

= Harriman (Erie Railroad station) =

Harriman Station , formerly known as Turner Station until 1910 , was the first station on the Erie Railroad Main Line west of Newburgh Junction tower in Harriman , New York . Built on the side of Grove Street in Harriman , the station depot was constructed originally as Turner Station in 1838 , as a three story hotel @-@ train station combination . This station caught fire in 1873 and was replaced by a one @-@ story wooden structure . That structure survived as long as its predecessor before it began decaying and was replaced in 1911 with a new station on land donated by the widow of Edward Henry Harriman . A new one @-@ story structure was built on the land . The station was maintained as a one @-@ story depot with a large monument to the side dedicated to the work of Charles Minot . Minot was a director of the Erie Railroad who , in 1851 , while his train was stopped at Turner , made the first railroad call by telegraph .

The station depot remained in use by the Erie until October 1960 , when that was folded into the Erie @-@ Lackawanna Railroad , which itself would fold in April 1976 , as it was absorbed into the Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) . Conrail maintained passenger services until 1983 , when that job was taken over by Metro @-@ North Railroad . On April 18 , 1983 , the last passenger train left the Harriman station , as Conrail and Metro @-@ North abandoned the tracks in favor of using the Graham Line (a high @-@ speed freight line) for passenger and freight service . At that time , a new park & ride off of New York State Route 17 in Harriman opened for the newly realigned passenger service along the ex @-@ Graham Line .

The station depot remained on its concrete platform when the tracks were torn up on the old main line . In 1996 , workers removed the plaque attached to the Minot monument , but it was soon returned . However , the plaque was stolen shortly afterward and has not been recovered . The station depot itself was left in decrepit condition , and in 2006 , the village of Harriman 's building inspector ordered Norfolk Southern Railroad (the successor to Conrail and who owned the right @-@ of @-@ way) to either restore the building or demolish it . Norfolk Southern followed through with a demolition permit and in May 2006 , the station depot was demolished by a front loader . The station remains were taken to a dump in Hillburn , New York .

= = History = =

= = = First station constructed = = =

The first station in Harriman , New York , then known as Turner , was first constructed around 1838 by Peter Turner , as one of the many stretches of the New York and Lake Erie Railroad was constructed through town . The station itself was a 400 feet (120 m) long brick depot , three stories tall and topped with a French roof . The station sat alongside the railroad tracks and was called the Orange Hotel . The dining room of the new structure was able to hold 500 people at a time and accommodate them with good food . During planning of the Erie , there was some concern to whether or not the railroad would work its way through Harriman at all , instead bypassing nearby Goshen and Middletown in favor of a terminus at Newburgh , also on the Hudson River . Train service to Harriman began in 1841 , when the New York and Lake Erie ran its first trains on June 30 , 1841 from Piermont @-@ on @-@ Hudson , the determined eastern terminus , to Goshen , the western end .

Construction progressed on the Erie Railroad , and by the end of 1841 , grading from Middletown to Goshen was in progress and 410 of the 447 miles (719 km) chartered for the new railroad was contracted . The railroad had been running trains on the 46 miles (74 km) railroad line , carrying about 250 passengers per day . The new railroad was completed in April 1851 at its intended length to Dunkirk on Lake Erie . On May 12 , 1851 , just about a month after the completion , a completion gala was held from Washington D.C . . Then @-@ president Millard Fillmore and several members of his cabinet , along with several former governors of New York , attended . Several other distinguished individuals came from around the United States . On May 14 , the tour arrived in New

York City and began their trip on the first 447 miles (719 km) ride at Piermont at 7 : 45 that morning . The Fillmore train arrived at Dunkirk just past 4 : 00 pm the next afternoon .

= = = Charles Minot and the telegraph = = =

In 1847 , Ezra Cornell of Ithaca , New York worked to expand telegraphic communication through the New York and Lake Erie Railroad right @-@ of @-@ way with the Western Union Telegraph Company , saving a telegraph line he built from New York City to Fredonia . The new telegraph was an instant hit , and was commonly used for gossip and casual chatting . The then @-@ superintendent of the New York and Lake Erie , Charles Minot , looked to expand this new technology with the railroad . He developed a system using telegraphs for train dispatches , for use when trains would want to pass one another along the line , such as at stations . Two @-@ letter telegraph codes were designated , and the new modern system was set up . For the ten years of the new railroad 's existence , passengers had been disgusted as trains waited for hours as another train had to pass them . This new system would relieve this issue .

On September 22 , 1851 , Minot was in a parked passenger train at Turner Station . He glanced out the window of the train and saw the new telegraph wires . Departing the train , Minot ran into the station , got on the new telegraph , and wired the next station along the line , Monroe , to see if the eastbound train to Piermont @-@ on @-@ Hudson had gone past . The station agent said no . At that point , Minot ordered the engineer of the train to proceed on their way to Goshen . The engineer refused to take Minot 's order , and instead , Minot got into the cab car himself and drove the train himself to Port Jervis , hours ahead of the planned scheduled time of arrival . This was the second of the several " firsts " the Erie Railroad created in its time , along with the shipment of milk by rail at Chester station in 1842 . The use of the telegraph and Minot 's system remained until 1888 , when a new system of block signaling , developed by the competitor Pennsylvania Railroad , helped expand Minot 's use of telecommunications to control rail traffic .

= = = Naming controversy = = =

Around 6 : 30 pm on the evening of Friday , December 26 , 1873 , the three @-@ story Orange Hotel station depot caught fire . Some staff of the re @-@ christened Erie Railroad were examining a room in the roof of the building , and upon looking into it , found it engulfed in smoke . The fire quickly spread , consuming the entire story . There was a lull , but the building re @-@ ignited as flames continued through the building . The Mansard roof on top of the building was destroyed by the flames . No fire @-@ ridding materials to douse the blaze were available to staff and no one could get near the building to inspect where the flames were . The flames finally destroyed the entire building , and just two hours after the fire was discovered , the walls began to collapse on the structure . Within a half @-@ hour , the entire hotel / depot had collapsed and was a pile of brick ruins . Train service on the Erie main line was disrupted for several hours due to the fire and station depot collapse . A later study determined the station depot burned down due to a defective flue .

The station depot was replaced by a wooden one @-@ story depot , referred to by locals as a shack , along the side of the tracks in downtown Turner . The new station itself lasted around the same amount of time that its predecessor station depot had ; however , the widow of Edward Henry Harriman (d . September 9 , 1909) , a local railroad executive whose Arden estate was in the nearby hills , donated land in February 1910 in a different portion of Turner to build a brand new station to the east . The old one @-@ story depot had a roof and structural supports that were aging and on the verge of collapsing to the ground .

Plans for a new station didn 't come without controversy though , as in 1910 with the death of E.H. Harriman , there was a proposal by the Turner Village Improvement Association to rename the borough from Turner to Harriman as an honor to the late executive . On May 25 , 1910 , the association voted 58 to 13 to change the name . Harriman 's widow said if they changed the name , she 'd donate \$ 25 @, @ 000 (1910 USD , equivalent to \$ 635 thousand in 2016) to help improvement the look and design of the village and \$ 6 @, @ 000 (1910 USD , equivalent to \$ 152

thousand in 2016) more for a brand @-@ new railroad station . It was proposed that by having the Erie Railroad change the station name on the decrepit depot from Turner to Harriman , the local Post Office would adopt the new name almost immediately . Erie conductors were told upon approaching Turner station to call the name Harriman . However , a local priest at the forefront of the controversy , Father McAran , thought the entire situation regarding the train from New York was a joke . To add to the annoyance of the priest , the old sign attached to the 1873 depot was replaced by a brand new one saying " Harriman " .

On the morning of May 26 , the Erie Railroad sent a statement out from Pavonia Terminal in Jersey City , New Jersey to disregard the order from the previous day . The new sign came down instantly and the conductors continued to call the station Turner once again . Old time locals felt the name Turner had more value to them and shouldn 't be touched . A self @-@ appointed committee run by the priest proposed a meeting on Saturday , June 4 , 1910 at nearby Gillette Hall to protest the name change . The priest also offered that if the name was to remain Turner 's , he would contribute \$ 500 towards the construction of a new station . The post office also said they would remain named Turner even if the signage on the Erie Railroad station went back to the Harriman name . Sometime during the night between June 1 and June 2 , the Erie Railroad took the station depot sign for Turner down once again and re @-@ attached the Harriman sign to the station depot . Local resolutions were sent to the Erie showing citizens ' displeasure at changing the signage once again . The order from the Erie stated that beginning on July 15 , the station name would remain " Harriman " permanently . Father McAran returned to his outrage and continued to go to the press and give interviews on the issue at hand . To wrap the issue up , a sign in the front of the local church proclaiming " LONG LIVE TURNER " was destroyed . This hurt the enthusiasm of locals , who suggested renaming the local Arden station near the Harriman estate instead .

= = = New station opens at " Harriman " = = =

A year after the great naming controversy and the station permanently being established as Harriman , construction began on a new station to replace the " disgraceful shack " that residents called Harriman . That year a new station , built with the \$ 6 @, @ 000 from Edward Henry Harriman 's widow , was constructed of brick with a stucco outlier . The roof of the one story depot was built with shingles , which helped it match the Tudor @-@ style used at the Tuxedo station eleven miles eastbound . The station , which was grounded on a large and wide concrete platform that also served as the new station platform , was built on Grove Street and had measurements of 20 ' x 26 @. @ 5 ' x 19 ' , common for a Type @-@ 9 Erie Railroad station design . Just a year after the new station depot opened , the Erie honored the late Charles Minot on May 2 , 1912 at the new station with a large ceremony attend by Mrs. Harriman , Erie president Frederick Underwood , several relatives to Minot , and other distinguished guests . At the ceremony , Minot 's assistance to the railroad community was honored and a bronze tablet on a stone backing was unveiled as a monument to him .

At this point , the Erie Railroad continued on with a new station at Harriman , which remained prosperous for years to come . In June 1931 , James Gorney , a resident of Pine Island , allegedly attempted to rob the station and station agent . Harriman police shot Gorney in the leg , which was crippling enough that it required amputation of the leg . His lawyer , who got him off third @-@ degree burglary charges and several acquittals , also negotiated a payment of \$ 20 @, @ 000 to Gorney from Harriman for the pain and suffering of the amputated leg , despite the attempted crime he was shot for . The jury deliberated for five hours before reaching a verdict of awarding Gorney the money .

= = = End of service and demolition = = =

Over the ensuing decades , the Erie Railroad fell into debt along with its competitor , the Delaware , Lackawanna and Western Railroad . On September 16 , 1960 , the Interstate Commerce Commission approved the railroads to go forward with a merger , creating the new Erie @-@

Lackawanna Railroad on October 15 , 1960 . The new railroad lasted only 16 years . In 1976 , the Erie Lackawanna and several other large railroad companies were merged into the newly formed federal Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) . At this point , stations had to fight for survival . The station depot at Harriman has been closed and boarded up since at least 1970 . Passenger train service , however , remained intact through the early 1980s .

In 1983 , the station was finally closed when Conrail and the newly formed Metro @-@ North Railroad announced that the new stations along the Erie 's former high speed freight line , the Graham Line , would take over freight and passenger service . Trains to Harriman would stop at a new park @-@ and @-@ ride built to the south . The former 1911 station depot , however , remained standing until 2006 , when the Harriman village building inspector forced the new owners of the right @-@ of @-@ way for the old main line , Norfolk Southern , to either revamp or demolish the former station depot . The railway chose the latter , and in May 2006 , a excavator tore down the 1911 depot , with the remains taken to a dump in nearby Hillburn .

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