

North—south Indiana link

The Winona Line, an interurban system founded on religion

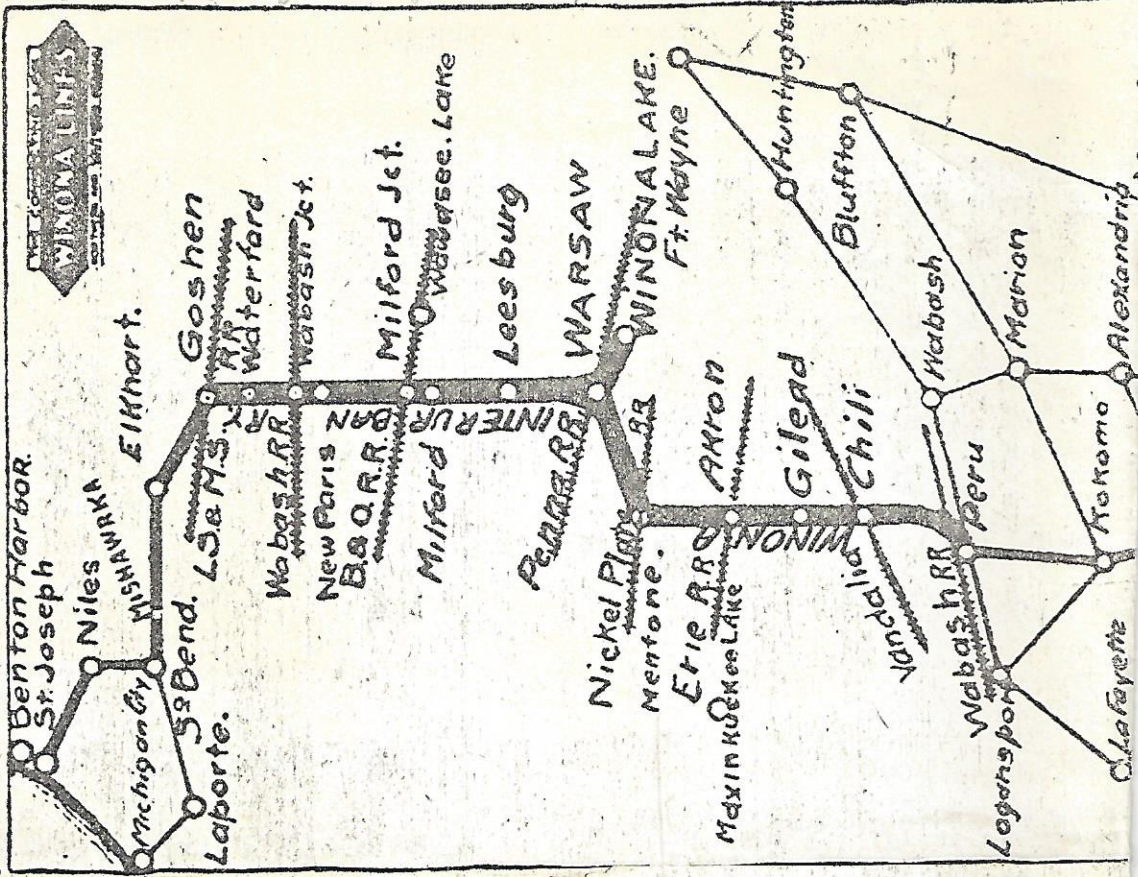
by Ann Kindig Sheetz

WHEN EARL SHINN WENT from Mentone, Ind. to Chicago, Ill., Ind., to pay court to Mariam Fouts, he took the same "trolley-urban" Miss Fouts had taken to high school in Akron. And when a patient came down the line went to the hospital in Elkhart, and her doctor took the trolley car to Goshen, and entered to another line, and were there within a few

Winona Railroad — 71 miles long at the height of passenger-carrying days — was the connecting link between northern and southern Indiana in an interurban network that once included 5,000 miles of track in

The Winona Interurban Railway Co.

Operates the Highest Standard of Passenger Equipment.



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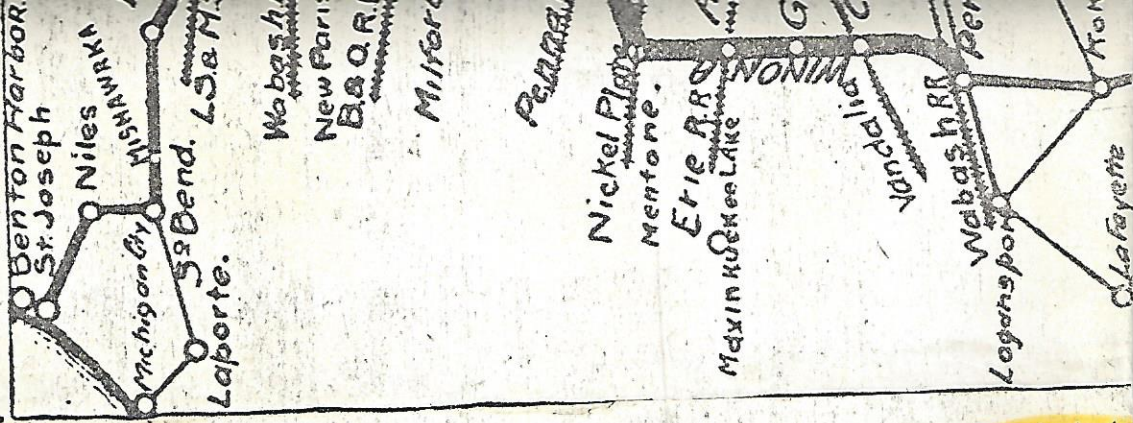
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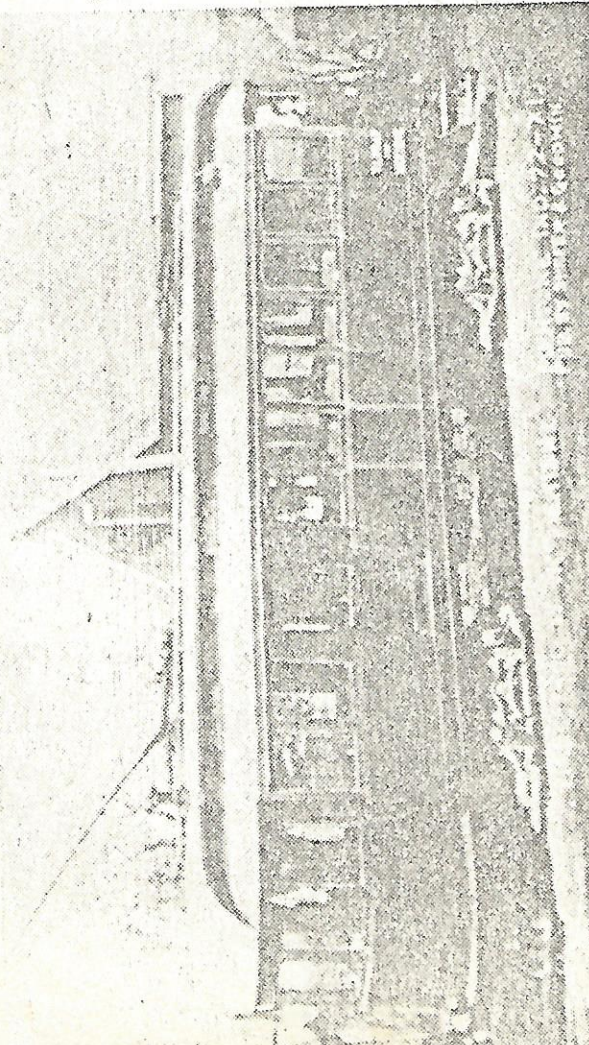
ALABAMA
ALASKA
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KANSAS
KENTUCKY
LOUISIANA
MAINE
MARYLAND
MASSACHUSETTS
MICHIGAN
MINNESOTA
MISSISSIPPI
MISSOURI
MONTANA
NEBRASKA
NEVADA
NEW HAMPSHIRE
NEW JERSEY
NEW YORK
NORTH CAROLINA
NORTH DAKOTA
OHIO
OKLAHOMA
OREGON
PENNSYLVANIA
RHODE ISLAND
SOUTH CAROLINA
SOUTH DAKOTA
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

*Miss Fouts of
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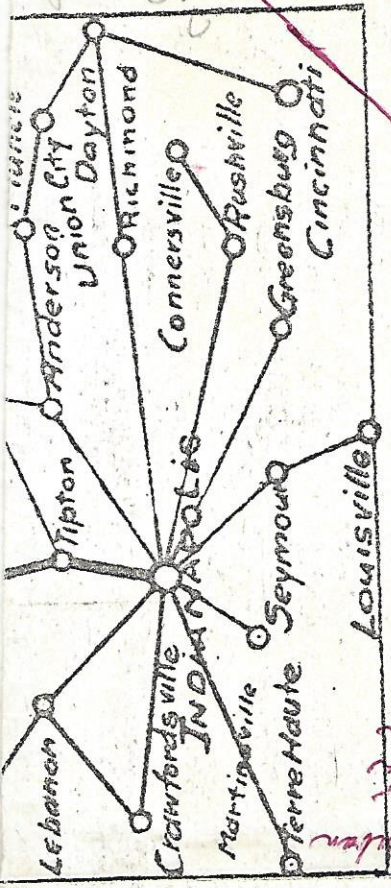
Michigan and Ohio. ...nded by such men as J.M. Studebaker of the ...nd wagon and automotive family and Pitts- ...ckle king H.J. Heinz, the Winona was only ...miles long when it was built as the Winona & ...y Railroad Co. to take people from Warsaw to ...ona Assembly, the religious settlement at near- ...ona Lake. It carried as many as 15,000 persons ...o hear such notables as William Jennings Bryan, ...Whitcomb Riley, Madame Ernestine Schu- ...Heink, Louise Homer and, later, the renowned ...unday, evangelist who aimed to make the coun- ...o dry a man would have to be primed before he ...spit."

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THE FIRST TROLLEY IN MENTONE enabled people of that community to go to the county seat, Warsaw, in less than an hour, a trip that previously had taken much longer by horse and buggy.

South Bend Tribune, Sunday, September 19, 1976



tors of the Winona Assembly formed the Winona Interurban Railway Co., and began an expansion program, first to the north as far as Goshen and then, a section at a time from the south, from Peru to Chili, and Chili to Akron. They then returned to the north to complete the line between Warsaw and Mentone. Finally, in 1910, the remaining section, between Mentone and Akron was completed. Construction often was delayed by farmers who refused to sell their land for the right-of-way and by such quirks of nature as quicksand that consumed equipment and teams of horses.

But as soon as a section of the line was completed, hundreds of persons rode the cars on special outings to the next town for band concerts and road company plays.

"IT WAS A GODSEND," a woman in Chili said of the Winona. "Before it came, we had no other way to get to Peru except by horse and buggy or on foot." And it was inexpensive. A round-trip ticket to Peru from Chili cost 35 cents, but a horse consumed 50 cents worth of feed while it rested for the return trip.

The 68 miles of track were dotted with 86 waiting

(Continued on page 4)

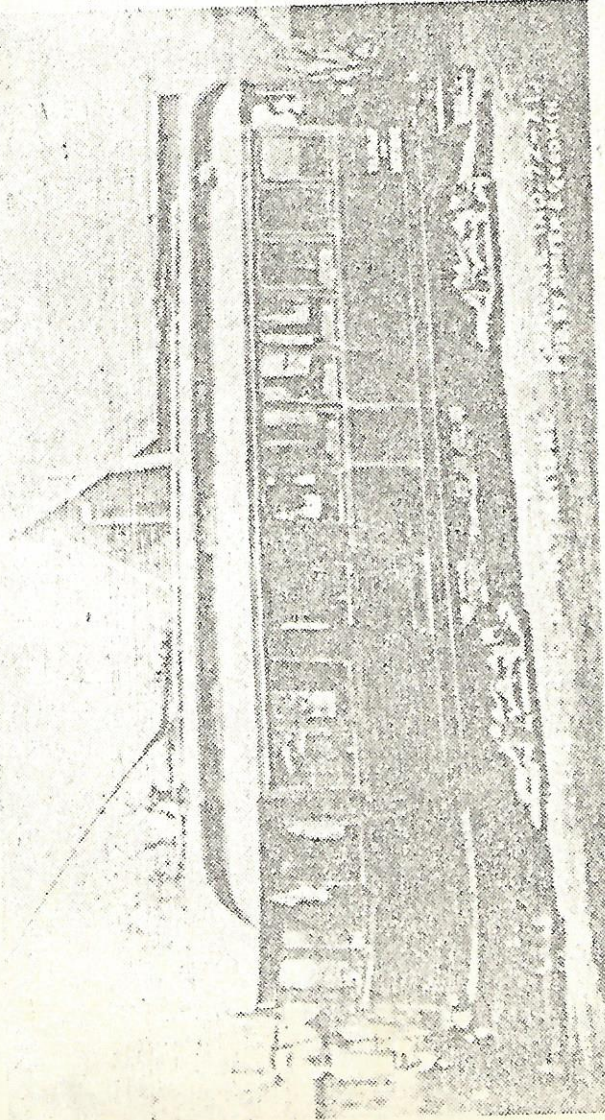
Each township in which the Indian ... passed through was asked to grant a subsidy to assist in the building of the track, money to be repaid by the railroad company. The railroad ... to be repaid by the railroad company. However, it was believed that a few progress- ...

round Indiana made contributions in ... the building project was started with whatever money, mules, and horses ...

ed fast transportation to surrounding cities.

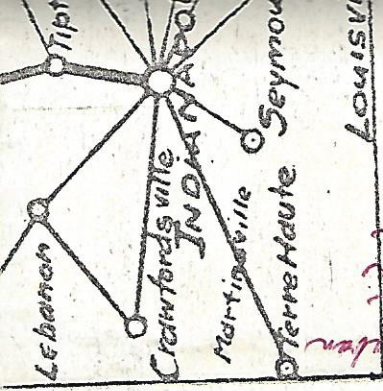
Indiana, Michigan and Ohio. Financed by such men as J.M. Studebaker of the South Bend wagon and automotive family and Pittsburgh pickle king H.J. Heinz, the Winona was only three miles long when it was built as the Winona & Warsaw Railroad Co. to take people from Warsaw to the Winona Assembly, the religious settlement at near-by Winona Lake. It carried as many as 15,000 persons a day to hear such notables as William Jennings Bryan, James Whitcomb Riley, Madame Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Louise Homer and, later, the renowned Billy Sunday, evangelist who aimed to make the country "so dry a man would have to be primed before he could spit."

Pleased with the success of their small line, opera-



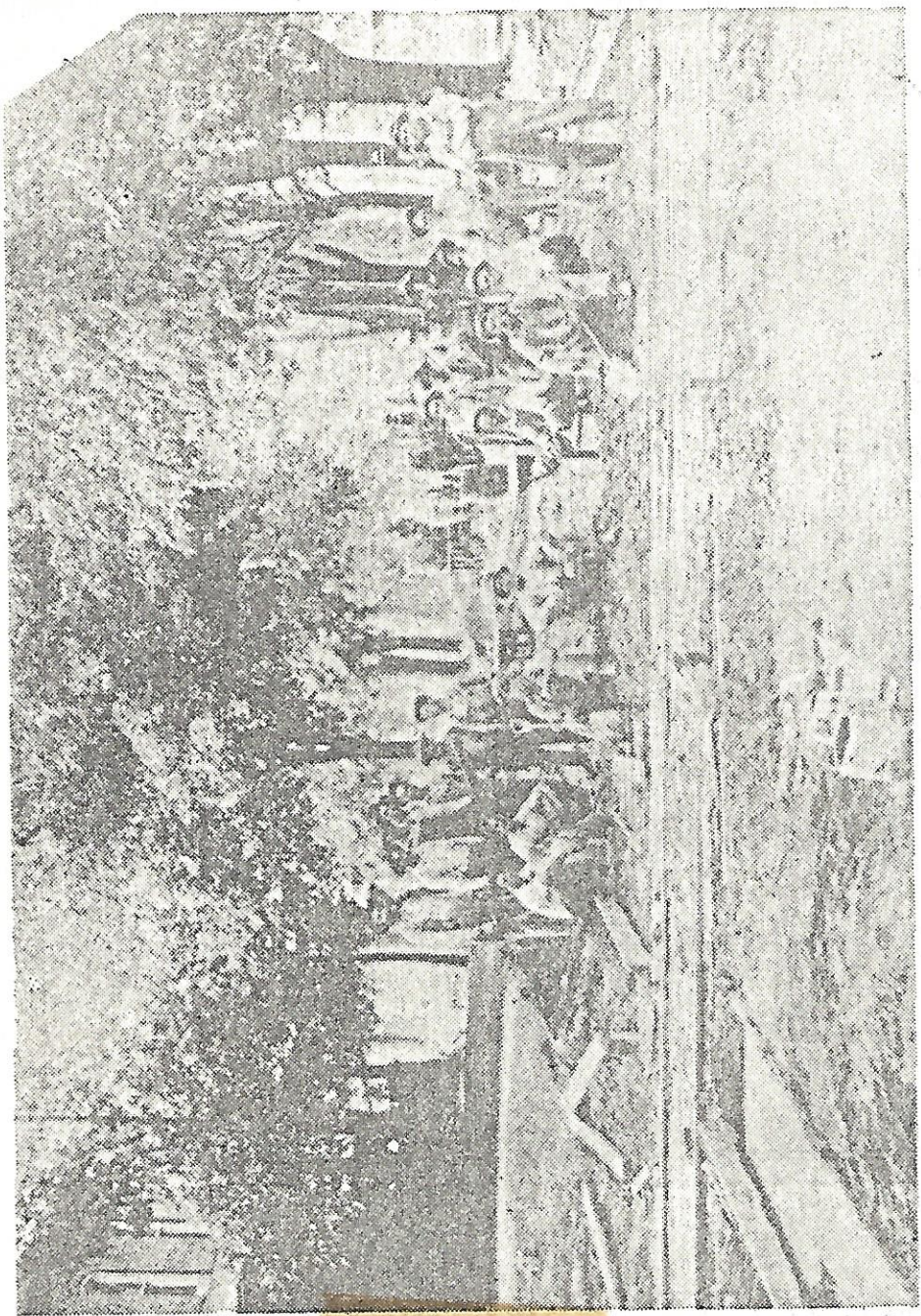
THE FIRST TROLLEY IN MENTONE enabled people of that community to go to the county seat, Warsaw, in less than an hour, a trip that previously had taken much longer by horse and buggy.

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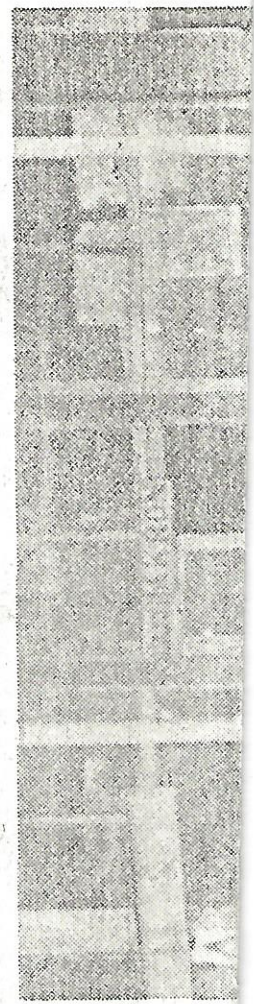


Each township in which the Indiana parallel trolley was used to treat a subway to assist in the building of the trolley, many have been running for years. The trolley in the township that lost its trolley. However, it was believed that a few years ago. But as for the hundreds of the next t plays. "IT WA the Winon get to Pen it was inc Chili cost worth of f The 68

its aid in the construction!



THIS WORK CREW PAUSED FOR A PHOTO as it labored to complete the final section of track, between Akron and Mentone.



Winona line, founded on religion

Continued from page 3)

stations, small shelters in which passengers could wait the arrival of the car. At the sound of the car's whistle (blown as it passed a "whistling post" at a distance of 80 to 100 rods from the station), passengers flagged the car, either by waving their arms during daylight hours or by lighting matches or flares after dark. Cars ran every two hours, and there was continuous half-hour service between Warsaw and Winona Lake. *The first car came as far as the (Barkman) residence located at the corner of*

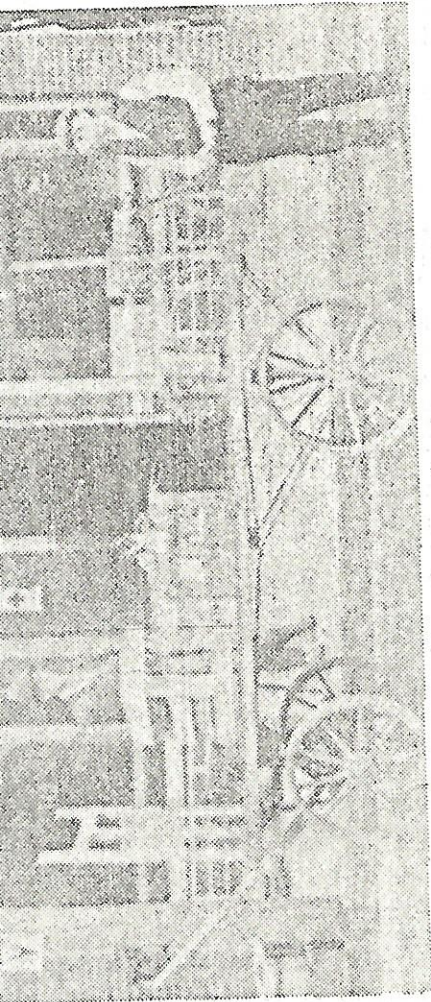
A one-way ticket from Goshen to Peru in 1915 cost \$1.35, and the 68-mile run could be made in two hours and 35 minutes. The speed never varied much during the line's existence, and, although it was considered fast, it was an acknowledged fact that no one who had to be at a certain place at a given time should depend on its schedule. There were too many variables. The weather, especially in winter, could change the schedule. And so could the passengers. The 86 stations were by no means the car's only stops; it stopped for anyone who flagged it, almost anywhere.

But the many stops were a minor price to pay. Ending forever their rural isolation, the Winona not only made it easier and less expensive for people to move from one community to another, but it also opened new vistas for traveling salesmen, students, teachers, farm families and couples bent on eloping.

The Akron News from these years is filled with

The youngsters were fascinated by it and not unusual for them to lay a penny on the tracks in order to see how far it would become when it came from every point on the line. Some even prepared to go as far as to jump into a pile of hay or straw.

PASSENGERS and freight moved through this interurban station at Akron, which also served the Wells Fargo & Co. Express.



between Indianapolis and South Bend, and the future

deal the interurban, the Winona's management looked for new sources of income, seeing its ultimate salvation as coming from the steam lines it crossed. Moving into what railroaders call "bridge traffic," the Winona became the first interurban in the midwest to solicit business from steam lines.

By the time the automobile's popularity forced it to cease passenger service in 1934, it was already involved in handling freight, primarily coal between separate lines of the Wabash Railroad at Peru and New Paris junction, gravel from Leesburg and eggs from Mentone.

ACCORDING TO GAROLD HORRICK, once a vice-president of the Winona and eventually its last employe, the freight business was the sole reason the Winona continued into the automobile age.

Constantly looking for more economical means of operating, the Winona abandoned electric power in 1938 and switched to a propane gas-electric unit and two Diesel locomotives to eliminate expensive maintenance of trolley wires and substations. These changes helped, but with the advent of World War II and the

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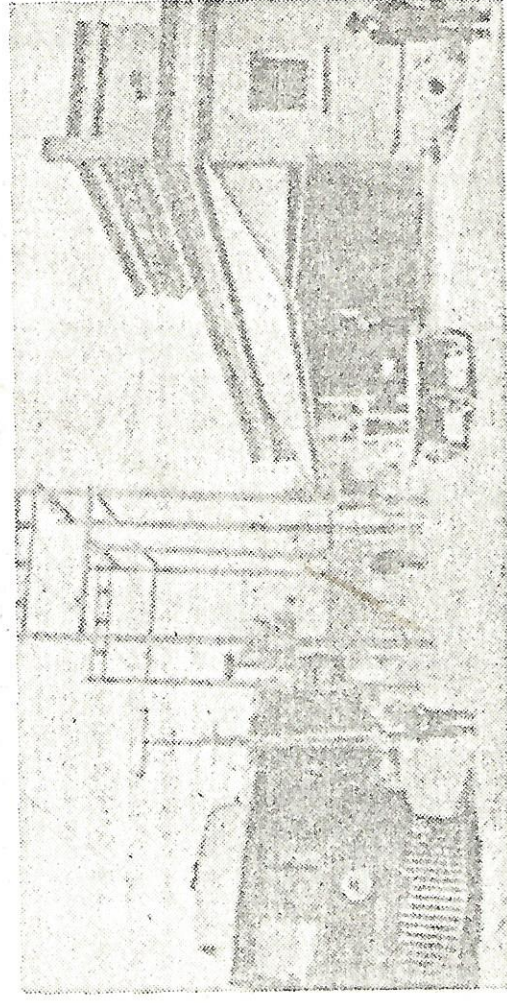
accounts of the people who whiled away time between cars by visiting with the editor ~~and~~ with stories of couples who had taken the interurban to St. Joseph, Mich. via Elkhart, South Bend and Niles, where they had the nuptial knot tied. But never on Sunday. The Winona's religious operators did not begin Sunday service until a creditor forced them to do so to increase the line's earnings and meet bond interest payments.

The Indiana interurban network, of which the Winona was a part, criss-crossed 67 of the state's 92 counties, but financial woes mounted and many lines failed. Within six years of reaching its full length, the Winona was in the first of several receiverships and its founder, the Winona Assembly, whose directors had invested \$1,500,000 of their own funds in the inter-city electrical line, was bankrupt.

After eight years of receivership, the line was sold, emerging as the Winona Service Corp., a name later changed to Winona Railroad Co. Agreements with other lines sent "through" passenger cars speeding

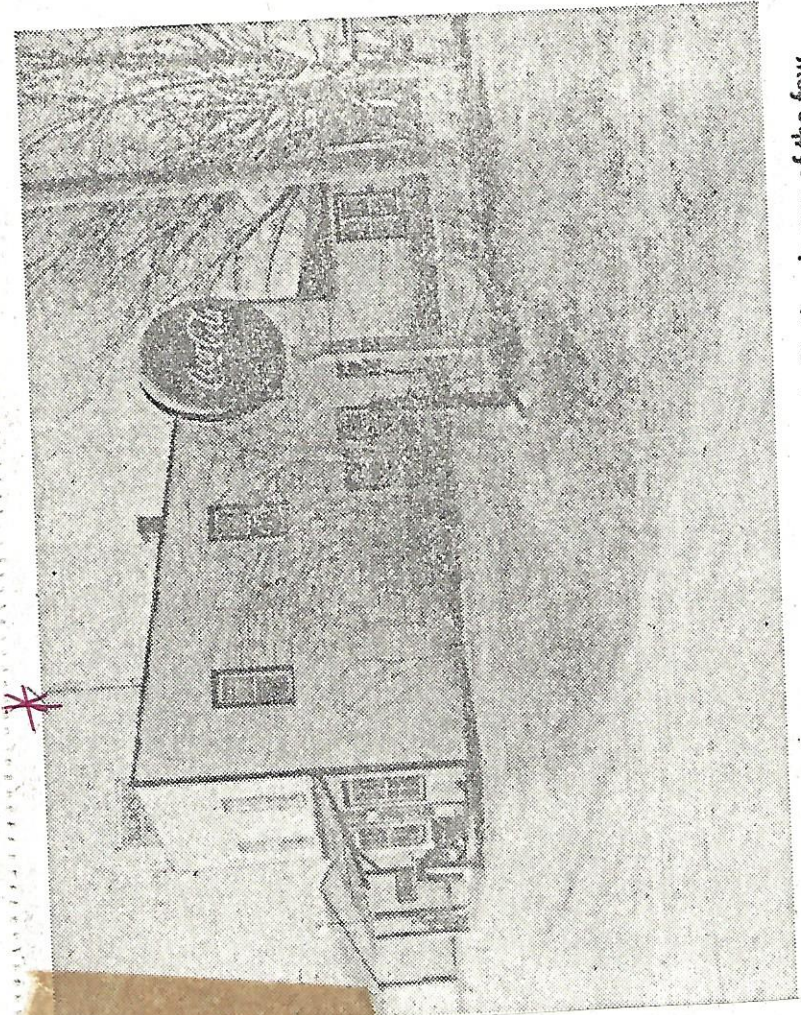
Morgan & High Street.

between Indianapolis and South Bend, and the future looked bright with one menacing exception — the growing popularity of the automobile. Correctly predicting the doom the automobile could

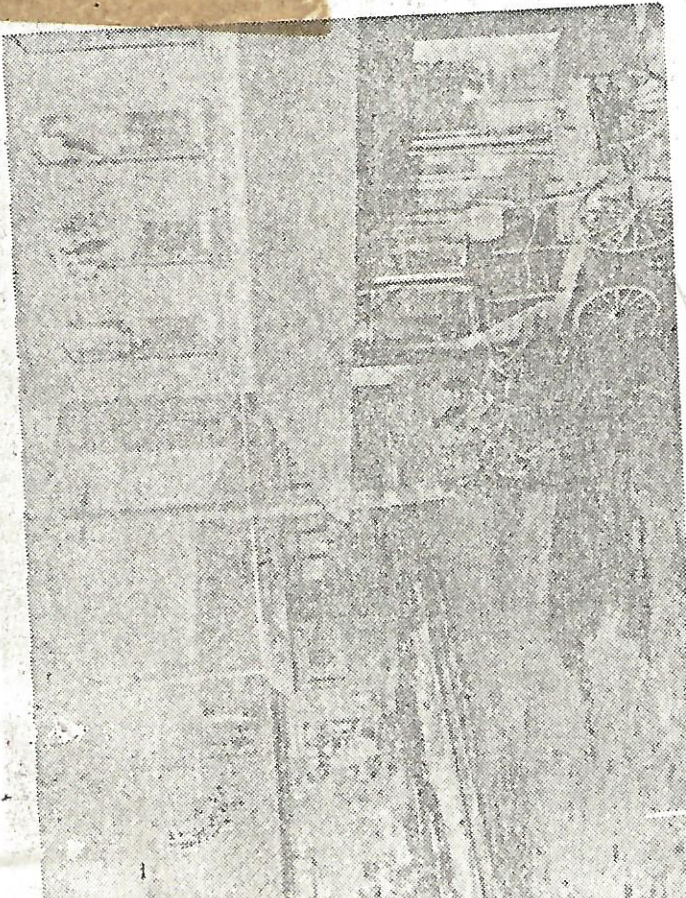
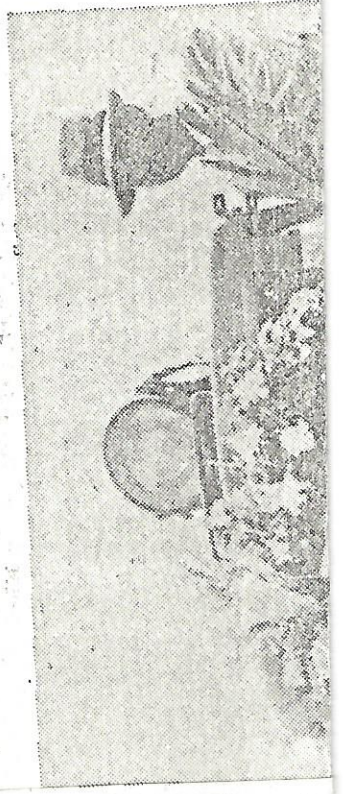


ELECTRIC current was fed into the trolley lines at this feeder station in Mentone, one of three such facilities along the Winona's southern route. The others were at Gi-lead and Brownell.





BLACK'S STORE, ONCE KNOWN as Doran's Station, is one of the few remaining waiting stations that dotted the Winona right-of-way. Much larger than most of the stations, the general store also had a small stockyard behind it to hold shipments of cattle for area farmers.



BRIDGING THE GAP between horse-drawn vehicles and the automobile, the Winona saw a great deal of change in the towns it led. This early-day photo shows dirt streets, town pump, horse-drawn dray and old buildings in Akron. But in its later years the urban crossed paved streets and passed new buildings at this spot.



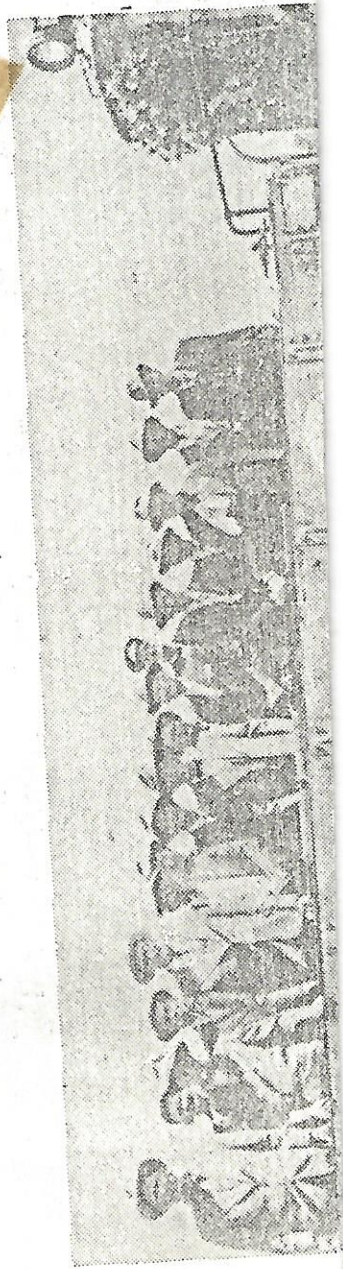


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INDOLA CARS CARRIED seated dignitaries as the Winona made its final run from Warsaw to New Paris and back on May 31, 1952.

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through the town again. It didn't always stick too close to the rails anyway."

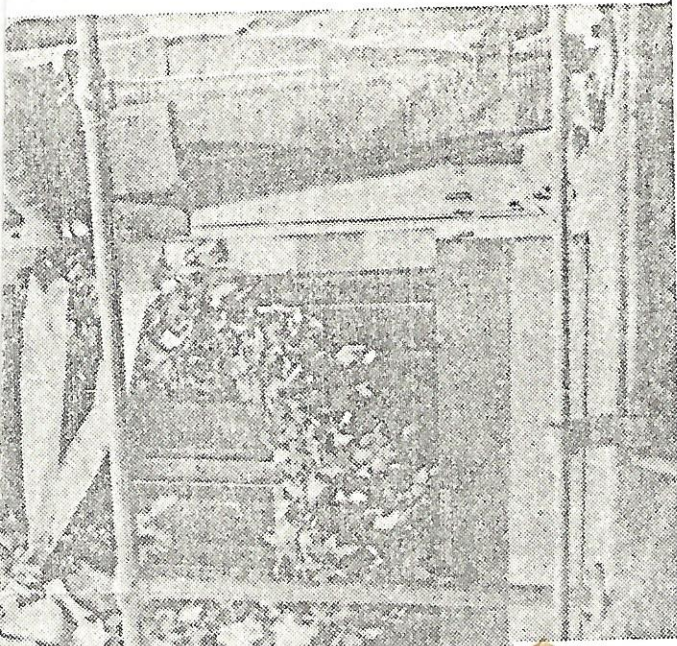
ALL THAT REMAINED was a 21-mile section between Warsaw and New Paris, and in 1952 the Winona's second petition to the Interstate Commerce Commission to abandon the line was granted.

The last remnant of Indiana's once sprawling inter-urban network was dead.

On May 31, 1952, the propane-powered engine pushed two gondola cars filled with seated dignitaries from Warsaw to New Paris and back in a nostalgic final ride. It was an occasion of mixed emotions. Nearly 50 years of existence were ending, but the automotive age was so firmly entrenched that the interurban's passing was hailed as a stepping stone to the future.

The Milford Mail, along with a brief tribute to the Winona's past, noted that the removal of the lines and its tracks would give both Milford and Warsaw opportunity to repair their main streets for better automotive transportation.

Founded on religion and kept alive on a diet of coal,



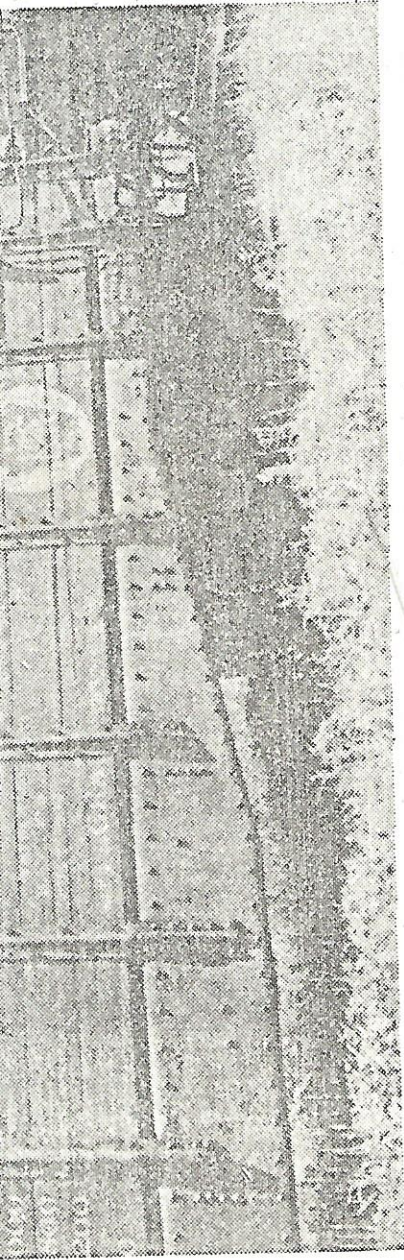
RIDING the flower-bedecked engine on the final trip was **Garold Horrick**, the company's vice-president and last employe. Now **Wayne** township assessor with an office in the **Kosciusko County courthouse**, he still has maps of the right-of-way and fond memories of a form of transportation that had to yield to the automobile.

gravel and eggs, the line that had become the "little engine that could" among Indiana's traction lines had served its purpose. It had ended forever the isolation of rural living, but it had been eclipsed by automobiles and trucks and its passing, like its formation, was hailed as a boon to the towns it served.

Today

(Another picture on page 22)

Picture of auto



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