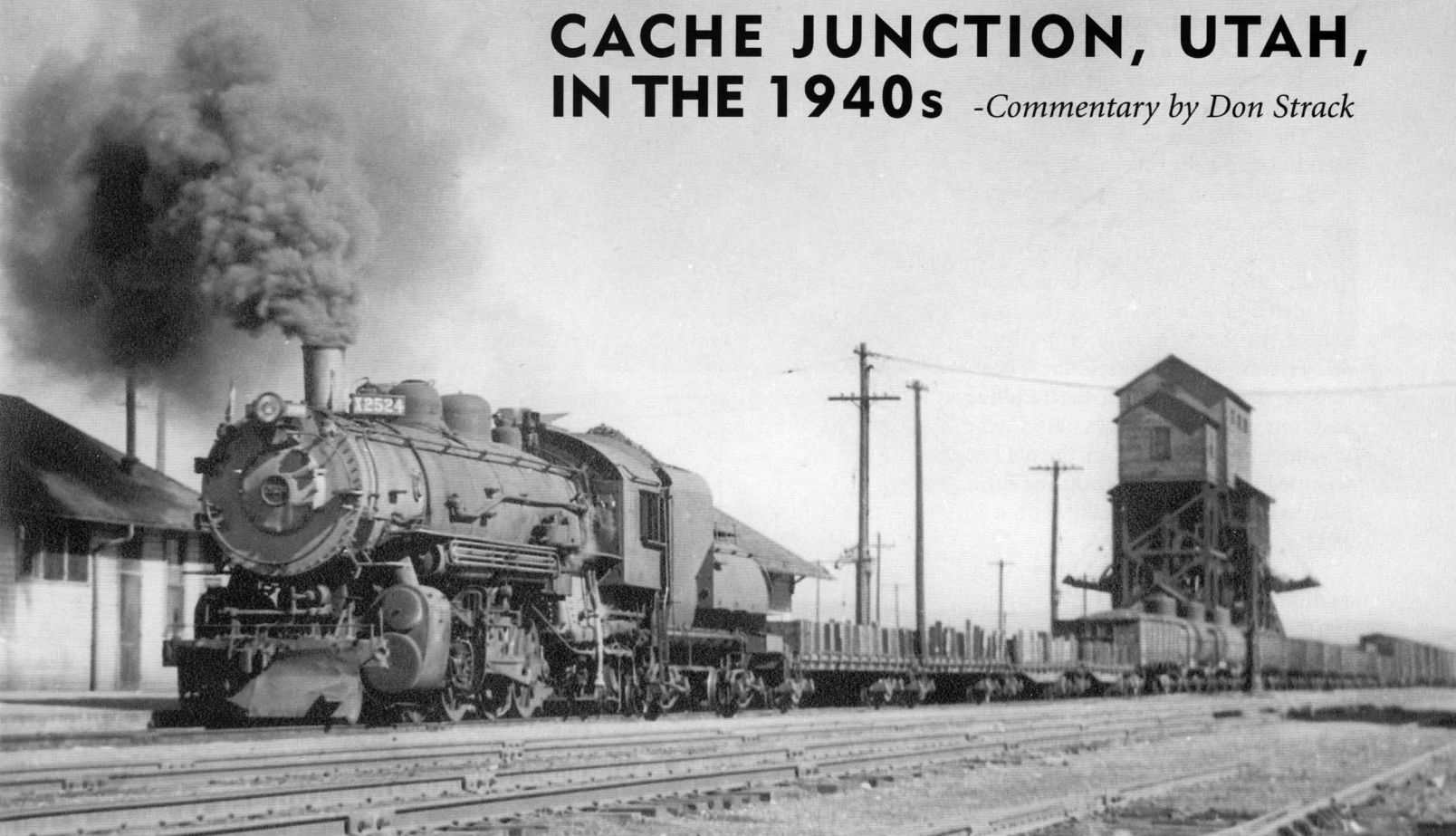


# CACHE JUNCTION, UTAH, IN THE 1940s

*-Commentary by Don Strack*



OSL 2-8-2 Mikado 2524 is westbound, above, as it passes the Cache Junction depot, May 30, 1940, with the coal chute in the background. Known as "Mikes," in later steam era days these locomotives were usually used on local trains, and in this view 2524 is on the Ogden to Pocatello Local. OSL 9506 is shown, right, westbound under the coal- ing trestle at Cache Junction. The 9506 was one of 15 4-12-2s on the Oregon Short Line. Delivered in 1930, these giants saw service all across the OSL (except north to Butte) throughout their years of service. They were replaced by diesels in the late 1940s, moved to UP's Eastern District, and retired in the mid 1950s. -Two photos, Emil Albrecht, Don Strack collection

**C**ache Junction, Utah, is located 48 miles north of Ogden on the west side of the Cache Valley. The junction is actually a yard situated next to a wye. One leg of the wye is used by the mainline between Ogden and Pocatello. Another is a connection between the mainline and the Cache Valley Branch serving Logan, Utah, and for many years extended as far north as Preston, Idaho, which forms the third leg.

While the Cache Valley had been served by a network of narrow gauge lines as early as 1872, all of which eventually came to be UP controlled, Cache Junction itself came into being in 1890 when the Oregon Short Line & Utah Northern completed a new standard-gauge line between Ogden and Pocatello that October. This line included 48.5 miles of new



construction between Dewey, Utah (14 miles north of Brigham City) and Oxford, Idaho, 20 miles north of the Utah/Idaho line, by way of the Bear River gorge, along with a new 8.5-mile connection between Cache Junction, on the new standard-gauge line, and Mendon, on the old narrow-gauge line.

The old narrow gauge line from Mendon across the valley to Logan, then north to Preston, Idaho, was converted to standard gauge at the same time, and became the Cache Valley Branch.

In 1906 the Wellsville Branch was completed as a loop around the south end of the valley by way of Wellsville and Hyrum, bringing more local business to the branch, with the resulting addition of yard tracks at Cache Junction. Upon completion, the old line was used only sporadically during sugar beet harvest and was finally retired in 1932.

In a unique play of directions, mainline OSL trains that operated north-to-south through Cache Junction were actually westbound trains, bound for Pocatello. They turned due east at Cache Junction, by way of the north leg of the wye, then on northward to Pocatello. Cache Valley Branch trains were westbound from Cache Junction to the end of the branch at Preston, although by the compass, they were running due south from Cache Junction to Wellsville, then due east through Wellsville and Hyrum, then due north from Hyrum through Logan to Preston.

In the 1940s, the junction was located on the Third Subdivision of the Utah Division. Traffic through Cache Junction at that time included three passenger trains each way a day between Salt Lake City and Pocatello. There were also three scheduled freights a day each way, which frequently operated in sections. Trains 303 and 304, the daily, except Sunday, mixed to Preston, originated at Cache Junction. The main line was protected by automatic block signals and a 24-hour telegraph office was maintained at Cache Junction (call letters CJ). Adjacent to the depot was a lunch room that was well-known, and well used by many local residents. There was a coaling trestle just north (railroad east) of the depot, and a three stall engine house was situated inside the

wye. An east siding could hold 91 cars, and the west siding 87.

The Cache Valley Branch is still an important source of business for Union Pacific, with a local that operates over the branch on a regular basis. Cache Junction is no longer the terminal that it was during the steam era, and the first 20 years of the diesel era. ■

**Additional reading:**

*Union Pacific Railroad System Employee Timetables* (Reprint, UPHS, 2000). See the pages for the Third Subdivision of the Utah Division.

*Crossroads of the West*, by Kooistra, Belmont and Gayer (Pentrex, 1998). See pages 39-42, map on page 40.

*Union Pacific Salt Lake Route*, by Mark Hemphill (Boston Mills Press, 1995). See pages 136-137, map on page 137.

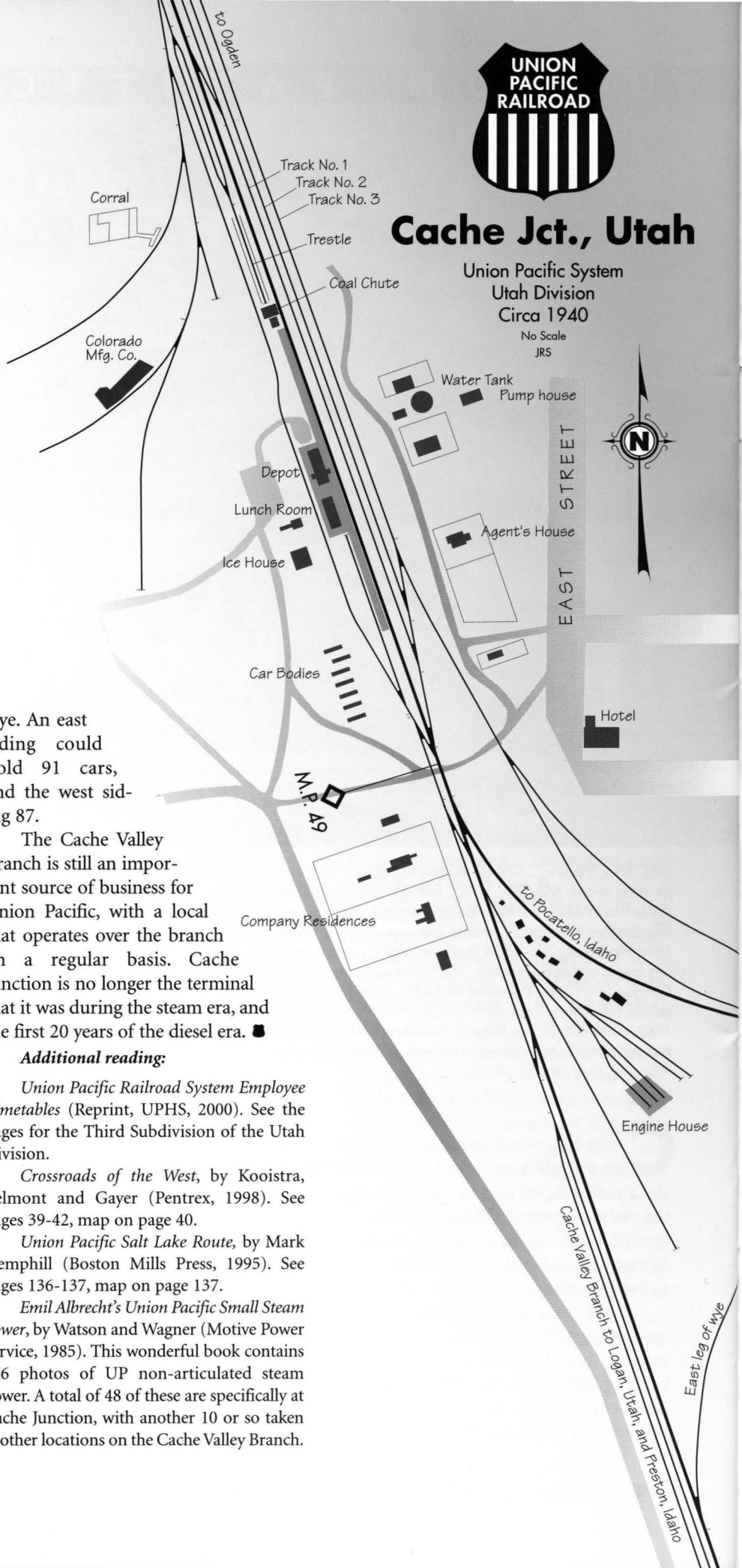
*Emil Albrecht's Union Pacific Small Steam Power*, by Watson and Wagner (Motive Power Service, 1985). This wonderful book contains 256 photos of UP non-articulated steam power. A total of 48 of these are specifically at Cache Junction, with another 10 or so taken at other locations on the Cache Valley Branch.



# Cache Jct., Utah

Union Pacific System  
Utah Division  
Circa 1940

No Scale  
JRS





UP Mountain class 7038 sits at Cache Junction, above, with an extra freight on August 22, 1940. Built in 1922, these versatile locomotives were used regularly on both passenger and freight trains, all across UP's far-reaching system. Train 553, right, is the Cache Junction to Preston passenger train, shown here prior to departure at the Cache Junction depot, with two cars in tow on May 30, 1938. The 568 is subbing for the regularly scheduled motor train. The unusual smoke stack treatment on the 568 is a spark arrestor that consisted of numerous rods installed across the stack. Timetables show Train 262 as a daily Ogden to Pocatello time freight, it is shown, below, leaving Cache Junction powered by a 2-10-2. Although the even number on the train's indicator denotes this as an eastbound train, this train is actually traveling north through Cache Junction, before eventually heading south to Ogden. -Three photos, Emil Albrecht, Don Strack collection

