INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The bulk of my work over the last 14 years or so has been on the USA and Canadian RRs and Interurbans lists. Most of the USA lists remain "works in progress" and will continue to be so into the distant future! I would like to think the USA RR lists are now 90 to 95% complete, say, an error or omission for every 10 to 20 entries - the Canadian lists maybe 98% complete. Many station and line cross references need to be added and I aim to do this over the next few years. The Interurban lists (see separate note) are less complete, perhaps around 50%. Particular thanks to Russ Powers of Denver, Colorado, Kent Hannah of Texas and Thomas Guertler of Stuttgart, Germany, for providing me with new material for these lists.

2. The USA contained about one third of the world's total railroad route mileage, with an "all-time" passenger route mileage of around 260,000 miles and an "all-time" total of about 100,000 passenger stations, of which possibly 10-25% have been renamed and/or relocated at least once. Today, about 26,000 route miles and 1600 stations remain in passenger use (excluding, metro, light rail and heritage lines).

The early USA railroad network originally consisted of many 100's of separate small companies, long distance trains over several companies tracks being jointly operated. Most of these smaller companies had merged into the major Class I railroad companies by 1900, these remaining substantially the same (with some subsequent mergers) until the end of most company operated long distance passenger services and start of Amtrak operation in 1971.

From 1971, a few long distance and mixed train services remained with the original companies but were either discontinued or transferred to Amtrak within a few years. Most commuter operations initially remained with the railroad companies and were gradually transferred to state or city transit authorites over the following years. The last of these were the Chicago commuter services 1986 > 1989. Some other local passenger and mixed train services operated by the railroad companies also continued for a few years after 1971. Both the railroads and city authorities were keen to release valuable railroad land in city centres for development and such remaining services in cities were often relegated to terminate at freight yards on the city outskirts. The most famous and enduring of these services was the Seaboard Coast Line's mixed train service (ex Georgia RR) from Atlanta (Hulsey Yard) to Augusta (Harrison Yard), ceasing operation in May 1983.

3. The key source of information for passenger services was the Official Guide of the Railways of the USA, Porto Rico, Canada, Mexico & Cuba (Travelers Guide until 1900) published from 1868, the passenger edition ceasing publication in 1994 (the freight edition is still published), and the public timetables issued by the individual railroad/railway companies. Collated national railway guides were also issued by other organisations from the earliest days, including Shermans, Appletons, Knickerbockers, Disturnells,

Dinsmores and Rand McNally. More detailed local collated timetables include Pathfinders (New England), Russells, Central States, Michigan (Woods), Peoples (New York State), Peck-Judah Blue Book, Lloyds (Confederate States) and the Canadian Railway Guide (formerly the International Railway Guide).

Some of the above included more complete timetables than the Official Guide, also short lines, commuter services and passenger carrying freight trains not shown in either the Official Guide or the railroad companies system public timetables.

4. The major short coming of all of the above, unlike the UK Bradshaws Guide and most European timetables, is that most of USA timetables did not include all passenger stations and stops in use at the particular date. The Official Guide omitted many commuter/suburban lines and intermediate passenger "flag" stops. Many short line timetables in the Guide only showed the main stations and the timetables of some short lines were either not included or only appeared occasionally. The public timetables issued by the railroad companies include more information, but their thoroughness varies considerably. Early public timetables may include most minor stations, but, by 1890's this certainly was not always the case. Most companies issued a system timetable (but most omitted their commuter services, separate forms being issued) and many issued separate timetables for each line, or group of lines. The latter could show more flag stops than the system folders (e.g. Lehigh Valley). The Pennsylvania RR never issued a detailed system timetable for lines east of Pittsburgh, just many leaflets for individual lines or groups of lines. Examples of system timetables including virtually all stops in the main tables were Illinois Central (but excluded the suburban services) and Santa Fe until the mid 1930's. Some public timetables only referred to the minor stops in footnotes (e.g. early Louisville & Nashville timetables, with no information on location) or in a separate table (e.g. Chesapeake & Ohio and later L&N timetables) with mileage from start of the line. After WW2, some public timetables omitted significant numbers of the minor stops, including some lines only served by mixed train services (sometimes just a note requesting potential users to consult the agent). The Southern Pacific and Union Pacific public timetables are examples of this, in fact, the Official Guide is of more help in later years for these two companies and several other major railroads.

5 To get more complete information on passenger stops, it is necessary to consult the employees/working timetables. Clearly, these are not readily available to most researchers, hence my statement above that my lists may only be 90% to 95% complete. The California RR Museum, Sacramento, has been particularily helpful in providing copies of employees timetables. Even some working timetables do not give information on all passenger stops. Sometimes, they are only listed in the footnotes or special instructions, without details of location, or not listed at all, just a general note that trains will stop at other locations not shown in the timetable. A 1914 L&N employee timetable states that, on some lines, trains will stop at platforms only shown in the passenger tariff. Passenger tariffs are rarely seen – they do not appear to

be of interest to most collectors. Thus, making research on these very difficult. Another factor is that many request stops, having little if any infrastructure, often had relatively short lives.

Employee timetables were generally standardised by about 1900, with an 'f' symbol by times where trains stopped on request, and an 's' for compulsory stops. Times with no 'f' or 's' symbols are either passing times or termini. In earlier years, some companies used a sword symbol for request stops and an asterisk for passing times; times without any symbol indicated compulsory stops. Some compulsory stops were for operational reasons, not for passenger use (e.g at many railroad level crossings) – this is often not explained.

6. Many companies also issued Official Station lists. Again, these are rarely seen and do not generally distinguish between passenger stations and non-passenger locations such as freight sidings. But, they can help locate obscure flag stops only noted in public timetable footnotes, even if passenger service has ceased by the date of the Station list, where they have remained open as a freight only siding, etc.

7. Union Stations and Terminals (or Depots in early years) were a major feature of USA Railroads. The common definition is a passenger station served by more that one railroad, the station being owned by one company with access rights granted to other operators. Or, at stations where two companies tracks crossed each other on the level (a common situation in USA), each company owning its own platforms but jointly owning the whole or parts of the station building. But, strictly, Union Stations (and sometimes also the approach tracks) were owned by a separate company or joint committee set up by the railroad companies serving the town or city to establish and operate a new joint station to replace the companies own stations. There were over 100 such jointly owned and operated stations and more research is needed on many of these.

In the early days, the various railroad companies, often in competition with each other, established their own separate stations in many medium sized and larger towns and cities. As railroad operations and the cities they served grew, there was considerable pressure to reduce the number of central area stations and associated tracks (often laid in the streets), and provide a single prestige facility, either on the site of one of these stations or at a new location close to the business district. The earliest station described as a Union Depot appears to be Providence RI, opened in 1848. Indianapolis in 1853 (replacing 6 separate stations) was the first established by a separate Union Station company. The last was in New Orleans, in 1954.

Many Union Stations were stub termini, requiring passenger trains to reverse and back into the platforms (allowing the locomotive to be serviced outside of the station and reduced fire risk),sometimes entailing extensive deviations and extra journey time from their original route. For this and other reasons, including high operating costs as passenger services decreased after WW2, some stub Union Stations were not very successful and had relatively short

lives (e.g.Evansville IN) with some RR companies returning passenger services back to their own stations (where these had been retained as freight depots). Most pre-Union termini and even some Union stations are not shown on the SPV Atlases, thus extensive research is needed with the help of the excellent Sanborn maps and selected on-line histories – thanks to those who have researched this interesting aspect of US railroad history.

8. Another relatively major aspect of US railroads, compared with European railways, is line relocations. Much of the early railroad expansion in USA was carried out cheaply and quickly through mainly undeveloped land, following river valleys and avoiding tunnels and major bridges wherever possible. New towns and cities were set up alongside the railroad, often the railroad becoming the major street through such communities. At the main station, there could be 4 or more tracks across the width of the street. Thus, as communities and railroad and highway traffic grew, many railroads through cities were relocated off the streets, and elevated or lowered (to remove level crossings), sometimes in conjunction with provision of a Union station. Even today, many main line railroads still run along streets through the middle of sizable communities.

Relocations have arisen for many other reasons, including reduction of line curvatures and gradients, reducing flooding of lines in valleys and construction of reservoirs.

In the early days, the major RRs were in competition with each other, often resulting in two, even three or more, RRs building tracks between the same cities, sometimes adjacent to each other or only a few miles apart. In later years, as passenger traffic was lost to highways and airlines and freight traffic increased, many former rivals rationalised their services operating the two individual tracks (most RRs were single track only) as a double track RR. The most complex operation of this type was probably the shared Denver & Rio Grande/Santa Fe trackage between Denver and Pueblo (see map & timetable in Maps & Timetables). Other examples include Buffalo to Erie and CN/CP operations in Canada.

9. USA railroads operated many train ferries across major rivers and lakes, particularly in the early years prior to construction of railroad bridges across rivers. These ferries often transported the whole train, with or without the locomotive, although in some cases passengers only were carried between trains each side of the river. Opening of the bridge often resulted in abandonment of the riverside stations with new stations on the new line via the bridge.

10. Many public timetables, mostly for Midwest and Western RRs, noted that some freight trains carried passengers. Often, passengers would only be carried in the caboose (guards van), no separate passenger car being provided, although these were often provided in the early years. Sometimes, passenger carrying freight trains were only shown in the employee timetables, usually with a note in the special instructions,although in some cases this is not specifically mentioned. Where the freight trains have s or f symbols by

the station times, it is likely these trains did carry passengers. Some public (e.g CNW) and employee TTs did include a list of freight trains that carried passengers. These trains often departed from and arrived at the freight yards and did not stop at the passenger station, which could be over one mile away. This was often not made clear, even when these trains were shown in public timetables. Also, these way freight trains may stop for passengers at additional locations not served by advertised passenger trains, yet another area difficult to research!

11. Station names; The etymology of USA and Canadian station names can be broadly grouped into 5 categories: People; Old World places; Native American places; Locality; and, inevitably, "Others" for everything else.
"People": includes US Presidents, Royalty & aristocracy, entertainment & sporting celebrities (In 1953 Mauch Chunk PA, a corrupted Native American name, was renamed Jim Thorpe, an Olympic athlete),owners of the land acquired by RR companies, RR companies bosses, RR construction workers, their wives and girl friends.
"Locality": names based on the local environment and geological features e.g. Riverside, Greenwood, Gull Lake, Short Mountain, Summit.
"Others" include RR Company crossings (see below); industrial and commercial premises; aspirations and endeavours (e.g. Independence, Paradise, Wait-a-While); literature & arts (e.g. Romeo, Juliet); stations on or close to State Lines (e.g. Texarkana: Texas-Arkansas); reversed spelling of common names (e.g. Eckles > Selkce in Minnesota)

Maybe as many as 25% of USA stations have been renamed at least once, some 4 or more times, e.g IGN in Texas: Frio > Erie > Ford > Ambergate > Dilley. The reasons for this are many, including:

RRs built across undeveloped Government lands initially established stations with sidings at about 10 mile intervals to encourage settlement, passenger services often being introduced as soon as the tracks were laid. Construction and supporting business workers were the main users, but many could be used by the general public and were shown in public timetables. Most stations would originally be named after local landscape features, construction workers/wives, or simply Siding No. 1, End of Track etc. As the area developed, those stations still in use would usually adopt the name of the new community.

Many stations on RRs across settled lands were named after the owner of the land acquired by the RR. If the owner changed then the station name may change. Again, as communities were established, the station name would change to the name of the community, sometimes by addition of a suffix, e.g. Taylor's > Taylorville. Local politics may explain the reason some stations (and presumably the community) changed name several times – sometimes reverting to an earlier name - in only a few years! Addition or removal of the " 's" to owners names is certainly the most common name change and the most inconsistant, both versions often appearing in the same document.

The Grand Trunk Pacific in Canada initially provided stations along several lines in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta with names in alphabetical order.

Other reasons include rationalisation of the station name with the Post Office name for the same community and removal of duplicated names on the same RR and in the same State, as the smaller RRs merged to form larger companies.

Where towns were served by several RRs, each RR often had its own separate station, even in quite small communities. The addition of prefixes or suffixes (East, West etc) to distinguish between the various stations in the same community, as the case in UK, was relatively uncommon and generally only occured where two of the stations eventually came under the same ownership.

RR Company Crossings: Many RRs, particularly in the mid-west, crossed each other at grade. In most cases, trains made safety stops, and in the early days, many companies allowed passengers to board and alight at such crossings. Most such locations were originally known by the name of the RR being crossed, so the location may have separate names on each RR. As RRs merged and reorganised, such locations could be renamed many times to reflect the change of ownership. Part of a 1901 Central of Georgia public timetable is included under “Maps & Timetables” showing such stops. Many ceased to be used by passengers after a number of years, presumably due to safety concerns. Others evolved into interchange or union stations (see 7 above), and, as communities were established nearby, many adopted the name of the community.

12. Ongoing research – hints and pitfalls

With over 250 Official Guides and other North American RR public timetables now on-line, the amount of material readily available for continuing research is enormous. Clearly, I am unable to look in detail at all of these, and I hope others may continue researching this aspect of North American RRs after I have finally given up. My aim is that my research will be available for others to use if a major institution such as a RailRoad Museum or University is prepared to include my work as part of its digital archive.
(date)Glist: refers to list of renamed stations included in the Official Guide from 1899 to 1908, and not (yet) found in the timetable pages, or may only have been included in timetables issued by the railroad companies.
(date)Gnote: refers to the General Railway Information section of the Official Guide
(date)Gindex: name shown in the Official Guide Index of Railway Stations.
(date)Gmap: name shown on RR company maps in the Official Guide.
Some of these stations and former names may have been non-passenger locations for freight or operational purposes only, or the station may have been renamed after closure to passengers. The General Railway Information section, much doubtless being “stop press” and reliant on information

provided by the RR companies, does contain some spelling and other errors, including possibly some renames that were planned but not implimented. From other research, some renames noted in the above were actually replacement stations provided on nearby sites.
Be aware that the first appearance of a timetable for a new line can well contain spelling errors, corrected in later issues.

Sources of information for ongoing research include:
The Google Archive of Official and other North American Guides
The Hathi Trust Archive
Rand McNally Commercial Atlas and State maps
Sanborn insurance maps for USA cities and many towns
City and County historical street atlases
Railroad Commission Maps
Perry-Castaneda historical topographical maps
Historical Map Works