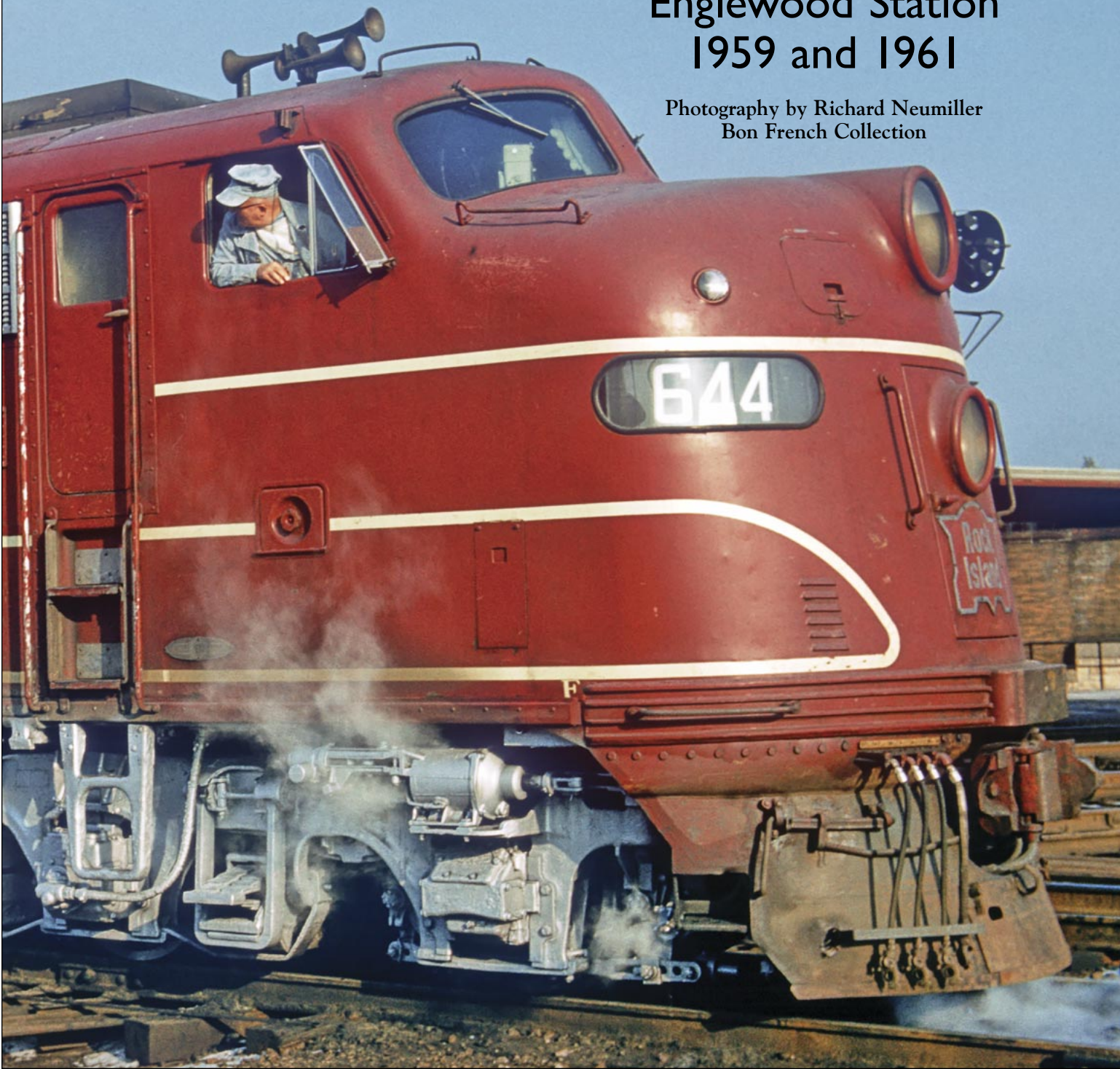


Englewood Station 1959 and 1961

Photography by Richard Neumiller
Bon French Collection



▲ The Rock Island engineer is looking back for the highball from his conductor. Joliet was a conditional stop before heading to the Quad Cities.

Englewood Union Station was one of four mainline railroad stations on 63rd Street. Englewood Union was between State Street and Vincennes Avenue on Chicago's south side. Trains of the Rock Island, New York Central, Pennsylvania and Nickle Plate stopped at this station. The first station at this location entered service in 1852. At its peak trains

stopping at Englewood Union served 52 of the largest cities in the United States. When Rock Island's Peoria and Quad Cities Rockets ceased operating in December 1978 Rock Island suburban trains also no longer stopped at Englewood Union.

Three quarters of a mile west of Englewood Union was another station on 63rd Street east of Halsted Street that was

named Englewood Station. This station, more commonly known as "Little Englewood," was located on the Chicago & Western Indiana. Passenger trains of the Erie-Lackawanna, Monon, Chicago & Eastern Illinois, Wabash and C&WI's suburban trains stopped at this station. This station closed operations in 1971 when Amtrak commenced operations.



▲ On August 17, 1955, Dick was in the cab of E7 638 on a westbound train approaching Englewood. The steel frame behind the station is one of the gas holders that were located around Chicago. There was an expanding holding tank inside of the frame that moved up and down depending on the amount of gas that was in the tank. This holder appears to have little, if any, gas in storage.

Three and one-half miles west of “Little Englewood” was the Chicago Lawn station at Central Park Avenue. This station served Grand Trunk Western (Canadian National) trains. Service at this station ceased with the start of Amtrak.

Two miles east of Englewood Union was Illinois Central’s Woodlawn Station. Woodlawn was located at Dorchester Avenue two block west of Stony Island Avenue. Intercity trains operated by the Illinois Central, and two components of the New York Central System, Michigan Central and the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis (Big Four) also used this station. The last day intercity trains used this station was March 6, 1972, when Amtrak moved train operations from IC’s Central Station to Chicago Union Station. Michigan Central trains were moved to LaSalle Street station decades before that. In 2025 Metra Electric and South Shore Line trains stop at Woodlawn station.



▲ FP7 409 is leading train 501, *Peoria Pocket*, into Englewood on November 15, 1959. The bridge in the background is at 59th Street. In 2025 the Chicago Transit Authority Green Line Englewood Branch continues to use this bridge.



▲ On November 15, 1959, the *Des Moines Rocket* has departed Englewood on its final lap into LaSalle Street Station.



▲ It is 10:45 a.m. on October 27, 1961, when an E8A leading train 4, the *Golden State*, crossed the Pennsylvania Railroad as it arrived at Englewood. This level crossing was replaced by the Englewood Flyer that was dedicated on October 23, 2014. The limits of this \$142 million project are 57th Place to 65th Street. This project was a civil engineering challenge that included new Rock Island bridges over I-94 the Dan Ryan Expressway at the junction with the Chicago Skyway. Norfolk Southern was the ultimate successor to the Pennsy. In 2014 there were 78 Metra Rock Island District trains, 14 Amtrak trains and on average 46 NS freight trains. This was one of the most congested railroad crossing in the Chicago area with NS trains being held as far back as Indiana Harbor (East Chicago), Indiana.

► Rock Island's suburban service was a rolling museum with a variety of locomotives and coaches. Alco-built RS 3 492 leads a three-car train of *Al Capone* coaches on November 15, 1959. These coaches were built in the 1920s when Capone ruled the gangsters in Chicago. His family lived in Park Manor, the neighborhood just south of Englewood. When "Big Al" came home to visit the family, he would ask his youngest brother how many friends he had that day. "Big Al" would give his brother money to treat his friends with candy, ice cream, soft drinks, etc. Those friends thought that "Big Al" was a great guy.



▲ In the mid-1950s General Motors introduced the Light-Weight Train concept for 500-750-mile trips. The concept was a stylish design competitive with automobiles, buses and aircraft. Rock Island was one of the railroads to test this concept. The coaches were 40-feet long and a direct decedent of GM's "new look picture-window transit buses" of that era. The locomotives were designated LWT12, 1,200 horsepower. The result was an underpowered train set that provided a rough noisy ride with frequent failures as they could not stand the rigors of 90-mph operation. Locomotive 1 arrived in 1956 and was coupled to an articulated train set. Known as the *Jet Rocket*, it was placed in service to cover the four daily trips of the Peoria service. After about 18 months it was demoted to suburban train service and retired in 1963. Locomotives 2 and 3 were coupled to separate cars with couplers similar the 1920s Illinois Central suburban MU cars' couplers with electric cable and air line connections embedded in the couplers. These two *Aerotrains* were purchased used from GM when they came off lease from the New York Central and Union Pacific and were assigned to the suburban service from 1958 to 1966. Locomotives 2 and 3 and their coaches are preserved at the National Railway Museum in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and the National Museum of Transport in Kirkwood, a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri, respectively. On October 27, 1961, at 10:45 a.m., *Aerotrain 2* is stopped at Englewood as inbound suburban train 278.



▲ On October 27, 1961, the westbound New York Central *New England States Limited* and Rock Island's eastbound *Peoria Rocket* are stopped at Englewood. NYC E8s 4052, 4040 and 4091 and Rock Island FP7 403 and a second unit are powering their respective trains.



▲ NYC E8A 4057 leading an E7B and E7A are the motive power for the eastbound *New England States Limited* on November 15, 1959. East from Englewood NYC and Pennsy will parallel each other to Indiana Harbor (East Chicago), Indiana. They typically would race each other. *The New England States Limited* was the premier train serving Chicago and Boston. North of Englewood the Rock and NYC operated on their own tracks on a shared right-of-way to LaSalle Street station that was jointly owned by the two railroads. Amtrak assuming the intercity service caused NYC to abandon the railroad north of Englewood. Metra became the owner of LaSalle Street station and the railroad from 17th Street to Joliet and the suburban branch. Metra has a permanent easement on the right-of-way from 17th Street to the LaSalle Street station.



▲ Nickel Plate had 11 Alco-built PA-1 passenger locomotives, known as the *Blue Birds*, that were delivered to the railroad in 1947-1948 and hauled their premier passenger trains until replaced by road-switchers in 1962. On November 15, 1959, 181-180 lead the eastbound *New Yorker* that operated from Chicago to Buffalo, New York, via Fort Wayne, Indiana and Belleview and Cleveland, Ohio. At Buffalo there was a connection with the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western with some cars going through to New York City. The *Westerner* was the westbound counterpart to this train. The *Nickel Plate Limited* also operated on this route. This passenger service was gone by 1964 due to a 20-plus hour schedule between Chicago and New York City in comparison to overnight service on the NYC and Pennsylvania. Between Cleveland and Buffalo, the NYC was next to the Nickel Plate and I-90 was nearby.



▲ On the same day Dick witnessed the departure of Pennsy's *Manhattan Limited*, an overnight train to New York City that departed Chicago before the *Broadway Limited*. Locomotive 5890 was the lead locomotive followed by an E7B and 5790.



▲ Also on November 15, 1959, Dick witnessed *The Union* arriving at Englewood from Cincinnati. This train operated through Logansport, Indiana, which was a major junction point in Central Indiana for many of Pennsy's lines. Pennsy had two major routes between Pittsburgh and Chicago, the Fort Wayne (Indiana) Line and the Panhandle Division via Columbus, Ohio. Most of the Panhandle west of Columbus is abandoned. Passenger trains serving Indianapolis, Louisville and Cincinnati used the Bernice Cutoff to reach Chicago. This north-south connecting line left the Fort Wayne Line at the Illinois-Indiana state line and headed south via Hegewisch to Bernice Junction in Lansing, Illinois, on the Panhandle.



▲ On October 27, 1961, a very late westbound *Broadway Limited* was discharging passengers at Englewood. This was Pennsy's all first class, limited-stop overnight train between Chicago and New York City.