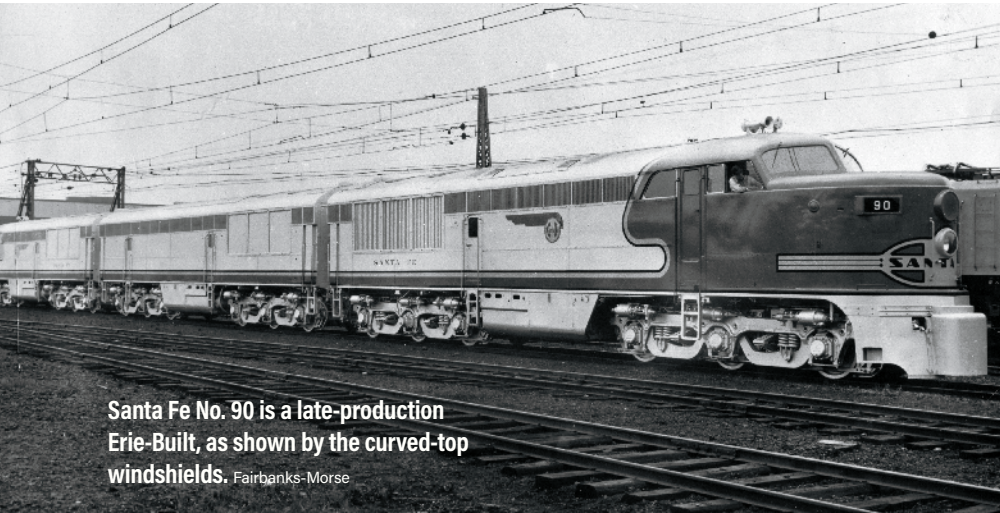


Fairbanks-Morse Erie-Built diesel locomotives

These distinctive streamlined diesels sold just 111 units in less than four years of production



Santa Fe No. 90 is a late-production Erie-Built, as shown by the curved-top windshields. Fairbanks-Morse

Fairbanks-Morse' distinctive "Erie-Built" diesel locomotives were the builder's entry into the six-axle passenger locomotive market. FM sold 111 total units between December 1945 and February 1949. They were the best-selling FM cab unit models; second place went to the CFA/CFB-16-4 "C-Liners" with 90 units sold.

FM's big Erie-Built units were named for being assembled at General Electric's facility in Erie, Pa., instead of FM's home of Beloit, Wis. This was due to lack of sufficient space at Beloit at the time. They rode on six-wheel, A1A trucks with unpowered center axles, like their competitors: Alco PAs and Electro-Motive E units. Each Erie-Built was powered by a single 10-cylinder, 850-rpm, opposed-piston diesel engine generating 2,000 hp.

They were designed by famous industrial designer Raymond Loewy, who worked on many FM diesel locomotive designs, and have a distinctive nose shape — "boat-nosed," some would say — and large, rectangular radiator intake grilles at the rear. Early units had rectangular windshields with square corners, while later units had curved windshields. Erie-Built diesel locomotives also came with two truck

styles: FM-designed fabricated trucks or those supplied by General Steel Castings that also appeared under Alco PA units.

In spite of just 82 A units and 29 B units being built, they sold to seven railroads: Santa Fe, Chicago & North Western, Kansas City Southern, Milwaukee Road, New York Central (the last built), Pennsylvania Railroad, and Union Pacific (the first built). Pennsy had the most with 48 — 36 A units and 12 B units — and were used in freight service. All but C&NW

purchased cabless B units.

Some roads, including Kansas City Southern and Union Pacific, rebuilt their Erie-Built units in the 1960s with EMD prime movers to extend their usefulness on rosters with few other FMs around.

No Erie-Built diesel locomotives are preserved, although a set of General Steel Castings trucks from an unidentified Erie-Built was used under Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad's restored Alco PA, a project spearheaded by Doyle McCormack. — *Brian M. Schmidt*



Kansas City Southern was one of seven buyers of 2,000 hp Fairbanks-Morse "Erie-built" units. The units derived their name from their assembly at General Electric's facility in Erie, Pa., when FM didn't have capacity at its Beloit, Wis., plant. A three-year-old cab-booster set rests at Shreveport, La., in July 1949. Harold K. Vollrath