

TRAINS IN THE VALLEY

If you were standing in this spot 150 years ago, you might have been run over by a train!

In 1847, Byron Kilbourn started Wisconsin's first railroad—the Milwaukee & Waukesha. On November 20, 1850, the railroad made its first run. Moving at a speed of 30 miles per hour, the train carried 50 passengers through the Menomonee Valley to Wauwatosa.

By the early 1900s, the railroad was one of the largest employers in Milwaukee, with 2,800 men working in the Menomonee Valley. Many lived in the neighborhoods nearby and walked to work.

As the railroad grew, its name changed to reflect the new places it served. By 1928, it was known informally as the Milwaukee Road. At the height of its success, as the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad, trains operated on 10,000 miles of track. Most of the routes were in the Midwest, but one extended all the way to Washington's Pacific coast.

The Milwaukee Road filed for bankruptcy and transferred its train cars and tracks to the Soo-Canadian Pacific system in 1986.

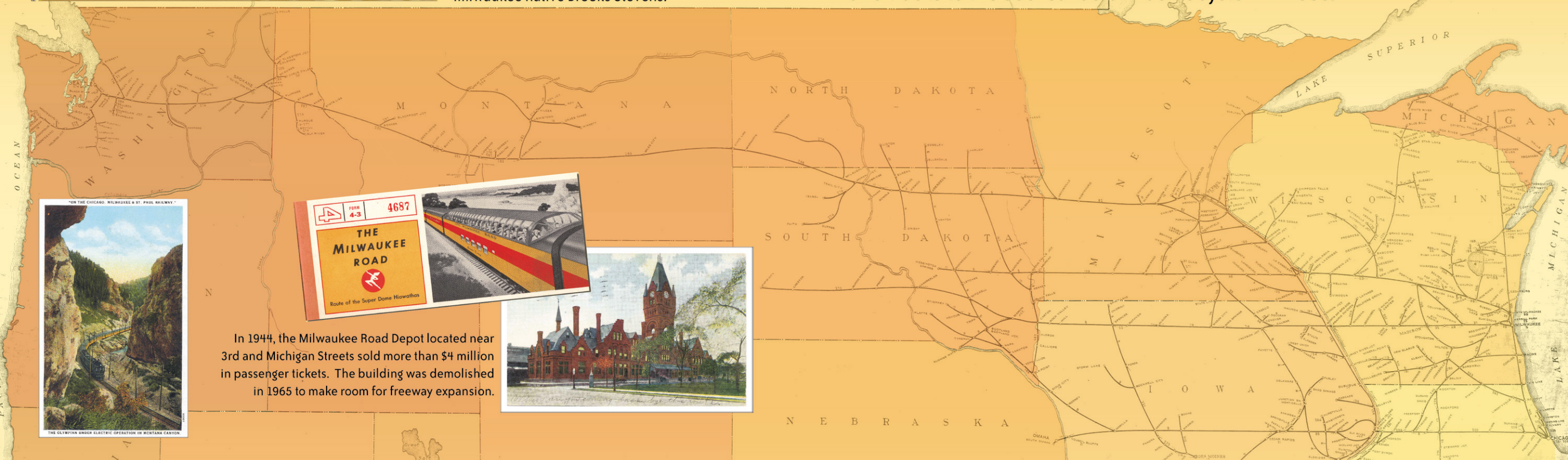


Top: In 1934, to renew interest in train travel, the Milwaukee Road introduced high-speed trains called Hiawathas. The sleek design and speeds of 100 miles per hour attracted many passengers to this exciting and comfortable mode of travel.

Left: The Hiawatha Skytop Lounge was designed by Milwaukee native Brooks Stevens.



Route Map and Hiawatha promotional image, Milwaukee Road Archives, Milwaukee Public Library



In 1944, the Milwaukee Road Depot located near 3rd and Michigan Streets sold more than \$4 million in passenger tickets. The building was demolished in 1965 to make room for freeway expansion.

