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The Erie meant a lot

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SAND, PULP FACILITY.—The sand and pulp facility at the Marion Diesel Shop provided one-stop working for incoming units before they were routed to the shop for inspections or to the ready tracks for dispatching. This scene from July of 1951 features Erie Lackawanna 2122, one of 12 General Electric U38's delivered to the railroad in December of 1951.



AT THE CROSSING.—The Kerwin Avenue grade crossing at the east end of the Marion yard had a full-time crossing attendant guarding the Erie Lackawanna and Penn Central joint tracks.



IN THE COUNTRY.—This Erie Lackawanna train skirts a farmer's field just east of Green Camp in October of 1952. The Dayton branch of the railroad closely paralleled this 120 for much of the distance between Marion and Green Camp.



HEADING OUT.—This train heads out of Marion on the Dayton branch near Green West Center Street in September of 1952, preparing to correct any misaligned switches in the small yard which serviced the Marion Power Short company.



HEADED WEST.—This Erie Lackawanna F7A 2121 on Erie 1213, built by EMD in 1951, heads on F7A and a D18 westbound at the Prospect Upper Sandwich Road grade crossing, four miles west of Marion in November of 1952. The pictures on this page were taken from the new book about the railroad.



The Erie Lackawanna Railroad meant a lot to Marion and the surrounding counties. More than 1,600 people worked for the railroad in Marion alone, according to a new article published before the railroad declared bankruptcy and was merged into the Conrail system.

But even though the railroad is physically long-gone, Preston Cook is helping to keep a part of its system alive with the publication of Erie Lackawanna Memories, a book which sets out detail about the Marion diesel shop, the Erie Lackawanna Dayton branch through Howard, Green Camp and North Lewisburg, the women track to Chicago and the link east through Grand St. V. to New York City.

Erie Lackawanna's operations near Marion, for example, featured throughout the publication. Some energy from the book about the area includes:

When I arrived in Marion, in February 1951 I found that the Erie Lackawanna Railroad was the dominant industry in town, the area's largest employer and source of financial support and tax revenue, as well as a constant presence through the frequent movement of the train across the town's main grade crossings. The EL provided a better opportunity than I had ever previously had to observe, close up, the operation of a class one railroad.

There were four major railroads operating through Marion, but the EL, with its colorful grey, maroon and yellow paint scheme inherited from the Lackawanna, made a far more impressive showing than the drab blue or black units of the Norfolk & Western, the purple black of the Penn Central (the one train was about 90% of the track past to its own part, green, or the blue private of the Chesapeake & Ohio).

The Erie Lackawanna Railroad started out with expectations of permanence, but was unable to maintain a financially secure position in the railroad industry to the

west of Marion in November of 1952. The pictures on this page were taken from the new book about the railroad.

However, the railroad's financial performance did not live up to expectations, and in 1976 the Erie Lackawanna became part of Conrail Corporation and history.

Cook writes about his childhood in the Erie Lackawanna, the gradual decline of the railroads, and the final work under away under the best of editing notes or had their identity changed by hastily applied paint and white-washed numbers, while the sections of the railroad not covered by Conrail or rescued by new owners were gradually left to rot by nature or slowly deteriorated as nature reclaimed them.

Cook's book is available by writing to him at 628 Elm St., South Dartmouth, Mass. 01904. Cost is \$19.95 plus \$2.50 for postage and handling.