



The Semaphore



Official Organ of the Great Northern Railway Club

Volume 1

JANUARY 1924

Number 1

First Annual Frolic A Big Success

Wednesday, December 19th, 1923, is a date that every member of the club will retain in fond recollection for a long time to come. On the evening of that red letter day, the "GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY CLUB" "pulled off" its first annual frolic. "Three rousing cheers!" Was it a frolic? Ask anyone who was there! It's some yard that will accommodate 473 "empties"; but the cafeteria on the thirteenth floor of the General Office Building at St. Paul proved entirely adequate, although there was not a foot of track to spare.

Promptly at 6:30 o'clock P. M., as per schedule, the "empties" were lined up in the yard, and the proceedings opened with the national anthem. The empties were then turned over to Yardmaster M. L. Countryman, and the ministrations of thirty "freight handlers" of the feminine persuasion to load them up, at one simoleon the load. The bill of lading called for the following:

<i>Cream of Tomato Soup</i>	
<i>Olives</i>	<i>Celery</i>
<i>Chicken a la King</i>	
<i>Mashed Potatoes</i>	<i>Peas</i>
<i>Salad</i>	
<i>Parker House Rolls</i>	<i>Coffee</i>
<i>Apple Pie a la Mode</i>	
<i>Cigars</i>	

The Great Northern orchestra discoursed sweet strains and syncopated jazz during the loading period; and music from elsewhere was brought in by radio.

It was a busy yard during the loading. The Yardmaster was fully occupied receiving and reading the wires that came in from absent officials and from those high in the seats of the mighty. Ye scribe understands, however, that the most interesting and at the same time valuable wire—all of 85 cents worth—was not delivered. Senator La Follette wired General Solicitor Dorety, we believe, that he had failed to

(Turn to Page 4)

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GREAT NORTHERN RAIL- WAY CLUB:

In this, the first issue of The Semaphore, I welcome the opportunity to extend to you my best wishes for the success of your Club, and to congratulate you on the fine spirit of co-operation and team work that has been displayed since the Club's inception.

A short time ago I had the pleasure of meeting many of you personally at a noonday meeting. At that time I stated that the railroad has nothing in the conduct of its affairs to conceal; that its management is not fraught with dark secrets, nor are its ways obscure and mysterious. I wish again to bring this point to your attention, for only through mutual confidence and faith in each other and in the Company, without fear or any lurking suspicion of mistrust, can we accomplish in fullest measure what I am sure we all wish to achieve. That is, the advancement of the Great Northern Railway and the broadening of our own lives and outlook. If I were asked what, in my opinion, is the greatest good fortune that could befall the Great Northern Railway, my answer would be, "To have all of its employees resolve to make it the best railroad in the United States, and whole-heartedly devote themselves to that end." Inasmuch as the aim of the Great Northern Club is to bring about this very thing, it is no exaggeration to say that nothing of more importance to the Great Northern is being done than the work of this Club.

With the very fine start already made, and with the splendid spirit that you have displayed, both individually and collectively, there is hardly any limit to the success to which you may aspire. I personally am very much interested in the Club, and most anxious to see it continue the good work already started. I am proud to be a member.

Yours very truly,
RALPH BUDD,
President.

Great Northern Railway Club

One noon last September, five or six Great Northern men lunched together at the St. Paul Athletic Club. One of them, Mr. E. F. Flynn, we believe it was, suggested the formation of a club of Great Northern employes. The seed fell upon fruitful ground; and, after a brief discussion, it was decided to ask a number of others in the general offices to attend a luncheon the following week at the employes' cafeteria in the building to further consider the matter. About two dozen attended the second meeting, and the idea began to take definite form. This meeting was followed by a third, attended by about 40, where the idea crystalized into the proposition of a club to which every male employe, above the age of 18, would be eligible—a club, the purpose of which should be to promote friendship between individuals and mutual co-operation between departments, to create an *esprit de corps* throughout the organization, to further the Company's interest in every legitimate way, to do all possible to establish a cordial relation between the railroad and the public, to awaken the people to a clearer understanding of the place the railroads occupy in the economic life of the nation, the problems confronting them, and their solutions, in which the public must aid, if they are to be successfully found.

A temporary organization of the club was effected at this meeting, and a committee appointed to draft a constitution and by-laws. The plan calls for weekly luncheon meetings, at each one of which some member from one or another of the departments will give a brief talk explaining to the others the work of his department, its organization, methods, the difficulties encountered, or the like, so that each of the members gradually will acquire a fair knowledge of the functions of all departments of the railroad, and not be lim-

(Turn to Page 3, Column 1)

THE SEMAPHORE

Official Publication of the
GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY CLUB

EDITOR—

W. N. S. IVINS,
1118 G. N. Office Building

STAFF—

CLIFFORD H. TREMBLY
M. L. COUNTRYMAN, JR.



OFFICERS OF THE CLUB

JAMES T. MAHER *President*
GEO. H. HESS, JR. *Vice-President*
EDWARD F. FLYNN *Vice-President*
CLIFFORD H. TREMBLY *Secretary*
JOHN H. BOYD *Treasurer*

Address all communications to the Editor. Copy for each number must be in by the 5th of the month of issue.

Editorial

With this issue, the SEMAPHORE makes its bow to the army of employees of the Great Northern. It is proposed that it shall be the official organ of the GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY CLUB; and if the enthusiasm and healthy growth marking that recently formed organization may be taken as an indication, this infant and diminutive periodical is destined to become a purposeful little sheet, which will find a warm welcome with those who are not only proud of the railroad, proud of its record and optimistic of its future, but are loyally bending every energy to achieve the success we all hope for the road.

It is proposed to publish the Semaphore monthly, and it is intended to make it a friendly, gossipy, little paper whose every issue will contain some little bit of news, or comment, which will be found of interest, or perhaps will provoke a smile. Edited in St. Paul, we shall be dependent largely on our friends everywhere on the system for items of news and interest; so everyone of you sharpen your pencil and tell us what is doing

in your town, or along your division, which you think the rest of us would like to know. The Semaphore belongs to you. It may not be your Kid by birth, but if we accomplish what we have set out to do, it is going to be your Kid by adoption; and you are going to have a hand in the raising of it. In other words, its life and vitality depend on your help and co-operation. Let's have your contribution, poetry or prose, light or serious—either will be equally welcome.

The greatest tonnage in the road's history, and \$25,000,000 net operating revenue. That is the G. N.'s record for 1923. How was it achieved? By hard work, loyalty and co-operation. These were what did the trick. From President to call boy, from Duluth to Seattle, each one of us may take credit who brought these characteristics to the performance of his allotted task. But to the men out on the line, who, rain or shine, in heat or in bitter cold, braved all, and bent every energy to keep the line open and the trains moving, to them should go the greater credit. Without their loyal service and intelligent co-operation, we could not have achieved this success.

Mr. Budd's letter, which appears on the first page, is both an appreciation and an exhortation to continue the good work of the Club so auspiciously begun.

Boys, the president of the road is for us; more, he is *one of us*. It is up to us to justify his faith and realize his hope. There is no lack of incentive—so let's put it over BIG. A long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together!

The Editor walked down Fourth street with the Comptroller the other day and ventured the thought that the Great Northern had made a pretty good record the past year. "It was the best year since 1917 under corporate operation," said he. "We have about \$25,000,000 net." Mr. Hess qualified this statement by saying that the net was, of course, exceeded by the rental paid by the Government during Federal control. There is this difference, however. We finished 1923 with a better railroad—better in every way. At the end of Federal control, we got back a property of which the less said the better.



Did you hear Freight Traffic Manager Smitton's speech at the Great Northern Club banquet? No? Neither did we. In fact, we haven't found anyone yet who did. George told someone afterward that it was about the traffic department. If it were not for them, the rest of us wouldn't have any jobs. We get you, Georgie. Much obliged.

And say! In our humble opinion, General Solicitor Dorety has missed his calling. Law? Pooh! Pooh! and a couple of Pshaws! The way he helped Brown befuddle the audience with his legerdemain convinces us that Fred's endeavors should have graced the stage.

And old man Parker's boy Fred! In assisting Brown, he was not one bit behind Dorety in grace and ease of manner. The only drawback to his performance was his inability to blush as becomingly as the Dorety kid.

A fellow who says he knows told us that James T. Maher, our genial President of the Club, is a first cousin of "Signor Bingdinger, the baritone singer" (Remember him?). We don't believe it. Imagine spelling the name Giovani Mahera. Moreover, we happen to know the Honorable James' forebears many, many years ago swore allegiance to old King Brian Boru.

When Mr. Countryman tires of the law and wearies of general counseling, as it were, he can land a yardmaster's job on any division of the road. The ease and celerity with which he kept Motive Power and Equipment moving through the Funville Yard the other night did not escape the eagle eye of them operating fellers—Jenks and Keating.

About six months ago, this here railroad went and hooked itself on to a human dynamo yclept Ed. F. Flynn who breezed down to St. Paul from Devils Lake and took charge of the Public Relations Bureau. He is hired to tell the public why is a railroad, and what; and does he tell 'em? I'll say he do. Yes sir! When he gets going at top speed as a public relationer, we predict that this railroad is going to have more relations than Solomon.

Great Northern Ry. Club

(From Page 1)

ited to an intimate knowledge of his own particular department. It is hoped to have occasional addresses by men outside the organization on topics of interest to club members. But underlying all, and the main-spring of every activity of the club, is the spirit of fellowship, good will, and co-operation.

Early in November, the first annual meeting was held, with election of officers. These were:

President—James T. Maher, Right of Way, Land and Tax Department.

Vice-President—Geo. H. Hess, Jr., Accounting Department.

Vice-President—Edward F. Flynn, Law Department.

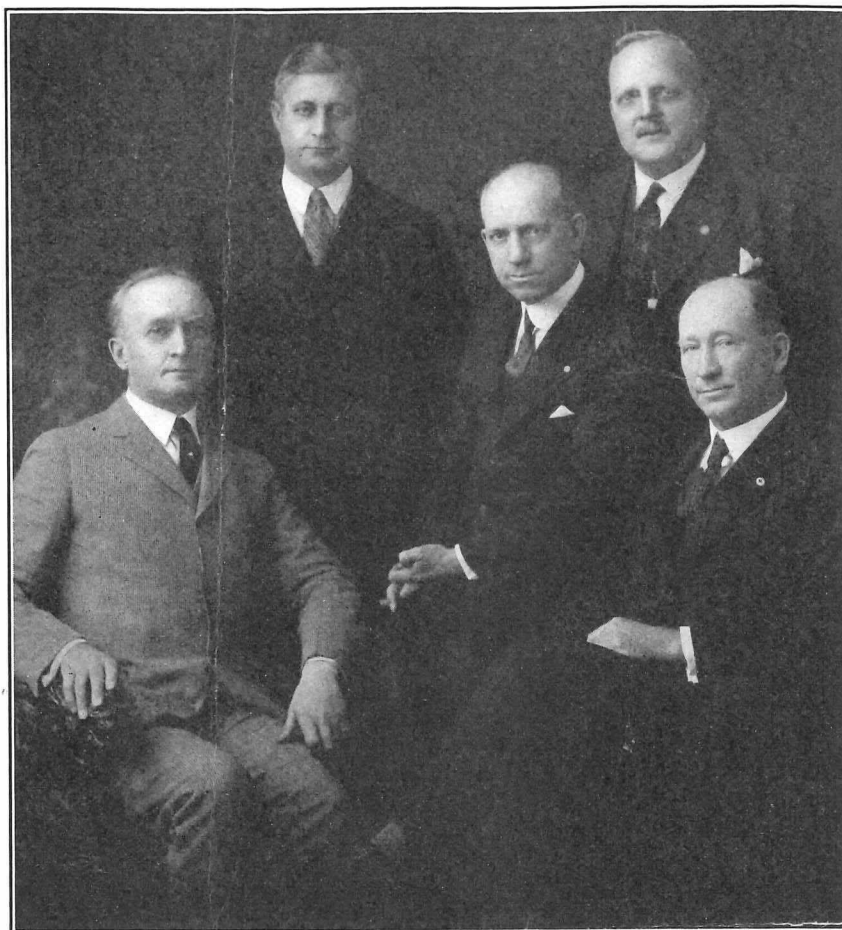
Secretary—Clifford H. Trembly, Traffic Department.

Treasurer—John H. Boyd, Accounting Department.

By the middle of December, the membership had reached 250 and the club is still growing.

The dues are \$1.00 a year, the weekly luncheon is served at 50 cents a plate, and each member is expected to average at least a sixty per cent attendance (excepting, of course, absence from the city).

So much for what thus far has been achieved in the General Offices at St. Paul. Obviously, this club cannot be, should not be, and was not intended to be, limited to employees in St. Paul. It is the purpose and hope that the club may become truly a GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY CLUB with a membership co-extensive with the system. While the club at St. Paul has provided for non-resident membership, and extends a welcoming hand to all who will join with us, it has been from the first foremost in the minds of the members that eventually we may have an organization similar to the Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions clubs, that is, a general organization with local chapters, not only at St. Paul, Seattle, Spokane and the larger cities along the line, but at every division point over the system. It can be done—it will be done. There are 30,000 employees, and once we develop the organization into an army of 30,000 friends, whose watchwords are "fellowship and co-operation," every man-jack of us will gain an added pride in himself, pride in his calling, pride in his fellow workers, and pride in this good old railroad which we are all



OUR CLUB OFFICERS

Left to right—C. H. Trembly; G. H. Hess, Jr.; E. F. Flynn; J. H. Boyd; J. T. Maher.

trying to make the finest on the map. Let's go!

At its meeting, Wednesday, January 9th, the Club passed a vote of thanks to Mr. J. H. Boyd, who, as chairman of the entertainment committee, labored so arduously to make the annual frolic a success. John was everywhere and doing a dozen things at once. He was indefatigable; was largely instrumental in arranging the program; took entire charge of the banquet, the seating arrangements and the menu; and then, to make us doubly his debtor, kindly consented to sing for us. With his voice and artistry, that exquisite ballad "Roses of Picardy" gained a new beauty for us all.

Ain't Freight Claim Agent Lewis the nifty little monologist? How he can tell 'em! And such a big voice now for such a little feller! We should worry, if der railroat don't smash and lose some more freight yet. The Orpheum would get him I bet cher.

And did yez see our old friend P. L. Clarity over from Minneapolis? Sure an' he had the Quaker Oats smile on his face that wouldn't come off.

How many of you at the Frolic heard Assistant General Counsel Janes plead with General Solicitor Dorety to pay for that "collect" telegram? His heart rending appeal would have moved anyone but a brother limb of the law. No wonder judges and juries fall for Alex.

Comptroller Hess, also, exerted his powers of persuasion on Dorety with equal unavail. I suspect that Fred is just a "wee bit set" in his mind.

Superintendent of Telegraph Rankine was responsible for the radio set up that proved the undoing of Smitton. If George ever finds this out, Rankine had better board the radio flyer to Samoland or some other seaport before George gets to him.

First Annual Frolic

(From Page 1)

include Glacier National Park, or the Missouri River scenery, or something, in our valuation and to please remedy the inadvertence pronto. But Fred insisted that it was after hours and his office was closed. Also, moreover, and besides, the cashier had gone home and there was nothing doing in the way of "collect" telegrams. Neither the entreaties of the messenger boy, nor the dire threats of the blue-coated minion of the law, brought in to enforce collection, had any effect on Fred. He was adamant. Being a lawyer, of course he could be and keep out of jail.

There was a wire from President Budd in New York regretting his inability to be present and hoping the frolic would prove a great success. Whereupon, 473 frolicers noisily inquired what was the matter with Ralph, and as noisily asserted that he was all right, and that if there was anyone a bit in doubt as to *who* was all right, why Ralph was all right. Wow! Vice-President Kenney, also, was out of luck, in that business detained him in the East. He, too, wired the hope that the frolic would go over big; and the 473 proceeded to proclaim to all downtown St. Paul that there wasn't one little thing the matter with "Bill" either.

How the time flew! By 7:45 those fairy freight handlers had loaded every empty. The track was cleared and, with bell ringing, the train pulled out for a through run on the "Funville Division." With the cigars going good, the speeches began. Mr. Countryman as Toastmaster was surely the "cat's whiskers." He had a quip, a story, or a joke to introduce every speaker; and the frolicers were there to give them a rousing reception.

Vice-President Martin told us he was enjoying us, and that the spirit of the gathering warmed the cockles of his heart—or words to that effect—all in light vein, for nothing serious went with the bunch. But the thought was there, however humorously expressed to befit the occasion. When he had concluded, the crowd wished to inquire whether there was any little thing the matter with "George," and vociferously remarked that they rather thought there wasn't. More Wows!

Vice-President Jenks, also, con-

gratulated the assembly on the success of the party, the *camaraderie* and whole-hearted friendliness that smiled forth from every face. Whereupon, the frolicers loudly insisted that "Charlie" was strictly all right.

General Manager Teas of the American Railway Express Company found opportunity here to compliment the gathering on the success of the frolic and to assure us that he was greatly pleased to be numbered among us.

Then Freight Traffic Manager Smitton was called on for a speech. He got away to a good start; but unfortunately the Chief of Police, that day resigned, called up to give the audience a parting warning not to believe what George was going to say, 'cause he was stringing us, or something of the kind. Someone incontinently cut Ex-Chief Sommers in on the magnavox and well, we never shall know what Georgie said.

Were we going good by now? We were! and stepping on the gas! The speed limit was off! A happy thought to bring on J. Joe Brown of the Accounting Department at this time to show us his bag of tricks. His legerdemain is the real article. When it comes to prestidigitating, Brown is strictly all there with the deft and nimble digit. But I ask you, why make us all jealous by showing us how easy it is to vanquish the Volstead Act? When Brown wants a drink, he just pumps someone's elbow. Dorety and Fred Parker each got a drink out of that trick. Some people have all the luck!

Then our Club President did a turn. It was a two-round bout between Kid Maher, the pride of the Great Northern, and Battling Harris of South St. Paul. The Kid knocked the realm of song for a row of apple trees, while the Battler hammered the piano into groggy submission. It was a knock-out, and the crowd cheered them to the echo. What those two can do to "Mahoney's 4th of July" is something to write home about. Jim vows that he is no singer. Modest chap—Jim! However, a lot of them are getting by and taking good money with voices not half so good.

Then, it being Christmas time, who should come in but Santa Claus, all dressed up in a Glacier Park Carnival suit, b' Gosh! From his proverbial pack, he brought forth presents for several of the officials who

evidently had been writing to Santa. Space precludes listing the gifts here. Perhaps later we may have the pleasure of doing so. Suffice it to say that they were truly splendid and warranted Woolworth's Best.

Then when fun had held sway for hours and everyone had laughed his fill, what happier return to the serious could be found than a song by J. H. Boyd? Jack sang "Roses of Picardy" and, as an encore, Molloy's "Just a Song at Twilight." We shall not soon forget the haunting melody of "Roses of Picardy" or the spell of Jack's voice in the dear old song whose sentiment finds echo in the heart of everyone who ever loved a lass.

When the applause following Jack's songs had died away, Mr. E. F. Flynn of the Public Relations Department arose and stated that while the evening had been given over to fun and frolic, he believed that a gathering of the kind should give a few moments at least to serious considerations, and that he deemed the time opportune to talk to the boys on the subject of diversified farming. If Ed said anything about diversified farming, the writer didn't hear it. After gaining our sober attention, he pulled a whizzer on us. He talked about anything else but the announced subject of his speech. He drifted around finally to an eulogy of the Glacier Park Goat, and wound up with a peroration in verse of which the Editor is guilty.

THE GOAT OF GLACIER PARK

W. N. S. Ivins

The famous goat of Glacier Park
Is the greatest sprinter that left the Ark;
Content no more with crags and peaks,
He tireless o'er the country streaks—
High on the side of the G. N. car,
He travels swiftly, travels far,
From North to South, from East to West
Upon his ceaseless ronnage quest.

Phil Sheridan, black steed astride,
And Paul Revere, on his famous ride,
Set records of which poets wrote,
Yet can't compare with this lively goat.
Aurora drove a champing four
That 'thwart the heavens morning bore.
Their limit was the daylight run;
But day and night to the goat are one.

In far Prince Edward shines his face;
In Cuba, he the scene doth grace;
'Neath tropic sun, 'mid northern snows,
On land and over seas he goes.
The famous goat of Glacier Park
Is the greatest sprinter that left the Ark;
And o'er the land in tireless flight.
He blazons far Great Northern's might.