



Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) maps accompanying general orders 2493

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Summary Information

Repository:	Manuscripts and Archives
Creator:	Pennsylvania Railroad
Title:	Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) maps accompanying general orders
ID:	2493
Date [inclusive]:	1937-1942
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Physical Description:	6 item(s)
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	The Pennsylvania Railroad Company was the largest railroad in the United States in terms of corporate assets and traffic from the last quarter of the nineteenth century until the decline of the northeast's and midwest's dominance of manufacturing. This small collection consists of six schematic diagrams of racks and signals placed in service or removed from service, mostly in connection with the step-by-step construction of the Philadelphia Improvements of 1927 to 1952.

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Historical Note

The Pennsylvania Railroad Company was the largest railroad in the United States in terms of corporate assets and traffic from the last quarter of the nineteenth century until the decline of the northeast's and midwest's dominance of manufacturing. The Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) was chartered in 1846 to complete a railroad across the state. This was accomplished in 1854. In 1857, the PRR purchased the state's old "Main Line" of canals and railroads and brought the entire line from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh under one management and a complete a route from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh, thus opening up the entire state of Pennsylvania to east-west train service.

Between 1855 and 1874, the PRR underwent rapid expansion and emerged as one of the two largest railroad systems in the area east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio. Through stock purchase or lease, it reached Baltimore in 1861, Chicago and Indianapolis in 1869, St. Louis in 1870, Jersey City opposite New York in 1871, and Washington in 1872. Purchase of the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad in 1881 brought complete control of the important New York-Washington corridor,

and in 1910, the PRR entered Manhattan through tunnels under the Hudson and East rivers. Most of the main lines lying east and south of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, were electrified between 1915 and 1938.

More than other railroads, the PRR was highly dependent upon the coal and steel industries and was burdened on its eastern end with a high-density passenger service. After 1958, the former began an irreversible decline, and the latter became a source of red ink. The PRR merged with its major rival, the New York Central, in 1968 to create the Penn Central Transportation Company. The merger was ill-planned, resulting in bankruptcy in 1970. In 1971, the federal government created Amtrak to assume the most essential passenger service, and in 1976, viable portions of Penn Central and other bankrupt railroads in its territory were conveyed to Conrail, which rehabilitated them with federal funds.

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Scope and Contents

These are schematic diagrams of tracks and signals placed in service or removed from service, mostly in connection with the step-by-step construction of the Philadelphia Improvements of 1927 to 1952, which included the construction of 30th Street Station and the abandonment of Broad Street Station. They supplement the more extensive coverage of these projects in the official Pennsylvania Railroad Company archives.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

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Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Railroads.
- Railroads -- Maps
- Railroad stations
- Broad Street Station (Philadelphia, Pa.)
- William H. Gray, III, 30th Street Station (Philadelphia, Pa.)