

Hiawathas at New Lisbon

★ When four steam-powered streamliners meet at a single point there's bound to be real activity.

By John F. Boose.

PICTURE a lazy Summer afternoon in the "driftless area" of western Wisconsin: temperature high, humidity high, big bulbous clouds barely moving in an almost breezeless pale blue sky. In this scene, on nearly level ground, is New Lisbon. It is on the main line of the Milwaukee Road, Chicago 221 miles, Mineapolis 200 miles, elevation 894 feet above sea level.

New Lisbon depot is a sturdy stucco covered structure on the north side of the 132-pound rails; eastward from the bay window one looks beyond the platform sheds down a long straight roadbed toward Mauston, seven miles. Just past the first grade crossing, tended by a jovial man wearing dark glasses and a safety belt studded with red reflectors, is a large coaling stage on the north side of the tracks. While not seen from the window, north of the fuel tower is the wye connecting the main line to the Wisconsin Valley Branch. A two-stall engine house sits in the center of the delta-shaped enclosure. Walk out onto

the main platform and look west. There, too, is a long tangent, but the main makes a slight bend to the south through the station grounds.

It's now 3:05 p. m. Extra 373 West has just arrived with 107 cars of freight. A few minutes before it was pounding through the scrub forests near Wisconsin Dells at 35 per; now

the engine, Class L-3, U. S. R. A. heavy Mikado, has pulled ahead for coal, again for water, and is about to put the cars into the siding west of the depot to make way for the *Hiawathas*.

Smoke down the main to the west heralds the approach of Extra 220 East, 127 cars double-headed with one L-3 and No. 220, one of the new S-2

engines, 4-8-4, fast and powerful. This freight has just enough time to fuel and water and get into the hole by 3:35, when the *North Woods Hiawatha*, train No. 200, whistles for the U. S. 16 highway crossing just north of the wye.

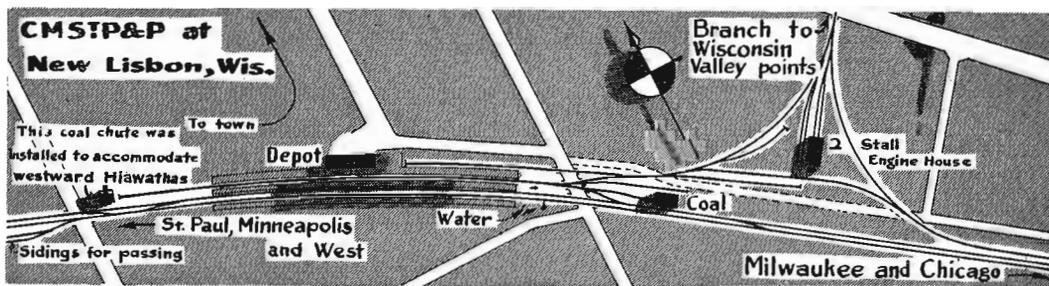
That whistle, a piercing air horn to be exact, marks the beginning of railroad activity hard



Illustrated by Linn H. Westcott.

Layout of New Lisbon facilities.

Here is a bird's-eye view of the Milwaukee Road tracks at New Lisbon. The U. S. Highway 16 crossing mentioned in the text is the diagonal broad white line in the upper right corner of the sketch.





From Wisconsin Valley.

Engine 10 pulling train 200 after a stop at the wye switch north of the engine house; conductor after throwing switch, will follow brakeman foot to depot. Above, twin loco No. 11 waits the engine house for Summer activities to beg

to match anywhere, let alone in a rural town of 1000 citizens. At 3:45 the *North Woods* backs into the stub track north of the mains and passengers pile out, cross over to the south platform to take the eastbound *Afternoon Hiawatha*, No. 100, for Milwaukee and Chicago at 4:01. But in the meantime No. 58, a 10-car local mail, baggage, and express train with one coach, pulls into the station, does its

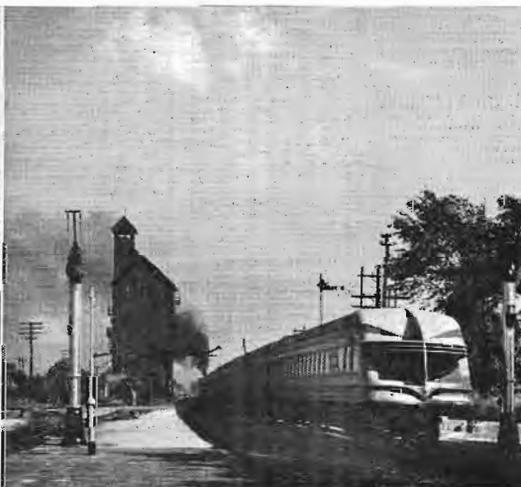
station work and backs into a siding ready to continue eastward at 4:10.

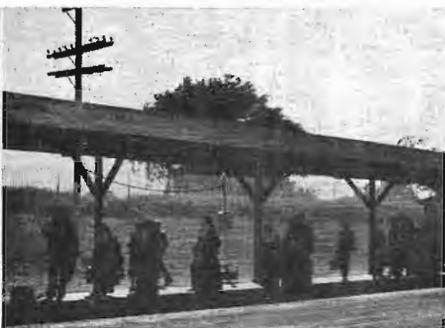
If you've followed the movements this far you'll find 58 and extras 373 West and 220 East in the hole west of the depot. No. 200 has arrived from the north and is now standing nose east at the station ready to become 201 for its return journey. A crew of men is busy checking engine 10, the streamlined Ten-Wheeler that is used on the *North Woods* branch because the track just isn't built for larger streamliners. Most no-

New Lisbon station activity.

Here is a \$116 express shipment, a stone monument for a northern Wisconsin city, going into the baggage car of the *North Woods Hiawatha*. No. 10 has just been greased, waits connections.

The beaver tail of *Hiawatha* 100 glides out of the station. Wye for turning *North Woods* trains to the left. Coaling plant in center has been supplemented by another west of the dep





New Lisbon at 3:48.

Engine 10 has left its train on the right, pulled ahead for greasing and a check-up. In the distance engine 220 from an extra freight gets refueled before taking siding; 58 is already in the clear.

Important duty.

Important but rarely noticed railway employees handle an Alemite gun operated with air from the locomotive to lubricate side rods of the Ten-Wheeler.

Waiting passengers.

While engines are groomed nuns, business men, resorters, and tourists from train 200 wait on the south platform for 100. In Summer the North Woods trains usually run clear through to Chicago.

ticeable work going on about the engine is the use of a large Alemite gun to lubricate the side rods and valve motion. No. 10 is a very unusual engine; while we wait for the next *Hiawatha* I'll tell you about it.

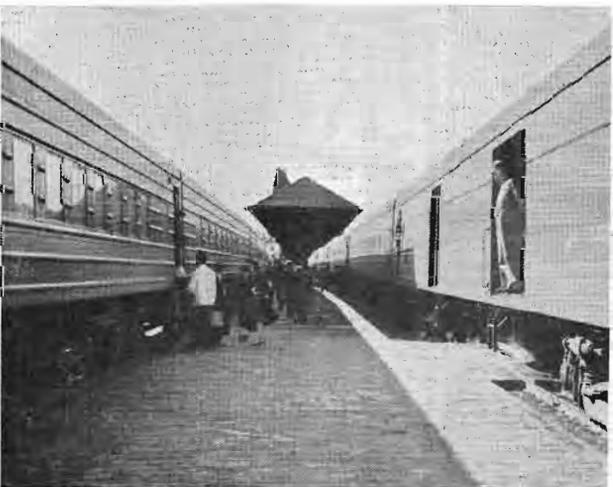
Back in 1899 Baldwin started building a series of Vaucrain Compounds, with two high- and two low-pressure cylinders, for the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul. Most of them were delivered late the next year, numbered 300 to 325, Class B-3. No. 315 was to become our present No. 10 and 306 the sister streamliner, No. 11. They did the work well, were

renumbered 1615 and 1606 in 1906, 4225 and 4206 in 1913, and when the compound working was no longer desirable the engines were rebuilt as Class G-6ps, Nos. 2769 and 2765, which numbers they kept until 1936 and 1938, when the two middle-aged Ten-Wheelers were taken to the locomotive fountain of youth, emerging streamlined as Nos. 10 and 11. They at present resemble the first *Hiawatha* locomotives, 1, 2, 3, and 4, but the boilers are shorter.

By golly, that eastward *Afternoon Hiawatha* sneaked into the station so quietly we didn't

The same scene a moment later. Train 101 approaches headed by one of the F-7 4-6-4 locomotives. The signal has not yet cleared behind train 100; Ten-Wheeler No. 10 is backing onto 201.

Passengers from Chicago step down from *Hiawatha* 101, at left, and many cross the platform to the *North Woods Hiawatha*, train 201 at right. The *North Woods* serves Wisconsin Rapids, Wausau, Tomahawk, Minocqua, and makes many intermediate stops.



even hear it. The Alemite gun is already doing its chugging and the water crane has been swung over the tender. No. 100 was pulled from the Twin Cities, 200 miles, in 3½ hours, including the half hour between Minneapolis and St. Paul Union Station, and three intermediate stops. On the head end is No. 3, one of the famous 4-4-2 locomotives built for high speed service. This engine is Class A, and differs from the usual Atlantic in that the main rod connects the pistons to the crank on the first pair of drivers rather than the second. This was done to keep the rods in line, impossible with the conventional hook-up.

Passengers steadily file into the yellow and red coaches, kept cool by the machinery hidden in long channels under the cars. In about four minutes the engine is greased and watered. The exhaust barks as the train smoothly approaches the grade crossing, and by the time the beavertail lounge car passes

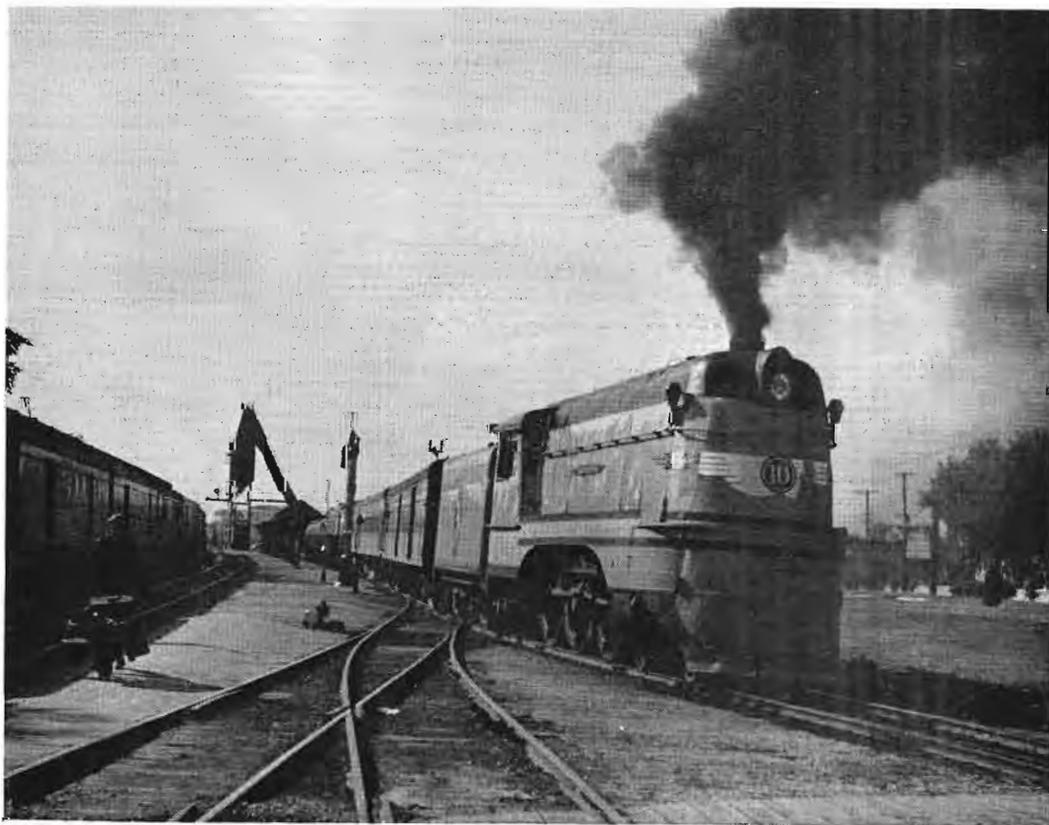
it is going at a good clip. Before the block signal rises to its 45-degree caution position No. 101, westbound *Hiawatha*, appears over the rise near Mauston. In the meantime express men have been loading a huge granite memorial stone into the baggage car of the *North Woods*, express charge \$116 Chicago to Wausau!

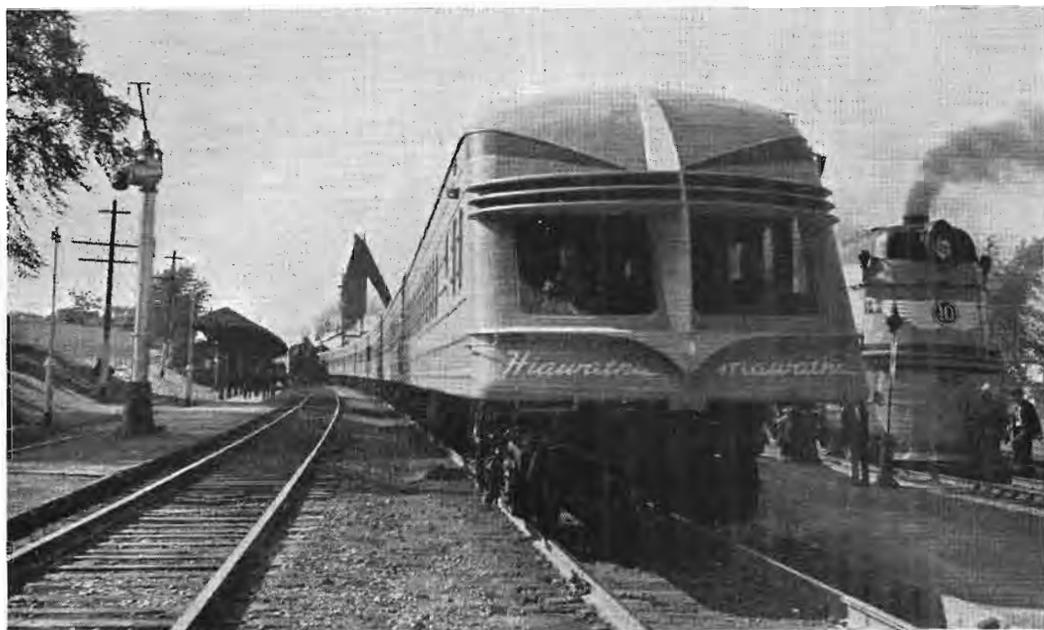
No. 101 is headed by an F-7, Milwaukee Road's newest class of passenger locomotive. This is streamlined and painted differently from the A and G classes and is fast becoming a favorite on the system. As 101 pulls out to the west, 58 will move out of the siding to the station platforms, and the *North Woods Hiawatha*, now train No. 201, will start around the wye for points north.

Last Summer there was so much traffic that the cars from the *North Woods* were pulled to Chicago ahead of the regular *Hiawatha* by the locomotive from 58. That sort

Train 201 makes a quick start.

Local No. 58 is about to start for Milwaukee and Chicago, vainly chasing the eastbound *Afternoon Hiawatha*, when the little streamlined Ten-Wheeler pulls the *North Woods* smartly away from New Lisbon.





North, south, east or west. Beavertailed train 101 goes west, train 201 on the right serves northern points, while No. 58, approaching the station, will take you south and east. Take your pick.

of leaves 58 stranded in the siding with no engine for a while, but the situation is relieved by turning the engine which brings the *North Woods* cars from Chicago and using it for 58. This double play with motive power gives just the extra minutes needed for servicing both engines.

After No. 10 leaves with train 201 for the North, the two extra freights pull out and the watchman finally sits down in his chair and leans back against the shanty—a much welcomed rest after nearly an hour of hopping up and down with the stop disk. Except for freight movements, the next train is at 1:53 a. m.

Most of this activity can be seen without more of a stop than that made by eastbound Minneapolis-Chicago train No. 58, so on your next ride over the Milwaukee between these cities leave Minneapolis two hours early, take 58 instead of the *Afternoon Hiawatha*, hop off at New Lisbon and take in the three-ring motive power sideshow. No. 58 does not carry a diner, so unless you plan to eat instead of watch trains during the half-hour stop at New Lisbon, you had better make other arrangements.

Should you be driving through central Wisconsin on a vacation, the territory near New

Lisbon offers other railroad attractions in addition to fine scenery. Elroy, about 18 miles south-southwest, is a junction on the Chicago & North Western's main line between Chicago and the Twin Cities via Madison. About the same distance northwest is Wyeville on the same road's main line via Milwaukee. Over this last trackage runs the "400." Through this area and a little to the west are dozens of photogenic settings for railroad pictures. Don't overlook the excellent possibilities for speed shots of the main line *Hiawathas* east or west of New Lisbon, or of the *North Woods* train north of the city.

That last mentioned Summer run, the *North Woods* from Chicago, is worthy of note: Time tables show it running on the regular *Hiawatha* time; actually it starts a few minutes early (if you miss it you have to take 101 to New Lisbon). The run is a fast one, making New Lisbon as much as 20 minutes early, in time to turn the train on the wye, change engines, and load any waiting passengers before the regular train arrives. The plans for this year's Summer service have not been completed but it will be interesting to see how the heavy traffic is handled. Probably the same "now you see it, now you don't" hocus-pocus will be used with the engines.