

Depression, the EBT shed expenses wherever possible. In a typical cost-cutting measure, passenger service was virtually eliminated (save for miners' trains) in favor of a new bus line subsidiary. The railroad avoided deficits in the 1930s but was powerless to halt a more serious decline after World War II. More labor disputes, a shrinking market for coal, and a dearth of easily recoverable deposits of that mineral combined to sound the death knell for the EBT. The railroad ceased operations in 1956, and the property was sold to salvage magnate Nick Kovalchick. Encouraged by the local citizenry, Kovalchick chose not to scrap the road. Instead, in 1960 the East Broad Top resumed operations over a portion of its line as a carrier of tourists and other excursionists, a role it fulfills to this day. Authenticity is the watchword, making a visit to the EBT and its shops a journey back in time sixty years or more.

This volume follows the high standards set by Golden West Books' history of another Pennsylvania railroad, the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie, published in 1981. Railroad enthusiasts especially will appreciate the numerous illustrations (over 360), as well as the detailed series of equipment rosters and scale drawings. Perhaps because the book initially took form as Rainey's doctoral dissertation, it is solidly researched and draws upon a wide array of primary source material, including corporate records, government documents, local newspapers, and personal recollections. And—perhaps in spite of its origins as an academic work—it is well written. The narrative offers an astute blend of the technical, human, and business aspects of the EBT and its coal company affiliate.

The price may strike some readers as a little steep, yet it is not out of line for a book of this kind. Indeed, rail fans, transportation scholars, and persons interested in the history of south-central Pennsylvania will find the volume well worth its cost, given the comprehensive and readable text, the excellent photo reproduction, and high production values in general.

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Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railway. By PAUL PIERTAK. (North Boston, N.Y.: Privately published, 1979. Pp. v, 239. \$12.95 cloth; \$7.95 paper.)

The Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railway was absorbed

into the Baltimore and Ohio in 1932, and what remains of it today is the Chessie System lines from Pittsburgh to Buffalo and Rochester. The big locomotive shops at Du Bois, Pennsylvania, are gone. Passenger service ended in 1955. Only a few trains run on the Rochester line anymore. But long ago, the BR&P was a thriving medium-sized railroad built to carry coal from the mines of Western Pennsylvania to western New York and Canada, and important to the life of that vast and rich region through Butler, Punxsutawney, Du Bois, Brockway, Ridgway, Johnsonburg, Mount Jewett, and Bradford, Pennsylvania, and Salamanca, New York. Before memories of this classic railroad faded, Paul Piertak painstakingly compiled photographs and memorabilia and wrote a fine historical narrative to go with them. He has created a valuable vignette of railroads, coal, and travel in Western Pennsylvania and western New York in the early years of this century.

The original impulse for the railroad came from citizens of Rochester in the 1860s who wanted access to Pennsylvania coal over roads not as Buffalo-oriented as the Erie and New York Central. It was completed, or really pieced together from short lines in 1883. A branch to Buffalo, built later in that decade, overextended the company and bankrupted it, at which point control was won by the two figures who would guide the destiny of the railroad and its extensive coal subsidiaries through their most prosperous years, New York investor Adrian Iselin and Rochester coal magnate Arthur G. Yates.

The railroad's subsidiaries owned a vast acreage of coal-producing property in the Punxsutawney Basin. Most coal was bound for Canada via the docks at Rochester, where trim lakeboats ferried it across Lake Ontario. Branch lines were pushed deep into Indiana County in the early 1900s to tap new mines owned mostly by Iselin. Coal traffic peaked around 1917, not because of diminishing demand but more because cheaper coal was then available from the nonunion mines of West Virginia and Kentucky. As the price of coal declined in the 1920s, major differences opened up between the railroad and its coal subsidiaries, the coal people wanting to leave it in the ground until the price went up, the railroad wanting to drop prices to keep Pennsylvania coal competitive in Canadian markets.

All the while, the railroad operated passenger trains — the day express known as the Pittsburgh Flyer, the night express with Pullman Palace Cars, locals, and even commuter runs out of Buffalo and Rochester — 13,877 trains in 1915, for example, of which the railroad proudly boasted that 12,628 arrived precisely on time. Some of those trains were excursions — outings for everyone up and down

the line, to Silver Lake near Rochester, to Cascade Park near Buffalo, to the Kinzua Bridge region around Bradford, and most popular of all, the annual Hawley's Peapicker Special, sponsored by the Hawley family's pea canneries for their employees and apparently everyone else in Wyoming County, New York.

The Baltimore and Ohio had long dreamed of a rail route running directly west out of New York, bypassing both Pittsburgh and Buffalo, roughly paralleling what is now Interstate 80. It already controlled lines from New York as far west as Williamsport. It bought the BR&P and the neighboring Buffalo and Susquehanna which together gave it a route from its own mainline at Butler to within 40 miles of Williamsport. But the Depression made construction of that 40 miles impossible (the Interstate Commerce Commission had never thought it was necessary anyway), and floods took out most of the Buffalo and Susquehanna lines in the mid-1930s. The "Rainbow Route," as it was called, never materialized. But that was how the little BR&P wound up as part of the B&O.

Paul Piertak's book is a small but important contribution to the history of local commerce, industry, and folkways in that region of small cities between Pittsburgh and Rochester.

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Working-Class Life: The "American Standard" in Comparative Perspective, 1899-1913. By PETER H. SHERGOLD. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982. Pp. xvii, 306. Acknowledgments, introduction, appendix, notes, index. \$21.95.)

"On the reefs of roast beef and apple pie socialist Utopias of every sort are sent to their doom" (p. 9). Werner Sombart said it, and generations of historians have echoed its sentiment: American workers have been conservative and lacking in class consciousness because they were, as a group, relatively well-off. Samuel Gompers did not dispute the fact of relative affluence. He offered his constituents more pie, pure and simple.

Peter Shergold's *Working-Class Life* (a pathetically nondescript title) is the first rigorous test of the apple pie thesis. Comparing the working-class "standard" of living in Pittsburgh and Birmingham,