

STORIES of New Jersey

by the Pennsylvania Railroad and uses the tracks and stations of the Penn between Newark and New York. The Jersey Central, which was to be part of the Baltimore and Ohio System, together with the Pennsylvania operates the New York and Long Branch Railroad, carrier of most of the traffic to the shore.

One railroad in New Jersey, the Lehigh and New England, which carries products from the anthracite, slate and cement regions of Pennsylvania to New Jersey, New York and New England, is owned jointly by the four systems. Several railroads also share control of Belt Line 13 which runs along the Hudson shore, linking industrial plants, railroad docks and freight yards which stretch almost uninterruptedly from Edgewater to Bayonne, 16½ miles to the south.

End of the Line

The river and bay shore has one of the heaviest concentrations of terminal facilities in the world. To the complicated maze of tracks at the water's edge come freight cars from all over the country; and at the long piers that stretch out into the water for as much as two-thirds of a mile dock ships from all over the world. Yard engines switch trains all over the yards, onto factory sidings nearby or out to the piers where their freight can be transferred to the holds of ocean liners.

No single figure could give an indication of the extent of operations in this area. Two yards used by the Erie Railroad, at Weehawken and Edgewater, can accommodate almost 3,000 freight cars at a time; the Lehigh Valley has a warehouse at Jersey City where 500 crated automobiles can be stored; two and one-half million tons of anthracite coal pass through the Lackawanna terminal at Hoboken each year, and every day to the same freight yard come 520,000 quarts of milk.

Lower New York Bay is served by terminals at Perth Amboy and South Amboy which receive coal primarily, and the chief terminals for the Delaware Valley are at Trenton, East Trenton and Camden. The waterfront terminals are only part of the facilities for receiving and shipping freight. The industrial regions are peppered with yards of the various companies. The most important of these is the Pennsylvania's receiving and break-up yard at Kearny, the largest on the Atlantic seaboard and one of the largest in the world for disposing of perishable freight.

A typical New Jersey freight depot is the Croxton Yards of the Erie Railroad on the meadows at the western edge of Jersey City where cars arrive from all over the country. This terminal, with approximately 150 tracks accommodating about 4,500 cars, has 75 classification tracks on which freight cars are sorted--all those going to the same destination are grouped into trains which are assembled on the various tracks. From Chicago, where western trains begin their journeys on the Erie rails, come instructions by teletype describing each car--its number, the weight of the load, its identification number and the place which it occupied in the train from the west. This description is called the "consist" by railroad men.

When the train pulls into the Croxton yard, the locomotive pulling it is detached and a yard locomotive, called a switch engine, is joined to the rear of the train. The line of cars is then pushed to the top of a low, narrow hill which was built on the flat meadowland. The hill is known as the "hump."

In a signal tower above the hump sits the yard conductor who breaks up the electric signals, he guides the engineer of the switch engine employed in classifying the train. The switch tender, working the track switches, also has a list showing the cars and the tracks to which they are destined. He throws the switch for the car after it is cut off by the yard conductor, so that it will