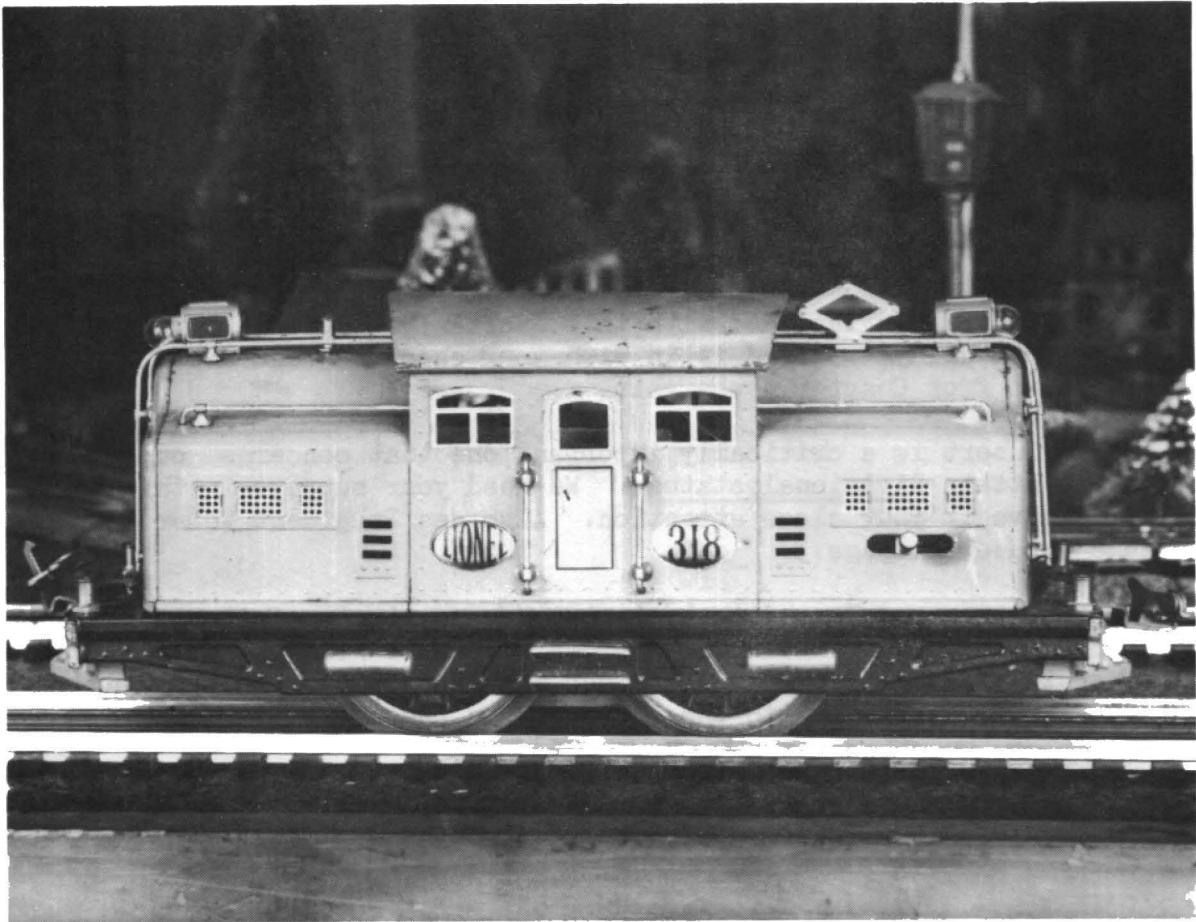


THE DELAWARE VALLEY EXPRESS



TRAIN COLLECTORS
ASSOCIATION

SUMMER, 1977

DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER "EXPRESS" Vol. VII - #3 - Issue 26 Summer, 1977

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

There are two inserts included with this Quarterly. One is your 1978 dues notice. Don't delay - send it in with your check now and avoid the risk of being dropped from Chapter membership.

The second insert is a critically important one that concerns our Chapter's efforts to attain Divisional status. We need your support in this endeavor, so please give it your close attention. Also see President Weber's column on the same subject on page 3.

In this issue we are pleased to begin two new continuing features by Robert Robinson. One is The Train Shopper in which Bob will review new products, starting with Pride Lines Ltd. The other is a photo contest depicting various Factory Errors, starting with the 318 shown on the cover.

In the works for future issues are articles by Nick Ladd, Dick Knowles, Glenn Stinson, Dick Robinson and others. How about an article from you!

CREDITS

Front Cover - Lionel 318 from the Bob Robinson collection. See Factory Error contest on page 6.

Pages 10-11 - "Toy Trains Hold Fans" is reprinted from the December, 1937 issue of The Mutual Magazine, official publication of The Mutual Beneficial Association of Pennsylvania Railroad Employees, Inc. From the paper collection of Joe Kearney.

Back Cover - A miniature Disney set poses in front of its big brother O ga counterpart. O ga loco and tender are from the "Mickey Mouse Meteor" set. The 16" miniature set (slightly larger than N ga) is marked "Donald Duck RR" on the tender and "Mickey Mouse Express" on the boxcar. Both are by Marx and are tin litho wind-ups. From the Ed Pinsky collection.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

As you will see when you read the special letter accompanying this Quarterly, we are still petitioning the National Board of Directors to allow the D.V.C. to become a Division. You may recall that we asked all Chapter members (as well as all TCA members residing within our geographical area) to vote on this matter in the spring of 1976. Upon receiving a huge "yes" vote, we applied to National at the Philadelphia Convention last summer for this change in status. The National B.O.D. rejected our request until after a study on the reorganization of the TCA National Board was returned from committee. We automatically assumed that we would be on the agenda for the 1977 B.O.D. meeting but it turns out that we weren't! In the meantime, the National B.O.D. rejected the report of the reorganization committee thereby retaining the status quo of the Divisions, and hence, the makeup of the National Board. Since National "overlooked" us we have re-applied to be added to the agenda at the next B.O.D. meeting. This will occur sometime around the fall York meet if they can get up a quorum. In any event, we will be on the agenda for the next meeting and, I can assure you, at least two of your Chapter officers will be there to carry the ball. I hope to be able to report in the next DVC Quarterly that we have become a Division!!! (How about changing our name to the Mid Atlantic Division --M.A.D.-- and then adopting Alfred E. Neumann into the herald?)

I feel that I should also report on the status of the Chapter souvenir. We have had three prototype trolleys made up for the Chapter Board's (and later your) consideration: A 4-wheel trolley for approximately \$35-40; an eight-wheel trolley for approximately \$50-60; and a heavy interurban in about the \$75 bracket. We have temporarily tabled this project for three reasons: (1) the potential drain on the Chapter treasury; (2) until we get some idea from you (probably later next year) on which model you like, if any; and (3) we were not happy with the shipping damage our samples received. Meanwhile, we are pushing ahead with an MPC freight car similar to what other Chapters and Divisions are doing. Depending on how things work out, we might have such a car as early as the January Polar Bear Meet. It will probably be a quad hopper.

Good Train Collecting,

Charlie Weber

NOTICE

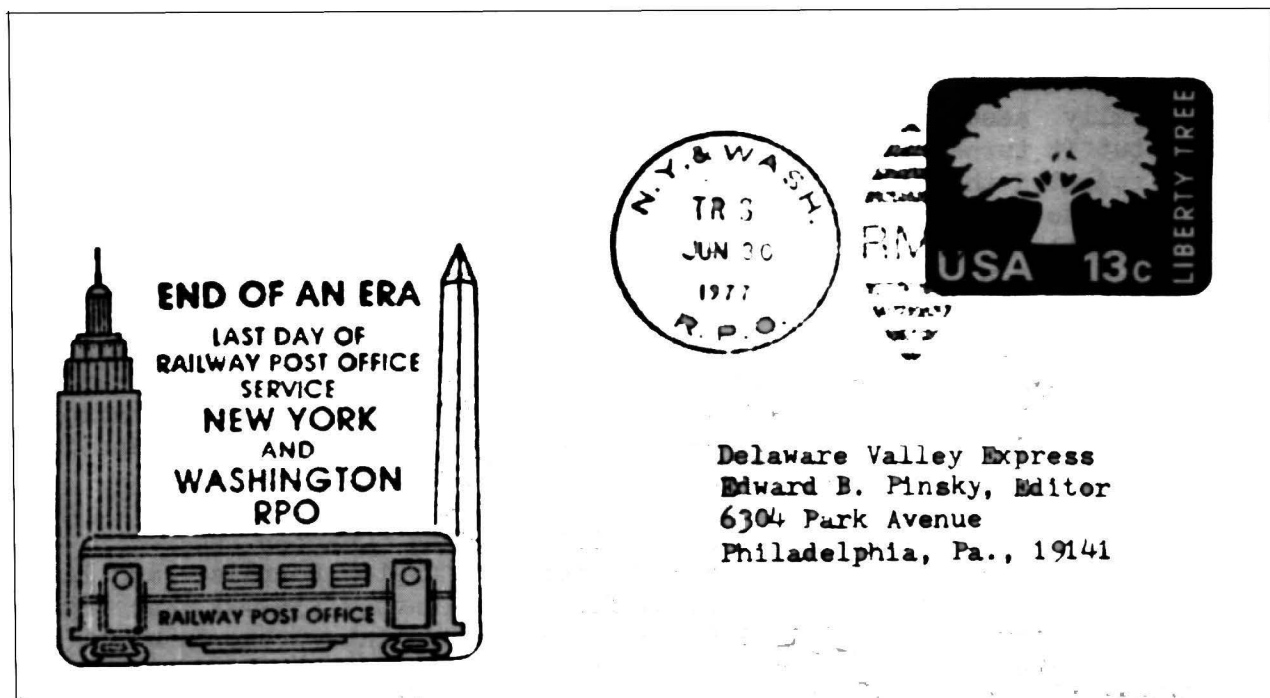
BOSTON NATIONAL CONVENTION 1978

NOTICE

The 24th National Convention will be held in Boston in June of 1978. Several scattered motels will be utilized for convention lodging. Bob Robinson has arranged for a reserved block of rooms in one motel for all DVC members. In order to be included, contact Bob before March, 1978. A Chapter "happy hour" is promised, etc. There is nothing like being with friends in an unfamiliar place. If interested, write (do not phone!) Bob at 1112 Shaw Drive, Ft. Washington, PA., 19034 indicating the rooms required. No promises on room rates.

RAILWAY POST OFFICE - ANOTHER END OF AN ERA

The toy train mail cars pictured in this article are memories of the past. Now the real cars join them as they too come to an end. After 113 years of post office trains, the last runs (one in each direction between New York City and Washington, D.C.) were made on June 30, 1977.



The R.P.O. service in its heyday covered 1,500 different routes, used 4,000 specially-designed cars and had over 30,000 employees. These postal workers sorted and processed the mail as the trains moved over their routes. Elimination of the service is envisioned as an economy measure - and so ends yet another era.



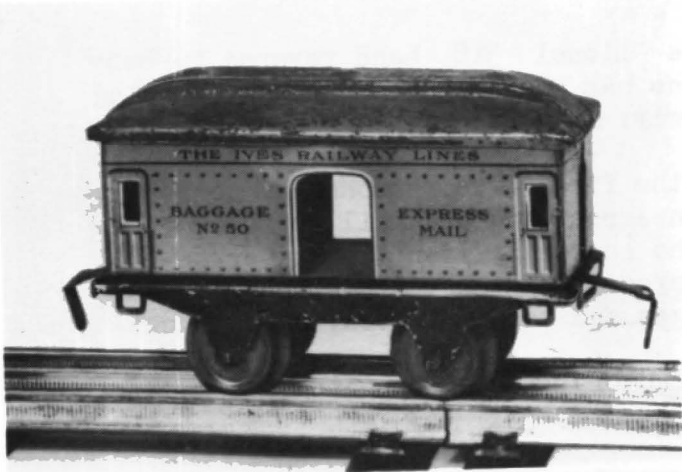
LIONEL 1866



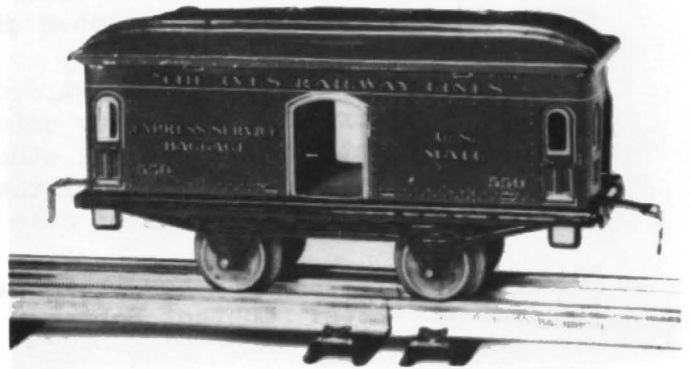
LIONEL 3428

RAILWAY POST OFFICE

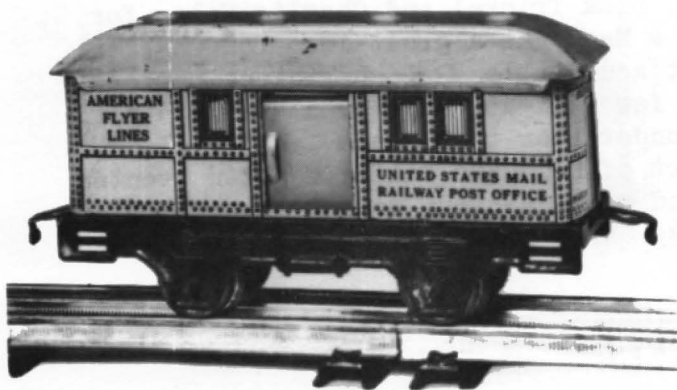
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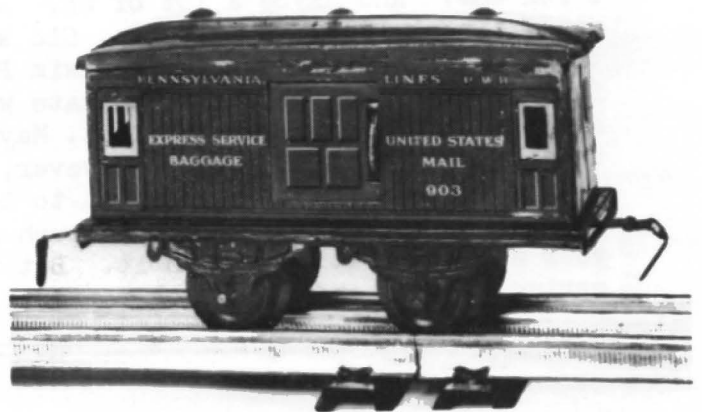
IVES 50 (Orange)



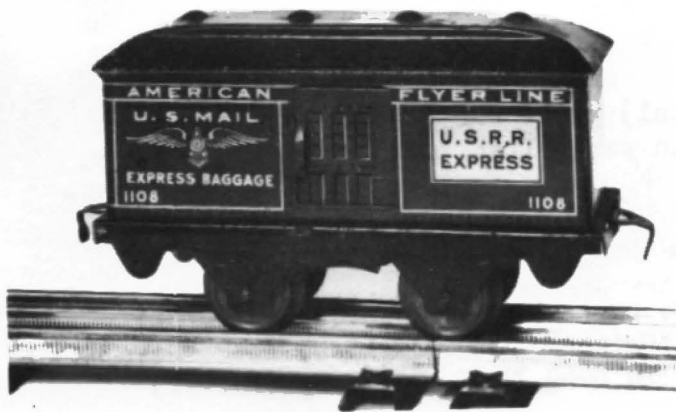
IVES 550 (Olive)



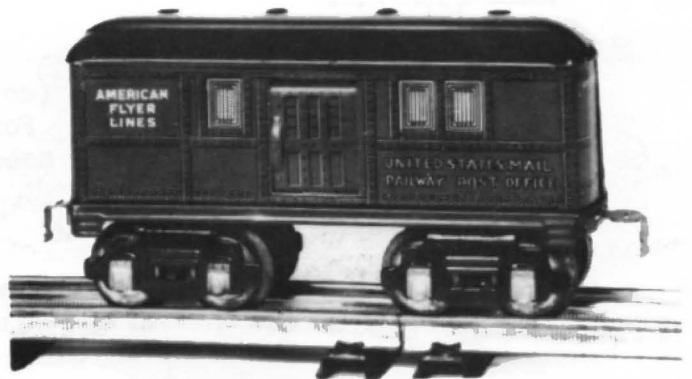
AF 1205 (Orange)



FANDOR 903 (Maroon)



AF 1108 (Maroon)



AF 1285 (Blue)

FACTORY ERROR CONTEST

By Bob Robinson

On the front cover of this issue is a nice Lionel 318 hand reverse in baby state brown with black frame. This engine has a major factory manufacturing error which is on the photographed side only.

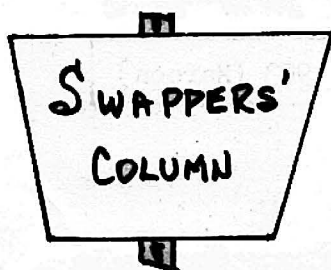
Free DVC Meet passes will be awarded to the first five persons who correctly identify the error. Write your answer on a postcard and mail to the Editor. Names of contest winners and all others who correctly identify the error will be published in the next issue of the "Express." Subsequent issues will have similar contests using items of other gauges and manufacturers. Good luck!

Editor's Note: Wanted - toy trains with factory errors to photograph and use in these contests. Contact Bob.

A SHORT OBITUARY TO A FINE IDEA

By Phil Ritter

I for one, and maybe a lot of us, appreciate your creative effort and planning. Thank you, Bob Robinson, Sid Weiss, Dick Trickel and Charlie Weber for trying. The DVC Mermaid Lake Swim Party & Meet was a great idea for Chapter fellowship. We are sorry the date wasn't acceptable for sufficient members and hope the concept is not lost. Maybe a few well-attended events are better than several smaller ones. However, an underwater train race and a clock-work diving competition have got to be part of Delaware Valley Chapter events some time. How about a Buddy-L push-around or a Keystone rodeo? I appreciate your attempt; it was worth it. But thanks also for cancelling when the spring unwound and the track ran out.



See TCA Directory for addresses.
Send your free ads to the Editor.

FOR SALE Large variety of cast (soft metal) parts for tinsplate trains, cast iron trains and toys. For train parts list, send two stamps. For toy parts, state your needs.

Dick Trickel 67-1905

WANTED Will swap my left you know what, or cash, for a Unique Lines Circus set - the variation with "Unique" on the sides, not "Jewel Tea." Also want anything weird in 6464 boxcars (my specialty!)

Charlie Weber 68-2126

THE TRAIN SHOPPER

By Bob Robinson

An Analysis Of New Products Offered To The Train Collector And Hobbyist

PRIDE LINES LTD.

For this first product review, I have chosen the reproduction Lionel trolleys #101 and #1100 manufactured by Pride Lines Ltd., which were purchased for my own collection. The owners of Pride Lines are John and Joyce Davanzo, of Babylon, Long Island. Both are old-time collectors of early tinsplate trains and are well-known in collecting and TCA circles.

Every commercial product has its unique packaging method. Pride Lines trolleys come in a large, strong box reminiscent of Lionel or Ives standard gauge. The lid has a full cover, color label depicting a boy and his trolley. The boy, dressed in 1915-era clothes, looks like a Lionel or Ives kid but is really John's son, Frank, proudly showing off his trolley. The box is a basic set box with a good, strong, cut-out partition inside to hold the trolleys in place and secure them from damage. The inside of the lid has a large, pasted-in sheet giving the background of the original summer trolleys. Enclosed in the box are a nice B&W descriptive flyer of all the trolleys manufactured by Pride Lines, a separate instruction sheet and a guarantee.



THE TRAIN SHOPPER

(Continued)

I carefully removed my two trolleys from the box. #101 is powered and #1100 is an unpowered trailer. They appear to be very well made. Bodywise, they are excellent reproductions, both dimensionally and as regards faithfulness to original detail. They have a good paint job in Lionel's colors of red and cream that will certainly age towards original in years to come. The material used is 28 gauge tinplate steel of hand-soldered construction. There are some minor assembly details that are not like the original Lionel model. The motor and frame assembly is attached to the body with modern round-head screws and hex nuts. The original used filuster-head screws and square nuts. The couplers are held in place with tubular rivets whereas the original had a soldered pin over which the coupler was placed and the pin end then deformed. The only objectionable feature which seriously departs from original is a plastic socket headlight and lens in the #101. It just doesn't look right and from a purist standpoint is objectionable. However, if you want a functioning headlight, you'll probably be satisfied. Included with the trolleys are 36 removable figures of men, women and children to sit on the bench seats. They add a nice touch and bring the trolley to life as it runs around my layout.

Now about that running. In fairness to Pride Lines, my set travelled to Houston and then to Philadelphia by private auto, a distance of about 4,000 miles, and may have not received the gentlest treatment along the way. To be specific, when I proudly set my trolley on track (Gargraves) for the first time and turned the current on, nothing happened. A gentle push and it feebly went into a sputtering, faltering six inch forward movement, then stopped dead. Examination showed that there was no spring tension in the original-type spoon-shoe current collector. I removed the collector, stretched the spring, put it back together, set it on the track and hit the juice again. More sputtering and more movement, but still not right. To correct the running, I removed the brushes and filed them concave to fit the armature. One brush wire was loose. I cleaned the armature and reassembled the motor. Now the motor runs - and runs very well.

The trolley has serious traction problems on Gargraves track, in fact it will not run! The motor has power but the wheels just won't grip the rails. (I thought I was driving my car on ice.) I figured I better try it on Lionel track so I removed my Lionel #2 trolley from its figure-eight Lionel track and put the Pride Lines #101 to another test. A bit of juice and away it went - a lot different than on Gargraves track! A close examination of Pride Lines reveals that the drive wheels are straight knurled to increase grip whereas Lionel's are smooth. The Pride Lines drive wheels do not have a flange that tapers towards the hub like all old toy trains have. Instead, the drive wheel flange is parallel-faced and 90° to the axle. Perhaps this has something to do with the poor traction. (The original Lionel #2 and #10 interurban that I have both run fine on Gargraves track, as does my Williams #8 repro.) When running, the knurled drive wheels whine quite similar in sound to a turbine, whereas the Lionel original is very quiet. Pride Lines needs some work in the 'traction' aspect if it is to compare with its original prototype.

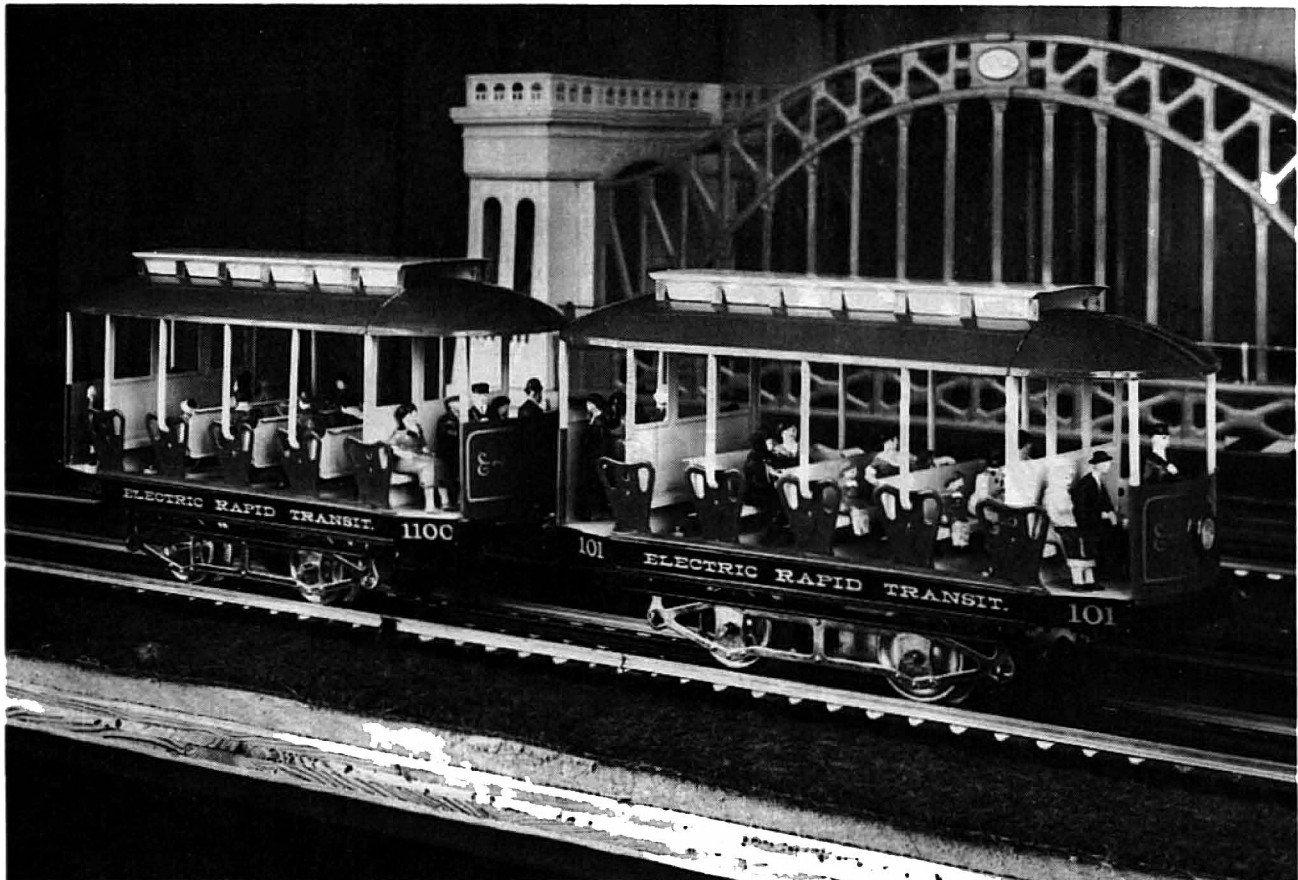
THE TRAIN SHOPPER

(Concluded)

Physically, the Pride Lines motor and frame closely match the original prototype and in some cases, such as its 6-pole armature, is better than the original. The same type #101 trolley repro that I am reviewing here has been running daily at the TCA Museum, getting extremely hard usage and has been holding up quite well with only normal maintenance.

The Pride Lines #101 set currently sells for \$375.00 plus \$5.00 postage and can be ordered directly from the manufacturer at Babylon (or see John at a DVC Meet and save the \$5.00). All sets have an unconditional one year parts and labor guarantee and you just can't ask for anything better than that. Custom colors are available at no extra charge. Normal delivery time is 2-3 weeks for standard models and slightly longer for custom colors. You can order a trolley without the headlight or with an original Lionel-type headlight which I wish I had done. One last word - the trolley floor has "Pride Lines" embossed in it to properly identify the product. If it didn't, a lot of us could easily be fooled by an unscrupulous person as a little aging here and there plus some switching of motor parts and you just couldn't tell this one from the original. Overall, the Pride Lines product is an accurate reproduction of the original Lionel model and is of excellent quality throughout. I am pleased with and proud of my set.

Pride Lines is bringing out other trolley reproductions of the Lionel line. If they are as good as this one, I'll be joining the "Trolley of the Month Club."



Toy Trains Hold Fans

*Hobbyists Run Their Own Railroad
"Systems" Spend Thousands*

By LARRY NIXON

Reprinted by Permission of The New York Times

AMERICA'S great railroads, determined to regain patronage lost during the depression, have made many new friends with their air-conditioning, streamlining, more comfort for passengers and faster schedules. With this added interest in the rails has also come an increase in the number of railway hobbyists—those who build their own "systems," and watch eagerly for anything new on tracks. Consider, for example, the following news items in a magazine devoted to Model Railroading:

The Bergen & Essex Railroad is constructing ten new freight cars. The Vernon Valley System has been dissolved, the Metropolitan Electric being organized in its territory. The West Penn lines have installed a number of Egolf couplers. Automatic Hall-Type signals will be used by the Brink Road in the near future.

The B. & E., the West Penn and thousands of other well-equipped and organized railroads have their entire systems operating indoors. Their rails are steel or brass, and their ties come to the construction departments by parcel post. They are scale-model railroads—stations, switches, roadbed, track and trains built in

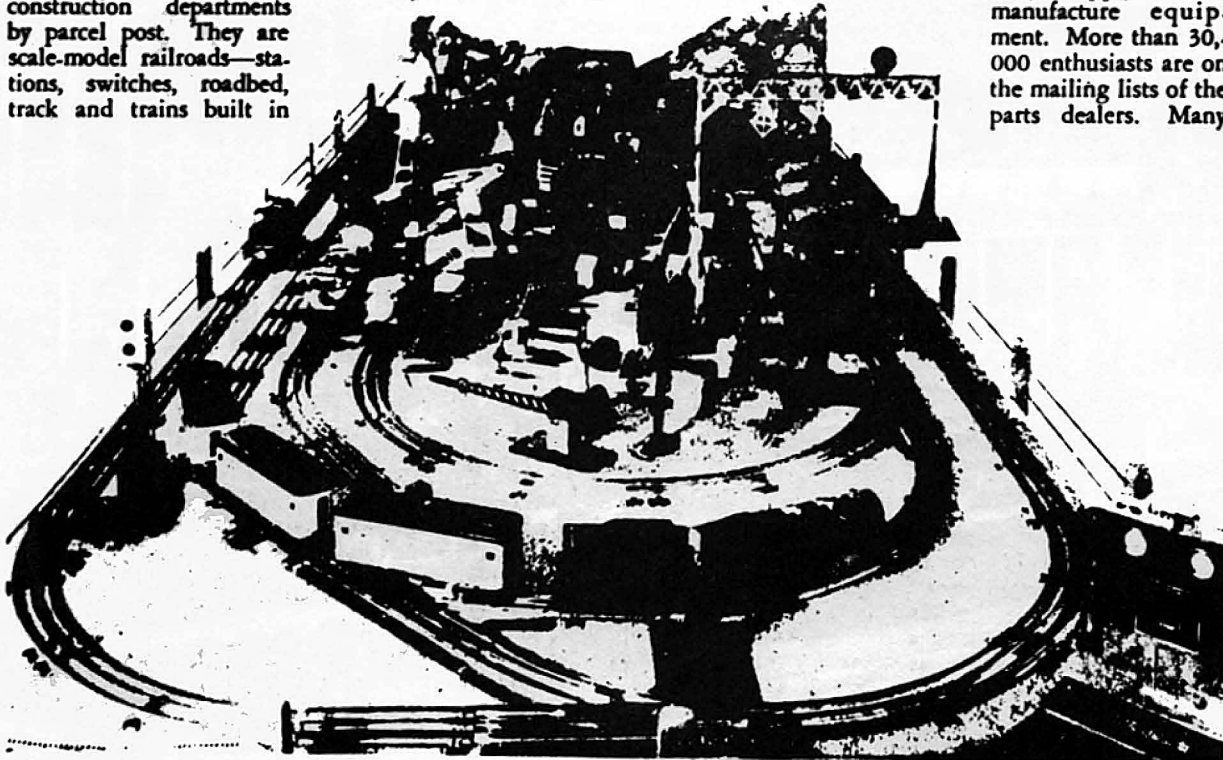
miniature, except scale models of transcontinental lines.

Model railroading is a serious hobby, one that is enjoyed by men and women, young and old. The total invested in track, roadbed, stations and rolling stock would be several million dollars, by the most conservative of estimates. Down in San Antonio more than \$80,000 is said to have been spent by one fan. His systems are housed in a shed 100 feet wide and almost 200 feet long.

HOBBY TAKES SPACE

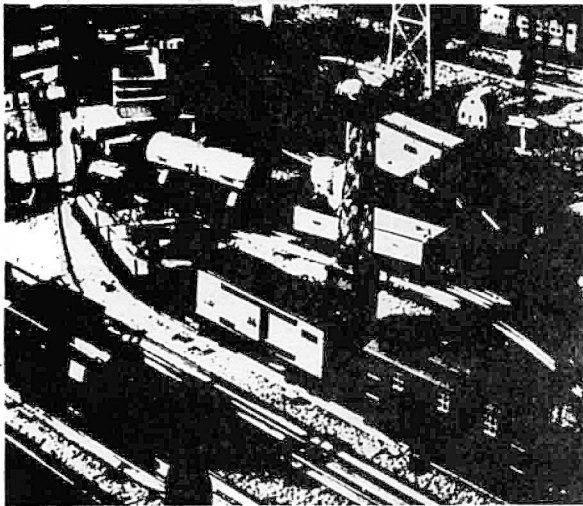
The setting up of a scale-model railroad is not at all a matter of clearing the space around the tree on Christmas Eve. Transportation systems require room. They need the biggest room in the house—attics get too small and once the virus gets into their veins owners start looking for halls or sheds nearby—no normal residence can properly house a four-track system.

And the hobby supports quite an industry. Fifty or sixty supply houses manufacture equipment. More than 30,000 enthusiasts are on the mailing lists of the parts dealers. Many



"THE LITTLE FELLOWS"

On these two pages is shown the result of ten years' accumulation of a miniature railroad by Editor Mecouch and his son. To get it off the floor at Christmas and permit all-year operation, a table was built to house this collection of "O" gauge equipment, made by a standard manufacturer. Close-ups of the yard and position light signals are shown on this page



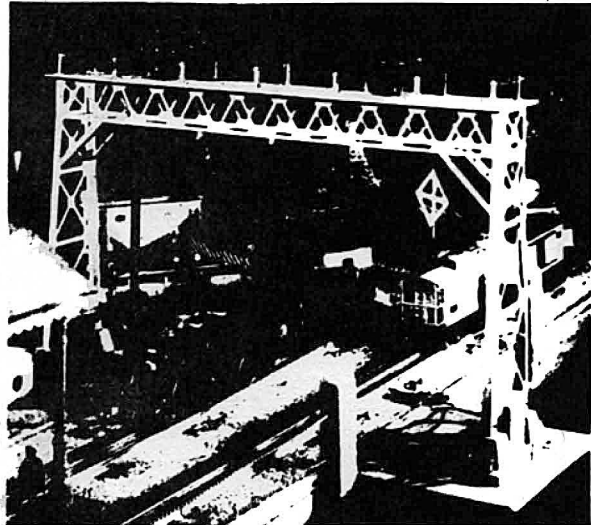
"railroaders" build their own. Magazines publish blue prints and plans for engines and cars, switch systems and station houses—owners eagerly await every issue of *The Model Railroader*, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, magazine of the hobby, and also watch for news in *Railroad Stories* and other publications.

It is easy to start, because the fan who wants to get his railroad operating in a hurry can buy whatever he does not want to build—complete systems or odd units. Cars and engines are offered for sale all set up and ready to operate—or with the parts ready for screw driver assembly. Gondola type coal or gravel cars, ready to roll, sell for as little as 95 cents. The parts for constructing such a gondola retail for 60 cents. A Pullman sleeper, with observation platform, sells for \$3.25—the parts alone would cost \$1.75.

ATTRACTIVE CATALOGUES

Model railroad catalogues are fascinating affairs. Black cardboard ties at \$1.50 per thousand and a storage shed with ten bales of cotton awaiting shipment, at \$1.75, stare out from the pages of the price list of a Rhode Island supply house. All the material necessary for fifty feet of "O" gauge track retails for \$7—with a thousand real wood ties. Motive power costs more money—a Baltimore concern advertises "O" gauge freight engines, built complete in replicas of four different famous railroad's best loadpullers, at \$70 to \$75 each. The cheapest locomotive offered in a recent issue of *The Model Railroader* was priced at \$35.

Model railroading clubs are to be found in many places. One in Cleveland has twenty-five members, and a room sixty by twenty-three feet, all surrounded by tracks and switches. The South Bend, Indiana, Club has



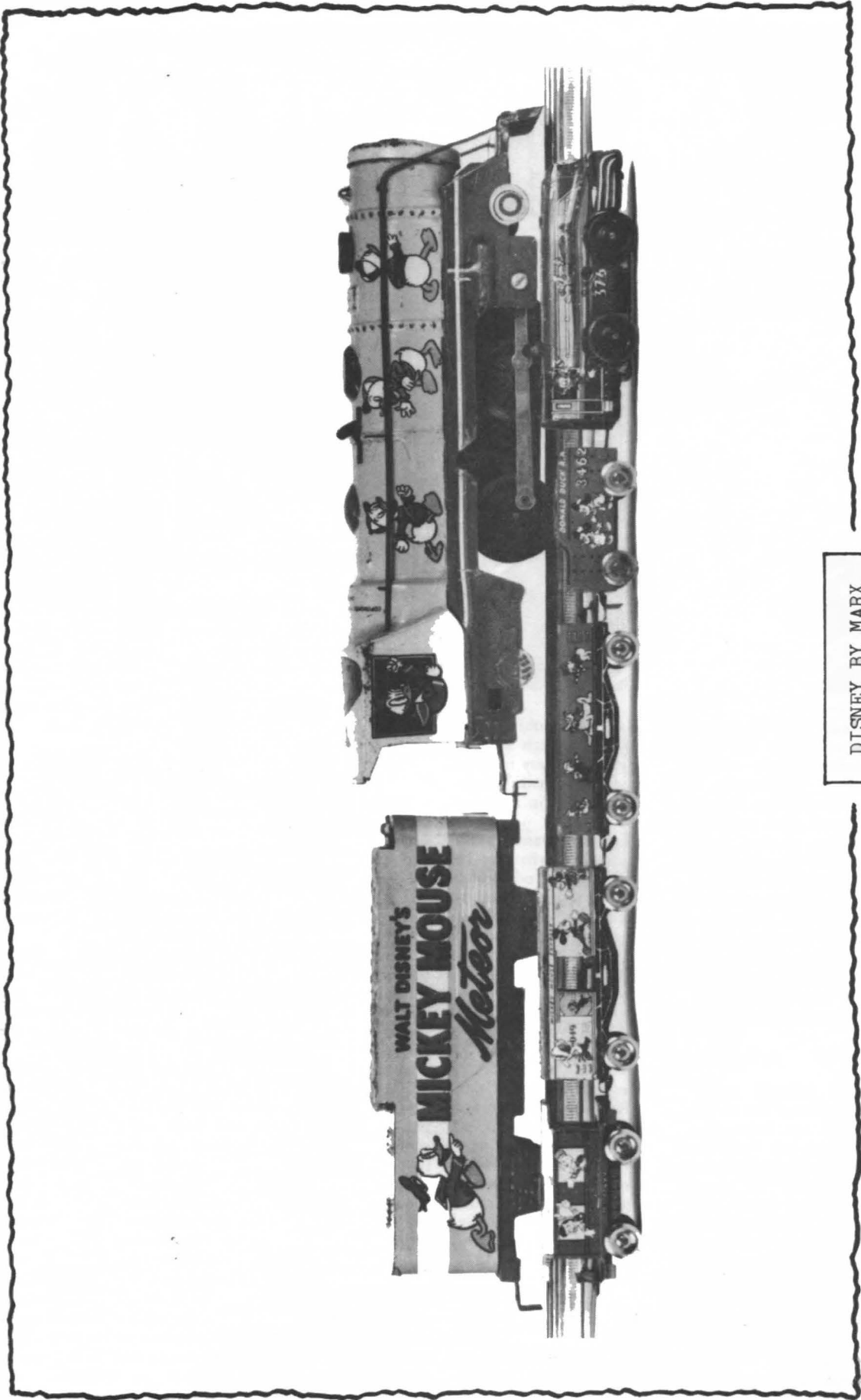
its quarters in an old Interurban car parked in the South Shore yards. The Detroit organization is located in private homes. Members gather regularly to swap experiences and gossip, to use the club drills and other tools for the construction of parts—and to operate the club railroad, which may be a four-track system replete with switches, cross-overs and tunnels and such.

SPEEDS OF THE MODELS

Model trains are geared to run at speeds that are greater than one forty-eighth of standard railroad speeds, however. Long articles appear in trade journals, and railroaders argue about speeds, but in the final analysis the answer seems to be: "Run your trains as fast as looks right—yet is safe on curves." In most cases this boils down to 100 scale miles per hour on passenger trains, and about 10 per cent slower for freight.

Prices of equipment are getting lower, according to old-timers, and a steady growth in the number of enthusiasts in the past year has made it probable that prices will stay down for all time—increasing the number of little engines tooting their way around curves over brass rails and paper ties.

A visit to a model railroad club is almost certain to arouse the enthusiasm of the visitor. The roads are built on tables or stands about four feet from the floor. Dispatchers sit at boards and work out train movements; switchmen sit before a panel board and throw levers that click distant switches, swinging trains from track to track. Freights take sidings, while passengers thunder by toward the distant terminal. Turntables in work shops are slowly revolved as the iron horses roll into the roundhouse for shop work. One hears the whistles and bells, sees the switch lights blink; block signals change and semaphores swing down to indicate that a clear track lies ahead, the sense of reality grows and grows until in a few minutes only the coldest scoffers can resist a desire to join in the operation of the line. Those not ready for a new hobby should stay away from the gleaming rails.



DISNEY BY MARX