

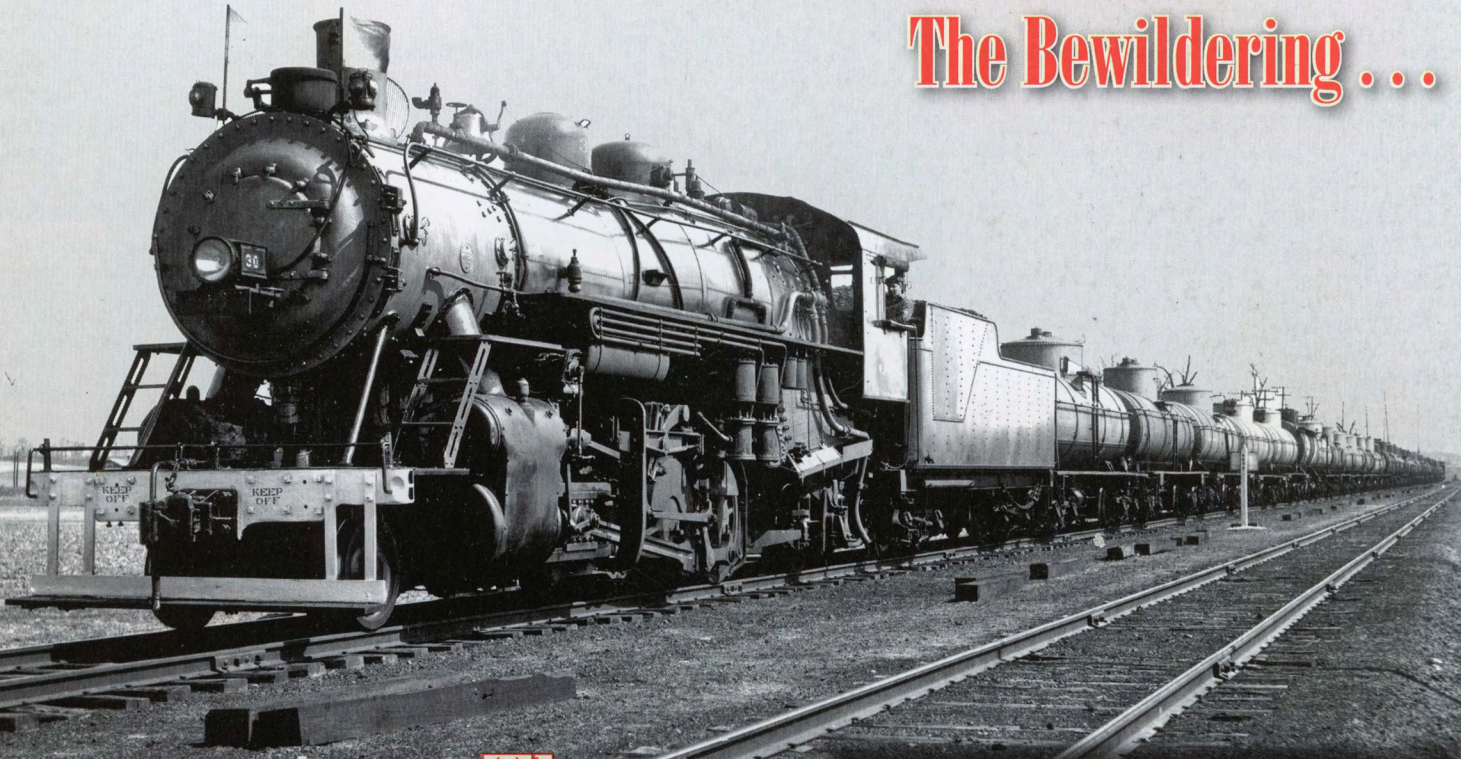
The **RAILROAD ILLINOIS TERMINAL COMPANY**

FLYER

The Magazine of Illinois Terminal Railroad History



The Mysterious ...
The Evocative ...
The Bewildering ...



...The
STEAM
(and later, DIESEL)
Division





Illinois Traction Society

THE FLYER is published biannually by the Illinois Traction Society, a not-for-profit corporation chartered in the State of Illinois. Membership is open to anyone who has an interest in the Illinois Terminal Railroad and its predecessor lines, including the Illinois Traction System, the Chicago, Ottawa & Peoria (Illinois Valley Lines); the St. Louis & Alton; the St. Louis, Troy & Eastern; the Alton & Eastern; and the East St. Louis & Suburban. Regular dues are \$25 for the calendar year. Members receive two issues of THE FLYER and two issues of The Phone Booth, the society newsletter.

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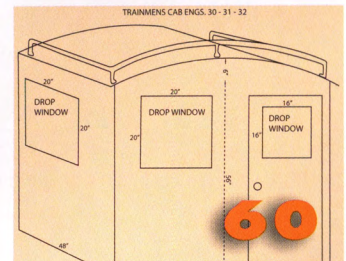
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Illinois Test Car**

ON THE COVERS



MAIN PHOTO: Illinois Terminal 2-8-2 No. 30 is in charge of moving an oil train out of Roxana in this well-remembered publicity scene from circa 1940. ITC, DALE JENKINS COLLECTION

INSET: The fate of IT's Steam Division is partially revealed in this scene at Thermal, just outside Le Claire, Ill., in 1977 as an SW1200 passes an abandoned water plug. FRED BLUE



BACK COVER: The timetable for the Steam Division's T&E Line, Alton to McKinley Junction Yard, issued on July 3, 1933. This was one busy piece of railroad in its day. Today, it is mostly a recreation path. DALE JENKINS COLLECTION



Meet Mr. McKinley

By DALE JENKINS

Illinois Traction System founder, utility entrepreneur, statesman, philanthropist... best describes William Brown McKinley. The founder and organizer of the traction empire ITS and predecessor to the Illinois Terminal. He was born on Sept. 5, 1856 near Petersburg, Illinois, in Menard County.

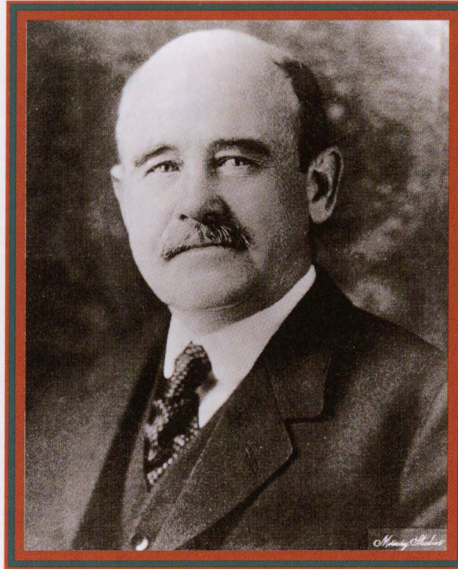
His father, George McKinley, was a Presbyterian minister, his grandfather, Robert Finlay, was president of University of Georgia in 1817 and his great grandfather, James Caldwell, was one of the founders of Princeton University.

In 1858 the family moved to Champaign to take over pasturage of the First Presbyterian church and he attended Champaign public schools. At the age of 14 he entered the Illinois Industrial University (the name was later changed to University of Illinois) and studied geometry, Cicero (a Roman statesman and orator), Virgil (a Roman poet), and bookkeeping (exceeding in the latter two subjects).

At the age of 16 and in his second year, lacking finances, he dropped out and went to Springfield to work as a clerk in a drug store for two years. He then returned to Champaign to work in similar position, before going to work for his Uncle J. B. McKinley who had a farm mortgage business. Mr. McKinley would work for him and in a few years became a partner.

In 1881, he would marry Kate Frisbee of Chicago, but for unknown reasons they would live apart for most of their marriage, with her living in Southern Pines, North Carolina. He would visit her several times a year and consulted with her on several matters. It was reported that she was described "as coldly intellectual as Secretary of State Elihu Root". They never had children although he did love children.

His association in the farm mortgage business introduced him to several eastern capitalists and he was able to develop a firm financial relationship with these investors who had confidence in his abilities. At the age of 28, he began his interest in public utilities and on Dec. 25, 1884, he built the Champaign Water Works: a benefit to the city but it nearly financially wrecked him.



William B. McKinley (1856–1926), father of the Illinois Traction System and successor Illinois Terminal Railroad.
DALE JENKINS COLLECTION

He went on to establish the Champaign & Urbana Light Heat & Power Co. and electrified the horse drawn streetcar line between Champaign and Urbana. This venture was very successful from its beginning. McKinley sold it in 1892 in order to pursue the business of restructuring public utilities.

In 1893 he sold his streetcar properties in Defiance and Springfield, Ohio, which he had rehabilitated and was able to sell at a handsome profit. This was on the heels of the Financial Panic of 1893 which put a halt to his plans for further utility developments for a short time.

In 1896, he started one of the first electric interurban railway developments in Illinois with an 11 mile line out of Joliet with plans to build to Chicago, but his plans changed.

He disposed of the property and bought, upgraded and modernized the street railway lines in Quincy and Galesburg with a branch line to Knoxville (Galesburg Street Railway). He would also rehabilitate the streetcar lines and utilities in Bay City, MI, Joliet, LaSalle, Ill. and Peru, Ind.

In 1901, he purchased the Danville Street Railway from which the Illinois Traction System would be developed. By 1910, at the age of 54, his company, The Illinois Traction Incorporated,

owned or controlled more than 40 railway, light, and power companies throughout Illinois, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska Wisconsin and had lines extending into Canada.

All total, he was operating about 800 miles of street railway and interurban lines, including the 550 mile Illinois Traction System. Mr. McKinley was a thirty-second degree Mason, which would establish the ITS and successor company Illinois Terminal as a "Masonic" railroad until the N&W take over in 1981.

Mr. McKinley was now a very successful businessman with a well organized and functioning syndicate of utilities and of course the ITS. His life would now take a gigantic turn... towards politics. To quote Mr. McKinley, "I really blundered into politics as I was getting unnecessary in my business and things went on without me, so when it was suggested that I run for Congress, I accepted just for something to do and I have never regretted it."

He would become a true statesman of his time. On March 4, 1905, he would be elected to the U. S. 19th District, House of Representatives and in August of 1908, was selected as chairman of the National Republican Congressional campaign committee.

His election was during the Teddy Roosevelt administration and he would also serve under President William Howard Taft, whose re-election campaign he would manage. However, in 1912 he would run for the U. S. Senate and lose as Democrat Woodrow Wilson would defeat Roosevelt (Bull Moose Party) and Taft (Republican party), which would also lead to defeat in Mr. McKinley's home district.

Mr. McKinley would return to congress on March 4, 1915 until March 3, 1921, once again serving in the House of Representatives. As a representative of Illinois, during World War I, he would make a special trip to the battlefields near the front lines for 14 days and made a detailed investigation of the war conditions.

He also carried with him messages from families of some 700 Illinois soldiers and made a special investigation of the hospital facilities and of the mail service. His political ambitions were further explored in March of 1919, when alumni of the University of Illinois organized to support him for Illinois governor, which did not

materialize. However, in 1920 he ran for the U. S. Senate seat of Illinois and was elected to that position on March 4, 1921.

With his additional political responsibilities, he retired in 1922 from active participation in the operation of the Illinois Traction System. His utilities interests were merged with the Studebaker interests (Southern Illinois Light and Power Company) to create a consolidation of properties in Illinois, Ohio, Kansas Iowa, Missouri and other central states and the ITS to create the Illinois Power & Light Company. He would become the chairman of the board and Mr. Studebaker would be president.

Mr. McKinley would be very active in the Senate, serving as chairman of the committee in manufacturing, a member of the senate appropriations committee, and secretary of the senatorial committee. After World War I he would support the U. S. membership in the world court as his interest was in world peace, however a world court was not popular with his constituents.

For his interest in world peace he was awarded the French Legion of Honor. However, the re-election for his second term would become embroiled in a scandal that would become a contributing factor to his declining health and untimely death.

He had finished his first six-year term in 1926 and was preparing to campaign for a second term in the republican primary. However, from this primary sprang an opposing candidate—Colonel Frank L. Smith, chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission.

The power and money supporting Mr. Smith's candidacy was utilities magnate Samuel Insull, who disliked Senator McKinley and was a direct foe. In part, he claimed he was snubbed 10 years earlier at a social affair, but the underlying reason was that Mr. McKinley bucked Insull's plans to have 100 percent control of all Midwest utilities and in particular Central Illinois where Mr. McKinley had holdings in power plants, electric, gas, and interurbans.

Mr. Insull spent \$173,735 in support of Republican nominee Smith, resulting in Mr. McKinley spending about \$350,000 (\$4,662,000.00 in 2013 dollars) of his own money on the re-election campaign.

Due to this huge expenditure in the Illinois primary Senatorial campaign, a Senate investigation committee led by Senator James A Reed, came to Chicago to conduct an investigation. This was brought about because of a recent Pennsylvania primary which exposed a scandal that had aroused national attention.

The Chicago hearing developed that Senator McKinley had his own money but his opponent had received contributions of \$300,000 from executives of public utilities of which his commerce commission was to oversee and regulate. It would also later come out that Colonel Smith would use his position as chairman to connive with Insull to obtain a short line coal railroad.



There were actually two major bridges that bore McKinley's name, the lesser-known being the McKinley Bridge that spanned the Illinois River at Peoria/East Peoria. The circa 1912 postcard view of the ITS Illinois River bridge in the open-draw position looks westward from the East Peoria side of the river with the Toledo, Peoria & Western bridge just beyond the ITS span. ROBERT HEINLEIN COLLECTION

With the 1926 election, Colonel Frank L. Smith of Dwight, Ill., defeated Mr. McKinley by 4,000 votes. However Colonel Smith was ultimately denied the seat by the Senate on the grounds of fraud and corruption in his campaign.

Mr. McKinley had been ill since his vigorous campaign for re-nomination as senator and the defeat in May of 1926 only aggravated his medical condition further. This combined with the stress of the investigation accelerated his declining medical condition of prostrate cancer and sciatic rheumatism.

On Dec. 7, 1926, 4:10PM, at the age of 70, Mr. McKinley passed away at the Homelawn Sanitarium, Martinsville, Ind. His body was returned to his home of Champaign the following day via the Peoria & Eastern Railroad. The last rites were held at 2PM on Dec. 10, 1926 at the First Presbyterian Church of which his father

was pastor 69 years before. He was buried in Mt. Hope cemetery in the family plot with the French Legion of Honor medal on his chest.

Mr. McKinley was a very generous philanthropist who touched many people's lives, both directly and, through anonymous gifts, indirectly. During 1902 to 1905 he was a trustee of University of Illinois and in turn would give over \$800,000 to the U of I campus and university organizations.

On Oct. 3, 1913, he established a program at the U of I offering loans to worthy students who did not have financial aid to continue their work in school and on May 15, 1900, he turned his loans over to the U of I as a permanent fund. He also established an endowment fund \$100,000 for Chair of Economics of Public Utilities.

In October of 1924, he donated \$340,000 to five Illinois colleges and the Presbyterian Student Center at the U of I and it was his \$200,000 that created the Presbyterian Student Center Foundation for Presbyterian Studies.

In 1925 his gifts to education had passed the million dollar mark—keep in mind that one million dollars in 1925 is \$13,300,000.00 in 2013 dollars. He was a liberal donor to Protestant, Catholic and black churches and it was later learned that in ten years he would contribute \$10,000,000 towards everyday ordinary people.

An example of this was Roy Cline. In 1908, he was employed as a stenographer to the trainmaster of the Illinois Central in Champaign. He was ambitious, but had no money and had just started a family. He contacted Congressman McKinley and told him of his troubles and goals in life. Mr. McKinley arranged for employment with the U. S. Capitol police so he could enter Georgetown University to study law, under a grant furnished by Mr. McKinley.

In time, Roy would become the States Attorney for Champaign County, and as he stated "Mr. McKinley made it possible for me in my life. I was an entire stranger to him, without influence of any kind." The last sentence of his statement was a true reflection on Mr. McKinley's generosity.

On his death, his biggest bequest was a \$300,000 trust fund with proceeds of which would make monthly payments to relatives and



The surviving McKinley Bridge, of course, is that which spans the Mississippi between St. Louis, Mo., and Venice, Ill. This view looks northeast from the St. Louis side shortly after the bridge's 1910 opening. It remains standing today, heavily rehabilitated but carrying only vehicular and pedestrian traffic. ROBERT HEINLEIN COLLECTION

friends to give annual Christmas presents of \$50 (\$666.00 in 2013 dollars), and to the wife of every minister in Champaign-Urbana, and "deserving clerks" both men and women in central Illinois on a summer vacation. The following is a compilation of buildings in existence because of his philanthropy;

McKinley Memorial Hospital: It was a scarlet fever epidemic in 1915 that attracted the attention of Mr. McKinley that led him in 1917 to contribute to a medical facility for students, which was a small one story building on the University of Illinois campus. At the time the only hospital facility available was a small part of Burnham Hospital.

In 1925 he donated \$205,000 towards construction for a student hospital health center on Lincoln Street. His philosophy was "The health of a student and his bodily development is quite as important as his intellect process."

McKinley Memorial Presbyterian Church: A \$50,000 donation was made in 1910 to build a Presbyterian church at 5th and John Streets in the memory of his father George McKinley, the former pastor of the First Presbyterian church. The organ was a gift to the church.



Another monument to William B. McKinley—his own—stands over his grave at Mount Hope Cemetery in Urbana, Ill. MIKE SCHAFER

McKinley Memorial YMCA: A donation of \$100,000 was made to build a YMCA building. Another \$100,000 in 5 percent bonds was to be held and the principal reinvested from time to time for the upkeep and operation of the building.

Hanna McKinley Hall: In 1913, Mr. McKinley donated \$50,000 to build the University of Illinois YWCA at Wright & John Streets in memory of his mother. It was later purchased by the U of I and renamed Coble hall.

Uofi Union Building: The contribution of \$130,000 was given to build the first YMCA at John & Wright Streets and after construction of the McKinley Memorial YMCA, the U of I converted it into the Illinois Union Building

McKinley Working Girls Home: Located at 561 South Ashland, Chicago, the Home was a day nursery for working mothers.

Sarah Haskett Stevenson Lodging House for Women: Located at 2412 Prairie Avenue, Chicago, was a day nursery that could accommodate 200 babies.

Business Woman's Club: Paid off their mortgage for their building in Champaign.

Burnham Hospital, Champaign: In its infancy, he helped to avoid financial stress by each year hosting "Trolley Day." All city street car receipts of the day were donated to the hospital and to help promote the event, the cars were manned by young women conductors.

Chanute Field, Rantoul, Ill.: Mr. McKinley was responsible for establishing this historical airfield which exists today.

The High School Athletic Fields: A donation of \$5,000 (\$66,600 in 2013 dollars) was given to each Champaign and Urbana high school to build their athletic fields "as a fit place to practice and play their games."

During Mr. McKinley's life time he was remembered as just a plain-spoken business man who was described as "kindly, a generous human, a man with high standards both moral and business, but above all was public spirited". He was a self-made man and possessed the ability "to make money which was exceeded only by his genius for giving it away".

As a politician he was considered as one "who talks the least and accomplishes the most." He was also an enthusiastic traveler, covering 500,000 miles in 25 years including 30 trips across the Atlantic, and three trips around the world. He had visited every country in the world except Russia and Turkey. But the crowning achievement, which exists today, spans the Mississippi River at St. Louis, The McKinley Bridge: "Serving the Road of Good Service."



CHAMPAIGN



ABOVE: With all passengers aboard, the conductor lifts the step box to permit car 285 to continue its journey to its final destination of Danville, 31.4 miles to the east. The shared trackage in this scene is with host railroad Wabash, which also provides a joint facility. In the background is the Peoria & Eastern passenger depot, which still stands to this day. *EUGENE VAN DUSEN, BILL ELEY COLLECTION*

RIGHT: Photos of ITS or IT trains at the original Champaign ITS station on University Street are very rare, but here's a 1936 scene with westbound IT train 77 pausing in front of the 1914-built station/office building at about 3:30PM, about the same time that Illinois Central's southbound *Panama Limited* hit town—and there it is, sitting in the IC station in the background. (The IC's main depot building was out of the photo at left). At this date, the old ITS building was now serving as the main office of Illinois Power & Light, the railroad offices having been moved elsewhere. A person standing at this location today might be surprised at a few things. The handsome ITS building looks almost unchanged, having been heavily restored. On the overpass in the background, you might see one of Amtrak's six trains serving Champaign, but with a new depot building south of University and adjacent to the ITS building, which has been integrated into Champaign's new transportation campus that serves trains, local transit, and the intercity buses that have replaced IT 270 and kin. *WILLIAM JANSSEN, GEORGE ISAACS ARCHIVE, COLLECTION OF ILLINOIS TRACTION SOCIETY*



and URBANA

By DALE JENKINS

On July 31, 1902, the Danville, Urbana & Champaign Railway was incorporated to create an interurban to link the streetcar properties between these namesake towns. Stations were located in Urbana at 120 East Main Street and in Champaign at the corner of Walnut and Main streets. On Sept. 7, 1903, the line was opened, covering the 33.8 miles in 2 hours and 45 minutes, one

way. To connect Champaign with Decatur, the St. Louis, Decatur & Champaign Railway, incorporated on April 25, 1906, constructed 50.6 miles of track to connect with the streetcar lines of Decatur. The line opened for service on June 10, 1907, and on New Years Day 1908, through service between Springfield, Decatur, Champaign, and Danville began with the inaugural run of the *Capitol City Limited*.

In a short time, the traffic demands outgrew the Champaign facilities capacity in addition to the need for space for the expanding staff of the developing interurban system. On Jan. 14, 1914, a new three-story combination passenger station-office building was opened at 110 University Street, situated at the corner of University and Market streets just a block away from the Illinois Central station. Constructed





ABOVE: It's an era when America's downtowns were vibrant centers of commerce that had yet to be dissipated by the automobile—an era when there was convenient transit to get downtown. An era when traffic signals were almost architectural works of art. We're in Champaign in 1936 as one of IT's tangerine cars pauses to take on a passenger. The photographer is facing southward on Neil Street at Main, onto which the car is turning east to head for the Champaign station. MIKE SCHAFFER COLLECTION

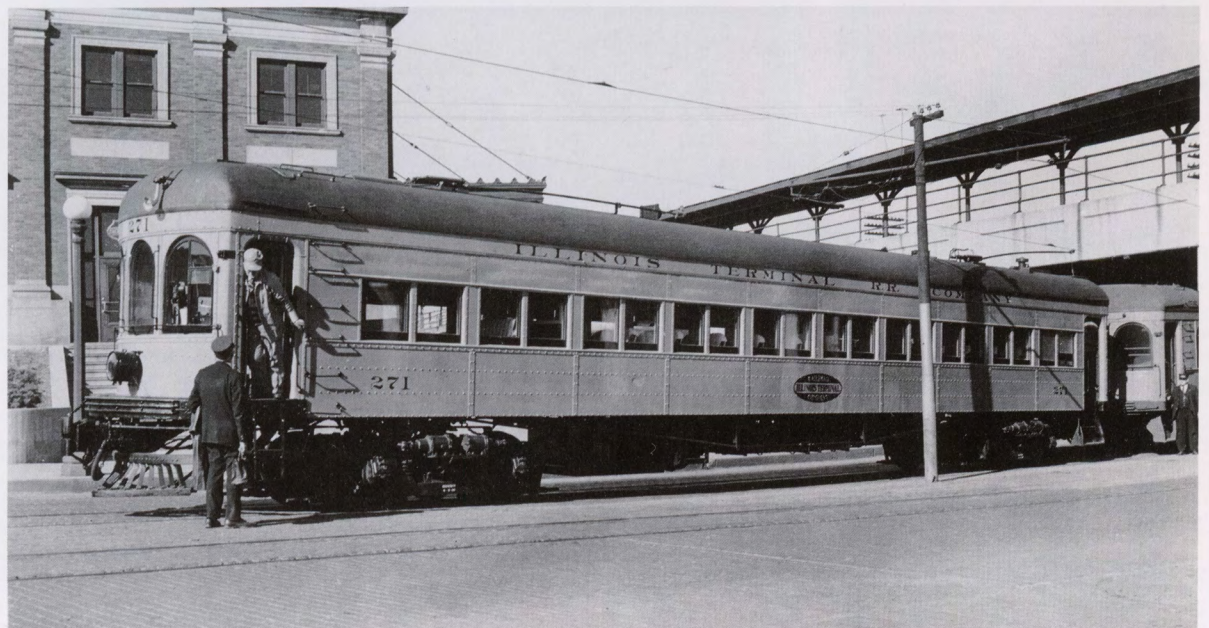
of Blackstone brick and white terra cotta, the first floor housed the waiting room and ticket office, in addition a display space of kitchen or other appliances that used the subsidiary utility services. To the rear of the first floor was the office for the local utility company. The second floor provided office space for Mr. McKinley and officers of the Illinois Traction, in addition to the support staff. Various offices and train dispatchers occupied the third floor.

In addition to the passenger traffic, the freight traffic was also being developed, but under restricted conditions through Champaign. A city ordinance permitted the movement of only four freight cars at a time over the city

streets. Due to equipment encountering a restricting radius of 50 feet, it required the use of a shackle bar, resulting in a time-consuming method of handling cars through the city. On arrival at the outskirts of the city, the "knuckle" of the coupler was removed (by lifting out the knuckle pin and removing the knuckle) and a "shackle bar" (long flat bar with a hole drilled in each end) was used in place of the knuckle between two cars. Four freight cars would then be pulled through town and the process to re-install the knuckle was done on arrival at the opposite side of town. Not only did it require two or three movements to reassemble the train, but also increased the possibility (and

probability) of derailment in the city streets. To further compound the problem, the city council wanted the railroad off of the streets altogether.

With the future for freight development hanging in the balance, plans were developed to create a belt line around the twin cities. In the fall of 1926, after two years of negotiations with the Illinois Central and Wabash railroads, an agreement was made for the electrification of 5.6 miles of track in Champaign and Urbana, at a cost of \$200,000. In the spring of 1927, all freight trains were routed over the new belt line while passenger trains continued to use the street trackage—for the meantime. On the west side of Champaign, a connection was built



TOP: Eastbound Illinois Terminal car 276 is turning south off of IC belt-line trackage and onto Neil Street in Champaign. Inasmuch as IT stopped using all street trackage in Champaign and Urbana in 1937, and that these cars are painted in the blue scheme of the 1940s, this appears to be a fan trip making the run over streetcar trackage still in service circa 1950. *TOM DESNOYER, GEORGE ISAACS ARCHIVE, COLLECTION OF ILLINOIS TRACTION SOCIETY*

ABOVE: Car 271 and mate are at the downtown Champaign IT station (that's the IC's Champaign station behind the car) on University Street in 1937, just before the rerouting. *WILLIAM JANSSEN, GEORGE ISAACS ARCHIVE, COLLECTION OF ILLINOIS TRACTION SOCIETY*

LEFT: Sporting white flats denoting Extra train status, two Uoff football specials parade southward on Neil Street, date unknown. *GEORGE ISAACS, GEORGE ISAACS ARCHIVE, COLLECTION OF ILLINOIS TRACTION SOCIETY*



ABOVE: Westbound car 271 is "clanging the diamonds" at Champaign Tower, crossing Illinois Central's Chicago-Memphis-New Orleans "Main line of America." The car is operating over an electrified segment of the Wabash trackage. On the other side of the tower parallel to the Wabash/IT is the Peoria & Eastern's Indianapolis-Peoria main line.



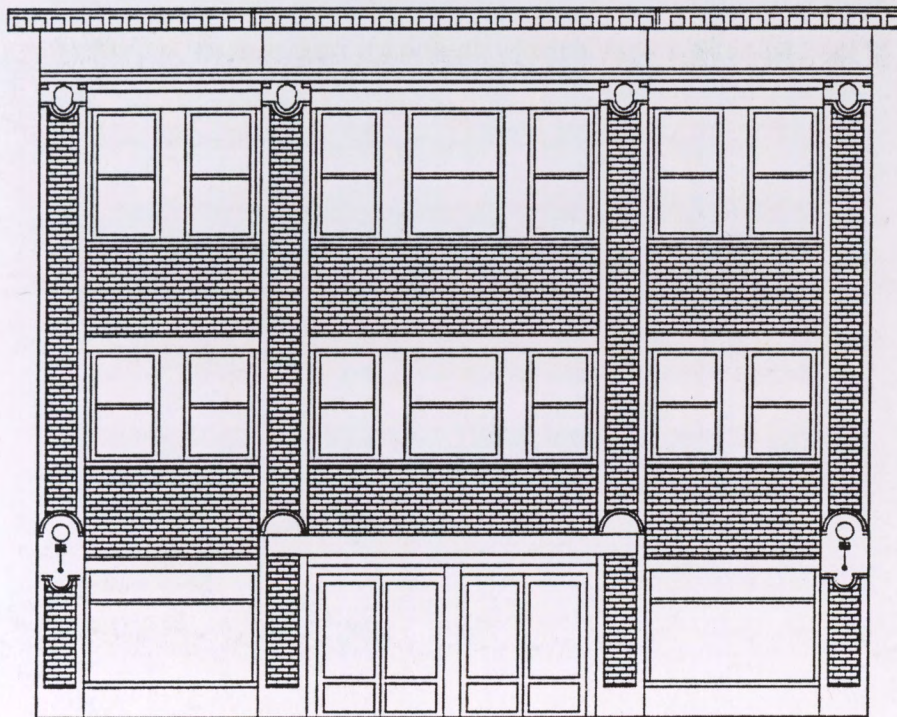
ABOVE: At Champaign, the taxi meets an arriving train in search of a potential fare without any success. The westbound passenger motor 271 has crossed from Wabash to IC trackage to continue to Staley's (3.3 miles) and return to home rails to continue to Decatur and Springfield. The depot owned by the Wabash.

LEFT: Illinois Terminal 1203 trundles east along electrified Wabash track and past the P&E depot in Urbana during the twilight days of IT passenger service to the central Illinois twin cities of Champaign-Urbana. In just a few hundred feet it will make its stop at the Urbana Wabash depot. GEORGE ISAACS ARCHIVE, COLLECTION OF ILLINOIS TRACTION SOCIETY



LEFT: On Jan. 14, 1914, the new three-story combination depot/office building was ceremoniously opened to the public. Constructed of Blackstone brick and white terra cotta, the building was a crown jewel of the Illinois Traction System. Passenger services were located on the first floor and, being part of a public utility, displays promoting household appliances that used both gas and electricity were located to the rear. The second floor housed the offices of the company officers, with the second floor front-right corner office reserved for President William McKinley. The third floor was the support offices for office staff and dispatchers. The building served as the railroad's general offices until the reorganization into the Illinois Power & Light Company in 1924. The building continued to serve as a ticket office until the opening of the belt line, and afterward, offices for the power company. The building stands today, handsomely renovated to nearly its original appearance, as the Illinois Traction Building. It serves today as an anchor in... the Illinois Terminal transportation complex!

BELOW LEFT: Drawings of the Champaign ITS office and station by the ITS Bridge & Building Department originally appeared in the April 1988 issue of *THE FLYER*.

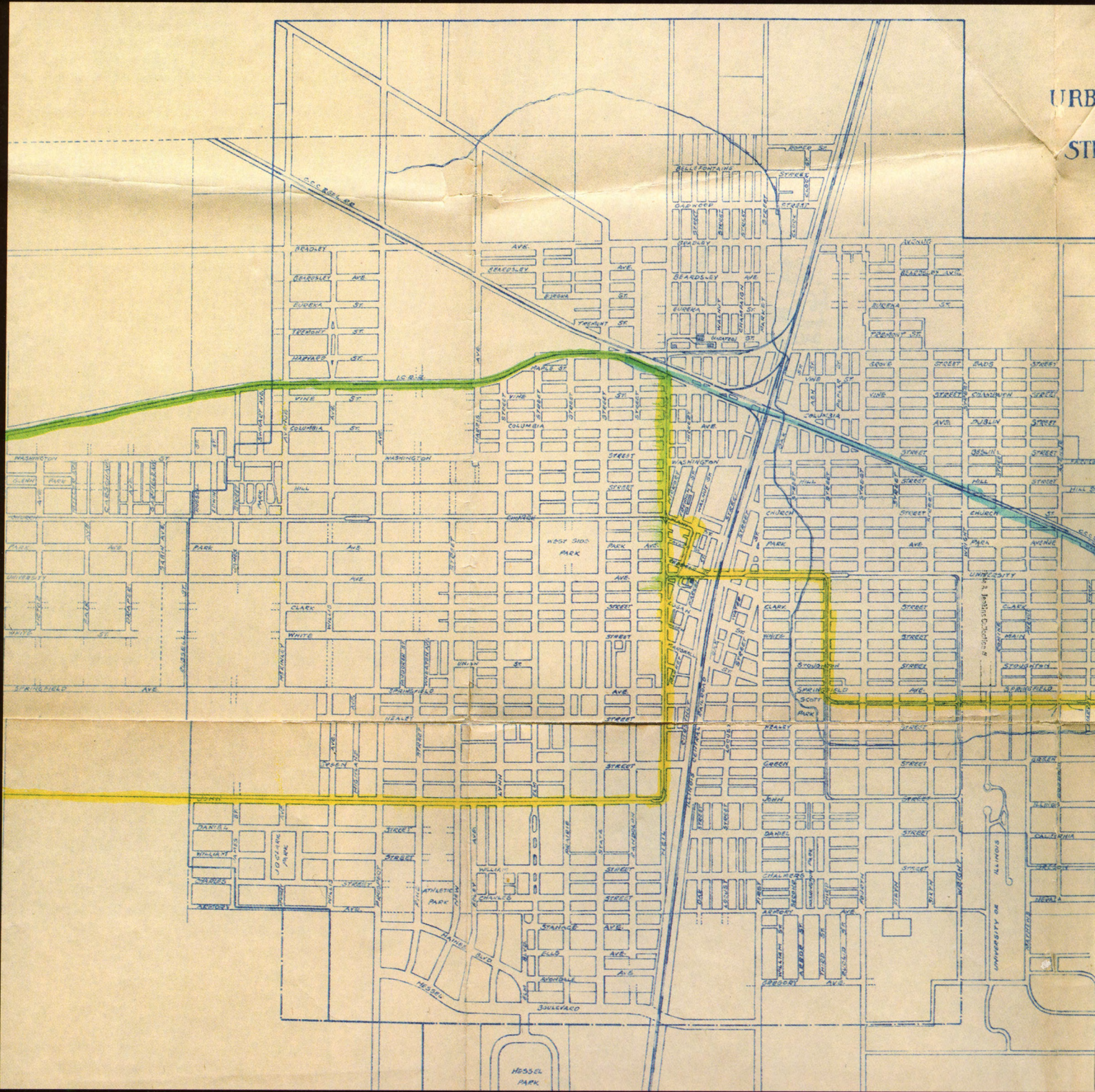


between the IT and the IC at Staleys, with 3.1 miles of trackage rights to State Street. At this point, the IT crossed over to the Wabash Main to continue on 2.5 miles of trackage rights around Urbana to where the IT returned to home rails via a former interchange connection track at Main Street. On July 9, 1930, to improve running time, all passenger trains were routed over the IT's IC Champaign belt line to a connection with the Neil Street city streetcar trackage. At this point, trains traveled south six blocks to University Street where connection was made with the former city street route, turning east and traveling two blocks to the passenger station. Trains continued east into Urbana via street trackage. On Sept. 26, 1937, to improve running times, eliminate street congestion, and appease city fathers that wanted the tracks out of the street, all street trackage was abandoned in favor of the belt line. The IT then used the existing Wabash depots of Champaign and Urbana as joint stations while the Champaign office remained as headquarters of the executive department until the creation of Illinois Power & Light Co. in 1923, when the executive offices were moved to Chicago. The street trackage remained in service in Urbana to serve the power house (across from the court house) and to back football specials down to Wright and Springfield streets within the campus of the University of Illinois.

To coincided with the opening of the Champaign belt line, a new freight house was placed in service, one block south on Neil Street. The buff brick building was roofed with Vermont Slate and measured 30 x 80 feet and was serviced by two team and two house tracks, with a total capacity of 15 cars. Located only five blocks north of the business district, unrestricted service continued. The former freight



Side Elevation, Drawing Courtesy of Doug Spinn



This plat of the downtown areas of Champaign and Urbana show train routings over the years. Routes highlighted in yellow are those of original ITS trains through the streets between Staley's and East Urbana; however, the north-south line on Neil Street highlighted in yellow is the latter-day routing when the IC's Champaign-Decatur branch was being used by IT trains west of Neil Street. The green line denotes the route on the IC used to vacate some of the Champaign city street running. The route highlighted in blue indicates IT's use of the Wabash east of Neil Street to East Urbana. The combination IC-WAB route was the final route used by IT trains before abandonment. This route took them almost completely off the streets of Champaign-Urbana. The red line is the Kankakee & Urbana Traction line.

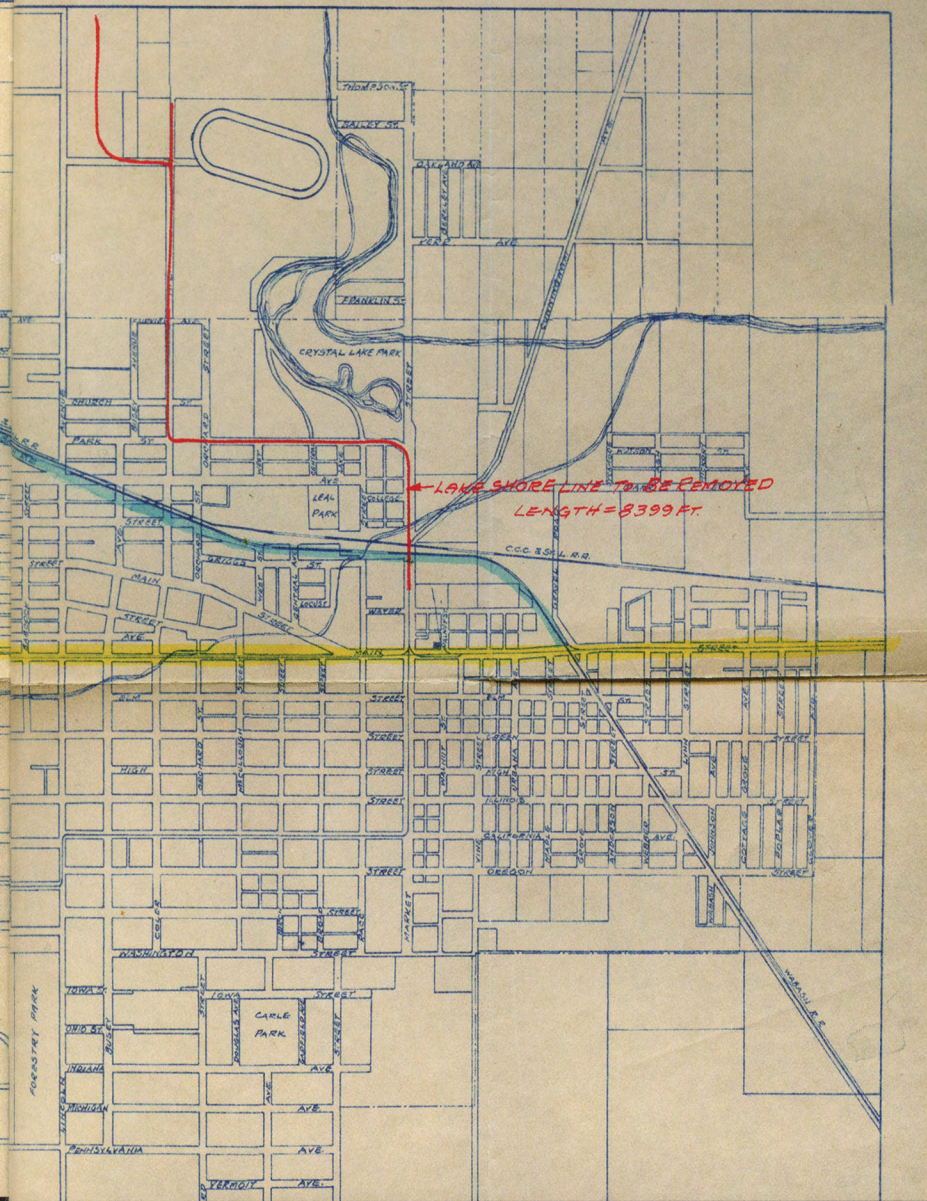
house, located in the rear of the downtown passenger station, with its severely stifled space to expand and hampered by freight car movement restrictions was closed.

In an effort to develop additional passenger traffic to Champaign-Urbana, the railroad introduced *Illini* sleeping-car service effective Nov. 9, 1924, between Champaign and St. Louis via

MAP
OF
DANVILLE AND CHAMPAIGN
SHOWING
RAILWAYS

SCALE 1" = 400 FT.

645-4-10-111111 Collection #1



Decatur and Springfield. The service operated on an alternate schedule of northbound (St. Louis–Champaign), on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, and southbound (Champaign–St. Louis) on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The service was such a success that, effective June 26, 1927, the *Illini* went nightly. However, in time, dwindling patronage resulted in a defi-

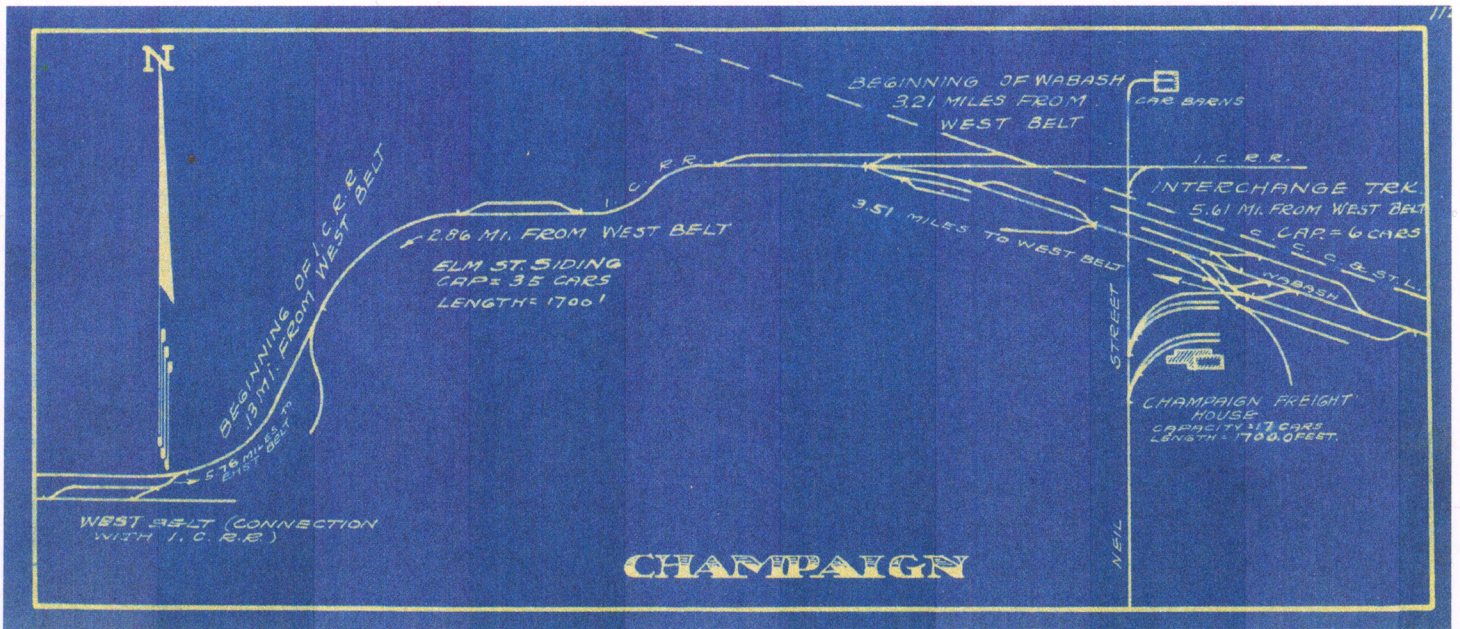
cit operation and the service was discontinued March 3, 1929.

Passenger service continued to serve the twin cities, but overall patronage, like the sleeper service, continued to dwindle as the automobile became more prevalent in the lives of the traveling public. On Feb. 17, 1950, petition was filed to abandon service of six of the

twelve trains through Champaign, citing that the seating occupancy was 37 percent less than in 1947. Although this was the first major request for discontinuance of service, the ICC noted that part of the reason for the passenger decline was due to the poor condition of equipment. The exteriors were dirty and in need of paint and repair and the seats were uncomfortable and shabby in appearance. This in essence led the traveling public to seek other means of transportation. Citing these conditions, the ICC ruled that the railroad reschedule six "test" trains in their place, with upgraded equipment, to prove that in fact the public would still not want to travel by rail. In compliance with the order, the railroad was able to prove that improvements would not attract sufficient numbers of riders and the six trains were dropped on Aug. 6, 1950.

On April 23, 1951, a petition was filed to abandon 15.3 miles of track and discontinue the remaining six passenger trains between Danville and Watkins (De Long) and effective April 26, 1952, the abandonment was granted and the remaining six passenger trains that departed Champaign, turned at Watkins and returned to Champaign. On Dec. 8, 1952, a petition was filed to discontinue passenger service between Champaign and Watkins, noting that the dwindling passenger patronage could not sufficiently pay the train crew's wages and that there was adequate bus service on the paralleling highway. It was further noted that train operation required special movement with passenger motor 284 equipped with poles on both ends. On arrival at Ogden from Champaign, the car was wye'd and had to back up 3.0 miles to Watkins and on arrival, with the car already facing westbound, returned to Champaign. On April 26, 1953, the passenger service was abandoned and the local freight, Decatur–DeLong No. 308, turned at De Long and returned to Champaign freight house as No. 303, where the crew laid over in the caboose. The next day, the local ran to DeLong as No. 304 and returned to Decatur as No. 307. On June 21, 1955, the local was re-assigned as Nos. 204/209, operating Decatur to DeLong and return.

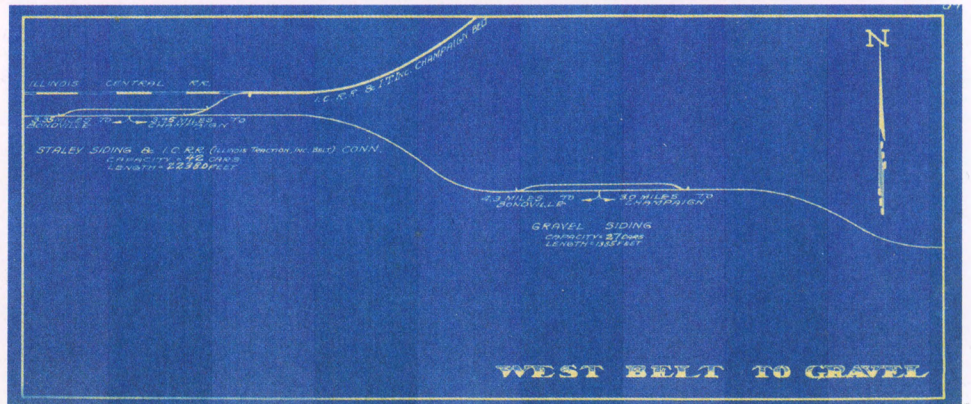
The discontinuance of passenger service would accelerate, with the company filing a petition on June 12, 1954, to abandon the remaining six trains between Springfield and Champaign. Effective March 13, 1955, all previously scheduled trains were discontinued and in its place, for a period of 90 days, a test train was scheduled. It would only take 30 days and a loss of \$7,600.45 to convince the Interstate Commerce Commission to allow abandonment of service on June 12, 1955.



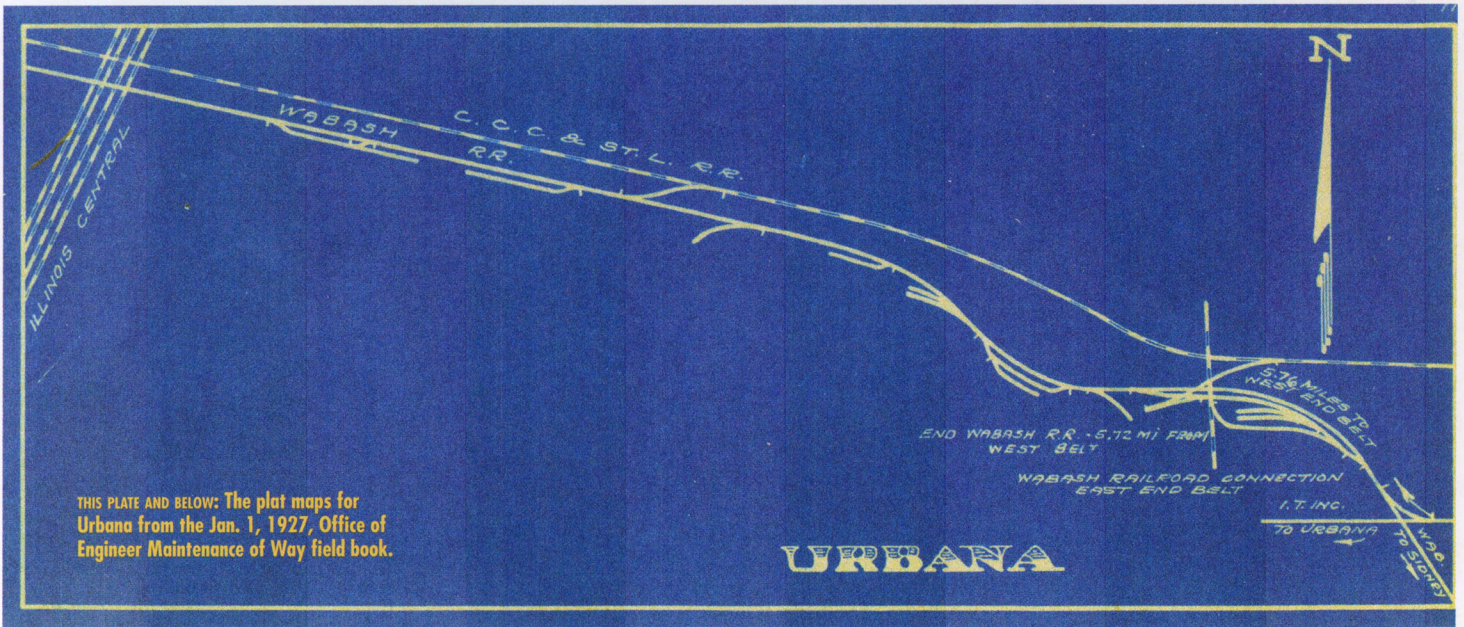
ABOVE AND RIGHT: The plat maps for Champaign from the Jan. 1, 1927, Office of Engineer Maintenance of Way field book.

Following on the heels of passenger abandonments, track abandonments took place with the abandonment of trackage between Urbana and DeLong on May 1, 1961, in favor of trackage rights over the parallel Peoria & Eastern (New York Central System) between the two points with connections to grain elevators at Fulls and De Long, and the Chicago & Eastern Illinois interchange tracks at Glover. On Oct. 16, 1961, operation began over the Illinois Central, operating from a connection at the north end of the IT Storeroom (Decatur) Yards to White Heath and then via the Havana District to Staleys on the west side of Champaign. With the discontinuance of passenger service and the loss of IT trackage, the office for the freight agent was relocated into the west end of the Illinois Central Champaign freight office.

By 1978, the 4PM East Local operated six days a week, between Decatur and DeLong, working industries and connections between the two points, and tied up at Staleys (west side of Champaign) and returned to Decatur the next day. In March 1979, the Illinois Central Gulf, successor to the IC, had a derailment in the Monticello area that permanently closed the line between White Heath and Decatur, forcing the IT to an alternative route of operating over N&W trackage between Decatur to Lodge where the ICG Clinton-Champaign line crossed. Movement from the N&W to the ICG main required the East Local's motive power to run around its train (equipped with two cabooses) on the N&W Lodge siding. With the motive power on the south end, the train was shoved around the connection track onto the

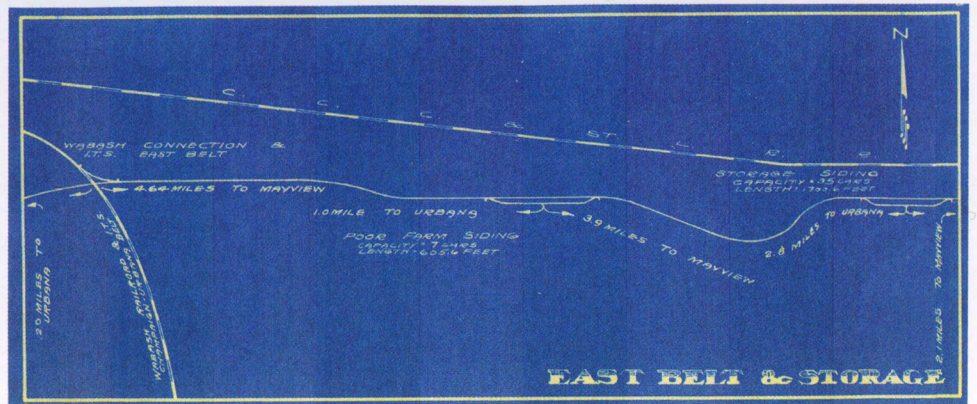


ABOVE: The east local is switching a car of coal for the Urbana power house, located north of the Champaign County court house. After the city street trackage through Champaign was abandoned, the Urbana trackage remained in place, permitting the "football specials" to access the Wright street team track located within the campus of the UoI. GEORGE ISAACS



ICG main, and then continued eastward to Champaign.

The Illinois Terminal met its demise on Sept. 1, 1981, when it became a "division" of the Norfolk & Western. The East Local was discontinued and the trackage rights were terminated with the elevator at De Long now served by the ICG and Fulls and Delong by Conrail, successor to the P&E/NYC and Penn Central. Champaign, home of the railroad's founder William B. McKinley, was indeed an intricate part of this railroad's history as "The Good Road of Service."



BELOW: Car 276 and mate curve past IT's compact freight yard at Champaign in 1953 during what appears to be a fan trip. TOM DESNOYER, GEORGE ISAACS ARCHIVE, COLLECTION OF ILLINOIS TRACTION SOCIETY

