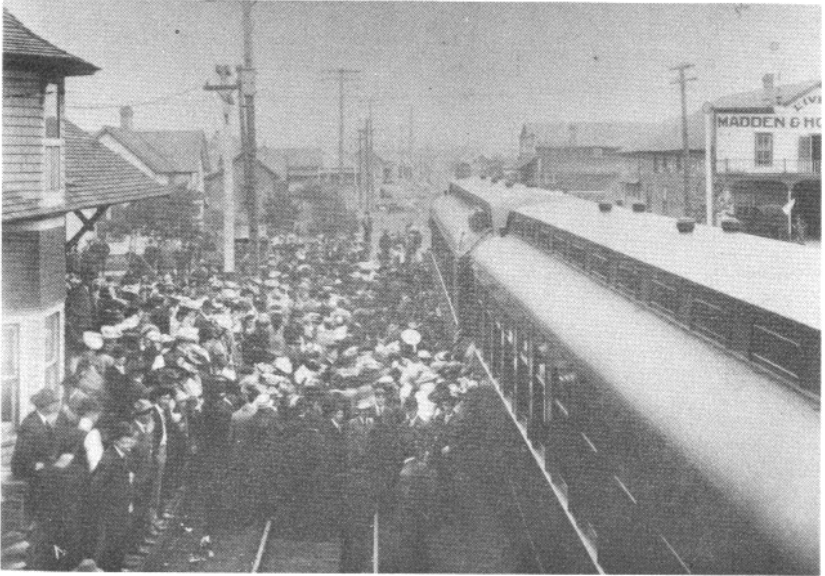


A brief  
**HISTORY**  
and  
**DESCRIPTION**  
of the  
**BOYNE CITY RAILROAD COMPANY**  
formerly the  
**BOYNE CITY, GAYLORD and ALPENA R.R.**  
formerly the  
**BOYNE CITY and SOUTHEASTERN R.R.**

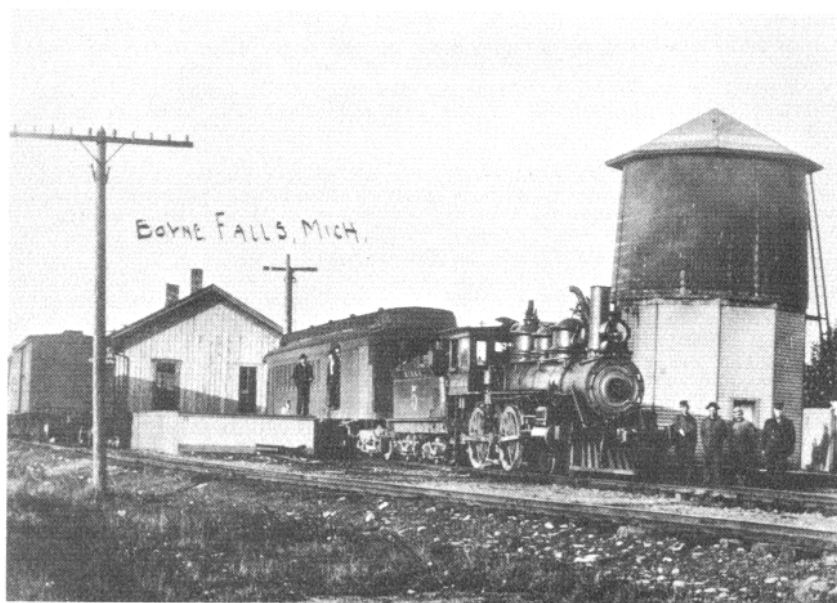


#### GENERAL HISTORY

For 78 years, the Boyne City Railroad has operated as a complete and independent railroad (never part of a larger company). First named the Boyne City & Southeastern, changed to the Boyne City, Gaylord and Alpena in 1905, and then simply to the Boyne City Railroad in 1935.

It started in 1893 with 7.2 miles of track between Boyne City on Lake Charlevoix and Boyne Falls, where it connected with the former Grand Rapids and Indiana line. The railroad eventually expanded across the top of Michigan to Alpena 92 miles but reverted back to the original 7.2 miles in 1935, when the line from Boyne Falls to Alpena was abandoned and torn up. The remaining track and railroad buildings all exist today almost as they were originally.

In those early days in Northern Michigan, the logging industry for which the railroad was built was soon followed by other industries in and around Boyne City. To take care of their transportation needs, the railroad eventually had 13 locomotives and 180 employees.



#### THE BOYNE FALLS DEPOT

The Village of Boyne Falls was the eastern terminus of the Boyne City Railroad and its predecessors in the first few years and again since 1935. The original line, in 1893, was extended between Boyne City and Boyne Falls primarily for the purpose of connecting the Great Lakes shipping at the docks in Boyne City to the Grand Rapids and Indiana main line going south through the center of the State. From the beginning, the Boyne City Railroad inter-changed with this larger railroad at Boyne Falls. The Grand Rapids and Indiana line became the Pennsylvania and then the Penn Central as it is today, and the Boyne City and Southeastern Railroad became the Boyne City, Gaylord and Alpena - and then the Boyne City Railroad, without interruption of its service with the larger railroad at Boyne Falls.

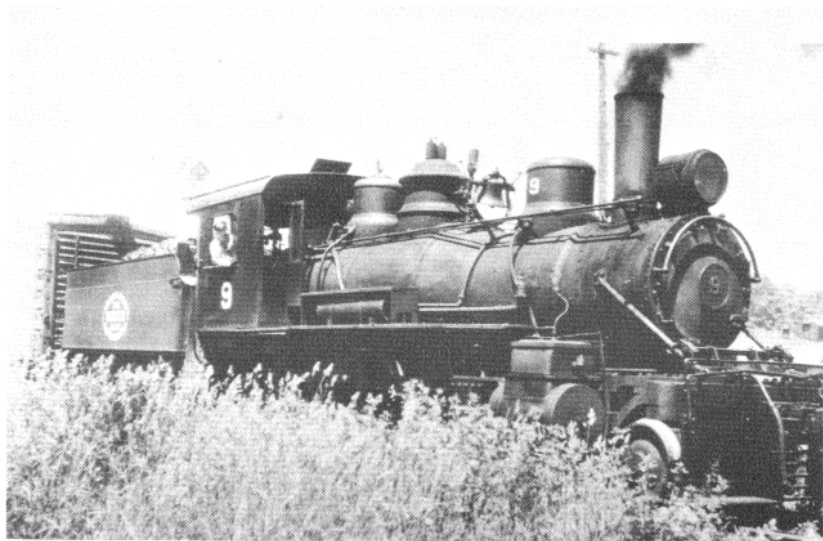
The original depot at Boyne Falls consisted of a combination passenger and freight depot and was still in existence up until about 1965 when it was torn down.

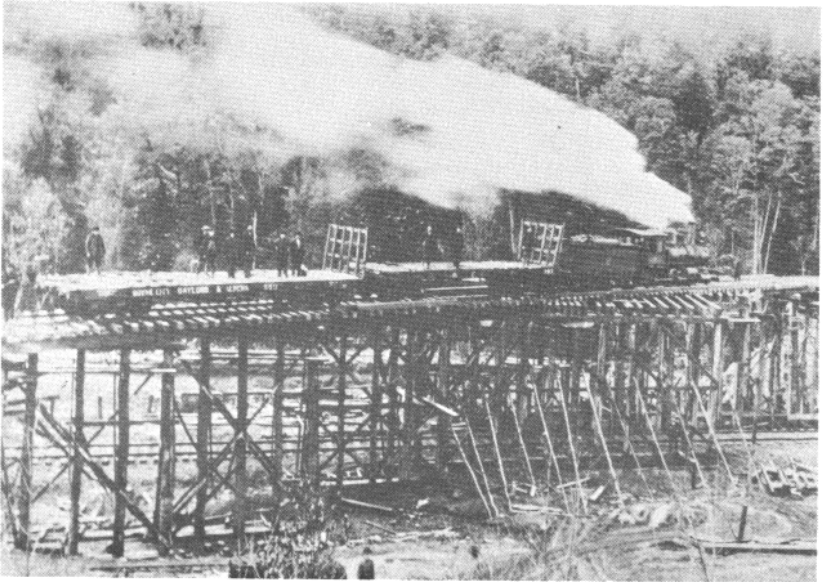
Besides the original depot, there was a large water tank whose location can still be traced. In the early days, there was also a large mill operated by water power on the west side of Boyne Falls. There were several railroad sidings to serve this mill, and the mill pond is still in evidence to the west of Highway 131 on the Kline property just north of the entrance into the Boyne Mountain Ski Lodge.

The photograph on the preceding page shows the Boyne City, Gaylord and Alpena locomotive #5 with a combination passenger and baggage car waiting for passengers on the siding that dead-ended at the freight platform of the original Boyne Falls depot. The large water tank then in existence is prominently shown.

The present depot, which was built in 1970 and the present water tank to the south of it, are approximately one-half scale of typical 1900 railroad structures. The depot itself is used as the ticket office for passengers boarding at Boyne Falls.

Freight traffic for Boyne City continues to be inter-changed on the sidings here, as in the past, although, at present, the Penn Central Railroad only runs two freight trains a week, so that the Boyne City Railroad only has to pick up cars consigned to its customers, usually on Tuesdays and Fridays, after they have been dropped off by the Penn Central.





#### BOYNE VALLEY POINTS OF INTEREST

The Boyne City Railroad tracks, after going south from the Boyne Falls depot, cross over U.S. 131 and then immediately over the Boyne River on a small wooden trestle. They swing west in a large arc heading northwest for Boyne City. However, the track splits just beyond the trestle and also swings north. Both these curves connect to the other side of what is called a "Y", as this was the main line running from Boyne City parallel to the present highway and, eventually, swung to the east on a huge wooden trestle to cross over the main Grand Rapids and Indiana line (now the Penn Central), and meandered its way to Gaylord, Atlanta and finally to Alpena in the 1920s.

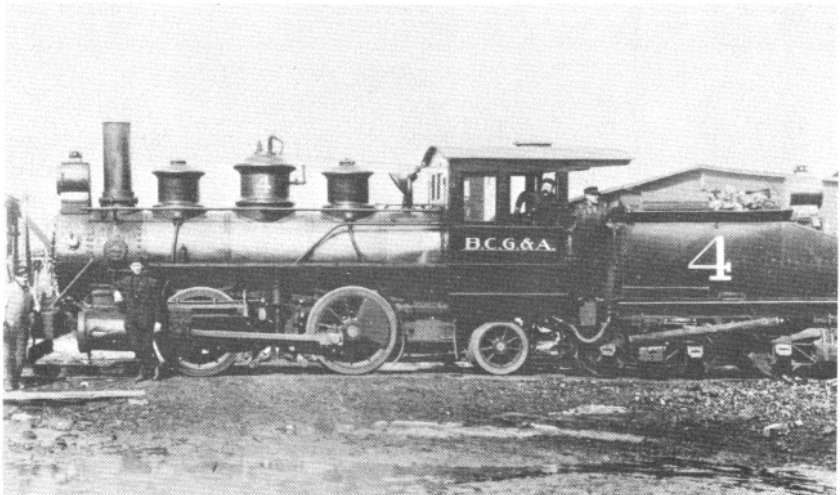
The above photograph shows a Boyne City, Gaylord and Alpena train crossing the huge wooden trestle over the Grand Rapids and Indiana main line. This trestle was later replaced with a steel bridge resting on cement abutments. The cement abutments are still there, at North Elmira.

The "y" had another use, which was to turn trains around when necessary, as a locomotive with as many as twenty cars could be completely changed in direction by backing into this "Y" and coming out the other side. The "y" still exists, although seldom used, and the main line continues south of the big curve for half a mile. The rest of the main line, from that point all the way to Alpena, was torn up years ago.

At one time, there was a settlement or cross roads named "Moore" at the northwest corner of the "y" which would be close to where the Boyne Mountain Lodge driving range is now.

As the Railroad proceeds west toward Boyne City, it passes through an area just before approaching "Dam" road which was the site of the lost village of "Doyle". This approximate location will soon be marked by the Boyne City Railroad picnic grounds. Passengers may notice a large, cement block building to the north of this area serviced by a railroad siding which, up to ten years ago, was a Consumers Power plant, now abandoned.

The tracks from here to Boyne City actually go down a hill with approximately a two percent grade, which, in railroad language, is fairly steep and requires braking all of the way. This was always known as the "Hill", and, in the days when lumbering was the main occupation of the Railroad, the trains would go empty up the hill to the lumber camps in and around Boyne Falls and needed little power to come down the hill with their heavy loads of logs for the mills and docks at Boyne City.



## GENERAL OFFICES

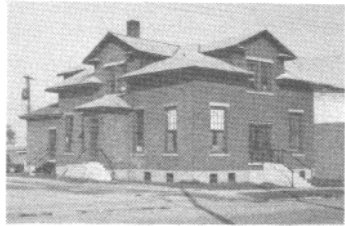
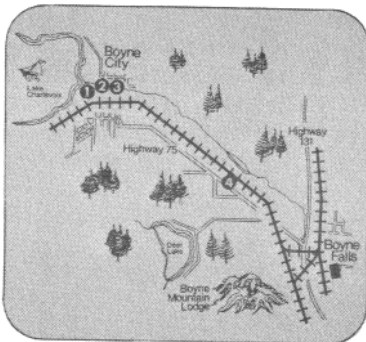
The General Office building was built around 1900 and was located near the waterfront to serve the offices of the White Lumber Company, the owner of which also owned the railroad.

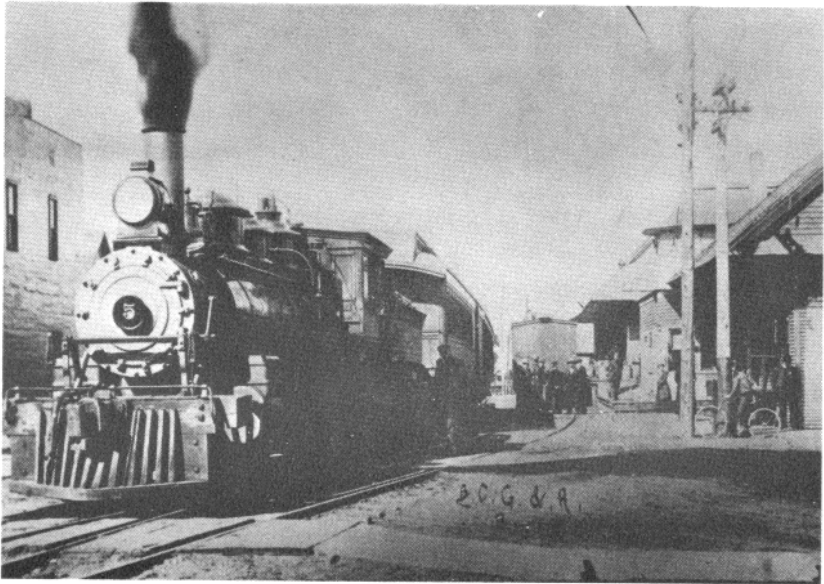
In 1918, the building was re-located on its present site, and, inasmuch as the railroad had sustained a disastrous fire earlier resulting in many lost records, the building was faced with brick and two huge fire-proof vaults added.

This fore-sight was fortunate for us present day rail fans, because all records in existence at that time, and all subsequent ones, have remained undisturbed to this day. They supply a wonderfully complete record of the railroad's rights-of-way, complete inventories, old tickets, time tables, maps, deeds, drawings and personnel records throughout the years.

It took little effort for the present railroad staff to restore these offices to a close approximation of their original appearance. The golden oak panelling and frosted glass partitions were still there. The old globe light fixtures and the chain were found in the basement, plus old desks, adding machines and other office equipment of the 1910-1920 period.

Part of the office is now used as a railroad gift shop for items having a connection with the Boyne City Railroad. Souvenirs, postcards, maps and photographs (historical and new) are available plus tickets for the train rides. Of special interest are the historical photographs and the office of the President.





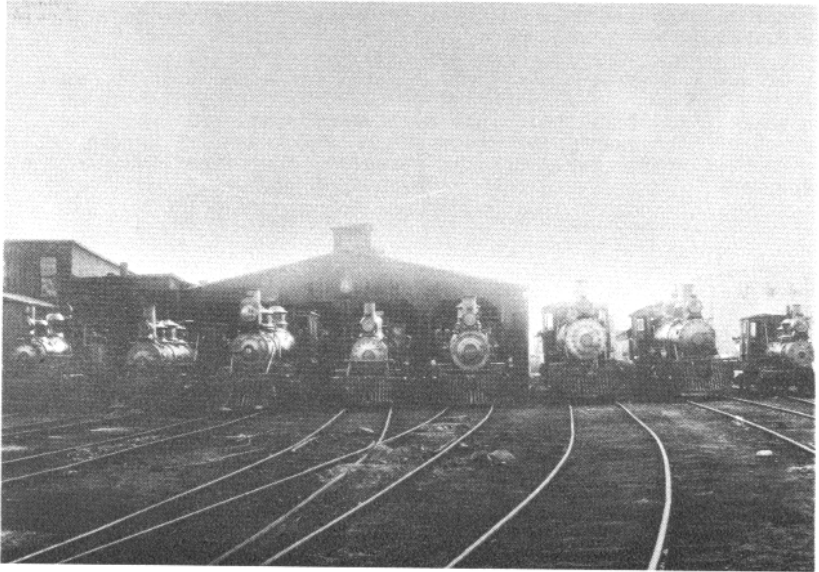
#### FREIGHT AND PASSENGER DEPOT - BOYNE CITY

The original freight depot or warehouse still stands adjacent to the General Offices in Boyne City and is now painted in the B.C.R.R. colors of red and white. The bay window on the front platform was added recently to give the building the look of a typical turn-of-the-century combination passenger and freight depot. However, the original building was strictly a freight warehouse, served by its own siding in front.

In the above photograph, the original passenger depot was alongside to the east and can be seen this side of the freight depot.

The freight building was built in 1905 and "modernized" in 1920 with the addition of a concrete foundation poured around the base. At present, this building is not used for any railroad purposes so is not open, but it does lend some photogenic atmosphere. Typical railroad station signs giving the appropriate civic information are mounted on the depot along with a baggage track on the front platform. Eventually, this building may be restored internally and put to railroad use once again.





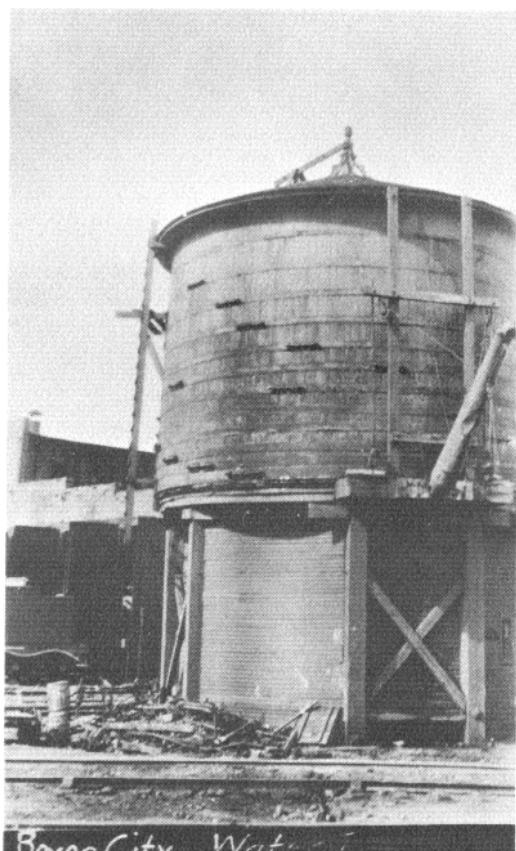
#### BOYNE CITY RAILROAD YARDS AND STRUCTURES

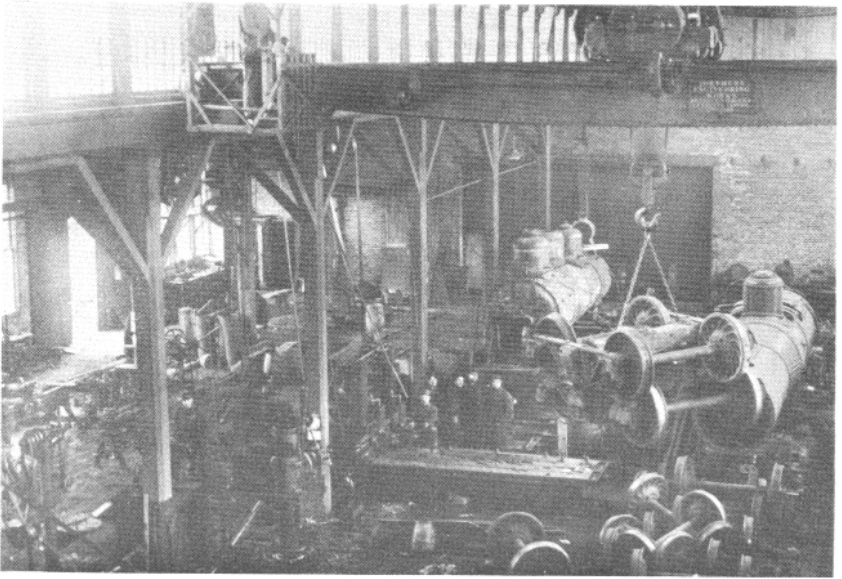
The Railroad yard probably developed on the waterfront at Boyne City because of the many docks and mills that clustered around the shore. Much of the railroad traffic terminated at the docks for further transportation by water because of its economy. The railroad served to gather up nearby products for delivery to the sailing ships and early steamers that crowded the city docks. The early maps of the tracks show dozens of sidings all along the waterfront with many docks having tracks leading out on them. The main line through the city was double tracked, and, in the yards, the tracks included a "Y" which surrounded the engine house and car shops for turning the trains and locomotives around at this end of the line.

Today, only sufficient sidings and switches remain to handle the present light freight operations with three tracks running into the "round house". The others having been pulled up gradually through the years. The main line does continue along the lake front for a short way, and used to terminate just beyond the now abandoned tannery.

Besides the engine house and car shops, the only other remaining structure is the oil house which was built in 1917. Even though all locomotives, at that time, were steam, they used a considerable amount of lubricating oil plus lamp oil for switch lamps and car lights, and this building was built for the storage of oil barrels.

The original huge water tank was located where the present water tank stands, and there were also several special purpose sheds for pumps, hand cars, etc. One can imagine that the yards were also piled high with spare ties, rails, wheels and axles and all of the rest of the paraphernalia needed to keep a railroad in operation.





#### ENGINE HOUSE AND CAR SHOPS

The present engine house and car shops undoubtedly were re-built and re-arranged many times but have been externally the same for the last 50 years. The original buildings were very ramshackle, having been erected with little planning, as the old pictures show. The present buildings, however, were built in 1910 after the original group burned in a disastrous fire which destroyed some rolling stock, several locomotives and many office records.

The various functions performed in the buildings intermingled originally, as there were few partitions. The southern building, half of which is now gone, was devoted to the daily servicing of the locomotives. There were eight tracks coming in with eight pits for working under the locomotives. Several of these tracks extended further into the car shops' part of the building where manufacturing of rolling stock was performed and re-building whole locomotives was undertaken.

Heavy duty machinery, driven by extensive line shafting (the remains of which can still be seen) was scattered throughout the building. A

complete foundry and pattern room, plus various storerooms, completed the shops.

In spite of the large amount of industry in and around Boyne City between 1900 and 1920, the railroad was quite isolated from sources of railroad equipment, so it was necessary for the employees to make their own replacement parts. Almost all of the railroad's 200 plus cars were actually built right in their own shops. Only locomotives were acquired elsewhere. The activity in the shops is vividly demonstrated in the photo on the preceding page, showing locomotives being stripped and re-built with the aid of a traveling crane which ran overhead the length of the building (its tracks are still there).

Today, the railroad is still re-building and re-painting its rolling stock in the car shops, and our locomotives are serviced over the same pits. The remaining machine shop equipment is used frequently. Fortunately, many of the old casting patterns have been saved and are on display in the pattern room. The collection of railroad lanterns can be seen in the lamp room.

The last of the original Boyne City, Gaylord and Alpena cabooses, #802, built here, is now being restored for display, and the original B.C.G. & A. Russell snow plow is on view. This plow was purchased new in 1906 and photographs attest to its struggle through the years with the severe winters that continue to plague railroading in Northern Michigan. The Russell plow was last used in the winter of 1959, requiring seven days to complete the plowing of the line from Boyne City to Boyne Falls to re-establish freight service.

The engine house and car shops are being re-organized for conducted tours. When this project is completed, there will be an admission charge, and the tours will be on a regular schedule commencing with a slide show of historical photographs of the railroad, followed by a complete tour of the building with our guide.

