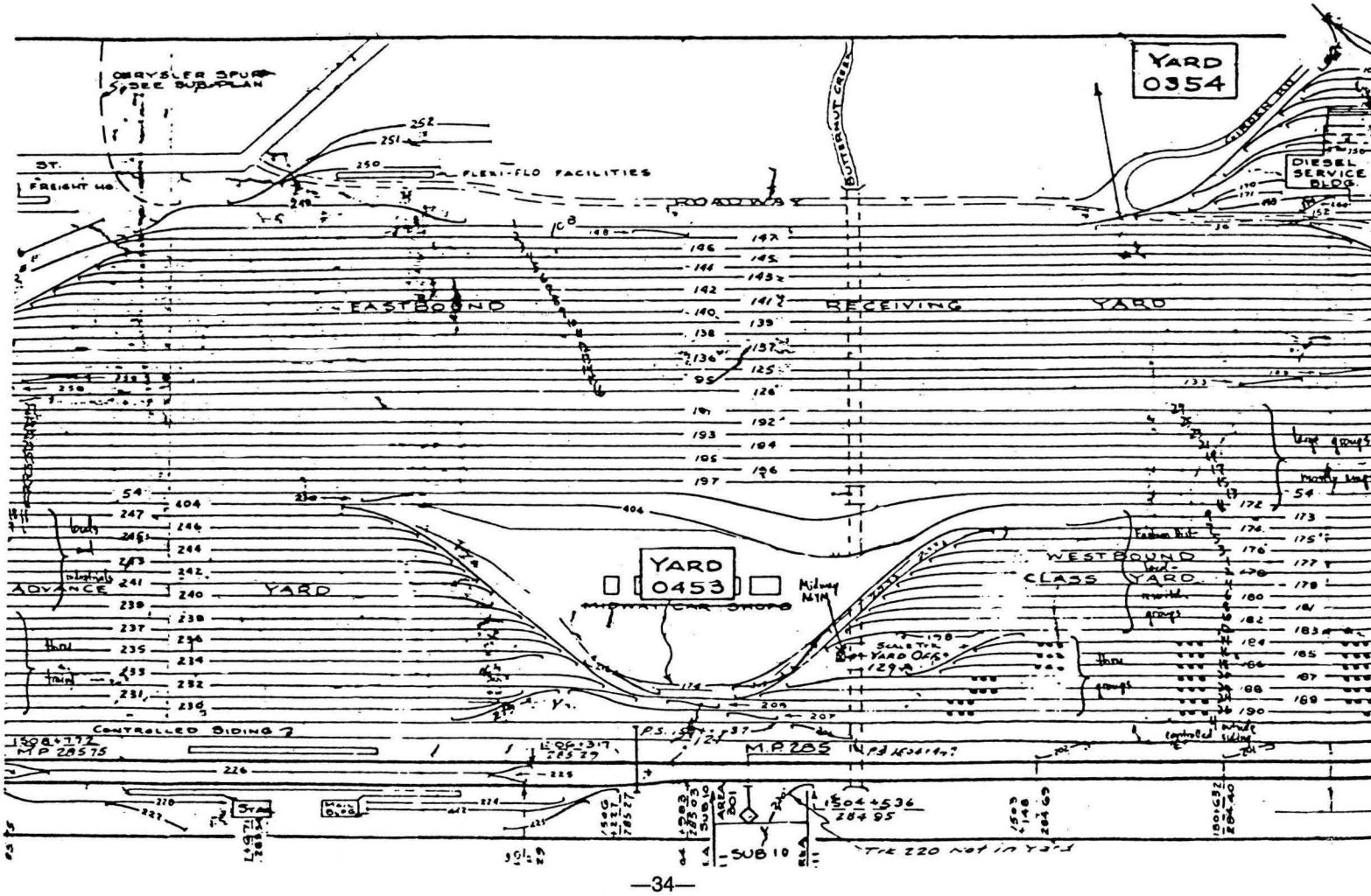


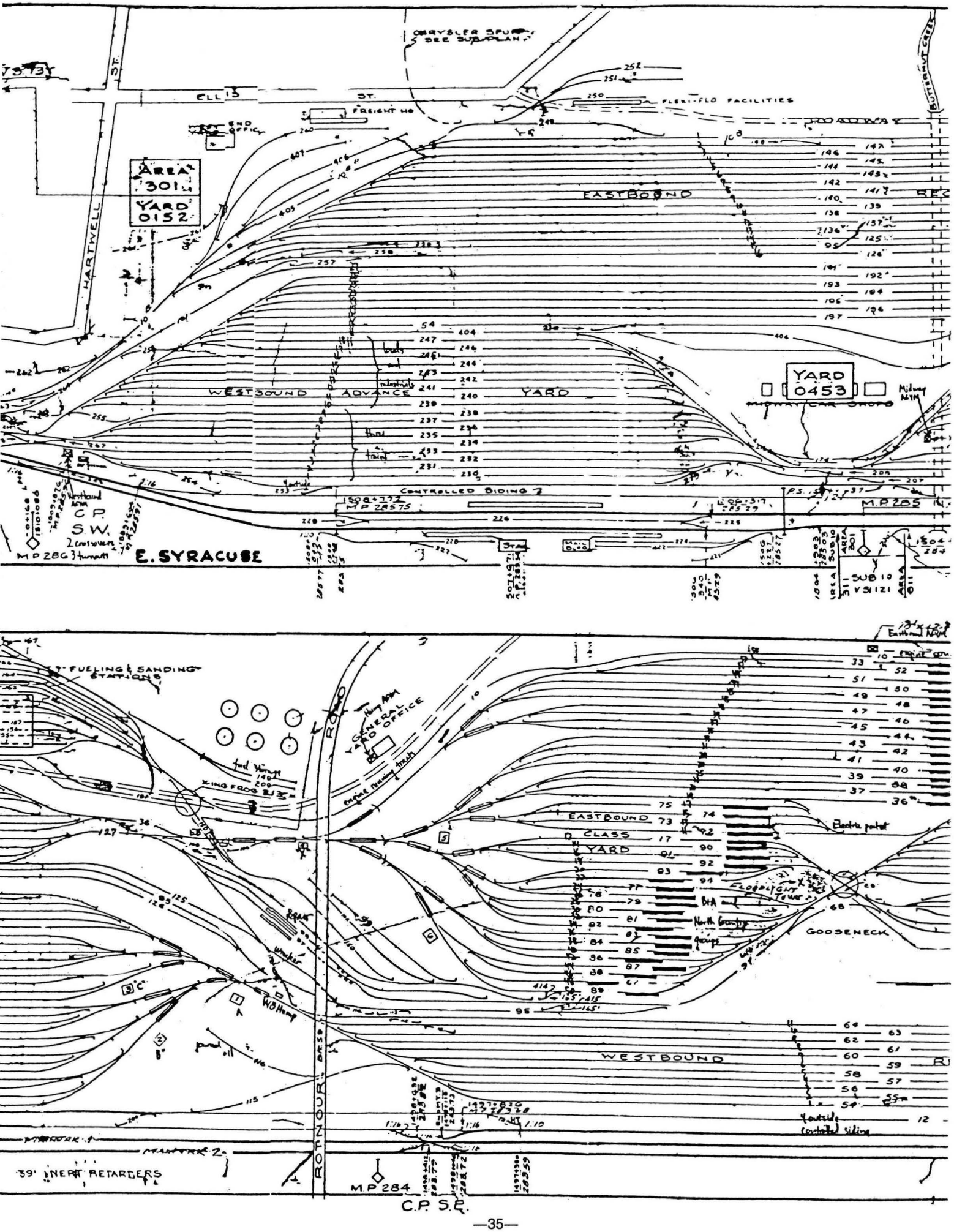
CP SW is located at the west end of the Dewitt complex. Controlled in NYC days from GS office at Clark Street, half a mile to the west, it has since been assimilated into the dispatcher's panel in Selkirk, but its functions have not changed. It still permits crossover moves between the main tracks, gives access to the west end of the controlled siding (the third track from the right in the foreground), and governs movements between the main tracks and the trailvan facility (back of the camera). One important difference: in this scene, the turnout opposite the signal hut in the left foreground served to handle movements from the westbound advance yard (behind the yardmaster's tower) onto the mains; today, with the westbound side removed, this turnout diverts trains from the mains into the (former eastbound) receiving yard, to the left of the light tower. Photo by J. Taylor.

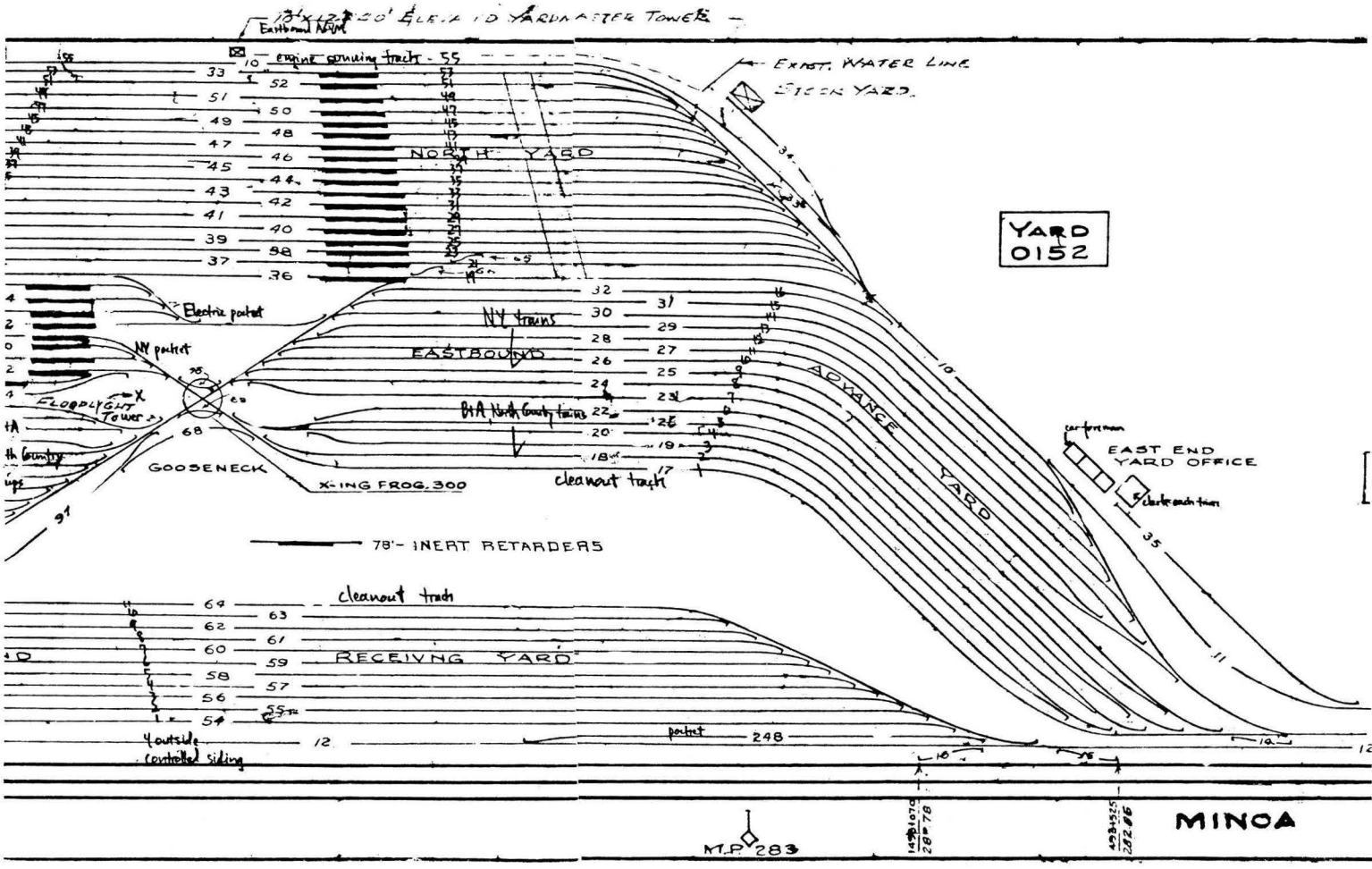


Rotnour (a.k.a. Freemont) Road bridges Dewitt Yard at its midsection and offers an excellent vantage point, as the next four photographs will testify. This one, looking west, includes a multitude of detail, as follows from left to right: (1) an eastbound thru train, NY-2, being relayed on the controlled siding (its reefers conceal the main tracks); (2) a running track known as "4 outside"; (3) the westbound class yard, with its retarder towers numbered 1, 2, and 3; (4) the westbound hump; (5) the wreck train and car repair shop; (6) the diesel shop; and (7) the approach to the eastbound hump (the hump lead is just back of the tank car in the right background). Note that NY-2 would have been humped rather than relayed prior to the opening of Perlman Yard at Selkirk; the photograph was taken January 17, 1968. Photo by J. Taylor.

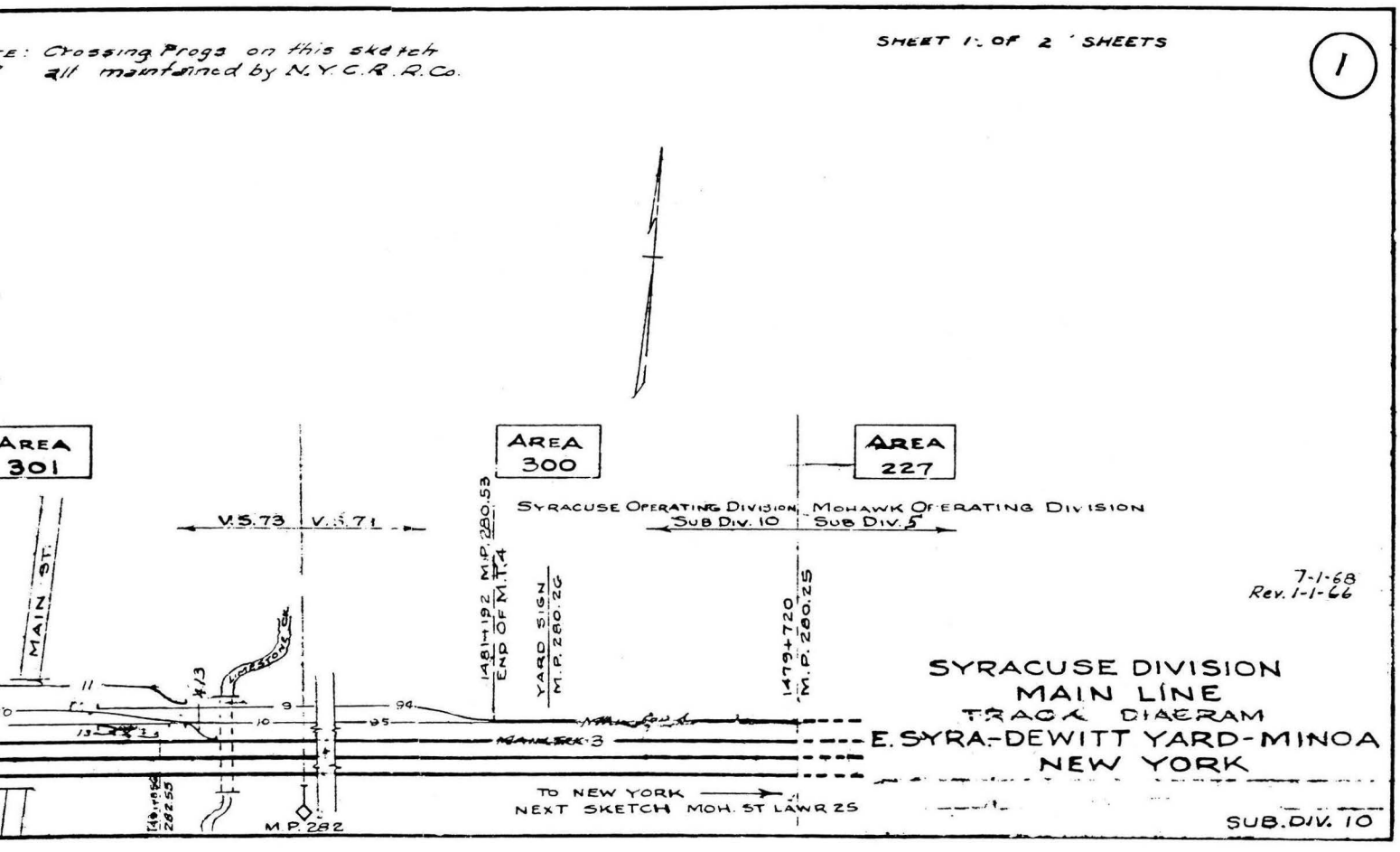

AREA 303
YARD 025
AREA 301
YARD 0152
FLEXI-VAN PAD
CLARK
MANLIUS
BRIDGE
SUB PLAN
1515+360
MP 287.00
THOMPSON RD.
ROAD

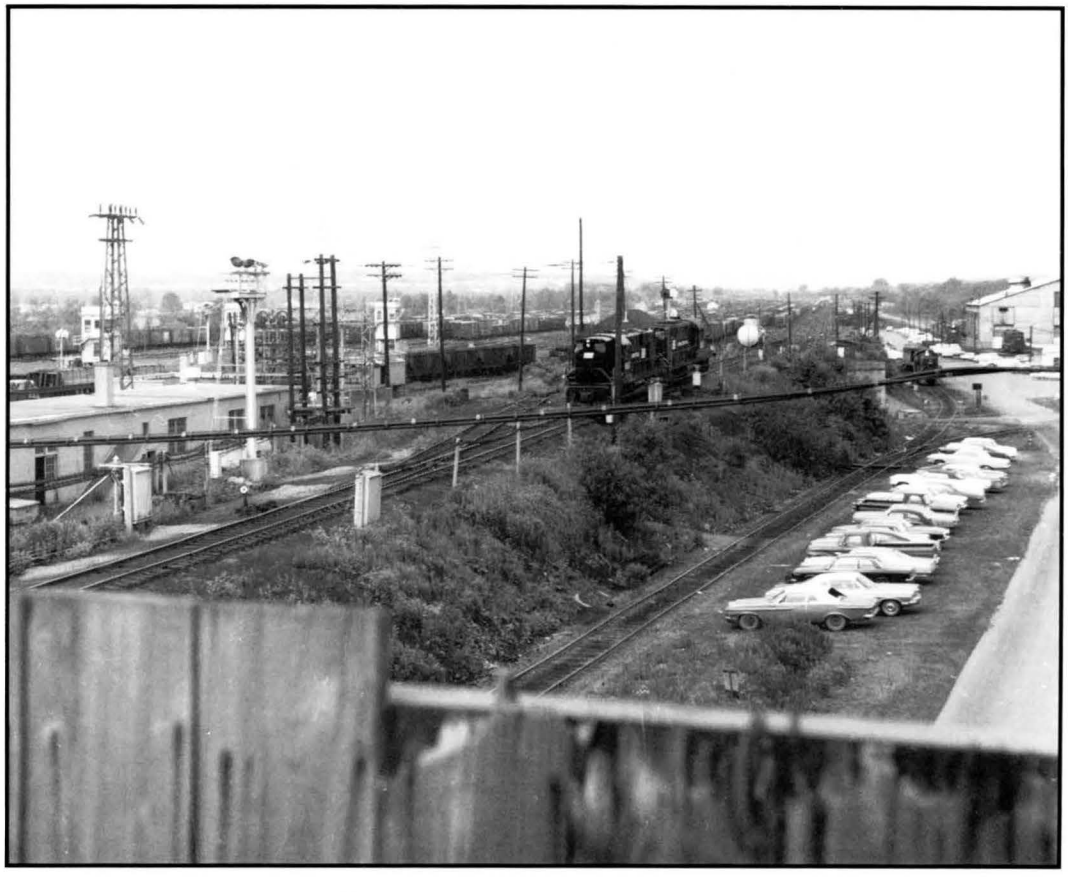

YARD 0354
YARD 0453
CHRYSLER SPUR
FLEXI-FLO FACILITIES
EASTBOUND
RECEIVING
YARD
WESTBOUND
CLASS
YARD
ADVANCE
YARD
DIESEL SERVICE BLDG.
BUTTERNUT CREEK
CONTROLLED SIDING 7
MP 285
SUB 10


CHRYSLER SPUR
SEE SUBPLAN
ELLIS ST.
HARTWELL ST.
FREIGHT HO
FLEXI-FLO FACILITIES
AREA 301
YARD 0152
EASTBOUND
WESTBOUND ADVANCE
YARD
YARD 0453
MIDWAY CAR SHOPS
CONTROLLED SIDING 2
MP 285
MP 286
E. SYRACUSE
C.P. SW. 2 crossovers 3 turnouts
FUELING & SANDING STATIONS
GENERAL YARD OFFICE
EASTBOUND
D CLASS YARD
WESTBOUND
GOOSENECK
ROTUNDA
MP 284
C.P. S.E.
39' INERT RETARDERS

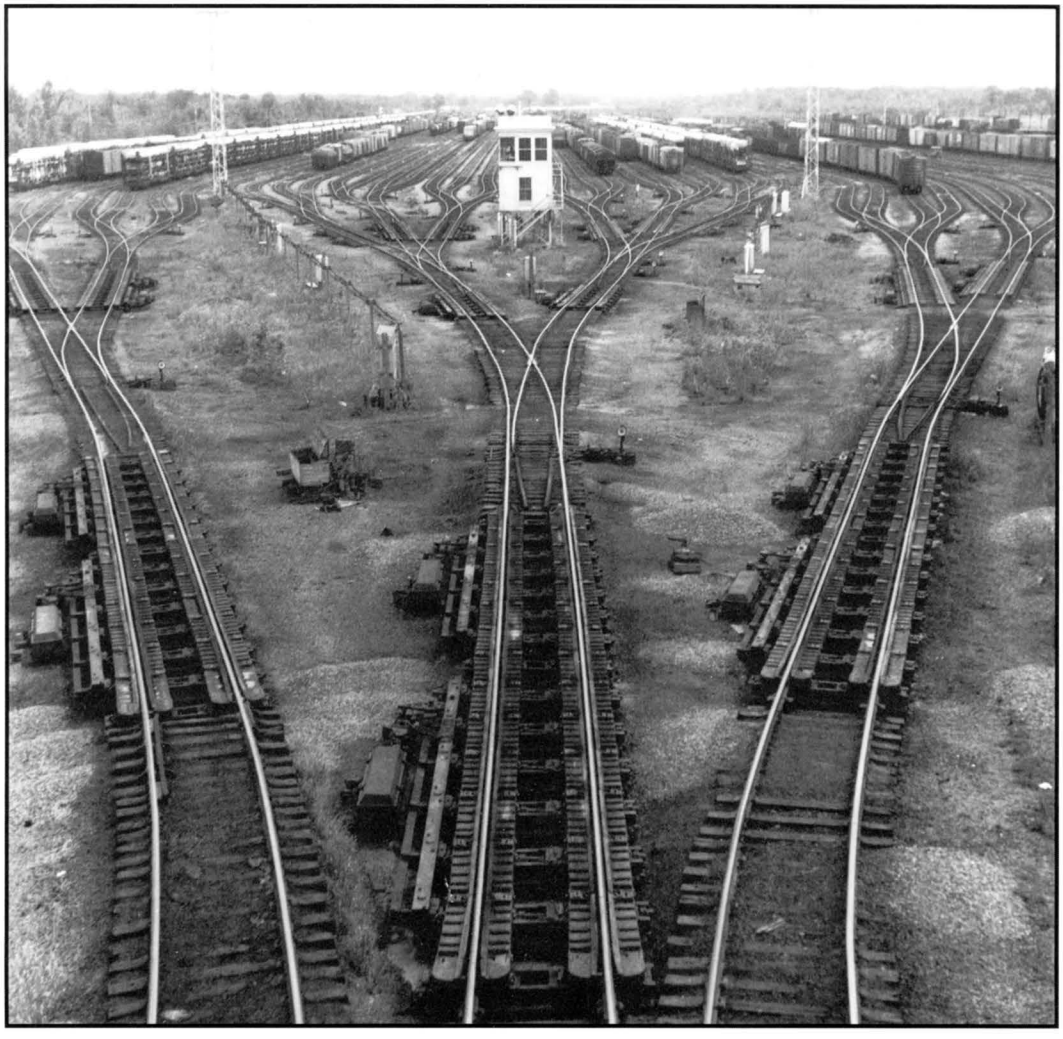


An about-face and slight shift to the south from the previous location provides this view of the main line extending east alongside the yard. Beyond the two mains are the controlled siding, ''4 outside'' (here occupied by a westbound relay train), the westbound receiving yard (the cut just above the cartops of the relay train is advancing toward the westbound hump), and the Eastbound Class and North Yard portions of the eastbound classification complex. (The light tower stands between tracks 34 and 36 in the Eastbound Class; the multilevels are in the North Yard.) Controlled point SE, consisting of universal crossovers between main tracks and between no. 1 main and the controlled siding, is in the right background beyond the signal bridge. Photo by J. Taylor.





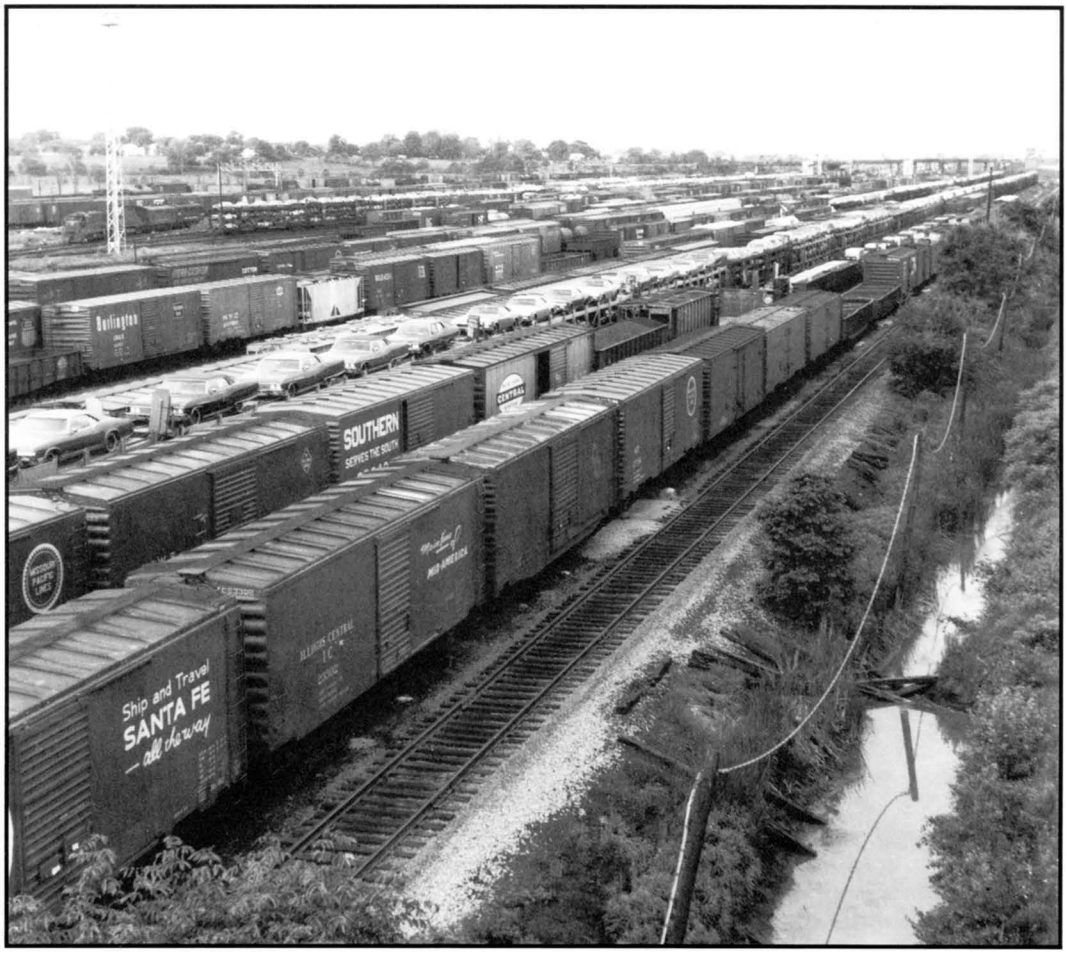
From the north end of Rotnour Bridge, the scene to the west is dominated by the eastbound hump. Back of it is, of course, the eastbound receiving yard, and across the road is the diesel shop. The running track from the shop alongside the parked autos is an engine running track extending to the east end of the yard at Minoa. The car shop building is just beyond the hump lead on the left, and beyond are things seen from a different angle two pages back — retarder towers and tracks of the westbound class yard, and NY-2 relaying on the controlled siding. Alert observers will note the PC logos on the ex-PRR RSD-2 humpers more evidence of the post-merger date of these photographs. Photo by J. Taylor.

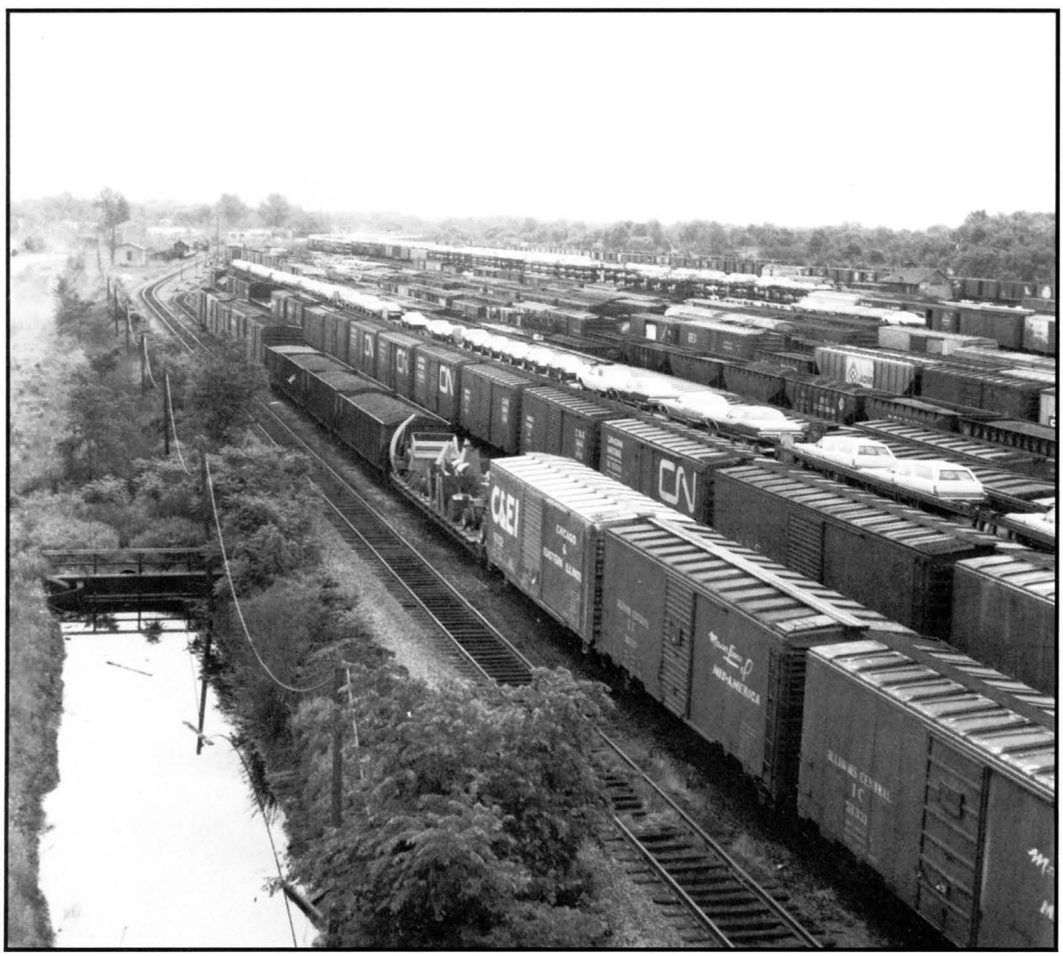


This is the eastbound retarder complex as seen from the north side of Routnour Bridge looking east. The three retarders in the foreground control, from right to left, movements to even-numbered tracks 36-50, movements to even-numbered tracks 12-34 and odd-numbered tracks 11-33, and movements to odd-numbered tracks 35-53, respectively. They are themselves controlled, along with divide switchers back of the camera and the three in the foreground, by retarder tower 4 below the crest of the hump. The retarder tower (5) in the center of the picture divides the odd- and even-numbered sides of the yard and controls movements into the odd-numbered side. Retarder tower 6, which handles the even-numbered side, is out of sight at the upper right. Photo by J. Taylor.

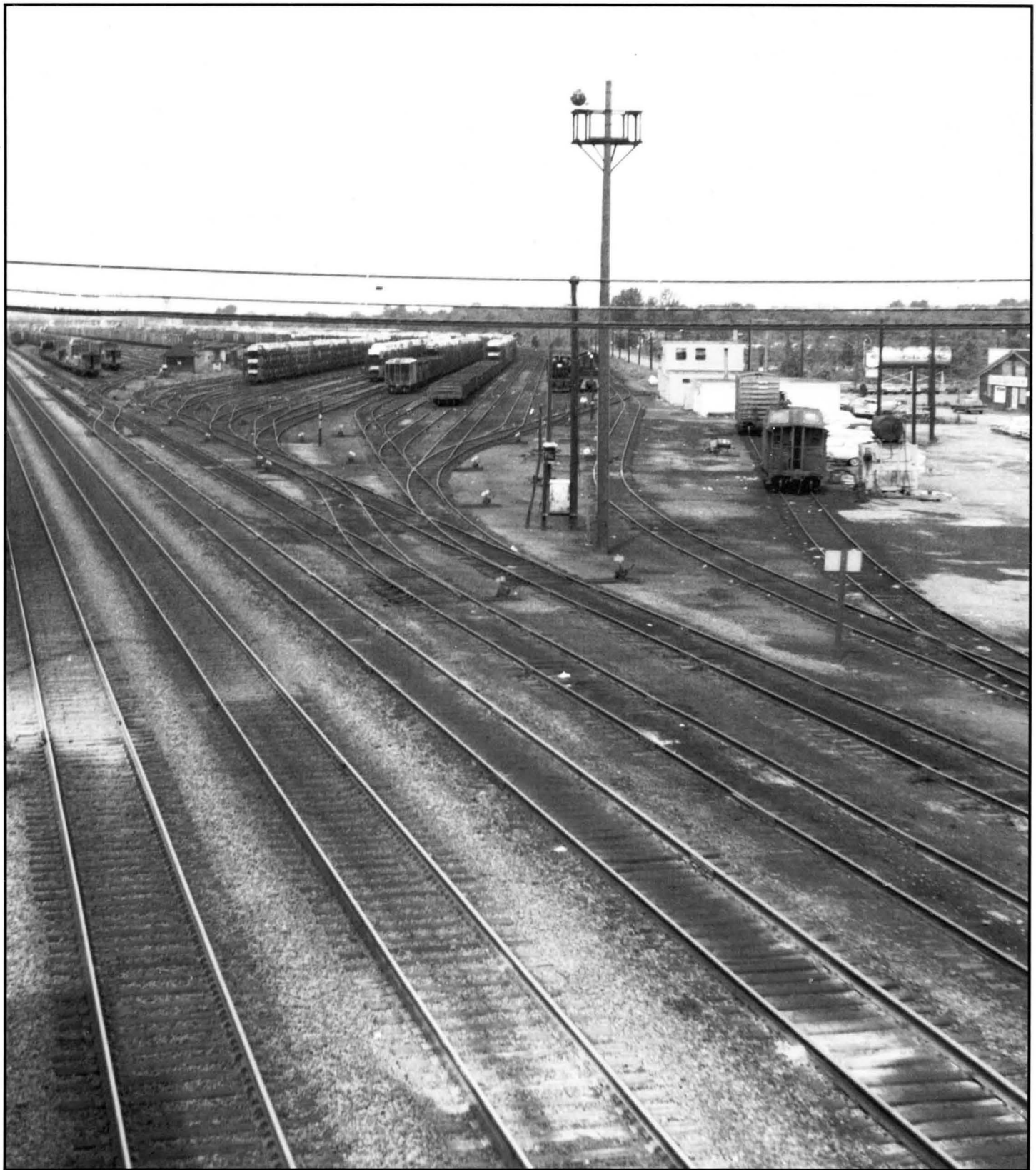
Loaded multilevels from a very late ML-12 dominate this view of the eastbound classification and departure portion of Dewitt. (At the time this was taken, the function of humping ML-12 had been shifted from Selkirk, due to advanced construction activity and resulting further emasculation of the old yard at that point). Selkirk and Little Ferry groups identify tracks 39 and 47 on the left, while Framingham autos occupy tracks in the Eastbound Class Yard on the right. The long tracks of North Yard which extended through to the east end at Minoa begin with number 19 (the eighth track to the right of the light tower). In the foreground is the engine running track between the diesel facility and Minoa. Photo by J. Taylor.

The three yardmasters' towers at Dewitt offered, along with Rotnour Bridge, fine vantage points for the photographer, located as they were to afford the yardmasters the best opportunities for monitoring the crews under their supervision. This picture was taken from the platform of the eastbound yardmaster's tower, with the camera aimed westward over the North Yard towards Rotnour Bridge and, above the multilevels in the right background, the hump yardmaster's tower alongside the general office building (from which tower the previous picture was taken). Controlled pointed SE on the main line is marked by the signal bridge in the left background. Photo by J. Taylor.





When these pictures were taken, the eastbound yardmaster's tower was vacant due to a fire which originated in the oily drainage ditch below and which spread to its communication apparatus. This, of course, did not affect its value as a lookout post, thus this view over the North Yard towards Minoa. The empty boxcars behind the shanty and carbody in the right background are on track 11, the northernmost track in the westbound receiving yard and then the designated cleanout track at Dewitt. The resulting debris was allowed to accumulate in the open area between track 11 and track 1 in the eastbound advance yard. (This and the polluted ditch were aspects of the seamier side of Dewitt which was a source of friction with local authorities.) Photo by J. Taylor.



At Minoa, the Dewitt track mass resolved itself into two mains, no's. 3 and 4, which joined the high speed mains about four miles east at CP 35, controlled by the dispatcher at Utica (currently CP278 with the board at Selkirk). Details of Minoa trackage north of the two main tracks are as follows: (1) freight main 3, or the controlled siding; (2) freight main 4, or ''4 outside'', (3) the pocket, here identified by a caboose and some westbound dimension cars; (4) the westbound receiving yard, with the aforementioned cleanout boxcars visible on track 11; (5) tracks 1 thru 16 in the eastbound advance yard; (6) the engine running track; and (7) the Minoa yard office, once somewhat of a hub but at the time occupied by only one clerk each trick. Photo by J. Taylor.

(To be Continued)

Gravity Switching by the New York Central On the Eve of Merger

(Part II)

Jeremy Taylor

ABSTRACT

In our First Quarter 1990 issue Mr. Taylor gave an overview of New York Central's eight major gravity switching facilities and described Selkirk and Dewitt in detail. This issue will cover Frontier and Elkhart. Coverage of Big Four, Sharon, Stanley and Junction yards will follow.

FRONTIER

This yard, completed in December of 1956, was the New York Central's first venture into the field of electronic retarder controls. In the overall picture, it represented the first major effort of the Perlman administration to cut away the jungle of obsolete and excess yard plant with which the railroad was plagued in the postwar years. These "firsts" sent the headline-starved publicity department into a frenzy, with the result that the yard was exuberantly oversold to the many who were ignorant of its purposes and limitations, and to the few who would have expected too much from it in any event. Then, when "Disneyland" opened in the midst of winter in Buffalo, with some of its vital parts unfinished and many of its personnel inexperienced and untrained, then came the deluge . . . overbills by the deskful, nobills and in-wrongs by the trainload, and cripples enough to reopen East Buffalo shop, all to the tune of a chorus of shipper anguish. With the coming of spring and the reopening of some local support facilities, the hard-pressed Frontiersmen began to get their operation in gear, but the explosion of the myth of electronic invincibility left a tarnish which yard supervision labored for years to eradicate. Also left was a lesson in new yard break-in techniques which paid dividends later at Elkhart, Youngstown, and Avon.

Had Frontier been developed as a remodeled Gardenville on the Gardenville site some five miles southeast of Buffalo, the "I told you so" cries of the supporters of this plan would have been forestalled. But the objective was a modern facility to handle the heavy industrial and interchange traffic of the Buffalo terminal area, rather than another staging point for through traffic. (There were too many of these already.) The plan adopted therefore encompassed an East Buffalo site much closer to the sources of local business. The property involved was roughly a mile-long rectangle bounded by the main line and Broadway on the south, the West Shore on the north, Harlem Avenue on the east, and the then-DL&W Railroad on the west, with a narrow wedge-shaped segment on the northwest corner extending west from the DL&W to Bailey Avenue. It was not an ideal plot for a modern hump yard, and the lopsided fishtail layout which necessarily evolved was and is the source of many of Frontier's inadequacies, with its elongated, sloping, curving pull-out leads on the Bailey Avenue end. Another perennial problem: the high rolling resistance created by excess curvature on the hump end, also caused by the shape of the property which made it necessary to bend the hump lead away from the main line, forming an angle between it and the class yard tracks. Nevertheless, Frontier more than fulfilled its mission, and the large economies it made possible certainly justified the decisions of its creators.

As has been previously indicated in the descriptive material on Selkirk and Dewitt, Frontier assumed some of the classification work on through westbound traffic formerly handled at these yards. Since the layout with its shortcomings was not changed, how was this possible? For one thing, people operating the yard became more expert at exploiting its advantages and circumventing its weaknesses, just as the Elkhart and Big Four managers did later with similar benefits. For another, there was the same business attrition in the Buffalo area as in the East generally, and in the period from Frontier's completion to merger this made a significant difference. The loss of certain kinds of traffic resulted in the elimination of much onerous work at Frontier, as for instance grain for subsequently-abandoned Buffalo elevators, which tied up class tracks with hold cars requiring rehumping, and bananas from Weehawken, which after a trip to the icehouse at the Stockyard had to be hurriedly reswitched for various connections. So Frontier began switching, in place of Selkirk, empty reefers and auto parts cars from New York and Tarrytown on NB-3 and empty boxcars from the B&A on BB-1, and in preference to Dewitt, the lean and filled-out returns from the Albany-Schenectady area on AB-21 and the rich harvest from the North Country on MB-1. This was done with the westbound hump at Dewitt for backup, because when Buffalo connection traffic soared on weekends or Buffalo winds howled in winter and spring, swallowing even a single westbound train of 150 cars-plus could be a long drawn-out process. Nevertheless, for a saving of nearly two dollars per car switched, the pressure was applied relentlessly on Frontier, and it was under such pressure that the yard reached its peaks of efficiency.

FRONTIER – INBOUND ROAD TRAINS

SYMBOL	FROM	ARRIVAL SPAN	FREQUENCY	REMARKS
HB-1	Newberry Junction	1201A- 300A	Daily	
NB-3	Westchester Ave. New York	1201A- 500A	XMon.-Tues.	occasionally switched at Dewitt
AB-21	West Albany	100A- 600A	XTues.	sometimes switched or combined at Dewitt
BP-1	Benson Mines (fill off)	400A- 700A	Daily	fill off head end (from Carthage) and rear end (from Benson Mines)
CD-6	Sharon	330A- 600A	1-2 days/week	if yarded for fill, train stood Dewitt-Buffalo-Dewitt, and Dewitts were swung from both ends to Dewitt fill from yard. Relayed about 50% of the time.
BB-1	Beacon Park	400A-1000A	Daily	sometimes switched at Dewitt
CB-4	Elkhart	400A- 800A	Daily	
MC-4	Detroit (fill off)	630A- 900A	Daily	fill off rear end (sometimes removed at Susp. Bridge)
TF-2	Toronto (CPRR)	700A- 900A	Daily	customs inspection at Frontier Yard
Akron	Oakfield	1000A-1130A	XSun.	traveling switcher
CG-2	Collinwood	1100A- 500P	Daily	picked up east of Collinwood
CB-2	Elkhart	100P- 500P	Daily	
NY-8	Big Four Yard (fill off)	300P- 700P	4-5 days/week	fill off rear end (sometimes removed at Collinwood)
MB-1	Massena	400P- 700P	XMon.	
BB-6	Suspension Bridge	430P- 600P	Daily	
PS-10	Youngstown	830P-1100P	Daily	CN block on rear end bypassed hump
DB-3	Dewitt	irregular	4-6 days/week	had Buffalos from Dewitt; picked up on Syracuse Div.

FRONTIER - OUTBOUND ROAD TRAINS

SYMBOL	TO	DEPART - FREQUENCY	GROUPING
CG-1	Collinwood	100A Daily	Dunkirk-Erie-Ashtabula-Painesville
BC-3	Elkhart	200A Daily	Fairlane-Elkhart-Gibson (fill)-Collinwood FV
BF-3	Big Four Yard	300A Daily	Indianapolis-B-19 boxcars (fill)
CD-6	Dewitt (fill on)	330A- 600A 1-2 days/week	if yarded for fill, train stood Dewitt-Buffalo-Dewitt, and Dewitts were swung from both ends to Dewitt fill from yard. Relayed about 50% of the time.
LS-5	Detroit	500A Daily	Trenton coke-Detroit-Gibson (fill)-Toledo
BP-1	Youngstown (fill on)	730A Daily	P&LE fill added
MC-4	Dewitt (fill on)	730A-1000A Daily	Dewitt fill added to rear end (train occasionally bypassed yard)
BB-3	Suspension Bridge	1000A Daily	Suspension Bridge-Niagara Junction
BD-4	Dewitt	1000A- 100P XSun.	Batavia-Syracuse Div. shorts or Dimensions-Lyons
GP-1	Youngstown	1100A- 300P Daily	P&LE
Akron	Oakfield	1201P- 130P XSun.	Oakfield-U.S. Gypsum (traveling switcher)
NY-8	Dewitt (fill on)	400P- 800P Daily	Dewitt fill added to rear end (train occasionally bypassed yard)
FT-1	Toronto (CPRR)	600P Daily	Welland-Toronto-Niagara Jct. (fill)
BH-2	Newberry Junction	630P Daily	Rochester FV-Corning-Avis-Reading-PRR-Clearfield
FRD-4	Dewitt	1000P or later Daily	Rochester-Dewitt
BC-7	Sharon	1000P Daily	Columbus-Cincinnati-Collinwood-Rockport
FGX trains	Gibson	irregular, 0-4 trains/week	Gibson (empties)

FRONTIER – INBOUND PULLERS AND INDUSTRIAL JOBS

Job 40	Kenmore	1st & 3rd tricks	Twice Daily	also pulled from CN interchange at Black Rock
Job 12	Kenmore	2nd trick	Daily	brought Trenton coke from Solvay for LS-5
Job 50	North Tonawanda	3rd trick	XMon.	
Job 4W	Seneca	1st trick	Daily	also pulled from LV interchange at Tifft St.
Various	Stock Yard	3rd trick	Daily	
West End Job	Walden Avenue	3rd trick	XMon.	pullout engine got these industrial cars
Job 15	Belt Industries	2nd trick	XSun.	
Job 46	Bailey Ave. Industries	1st Trick	XSat.-Sun.	
N&W	N&W	various	2-3 Daily	
EL	EL	each trick	3-4 Daily	usually had Tarrytowns and Framinghams on head end
PRR	PRR	various	1-2 Daily	
BCK	BCK	1st trick	XMon.	
B&O	B&O	1st or 3rd trick	Once Daily	

FRONTIER – OUTBOUND PULLERS AND INDUSTRIAL JOBS

Job 40	Kenmore	1st & 3rd tricks/Daily	CN-Chevrolet empties-Kenmore
Job 12	CN	2nd trick Daily	CN (got block off rear end of PS-10 in South Yard)
Job 50	North Tonawanda	3rd trick XMon. AM	Tonawanda
Job 4W	Seneca	1st trick Daily	LV-South Buffalo-gons
Various	Stock Yard	3rd trick Daily	Ohio Street-FS
West End Job	Walden Ave.	3rd trick Daily	Middle Belt-Long Belt-Walden Ave.
Job 46	Bailey Ave. industries	1st trick XSat.-Sun.	Bailey Ave.
Job 45	PRR	1st & 2nd tricks Daily	PRR
Job 35	EL	1st & 2nd tricks Daily	EL-Mahwah
Job 15	BCK	2nd trick Daily	BCK
Extra	N&W	2nd trick Daily	N&W
Extra	B&O	2nd trick Daily	B&O

FRONTIER - CLASSIFICATIONS

GROUP	ASSIGNED TRACK
BCK	none
N&W	none
B&O	none
PRR	none
EL	none
Mahwah	none
FS	none
Ohio Street	none
Bailey Ave.	none
Tonawanda	none
Oakfield	none
U.S. Gypsum	none
Dunkirk	none
Erie, Pa.	none
Ashtabula	none
Painesville	none
Repaired cripples	19
Cripples	20

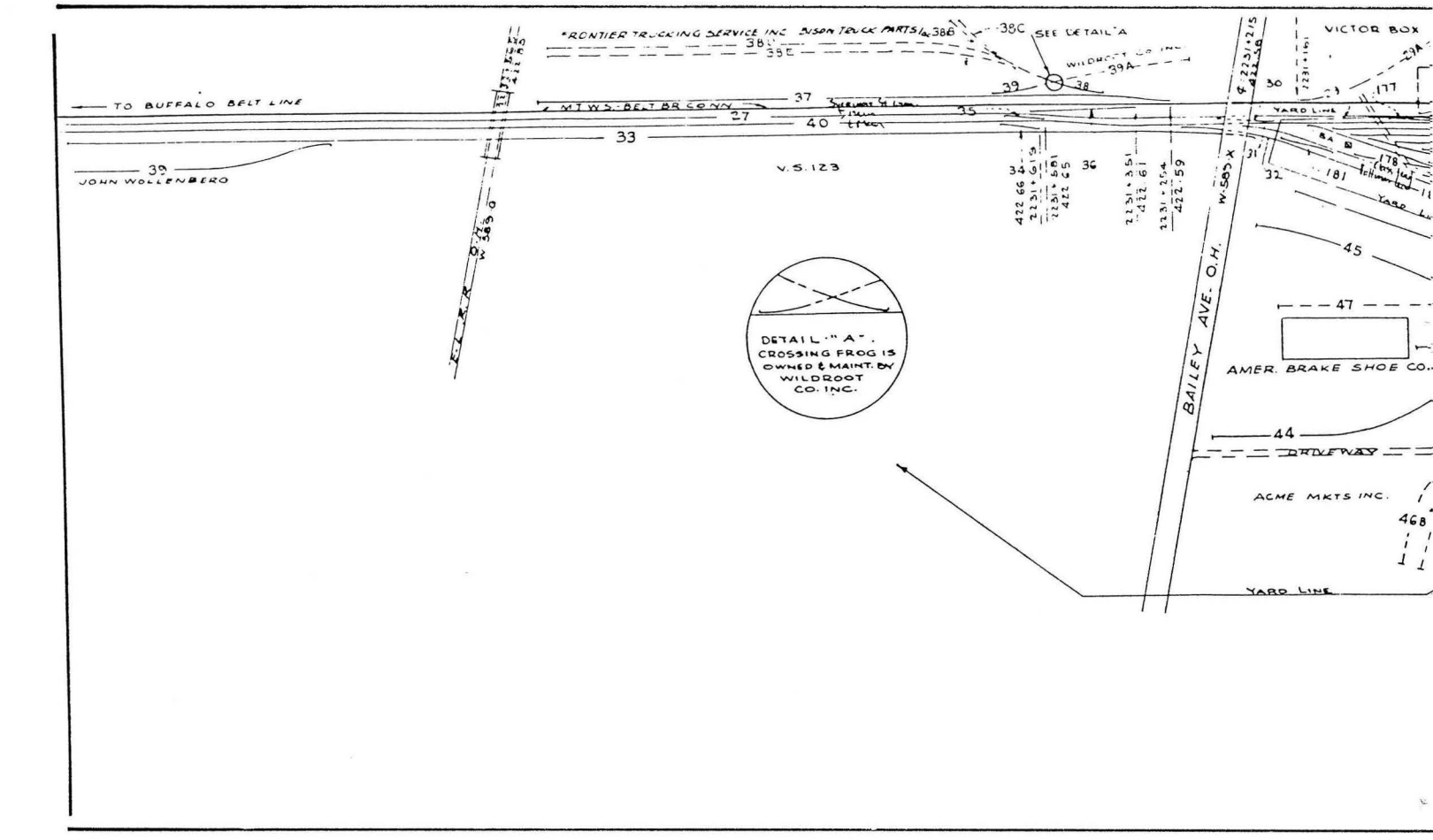
GROUP	ASSIGNED TRACK
Special Loads	none
Lyons	none
Batavia	none
Middle Belt	none
Long Belt	none
Walden Ave.	none
Fairlane	none
Chevrolet empties	none
Toledo	none
Detroit	none
Columbus	none
Cincinnati	none
Collinwood	none
Rockport	none
Corning	none
Avis	none
Newberry-Reading	none
Newberry-PRR	none

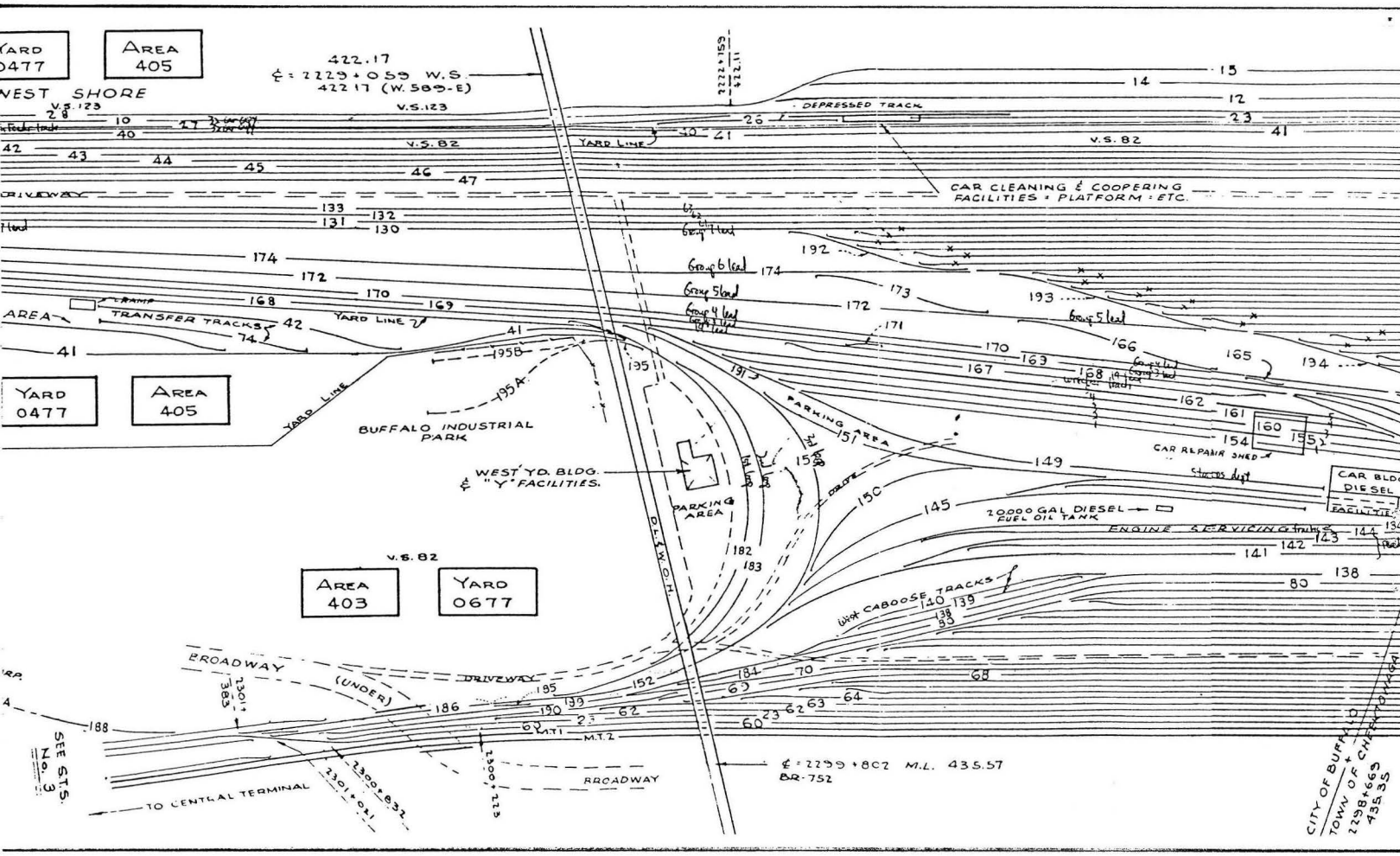
GROUP	ASSIGNED TRACK
Clearfield	none
LV	none
South Buffalo	none
Gons	none
CN	none
Kenmore	none
Welland	none
Toronto	none
Suspension Bridge	none
Niagara Junction	none
P&LE	none
Elkhart	none
Gibson empties	none
Indianapolis	none
Rochester	none
Dewitt	none
Boxcars	none
Miscellaneous Holds	none

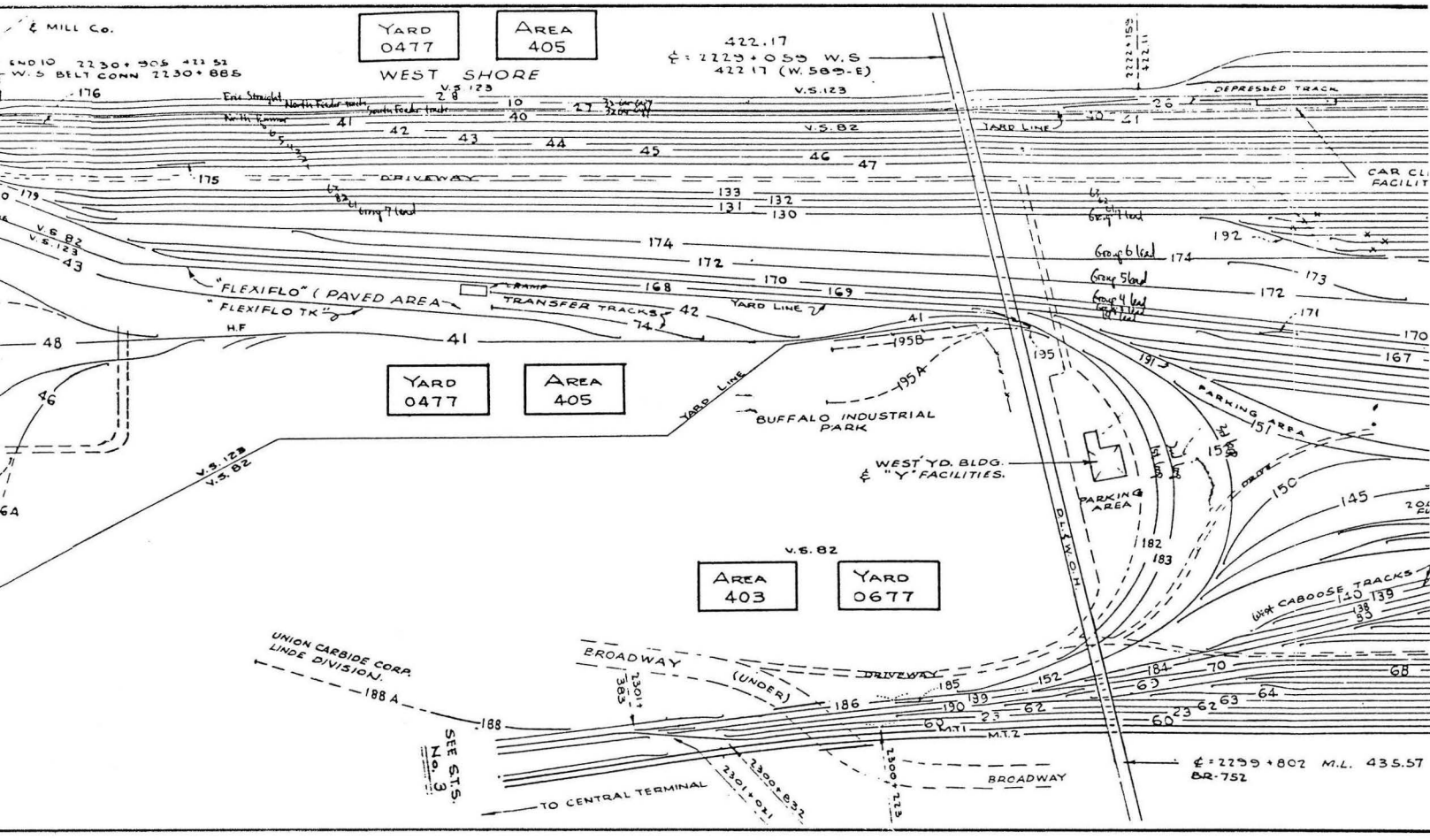
COMMENTS

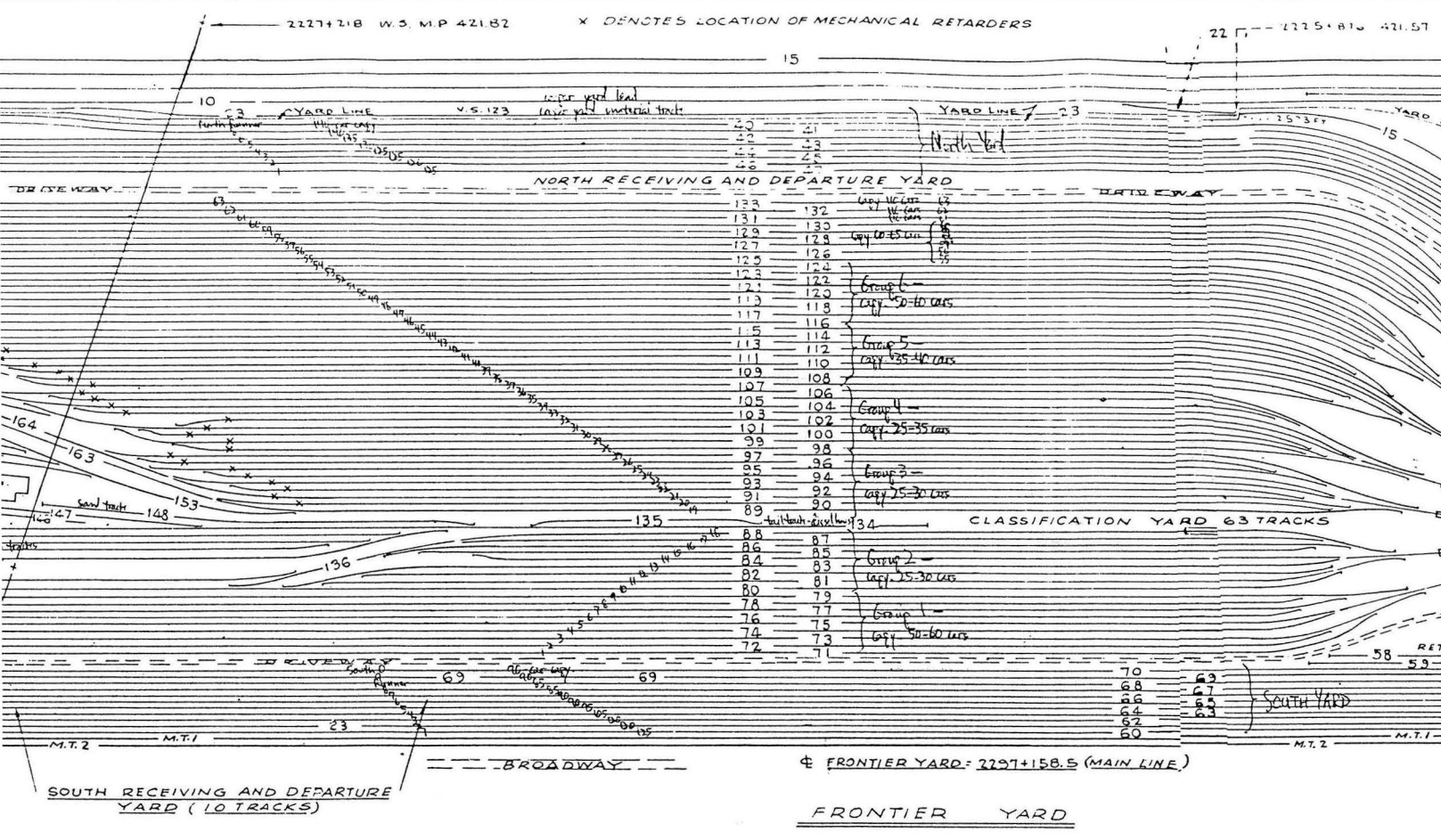
From BCK to Painesville, inclusive, groups were made on Tracks 1-18 (Class Yard Groups 1 and 2) - cars departed from Class Yard or South Yard

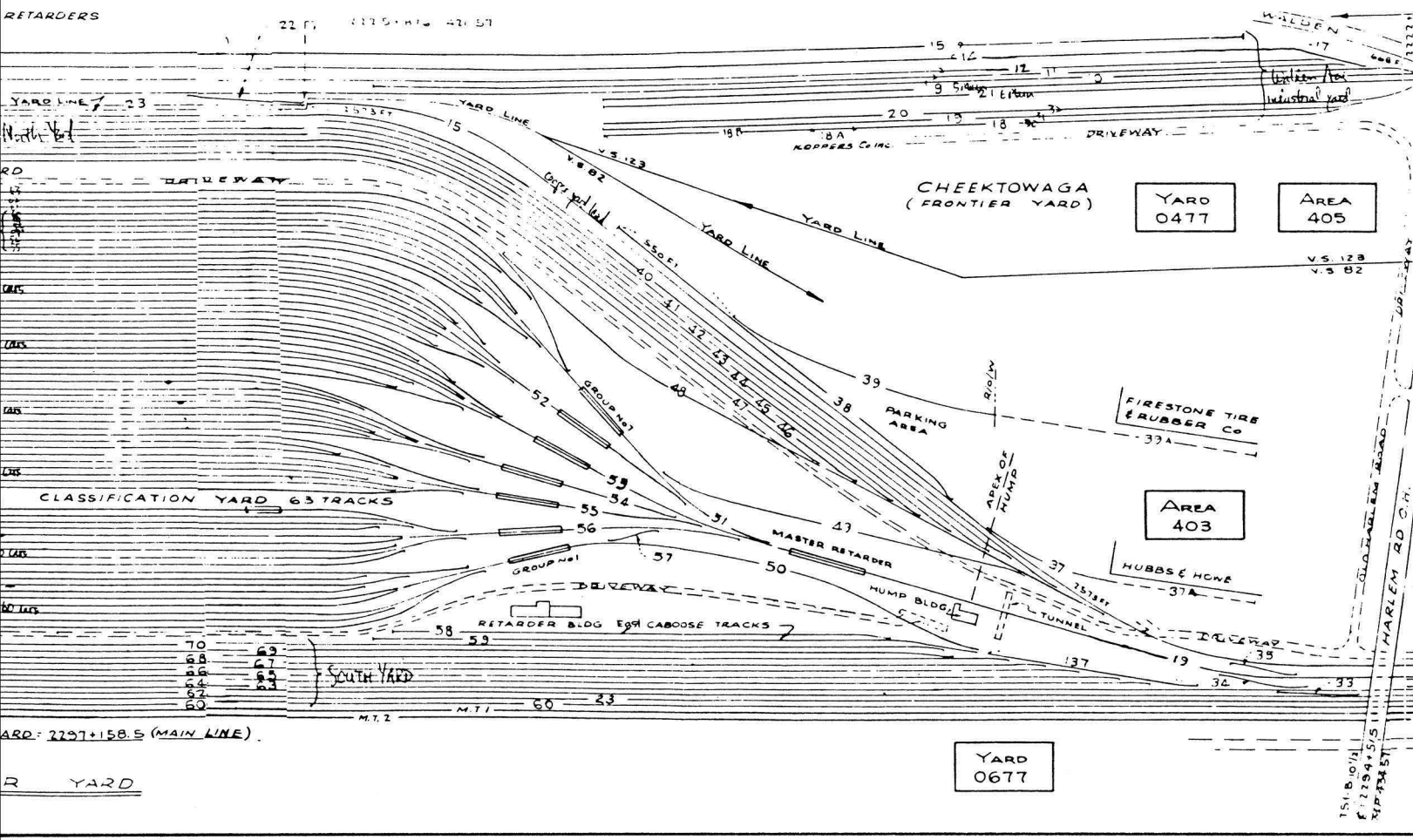
Balance of groups from Special Loads to Miscellaneous Holds, inclusive, were made on Tracks 19-63 (Class Yard Groups 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7) - care departed from Class Yard or North Yard

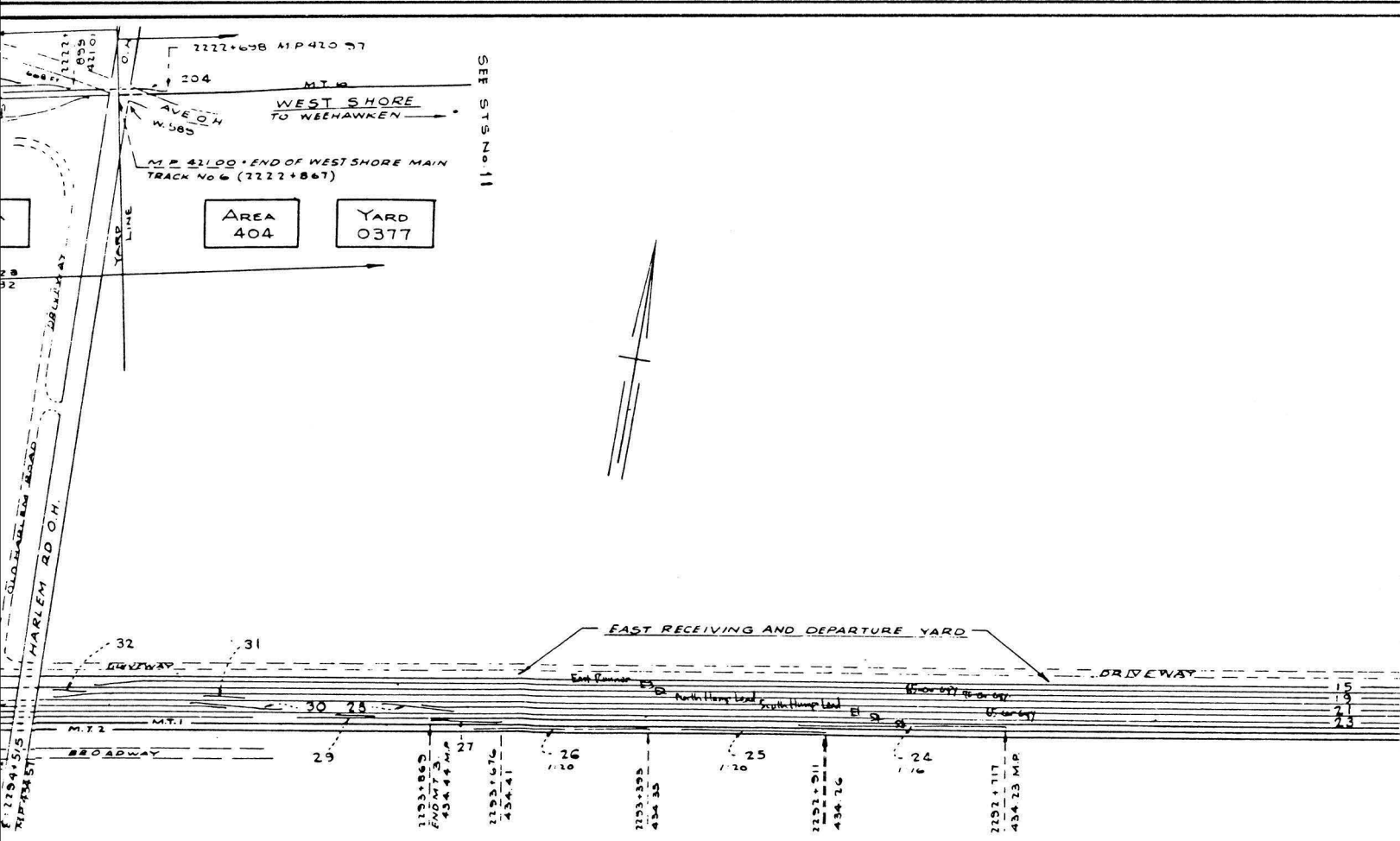

TO BUFFALO BELT LINE
JOHN WOLLENBERG
FRONTIER TRUCKING SERVICE INC
NISON TRUCK PARTS
SEE DETAIL "A"
WILDROOT CO. INC.
M.T.W.S. BELT BR CONN
V.S. 123
E.L.R.R.
W. 585 G
DETAIL "A". CROSSING FROG IS OWNED & MAINT. BY WILDROOT CO. INC.
BAILEY AVE. O.H. W. 585 X
VICTOR BOX
YARD LINE
AMER. BRAKE SHOE CO.
DRIVEWAY
ACME MKTS INC.
YARD LINE

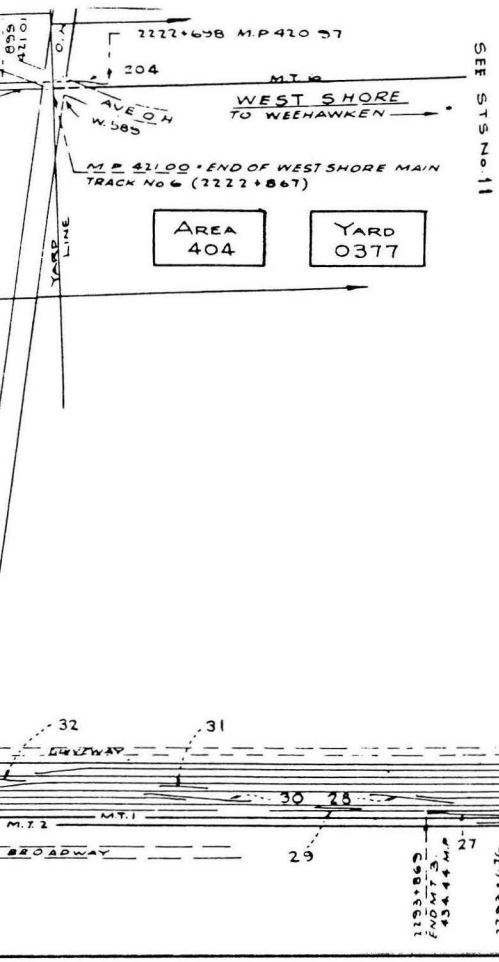

YARD 0477
AREA 405
WEST SHORE
422.17
℄ = 2229 + 059 W.S.
422.17 (W. 585-E)
V.S. 123
V.S. 82
DEPRESSED TRACK
YARD LINE
CAR CLEANING & COOPERING FACILITIES = PLATFORM = ETC.
RAMP
TRANSFER TRACKS
BUFFALO INDUSTRIAL PARK
WEST YD. BLDG. & "Y" FACILITIES.
PARKING AREA
CAR REPAIR SHED
20000 GAL DIESEL FUEL OIL TANK
ENGINE & SERVICING TRACKS
CAR BLDG DIESEL FACILITIES
AREA 403
YARD 0677
BROADWAY (UNDER)
DRIVEWAY
M.T.2
TO CENTRAL TERMINAL
BROADWAY
℄ = 2299 + 802 M.L. 435.57
BR-752
SEE STS. NO. 3
CITY OF BUFFALO
TOWN OF CHEEKTOWAGA
1298+65
435.35

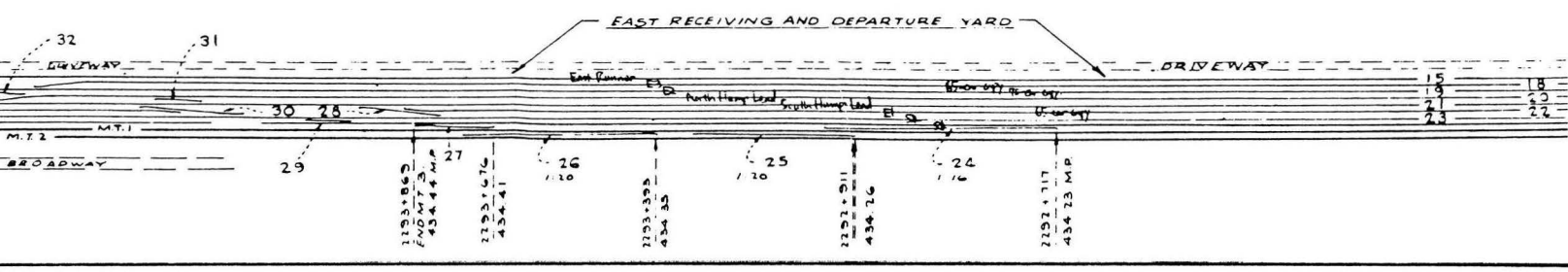

YARD 0477
AREA 405
WEST SHORE
422.17
℄ 2229+059 W.S
422.17 (W. 585-E)
DRIVEWAY
"FLEXIFLO" (PAVED AREA
"FLEXIFLO TK"
TRANSFER TRACKS
YARD LINE
BUFFALO INDUSTRIAL PARK
WEST YD. BLDG. & "Y" FACILITIES.
PARKING AREA
DRIVE
DEPRESSED TRACK
AREA 403
YARD 0677
UNION CARBIDE CORP. LINDE DIVISION
BROADWAY (UNDER)
SEE STS. No. 3
TO CENTRAL TERMINAL
BROADWAY
℄ 2299+802 M.L. 435.57
BR-752

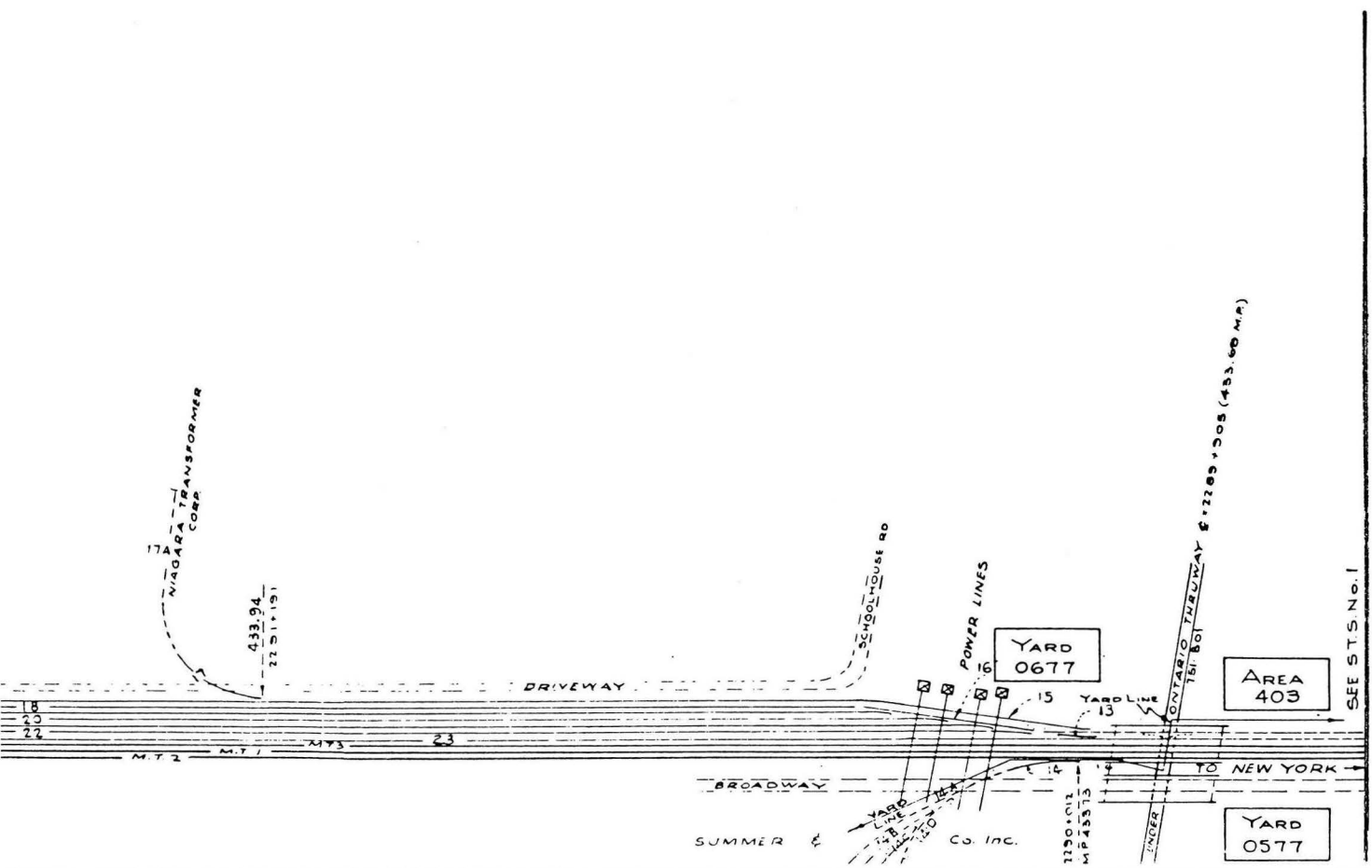

2227+218 W.S. M.P 421.82
X DENOTES LOCATION OF MECHANICAL RETARDERS
2225+818 421.57
NORTH RECEIVING AND DEPARTURE YARD
CLASSIFICATION YARD 63 TRACKS
SOUTH YARD
BROADWAY
SOUTH RECEIVING AND DEPARTURE YARD (10 TRACKS)
℄ FRONTIER YARD = 2297+158.5 (MAIN LINE)
FRONTIER YARD


RETARDERS
YARD LINE
DRIVEWAY
CHEEKTOWAGA
(FRONTIER YARD)
YARD 0477
AREA 405
YARD LINE
CLASSIFICATION YARD 63 TRACKS
GROUP No 2
GROUP No 1
PARKING AREA
FIRESTONE TIRE & RUBBER Co
APEX OF HUMP
AREA 403
MASTER RETARDER
HUMP BLDG.
HUBBS & HOWE
RETARDER BLDG
Egg CABOOSE TRACKS
TUNNEL
SOUTH YARD
HARLEM RD O.H.
M.T.2
M.T.1
YARD 0677

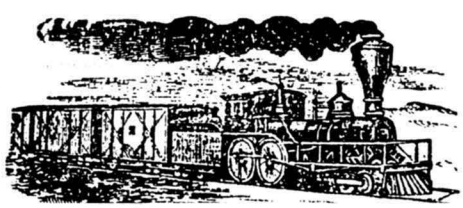

WEST SHORE TO WEEHAWKEN
M P 421.00 • END OF WEST SHORE MAIN TRACK No 6 (2222+867)
AREA 404
YARD 0377
YARD LINE
SEE STA 11
HARLEM RD O.H.
EAST RECEIVING AND DEPARTURE YARD
DRIVEWAY
BROADWAY
M.T.2
M.T.1
East Runner
North Hump Lead
South Hump Lead

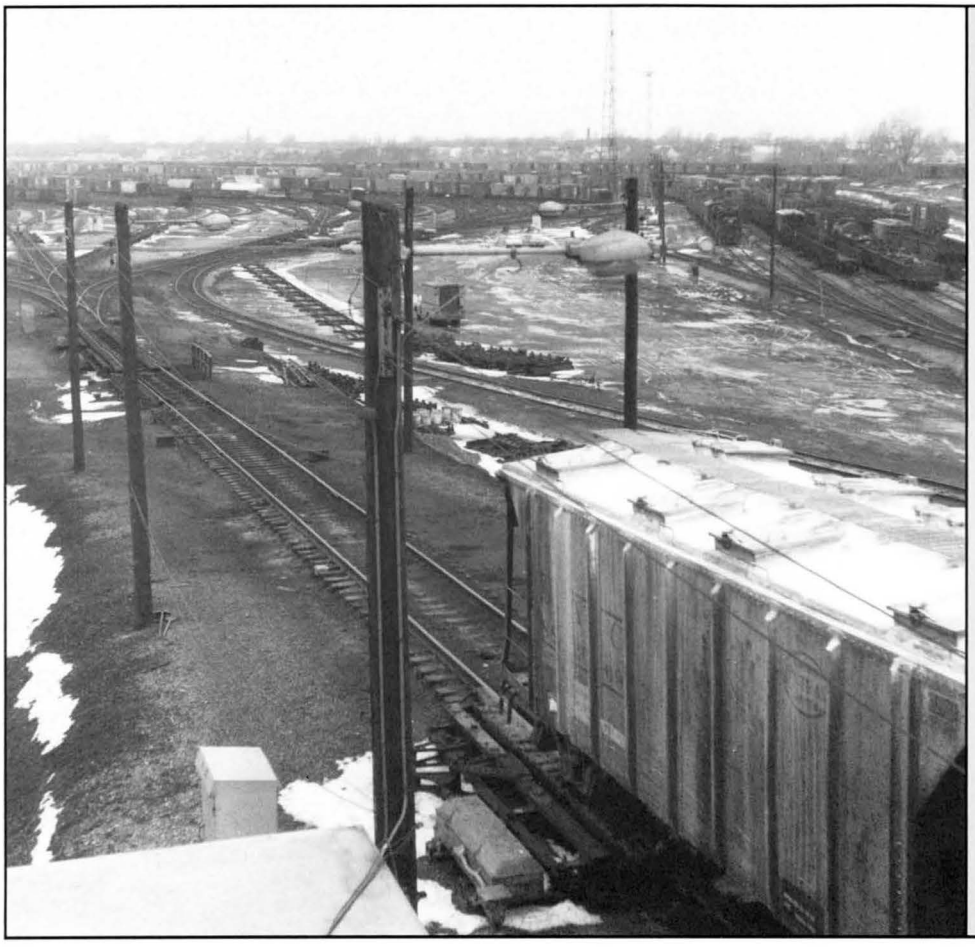

2222+698 M.P 420.57
204
M.T 2
WEST SHORE
TO WEEHAWKEN
AVE O H
W. 585
M.P. 421.00 • END OF WEST SHORE MAIN TRACK No 6 (2222+867)
AREA 404
YARD 0377
YARD LINE
SEE STS No. 11


EAST RECEIVING AND DEPARTURE YARD
DRIVEWAY
DRIVEWAY
32
31
30
28
29
27
26
25
24
M.T 2
M.T 1
BROADWAY
2233+863
END MT 3
434.44 M.P.
2233+676
434.41
2233+339
434.35
2232+911
434.26
2232+117
434.23 M.P.


NIAGARA TRANSFORMER CORP.
17A
433.94
2231+191
SCHOOLHOUSE RD
POWER LINES
YARD 0677
AREA 403
ONTARIO THRUWAY E 2229+305 (433.60 M.P.)
SEE STS No. 1
DRIVEWAY
16
15
13
YARD LINE
18
20
22
M.T 2
M.T 1
MT 3
23
14
TO NEW YORK
BROADWAY
SUMMER & Co. Inc.
YARD LINE
2230+012
M.P 433.73
YARD 0577

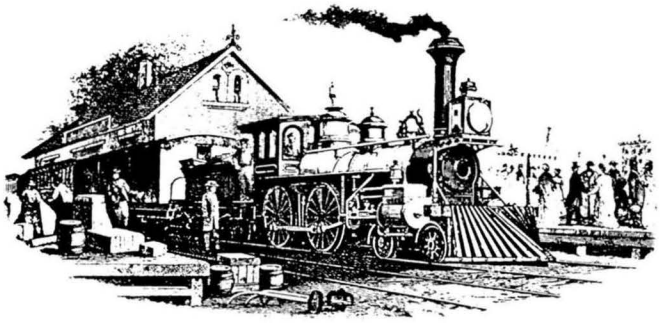
The rollability problem caused by excess curvature between the hump lead and class tracks is understandable from this view of the class yard as seen from the hump building. Compound this with the normal measure of adverse Buffalo weather (principal ingredient: gale force winds blowing towards the hump), and you have the answer to the stalls and impacts which often cause low production and high cripple counts at Frontier. (On many winter days in the 1950s and 1960s, more cripples were worked by truck in the yard than in the car shop, in order to stay abreast; the tracks which were converted into shop tracks during these emergencies were 1 and 63 on the fringes of the class yard and E3.) The five-story retarder building in the foreground is the nerve-center of the yard; among others, it houses the Terminal Superintendent, Terminal Trainmaster, and retarder operator along with all of his computer hardware.



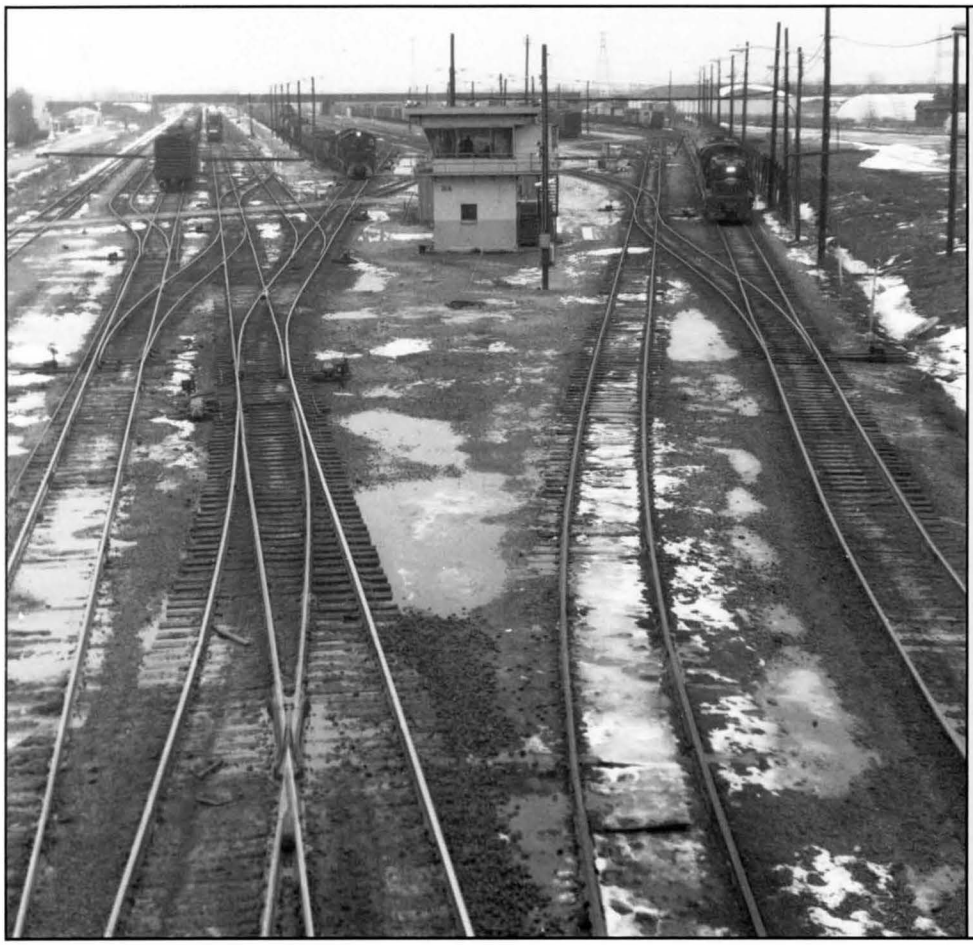


With the camera swung more to the north, the scene from the hump building takes in the North Yard, on the right above the covered hopper on the hump lead. The road engines are on track 1 getting an air test on a Dewitt train, symboled FRD-2 in recognition of the Rochester group on its head end. Eastbounds such as this one usually departed from North Yard via the East Runner but sometimes went via Bailey Avenue and Tower 47 when the head-end cars were placed on the west end. The boxcars in the background are in Walden Avenue yard, a small facility outside the limits of Frontier which served industries on the Belt, West Shore, and Gardenville Branch. The hump building is headquarters for the hump yardmaster, route director, hump conductor, and hump crews (the latter when they are not pulling pins, doubling up cuts to hump, trimming the class yard, caboosing or switching cripples out of outbound trains, etc.).

This view from the Erie-Lackawanna embankment back of the YMCA building includes a number of the auxiliary facilities necessary or often found at a major terminal yard. In the center with the exhaust vents on its roof is the diesel shop, and to its right is the fueling station, including two servicing and three ready tracks. The road power in the left foreground is standing on the diesel shop lead, and above and beyond it is the car shop shed. The cabooses in the right foreground are on one of the two west caboose tracks (the east caboose tracks are located adjacent to the South Yard near the retarder building). In the right background are the tracks (1 thru 18) of Groups 1 and 2 in the class yard. Nearest to the camera are the first, second, and third loop tracks, used to accommodate the pullout engines when crews are changing or at lunch, to yard short industrial cuts, to hold hot cars, and for other miscellaneous purposes.



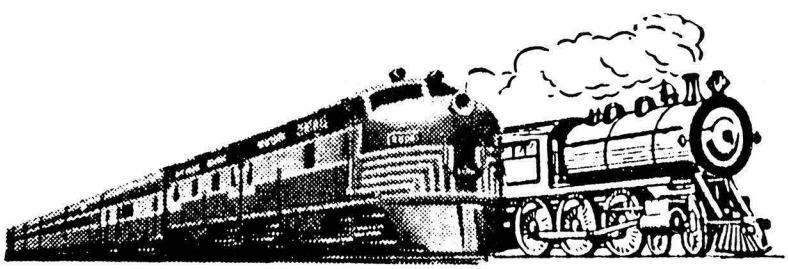
The E-L embankment on the opposite side of the YMCA building affords a good look at the car repair and transfer tracks. Four tracks, three of them for production, pass under the shed. The cycle on cripples is that they are humped into track 20, then pulled down and shoved toward the shed, where they are worked through the A-frames from west to east and moved by rubber-tired crane into track 19, from which point the humper pulls them back as "OKs" to be rehumped. The odd-shaped tank, tractor, and poles on the open-top cars identify Car Shop track 5, on which transfer and adjust loads are worked by mobile crane. The cars in the background are in Groups 4, 5, and 6 in the class yard, and again, the loop tracks are in front.



A car which passed through Frontier's class yard intact was not necessarily home free, since it still had to wedge its way past Bailey Avenue, unquestionably one of the major yard bottlenecks on the New York Central. In order to reach the departure tracks of North Yard, traffic from 40 of the 63 class tracks makes the long trip from east of the E-L bridge in the background, competing for room on one of the two leads on the right — the Pullman, on which the road engine is standing, and the Class. The pullout power has to be rugged enough to shove heavy cuts around a curve and upgrade. In this scene, the double-unit to the left of the tower has nearly completed the job of heaving GP-1's train up to the ground air line at the west end of track 6.

Access to the fishtailed west end of Frontier Yard was and still is available either via the Belt-Bailey Avenue route on the north side or via the main line-Broadway route on the south. In 1968, the latter was governed by the interlocking at Tower 47, the building beyond the signal bridge in the right background in this photograph. Tracks, from right to left, were an industrial lead, main tracks 6, 5, 2, 1, 4, and 3, and a runner called the "Old Dump." Tracks 1 and 2 were the passenger mains to Central Terminal; 3 and 4 passed under the concourse to the north of the terminal, and 5 and 6 bypassed it to the south. This was the west entrance to the South Yard, the primary receiving yard, and when business was brisk and there was "no room at the inn", it was not unusual to look this way from Broadway and see three or four headlights, each representing a hopeful entrant. The Tower 47 interlocking has since been eliminated, and CP 437, a recent installation located in the vicinity of the former Tower 49 interlocking at the west end of Central Terminal, now functions as the entrance to South Yard for movements from points west.

The space problem that inhibited yard planners at Frontier was not a factor at Elkhart, as this and succeeding photographs illustrate. A strip of more than four miles in length and up to a mile wide was available, its only major drawback being that it was overlain with an obsolete yard. The pain of being squeezed out of the old yard was a worthwhile sacrifice to the transportation department in view of the fine facility it received in return. The spacious receiving yard is the primary subject of this picture, made from the top floor of the hump building.



In late 1956, a few months after the NYC had established a system motive power distribution office in New York, top operating officials were expectantly awaiting dividends in the form of improved power utilization. These were trying times for the new organization, and in a moment of frustration, one of its supervisors drew a map of the flow of locomotives between dispatching points to illustrate the impediments to good utilization inherent in the isolated operations of the districts. The most flagrant example of this separatism existed between the Western and Northern Districts, where the insulation was so complete that, once by the Niagara Frontier on a westbound train, a locomotive was committed to the "Lines West" or "Michigan Central" all the way to Chicago and back, depending on the shore of Lake Erie along which it was routed. A parallel set of rail lines and a duplicate set of terminals lay only a few miles apart at the west end of these extended networks, and the inefficiency illustrated by the locomotive flow chart was dwarfed in the car movement area by the short trains and extra switching which these dual operations entailed.

These conditions were of course recognized and considered to be intolerable, and the solution adopted was to scrap the obsolete facilities at the Western and Northern District terminals at Elkhart and Niles and to build a new electronic hump yard at Elkhart. What emerged from the ruins in November of 1957 (as at Frontier, choice of site at Elkhart necessarily meant destruction of the old along with construction of the new) was a semi-in line, semi-tear drop layout, with the receiving yard in line with the hump in anticipation of the large percentage of long trains to be yarded, and the two departure yards parellel to and on opposite sides of the class yard. A separate local yard was located beyond the class yard. The new yard was big, with 72 class tracks (compare with Frontier's 63, Big Four's 55, and Perlman's 70) terminating in a fishtail at the pullout end, with the car shop between the two sets of pullout leads, as at Frontier. Unlike Frontier, however, property at Elkhart was plentiful, and 150 carlengths was the standard adopted for the receiving and departure tracks. (Multilevels and high-cube cars later made even this inadequate, and shortly prior to merger two of the receiving tracks were lengthened to accomodate 200-carlength trains.) Far more special equipment was lavished on Elkhart than on Frontier, based in part on experience at Frontier and in part on improved economic conditions on the railroad at the time. In the case of the computerized retarder controls in particular, the equipment installed was more sophisticated. The results of the various advantages have been obvious — Elkhart is a far smoother yard than Frontier, with reduced impacts and fewer stalls in class yard tracks; a more efficient one, with a faster pullout operation and hence the ability to hump more cars over extended periods of time; and, last but far from least, a more economical one, to the extent of about 75¢ a car.

As far as transportation objectives were concerned, the yard met all of the immediate ones with little strain and with far less of the confusion which marred the initiation period at Frontier. There was a small amount of intra-organizational labor strife, highlighted by a few spectacular incidents, and a predictable number of car movement errors, which were of course played up by the die-hard Niles adherents. The latter yard with its antiquated double rider humps was phased down quickly, and Northern District traffic moved smoothly over the upgraded Air Line and Old Road branches. This business was classified eastbound to avoid the complexities and inadequacies of the Detroit terminal just as Niles had previously done it - only far more cheaply. In subsequent years, by means of service arrangements based on greater use of Elkhart, the Niles operation was completely dried up. Thus were the economic benefits promptly achieved, but the principal service benefits were slower in coming, since they involved Chicago gateway bypass movements which required considerable planning and negotiations with the western railroads. In due time, Elkhart's full potential in that area was realized by the morning fleet of group trains for the Burlington, Rock Island, Santa Fe, Northwestern and Milwaukee. Thus the yard firmly established the NYC as a leader in the effort to reduce terminal time at major interchange points by means of direct exchanges of blocks and solid trains — a service milestone in American railroading. The stage was thus set for a similar rejuvenation of the St. Louis gateway by Big Four Yard.

Looking west at the Elkhart diesel servicing facility, September 29, 1964. First generation units still predominated at that time. Collection of Dr. Louis A. Marre.

ELKHART — INBOUND TRAINS

SYMBOL	FROM	ARRIVAL SPAN	FREQUENCY	REMARKS
NY-4	Blue Island (perish. off)	100A- 200A	Daily	sometimes had 1-2 Toledo perishable to come off
1/MD-4	Big Four Yard	300A- 600A	Daily	
1/A/CB-12	Englewood	300A- 700A	Daily	picked up (Whiting, Pine, Porter, Terre Coupee, South Bend)
2/MD-4	Big Four Yard	500A- 800A	Daily	
KK-2	Kankakee	500A- 800A	Daily	
2/A/CB-12	Englewood	630A- 900A	Daily	sometimes picked up enroute
KE-2	Kalamazoo	800A-1030A	Daily	important connection for 1/MD-5
QNY	Galesburg, Cicero-CB&Q RR	930A-1100A	Daily	
CB-12	Englewood	1000A-1130A	Daily	
SFE-2	Kansas City-ATSF RR	1130A- 200P	Daily	
CFC-2	Blue Island	1230P- 230P	Daily	picked up Ford stampings at Porter for CFC-2 and ND-4
NY-2	Blue Island (perish. off)	100P- 200P	Daily	sometimes had few Toledo perishable to come off
SE-2	Silvis-CRI&P RR	100P- 500P	Daily	filled with General Foods and other hot cars at Kankakee
DC-7	Junction Yard, Detroit	230P- 430P	Daily	picked up autos at Willow Run
A/DC-7	Jackson	330P- 530P	XMon.	
NT-1	Toledo	400P- 700P	XMon.	picked up at Bryan and Waterloo
CB-2	Burns Harbor (groups off)	430P- 530P	Daily	River Rouge mty coil gons for CR-4, misc. switch, and sometimes Weirton scrap for CFC-2 off rear end
Goshen Local	Goshen	500P- 700P	XSun.	
BC-3	Frontier Yard	600P- 900P	Daily	picked up at Rockport and got autos and mty parts cars at Fairlane
Indiana S/R	Ligonier	600P- 900P	XSun.	
JS-2	Englewood	600P-1000P	Daily	picked up (Whiting, LCL, Porter, Terre Coupee)
LS-3	Boston	700P-1000P	XMon.	filled out at Dewitt, Susp. Bridge, and sometimes Detroit
Pinola Turn	Pinola	700P-1000P	XSun.	
Mishawaka E&W	South Bend (E&W Branch)	700P-1000P	XSun.	
794	Kankakee	700P-1159P	4-5 days/week	did local work, Hamlet-South Bend, and picked up at South Bend
SV-1	New York (Highbridge) (PBs off)	800P- 900P	XMon.	sometimes had overhead PBs (CBQ, CRI&P, ATSF, CNW, MILW) to come off rear end
PC-1	Youngstown/P&LE RR	800P-1159P	Daily	usually filled out at Collinwood
695	Hillsdale	900P-1159P	XSun.	
Elkhart E&W	Elkhart	late 2nd trick	XSat.-Sun.	from E&W industrial territory
10th Street	Elkhart	late 2nd trick	XSat.-Sun.	from 10th St. industrial territory, incl. Industrial Park
RC-1	River Rouge, Detroit	1000P- 100A	Daily	had coil steel for BM-1 or E/DC-7 to Portage
SV-9	North Bergen (PBs off)	1030P-1130P	XSun.-Mon.	usually had overhead PBs (CBQ, CRI&P, ATSF, CNW, MILW) to come off rear end
LS-1	New York (33rd St.)	1100P- 100A	XMon. PM	yarded on east runner; had on head end Cicero-CB&Q for NYQ, ATSF for LS-3 and RI for LS-21, and on rear end Galesburg-CB&Q for NYQ. Balance pulled back and humped
KE-4	Kalamazoo	1100P- 200A	Daily	local on Three Rivers branch
Anderson S/R	Anderson	irregular	XSun.	Sou. Dist. Mich. Subdiv. local; arrived late 2nd trick or later
Penn Turn	Mishawaka	irregular	1-3 days/week	had empty hoppers from Penn. Electric Co.

ELKHART - OUTBOUND TRAINS

SYMBOL	TO	DEPART - FREQUENCY	GROUPING
NY-4	Dewitt (groups on)	130A- 230A Daily	Dewitt and Niagara Falls added to rear end in that order
NYQ	Cicero-CB&Q RR	230A- 430A Daily	Cicero-Galesburg
LS-11	Proviso-C&NW RR	300A- 500A Daily	CNW/UP-C&NW
LS-3	Argentine-ATSF RR	300A-530A Daily	ATSF
LS-21	Silvis-CRI&P RR	330A- 600A Daily	Reddick/C&NW-Rock Island-RI/UP & DRGW-RI/SP
BI/LS-1	Bensonville-MILW RR	400A- 630A Daily	Milwaukee (sometimes combined with LS-11; MILW on rear end)
696	Hillsdale	CF 645A XSun.	station order Vistula to Sturgis; balance Hillsdale mixed
Indiana S/R	Ligonier	CF 700A XSun.	Millersburg-Ligonier-Middlebury-Shipshewana
Mishawaka E&W	South Bend (E&W Branch)	CF 700A XSun.	Mishawaka and South Bend on E&W Branch
Elkhart E&W	Elkhart	CF 700A XSat.-Sun.	E&W industries in Elkhart
10th Street	Elkhart	CF 730A XSat.-Sun.	10th St. industrial territory in Elkhart, including Industrial Park
MC-4	Dewitt (fill on)	730A- 900A Daily	fill of Jackson, Lansing, and (if had overflow of Buffalos and there was room) Buffalos cut in on rear end
IHB-1	Gibson	730A-1000A Daily	Porter/West-Porter/East-Gibson/Ford-Gibson
Goshen Local	Goshen	CF 800A XSun.	Goshen
Pinola Turn	Pinola	CF 800A XSun.	Mishawaka-Lydick-Terre Coupee-New Carlisle-Rolling Prairie-La Porte-Pinola
Anderson S/R	Anderson	CF 800A or later on crew's rest XMon.	station order, New Paris-Wabash
BM-1	Burns Harbor	800A-1201P 4-6 days/week	Portage-Portage can cars-Burns Harbor, with fill on head end of Terre Coupee/CSSSB, Porter/EJ&E, etc., as available
ET-2	Toledo	900A- 100P 2-4 days/week	Toldeo/C&O-Toledo #2-Toledo #1; run when Toledos were heavy
EK-3	Kalamazoo	CF 1100A Daily	intermediate stations, Three Rivers-Kalamazoo
1/MD-5	Big Four Yard	1201P- 300P Daily	Indianapolis loads-Indianapolis empties
NP-7	Norpaul	100P- 300P 4-6 days/week	Argo-IC West-Norpaul; fill of CNW on head end and MILW on rear end if room and cars were available
NY-2	Dewitt (fill on)	130P- 230P Daily	Dewitt fill added with Wayneport icers rear out
A/NY-2	Dewitt	330P- 600P Daily	Rochester-RDG-Dewitt (no icers)
K/DC-7	Kankakee	400P- 700P Daily	KKK loads-KKK mtys-KKK/IC
CB-2	Frontier Yard (fill on)	530P- 630P Daily	fill of Buffalos added to rear end
2/MD-5	Big Four Yard	530P- 830P Daily	L&N empties-Ashby (system mty hoppers)-late Indpls. loads
CR-4	Detroit (River Rouge)	700P- 900P Daily	Trenton/Monroe/Wyandotte mixed-River Rouge miscellaneous-River Rouge coil gons-CPRR-Canada local, with fill if room of Junction Yard (with cut cab) or North Yard (no cut cab)
2/K/DC-7	Kankakee	700P-1100P 4-5 days/wk.	KKK loads-KKK mtys
CFC-2	Collinwood	800P-1100P Daily	Fairlane-Rockport-Toledo/C&O-Toledo #2-Toledo #1-Toledo/OC
ND-4	Detroit (Junction Yard)	1030P- 600A Daily	Willow Run/Ypsilanti-Wayne-Mound Road-North Yard-North Yard multilevels-Junction Yard-Detroit Term'l RR-fill of Jackson and/or Lansing
EK-1	Kalamazaoo	1100P-1159P Daily	Battle Creek-Kalamazoo
E/DC-7	Englewood	1100P- 100A Daily	Pine/EJ&E-Whiting-CJ-Englewood, with fill of South Bend, Terre Coupee/CSSB, Porter/West, Porter/East, Portage, Portage can cars, or Burns Harbor as available and required. This train handled all Burns Harbor and Portage traffic in lieu of BM-1 when business was light
CDB-4	Youngstown	1100P- 100A Daily	Waterloo-Bryan-P&LE-Collinwood, with Toledos for fill if necessary
Penn Turn	Mishawaka	irregular, 1-3 days/week	coal for Penn Electric Co. at Mishawaka (E&W Branch)
ED-2	Detroit (Junction Yard)	irregular, 2-4 days/week	run when ND-4 would not accommodate the designated Northern District groups; same makeup as ND-4

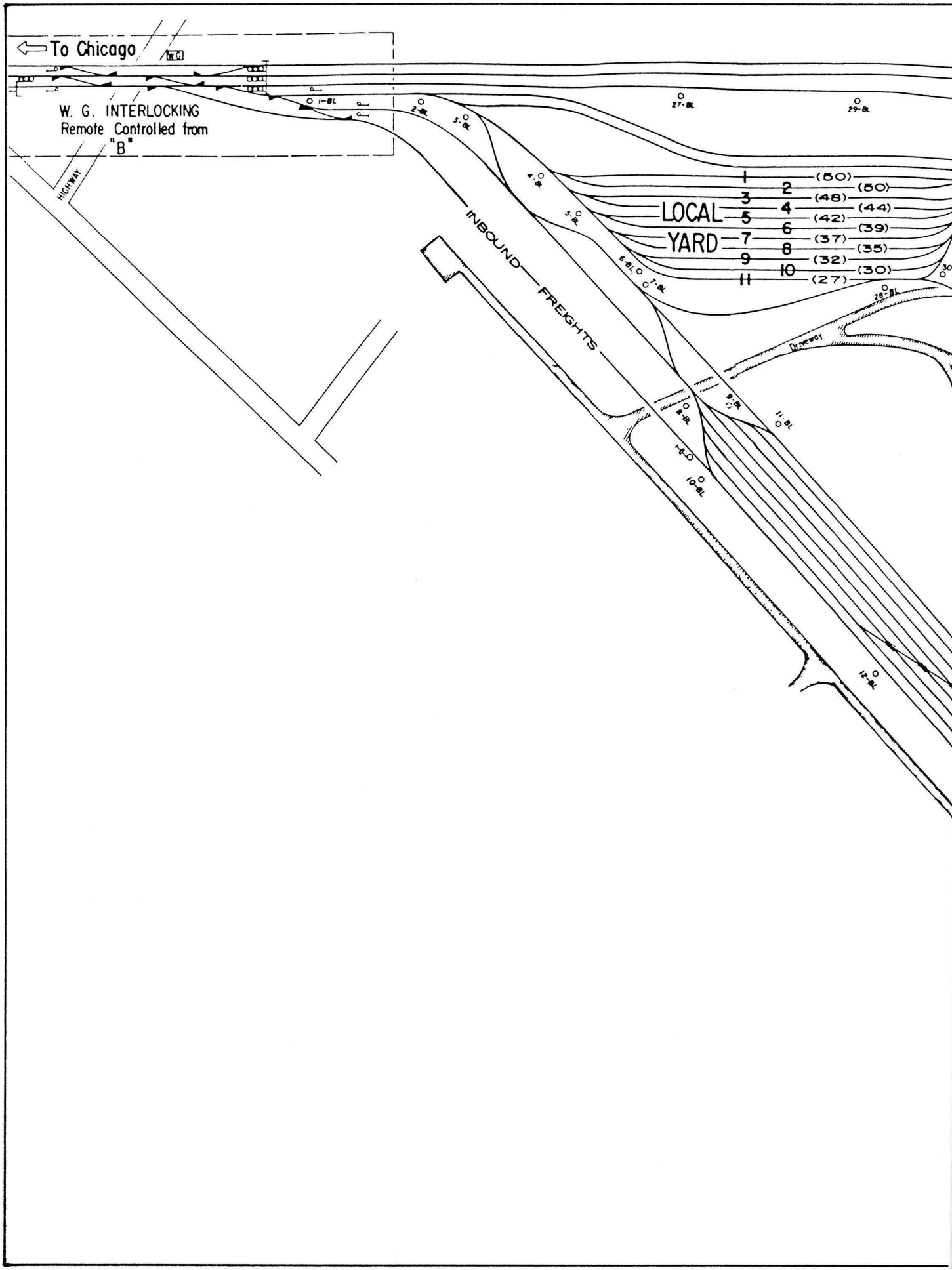
ELKHART - CLASSIFICATIONS

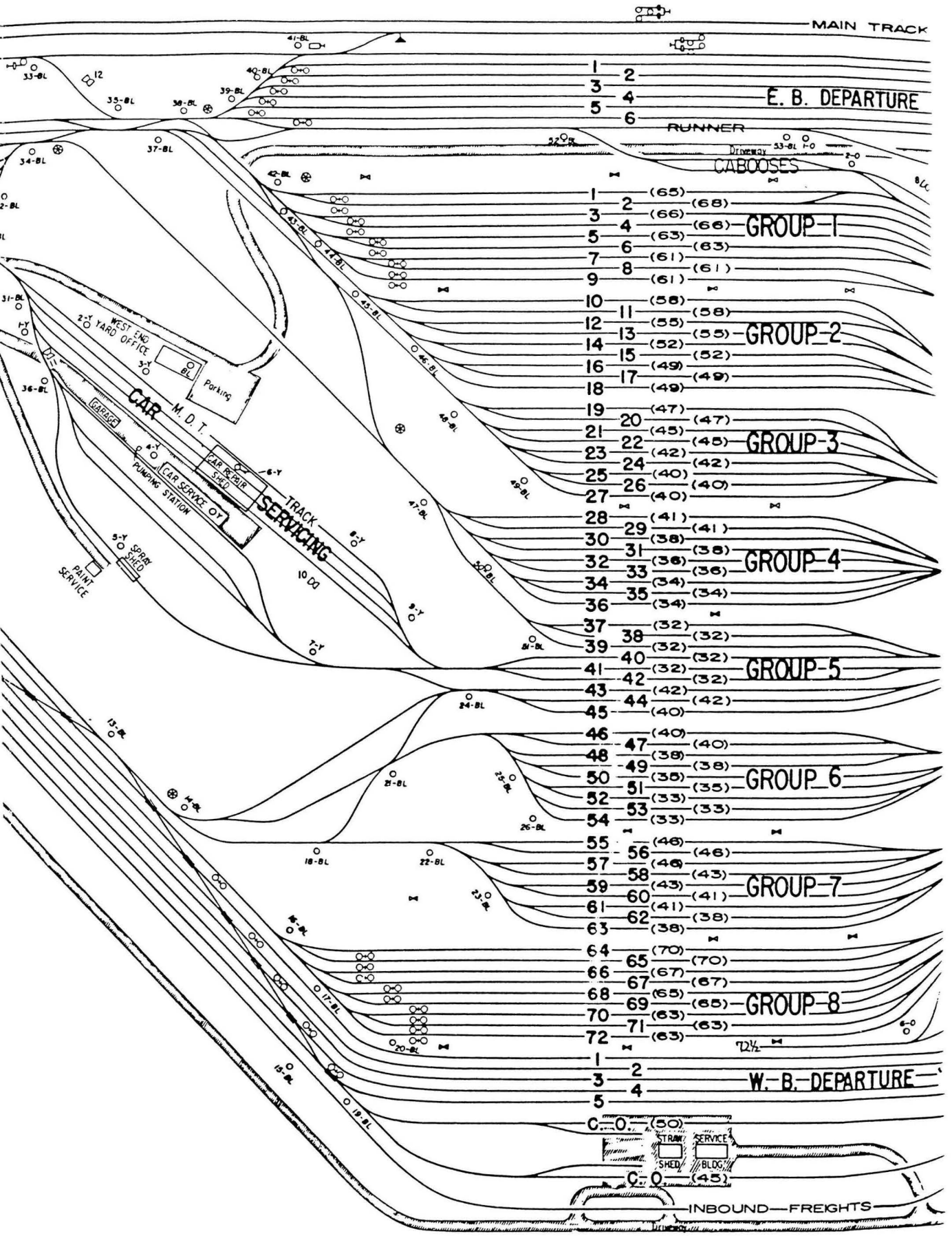
GROUP	ASSIGNED TRACK
Elkhart (industries)	1
Toledo #2 (Airline yard at Airline Jct.)	2
Dewitt	3
Indianapolis loads	4
North Yard	5
Swing	6
Jackson	7
Local Yard	8
Junction Yard	9
North Yard (multilevels only)	10
P&LE	11
Toledo/OC	12
Kalamazoo	13
Indianapolis empties	14
Fairlane	15
C&NW RR	16
Battle Creek	17
Willow Run/Ypsilanti	18
Rockport	19
Buffalo	20
Toledo/C&O RR	21
Canada Division locals	22
CPRR	23
CNW/UPRR	24
Toledo #1 (New yard at Airline Jct.)	25
Collinwood	26
Elkhart E&W (industries)	27
Wayne/Detroit Terminal RR (reswitched)	28
Niagara Falls	29
Hillsdale (Old Road stations to Hillsdale)	30
Lansing	31
Mound Road	32
River Rouge	33
RDG RR	34
Rochester	35
Trenton, Wyandotte, and Monroe	36

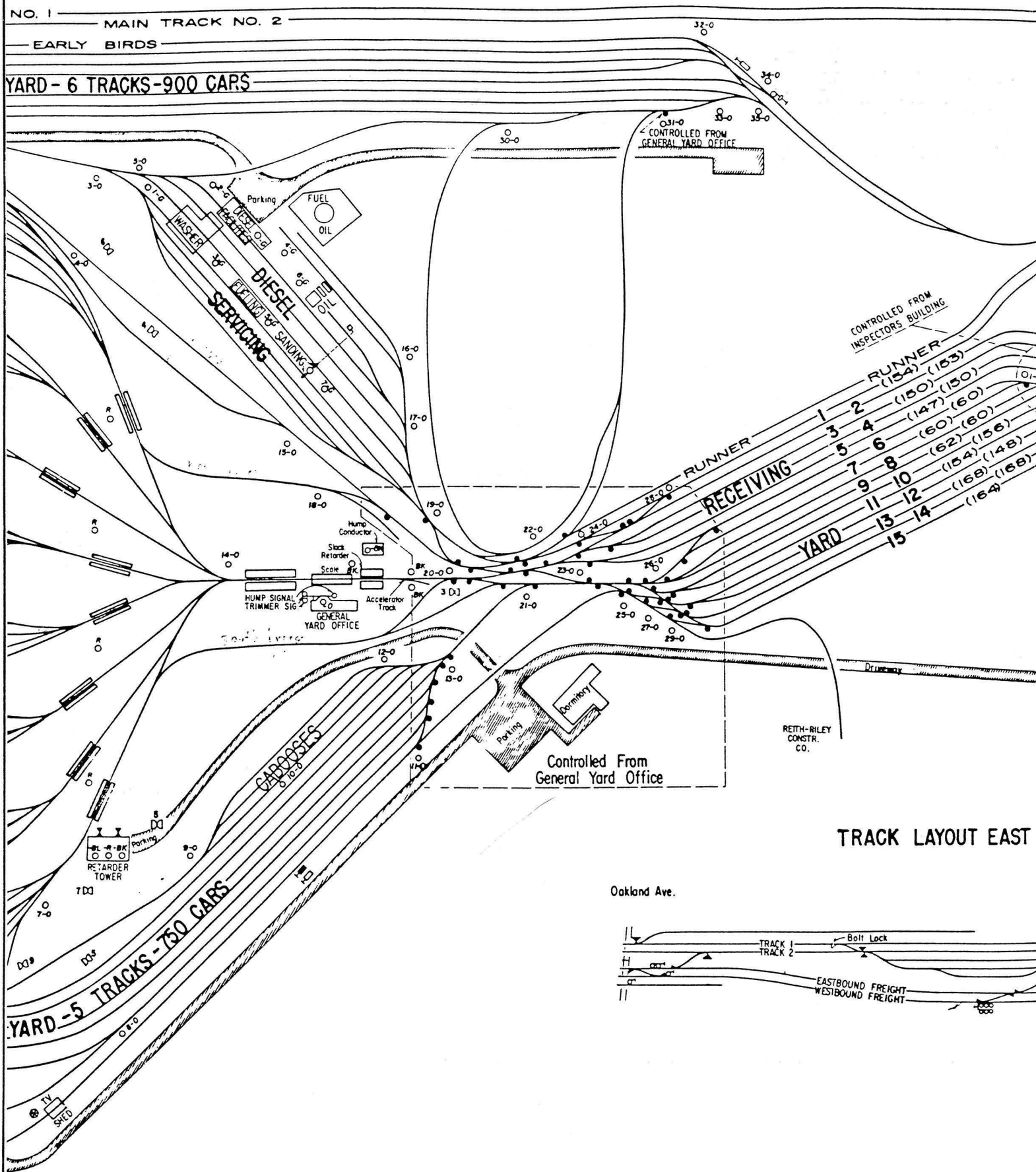
GROUP	ASSIGNED TRACK
Waterloo	37
Bryan	38
EK-3 (Three Rivers branch stations to Kalamazoo)	39
(OKs in one, cripples into)	40
(other two (used)	41
(interchangably))	42
Gibson/Ford Motor Co.	43
Galesburg/CB&Q RR	44
ICRR West	45
Englewood	46
Terre Coupee/CSS&SB RR	47
Reddick/N&WW RR	48
Whiting	49
Burns Harbor	50
Portage	51
South Bend	52
system empty hoppers	53
Argo/IHB RR	54
Porter/West	55
Rock Island RR	56
Kankakee/ICRR	57
RI/UPRR (included SP and D&RGW reswitch)	58
CJRR	59
Kankakee loads	60
Pine/EJ&E RR	61
Portage can cars (coil steel)	62
L&N RR empties	63
Milwaukee RR	64
Gibson/IHB RR	65
Porter/East	66
Cicero/CB&Q RR	67
Norpaul/IHB RR	68
AT&SF RR	69
Kankakee empties	70
Holds	71
Wash Box	72

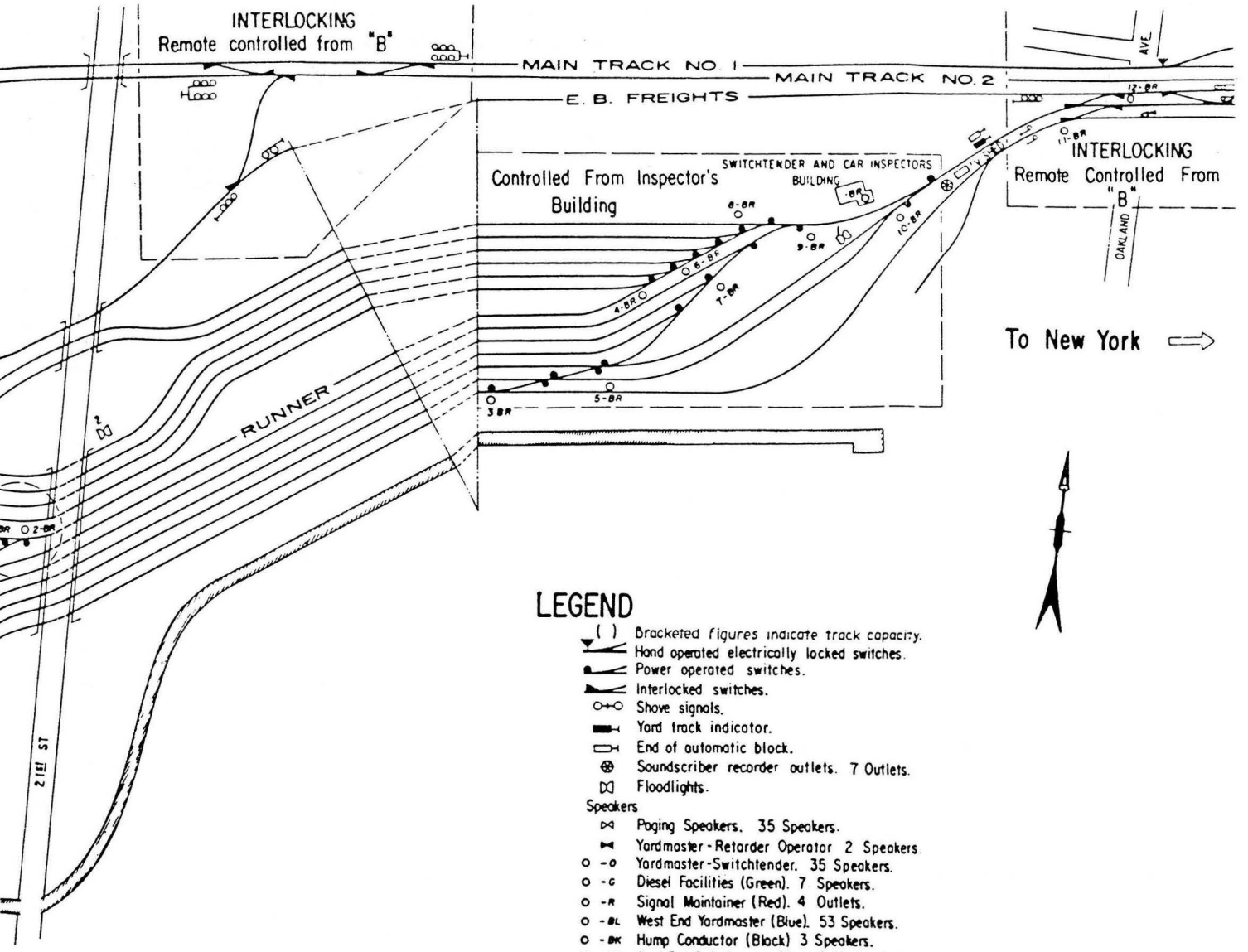
The first General Electric units had just arrived on the property. Elkhart, January 30,1964. Collection of Dr. Louis A. Marre.

In contrast to the cramped layout at Frontier, the 72-track class yard at Elkhart fans out in geometric symmetry from the base of the hump. Adding to the sweeping impression are the twin bypass tracks. Less pleasing to the eye, but at least as much of a measurement of the superiority of Elkhart over its predecessor is its electronic gadgetry, some of which is visible here. The posts set at intervals to the right of the five-section master retarder support the photocells which fix the location of cars, and the snow-covered box in the gauge just uphill from the retarder houses the radar unit which calculates speed.


To Chicago
W. G. INTERLOCKING
Remote Controlled from
"B"
HIGHWAY
INBOUND FREIGHTS
LOCAL
YARD
1 (50)
2 (50)
3 (48)
4 (44)
5 (42)
6 (39)
7 (37)
8 (35)
9 (32)
10 (30)
11 (27)
Driveway


MAIN TRACK
E. B. DEPARTURE
RUNNER
Driveway
CABOOSES
GROUP-1
GROUP-2
GROUP-3
GROUP-4
GROUP-5
GROUP-6
GROUP-7
GROUP-8
W. B. DEPARTURE
INBOUND—FREIGHTS
WEST END YARD OFFICE
Parking
CAR M. D. T.
GARAGE
CAR REPAIR SHED
CAR SERVICE OT
PUMPING STATION
SPRAY SHED
PAINT SERVICE
TRACK SERVICING
STRAW SHED
SERVICE BLDG.
C. O.


NO. 1
MAIN TRACK NO. 2
EARLY BIRDS
YARD - 6 TRACKS - 900 CARS
CONTROLLED FROM GENERAL YARD OFFICE
Parking
FUEL
OIL
WASHER
DIESEL SERVICING
SANDING
CONTROLLED FROM INSPECTORS BUILDING
RUNNER
RECEIVING YARD
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
(154) (153) (150) (150) (147) (150) (60) (60) (60) (60) (62) (60) (154) (156) (148) (168) (168) (164)
Hump Conductor
Slack Retarder
Scale
HUMP SIGNAL TRIMMER SIG
Accelerator Track
GENERAL YARD OFFICE
Driveway
Dormitory
Parking
REITH-RILEY CONSTR. CO.
Controlled From General Yard Office
CABOOSES
RETARDER TOWER
BL R BK
Parking
YARD - 5 TRACKS - 750 CARS
TV SHED
TRACK LAYOUT EAST
Oakland Ave.
Bolt Lock
TRACK 1
TRACK 2
EASTBOUND FREIGHT
WESTBOUND FREIGHT

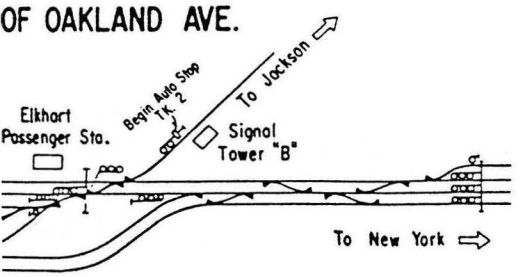


LEGEND

- ( ) Bracketed figures indicate track capacity.
- Hand operated electrically locked switches.
- Power operated switches.
- Interlocked switches.
- Shove signals.
- Yard track indicator.
- End of automatic block.
- Soundscriber recorder outlets. 7 Outlets.
- Floodlights.

Speakers

- Paging Speakers. 35 Speakers.
- Yardmaster - Retarder Operator 2 Speakers.
- o -o Yardmaster - Switchtender. 35 Speakers.
- o -G Diesel Facilities (Green). 7 Speakers.
- o -R Signal Maintainer (Red). 4 Outlets.
- o -BL West End Yardmaster (Blue). 53 Speakers.
- o -BK Hump Conductor (Black) 3 Speakers.
- o -BR East End Switchtender (Brown) 12 Speakers.
- o -Y Car Repair Facilities (Yellow). 9 Speakers.



NEW YORK CENTRAL SYSTEM

SIGNAL DEPARTMENT

ROBERT R. YOUNG YARD, ELKHART, IND.

Office of Chief Signal Engineer, Cleveland, O.

NO SCALE Sept. 20, 1957 SK 212

ISSUED 11-27-57

This is part of the view the retarder operator has from his post on the sixth floor of the retarder building. (Except for maintainers, he is all by himself; the trainmaster, hump yardmaster and clerical forces are all located in the hump building.) Group 7 is straight ahead, and beyond it are outbound trains in the westbound departure yard. The car shop shed is in the center background, and just to its right is the west end yard office building. Cars on the extreme right are in the eastbound departure yard, and the line of boxcars in the far left background are on the south cleanout track.

Unfortunately, the west end yardmaster at Elkhart sees only half of the pullout operation he supervises; it required one more project before the planners provided at Big Four the complete surveillance desirable for this function. From the west end yard office, Group 1 ladder is on the left, and progressively nearer the camera are the leads to Groups 2, 3, and 4 (next to the light poles). The car shop, whose location in the yard and production setup are similar to Frontier's, is on the right, effectively blocking the view of the pullout crews in Groups 5, 6, 7, and 8. The hump building is in the center background, and to its right is the retarder building.

Of the eight facilities covered in this series, Elkhart is the only one with a bona fide local yard. Accordingly, in its earlier years it was the only one which dispatched any quantity of local freight trains; the others either peddled local cars to outlying points or ground out one or two locals with varying amounts of fuss, delay, and interference with production. The procedure at Elkhart was for a third-trick crew to couple up the local yard track in the class yard, pull the cars into the local yard, and line them up for morning departure. (At this writing, area local business is sent elsewhere for servicing, and the local yard is essentially surplus.) The train on the right here is the Elkhart-Wabash local ready to leave as seen from the west end yard office. To the left are cripples on the car shop tracks.

This location is WG, the interlocking at the west end of Elkhart Yard controlled by the operator in BC office, located in the hump building. Current Conrail designations are CP 426 for WG and Hart for BC office. County Line Road is in the foreground, and crossing it are main tracks 1 and 2 and a freight lead, from left to right. Entering here, a train proceeding straight ahead is on the Early Bird track, used for eastbounds to be worked or, adjacent to the eastbound departure yard, for making up trains; a train taking the first right is on the inbound lead; and a train taking the second right is headed toward the westbound departure yard. The Early Bird track and the inbound lead are equipped with block signals for safe and expedited movement into the yard, an innovation begun at Elkhart.

A second look from the top floor of the retarder building with the camera pointed east shows the hump and hump building and, beyond in the left foreground, cars in the eastbound departure yard. The diesel shop and fueling station are barely out of the picture on the left behind the hump lead. The receiving yard is in the center background. Tracks on the right are caboose tracks (the first two), an escape route for humpers from track 72-1/2 in the class yard, 1 thru 5 in the westbound departure yard (the train double-caboosed is on 4), the cleanout lead, and the inbound lead. The prominent building on the right is the YMCA.

The east entrance to the receiving yard is called Oakland Avenue, and when the yard first opened, a switchtender located in the shanty there operated the yard power switches at that location. This work was later transferred to the route director in the hump building, who from the outset controlled power yard switches at the hump end of the receiving yard. Besides the uninhabited building, this picture of the Oakland Avenue area includes the main line at far left, the eastbound departure lead, a running track for light engines, and various receiving yard tracks (no. 2 is front and center).

Entering Elkhart from the east, the first interlocking encountered was B, where the main line from Toledo and the Elkhart branch from Jackson converged. (Today, B is CP 421, and the line from Michigan points is called the Kalamazoo branch.) Controlled by the "Hart" operator located in the hump building, this interlocking is also the east entrance to the yard. Taken from the steps of former B tower and facing west, this photograph shows the tangent Elkhart branch and the curving Toledo mains joining just west of Main Street, with the depot a stone's throw beyond. Northern District trains from Jackson and east which used the Elkhart branch, crossed the main line to reach the two freight leads in the center of the picture. Current Kalamazoo-Elkhart trains follow the same procedure.

Gravity Switching by the New York Central On the Eve of Merger

(Part III)

Jeremy Taylor

ABSTRACT

In our First and Fourth Quarter 1990 issues, Mr. Taylor gave an overview of New York Central's eight major gravity switching facilities and described Selkirk, Dewitt, Frontier and Elkhart in detail. This issue will cover Big Four and Sharon. Coverage of Stanley and Junction yards will follow.

Big Four

The clannish railroad family of the old Big Four was both proud and suspicious as the $12 million dollar yard on the fringe of Indianapolis opened for business in September of 1960. Proud of this proof of the importance of their railroad and also of the recognition of their tradition implicit in the name, and suspicious of what the new facility would do to upset their private preserves and bring in "foreign" influence from the east to erode their independence. Both feelings were well founded, and the basis for their suspicious was quickly reinforced as the yard broke down the old order at Bellefontaine, Indianapolis, Mattoon, and East St. Louis and integrated the grass roots railroad with the rest of the system for once and for all. In its sphere of influence, this yard wrought perhaps more profound change than Elkhart had done previously on the west end, especially since the tide of traffic, being smaller, was more easily formed into new shapes. Moreover, the shortness of sidings and yard tracks throughout the territory, coupled with the full crew law of the state of Indiana which straddled it, had resulted in an operation where a 100-car train was considered quite an achievement — as assuredly it had been.

In this situation, the new facility quickly took charge with its 150-car receiving tracks easily assimilating the maximum input from surrounding yards and its equally long departure tracks, dispatching trains which gagged these same yards (to the extent that they were not bypassed). The layout at Big Four is of the "teardrop" configuration, which had evolved into the favorite in the postwar flurry of hump yard construction. The receiving yard curves around the class yard to the south and the departure yard lies in a straight line on the north side of the class yard and parallel to its longest tracks. At the upper end of the teardrop are the hump leads and hump, while at its base are the two stub-end pullout leads. The pullback hump operation was designed with an abundance of short inbound trains in mind, and it worked smoothly enough although that expectation proved to be ill-founded. (Actually, the yard itself made possible the vast reduction in train-miles which in turn upset the prediction of its designers in that respect.) In the "hardware" department, Big Four was showered with the latest version of just about every proven gadget. Its analogue computer surpassed Elkhart's in the accuracy of its distance-to-go input, which was received from individual track circuits and therefore not misled by stalls. Its pullout operation is a model of efficiency, abetted by conductor-operated power switches at the convergence of the class yard, pullout, and departure yard leads, by portable radios with separate frequencies for pullout crews, and by the aforementioned stub-end leads (yes, at least one engineer has run out of room, but there are no switches to run through or cars to corner back there). More prosaic, perhaps, but just as vital from a cost standpoint, is the efficiency of the clerical process, by which the flow of paperwork essential to the flow of cars is managed by just three clerks per trick. All things considered, it was apparent early on that Big Four was the smoothest, cheapest, and most efficient plant of its type on the system.

The reduction in train miles, brought about by dispatchment of longer trains and the drying up of numerous train yards were the most spectacular accomplishments of the yard in the area of operating efficiency. Unquestionably the saving in car days with its per diem corollary was just as impressive, although not as readily measurable in terms of dollars. These benefits were realized primarily on the Cleveland-St. Louis main line end and in the Indianapolis terminal, with important secondary benefits on the Cincinnati-Kankakee main line and the Terre Haute-Evansville branch. From the standpoint of service, the most dramatic development was the elimination of the St. Louis gateway bottleneck by means of Big Four engineered through train service with the Missouri Pacific and Cotton Belt and, in conjunction with St. Louis terminal roads, expedited block movements to the Frisco, Katy, Rock Island, and N&W (ex Wabash). Louisville service was made competitive with the assistance of PRR trackage rights, and a highly beneficial through service was set up between Big Four and Elkhart via the Michigan Subdivision.

With the harshness of the realities which confirmed their deepest suspicious softened by the passage of time, the Big Four men who rode out the storm should have been proud of their namesake yard. In due time, it would be one of the key classification centers of Penn Central and then Conrail.

Big Four - Inbound Trains

Symbol	From	Arrival Span	Frequency	Remarks
SLX-1	Dewitt	1201A- 500A	Daily	symbol and small block of cars from 72nd St., N.Y.
Springfield Local	Springfield	1201A-800A	Wed-Fri-Sun	switch run
Westside (Express Job)	West Side Yard	1230A-200A	XSun-Mon.	yard crew out of West Side
CC-1	Sharon	600A-900A	Daily	
MPX-2	East St. Louis	600A-900A	Daily	had through block from MP-RR, No. Little Rock
PE-6	East Peoria	600A-900A	Daily	reswitched at Urbana
2/MD-5	Elkhart	600A-1000A	Daily	some times had L&N block for 2/SY-2
Ansonia Turn	Ansonia	800A-1201P	Daily	picked up at Muncie and South Anderson
CBN-2	Pine Bluff, Ark.	1000A-1201P	Daily	cars added by SSW at Valley Jct., A&S at Davis Yard
NY-6	East St. Louis	1100A-100P	Daily	Dewitt block on head end swung to outbound NY-6
Hill Transfer	Hill Yard	300P-500P	Daily	return of 1st trick transfer
Westside	West Side Yard	430P-600P	XSat-Sun	yard crew out of West Side
EI-2	Ashby	430P-830P	Daily	had blocks for Stout (IPL plant on ICRR) or alternately for Anderson-Elkhart-Gibson-BRC; balance of train humped
CC-3	Sharon	600P-900P	Daily	
KA-2	Kankakee	700P-1159P	Daily	performed local work, St. Anne-Templeton
SY-2	Englewood	800P-1100P	Daily	picked up at Indiana Harbor and Gibson
MA Extra	Mattoon	800P-1159P	5-7 days/wk	picked up at Midland and Duane
Westside	West Side Yard	830P-1000p	3-5 days/wk	2nd trip of yard crew out of West Side
NY-8	East St. Louis	830P-1130P	Daily	regular pickup at Worchester
JA-1	Jeffersonville	900P-1100P	XSun	FV for SV-6 on head end; balance humped
SV-5	Selkirk (groups off)	930P-1100P	XMon	Indpls. and Louisville FV and PB for SSW and MP off rear end
Produce	West Side Yard	1000P-1159P	XSat-Sun	return of 230PM crew
A/BF3	Collinwood	1000P-200A	Daily	picked up at Rockport, Galion, and Ridgeway
1/MD-5	Elkhart	1100P-230A	Daily	
Valley Junction Turn	Valley Junction	1100P-300A	Daily	picked up at Greensburg
DSL-1	Detroit	1100P-300A	XMon	
BF-3	Frontier Yard	1130P-330A	Daily	fill usually added at Bellefontaine

Big Four - Outbound Trains

Symbol	To	Depart	Frequency	Grouping
CC-3	Englewood	1201A-200A	Daily	Gibson-Englewood
Ansonia Turn	Ansonia	1201A-300A	Daily	Anderson-Yorktown-Muncie-Ansonia
SV-6	Dewitt	1230A-130A	XMon	Syracuse FV Roch. & Bflo. FV-Cleveland FV cut in
West Side	West Side Yard	130A-300A	XSun-Mon	West Side Yard (return of Express Job out of West Side)
SY-2	Sharon	400A-530A	Daily	Cincinnati-N&W-Ivorydale-Sharon
AJ-2	Jeffersonville	500A	XSun	Louisville
NCB-1	Pine Bluff, Ark.	700A-830A	Daily	Pine Bluff (SSW-RR)-cut cab-A&S switch
BF-3	East St. Louis	800A-930A	Daily	Kansas City (MP RR)-TRRA/MP west TRRA/SLSF
MPX-1	No. Little Rock, Ark.	900A-1030A	Daily	No. Little Rock (MP-RR)-cut cab-E. St. Louis Lower Yard
Hill Transfer	Hill Yard	900A-1000A	Daily	Beech Grove Shop-Hill Yard
BF-1	East St. Louis	1000A-1130A	Daily	Hillsboro/Worcester-Rock Island- MKTO-Chevrolet-cut cab-N&W (Wabash)-TRRA/Madison

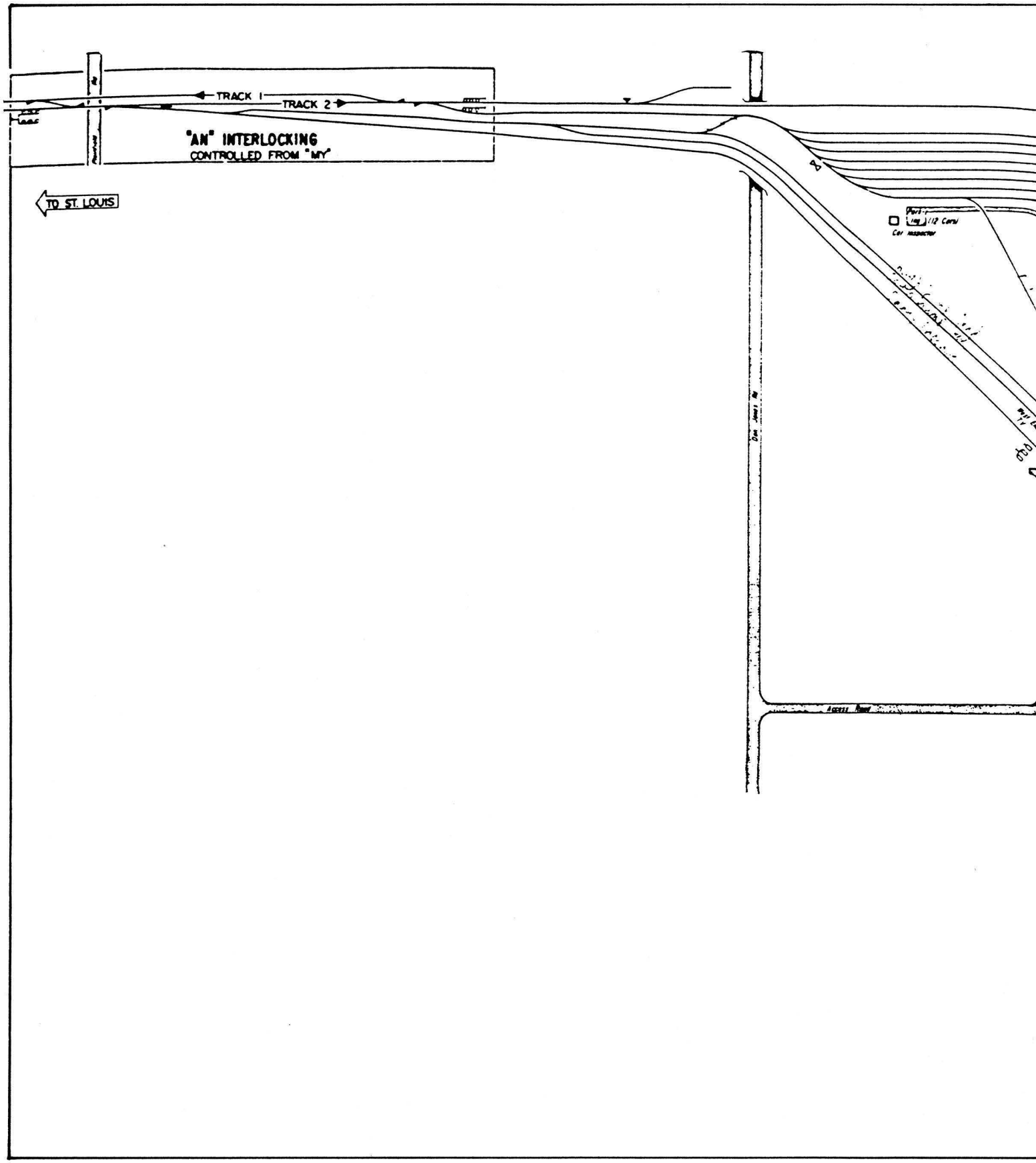
Big Four - Outbound Trains (Cont'd)

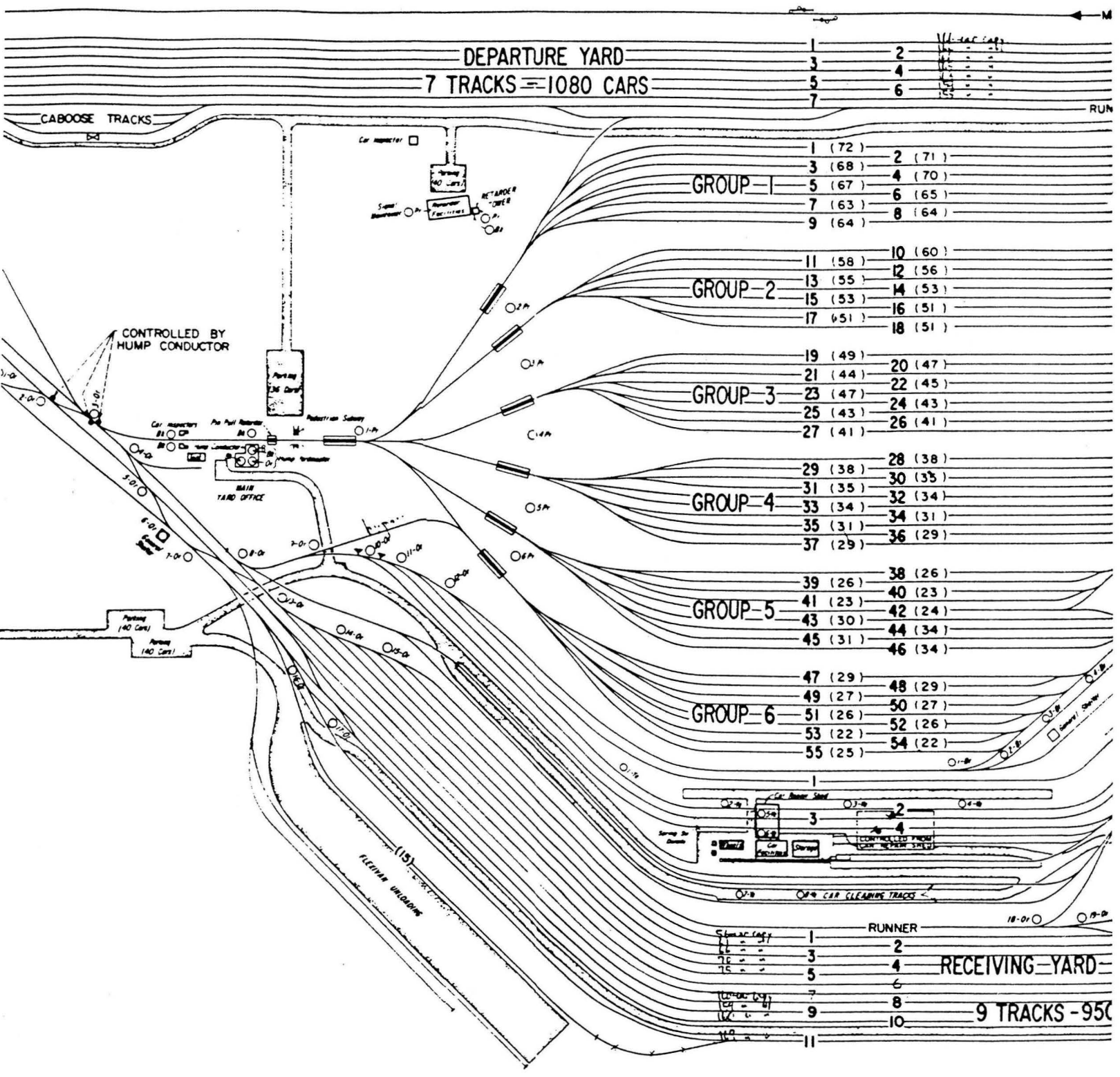
Symbol	To	Depart	Frequency	Grouping
Valley Junction Turn	Valley Junction	1100A-100P	Daily	Greensburg-Lawrenceburg
Springfield Local	Springfield	1100A-100P	Mon-Wed-Fri	intermediate stations, Hunter-Springfield
AM Extra	Mattoon	1100A or later,	5-7 days/wk	Duane
NY-6	Dewitt	1130A-130P	Daily	Dewitt (including block set over from inbound NY-6)
AP Extra	Ashby	1201P or later,	Daily	Ashby (empty hoppers)-Evansville
Produce	Produce Terminal	330P	XSat-Sun	Produce Terminal-West Side Yard (latter only if West Side yard job returned with IPL coal)
2/SY-2	Sharon	400P-500P	Daily	L&N-CincinnatN&W-Ivorydale-Sharon
BF-2	Collinwood	430P-600P	Daily	Columbus-Rockport-P&LE-Collinwood
PE-9	Urbana	530P-630P	Daily	Hillery-Urbana (reswitched at Urbana for E. Peoria)
West Side	West Side Yard	530P-800P	XSat-Sun	West Side or IPL coal (return of crew out of West Side)
SLD-2	Stanley	600P-730P	Daily	Detroit-Bellefontaine
MD-4	Elkhart	600P-1000P	Daily	Elkhart
NY-8	Dewitt	930P-1130P	Daily	Dewitt-Buffalo
SF-3	Kankakee	1130P-130A	Daily	Lafayette-Kankakee-ATSF (Streator)

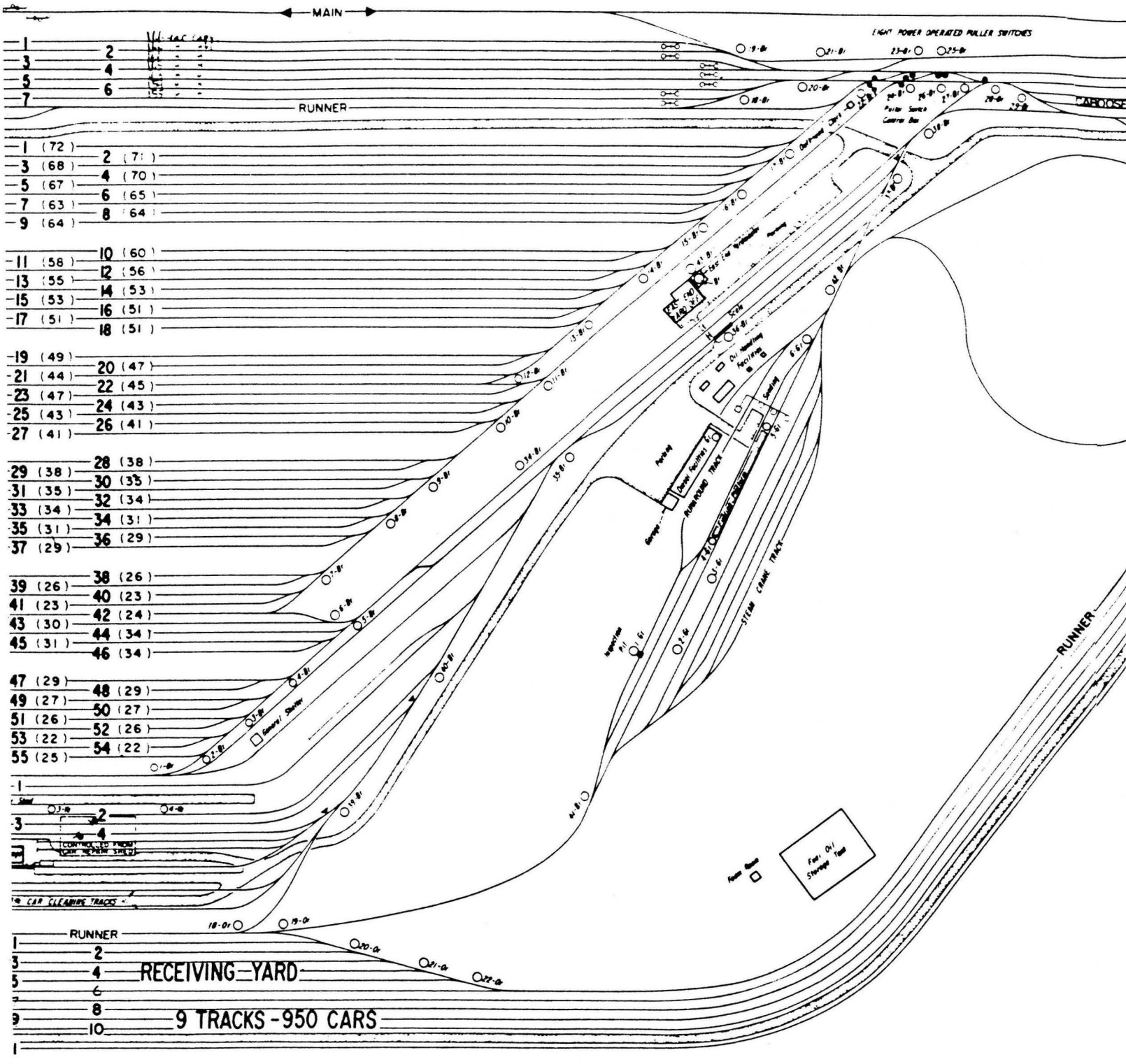
Big Four - Classifications

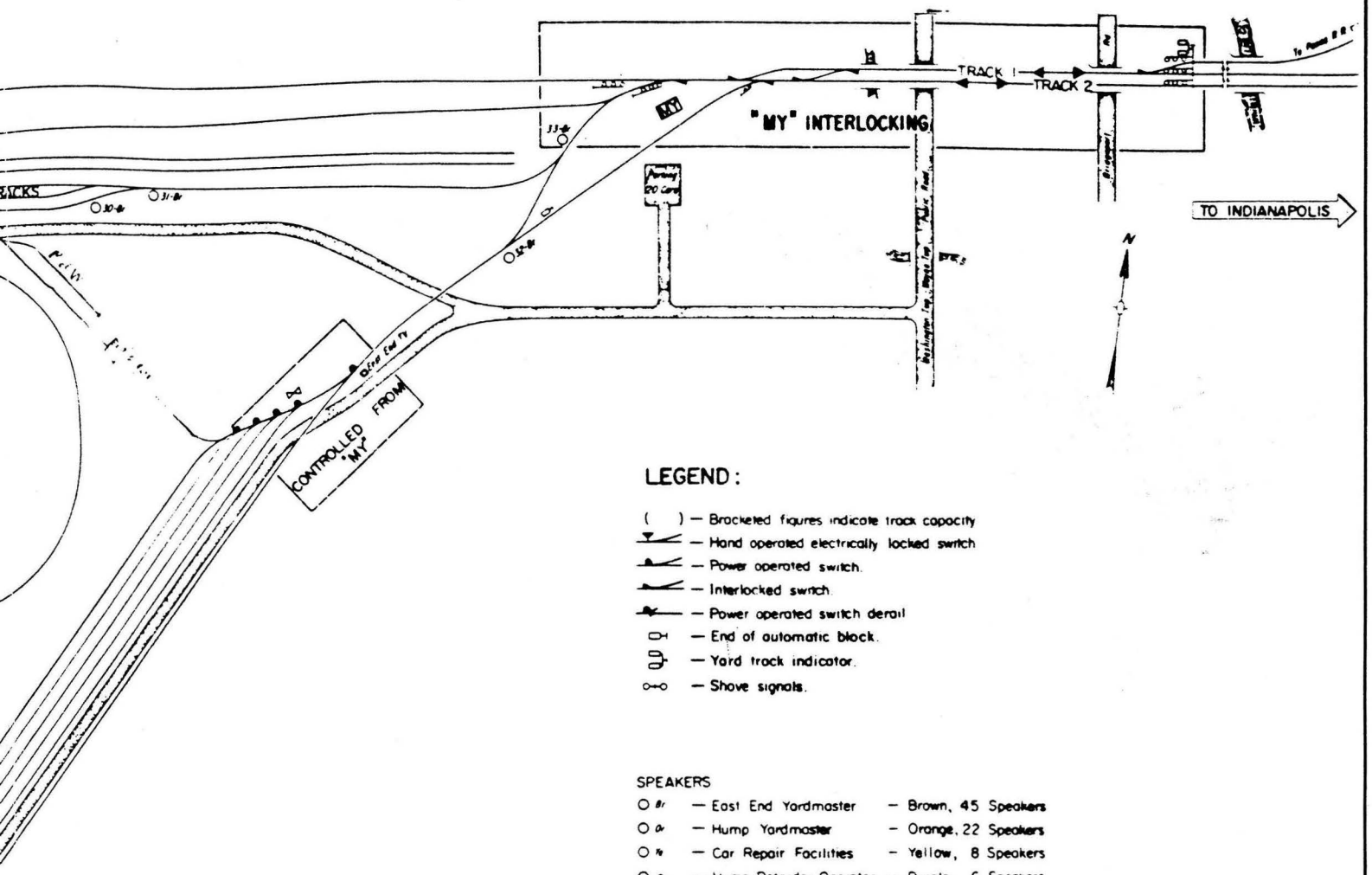
Group	Assigned Track
Grain inspection and holds (rehumped)	1
Rockport	2
Empty hoppers	3
West Side	4
TRRA Frisco	5
A & S switch	6
Anderson	7
Buffalo	8
Urbana	9
Hill	10
Little Rock (MP RR via TRRA)	11
E. St. Louis Lower Yard (incl. CB&Q, GM&O)	12
L & N	13
Columbus	14
Detroit	15
P & LE	16
Beech Grove Shop	17
Gibson	18
Muncie	19
Duane (except empty hoppers)	20
TRRA MP West	21
Pine Bluff (SSW RR via A&S	22
Louisville	23
Dewitt	24
Bellefontaine	25
Elkhart	26
TRRA Madison	27
N & W	28

Group	Assigned Track
St. Louis rehump (including RI and MKT) and Crawfordsville (rehumped)	29
Danville	30
Cincinnati (including Riverside, Southern, B&O, PRR)	31
Paris and Mattoon	32
Collinwood	33
Englewood	34
Kansas City (MP RR via TRRA)	35
TRRA Chevrolet	36
Sheff	37
Ivorydale	38
Hillsboro-Worcester	39
TRRA Wabash	40
Ansonia	41
Sharon	42
Greensburg	43
Lawrenceburg	44
Lafayette	45
Streator/ATSF	46
Cleanout	47
Empty system had orders	48
Bad order loads and empty foreign bad orders	49
Cleanout	50
Kankakee	51
Weighers	52
Produce terminal and Yorktown	53
Lynn	54
Cabooses	55


TRACK 1
TRACK 2
"AN" INTERLOCKING
CONTROLLED FROM "MY"
TO ST. LOUIS


DEPARTURE YARD
7 TRACKS — 1080 CARS
CABOOSE TRACKS
CONTROLLED BY HUMP CONDUCTOR
MAIN YARD OFFICE
GROUP—1
1 (72)
2 (71)
3 (68)
4 (70)
5 (67)
6 (65)
7 (63)
8 (64)
9 (64)
GROUP—2
10 (60)
11 (58)
12 (56)
13 (55)
14 (53)
15 (53)
16 (51)
17 (51)
18 (51)
GROUP—3
19 (49)
20 (47)
21 (44)
22 (45)
23 (47)
24 (43)
25 (43)
26 (41)
27 (41)
GROUP—4
28 (38)
29 (38)
30 (35)
31 (35)
32 (34)
33 (34)
34 (31)
35 (31)
36 (29)
37 (29)
GROUP—5
38 (26)
39 (26)
40 (23)
41 (23)
42 (24)
43 (30)
44 (34)
45 (31)
46 (34)
GROUP—6
47 (29)
48 (29)
49 (27)
50 (27)
51 (26)
52 (26)
53 (22)
54 (22)
55 (25)
CAR CLEANING TRACKS
RUNNER
RECEIVING YARD
9 TRACKS - 950
FLEXIVAN UNLOADING


MAIN
RUNNER
EIGHT POWER OPERATED PULLER SWITCHES
CABOOSE
1 (72)
2 (71)
3 (68)
4 (70)
5 (67)
6 (65)
7 (63)
8 (64)
9 (64)
10 (60)
11 (58)
12 (56)
13 (55)
14 (53)
15 (53)
16 (51)
17 (51)
18 (51)
19 (49)
20 (47)
21 (44)
22 (45)
23 (47)
24 (43)
25 (43)
26 (41)
27 (41)
28 (38)
29 (38)
30 (35)
31 (35)
32 (34)
33 (34)
34 (31)
35 (31)
36 (29)
37 (29)
38 (26)
39 (26)
40 (23)
41 (23)
42 (24)
43 (30)
44 (34)
45 (31)
46 (34)
47 (29)
48 (29)
49 (27)
50 (27)
51 (26)
52 (26)
53 (22)
54 (22)
55 (25)
CAR CLEANING TRACKS
RUNNER
RECEIVING YARD
9 TRACKS - 950 CARS
STEAM CRANE TRACK
RUNNER



LEGEND:

( ) — Bracketed figures indicate track capacity
— Hand operated electrically locked switch
— Power operated switch.
— Interlocked switch.
— Power operated switch derail
— End of automatic block.
— Yard track indicator.
— Shove signals.

SPEAKERS

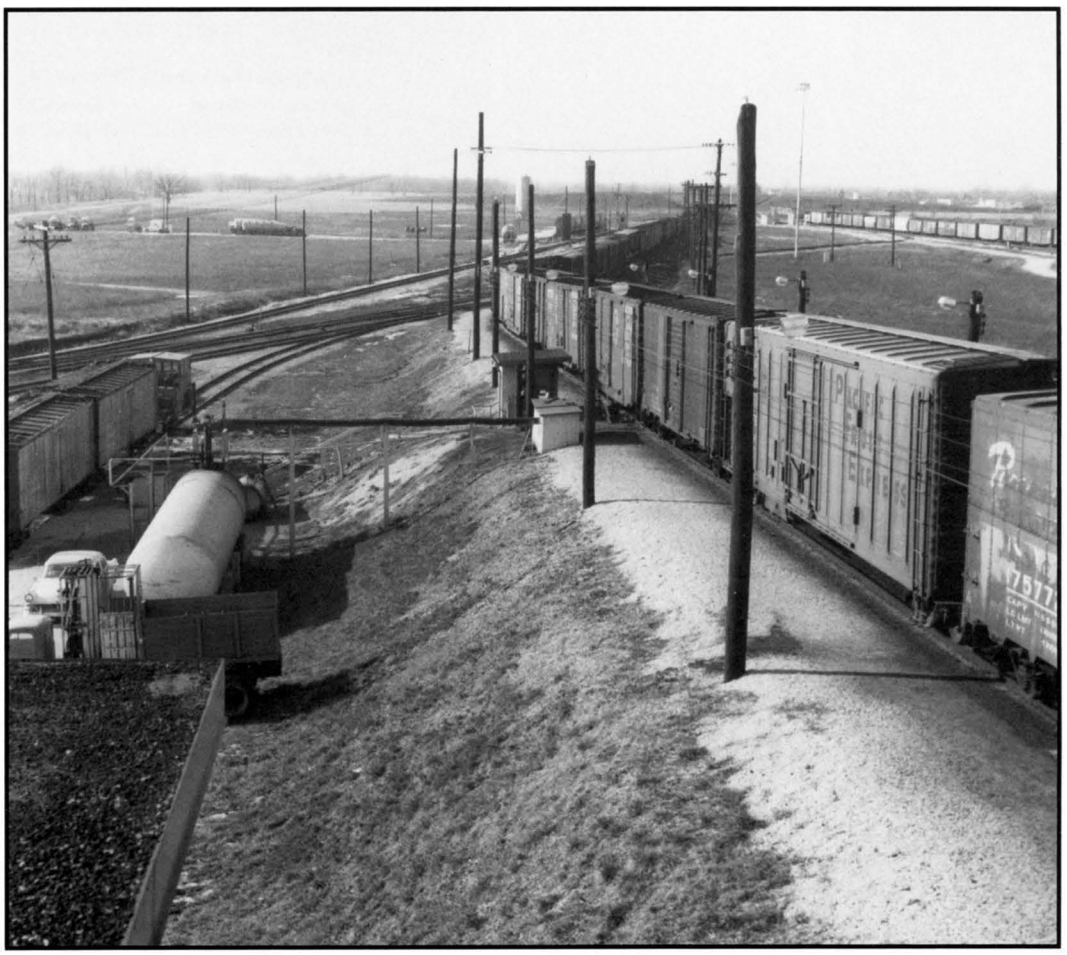
— East End Yardmaster	—	Brown,	45 Speakers
— Hump Yardmaster	—	Orange,	22 Speakers
— Car Repair Facilities	—	Yellow,	8 Speakers
— Hump Retarder Operator	—	Purple,	6 Speakers
— Diesel Fueling Station	—	Green,	6 Speakers
— Hump Round Robin	—	Black,	7 Locations
— Paging Speakers	—	—	3 Locations

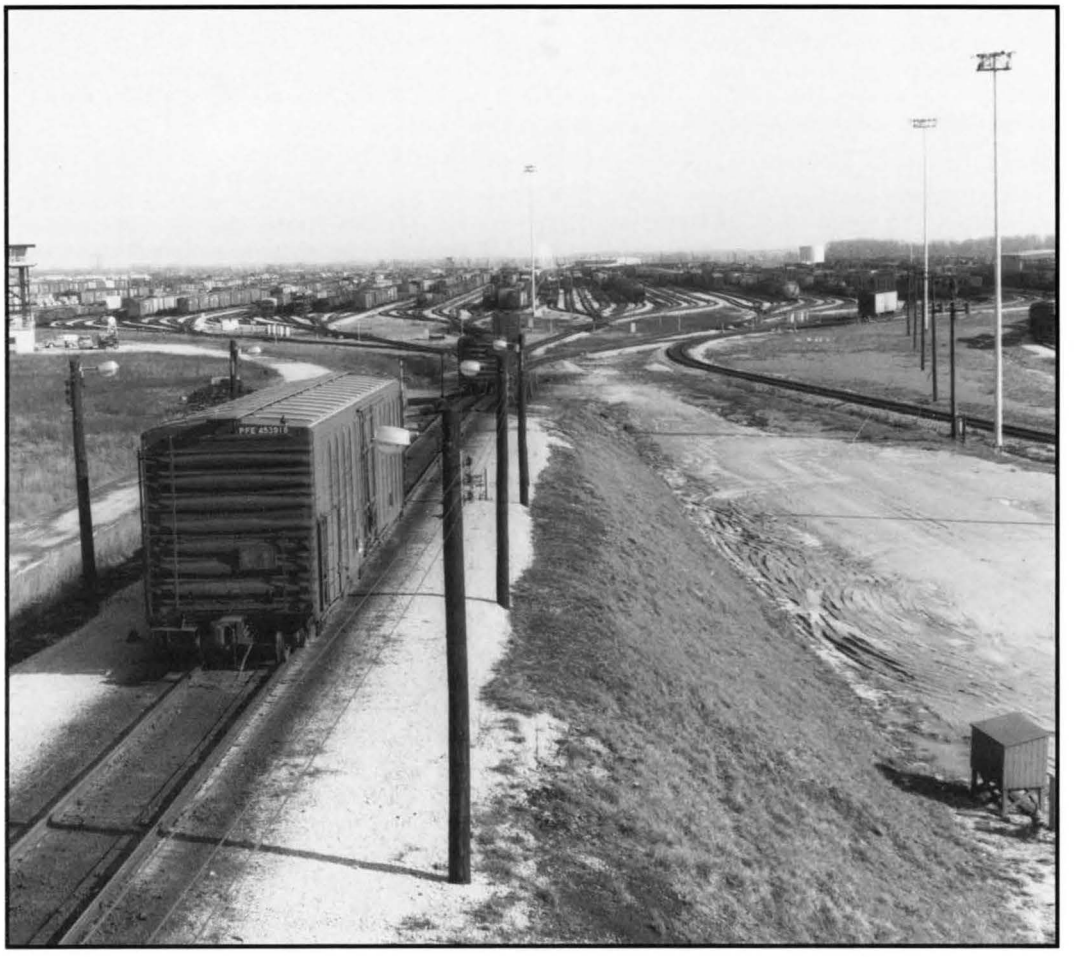
NEW YORK CENTRAL SYSTEM
SIGNAL DEPARTMENT
AVON YARD, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.
Office of Chief Signal Engineer, Cleveland, O.
NO SCALE DEC. 15, 1959 SK 288

ISSUED...

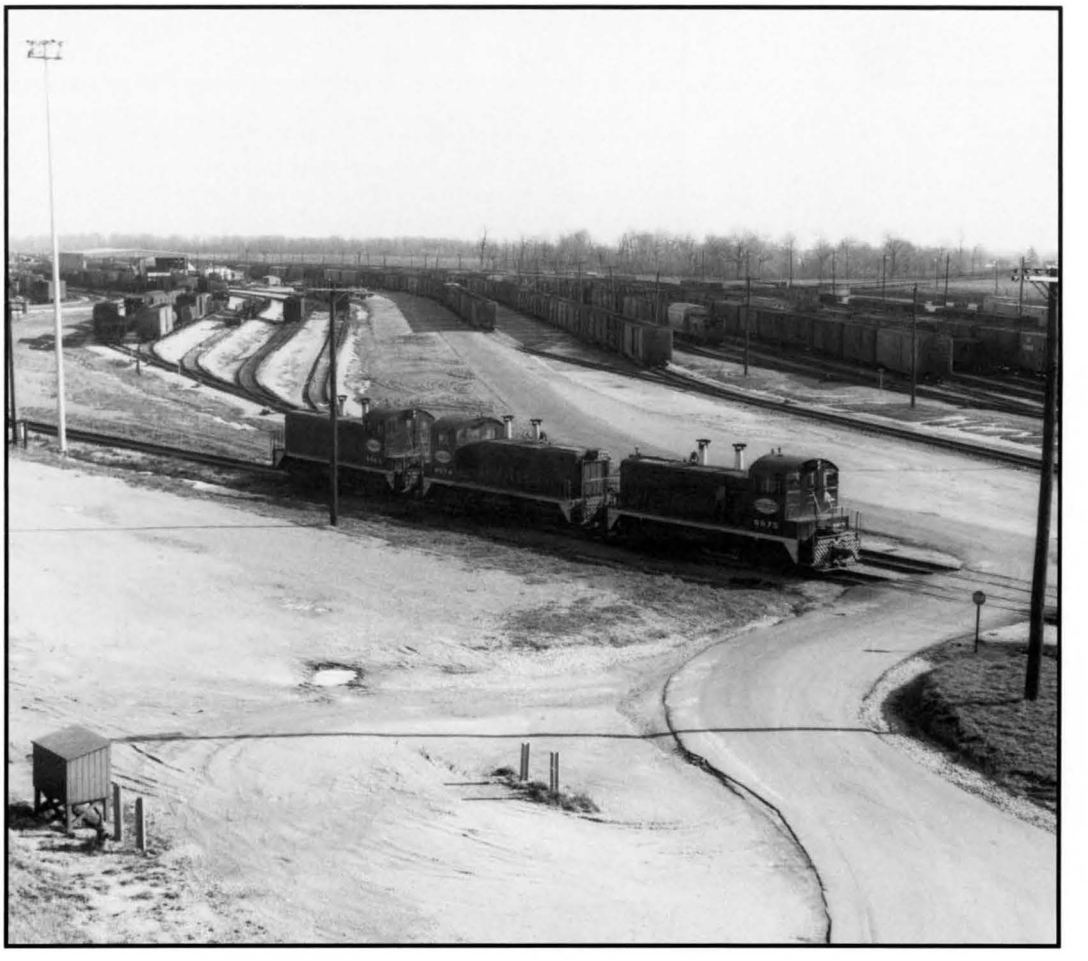
From the west side of Dan Jones Road, the camera again focuses on BF-1 as it moves out on the departure yard lead towards AN, whose eastbound home signals are visible in the background. The hump cut on the north hump lead blocks the view of the south hump lead (the two join back about where the humpers are), but the receiving yard lead is in plain sight on the left. This track was known locally as the "Sanky inbound" — a throwback to Big Four days during which for obscure reasons the Indianapolis-St. Louis line came to be called the "Sanky."

The departure yard (on the right), the hump approach, and the receiving yard lead are all in plain view from the west side of the hump building. So is the Flexiflow terminal, over the cartops of the hump cut, and a track known as the pigtail, back of the light tower. The latter permits cars to be humped from the departure yard, a procedure followed in the case of inbound NY-6, which was yarded in the departure yard to facilitate a quick move on the Dewitt group on its head end from inbound to outbound train. Note the pit inspector's shanty alongside the hump lead; although a pit inspector was in residence, its counterpart on the opposite side was vacant, and similar pairs of shanties at Frontier and Elkhart were completely unoccupied in examples of the interplay of operating requirements and economies.

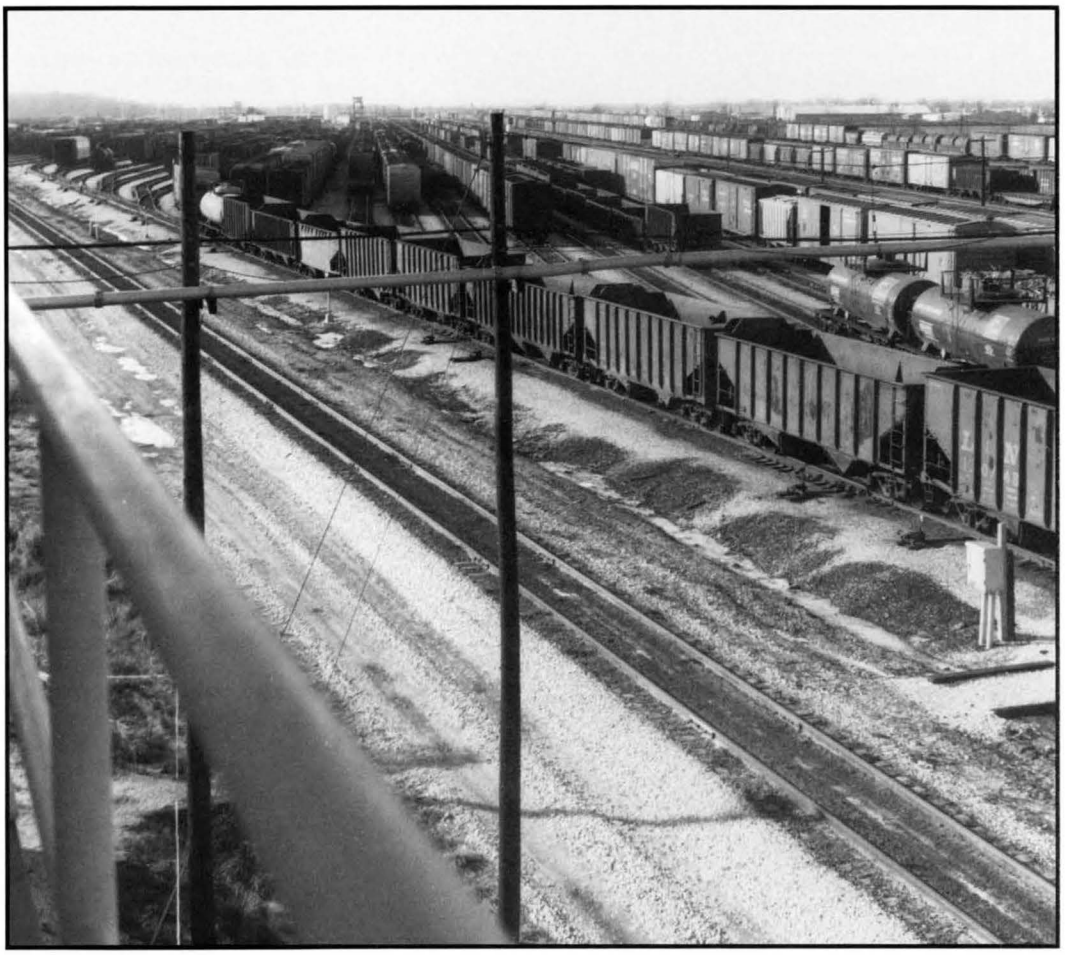




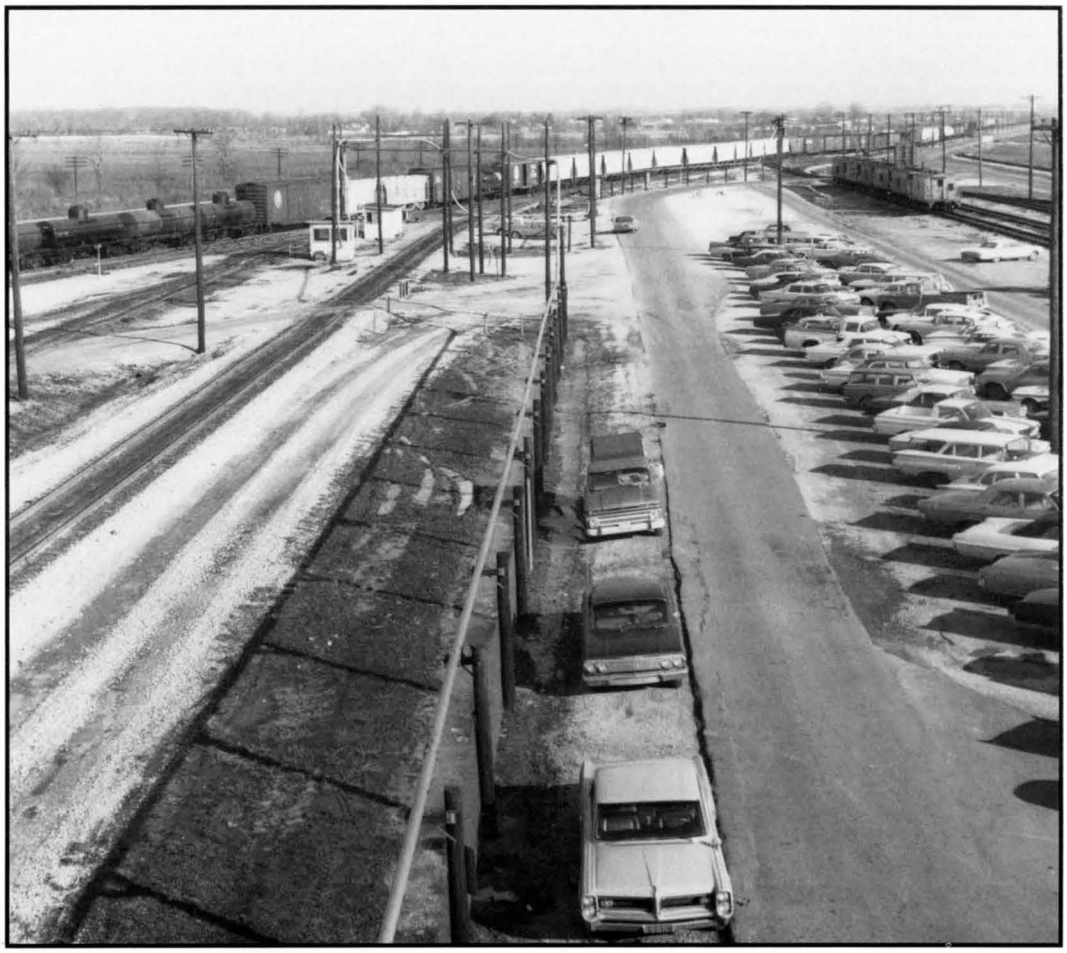
With its distance-to-go system alerted by track circuits, this class yard led the way in reduction of excessive-speed impacts. It represented a distinct improvement over Elkhart's reliance on car count and a night versus day change from Frontier's manually-operated near-medium-far arrangement. The rarity of thunderous "hard couplings" here was readily apparent, and in a less dramatic but more relevant sense, so was the reduction in claim payments, equipment damage and derailments. Thanks to its electronic refinements, the retarder operators at Big Four (located in the tower on the left) were less involved in controlling cars than those at Elkhart, who in turn were relatively passive compared to Frontiers inveterate practitioners of guesswork. The principal drawback of Big Four's class yard was and is the lack of capacity of its smaller groups, 4, 5, and 6 (on the right). When long cars predominate, a dozen or so fill up some of the higher-numbered tracks.



Humpers parked on the bypass are a sign that it's lunchtime, but the second hump crew is maintaining production, and a look at the receiving yard indicates that there's enough work to keep everyone busy through the afternoon. From left to right, the middle runner and shop tracks 1, 2, 3, and 4 come off the ladder on the left. Across the road are the two cleanout tracks, elevated so that wash water will flow out of the cars towards the center. Next comes the departure yard, and on the extreme right is the Flexivan site. The car ship is in the left background; the production line runs towards the camera, with cripples pulled in by cable and OKs shoved out by rubber-tired crane.



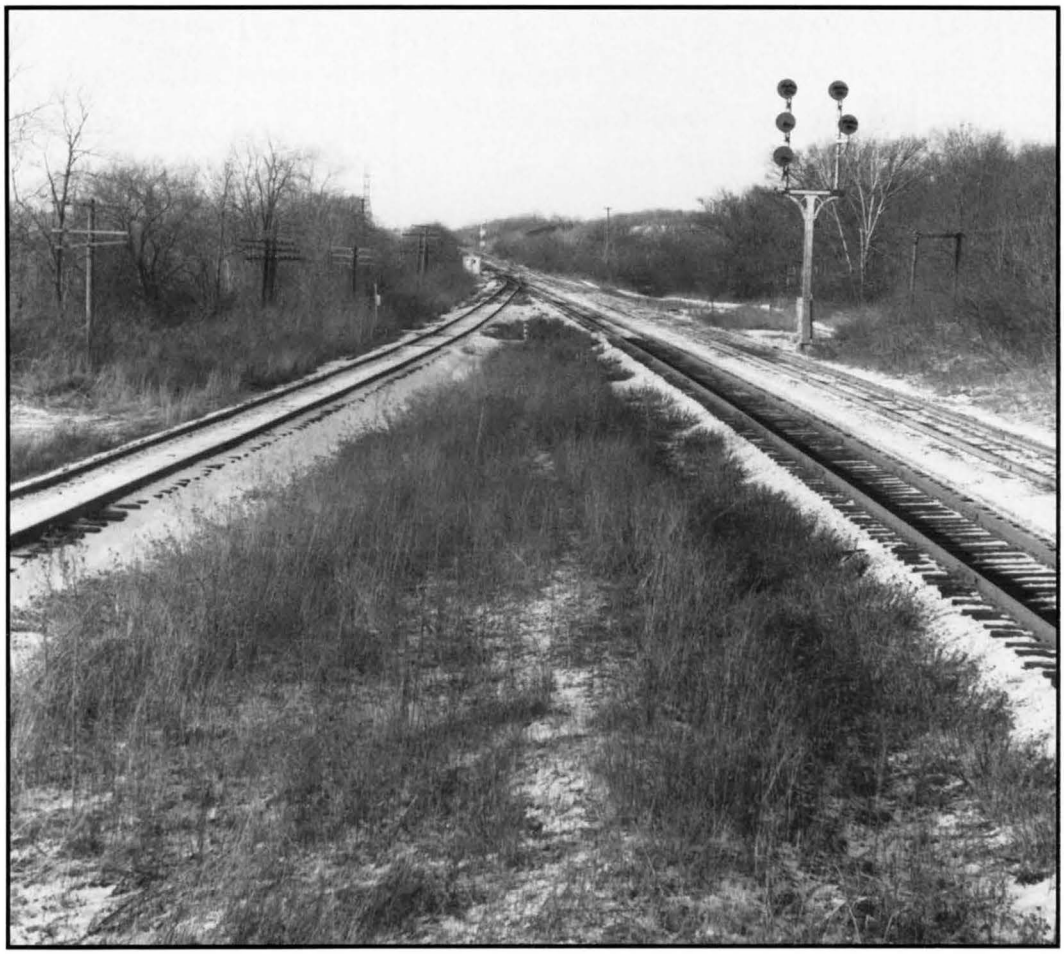
This photograph and the next, taken from the East End tower, illustrate the pull-and-shove movements of the fastest and most efficient pullout operation on the New York Central. This is the showpiece of Big Four's plant and they key to its high production. Two tandem ladders running in front of the tower tap most of the class yard; "one lead" reaches tracks 1 thru 22, and "two lead" gets 22 thru 42. "Three lead," back of the tower, plays to the lower volume from 42 thru 55, mostly short tracks. On "one lead" here are L&Ns coming out of track 13 for 2/SY-2. The departure yard is back of the pole line on the right, and beyond and somewhat elevated is the main track, occupied by the Muncie Turn.



The jumbo covered hoppers are part of a track of Cincinnati cars being shoved into the departure yard for 2/SY-2. Initially, the eight conductor-operated power pullout switches were controlled from a small panel mounted on a post which in this scene is barely visible back and to the right of the second shanty. In a post-merger change, a second east-end yard tower was erected here to house this operation. One of the best aspects of the layout at Big Four is that these switches, which connect the class and departure yard leads, are located a short distance beyond the entrances to both yards. Thus there is very little wasted motion in the pullout movements, in direct contrast, for instance, to the long trek between most of the class yard tracks, and the primary departure yard at Frontier.

The land in which Big Four is laid out slopes from west to east, and most of the yard slopes along with it (hence the profusion of inert retarders). Not so the pullout leads — after Frontier's example, no one would tolerate an uphill shove. To overcome the slope, the pullout leads were built on a progressively higher fill which kept them level. When they were long enough to accommodate the optimum pull of 70 cars with room to spare, they were up in the air with no place to go, so they were simply stubbed. (That crossover comes in handy in the event of a derailment in the vicinity of the pullout switches.) The south and north departure leads border the fill; on the far left is the inbound lead and TV camera, and on the right is the main track, with the Muncie Turn now on the move.

Before Big Four was built, MY interlocking (then known as Mt. Jackson) was at Warman Avenue in Indianapolis and controlled, in armstrong fashion, the leads at the west end of Westside Yard, which at the time was the west extremity of the Indianapolis Terminal. With the coming of the new yard, this plant was retired in favor of hand operation, and a new MY was built at the east entrance to Big Four. Above is MY as seen from the pullout fill, with the departure leads converging in front of the home signals. Double track resumes east of the operator's building. MY operator controls interlockings here and at AN and yard power switches at the east end of the receiving yard. Passing MY on the inbound lead is DSL-1, with a tremendously long consist of auto parts loads trailing three overloaded units.



One turnout at Gano, controlled by the operator at West Sharon, sufficed to head westbound trains off the main and onto the receiving yard lead. (PC added a crossover when it installed dispatcher-controlled CTC between Dayton and Gano.) The only through movements which were then regularly using the westbound between this point and West Sharon were SV-5, the Flexivan train which terminated at Riverside Yard, and no. 15, the Budd car, which at the time provided the only passenger service between Cleveland and Cincinnati). Eastbounds out of the yard crawl by here on sand as they ascend Mauds Hill, approximately five miles of 0.8% and the ruling grade between Sharon and Columbus or Bellefontaine. Mauds Hill was a stalling problem on occasion primarily because long trains were on its incline before the rear end cleared the yard, and thus got no chance to make a run for it. Big power and run-through operations have virtually eliminated this impediment for today's practicioners.

The receiving yard, or Gano as it is called locally, widens from the lead and one track to eight tracks under the twin bridges of Interstate 275. East (or north, by compass) of this location there was until 1964 only the lead, but the improvement program that year included construction of a second track almost to Gano interlocking, and this track, representing the extension of no. 1 Gano, is the one on the left, above. For trains handling autos and auto parts in quantity, this is the only track which will accommodate in excess of 100 cars (it will hold more than 200 fifty-footers), so for BF-7 and BC-1, which ran in the same time slot, this sometimes meant that the second train was held out until the first was humped. The 1964 construction began in the vicinity of the General Services Administration turnout, the one leading left off no. 1.

Sharon

This facility had the weaknesses commonly associated with hump yards of its vintage (built in 1908 and converted to retarder hump operation in 1928), nevertheless its unit cost was third lowest of the eight humps, ranking behind only Big Four and Elkhart. Between 1928 and 1961, Sharon consisted of two separate hump operations side by side in a miniature version of the Dewitt layout, but without departure yards. In 1961, the retarders on the eastbound hump (known as the "heavy hump" because of the preponderance of coal handled over it) were removed and sent to Junction Yard at Detroit to replace wornout retarders there. From then on, all switching was performed over the westbound or "light hump," and the eastbound class and departure yard, known as Sharon Avenue Yard, remained strictly as a departure yard for eastbound road trains, fed from the class yard via an obstacle course across the double-track main line. In 1964, a rehabilitation and modernization project costing about $1.2 million was carried out at Sharon. The class yard was completely upgraded with relay rail, ties, and ballast, beefed-up retarders, new leads at the pullout end, and improved grades at both ends. Talk-back speaker systems were installed, and the retarder tower on the heavy hump was relocated at the west end of the class yard as a yardmaster's tower. Receiving yard track 1 was lengthened to accommodate 200-car trains and more flexible access was provided at the hump end of this yard. New car repair and diesel fueling facilities were also built.

Despite all of these improvements, the aforementioned pullout problem, as well as the operation of nearly all westbound traffic (connection, industrial and Indianapolis) out of the class yard, remained as major impediments to high production at Sharon, but this was not a critical matter as long as humping figures of 1200 to 1400 cars per day sufficed to maintain current status. Such would not be the case after merger — Sharon was selected as the Penn Central Cincinnati terminal facility — but there were high-priority plans drawn up to expedite the pullout operation and to increase both classification and departure room. The revised and augmented layout was designed to make possible a substantial growth in humping figures, albeit with yard power increased by another humper and at least one more pullout engine per trick. These plans were duly implemented, and Sharon was able to fulfill its designated mission. The big difference, however, was provided by the post-merger construction of Buckeye Yard at Columbus, which did for the Cincinnati gateway what Elkhart and Big Four had already done for the Chicago and St. Louis gateways.

The sad sequel to this progression of facility improvements geared to Cincinnati traffic is that the latter has fallen precipitously for NYC's successors as a result of elimination of L&N, C&O, and Southern as friendly connections following the CSX and Norfolk Southern mergers. The consequent reduction in volume has been so great that Sharon hump was closed in April of 1987, and the switching which remained was transferred into Sharon Avenue yard. "All dressed up and no place to go" is the adage which best describes the current situation here.

Reference to holdouts of BF-7 or BC-7 in the previous footnote raises the question, "Why not double?" This illustration of the hump end of Gano Yard, with the hump lead in the immediate foreground, supplies the answer. On those ocassions when a westbound train was yarded in sections, the normal procedure was to make a cut and yard the head end, then go back through a clear track for the balance. The presence of high-priority traffic throughout the consists of BF-7 and BC-7 made doubling impractical in any event, since it meant another track to be switched for the evening connection runs. Tracks 6, 7 and 8, on the right, were normally used to yard transfers from the west, which could enter via the lead on the right without stopping humping from 1 through 5 (this flexibility was added in 1964). PC squeezed things together here to make more room for a third track, an additional lead on the left providing an inbound route north (geographically west) of the class yard from West Sharon. At the same time, the entire layout was revamped to mimimize conflicts between arriving and humping movements.

Sharon - Inbound Trains

Symbol	From	Arrival Span	Frequency	Remarks
L&N Transfer	DeCoursey Yard	200A-500A	Daily	L&N crew called from 700P to 900P
C&O Transfer	Stevens Yard	300A-600A	Daily	return of 400P NYC crew out of Sharon
Lockland Job	Lockland	600A-700A Industries	XSun-Mon	yarded cars in west end of class yard; brought National Distillers cars from Carthage
L&N Transfer	DeCoursey Yard	600A-1000A	Daily	return of 755P NYC crew out of Sharon
Riverside Transfer	Riverside	1100A-100P	Daily	return of 1130P crew out of Sharon with SOU conn.
Ivorydale Job	Ivorydale	1201P-200P	Daily	800A Ivorydale yard job with 2/SY-2 conn., SY-2 conn. if early, N&W interchange and in dustry cars
BF-5	Bellefontaine	1201P-500P	XSun	usually picked up most of train at Moraine
Yard Job	Formica	230P	XSun	Formica cars yarded in west and of class yard
Hole Job	Hole Industries	300P-400P	XSat-Sun	yarded cars in west end of Gano Yard
Exon Ave. Job	Exon Ave., Hill Industries	300P-400P	XSat-Sun	yarded cars at Sharon Avenue
CS-1	Columbus	300P-700P	Daily	usually picked up at least once enroute
Moraine Turn	Moraine	300P-700P	Daily	picked up at Middletown, sometimes Hutch
BF-7	Detroit	600P-900P	Daily	
BC-7	Frontier Yard	700P-1000P	Daily	got cars at Collinwood, Rockport, Galion and Ridgeway
Ivorydale Job	Ivorydale	700P-830P	Daily	400P Ivorydale yard job with SY-2 conn., if late, N&W interchange and industry cars
Riverside Transfer	Riverside	800P-930P	Daily 400P	Riverside job with SOU connection
Distillery cars	Ivorydale	900P-1100P	irregular	400P Distillery job out of Ivorydale. Sometimes came with Nat. Distillers and other industry
IMC Job	Main Line Industries	930P-1030P	XSat-Sun	switched off eastbound main between Lockland and Evendale; yarded cars in west end of class yard
Lockland Job	Lockland Industries	1100P-1159P	XSun	yarded cars in west end of class yard

Sharon - Outbound Trains

Symbol	To	Depart	Frequency	Grouping
CC-1	Big Four Yard	1201A-130A	Daily	Valley Junction-Big Four Yard
Lockland Job	Lockland Industries	100A-130A	XSun-Mon	Lockland Industries; got cars out of Evendale yard
Riverside Transfer	Gest St. Yard (SOU)	100A-200A	Daily	1130P crew out of Sharon; had SOU connection
Moraine Turn	Moraine	200A-500A	Daily	Middletown-Hutch-Moraine
SC-2	Columbus	400A-700A	Daily	Springfield-Columbus-Collinwood
L&N Transfer	DeCoursey Yard	500A-800A	Daily	L&N-L&N empty hoppers (return of L&N crew out of DeCoursey)
CD-6	Dewitt	800A-930A	Daily	Fairlane-Rockport-Dewitt-Buffalo (train frequently terminated at Collinwood)
Yard Job	Formica	730A-800A	XSun	Formica cars (switched out in Evendale yard)
Hole Job	Hole Industries	830A-900A	XSat-Sun	Hole industry cars, GSA, also did rip work, store house

Sharon - Outbound Trains (Cont'd)

Symbol	To	Depart	Frequency	Grouping
Exon Ave. Job	Exon Ave., Hill Industries	830A-900A	XSat-Sun	Exon Ave. and Hill industry cars
CC-3	Big Four Yard	1201P-130P	Daily	Big Four Yard
Ivorydale Job	Ivorydale	200P-330P	Daily	N&W-Ivorydale (return of 800A Ivorydale yard job)
IMC Job	Main Line Industries	330P-400P	XSat-Sun	industries off eastbound main between Lockland and Evendale; switched cars out in Evendale Yard.
Lockland Job	Lockland Industries	500P-530P	XSun	Lockland Industries; got cars out of Evandale Yard.
C&O Transfer	Stevens Yard	500P-600P	Daily	C&O (400P crew out of Sharon; picked on C&Os out of Riverside in ditch)
MC-2	Detroit	530P-700P	Daily	Trenton-Junction Yard-North Yard-Kalamazoo
MC-6	Stanley Yard	730P-900P	Daily	Toledo-Kalamazoo (overflow from MC-2)
L&N Transfer	DeCoursey Yard	830P-1130P	Daily	L&N-L&N empty hoppers (755P crew out of Sharon)
Ivorydale Job	Ivorydale	930P-1130P	Daily	N&W-Ivorydale (return of 400P Ivorydale yard job)
Riverside Transfer	Riverside	1030P-1159P	Daily	Riverside (return of 400P crew out of Riverside)

NOTE: transfer service to and from the L&N and C&O were operated on an engine-hour equalization basis, so that at any given time crews of one road or the other might have been manning all or a preponderance of the transfers. Runs listed were regular, but were supplemented as required to move the business.

Sharon - Classification

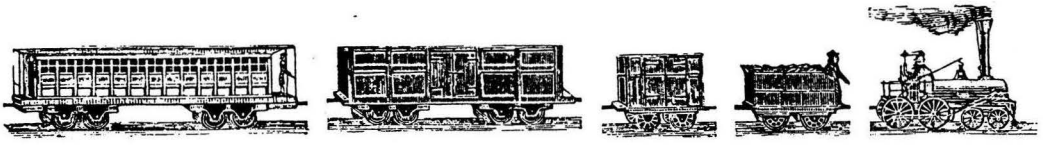
Group

Dewitt
Buffalo
Collinwood
Rockport
Fairlane
Columbus
Springfield
Moraine
Hutchings
Middletown
Junction Yard
North Yard
Kalamazoo
Stanley
Big Four Yard
Valley Junction

Group

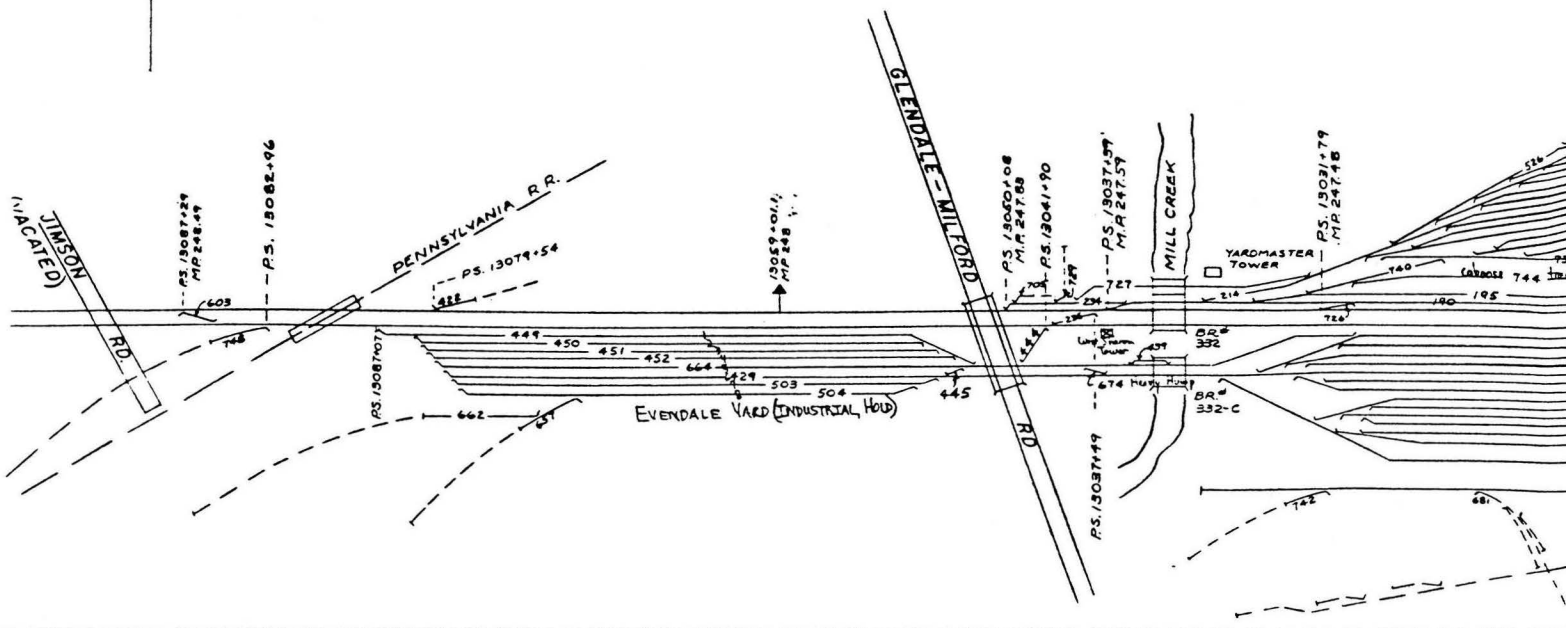
Riverside
Ivorydale
L&N miscellaneous
L&N empty hoppers
C&O
N&W
SOU
Evendale (industrial cars for Lockland, Formica, IMC, etc.)
Sharon Ave. (industrial cars for Exon Ave., Hill area)
Holds (also included Hole and Drackett lead industrial cars)
Cleanouts
Bad orders and upgrades

(the only track assignments were track 0 for holds and track 30 for bad orders and upgrades)



INITIALS

EVENDALE, OHIO



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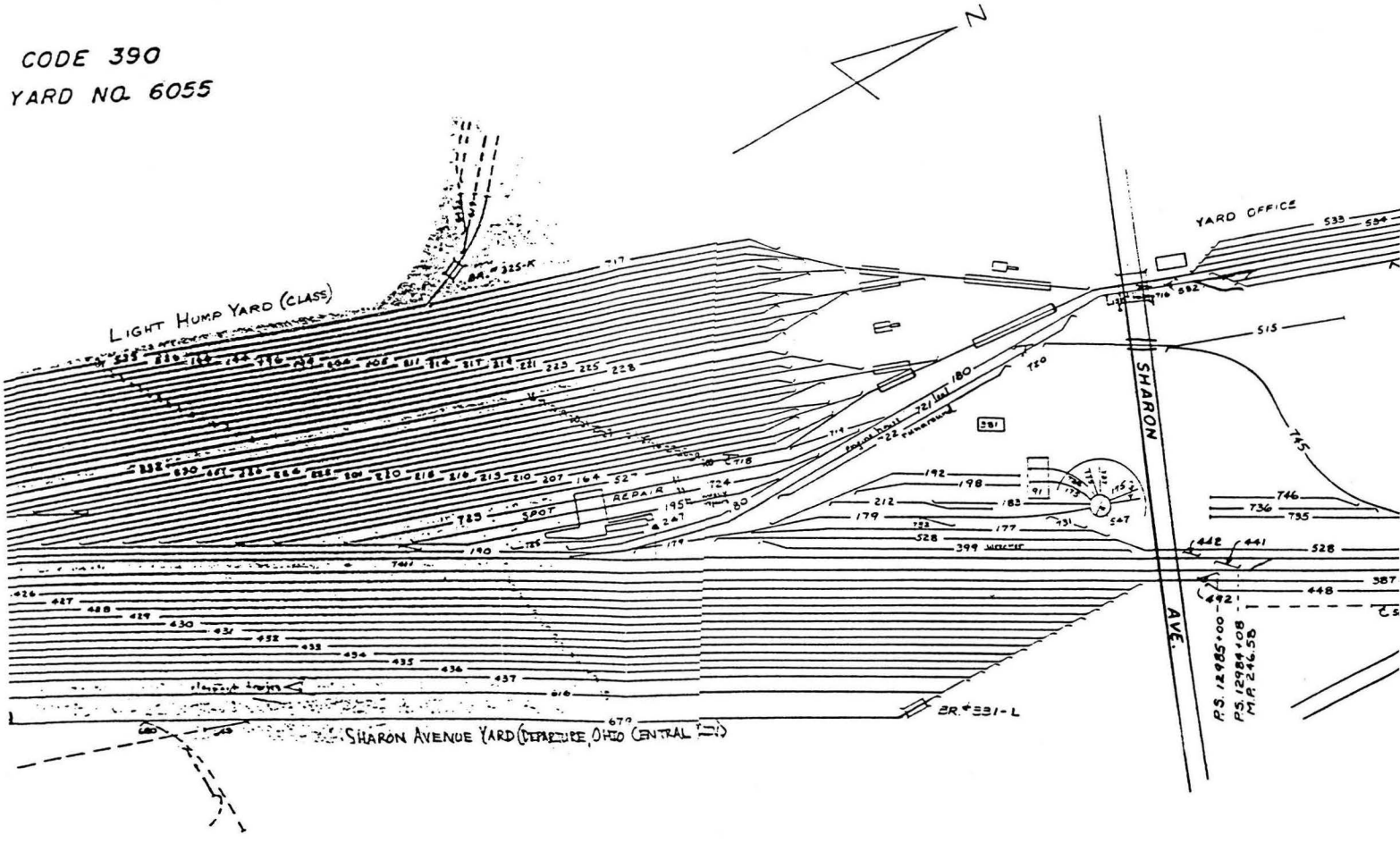

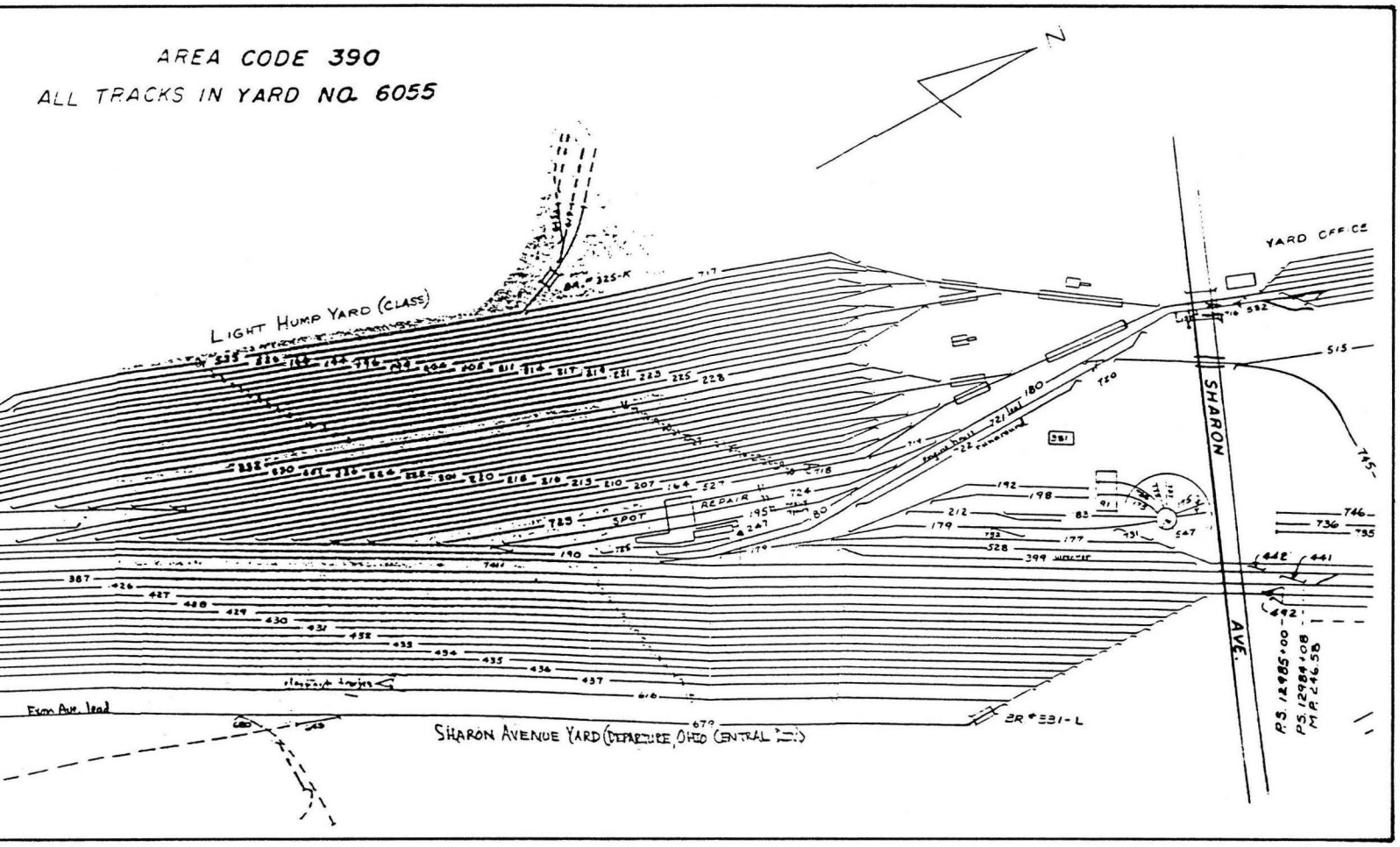

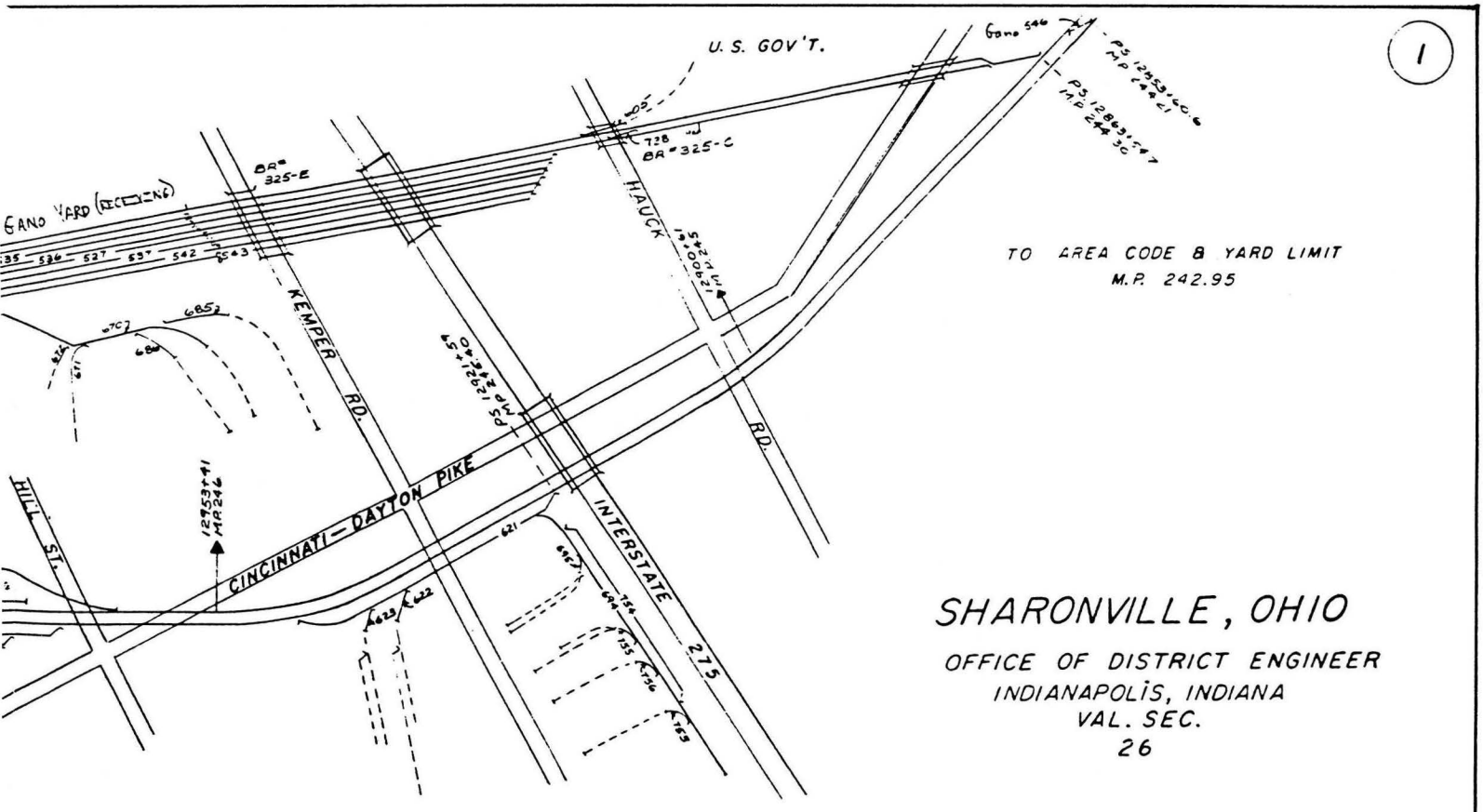

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SHARONVILLE, OHIO

OFFICE OF DISTRICT ENGINEER
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
VAL. SEC.
26

ILLINOIS DIVISION
CINCINNATI TERMINAL

APRIL 7, 1967

Sharon yardmasters would not have been the least bit surprised on being told that theirs was the smallest class yard of any of the eight hump yards on the railroad. They would have responded with an earful about how quickly it filled up (BF-7 and BC-7, to belabor those schedules, did a masterful job in this respect) and on how hard they had to work to clear it out (more about that in connection with succeeding photographs). From right to left, tracks run from 0 to 30, followed by the car shop (the shed is behind the light tower), main tracks, and Sharon Avenue (departure) yard. When this photograph was taken, a project was under way to install pushbutton track selection in the conductor's office on the hump and to place control of all retarders under one operator. The framework for the new retarder tower can be seen rising in the right background beyond the existing tower.

The west end yardmaster got a very comprehensive view of his domain, thanks to the conversion of a former retarder tower into his office in 1964, and also due to the compactness of the layout which he supervised (too compact, he would remind you). From this end the class yard spreads out from track 0 on the left to track 30 on the right. Pool cabooses lay over on their service track at center, with the car shop shed visible behind them. Next right is a lead to class yard tracks 21 through 30 and shop tracks 31, 32, and 33, the latter for heavy repairs and the other two for the spot system. Further to the right is the in-bound lead which runs over the hump, then the lightly-travelled main tracks, with the westbound in use at the time as a departure track and occupied by a cut for the C&O. Beyond, in the right background, is Sharon Avenue yard. (The PC-installed inbound lead referred to a couple of captions ago ran past the automobiles in the foreground and paralleled the class yard, itself expanded by six tracks on the left.)

From the standpoint of production, Sharon was limited by its size, and this hurt particularly with respect to the functions of receiving and building up trains of modern-day length. Smallish yards can achieve high output, of course, as witness Big Four. But mention of that facility with its superior pullout operation calls attention to the one weakness at Sharon which was its fatal flaw, so to speak — the pullout route. Here it is as seen from the west end yardmaster's tower — the second track from the right. West Sharon tower in the center lined a turnout and two crossovers, the cuts pulled west until the last car passed the divide switch under Route 126 bridge, then shoved up the hill and over the old heavy hump and, finally, into Sharon Avenue. One at a time.

Here is Sharon Avenue, the departure yard, viewed from the top of the heavy hump. Very seldom were westbounds or transfers set in here, but trains for the north and east were piecemealed into tracks 1 through 12 and doubled back over the hump at departure time. Sharon Avenue, a major vehicular artery which got busier year by year, crossed at grade just east of the east ladder and prohibited doubling by the road crew. (An overpass was finally provided in 1976.) The departure tracks were bordered by the main line, on the left, and by tracks 13 and 15, the cleanout tracks, on the right. The PC project added a third doubling track over the heavy hump and tied the departure tracks into the eastbound main in the left foreground to shorten the pullout route.

This scene looking east from Route 126 includes just about all of the inefficient arrangements of track described in the last two footnotes. Facilities mentioned therein such as the west end yardmaster's tower and West Sharon tower are plainly visible, along with the main tracks, pullout lead and heavy hump doubling tracks. The track at the base of the yardmaster's tower was a fairly recent addition which required construction of a separate bridge across Mill Creek just west of the tower; known as "Brown's bridge" after the superintendent who was its successful promoter, it permitted transfers to double out of tracks O through 12 while pullout operations continued unimpeded on tracks 13 through 30. (In the post-merger revamping, it became the west end of the new inbound lead referred to twice before, and provided an arrival route independent of the pullout operation.)

West of Route 126, Evendale yard lies south of the main line. It was not heavily used except when class repair cars accumulated without forwarding instructions. The only tracks which were fully committed were 5, the regular doubling track for eastbound trains, and 8, which served as a lead to Formica, the plant with the water tower. (Track 8 was later pre-empted for a new main track which now bypassess the yard to the east.) On the right is the Tennessee Copper plant, a decrepit structure which nevertheless produced a surprising volume of traffic in fertilizer ingredients. The bridge in the background, which carried the Richmond branch of the Pennsylvania over the main line, marks the extreme west end of the yard. (In a merger-related transaction, an 83-mile portion of the Richmond branch from a point just east of this bridge to New Castle, Indiana was sold to the Norfolk & Western.)

Gravity Switching by the New York Central On the Eve of Merger

(Part IV)

Jeremy Taylor

ABSTRACT

In our First and Fourth Quarter 1990 and Second Quarter 1991 issues, Mr. Taylor gave an overview of New York Central's eight major gravity switching facilities and described Selkirk, Dewitt, Frontier, Elkhart, Big Four and Sharon in detail. This issue will cover Stanley and Junction yards and conclude the series.

Stanley

Two staples of the rail industry traffic diet on opposite ends of the scale of sensitivity, auto parts and coal, historically provided the grist for this yard. Proximity to Detroit and to the joint NYC-B&O Lakefront Dock meant that perhaps four of every five cars dispatched were either coal hoppers or members of the great armada of equipment related variously to the automobile industry. This held true up to merger time, even though in the preceding five years there was a substantial change in the ratio of these commodities handled at Stanley, a change which was primarily responsible for whatever physical alterations were made at the yard. Such alterations largely took the form of retirements, since Stanley, having established a reputation over the years as a "coal yard" despite the continuing abundance of automotive traffic, was never high on the list of facilities deemed deserving of capital infusion.

The two factors which affected Stanley the most in the premerger decade were a variety of changes in the handling of lake coal traffic and a continuous expansion by the automobile industry in the Detroit area. The development of volume rates and unit-train movement for coal meant that coal trains from Columbus and beyond, which as recently as 1962 had to be switched in their entirety, could be moved directly to the dock in most instances. Locomotives and cabooses went through and the only pause at Stanley was for a crew change which was performed on the main track. Occasionally, congestion at the dock or mixed inbound consists made it necessary to yard some lake coal, but in such cases the handling merely involved holding in yard "O" (departure) or perhaps a setover from yard "S" (receiving) to yard "O". Contrast this with the time when it was normal during navigation season to have mixed lake coal for rehumping on 6 or 8 of the 42 tracks in yard "K" (classification), to say nothing of the 2000-plus cars jammed into the 45 tracks in yards "E", "H", and "I" north of Stanley Tower, with a crew each trick laboriously making up dock pullers from that mismash. It was impossible to maintain an orderly yard with this type of traffic, what with approximately 125 grades of coal involved, and rehandling was standard to the point of absurdity. In addition, car utilization could be virtually nil when grades of coal were not in demand, as witness one Virginian hopper in recall which was shoved off the end of a yard "I" stub track in early May and, its contents unneeded at the dock, was not rerailed and moved until late October! Fortunately, this sort of handling was duly eliminated, along with most of the trackage north of Stanley Tower on which it was primarily performed. The advantages of bypassing Stanley with coal traffic were fully exploited, especially after the appointment in 1966 of an able ex-NYC trainmaster as superintendent at the Lakefront Dock. The latter's facilities were consequently utilized as much as possible in lieu of Stanley's to set up the loads for dumping and to classify the empties into solid trains. Then, too, the volume of lake coal handled by the Dock declined, particularly after the purchase by the N&W of the PRR Sandusky Branch. All-rail coal traffic picked up, but this consisted of power plant coal which moved in unit trains, and these, of course, were main-tracked at Stanley.

In contrast to the situation in coal, the automobile traffic switched at Stanley kept increasing. Detroit was on the move, and the NYC facilities in that area did not keep pace (more about that in connection with Junction Yard). Consequently, the spoon-feeding of inbound traffic which for years was necessary to keep Detroit fluid not only had to be maintained but also required refining. Stanley performed this job on traffic from Cincinnati and St. Louis and from such connections as the PRR, C&O, N&W (ex-W&LE), and B&O. (In times of stress at Elkhart, cars from the Chicago gateway were also tailored here for the Motor City.) Those classification tracks which were formerly expended on lake coal were more efficiently utilized to reduce transit time on traffic for new plants in the Detroit vicinity.

So great was the attrition in coal, however, that with the assistance of additional grouping at Sharon it was possible to close the hump on third trick in early 1967 in a period of doldrums in the automobile industry. More of the persistent expression "let's close Stanley" was heard, but this goal was missed by a minimum of 500 cars a day — a lot of cars to handle for some yardmaster at some unidentified location. In any event, such talk faded as merger drew near, since one of the priority consolidation projects was the absorption by Stanley of all activity at the PRR's nearby Outer Yard. This would be no mean accomplishment for the old place, and a degree of rejuvenation in the form of new tracks and gadgets was in prospect. Quite a development, in a facility where for years a coat of paint was a major concession.

STANLEY — INBOUND TRAINS

Symbol	From	Arrival Span	Frequency	Remarks
Airline-Stanley Puller	Airline	100A- 300A	Daily	Airline crew-returned with NT-1 cars
MC-6	Sharon	400A- 800A	See remarks	combined with SLD-2 1-3 days/week
WIP	Willis Day Industrial Park	530A- 730A	XMon.	3rd trick Ohio Central Div. stationary job
JT-3	Jackson	700A- 900A	Daily	often dropped entire train at Airline
SLD-2	Big Four Yard	800A-1201P	Daily	picked up at So. Anderson and Muncie
NT-7	West Columbus	1000A- 200P	Daily	picked up at Ridgeway, Kenton, Arlington, Findlay, Bowling Green
PRR Puller	Outer Yard	1100A- 100P	Daily	sometimes made 2nd delivery later if business warranted
C&O Puller	Walbridge Yard	200P- 400P	Daily	often made 2nd delivery — irregular arrival
Town Pull	OC Industries	230P- 430P	XSun.	had cars from OC industries along Maumee River
WLE Puller	Homestead Yard	300P- 600P	Daily	had basket cars for Ford/Sterling for MC-8; in lake season, sometimes made 2nd delivery of coal
Toledo Terminal	Walbridge	400P- 600P	Daily	had glass from LOF Rossford for MC-8 and TL-2
B&O Puller	Bates Yard	700P- 900P	Daily	had aparts X Hamilton for TL-2
JT-1	Jackson	700P- 900P	Daily	usually dropped entire train at Airline
Bucyrus-Stanley Local	Bucyrus	800P-1100P	M-W-F	
DTSL Puller	Lang Yard	900P-1100P	Daily	DTSL crew-returned light
Airline-Stanley Puller	Airline	900P-1159P	Daily	Equity between Stanley and Airline crews; handled NT-5 bypass train westbound
DTSL Puller	Ann Arbor	900P- 100A	Daily	return of 500P NYC crew to DTSL Lang Yard and AA; pulled from AA only
CS Trains	West Columbus	irregular	0-3 per day	See note

NOTE: CS trains were operated as required between West Columbus and Stanley to handle lake and commercial coal, primarily from the Bennon interchange with the N&W at Columbus. Those with commercial coal were yarded and humped. Those with straight lake coal trains were run directly to the Lakefront Dock unless the coal was not ordered and the Dock was congested, in which case they were stored in yard "O" until ordered to the Dock. Ford Motor Co. and Algoma Steel coal trains off the Ohio Central Division were likewise run directly to the Dock or yarded in yard "O", depending upon conditions at the Dock.

STANLEY - OUTBOUND TRAINS

Symbol	To	Depart-Frequency	Grouping
TN-6	West Columbus	1201A- 400A Daily	OC shorts (Findlay, Kenton)-Cincinnati-Big Four-Columbus
GL-3 (Puller)	Airline	200A- 300A Daily	took eastbounds to Airline-handled CN-2 bypass train on return trip
NT-1 (Puller)	Airline	400A- 600A Daily	return of Airline crew with Elkharts and Airline/westbounds
Stanley-Bucyrus Local	Bucyrus	400A- 700A T-T-S	called on rest of crew out of Bucyrus. Station order.
MC Local	Detroit (River Rouge)	530A- 730A Daily	Monroe-Trenton-Wyandotte-River Rouge
WIP	Willis Day Industrial Park	730A- 930A XSun	Willis Day industrial cars-1st trick O.C.Div. stationary job
Town	OC downtown industries	800A-1000A XSun	OC industry cars
TJ-2	Lansing	1201P- 200P Daily	Wayne-Willow Run/Ypsilanti-Lansing Belt-Lansing-Jackson-Kalamazoo
TB-10	Detroit (Junction Yard)	130P- 400P Daily	Junction Yard
Yard	C&O-Walbridge Yard	second trick Daily	400P Crandall R and O Bum transfer engines were used to make second trick deliveries to these four connections in whatever sequence was decided upon by the yardmaster (returned light)
Yard	PRR-Outer Yard	second trick Daily	
Yard	WLE-Homestead Yard	second trick Daily	
Yard	B&O-Bates Yard	second trick Daily	
DTSL Puller	DTSL (Lang Yard)-AA	600P- 700P Daily	DTSL-AA

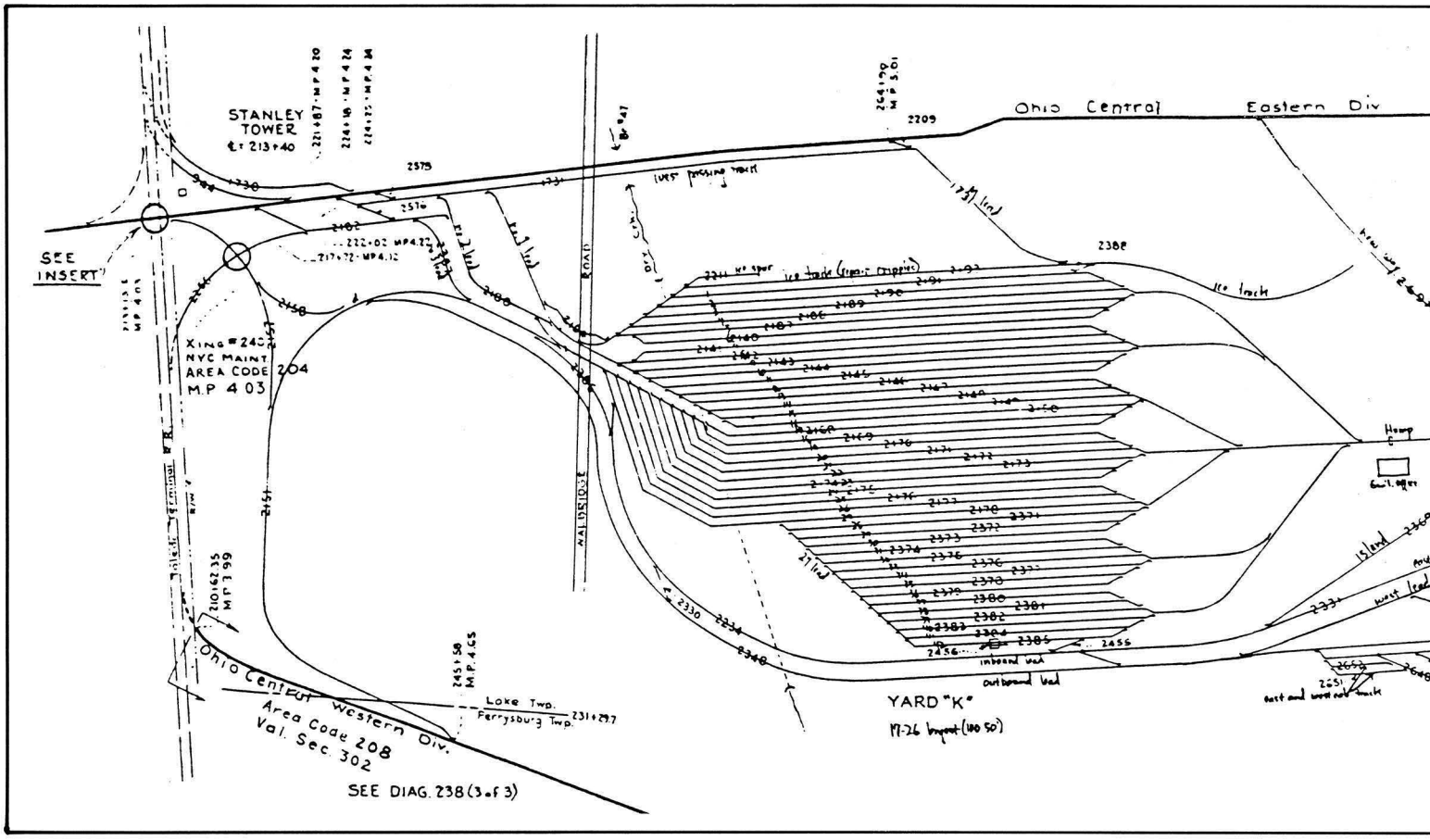
STANLEY - OUTBOUND TRAINS (CONTINUED)

Symbol	To	Depart-Frequency	Grouping
MC-8	Detroit (North Yard)	700P- 900P Daily	GTW-Bay City-Warren-Mound Road-North Yard-Belt
TL-2	Lansing	900P-1100P Daily	Willow Run-Lansing Belt-Lansing-Jackson-Kalamazoo
Yard	Toledo Terminal-Walbridge	irregular	various engines delivered to TT as directed by yardmaster

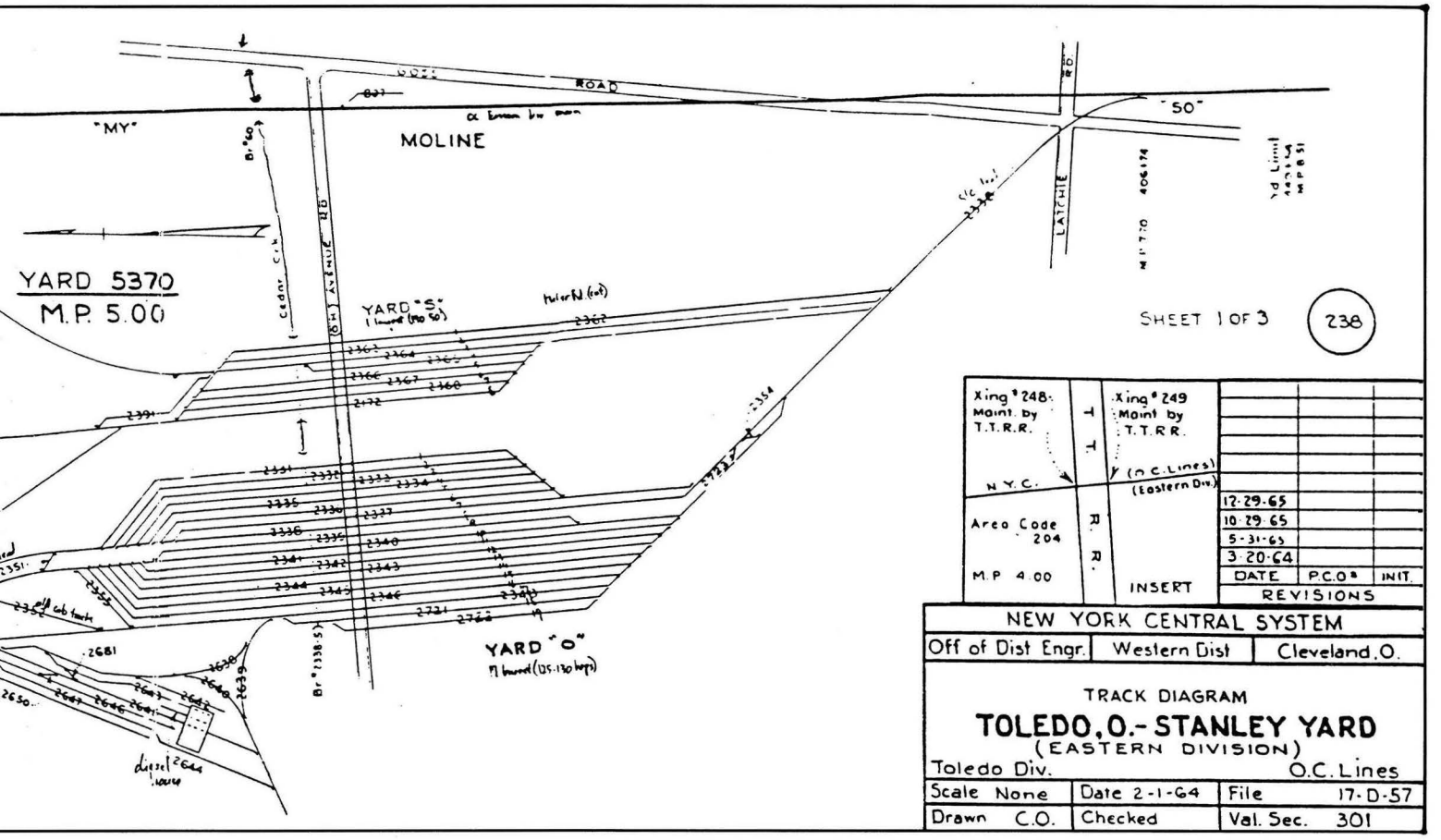
STANLEY — CLASSIFICATIONS

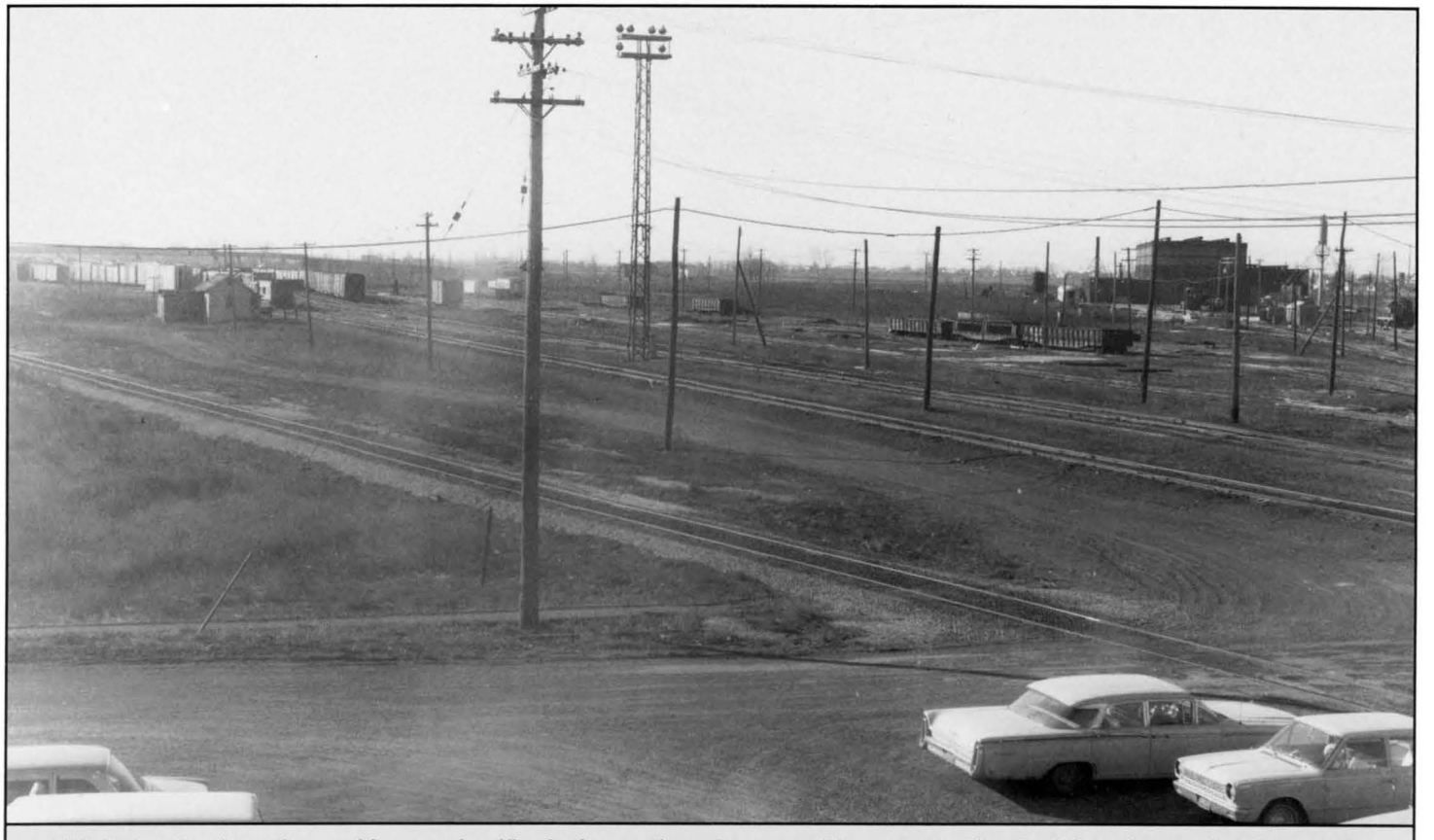
Group	(no assigned tracks)	Group	(no assigned tracks)	Group	(no assigned tracks)
Monroe		Lansing Belt		Airline Eastbound	
Trenton		Lansing		WIP	
Wyandotte		Jackson		Town industries	
River Rouge		Kalamazoo		C&O	
Junction		Willow Run		PRR	
GTW		Cincinnati		WLE	
Bay City		Big Four		B&O	
Warren		Columbus		DTSL	
Mound Road		OC Western Shorts (reswitch)		AA	
North Yard		OC Eastern Locals (reswitch)		TT	
Belt		Elkhart		Holds	
Wayne		Airline Westbound		Cripples	
Willow Run/Ypsilanti				Yard O	

The view from the north side of Route 795 includes the hump in the center background, with MC-6's train strung out on the long approach grade. To the left of the hump behind some high cube cars in this train is the main yard office building, and to the right behind the baggage cars in an inbound train is the YMCA building, which housed crews from Detroit, Jackson, Columbus, Bellefontaine and Bucyrus — all away from home at Stanley. The inbound train was CB-4, an Elkhart switch train from the IHB at Blue Island, which was being diverted to Stanley to relieve congestion at Elkhart. The route being used by this train between the Eastern main (in the foreground) and the north end of yard "S" was of fairly recent construction and was therefore known as the "new way." In another phase of the aforementioned post-merger project, four departure tracks were constructed between yard "K" and the Eastern main; these tracks paralleled the "new way" to the north end of yard "S."



As is customary in the case of most vintage hump yards, control of retarders and class yard switches on the hump end was divided up among three sets of retarder operators (witness Selkirk, Dewitt, and Sharon; Junction Yard was an exception, having two sets). These three brick towers are in plain view here from the crest of the hump, as in the 42-track class yard, known as "K" yard. Since Stanley had no departure yard at the time, the class yard was decorated continuously with blue flags, which of course meant dead tracks and lost classification room. The consequence of this was indicated by the folly, illustrated two photos ago, of doubling out a train, only to backhaul it more than a mile to preserve switching room.



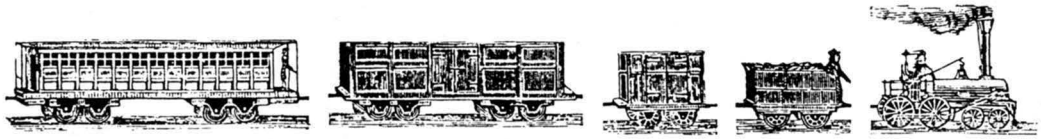


This is the view from the road foremen's office in the southwest corner of the general office building. Appropriately enough, the diesel fueling station is a part of the scene, backdropped by the diesel shop, which along with Buffalo and Ashtabula was one of the three new facilities of their type whose operation was doomed by the centralization philosophy of the Perlman regime. Flanking the light tower are the two yard "O" leads, and in the foreground is a track called the "island" which connects the inbound lead from Stanley Tower with yard "S". It was the heavy traffic on this track and the inbound lead which led to the construction of the "new way" illustrated two photographs ago.

The yardmaster at the north end of yard "K" presided over movements on this hodgepodge of undermaintained trackage, as he struggled to inject a degree of fluidity into the outbound operation at Stanley. The first left-handed turnout off the lead in the foreground takes in the ice track and 1 through 6, and the ladder beyond reaches 7 through 16. The ladder on the other side of the signal box taps 17 through 26 and also the lead to 27 through 42, which curves around adjacent to the inbound lead. The latter is identified by JT-3, whose rear end is in the center background. The outbound lead from yard "O" is to the right of this train. Power-operated yard switches in this area are controlled by pullout conductors from a panel on the post back of the aforementioned signal box. Walbridge Road, a dirt track here which is blocked with inpunity, crosses the maze just beyond this post.

The throat of yard "K" butts right up against Stanley interlocking, as is evident from this scene which is the reverse of the one immediately preceding. Number one lead extends towards the west passing track and Eastern main in the right background, number two aims right for Stanley Tower in the center background, and number three parallels number two. The tracks curving around to the left connect with the Western branch to Columbus. The Toledo Terminal Railroad runs across the picture just behind the towers. A multiplicity of wyes in Stanley interlocking make it possible to move from yards "K" and "O" to the Western, Toledo Terminal eastbound or westbound, or straight north to the downtown area. The layout was revamped considerably in connection with the four-track departure yard installed after the merger, the broad flexibility was essentially retained.

Looking south towards the yard from Stanley Tower, it is possible to see most of the wyes referred to in the previous caption. Diverging to the right from the Eastern main (the only straight track in the picture) is a connection which splits into two legs of a wye just beyond the home signal facing the camera; a right turn at this switch leads to the Western main (a route used by bypass trains such as BF-7, DSL-1, and northbound unit coal trains), and a left leads to the yard (since removed, but then used primarily by Northern District trains enroute to yard "S"). The track which crosses this connection back of the home signal facing away on the right is the wye between the Toledo Terminal west and the yard, while the double-tracked wye to the Toledo Terminal east is on the left. The connection between the yard and the Western curves along the edge of the field in the background. An advance section of MC-8, lined across to the Toledo Terminal east, is approaching on its way out of the yard.



It would almost appear that the existence of tracks in this photograph was incidental, so conspicuous is the Cadillac plant. Then in second place as an attraction might be the Detroit skyline in the right background. But the subject is Junction Yard, and the vantage point is the super-elevated yardmaster's tower at Livernois Avenue and the scene includes the general yard office building, Livernois Avenue itself, and main tracks 1 and 2 and yard leads 3, 4 and 5 at the east end of the yard. West Detroit tower is approximately back of the water tank on the right; in addition to controlling the east entrance to the yard, it also governs the intersection of the Toledo and Bay City branches with the main line and protects the crossing of the main line by the Wabash (Norfolk Southern), all in the same general area.

This is the excellent view from the Livernois yardmaster's tower of the maze of tracks in the area known as Livernois Avenue. The ladder in the right foreground identifies the north receiving yard, tracks 1 through 11, historically known as the "Glory" yard. The next ladder to the left is from the eastbound class yard, tracks 1 through 10 excluding 2. Then come the "Boulevard," 24, 25 and the three customs tracks, numbered 26, 29 and 32, with open areas between them for inspection purposes. Finally, there are three stub tracks, numbered 33, Running 35, and Running 36, the latter identified by the Flexivan flat. (On the side track sketch, tracks in the eastbound class yard and miscellaneous tracks to the south through Running 76 are shown as part of the north receiving yard and are numbered consecutively from 12 through 29 in a subsequent system of identification.) At the switch towards the camera from the Flexivan, straight ahead is to the two caboose tracks ("way car" tracks, per old Michigan Central terminology) in front of the abandoned coaling tower, and to the left is the East Runner which curves around to the south receiving yard, identified by the loaded multilevels and other cars in the left background. Finally, on the lower left are three fueling station tracks, a lead to the turntable, and at bottom, the car shop lead.

Junction Yard

The Detroit area on the New York Central was at once the system's greatest generator of carloads from a combined revenue and volume standpoint (an educated guess), and the prime example of the excess of terminal costs and car delays which constituted its basic operating weakness (a sure thing). Detroit to the Central meant, among other lesser headaches, more yards, more plugged yards, more yard crews and yard clerks, more hot cars, more overbills and nobills, more long cars, more derailments, more weigh cars, more weigh cars dispatched unweighed, etc., etc. In busy periods, Detroit handled more high-priced loads, and in lean periods, Detroit stored more high-priced empties. Not surprisingly, Detroit also had the highest turnover of transportation officials, victims of its perpetual obstacle race whose debilitating effects on the nervous system dictated a choice of either rotation or ruin.

More or less in the geographical center of the terminal sits little Junction Yard. Not "little" by Detroit standards — it is by far the largest yard in town — nor "little" as yards go in general — it is a smallish hump operation but its overall dimensions are not insignificant — but "little" in the sense of inadequacy when measured against the tough task of producing order from the chaotic tangle of car movements in this NYC terminal. Junction Yard for many years was unable to provide the complete train and classification yard functions which, as performed by major yards at other principal terminals, brought large degrees of efficiency to their operations. Actually, the very size and complexity of the Detroit terminal militated against one focal point for its transportation activities. (This factor and a shortage of capital doomed a modernization plan for Junction Yard in the early 1960s.) As business increased, however, and the size of the yard remained about the same, its limited accomplishments as the hub of such activities were curtailed further by the proliferation of oversize equipment stimulated by the automotive industry. Nowhere on the Central did the problem of yard capacity shrinkage due to long cars hurt as badly as it did here, where so many high-cubes and multilevels congregated.

Alleviation of this congestion was a task to which the best transportation brains of the New York Central were dedicated in large part for many years. As noted above, the solution was not to spend money in quantity on Junction Yard, although there were a number of improvements for which dollars were gradually and grudgingly allocated (recall installation in 1961 of retarders brought up from Sharon). Investment in yard facilities in the Detroit complex took place more in the outlying areas, such as north on the Bay City branch where industrial expansion was the greatest. Even River Rouge, a dilapidated and outmoded coal-and-steel handling facility on the south side of town, got a major facelifting. But, the effort was largely in the direction of devising any and all methods feasible of bypassing traffic around Junction Yard. Although all eight of the yards covered herein benefitted more or less from overhead blocks or trains, nowhere else was there such a concerted effort made at avoiding a place, and in fact five of the other seven humps participated in this campaign. (Just prior to merger, all but Selkirk, Frontier, and Big Four were involved, and even Selkirk contributed in its palmier days.) Most of the bypass traffic was inbound in the form of block trains arriving from the south, west, and east, with a smaller amount of outbound traffic, primarily finished automobiles and coil steel, also shunning the yard. Despite all of this scheming, the situation remained bad and in peak traffic periods it was a real struggle to keep Junction Yard and surrounding satellites fluid, let alone current. There was simply no easy answer, and the only palliative for the hardpressed car movers in Detroit were the handsome revenue figures which they were instrumental in producing.

In today's Conrail operation in Detroit, Junction Yard functions only as a minor satellite, its hump shut down. Over time, further dispersal of traffic-producing automotive facilities outside the downtown area has made its once-central location less desirable, and the former NYC North Yard is now the principal terminal. It should be noted, however, that Junction is the only one of the eight subject yards in this review which has lost its status as territorial hub. Thus we have a good indication of the general strategic value of these facilities, a value which over a period of twenty years has insured their survival in an area of the country where shrinkage of the rail plant has been most drastic.

JUNCTION YARD — INBOUND ROAD TRAINS

Symbol	From	Arrival Span	Frequency	Remarks
ST-6	Warren	100A- 200A	Daily	yarded in North Receiving (Glory) Yard
MC-2	Sharon	400A- 700A	Daily	yarded in South Receiving Yard
LS-5	Frontier Yard	400A- 800A	Daily	yarded in South Receiving Yard. Train filled out at Collinwood and Airline.
ND-4	Elkhart	600A- 300P	Daily	thru Ice House to South Rec. Yard, or was sometimes yarded at Ice House or on main track opposite hump if North Yard cars predominated.
NY-4	Blue Island (group off)	630A- 800A	Daily	Junction Yard group taken off rear end while train was relayed on main track opposite hump
BD-2	Bay City	1201P- 300P	Daily	yarded in North Receiving (Glory) Yard
ST-3	Warren	200P- 300P	XSun.	yarded in North Receiving (Glory) Yard
TB-10	Stanley	600P- 900P	Daily	yarded in South Receiving Yard
ML-9	Little Ferry	600P-1000P	Daily	yarded on main track or in North Rec. (Glory) Yard; head end humped, balance delivered direct to GTW and North Yard (Chrysler multilevels)

JUNCTION YARD — INBOUND ROAD TRAINS (CONTINUED)

Symbol	From	Arrival Span	Frequency	Remarks
FMA-9	Dewitt	1000P- 200A	Daily	yarded on main track or in North Rec. (Glory) Yard; same makeup as ML-9 except had cars to hump and Flexivans on rear end
ED-2	Elkhart	irregular	2-4 days/ week	thru Ice House to South Rec. Yard or North Rec. (Glory) Yard if light

JUNCTION YARD — INBOUND PULLERS AND INDUSTRIAL JOBS

Symbol	From	Arrival Span	Frequency	Remarks
CP Liner	Windsor	each trick	3 Daily	yarded in North Receiving (Glory) Yard
North Yard Liner	North Yard	each trick	3 or more Daily	yarded in North Rec. (Glory) Yard except when handling multilevels for ML-12
River Rouge Liner	River Rouge	each trick	3 Daily	yarded in South Rec. Yard or sometimes backed into North Rec. (Glory) Yard
Belt Liner	Huber Yard	1st & 2nd tricks	2 Daily	yarded in North Receiving (Glory) Yard
MR-1	Mound Road Yard	1st trick	Daily	yarded in North Receiving (Glory) Yard
MR-2	Mound Road Yard	2nd trick	extra-as required	yarded in North Receiving (Glory) Yard
West Detroit	West Detroit industries	irregular	Daily	industrial job-yarded in North Rec. (Glory) Yard
City	City Yard	1st trick	XSun.	industrial job-yarded in North Rec. (Glory) Yard
North Side	North Side industries	early 2nd trick	XSat-Sun	did industries across main tracks along north side of yard-yarded in Class Yard
South Side	South Side industries	late 2nd trick	XSat-Sun	did industries south of Class and Departure Yards-yarded in Class Yard
Liner	GTW-Milwaukee Jct.	late 1st trick	Daily	yarded in North Receiving (Glory) Yard
Yard	DT&I-Ford Yard	late 2nd trick	Daily	thru Class Yard to South Rec. or North Rec. (Glory) Yard
C&O	C&O-Rougemere Yard	2nd trick	Daily	C&O crew backed into North Receiving (Glory) Yard
N&W (Wabash)	Wabash-Oakwood	2nd trick	Daily	Wabash crew delivered into tracks 6, 7, or 8 in South Receiving Yard
Detroit Terminal	Detroit Terminal	2nd trick	Daily	DTRR crew pulled thru Class Yard into North Receiving (Glory) Yard

JUNCTION YARD — OUTBOUND ROAD TRAINS

Symbol	To	Depart - Frequency	Grouping
TB-10	Bay City	300A- 700A Daily	Bay City-Vassar-Mackinaw. Departed from Eastbound Class Yard.
BF-7	Sharon	330A- 500A Daily	Cincinnati
DSL-1	Big Four Yard	500A- 730A Daily	Indianapolis
DC-7	Elkhart	700A- 900A Daily	Wayne/Willow Run-Elkhart
DT-1	Toledo (Airline Junction)	700A-1000A Daily	Wyandotte/Trenton-Monroe
ST-3	Sterling	800A XSun.	Sterling. Departed from Eastbound Class Yard.
DC-6	Toledo (Airline Junction)	1201P- 500P 1-3/week	Airline-Frontier (latter were hy-cube auto parts cars which could not go thru Detroit River Tunnel)
DB-4	Toledo (PRR Outer Yard)	1201P or later 2-4/week	PRR cars, normally grouped at North Yard (no PRR group made at Junction Yard)-train sometimes picked up empty PRR hoppers at River Rouge
LS-3	Elkhart (fill on)	200P- 430P Daily	Elkhart fill added on main track when train was light and on time
DC-8	Toledo (Airline Junction)	300P- 500P Daily	Airline. This train handled DC-6 and DB-4 traffic as available when these trains were not operated.
ST-6	Sterling	600P Daily	Sterling. Departed from Eastbound Class Yard.
MC-4	Dewitt	900P-1030P Daily	Buffalo-Dewitt. Departed from main track or north runner, adjacent to Class Yard.
DJ-1	Jackson	900P-1100P Daily	Waynet/Willow Run-Jackson. Departed from Advance Departure Yard.

JUNCTION YARD — OUTBOUND PULLERS AND INDUSTRIAL JOBS

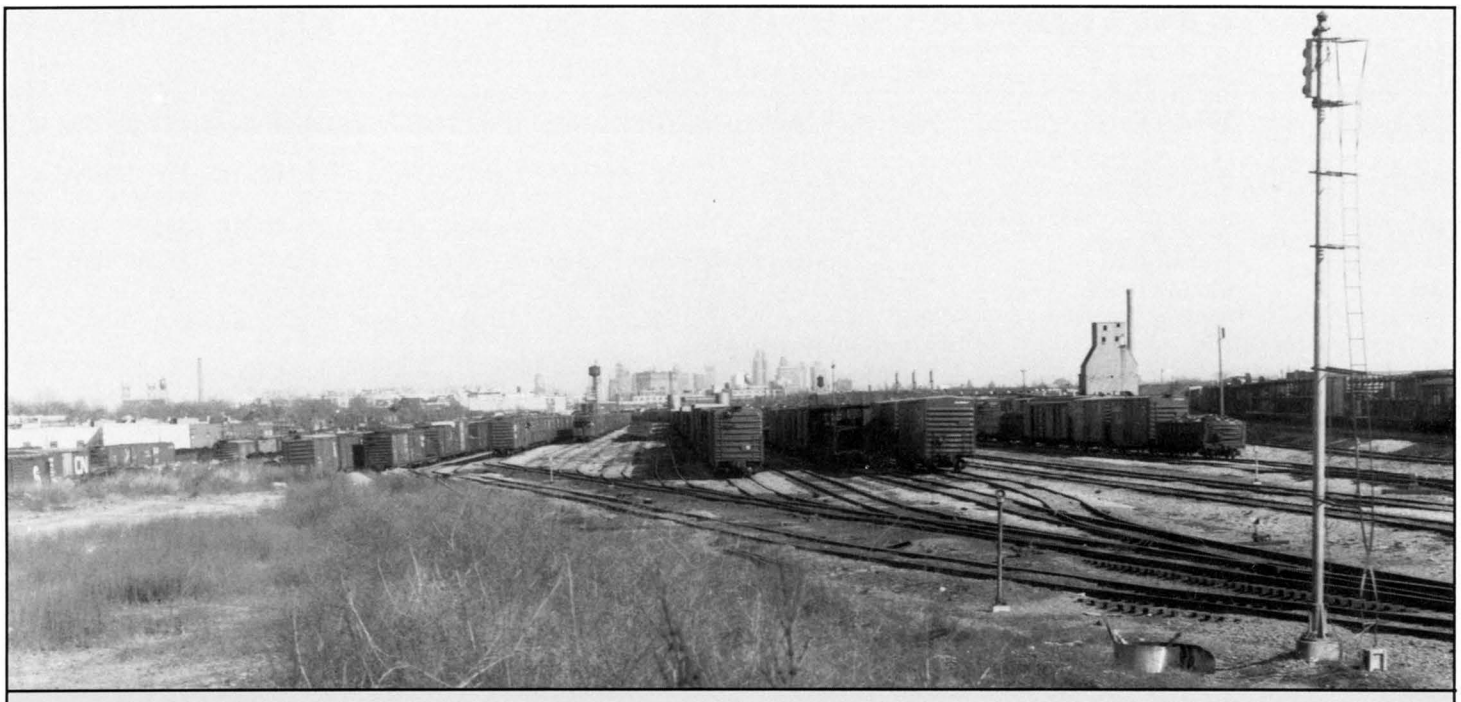
Symbol	To	Depart - Frequency	Grouping
CP Liner	Windsor	each trick Daily	Eastbounds (Windsors). Departed from tracks 26, 29 and 32 allocated to customs in Eastbound Class Yard.
North Yard Liner	North Yard	each trick - 3 or more Daily	North Yard. Departed from either Eastbound Class Yard or Advance Departure Yard
River Rouge Liner	River Rouge	each trick Daily	Great Lakes Steel-River Rouge, in either order
Belt Liner	Huber Yard	1st & 2nd tricks Daily	Belt Extension. Departed from Eastbound Class Yard.
MR-1	Mound Road	1st trick Daily	Mound Road. Departed from Eastbound Class Yard.
MR-2	Mound Road	2nd trick - extra as required	Mound Road. Departed from Eastbound Class Yard.
City	City Yard	1st trick XSun.	Cities/Side Tracks. Industrial job-departed from Eastbound Class Yard.
North Side	North Side industries	1st trick XSat-Sun	North Side industries. Industrial job-departed from Class Yard.
South Side	South Side industries	2nd trick XSat-Sun	South Side industries. Industrial job-departed from Class Yard.
Liner	GTW-Milwaukee Jct.	1st trick Daily	GTW RR. Departed from Eastbound Class Yard.
Yard	DT&I RR-Ford Yard	2nd trick Daily	Ford Miller & Schafer Rd. (including DT&I RR). Departed from Class Yard.
Liner	C&O-Rougemere Yard	2nd trick Daily	C&O RR. Departed from South Receiving Yard.
Liner	N&W (Wabash)-Oakwood Yard	2nd trick Daily	N&W (W) RR. Departed from South Receiving Yard.
Yard	Detroit Terminal RR	2nd trick Daily	D.T. RR. Departed from Class Yard.

JUNCTION YARD — CLASSIFICATIONS

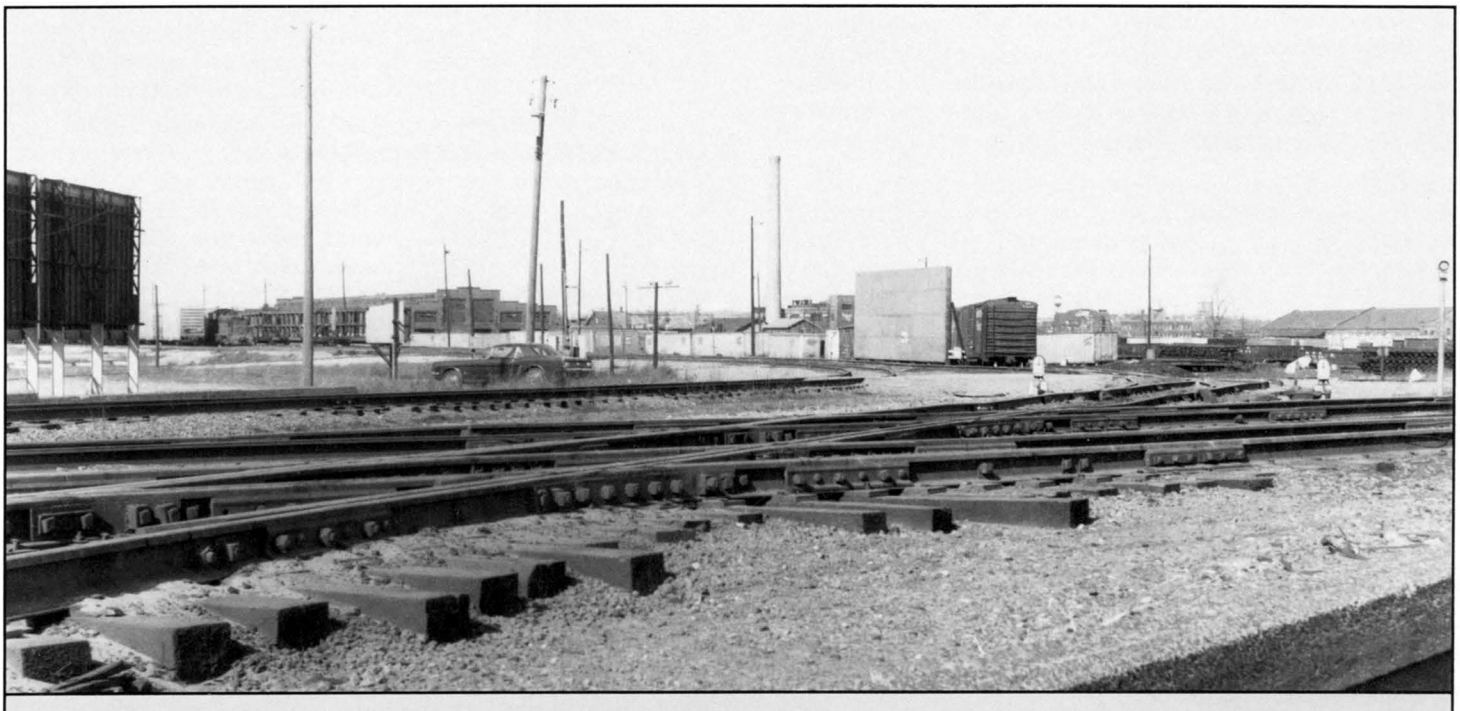
Group	Assigned Track	Group	Assigned Track
Mound Road	2	Cadillac multilevels (for South Bound Yard)	18
Cities/Side Tracks	3	Dewitt	19
Hold	4	South Side industries	20
North Yard	5	Belt Extension	21
River Rouge	6	Indianapolis	22
Wayne (Willow Run)	7	Cincinnati	23
Bay City (included Vassar and Mackinaw)	8	Airline	24
Old West Bound Yard (weighers and industrials)	9	Great Lakes Steel	25
Jackson	10	Ford, Miller and Schafer Rd.	26
Sterling (Warren)	11	Monroe	27
North Side industries	12	Wyandotte/Trenton	28
GTWRR	13	Eastbounds (Windsor)	29
Elkhart	14	C&O RR	30
Buffalo	15	South Bound Yard	31
DTRR	16	Cripples	32
Wabash RR (N&WW)	17		

(Track 1 used as a departure track)

Train no. 312 (Cincinnati-Detroit) with class J3a #5452 crossing Crandall Road, near the Stanley Yard RR YMCA on the Eastern main, October 12, 1955. Photo by Ernest L. Novak.

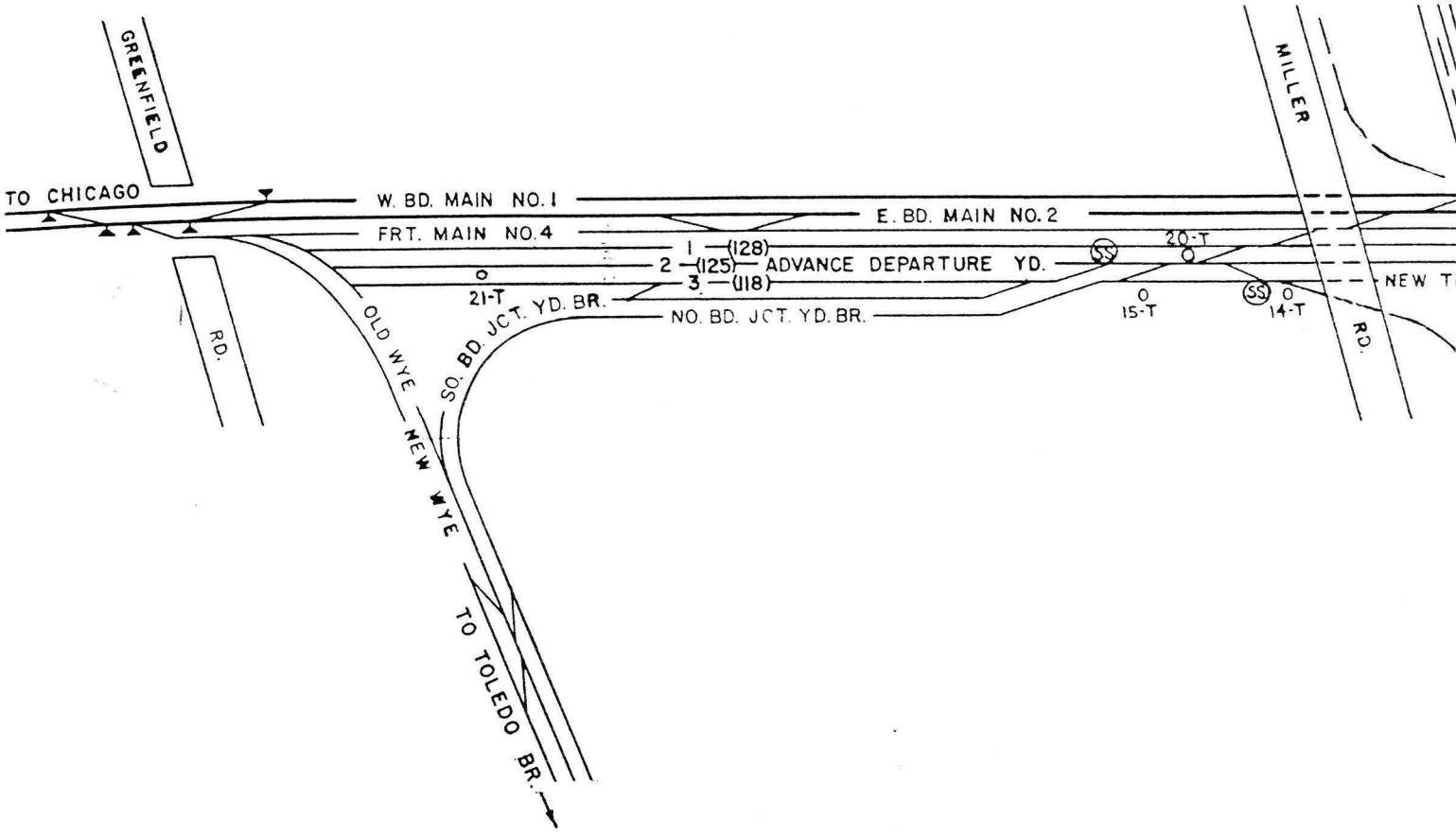


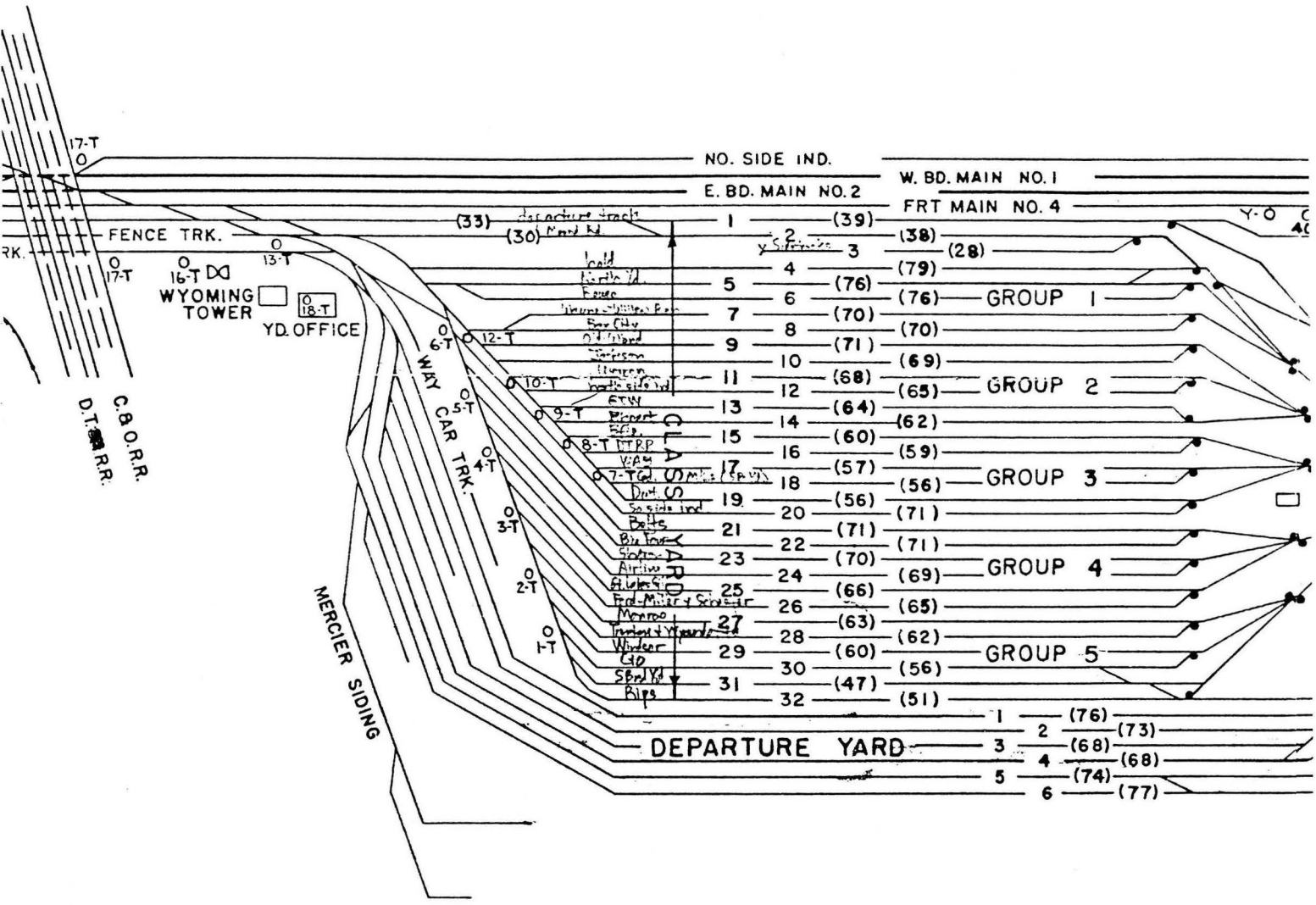
From the west end of the eastbound class yard looking east, the Livernois yardmaster's tower from which the two previous pictures were taken is barely recognizable in line with the water tower just to the left of the tall buildings in downtown Detroit. In the left background is the Glory yard, from which the most southerly track, number 11, extends along the eastbound class ladder in the foreground. From left to right, tracks 1 through 10, except 2, run off this ladder, then continuing to the right are the "Boulevard," 24, 25, and 26 (the first customs track, with a car of scrap west out). On the far right, at a higher elevation, is the south receiving yard. Though both the eastbound class and north receiving yards are in line with the hump, they were used as departure yards for transfers ("Liners," per old MC terminology) to terminal points such as North Yard, Mound Road, and Windsor. Cars for these runs were pulled back either over the hump or (from tracks 2 through 5 in the class yard) over a running track just north of the hump.

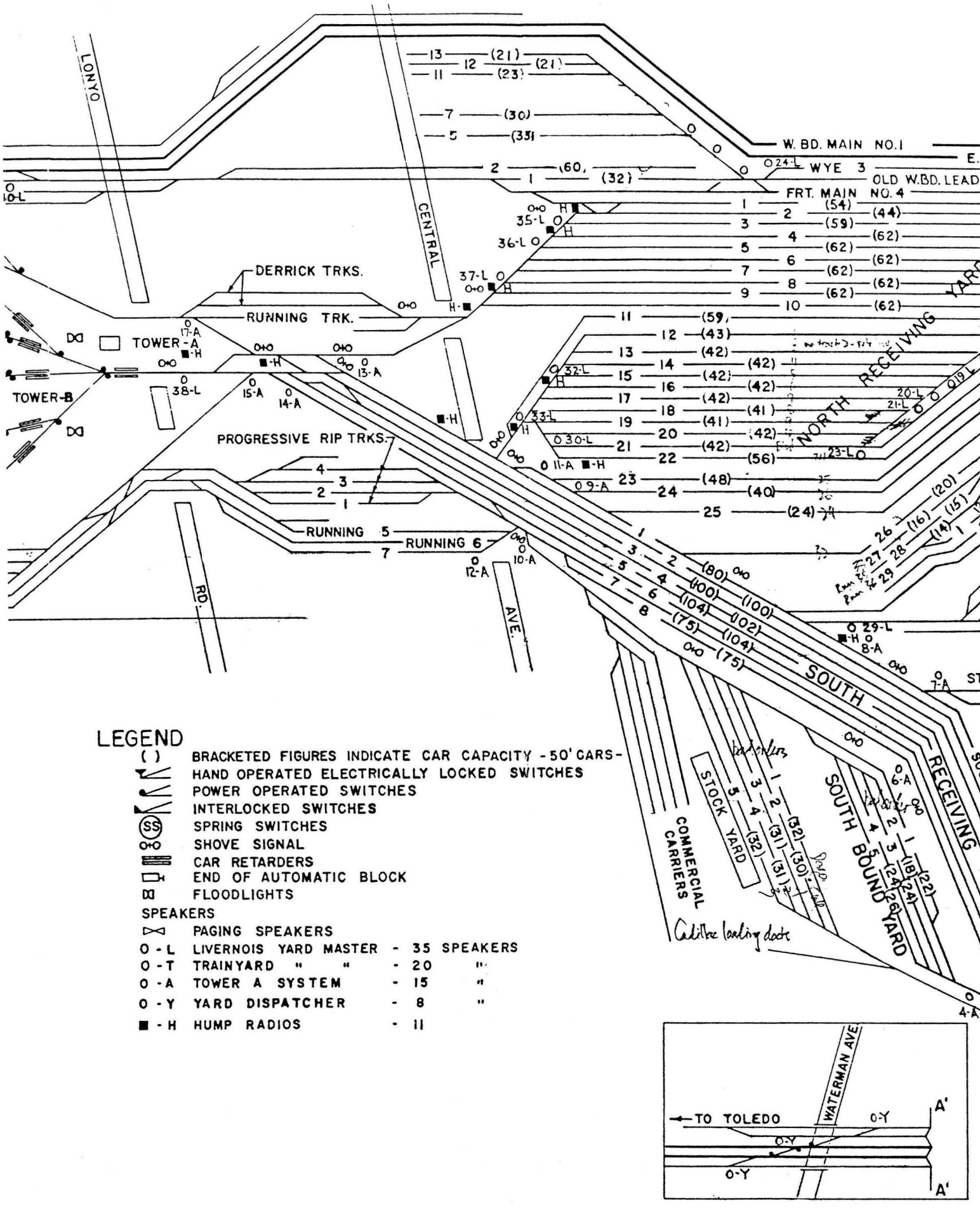


This is Waterman Avenue, the entrance to the south receiving yard from the Toledo branch and Wabash (NS) Railroad. The two Wabash tracks run across the picture in the foreground; the lead from the Toledo branch crosses them on the diamonds, and the connection from the Wabash curves around on the left. A TV camera here saw car numbers for the clerks at Livernois Avenue on such entrants as MC-2, LS-5, TB-10, River Rouge liners, and Wabash cuts. Arrivals from the West such as ND-4, ED-2, and extras from Jackson enter from the opposite (hump) end of the yard and did not get TV coverage. Departures from the south receiving yard at this end included interchange runs to the C&O and Wabash and occasionally liners to River Rouge (which more often departed the Junction Yard branch). The Flexivan pad is visible in the background.

Retarder towers A and B sit astride the entrance to the 31-track class yard. Tower A in the foreground, in addition to housing the retarder operator and his control apparatus, provided office space for the hump yardmaster. The hump lead on the left and the running track on the right between class tracks 2 through 5 and the Glory yard overpass Lonyo Road at this point. Lonyo Road and Central Avenue, which intersect Junction Yard at its midsection and which are extensively bridged, provided headaches for planners trying to work out a reasonably economical plan for improvement of the yard. Surprisingly, the main tracks (behind the fill on the right) cross both of these streets at grade.


GREENFIELD
TO CHICAGO
W. BD. MAIN NO. 1
E. BD. MAIN NO. 2
FRT. MAIN NO. 4
1 (128)
2 (125) ADVANCE DEPARTURE YD.
3 (118)
21-T
SO. BD. JCT. YD. BR.
NO. BD. JCT. YD. BR.
20-T
15-T
14-T
MILLER
RD.
RD.
OLD WYE
NEW WYE
TO TOLEDO BR.
NEW T


NO. SIDE IND.
W. BD. MAIN NO. 1
E. BD. MAIN NO. 2
FRT MAIN NO. 4
FENCE TRK.
17-T
16-T
13-T
WYOMING TOWER
18-T
YD. OFFICE
12-T
6-T
10-T
9-T
8-T
7-T
5-T
4-T
3-T
2-T
1-T
WAY CAR TRK.
MERCIER SIDING
C.B.O.R.R.
D.T.R.R.
CLARK ROAD
1 (39)
2 (38)
3 (28)
4 (79)
5 (76)
6 (76) GROUP 1
7 (70)
8 (70)
9 (71)
10 (69)
11 (68)
12 (65) GROUP 2
13 (64)
14 (62)
15 (60)
16 (59)
17 (57)
18 (56) GROUP 3
19 (56)
20 (71)
21 (71)
22 (71)
23 (70)
24 (69) GROUP 4
25 (66)
26 (65)
27 (63)
28 (62)
29 (60) GROUP 5
30 (56)
31 (47)
32 (51)
DEPARTURE YARD
1 (76)
2 (73)
3 (68)
4 (68)
5 (74)
6 (77)

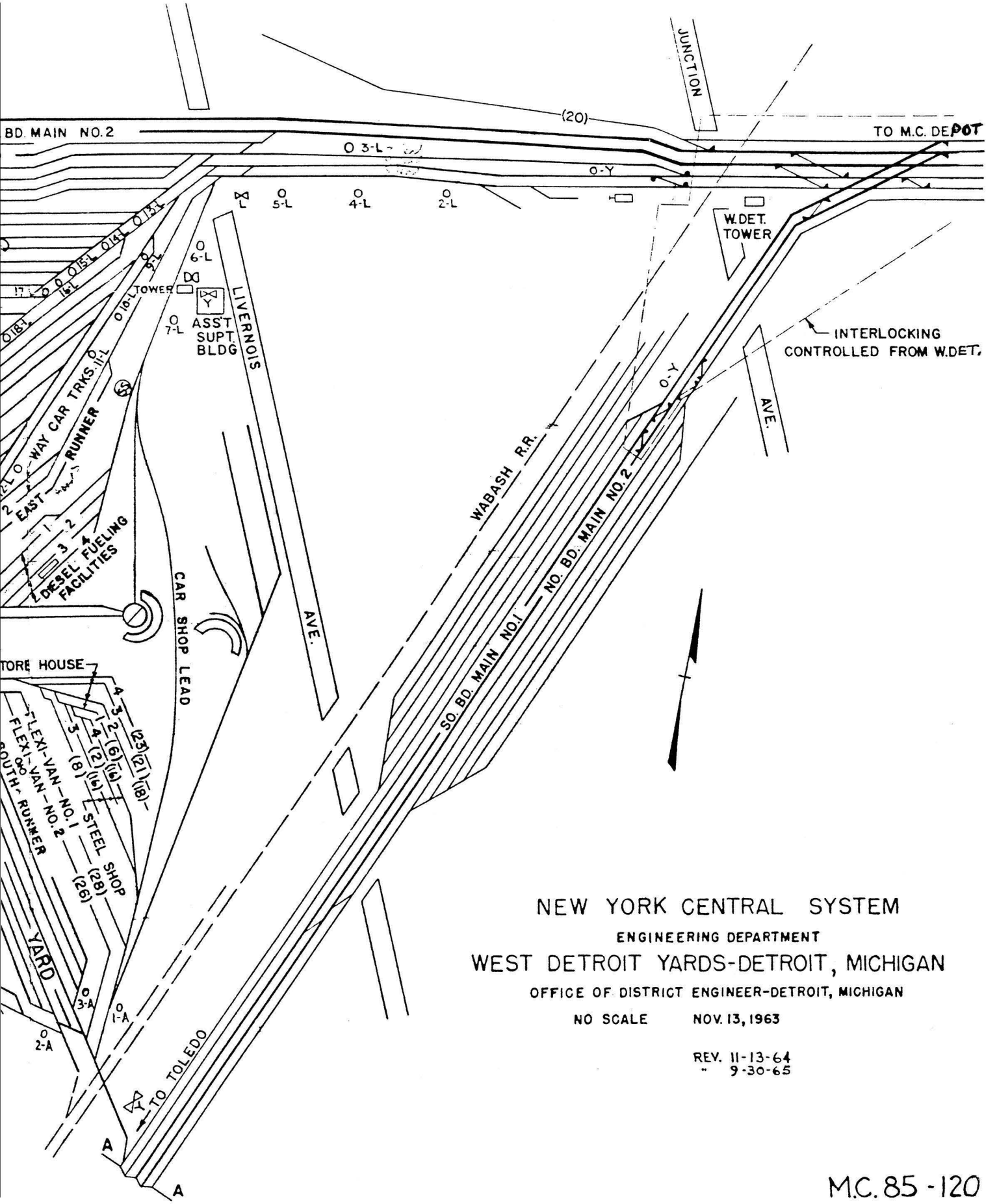


LEGEND

( )	BRACKETED FIGURES INDICATE CAR CAPACITY - 50' CARS -
	HAND OPERATED ELECTRICALLY LOCKED SWITCHES
	POWER OPERATED SWITCHES
	INTERLOCKED SWITCHES
(SS)	SPRING SWITCHES
	SHOVE SIGNAL
	CAR RETARDERS
	END OF AUTOMATIC BLOCK
	FLOODLIGHTS

SPEAKERS

	PAGING SPEAKERS	
O - L	LIVERNOIS YARD MASTER	- 35 SPEAKERS
O - T	TRAINYARD " "	- 20 "
O - A	TOWER A SYSTEM	- 15 "
O - Y	YARD DISPATCHER	- 8 "
■ - H	HUMP RADIOS	- 11



NEW YORK CENTRAL SYSTEM

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

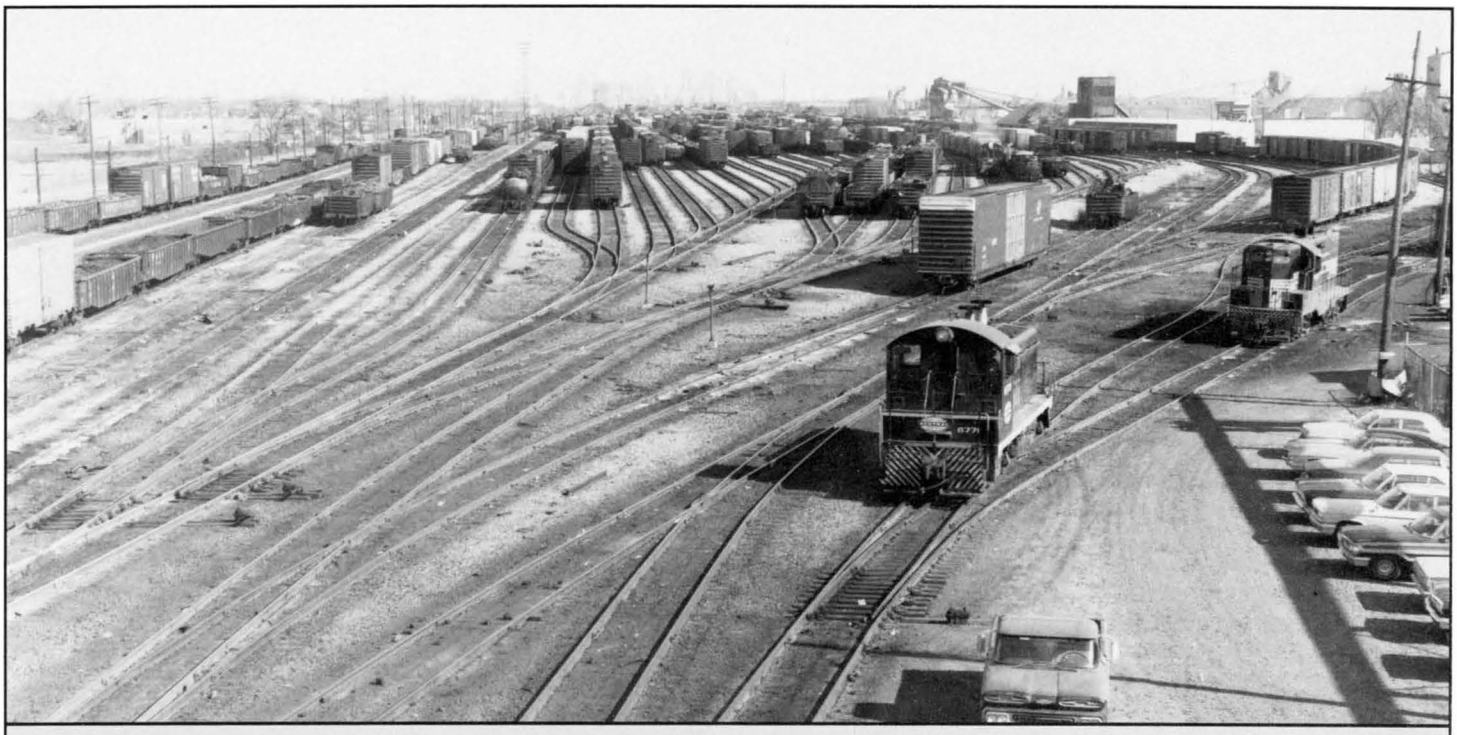
WEST DETROIT YARDS-DETROIT, MICHIGAN

OFFICE OF DISTRICT ENGINEER-DETROIT, MICHIGAN

NO SCALE NOV. 13, 1963

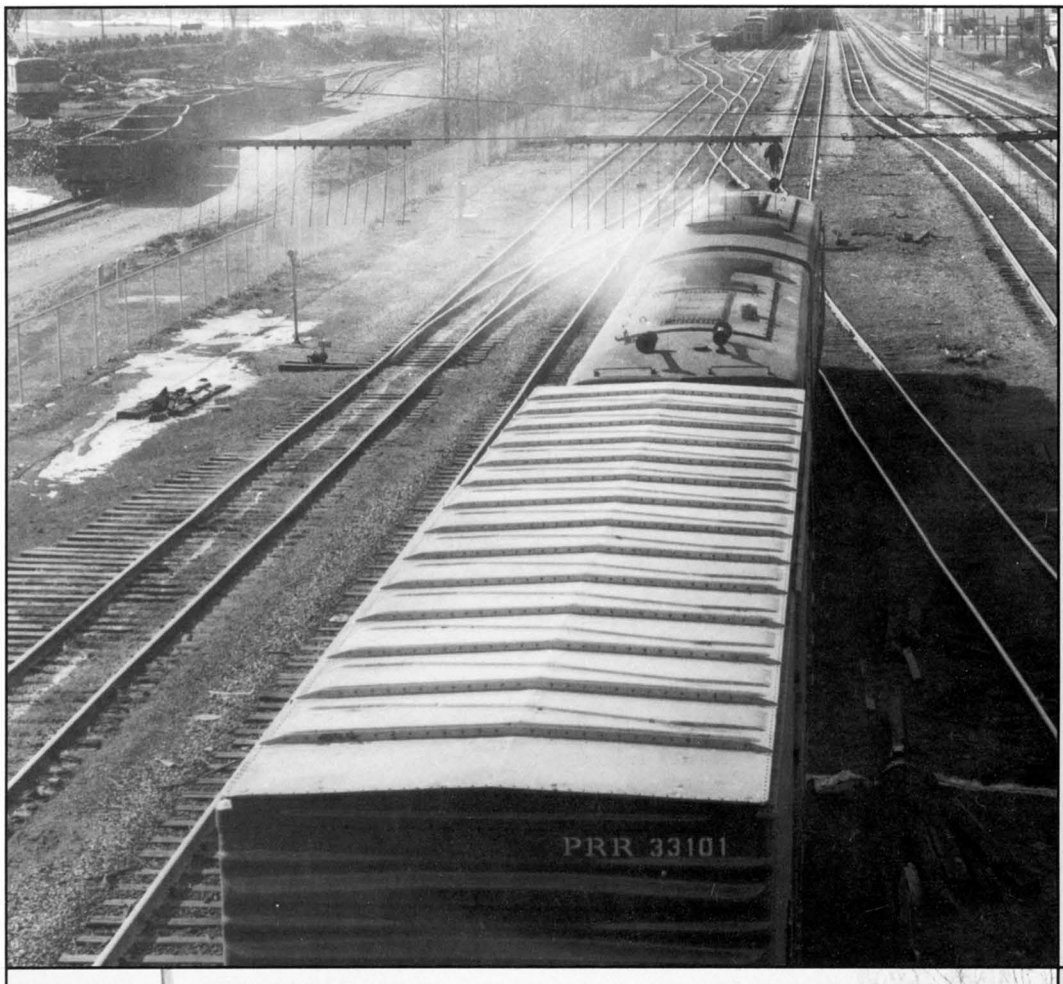
REV. 11-13-64
" 9-30-65

M.C. 85-120



This area at the west end of the class and departure yards was commonly referred to as the "train yard." The preponderance of Junction Yard output was dispatched from here, either from the departure yard after being set over, or by pullout to the advance departure yard, or directly from the class yard in the case of (1) road trains from track 1, (2) some River Rouge liners, (3) interchange to the DT&I and Detroit Terminal railroads, and (4) a couple of industrial cuts. The class yard spreads out here below the yardmaster's tower at the pullout end, with the ladder on the left reaching as far as track 19 and the ladder on the right taking in 20 through 32. On the extreme right is the departure yard, and on the left is the main line, bordered on the north by an industrial lead serving customers along John Cronk Avenue, primarily processors of scrap. And again, the Detroit skyline.

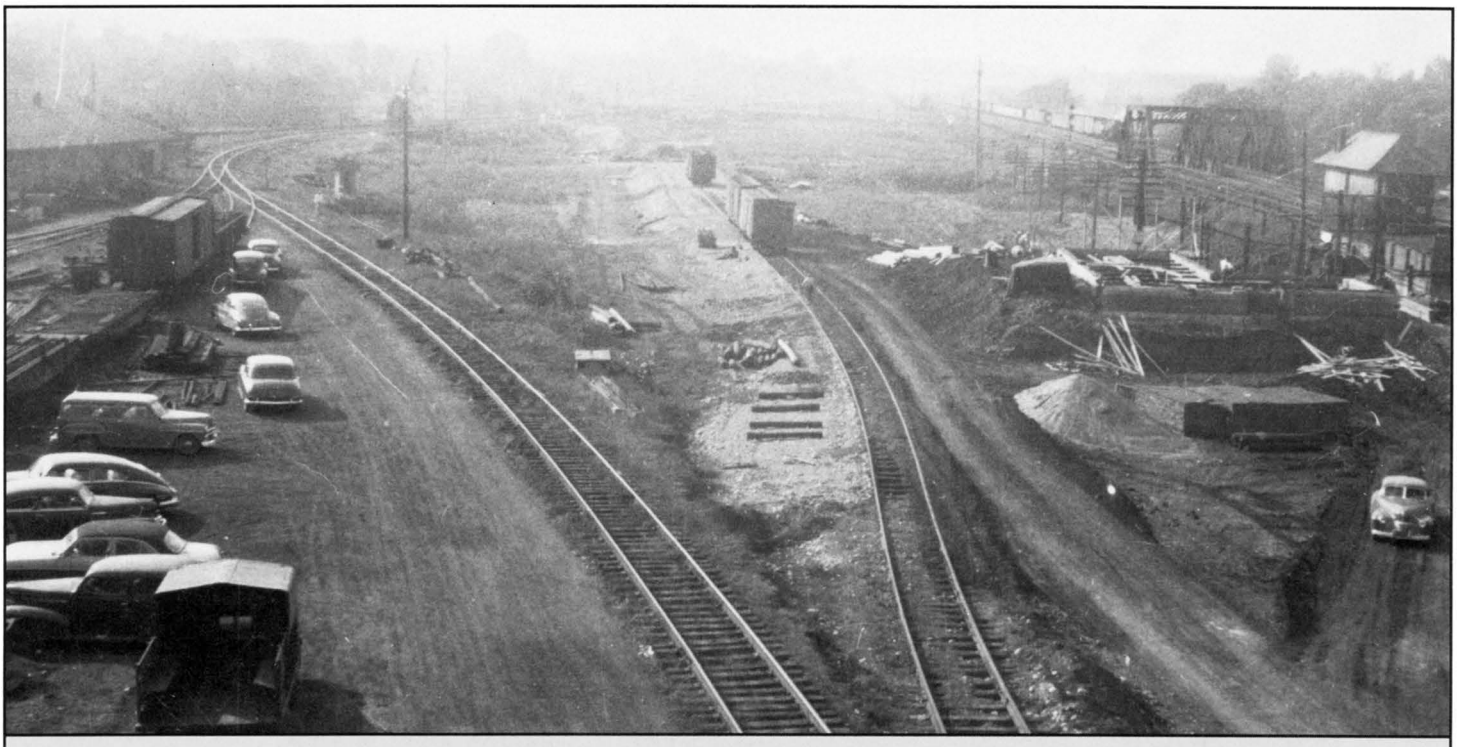
Just west of the class yard, the main tracks and four yard tracks are spanned by the C&O and Detroit Terminal railroads and Miller Road, in that order from east to west. Crossovers here permitted direct pulls from the class yard to the Detroit Terminal connection, which is visible here as a facing point turnout in the westbound main just beyond the two railroad bridges. A C&O switcher is moving south towards the bridge, headed for Rougemeres Yard which is not far out of the picture on the left. There is no C&O connection here, however, and C&O interchange followed a somewhat circuitous route south on the Toledo branch to Delray Tower, then west and into the south end of Rougemere Yard.



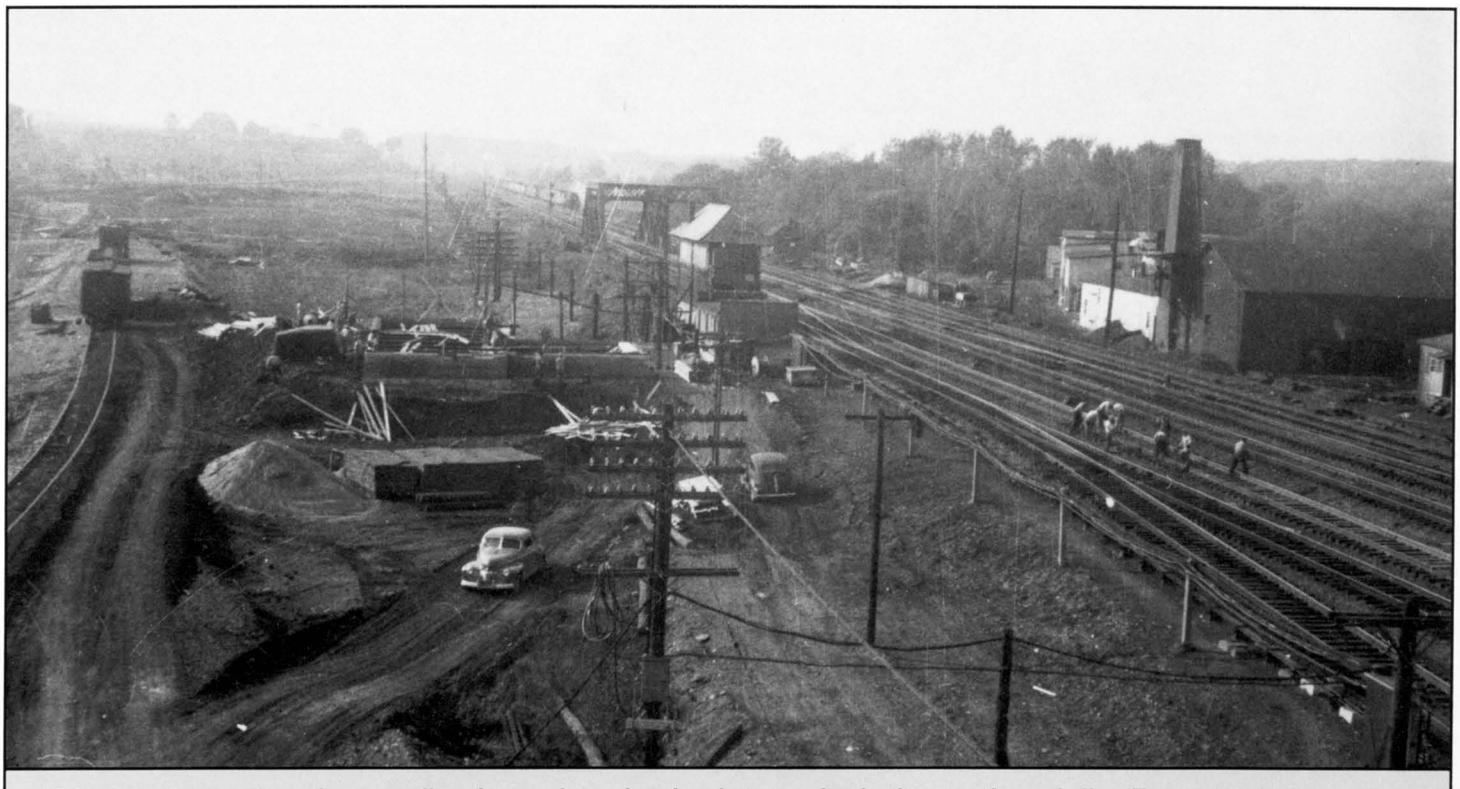
The front brakeman walks ahead to line the route to the Junction Yard branch as DC-6, a train for Airline Junction in Toledo, departs from the yard. The Junction Yard branch, which connects with the main line here in a wye, runs for approximately four miles to the Toledo branch junction at YD Tower (now CP YD), and was not only the exit route for southbound Detroit-Toledo trains and most River Rouge liners, but also served (and still serves) as a bypass along the southwest edge of the terminal for Jackson-Toledo trains. To the right are the main tracks, with a thoroughfare known as the north runner adjacent, and directly ahead is the advance departure yard. Ford River Rouge property lies beyond the fence on the left; a switch in the track on the left (called the "fence track," naturally) just below Miller Road bridge connects with the Ford-DT&I interchange.

Town Line, 7-1/2 miles from downtown Detroit, was the boundary between the Detroit and Michigan Divisions. (The Detroit terminal is now a part of the Toledo Division, as is the former Michigan Division territory to Comstock, just east of Kalamazoo.) The west wye from the Junction Yard branch connects with the main line here, and westbound freights from the advance departure yard entered the main at the same switch. Westbounds made up in the departure yard or on class yard track 1 which did not cross out onto the main at Miller Road (1.7 miles east at the bridges) could pull down to Town Line on the north runner and get out. Nothing fancy about the NYC's Town Line — two crossovers and a turnout equipped with electric locks and a combination of high- and low-stand switches, handled by an operator in an unpretentious shanty. Today, under Conrail, it is a controlled point handled by the operator at West Detroit Tower, 4.5 miles east.

Central Memories



This photo, taken in the late 1940s, is looking west at Tower 15, Lyons, N.Y. The old West Shore Freight house is at the upper left, and the track that veers from lower right to upper left is the old connection to the West Shore from the Pennsylvania Division. Next to it, center of photo is the new connection. At upper right, a freight train is moving east on main track 4. Photo by D. M. Cosgrove.



This photo is taken from the same direction as above, but the photographer is closer to the main line. Tower 15 is in the center, and the track gang is working on Track 1 — the main tracks are numbered from left to right: 2, 1, 3, 4 - eastbound passenger, westbound passenger, westbound freight, eastbound freight. The connection to the Pennsylvania Division diverges from track 2 to the left of the track gang. Photo by D. M. Cosgrove.

Looking east from Tower 15, towards the Lyons station. The main line passes to the left of this building. The Pennsylvania Division connection is the first track to the right of the station, and the West Shore connection comes in from the bottom right. Note the water tank east of the station, and the Iroquois Hotel, the boxy building to the right. Photo by D. M. Cosgrove.

This scene is from Tower 14 at the east end of Lyons in 1912. Note that the switches are rod-operated and the signals cable-operated. The yard on the left is for the Fall Brook line, whose main tracks are between this yard and the main line. To the right of the main line is the North Yard. In the distance is a six-track coaling plant, the existance of which Mr. Cosgrove first learned from this photograph. Photo from D. M. Cosgrove.