

Reaching the Pacific Ocean was for a time the goal of many American railroads. From the mid-19th to the early 20th century, scores of companies, often from the nation's midsection, aspired, planned, or actually attempted to lay track to deep water. They hoped to tap the riches of the West, to exploit traffic with the Orient, and to create their own powerful transportation systems. The success stories of these "—— & Pacific" ventures are relatively well known. Modern studies of the Great Northern, Santa Fe, and Union Pacific railroads, for example, reveal how these roads reached the Pacific, whether under their own corporate banners, through subsidiaries, or by acquisitions. The dated centennial history of the Milwaukee Road describes how the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul (subsequently the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific) pushed from the upper Great Plains to Puget Sound between 1906 and 1909, the last carrier to accomplish this construction feat.¹

Virtually every midwestern trunk railroad at one time eyed the West Coast. The 1,500-mile Chicago Great Western (CGW), for example, may not have staked a route from Omaha, its western terminus, to the Pacific, but its founder and president, A. B. Stickney, told fellow officers in 1905: "Gentlemen, I expect to see the Great Western a transcontinental railroad." His idea involved either the construction of a line from Omaha to Denver or a lease of the Chicago & North Western's Hastings (Nebraska) branch, and then an extension to the Colorado capital. Once in Denver, the CGW would join forces with two promising ventures, David H. Moffat's Denver, Northwestern & Pacific (the so-called Moffat Road from Denver to Salt Lake City) and William A. Clark's San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake, to forge a through route from Chicago to Los Angeles. But financial difficulties quickly crippled the emerging Moffat Road, and Clark's property earlier had fallen secretly into the hands of E. H. Harriman, who controlled the Union Pacific Railroad. The CGW's own growing money troubles, moreover, ruined any serious hopes of accomplishing Stickney's monumental scheme.²

The Midwest's wealthiest trunk road, the Chicago & North Western (C&NW), likewise seriously considered an extension

to the Pacific after the turn of the century. This was not surprising. Not only did this sprawling Chicago-based carrier have the financial capacity to undertake such a project, but its able president, Marvin Hughitt, was a well-known and respected railroad builder.³

Hughitt's role in shaping the railroad landscape of mid-America was impressive. When he joined the Chicago & North Western as a senior official in 1872, the company's mileage totaled 1,382. When he stepped down from the presidency 38 years later, mileage had soared to 9,761, making the C&NW one of the nation's largest railroads. During this time of system building, which Alfred D. Chandler has rightfully ascribed to the genius of certain railroad leaders, the company absorbed a host of independent roads, including the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western, the Sioux City & Pacific, and the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley. The C&NW also acquired stock control of the Omaha Road, the strategic 1,700-mile Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railway. By 1900, the C&NW and affiliated properties bound nine midwestern and Great Plains states with rails that linked Chicago with Omaha (forming the eastern segment of the famed Overland Route), Milwaukee, and the Twin Cities.⁴

Seeking the Pacific

The Chicago & North Western's Plans to Reach the West Coast

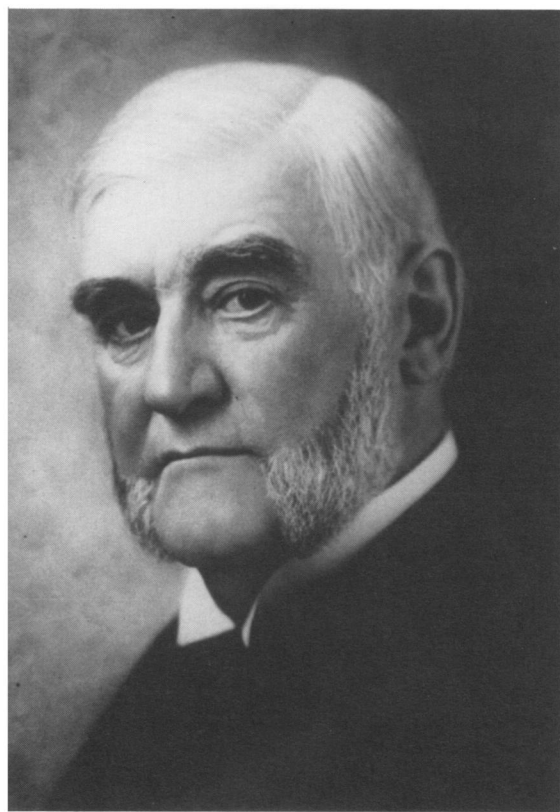
H. Roger Grant

1. See Ralph W. Hidy, Muriel E. Hidy, and Roy V. Scott, with Don L. Hofsommer, *The Great Northern Railway: A History* (Boston, 1988); Keith L. Bryant, Jr., *History of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway* (New York, 1974); Maury Klein, *Union Pacific, Vol. 1: Birth of a Railroad, 1862-1893* (Garden City, N.Y., 1987), and *Union Pacific, Vol. 2: The Rebirth, 1894-1969* (New York, 1990); and August Derleth, *The Milwaukee Road: Its First Hundred Years* (New York, 1948).

2. Fort Dodge (Iowa) *Messenger*, July 7, 1905 (qtn.); Oelwein (Iowa) *Register*, July 11, 1906.

3. H. Roger Grant, "Marvin Hughitt," in *Encyclopedia of American Business History and Biography: Railroads in the Age of Regulation, 1900-1980*, ed. Keith L. Bryant, Jr. (New York, 1988), 215-17.

4. H. Roger Grant, "Three Components of the Chicago and North Western: The Omaha Road, the Louie, and the Great Weedy," *Railroad History*, Vol. 154 (Spring 1986), 12-23. See also Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), 145-87.



Marvin Hughitt, president of the Chicago & North Western, refused to be railroaded on the issue of a Pacific extension. (Author's collection)

Hughitt repeatedly expressed pleasure at the Chicago & North Western's expansion. Most of all, he cherished the company's development in Dakota Territory, which began during the late 1870s. Hughitt felt that he had helped to father the great Dakota boom that did much to turn the empty prairies of what after 1889 became eastern South Dakota into thriving farms and towns. Clearly, the C&NW president had the good sense to realize that a modern railroad could not merely travel in the hinterlands; it had to have a destination as well as a departure point.⁵

"King Marvin" Hughitt sought more than increased mileage. He wanted the Chicago & North Western's lines to be in the best possible condition and to serve the most profitable territory. Principal routes by the early 20th century were double-, even triple-tracked; had heavy steel rails, hardwood ties, and rock ballast; and sported state-of-the-art electric block signals. These lines served the burgeoning

corridors that radiated north and west from Chicago. Hughitt believed that a first-class physical plant accommodated more traffic, operated more rapidly and efficiently, and attracted more patrons. Like James J. Hill of the Great Northern Railway, he knew that if operating costs fell, so would rates, and business would be brisk. Generally he was correct.⁶

About the time the CGW's Stickney revealed his Pacific dream, Hughitt began analyzing the possibility of the Chicago & North Western's building a Pacific extension. Initially, he expressed little enthusiasm for massive westward expansion. After all, the road already enjoyed some benefits of a transcontinental artery: it was the eastern link of the Union Pacific-Central Pacific's Overland Route and the western arm of the New York Central-Lake Shore & Michigan Southern's Central Line. The North Western (controlled primarily by Hughitt and W. K. Vanderbilt, a powerful board member) did not bid on the Union Pacific at its bankruptcy sale in Omaha in the late 1890s, "content to be a powerhouse in its highly profitable territory." Indeed, the tie to the Overland Route shaped the C&NW's Pacific strategies. Hughitt liked the relationship with the Union Pacific so well that on October 22, 1902, he signed an agreement with the newly created Harriman lines—namely the Union Pacific, Southern Pacific, Oregon Short Line, and Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company. This document specified that the "parties hereto shall form through lines of transportation by way of Omaha" and stated in part that "all officers, agents and employees of the respective parties shall be required to work for said through line as diligently and faithfully as they severally or jointly work for any other Carrier or transportation line."⁷

While agreeing to cooperate with E. H. Harriman (Hughitt served on the Union Pacific board of directors), the North Western president nevertheless realized that a current railroad map would reveal a paucity of lines beyond the 100th meridian. And rail traffic there was growing dramatically. Furthermore, prospects for future development appeared strong. One contemporary source estimated that the Pacific Northwest contained 365 trillion board feet of lumber. This was par-

ticularly significant because eastern and midwestern forests were in rapid decline, and the nation was enjoying a building boom. Obviously, Hughitt intended to participate in connecting western resources and eastern markets; after all, the Chicago & North Western was already more than a granger road. An affiliate, the Wyoming Central Railway, had pushed from the Nebraska state line in 1886, to Douglas, Wyoming Territory, a distance of 77 miles, largely to tap transportation-starved ranch country. During 1887 and 1888 this same pike laid more than 50 miles of track to reach Casper. (The C&NW's Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad linked the parent company with this Wyoming appendage.) From there the C&NW apparently planned to extend the line to Ogden, Utah Territory, where it would connect with the Central Pacific or even possibly to build on into Los Angeles. That was mere speculation in 1888, but the plan seemed more realistic a decade later.⁸

Use of what by 1905 had become the Nebraska & Wyoming Division (Wyoming Central) as a springboard to some western destination appeared logical. Hughitt's road would not have to be overcon-

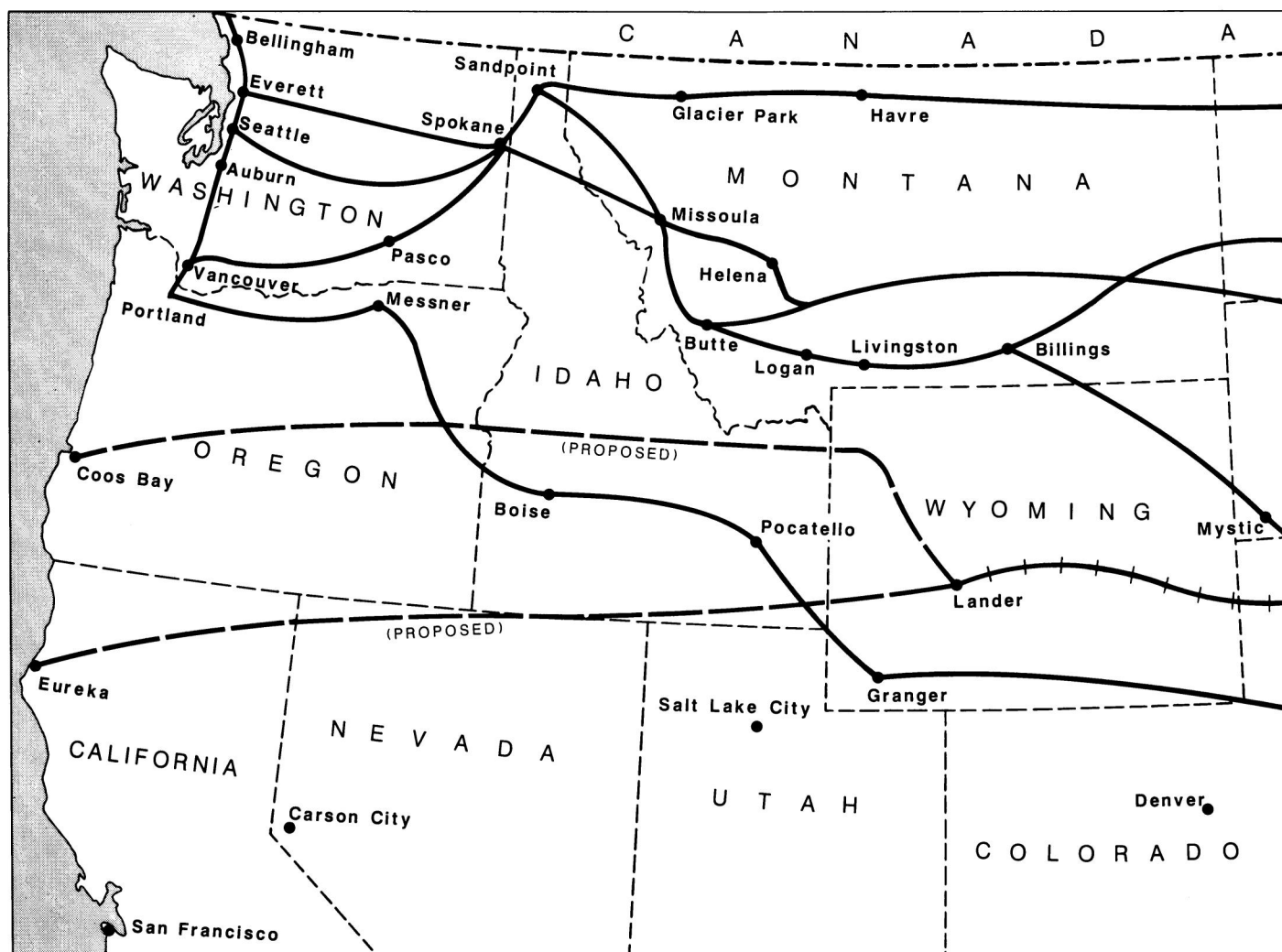
5. Robert J. Casey and W. A. S. Douglas, *Pioneer Railroad: The Story of the Chicago and North Western System* (New York, 1948), 159-71.

6. [Chicago & North Western Railway], *Over Half a Century of Progress, 1848-1902* (Chicago, 1902).

7. Newspaper clipping, Dec. 18, 1897 (1st qtn.), from the New York News Bureau, Pliny Fisk Collection, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey (hereafter cited as Newspaper Clipping Coll.); "Memorandum of Agreement," in E. M. Lewis, "Chicago and North Western Ry. and the Projected West Coast Extension, 1904-1906" (1966), 12-13, copy in the Northern Illinois University Archives, DeKalb.

8. Clipping, Jan. 2, 1901, Newspaper Clipping Coll.; Klein, *Rebirth*, 170; *Chicago and North Western Railway Company and Components to April 30, 1910* (Chicago, 1910), 35. See also *Railway Review*, March 31, 1888.

9. *Forty-sixth Annual Report of the Chicago and North Western Railway Company for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1905* (Chicago, 1905), 19. See also Richard C. Overton, *Burlington Route: A History of the Burlington Lines* (New York, 1965), 219, 229.



Both of the c&nw's proposed coast routes from Lander, Wyoming, the western end of its line, struck out across territory not served by the northern transcontinentals, as shown in this railroad map of the West. The principal lines of James J. Hill's Great Northern and Northern Pacific railroads and E. H. Harriman's Union Pacific Railroad appear as solid black lines. Source: Laboratory for Cartographic and Spatial Analysis, University of Akron.

cerned about penetrating the spheres of influence of a powerful and potentially vindictive competitor. The Union Pacific, already a partner in the Overland Route, operated through the extreme southern portion of Wyoming and interchanged with its new affiliate, the Southern Pacific (formerly the Central Pacific), at Ogden; its Oregon extension, the Oregon Short Line, left the Overland Route at Granger, in Wyoming's southwestern corner, on its way through Pocatello and Boise to Portland via the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company. Hill's Northern Pacific and Great Northern railroads served the upper tier states of Montana, Idaho, and Washington. Even with the

Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (CB&Q) line from Edgemont, South Dakota, to Billings, Montana, which opened in the 1890s and sliced the northeastern corner of Wyoming, there existed ample room for C&NW development in Wyoming. Moreover, should the C&NW decide to push to the Pacific on its own, possible routes lay mostly between those of the Union Pacific and the two northern transcontinentals.⁹

By 1905, too, railroad affairs in the West gave Hughitt and the Chicago & North Western a window of opportunity. Following the depression of the 1890s, the transcontinental arena was in flux as car-

riers, having regained their financial footing, sought to expand. Yet railroad executives generally feared competition because it brought low rates and seemingly perpetual strife. Not surprisingly, then, a merger madness of sorts took hold at the start of the century: Harriman captured the Southern Pacific, George Gould secured the Rio Grande, and Hill won the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. It was the latter event that triggered a drive, albeit unsuccessful, by Harriman and his Union Pacific to dominate the Northern Pacific, a logical move since ownership of the CB&Q was now divided equally between the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific. Harriman had surprised Hill and his associates, most notably the investment banker J. P. Morgan, Sr., who considered the Northern Pacific to be their property even though they owned less than a quarter of the company's common and preferred stock. A disappointed



This 1906 view records the arrival of the first C&NW passenger train at Lander, Wyoming. (Author's collection)

though pragmatic Harriman accepted defeat at the hands of Hill and Morgan, whose Northern Securities Company, second only to United States Steel in capitalization, then fused the Great Northern, the Northern Pacific, and the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. Harriman, though, did get something for his foray: Hill created a new firm that leased the CB&Q and allowed Harriman's Union Pacific to acquire half ownership. This move helped to limit CB&Q expansion in Union Pacific country. Harriman, of course, saw some value in Hill's long-held philosophy that leading carriers should control lines in their service territory.¹⁰

This spirit of cooperation between the nation's railroad giants altered some traffic patterns in the Northwest. Most significant, changes led to Hill's trains winning access to Portland over Harriman's Oregon Railroad and Navigation route

and to Harriman's receiving trackage rights for Union Pacific trains over the Northern Pacific between Portland, Tacoma, and Seattle. But the United States Supreme Court ended the brief tranquility when it declared in 1904 that the Northern Securities Company violated provisions of the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890, namely that Northern Securities held an illegal monopoly over transportation in the Northwest. Chaos returned to western railroading. As Harriman correctly anticipated in 1905, "We are going to run into an era of competitive railroad building just as we have passed through an era of competitive buying." Within a few years Hill's forces built the Spokane, Portland & Seattle along the north bank

of the Columbia, and crews pushed the Milwaukee Road, the third northern transcontinental, toward the Pacific.¹¹

Hughitt's North Western, though, was still far from the ocean. Understandably, Wyoming became the center of its extension plans. Even if the company failed to drive a line beyond the state to Oregon—the most commonly discussed terminus—it would nonetheless gain exclusive control of transportation throughout vast expanses of the Equality State. Business prospects looked bright: ranches could produce sizable carloadings of livestock; emerging mining operations could generate traffic in coal, copper, and other minerals; and general agriculture could increase when the federal government opened portions of the Shoshone Indian reservation for settlement. Expansion would mean profitable movements of outbound farm products and inbound supplies (for example, lumber

and machinery) and, of course, a brisk flow of passengers.¹²

A plan for possible growth had begun to take shape nearly a decade before Harriman predicted that "era of competitive railroad building." In January 1897, the Chicago & North Western had incorporated the Wyoming & North Western Railway "to run west from Casper . . . through the counties of Natrona, Fremont and Uinta, along the Wind River or such route as may appear the most expedient to the western border of the State of Wyoming." The C&NW modified its incorporation certificate in November 1904 to permit a line through Thermopolis and on to Yellowstone National Park.¹³

Soon the Wyoming & North Western became a reality. Surveyors, graders, and tracklayers completed their work with dispatch: service reached Shoshoni in mid-1906 (shortly before the federal government opened the Indian lands) and Lander a few months later. This construction added 148 miles to the North Western system and "sewed up parts of [Wyoming] for Mr. Hughitt."¹⁴

Trains to Lander prompted considerable speculation about the overall intentions of the Chicago & North Western in the Northwest. The company at this time apparently considered at least two Pacific routes. One would run from Lander westward along the Idaho, Utah, and Nevada state lines into northern California, with Eureka, a coastal community of some 7,300, the probable destination. The other possible line would extend westward from the southern boundary of Yellowstone National Park through central Idaho and Oregon to Coos Bay, another port that one day "could rival Portland and San Francisco." Conceivably, Hughitt discussed these schemes (and possibly others) with Harriman in 1906 and 1907, hoping for some type of cooperative construction effort. However, Harriman, a tough dealer, probably told him to stay in Wyoming. After all, Harriman faced conflict with Hill in the region; for example, they soon battled over control of Deschutes Canyon and a route into and through central Oregon. Entry by the C&NW, even under a joint arrangement, would only complicate matters. Harriman no doubt thought the C&NW's role as wallflower was appropriate.¹⁵

In conjunction with its expansion in Wyoming and its evaluation of California and Oregon terminuses, the Chicago & North Western considered forming a Pacific Northwest partnership with the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul. Although the Milwaukee Road was a longtime rival, it was a well-managed blue-chip company that, like the C&NW, aspired to a Pacific artery. Hughitt did not personally enter negotiations with his counterpart, Albert J. Earling. Rather, the C&NW's Vanderbilt discussed the arrangement with William Rockefeller, a major investor in the Milwaukee. Over the course of conversations, they determined a joint route that extended from central South Dakota through Montana and Idaho to Seattle and Tacoma. Details of the negotiations are sketchy. The C&NW, however, withdrew from these talks, perhaps because the estimated cost was \$60 million. Moreover, between the two companies there was "a tradition of mutual distrust." Surely, too, neither Harriman nor Hill would have approved. The C&NW could still push westward from Wyoming. An undismayed Hughitt urged his associates to "stick to our knitting, develop this railroad in its present territory and let the Milwaukee build to the coast if it wants to."¹⁶

Any time there were hints of Chicago & North Western expansion, individuals and groups along anticipated routes expressed approval. The coming of trains meant much to everyone. Often enthusiasts promised to help subsidize the railroad, perhaps by using a local tax to buy securities or by donating land for rights-of-way and station sites. Rumors of a joint C&NW and Milwaukee foray toward Puget Sound brought this comment from a Kittitas County, Washington, resident: "If the Northwestern [sic] and St. Paul build through Ellensburg, there will be rejoicing in the streets." Yet the C&NW, with its cautious management, never allowed public opinion to stampede it into what might be a bad business decision. Recalled a company official in 1928, "Mr. Hughitt refused to get caught up in that hysteria to add 'Pacific' to his road's corporate name."¹⁷

The Hughitt stick-to-our-knitting philosophy turned out to be remarkably wise. The panic of 1907 dashed most

plans for westward extension because it crippled a large portion of the railroad industry. All was quiet at North Western headquarters. The company weathered this business crisis and remained a darling among investors. The Milwaukee, on the other hand, experienced immediate and long-term economic problems and soon lost its attraction for conservative buyers of securities.

After 1910 the railroad world lacked the ambitious spirit of the previous decade. Admittedly, companies laid additional miles of track, especially west of the Missouri River. Yet no one built to the Pacific, with the exception of the Western Pacific; a Gould property, the Wobbly Pacific, as it came to be known, opened a financially disappointing transcontinental route between Salt Lake City and Oakland in 1910.¹⁸

The reasons for the slowdown in railroad building are simple. The nation's rail map was largely complete, and intense federal regulation seemed to impede the industry with unreasonable restrictions. Albro Martin has argued cogently that

10. Klein, *Rebirth*, 101-55, 170-71; Albro Martin, *James J. Hill and the Opening of the Northwest* (New York, 1976), 439-41, 459, 463, 477, 482.

11. Klein, *Rebirth*, 149.

12. Clipping, Jan. 21, 1905, Newspaper Clipping Coll.

13. Wyoming & North-Western Railway Company, Incorporation Certificate, Filing 1930, Secretary of State-Corporations, Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne; Wyoming & North Western Minute Book 6, p. 91, Chicago & North Western Transportation Company, Chicago.

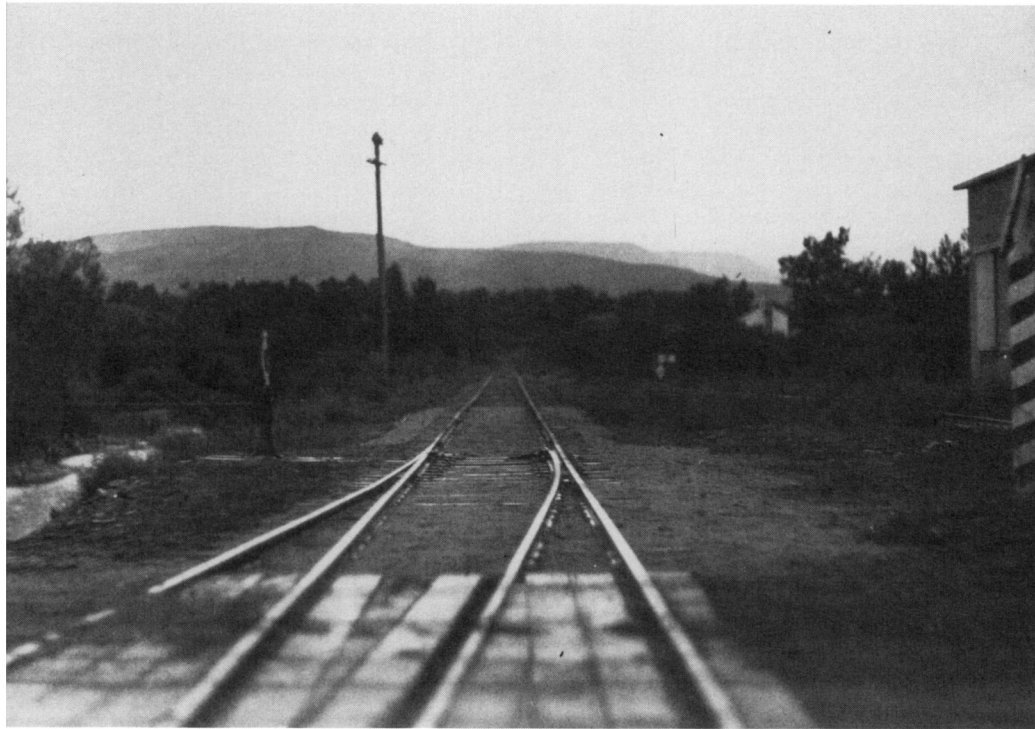
14. *Wind River Mountaineer* (Lander, Wyo.), Nov. 17, 1905, Oct. 19, 1906 (qtn.).

15. Lewis, 6; clipping, Aug. 4, 1907, Newspaper Clipping Coll. (qtn.).

16. Derleth, 170-71; clipping, Dec. 1, 1905, Newspaper Clipping Coll. (1st qtn.); Hughitt quoted in Casey and Douglas, 139.

17. Clipping, n.d., Newspaper Clipping Coll. (1st qtn.); Chicago Tribune, Jan. 8, 1928 (2d qtn.).

18. Don DeNevi, *The Western Pacific: Railroading Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (Seattle, 1978), 51-58.



The end of the line: despite the desire to reach the Pacific, Wyoming remained the C&NW's western terminus. (Barriger Railroad Collection, Saint Louis Mercantile Library)

carriers felt the financial sting of both the Hepburn Act (1906) and the Mann-Elkins Act (1910), which increased the power of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and consequently recoiled from their efforts to expand and upgrade their physical plants.¹⁹

Lander, Wyoming, was the end of the line for the Chicago & North Western, but the company still toyed with the idea of pushing farther west. After all, plans were cheap, and increased federal regulation had not ruined all economic opportunities. A new line, even if it did not reach the Pacific, would mean longer freight hauls and a chance to tap the rapidly increasing summer tourist trade to the West. It could also capture the short-haul business, since neither freight nor passenger traffic had yet been lost to motor vehicles.

In the early 1920s, after the dislocations of federal control during the First World War, the Chicago & North Western renewed consideration of a Pacific route. Hughitt had stepped down from the pres-

idency in 1910, but he remained powerful as chairman of the board of directors until 1925 and continued to be interested in such construction. Although details of a coast extension are sketchy, evidence from early in the decade indicates that the C&NW's preferred route was through Idaho and Washington, with a Seattle terminus. But by the mid-1920s, speculation focused on a merger of the C&NW with the Union Pacific, a move suggested by William Z. Ripley of Harvard University in a 1921 report for the Interstate Commerce Commission.²⁰

A postscript to the Chicago & North Western's notions of becoming the Chicago, North Western & Pacific dates from the early 1950s, a time when railroad construction had virtually ceased. In November 1953, the company's director of research, B. M. Snell, sent President Paul Feucht a three-page memorandum with supporting surveys in which he sought to revitalize old plans to expand operations in Wyoming. The idea was no longer to push directly toward the Pacific but to build from Lander southwestward to Granger and a connection with the Union Pacific.

Snell anticipated wonderful things with this 135-mile extension through South Pass: it would help the C&NW to gain

greater freight revenues with longer hauls and higher percentages of rate revenues; it would improve the "competitive position with other transcontinental railroads in saving time and reduction of expenses"; and it would have the "advantage of nearly 550 miles of line for freight train operation without passenger train interference, thereby facilitating the movement of both passengers and freight in the highly competitive transcontinental business through the difficult and unfavorable operating territory across Wyoming." But Feucht, the C&NW's least competent chief executive, failed to respond to Snell's imaginative and likely moneymaking scheme. Feucht's successor, the able and hard-driving Ben W. Heineman, studied expansion, but growing financial difficulties precluded new construction. Yet, in the early 1980s the company built about 100 miles of track in Nebraska and Wyoming to tap the lucrative coal traffic from the southern Powder River coal basin to utilities in the Midwest and South.²¹

Why study the Chicago & North Western's abortive plan for a Pacific route? First, the story underscores the intense interest in Pacific lines that once existed in the railroad industry, and the case of the C&NW is to some degree representative. That the C&NW could work closely with a transcontinental line—the Union Pacific system—however, reduced the pressure to push westward on its own. (Perhaps if the Milwaukee Road had enjoyed the C&NW's strong relationship with the Union Pacific, it never would

19. Albro Martin, *Enterprise Denied: Origins of the Decline of American Railroads, 1897-1917* (New York, 1971).

20. See Presidents' Subjects Files, Northern Pacific Railroad Collection, Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 24, 1927. It would not be until 1989 that a union of sorts occurred; the Union Pacific bought heavily into the Chicago & North Western to prevent a hostile take-over bid.

21. B. M. Snell, "Strategy and Advantage, Connecting Railway, Wyoming," in Lewis, 17-19.

22. James L. Hickey, "Last Run of the Riverton Local," *Trains*, Vol. 49 (April 1989), 24-25.

have made the Pacific plunge.) Yet Marvin Hughitt wisely did not reject a West Coast objective out of hand. While he publicly embraced that stick-to-our-knitting philosophy, he shrewdly considered options. With construction of the Wyoming & North Western west of Casper, he positioned the C&NW to take the leap if it seemed auspicious. The company, of course, never decided to do so.

The C&NW apparently followed the sensible course. In contrast, the Milwaukee Road took a risk; then cost of construction, volume of traffic, and other problems made the line to Washington

State unprofitable. Service on the C&NW's Casper-to-Lander line, though business failed to develop sizably, nonetheless lasted until 1972, and the Casper-to-Riverton line operated until 1988 (with trackage rights after 1944 over the Burlington Northern—the former CB&Q—from Illco to Shoshoni). Because of its cautious policy, the C&NW did not reap the financial benefits of mining iron ore and soda ash (trona) in southwestern Wyoming. Indeed, the United States Steel Corporation built its own 77-mile line from the Union Pacific to Atlantic City, Wyoming, 21 miles from Lander, in 1962. Thus historical hindsight suggests that

the C&NW, although wise in not pushing to Eureka or Coos Bay, was foolish in refusing to exploit its 1,300-mile extension from Chicago to Lander. The C&NW truly was an aborted transcontinental, but at least its Pacific dream never became a Pacific nightmare.²² □

H. Roger Grant, professor of history at the University of Akron in Ohio, is the author of several books on railroad history and, most recently, the editor of *We Took the Train* (1990). He also edits *Railroad History*, a publication of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society and the Smithsonian Institution.

The Virginia Historical Society is conducting research for a major exhibition titled "Away, I'm Bound Away: Virginia and the Settlement of the American West," which will consider the impact of the 800,000 people who left the Old Dominion and helped explore, settle, and govern the western territories. The society is seeking to locate letters, diaries, paintings, photographs, and other museum objects that relate to families that emigrated from Virginia to points westward, 1750-1850. Persons knowing the whereabouts of such materials are encouraged to write to Dr. James C. Kelly, Assistant Director, Virginia Historical Society, P.O. Box 7311, Richmond, VA 23221-0311, or to telephone him at (804) 358-4901.

Virginia and the West

The Coalition for Western Women's History, in conjunction with the Center for Great Plains Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, announces its fourth conference, titled "Suspect Terrain: Surveying the Women's West," August 7-9, 1991, at Lincoln. The coalition invites interested persons to present papers, media productions, or panels for this interdisciplinary, multicultural program.

Particularly welcome are proposals from established scholars, graduate students, and independent researchers concerning labor and leisure, law, leadership and politics, urban and rural landscapes, life cycle, immigration and mobility. Conference organizers hold a broad interpretation of the theme and encourage approaches from all perspectives.

The Center for Great Plains Studies will seek funding from various agencies and may be able to subsidize participants. The sponsors expect to publish a volume and produce a video based on the conference.

Interested persons should submit a two-page proposal and a vita (not to exceed two pages) by December 1, 1990, to: Center for Great Plains Studies, 1213 Oldfather Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68588-0314. For additional information, contact: Paula Petrik, Department of History, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469, 207-581-1907, or Kathleen Underwood, Department of History, Box 19529, University of Texas, Arlington, TX 76019, 817-273-2861.

Call for Papers