

THE LAST "ALL ABOARD!" echoed through Central Station in Chicago March 5 as passengers hurried to board the IC's Campus for Champaign. The familiar call marked the end of 79 years of passenger service for the depot.

On March 6 the IC's Panama Limited and Shawnee moved over to Union Station, together with the Penn

Central's James Whitcomb Riley/George Washington. The PC's Southwind had moved to Union Station on January 23.

All Amtrak trains now arrive and depart from Union Station, ending taxi trips between terminals and consolidating ticket facilities. Three other Chicago depots remain for commuter trains and non-Amtrak intercity service.

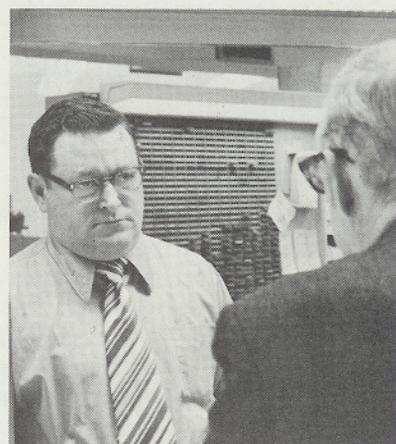
IC's electrified commuter trains still stop in the vicinity of Central Station at a separate, smaller station that has been in use for many years.

Central Station has had a long and colorful career since its opening in 1893 for the Columbian Exposition. At the peak of its operation in 1913, a total of 85 intercity passenger trains used the big terminal. Perhaps Cen-

End of the line for Central Station



• Above. Commuter Information Experts Phyllis Lauritzen, left, and Bernadine Brittin, right, still work in the ticket office. • Right. Redcap Harold Robinson at work. • Below. 1894 view of Central Station looking south from high-level suburban platform shows long-gone buildings at right.



• Above. J. A. Washburn, terminal passenger and ticket agent, ponders customer's question. • Right. Lead Mail Handler Frank Micelli unloads pouches from baggage car. • Below. He saw the handwriting on the wall: Redcap Elmer Cotton in 1968.



tral Station's most hectic periods were World War I and World War II, when thousands upon thousands of service men and women marched to and from war across its high-ceilinged waiting room. Even as late as World War II the railroads handled 98 per cent of all organized military movements. During that war great numbers of civilians took to the rails with the

advent of gasoline and tire rationing. Over the years Central Station has handled trains for such railroads as the Wisconsin Central, Michigan Central and Big Four. Other tenant roads have included the Chesapeake & Ohio, the Soo Line and the Penn Central. Built in an era when railroads could afford to be lavish on passenger terminals, Central Station's architecture

from the beginning created controversy. The station's Romanesque tower and connecting buildings have been praised on the one hand and decried as "ramshackle Gothic" on the other. For 79 years the building has served as the home office of the 14-state Illinois Central Railroad and more recently as headquarters of IC Industries, the railroad's diversified parent.



View looking southeast shows familiar clock tower and large IC diamond advertising sign. Cab stand and parking lot are at right front, mail platforms and commissary building are at the right rear behind the station. In the center behind the depot is Weldon coach yard.

• Left. Amtrak notice meant that Ticket Clerk A. H. Kettering would close his window for good in a few days. • Below. Leverman Dale Holajeter hands up orders to conductor on the Penn Central's George Washington at Weldon Tower.

