They’re Starting New Careers

Furloughed men retrained as brakemen

The Northern Division men pictured here are typical of a number of furloughed employees across the Railroad. They’re taking advantage of a PRR program for training in new jobs.

As J. E. Kennedy, manager of employment practices and training, explains: “Company policy is to offer these employees who have been furloughed, due to lack of work in their own crafts, first call when we need additional men in other lines of work and they seem to have the potential.”

“This offer includes the opportunity to learn while they earn.”

At Buffalo, men who were furloughed from jobs as trackmen and machinists are becoming brakemen.

Instructors are Rules Examiner Paul P. Dieffenbach, Safety Supervisor Francis J. Faltz and Special Duty Conductor Eugene G. Miori.

Mr. Miori and Mr. Faltz teach the proper way to get on and off cars and locomotives and other safe work practices—followed by a two-hour written examination. The instruction is based on a course previously prepared to broaden safety education in the Transportation Department.

“This course has been of real benefit to those taking it,” says Mr. Miori. “They seem to learn more rapidly from it; even men who have had some experience as brakemen do better when they’ve had this course.”

Mr. Dieffenbach teaches the Book of Rules, timetables and air brakes.

“The men taking this program,” he says, “are as eager to learn as any young newcomer to the Railroad.”

The brakeman’s training program at Buffalo includes classroom sessions and on-the-job experience in yards. At other PRR locations furloughed employees are also back at work—training for brakemen, block operators, clerks and other jobs as they begin new Railroad careers.

Robert J. Mast, 19, worked as a trackman in Buffalo before he was furloughed. The brakeman training program looks like a good deal, he says. “I like working for the PRR and this new job seems interesting. I think there’s a future here.”

James R. McGowan, 19, is rooming in Buffalo while his wife and two children are staying in Renovo, Pa. “After being furloughed as a trackman I was offered the chance to become a brakeman. I’m glad I took advantage of the opportunity.”

Carl L. Vroman, 42, was working in the Renovo, Pa., diesel shop when he was furloughed. “My father, grandfather—practically my whole family worked for the Railroad. I’ve got 19½ years. Now I’m starting out on a new career.”

Joseph Szufraniec, 34, had a job as trackman when he was furloughed. “The Railroad offered me a shot at this new job so I took it,” he says. “My dad was a boilermaker on the Central for 29 years. I think railroading is a good industry to work in.”

They Mix Music With Frolic

When the Greater Kensington String Band strutted along Broad Street in Philadelphia’s Mummers’ Parade, on New Year’s Day, 1965, three PRR men were part of the act.

Strumming a banjo in this colorful spectacle of mirth and music was Flask Frank Bogan of the Regional Comptroller’s Office. Tootling saxophones were Cost Analyst Hartley Hird of the System Financial Department and Machinist Larry Simpson of the Philadelphia Division’s M.-of-E. Department.

Each was dressed as Prince Charming as part of their club’s parade theme: “Fantasy in Disneyland.” They each wore a white jacket with gold thread and red and blue rubies, pants of gold lame, and a Prince Charming hat, three-pointed, with a white plume.

Setting off this exotic outfit was a magnificent backdrop of African ostrich plumes depicting a blue sky with stars and clouds.

“We put about six solid months into working on our costumes and shaping up our act,” says Mr. Hird, a member of the Greater Kensington club for eight years.

“Oh, Dem Golden Slippers”—an old Mummers’ number—is his favorite tune, while “The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise” rates first with Mr. Simpson, a club co-captain.

The term “Mummer,” Mr. Simpson explains, is traced to Momus, Greek god of ridicule. The Mummers’ tradition of parading in fancy dress was brought to Philadelphia by early English settlers, he adds.

In addition to the New Year’s Day parade in Philadelphia, Greater Kensington marched in Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade in New York. And now they’re getting ready for the “Show of Shows” string band festival in Philadelphia’s Convention Hall.

Throughout the year they perform, without charge, as a concert band, for the Salvation Army, Veterans’ Hospital, orphanages and other institutions. (In 1959, when the new Castro regime in Cuba seemed friendly to America, the Greater Kensington band was flown to Havana, as guests of Cuba, for a “Carnival of Liberation.”)

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Electronic Eyes

More hotbox detectors go on duty for PRR.

The PRR is a leader among American railroads in the use of these modern detection devices," says F. L. Chatten, engineer, signals and catenary. "We've recently expanded the installation of these devices to include key points across the System. These new detectors will help us in our continuing effort to reduce all train delays from hotboxes to a minimum, improving our service to customers."

Hotboxes, the overheating of journal boxes of every passing car, pinpointing any that are getting overheated. The train is then stopped and the car set off before it can cause trouble.

"The abrupt end of their trip with the death of Sister Mildred Dolores stunned all of us but one of the contributing factors is Sister Mary Francine's account of your kindness."

Two women riding from New York to Washington planned a stopover at Princeton Junction, N.J., but due to a mixup they failed to get off the train and had to go to North Philadelphia. There Stationmaster W. P. Henderson took over. He put them on a train going back to Princeton Junction, phoned the relative who was meeting them, made parlor car reservations for them on a later train to Washington, and held their luggage for them till this train came. W. Emmet Milward, of Lexington, Ky., husband of one of the women, wrote that Mr. Henderson's "services and concern were outstanding. He is a terrific representative of a very wonderful corporation. If I ever get to North Philadelphia, his office will be a port of call for me." M. L. Archdale, of the Chicago Police Department, writes praising Trainman E. J. Wellbrock, with whom he rode on Train 70: "He was extremely courteous to everyone, from the very smallest child to the oldest passengers—many in their 70's and 80's. There were numerous babies and young children riding, and as usual when the newness of a train ride begins to wear off, they became restless and bored. Every time a child would cry, Mr. Wellbrock would talk to it and in a few minutes they would be smiling. "He was extremely helpful with women who were traveling alone, in helping them off the train with their luggage, as well as elderly men who had difficulty in getting their heavy bags from the baggage racks. "I've been riding trains since I was 3 years old, and I can truthfully say I've never met a nicer or more cheerful man. Mr. Wellbrock is a Goodwill Ambassador for the PRR." From Kenneth E. Disler, president of the Gen-Tel-Co Employees Club in Fort Wayne, comes a note of appreciation for the courtesy accorded the club's 102 members during trips to the New York World's Fair by PRR. "We especially wish to express our gratitude to Sales Representative W. L. Throop for his splendid assistance and cooperation in making our trips the success they were. Our first consideration for future trips will be the PRR and Mr. Throop."

Leading Maintainer F. T. Lloyd tests power voltage with analyzer at trackside.

ON COVER: Signal Maintainer E. J. Ragan focuses detector. Track is protected.

More hotbox detectors go on duty for PRR.
Mr. Saunders proposes railroad Labor-Management conferences
To Strengthen Labor Peace

Top-level conferences between rail-roads and labor were proposed by PRR Chairman Stuart T. Saunders to develop ways for improving collective bargaining. The proposal, which Saunders presented in a speech before the Pittsburgh Traffic Club, attracted wide attention as a new approach to railroading problems.

The highest officials of the railroad companies and the unions should participate in the conferences, he said, because “this particular responsibility is too great to be delegated.” There is every reason to believe that we can enter such meetings in good faith,” said Mr. Saunders, who is a member of President Johnson’s Advisory Committee on Labor-Management Policy.

Addressing an audience of more than 1,700, including large customers of PRR service, he envisioned a better day for the railroads and the unions. “We cannot attain it, however, unless management and labor cooperate to build strong railroads, aggressively providing a superior and reliable service. Only then will it be possible to provide job security, better employment opportunities and the high morale that comes from essential and rewarding work.”

Mr. Saunders put special emphasis on the search for labor-management unity on the size of train and engine crews. The search for labor-management unity has been prolonged by the recurring strike threats, which, he said, are endangering the advances the railroads have made in regaining the confidence of the public.

At the beginning of 1964, there were full crew laws in 16 States. During the year, the Mississippi legislature abolished its crew law; and similar laws were killed by the voters in California, Arizona and North Dakota.

In Indiana and Nevada, the courts have issued temporary orders blocking the enforcement of full crew laws. The laws are also being challenged in the courts of Ohio and New York. The movement for elimination of full crew laws is also active in the legislatures.

On February 17, a bill to repeal Indiana’s crew law was introduced in the State Senate and was referred to the Committee on Transportation. Two days later, a comparable bill was introduced in the State Senate of Ohio. Hearings are expected in the near future.

On February 17, a bill to repeal New York’s crew law was introduced in the State Assembly. This bill is endorsed by Governor Nelson Rockefeller. Last year it urged approval of a similar bill.

Mr. Heath, grand chief engineer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, cited the union newspaper that “every state crew consists of” law is in jeopardy.

“‘There’s no point in fighting a losing battle just for the sake of fighting,’” Mr. Heath said.

The agreement between the group of Eastern railroads and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers provides as follows: If a State repeals its crew law, an engineer will be provided with a fireman in that State on a run on which existing rules and agreements shall remain in effect (provisions for the railroad’s crew law, an engineer will be provided with a fireman in that State on a run on which existing rules and agreements shall remain in effect).

One merit of the agreement as proposed by PRR Chairman Stuart Saunders is that if a State repeals a full crew law applying to train service, the railroad will continue using crews of a conductor and two trainmen (except that on railroads that had established crew arrangements prior to January 25, 1964, which permitted crews to be operated with less than two trainmen, such crew arrangements shall remain in effect).

If the law or agreements in this State had provided for a third brakeman, the railroads will continue this practice to the extent and as long as is necessary to provide jobs for trainmen with seniority dating before January 25, 1964, who were not on furlough on that date, and for whom no other train service jobs are available in their seniority districts and at their governing terminals.

Both unions have agreed that in the Eastern States involved in this agreement, they will no longer support minimum crew laws in the legislatures or the courts, and will not work for the adoption of new laws of this kind.

Charles Luna, president of the Trainmen, commented that the agreement was reached without the intervention of government—‘‘it was pure collective bargaining, accomplished by cooperation and sitting down across the table from each other.'’
The old songs are the best songs
say these PRR retired men who collect them

When Albert P. (Pete) Kouba retired in 1959 as assistant engineer of structures, he had no doubt about what he would do to keep busy.

In his home he had amassed a tremendous assortment of old-time song sheets—more than 2700. He had been collecting for almost 30 years. Now at last he really had time to repair, bind and catalogue them. And also to pore over them, sing them, and relive many a memory of days when the world was young.

Pete Kouba's love affair with popular songs began when he was 14. That was in 1908. He was a member of a Philadelphia branch of the United Boys Brigade, a predecessor of the Boy Scouts.

"We went to summer camp for two weeks, at a cost of $14—and of course, no boy thought of asking his parents for the money," Pete recalls. "We earned every penny. And the best method we had was to sell tickets for our own original minstrel shows."

To pick up ideas for the shows, Pete took to going to vaudeville shows and burlesque houses ("but you understand, burlesque wasn't strip tease in those days—it was just second-class musical comedy").

He got to see all the big stars—Nora Bayes, Sophie Tucker, Fannie Brice, Eva Tanguay ("The I Don't Care Girl"), Harry Lauder, George M. Cohan, Bert Williams. They made a lasting impression.

Pete joined the PRR in 1911 as a $32-a-month messenger in the superintendent's office at Philadelphia, later transferred to Engineering, where he spent the rest of his railroad career.

"When the Depression hit us," Pete recounts, "we were put on short hours, four days a week. We had a lot of free time and nothing to do with it."

"One day I got to talking to Stephen G. Broadwell, another PRR engineer, and we got on the subject of the old time songs. We found we had practically the same memories."

Steve had been a song plugger in his youth. A music publisher would pay him to drum up business for the newest songs by singing them during intermissions in movie houses.

"Look—let's go see if we can buy some of those old song sheets," Pete Kouba said. "And their big hunt was on."

It was a perfect hobby for Depression times. You could get old song sheets for as little as a dime apiece, three for a quarter. The two men haunted old music shops and bookstores, rummaged through attics, put Wanted ads in local newspapers. Pete wound up with 2709 song sheets (including 149 Irving Berlin), but Steve Broadwell, whose collecting ardor has never let up, has gone past 9000.

Steve, who retired in 1958 as office engineer in the System Engineering Department, has transcribed some 3000 of the songs so he can play them on his electric organ.

"I mean good, singable songs, like Around the World in Eighty Days, Moon River, and Hello, Dolly," he emphasizes. "No Elvis Presley stuff. Nowadays, only one song out of three hundred is worth singing."

S. G. Broadwell, another retired PRR man, transcribes old songs for organ.
The PRR Safety Department has conducted its annual Safety Contest, and the results are in. The contest is a way for the company to recognize the efforts of its employees in promoting safety on the job. The contest is based on the number of injuries that occur on the job, and the lower the number of injuries, the better the performance.

The worst division of the company in 1964 was the Cleveland, with a rate of 8.90, followed by the West Division at 8.50. The best division was the Southwestern, with a rate of 6.05. The worst region was the Central, with a rate of 9.15, followed by the West at 9.00. The best region was the Southwestern, with a rate of 5.50.

The PRR Safety Department has also been working on improving safety on the job. In 1927, the company had a rate of 15.70, and in 1928, the rate was 10.00. The goal is to continue to reduce the number of injuries and accidents on the job.

At anchor were seven vessels with ore from Canada and South America, waiting to be unloaded into PRR cars for movement to steel mills. At Baltimore, 42 freight handlers and 18 clerks and tallymen had no work when Canton Pier closed. The effect of the strike on PRR freight movement was widely visible. South Philadelphia yard tracks were clogged with 924 cars of grain, waiting to go into ships for Europe.

The strike was more than a generation ago. In 1928, the year the present Safety Department was formed, it was felt that accident-prevention efforts deserved recognition from the head of the Railroad, and the President's Safety Contest was established. It was a competition between Regions and Divisions—a happy competition to keep men safe and unhurt. The efforts of PRR people in the years since have produced a notable reduction in injuries and accidental deaths.

In 1957, we started seven consecutive years of improved safety—each year better than the preceding one. We happened to slip in 1964, but now we intend to resume our march to greater safety.
Less lugging for the men, less delay for the cars

‘NEW LOOK’ CAR SHOP AT ENOLA

When snow falls and winds howl, the men at Enola Car Shop, near Harrisburg, Pa., are particularly happy with their new accommodations. Instead of working in the open, as before, they now have a new steel building. Fiberglass panels at the top part of the walls admit daylight. Mercury-vapor lamps give bright illumination at night. Oil-fired heaters with blowers are mounted above each of the six doors.

Enola’s is one of a series of new PRR car shops based on the “one spot” principle. That means that a man and all the tools and supplies he needs are stationed at one spot. He doesn’t go to the car; the car is brought to him.

“There’s less walking—the work’s all together,” says Car Repairman Russell E. Morrison. “The tools and parts are right at hand.”

“No lugging of jacks, no lugging of A-frames,” adds Car Repairman Ralph E. Miller.

Cars are repaired and go back into service more promptly—a vital consideration at a time when every car is needed for shipper’s loads,” says John K. Sherwood, master mechanic. Among the work-easing features: A 15-ton crane, floor operated and pushbutton controlled, adjusts loads on cars and moves heavy replacement parts.

Hydraulic jacks raise and lower cars without effort. Each repair spot has its own storage bins, stocked with parts. Each of the three tracks in the shop has its own outlet for lube oil, solvent, air and oxygen-acetylene, piped in through hoses that retract on reels when not in use.

“The design includes major emphasis on safety,” Mr. Sherwood adds. For example: A derail outside the shop prevents cars from rolling in accidentally. Jacks can’t be raised unless the operator uses both a hand and a foot at the controls. The “rabbit,” a cable-operated device that pushes cars through the shop, can’t be moved unless the jacks are down.

“And a retarder is used to stop the car at the exact spot where the repairs are to be made,” adds Crane Operator Elmer A. Fry.

The new shop, which operates around the clock, specializes in repairs that can be done in a reasonably short time. Heavy repairs, which might slow the lines, are done on a track adjacent to the shop.

R. E. Miller has journal bearings and other parts close at hand. “Everything’s easier—no more walking,” he comments. Cylinder of the hydraulic jack supports car while Car Repairman Frank E. Wolf burns bolts off coupler’s carrier iron.

On The Way Up

Personnel and Title Changes
Labor settlement—The railroads settled their last major disagreement with labor on February 7, when a contract was signed with five non-operating unions representing some 290,000 employees. In it the railroads granted job security, subject to arbitration—that is, the number of employees will be reduced only through promotion, retirement, resignation, discharge for cause, or death. On the PRR, the pact covers the clerks, telegraphers, signalmen, and maintenance-of-way employees. The job protection applies to employees (other than seasonal employees) in these unions who were in active service on October 1, 1964, or who were restored to active service before February 7, 1965; who had two years of employment relationship on October 1, and who had at least 15 days of compensated service during 1964.

This agreement is the fifteenth major settlement made by the railroads since last spring. A spokesman for the railroad negotiators noted that the contract removes the last major issue over which any union had threatened to strike, and said, “I hope it will lead to an era of labor peace.”

Typical of newspaper comment was an editorial in the New York Daily News, which said: “Both the rail companies and the numerous railroad unions deserve the public’s thanks, we believe, for having kept the trains rolling through long, difficult and, at times, heated negotiations.”

Track improvements—The PRR will install 30,000 tons of new rail in 1965, Chairman Stuart T. Saunders has announced. Much of it will be welded into quarter-mile lengths for smoother running. About 40,000 tons of reprocessed rail will be installed in secondary, siding and yard tracks. New track-laying and maintenance equipment, costing $2,400,000, will be acquired to enable PRR trackmen to keep the roadbed at top condition.

The divisions case: another round—Two years ago, the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled that Eastern railroads were entitled to a larger share than they had been getting of the revenue on freight moving across the continent. For the PRR, this would mean a welcome boost in income. But last month a U. S. District Court in Los Angeles, acting on an appeal by Western railroads, returned the case to the I.C.C. for additional findings, on the grounds that the I.C.C. may not have considered sufficient facts. The Eastern railroads will appeal to the Supreme Court.

Trouble on commuter railroads—The PRR’s problems in making local passenger service pay its own way are shared by a number of Eastern railroads. Among the latest developments: The Erie-Lackawanna announced its intention of going out of the commuter business, stating it could no longer bear the financial losses. The Jersey Central said it needed a doubling of its State aid “if we are to end the year by paying our obligations.” The bankrupt New Haven petitioned a Federal Court to prepare for the discontinuance of all its passenger service.

Sky view—Dome cars, Pullman-operated, are brightening the consist of the PRR’s South Wind (Trains 90 and 93), running between Chicago and Miami. The train, which runs from January to April, is operated in conjunction with the Louisville & Nashville, the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line railroads.

Pay your own way—President Lyndon B. Johnson, in his budget and economic messages to Congress, has proposed, as President Kennedy did, that users of airways, waterways and highways pay higher taxes to help repay the Government for its investment. Specifically, he asked that the 5 percent tax on air passenger tickets be made permanent; a new 2 percent tax be placed on freight, a 4 cents-a-gallon tax on all fuels in general aviation, and a 2-cents-a-gallon tax on jet fuels; and a new 2-cents-a-gallon tax be placed on air freight, a 4 cents-a-gallon tax on all fuels in general transportation with the Louisville & Nashville.

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From the Mail Bag

“I think the new form in which our Pennsy magazine is now made up is very good. ’Keep ’em coming.’”

“I am glad to receive The Pennsy. I worked in the inspection pit in the eastbound receiving yard. My gang foreman came to me just before I retired and said, ‘Fred, I passed by the pit many times that you did not know I was about and I can say I never saw you sleeping.’ I said, ‘Dave, the Company did not pay me to sleep. I was paid to be on the lookout for safety.’ I could not resist writing this note to say I enjoy the life God has given me.”

“For the PRR almost 40 years and am so glad to get The Pennsy. Was hoping the last issue would have something about the progress of the N.Y.-PRR merger. It’s got to be or it’s too bad for the old Pennsy. With the other Eastern consolidations, it’s a ‘must.’”
—A. E. Obergfell, Kerrville, Texas.
"Hello, I’m Your Boss"

"You say you never saw me before? Never heard of me? It doesn’t matter. I’m Mrs. Typical American Consumer, and I’m your Boss.

"Let me explain.

“When I go shopping—in a supermarket, for example—I refuse to buy items that look banged-up. The manager is stuck with them. Let’s suppose those items were damaged on your railroad. When the manager places his next order, who do you think is going to haul it? Not you. Somebody who’s more careful, that’s who.

“You see, I really am your Boss. You’ve got to please me—Mrs. Typical American Consumer—or you’re a dead duck.

“So please, Mr. Railroad Man, handle your carloads of freight as carefully as you can. I want to be able to buy things that look fresh and new and undamaged. And, I might add, I want you to keep getting lots of business on your railroad.”