



GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY
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GNRHS©

THE GREAT NORTHERN EMPIRE BUILDER Part 2: 1947-1951

Contributor: John F. Strauss Jr.



Before the New Streamlined Empire Builder was placed into service, the train was on display in St. Paul and Minneapolis. The publicity department arranged to have some posed photographs taken on the trackage between St. Paul and Minneapolis. Here the train is spotted just beyond the Lexington Avenue Bridge. Evidently the engineer and fireman felt they should be a recognizable part of the historic event!

FORWARD NOTE: The numbers shown in the brackets within the text are keyed to the page numbers for additional photographs and information which appear in the following books: Dorin, Lines East [coded Dxx] and Wood and Wood, The Great Northern Railway: A Pictorial Study [coded Wxx].

The long awaited announcement came on November 4, 1943. The Great Northern, along with the Burlington Route, stated that they were ordering five streamlined twelve-passenger car consists and five two-unit E-7 road passenger diesel locomotives to replace the 1929 Empire Builder. The Great Northern wanted delivery as soon as possible, but World War II priorities intervened. However, the Great Northern and the Burlington were able to have the orders placed at the top of the builders' lists of peacetime projects when the War Effort requirements terminated.

The two-unit E-7 road passenger diesel locomotives were delivered in April and June, 1945. Even though they were ordered for the 1947 Empire Builder, as soon as these two-unit locomotives arrived, they were immediately placed in shakedown service on the westbound Fast Mail, train No. 27, and on one of the sections of the eastbound

Empire Builder. The E-7s came from the builder in Empire Builder colors and had the unique script "Great Northern" on their noses [D160]. This disappeared from the E-7s' noses by the inaugural of the 1947 Empire Builder, and the EB colors of these units were modified to the scheme which the other GN diesel locomotives carried [D206].

Amidst an exhilarating atmosphere on a cold winter day in St. Paul Union Depot, Great Northern officials accompanied by Twin Cities civic and governmental notables dedicated the new streamlined Empire Builder [W352]. The date was February 7, 1947, which officially became the long anticipated date of entry by the Great Northern into the Streamlined Era. Since this streamliner was the first to be built and placed in service following the conclusion of World War II, it soon was identified as the Post War Empire Builder, and, later on, as the 1947 edition of the Empire Builder.

Following its christening and dedication ceremonies the Post War Empire Builder was opened to the public for viewing in St. Paul and Minneapolis. Upon completion of its Twin Cities exhibitions, it departed westbound on an exhibition tour which took it to on-line as well as off-line communities such as Duluth-Superior and Great Falls, all the way West to Spokane, Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, and

Vancouver, BC. During this exhibition trip the Empire Builder introduced the Northwest to a whole host of passenger train service innovations, including the duplex roomette [W349], [D89] and [D90], the Day-Night Sleepy Hollow reclining coach seat, assigned reserved coach seats, a coffee shop, dining car reservations, a public-address system, ice-water drinking fountains in the coaches and the sleeping cars, and the traveling passenger representative as a member of the assigned train crew. All who visited the Empire Builder were highly impressed with this new streamliner in its beautiful EB colors, and they eagerly anticipated the opportunity to ride this new Post War train.

The Great Northern published and distributed during its exhibition trip an Empire Builder brochure and published advertising throughout the country which, among other points of information, stated that this streamliner would inaugurate forty-five hour schedules in both directions between Chicago and Seattle via the Twin Cities, the Willmar line, the Surrey Cutoff, and Spokane with through Chicago-Portland coach and sleeping car service connecting to and from the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railway at Spokane.

The first 1947 Empire Builder revenue trips occurred on February 23, 1947, when train Q49/GN 1 departed Chicago Union Station at 1:00 PM (CST), and GN 2 left Seattle King Street Station at 3:00 PM (PST). Prior to train 2's departure from Seattle, it was again dedicated by local civic and governmental notables along with Frank Gavin, President of the Great Northern, and other railway officials. [W352] Photographs of this ceremony demonstrated the public enthusiasm for the new Empire Builder as they lined up several deep along the concrete railing of the Fourth Avenue Viaduct looking down into King Street Station.

The inaugural consists of the 1947 Empire Builder were impressive, from the two-unit E7s on the head end to the River series observation car which carried the square Empire Builder lighted tail sign on its rear door. Each consist in EB colors included the following locomotives and cars, and the coaches and sleeping cars were assigned the following line numbers.

	WEST	EAST
Two-unit E7s and Class W & Y Electric Motors		
Railway Post Office-Baggage Car		
60 Seat "Shorts" Coach	160	260
48 Day-Night Sleepy Hollow Reclining Seat Coach	100	200
48 Day-Night Sleepy Hollow Reclining Seat Coach	101	201
48 Day-Night Sleepy Hollow Reclining Seat Coach: Chicago-Portland	P102	P202
Coffee Shop-Lounge-Dormitory		
Dining Car		
4-8-4 Pullman Sleeping Car	15	25
16-4 Pullman Sleeping Car	16	26
16-4 Pullman Sleeping Car	17	27
4-8-4 Pullman Sleeping Car Chicago-Portland	P18	P28
2-1-Buffer-Lounge Observation Car	19	29

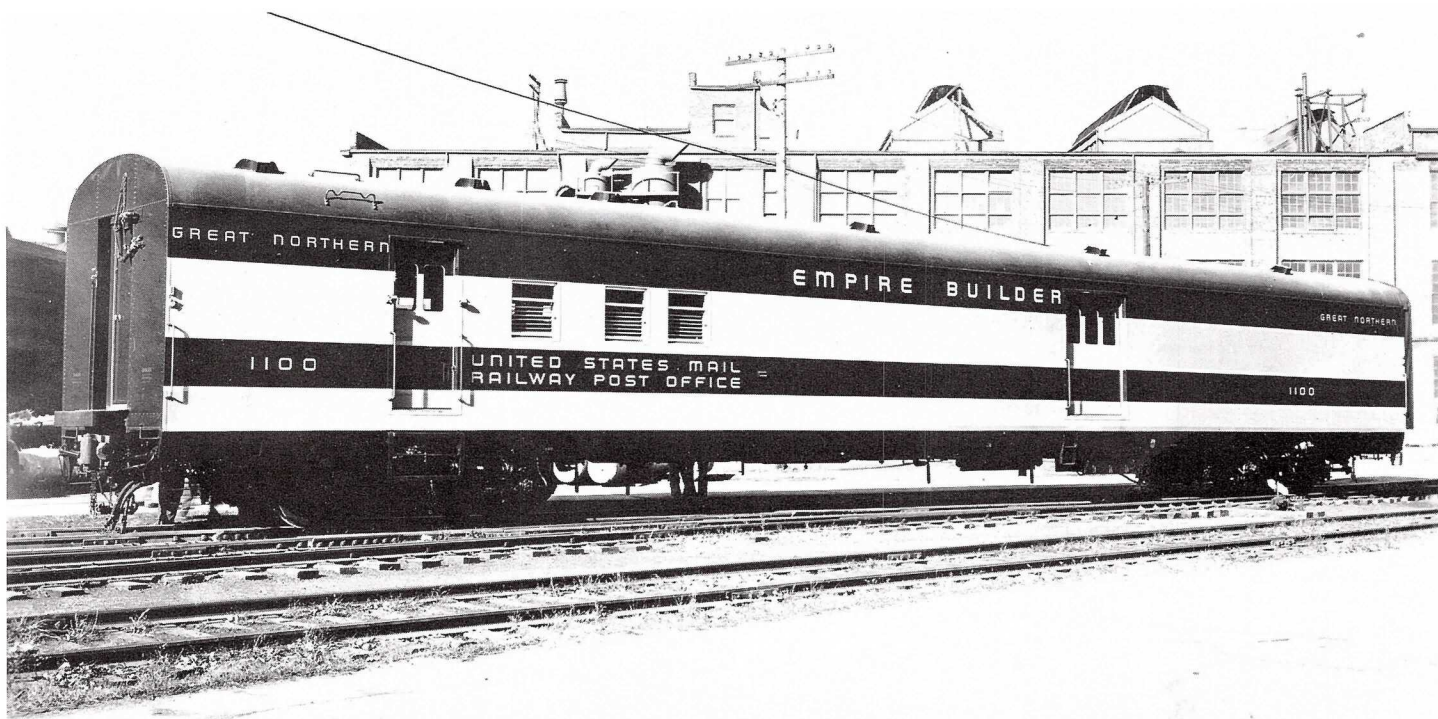
The five streamlined consists were drawn from the following cars which had been built by the Pullman-Standard Car Company:

RPO-Baggage [D78]	GN 1100-1103 and CB&Q 1104
60 Seat Coach	GN 1110-1113 and CB&Q 1114
48 Seat Coaches	GN 1120-1131 and CB&Q 1132-1134
Coffee Shop-Lounge-Dormitory	
GN 1140 Waterton Lake	GN 1143 Coeur d'Alene Lake
GN 1141 St. Mary Lake	CB&Q 1144 Red Eagle Lake
GN 1142 Two Medicine Lakes	
Dining Car	
GN 1150 Lake Superior	GN 1153 Lake Josephine
GN 1151 Lake McDonald	CB&Q 1154 Lake Michigan
GN 1152 Lake Chelan	
4-8-4 Pullman Sleeping Cars	
GN 1160 Gunsight Pass	GN 1165 Triple Divide Pass
GN 1161 Ptarmigan Pass	GN 1166 Lincoln Pass
GN 1162 Dawson Pass	CB&Q 1167 Cut Bank Pass
GN 1163 Piegan Pass	CB&Q 1168 Red Gap Pass
GN 1164 Logan Pass	GN 1196 Swift Current Pass
16-4 Pullman Sleeping Cars	
GN 1170 Blackfoot Glacier	GN 1175 Oberlin Glacier
GN 1171 Ahern Glacier	GN 1176 Sexton Glacier
GN 1172 Grinnell Glacier	GN 1177 Harrison Glacier
GN 1173 Hanging Glacier	CB&Q 1178 Sperry Glacier
GN 1174 Many Glacier	CB&Q 1179 Siyeh Glacier
2-1-Buffer-Lounge-Observation Car	
GN 1190 Mississippi River	GN 1193 Kootenai River
GN 1191 Missouri River	CB&Q 1194 Marias River
GN 1192 Flathead River	

The Great Northern and the Burlington had been able to order only those cars needed to complete the five consists of twelve cars each. Protection cars were to come a few years later. With the high demand for new cars placed on the passenger car building industry by the nation's railroads, the Great Northern and the Burlington considered themselves very fortunate to secure sufficient cars to fully streamline their 1947 Empire Builder.

The two-unit E7s were assigned between St. Paul and Wenatchee, and between Skykomish and Seattle, with electric motors from the Class W and Y pool being on the point on the electrified district between Wenatchee and Skykomish. The big electrics towed the E-7's and consist through the electrified section with diesel engines idling. The Class W electric motors, the world's largest single unit straight-electric locomotives, were also delivered to the Great Northern during 1947. During the short period in 1950, when the F-unit passenger diesels took over the '47 EB from the E-7's, the diesel power was removed, and the electrics took over for the short trip from Wenatchee to Skykomish. A variety of power was used onward.

The shorts coach provided sixty reclining seats with foot rests designed for coach passengers traveling intermediate distances, and the forty-eight seat coaches were designed for the long-haul coach passengers [D80], [D81] and [W348]. These coaches provided the innovative Day-Night Sleepy Hollow reclining coach seat, including a leg-rest which came down from the back of the seat in front. Although not as comfortable as a bed in one of the Pullman sleeping cars, it was possible for Empire Builder coach passengers to recline in a sleeping position during night travel hours. All of the coach sets were reserved in advance and individually assigned when passengers purchased their tickets.



A builder's photograph of the RPO Baggage car.

The coffee shop-lounge-dormitory contained ten counter seats in the coffee shop, ten lounge seats, and the crew's dormitory facilities [D84], [W350/351] and [D85], and the dining car had thirty-six table seats for its guests [W349] and [D86]. Both cars were named in the Lake series for lakes situated along the Empire Builder's route. A large photograph of James J. Hill, "the Empire Builder", was positioned on the wall between the dining room and the pantry-kitchen areas above the dining car steward's station.

The four sleeping cars assigned to each consist contained two floor plans, one plan arranged in four sections, eight duplex roomettes, and four double bedrooms [W348] and [D88] and the other in sixteen duplex roomettes and four double bedrooms [D88]. Rather than providing Tourist sleeping cars in the consists, the Great Northern chose to include lower and upper berths in the 4-8-4 First Class sleeping cars. This design thereby permitted those passengers who were occupying berth accommodations access to the buffet-lounge-observation car, but at an economical first class accommodation cost. The 4-8-4 sleeping cars were named in the Pass series, and the 16-4 sleeping cars in the Glacier series.

The last car in each consist was the two double bedroom and one drawing room-buffet-lounge-observation car which was named in the River series [D92], [W350/351], and [D92]. The lounge's decor emphasized Blackfeet Indian Nation memorabilia in recognition of that Nation's collaboration with Great Northern's efforts to encourage travel to and from Montana's Rocky Mountain vacationland and Glacier National Park, which was located just west of the Blackfeet Reservation and its headquarters at Browning, Montana. Because of its high-speed schedules, however, the Empire Builder no longer made the Glacier Park stops, leaving that service to the newly returned Oriental Limited, trains Nos. 3 and 4. This car provided buffet beverage service, stock market reports, daily newspapers, plus a wide selection of current magazines for the sleeping car passengers.

As noted in the consist list above, a Day-Night Sleepy Hollow coach and a 4-8-4 Pass series sleeping car were assigned to through Chicago-Portland service, which connected to and from SP&S trains Nos. 1 and 2 at Spokane. In addition, the Great Northern had leased refurbished sixty-two seat coach No. 961 and cafe-parlor-observation car No. 1057, painted in EB colors, to the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railway for inclusion in the consist of its trains Nos. 1 and 2,

also named the Empire Builder, between Spokane and Portland. The SP&S assigned its own diesel locomotives and an RPO-baggage car to the consist of trains 1 and 2.

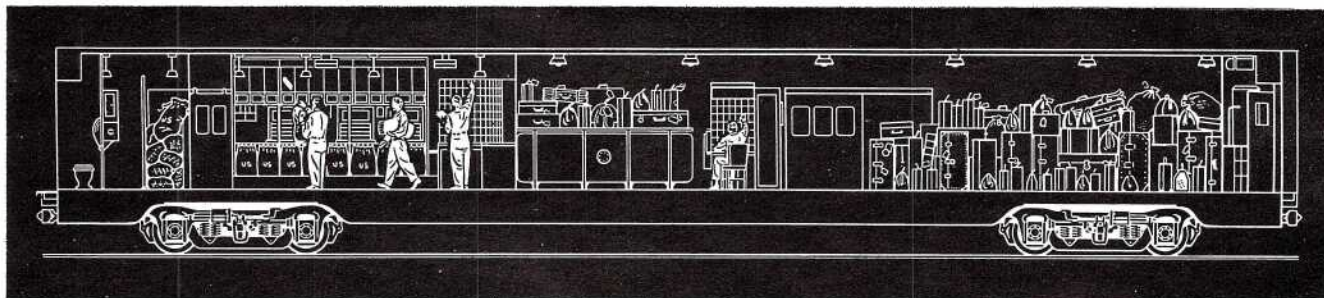
The Chicago-Seattle/Portland runs of the 1947 Empire Builder involved a joint operation. The Great Northern held responsibility for its Empire Builder, trains 1 and 2, between St. Paul and Seattle, the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railway handled the through Chicago-Portland cars in its trains 1 and 2, and the Burlington Route participated between Chicago and St. Paul, operating its Empire Builder as trains 49 and 44. The Burlington assigned its own E series road passenger diesel locomotives to the Empire Builder between Chicago and St. Paul, and a Chicago to St. Paul stainless-steel parlor car was tucked into the consist just ahead of the observation car.

Since all of the Empire Builder's sleeping car accommodations were assigned to long-haul first class passengers, the Burlington inserted its own parlor car in the consist daily to take care of its Chicago to Twin Cities first class passengers. The addition of this car increased northbound Q 49's consist to thirteen cars, and the parlor car broke up the continuity of the EB colors to St. Paul. This car returned to Chicago from the Twin Cities on one of the Twin Zephyrs, so when Q No. 44 raced down river to Chicago, the Empire Builder's twelve-cars were all EB colors except for Burlington's E series locomotives.

Some media descriptions of the planning for the 1947 Empire Builder made reference to the possibility of a bedroom sleeping car being included in each consist. This erroneous information has been repeated in recent publications which described the 1947 Empire Builder. The Great Northern planners never intended to use the popular double bedroom accommodation [D88] in a single sleeping car. Rather, the designers included double bedrooms with the option of ensuite arrangement in all of the Empire Builder's sleeping cars, including the River series buffet-lounge-observation cars. Also, historical and recent publications have stated that the 1947 Empire Builder's total revenue capacity amounted to 307 passengers.

When the coach seats and the sleeping car spaces which were assigned to the train crew are deleted, the consist's revenue capacity was closer to 198 coach passengers and 101 sleeping car passengers. This sleeping car revenue capacity assumes that every bed in the bedrooms and the drawing room was occupied, which was seldom the case. Several of the bedrooms were sold to single passengers and

continued on page 8



Luxury Travel **AT NO EXTRA FARE**

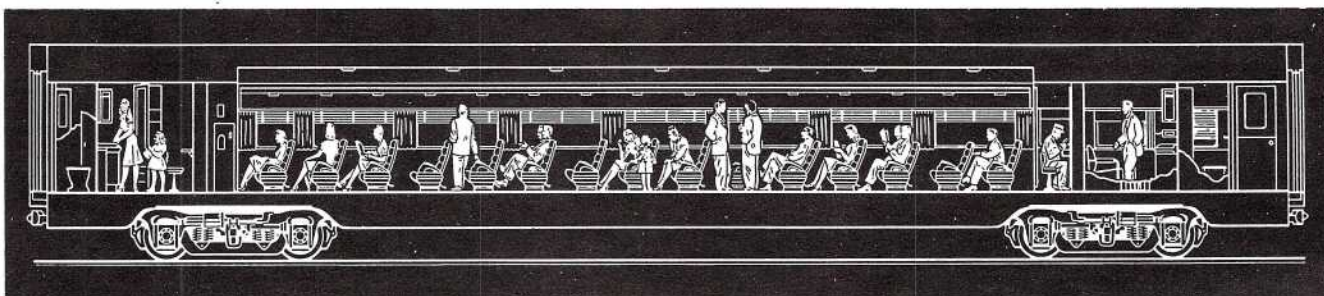
Regardless of whether you ride in the comfortable Day-Nite coaches or in any one of the five different first-class accommodations on the *New EMPIRE BUILDER*, you ride at **NO EXTRA FARE**. This is luxury travel brought within the means of every traveler—another thing that makes Great Northern *great*.

It takes more than fine equipment to make a train—it takes the effort of people to achieve luxury transportation. Train attendants,

proud of the long tradition of Great Northern service and courtesy, are constantly available to serve your needs.

On each train there is a passenger representative who is always on call to take care of unusual circumstances and requirements. He takes your reservation for dinner, announces points of historical and scenic interest along the route, and watches for opportunities to serve you.

The baggage car and the "shorts" coach, as described in the publicity brochure



Nothing is spared on the *EMPIRE BUILDER* to make your ride as comfortable and pleasant as possible.

In order to maintain daily service between

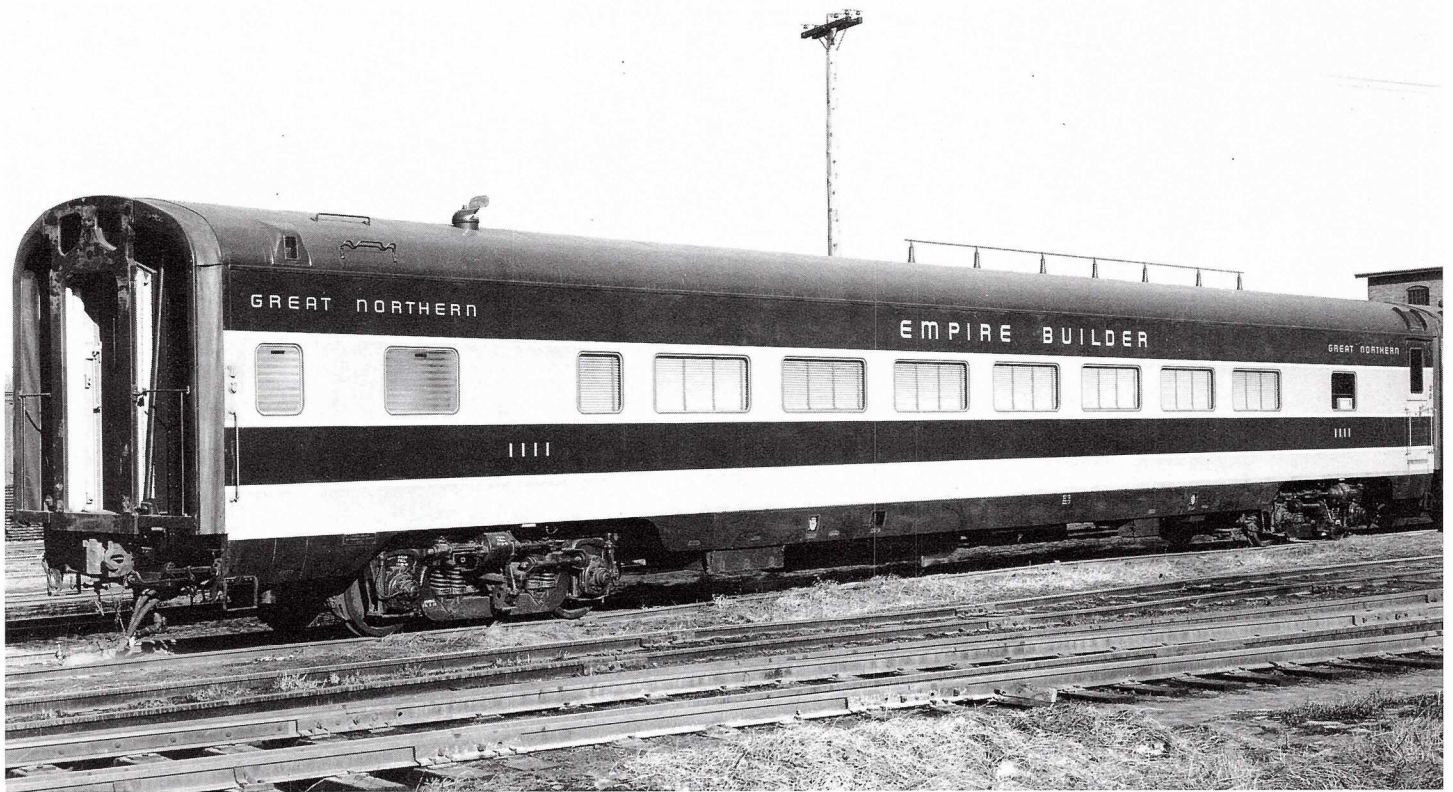
Chicago and Seattle-Portland, a fleet of five streamlined *EMPIRE BUILDERS* is required—five Diesel units and five each of every single car.

The First Two Cars

The head-end car is a combination Railway Post Office and baggage unit. Great Northern Railway has handled the fast mail between St. Paul and Seattle for many years.

The second car is a smart, modern coach, finished in pastel blue, with individual reclining seats with foot-rests, for sixty pas-

sengers. It is planned primarily for the convenience of intermediate passengers, and seats are reserved in advance with ordinary coach tickets at *no additional charge*. It provides large, attractive dressing rooms with complete toilet facilities, and is equipped with a public address system.

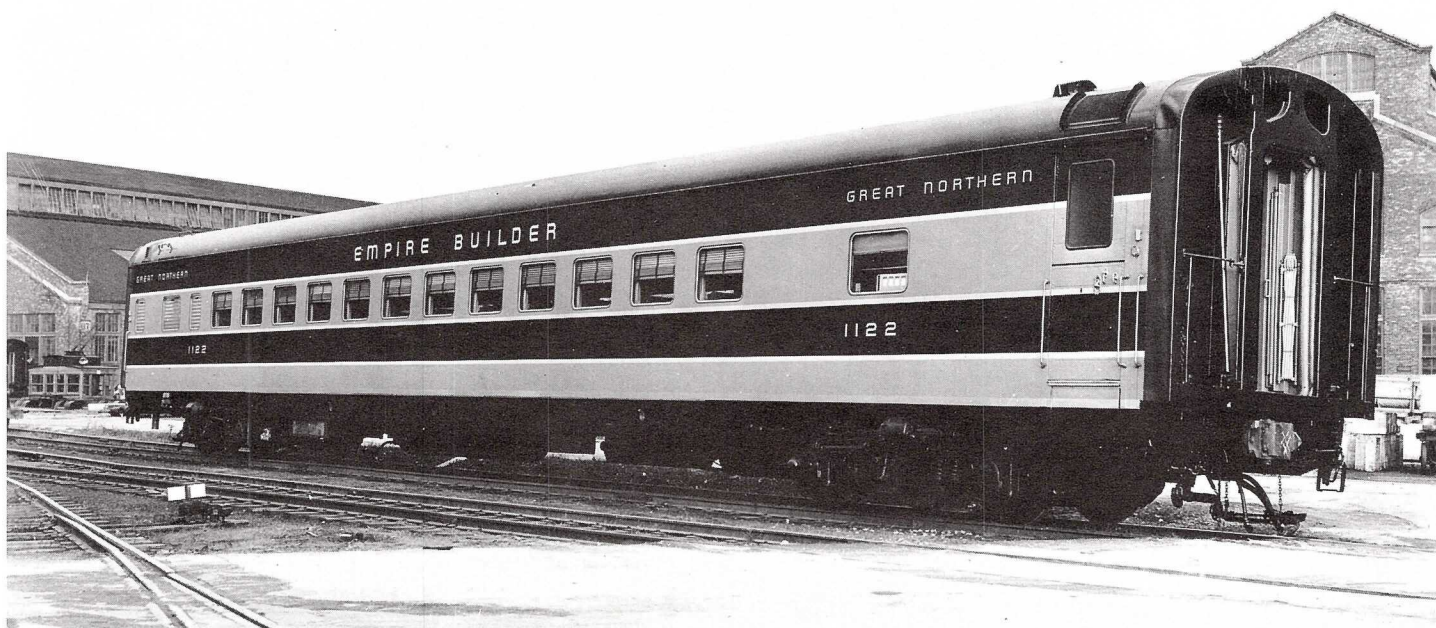


The builder's photograph of the sixty seat "shorts" coach No 1111. The roof mounted train radio antenna is clearly shown. Photographs on this page from the Burlington Northern Art & Archives files. The car ran with the vestibule and conductors desk to the rear of the car.

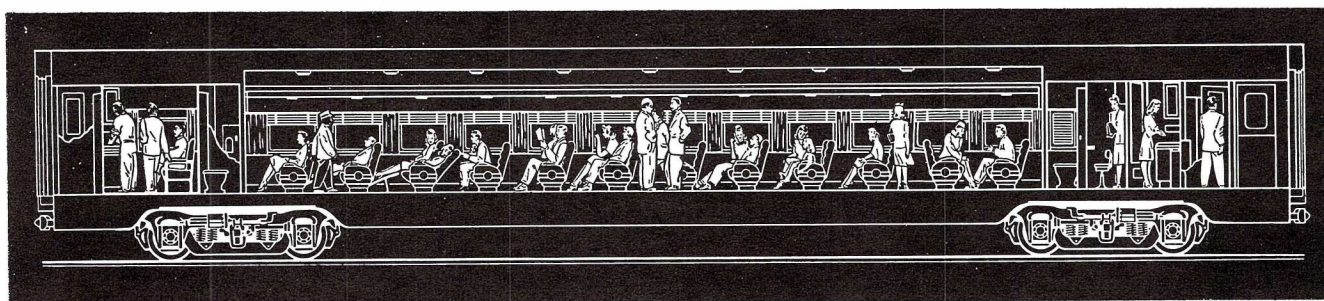


above: full length view of the "shorts" (for short distance passengers). This car had foot rests, and was designed for intermediate station coach travel. The interior color of the "shorts" car was blue.

left: in this close-up photograph of the "shorts" reclining coach seats, note the foot rest mounted on the lower back of the coach seat. The coach porter arranges the bags of a newly entrained passenger.



A three quarter angle builder's photograph of luxury day-night coach No. 1122. These coaches ran in a series of three cars. The first ran vestibule forward, and its interior was tan. The second ran vestibule to the rear, and its interior was green, followed by a vestibule forward car with a yellow interior. This vestibule configuration was deliberate. It enabled two car conductors to handle the "shorts" car and the three day-night coaches, with the four vestibules of the cars split evenly in two side by side configurations.

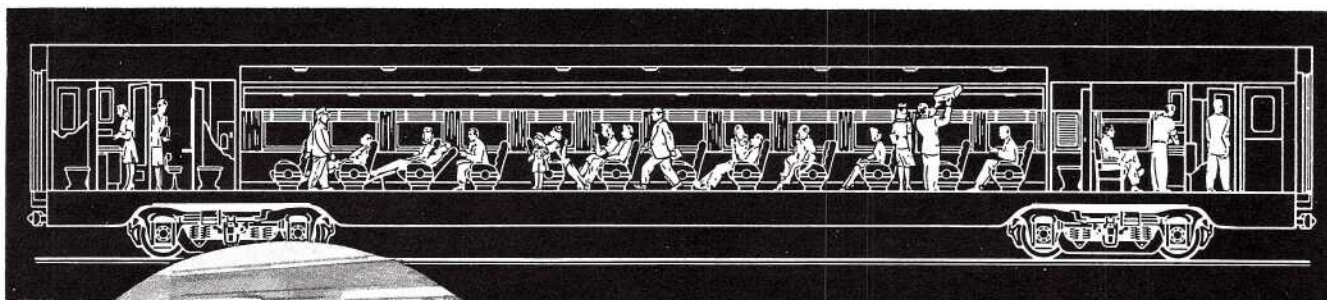


New-Type LUXURY DAY-NITE COACHES

The *New* EMPIRE BUILDER trains include three new-type Day-Nite Coaches, each accommodating forty-eight passengers. One Day-Nite Coach accommodates through passengers between Chicago and Portland. The other two operate between Chicago and Seattle. All of these coaches are designed to provide more comfort, more convenience for long distance travelers. The seats are reserved with ordinary coach tickets *at no additional cost.*

There's 20% more space for each passenger than in the 60-passenger coach. The seats have individual leg rests that pull out easily from the seats ahead. Adjust your individual reclining chair, stretch out with your feet up, and there you have it—your own chaise lounge for luxurious travel comfort. And when you wish to freshen up, there are two dressing rooms with complete toilet facilities in each Day-Nite Coach.

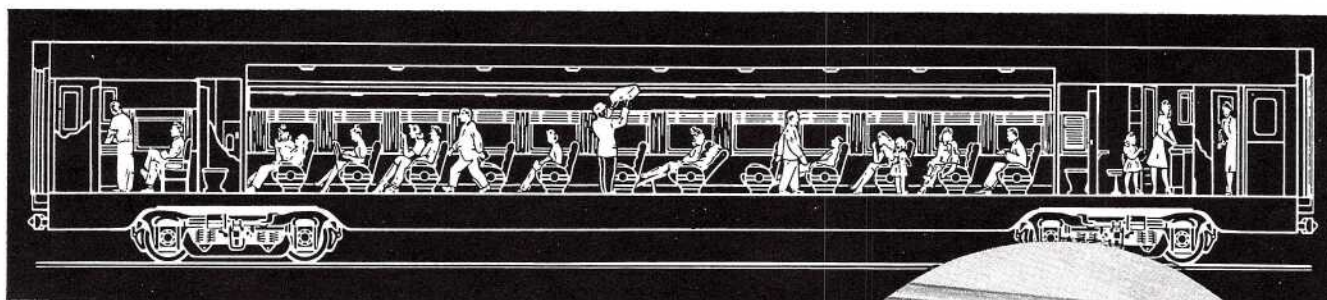
The Luxury Day-Nite Coach, as described in the publicity literature.



An easy way **TO SAVE MONEY**

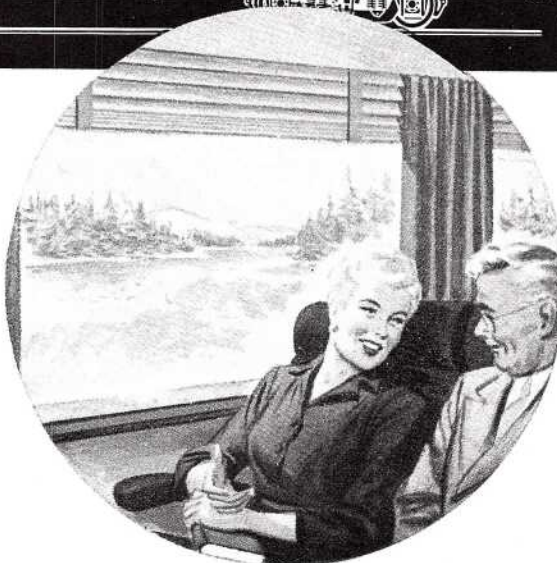
That is what passengers will say after they travel in the Day-Nite Coaches on the *New EMPIRE BUILDER*. You enjoy more privacy, more room, more comfort and convenience on these new-type coaches than ever before at the low coach fare. You see more scenery, too, through oversize windows. These are hermetically sealed to insure maximum air-conditioned comfort. Venetian blinds permit you to control the light. Each car is equipped with no-glare ceiling lights, controlled reading lights, and public address system.

Further descriptions in the publicity brochure covering the second and third day-nite coaches



Keystone **FOR DESIGN AND COLOR**

There is nothing monotonous about the *New EMPIRE BUILDER* interiors. In all cars you will observe attractive designs, decorations and color schemes. The three luxurious Day-Nite Coaches, for example, are finished in three different pastel color schemes. The first is a beautiful blend of tans, the second greens, and the third yellows. The secret of harmonious variety throughout this gorgeous train is the artistic use of designs and colors characteristic of the country the all-new, streamlined Empire Builder traverses.





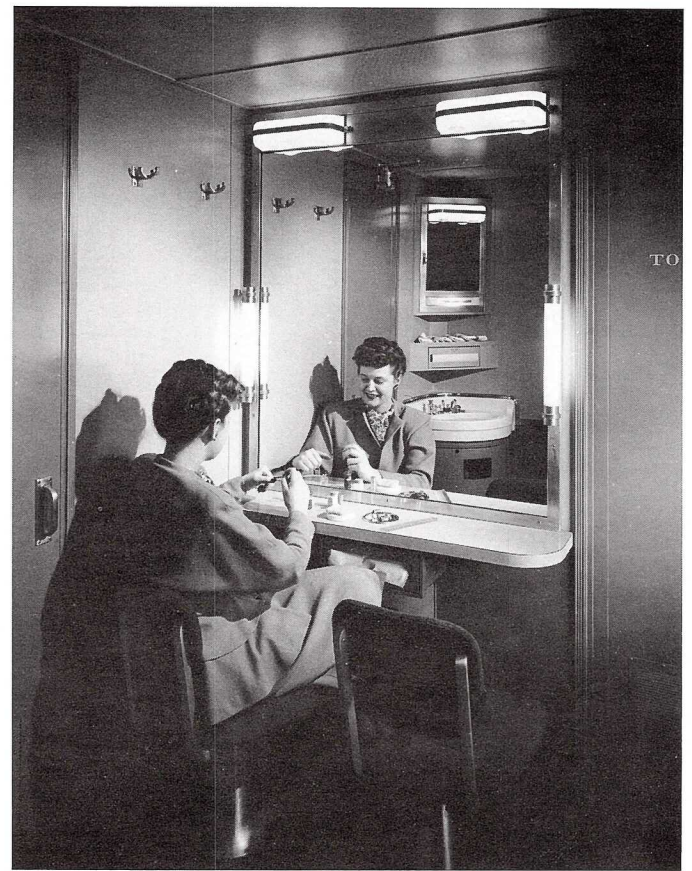
A Day-Night Sleepy Hollow reclining coach seat has been arranged in a sleeping position with its leg rest. All of these forty-eight seat coaches had scenic photographs mounted on the forward and rear walls of each coach

the drawing room to two passengers for a given trip. The Passenger Traffic Department compiled sleeping car load statistics using the accommodations occupied rather than total passengers in the sleeping cars. Using this statistical format, the Empire Builder's sleeping car capacity had eight lower berths, eight upper berths, forty-six duplex roomettes, eighteen double bedrooms, and one drawing room for sale to first class passengers. Duplex Roomettes #1 and #2 in Lines 15 and 25 were assigned to the Pullman conductor and the traveling passenger representative, and they were never sold as revenue accommodations.

Each of the assigned cars had Empire Builder centered on its letterboard with either Great Northern or CB&Q in smaller letters at each end of the letterboard. Those cars which were assigned names had their names centered below the windows, and all of the cars had their equipment car numbers at each end below the windows. Cars assigned line numbers had the line number exhibited in a lighted box in a window adjacent to the exterior vestibule dutch-door.

Right from its beginning the 1947 Empire Builder was very popular with the traveling public. The Great Northern's passenger traffic department stated that the Empire Builder averaged seventy-five percent occupancy of its revenue capacity during its first year of operation, and succeeding years were even more successful. This was accomplished even though the Milwaukee Road inaugurated its Olympian Hiawatha on June 29, 1947, and the Northern Pacific completed the streamlining of its North Coast Limited in 1948. However, the Olympian Hiawatha was not completely streamlined until the end of 1948, and the North Coast Limited retained its slower pre-streamlined era schedules. Thus the Empire Builder was still number one in competing for the Chicago-Pacific Northwest traveler.

A propensity, some may call it a superstition, most railroaders have when new train equipment is placed in service is to anticipate



A photograph of the women's lounge, showing the large mirror and make-up facilities, very much appreciated by the ladies, and the doorway to the toilet facilities..

that some sort of crisis will occur Sure enough, during the spring of 1948, Montana and Idaho experienced extensive flooding along the Great Northern's main line forcing the detour of the Empire Builder and other passenger and freight trains via Great Falls, Helena, and Sandpoint, which severely disrupted all main line schedules [W356], [W358], [W498], and [W353].

In order to provide connecting Empire Builder service to and from Great Falls, the Great Northern inaugurated trains Nos. 237 and 238 between Havre and Great Falls on February 24, 1947 [W478]. The consist became known locally as "the Baby Streamliner" soon after its inauguration. The company shops rebuilt "Doodlebug" No. 2322, a diesel-electric motor car, into a semi-streamlined motor car with a baggage compartment and operating cabs at both ends for this new service, and the Great Northern assigned refurbished sixty-two seat coach No. 962 and cafe-parlor-lounge car No. 1059, which was named "Robert S. Ford" [D63]. This entire consist was painted in EB colors to match the 1947 Empire Builder, which in turn gave the rationale to nickname this consist "the Baby Streamliner".

Since it was impossible to secure protection cars from Pullman-Standard because of its workload, the company shops built an all-new Railway Post Office-baggage car No. 1108 in December, 1948, and all-new coffee shop-dinette-dormitory No. 1148 and dining car No. 1155 in July, 1949. No. 1148 was named "Devils Lake", and No. 1155 was assigned the name "Lake Washington". No. 1148's floor plan was different from Nos. 1140-1144, in that it had a twelve table seat dinette instead of the ten lounge seat area, and this change became known as the Devils Lake Plan.

The addition of Nos. 1148 and 1155 as protection cars permitted the Great Northern from July, 1949 onward to switch out of and into each eastbound consist the coffee shop-lounge-dormitory cars and the dining cars in St. Paul. This allowed the Great Northern's St. Paul

dining car commissary to service and maintain these cars, rather than relying upon the busy Burlington's Chicago commissary to continue, as it had done since 1947, during each consist's layover in the Chicago 14th Street coach yard. Coffee shop and dining car crews started out their runs in St. Paul on Q 44 down-the-River with fresh cars. The time available permitted the St. Paul dining car commissary to conduct in-service training programs dealing with menu item preparation and serving requirements while each crew prepared its car for the start of the next St. Paul-Chicago-Seattle-St. Paul trip the following morning.

Securing protection cars for the assigned 4-8-4 and 16-4 sleeping cars was also a problem, and was not solved until January, 1950. At that time, Pullman-Standard finally delivered two Pass series 4-8-4 sleeping cars to the Great Northern. No. 1180, named "Stevens Pass" [D89], belonged to the Great Northern, and the other 4-8-4 became the first Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railway car assigned to the 1947 Empire Builder. It was named "Indian Pass" and was assigned SP&S 700 [D65] as its equipment car number. On its letterboard at each end appeared the initials SP&S Ry. Co. which framed "Empire Builder" centered on the letterboard, just like all of the other assigned cars.

Prior to the arrival of these two protection sleeping cars, Great Northern and Pullman train crew members experienced some delicate moments during those rare occasions when one of the assigned streamlined sleeping cars had to be bad-ordered for mechanical reasons. The touchiness of the situation arose when those first class passengers, expecting to occupy duplex roomettes, were assigned to lower berths or, even worse, upper berths. Usually, those who had a bedroom were reassigned to a bedroom, compartment, or drawing room in the substitute heavyweight sleeping car, so that was generally accepted without much complaint. However, the Pullman conductor, the traveling passenger representative, and the Great Northern depot-duty passenger agent had to be very understanding and diplomatic when reassigning first class passengers to lower and upper berths. Such situations did not occur often, since the GN and the Burlington were very thorough and meticulous during the performance of service and maintenance on the Empire Builder's cars while in the Chicago, St. Paul, and Seattle coach yards. With the

addition of sleeping cars Nos. 1180 and SP&S 700, adequate protection was available from January, 1950 onward, and regular maintenance schedules for all assigned cars were established.

A much more serious problem occurred with all of the Empire Builder's E7s as soon as the forty-five hour schedules became effective. Their traction motors over-heated, particularly in the Rocky Mountains between Cut Bank and Whitefish. At first, the Great Northern locomotive department experimented with F series B units assigned to each two-unit E7 set, locating the B unit between the two E7s. When this arrangement proved to be unsuccessful in the elimination of the E7s' traction motor problems, the company locomotive shops refurbished several F3-7 series covered wagons, re-gearred them to passenger train speeds, and added train heating equipment. These units were identified out on the road as the Passenger Fs by the operating train crews, and they were officially classified on the Great Northern's diesel locomotive roster as Class P3-5-7 [W492/493]. All five consists of the Empire Builder were assigned three-unit passenger Fs during early 1950, and the E7s were reassigned from the diesel locomotive pool to other Great Northern passenger trains from then on.

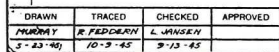
The popularity of the Empire Builder continued to grow, and it became evident to the Great Northern's passenger traffic department that its premier train needed additional first class sleeping car accommodations to meet the demand. The Great Northern had a surprise up its sleeve for the passenger traffic industry to meet this encouraging growth situation, however. (The 1951 surprise will be covered in the next Reference Sheet of this series.)

There are six photographs of the 1947 Empire Builder in service which appear in The Great Northern Railway, A Pictorial Study, and in Lines East. East to west these photographs illustrate the Empire Builder passing through Rochelle, Illinois, on the Burlington Route [D75], arriving at St. Paul [W9] and [W346/347], west of Nimrod in the Rocky Mountains on "the Gauntlet" [W125], along the Columbia River east of Wenatchee [D74], and just west of Index on its way down from Stevens Pass in the Cascades [W357].

All photographs in this Reference Sheet are from the GNRHS and Burlington Northern Archives, unless otherwise noted.

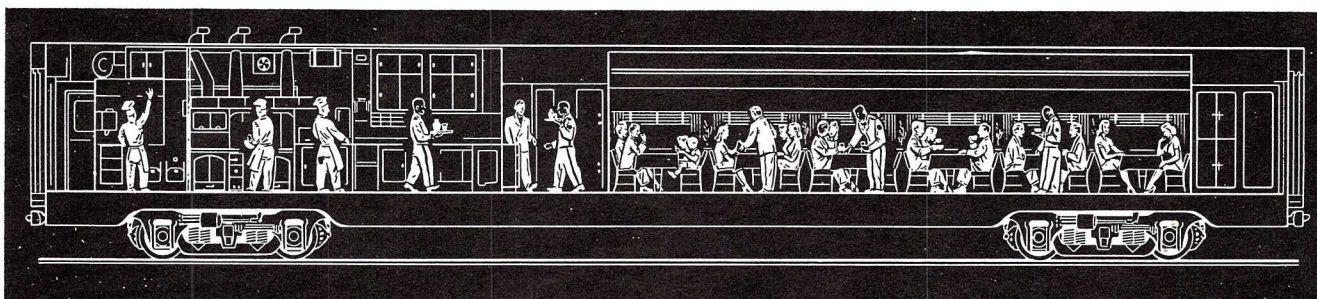
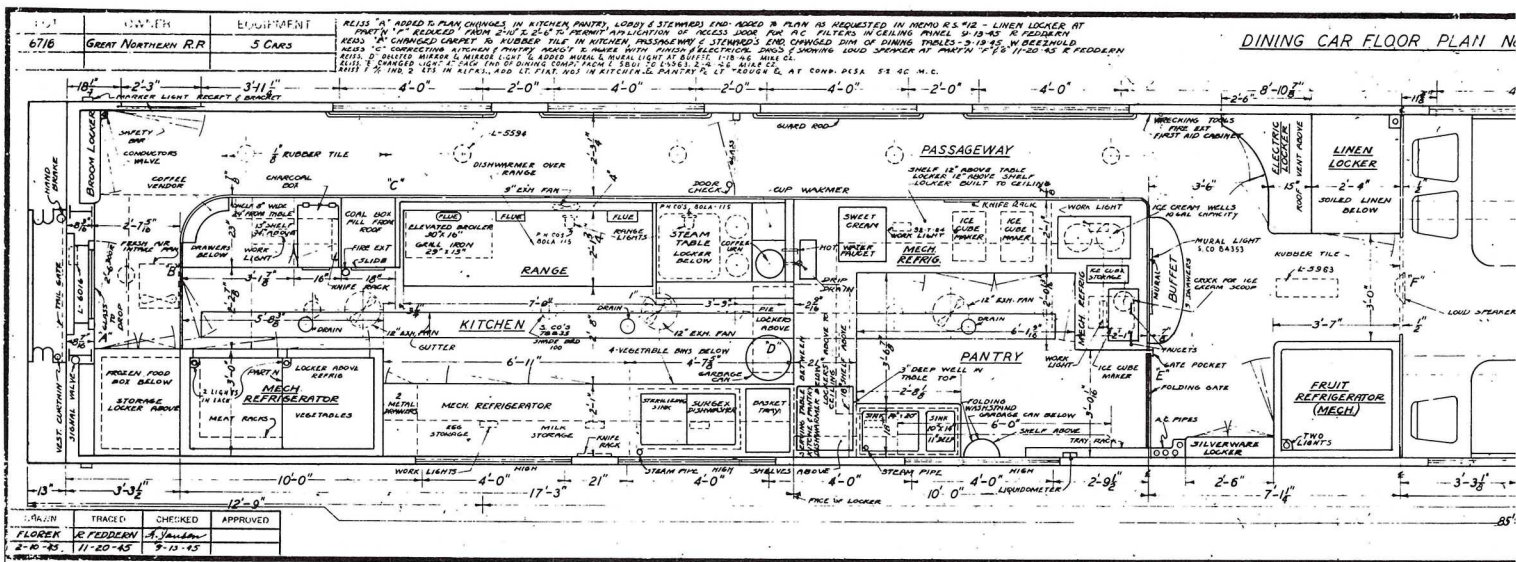


A classic publicity photograph for the new Great Northern EMDE-7 units, acquired to power the new GN streamlined Empire Builder. This publicity photograph was taken by the Chicago firm of Hedrich-Blessing Studios, who were well known for their many action and static photographs of the Great Northern. In spite of the posed photograph, the top of a lineside telephone post manages to protrude above the second diesel unit. In all probability, we have all made this type of camera error sometime!

[illegible]

What gives this car its glamorous atmosphere —its distinctive, refreshing charm? You'll find yourself surrounded by the primitive designs and bright colors handed down through untold generations of Blackfeet Indian tribes —by nature's most delicate hues and color tone contrasts from Glacier National Park, Montana—by the motifs and brilliance of Hudson's Bay blankets. All these combine to form a Western roundup of design and color.

across page: the builders photograph of number 1142, "Two Medicine Lakes", and the interior view of the coffee shop and the lounge area. The cafe seating section was blue, the lunch counter section walls were ivory and the ceiling blue. The remainder of the car interior was tan color.



Previewing THE BEAUTIFUL DINING CAR

The quality of its meals is the most important thing about a dining car. Since you can't pretaste the food or prejudice the service, you must wait until your first meal on the *New EMPIRE BUILDER*. In the meantime, you have this assurance: That the cuisine and service shall equal or excel prewar Empire Builder far-famed standards of excellence.

But, you can preview the style and appearance of this lovely room—a symphony of harmoni-

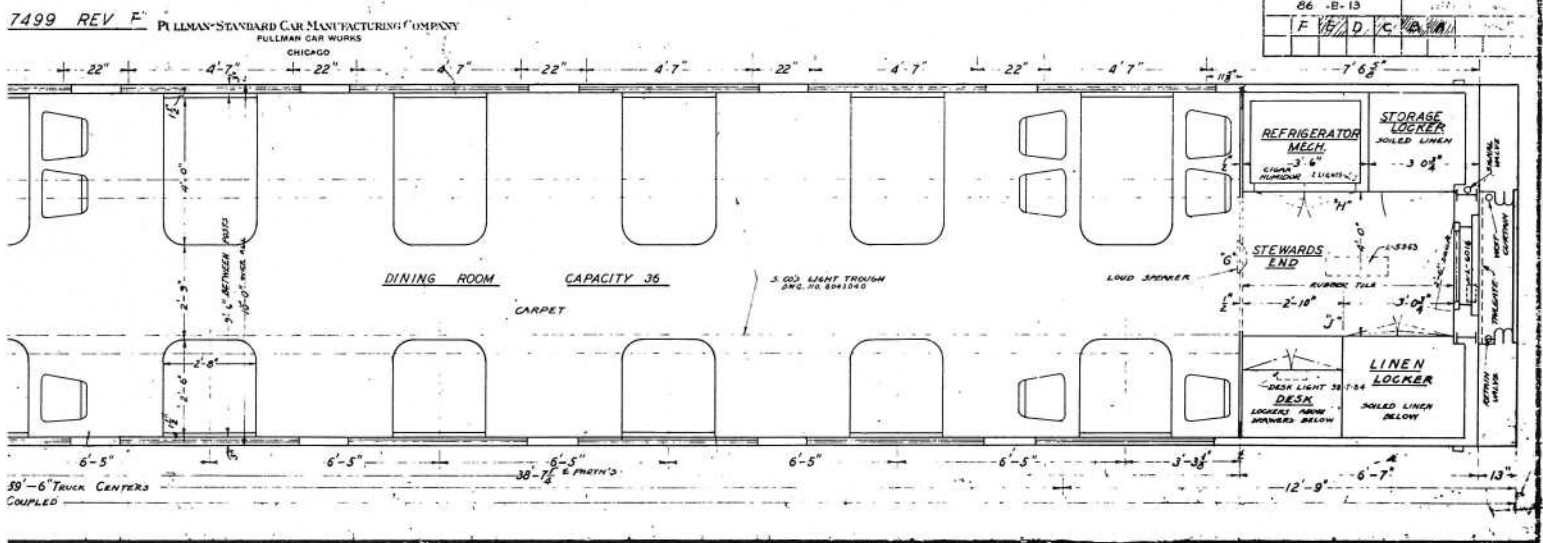
ous colors. The gorgeous wild flowers of Glacier National Park inspired the decor of the *New EMPIRE BUILDER* dining cars. Pier panels and window drapes reflect hues of varieties rarely seen elsewhere.

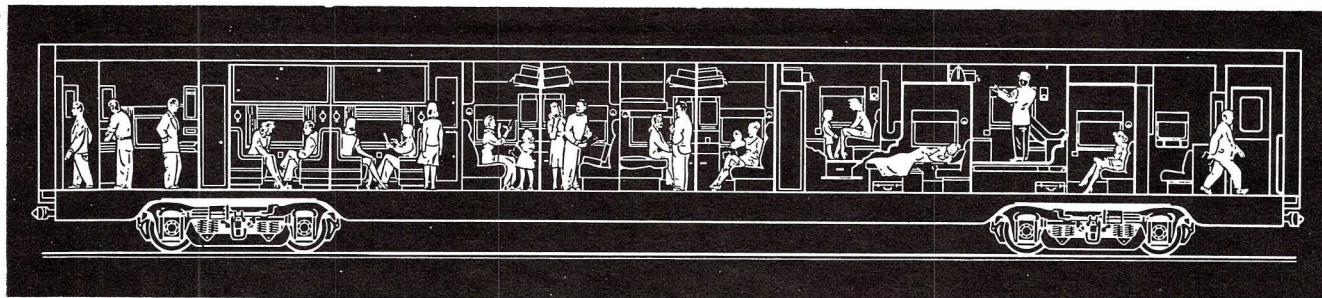
The table service was individually designed for the *New EMPIRE BUILDER*—the china by Onondago Pottery; glassware by Libbey; flatware by International Silver, and imported Irish table linen from William Liddell.

across the page:

The dining car was given special attention by the planners. The china service was designed specially for the train by the Onondago Pottery Co. of Syracuse, and the china is referred to as the "Syracuse Service". The pattern combined pictorial views of Glacier National Park and wildflowers native to the park. The cars had new silverware, glassware, linen and kitchen equipment, costing \$10,000 for each car. The photograph gives a close up of meal service at two of the tables for four diners. James J. is intent in making his presence very obvious, even though he may, perhaps, be viewing the proceedings with a jaundiced eye. He probably considered the dining facilities not up to the opulent standard he was accustomed to during his glory years at the Great Northern.

The decor of the car, and indeed of all cars in the new trains, was carefully chosen. The passage way and lobby was painted blue with a yellow ceiling. The other walls of the car were blue, and the ceiling was tan color



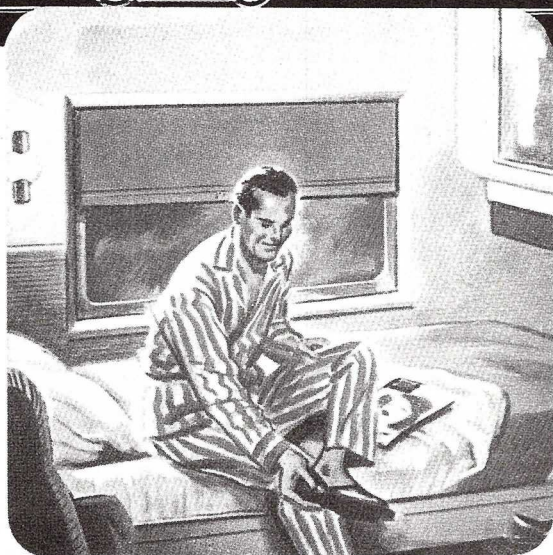
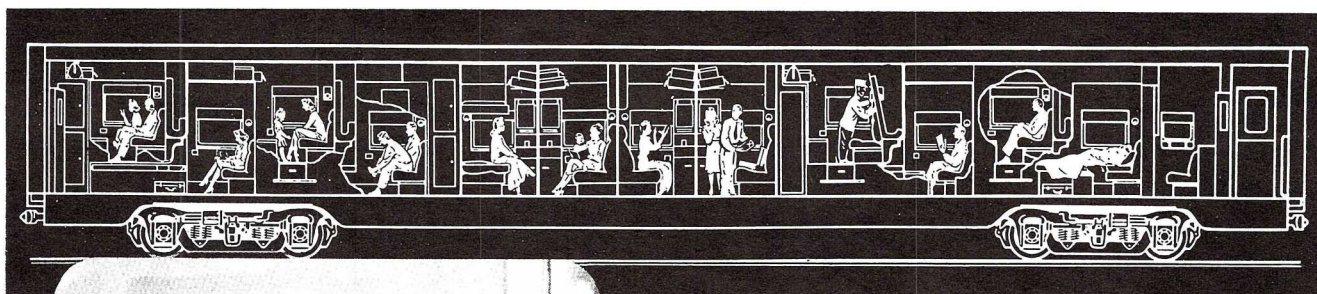


A Full Variety **OF SLEEPING CARS**

Each train in the *New EMPIRE BUILDER* fleet offers a full variety of ultramodern, first class sleeping car accommodations—open sections consisting of lower and upper berths, private, low-cost duplex roomettes for one adult each, double bedrooms for two, drawing rooms for three. Each type of accommodation is the result of extended, painstaking research to make it more comfortable, convenient and attractive for passengers.

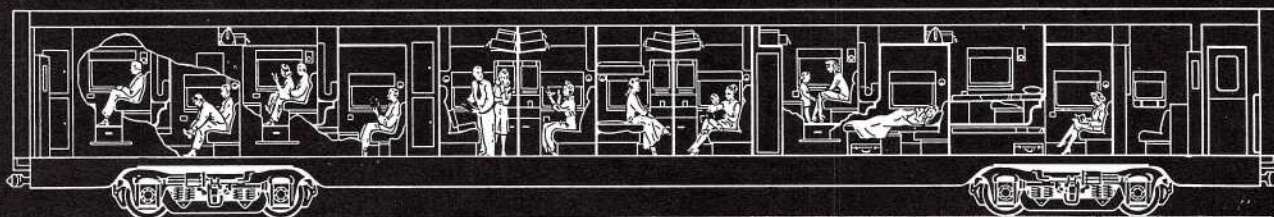
A duplex roomette or bedroom provides privacy and quiet during both day and night—for the busy man with work to do en-route—for parents traveling with children—for those who wish to enjoy the always interesting and often spectacular scenery while completely relaxed. Or one can have meals served in restful seclusion. Whatever accommodations you choose you'll have your own large, clear vision window framing an ever-changing panorama.

More descriptions of the consist, from the publicity brochure, this time covering the sleeping cars.



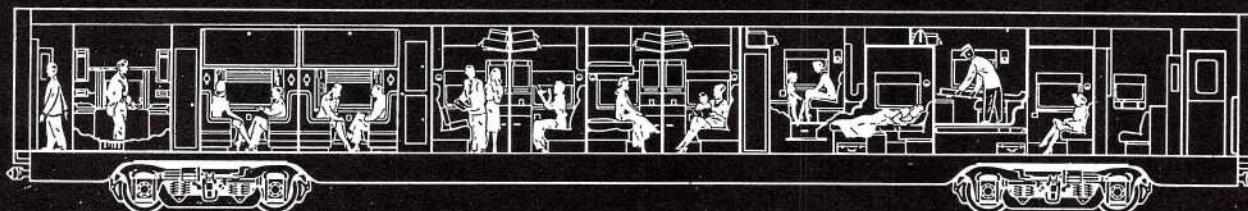
For Complete Privacy **AND COMFORT**

The *New EMPIRE BUILDER* is the first train that provides travelers with this improved type of bedroom with many innovations. Individual bedrooms are so arranged that adjoining units may be opened to form a large, comfortable room by day for restful lounging, card playing or dining. Specially designed chairs and sofas afford utmost relaxation. And for extra convenience you'll like the improved toilet facilities, such as a fixed washstand which becomes a useful table when the tilt top is down.



A New Kind **OF BEDROOM**

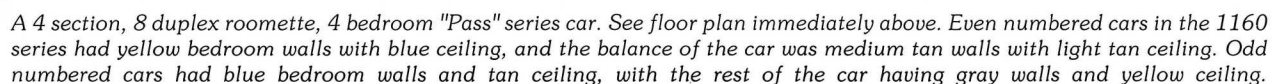
Two sleeping cars have 16 duplex roomettes and 4 double bedrooms. Duplex roomettes have adjustable seats made extra comfortable by sponge rubber backs and cushions. In some of them the concealed bed is lowered from the wall. In others it rolls out of a hidden recess. Beds are extra long—6 feet 5 inches. Toilet facilities are concealed, including ice water on tap—individual control of air conditioning, heating and lighting. Wardrobes are enclosed and storage space is provided. All for only 10 per cent more than a standard lower berth.

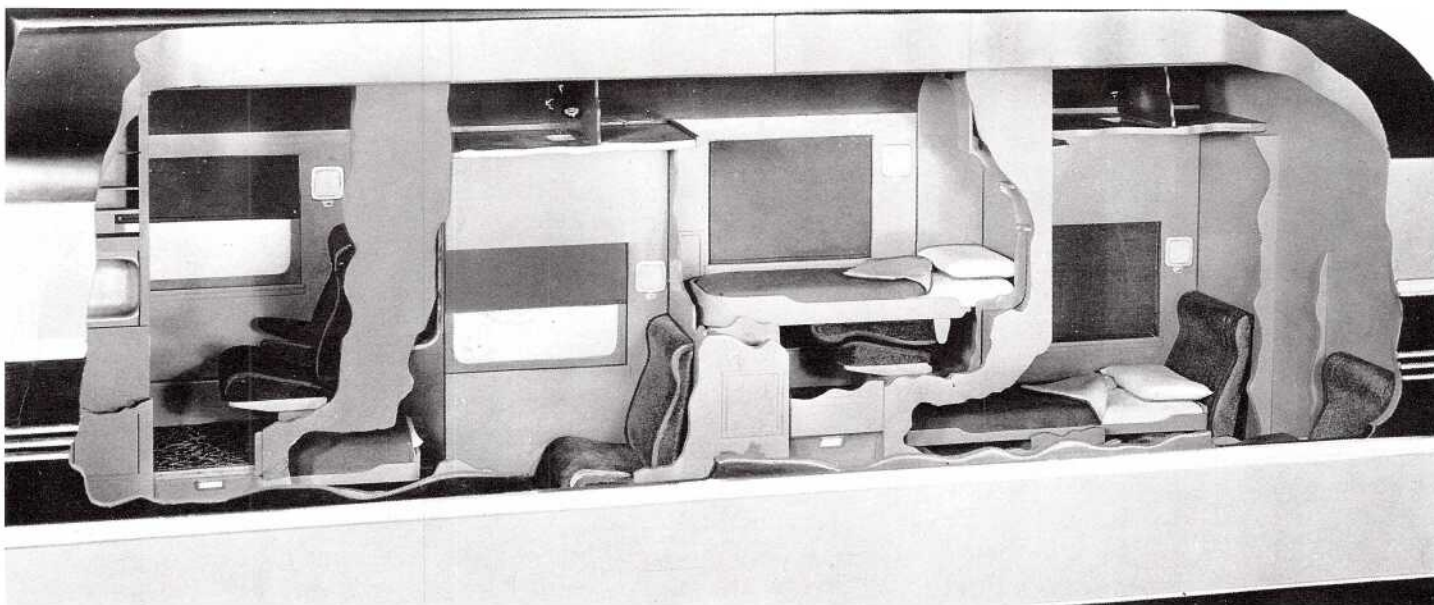


The Last Word **IN SLEEPING COMFORT**

The bedrooms on the *New EMPIRE BUILDER*, like all other sleeping accommodations, are built and furnished to give greater comfort and rest. All bedrooms are first class hotel rooms on wheels. The beds are the last word in full relaxation and sleeping comfort. One bed pulls down from above and the other is made up from the daytime sofa. The construction of the train itself is one important reason for your restful travel. New cushion-ride trucks and electrically controlled braking

make your ride smoother and induce unbroken sleep. Improved air conditioning and insulating control of temperature and sound go far in increasing travel enjoyment, too. Your room can be as cool or as warm as you want it to be. It is individually cooled and heated by your own conveniently located control. Even the double paned windows, with vacuum space between, add to room quietness and give fog proof panoramic view under all weather conditions.





A cut-away model showing the essential features of the duplex roomettes and the bi-level design, which allowed each roomette occupant a wide picture window. The roomettes provided private room travel for only 10% more than the cost of a standard Pullman lower berth. The Empire Builder duplex roomettes were built on two levels. One at aisle level, the other two steps above aisle level. In the aisle level duplex, the ready made bed slid out of the wall, like a drawer. In the upper roomette, the bed folded down from the wall, where it was concealed by day. Each roomette had its own lavatory and toilet, heating and lighting controls, well lighted mirrors, and other features for comfortable day and night travel for one adult passengers. (These details were extracted from the Great Northern "Goat" magazine in the GNRHS files.)

2 GREAT TRAINS

EMPIRE BUILDER *Oriental Limited*



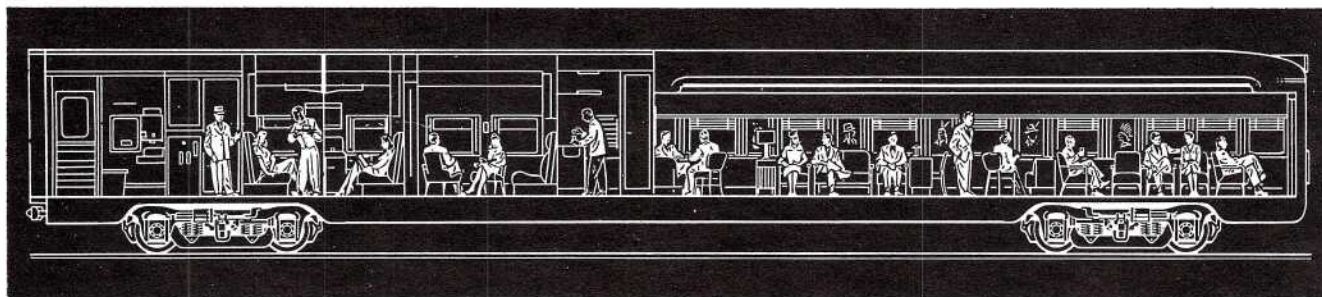
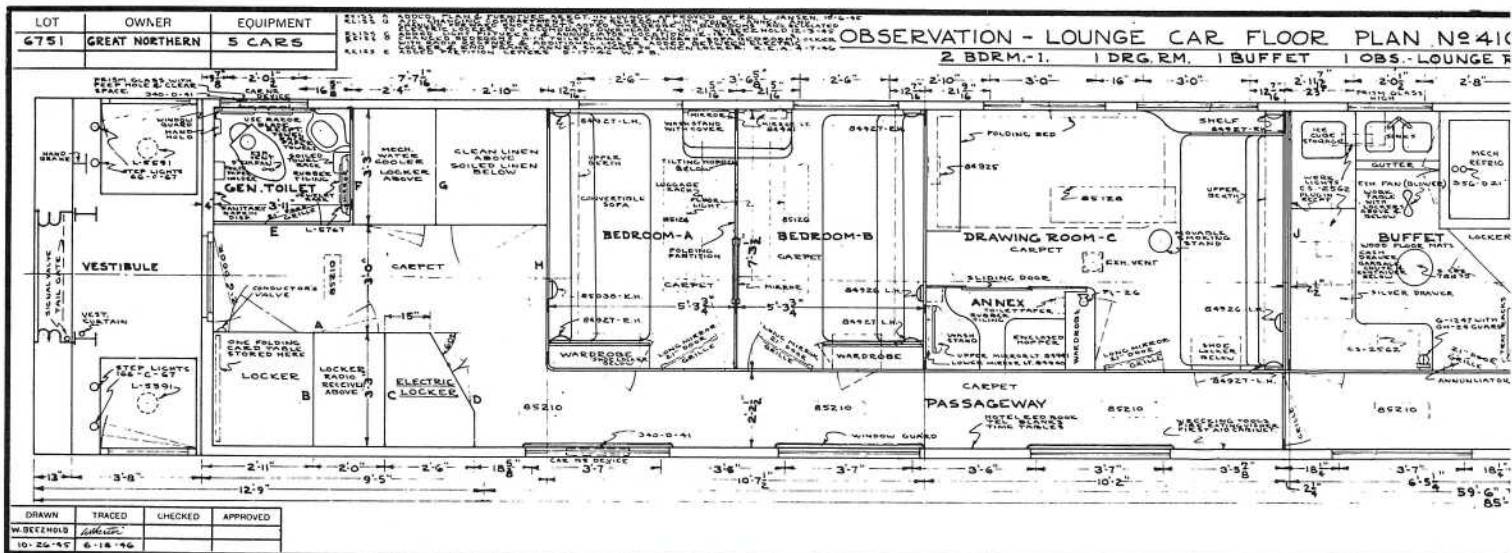
The day of the ball-point pen had not yet dawned, and messy fountain pens were still the usual implements of letter writing. The lowly blotter was always in demand, and the Great Northern publicity department took advantage of this. They saw that all ticket office counters had copious supplies advertising their two premier streamlined trains. These blotters were laid out on the counter for any passerby to take. There was no requirement to purchase transportation.



above: this duplex roomette has been arranged for night-time use. Accommodations are necessarily on the compact size but, nevertheless, they are quite comfortable.



left: this innovatively designed roomette has been set up for day-time use. The passenger is enjoying room service on a table installed by the Pullman porter. It is somewhat surprising, considering that much effort was put out by the GN to publicize the wonder of the new train, that the views through all the windows of the cars of the official photographs are apparently the "in house" work of the photo studio! It is also interesting to note that artistic imagination also has been shown with this photograph, which sometimes appears in the GN literature with the photograph in reverse profile and reversed picture!



More Luxury MORE COMFORT, MORE FUN

Artcraft designs of the Blackfeet Indians are used as the color theme of the observation-lounge car. Full color reproductions of Winold Reiss' famous paintings of Blackfeet braves are used to embellish the car's pier panels. Their dominant colors are repeated in furniture, fittings, curtains and carpets, creating an effect of startling beauty. A dramatic reproduction of a painting by the late Charlie Russell, celebrated artist of Montana, decorates the bulkhead.

In this delightful atmosphere you can visit with companions as you watch scenery through clear vision windows. You can read, chat, play cards or write letters at convenient desks. You can order refreshments from the car's well-stocked buffet. You'll enjoy every hour you spend in the *New EMPIRE BUILDER'S* beautiful observation car, which provides lounging space for 27 passengers. A modern drawing room and two luxurious bedrooms are in the forward end of this de luxe car.

above: observation car luxury, as described in the Great Northern publicity brochure. The drawing room walls were painted medium gray, and ceilings a light grey. The lounge area walls were a medium tan, and the ceiling was light blue. The bedrooms were gray, with yellow ceilings. The passageway walls were medium tan, and the ceilings were a light tan color.

opposite page-center:

The rear end of the train was brought up with a restrained and simply designed bedroom-buffet-lounge-observation car. This builder's photo of the 2-1-buffet-lounge-observation car No 1192, the "Flathead River", clearly shows that the usual railroad identifying name "Great Northern" did not appear on the letterboard at the observation end of the car.

opposite page-bottom:

The interior view of the lounge area shows the Blackfeet Indian Nation paintings by Winold Reiss, mounted between the windows, and the variety of furniture carried on these cars for the use of sleeping car passengers.

THE NEW EMPIRE BUILDER

Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Spokane, Seattle, Tacoma,
Portland, British Columbia and California Cities.

West—Read Down		East—Read Up	
Oriental Limited	Empire Builder	Central Time Burlington Route	Oriental Limited
3 Daily	1 Daily		2 Daily
PM	PM		PM
10 45	1 00	Lv Chicago.....Ar	2 00
8 15	7 45	Ar St. Paul.....Lv	7 15
		Great Northern Ry.	
8 50	8 00	Lv St. Paul.....Ar	7 00
9 25	8 30	Ar Minneapolis.....Lv	6 30
11 30	10 05	Ar Willmar.....Ar	4 46
9 03	11 57	Ar Breckenridge.....Ar	3 00
3 25	1 00	Ar Fargo.....Ar	1 55
5 25		Ar Grand Forks.....Ar	11 43
	3 02	Ar New Rockford.....Ar	9 55
10 50	4 55	Ar Minot.....Ar	7 40
1 50	7 20	Ar Williston.....Lv	6 40
		Mountain Time	
12 55	6 20	Lv Williston.....Ar	5 55
4 25	▲ 9 10	Ar Glasgow.....Lv	▲ 3 45
8 00	12 05	Ar Havre.....Lv	12 55
10 30	2 10	Ar Shelby.....Ar	10 45
11 10	▲ 2 45	Ar Cut Bank.....Ar	▲ 10 16
▲ 12 32		Ar Glacier Park.....Ar	6 45
▲ 2 18		Ar Belton.....Ar	4 40
3 00	6 15	Ar Whitefish.....Ar	3 45
6 30	9 15	Ar Troy.....Ar	2 45
		Pacific Time	
5 35	8 15	Lv Troy.....Ar	11 15
9 15	11 30	Ar Spokane.....Lv	11 00
9 35	11 45	Lv Spokane.....Ar	7 30
1 50	3 30	Ar Wenatchee.....Ar	7 30
5 00	5 55	Ar Skykomish.....Ar	5 15
6 28	7 10	Ar Everett.....Ar	3 58
7 30	8 00	Ar Seattle.....Lv	3 00
9 30	9 30	Ar Tacoma.....Lv	12 50
3 Daily	1 Daily	Spokane, Portland & Seattle Ry.	
9 45	12 01	Lv Spokane.....Ar	2 Daily
7 15	7 32	Ar Vancouver, Wash.....Lv	10 55
7 35	8 00	Ar Portland.....Lv	3 23
			3 00
		Connecting Trains	
	19 Daily	Central Time	
	4 30	Lv Duluth.....Ar	24 Daily
	4 45	Ar Superior.....Ar	11 58
	7 30	Ar Minneapolis.....Lv	11 43
	8 00	Ar St. Paul.....Lv	8 27
			8 00
35-3		Central Time	
Ex. Sun.		Lv Duluth.....Ar	4-36
9 30		Ar Grand Forks.....Lv	Ex. Mon.
97 00		Ar Minot.....Ar	97 00
10 45			10 20
			9 45
	7 Daily	Central Time	
	8 02	Lv St. Paul.....Ar	8 Daily
	8 32	Ar Minneapolis.....Lv	8 00
	9 00	Ar Winnipeg.....Lv	7 35
235 Daily	237 Daily	Mountain Time	
8 20	1 15	Lv Havre.....Ar	238 Daily
11 30	4 00	Ar Great Falls.....Lv	11 45
2 35		Ar Helena.....Ar	9 00
5 20		Ar Butte.....Ar	7 30
245 Daily			7 00
2 50		Lv Columbia Falls.....Ar	236 Daily
3 20		Ar Kalispell.....Ar	11 45
			7 30
360 Daily	360 Daily	Pacific Time	
8 15	8 15	Lv Seattle.....Ar	238 Daily
9 12	9 12	Ar Everett.....Ar	11 45
11 01	11 01	Ar Bellingham.....Lv	9 00
12 45	12 45	Ar Vancouver, B. C.....Ar	10 03
			8 10
402 Daily	458 Daily	California via Puget Sound	
11 30	3 50	Lv Seattle.....Ar	457 Daily
1 00	5 05	Ar Tacoma.....Lv	407 Daily
6 45	8 50	Ar Portland.....Ar	459 Daily
			401 Daily
15 Daily	13 Daily	Southern Pacific	
10 15	5 00	Lv Portland.....Ar	16 Daily
10 02	11 10	Ar Oakland Pier.....Lv	12 Daily
10 30	11 50	Ar San Francisco.....Ar	14 Daily
8 45	9 55	Ar Los Angeles.....Lv	20 Daily

①San Joaquin Daylight via Valley Line change at Oakland Pier.
②Arrives daily except Monday.
③Direct train via Sacramento and Valley Line.
④Change at Martinez.
▲Conditional stop, see Tables 3 and 4.
*Conditional stop, see Table 4.

EQUIPMENT

TRAIN NO. 1—THE NEW EMPIRE BUILDER—COMPLETELY AIR-CONDITIONED. NO EXTRA FARE. RADIO.

DAILY—Chicago, Saint Paul, Minneapolis to Spokane, Seattle and Portland with connections to Tacoma, British Columbia and California points.

Observation—Lounge—Sleeping Car, Chicago to Seattle, 2 Double Bedrooms, 1 Drawing Room (Car 18). Observation—Lounge-Cafe Car between Spokane and Portland via S.P. & S.Ry.

Pullman Standard Sleeping Cars:

Chicago to Seattle, 8 Duplex Roomettes, 4 Double Bedrooms and 4 Sections (Car 15);
Chicago to Seattle, 16 Duplex Roomettes, 4 Double Bedrooms, 2 Cars (Cars 16-17);
Chicago to Portland, 8 Duplex Roomettes, 4 Double Bedrooms and 4 Sections (S.P. & S.Ry. from Spokane) (Car P-14).

Lounge—Coffee Shop Car, Chicago to Seattle.

Dining Car Service—Chicago to Seattle, Tacoma and Portland.

Luxury Day-Nite Coaches:

Chicago to Seattle, 2 cars, each containing 48 reclining seats - all reserved in advance (no extra cost) (Cars 100-101), 1 car - 60 reclining seats.
Chicago to Portland, 1 car - 48 reclining seats - all reserved in advance (no extra cost) (S.P. & S.Ry. from Spokane) (Car P-102).

Tickets—See Note.

TRAIN NO. 2—THE NEW EMPIRE BUILDER—COMPLETELY AIR-CONDITIONED. NO EXTRA FARE. RADIO.

DAILY—Seattle, Portland, Spokane, Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Chicago, with connections from Tacoma, British Columbia and California points.

Observation—Lounge—Sleeping Car, Seattle to Chicago, 2 Double Bedrooms, 1 Drawing Room (Car 28). Observation—Lounge-Cafe Car between Portland and Spokane via S.P. & S.Ry.

Pullman Standard Sleeping Cars:

Seattle to Chicago, 8 Duplex Roomettes, 4 Double Bedrooms and 4 Sections (Car 25);
Seattle to Chicago, 16 Duplex Roomettes and 4 Double Bedrooms, 2 Cars (Cars 26-27);
Portland to Chicago, 8 Duplex Roomettes, 4 Double Bedrooms and 4 Sections (S.P. & S.Ry. to Spokane) (Car P-24).

Lounge—Coffee Shop Car, Seattle to Chicago.

Dining Car Service—Portland, Tacoma and Seattle to Chicago.

Luxury Day-Nite Coaches:

Seattle to Chicago, 2 cars, each containing 48 reclining seats - all reserved in advance (no extra cost) (Cars 200-201), 1 car - 60 reclining seats;
Portland to Chicago, 1 car - 48 reclining seats - all reserved in advance (no extra cost) (S.P. & S.Ry. to Spokane) (Car P-202).

Tickets—See Note.

Note—All one-way and round-trip tickets will be honored except as follows: tickets endorsed Clergy, Charity, Employee, D. V. S., V. A. H., Blind and Attendant, Blind and Guide Dog, Furlough, Dischargee, will not be honored. Circus, Drover's or caretaker's tickets and Live Stock Contracts will not be honored.

TRAIN NO. 3—THE ORIENTAL LIMITED. All regularly assigned equipment is air-conditioned. All classes of tickets honored.

DAILY—Chicago, Saint Paul, Minneapolis to Spokane, Seattle and Portland with connections to Tacoma, British Columbia and California points.

Observation—Club Car, Chicago, Saint Paul to Seattle. Radio.

***Pullman Standard Sleeping Cars:**

Chicago to Seattle, 6 Double Bedrooms, 6 Sections (Car B-1);
Chicago to Seattle, 8 Sections, 2 Compartments, 1 Drawing Room (Car B-2);
Chicago, Spokane and Portland (via S.P. & S.Ry. from Spokane to Portland, 8 Sections Observation Buffet Lounge Car 10).
St. Paul to Great Falls, 12 Sections, 1 Drawing Room (No. 235 from Havre) (G-7).
Spokane to Seattle, 10 Sections, 2 Compartments, 1 Drawing Room (Car 79). Ready for occupancy at Spokane 9:00 PM.

***Pullman 16-Section Tourist Sleeping Cars:**

Chicago to Seattle (Car BH);
Chicago to Portland (S.P. & S.Ry. from Spokane) (Car B-J);
Spokane to Seattle (Car GG). Ready for occupancy at Spokane 9:00 PM.

Dining Car Service—Chicago, Saint Paul to Seattle, Tacoma and Portland.

De Luxe Coaches—Chicago to Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane to Portland (S.P. & S.Ry.).

*Sleeping Cars ready to occupancy Union Station, Chicago, 10:00 PM.

TRAIN NO. 4—THE ORIENTAL LIMITED. All regularly assigned equipment is air-conditioned. All classes of tickets honored.

DAILY—Seattle, Portland, Spokane to Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Chicago, with connections from Tacoma, British Columbia and California points.

Observation—Club Car, Seattle to Saint Paul and Chicago. Radio.

***Pullman Standard Sleeping Cars:**

Seattle to Chicago, 6 Double Bedrooms, 6 Sections (Car G-1);
Seattle to Chicago, 8 Sections, 2 Compartments, 1 Drawing Room (Car G-2);
Seattle to Spokane, 10 Sections, 2 Compartments, 1 Drawing Room (Car 80). May be occupied at Spokane until 8:00 AM.
Portland, Spokane and Chicago (via S.P. & S.Ry. from Portland to Spokane, 8 Sections Observation Buffet Lounge Car 10).
Great Falls to Saint Paul, 12 Sections, 1 Drawing Room (No. 236 to Havre) (G-7).

***Pullman 16-Section Tourist Sleeping Cars:**

Seattle to Chicago (Car G-H);
Seattle to Spokane (Car GK). May be occupied at Spokane until 8:00 AM.;
Portland to Chicago (S.P. & S.Ry. to Spokane) (Car P-J).

Dining Car Service—Portland, Tacoma, Seattle to Saint Paul and Chicago.

De Luxe Coaches—Tacoma-Seattle to Chicago and Portland to Spokane (S.P. & S.Ry.).

*Sleeping Cars ready for occupancy, King Street Station, Seattle, 9:00 PM.

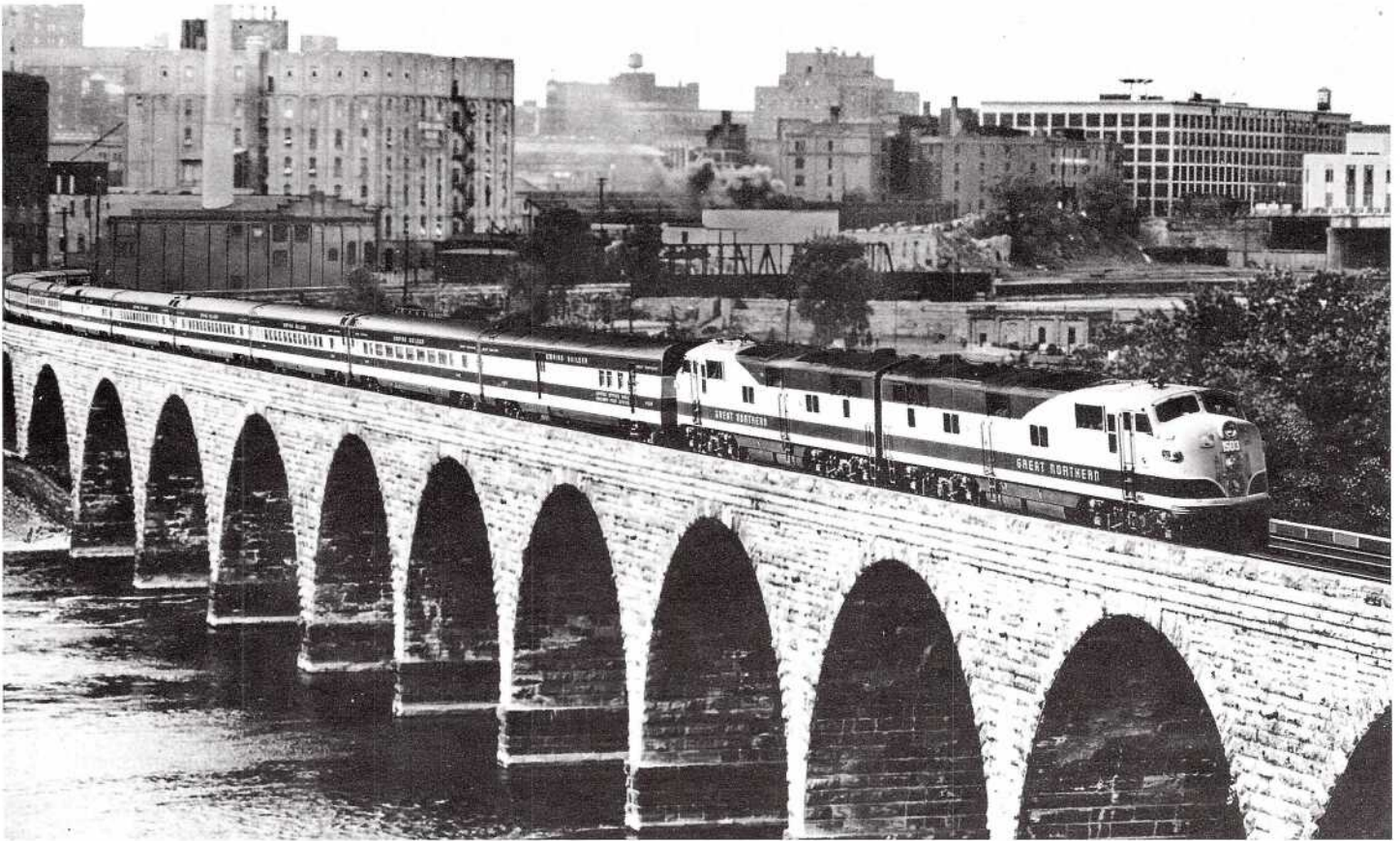
Condensed timetable and equipment listing, effective February 23, 1947,
issued for "The Streamlined Empire Builder" of the Great Northern.



The "Empire Builder" captured on film at a favorite location of photographers – the St. Paul Union Wye. A classy looking train.



Great Northern and Burlington officials participated in inaugural ceremonies for the New Empire Builders, prior to the first eastbound and westbound runs of the streamliners on February 23, 1947. In Seattle, F. J. Gavin, Great Northern president, and Mayor William F. Devin christened the diesel locomotive of the first eastbound Empire Builder, at a somewhat showery ceremony, pictured above in the April 1947 issue of the Great Northern Goat. Mayor Devin christened the train with a bottle of Puget Sound water and ducked the spray. President Gavin swung a bottle of Mississippi River water...but didn't mind the resultant shower. At the Seattle ceremony, at left, is Michael Dederer, vice president of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce. On the right is GN Seattle vice president Thomas Balmer. In a brief address, Mr. Dederer congratulated Great Northern on providing Seattle with its first streamlined train service.



Memories of a long past era. The 1947 Empire Builder moves out on its way to Chicago, over the Hill masterpiece- the Stone Arch Bridge. The train and locomotives are no more. The Minneapolis skyline is vastly changed. The tracks are gone from the Stone Arch Bridge. Indeed, the bridge itself is in a state of some disrepair, with a pronounced and very visible sag in one of the arches on the eastern end of the bridge. Pedestrians can still walk out on the bridge however. Perhaps it can be hoped that, if politicians can get their act together, the bridge once again will see rail traffic on the bridge, even though it may only be "light rail."



The final months of service of the 1947-1951 Empire Builder saw the dethroning of the E-7 twin unit diesels (see text page 9), and their replacement by three unit passenger F-series locomotives, usually in an A-B-A formation. This Norman Priebe photograph, taken in 1951, shows the eastbound "Builder" just after passing Westminster Tower, on the last stage of its GN journey, drifting downgrade, to the St. Paul Union Depot.