



PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD INFORMATION



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The Future of Air Transport from a Railroad Viewpoint

AN INTERVIEW WITH W. W. ATTERBURY,
PRESIDENT, PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

(Reprinted by permission of "The Saturday Evening Post")

"Aviation Comes Out Of A Tail Spin," by Wesley Winans Stout, the leading article in "The Saturday Evening Post" for May 8, 1926, recapitulates the chief facts regarding the development of commercial aviation in America, and particularly the impetus received from the recently projected plans for the wide extension of the air mails. Included in the article is the following interview with General Atterbury, setting forth his views respecting the progress of air transport, its scope and adaptability, particularly with reference to the mail and express services in this country:

NO ONE knows the future of air transport. Twenty-five years ago no one knew the future of motor cars. Virtually everyone, including the railroads, failed completely to anticipate the development of the automobile and its extraordinary effect on the social and commercial life of the nation. I, for one, hope that we shall not repeat the error with air transport.

I do not think of air transport as a competitor of the railroads in any important degree, either now or in

the future. It will, I believe, create a new field chiefly of its own. Indeed, to the limited extent to which it is now being used in this country, it actually is creating such a field. Instead of being a competitor of the railroads, I think it will prove a valuable ally in co-operation with them as an auxiliary form of service.

Moreover, it seems to me not only possible but probable that the railroads will themselves find it desirable to utilize aircraft directly, just as they now are finding it desirable

to make use of motor trucks and busses on the highways to supplement the service on their rails.

Nation Unified by Railroads

That the United States is one vast economic unit, the greatest economic unit in history, is due to our rail transportation facilities more than to any other one factor. Our country and its people continue to grow rapidly in wealth, purchasing power, living standards and numbers. The demand—the necessity of the times—is for greater speed in transportation and communications. That we are able each year to afford new luxuries is one of the inevitable benefits resulting from transportation. Luxuries, in turn, become necessities. The most striking instance of this in history is the story of the motor car.

It is not discouraging to admit that airplane operation is expensive today. So were railway and motor car operation in their infancy. Like progress may be expected in aeronautical engineering.

Luxury and Speed Demands

Air transport is just beginning to wear itself from military service. It scarcely has had a chance to give more than a flash of what it can do. Generous acknowledgment of what may be discovered or developed in the near future, however, does not prevent proper conservatism in making the statement that air transport will remain probably for a considerable time an extra-high-cost transport, drawing its patronage partly from the luxury desire and partly from the demand for extra speed that marks as peculiarly American our whole social and economic structure. That we shall—perhaps more quickly than we now realize—come to look upon it as a necessity seems to me extremely likely,

despite continued high cost. But such traffic always will represent only a negligible fraction of the total carried by rail. The bulk of traffic will continue to move by rail because of the vastly greater economy.

Scope of Air Transport

Traffic analysis of the government-owned and operated air mail shows that, without selling effort, air transport has attracted business in the following order: Banks, bond houses and other financial institutions; export and import houses; manufacturers and distributors operating on a national scale through dealers or branch agencies; publishers and advertisers conducting nation-wide sales campaigns; transport and communication corporations, and lastly the general public.

In short, whatever in the shape of mail or express can, for business reasons or personal luxury desire, justify extra charge for speed, can be solicited by air transport. This, however, also indicates how highly specialized the air field must be by comparison with the total of rail-borne transportation.

Experience with Extra Fares

I know from our own experience that the charging of an extra fare on a passenger train, with the accompanying extra speed and luxury, inevitably is followed by increased traffic on that train. A very large proportion of all passenger travel between New York and Chicago and New York and St. Louis moves by extra-fare trains. The first were inaugurated in 1881 between Chicago and New York. The effect was an immediate increase in travel on those trains, and the increase has been particularly notable in recent years.

Apart from the added speed and luxury

of such a train as the Broadway Limited, there is a tangible prestige to the traveler in riding it.

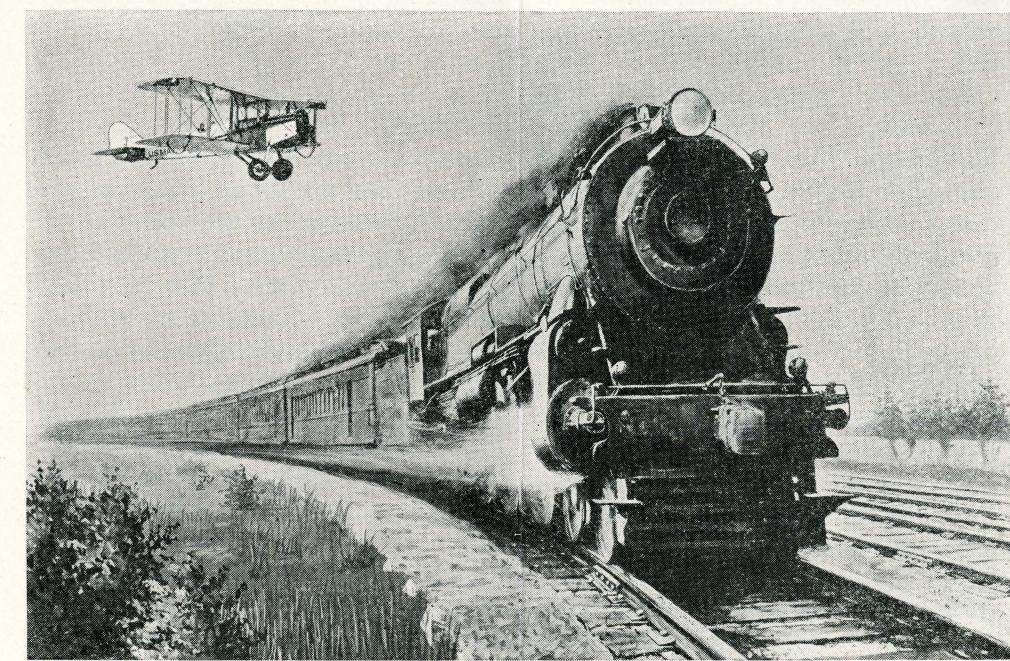
In the Passenger Field

The twenty hours from New York and eighteen hours from Philadelphia are little more than an overnight ride. The airplane today might cut the time in half, but it still would be an overnight journey, necessarily in much less comfort and serenity. No doubt we shall have air passenger routes in the proximate future, but I think the vast bulk of passenger travel will continue to move by rail. The limited growth of air passenger traffic in Europe is not a criterion, of course. The relative smallness of European countries, and the succession of national boundaries, custom houses and passport annoyances are obstacles which we escape. Nor have the

European railroads ever developed a general train service comparable in convenience, adequacy and comfort to that which links most of our larger cities by one-night journeys.

I mention these matters for the purpose of making perfectly clear my ability to consider air transport entirely apart from competition, with rail service. I am exceedingly anxious to see it encouraged to develop along proper lines and in proper co-ordination with the railroads.

The Pennsylvania Railroad, which uses the air mail for some of its official correspondence, has been most happy to co-operate with the Government in the development of the New York-Chicago-San Francisco air route. Our part is getting the mail at the New York end to and from the air terminal at New Brunswick, New



THE "BROAD WAYS" OF EARTH AND AIR
Airplane of the United States Mail Service circling above the tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The train shown is the "Broadway Limited," the Pennsylvania's twenty-hour extra fare de luxe express between New York and Chicago.

Jersey. Though this is only a small part of the total work, it is an essential one, and we are doing it whole-heartedly. We welcome the establishment of other routes in our territory and additional opportunities to co-operate. Wherever an air service may have junction with the Pennsylvania, we desire to make this junction effective in the practical interchange of traffic.

Should Embrace High Grade Express

I will go a step further and say that the Pennsylvania Railroad management is not only willing but desires to see the air service broadened to embrace high-grade express traffic. The ten new air routes will be privileged to carry express or any other traffic they can obtain as long as they perform the mail service properly. The original New York-Chicago-San Francisco route also probably will be turned over to private agencies under contract, and thus be available for high-grade express traffic.

General Policy Toward Auxiliary Services

In "The Saturday Evening Post" article from which the foregoing interview with General Atterbury is quoted, the further explanation is made that the Pennsylvania Railroad, though entirely friendly to the proper development of commercial aviation, does not desire to operate airplanes itself any more than it desires to operate motor buses or trucks. The company, General Atterbury adds, is approaching the question of its relationship to air transport in the light of its experiences, up to the present time, in the bus and truck field.

Though directly utilizing trucks quite extensively in the handling of less-than-carload freight, the company does not itself operate the vehicles. The service is performed altogether by contract with inde-

It is my thought and that of my associates that the railroads should not stand in the way of this, but should encourage it, and our management has so placed itself on record.

Anything which stimulates invention, industry and commerce necessarily increases the general volume of trade and traffic throughout the country; and in this larger prosperity the railroads, like all other economic agencies, have their share. They should play the part of leaders, never of obstructionists, in the march of progress. For all we know to the contrary, air transport may embrace the most important field of progress which this generation is to see.

Nor must we forget our national defense, in which it already has been demonstrated that aircraft is one of the dominating factors. Patriotism joins with business sense in demanding encouragement in every legitimate way.

pendent owners, who remain the operators.

In the passenger field, the Pennsylvania Railroad has thus far, on one or two occasions, been obliged to initiate bus lines of its own in order to protect through traffic. It may be forced to do so in other instances for like reasons, and is prepared for such contingency.

It is not, however, the policy of the Pennsylvania Railroad, either directly or indirectly, to enter the general business of transportation either by motor buses or motor trucks, but to do so only when such auxiliary operation is required to conserve existing railroad business, or in the interest of greater economy or public convenience in connection with railroad operations. It views air transport as presenting similar problems requiring a similar policy.

"Burbanking" in Railroad Service

By JULIEN L. EYSMANS
Vice President in Charge of Traffic

Addressing the members and guests of the Denver, Col., Chamber of Commerce on "Pennsylvania Railroad Day," April 23, 1926, Mr. Eysmans, said:

It would be a delightful experience to come here on almost any mission and, lacking a mission, it would be pardonable to find an excuse. You have a beautiful city in a magnificent setting, perhaps the most inspiring of any large city in America. As for your climate and sunshine, I can only say that the best way to appreciate them is through the sudden transition and completeness of change felt in the few days' journey from the East which I have just taken.

A Century of Railroad Progress

I am not going to talk to you in any technical or formal way about transportation. You all know what it means. If there had been no railroads there would have been no Denver, at least nothing even remotely approaching the Denver of today. Our country's population would be largely where it was in colonial times, along the seacoast, the Great Lakes and the few naturally navigable rivers. The interior would still be the prairies and the Great American Desert that used to be in the school geographies, and we would have two frontiers, the Allegheny Mountains on the East and the Coast Range on the West.

Railroads operated by steam are just completing their initial century of existence. The first locomotive to pull a train on any part of what is now the Pennsylvania Railroad was known as the "John Bull" and ran between Camden and Bor-

dentown, N. J., later extending to New York Bay at South Amboy. It weighed eleven tons, burned cord wood and carried its water supply in a whiskey hogshead on a tiny flat car. It developed about the horse power of a small automobile of the present day. The standard heavy freight locomotive now used by the Pennsylvania Railroad weighs nearly 200 tons; carries 37,000 pounds of coal and 14,000 gallons of water in its tender, and at its maximum efficient speed develops 4,000 horsepower. In less than a century we have multiplied the efficiency and power of locomotives more than one hundred times. These measures progress in the physical sense.

Our ideas about the obligations of service—about what railroads owe the public and what the public owes the railroads—have undergone changes fully as radical as the mechanical and other improvements in the physical plant.

All of the early railroads were purely individual affairs. They were built to serve local needs and interests. The Pennsylvania, for instance, was planned to protect the trade of Philadelphia from the competition of New York on the north and Baltimore on the south. The idea of nationwide service was a later development. There was no regulation in the early days. Competition was intense often to the point of destruction. Rates were what the railroad could get or what the shipper would pay, according to which at the moment had the upper hand.

Out of this situation there arose two conflicting and directly opposed ideas regarding policies of railroad management. One became famous, far too famous in fact, under the name of "the public be damned" theory. The other never had a popular name but I think might properly be described as "the public be pampered" theory.

Gist of the Two Extremes

Under "the public be damned" idea a railroad was a purely private enterprise to be run as its owners saw fit, and solely and entirely in their selfish interests. They could charge what they pleased, discriminate between different users, give secret rebates, purchase patronage and political favor, use any gauge of track they wanted, any style of equipment, and, in general, do absolutely as they saw fit with the property and its operation. It was one of the cardinal tenets of this theory that the government had no more right to control railroad practices than it had to control the management of the corner grocery.

It was in opposition to this theory that "the public be pampered" idea first took shape and was later carried to great excesses. In its most extreme forms it denied the right of the owners to any assurance of a return at all upon their property, or even a fair price in the event of governmental purchase. It held that rates could always be reduced at the same time that service was being improved and wages raised. Faced with the obvious fact that such combinations are impossible under corporate management, it demanded governmental ownership and operation in order that the losses might be borne out of taxes, and in that manner transportation service be furnished to the public at less than cost.

As the distribution of taxes is never even, the necessary result of government ownership and operation would be that a part of the people would be paying for the transportation service of the other part—a situation opposed to the principles on which our government is founded, and contrary to the basic ideas of justice and sound economics recognized everywhere.

A generation or more ago these two opposing ideas of railroad management were in active and violent conflict. Today in actual practice we see very little evidence of either one of them—practically none at all in their crudest and most extreme forms.

Using Burbank's Methods

How has this come about? The answer is that we have "cross-bred" our ideas on all of these subjects and have produced hybrid strains, higher and better in type, just as Luther Burbank, whose recent death the whole country is lamenting, produced greatly improved hybrid strains of plants, vegetables and flowers by crossing the original forms. His process of controlled evolution—i. e., evolution controlled by human intelligence—was that of eliminating undesirable characteristics and retaining those that were useful and beautiful. The bad were bred out and the good bred in. So I think that without fully realizing it we have been "Burbanking" our ideas on the relations between the railroads and the public, and will continue to do so as we make further progress.

Origin of the Conflicting Theories

Both the "public be damned" and the "public be pampered" theories were, of course, hopelessly wrong and unworkable. Yet, in considering their origin, it is possible to understand some of the ideas and motives out of which they arose, though later distorted into extravagant and fantastic forms. For instance, we must bear

in mind that railroad managers of a past generation faced a severe struggle against unwise and excessive regulation. If, on occasions, some of them became overzealous and went to extremes in maintaining the rights which they represented, time has demonstrated these truths: First, that the owners of the railroads are entitled to not less than a fair and reasonable return on their property; second, that the management of these properties must be exercised by the directors and officers; and third, that these directors and officers must be allowed reasonable business discretion in their administration.

In other words, it is perfectly proper and wise that the Government should regulate the railroads for the purpose of insuring fair treatment to the public, but regulation must not be expanded into the field of management, administration or operation; at the same time rates must be sufficient to insure a fair investment return.

The nucleus of truth in "the public be pampered" theory is that the public is entitled to the best transportation which modern facilities permit, at the lowest rates which will properly safeguard the rights of the owners, and under terms and conditions which shall guard against unjust discrimination in either rates or quality of service.

Notable Results Obtained

We must all of us admit that we have made real and gratifying progress in reconciling these two opposing ideas and in salvaging out of each the basic truth which each contains. What have been the results? I can point to at least four.

One is that there is greater harmony between the railroad regulative authorities and railroad managements today than there has ever been at any time since gov-

ernmental regulation was inaugurated. Another is that relations between the railroads and their patrons are more friendly than ever before, with less litigation and fewer protests to the commissions.

The third is that the employees are better satisfied and on better terms with the managements than at any time in our generation, and perhaps in the history of railroads.

The fourth and perhaps most important of all, since it is the thing we are all striving for, is that the quality of service rendered by the railroads in the last two or three years has been the best ever known while at the same time the volume of traffic handled has been greater than ever before.

Reflected in Operating Records

This latter achievement is strikingly exemplified in the fact that last year the railroads handled the largest freight movement in their history, with no general car shortage at any time and very few local shortages, with no embargoes save those caused by the wholly abnormal conditions in Florida, and with a dependability, regularity and promptness of service which actually permitted changes of a most revolutionary character in the methods of doing business.

So you can see that the "Burbanking" process has been applied to the physical service as well as to the two opposing theories of public relationships. We are constantly breeding out the poor and breeding in the good, constantly improving the strain and producing service better and better adapted to the needs of our times. The ultimate goal is perfect service, which we may perhaps never reach but can surely approach nearer and nearer and must always keep in view as our ideal.

Famous Trains 50 Years Old

"Federal Express" and "Colonial Express," inaugurated in Centennial Year, mark their Golden Anniversary

THE "Federal Express" and the "Colonial Express," the through night and day trains between Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Boston, operated jointly by the Pennsylvania Railroad and the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad, were fifty years old on May 8, 1926.

These trains, among the most famous in the world, were established May 8, 1876, primarily to accommodate travel from New England to the Centennial Exhibition held in Philadelphia that year. They provided the first through passenger service between New England points and Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington.

Now Use "Hell-Gate Bridge Route"

The arrival of their golden anniversary emphasizes the fact that during the present summer the "Federal Express" and "Colonial Express" will again carry travelers to a great international exposition in Philadelphia, the Sesquicentennial.

When the service was first inaugurated, and for many years thereafter, the cars of these trains were transferred between the terminals of the Pennsylvania and New Haven systems by floating them around the lower end of Manhattan Island on a specially equipped transfer steamer operated between the Harlem River and Jersey City. Later, a route utilizing the Poughkeepsie bridge over the Hudson was adopted for a time.

Since 1917, the "Federal" and "Colonial" expresses have been operated via the "Hell Gate Bridge Route," consisting of the Pennsylvania Railroad tunnels under the Hudson River, New York City, and the East River, and the New York Con-

nnecting Railroad, of which the Hell Gate Bridge forms a part. The Connecting Railroad, with the tunnels, now provides an all-rail link between the New Haven and Pennsylvania lines. It was opened April 1, 1917, and the "Federal Express" was the first regular passenger train to be operated over the Hell Gate Bridge.

The through service, as originally established, only actually extended between Boston and Philadelphia. The night train carried sleeping cars as far as the latter city, arriving early in the morning in time to permit change to a Washington train arriving at the national capital at noon. A few months later, however, sleeping car service was extended all the way to Washington, so that through passengers did not have to make the change. The daylight run was extended through to Washington in 1890. In addition, through sleeping cars are now operated on the "Federal Express" between Boston and Miami.

Lines Originally Traversed

Originally the route between Boston and Washington included portions of the lines of six railroads beside the steamer route. They were the Old Colony between Boston and Providence, the New York, Providence and Boston between Providence and New London, the New York, New Haven and Hartford from New London to the Harlem River, the transfer steamer route from Harlem River to the Pennsylvania Station at Jersey City, the Pennsylvania Railroad from Jersey City to Philadelphia, the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore from Philadelphia to Baltimore, and the Baltimore and Potomac from Baltimore to Washington.