

A Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern Timeline

- 1907 Col. Marlon W. Savage became one of the founders of the “Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester & Dubuque Electric Traction Co.,” to build a commuter railroad south from Minneapolis to his farm along the Minnesota River and beyond.¹
- 1910 The name of his railroad was changed to the simpler "Dan Patch Electric Lines," to promote and capitalize on Savage’s famous race horse.²
- 1913 Col. Savage started constructing an extension of his railroad north from Auto Club Road to a connection with the Electric Short Line Terminal Co. in Golden Valley, to give it access eastward to downtown Minneapolis and westward, by the Electric Short Line Ry., to Hutchinson. He also extended his railroad from commuter to freight operations.³ (The Electric Short Line Ry. became the Minnesota Western Railway in 1924 and extended to Gluek, Minnesota.⁴ Today it is the Luce Line trail.)
- 1915 The extension to Golden Valley was completed.⁵ Interchanges were constructed with:
- The Minneapolis & St. Louis Ry; in Minneapolis and St. Louis Park.
 - The Milwaukee Road; connecting to existing Milwaukee Road track in St. Louis Park's "Skunk Hollow" and producing the switchback movements familiar to the Elmwood neighborhood.
 - The Great Northern Railroad; in St. Louis Park, which is now being considered as the means to reroute the freight traffic currently passing through Kenilworth.
- 1916 Dan Patch Electric Lines acquired its first steam locomotives to help handle its growing freight traffic. In addition to commuter trains, four daily freight trains traveled south from Minneapolis to Mankato and four daily freight trains traveled north from Mankato to Minneapolis.⁶
- 1918 The Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern Ry. was incorporated and purchased the bankrupt Dan Patch Line.⁷

¹ “Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester & Dubuque Electric Traction CO.,” The Electric Railways of Minnesota, pg. 502, by Russell L. Olson, Minnesota Transportation Museum, St. Paul, 1976.

² Ibid, pg. 503.

³ Ibid, pg. 504.

⁴ “The Strange, Successful Story Of The Railroad That Was Once Named For A Race Horse,” by William D. Middleton, Trains, pg. 16, June, 1959.

⁵ Olson, pg. 506.

⁶ Olson, pg. 506.

⁷ Olson, pg. 507.

- 1927 An extension was built north from Golden Valley north to Crystal to connect with the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railroad, commonly known as the Soo Line, at their Shoreham yards and the Northern Pacific Ry. at their Northtown yard, further extending the freight interchange connections of the MN&S.⁸
- 1942 Passenger service was discontinued between Minneapolis and Northfield.⁹
- 1943 The MN&S is operating “three or more” round trips a day between Minneapolis and Northfield, with train lengths up to 90 cars.¹⁰
- 1956 St. Louis Park High School was built at its present location.¹¹
- 1959 The MN&S is intensively promoting industrial development all along its lines, but 70% of its traffic consists of very lucrative “bridge” traffic, i.e. cars originating on other railroads and being routed around Minneapolis-St. Paul to avoid the cities congestion and delay.¹² Its main line is well built and maintained, but train lengths are held to 60 car maximums (larger cars than in 1943), and speeds kept low, because of the “roller coaster like” curves and grades from Crystal south to the Minnesota River.¹³
- 1976 The MN&S is described as “a financially-successful, freight-handling short-line railroad.”¹⁴
- 1982 The MN&S was acquired by the Soo Line.¹⁵ The interchange track with the Burlington Northern (formerly Great Northern) was cut and the eventually the rails were removed.
- 1986 The MN&S was merged into the Soo Line.¹⁶
- 1990 The Canadian Pacific Railway gained full control of the Soo Line.¹⁷

⁸ Olson, pg. 507.

⁹ Olson, pg. 507.

¹⁰ “The Dan Patch Line,” by Navarro Fosse, Railroad Magazine, pg. 86-87, August 1943.

¹¹ St. Louis Park Historical Society, <http://slphistory.org/highschool/>

¹² Middleton, pg. 19.

¹³ Middleton, pg. 20.

¹⁴ Olson, pg. 507.

¹⁵ “MN&S: Unique and Colorful Well Beyond Its Size,” by Steve Glischinski, Classic Trains, pg. 18, Summer 2005.

¹⁶ “Minneapolis, Northfield and Southern Railway,” Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minneapolis,_Northfield_and_Southern_Railway

¹⁷ “Soo Line Railroad,” Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soo_Line_Railroad