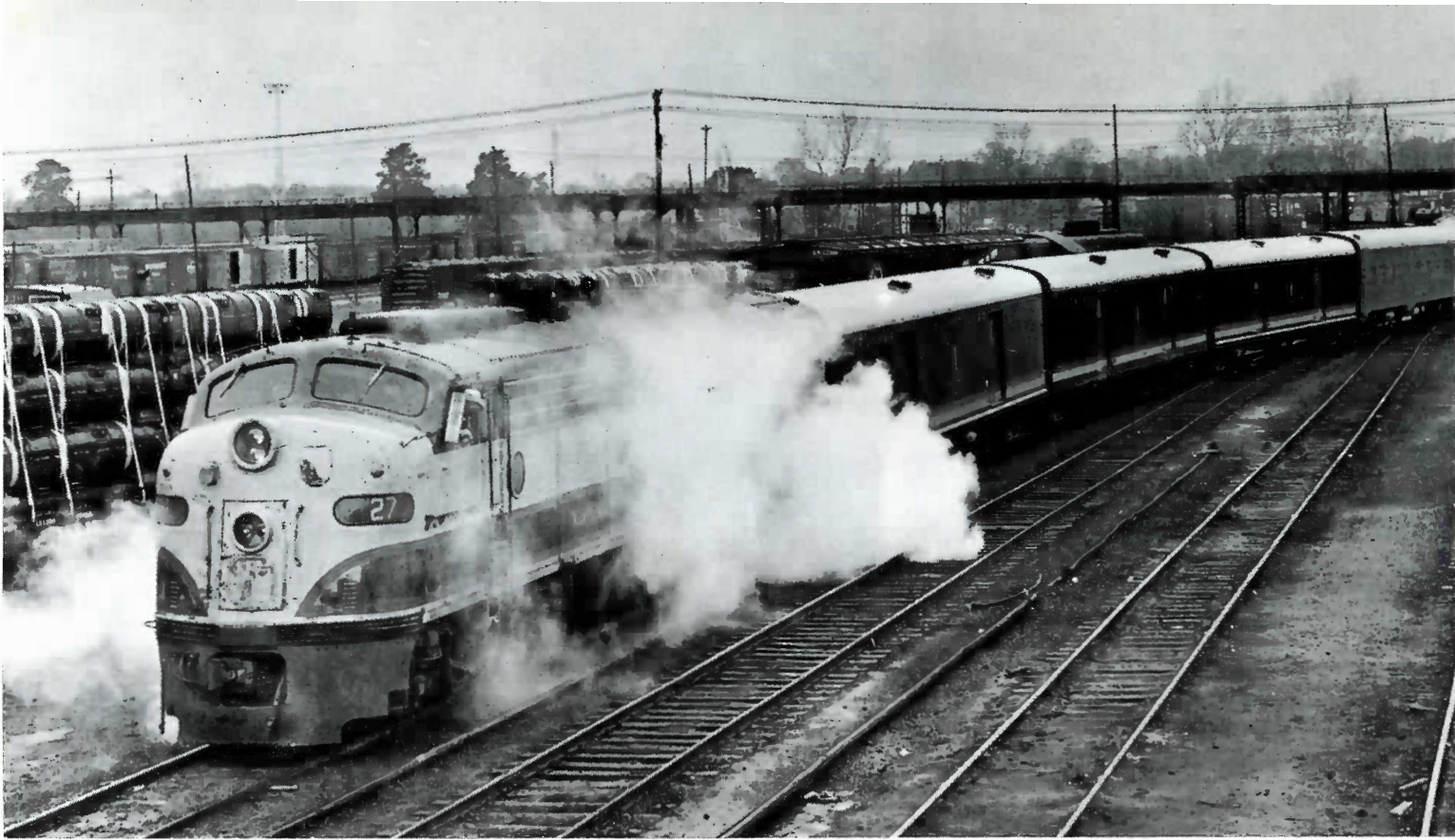


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Passenger Train JOURNAL



Hastings rides the Flying Crow



No. 15 backs out of Union Station, Texarkana, toward the wye, before heading south for New above. A KCS trademark, an ex-New York Central observation car, waits during a 6:30 a.m. crew at Heavener, Oklahoma, below.





Orleans,
change



Twilight Flight of the Flying Crow

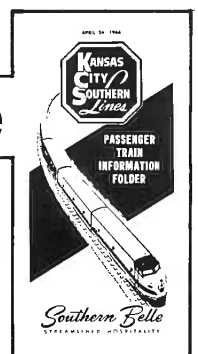


The month of March, 1968, may seem in retrospect to have been a fine time to be riding passenger trains. But a flood of discontinuance petitions kept the ICC busy and the train-riding public gloomy. It also kept Photographer Philip R. Hastings on the road. Famous for his unparalleled record of steam's final hours in the Fifties, Hastings set out in the Sixties on a similar mission,

recording what he could of some of America's less glamorous trains on the hunch they wouldn't be around much longer. He was right, of course. Just three months after his trip south from Kansas City to Texarkana, Nos. 15 and 16, the remnants of **The Flying Crow**, died, leaving only the flagship **Southern Belle** to carry the Kansas City Southern banner for another year. But the train he caught in late winter looked very much alive. The red, black and yellow E units and observation cars made respectable consists, and station agents in places like Pittsburg and Winthrop still accounted for ticket revenue. And although the timetable gave no name for 15 and 16, Hastings' camera recorded a train that still deserved the name **Flying Crow**.

Once in a timetable

By Philip R. Hastings





A midnight review of train orders during a crew change keeps the men in charge of No. 15 occupied on the nearly empty platform at Pittsburg, Kansas, left. No. 27 will get serviced during the short layover. Although old-time KCS literature might have passengers believing otherwise, the **Crow** never flew straight, as witness the curving trackage through the Ouachita Mountains in Oklahoma, above. No. 15 waits for a northbound freight extra. Passengers in the photo below should be wary of northbound No. 2, the **Southern Belle**, due to pass through their home town of Winthrop any moment. The KCS flagship will breeze right through the Arkansas hamlet, but here No. 15 tends to its mundane duties.



Tickets



Route of the Flying Crow



Clockwise from top: A modest crowd awaits the 10:15 p.m. departure at Kansas City Union Station; at Texarkana, the **Crow** has been gone for 45 minutes as two detraining passengers make final travel arrangements; the cook and waiter behind the counter at left in cafe-lounge-observation No. 43 also serve table meals; a light, cheery interior greets patrons in a new KCS coach, one of 10 built in 1965 for the pro-passenger carrier. Note the ceramic tile floor.





Clockwise from above: The red, yellow and black of the KCS is reflected on the smooth side of a coach on No. 15, somewhere in Arkansas, as No. 16 passes. An SD40 slave unit on a northbound freight is visible through the rear window of ex-New York Central cafe-lounge-observation car No. 43 at right, above. The trains pass at Vandervoort, Arkansas. A Dressel switchman's lantern with a red Fresnel globe and some electrical connectors hang handy as E8 No. 27 sets off an express car from southbound No. 15 at Texarkana. It was the photographer's last glimpse of the remnants of the **Flying Crow**.

NEXT MONTH:

Photographer Hastings heads north in October's **PTJ** to sample the **Copper Country Limited** in a ride from Milwaukee to Michigan's Upper Peninsula in 1968.