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The Sentinel

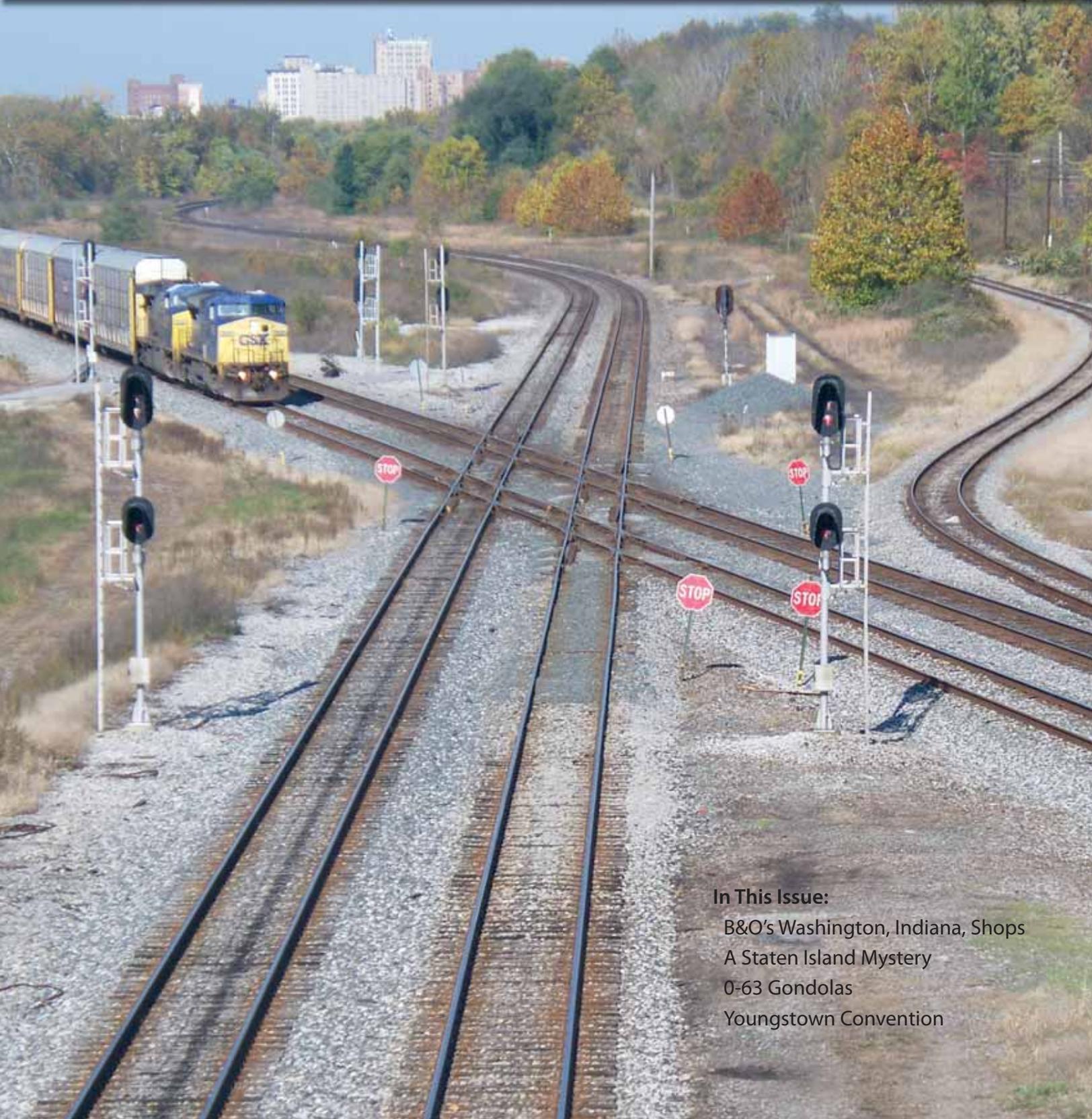


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In This Issue:

- B&O's Washington, Indiana, Shops
- A Staten Island Mystery
- 0-63 Gondolas
- Youngstown Convention

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I was looking through my files for some good material on the B&O that has never been published. Some years ago I compiled several hundred pages of B&O material, but it is all out of date, so if any of you would like to get the "books" and use or update them please write me at profbarryrubin@yahoo.com

Here are some items from these collections:

- You would have thought that the N-37 hopper cars were given a different class when rebuilt, but remember that the B&O is the railroad that took the O-27 gondola, increased the interior length from 46 to 50 feet and called it an O-27b, and took the M-55, gave it a new roof and ends, and called it an M-55h.
- In an October, 1992 issue of *Trains* magazine, I came across an article by Howard Skidmore, detailing the interesting fight between the NYC and the C&O for control of the B&O. What an interesting "what if" scenario one could make out of an NYC-B&O merger in the early 1960s from a model RR point of view. (Bruce Donley)
- Subject: B&O Unnamed Div. Press Release/Construction Continues
B&O Unnamed Division work crews have cleared the right-of-way into the towns of East Unnamed and West Unnamed. From each of the two towns, crews will continue toward each other, meeting in a Golden Spike ceremony later this spring (hopefully). Currently, construction has halted while work completes on the bridge over West Unnamed River.

Major Chemical Spill: A major Chemical spill occurred earlier this week at

Procrastinator Construction, where crews were working a bridge for the B&O Unnamed Division. Approximately 2,500 gallons (HO) of Tenax spilled due to a careless builder. Tenax is a plastics solvent that can give off toxic fumes. The residents of Livingroom evacuated following the spill. Fortunately, the spill was contained to the immediate working area and there was no impact on the surrounding environment. The worker responsible for the spill has been officially declared a complete goof. Procrastinator Construction is in the process of obtaining a wooded support structure to prevent spills like this in the future.

Div. Secretary, Div. Head, and Complete Goof, Michael W. Rudder

PS. In case you were wondering, 2,500 gallons HO is about a half-ounce. And holes are being drilled into a scrap 2x3 to make a glue holder.

- Why Study/Model the B&O
Henry Freeman

America's first railroad, the Baltimore & Ohio, has most of what [modelers look for, including available equipment]. High quality versions of B&O diesels are readily available, as are decent representations of their passenger cars and other freight cars. The B&O crossed through spectacular, varied scenery and good research material is available with a little digging. If you are designing a layout, you can pick from urban railroading to tough mountain railroading, complete with helpers. Lots of opportunity for interchange traffic, long coal drags, merchandise freights and some of the classiest passenger trains ever to run the

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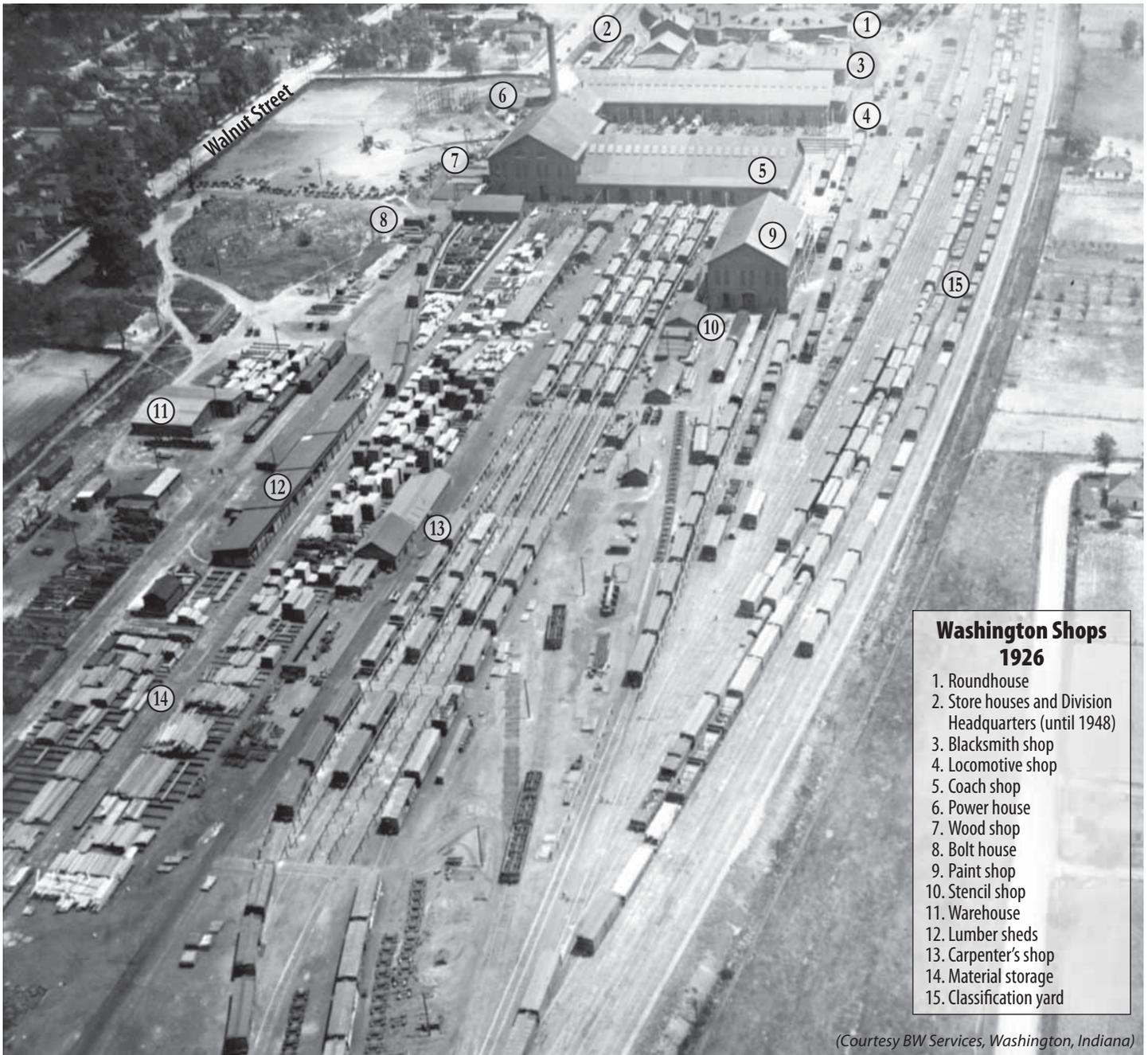
MEMBERSHIP

One year regular membership is \$35.00, for other categories or to send notification of change of address contact the Secretary by writing to the Society's post office box or via e-mail. Memberships, once accepted, cannot be returned.

ON THE COVERS

FRONT COVER: The Center Street crossing, now of CSX and Norfolk Southern, was once a major site for Youngstown, Ohio's steel industry. Society convention coverage begins on page 15. (Allen Young photograph)

BACK COVER: Relay station in Washington, Indiana, has long been a crew change point. The ritual repeated itself in this March 1974 photograph by Frank Dewey..



**Washington Shops
1926**

1. Roundhouse
2. Store houses and Division Headquarters (until 1948)
3. Blacksmith shop
4. Locomotive shop
5. Coach shop
6. Power house
7. Wood shop
8. Bolt house
9. Paint shop
10. Stencil shop
11. Warehouse
12. Lumber sheds
13. Carpenter's shop
14. Material storage
15. Classification yard

(Courtesy BW Services, Washington, Indiana)

B&O's Washington, Indiana, Shops

By Edward Young
(With input from Frank Dewey)

The St. Louis Division of the Baltimore & Ohio began as the Ohio & Mississippi Railway. In February 1852, the O&M began construction of its line from Cincinnati across Indiana and Illinois to St. Louis. Progress was slow, especially across southern Indiana where its hilly terrain necessitated the construction of two tunnels, and numerous rivers and streams often meant building sizable (for that

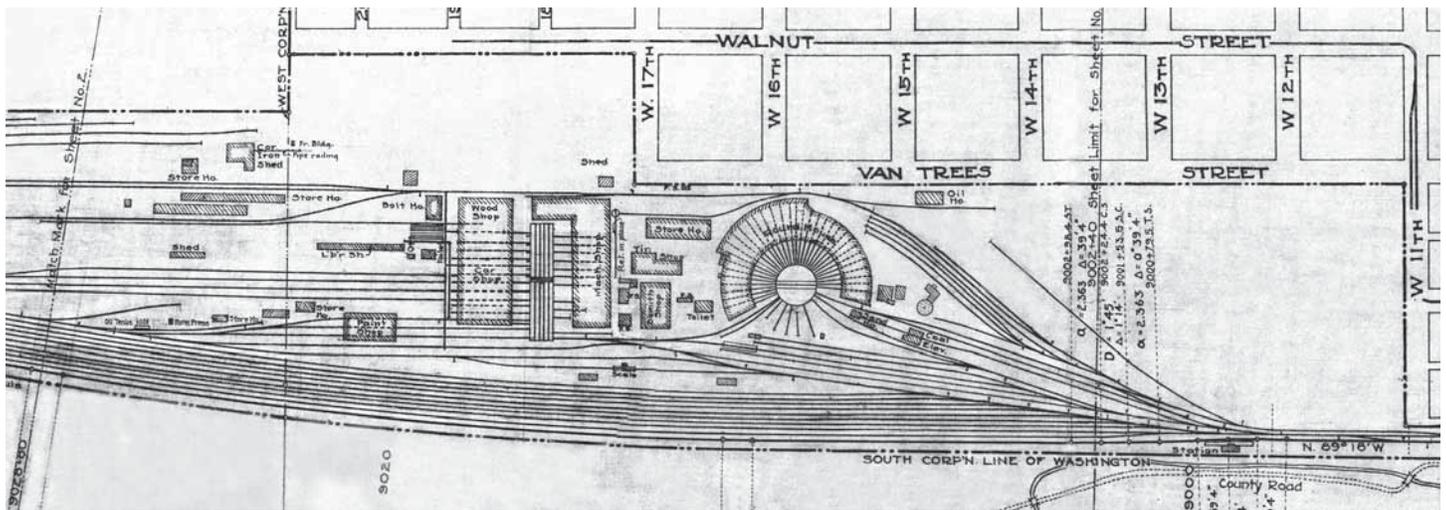
time) bridges. The cash-strapped O&M always seemed to be in need of financial help, but the determined backers of the railroad always made it happen.

The Western Division of the O&M, from Illinoistown (renamed East St. Louis in 1861) to Vincennes, was finished on July 11, 1855. The last rail of the Ohio & Mississippi mainline was laid at Rock Cut, about six miles east of Mitchell,

Indiana, on the Eastern Division on April 15, 1857. A ceremony was held at the site.

The great Midwestern cities of Cincinnati and St. Louis were at long last joined—by about 340 miles of Ohio & Mississippi 6-foot-gauge track (and a short steamboat trip across the Mississippi).

The initial construction cost for the O&M was estimated at \$5 million; the line eventually cost more than \$20 million.



Shops, engine terminal, and yard at Washington, Indiana, around 1930. (B&ORRHS Archives)

Early O&M Shop Facilities

Along with the right-of-way, bridges, the two tunnels, depots and water facilities, the O&M constructed three shop complexes, not only to service and repair its locomotives and rolling stock, but also to actually build freight and passenger cars and assemble many of its locomotives. It is likely that the railroad's uncommon broad gauge necessitated the building of three shop complexes (for such a relatively short railroad) to custom-build equipment that was not available from other manufacturers.

These shops were located in Indiana at Cochran and Vincennes, and at Illinois town. Cochran, about 27 miles west of Cincinnati, served the eastern end of the railroad. Vincennes, on the Wabash River, was approximately in the middle of the system, and Illinois town, on the Mississippi River opposite St. Louis, was at the western terminus.

Cochran, on the west side of Aurora, Indiana, was named for George W. Cochran, an original backer of the railroad from Covington, Kentucky. Purchasing 30,000 acres of land along various spots of the O&M, he donated 20 acres for the construction of the eastern O&M shop complex in 1852. The complex contained a large, stone machine shop, 250 feet long and 140 feet wide. The remaining buildings, predominantly of wood construction, included a blacksmith shop, a car shop, a paint shop, a turntable, and facilities to accommodate and service 32 locomotives. A large

number of tracks for outside construction, demolition, and storage also served the complex.

The shop complex at Vincennes was just north of the eventual site of the Union Depot Hotel, which opened in 1871 at the junction of the O&M and the Evansville & Terre Haute Railroad (a predecessor of the Chicago & Eastern Illinois). The complex included a multi-wing shop building, presumably performing the same functions as the facilities at Cochran. It also had a turntable with tracks radiating out to 11 separate engine houses—all with two stalls except for one single-stall structure.

All of the buildings at Vincennes were built of wood. The area also contained a number of smaller servicing and storage buildings, and not surprisingly, a myriad of tracks.

In 1856, the O&M bought 42 acres of land in Illinois town in the area known as Bloody Island on the east bank of the Mississippi. It constructed two railyard terminals with three large freight houses on the island and a large engine servicing and shop complex east of the island.

The O&M shops were located just west of the St. Louis stockyard complex in the area later occupied by the B&O's Cone yard and its adjacent engine terminal. The East St. Louis shops—consisting of six large frame building—were used for the construction and repair of locomotives and cars. The facility also had a turntable and a number of outside construction and storage tracks.

Closing the Early Shops

In May 1872, the O&M was looking to move its locomotive shops from Cochran to Seymour, Indiana; the car shops were to remain in Cochran. George W. Cochran, incensed by this plan, stated that if the O&M removed any part of the shops, it would forfeit all of the land and buildings. How this issue was resolved is unclear, but in June 1873, the boiler shop and much of the machinery at the complex were taken to Seymour. The O&M also intended to move the car shops from Cochran to Mitchell, but there is no information to suggest that they were moved there.

By this time the wooden buildings at Cochran were beginning to deteriorate badly, anyway. An 1875 map of Cochran shows that all the shop buildings were gone. Much of the northern portion of the property had been reclaimed by George W. Cochran. It is likely that the car shops in Vincennes took up the slack with the abandonment of the shops in Cochran.

Also by the early 1870s, the O&M found that much of the business it was hoping to pick up in the St. Louis area did not materialize. As a result, the railroad began to unload some of its property, starting with the shops in East St. Louis in 1875. However, the railroad retained at least some of its original locomotive servicing facilities there.

Around 1880, the O&M constructed a new roundhouse to replace the large facilities that were phased out in the 1870s. The O&M roundhouse may have



The B&O freight house at Washington, Indiana, shown here around 1955, was the original Ohio & Mississippi passenger station in town. It was moved to this location east of the new passenger station that was built on its original site. (Robert Clark collection, B&ORHS)

survived into the 1890s and the takeover by the B&O Southwestern. Either the B&OSW or a major tornado in 1896 finished it off. In 1909 the B&O built a roundhouse and engine terminal at Cone. The decaying remnants of the roundhouse remain today.

So by 1875, the only shop facilities remaining from the original three were those at Vincennes. Being of wood construction, they were beginning to deteriorate and were in desperate need of repair or replacement. They continued, however, to serve the O&M and its successor the B&OSW for more than another decade.

Washington, Indiana

Centrally located on the Ohio & Mississippi mainline about halfway between Cincinnati and St. Louis, Washington, Indiana, would help solve the railroad's problems regarding its shop facilities. The town was platted in 1815 and originally named Liverpool. The county commissioners selected the town, located in Washington Township of Daviess County, as the county seat in 1817, the same year its name was changed to Washington. The town grew, but slowly until 1857. The construction of the Ohio &



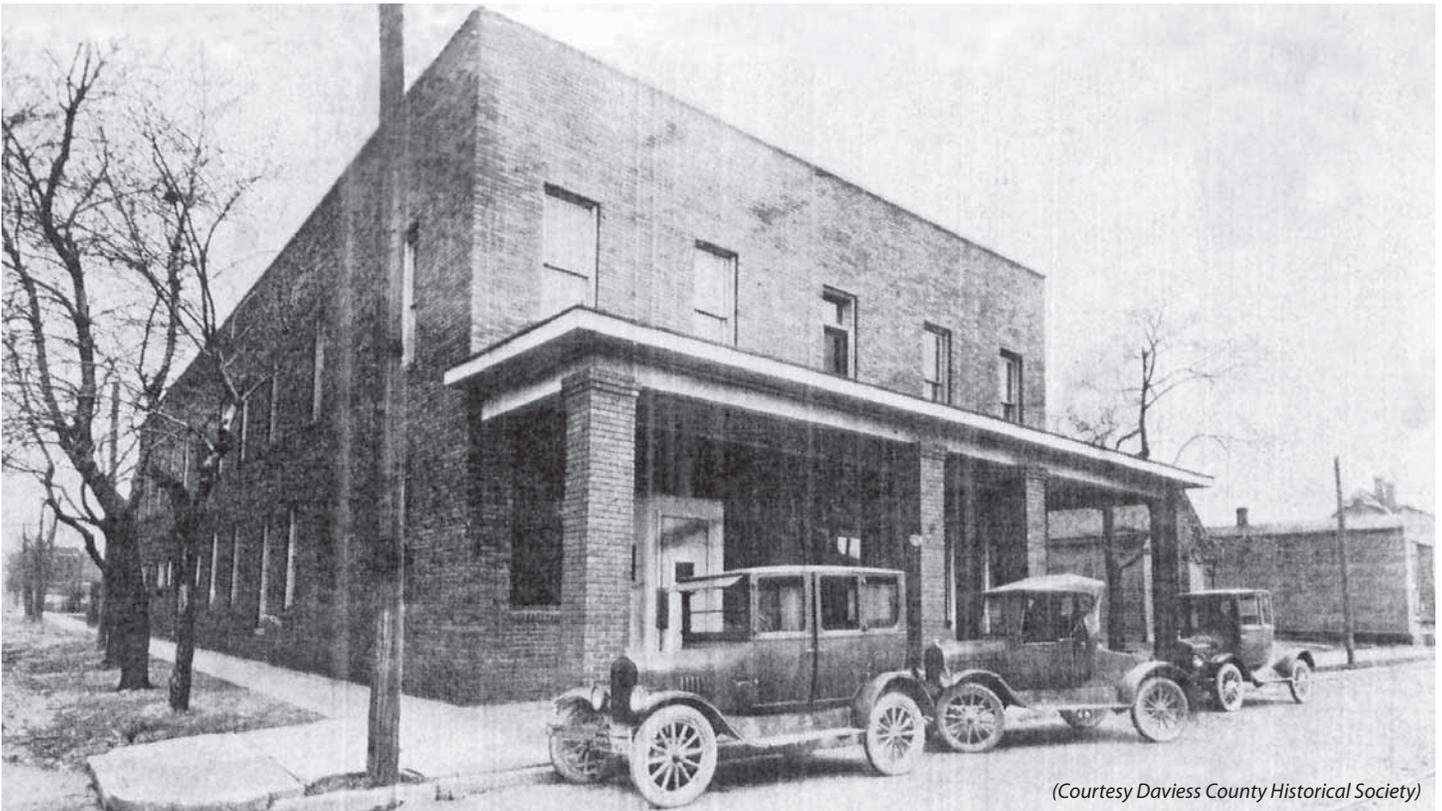
The "new" B&O passenger station at Washington, seen here around 1920, was built in 1906 to replace the O&M structure. (Hays T. Watkins Research Library, B&O Railroad Museum)

Mississippi Railway through the town at that time instantly boosted the economy and growth of the city and county.

The O&M felt Washington, being the county seat and a town of some size, was deserving of a passenger depot fitting its stature. The majority, if not all, of the original O&M passenger depots were of wood, board-and-batten construction; the Washington depot was no exception. Situated on the north side of the main and just east of the Daniel Street (later renamed Meridian Street) crossing, the

depot was 22 feet wide and 85 feet long. It had a gable roof with 10-foot overhangs on both the front and rear of the building. The east end of the depot contained both men's and women's waiting rooms on either side of the ticket office; the west end held a baggage room and a freight room. A small 17- by 33-foot wood freight house was immediately east of the passenger depot.

In 1906 the B&O Railroad constructed a passenger station in Washington. It was a Mission Revival Style brick structure,



(Courtesy Daviess County Historical Society)

The Arlington Hotel, shown here around 1925, was located near the Washington Shops. Many train crews stayed here while laying over in Washington. The food was reported to be good, and the poker game went on, for the most part, 24/7.

23 feet wide and 79 feet long, with a terra cotta tile roof. The east end of the depot contained both men's and women's waiting rooms on either side of the agent/operator's office; a baggage room was in the west end. It was built on the site of the original O&M freight house.

The original O&M passenger depot was relocated about 500 feet to the east and just west of the E. 2nd Street crossing. It was modified to become the new freight house. A wood platform ran along the front of the freight house between it and the house track.

In 1914, the railroad constructed a small, frame passenger shelter on the south side of the siding across from the passenger depot.

A passing siding ran south of the main, the east end beginning at E. 4th Street and the west end extending just past W. 10th Street. Several spurs extended from this siding and the main to serve the freight house, livestock pens, and a number of industries in the downtown area.

Around 1952, the railroad made a slight realignment to the tracks and changed the passing siding to the main

and vice versa. The change made it easier to switch the local industries and avoid congestion on the main. It also allowed access to the engine terminal and yard using a hand-thrown switch, rather than a powered switch that would have been required off the main due to Centralized Traffic Control.

To provide water for diesel locomotives on through passenger trains, a hose box was located just west of the Meridian Street crossing (for westbound trains); another was between E. 2nd Street and E. 3rd Street (for eastbound trains). Although rusty and no longer used, both are still present. Steam-powered trains had their locomotive replaced with one freshly serviced at the engine terminal.

The Evansville & Indianapolis Railroad, a predecessor of the Big Four (CCC&StL), crossed the B&O on the east side of W. 5th Street; just west of the grade crossing, the Big Four interchange track joined the siding. The Big Four passenger depot was on the south side of Main Street, half a block east of W. 5th Street; about two blocks away, the freight house was on the southeast corner of W. 5th Street and Main Street.

Construction of the Washington Shop Complex

As early as 1867, the town of Washington had hopes of convincing the O&M to relocate its shop facilities there. There was no movement in that direction until the mid-1870s with the loss of the shops in Cochran and East St. Louis and the deteriorating condition of the shops in Vincennes. The railroad was at least considering consolidating and relocating its shops to a single central location, but lacking the necessary capital to effect such a move, the financially weak O&M was forced to get by with what it had.

Although the railroad was reluctant to relocate its shops at that time, Washington did achieve a significant victory with the O&M. In 1867 the Ohio & Mississippi was burning wood in its locomotives. Significant deposits of coal had been discovered in that part of Indiana, and no less than 16 large mines were operating in the Washington area served by the O&M. Washington furnished more coal business for the railroad than any other city between Cincinnati and St. Louis.

On behalf of Washington coal-mining



B&O train crew members pose for this shot in front of the original Relay Depot at Washington Shops in 1919. It was a crew- and power-change point for most trains, both east- and westbound. (Robert Clark collection, B&ORHS)

interests, Councilman J. C. Spink (also co-owner of Spink, Cabel & Co. Coal) called on W. D. Griswold, president of the O&M, hoping to convince him to burn coal in his locomotives instead of wood. President Griswold at first objected, stating it would be prohibitively expensive to convert all the locomotives over to coal. Mr. Spink convinced him to convert one locomotive as an experiment.

The experiment was so successful that the O&M began changing all its locomotives to burn coal, a more efficient form of fuel...and about 50 percent cheaper than wood, which was music to the railroad's ears.

Finally, on November 17, 1885, Washington received a proposal from the O&M summarizing its plan to move the railroad's machine shops to that city. A

letter was sent to Mayor W.P. Ellis from W. W. Peabody, president of the Ohio & Mississippi, proposing to consolidate their machine shops at Washington, provided the city would donate 60 acres of land for a site, and \$75,000 in cash.

The city held a meeting on November 19, and a committee was appointed to confer with President Peabody regarding the railroad's proposal. The committee consisted of Mayor Ellis, Judge W. R. Gardiner, Dr. F. M. Harned, J. H. O'Neill, and Joseph Cabel, probably the co-owner of Spink, Cabel & Co. A plan agreeable both to the railroad and to the city was eventually signed, providing for Washington to contribute 70 acres of land and \$72,000.

The site was to be on the west side of Washington, beginning just west of W.

10th Street on the north side of the main. It would include a number of large shop buildings, extensive storage and work tracks, a major engine terminal, and a large classification yard. Construction began in short order and the facilities opened in 1888, although some of the buildings were not finished until the following year.

The shop facilities still standing in Vincennes were torn down; a small engine terminal was constructed across the tracks from the Union Depot Hotel. The Washington shop complex, including the engine terminal, was referred to simply as "Shops"—a title used by railroaders throughout the O&M and later the B&O years, as well as by the railroad in its employee timetables, track charts and official correspondence.



The B&O roundhouse and turntable at the Washington engine terminal, shown here in about 1930, probably were built at the same time as the Shops. This 100-foot turntable replaced the original 70-foot turntable around 1918. (Robert Clark collection, B&ORHS)

The Engine Terminal

The entrance to the engine terminal at Shops was just west of the W. 10th Street grade crossing. A little beyond the crossing, a wreck train track and several caboose tracks were on the north side of the engine terminal; two primary engine servicing tracks were just to the south, providing access to the coal elevator, water and sand facilities, ash and inspection pits, and a locomotive washing platform. Just west of these facilities was the roundhouse. Tracks to park and service passenger cars were just south of the engine servicing tracks.

A Rattler?

No, Shops didn't have a pet snake. I asked a retired B&O conductor friend, Bob Clark, who spent a lot of years on runs between North Vernon and Shops, about that name once and he thought it was a facility that used some type of vibration equipment to remove heavy soot and possibly calcium deposits from steam locomotive components. Since it was next to the flue shop, that seems reasonable.—ED YOUNG

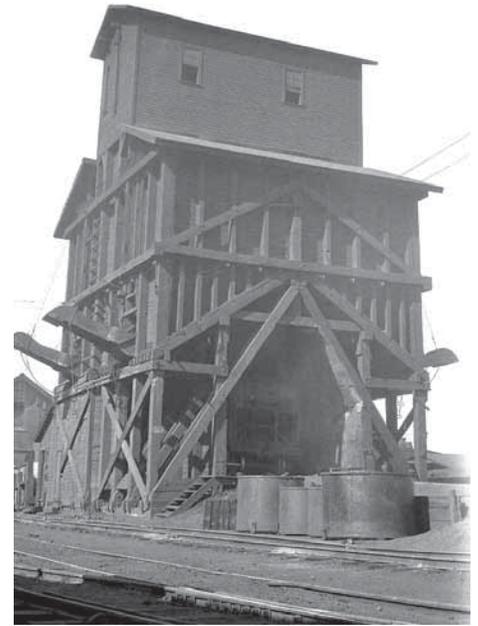
The roundhouse, constructed primarily of brick, had 34 stalls, 75 feet long and 18 feet high. In 1918, 12 stalls were extended to 100 feet, probably to accommodate USRA Q-3 and P-5 locomotives, which became the dominant motive power on the St. Louis Division during the 20th century. Probably at the same time, the roundhouse's 70-foot turntable was replaced by a 100-foot turntable.

The 40-foot-long, 30-foot-wide, 60-foot-high frame coal elevator had a delivery pit and storage pocket on each side; there were two chutes on each side to service locomotives on two tracks. It had a slightly elevated central loading track that also served the nearby sand house.

Because of high maintenance costs, the elevator was removed in late 1952 and replaced by a Haiss portable conveyor located just east of the coal elevator.

A two-story, brick sand house was next to the roundhouse and about 150 feet west of the coal elevator. The 24-foot-long, 20-foot-wide structure had an elevated tank with a spout for dry sand at the northwest corner of building. A reinforced wood-frame wet-sand bin ran between the sand house and the coal elevator.

South of the sand house was a standard B&O 16- by 24-foot wood water tank. Certainly not the first water tank

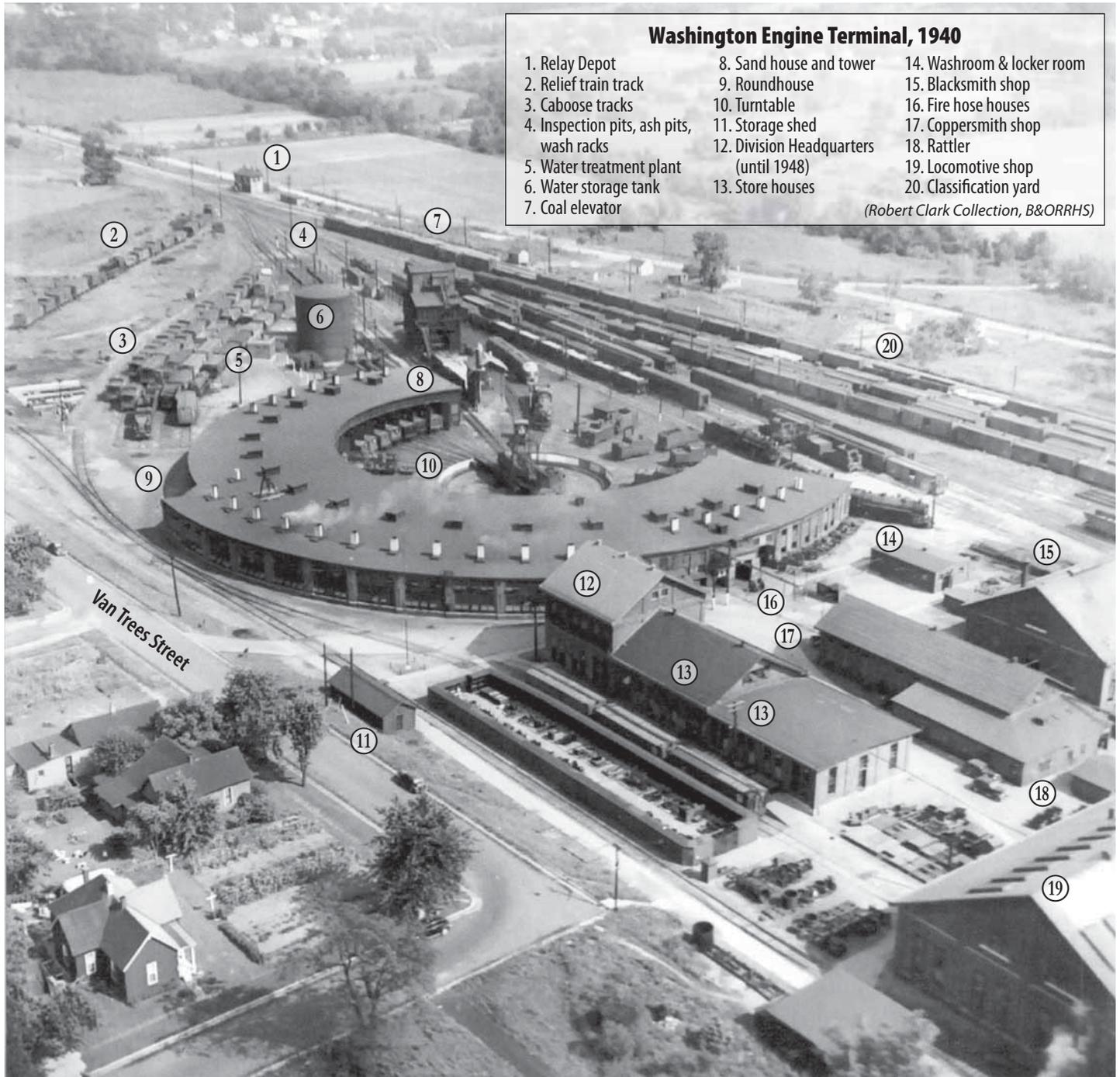


The massive frame coal elevator and the brick sand house at the Washington engine terminal are shown in these ICC Valuation photos from about 1918. The coal facility was set up to serve two locomotives on each side. The sand house had an elevated tank for dry sand at its northwest corner.

(Hays T. Watkins Research Library, B&O Railroad Museum)

at Shops, it used water supplied by the city. The tank supplied two penstocks, one just to the north and the other at the east end of the servicing tracks.

Around 1928, as part of a system-wide upgrade, the B&O constructed a water treatment plant at the terminal. Located north of the coal elevator, it consisted of



Washington Engine Terminal, 1940

- | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Relay Depot | 8. Sand house and tower | 14. Washroom & locker room |
| 2. Relief train track | 9. Roundhouse | 15. Blacksmith shop |
| 3. Caboose tracks | 10. Turntable | 16. Fire hose houses |
| 4. Inspection pits, ash pits, wash racks | 11. Storage shed | 17. Coppersmith shop |
| 5. Water treatment plant | 12. Division Headquarters (until 1948) | 18. Rattler |
| 6. Water storage tank | 13. Store houses | 19. Locomotive shop |
| 7. Coal elevator | | 20. Classification yard |

(Robert Clark Collection, B&ORRHS)

a single-story brick, L-shaped treatment building and a large steel storage tank, 40 feet in diameter and 47 feet tall. Still serving the two penstocks, it replaced the wood water tank.

At least through the 1920s, an ash pit probably was located on the south side of the sand house. Later an ash pit spanning the two engine servicing tracks was built east of the coal elevator; it included a conveyor to move ash and cinders into hopper cars spotted on an adjacent track.

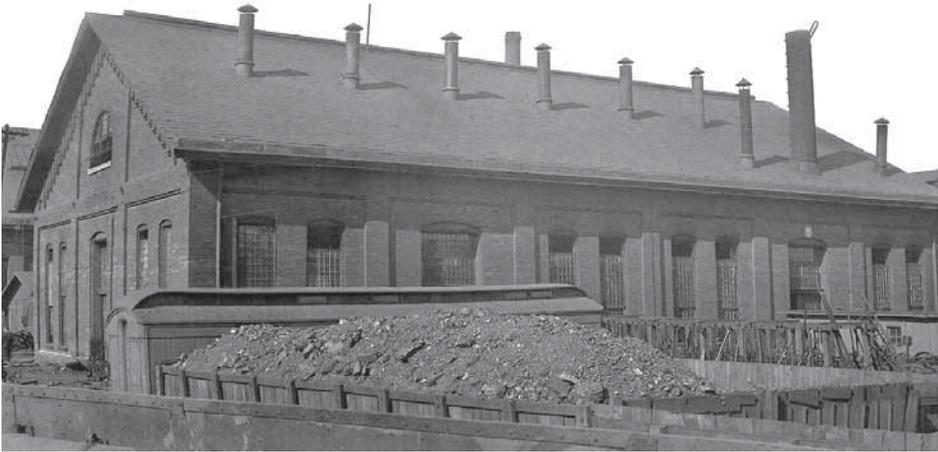
The locomotive washing platform, also spanning the two service tracks,

was just east of the ash pit. Two inspection pits were just east of the washing platform. There also were a number of small storage buildings and tool houses at the engine terminal.

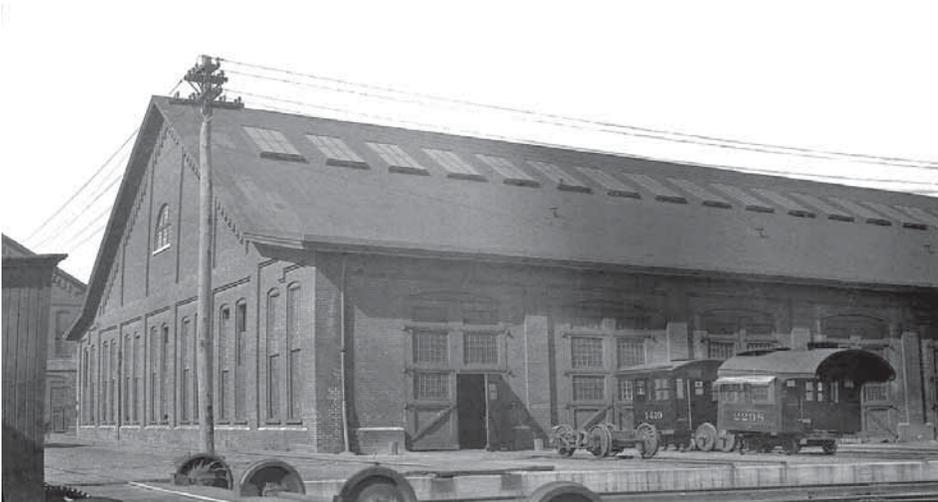
North of the engine terminal and adjacent to Van Trees Street was a single-story, brick oil house. The 42-foot-long, 32-foot-wide facility, and an attached metal-clad shed, were used for the handling and storage of locomotive oils and lubricants. Several racks for the storage of barrels and drums were just south of the building.

The Shops

West of the engine terminal was the shop complex. The predominant structures were several large brick shop buildings, including the eastern and western shop buildings, the blacksmith shop, the paint shop, a store house, and the power house. There also were a number of frame structures, the largest being the coppersmith shop and the bolt house. Other smaller facilities included a tin shop, flue shop, rattler, valve house, pipe shed, asbestos storage house, motor



An ICC Valuation photo of the blacksmith shop at the Washington Shops from about 1918. It was 120 x 70 feet; there are no fewer than nine smoke stacks on the roof.



This was the coach shop at the Washington Shops from an ICC Valuation photo taken around 1918. It was used for the construction of passenger cars and for refurbishment until the end of B&O passenger service.



This Valuation shot shows the wood shop at the Washington Shops. It was located in the north end of the coach shop, perpendicular to the main building and two stories high. The passenger car upholstery shop was likely upstairs in this section of the building, as well. (Three photos, Hays T. Watkins Research Library, B&O Railroad Museum)

car repair shop, paint and stencil store house, maintenance-of-way store house, locker and wash rooms, lunch room, and lumber sheds.

There were four long tracks used for “open air” freight car assembly and several open storage platforms, all west of the primary shop buildings.

The eastern shop building was used primarily as the back shop for locomotive repair, at least in the early 20th century. The brick building was approximately 332 feet long, 94 feet wide, and 24 feet high at the eaves of the roof, which, at its peak, added another 24 feet to the height.

The center of the building was the 170-foot-long machine shop, containing eight tracks, each with an inspection pit. The wheel shop was in the south end of the building and the boiler shop was in the north.

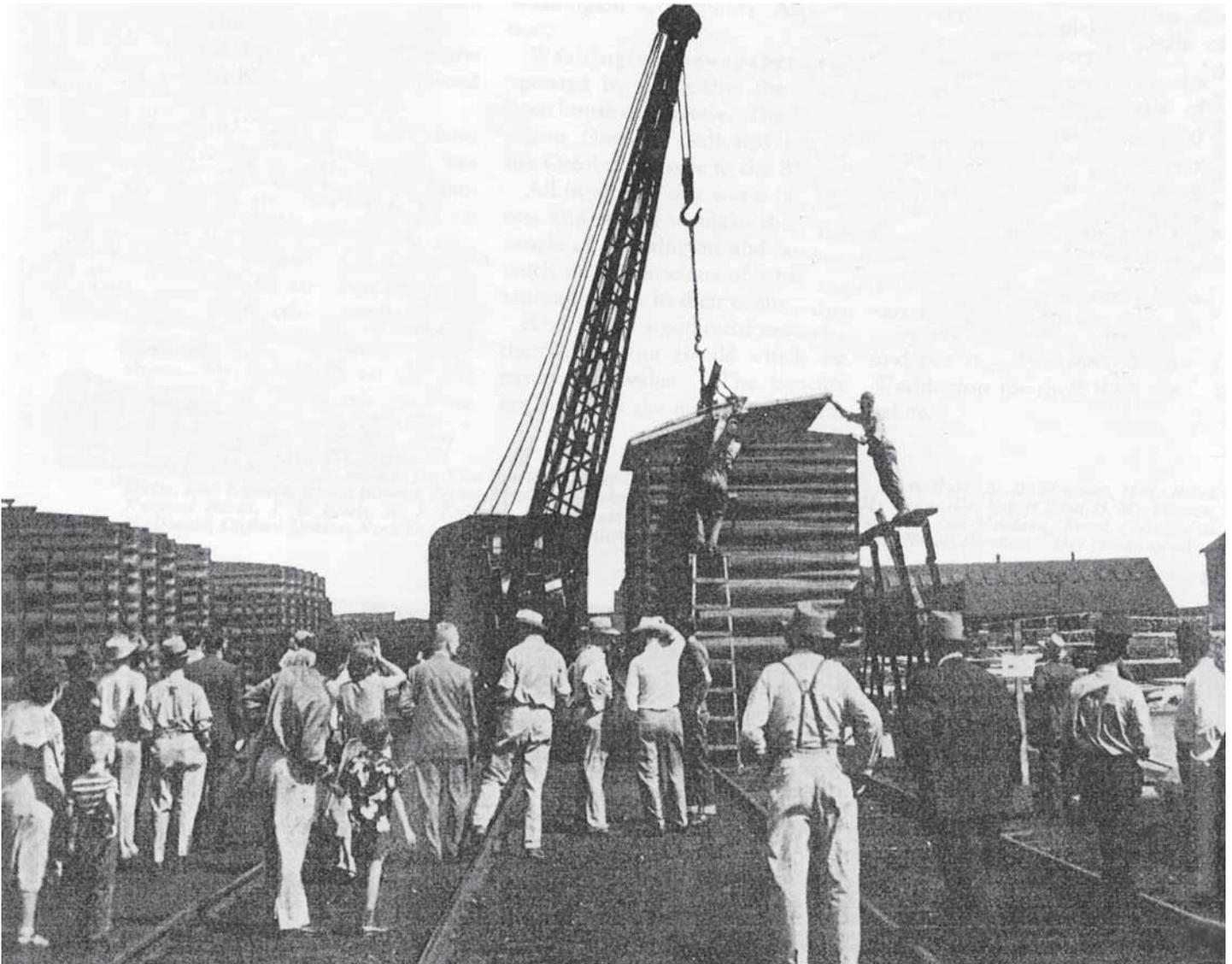
Lacking overhead cranes in the building, workmen used jacks to lift locomotives to replace wheels. Bridge cranes, supported by heavy steel beams, were later installed in the building. The roof was filled with large skylights to provide natural light. The power house was connected to the west end of the boiler shop. It had a 153-foot-tall, brick chimney.

Early on, the western shop building was called the coach shop, primarily used for the construction and repair of passenger cars. It later handled freight cars as well. The largest building at Shops, it was approximately 325 feet long, 135 feet wide, and 24 feet high at the eaves of the roof; at its peak it was 24 feet higher. The south end of the building was the 230-foot-long car shop, which contained 11 tracks; its roof also was filled with large skylights.

At the north end of the building and essentially perpendicular to it was the two-story, 46-foot-high wood shop, housing saws, planing mills, and a drying kiln. This section of the building may also have included the upholstery shop, mostly staffed by women.

A transfer table moved locomotives and cars between the two large shop buildings. The pit for the traveler was approximately 295 feet long and 55 feet wide.

Located west of the western shop building, the paint shop was a two-story, 145-by-80-foot-wide brick building, also 46 feet high. Three tracks ran the length



Attaching the roof to an M-56-class boxcar at Washington Shops in 1952. Most of the work at the shops appears to have involved boxcars. A chart of Shops production is available at BORHS.org/history (December 1952 B&O Employees Magazine, B&ORHS Archives)

and through each end of the building, one going to the coach shop, the other two to storage tracks.

Just east of the eastern shop building, the blacksmith shop was a single-story, 120x70 brick building. One track ran to it from the eastern shop building. There were no fewer than nine smoke stacks on the roof of the building.

About 100 feet south of the blacksmith shop and the eastern shop building was the track scale at Shops. Still present today but out of service, it had a 300,000-pound capacity and was 50 feet long.

A combined store house and office building was between the roundhouse and the eastern shop building. The original 102-foot-long and 50-foot-wide brick structure consisted of a single-story store

house on the west end and a two-story office section on the east end. By 1921, a single-story, 58-foot long extension to the store house was added to the west end of the building. At about the same time, the B&OSW's Indiana Division moved from offices in Seymour and occupied the two-story office section of the building.

The office section faced the roundhouse, and that location often was the focus of complaints by workers because of the excessive noise, smoke, and heat. Female office workers complained further because the women's toilet and locker room was located well west of the two large shop buildings. Although the conditions were tolerated during World War II, after the war the dispatchers filed a formal dispute with the railroad.

Consideration was given to relocating the dispatchers to another part of the building, but none of the proposals were deemed acceptable. Several other locations within the Shops complex were considered for a new building, as well as a site closer to the passenger and freight stations; they too were turned down. A new building was finally agreed to, and it was decided that the structure would be located five blocks further east at the corner of Van Trees Street and W. 11th Street. At last, in 1947, the railroad began constructing a new, two-story brick office building to house the St. Louis Division Headquarters in Washington.

The new 80-foot-long and 44-foot-wide Division Headquarters building opened on August 1, 1948, although some

equipment was not installed until the following year. Some railroad officials, like the road foreman of engines, retained offices in the older building. Much of the original office space was put to use for other purposes, including the storage of the older O&M and B&OSW documents and records. According to a retired B&O employee, the railroad burned much of this material in the 1950s, considering it to be out-of-date, useless information.

Located between the store house/office building and the blacksmith shop, the coppersmith shop was a single-story, board-and-batten frame building, 100 feet long and 35 feet wide. It was the largest of the frame buildings at Shops. By the 1940s, the tin shop had been relocated to the facility, and by the 1950s, it had been converted to a locker room.

Another large frame building was the bolt house, located just northwest of the western shop building. The two-story structure was also of typical O&M board-and-batten frame construction, 60 feet long and 40 feet wide.

Not involved in the manufacturing or maintenance process, but integral to the effective operations at Shops, were two “wash rooms” containing toilets, shower, and locker rooms. Both were single-story brick buildings; the larger of the two, 42 feet long and 26 feet wide, was between the roundhouse and the blacksmith shop; the other, 33 feet long and 26 feet wide, was just beyond the western shop building and adjacent to the “open air” assembly and material storage area. The women’s toilet, shower, and locker facility, mentioned previously, was next to the western men’s wash room. A 45-foot-long and 26-foot-wide space in the eastern end of a lumber shed was set aside for them.

The core assembly and maintenance buildings composed a complex about 2½ blocks wide and seven blocks long. Adding the division headquarters, engine terminal, outdoor assembly area and classification yard brought Shops to three blocks by 18.

The Yard

An eight-track classification yard was on the north side of the main at Shops, beginning just west of the W. 10th Street

crossing. A 5,900-foot-long siding began at that point, extending well west of the yard tracks; the western extension served as the yard lead or tail track to the yard. The yard had a capacity of 419 45-foot cars.

In early 1942, probably to support the war effort, there was a proposal to extend each of the yard tracks west about 1,200 feet and add a 5,400-foot passing siding on the south side of the main. The capacity of the yard would be increased by 208 cars, to 627. The passing siding, to begin just west of Relay, would have a 100-car capacity. It also would have required a realignment of some of the western shop tracks.

The yard at Shops was expanded in 1942; whether it was the proposed expansion or another plan is not known.

Relay Depot, a two-story frame crew change facility, was just west of W. 10th Street on the south side of the main at the entrance to the engine terminal. The decorative depot, 40 feet long and 16 feet wide with a semi-circular bay window, tongue-and-groove siding and bands of Queen Anne shingles, may also have been a passenger stop, at least for local trains.

Primarily, however, Relay was the starting or stopping point for engine (passenger and freight) and cabooses even on through trains. Except for a small number of passenger trains that originated or terminated at Washington, most continued east or west after changing crews. Similarly, except for the “hot” through freights, all arriving freight trains were broken up and reclassified at the Shops yard.

All steam-powered through trains, both freight and passenger, changed locomotives at Relay. Diesel-powered passenger trains used the same locomotive and passenger staff between St. Louis and Cincinnati; engine crews changed at the passenger station. The men’s waiting room was replaced by the train register, standard clock, and engine crew bulletin board.

Some freight crews stayed with their caboose at Shops until returning to Cincinnati or East St. Louis. Other crew members stayed at local hotels near Shops, quite frequently at the Arlington Hotel, located a block north of Relay at W. 11th Street and Main Street. The two-story, brick Arlington offered inexpensive, Spartan accommodations. Many

railroaders tended to sleep on the second floor in the open bay, bunkhouse-style rooms.

A retired B&O employee says most trainmen slept “like dogs” fully clothed and with their boots on. I’m told that the Arlington served good food at its lunch counter and in the limited dining area. It also had a bar that was quite popular, as was the 24-hour poker game. It dated to when Shops was built, and is long gone now.

The yard at Shops ceased to function as a classification yard sometime in the early 1980s. It went out with a bit of fanfare, however. In the late 1970s, Chessie System was building Queensgate Yard in Cincinnati and eliminating eight other yards in the Queen City area. The yard at Washington was upgraded with welded rail and became the primary switching yard for the St. Louis Gateway (“new speak” for the St. Louis Division) until Queensgate opened in 1980.

Railcar Production at Shops

From their opening in the late 1880s, the Washington Shops undoubtedly produced a wide variety and significant number of railcars. During the Ohio & Mississippi era and the early days of the B&O Southwestern, cars were predominantly built of wood, so the primary construction material for most railcars was readily available. But throughout its existence the lack of a foundry at Shops meant that large steel parts and castings had to be shipped to the facility.

Certainly, many freight and passenger cars were scratch built here during the early days of the shops. But data on O&M, B&OSW, and B&O car production and rebuilding up through 1940 at Shops are not readily available.

According to a retired B&O employee who started working at Shops in 1941, they were building bay-window cabooses from old stock cars at that time. He said that after that, Washington mostly worked on M-15 and M-24 classes of boxcars.

Boxcars seem to be the most common freight car produced, rebuilt, or refurbished at Shops. The railroad assembled a large number of cabooses here, as well. A table of Washington Shops projects has been posted online at www.B&ORRH.org/history.