

R. E. WOODRUFF ELECTED PRESIDENT

New Chief Has Spent Entire Career on the Erie—Board Of Directors Inspect System

WHEN Robert E. Woodruff was elected President of the Erie Railroad late in October he became the 23rd man to hold that position and one of the few Erie Presidents whose entire career was spent with the company. He got his first job with the Erie as a section laborer 36 years ago.

Mr. Woodruff was born on a farm near Green Bay, Wis., on Sept. 11, 1884, attended high school in Benton Harbor, Mich., and was graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Civil Engineering in 1905. Upon graduation he entered Erie service and gained a well rounded experience in the engineering and operating departments, having been track laborer, foreman, transitman, inspector, asst. division engineer, division engineer, trainmaster, superintendent, superintendent of transportation, general manager and asst. vice president.

In 1929 Mr. Woodruff was elected Vice President in Charge of Operation and Maintenance which position he held until October, 1939, when he was appointed Trustee and Chief Executive Officer. These various positions required him to be located at fourteen different points along the Erie, namely, Warren, Garrettsville, North Randall, Kent, Youngstown, Meadville, Galion, Chicago, Rochester, Marion, Hornell, Buffalo, New York and Cleveland. No other President in the history of the Erie Railroad has held jobs at so many different points on the railroad which probably accounts for his remarkably detailed knowledge of the Erie and its men.

Commenting on his election, Railway Age says that Mr. Woodruff has been noted on the Erie for being especially active in his study of the younger men on his railway with the object of discovering latent talent and providing the maximum opportunity for those with ability and ambition and, as a result, he has built up an exceptionally efficient organization of executive and supervisory personnel.

Confirmation of this was given in a letter received from an old-time employee who typifies the thoughts of many. "It is gratifying to know," he wrote, "that this top office is given to one of the

Erie family, and one who has worked from the bottom and up to the top; knows and understands the system territory and requirements. It was not so long that this high executive office was sure to go to some officer from another railroad—result that there was no advancement for the next officer in line. However, it has been your policy to make official advancement and appointments from the ranks of Erie employees and I want you to know that this policy is known, recognized and appreciated here on this end of the system, and I am sure it must be the same on the entire system of the Erie Railroad."

Since his election Mr. Woodruff has received several hundred messages of congratulation from men in all walks

of life, from Presidents of other railroads and corporations to men with whom he has worked. One of the most prized letters came from F. D. Underwood, predecessor as President of the Erie for so many years, who is now nearly 93.

"Many friends have sent congratulations," Mr. Woodruff said, "which I appreciate very much, but I especially appreciate the good wishes, from the members of the Erie family whose cooperation and help will be needed in the trying years that lie ahead of us."

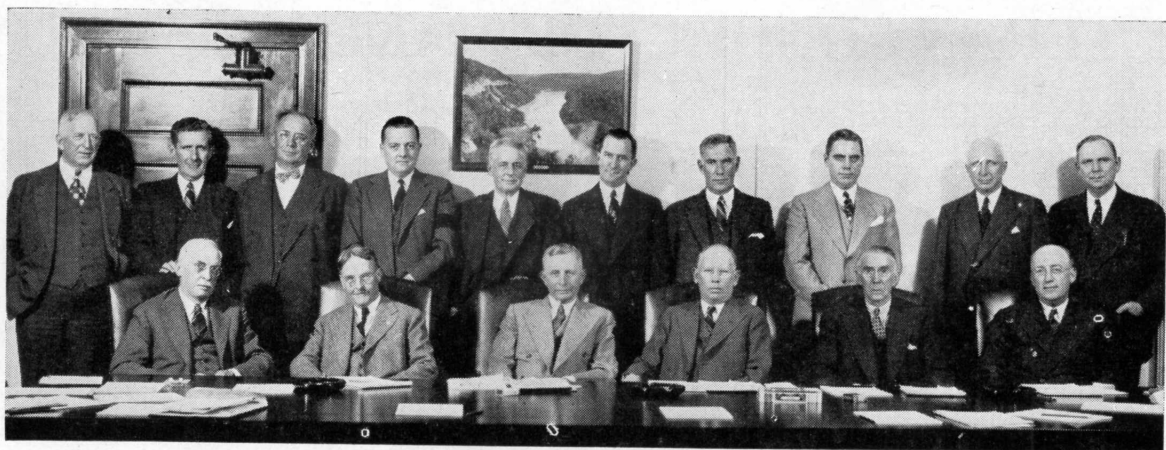
Mr. Woodruff is married and lives at 18100 South Park Boulevard, Shaker Heights, suburb of Cleveland, O.

Erie's new President was acclaimed by the press along the railroad. "Meadville is proud of Mr. Woodruff's successful career," the Meadville Tribune-Republican said, "and congratulates him upon his election. His policies have made the Erie a really progressive railroad, as far as fast and heavy duty freight service is concerned."

The Cleveland Press said: "We believe Mr.



Robert E. Woodruff, the new President of the Erie receiving a congratulatory call



ERIE'S NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Photo. by Bachrach

Seated, left to right: Frank C. Wright, Herbert A. Taylor, George D. Brooke, O. D. Donnell, George A. Martin and Daniel C. Borden. Standing, left to right: Alfred C. Davis, Harry C. Hagerty, John A. Hadden, Amory Houghton, James S. Knowlson, John K. Thompson, Henry S. Sturgis, Charles T. Fisher, Jr., Robert E. Woodruff and Secretary George A. W. Achenbach

Woodruff's election and that of the new board, with its six Clevelanders, is a fortunate event for northern Ohio and its industrial cities to which the continuing vitality of the Erie system is always so important."

Declaring that the election of Alfred C. Davis, President of the Marlin Rockwell Co., as a director on the new board is recognition of the importance of Jamestown on the Erie line the Jamestown Post adds: "Mr. Woodruff's rise from laborer to President is another example of the opportunities that come to able and energetic men and women in these United States who are not afraid to work and learn as they work."

Congratulating the new Erie president, as another example of the fact that "it can be done," the Olean Times-Herald added: "Once again, it has been demonstrated that there is every possible chance in this land of the free—and of opportunity—for any young man with what it takes to climb the ladder of success."

Mr. Woodruff's election occurred at a meeting in New York Oct. 22nd of the new directors of the Erie Railroad. Nine new directors elected were: Frank C. Wright, Henry S. Sturgis, Amory Houghton, Charles T. Fisher, Jr., James S. Knowlson, John A. Hadden, Daniel C. Borden, Alfred C. Davis and Harry C. Hagerty. Six re-elected directors were: George D. Brooke, George A. Martin, O. D. Donnell, Robert E. Woodruff, John K. Thompson and Herbert A. Taylor.

Mr. Sturgis is Vice President of the First National Bank of New York and Director of numerous corporations. He was a director of the Erie from 1925 to 1931. He lives at Cedarhurst, Long Island.

Mr. Wright is Vice President of the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad and Special Assistant to the Board of Directors of the Reconstruction Finance Corp. He lives at Tarrytown, N. Y.

Mr. Brooke is President of the Chesapeake & Ohio, Pere Marquette and Nickel Plate Roads and lives in Cleveland.

Mr. Houghton is President and Director of the Corning Glass Company. He lives at Corning, N. Y.

Mr. Martin is Chairman of the Board and Director of the Sherwin-Williams Co., and Director of numerous other corporations. He lives in Cleveland.

Mr. Borden is Vice President of the National City Bank of New York and lives at Pelham Manor, N. Y.

Mr. Davis is President and Executive Director of the Marlin-Rockwell Corp., of Jamestown, N. Y., and lives at nearby Ashville. He was formerly a railroad master mechanic.

Mr. Hagerty is Treasurer of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. and lives at Forest Hills, Long Island, N. Y.

Mr. Knowlson is President and Chairman of the Stewart-Warner Corp. and lives in Chicago. He worked for a western railroad after leaving college.

Mr. Donnell is President and Director of the Ohio Oil Co. and lives at Findlay, O.

Mr. Fisher is President and Director of the National Bank of Detroit, Mich., and lives in Detroit.

Mr. Thompson is Vice President in Charge of Accounting, Finance and Purchases of the Erie and lives in Cleveland.

Mr. Taylor is Vice President and General Counsel of the Erie and lives in Cleveland.

Following the meeting and election, the Directors, accompanied by a group of Erie officers, made an inspection by special train of the main line from New York to Chicago and expressed themselves as greatly pleased with the excellent condition of the property. The smooth roadbed, first class equipment and enthusiastic Erie family were a revelation to some of them who had not seen the Erie before. Stops were made for inspection of the coach shops at Susquehanna and the locomotive shops at Hornell and those in charge were complimented on their splendid condition.