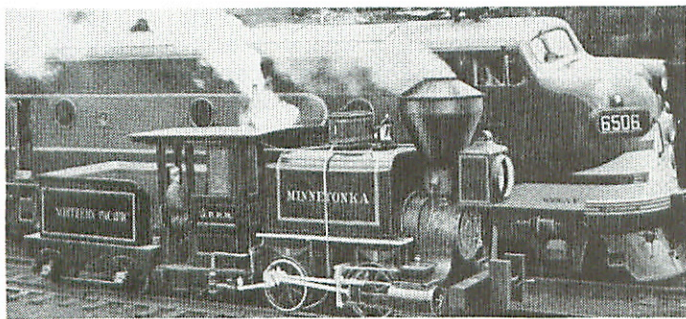


§ Railroads §

Railroads played an important part in the settling of this Northwest Territory. Towns were established soon after the rails reached a suitable location, usually where a side track had been installed. Immigrants came in great numbers from Europe and the eastern states to pioneer this new land.

The first locomotive which we have learned about was built in London in 1804. The first locomotive in the United States was built by a Mr. Baldwin. It was named Old Ironsides; it weighed 5 tons and the cost of construction was \$3,500. The cylinders were made of wood and were chiseled and honed out by hand. Old Ironsides made its first run in November 1832.

Northern Pacific Railroad Co.'s first steam locomotive was the Minnetonka, built in 1870. It weighed 12 tons, was 27½ ft. long and 10 ft. 2 inches high. Cost of construction was \$6,700. It was a wood burner, as indicated by the bulging smokestack. The accompanying picture also shows (in contrast) the 4,400 horse power diesel engine, which weighed 345 tons and cost \$458,000. Transportation by railroad became possible in 1850.



In 1864, by an act of congress, and signed by President Lincoln, railroads were granted all odd numbered sections of land for a radius of 40 miles, on each side of the railroad. From the sale of this land, railroad construction costs were realized. The land was sold to loan companies and individuals.

The railroads almost always came in advance of settlements. The different railroad companies seemed to be racing against each other to see which company could make the most headway. Walkers, Bellows and Co. had the contract to build the railroad grade through this area.

In 1872, the railroad tracks reached Fargo, Dakota Territory, and in 1873 construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad had come as far west as the Missouri River. The city of Edwinton (Bismarck) sprung up immediately. At this time the Northern Pacific Railroad Company ran out of funds and construction was discontinued for six years.

In 1871, a survey crew was sent from Ft. Rice to survey a route for the Northern Pacific Railroad west of the Missouri River. The crew consisted of a front flagman and a corps of axe men to cut away trees and brush. They were followed by the transit man, who recorded distances and

angles of the line, assisted by chain men. At that time there were no tapes to measure distances so the Gunters surveyor's chain was used; it was 66 ft. in length, with 8 inch links. Lastly came the leveler who, with the assistance of rod and flagmen, recorded levels. The topographer sketched the water



Sweet Briar Valley, Dakota Terr. Northern Pacific Railroad construction crew in 1879, grading in advance of track laying. (At this time, track work was delayed west of Bismarck.)



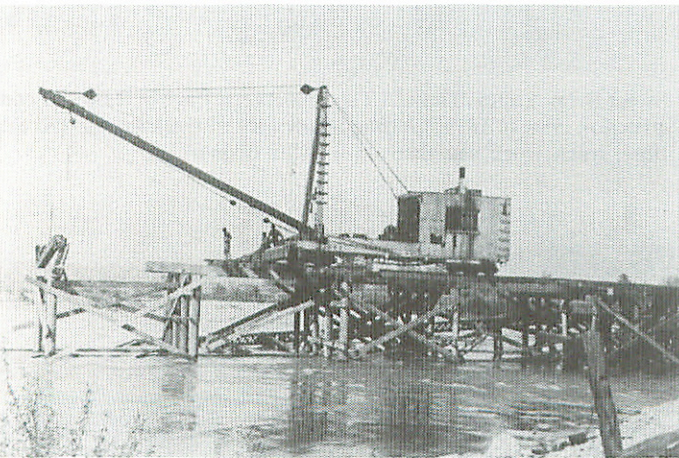
The Big Cut. Northern Pacific Railroad original construction in 1879.

courses and contours of the hills. The shortest, cheapest and straightest line possible was chosen, taking topography into consideration. The initial survey showed that the railroad would swing west, south of Sims; but when the construction crew came, they decided to follow the valley. The grade over the hills would have been too steep. In five weeks the survey had been completed, from the Missouri River to the mouth of the Yellowstone River. For protection from the Indians, the survey crew was guarded by 500 military men and 50 mounted Indians guides, accompanied by 100 wagons and two Gatling guns.

During railroad construction, 25,000 men were employed, 15,000 of which were Chinese. Work was done with shovels, wheel barrows, wagons, slip scrapers, fresnos and two wheel scrapers called "Clam Shells." One such scraper is in Almont Heritage Park.



Northern Pacific work crew building grade and laying track in western North Dakota — 1880.



Northern Pacific Railroad building bridge — 1882.

With so many men working on the project, there were the inevitable injuries and fatalities. We have been told that those who died on the job were usually buried at the work site. Otto Feland told of one fatality that happened during construction at Rattlesnake Cut, just east of Almont. One of the workers, who owned a span of mules he was working, became sick and was laid up for several days. Another worker, taking advantage of the idle pair of mules, used them on the job during the sick man's absence, and got paid accordingly. When the owner of the mules came back to work

and found out what had been going on, he shot and killed the borrower! The victim is said to have been buried at Rattle Snake curve. (We do not know for sure why this curve through the cut in the hill was called Rattle Snake. Perhaps they dug into a nest of rattlers during construction, or maybe it was because of the sharp curve.) The curve was so sharp that trains approaching Almont from the east could not be seen until they rounded it, about a half mile from the station.

After the grade for the railroad was prepared, ties were laid, spaded and bedded. An adz was used to get a true bearing, the rails were laid and spiked down. The ballast train followed and covered the road bed with gravel after which each tie was raised so gravel could be tamped under it. The track was then ready for use. Much of these materials such as rails, spikes and tie plates were imported from France and England.

In 1873, when the Northern Pacific Railroad ran out of funds, they tried to promote the selling of land granted them by the Government; however, General Sibley had publicly stated that the land in Dakota Territory was fit only for the Indians or the Devil — consequently it did not sell! Railroad agent J. B. Powers then spearheaded the idea of Bonanza farming — farming on a very large scale.

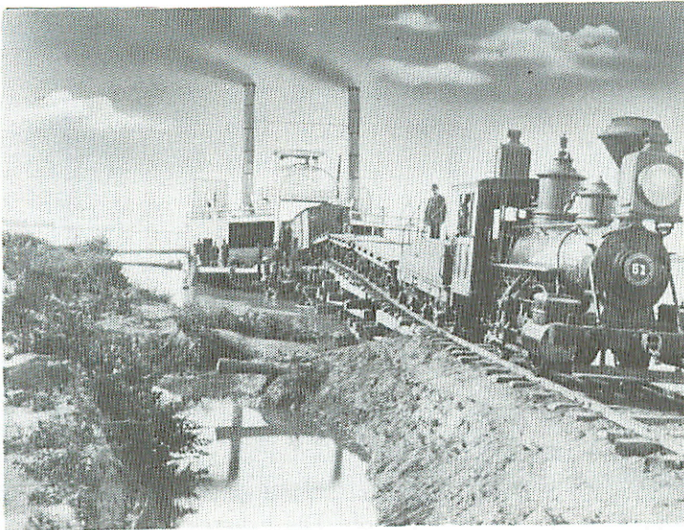
Bonanza farming, mostly in the fertile Red River Valley in the eastern part of the state, proved to be a very good idea. There were a total of 91 Bonanza farms in North Dakota, ranging in size from 3,000 to 100,000 acres. The largest was the Dalrymple farm employing 1,000 laborers and using 400 horses and mules for power. The Fred Bagg Bonanza farm had three horse barns each measuring 40 x 128 feet. Bagg felt that men worked best when they were with their own ethnic group, and therefore separated them into crews of different nationalities: the Hobo crew (Scandinavians); Cyclone crew (Polish) and the Grasshopper crew (Finnish). The farm records show that each day they consumed one quarter of beef, almost two bushels of potatoes, 40 loaves of bread, 20 dozen eggs and 18 pies. Breakfast was served at 5:30 a.m., dinner at 12 noon and supper at 7 p.m. Wages were \$2.50 per day or \$20 per month, room and board included.

The Bagg farm, located west of Wahpeton, has been placed on the State and National Registry of Historical Sites and is at present being restored. Several of the early pioneers from here worked during the harvest on Bonanza farms in the eastern part of North Dakota. These men would either ride the rails to the Red River Valley or would go in a group by horse-drawn wagon. They told of fields so large that in some cases only one round by a harvesting machine could be made in a day. Fields four miles long were common.

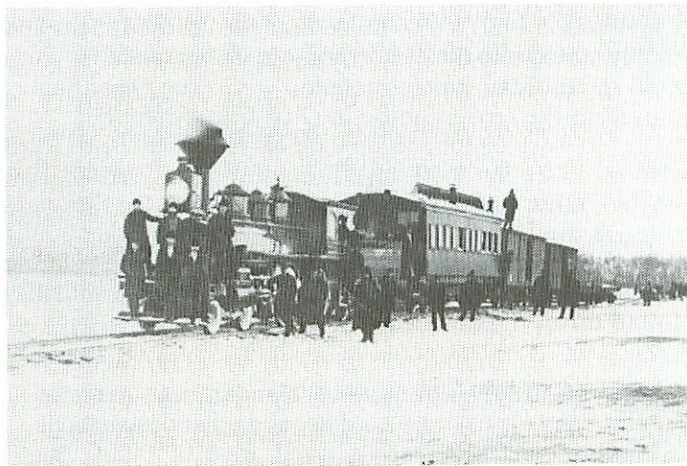
Bonanza farming lasted 17 years, from 1876 to 1893. Land was then parceled out to smaller operators and sold for \$1.75 to \$2.50 per acre. General Sibley's assessment was proven wrong!

By 1879 financing had been arranged and railroad construction was resumed. The first train to cross the Missouri River was on February 2, 1879. There was no bridge, so pilings were driven through the ice to support the tracks. 538 carloads were transported across the river to the west side that winter. In the summer a ferry was used. Bernt (Ben) and Anna Ramsland and their 3-year-old son Tinius came from Norway in 1881 with Bly Mine (Sims) as their destination. On November 18 of that year they walked across the Missouri River on the ice, with Mrs. Ramsland carrying Tinius.

The railroad bridge across the river between Bismarck and



Crossing the Missouri River by ferry — 1880.



First train over the Missouri River on tracks laid on the ice — March 1879.

Mandan was completed in 1882, and following that, construction of the railroad westward progressed rapidly; some accounts show they averaged 3 miles per day.

The tracks had reached a point 35 miles west of Mandan in September 1879, at a spot that was later to be called Sims. Construction continued westward, and in September 1883, the last spike was driven at the point where east-bound and west-bound construction met at Gold Creek, Montana. This history-making event called for a celebration and a number of noteworthy people were present for the ceremony. Former President Ulysses S. Grant, NPRR President Henry Villard and Mayor Carter Harrison of Chicago were among the notables. More than 3,000 people attended the event, which included representatives from England, Germany and the Scandinavian countries. Someone with foresight arranged for this group of dignitaries to be present at the laying of the cornerstone for the new Dakota Territory capitol building, which took place a few days later in Bismarck. Henry Villard, NPRR president did the honors at that ceremony. According to Otto Feland, the cornerstone had been made by Sakarias Egan and Ole Barstad in Sims.

The Northern Pacific Railroad installed side tracks, spaced from 7 to 10 miles apart, to enable trains to meet or pass. Each siding had a name and some had stations with an agent. A list of sidings in this area of the Missouri Division, as of

July 15, 1882 were: Bismarck (agent); Mandan (agent, Wm. Van Waters); Marmot; Sweet Briar (agent, G.V. Gilman); Sedalia; Blue Grass; Cold Spring (water stop); Bly's Mine (agent, George H. Luke); Curlew; Kurtz; Eagles Nest (agent, W. Murphy); Knife River; Taylor (B.F. Edwards). The Almont siding was built in 1883. I remember seeing a "Y" at the siding at Kurtz for the purpose of turning a locomotive around.

Cold Spring was a railroad siding about one mile north of Bly's Mine, so named from a water pond supplied by a spring. The locomotives drew water from the pond before a pumping station at Bly's Mine was installed; a spur track was built over to the spring. We've been told that a locomotive rolled off the make-shift spur track and landed in the creek; it gradually sank into the quicksand, and at that time there was no equipment to recover it. Anna Olin Bakken told of seeing the locomotive in the creek when she walked to school at Sims. Some articles, such as the bell and lights were stolen and rumor has it that these articles are buried somewhere in the Sims area. We do not know the exact spot where the locomotive disappeared.

A letter from the Burlington Northern Railroad office at St. Paul, MN, dated March 26, 1976 states that at the time railroad service reached Bly's Mine in 1879, the N.P. locomotives burned wood; they could not accommodate coal. Conversion to coal soon followed; however, the Sims lignite was never used in locomotives as it was not of satisfactory quality. If the locomotive that rolled into the creek is ever found, it will most likely have a bulging smoke stack, indicating that it was a wood burner.

During the first years of railroading, trains traveled only during daylight hours, so people could see this new and unique means of transportation — the Iron Horse!

The availability of water for the steam locomotives was very important, as much water was needed to make steam power. The NPRR constructed a concrete dam across the Sims Creek, located downstream from the large spring flowing out of the creek bank. A water tower was built next to the track, and also a water pump, which was powered by a steam engine. In 1883, the water tower was blown down by a tornado which swept through the area, but it was rebuilt at once as the water station was very important. When rail traffic increased, the pump station operated 24 hours per day. Tom Gray operated the pump station for many years, and Melvin Jacobson was often called on to take the night shift.

An interesting side light in reference to the dam and spring at Sims: A sign on the main road indicated that good spring water was available, and travelers were welcome to it. A long black limousine, with a black chauffeur, carrying two people in the back seat, noticed the sign and stopped for water. (They were traveling the only highway from one coast to the other.) The driver of the auto evidently neglected to set the emergency brake, so while they were all down at the spring getting water, the auto rolled down into the dam. I never heard how they got the limousine out and on the road again — Sims probably had some distinguished overnight guests.

We used to cut ice for summer use at the Sims RR dam. The springs continued to run the year around. Springs are still flowing in a number of locations at Sims — we sometimes wonder about the unlimited source.

The Interstate Commerce Commission was instated in 1887. The commission helped regulate railroad operation to everyone's satisfaction.

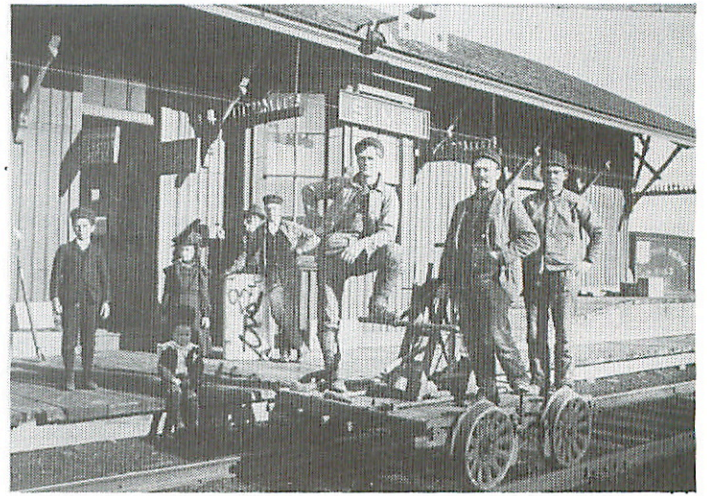


Curlew section crew at Almont Depot. (l. to r.) Beas Olson, Conrad Christianson, Tony Lang, Floyd Christianson, Harry Miller, Carl Kilen, Richard Schreck, Tollef Christianson (boss), Walter Bakken (agent).

After main lines were completed, branch lines were built to serve outlying districts, and small towns “sprang up” along these lines. My dad was assistant road superintendent out of Mandan at the time the Northern Pacific built the north and south branches in 1908 to 1910. His duty was to oversee the construction — that it met all the specifications. The Milwaukee branch was built about the same time. It went through Grant County (then a part of Morton County) which had large areas of pasture land. I have read that until right-of-way fences were built, the train crew had to stop the train to open and close pasture gates. When the NPRR south branch was built, much of the material came by freight to Almont and Sims and was transported from there to Carson and Flasher by team and wagon. My dad said 500 mules were unloaded at Almont and were used for the construction of the south branch. He also said the hostlers (mule tenders) were black men.

In order to minimize accidents and derailments, it was very important that the rail bed be kept in good repair. The road was divided into sections of 5 to 8 miles and a Section Crew assigned to each with responsibility for maintenance and repair. Each crew had a boss and 4 or more workers who were expected to inspect their section of track at least twice each day. If a low joint was found on the track, it would be raised by tamping gravel under it, and if the track had slid out of alignment, that also had to be corrected. In the winter shims were slipped under the rails to raise the track. When a spike was taken out, a wooden spike was driven into the hole; then the spike could be replaced. The crew rode the rails on a hand car propelled by up to four men. Sometime between 1910 and 1915, the hand car was replaced by the faster and more convenient motor car. The motor was a water-cooled stationary engine that would run in either direction. In order to reverse the direction of the car, it and the motor had to be stopped and the motor switched and re-started to run the opposite way.

Working on the Section provided employment for a number of local men. The first Section Boss I remember was Ralph Bakken, who was foreman at Sims, and lived in the section house located on the railroad right-of-way about a mile south of town. The foreman at Curlew was Tollef Christianson who served in that capacity until the railroad was abandoned in 1947. Beas Olson started working as a section



Sims section crew on hand car. Ole Fallgren (boss) — others unidentified — about 1910.

hand in Curlew when he was very young, and after Tollef Christianson built a new home near the railroad, Beas and family moved into the section house in Curlew and lived there until the railroad was re-routed in 1947. The Olson family moved to the section house in Glen Ullin where Beas continued to work on the section until his retirement. Carl Kilen also made section work his life employment, working first on the Curlew section, and then at New Salem after the tracks through the Curlew Valley were pulled. Many other young men in the area worked as section hands, some only during the summer months and others for just a few years until they found other employment.

Oct. 18, 1889—Johnny—of Mandan was arrested yesterday for having placed ties and other obstructions on the Northern Pacific track west of Sims. The discovery that the crime had been committed was made by the section foreman whose hand car was thrown from the track. For over a mile, ties and fish plates were lying across the track and had a train encountered them serious damage and possibly loss of life would have resulted. The boy has made a confession but the object or motive of his act is unknown. He is eleven years of age and is the first subject produced by Mandan for the reform school which was located at that place by the Constitutional Convention.



1910 — Loads of lumber enroute to south branch line of NPRR from Almont.

Section crew wages were about average for those days, and in 1895, they were cut from \$1.35 to \$1.25 per day. Working conditions were not always pleasant as it was all outdoors with the wide range of temperature and weather conditions possible in North Dakota. On the coldest night of winter it was very likely that a contraction would cause a rail to break and the crew, or part of it, would be called out to make immediate repair. The damaged rail would usually be replaced but it could also be cut with a heavy chisel and large mall and then spliced by drilling holes and using bolts and "fish plates." Standard rails were 39 feet long and weighed from 100 to 140 pounds per yard. Rail rests were installed at various locations along the tracks to store spares until they were needed. These rests were built even with the height of a push car so they could be transferred to them with a minimum of lifting. Problems during the summer heat resulted in rail expansion, to the extent that alignment was necessary. Installation of "ribbon steel" in later years has helped correct these situations.

The section crew and the station agent were all expected to be on the alert to detect problems as each train went by. If they noticed a "hot box" (dry wheel bearing) they would signal to the conductor or brakeman by holding their nose. If the trouble was at the front of the train, they would pat their head; if in the middle, they would tap their stomach, and if at the rear, their butt. The car that was in trouble would either be uncoupled and left on a siding, or packed with grease and oil soaked "waste," so it could make it to the repair shop.

Freight train problems were also detected by conductors and brakemen riding in the last car, the "caboose." (Caboose is from the Dutch word "Kabus," meaning cabin house.) The use of this car dates from the 1840's when a conductor set up shop in the last car of a freight train. Other conductors followed his idea and by the 1870's the caboose had evolved into the cupola shaped car with the bay window that is familiar today. It became a little house on wheels with office, kitchen and bunk beds, all necessary because conductors and brakemen spent about as much time in this car as they did at home. The bay windows were extended outward in later years to make it easier to detect problems on the train ahead, such as a hot box.



Train wreck at Blue Grass — 1915.

Torpedoes and flares were used to warn train crews of problems ahead. The torpedoes were small explosive charges which detonated when run over. The flares which produced

a brilliant light when ignited, were about a foot long with a pointed nail in the bottom end so it would stand erect when thrown into a tie.

The section crew was also responsible for upkeep of the right-of-way fence, a continuous fence two hundred feet from the track on both sides. The posts were large split cedar and many are still standing to this day, attesting to their durability; the fence itself was initially a large mesh netting, but was later replaced with five strands of barbed wire in about 1925. Cattle guards were built at all road crossings, as most livestock ran at large during those early years. It was important to the railroad to keep livestock off the track because if an animal were to be injured or killed, the railroad was liable and would have to make settlement with the owner.

The steam locomotives often threw off sparks which could and would set fire to the dead grass along the right-of-way.

Jan. 3, 1892—A snowplow on the Northern Pacific yesterday ran into a lot of cattle, mules and horses near Steele in a cut, killing and wounding twenty-seven.

In order to help prevent prairie fires, the section crew would burn off the grass and undergrowth on the right-of-way each fall. In spite of this, pastures and range lands got burned off in every dry season and the railroad was again liable to the owners of the land for damage done. In the late 1880's or early 1890's, Otto Feland worked with a crew that contracted to plow a fire guard, using four horses and a walking plow, all the way from Mandan to Dickinson.

When a portion of the railroad needed major repairs, a repair gang would be moved in to do the job. These gangs, made up of many men, would be housed and fed at the work site in railroad sleeping and cook cars. Railroad ties used in those early days were not treated so had to be replaced quite often. To help with scheduled replacement, a date nail was driven into the new tie. Some of these date nails can be seen in the Almont Depot at Heritage Park. Sometimes a bridge repair gang would come through to check and make necessary repairs to all abutments and supports.

The railroad rechanneled many of the creeks, especially in the Sims area where the creek meandered a great deal; by doing so they could eliminate the need for many bridges. I remember as a first or second grader, walking to the Rattlesnake cut with the other Sims school children to watch a



Almont Depot — 1909.

steam shovel at work. At that time, it was widening the cut in order to make it more snow free; it was the same kind of shovel that was used to re-channel the creek. I remember that we kids were quite tired after that walk from Sims almost to Almont and back, a round trip of nearly six miles.

All local passenger trains traveled only by day, as a convenience to passengers. Train No. 8, the eastbound local which arrived in Sims at about 10:30 a.m. had had a 10-hour layover in Glendive, Montana. The westbound No. 7 arrived in Sims at about 3:30 p.m. and had laid over the night before, probably somewhere in Minnesota.

At one time there were eight daily passenger trains going through Sims and Almont, trains 2, 4, 6 and 8 eastbound and trains 1, 3, 5 and 7 westbound. Locals 7 and 8 would stop at both Sims and Almont and numbers 3 and 4 would stop if arrangements had been made beforehand. They could also be flag-stopped, using a red and white cloth, at places such as Curlew and other places where there was no depot. The locals would on occasion accommodate a passenger by letting him off the train in the country, probably near his farm. Theodore Feland, who was Morton County Commissioner for many years, and lived on a farm south of Sims, was often given this privilege. His granddaughter, Patty Feland Hinton, tells about riding from Sims to Almont to visit an aunt when she was a young girl. As the train passed the Feland farm, Patty told the conductor that it was her grandfather's farm. The conductor then said, "If you are Theodore Feland's granddaughter, you don't need a ticket, as long as I am the conductor."

The rails were used for both business and pleasure. In the '20's, Marge used the trains to travel to and from New Salem every Saturday to take her piano lesson from Mrs. Rule (the fare, she remembers, was 25¢ each way). The time between trains was long enough for her lesson and a lunch at the only cafe in New Salem — the Hole in the Wall, on Main Street. A fried egg sandwich was their specialty (no hamburgers in those days).

The train depots at Sims, Almont and Curlew provided 24 hour service. The agent's hours were from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and he had a very responsible position. He sold passenger tickets, was responsible for the mail bags, cream cans, egg crates, parcel post and luggage. He also ordered grain, coal, livestock and freight cars and billed them out. He received and sent train orders by telegraph and relayed the messages to the train crew; he sent and received telegrams for individuals and arranged for their delivery (very few phones, if any, to relay messages).

The second trick operator worked from 4 p.m. to 12 midnight and the third trick was from midnight until 8 a.m. These operators sent and received telegraph orders and helped the agent with book work.

The first depot agent whom I remember in Sims was Andrew Holritz. I also remember the black sleeve protectors he always wore to keep the sleeves of his white shirt clean. When his son, Frederick, graduated from 8th grade, the family moved to Almont so he could attend high school there. Andrew served as the Almont depot agent for about six years. Charles Cunningham also served as agent in both Sims and Almont. Walter Bakken was agent at Almont from 1928 until the depot was moved to North Almont in 1947. In 1931 the original depot was gutted by fire, and the Bakkens lost all their belongings, as they had living quarters on the second floor. A smaller depot was built to replace the old and it is

now in the Almont Heritage Park.

When the Almont depot closed in 1947, the building was moved to a siding called North Almont on the new line; Walter Bakken was the first agent there and continued until the station was closed September 30, 1979. He also retired at that time. The last agent and postmaster at Sims was Irvin Olin, who succeeded Simon Johnson. The Sims depot closed in 1947, at the same time Almont's closed. Curlew depot closed about 1920.

Sending messages by telegraph became a reality in 1844. At that time, the Morse Code was introduced, which was a series of dots and dashes which were interpreted by a code. The code message was sent over the telegraph wire by a sender and interpreted by a receiver at the destination end. The dots and dashes spelled the alphabet. For instance: for the name Sig, you would hear 3 dots, 2 dots, 2 dashes and 1 dot. Usually a telegram was only 10 words. My older sister Borghild took up telegraphy at a rather young age. She served as second or third trick operator for the NPRR at various small stations in Montana. It was a lonely life for a young girl. Her last position was in New Salem.

All railroad workers had "bumping" privileges. If a person had more seniority than someone whose position you preferred, you could bump him, or her, and get that position. This was approved by the railroad and union.

In about 1920, block signals were installed at stations, before curves, at other locations where there was poor visibility, and at some road crossings. The purpose of the signal was to warn of an approaching train. If the signal arm was at a 45 degree angle (half way down), it meant the train was still at a distance. If the block signal was all the way down to a 90 degree angle, it indicated the train was very close. The signals also had red, green and yellow lights which were operated by storage batteries. The signal maintainer kept the system working, traveling on the rails with a "speeder," a motor-driven rail car, which was much faster and lighter than the section crew's motor car.

After railroad workers had worked a certain number of years, they were issued an annual pass allowing them and their families to ride on the railroad free of charge. It was also possible to get a trip pass which allowed them to ride on other railroad lines.

Pullman cars were named for George Pullman who, in 1867, installed pull-down sleeping bunks in some passenger coaches.

The real Pullman cars were developed later, providing full sleeping accommodations for passengers traveling long distances, who could afford the luxury of a small private room. President Abraham Lincoln was one of the first to avail himself of this new service. A porter, usually a black person, cared for all the needs of the Pullman passengers.

The dining car was also an additional service for those who could afford it. The meals were served in elegant style — white linen tablecloths and napkins, very good china, many pieces of silverware. Black waiters served the multi-course meal, using all the correct forms of etiquette. Eating in a railroad dining car was an experience that most people never forgot.

Depots were a favorite place to visit, especially when the local passenger trains arrived. There were many things to observe - arriving and departing passengers, mail sack loading off and on the mail car, and the rapid and efficient handling of express packages, cream cans, egg crates and luggage. All

The following fixed price breakfast combinations are available in the Cafe Car on this train

75c			
Choice of Fruit or Cereal Ham or Bacon with Eggs or Corned Beef Hash, Poached Egg			
Toast		Muffins	
Coffee	Tea	Cocoa	
65c			
Choice of Fruit or Cereal Minced Ham with Scrambled Eggs or Bacon with Hot Griddle Cakes or Omelet with Cheese			
Toast		Muffins	
Coffee	Tea	Cocoa	
50c			
Breakfast Bacon with (2) Eggs			
Toast		Hot Muffins	
Coffee	Tea	Cocoa	
50c			
Choice of Fruit and Cereal Orange Marmalade			
Toast		Muffins	
Coffee	Tea	Cocoa	
35c			
Hot Griddle Cakes with Maple Syrup			
Coffee	Tea	Cocoa	
25c			
Toast or Muffins	Coffee	Tea	Cocoa

Dining Car Menu.

Wines and Liquors

<i>Cocktails</i>			
Manhattan . . . . .	.35	Side Car . . . . .	.35
Martini . . . . .	.30	Old Fashioned . . . . .	.35
<i>Liquors and Cordials</i>			
Bourbon Whiskey (American Bond) . . . . .	.40		
Bourbon Whiskey (Over 1 year old) . . . . .	.30		
Blended Whiskey . . . . .	.30		
Scotch Whiskey . . . . .	.50		
Irish Whiskey (Over 10 years old) . . . . .	.45		
Rye Whiskey . . . . .	.40		
Canadian Club Whiskey . . . . .	.40		
Puerto Rico Rum . . . . .	.40		
Gin . . . . .	.30		
Sloe Gin . . . . .	.30		
Brandy . . . . .	.40		
Champagne Cognac (50 years old) . . . . .	.50		
D. O. M. Benedictine . . . . .	.50		
<i>Miscellaneous</i>			
Gin Fizz . . . . .	.40	Golden Fizz . . . . .	.45
Silver Fizz . . . . .	.45	Tom Collins . . . . .	.40
Sloe Gin Rickey . . . . .	.40		
<i>California Wines</i>			
Sauterne	Splits .45	Half Bottle .75	
Old Claret	Splits .45	Half Bottle .75	
Burgundy	Splits .45	Half Bottle .75	
<i>Imported Wines</i>			
Amontillado Sherry	Individual Bottle .40		
Old Port	Individual Bottle .40		
<i>ASSORTED BRANDS BOTTLED BEER</i>			
Domestic Ale	Bottle .30		
<i>Mineral Waters and Gingerale</i>			
White Rock Water	Pint .25	Split .15	
Rock Springs Water	Pint .20	Split .10	
Canada Dry Water	Pint .20	Split .10	
Club Soda	Pint .25	Split .15	
Gingerale	Pint .25	Split .15	
Coca Cola	Bottle .10		
Root Beer	Bottle .10		
Bromo Seltzer	Bottle .20		

Sole of Beer, Wines and Liquors subject to State and Federal Regulations



Northern Pacific Ry.
DINING CAR SERVICE

Form 6509—Revised 10M 1-30

Dining Car Wine and Liquor List — 1939.

of this had to be done speedily as the trains were on a tight schedule and there was no time to waste. We who farmed near the railroad never needed to carry a watch as we could tell the time of day by the passing of the passenger trains.

Horse run-a-ways happened quite frequently at the depots because the horses would get excited from all the commotion and the noise of the train. One time my brother drove to Sims with a single horse and buggy to ship off a can of cream. He got rid of the cream can, but when the engineer pulled the whistle cord to indicate departure, the horse got scared and took off, tipping the buggy and it's contents! The engineers had a standard code for whistle blowing. Two examples are: long, short, long meant the train was approaching a road crossing; two shorts was engineer's answer to any signal "I read you." It was interesting to be able to understand some of the whistles, but in the late 40's we would hear them no more. The familiar sound of a train traveling through Sims or Almont would soon be a thing of the past.

In 1947, the Northern Pacific Railway moved their tracks north — cutting out the "loop," which followed the valley from New Salem to Glen Ullin. The railroad wasn't given up without a fight however — area folks testified at public hearings in an appeal to the NP to reverse their decision to move, but to no avail. The Northern Pacific was too powerful for small-town folks to fight.

The last train to travel the tracks through the valley on that "fateful" night was the North Coast Limited No. 1, on December 6, 1947. The engineer tooted a wailing farewell, which was heard through the town and also by everyone attending the basketball game that evening at the Almont school gym. It was a sad goodbye to a great era. The present generation doesn't realize what they missed in Almont and Sims, when the trains were a vital part of our existence.

The rails were taken up in 1948 and the old ties were sold for 50¢ apiece; local farmers bought most of them. Much of the gravel from the old railroad bed was used for surfacing area roads. Railroad spikes were mixed with the gravel and ruined many car and truck tires. A representative from the FHA in Mandan spent a day in the Almont area and was forced to buy three new tires. It was good business for the tire salesmen! The spikes are no longer a problem — but a stray will sometimes surface on the road.

The deserted railroad bed is the only visible sign of the part railroads made in our area's history.

Railroad Accidents

With the building of the railroad, and the use of much heavy equipment by inexperienced laborers, it seems strange there were so few casualties. Maybe they weren't reported, or made known to the public, as they would be if it were today. I am aware of only two casualties, and both of them were weather related.

On February 1, 1903, the Kurtz section crew was working six miles east of Kurtz (between Curlew and Glen Ullin) when an unexpected blinding snow storm, with a 60 mile-an-hour northwest wind decended on the crew. They could not propel the hand car against the wind, nor would it be safe to do so with nil visibility. Three of the crew took shelter in a nearby farmhouse and the other two decided to walk back to Kurtz. Section foreman, Ole Torgerson (homesteader and brother of Andrew Torgerson) and Nels Skavang (also a homesteader and relative of Andrew Knutson), walked in the

railroad ditch until they came to the railroad bridge, two miles east of Kurtz. They had to cross the creek on the bridge, and weren't aware of an approaching train until it was upon them. Torgerson was killed instantly, but Skavang was found on the "cow catcher" of the locomotive when the train reached Sims. He was alive, but died shortly afterwards.

During another blizzard, a young man, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Stensland, was caught by a train south of Sims. My dad told of having the gruesome and unpleasant task of help-

ing pick up the remains in a wash tub for burial. What a horrible experience that must have been!

A near-fatal accident occurred when Carl Olin was crossing a railroad bridge; he suddenly realized a train was only a short distance away. He could not get to the other end of the bridge in time, so he dropped down between a couple railroad ties and held on until the train passed by. His life was saved, but one of his hands was cut off. ✍️



Talking Things Over

by Patience Strong

*In talking things over, you often find
that the knots and tangles all unwind.*

*In talking things over, it might well be
that a different viewpoint you will see.*

*In talking things over, you get a fresh light
on the whole situation, the wrong and the right.*

*Thrashing it out in a friendly tone
is better than thinking it out alone.*

So don't go around with a harbored grudge.

Don't take a side and refuse to budge.

*For there is no grievance that can't be healed
and there is no problem that will not yield
in talking it over.*

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