



**WELCOME,  
SCOUTS!**



The Western Pacific System lies within the states of California, Nevada and Utah. In addition to the Western Pacific Railroad mileage of 1,190 the Sacramento Northern Railway covers 339 miles and the Tidewater Southern Railway 57 miles, both wholly owned subsidiaries. The Western

Pacific also owns 50% of the Alameda Belt Line and the Oakland Terminal Railway, switching railroads in Alameda and Oakland, respectively, and one-third of the Central California Traction Company, a short line operating between Stockton and Lodi-Sacramento.

# Brief History of the Western Pacific

**A** transcontinental railway through the Feather River Canyon was a dream that dated back to the early sixties. Most of the dreaming was done by Arthur W. Keddie, a Scotch surveyor, who settled in Quincy in the early days. Employed to locate a wagon road down the North Fork of the Feather River, he was impressed by the scarcity of snow and the possibilities of an easy railroad grade across the Sierras. Thenceforth, he devoted his life to the prospect.

Keddie managed to interest several important men: Harpending of diamond hoax fame, General Rosecrans, and others. Companies were formed, and one, the Oroville and Virginia City Railroad, actually started construction in 1869. But funds were possible for only one Pacific railroad at that time and C. P. Huntington, one of the Big Four promoting it, laughed the surveyor out of his office with the remark, "No man will ever be fool enough to build a railroad through that canyon."

The sixties, the seventies, and the eighties passed. During the nineties it looked as if Keddie's dream might come true. Jay Gould had acquired the Denver and Rio Grande and talked of extending it to the Pacific Coast. The Union Pacific, however, induced him not to. But when Harriman acquired the Union Pacific and picked up control of the S. P. too he closed the Utah gateway to the traffic on the D&RG. George Gould, Jay's son, whose ambition was to have his own rails from coast to coast and who already had them from Buffalo to Salt Lake City, immediately undertook the construction of a line from Salt Lake to San Francisco.

The Western Pacific Railway Company was incorporated in March, 1903, to proceed up the North Fork of the Feather River and cross the Sierras via Beckwourth Pass. Its \$50,000,000 bond issue was guaranteed by Gould's Rio Grande with the stipulation that grades on the W. P. could not exceed 1% or curves 10 degrees.

These restrictions meant costly construction but gave the Western Pacific the superior line it has today. Construction got under way in the Fall of 1905. Nature and pre-existing railroads introduced some obstacles but the east- and west-bound track gangs met on Spanish Creek bridge near Keddie on November 1, 1909. Here, Leonard D. Tomasso, the fore-

man, drove the last spike sans ceremony or any audience, except his workmen, two women and a little girl.

Regular passenger service commenced on August 22, 1910, with the tumultuous welcome in Oakland of the first through passenger train. It had received royal greetings all along the line and 68-year-old Keddie almost wept when he spoke from the courthouse steps in Quincy.

Traffic agreements had been signed with the Pacific Steamship Company, the Santa Fe, and a Japanese navigation company which gave the new railroad access to all coastal cities and the Orient.

Following a short reorganization in 1916 the company emerged as the Western Pacific Railroad. In the mid-20's control was acquired by Arthur Curtiss James, last of the great railroad builders. James instituted an ambitious improvement program, forging a 200-mile link with the Great Northern to mark the completion of which he drove a golden spike at Bieber, California, on November 10, 1931.

Traffic on the Western Pacific is predominantly freight, which comprises 95% of the total, passenger taking 5%. Manufactured goods from the East move west to markets in Stockton, Sacramento, San Jose, Oakland and San Francisco. Included in this are trainloads of automobile parts destined to the Ford assembly plant at Milpitas. From the West to eastern destinations move California's farm fruits and vegetables as well as lumber from the pine forests of the Sierra Nevadas and other products. Iron ore and other products of mines make up important traffic for the railroad as does steel, which moves from Geneva Steel in Utah to Pittsburg, California, on the Sacramento Northern. "Piggy-back" service, the carrying of trailers on flat cars, is operated over the complete Western Pacific line.

The Western Pacific today is over fifty years old—half as old as transcontinental rail transport itself. During these five decades it has had its ups and downs—as have most railroads. But now, its heavy steel along Keddie's superior alignment protected by Centralized Traffic Control, and thundering to diesel-powered freights and the vista-dome *California Zephyr*, America's most glamorous train, Western Pacific is one of the nation's most modern and progressive railroads.





The most modern techniques were used in building the Western Pacific. Here the "Improved Harris Track-Layer" is seen putting down rail near Hartwell (now Quincy Junction).

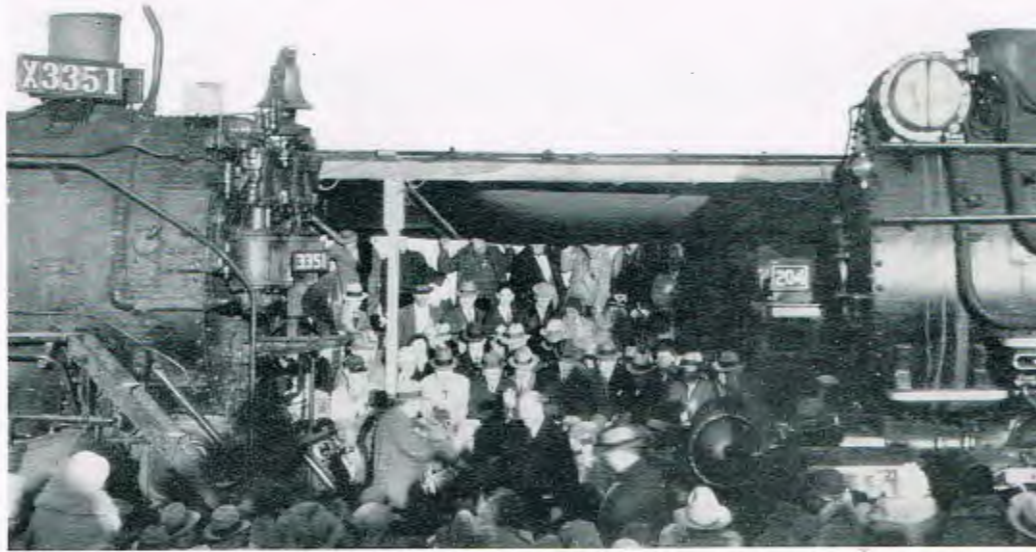


On May 17, 1908, the track had reached Berry Creek from the west—pushing relentlessly up the Feather River Canyon.



Passenger service on Western Pacific commenced August 22, 1910. Here the Panama-Pacific Express, named for the San Francisco Exposition, pauses at Belden deep in the Feather River Canyon in 1914.

The "Inside Gateway" is completed. Western Pacific No. 204 and Great Northern No. 3351 meet at Bieber, November 10, 1931, as WP President Harry Adams and GN President Ralph Budd shake hands from their pilots.



Today's freight cars on WP are modern in every way. Pictured to the right are two modern special-purpose insulated boxcars equipped with new devices to protect the shippers' lading.



Western Pacific does a sizeable "piggy-back" business of all types . . . using its own trailers, common carrier truck line trailers, etc. Here is pictured one of WP's own modern trailers in the line's "Rail/Road Service."



## From Steam to Diesel: Evolution of Locomotives on Western Pacific

### 50 Years of Progress

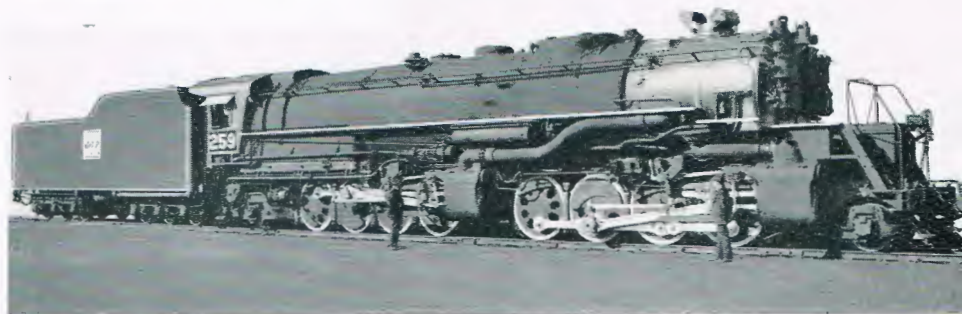


The "Old Reliables" of WP. The road began operations with 35 of the ten-wheel passenger engines (above) and 65 of the freight consolidations (right) as well as twelve switchers. They were built in 1909 and 1910 and for many years were the sole motive power of the railroad.



The "baby mallets" articulated engines were the first of that type on the railroad, built in 1919 and 1923. For many years these engines saw service on the "Inside Gateway" Route between Keddie and Bieber.

WP articulated locomotives were among the largest in the world. The 250-series (right) were oil-burning and used in the Feather River Canyon. The 400-series (below) were coal-burning and used in Nevada and Utah.



The vista-dome California Zephyr is powered by a three-unit 800-series diesel locomotive, 4,500 horsepower in all. Here the daily streamliner is seen crossing the Willow Creek Bridge near Clito, California, near the head of Feather River Canyon.



## The Diesel Takes Over

Fast Western Pacific freight trains use four-unit 900-series diesel locomotives, 5,400 horsepower or 6,000 horsepower in all. Here the "GWS," fast freight, from Seattle and Portland headed for Los Angeles via WP and its north and south connections, is seen skirting Lake Almanor with almost 100 cars.



Western Pacific purchased its first diesel locomotive in 1938, a switcher. It was one of the first roads to purchase and use large four-unit freight diesels when, in 1942, three such 5,400-horsepower behemoths were purchased. Early in 1953 the last steam engine made a trip on the road and today the line is completely dieselized. Three steam locomotives have been put in "moth-balls" for possible emergency use.

One of WP's newest 2,000-horsepower general purpose (GP-20) single-unit road locomotives delivered in 1960, and now in service. Six were purchased at a cost of approximately \$1½ million.



