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Single Copy Price: \$12.50 (U.S.)
ISSN 0090-7847

RRH Online
[www.rhistorical-2.com/rlhs/
rhistory/rhistory.htm](http://www.rhistorical-2.com/rlhs/rhistory/rhistory.htm)

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**THE RAILWAY & LOCOMOTIVE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
publishes *Railroad History* twice annually
in June and December. Copyright ©2005
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Printed by the University of Illinois.



A New Page

“If you find something of enjoyment in its pages, we shall be glad; and if you are interested in our work and can help us, we shall appreciate it.” Thus began the opening words of the first *Bulletin*, a modest pamphlet of 32 pages, presented to the six members of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society in 1921. We extend the same greeting and sentiments to our 3,000 readers as we introduce a redesigned *Railroad History*.

Redesigned in several ways. Most obviously in size. We have enlarged the page format from 6 x 9 inches to 8 ¼ x 10 ½ inches. A 6 x 9 format was typical magazine size when the *Bulletin* (*RRH's* original name) was started – just as steam power was the overwhelming means of rail transportation back in 1921.

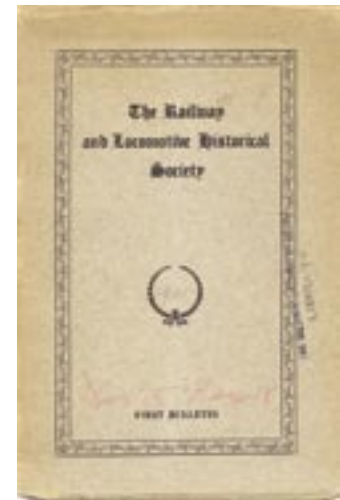
Times have changed both in railroading and publishing. Our new page size was developed to take full advantage of desktop publishing and improved print quality to meet the expectations of today’s readers, especially younger readers. The particular size was developed as the most cost-efficient way to use our printing press to maximum advantage, to meet U.S. Postal Service mailing requirements, and to give us maximum freedom to use a varied and visually compelling layout.

What you hold in your hands is 10,395 square inches of editorial space, or 20.3 percent more space than the 160-page journals produced under our old format. This in turn translates into more articles, larger photographs, and better maps.

So, too, our interests have broadened from nine decades ago, when the stated aim of the journal was “the gathering of all data possible relative to early locomotives and early railroads.” Major features in this issue range from the overlooked operations of America’s first electrified mainline railroad to a case study of the role that railroads played in improving employee health care. John Mortimer gives a nuanced account of a 19th-century railroad figure whose life story seems to come out of a tale by Edgar Allan Poe. Bill Middleton offers a succinct history of the fish car, and Alan Levitt explores the relationship between printing technology and the graphic display of early railways.

One of the joys of studying history is finding continuity amid the change. Railroads were so ubiquitous in 1921 that they were addressed almost entirely in commercial or regulatory terms; the trade periodicals of the day were devoted to traffic and finance, with an almost total emphasis on the here and now. Charles E. Fisher and the other founders of R&LHS established a publication that focused on railroad mechanical history and, aided by a succession of fine editors – John H. White Jr., Robert C. Post, and H. Roger Grant – *RRH* not only pioneered the study of technological history, but has become a leading source on the cultural and business impact of railroads on America.

The Society began with a farsighted idea in the age of steam, and we plan to carry this vision forward in the 21st century. —*MR*



Dan Cupper Collection
Cover of “First Bulletin,” 1921.