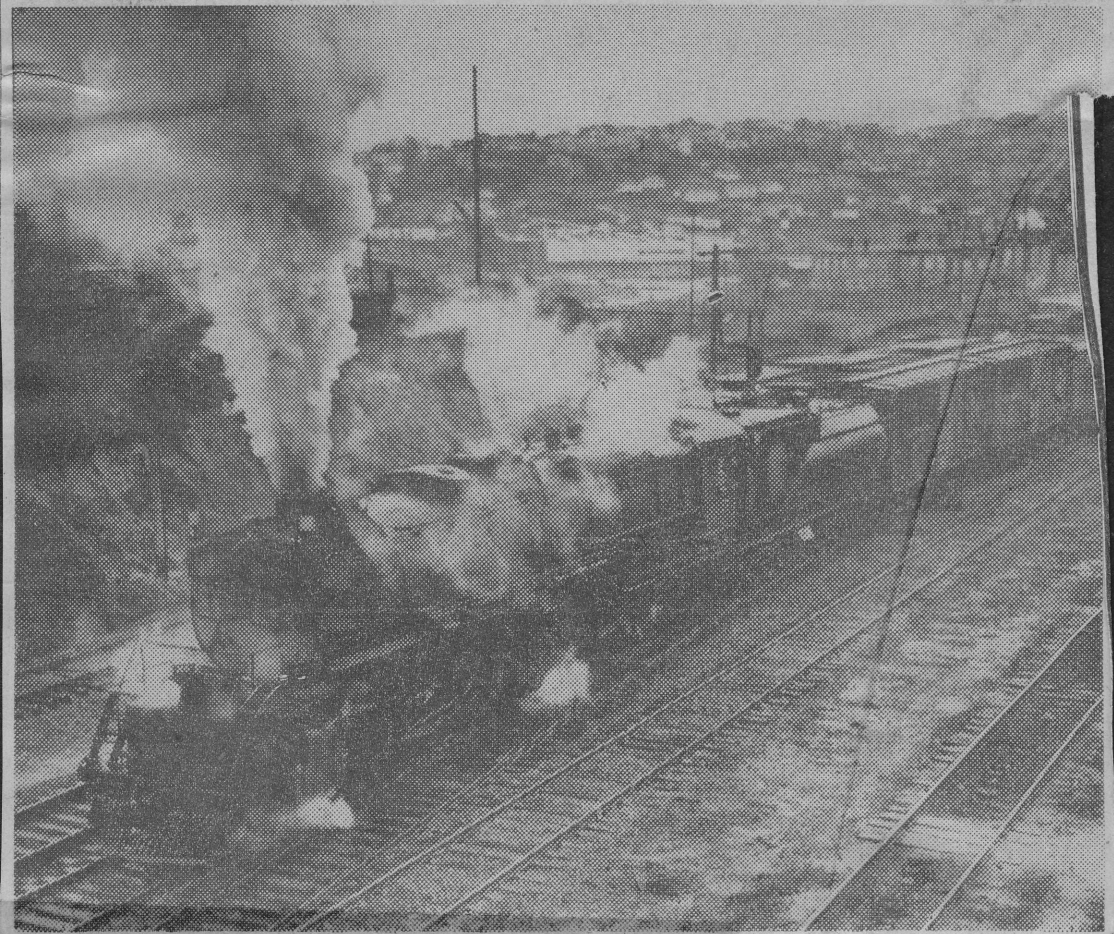


# Last G.N. Mallet Steams to Oblivion



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It is one of three being replaced by superior Diesel-electric locomotives

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By ROBERT A. BARR

This is an open letter to Frank T. Gavin, president, Great Northern Railway, St. Paul.

It appears in behalf of an army of railroad fans who watch a working Mallet-type steam locomotive through the same kind of sheep's eyes that a San Franciscan views the cable cars.

Dear Mr. Gavin:

This is to advise you that No. 2054, last of three Mallets which have been in freight service between Seattle and Skykomish for nearly 20 years, left Interbay yesterday on No. 442, your second manifest freight eastbound, never to return, probably as a direct result of your Dieselization program.

*Mister Gavin! Don't you realize, sir, that the Iron Horse was chiefly responsible for development of this great Western frontier? Don't you know that hundreds of fans have paused or made special trips to visit these rail giants or photograph their double sets of 16 drive wheels?*

Are these fans to be ignored for this thing called a streamliner, sleek, fast and more powerful, but without bellowing stack and churning drivers and "monkey gear?"

In your yard, William McKay, engineer for 38 years, swung up into the cab of 2054 ahead of his fireman, Jim Young, while your traveling engineer, Frank Crutchley, 40 years a railroad man, watched.

Engineer McKay said he had no regrets about 2054 or two others like her being headed for Minot, N. D., and eventually the bone yard. Diesels for him. He said it only had taken one trip on one of the three 5,400-horsepower, Diesel-electric, four-unit, freight locomotives, which are replacing the Mallets, to win him over.

*Mr. Gavin, does the faithful following of steam fans mean nothing? Must the rail fan, the ambassador of good will for all railroads, be*



JAMES A. YOUNG (left), fireman, and WILLIAM MCKAY, engineer

They took No. 2054 on her last run from Seattle

*forgotten in this mad struggle for faster service, economy and safety? Are these noble juggernauts to be cast aside like old shoes after 20 years of faithful service? What brand of featherbedding is this that caters to the fickle, one-ride converts?*

Crutchley, watching 2054 leave,

roundhouse, for much of anything in repairs and that the Mallets couldn't hold a candle to 'em.

The rain was pouring down. Frank Perrin, your public-relations man, was the only employe there feeling badly. He likes steam, too.

*Mr. Gavin, what are you doing to the morale of your fans?*

The only other person around was a fellow who's been dangling from semaphores and stumps on "the hill" near Skykomish for years to get pictures of your R2's with their 16 drivers. He was the only loyal fan who knew it was being sneaked out of town.

It was a pathetic sight. He was leaning against a switch standard with rain water running down his neck watching her leave. "One day the novelty of those new-fangled Diesels will wear off and they'll have to bring her back," he muttered.

*Mr. Gavin, are you sure you want to do this to your railroad?*

said she'd double her load with a pick-up of 2,500 more tons at Lowell; that she'd have to have a helper on the hill; but that one of those Diesels of yours would handle 5,000 tons alone, easy.

He said the Diesels were good for a couple of years' service with 400,000 miles of running before they had to go into the