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# The Sentinel



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THIRD QUARTER 2021



- B&O Motor Coach Service in Manhattan in the 1920s
- Getting Freight through Chicago, *Part 2*

- "Grounded" Wagon-tops
- 100 Years Ago on the B&O

# Message from the President

## Fellow Members:

Well miracles happen! After exactly five months my first quarter *Sentinel* arrived through the mail in pristine condition: no tears, wrinkles, or bends; what great service from the USPS. Most of us received our second quarter on time. If you still are missing either issue, please notify the Company Store Manager. I started a list and we need to compare them.

**GREAT NEWS!** The building was paid off in March and we received official notification from the bank and the county that the loan is clear last week. The building is now ours. Improvements are underway to maintain the parking lot and replace some the air conditioning units throughout the main floor of the building. For all who contributed to the building, again, thank you. If you have a few extra dollars, consider contributing to these funds: building fund, archives collection, and the general fund to support the Society. We also have begun our goal to invest long term to preserve the Society and its mission of preserving B&O history.

The *B&O Modeler* editor is stepping down after the next issue this Fall. Unless someone steps forward to take over the job, the *Modeler* will no longer be provided. If you are interested, please contact

the current editor for details about taking over the job.

The book projects are progressing and with research centers now opening, more progress is happening. The diner car book and the St. Louis Division book are now smoothly moving along. The goal is to have my book on modeling printed by the annual convention. The 2022 calendar will be available in the next month. If you are interested in a calendar, contact the Company Store. The calendar is a short press run so act fast.

The Society will have a presence at the NMRA virtual convention in July. We will have a loop presentation throughout the convention and we have volunteers to monitor discussions during three evening dinner breaks. This is another method of doing outreach to get additional members. If you have an idea, forward it to the board, but remember we need your participation to get it done.

Beginning July 1st, the archives will be open to research by appointment only. If you are vaccinated, no mask is required. When handling photos and some documents, gloves must be worn. Space is limited due to the large number of volunteers who show up weekly. If you plan to come

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 39)

# The Sentinel

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*The Baltimore and Ohio Historical Society is a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving and disseminating historical information about The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.*

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Memberships, once accepted, cannot be returned.

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## On the Covers

**FRONT COVER:** No 6, the *Capitol Limited* approaching 75th Street Tower Ca. 1968, crossing the Pennsylvania Railroad connection to the Belt Railway of Chicago and about to cross the Belt and Wabash diamonds.

**BACK COVER:** The front cover of the September 1926 *Baltimore and Ohio Magazine* shows the new B&O motor coaches at the Waldorf-Astoria Station in New York City. The station was located in the original Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, which was built in 1893 and razed in 1929 to make way for the construction of the Empire State Building.

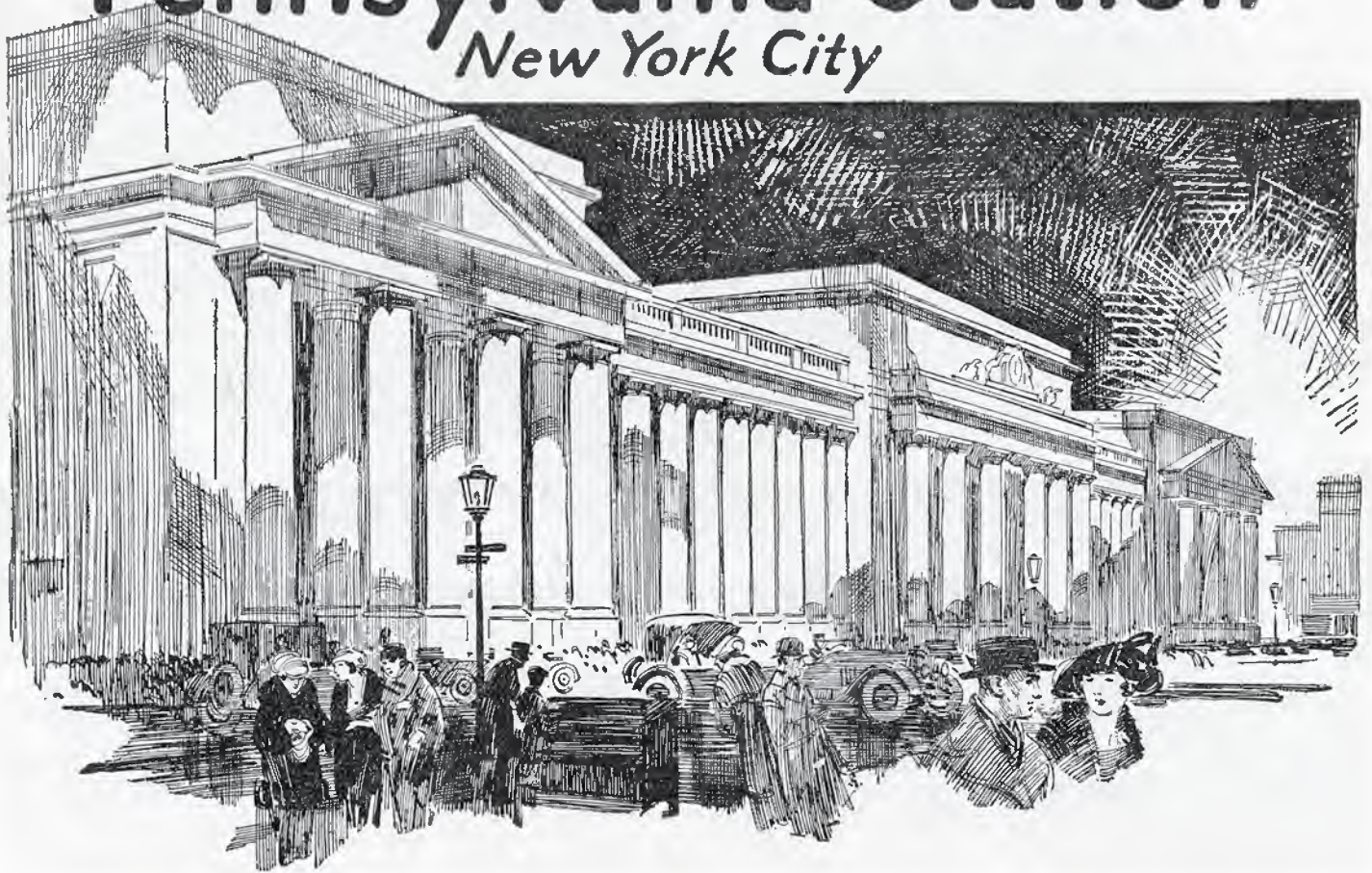
(B&O Railroad Historical Society Archives)

# Baltimore & Ohio

Trains will continue to arrive at and depart from

# Pennsylvania Station

*New York City*



Pennsylvania Station as shown in a full-page advertisement in the September 1921 *B&O Magazine*. The ad stated that "Arrangements have been made for continued operation of Baltimore and Ohio trains to and from Pennsylvania Station (Seventh Avenue and 32nd Street), New York City...The noteworthy announcement made in this advertisement received wide publicity in the newspapers and other media during the forepart of September." (*B&O Railroad Historical Society Archives*)

## B&O Motor Coach Service in Manhattan in the 1920s

By Brian Rochon

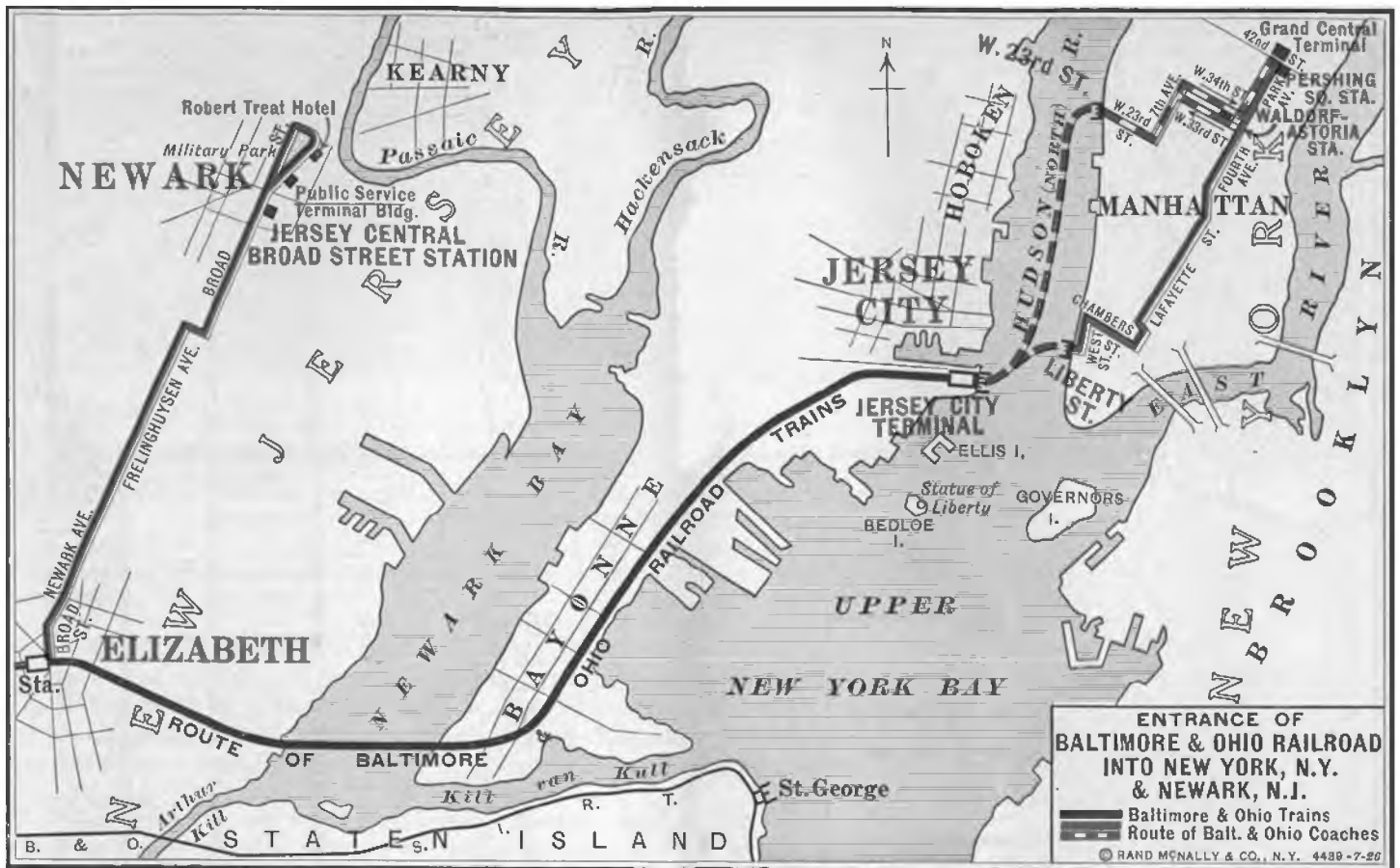
### Background

Although the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad (B&O) never extended its tracks to New York City, the railroad was able to provide for passenger service to New York by partnering with other railroads north and east of Baltimore initially and later, after the completion of the Philadelphia Branch in 1886, northeast of

Philadelphia. By 1867 this service allowed B&O passengers to reach the Hudson River at Jersey City, New Jersey where they completed their travel to Manhattan via ferry boat. At that time only the New York Central (NYC) was able to offer the convenience of a passenger station in the City; however, the B&O was able to provide service that was competitive

with the other railroads serving New York, including its primary adversary, the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR).

In December 1880, the B&O reached a three-road traffic agreement with the Reading and the Central Railroad of New Jersey (CNJ) to provide service to Jersey City. Each company controlled its own section of the route with all of them contributing to



Map from a July 1926 B&O promotional brochure showing the original motor coach routes and stations including Newark, New Jersey. The B&O initiated motor coach service from CNJ's Elizabeth, New Jersey station to several stops in Newark at the same time the Manhattan service began. (B&O Railroad Historical Society Archives)

the passenger car pool. An engine change was normally made in Philadelphia.

The situation changed in 1910 when the PRR completed Pennsylvania Station. At significant expense, the PRR dug twin tunnels under the Hudson and, with the use of newly-developed electric locomotives, provided service directly to its new Beaux-Arts style station in Midtown Manhattan. With the NYC utilizing its Grand Central Station, also in Midtown, the B&O was now at a significant marketing disadvantage compared to its two larger eastern trunk line rivals.

During the First World War, the poor performance of the U.S. railroads led the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to recommend federal control of the railroad industry in an effort to ensure efficient operations. On December 26, 1917 President Woodrow Wilson issued an order for the nationalization of the country's rail system and on December 28th the United States Railroad Administration (USRA) came into existence.

The USRA's focus on efficiency included the rationalization of passenger terminal facilities. In a September 1918 letter to President Wilson, the Director General of Railroads, W.G. McAdoo, stated that:

"Other reforms that are being worked out in the passenger service include the use of the same terminals by railroads formerly in competition and using separate terminals. The most conspicuous example of the latter innovation is the use of the Pennsylvania terminal in New York for through trains via the Baltimore & Ohio between Washington and New York. Passengers going from New York to Washington by the Baltimore & Ohio used to have to take the 23rd Street or Liberty Street Ferry and cross the river. This was inconvenient. The result was that the Pennsylvania got the bulk of the traffic, although the Baltimore and Ohio maintained a well-equipped and full service. Now, it really makes no difference to the traveler between Washington and New York by which road he goes. Both make practically the same time and leave

and arrive from and at the same terminals."

The USRA was disestablished in 1920, following the end of the First World War, but the B&O was able to extend its agreement with the PRR for continued use of Pennsylvania Station. The September 1921 issue of the *B&O Magazine* touted this service in a full-page advertisement (Page 3).

However, following the retirement of PRR President Samuel Rea in 1925, the PRR refused to grant any further extensions and gave notice to the B&O that their access would end as of 1 September, 1926. As the September 1926 issue of the *B&O Magazine* explained:

"Notice from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company to the Baltimore and Ohio, its competitor, that the wartime privilege of using the Pennsy's magnificent terminal in Seventh Avenue could not be extended past September of the current year, was characterized by President Willard, of the latter Company, as "eminently fair." In other words, the Pennsylvania was quite within its rights in denying, even for a proper,



**The B. & O. Yellow Coach for New York and Newark Terminal Service**

One of the new motor coaches from the August 28, 1926 *Railway Age*. This same image appeared in the September 1926 *Baltimore and Ohio Magazine*. (*Railway Age* Vol. 81 No. 9, August 1926)



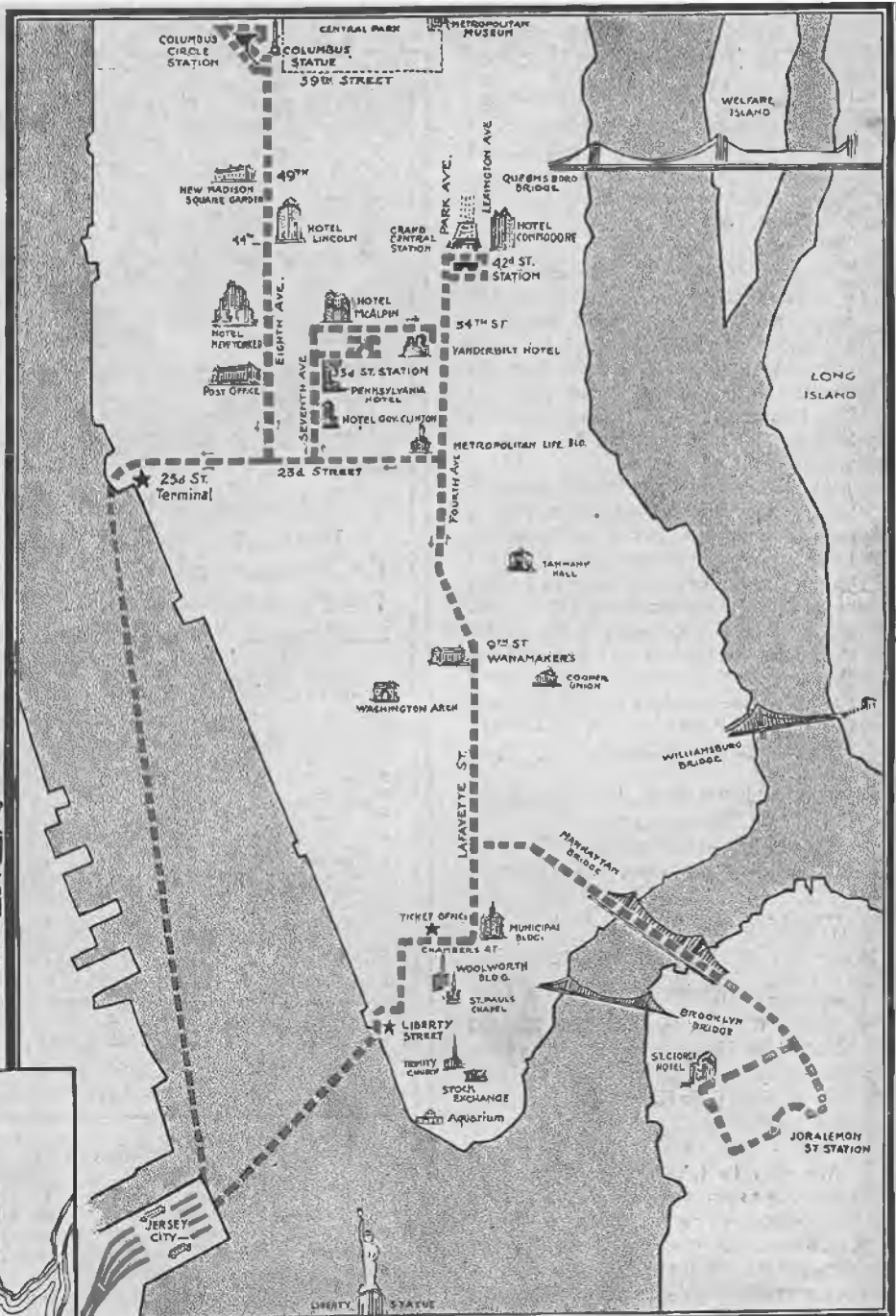
Six B&O motor coaches lined up under the train shed at the CNJ station in Jersey City, B&O photograph, 1926. The destination boards on the first two coaches read "Liberty Street Route" as does the sign to the left of the first coach.

*(B&O Railroad Historical Society Archives)*

HOW  
**B & O**  
 MOTOR COACHES  
 SERVE  
 Greater New York  
 and  
 New Jersey



--- Motor Coach Routes  
 — B. & O. Rail Route



**F**OUR terminals in Greater New York (with nine intermediate route stops) with Motor Coach connection with every B. & O. train entering and leaving Jersey City Terminal, day or night, at

**NO ADDITIONAL CHARGE**

Separate Motor Coach Service between the trainside at Elizabeth and three coach stops in Newark, N. J.

The easy, convenient B. & O. way to and from the heart of New York, Brooklyn and Newark, N. J., and the trainside. (See Page 20 of this issue)

*N. P. Kelloway*  
 Passenger Traffic Manager

Map from the July 1930 *Baltimore and Ohio Magazine* showing the expanded motor coach routes and stations including Brooklyn. (B&O Railroad Historical Society Archives)