= PRR 4876 =

PRR 4876 is a GG1 @-@ class electric locomotive located at the B & O Railroad Museum in Baltimore , Maryland , United States . It was built in 1939 and was involved in the only accident to befall a GG1 . In 1953 , the locomotive overran the buffer stop and crashed into Union Station in Washington , D.C. after its brakes failed . A temporary concourse floor was erected over 4876 (which had broken through the original) for the upcoming inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower . After the inauguration it was shipped back to Altoona , Pennsylvania , for repairs and placed back into service .

= = Background = =

The GG1 was developed in the 1930s by General Electric as the replacement for the Pennsylvania Railroad 's then standard electric locomotive , the P5a , and was based largely on the New Haven EP3 . The GG1 was capable of a top speed of 100 miles per hour (160 km / h) , powered by its twelve 385 horsepower (287 kW) traction motors . The prototype GG1 , PRR 4800 , was tested against Westinghouse 's submission , the R1 . The Pennsylvania selected the GG1 over the R1 , as the R1 was not articulated and the GG1 's traction motors were similar to ones already in use . An order for the first 57 of a total 139 GG1s was placed in November 1934 , with delivery starting in April 1935 .

= = History = =

4876 was built in 1939 at the Pennsylvania Railroad 's Altoona Works in Altoona , Pennsylvania , and was the 77th locomotive in its class . It operated between New York City , Philadelphia and Washington , D.C. on the electrified Northeast Corridor .

At 8 : 38 AM on the morning of January 15 , 1953 , 4876 was the subject of a wreck , the only one to involve a GG1 , while pulling southbound Federal Express # 173 from Boston , Massachusetts , to Washington , D.C. Upon nearing an " Approach " signal about 1 mile (1 @.@ 6 km) outside of Washington , the engineer applied the brakes to slow the train down from 70 to 60 miles per hour (113 to 97 km / h) . Noting that the train still was not slowing after passing the signal , the engineer engaged the emergency brake and sounded the locomotive 's horn . Also observing the excessive speed of 4876 was an assistant train director in Interlocking Tower ' C ' , who radioed ahead to Tower ' K ' . The train director in Tower ' K ' had the switches changed to allow 4876 to enter Union Station on Track 16 , its regularly assigned track . Having insufficient time to switch the runaway on to another track , the director alerted the station master 's office which was situated at the end of Track 16 . Still traveling at around 35 to 40 miles per hour (56 to 64 km / h) , 4876 rammed the buffer stop and continued into the concourse of Union Station , before partially falling through the floor into the baggage room below .

An investigation by the Interstate Commerce Commission discovered a design flaw on a style of passenger car used by the New York , New Haven and Hartford Railroad in which the handle of an angle cock , a valve used to close the brake pipe when the car is the last one in the train , came into contact with a bottom crossmember of the coupler pocket . The angle cock would become closed , rendering the brakes on all the trailing cars inoperable . The third car behind 4876 , New Haven 8665 , was of this design , but the fourth car had a slightly different style of coupler . The difference between the two cars increased the frequency and the intensity of which the angle cock at the rear of 8655 would hit the crossmember . Earlier in the morning , the train was stopped outside of Kingston , Rhode Island , because the brakes on the final two cars were " sticking " and could not be released from the locomotive . Upon inspection , the angle cock on 8655 was found to be closed and was reopened by the engineer , but , after a locomotive and shift change , the matter was forgotten .

With the inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower set to occur on January 20 , the passenger cars were re @-@ railed and 4876 was lowered the rest of the way into the baggage room . A temporary

floor was erected over the locomotive so as to not impede the crowds traveling to Washington , D.C. for the inauguration . After the inauguration , 4876 was cut into 6 @-@ foot (1 @.@ 8 m) sections , hoisted from the baggage room , and reassembled in the Altoona shops . The insurance company deemed it less expensive to reassemble 4876 than to replace it with a new locomotive .

Ten months later , 4876 was returned to service , repainted in Tuscan red . It stayed in service until 1983 when she was retired and donated for preservation . Originally planned for donation to the Smithsonian Institution , it was ultimately donated to the B & O Railroad Museum in Baltimore , Maryland . Initially , the museum planned on restoring 4876 and putting it on display , however , these plans were placed on hold indefinitely when the museum 's roundhouse roof collapsed in 2003 , and the museum is currently focusing its efforts on restoring the equipment damaged by the collapse . The locomotive has been stored outside since it was acquired by the museum , has become defaced with graffiti and parts of its steel body are corroded .