

W. J. Whalen Retires



"Personalized Service", one of the principal themes stressed by Vice President W. W. Kremer at both the traffic and the joint meetings, was made the subject of this placard in red and blue. Shown with it at the traffic meeting are, left to right: Mr. Kremer; G. M. Ryan, general freight traffic manager—rates & divisions; Harry Sengstacken, passenger traffic manager; and W. D. Sunter, general freight traffic manager—sales & service.

General Staff Meeting cont'd

cited was the fact that the Road would soon have available for shippers \$12 million worth of new freight equipment.

"Why are we buying this equipment?" he asked. "First of all because we have faith in the future. I am hopeful that this purchase will be met with enthusiasm by our shippers. To the best of our ability we are giving you men the very finest equipment that can be had."

Commenting on the legislation now before Congress, growing out of the Smathers Committee Report, Mr. Quinn reminded the group that "We may not get all we ask for. Rome was not built in a day, but you are all going to be called upon to a greater extent than heretofore to assist in this important legislative matter."

W. J. Whalen, who had retired as operating vice president only a few days earlier, also addressed the meeting, as did Vice Presidents W. W. Kremer, F. G. McGinn, P. H. Draver and R. S. Stephenson, and R. F. Kratochwill, assistant comptroller.

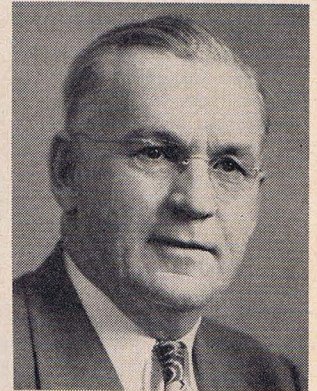
The feeling of optimism which marked the three days of meetings was voiced again by Mr. Quinn in his closing remarks before the operating department group on the third day.

"As you men return to your jobs I want it to be with the realization that you have our every confidence. I want you to go home with hope, because I have hope that things are going to get better. Meanwhile, we have a job to do."

Retirement Climaxes

the Story of the Railroad's

Best Known Family



W. J. Whalen

THE familiar term "Milwaukee Road Family" does not actually have reference to the Whalens. It just seems that it very well might, for certainly no family has ever more perfectly typified that larger family group than have the kinsmen of Martin and Mike Whalen, the brothers who began that colorful chapter of Milwaukee Road history long before the turn of the century.

The story of the Whalens is the story of this railroad's best known family, and it calls for re-telling because of the retirement on May 13 of William J. Whalen, operating vice president and most outstanding of the many of that name who have called this railroad home.

He leaves with a record of 52 busy years, many of them consisting of seven-working-day weeks. He also leaves with the gratifying knowledge that, with the

possible exception of the late J. T. Gillick, he has had a greater and more far-reaching influence on The Milwaukee Road than any operating officer before him.

In a day when huge track maintenance machines are rapidly replacing the old track gangs, including water boys, it must be realized that William J. Whalen's career will necessarily be one of the last involving the legendary rise from water boy to vice president. In his case, however, it was never hard to realize that the man behind the big desk, with the always-busy intercom box, started with a water pail, because one of the keys to his great value as an officer was the fact that he always felt close to the men out on the railroad making things go.

To start the story at the beginning, it should be stated that his father, the late

Before the luncheon marking his retirement, Mr. Whalen took a minute to show some pictures from the family album. Left to right: J. P. Kiley, retired president; Mr. Whalen; William J. Quinn, president; and Leo T. Crowley, chairman of the board.



Martin Whalen, began working for the railroad in 1870 and had 68 years of service to his credit when he retired in 1938. He was in track work throughout the greater part of his career, serving for a number of years as roadmaster. It should also be noted that Martin's brother Mike was also with the Road for 64 years, most of the time in track work.

The retiring vice president is the youngest of Martin Whalen's four sons, all of whom were Milwaukee Road employes. There were also four daughters who reached adulthood, three of whom married Milwaukee Road men. Altogether there were 11 children. One died in infancy, and two daughters died during the influenza epidemic in 1918.

William's brothers, all of whom are now deceased, had long years of service, John being with the company 59 years; Martin Jr. 30 years; and Edmund 15 years before transferring to the E.J.&E. It has often been mentioned that the total years of service of the elder Martin Whalen, his brother Mike, Martin's four sons, three sons-in-law and two cousins came to more than 400 years. Actually, this figure would be increased considerably if one added the service years of nephews and others who are still doing their share toward keeping the Whalen family tree the dominant landmark on

the Milwaukee Road landscape.

William Whalen was born in Lansing, Ia., on Mar. 22, 1893, and was only 13 when, in 1906, he started spending his summer vacations from school out on the railroad, working as waterboy in his father's track maintenance crew. He graduated from high school in 1909 at the age of 16, and in that same year advanced to timekeeper, then to extra gang foreman, and in 1916 to roadmaster at McGregor, Ia. He was at that time—at the age of 23—the youngest roadmaster in the United States, although he is proud of the fact that he later appointed two roadmasters younger than he was when he established the record. They were Norman Kelsey, now roadmaster at Savanna, and the late Frank Cassidy.

In 1923 he was made trainmaster at Joliet, Ill., and later served in the same capacity at Montevideo, Minn., Aberdeen, S. D., Portage, Wis., and Dubuque, Ia. He then served as assistant superintendent at Perry, Ia. before being promoted to superintendent at Terre Haute in 1937.

"I thought that day never was going to come," he later remarked. "I was 14 years as a trainmaster and assistant superintendent. It seemed that every time I got my hand on the door to a superintendent's job, they'd consolidate a couple

of divisions."

After serving as superintendent on the Dubuque and Illinois and the La Crosse & River Divisions, he was advanced to general superintendent at Milwaukee on June 1, 1946. He became assistant general manager of Lines East a little more than two years later, and in August, 1950 was appointed Lines East general manager. His appointment as assistant vice president in charge of operations came in October, 1952, followed one year later by his election as vice president—operation.

Assumed Many Added Responsibilities

Meanwhile, Mr. Whalen has assumed many additional responsibilities, including that of president and director of the St. Paul Union Station, and of the Des Moines Union Railroad; vice president of the Davenport, Rock Island and N. W. Railroad; director of the Minnesota Transfer R. R., Chicago Union Station, Kansas City Terminal R. R., Southern Indiana Belt Railway, and the Milwaukee Motor Transport Company. He is also a member of the advisory board of Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids, Ia.

Mr. Whalen was married in 1920 to the former Margaret Kramer, who is shown in an accompanying picture. The Whalens have three children, Mrs. Mary Hogan of Park Forest, Ill.; Dr. William John Whalen, who worked for the Road during several summer vacations, and who is now practicing medicine in Sacramento, Calif.; and Margaret Ann, a sophomore at St. Patrick Academy in Des Plaines, a suburb of Chicago, where the the Whalens make their home.

Leo T. Crowley, chairman of the board, and President William J. Quinn were hosts at a luncheon in Mr. Whalen's honor at the Chicago Club on May 26, which was attended by a number of his closest associates on The Milwaukee Road. Following the luncheon, Mr. Quinn presented Mr. Whalen with a beautifully embossed and framed copy of a resolution which had been passed by the board of directors.

The resolution summarized his career briefly and made note of his "outstanding record characterized by integrity, application and faithfulness to duty." It concluded with an expression of appreciation and the board's wishes for many years of happiness.

The sentiment was highly appropriate as the best known member of the railroad's best known family stepped into retirement.

Among the old snapshots being shown at left are the two below, the larger of which is a Whalen family group taken at the family home in Lansing, Ia., about 1930, when the father, Martin Whalen, was assistant agent at that point and the now retiring operating vice president was trainmaster at Portage. The father and mother are seated, and the children, left to right, are: John (then roadmaster); Margaret (Mrs. P. J. Rachor); Catherine (Mrs. Gus Murphy); Edmund; Anna (Mrs. Henry Fitzpatrick); Frances (Mrs. Carl Hurm); and William himself. The other son, Martin, who was yardmaster at Othello, Wash. at the time, was not present for the picture.

Below: This 1918 snapshot shows the future operating vice president when he was a roadmaster at McGregor, Ia., with Miss Margaret Kramer (better known to her friends as Gretchen), who was later to become Mrs. Whalen.

