



GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY
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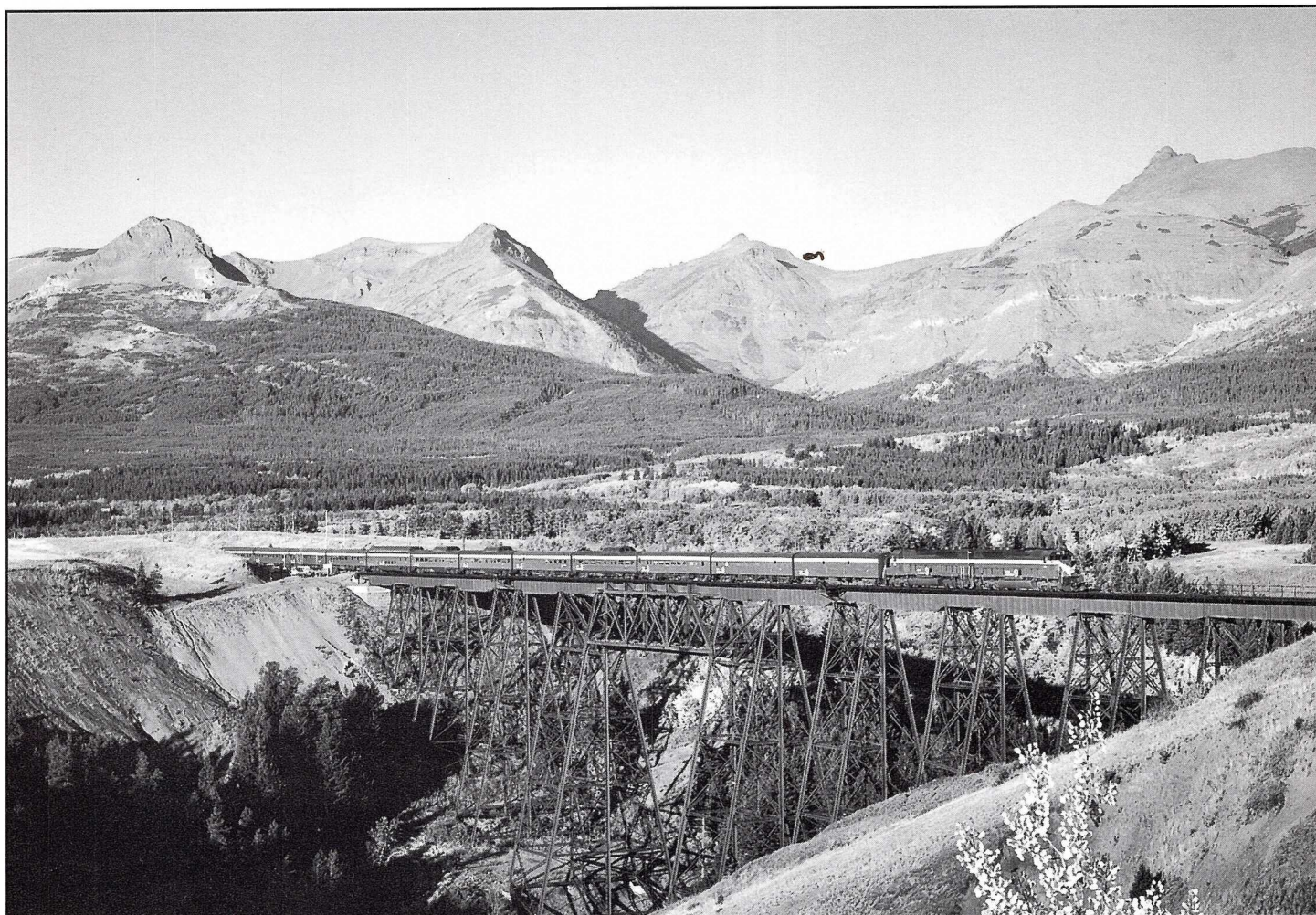
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THE GREAT NORTHERN EMPIRE BUILDER

Part 5: 1960-1970

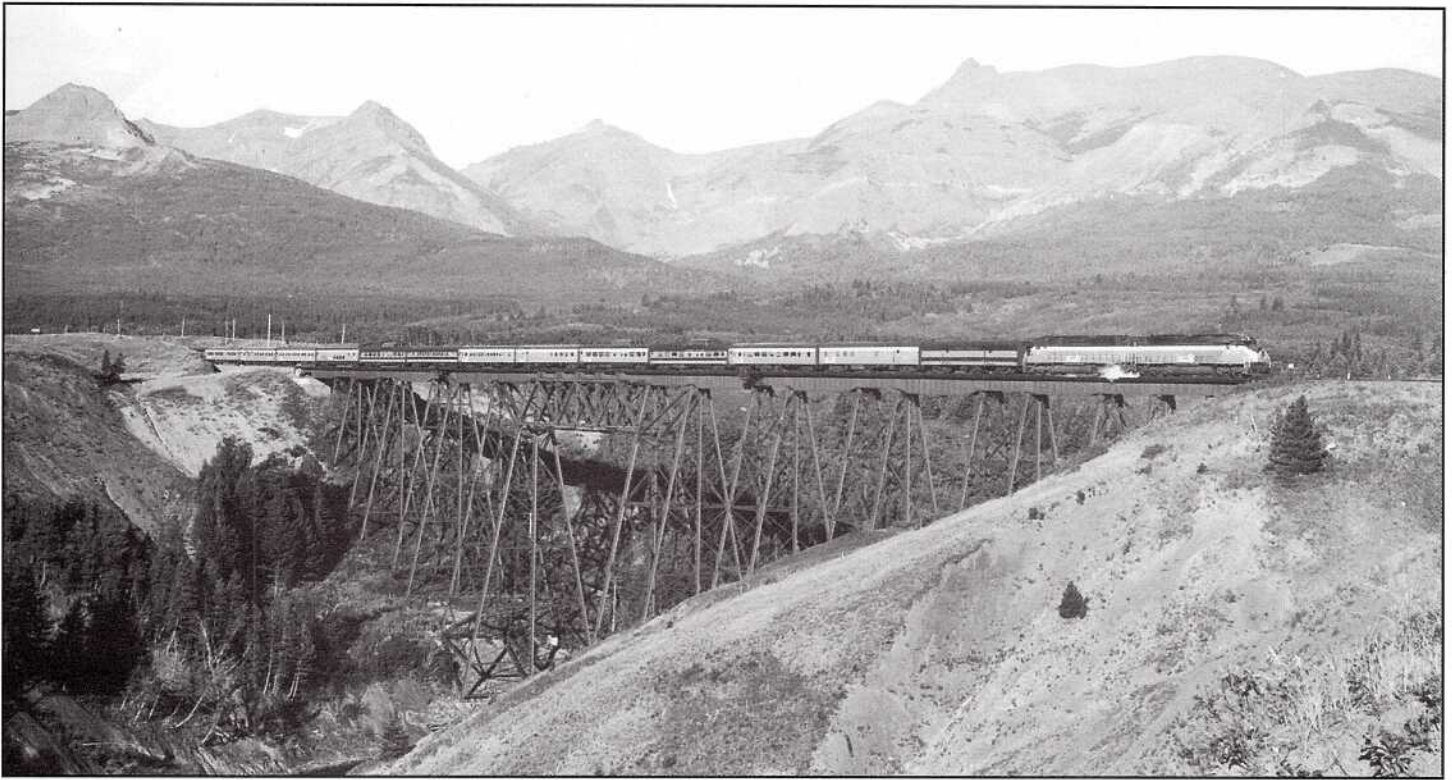
Contributor: John F. Strauss, Jr.



A Great Northern Railway Publicity Department photograph proudly showing the complete Empire Builder consist in its newly acquired (1967) Big Sky Blue livery. Two Medicine Bridge, at the east edge of Glacier National Park has always been a favorite photo site for amateur and professional photographers alike.

The Great Northern Railway entered the decade of the '60s with considerable apprehension regarding the future of its renowned passenger train service. Subsidized competition was increasing with the assistance of recently passed Federal legislation that funded the construction of the new Interstate Highway System, the expansion of major airports, and the installation of air traffic control systems. There were no Federal funds, however, for passenger train service other than the revenue earned from existing contracts with the U. S. Post Office Department for the transportation of Railway Post Office and storage mail cars. In addition, the Great Northern faced rapidly increasing passenger train operating costs plus rising Federal, state and local income and property taxes.

Traffic data indicated that business-oriented sleeping car travelers were deserting to the emerging airlines that had recently introduced the innovative, high-speed jet airplane. National studies also indicated that most travel occurred in the private automobile. These studies projected that automobile travel would increase to almost 90 per cent of all travel as the new Interstate Highway System continued to expand. This innovative, high-speed, multiple-lane highway system motivated national hotel companies to construct and franchise new facilities within the expansive interchanges with crossing roads that led into by-passed urban or suburban areas and towns along the way. The evolution had begun in which the all-amenities "motel" replaced the elegant Pullman sleeping car.



The same train and location, but now a circus of colors caused by the inevitable substitution of equipment caused by maintenance and passenger space requirements. Despite heroic efforts by the schedulers, it was just not practical to retain a complete Big Sky Blue consist very long after the initial introduction of the colors. A Norman Priebe photograph.

Even though off-season coach traffic was also declining, summer vacation travelers were still attracted to passenger train travel in coaches, however. This phenomenon carried on throughout the decade, and resulted in the assignment of additional coaches to Great Northern passenger train consists each summer. Rather than traveling transcontinental however, the winter season coach passenger tended to travel shorter distances. Competitive commercial transportation service was unreliable and minimal at best during the severe winter weather conditions that plagued the Northern Tier of States served by Great Northern transcontinental passenger trains.

1960-1962

As anticipated and projected, the Great Northern began to implement changes during 1960 in passenger train schedules and in the consists assigned to its premier transcontinental streamliner, the Great Dome *EMPIRE BUILDER*. (see page 12-table 1) for the cars usually assigned to the *EMPIRE BUILDER* during the 1960s. For example, effective as of February 1, 1960, the "Coulee" series lounge-observation cars were removed from trains 31 and 32's winter season consists. This was the first occasion in the history of this renowned transcontinental streamliner when its consists were no longer punctuated by a rounded lounge-observation car. As far as the sleeping car passengers were concerned, they preferred to ride in the Great Dome Lounge Car during the daytime and early evening hours, so the observation car was not missed. In addition, the 1960-1961 and 1961-1962 winter seasons' lineups had been reduced to a 1209-1214 series Chicago-Seattle Day-Nite coach, two 1320-1335 series Chicago-Seattle and Chicago-Portland Great Dome coaches, and three sleeping cars, one Chicago-Seattle "River" series and two Chicago-Seattle and Chicago-

Portland "Pass" series, between St. Paul and Spokane.

The 266-280 series St. Paul to Spokane and Chicago-Seattle storage mail cars, a 37-42 series St. Paul-Seattle Railway Post Office-storage mail car, a 1200-1205 series Chicago-Seattle baggage-dormitory, a 1240-1245 "Lake" series Chicago-Seattle "Ranch" Car, a 1250-1255 "Lake" series Chicago-Seattle dining car, and a 1390-1395 "View" series Chicago-Seattle Great Dome Lounge Car remained in each lineup, however. During these two winter seasons train 31's lineup was assigned 13 cars and train 32's had 12 cars between St. Paul and Spokane. The Chicago-Portland "Great Dome" coach and "Pass" series Pullman sleeping car continued to be transferred to and from SP&S trains 1 and 2 at Spokane. Prior to its late night departure, a Spokane to Seattle "Glacier" series Pullman sleeping car was added to train 31's consist, except on Saturday night.

During the 1961-1962 winter season a St. Paul-Havre "River" series Pullman sleeping car was added as an extra car to the consists of trains 31 and 32. This extra sleeping car was included to accommodate overnight business-oriented Twin Cities-Minot-Williston-Great Falls travelers who decided that the *EMPIRE BUILDER* was more reliable than weather-sensitive air travel during the winter months. When this extra sleeping car was added, it raised trains 31 and 32's lineups to 14 and 13 cars respectively between St. Paul and Havre.

Two 1215-1232 series St. Paul-Seattle and St. Paul-Portland "Day-Nite" coaches, a Chicago-Seattle "Great Dome" coach, a Chicago-Seattle "River" series Pullman sleeping car, and a Chicago-Seattle "Coulee" series sleeping-lounge-observation car were added to the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s lineup during the 1960 and 1961 summer seasons, which extended from the middle of May through the middle of September. With these additions the summer season westbound train 31's consist numbered 18 cars

and eastbound train 32 had 17 cars assigned between St. Paul and Spokane. The through Portland "Day-Nite" and "Great Dome" coaches and "River" series and "Pass" series Pullman sleeping cars were transferred to and from SP&S trains 1 and 2 at Spokane.

Although the *EMPIRE BUILDER* was not scheduled to stop at Glacier Park Station and Belton during the 1960 Glacier National Park Season, and had not done so since its inauguration as a transcontinental streamliner during 1947, trains 31 and 32 made "train-ordered" stops at Glacier Park Station for the 1960 National Governors' Conference. This renowned annual conference was held at Glacier National Park in recognition of its 50th. Anniversary as a national park. In order to facilitate the transportation of various governors, their staffs, and the news media to and from the Park, trains 31 and 32 made these unusual stops during July prior to and following this historic national conference. In contrast to the upbeat national attention brought to the Park and the Great Northern Railway by having this national conference held during July in the Great Northern's Many Glacier Lodge, the Railway's Board of Directors dropped a bombshell when it announced that all of the Railway's lodges and related facilities located in the Park would be sold on December 30th. However, in the same announcement, the Board indicated that passenger train service would continue to serve the Park during its summer seasons as long as travelers continued to travel on Great Northern trains to and from Glacier Park Station and Belton.

A major operational change occurred on the Burlington Route during October of the 1960-1961 winter season. Believing that it had too many passenger trains during the winter season between the Twin Cities and Chicago for the amount of traffic carried, the Burlington Route combined the *EMPIRE BUILDER* (GN/CB&Q train 32) with the *NORTH COAST LIMITED* (NP/CB&Q train 26) for the daily southbound run and the *EMPIRE BUILDER* (CB&Q/GN train 31) with the *AFTERNOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR* (CB&Q train 23) for the northbound run. There was no change in GN/CB&Q train 32's southbound schedule as it, along with NP/CB&Q train 26, departed St. Paul at 7:15 AM and arrived in Chicago at 2:00 PM. The northbound schedule was changed, however, in order to accommodate CB&Q train 23's passengers. Throughout the winter season, CB&Q train 31/23 departed Chicago Union Station at 3:00 PM, an hour later, and arrived in St. Paul at 9:45 PM. This combination of the *EMPIRE BUILDER* (CB&Q/GN trains 31 and 32) with the southbound *NORTH COAST LIMITED* (NP/CB&Q train 26) and northbound *AFTERNOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR* (CB&Q train 23) took place during the winter seasons until the 1966-1967 season. With the extra cars during the Thanksgiving-Christmas holidays, the Burlington Route usually operated these trains in two sections between St. Paul and Chicago, however.

A much more significant time change for the westbound *EMPIRE BUILDER* occurred between St. Paul and Spokane, however. In order to protect the mail contracts carried by train 31 in its St. Paul to Spokane and Chicago to Seattle storage mail cars as well as the priority mail sorted in the St. Paul to Seattle Railway Post Office-storage mail car, the westbound schedule was speeded up to a 35-hour and 40-minute run from St. Paul to Seattle. Going back to its inauguration in 1947, this was the fastest running time for the westbound *EMPIRE BUILDER*

to date. Since train 31's winter season consist was shorter, maintaining this time schedule was achieved consistently during normal winter weather conditions. However, occasionally when a Northwest winter blizzard decided to interfere with normal passenger train operations, there were a few mornings when train 31 did not reach Seattle in the scheduled 35 hours and 40 minutes.

After being assigned as a member of the train crew since the postwar *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s inauguration in 1947, the year-around Traveling Passenger Representative was withdrawn at the beginning of the 1961-1962 winter season. Passenger Traffic Department personnel were assigned from the Railway's ticket office staffs and graduate school students, primarily from the University of Minnesota, were hired part time as summer season Traveling Passenger Representatives beginning during the 1962 summer season and continued until the 1969 summer season. During the winter seasons, each train conductor was assigned responsibility for the coach seat reservations while working the train over his division, and he passed on the coaches' reservation charts to the next division's relieving train conductor during the entire trip. The dining car steward also made his own dinner reservations each afternoon for that evening's dinner in the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s elegant dining car.

Summer 1962

During the Seattle World's Fair, known officially as "The Century 21 Exposition", the *EMPIRE BUILDER* and its transcontinental colleague, the *WESTERN STAR*, experienced phenomenal increases in coach and sleeping car ridership. These two trains carried over one quarter of a million passengers during the Fair's six-month run between April 21st and October 21st, 1962. That averaged out to almost 1,400 passengers daily who originated their trips on trains 31 and 32 and trains 27 and 28 westbound in Chicago and the Twin Cities and eastbound in Seattle. The expanded Fair lineup that was assigned to each of the five *EMPIRE BUILDER* is shown in Table 2 on page 13.

Even this expanded lineup was not sufficient to meet the increased requests for coach and sleeping car reservations. Mr. Kent C. Van Wyck, the Railway's Passenger Traffic Manager, addressed this phenomenal increase and the unfulfilled requests for additional cars submitted to him by the Railway's General Passenger Agents when he distributed a bulletin to all of the Railway's Passenger Traffic Department Offices during July. "The volume of traffic thus far has surpassed our expectations. Every piece of serviceable passenger equipment is in use including six coaches purchased this year. (Mr. Van Wyck was referring to the former "400 coaches" that the Great Northern had purchased from the Chicago and North Western during the spring.) No other equipment is available from other lines because this is the peak travel season for most railroads. However, some space is cancelled every day, and this factor should be considered in planning travel to the Fair." As the 1962 summer season unfolded, all thoughts and concerns about the increased competition disappeared as the Railway enjoyed this resounding success being achieved by its premier transcontinental streamliner and its other passenger trains. Unfortunately it also proved to be short lived; for when the Fair completed its six-month run, reality once again settled in. The challenge presented by declining passenger loads and the impact of subsidized competition once again became chief concerns

right up to the Burlington Northern Merger during 1970.

In anticipation of expected merger approval (premature as it turned out) with the Northern Pacific, Burlington Route, and Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway, the Great Northern and the Burlington Route began an experiment during the Fall with the assignment of passenger locomotives to the *EMPIRE BUILDER*. The Burlington Route's E Series passenger locomotives were assigned to through service between Chicago and Havre, and the Great Northern's Passenger Fs were on the head end between Havre and Seattle. The two railways expected that this experiment would prove successful, since the Great Northern had had success with its E7s between St. Paul and Havre when they had been assigned to the postwar *EMPIRE BUILDER* that had been inaugurated during 1947. By the end of the year this experiment was concluded with expected results and was terminated. Once again, the Great Northern's Passenger Fs were assigned to trains 31 and 32 between St. Paul and Havre and between Havre and Seattle.

The Passenger Fs also began their cost-saving evolution to the modified Empire Builder colors scheme. As these locomotives received their scheduled heavy maintenance and were repainted, the gold trim in the original color scheme was removed, and more Pullman Green replaced the Omaha Orange on the lower exterior portion of the locomotive's body. However during this changeover, the passenger cars assigned to the *EMPIRE BUILDER* retained their original Empire Builder color scheme.

1962-1967

Beginning with the 1962-1963 winter season the Great Northern established lineups for the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s five consists that remained somewhat consistent throughout the succeeding summer and winter seasons until the 1966-67 winter and the 1967 summer seasons. Table 3 on page 13 gives an overview of these lineups. The expanded summer season lineup, which numbered 18 cars westbound and 17 cars eastbound between St. Paul and Spokane, continued to reflect the excellent coach and sleeping car loads carried during this vacation travel period. The winter season lineups, however, demonstrated the dramatic decline in traffic that was carried during these periods.

The *EMPIRE BUILDER* continued to be combined by the Burlington Route during the winter seasons with the southbound *NORTH COAST LIMITED* and the northbound *AFTERNOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR* between St. Paul and Chicago, and the Great Northern reduced the number of cars that were assigned to through Chicago-Pacific Northwest service. Since the *EMPIRE BUILDER* had its "Great Dome Lounge Car" assigned for its sleeping car passengers the year around, the "Coulee" series sleeping-lounge-observation cars were transferred to storage during these winter seasons. This facilitated the combination between St. Paul and Chicago while traveling over the Burlington Route. The *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s consist was located right behind the Burlington Route's E series locomotives and Railway Post Office-storage mail car in the combined consists followed by the *NORTH COAST LIMITED*'s consist including its sleeping-lounge-observation car southbound and the *AFTERNOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR*'s consist including its Vista Dome parlor-observation car northbound.

This consolidation of trains by the Burlington Route

Incomparable EMPIRE BUILDER

Detailed Schedules Begin on Page 6, Table 1

West—Read Down

East—Read Up

Example by days	Empire Builder 31 Daily	Miles	Central Standard Time	Empire Builder 32 Daily	Example by days
Burlington Route					
Mon	3 00	0	Lv Chicago.....Ar	2 00	Wed
Mon	9 45	427	Ar St. Paul.....Lv	7 15	Wed
Great Northern Railway★					
Mon	10 20	0	Lv St. Paul.....Ar	6 45	Wed
Mon	10 45	11	Ar Minneapolis.....Lv	6 20	Wed
Mon	10 50	11	Lv Minneapolis.....Ar	6 15	Wed
Tue	12 25	102	" Willmar.....Lv	4 18	Wed
Tue	2 17	215	Lv Breckenridge....." "	2 15	Wed
Tue	3 05	262	Ar Fargo.....Lv	1 15	Wed
Tue	3 20	262	Lv Fargo.....Ar	1 01	Wed
Tue	5 23	386	Lv New Rockford.....Lv	11 01	Tue
Tue	6 59	495	Ar Minot.....Lv	9 15	Tue
Tue	7 10	495	Lv Minot.....Ar	9 00	Tue
Tue	9 20	615	Ar Williston.....Lv	6 40	Tue
Mountain Standard Time					
Tue	8 30	615	Lv Williston.....Ar	5 30	Tue
Tue	▲10 05	721	" Wolf Point.....Lv	▲3 38	Tue
Tue	▲10 55	771	" Glasgow....." "	▲2 46	Tue
Tue	▲11 53	837	Lv Malta....." "	▲1 31	Tue
Tue	1 10	924	Ar Havre.....Lv	12 01	Tue
Tue	4 05		Ar @Great Falls.....Lv	8 50	Tue
Tue	1 20	924	Lv Havre.....Ar	11 50	Tue
Tue	▲2 18	985	" Chester.....Lv	▲10 41	Tue
Tue	3 05	1029	" Shelby....." "	9 55	Tue
Tue	▲3 38	1053	Lv Cut Bank....." "	▲9 25	Tue
Tue	6 40	1179	Ar Whitefish.....Lv	6 10	Tue
Tue	6 45	1179	Lv Whitefish.....Ar	6 05	Tue
Tue	9 15	1314	Ar Troy.....Lv	3 25	Tue
Pacific Standard Time					
Tue	8 15	1314	Lv Troy.....Ar	2 25	Tue
Tue	11 15	1453	Ar Spokane.....Lv	11 10	Mon
Tue	11 45	1453	Lv Spokane.....Ar	10 40	Mon
Wed	2 01	1575	" Ephrata.....Lv	8 24	Mon
Wed	3 10	1627	Ar Wenatchee.....Lv	7 18	Mon
Wed	3 20	1627	Lv Wenatchee.....Ar	7 10	Mon
Wed	6 35	1750	Ar Everett.....Lv	3 58	Mon
Wed	6 45	1750	Lv Everett.....Ar	3 58	Mon
Wed	7 10	1765	Lv Edmonds.....Lv	3 31	Mon
Wed	7 45	1783	Ar Seattle.....Lv	3 00	Mon
Wed	8 57		Ar Tacoma.....Lv	12 35	Mon
Spokane, Portland & Seattle Ry.					
Tue	11 50	0	Lv Spokane.....Ar	10 00	Mon
Wed	2 30	148	Ar Pasco.....Lv	7 20	Mon
Wed	4 45	273	" Wishram....." "	5 00	Mon
Wed	6 35	370	" Vancouver, Wash...." "	3 22	Mon
Wed	7 00	380	Ar Portland.....Lv	3 00	Mon

★Conditional stop. See Tables 6 and 8.

■Westbound Empire Builder and Western Star will stop to discharge revenue passengers.

▲Eastbound Empire Builder and Western Star will stop to receive revenue passengers.

@Connecting GN Bus Service Between Havre, Mont. and Great Falls, Mont.

★Equipment for these trains shown on page 25.

The 1964 schedule as shown in the October 1964 time table.

The westbound timing was the fastest in the Builder's history.

provided some very interesting switching moves in St. Paul Union Depot each morning and evening during the 1960-1961 through 1966-1967 winter seasons. These moves were accomplished within the overall scenario of the hectic activities associated with the loading, unloading, and switching of cars of other passenger trains also in St. Paul Union Depot during those time periods. After train 32 and NP train 26 completed their unloading procedures and switching out of cars following their morning arrivals, the east end Depot switcher backed down on to train 32's remaining consist and coupled up. This entire set of cars was pulled out through the east "infield" (complex of switches) with the assistance of the depot



It is August 1967, and GN No. 363C leads 3 other P3-7's in perfect A-B-B-A formation bringing The Empire Builder west and downgrade past Nimrod, Montana. This place was later renamed Java. A Norman Priebe photograph.

switchtenders, and then was backed into the depot onto NP train 26's remaining consist and coupled up. The Burlington Route's four E Series locomotives, which had been serviced overnight at the Burlington Route's Daytons Bluff Locomotive Terminal, with the loaded RPO-storage mail car then backed down on to CB&Q train 32/26's consist after the GN depot switcher had uncoupled and moved out of the way. Following the rear-to-front car inspections and train air test, CB&Q train 32/26 departed St. Paul Union Depot with its kaleidoscope of Burlington Route stainless-steel, GN Empire Builder, and NP Loewy colors for its high-speed six-hour and 45-minute run "down-the-river" to Chicago.

A different procedure was followed each evening when CB&Q train 31/23 arrived in St. Paul following its fast six-hour and 45-minute afternoon run from Chicago along the beautiful Upper Mississippi River Palisades "Where Nature Smiles for 300 Miles." Train 31/23 pulled through Division Street on up the lower portion of Westminster Hill. Then it backed into St. Paul Union Depot onto one of the stub tracks where the *AFTERNOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR*'s consist was uncoupled. The lead Burlington Route E series locomotive quickly uncoupled and moved

into one of the Depot's "pocket" tracks, and the other two locomotives also uncoupled and departed for the Daytons Bluff Locomotive Terminal. There they joined the two E Series locomotives that had arrived earlier on CB&Q train 25 for the overnight layover until the next morning's CB&Q train 32/26. A GN Depot switcher then coupled on to the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s consist and quickly moved it over to one of the through Depot tracks. As soon as the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s consist cleared the stub track, CB&Q train 31/23's lead locomotive re-coupled to the *AFTERNOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR*'s consist, and CB&Q train 23 quickly exited St. Paul Union Depot for Minneapolis and completion of its run. The second GN depot switcher, located at the west end of the Depot, and the east end GN depot switcher switched passenger cars into train 31's train in their assigned locations from both ends of the consist on this through track. Then the St. Paul-Spokane storage mail car and St. Paul-Seattle Railway Post Office-storage mail car were "doubled-over" from the mail loading track and the waiting four GN Passenger Fs were coupled up. As soon as all of the passengers, mail, and baggage were quickly loaded and the various tests completed on the re-assembled consist, GN train 31 departed

St. Paul Union Depot for its stop in Minneapolis and its high-speed transcontinental run to the Pacific Northwest.

All of the activities associated with the morning combination of trains and the evening disassembling of combined trains were accomplished routinely, if not sometimes hectically, within the scheduled Depot dwell time. The morning CB&Q train 32/26 and the evening GN train 31 were usually able to depart St. Paul Union Depot on time or nearly so with the prospects of on-time arrivals in Chicago southbound and Willmar westbound very good, barring circumstances beyond the Railway's control.

Effective with the January 1, 1964 Passenger Timetable, the *EMPIRE BUILDER* was assigned the fastest westbound schedule in its history. The Chicago to Seattle journey via the Burlington Route and the Great Northern was scheduled for 42 hours and 45 minutes. While operating on the Burlington Route the combined CB&Q train 31/23 retained its Chicago to St. Paul six-hour and 45-minute scheduled run, and dwell time in St. Paul Union Depot was set at 35 minutes. Therefore, the speed up occurred between St. Paul and Seattle on the Great Northern, where train 31 was scheduled for an exceptionally fast 35-hour and 25-minute run. The "*Incomparable Great Dome EMPIRE BUILDER*" continued to be the premier, as well as fastest, domed streamliner in service between Chicago and Seattle despite Federally subsidized competitive and regulatory pressures on the Great Northern Railway to reduce the quality of service provided to the traveling public.

During the summer season until 1967 the *EMPIRE BUILDER* was operated separately between St. Paul and Chicago, and train 31's departure from Chicago was moved up to 2:30 PM. The additional 30 minutes were restored to the St. Paul to Seattle schedule, since train 31 was much longer and heavier and carried much larger passenger loads.

As an additional way for increasing gross passenger revenues, the Great Northern began a reserved coach seat charge year around on the *EMPIRE BUILDER*, effective as of October 25, 1964. Since trains 31 and 32 were all-reserved trains, each passenger was required to purchase a railroad ticket, either coach or First Class, and an accommodations ticket for either a coach seat or for one of the sleeping car accommodations provided in the train's sleeping cars. This coach seat charge applied to travel between all Great Northern and Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway stations, but did not apply for travel between St. Paul and Chicago over the Burlington Route.

In order to be sure that sufficient train heating capacity was provided during the winter months when severe weather conditions could be encountered en route between St. Paul and Seattle, the Great Northern assigned four Passenger F locomotives to trains 31 and 32 during the winter seasons, even though their consists were shorter in length when compared to those operated during the summer seasons. Even with this provision for passenger comfort while traveling through bitterly cold conditions, it was also necessary on occasion to add one of the heater cars behind the Passenger Fs or to the rear of a consist to be sure that a comfortable level of heating was provided throughout the train. During the winter months heater cars were located at St. Paul, Havre and Seattle. Here they were readily available when necessary to call upon one of them for added heating capacity.

As a result of increased publicity and personal contacts

made by Passenger Traffic Department sales personnel, it was frequently necessary during the 1963-1964 winter season to extend the run of the Chicago-Havre sleeping car to and from Seattle in order to provide sufficient accommodations to meet all of the additional requests. Since projections indicated that such requests would continue during the 1964-1965 winter season, a St. Paul-Seattle "Pass" series sleeping car replaced the Chicago-Havre sleeping car in trains 31 and 32's consists.

During the 1966-1967 winter season the Burlington Route decided to combine the *EMPIRE BUILDER* and the *NORTH COAST LIMITED* in both directions, and to operate its northbound *AFTERNOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR* as a separate train from Chicago to the Twin Cities. The only change in operation, therefore, was the combination of CB&Q trains 31 and 25 from Chicago to St. Paul Union Depot where they were separated and turned over to the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific. However, when the Burlington Route decided to continue this combination during the Summer of 1967, it resulted in extremely long combined trains of over 20 cars with at least seven dome coaches and a "Great Dome" Lounge Car, since additional through Chicago-Pacific Northwest dome and Day-Nite coaches and sleeping cars had been returned to each of the *EMPIRE BUILDER* and *NORTH COAST LIMITED*'s consists. The westbound Chicago departure time was moved up to 1:15 PM CST and the westbound St. Paul Union Depot dwell time was increased to 50 minutes; this resulted in westbound train 31's Chicago to Seattle scheduled running time of 44 hours and 30 minutes, while preserving the same arrival times that met the delivery deadlines of existing mail contracts in Spokane at 11:15 PM PST and in Seattle at 7:45 AM PST. Train 32's eastbound schedule was not modified, since the 40 minutes of St. Paul Union Depot dwell time was sufficient to combine train 32 with NP train 26 prior to departure as CB&Q train 32/26. Overall eastbound running time from Seattle to Chicago, therefore, remained at 45 hours with arrival in Chicago at 2:00 PM CST as it had been.

Weather Related Disasters

During a period of less than two years from June 6, 1964, to March 11, 1966, the Great Northern experienced five weather-related disasters that impacted the operation of the *EMPIRE BUILDER* as well as several of the Railway's other passenger and freight trains. Each disaster required lengthy detours for several days by the *EMPIRE BUILDER* that hampered its westbound as well as eastbound runs, resulting in delays of several hours.

Beginning on June 6, 1964, torrential rainfall in the Rocky Mountains caused devastating slides, washouts, and flooding on the main line from Summit Station in Marias Pass all the way to Belton, the West Entrance to Glacier National Park. Several snow sheds, located between Blacktail and Nimrod, were destroyed as massive slides took significant stretches of the main line down into the valley below. The Middle Fork of the Flathead River, along whose southern shore the main line traversed, overflowed its banks. The rapidly rising torrents of ram-paging water washed out trestle foundations and several lengths of main line and also inundated the tunnels with tons of debris between Nimrod and Belton.

In order to continue its transcontinental service, the *EMPIRE BUILDER* was detoured between Pacific Junc-



When the Great Dome Empire Builder began to make daily stops at Glacier Park Station and Belton during the 1968 Park Season, more horsepower was need west of Havre for the long and fully loaded consist that included extra Glacier Park tour cars. During a cloudy summer afternoon, the four passenger Fs from St. Paul are here being exchanged for a set of higher horsepower units. The SPD 40 No 321, two Passenger FB units and another SDP 40 will head the Builder as it continues on its westward journey from Havre over the looming grades of the Continental Divide. A Robert W. Johnston photograph, from the Warren Wing Collection.

tion, west of Havre, to Spokane. It traveled as a passenger extra between Pacific Junction and Helena via Great Falls. Between Helena and Spokane it was detoured over the Northern Pacific as one of their passenger extras via Missoula and Sandpoint. This detour allowed the westbound and eastbound EMPIRE BUILDERS to get through, although delaying arrivals in Seattle and Chicago up to seven or more hours, even after the detour became somewhat routine. In order to provide passenger and mail service to stations normally served by trains 31 and 32, the Havre-Great Falls "Bruk" (bus-truck) was rerouted to a Havre-Cut Bank via Chester and Shelby round trip, and the Whitefish-Kalispell Bruk provided connecting round trip service between Missoula and Whitefish via Kalispell. Despite Herculean around-the-clock effort and allocation of massive numbers of personnel and equipment, it took the Great Northern and contracted construction crews until June 29th to repair the extensive and massive damage caused by the rampaging waters and devastating slides. Following the June 29th reopening of the main line between the Summit and Belton, trains 31 and 32 proceeded through this ravaged area under slow orders until the entire restoration and stabilization of the main line was completed a week later.

As of April 9, 1965, the flooding of the Mississippi River, caused by the rapid melting of the winter's accumu-

lated snow, inundated St. Paul Union Depot and the Burlington Route's main line, stations, and related facilities between St. Paul and Savanna, Illinois. In order to continue service to and from Chicago, the Burlington Route detoured the EMPIRE BUILDER via the Chicago and North Western between Minneapolis and Camp Douglas, Wisconsin, and over the Milwaukee Road between Camp Douglas and Chicago via Milwaukee. This unusual detour routing was necessary since the Milwaukee Road had also lost its main line, stations and related facilities between St. Paul and La Crosse, Wisconsin, and the North Western had similar main line problems between Camp Douglas and Milwaukee. This detour was in effect until April 29th when the Burlington Route had restored its St. Paul-Savanna main line, and necessary repairs had been completed in the St. Paul Union Depot complex.

During this period, the Great Northern transferred operation of the EMPIRE BUILDER to and from the Burlington Route in Minneapolis GN Station. With St. Paul Union Depot out of service, Minneapolis Great Northern Station became a very hectic terminal, since it was taking care of all of the passengers, mail and express it usually handled during a busy summer season in addition to the changing of locomotives, switching of cars, and the passengers, mail and express that were normally taken care of in St. Paul Union Depot. As part of this revision of

service, connecting shuttle bus service was provided between Minneapolis GN Station and the St. Paul Downtown Bus Terminal, and connecting mail service was provided by U. S. Post Office Department trucks between the Minneapolis and St. Paul Main Post Offices.

As if these second disaster revisions in service were not enough of a burden, the Stone Arch Bridge, south of Minneapolis GN Station, was taken out of service on April 18, 1965. The rampaging Mississippi River had undermined the foundation supports at Pier No. 7, causing the double-tracked road bed to sink over a foot. A detour was placed into effect between Minneapolis GN Station and St. Anthony Tower via Bridge Switch, Minneapolis Junction, and Union Yard over the Twin Cities Terminal freight main line. With the Stone Arch Bridge out of service, this made Minneapolis GN Station a stub-ended facility. The westbound *EMPIRE BUILDER* traveled over the detour all the way through First Street North, and then backed into the station for the change of locomotives, switching in of additional cars, and the unloading and loading of passengers and mail. Eastbound train 32 headed into the station for the change of locomotives, switching out of cars, and the unloading and loading of passengers and mail. When completed, train 32 backed out through First Street North before heading eastward to Minneapolis Junction and St. Anthony Tower via Bridge Switch. Minneapolis Great Northern Station continued to handle all of the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s locomotive changes, switching in and out of cars, and the mail and passengers, as well as for other passenger trains, until St. Paul Union Depot was restored to service on April 29th. However, this detour continued in effect until October 21st, when the extensive repairs to the Stone Arch Bridge were completed after over six months duration. Eastbound GN train 32 had the honor of being the first scheduled passenger train to cross the restored Stone Arch Bridge early in the morning on October 22nd.

The fourth weather-related disaster to impact the operation of the *EMPIRE BUILDER* began on March 3, 1966, when a severe blizzard struck North Dakota and Western Minnesota with winds of nearly 100 miles per hour that whipped the falling snow into zero-visibility conditions and inundated main line cuts with huge drifts of 25 to 30 feet in depth. The Surrey Cutoff was completely blocked until March 11th and the Devils Lake main line between Grand Forks and Minot was also blocked at various times. During a period of eight days the westbound and eastbound *EMPIRE BUILDERS* were either detoured via Grand Forks and Devils Lake, when that line was open, or were held at open stations until conditions were improved on the Devils Lake Line so that passage could be made safely. The Great Northern issued daily reports during the blizzard and during the following days' drift-clearing activities that included the status of each of its trains. The day-by-day reports of the westbound and eastbound *EMPIRE BUILDERS*' status have been included in Table 4 on page 14. Even though some trains 31 and 32 had to be held at open stations for several hours at a time, they made it through the devastated area eventually. For those who experienced this "Blizzard of the 20th Century", passengers and railroaders alike, it was not surprising to learn later on that several North Dakota residents lost their lives, others were exposed to frostbite and other extreme temperature injuries, the area's farms suffered devastating losses to their livestock, and property

damage in the millions occurred. Finally, after several days of hard work by snow-removal crews with rotary snow plows and other snow removal equipment, the Surrey Cutoff main line was reopened late during the afternoon of March 10th. Eastbound train 32 that departed Minot that evening was one of the first trains to pass through the reopened cuts. The snow was piled high along each side of the train that reached well above the "Great Dome" coaches and the "Great Dome Lounge Car."

The fifth and final weather-related disaster occurred on March 7th when the westbound *WESTERN STAR*, operating quite late because of the delays caused as a result of the North Dakota Blizzard, collided head on with the eastbound *EMPIRE BUILDER* at the west siding switch in Buelow, Montana, located seven miles east of Chester, at approximately 11:00 AM MST. Train 32 had departed Chester on time, and late train 27's locomotive engineer seemed to have overlooked signal indications as if he did not expect to meet train 32 at this station for a running meet as train 32 took the siding. Under normal circumstances, train 27 and train 32 passed each other on Walton Hill's double track between Blacktail and Nimrod earlier in the morning. This violent collision resulted in the deaths of the two locomotive engineers and injuries to the two locomotive firemen. In addition, other crew members and some of the passengers suffered minor injuries during the derailment of cars that followed the collision. Mr. John M. Budd, President of the Railway, and Mr. J. L. Robson, Vice President of Operations, were traveling along with other officials and their car attendants in Business Cars A-30 and A-28 coupled onto the rear of train 32. No one in these two business cars was injured, although they also encountered severe jolts as trains 32 and 27 came to unexpected, abrupt halts. While the severely damaged locomotives and derailed cars of the two wrecked trains were removed and the extensive damage to this main line and siding track was restored, trains 31 and 32 plus the *WESTERN STAR* and freight trains detoured for a couple of days between Havre and Shelby via Great Falls.

The period from June 6, 1964, to March 10, 1966, had not been a good one for the operation of the *EMPIRE BUILDER*, or for the railway's other passenger and freight trains. However, even though each of the five disasters caused extensive damage and required periods of delaying detours, the *EMPIRE BUILDER* did get through eventually and did complete its transcontinental trips between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest. Of course, without the tremendous efforts exerted by many of the Railway's employees in dangerous and exhausting situations, such continuous operation of the Railway's premier transcontinental streamliner would not have been possible nor would it have occurred.

1967-1970

Although the Great Northern Railway's Board of Directors adopted a new corporate image that included a new "Big Sky Blue" color scheme and Rocky logo on May 11, 1967, the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s consists displayed a variety of exterior colors during this three-year period prior to the Burlington Northern Merger. New brochures and photographs that depicted the *EMPIRE BUILDER* with Big Sky Blue locomotives and cars were released by the Railway, but it became a very unusual day when Big Sky Blue locomotives and cars completely replaced EB Colors in the consists of trains 31 and 32.



The All Big-Sky Blue Empire Builder, led by two new SDP 45s, is momentarily stopped to pose for Great Northern's Publicity Department on the main line beneath Mount St. Nicholas in Glacier Park, Montana.

The Public Relations Department at St. Paul covered the new color scheme with a press release dated May 5, 1967, as follows-

"The Rocky Mountain goat that went to work for Great Northern in the railway's trademark 46 years ago is about to make his "mod" debut.

"Rocky, the only animal now appearing in the symbol of a major United States railway, soon will be seen up and down the land in his new look on Great Northern passenger and freight cars, locomotives, stationery, advertising, signs--wherever the company uses its trademark.

"The 1967 version of Rocky will be introduced with a new GN corporate color, named Big Sky blue by John M. Budd, president of the railway. Mr. Budd said the company began last Fall the development of a new corporate identification system, and employed Lippincott and Margulies, Inc., of New York who are communications and design consultants and specialists, for the project.

"Mr. Budd said "We felt that Great Northern's development and progress as a transportation system should be projected in a fresh, modern image. In asking our consultants to propose a new identification system for the railway, we told them there were absolutely no sacred cows--or goats--to consider. It would have been painful, of course, but not surprising had the experts recommended banishing Rocky from our trademark, for they are

wholly unsentimental about existing symbols and other identity elements when researching for a corporate identification project. However, the Lippincott & Margulies team determined through extensive sampling of public opinion that the goat is more widely associated by people with great Northern's name than even we thought.

"GN's consultants recommended keeping Rocky in the symbol, but prescribed vitamins and exercise to make him a more vigorous, dynamic character. They also said the goat no longer should be required to look at the world through the encircling words, Great Northern Railway, as in the old trademark. In addition, they proposed stylized lettering for the company name, and a special blue paint for system-wide application. GN's previous official color is known as Omaha orange.

"Mr. Budd said that the proposed identification system was approved in early March, and added that "we are specially pleased with the new color, which we immediately named Big Sky blue because it is typical of the Big Sky country of Minnesota, the Dakotas, Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon, where the Great Northern runs.

"GN is just beginning application of the new color, Rocky trademark and lettering to locomotives, passenger and freight cars--an enormous job considering that the company owns more than 50,000 units of equipment. The first freight cars to wear GN's new look are being built in the

Seattle area by Pacific Car and Foundry Company, and delivery of the 300-car order will begin about May 15. The new identification system has been applied to a few passenger cars, and the eight new diesel locomotives now being built by the Electro-Motive Corporation for mid-summer delivery will go to work in the new Big Sky blue colors.

"However," said Mr. Budd, "we will not undertake a 'crash' painting program. Application of the new identification system to our rolling stock and engines will be progressed gradually, and will require a substantial period of time to complete. Meanwhile, our modernized trademark and new color are being applied to GN's stationery, advertising, literature and the scores of paper forms used by the company; this transition will be accomplished within a comparatively short time."

The creation of the Railway's official Big Sky Blue *EMPIRE BUILDER* photographs became a complex production in and of itself. Some of the Railway's retired employees who had been involved in this project recently recalled that it was a most difficult as well as frustrating experience. They had to assemble sufficient cars for repainting in the new exterior colors to form an assigned consist, while, at the same time, provide sufficient cars to protect the five *EMPIRE BUILDER* consists in daily service. Eventually during the Fall of 1967, a 13-car "new colors" winter season trainset, led by SDP45s 333 and 332, was placed in service as one of the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s five consists. The Railway's official photographer took several exposures of this 13-car trainset operating as train 31 and then two days later of train 32 with its 12-car train. Three poses were selected and two of these colored photographs appeared in the new colors *EMPIRE BUILDER* brochure. All three photos also appeared as postcards that were distributed to passengers on the *EMPIRE BUILDER* and were readily available at no charge in the Railway's ticket offices. The first photograph depicted train 31 after it had passed through Summit Station in the shadow of Glacier Park's impressive Triple Divide Range and was about to proceed down Walton Hill. This same train 31 was again displayed as it passed along the Middle Fork of the Flathead River with imposing Mount St. Nicholas and companion peaks in the background. The third and final photograph (see page 1) caught train 32 with its entire 12-car consist as it traversed the massive Two Medicine Creek Trestle, just east of Glacier Park Station. A fourth illustration of a Big Sky Blue *EMPIRE BUILDER* as train 32 along the Middle Fork of the Flathead River appeared as an artistic interpretation on the front cover of the new publicity brochure.

In addition to displaying contrasting exterior color schemes, the lineup of locomotives and cars assigned to the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s five consists was very fluid and dynamic as the Railway attempted to address the fluctuating traffic patterns that occurred during the summer and winter seasons. A summary of the various lineups that were placed in service between 1967 and 1970 appears on page 14, in Table 5. As shown in this table, the seasonal lineups varied from an assignment of as many as 17 cars during the summer to the assignment of as few as nine cars during the winter.

The most obvious 1967 summer changes in the lineup resulted in the permanent withdrawal of the "Coulee" series sleeping-lounge-observation cars and the relocation of the "View" series Great Dome Lounge Car behind the coaches and in front of the dining car and sleeping cars. The repositioning of the Great Dome Lounge Car was implemented so that coach passengers could utilize the services of the car's Lower Club Lounge. With the summer season lineup including six coaches, the "Ranch" Car became a second full-service dining car that offered economy meal menus designed for the coach passengers. This car had been remodeled with an increased dinette area that replaced existing lounge facilities. Therefore, the Lower Club Lounge in the Great Dome Lounge Car became an all-passenger facility that provided beverages and snacks. This car's dome sofa seating and Upper Deck Lounge continued to be limited for exclusive use by the sleeping car passengers, however.

During the 1967 summer season the *EMPIRE BUILDER* continued to be combined with the *NORTH COAST LIMITED* between Chicago and St. Paul. This was the first summer season during which the Burlington Route combined the *EMPIRE BUILDER* with one of its other trains. However, beginning with the 1967-1968 winter season, the Burlington Route combined the northbound *AFTER-NOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR* and the southbound *MORNINGTWIN CITIES ZEPHYR* with the *EMPIRE BUILDER* and the *NORTH COAST LIMITED*, and this consolidation became permanent year around through the Burlington Northern Merger until Amtrak took over the nation's passenger service on May 1, 1971. In order to provide more St. Paul Union Depot dwell time for required car switching moves, the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s schedules were expanded, effective as of October 29, 1967. Westbound CB&Q train 23/31/25 departed Chicago at 1:15 PM CST, and GN train 31 arrived in Seattle at 7:45 AM PST. Eastbound GN train 32 departed Seattle at 3:00 PM PST, and CB&Q train 22/32/26 arrived in Chicago at 2:55 PM CST.

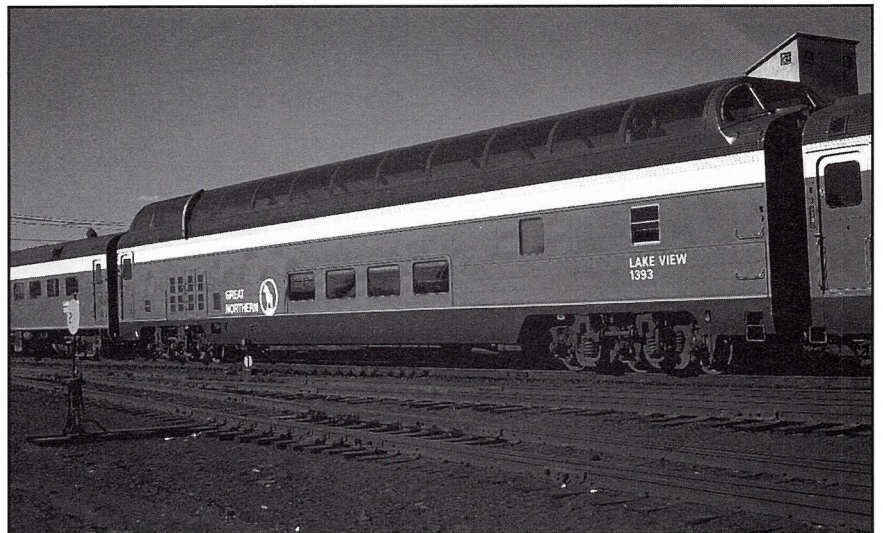
Another change in the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s lineup occurred during the Fall of 1967 when the U. S. Post Office Department terminated all Railway Post Office contracts with the railroads, and also reduced the number of storage mail contracts. GN and CB&Q RPO-SM cars 37 through 45 and 1602-1603 were withdrawn from the consists as of September 1st, and the GN cars were reassigned to the storage mail car pool after their interior mail sorting furnishings had been removed by the car shops.

The *EMPIRE BUILDER* began to stop daily at Glacier Park Station and Belton during the 1968 Park Season. This was the first summer that the Railway's premier transcontinental train was scheduled to make these two stops daily since the 1946 Park Season. The heavyweight *EMPIRE BUILDER* made these Park stops after Glacier National Park was reopened following the end of World War II. By having trains 31 and 32 make these Park stops, it was no longer necessary to operate the *WESTERN STAR* in separate passenger and mail sections during the summer months. However, with an extensive lineup already assigned to trains 31 and 32 during the summer, consists of up to 25 cars often resulted when extra Glacier Park tour cars were added between Chicago and Glacier Park Station. The 1967 arrival of the new and powerful SDP45 locomotives made these lengthy consists possible,

and scheduled running times between St. Paul and Seattle were consistently achieved.

Experimental Merger Cascade Green began to appear on the exteriors of some of the cars assigned to the *EMPIRE BUILDER* during 1968. The repainted cars that were observed from time to time in trains 31 and 32's consists are listed in Table 6. Until Amtrak appeared during May 1971, the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s consists displayed a rainbow of colors that included original EB Colors, modified EB Colors, Big Sky Blue, and two versions of Merger Cascade Green. The popular reaction to this unexpected addition of colors was expressed by a less-than-enamored Lines West supervisor who had been critical of Big Sky Blue as well. When he saw a Merger Cascade Green car in train 32's consist prior to its departure from Seattle's King Street Station, he exploded with, "I'll be damned! Big Sky Blue sure didn't last long after all! But this is ridiculous! Do we have to put up with pea-soup green too?"

Even though the *EMPIRE BUILDER* was recognized with a 1968 award as one of "the Ten Best Rides in the Nation" by the Saturday Review, a popular national monthly periodical, there were indications that passenger train service provided by the private railroads was about to end. Recorded 1968 passenger traffic results indicated that the *EMPIRE BUILDER*, despite aggressive and concerted efforts to maintain quality service, had experienced an almost 50 per cent decline in annual ridership when compared to 1959 passenger traffic data. Also, the typical *EMPIRE BUILDER* passenger traveled in the coaches for an average of less than 402 miles. In addition, the agreement for the operation of its sleeping cars with the Pullman Company was terminated, effective on January 1, 1969. Those Pullman porters who did not retire were reassigned as Great Northern employees to the Railway's Dining Car Department, and the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s dining car stewards replaced the historic Pullman conductors as the supervisors of the sleeping car porters' work schedules and related activities while en route. The train conductors were assigned the tasks of picking up each sleeping car passenger's accommodations coupon along with rail ticket and of verifying that each passenger was in the correct accommodation as shown on that car's reservation chart. These tasks were added to those related to coach ticket pickup and verifying passenger seating in the reserved seat coaches assigned to trains 31 and 32.



A contrast in liveries. In this photograph, Great Northern's Great Dome 1393, "Lake View", appears in Big-Sky blue livery. A Cordell Newby photograph.



In this view "Ocean View" Great Dome No. 1391 is decked out in the Cascade Green experimental colors. The large band of white color ending with a downward sweep leaves much to be desired if the intention is to create a pleasing image. A photograph from the Norman Keyes Collection, the photographer and the location is not recorded. Comparison is invited to the photograph of "Glacier View" in the Empire Builder colors of Orange and Green, as shown on page 3 of the March 1995 GNRHS Reference Sheet number 227.

When the final Great Northern passenger timetable was issued on February 3, 1970, the *EMPIRE BUILDER* became the sole passenger train to travel over the Willmar Line and the Surrey Cutoff. In order to compensate for the discontinued train service, trains 31 and 32 added conditional stops at Litchfield, Benson, and Morris, Minnesota, on the Willmar Line and at Hannaford, North Dakota, on the Surrey Cutoff. Trains 31 and 32 had also added a conditional stop at Libby, Montana, a few months earlier.

It was difficult for those who believed in passenger trains to witness the eventual demise of the *EMPIRE BUILDER* as Rocky's Railway moved toward the on-again, off-again, on-again Burlington Northern Merger, frustratingly uncertain itself. There was a short reprieve of 14 months prior to total discontinuation, however, as the Burlington Northern continued to operate the *EMPIRE BUILDER* with essentially the same equipment that had been assigned during the Great Northern's operation. Along with the

uncertainty surrounding what became known eventually as Amtrak, this interval of continued service emphasized a very discouraging and frustrating scenario. It was clearly evident that the *EMPIRE BUILDER* did not support itself, and motivation to continue operation of Rocky's premier passenger train had vanished.

EPILOGUE

Throughout the Great Northern Railway's Streamlined Era, the *EMPIRE BUILDER* was a super-star in the passenger traffic industry. Displaying the beautiful Pullman Green and Omaha Orange Colors and led by world-renowned Rocky, the spirited Rocky Mountain Goat, it was esteemed for its outstanding variety of cars and accommodations and for the excellent service provided by its crew members between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest. Even after the 26 years since the Railway's demise, those who had traveled via the *EMPIRE BUILDER* and those who had had the privilege of being members of its crews can still recall its elegance and excellent appointments with considerable fondness and enthusiasm.

Imagine that we have just departed from Seattle's King Street Station and have already occupied glass-enclosed dome seats with viewing possible in all directions. Our journey becomes an unparalleled sight-seeing opportunity as the beautiful, sunny summer afternoon encompasses exquisite Puget Sound's array of barges, bays, beach-combers, birds, boats, and bluffs and the majestic Olympic Mountains soaring in the distant West. The many rugged, snow-covered Cascade Mountain Peaks emerge above the lush evergreen forests, temporarily disappearing while traversing the lengthy Cascade Tunnel during the dinner hour and then reappearing above the prolific valleys of the Chumstick and the Wenatchee. Shortly thereafter, the stark volcanic formations through the Columbia River Valley and around Trinidad Horseshoe Curve and the late evening starlight sky above relax us for a comfortable night's rest.

Resumed dome "rubber-necking" becomes a must early the next morning as the startling, awe-inspiring, and exquisite beauty of the snow-covered Rocky Mountains and expansive Flathead River Valley in Glacier Park spread out before us. The intent search for the many and diverse occupants of the wild hold our undivided attention while we pass through unique snow sheds and tunnels, around photogenic Blacktail Horseshoe Curve, and up to the imposing Triple Divide Range at the Summit of Marias Pass. Our amazing trek continues as the rolling prairies of Eastern Montana and North Dakota present late morning and all-afternoon, sun-bleached horizons seemingly an infinite distance away on all sides. The late evening hours rivet our attention forward as the gyrating headlight searches out the darkened pathway and as the changing green-to-red signal lights protect our overnight progress ever eastward.

The fabulous sights from our high-above-the-rail seats continue the second morning, as train 32 hastens along the Upper Mississippi River Palisades. Each expansive, bluff-shielded curve along the "Father of Waters" exposes to view one awesome portrait after another. However, as our elegant hotel-on-wheels accelerates down the River's bluffed Wisconsin side and across the productive farmlands of Northern Illinois, we begin to resent an on-time arrival in Chicago Union Station. As we momentarily tarry on our imaginary station platform exit for one last look at

Rocky's pride and joy, reality intrudes with the perception that, without any doubt, it would be an exceptional odyssey were it possible today to travel aboard the *Incomparable Great Dome EMPIRE BUILDER* one more time.

TABLE 1
"GREAT DOME" EMPIRE BUILDER CARS

The following types of passenger cars were assigned to protect the five consists of the *Great Dome EMPIRE BUILDER* during the 1960s. Those cars not specifically assigned during a given summer or winter season were assigned to other Great Northern passenger trains or were placed in storage, but continued to serve as protection cars for the *EMPIRE BUILDER*'s consists, if needed.

<u>SERIES</u>	<u>TYPE OF CARS</u>
37-45	Railway Post Office-Storage Mail Cars—the CB&Q owned car 41.
266-280	Storage Mail Cars
1180-1188	"Glacier" series 16 Duplex Roomettes and Four Double Bedrooms Pullman Sleeping Cars
1190-1194 and 1197	"Coulee" series Six Roomettes-Four Double Bedrooms-One Compartment Pullman Sleeping-Lounge-Observation Cars—the CB&Q owned car 1194.
1200-1205	Baggage-Dormitory Cars—the CB&Q owned car 1202.
1209-1214	"Day-Nite" Coaches: 60 Seats with Foot Rests
1215-1232	"Day-Nite" Coaches: 48 Seats with Leg Rests—the CB&Q owned cars 1219 and 1220.
1240-1245	"Lake" series Coffee Shop-Dinette-Lounge Cars, named "The Ranch"—the CB&Q owned car 1243.
1250-1255	"Lake" series Dining Cars—the CB&Q owned car 1250.
1260-1274 and 702	"River" series Four Sections-Seven Duplex Roomettes-Three Double Bedrooms-One Compartment Pullman Sleeping Cars—the CB&Q owned cars 1266, 1269, and 1273, and the SP&S Ry. owned car 702.
1320-1335	"Great Dome" coaches: 46 Seats with Leg Rests—the SP&S Ry owned car 1332, the CB&Q owned cars 1333-1335.
1370-1384 and 701	"Pass" series Six Roomettes-Five Double Bedrooms-Two Compartments Pullman Sleeping Cars—the CB&Q owned cars 1371, 1378, and 1382, and the SP&S Ry owned car 701.
1390-1395	"View" series Great Dome Lounge Cars—the CB&Q owned car 1395.
1602-1603	CB&Q Railway Post Office-Storage Mail Cars

Notes:

- Cars 1240-1245 were remodeled during 1962 and 1967. This increased the dinette space and reduced the lounge area in these cars.

- Sleeping cars 1260, 1262-1264, and 1270-1272 were remodeled during 1963 to seven duplex roomettes-six double bedrooms-one compartment Pullman sleeping cars. The cars retained their names and equipment car numbers, however.

TABLE 2
SEATTLE WORLD'S FAIR EMPIRE BUILDER LINEUP

Three E Series Locomotives, Chicago-St. Paul
 Five Passenger F Locomotives, St. Paul-Havre and
 Havre-Seattle
 Storage Mail Car, St. Paul to Spokane
 Railway Post Office-Storage Mail Car, Chicago-St.
 Paul
 Railway Post Office-Storage Mail Car, St. Paul-Seattle
 Storage Mail Car, Chicago-Seattle
 Baggage-Dormitory Car, Chicago-Seattle
 60-Seat Day-Nite Coach: Line 100-200, Chicago-
 Seattle
 Great Dome Coach: Line 101-201, Chicago-Seattle
 Great Dome Coach: Line 102-202, Chicago-Seattle
 The Ranch Car, Chicago-Seattle
 48-Seat Day-Nite Coach: Line 103-203, St. Paul-
 Seattle
 Day-Nite or Great Dome Coach: Line X103-X203,
 St. Paul-Seattle
 48-Seat Day-Nite Coach: Line 104-204, St. Paul-
 Portland via Spokane
 Great Dome Coach: Line 105-205, Chicago-
 Portland via Spokane
 "River" series Sleeping Car, Line 311-321, Chicago-
 Portland via Spokane
 "Pass" series Sleeping Car, Line 312-322, Chicago-
 Portland via Spokane
 "River" series Sleeping Car: Line 314-324, Chicago-
 Seattle
 "Lake" series Dining Car, Chicago-Seattle
 "View" series Great Dome Lounge Car, Chicago-
 Seattle
 "River" series Sleeping Car: Line 315-325, Chicago-
 Seattle
 "Pass" series Sleeping Car: Line 316-326, Chicago-
 Seattle
 "Coulee" series Sleeping-Lounge-Observation Car:
 Line 317-327, Chicago-Seattle

Notes:

•This lineup was the longest ever assigned to the *EMPIRE BUILDER*. Train 31 had 20 cars assigned from St. Paul to Spokane and train 32 had 19 cars from Spokane to St. Paul.

•The first storage mail car, en route from Chicago to Spokane via Milwaukee, was assigned to the westbound consist only. This car was transferred from the Milwaukee Road's *MORNING HIAWATHA*, train #5, at St. Paul.

•Line X103-X203 was an extra 48-seat "Day-Nite" coach or 46-seat Great Dome coach, assigned to each consist as needed to meet Fair coach reservation requests.

•Line 314-324 was an extra "River" series Pullman sleeping car that was assigned to meet the increased accommodations requests by travelers to and from the Seattle World's Fair.

•Additional sleeping cars that carried tours to and from the Fair were usually located between Line 316-326 and Line 317-327 almost daily during July and August.

TABLE 3
1962-1967 WINTER & SUMMER SEASON LINEUPS

The following cars, except as noted below, were assigned to the *Great Dome EMPIRE BUILDER* year around

between 1962 and 1967: a St. Paul to Spokane storage mail car, a St. Paul-Seattle Railway Post Office-storage mail car, a Chicago-Seattle storage mail car, a Chicago-Seattle baggage-dormitory car, a Chicago-Seattle 60-seat Day-Nite coach, a Chicago-Seattle Ranch Car, a Chicago-Seattle dining car, a Chicago-Seattle Great Dome Lounge Car, and a Spokane to Seattle "Glacier" series sleeping car, except that this car was not added to train 31 Saturday nights in Spokane.

Winter '62-'63—In addition to the year-around cars, a Chicago-Seattle Great Dome coach, a St. Paul-Seattle Great Dome coach, a Chicago-Portland Great Dome coach, a Chicago-Portland "Pass" series sleeping car, a Chicago-Seattle "River" series sleeping car, and a Chicago-Havre "Pass" series sleeping car were assigned to each consist. The year around eastbound 60-seat Day-Nite coach was terminated in St. Paul.

The "River" series sleeping car, at first, was one of the original four sections-seven duplex roomettes-three double bedrooms-one compartment sleeping cars, and then was replaced by one of the remodeled seven duplex roomettes-six double bedrooms-one compartment sleeping cars that were redesigned by the car shops during this winter season.

The eleven through Chicago cars were combined with the northbound *AFTERNOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR* and the southbound *NORTH COAST LIMITED*, and they were transferred from CB&Q train 31/23 and to CB&Q train 32/26 at St. Paul. The two through Portland cars were transferred to and from SP&S trains 1 and 2 at Spokane.

Summer '63—In addition to the cars assigned the year around and those assigned during the winter season, the following cars were added to each of the five consists: a St. Paul-Seattle 48-seat Day-Nite coach, a St. Paul-Portland 48-seat Day-Nite coach, a Chicago-Portland "River" series sleeping car, and a Chicago-Seattle "Coulee" series sleeping-lounge-observation car.

The '62-'63 winter season St. Paul-Seattle Great Dome coach and the Chicago-Havre "Pass" series sleeping car were changed to Chicago-Seattle runs during this summer season. The four through Portland cars were transferred to SP&S trains 1 and 2 at Spokane.

Winter '63-'64—Same as Winter '62-'63.

Summer '64—Same as Summer '63.

Winter '64-'65—Same as Winter '62-'63, except that a St. Paul-Seattle "Pass" series sleeping car replaced the Chicago-Havre "Pass" series sleeping car. Ten through Chicago cars were transferred from CB&Q train 31/23 and to CB&Q train 32/26 at St. Paul.

Summer '65—Same as Summer '63.

Winter '65-'66—Same as Winter '64-'65.

Summer '66—Same as Summer '63, except that the Spokane to Seattle "Glacier" series sleeping car was withdrawn from service for the summer season.

Winter '66-'67—Same as Winter '64-'65, except that the Chicago-Seattle 60-seat Day-Nite coach and the Chicago-Seattle Ranch Car were changed to St. Paul-Seattle service. The Spokane to Seattle "Glacier" series sleeping car was in service, except that it was not included in train 31's consist Saturday nights. Eight through Chicago cars were combined with those assigned to NP's trains 25 and 26, and they were transferred from CB&Q train 31/25 and to CB&Q train 32/26 at St. Paul.

TABLE 4
NORTH DAKOTA BLIZZARD STATUS REPORTS
March 3-11, 1966

March 3rd—The Surrey Cutoff was blocked during the late afternoon.

Train 32-2 (departed Seattle March 2nd) detoured from Minot via Devils Lake to Grand Forks as a Passenger Extra East.

March 4th—Surrey Cutoff and Grand Forks-Devils Lake Line were blocked.

Train 31-3 (departed St. Paul March 3rd) was held at Fargo.

Train 31-4 was held at St. Paul Union Depot.

Train 32-2 completed its run to St. Paul, arriving seven hours late.

Train 32-3 was held at Williston.

March 5th—Surrey Cutoff and Grand Forks-Devils Lake Line were still blocked.

Train 31-3 was turned at Fargo and returned to St. Paul as train

32-3, "train-ordered" as a Passenger Extra East.

Train 31-4 that had been held at St. Paul over night departed at 12:18 PM, 14 hours late.

Train 32-3 was turned at Williston and returned to Seattle as train 31-3, "train-ordered" as a Passenger Extra West.

Train 32-4 was held at Glasgow.

March 6th—Grand Forks-Devils Lake Line was opened at 1:35 PM.

Trains 31-3's passengers were transferred to train 31-4 at Fargo, and trains 31-4 and 31-5 were detoured via Grand Forks and Devils Lake to Minot as Passenger Extras West.

Trains 32-3's passengers were transferred to train 32-4 at Williston, and trains 32-4 and 32-5 were detoured via Devils Lake and Grand Forks to Fargo as Passenger Extras East.

March 7th—Grand Forks-Devils Lake Line was blocked again.

Train 31-6 completed its westbound detour to Minot as a Passenger Extra West in the morning before the line was blocked.

Train 32-6 was annulled at Buelow, Montana.

March 8th—Grand Forks-Devils Lake Line was re opened at 7:00 PM.

Train 31-7, after being held at Grand Forks all day, completed its detour to Minot via Devils Lake that night as a Passenger Extra West.

Train 32-7 began its detour late that night to Fargo via Devils Lake and Grand Forks as a Passenger Extra East. It had arrived Minot several hours late because of a detour via Great Falls that morning.

March 9th—Surrey Cutoff was still blocked.

Train 31-8 detoured during the morning hours to Minot via Grand Forks and Devils Lake as a Passenger Extra West.

Train 32-7, as a Passenger Extra East, completed its detour to Fargo via Devils Lake and

Grand Forks during the early morning hours.

Train 32-8 began its detour during the late night hours to Fargo via Devils Lake and Grand Forks as a Passenger Extra East.

March 10th—Surrey Cutoff was opened late in the day.

Train 31-9 detoured during the morning hours to Minot via Grand Forks and Devils Lake as a Passenger Extra West.

Train 32-8, as a Passenger Extra East, completed its detour to Fargo via Devils Lake and Grand Forks during early morning hours.

Train 32-9 followed its scheduled route over the Surrey Cutoff with slow orders posted in all of the plowed-out cuts.

March 11th—Normal operations were restored, but with slow orders as required.

Train 31-10 passed over the Surrey Cutoff during the early AM.

Train 32-10 passed over the Surrey Cutoff during the late PM.

TABLE 5
1967-1971 SUMMER & WINTER SEASON LINEUPS

The following cars, except as noted below, were assigned to the *Great Dome EMPIRE BUILDER* year around between 1967 and 1970: a St. Paul to Spokane storage mail car, a Chicago-Seattle storage mail car, a St. Paul-Seattle baggage-dormitory car, a St. Paul-Seattle 60-seat Day-Nite coach, a Chicago-Seattle Great Dome coach, a Chicago-Portland Great Dome coach, a Chicago-Seattle Great Dome Lounge Car, a Chicago-Seattle "Lake" series dining car, a Chicago-Seattle modified "River" series sleeping car, and a Chicago-Portland "Pass" series sleeping car.

Summer '67—In addition to the year-around cars, a Chicago-Seattle Railway Post Office-storage mail car, a St. Paul-Seattle Great Dome coach, a St. Paul-Seattle 48-seat Day-Nite coach, a St. Paul-Portland 48-seat Day-Nite coach, a Chicago-Seattle Ranch Car, a Chicago-Seattle "Pass" series sleeping car, and a St. Paul-Seattle original-plan "River" series sleeping car were added to each of the five consists assigned to the *EMPIRE BUILDER*. The Chicago-Seattle Railway Post Office-storage mail car was discontinued, effective as of September 1, 1967. Ten through Chicago cars until 9/1/67 and nine cars thereafter were transferred from and to CB&Q trains 31/25 and 32/26 during the St. Paul Union Depot stop. The St. Paul-Portland 48-seat Day-Nite coach, Chicago-Portland Great Dome coach, and Chicago-Portland "Pass" series sleeping car were transferred to and from SP&S trains 1 and 2 at Spokane.

Winter '67-'68—In addition to the year-around cars, a St. Paul-Seattle Great Dome coach, a St. Paul-Seattle Ranch Car, and a St. Paul-Seattle "Pass" series sleeping car were added to each of the five consists. Seven through Chicago cars were combined with the northbound *AFTERNOON TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR* and *NORTH COAST LIMITED* and with the southbound *MORNING TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR* and *NORTH COAST LIMITED*, and they were transferred from and to CB&Q trains 23/31/25 and 22/32/26 at St. Paul. The Chicago-Portland Great Dome coach and "Pass" series sleeping car were transferred to and from SP&S trains 1 and 2 at Spokane. Prior to train 31's late night departure, a Spokane to Seattle "Glacier" series sleeping car was added to the consist, except on Saturday nights.

Summer '68—Same as Summer '67, except that the St. Paul-Seattle "River" series sleeping car was replaced by a St. Paul-Seattle "Pass" series sleeping car. Nine assigned through Chicago cars plus extra through Glacier National Park tour cars were transferred from and to the "Empire Builder" sections of CB&Q trains 23/31/25 and 22/32/26 at St. Paul.

Winter '68-'69—No cars were added to the year-around cars that were assigned to each of the five consists. The shortest lineup in the history of the streamlined *EMPIRE BUILDER* was the result with 10 cars assigned to train 31 and nine cars assigned to train 32 between St. Paul and Spokane. There was no Ranch Car assigned, and the Spokane to Seattle "Glacier" series sleeping car had been discontinued following the 1967-1968 winter season, also.

Summer '69—Same as Summer '68. Nine assigned through Chicago cars and extra through Glacier National Park tour cars were transferred from and to the "Empire Builder" sections of CB&Q trains 9/31/25 and 8/32/26 at St. Paul. Note that the *TWIN CITIES ZEPHYRS* had had their train numbers changed.

Winter '69-'70—Same as Winter '68-'69, except that the Chicago-Portland "Pass" series sleeping car was changed to a St. Paul-Portland run. Six through Chicago cars were transferred from and to CB&Q trains 9/31/25 and 8/32/26 at St. Paul until 3/2/70.

BURLINGTON NORTHERN

Winter '70—Through Chicago cars were transferred, effective as of 3/2/70, from and to Chicago-St. Paul BN trains 9/31/25 and 8/32/26 at St. Paul. Also effective as of 3/2/70, the *EMPIRE BUILDER* was operated as BN trains 31 and 32 between St. Paul and Seattle, and through Portland cars were transferred to and from BN trains 21 and 22 at Spokane.

Summer '70—Same as Summer '69, except that the *EMPIRE BUILDER* was operated as BN trains 31 and 32 between St. Paul and Seattle, through Chicago cars were transferred from and to Chicago-St. Paul BN 9/31/25 and 8/32/26 at St. Paul, and through Portland cars were transferred to and from BN trains 21 and 22 at Spokane.

Winter '70-'71—Same as Winter '69-'70, except that through cars were transferred from Chicago to St. Paul BN train 9/31/25 until 4/30/71 and to St. Paul to Chicago BN train 8/32/26 until 4/30/71 and to BN train 32/26, operated as a Passenger Extra East, on 5/1 and 5/2/71. The BN *EMPIRE BUILDER* was discontinued as of 5/1/71, the date of Amtrak's takeover. However, BN trains 31 and 32, operated as Passenger Extras, completed their last 4/30/71 transcontinental runs in Seattle and Chicago on 5/2/71. Connecting Spokane-Portland BN trains 21 and 22 made their last runs on 5/2/71 and 4/30/71.

MERGER CASCADE GREEN CARS

Beginning during 1968, the following 11 cars, repainted in the experimental Merger Cascade Green Color Schemes, appeared in the consists of the *Great Dome EMPIRE BUILDER*.

<u>CAR NUMBER</u>	<u>TYPE OF CAR</u>
1202	Baggage-Dormitory Car
1219, 1225 and 1229	48-Seat Day-Nite Coaches
1250-Lake of the Isles	Dining Car

1254-Lake Minnetonka	Dining Car
1260-Skykomish River	7-6-1 Sleeping Car
1320-Great Dome	Coach
1371-Pitamakin Pass	6-5-2 Sleeping Car
1391-Ocean View	Great Dome Lounge Car
1395-River View	Great Dome Lounge Car

Notes:

•Dining car 1254 was the unique car in this group, since it had both versions of the Merger Cascade Green Colors Scheme, one on each side of the car. see photographs on the following page.

•Cars 1202, 1219, 1250, 1371 and 1395 were owned by the Burlington Route.

A MODELER'S GREAT DOME EMPIRE BUILDER

For those wishing to include an accurate *EMPIRE BUILDER* on their layout, but are concerned about its length in relation to the overall size of their layout, the following lineup is suggested. This lineup was assigned to each of the five consists of Great Northern's *Great Dome EMPIRE BUILDER* during the 1968-1969 and 1969-1970 winter seasons.

Ten cars were assigned to westbound train 31, and nine cars to eastbound train 32 between St. Paul and Spokane. It is also appropriate to reduce the model to seven cars and still be authentic, since this was the winter season lineup that was assigned to trains 31 and 32 between Spokane and Seattle.

SDP45, SDP40, and/or Passenger F Locomotives
Storage Mail Car: St. Paul to Spokane
Storage Mail Car: Chicago-Seattle
Baggage-Dormitory Car: St. Paul-Seattle
Day-Nite Coach: St. Paul-Seattle
Great Dome Coach: Chicago-Seattle
Great Dome Coach: Chicago-Portland via Spokane
Great Dome Lounge Car: Chicago-Seattle
"Lake" series Dining Car: Chicago-Seattle
"River" series Sleeping Car: Chicago-Seattle
"Pass" series Sleeping Car: Chicago-Portland via Spokane

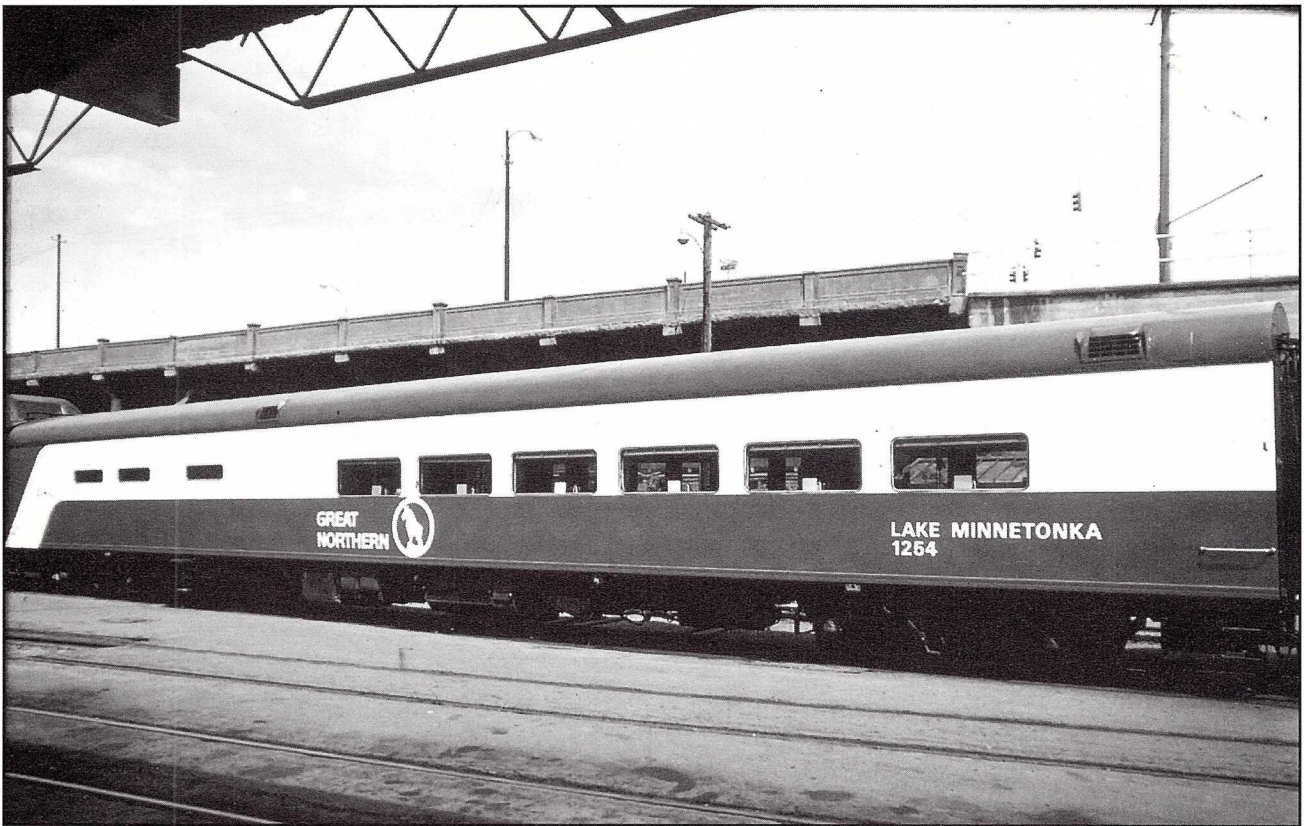
Notes:

•This lineup represented the shortest consist assigned to the *EMPIRE BUILDER* since the early 1930s during the depths of the financially disastrous Depression Era.

•Various combinations of EMD SDP45, SDP40 and Passenger F typed locomotives were assigned to the GN *EMPIRE BUILDER* between St. Paul and Havre and between Havre and Seattle.

•The Chicago-Portland "Pass" series sleeping car was changed to a St. Paul-Portland run during the 1969-1970 winter season.

•It would also be historically correct to model a *Great Dome EMPIRE BUILDER* using a combination of locomotives and cars displaying E/B Pullman Green and Omaha Orange, Big Sky Blue, and the Merger Cascade Green color schemes.



An oddity as Lake series No. 1254 "Lake Minnetonka" displays differing designs of experimental Merger Cascade Green livery on each side. Apart from the handling of the white band at the end of the car, the car name and number is also shown in different positions at the end of each car side.

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