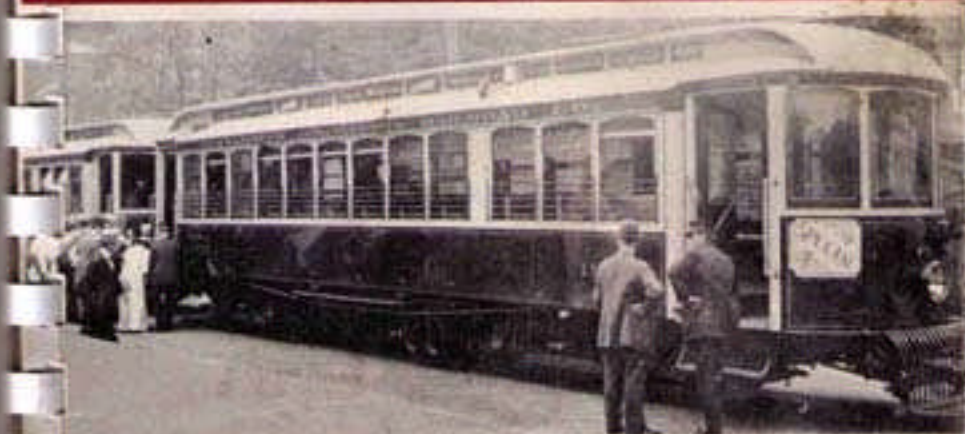


NORTHERN ELECTRIC RAILWAY

**SCRANTON, MONTROSE
& BINGHAMTON RR CO**



By Thomas F. Flanagan

FOREWORD

"Whoever travels through the anthracite coal belt in the vicinity of Scranton cannot fail to notice the numerous unsightly culm piles and breaker buildings which disfigure the timber-stripped hills. Yet a few miles north of the territory, made desolate by the miner, lies one of the prettiest mountain and agricultural districts in the state. The workers in Scranton have always appreciated the value such a region would be to them for residential purposes, but hitherto the territory has been practically inaccessible for the commuter. The only means for traveling north was by the Lackawanna Railroad which, together with the public highway, occupied practically all the available land in the defile formed by the hills."

The above quotation, taken from an electric railway trade paper of 1908, while rather unflattering in its description of the city of Scranton, nonetheless succinctly presents the very *raison d'etre* and problems involved in the building of the NORTHERN ELECTRIC, the subject of this work, the 15th in the PENNSYLVANIA TRACTION SERIES, a series dedicated to preserving and recording the history of the trolley in Pennsylvania.

The SCRANTON, MONTROSE & BINGHAMTON RAILROAD COMPANY was originally chartered as the NORTHERN ELECTRIC STREET RAILWAY COMPANY and was generally known as such throughout its existence despite subsequent changes in corporate title. The line was little known outside the territory it served, being always locally owned and managed and never a part of any grandiose syndicate or traction empire as were so many other electric lines of the period. The line was fortunate in never having suffered any spectacular wrecks, fires, or labor troubles that would have merited wide press attention, but rather it just went about doing the job it was intended to do and doing it well until circumstances brought about its closing.

It is the author's hope that this work will bring back memories to those who knew the NORTHERN ELECTRIC in its heyday, and to those who did not, the pleasure of learning a small part of Pennsylvania traction history.

Thomas F. Flanagan
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