SEATTLE, LAKE SHORE & EASTERN RAILWAY

In 1885, a group of Seattle businessmen formed the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railway. Their plan was to build a railroad from Seattle, through Woodinville, Squak (now Issaquah), Preston, The Landing, Rangers Prairie (now Snoqualmie and North Bend) and over the pass to Eastern Washington. With venture capital from the sale of stock, the railroad began laying track, and by 1888, it had reached Issaquah. During the following year, the tracks passed Fall City, crossing the wagon road that is now Lake Alice Road at the present trail site, and reached North Bend. Shortly after that, the railroad built a depot at the Fall City crossing, including a water tower, and the isolated community of Fall City became connected with Seattle by rail and telegraph. Daily service of freight and passengers launched the sleepy village into a new timetable, based on when the train either arrived or left the depot. In 1891, the U.S. Postal Service contracted with the railroad to carry the mail and Fall City became a real town.

On March 26, 1890, Otto Reinig, a boy of 13, took the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railway on an excursion trip from Seattle to Snoqualmie Falls. He logged his trip on a small piece of note-paper, listing each depot along the way and the arrival times. The train departed from the foot of
Columbia Street, with the following stops: Boulevard, Fremont, Latona, Ravenna Park, Yesler Junction, Keith, Lake Wayne, Bothell, Woodinville, Derby, York, Redmond, Adelaide, Inglewood, Monohan, Gilman, Preston, Fall City and Snoqualmie Falls. The time from Columbia Street to Snoqualmie Falls was 2 hours, 50 minutes. He had traveled about 45 miles at an average speed of 15 miles per hour. Later on, Otto and his parents moved to the town of Snoqualmie and started the Reinig Store, but he never forgot the train trip to Snoqualmie Falls.

In 1901, the Northern Pacific Railroad acquired the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern track, facilities and rolling stock. The wagon road connecting the depot to town via Taylor Street was in use and regular taxi service provided. When my father, Jesse Kelley, arrived here on the Northern Pacific from Kansas in 1903, he rode down the hill into town aboard Simon “Time” Bailey’s hack, pulled by a team with harness bells. Dad told me, “It was a dark night, raining like hell, and coming down an unfamiliar road by the light of two small lanterns, along with the noise of the bells on the team, was a ride I’ll never forget.”

With the improvements in roads, trucks and buses, shipping goods by road became less costly and the railroads began to lose money on spurs like the one connecting North Bend to Seattle. The Northern Pacific curtailed passenger service in an effort to keep the freight segment profitable. However, it was only a matter of time before the trucking industry overtook the railroads in moving goods, both in cost and convenience. In an effort to regain some of the business, the railroad began using the more efficient diesel locomotives in about 1956. This change only pushed the demise of the rail service to the Snoqualmie Valley out a few short years. In 1970, what remained of the Northern Pacific became the Burlington-Northern and, by 1974, rail service to the Snoqualmie Valley had been discontinued. The tracks that had tied the Snoqualmie Valley to the outside world were torn up and the bridges and trestles dismantled. Within a few years all that was left was a trail for hikers and bikers, called the Preston-Snoqualmie Trail. Still in use today, it begins at Preston and runs 5.3 miles along the old railway bed to an overlook of Snoqualmie Falls.

**MILWAUKEE RAILROAD**

In the early 1900s, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St Paul Railroad began building their main east-west tracks from Chicago to Seattle. The Snoqualmie Pass route was selected as the route through the Cascade Mountains. During the construction of the tracks, the telegraph system was installed and my dad was a lineman for a portion of the Western Union telegraph line from Moncton (later Cedar Falls) to the Snoqualmie Summit. (He brought home a large, metal toolbox, which is now in the Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum.) The Snoqualmie Pass tunnel was completed in 1915, bypassing the section of track which had caused

*Fig. 6-10 Milwaukee Railroad OLYMPIAN.*
many delays due to heavy snows. In 1920, the main line was electrified from Seattle to Wilbur, Washington and the passenger train was called the OLYMPIAN. It was the OLYMPIAN which Lud Peterson, his son Wilbur, and I boarded at Cedar Falls in August of 1941. The three of us rode to Chicago, on our way to Lebanon, Indiana, to pick up a new school bus.

It was 1910 when the Milwaukee Railroad began working on a spur from Moncton to Everett. The track-laying crew arrived on the hill to the north of Fall City in 1911, and during the following year they reached Everett. Freight and mail services were extended to Fall City and a road past Rutherford Slough wound up the hill to the Fall City siding. The siding was gone by the late 1930s and the trains no longer stopped in Fall City. In the mid-1970s, the Milwaukee went out of business, the tracks and most bridges were torn up and the right-of-way of the Everett Branch came under the jurisdiction of King County Parks, to later become the Snoqualmie Valley Trail.