

ROCKY MOUNTAIN



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No. 1

MIDLAND TERMINAL

Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and their guests — 169 strong — bid a fitting farewell to the Midland Terminal Railway February 6th when they rode the last passenger train to run over the historic bonanza railroad.

The equipment was in fitting with the pike's historic past. At the head end, brave in new paint, was number 59, a sturdy 2-8-0 type built in 1898. Behind were two wooden Rio Grande combines, a combine which once rolled on the Cripple Creek Short Line and, last but not least, a fine old wooden observation car. This observation car was formerly coach 111 of the Colorado Midland — built by Pullman in 1887.

We couldn't have asked for a better day. A bright sun shone down out of an almost cloudless sky, making for perfect visibility and photographic conditions. We are indebted for the fine weather, at least in part, to fervent prayers uttered by Ed. Haley, club president.

It was a most successful trip. No one aboard the train will ever forget the breathtaking view from the main line near Elkton. The Sangre De Cristo range, the Continental Divide itself, even Harvard, Princeton and Yale peaks far to the west were visible.

Nor can we forget the people along the line who waved at us while taking a final look at 'their train.' Or the many motorists who paced us on the adjoining highway.

It was a fitting farewell to one of the most romantic of railroads.

ABANDONMENT

Dismantling of the Midland Terminal marks the end of 54 romance-packed years of railroading in the Cripple Creek District. The thrilling story of transportation to and from the "greatest Gold camp on earth" is long and complicated so we can only skim the surface here.

The birth of Cripple Creek railroading actually took place in 1892, when some citizens of Florence, Colorado, incorporated and soon constructed a toll road from that point up narrow, winding Phantom Canon to the newly-blossoming boom town. The rapid growth of Cripple Creek made it obvious, however, that a better means of transportation was needed. The Florence and Cripple Creek railroad was incorporated by many of the same individuals who had built the toll road, with the important addition of David Moffat. Indeed, some of the original F.& C.C. track utilized portions of the road.

Construction crews made the dirt -- and rocks -- fly, and on July 4, 1894, the first slim-gauge passenger train chugged into Cripple Creek, using borrowed Rio Grande motive power and rolling stock. However, the F.& C.C. had barely nosed out a big rival.

Construction on this rival -- the Midland Terminal -- began in 1893, about the same time as that on the F.& C.C. Progress, however, was much slower. This standard-gauge line was pushed southward from Divide station on the old Colorado Midland, to Gillette, Cameron, Victor and finally Cripple Creek. While tracks reached the mining district in 1894, operation into the town of Cripple Creek proper did not begin until December 19, 1895.

With good transportation assured, Cripple Creek, Victor and the smaller towns in the district thrived. Production skyrocketed to 24 million dollars worth of gold ore in 1900. Population figures for the mining district at this time ranged from 50,000 to 70,000 persons in the six-mile-square area.

The two railroads thrived along with Cripple Creek. Ore trains rolled day and night from the mines to smelters at Colorado City (now part of Colorado Springs) and Florence. Travelers and tourists jammed passenger trains to and from the new Golconda. Profits were enormous.

So enormous, in fact, that when a flood wrecked the F.& C.C. a year after its completion, it had already paid for itself. Of course, the line was promptly rebuilt. In fact, flash floods roaring down Phantom Canon's narrow sluiceway smashed the narrow-gauge pike several times in its career. Business was so good, however, that each time the line was repaired, until ----. But we are getting ahead of our story.

As often happens, the owners of the railroads were not satisfied with their profits. They wanted more. In 1899, the owners of the two roads joined forces. A holding company originally known as the Denver and Southwestern Railway Company (later the Cripple Creek Central) gained control of both the M.T. and the F.& C.C. The same interests also controlled smelters at Colorado City and Florence. Once this was accomplished, the "trust" began to bleed mine owners by means of higher freight and smelting rates.

But the mine owners decided there was a way to avoid this squeeze play. They owned and operated the Cripple Creek District Railway, an interurban line running between Cripple Creek and Victor by way of the upper summits. This famous "high line" had been built in 1898.

"Why not build our own railroad?" thought they.

They did!

This road, the famous Colorado Springs and Cripple Creek District (known as the Short Line) was completed in 1901. It swung around to the mining district south of Pikes Peak, utilizing tunnels, trestles, great fills and much heavy construction generally. Spurs and branches were built in the Cripple Creek District, and a second interurban route between Victor and Cripple Creek -- the "low line" -- was built. The mine owners also built their own smelter at Colorado City.

Freight and smelter rates immediately dropped back to their normal levels and the mine owners emerged victorious. From 1901 until 1912, Cripple Creek was served by no less than three railroads. It was the high point of Cripple Creek rail transportation. A few developments did take place during this period. In 1906, the Colorado and Southern bought control of the Short Line. In 1911, the F.& C.C. leased the Short Line and, once more, all railroads into the district were under a single control.

This little railroad empire first began to crumble the following year. In July, 1912, a flood in Phantom Canon wrecked miles of the F.& C.C.'s track and roadbed. The owners felt that the narrow-gauge was no longer needed in the scheme of things at Cripple Creek, and in 1914 the undamaged track was dismantled south of Wilbur station in the upper canon. Some mines in the district were served only by narrow-gauge track, making it necessary to continue switching service on the

M I D D L A N D T E R M I N A L R A I L W A Y

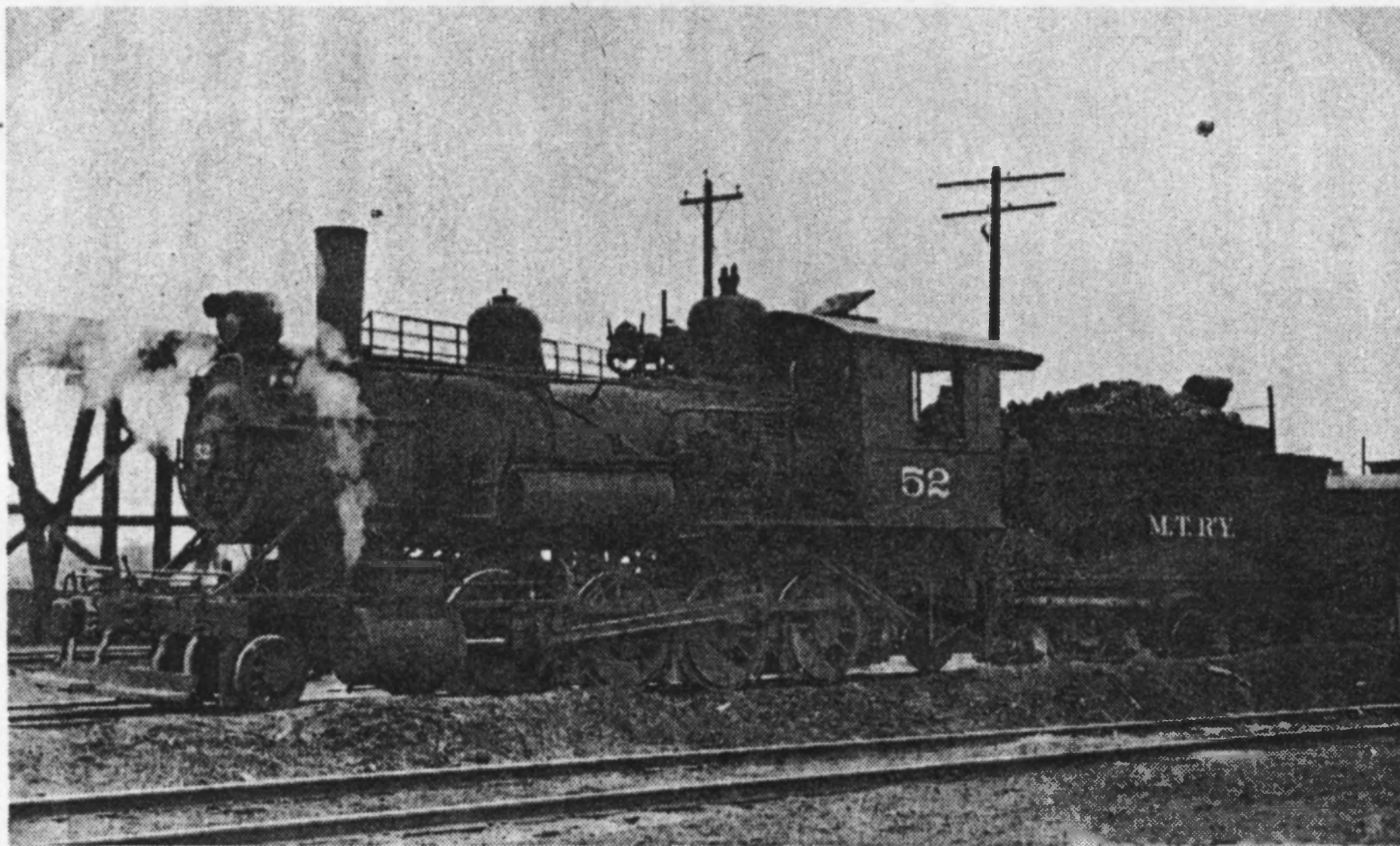
Roster of Motive Power

No.	Wheel Arrange.	Cyls.	Drs.	B.P.	Total Weight	T. E.	Builder	Builders No.	Date Built	Remarks
52	2-8-0	21"x 26"	52"	180#	154000#	33621#	Baldwin	#15131	1/1897	Ex C.M. 50. Scrapped by 12/1948.
53	2-8-0	21"x 26"	52"	180#	154000#	33621#	Baldwin	#15134	1/1897	Ex C.M. 53. Scrapped by 12/1948.
54	2-8-0	21"x 26"	52"		150000#		Schenec.	# 4427	4/1896	Ex M.T. 1. Scrapped by 12/1948.
55	2-8-0	21"x 26"	52"		150000#		Schenec.	# 4428	4/1896	Ex M.T. 2. Scrapped by 12/1948.
56	2-8-0	21"x 26"	52"		150000#		Schenec.	# 4429	4/1896	Ex M.T. 3. Scrapped between 11/1947 and 12/1948.
57	2-8-0	21"x 26"	52"		150000#		Schenec.	# 4430	4/1896	Ex M.T. 4. Scrapped by 12/1948.
58	2-8-0	21"x 26"	52"		150000#		Schenec.	# 4431	4/1896	Ex M.T. 5. Scrapped 3/1949.
59	2-8-0	20"x 26"	52"		150000#		Schenec.	# 4741	4/1898	Ex M.T. 6.
60	2-8-0	21"x 26"	52"		150000#		Schenec.	# 5178	7/1899	Ex M.T. 7.
61	2-8-0	21"x 28"	51"	185#	194280#	38070#	Brooks	#47769	5/1910	Ex C&M 174, 510. Purchased 1938. Rebuilt to 2-8-2 and back to 2-8-0.
62	2-8-2	20"x 28"	48"	180#	196000#	35700#	Brooks	#55490	11/1915	Ex CR&NW 70. Purchased 1940. Sold NOM #200, 12/48
63	2-8-2	20"x 28"	48"	180#	196000#	35700#	Brooks	#58164	8/1917	Ex CR&NW 74. Purchased 1940. Sold NOM #201, 12/48
64	2-6-0	21"x 28"	50"	190#	154500#	40000#	Lima	# 8385	1/1944	Ex USA 4051. Purchased 1946. Rebuilt from 0-6-0. Sold N&PBL, Portsmouth, Virginia.
65	2-6-0	21"x 28"	50"	190#	154500#	40000#	Schenec.	#70410	11/1942	Ex USA 4028. Purchased 1946. Rebuilt from 0-6-0. Sold N&PBL, Portsmouth, Virginia.
66	2-6-0	21"x 28"	50"	190#	154500#	40000#	Lima	# 8384	1/1944	Ex USA 4050. Purchased 1946. Rebuilt from 0-6-0. Sold N&PBL, Portsmouth, Virginia.
4064	0-6-0	21"x 28"	50"	190#	154500#	40000#	Lima	# 8398	3/1944	Intended to be M.T. 67. Purchased 1946. Sold N&PBL, Portsmouth, Virginia.
4070	0-6-0	21"x 28"	50"	190#	154500#	40000#	Lima	# 8404	3/1944	Intended to be M.T. 68 or 69. Purchased 1946. Sold N&PBL, Portsmouth, Virginia.
4014	0-6-0	21"x 28"	50"	190#	154500#	40000#	Schenec.	#70390	10/1942	Intended to be M.T. 69 or 68. Purchased 1946. Sold N&PBL, Portsmouth, Virginia.
101	Motor				36520#	4217#				Two Buda Lanova Diesel engines: 118 HP @ 2200 RPM.
102	Motor				36520#	4217#				Capacity 12 tons, 8 passengers.

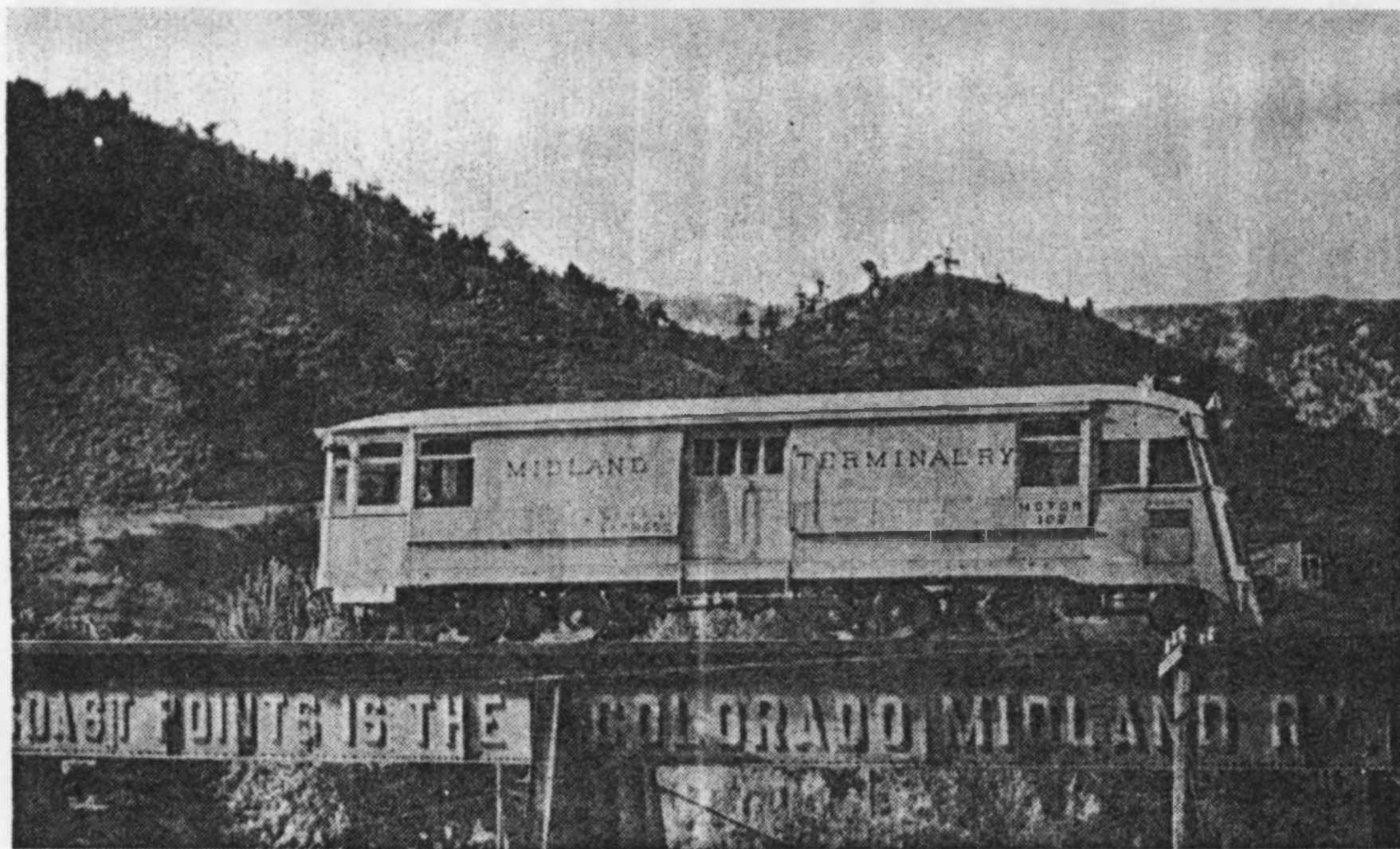
NOM — Nord-Oeste de Mexico (Mexico Northwestern)
N&PBL — Norfolk and Portsmouth Belt Line

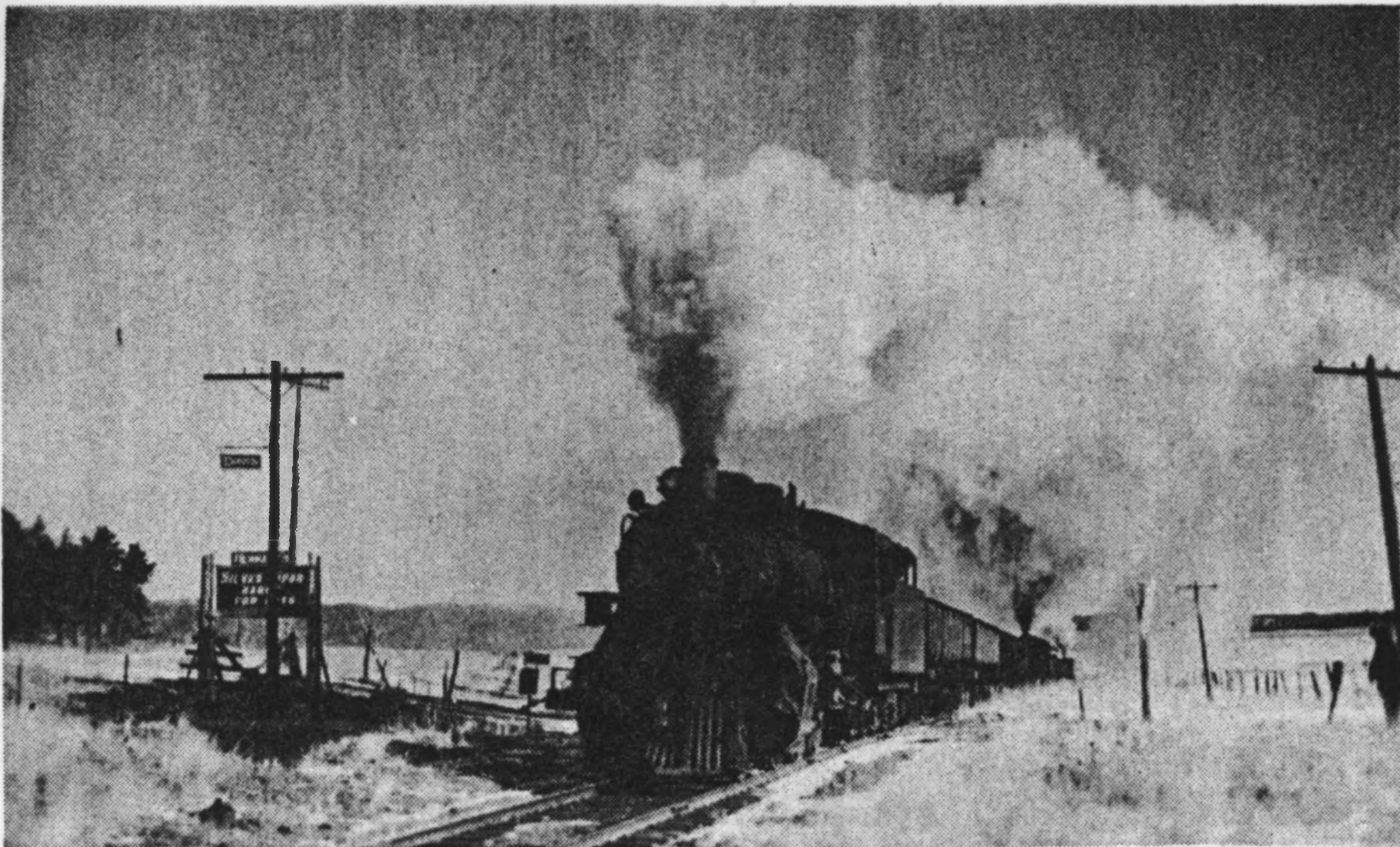
Compiled from data furnished by G. M. Best, R. H. Kindig, and Donald Duke.

Midland Terminal 52, former C.M. 50, switching at Colorado Springs in May, 1939. Dick Kindig

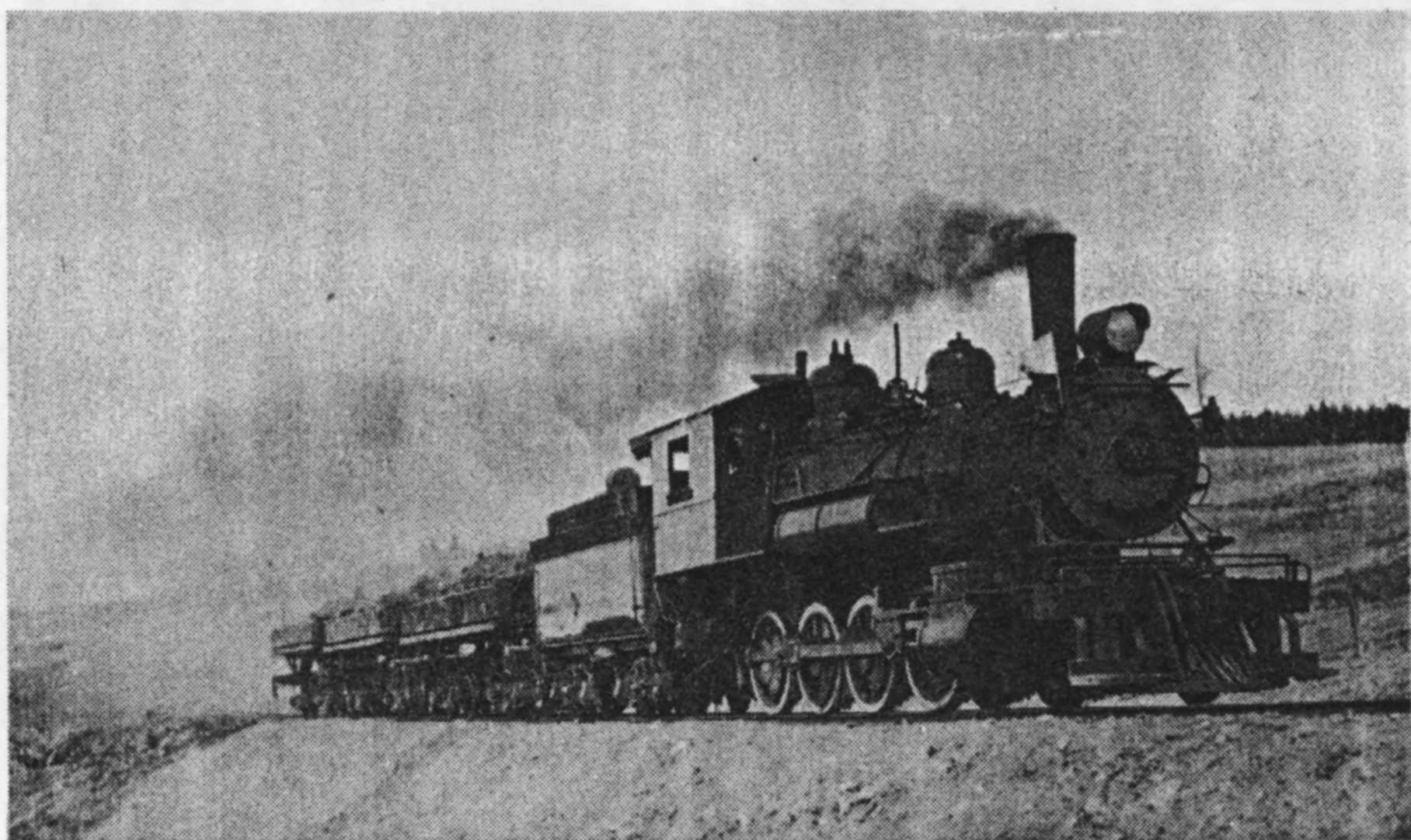


Motor 102 on the Manitou trestle; June, 1941. Otto Perry

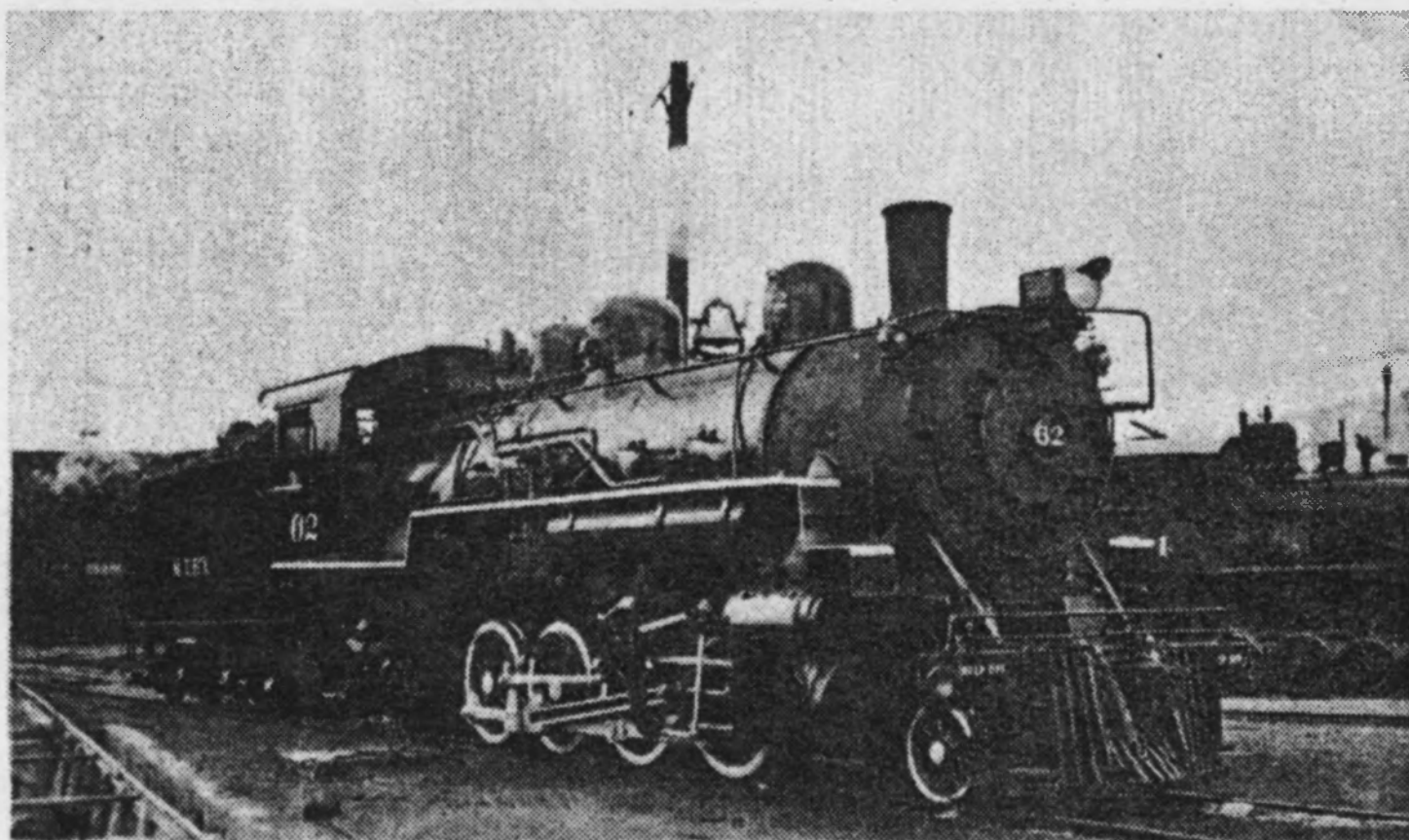




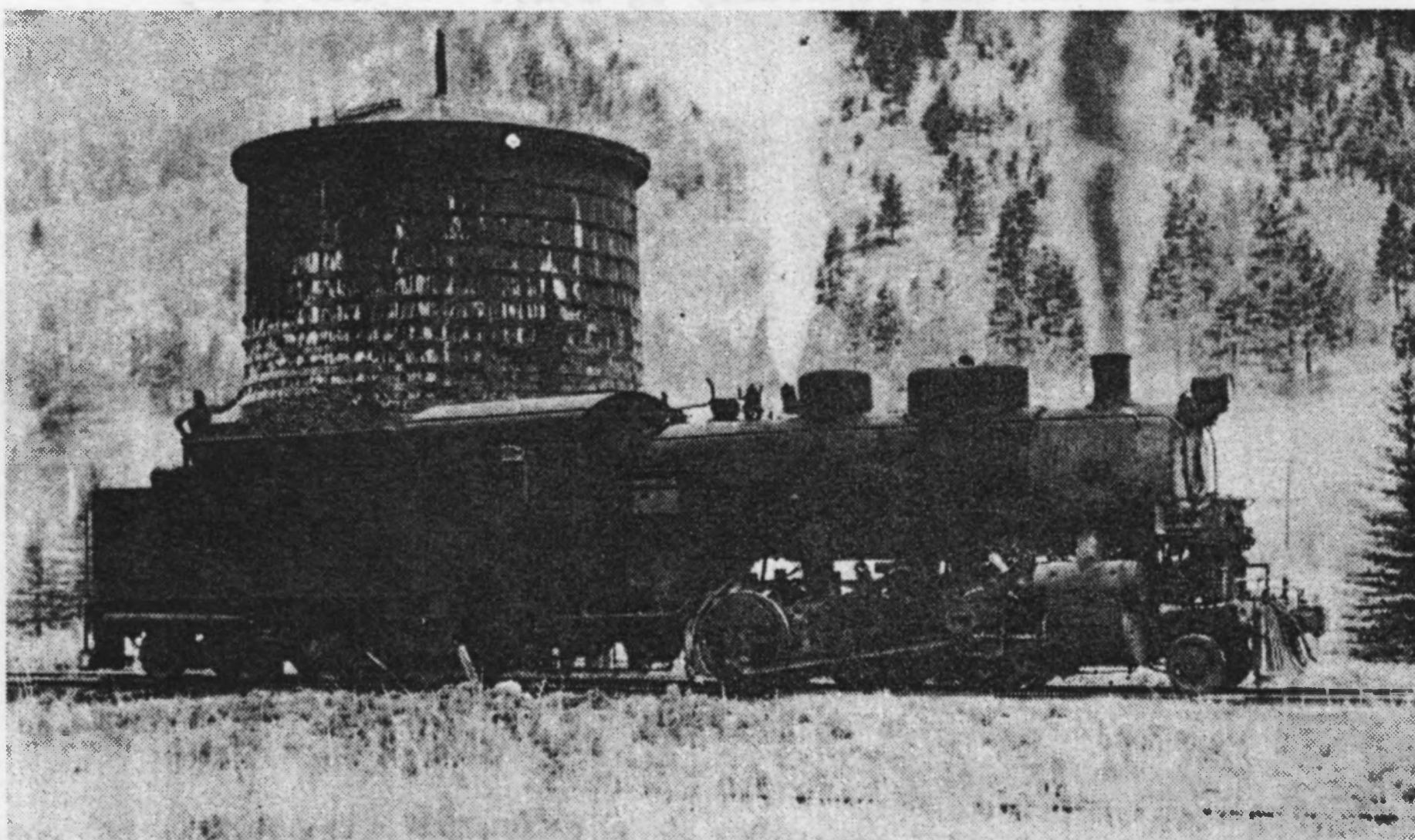
Three-engine freight Cripple Creek bound; engine 65
on the head end. February 5, 1949. Ed. Haley



M.T. 53, old Colorado Midland 53, with a work train
near Divide, in 1935. Otto Perry



No. 62, exiled from Alaska, came to the Midland
Terminal in 1940. Jack Thode



The powerful little 66 was once an 0-6-0 U. S.
Army switcher. Cascade, May, 1948. Kindig

T h r e e

upper end of the F. & C.C. Narrow-gauge ore cars were hauled to a point where their loads could be transferred to standard-gauge M.T. or C.S. & C.C.D. cars. By the end of 1915, however, the slim-gauge mine spurs were changed to standard gauge and the F. & C.C. passed into history.

The F. & C.C. lease on the Short Line was taken over by a company which called itself the Cripple Creek and Colorado Springs — a neat reversal of the Short Line's name. This company also leased, for a time, the Midland Terminal.

After 1915, mining at Cripple Creek showed a sharp decline. Thus it was, in July of 1918, when a great trestle in South Cheyenne canon was destroyed by fire, service ceased on the Short Line. Tracks remained in place until 1922. The interurban lines operated a year or two longer — just how long we have been unable to ascertain. Then, late one night, the car barns at Cripple Creek and all rolling stock were destroyed by fire. In 1922, a Colorado Springs businessman named Corley bought the Short Line, tore up the rails and built a toll highway on the old grade. The road is now a free State highway.

In August, 1918, the Colorado Midland stopped running trains. The Midland Terminal bought the old C.M. main line between Colorado Springs and Divide, and proceeded to carry on the burden of ore hauling alone. During the twenties she staggered along, running a passenger train each way daily and what freight trains were necessary. In the thirties, the steam passenger trains were retired in favor of gas-powered rail cars converted from Colorado Springs street cars.

After 1933, Cripple Creek had a new boom. The rise in the price of gold stimulated mining operations, and the M.T. shared in the new prosperity. The line was purchased by the Golden Cycle Corporation, which owned the one remaining smelter at the 'Springs as well as the better mines in the district. Trains of fifty or sixty empties powered by five and six engines roared up to the Cripple Creek District. The helpers returned alone while one engine brought down the long ore trains. In 1938 alone the M.T. made a net income of nearly \$125,000 — not peanuts by any means for a 55-mile short line.

Prosperity was short lived. During World War II, the Government ordered the closing of the mines; M.T. carried along somehow. After the war things looked brighter. The mines reopened, ore began moving. The road bought steel ore cars, six army surplus engines. But in the spring of 1948, hopes for a new railroad revival ended. M.T. shopmen struck, and this probably helped Golden Cycle to decide on moving the smelter to Cripple Creek. Midland Terminal was doomed.

The line has been sold to a Dallas junk firm and will soon be scrap.

The last train out of the District — thirty-one cars with No. 60 on the head end and No. 59 as helper — ran on Friday, February 18th. On the following Monday wrecking crews began tearing up the tracks. In less than a month the historic line over Ute pass between Cripple Creek and Colorado Springs will be no more.

Midland Terminal, like her long-dead sister roads, has vanished, but as long as railfans compare notes, as long as railroad men gossip in roundhouses and switch shanties, she will never be forgotten.

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This is the first of what we hope will become a regular feature of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club. Long before the War, Carl Hewitt acted as Editor for four issues of the Rocky Mountain Railroader — the only ones ever published. Now we feel the time is appropriate to re-inaugurate the club bulletin, with Morris Cafky (this issue's historian) as Trainmaster and Jack Thode as Dispatcher. With apologies to Mac Poor's Broken Axle and Western, we will operate when the spirit moves us, at least for the present.

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Rocky Mountain Railroad Club made the headlines with its last passenger train on the M.T. During the week March 1 - 7, Fox Movietone News Issue No. 17, which included some nice shots of the trip, was shown in Denver movie houses.

F o u r

The January meeting brought with it the annual election of officers. Ed. Haley, our intensely active 1948 President was reelected, as was Les Logue, Treasurer and Otto Perry, Secretary. I.E. August is our new Vice-President. The Board of Directors elected for 1949 includes Bob Andrews, Bill Brown, Bob Le Massena, Ned Mahoney, John W. Maxwell, and Everett Rohrer.

* * *

Something new has been added to the C. & S. motive-power picture. Recently, Burlington four-unit Diesels have been in service on the Denver - Texas run. Some time ago the C. & S. and its subsidiary, the Fort Worth and Denver City, ordered 30 new Diesel-electric freight locomotives. Despite the invasion of the 'growlers' the faithful 900 and 6300 class 2-10-2's can still frequently be seen in freight service both north and south of Denver.

Speaking of the C. & S., the road's 800-class Mikes seem to be coming back to the fold. Five of these machines were built by Baldwin in 1911 and were heavy main-line power for their day. However they were gradually shouldered aside by the newer and heavier 900's, and eventually wound up on the "Q" in Iowa. Last summer, however, the 804 was again seen in the Denver terminals, and is now awaiting the backshop. 803 was seen recently doubleheading a Santa Fe freight toward Palmer Lake, and 801 was hiding her light in the enginehouse at Denver.

* * *

Union Pacific re-routed a number of its passenger trains over Rio Grande rails during the Wyoming snow blockade. In February, railfans, residents and railroaders on the Rio Grande were treated to the sight of U.P. passenger trains containing varied assortments of equipment. The detoured trains were hauled by canary-colored U.P. passenger Diesels. Many of us would like to have seen some of the 800 series 4-8-4's in action on the Rio Grande, but it was not to be. 'Tis said there are no facilities on the Rio Grande for refueling the big oil-burners.

Rio Grande handled much additional freight traffic during the blockade. What's more, it rented an interesting assortment of motive power in order to move the extra traffic, including U.P., W.P. and MoPac locomotives. Engines from the U.P. included Diesels 603, 704, 706, 906, 909, 1432, 1414, and a four-unit Diesel containing units from engines 1640 and 1630, together with 1626. Also in service were 4-6-6-4 steamers 3944, 3957, 3969 and 3986, and Diesel switchers 1930 and 1116. In addition, Rio Grande used two W.P. challenger types, 402 and 405. MoPac power included Diesel A unit 511 and B units 508 and 509.

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There seems to be some huffin' and puffin' over what is to become of the Rio Grande's right of way through the Black Canon of the Gunnison. When the rails are pulled up, it is feared that access to the gorge for fishermen and hikers might be cut off. Highway officials of Montrose and Gunnison counties have expressed willingness to build a one-way road on the old grade, provided the Rio Grande leaves all bridges in place. Thus it may be possible to drive over what was originally the Rio Grande's Denver - Ogden main line.

Be that as it may, those of us fortunate enough to have traveled through the canon by narrow-gauge train will never forget the experience.

* * *

Coming up -- the annual Memorial Day weekend excursion: Again via Rio Grande Southern, this time to Telluride on Saturday, the next day to Rico and return to Ridgway. R.G.S. has promised us their new locomotive #74 recently purchased from Morse Brothers. This Brooks-built 2-8-0 was first Colorado and Northwestern 30, then Denver, Boulder & Western 30, later Colorado & Southern 74.

Among the coaches will be a fine old R.G.S. business car, the B-20. This car, to be repainted by club members and overhauled by the railroad, will be relettered the "Edna." It contains, among other things, a cookstove (for hot chile) and an O-P-E-N observation platform. Need we say more??

* * *

Have you ordered your copy of DENVER, SOUTH PARK AND PACIFIC? The manuscript is at the printers; proof-reading begins soon. Don't delay -- get that order in the mail today to Les Logue, Treasurer, 3227 Bryant St., Denver 11, Colo.

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No words of praise will ever be enough to express our thanks to the men of the Midland Terminal for that wonderful Feb. 6th trip. The stop at Waters tunnel still has some of us gasping for breath from the beauty of it all.