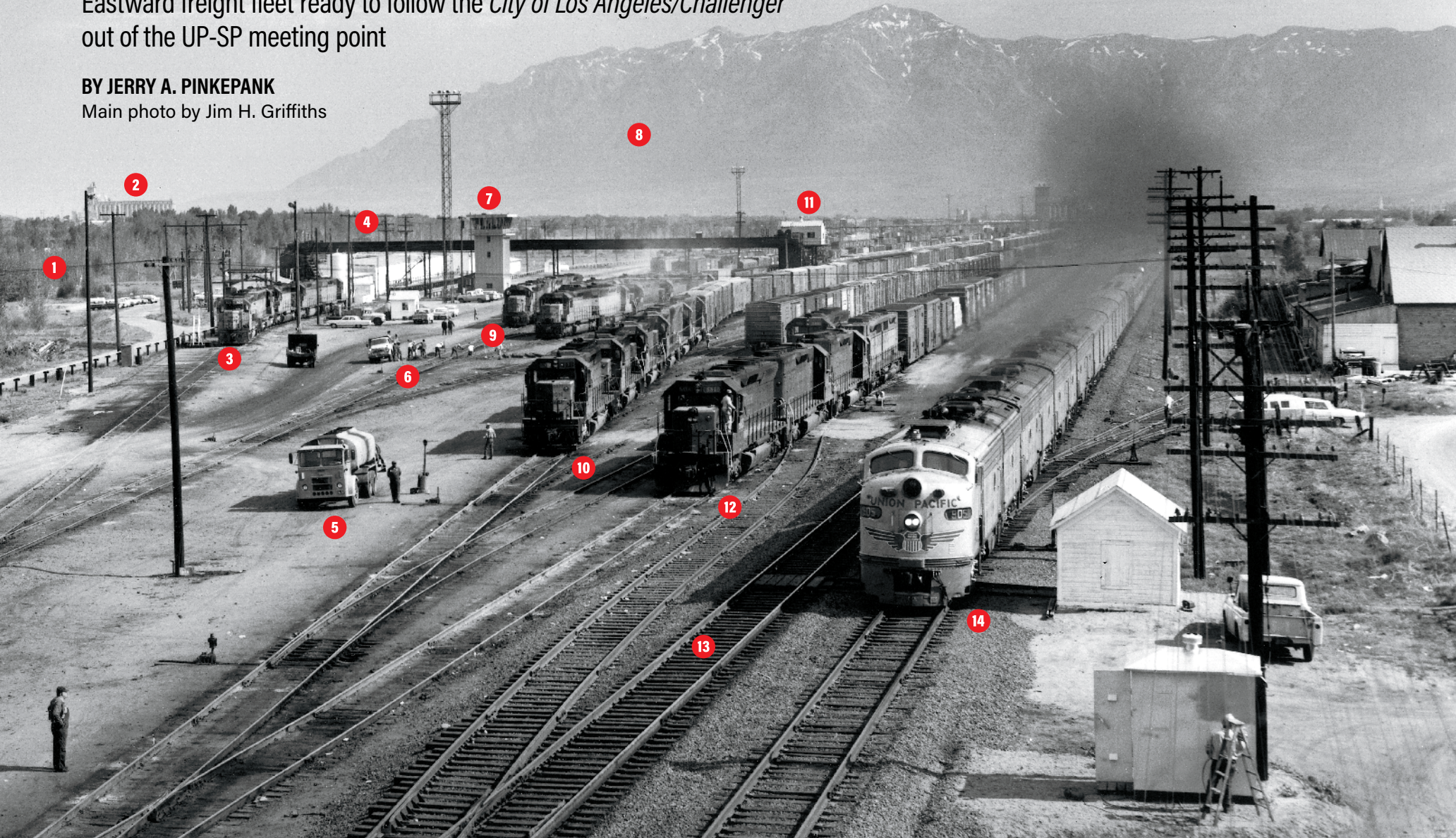


UP's Riverdale Yard, Ogden, Utah, May 12, 1969

Eastward freight fleet ready to follow the *City of Los Angeles/Challenger* out of the UP-SP meeting point

BY JERRY A. PINKEPANK

Main photo by Jim H. Griffiths



Ogden, Utah, is named for Union Pacific's first president, William B. Ogden

(see his biography in January 2019 TRAINS). Located 36 miles north of Salt Lake City, Ogden was the logical crew terminal in the Salt Lake valley when the UP was building west to meet the Central Pacific. The Mormons had contributed to building the UP through Utah, but the main line missed their principal settlement because it needed to swing north of the lake, where it met the CP at Promontory on May 10, 1869 (a branch to Salt Lake opened in January 1870). This photo was made two days after the centennial of the Golden Spike ceremony. Ogden became the passenger interchange terminal between UP and CP in January 1870, but freight interchange continued at Promontory until CP, which Southern Pacific leased in 1885, opened the Lucin (LU-sin) Cutoff trestle across the lake in 1904. The volume of freight traffic between SP and UP overwhelmed the old joint Ogden Union Railroad & Depot yard, and East Yard, later called Riverdale Yard was opened in 1942, leaving the OUR&D facility, renamed West Yard, for westbound freights.

1 Weber (WEE-bur) River

The river, for which Ogden's Riverdale neighborhood and Riverdale Yard are named, provided the water gap through the Wasatch (WAW-satch) Mountains by which UP entered the Salt Lake valley. Its course turns briefly north here.

2 Sperry Flour elevator

A landmark located across the tracks from UP shops and roundhouse, 1 mile from Union Station.

3 Parking for light engines

UP's Ogden engine terminal was at the old 1927 roundhouse adjacent to West Yard. It wasn't replaced by a modern facility because UP's Salt Lake City shops were so close, so engines laying over that didn't need servicing, such as on trains from L.A. that had changed power at Salt Lake, waited here while their trains were filled out.

4 Ice conveyor

Running from the ice-storage house largely hidden from view, it makes a right-angle turn here to cross tracks and reach the car-icing platform.

5 Fuel truck

Used to top-off fuel tanks on power passing through. Second-generation diesels on Western roads had big fuel tanks to cut the need for this.

6 Section gang replacing ties

Such work in yards often is done by hand without the kind of machinery used on main lines.

7 Yard office tower

In theory with modern computer displays, the yardmaster should not need to look out over the yard from such a perch, but the practice of providing such a vantage point continues today.

8 Spur of Wasatch Mountains

Eastward views at Ogden and Salt Lake City have the dramatic main range of the Wasatches as backdrop, but this spur is seen when looking north at Ogden. The spur determined the location of Ogden by forcing the UP to come close to the lake before turning north to go around it.

9 Parked power consist

Parked next to two eastbounds, one with UP and SP power. Such mixed consists generally would run between yards at Roseville, Calif., and North Platte, Nebr. SP and UP began pooling power through Ogden in 1962, but it didn't become routine until second-generation power took over. Roseville-Ogden is 676 miles and Ogden-North Platte is 709 miles, 1,385 total. UP had a mainline fueling facility at Sinclair (beside the Sinclair Oil refinery), 227 miles east of Ogden, and SP had one at Carlin, Nev., 249 miles west, so it was practical to run through Ogden without refueling.

10 Probable "R Block" train

Stopped beside the icing platform, where these

trains were normally yarded. Some of the units (four SD40s, two SD45s) appear to be SP, so this is not a UP train out of L.A. The head block consists of 12 mechanical refrigerator cars, followed by 4 or 5 ice-cooled reefers; mechanical reefers totally displaced ice cars in 1972. R Block trains had traditionally been solid reefer trains that often ran in sections; this one has more non-reefer cars than reefers, reflecting the loss of much perishable traffic to trucks. Except for perishables, the loaded direction on SP between Ogden and the Bay Area was westbound in this era, so the six units may reflect a power-balancing move.

11 Ice dock head house

Until 1954 the icing of R Blocks had been done in the West Yard, but in that year Pacific Fruit Express, the joint refrigerator car operating subsidiary of UP and SP, constructed a new ice plant and storage house referred to in item 4, as well as the conveyor and a 110-car icing platform. Ice cakes from the ice house were placed in carts which workers distributed along the dock to dump into the reefers' bunkers. There was also a provision to blow chipped ice into the body of the car through an open side door — PFE personnel were on the ground to do this in addition to the men on the dock, and it was called "top icing." As mechanical reefers came

into service, the ground men took care of checking and topping off fuel of their diesel engines and confirming the temperature was being maintained. Mechanical reefers can reliably protect frozen shipments, which was hard to do with ice cars. The ice dock was razed in 1974.

12 Probable OVE ("Overland East")

OVes often ran in sections and among other traffic handled hot empty auto parts cars returning from Ford and Chevrolet plants in the Bay Area; these cars had special racks for particular parts such as engines and were needed back at auto plants to keep the cycle going, often as loads being tagged as "shut down cars" if they were late and threatening the continuity of the assembly line. The first three units are SP followed by a UP DD35. The OVE was scheduled into Ogden at 8 a.m. and out at 11 a.m.

13 Westbound main track

UP's main line to the east through Weber Canyon is arranged for left-hand running.

14 Train 104

The eastbound *City of Los Angeles*, combined with the L.A. section of the *Challenger*. Due to depart Ogden at 9:05 a.m., it was followed by the *City of San Francisco* at 9:34.



SP train 21 to Oakland, all mail and express plus a coach or two, departs Ogden Union Station on June 7, 1967. Nos. 21-22 came off a few months later, victims of the 1967 Post Office cutbacks.

Gordon Glattenberg