

# TRAINS OF WISCONSIN

by  
Malcolm Rosholt

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## FOREWORD

This is primarily a picture book on railroading in Wisconsin. My aim is to give only short resumes on the history of the five main railroad systems and use these as leads to pictures related to each of the five systems, namely, the Milwaukee Road, the Chicago & North Western, the Green Bay & Western, the Soo Line, and the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha.

I have also devoted a few pages of text and pictures to several "predecessor" lines, that is, railroads which at one time had considerable trackage, but which were either leased to, or conveyed to other lines, or incorporations, namely, the Milwaukee & Northern, the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western, the West Wisconsin, the Duluth, South Shore and Atlantic, the Wisconsin Central, and the Minneapolis, Sault Ste. Marie & Atlantic.

From sources I have already tapped for picture materials, it seems clear that there are many more pictures available in city libraries, historical societies, railroad archives and private collections.

Aside from the standard black and white pictures to be found, there are thousands of postcards from the early 1900s related to depots and trains. I am pleased to include some of these from the collections of Gerald Johnson, Wisconsin Rapids; David Jankoski, Stanley; and C. Luke Leitermann, Pickerel Lake.

In addition, it was my privilege to be introduced into a select circle of Wisconsin railroad buffs who were most generous with their time and expertise in the identification of locomotives and who answered numerous technical questions. I also acquired a number of valuable pictures from this group and I want to express my appreciation to all of them, namely, Larry Easton, Neenah; Ed. Selinsky, Green Bay; Jim Kaysen, Cedarburg; Dr. R.C. Brown, Eau Claire; Laird Ross, Cochrane; R. Milton Clark, Whitefish Bay; and Wes Foshay, Oshkosh.

The 1923 map of Wisconsin railroads, loaned by Larry Easton, was chosen for the book because it probably represents the peak year of railroading in Wisconsin, since no new major lines, apart from logging and narrow gauges, were added after that year.

For some time, in my research, I had been on the lookout for an original work of art by a Wisconsin

artist to enhance the jacket and centerfold of the book. One day in April, my wife and I were looking for the cafeteria at St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield. We were following the corridors and along the route we passed a gallery of paintings, sketches and watercolors, all done by Wisconsin artists, and lo! there was my jacket cover: a freight train hurrying through the night, headlight glaring, smoke pouring out of the stack, and steam escaping from the cylinder heads. The picture was called "Burlington Freight" and the artist's name underneath read: Mike Zimmerman. Now, whether this is Burlington, Wisconsin or Burlington, Iowa, is immaterial. The picture is universal, and it struck a chord of memory in me from long ago of a train approaching a railroad crossing, whistling sharply, raising the hackles on the back of my neck.

The original of "Burlington Freight" was purchased by the Women's Auxiliary of St. Joseph's Hospital for permanent exhibit. The artist, who lives in Menasha, generously agreed to allow the use of the watercolor in *Trains of Wisconsin*.

I am also indebted to Bruce G. Smith (Eveleth, Minnesota), former engine house man at Altoona, for the loan of two of his fine line drawings of early Wisconsin locomotives.

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# Trains of Wisconsin - Link Page

[Next](#)

[Contents](#)

3

[Return to Electronic Index Page](#)