

RAIL BRANCH MAY BE DROPPED

Carrier Would End Green Spring Valley Spur

A petition was filed yesterday to abandon part of the Green Spring Valley branch railroad, once the main artery into Baltimore from Western Maryland.

The Pennsylvania Railroad asked the Interstate Commerce Commission, in Washington, for permission to abandon a 6-mile segment of the ancient railroad line between Brooklandville and **Green Spring Junction.**

According to a spokesman, there has been no freight service on the line for about five years.

Passenger operations, which reached a height at the turn of the century when families began building country homes in the Green Spring Valley, ended in August, 1933.

No Demand For Services

"Not only has there been no traffic for a number of years," declared the spokesman, "but no demand for services either."

He said the Pennsylvania Rail-

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Baltimore from Western Maryland.

In 1854 the railroad was sold to the Baltimore, Carroll and Frederick Railroad Company, which later became the Western Maryland Railway. Under terms of the contract, it was returned to the Northern Central in 1873, when the Western Maryland built its own tracks to the West.

Farm products, barrels of flour and other goods were carried by its early, horse-drawn cars. In the 1880's the line shifted to predominately passenger services as the valley became more populous.

Many Like Chalets

Passenger stations, many resembling Swiss chalets, were built at such major stops as Green Spring Junction, Garrison, Chatto- lanee, Eccleston, Stevenson, Lys- tra, Brooklandville, Rockland and Hollins.

Although by 1910 automobiles had begun to cut into the pas- senger services, the line boomed again during World War I carry- ing heavy loads of supplies to ships in Baltimore Harbor.

The 1920's saw its rapid decline as five daily passenger runs were gradually reduced in number.

Only rarely in the last two decades would a one-car freight train rumble along the once-busy track.

road is losing money by keeping the branch line in its system.

He said freight service will continue on the approximately 2 3/4 mile segment from Hollins to Brooklandville (Rockland). Cur- rently freight trains use this track when requested, an average of two runs weekly.

The Green Spring Valley branch connects at Hollins with the Penn- sylvania's Northern Central Rail- way, the line from Baltimore to Harrisburg.

It was constructed in the early 1830's by the Old Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad Company as an intended route to Westmin- ster.

Important For Freight

Although it never reached West- minster, it served as an important freight line in the middle of the Nineteenth Century when it was considered the main artery into