



# ARKANSAS RAILROADER



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

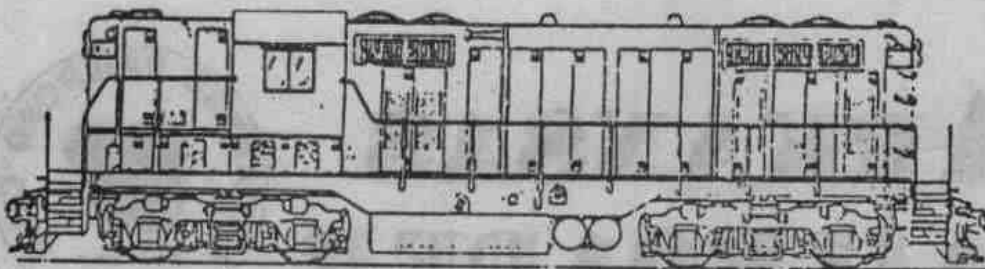
VOLUME 17

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A Kansas City Southern coal train passes the old DeQueen, Arkansas depot northbound on an overcast day in September, 1985. DeQueen is still a crew-change point on the KCS. (Ziegenbein photo)



# GENERAL NEWS

## CLUB HAPPENINGS - ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRIEF BUSINESS NOTES - Bill Bailey reported that the SLSW 819 was about 98% ready and should run in the early spring. -- The club's meeting in May will be moved up to the first Sunday instead of the second because of Mother's Day. -- A picnic at the famous Reader Railroad in May or June was discussed.

NARP TO MEET - The National Association of Railroad Passengers, Region IX, will meet March 15-16 in Dallas. Region IX includes the Arkansas chapter of this organization, and several from this area will attend. A tour of the Southwest Rail Historical Society's rail equipment will be held.

SHOW AND SALE TIME - The Arkansas Railroad Club's annual railroadiansa Show & Sale will be held March 29, 1986 at the Fisher National Guard Armory in North Little Rock. Tables are available for you to sell from or just show. Contact Bill Pollard, 32 Fair Oaks, Conway, AR 72032 (501-327-7083) if you're interested. Admission is \$1.00 for adults and free for under 12.

FORDYCE- ON-THE-COTTON BELT FESTIVAL - Joe Bill Meador, chairman of Fordyce on the Cotton Belt festival, has issued an invitation for the Arkansas Railroad Club to participate in their festival the week of April 21-26 - Contact person - Elizabeth Gaines.

BILL MERCK fell recently and broke his hip. He is in St. Vincents Infirmary in Little Rock (as of February 20). GET WELL SOON!

PROJECTED MAILING DATE of this issue is Thursday, February 27.

## ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

MISSOURI PACIFIC PETITIONS TO CLOSE GURDON STATION as an agency. This petition was filed January 6. With the closing of the station as an agency, the present agent could be replaced with a clerk with a savings of over \$4,000 a year. With the present volume of business on the branch lines out of Gurdon, no immediate closing of the doors to the station is anticipated, according to Lee Roach, division superintendent. At present, there is an agent, 2 clerks, along with the trainmaster, signalman and car man working out of the station. Roach added that he could not say that the station wouldn't eventually close entirely if the operating picture changed. Residents of Gurdon have until March 6 to request a hearing before the Arkansas Transportation Commission. (GUDRON TIMES)

\$6 MILLION LAWSUIT FILED - Bauxite and Northern Railway Co. and Alcoa were named as defendants in a \$6 million damage suit filed January 27 in Saline County Circuit Court. The lawsuit stems from injuries sustained by a 21-year old Brad J. Guthrie in July 1985. In that suit, the plaintiff states the two companies failure to maintain a railroad bridge across Arkansas 183 near Bauxite caused Guthrie to fall 20-25 feet through a hole where a section of the metal grating was supposed to be as he attempted to cross a walkway of the bridge. Alcoa is the owner of the bridge and the Bauxite and Northern Railway. (BENTON COURIER)

PRESCOTT DEPOT NOW A MUSEUM - The red brick railroad station on Highway 67 leading into Prescott has been turned into a museum. The depot was built in 1912 by the Missouri Pacific and turned over to the city of Prescott in 1971. The museum is open to visitors from 10 AM to 3 PM Tuesday through Friday and 2 to 4 PM on Sunday. (HOPE STAR)

ABANDONMENT IN NORTHWEST ARKANSAS? - According to the Southwest Times Record, it has been rumored that if and when the railroad line (Burlington Northern) between Fayetteville and Fort Smith is sold to a private short-line operator, BN will still provide the engines, computers and other services to the new line. Also, a writer of a letter-to-the-editor says he would be very surprised if the new line didn't ask for permission to abandon the tracks between Fayetteville and Fort Smith soon after it is formed. "Remember when they got rid of the passenger trains, this was accomplished by showing a loss which was accomplished by charging everything possible to the passenger trains and running passengers off because of everything from unclean depots to people waiting for hours because of poor connections. BN states that the new operation will provide more jobs (un-unionized) and that the line now only averages 3 trains a week.

819 TO PULL THE TEXAS INDEPENDENCE EXPRESS? - According to THE SETOUT, an exchange publication of the Beaumont, Texas NRHS Chapter, P.O. Box 3542, Beaumont, Texas 77704, The Texas Independence Express will not be as successful as first planned (this is a bold endeavor to run a steam-powered train across Texas for its 150th anniversary). The railroads in Texas have denied TIE the right to run on their lines if TIE uses the ex-T&P 2-10-4 #610. Reasons are that the Texas-type is just too heavy for today's track structure.

Several alternative plans were put forth. One plan called for the 610 to pull the train on UP tracks only and use diesels on the other lines. A second plan was to use the ex-SSW 4-8-4 #819 from Pine Bluff instead of the #610. A third plan was to use the 610 but stay on UP tracks only, thus still being able to reach all of the large cities in Texas. The last and least favorable plan was to run an all-diesel powered Express, using older E or F units.

So far, the Texas-Mexican Railway has given TIE the run of their road, SPSF has said no, and Union Pacific has not committed yet. TIE's primary locomotive, the 610, needs about \$80,000 worth of work while a possible alternate, the 819, requires only \$35,000. The locomotive to be used if TIE is run could be a toss-up. A tentative and approximate route is Dallas-El Paso-San Antonio-Corpus Christi-Houston-Dallas.

FROM THE PAST - Bill Merck wrote the following in the September 1978 ARKANSAS RAILROADER: "Not so long ago had another chance to go down to Pine Bluff and out to Oakland Park for another view of ex-SSW 4-8-4 No. 819. When presented to the City of Pine Bluff by the Cotton Belt some years ago the engine had seen some 800,000 miles of service, much of it run off in World War II. The once fine machine is now showing some signs of deterioration; the bell has been stolen as well as one of the brass Cotton Belt plates on the steam chests. Many smaller parts as well have been stolen. With all the many engine foundations making the rounds of the country its too bad that someone can't start a #819 Foundation. This is the largest steam display engine in the state. We think the City of Pine Bluff is partly to blame for its present condition since they apparently do nothing to take care of it. What can one caretaker in a city park do to take care of a steam locomotive? Very little if anything. The engine really should be at a location in the heart of the city where it could be viewed more easily. Every time I see this engine I get a "tug" in my heart since I had the opportunity of seeing the famous 800 fleet in operation".

Like the old saying goes - "Believe in something strong and long enough and eventually your dreams will come true". (Ed.)

Found this poem recently and thought I'd pass it along to the gallant crew who rebuilt the 819:

#### ALWAYS FINISH

*Author Unknown*

*If a task is once begun  
Never leave it till it's done.  
Be the labor great or small,  
Do it well or not at all.*

#### GENERAL RAIL NEWS

DREW LEWIS CHAIRMAN OF UP - Former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Drew Lewis has been elected chairman of Union Pacific Railroad Company effective April 1, 1986 to succeed John C. Kenefick. Mr. Lewis will eventually become chairman and chief executive officer of the UP Corporation in October of 1987 after William S. Cook retires. Mr. Kenefick will retire January of 1987, filling the post of vice-chairman of UP until then.

AMTRAK FUNDS ELIMINATED FOR 1987 - "I think the fact that Amtrak's yearly budget represents 22 hours of the Pentagon's budget speaks for itself as far as how big of a problem Amtrak really is in terms of the federal deficit", said Dr. Bill Pollard, president of the Arkansas Association of Railroad Passengers. The 24,000-mile Amtrak system in 1984 carried more than 20 million passengers and ranked among the nation's top 10 people movers. USA Air, Republic, TWA and Trailways all carried fewer passengers than Amtrak. Amtrak reached 58% cost-recovery in 1985 and Amtrak president Claytor has indicated he will achieve 60% cost recovery in 1986. (ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT)

UNION PACIFIC NOW ONE NAME - Effective January 1 of this year, Missouri Pacific and Union Pacific System will no longer be used as names. Union Pacific Railroad Company is now the only name used. (INFO MAGAZINE)

CYCLE FOR RIDING RAILS ENDANGERS CONSUMERS - Recently a company has advertised a type of bicycle for riding the rails with. These are dangerous, and the Association of American Railroads warns against any use of these vehicles. For one thing, railroad tracks, even abandoned, are private property and trespassing is illegal. Another - some of the so-called "rail" bikes are very unstable and spills are common. Falling off a cycle onto a roadbed of wooden crossties, gravel ballast and steel rails is courting very serious injury. According to the Federal Railroad Administration, some 588 trespassers were killed on railroad rights-of-way in 1984 and 773 were injured, including 114 children. The bottom line - Don't buy or advertise these "rail-bikes".

OPERATION LIFESAVER TO BE PROMOTED BY FAMOUS CARTOON CHARACTERS - The Road Runner and his nemesis Wile E. Coyote has been "hired" as "spokesman" for Operation Lifesaver, a program designed to promote rail crossing safety. This, according to Jim Johnson, Manager of Public Relations of the Cotton Belt Railroad. He says that in order to get a message across, you must get the attention of your audience - so why not a youthful message? "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

70+ YEARS ON THE JOB - Johnny Long, on January 29, 1986, celebrated 71½ years with the Cotton Belt at Tyler, Texas, where he's been an accounting clerk since 1914! He's number one in seniority on SP (really?). Long says, "I was brought up by my parents to find a steady job and keep at it". (SP UPDATE)

NO STEAM IN 1986 - The Union Pacific will not run any steam excursions this year because the entire fleet of UP passenger equipment is going through the shops in Omaha. Head End Power wiring will be added. (RAILLETTER)

AMTRAK ENGINEERS? - Amtrak has reached an agreement with two major railroad unions to take over direct employment of most engineers, conductors and their assistants outside the northeast corridor. Amtrak said on January 6 that the agreement with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and UTU is a major step to improve productivity. Operating crews are now employed by the freight railroads over which they operate. The new changes will be phased in route-by-route over an 18-month period, beginning April 1.

Under the new labor agreements, freight railroad employees eligible for Amtrak service will be invited to bid on rail passenger jobs based on seniority. Train and engine crews will no longer be paid under the freight industry's standard of train mileage or hours of service. They will be paid under a defined standard 40-hour work week. Amtrak said it will become the first and only major U.S. railroad operating under totally revised, modern work rules and that this should save the company between \$20 and \$30 million a year. (SP UPDATE)

NEW SERVICE? - Texas-Mexican Railways was supposed to begin weekend-only passenger train service between Laredo and Corpus Christi, Texas at the end of January. Has anybody heard if they did?

SP FACTS - According to SOUTHERN PACIFIC BULLETIN, SP's executive Vice President Mike Mohan said that 52% of SP's revenue dollar goes for wages and benefits. Typically, a trucker pays himself \$20,000 a year and drives 200,000 miles. The average railroad employee makes about \$45,000 a year but an SP brakeman may run only 50,000 miles or less. (The \$45,000 includes company paid benefits). Southern Pacific has between 1,500 and 2,000 excess clerical employees and about 5,000 excesses in other railroad employees.

DOUBLE-STACK TRAINS STACKS UP - Today, Union Pacific has eight double-stack trains running weekly roundtrips of 4,500-plus miles between West Coast ports and Chicago and another train between Houston and an East Coast port. UP signed contracts with three major steamship carriers last year covering double-stack shipments. UP currently has over half this business with other roads getting the other half. The freight is classified as FAK - freight all kinds. Much of it ends up in retail stores across the country. (INFO)

DIESEL SPILL IN NATCHES, MISSISSIPPI FEBRUARY 15 - An Illinois Central Gulf train derailed at 1 in the morning February 15 spilling 1,600 gallons of diesel fuel on the ground in Natches, Mississippi. No injuries were reported.

BUM STEER - "When a tractor-trailer truck overturned on a Houston freeway recently, pinning the driver underneath the wreckage, Don Fowler, a Southern Pacific employee, used a crane that was in the back of his pickup to save the driver's life. Then a highway patrolman issued Fowler a ticket because the crane was too heavy for his truck." This quote, from TEXAS MONTHLY MAGAZINE, encouraged them to give that patrolman its "bum steer" award. Southern Pacific paid the \$198.50 fine.

REMEMBER WHEN?

EFFECTIVE MARCH 13, 1974  
ST. LOUIS - LITTLE ROCK - DALLAS -  
FORT WORTH - LAREDO - (NUEVO LAREDO)



NEW SERVICE!

The  
Inter-American



**TRACKS ARE BACK** - Amtrak finally began service to Arkansas the night of March 13, 1974 after many years of hassle in Washington. On her maiden voyage, she had E-9's No. 411 and 419 (ex-UP) on the point and carried 11 cars.

Arkansas Railroad Club members were present, like your editor, and Gene and Naomi Hull and Jim Wilson actually rode the train.

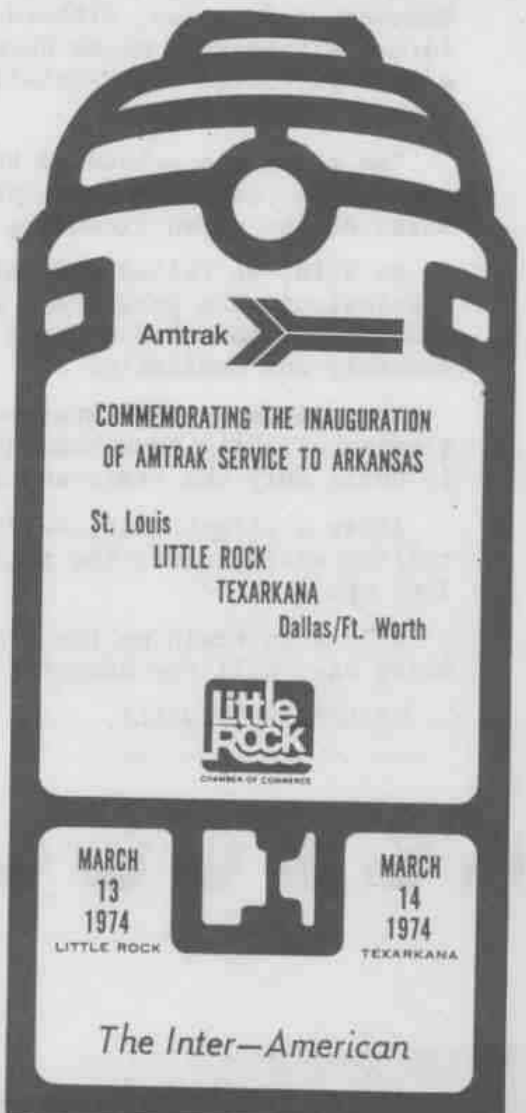
Arrival in Little Rock was shortly after 11 PM that night, somewhat late, but the huge crowd didn't mind.

With the pending budget cuts in Washington in 1986, we may not have too much longer to enjoy this valuable service. Let's hope for the best, however.

Gene Hull wrote about his inaugural trip on the "Inter-American" in the April 1974 ARKANSAS RAILROADER. Here is that story:

On Tuesday afternoon, March 12, I was informed that if my wife and I could get to St. Louis, we would have the privilege of riding the inaugural run of Amtrak's "Inter-American" train to Little Rock. We were glad to take advantage of the opportunity, and on Wednesday morning, we were aboard the 7:35 flight of Delta Airlines out of LR, and at 8:25 we were at International Airport in St. Louis. From then until about 2:00 PM, we had a walking tour of downtown St. Louis.

At the long, rambling Union Station, the hopeful passengers, well wishers, and a few politicians were gathering in the great, echoing concourse. We were pleasantly pleased to run into our club president, J. Harlen Wilson, who had come up by way of an official hi-rail car. Our Amtrak friend, John Mills,

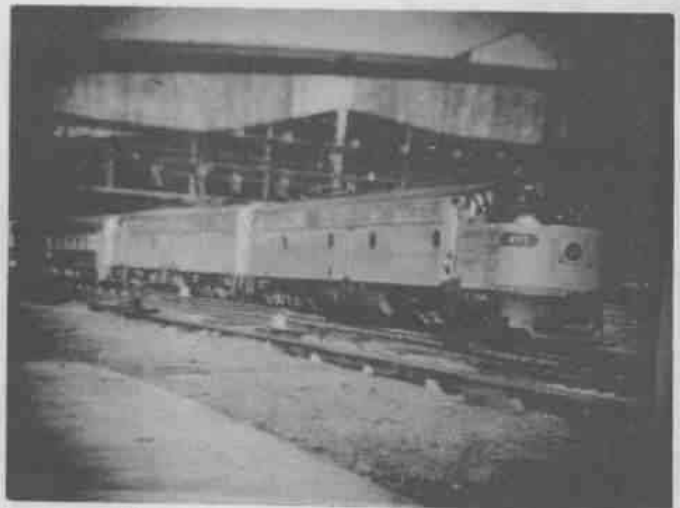


ST. LOUIS - LITTLE ROCK - DALLAS -  
FORT WORTH - LAREDO - (NUEVO LAREDO)

Head Down	(Local Time)	Head Up
21	← Train Number →	22
The Inter-American	← Train Name →	The Inter-American
Departs St. Louis Mo Wa Fr	← Frequency of Operation →	Arrives St. Louis Mo Wa Fr
M X S	← Type of Service →	M X S
6:10 a	0 Dp... Milwaukee... (CDT) Ar	11:10 p
8:10 a	83 Dp... Chicago (Union Sta.) (CDT) Ar	8:24 a
8:11 a	270 Dp... Springfield... (CDT) Ar	8:18 a
1:22 p	0 Dp... New York, NY (Penn. Sta.) (EDT) Ar	2:02 p
10:18 p	439 Dp... Pittsburgh, PA... (EDT) Ar	5:10 a
2:44 a	810 Dp... Indianapolis, IN... (EST) Ar	7:42 p
2:12 p	0 Dp... ST. LOUIS, MO... (CDT) Ar	2:30 p
7:00 p	163 Ar... Peoria, Ill., MO... Dp	10:30 a
7:03 p	163 Dp... Peoria, Ill., MO... Ar	10:25 a
10:43 p	342 Ar... LITTLE ROCK, AR... Dp	6:45 a
10:52 p	342 Dp... (The Train Station) Ar	6:35 a
2:13 a	485 Ar... Texarkana, AR... Dp	3:15 a
3:20 a	485 Dp... (Union Station) Ar	3:00 a
1:40 a	330 Dp... Marshall, TX... Ar	1:22 a
1:40 a	374 Dp... Longview... Ar	11:20 a
7:30 a	702 Ar... DALLAS... Dp	10:00 p
7:40 a	702 Dp... (Transportation Center) Ar	9:30 p
8:45 a	721 Ar... FORT WORTH... Dp	8:45 p
9:15 a	721 Dp... FORT WORTH... Ar	8:15 p
9:23 a	729 Ar... Cleburne... Dp	7:30 p
10:02 a	729 Dp... Cleburne... Ar	7:30 p
11:09 a	823 Dp... McGregor (Ware)... Ar	6:20 p
11:38 a	828 Dp... Temple... Ar	5:43 p
2:10 p	971 Dp... AUSTIN... Ar	2:30 p
2:30 p	1003 Dp... San Marcos... Ar	2:40 p
4:05 p	1031 Ar... SAN ANTONIO... Dp	1:22 p
4:13 p	1051 Dp... SAN ANTONIO... Ar	1:12 p
8:02 p	1204 Ar... LAREDO, TX... (CDT) Dp	9:33 a
8:02 p	1204 Ar... Nuevo Laredo, Tamps. (NLM Stn.) Dp	9:33 a
Arrives Mo Th Sa		Departs Su Tu Fr

EQUIPMENT  
The Inter-American

St. Louis-Laredo  
Diner-Lounge Car  
Sleeping Car (Roomettes and Bedrooms)  
Coaches  
Laredo-Nuevo Laredo  
Transfer Service (consult agent)  
Baggage Service  
Checked baggage handled at all points between St. Louis and Laredo except McGregor and San Marcos (no checked service between Laredo and Nuevo Laredo)  
For Mexican rail connections at Nuevo Laredo, see adjacent schedule.



Inaugural run of Amtrak's "Inter-American" leaving St. Louis March 13, 1974. (Hull)



Present-day crew, Vern Williams (left) and Paul Nelson prepare to board the southbound "Eagle" at Little Rock in the summer of 1985. (Ziegenbein)

was there with his charming wife. Also present were Randy Tardy from the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce, Richard Allin and Charles Albright from the Arkansas Gazette, former Little Rock mayor Warner Knoop, and other representatives from our city. We had a nice chat with Roy Mitchell, anchorman for Channel 4 TV News and his cameraman, and Mayor William Walters.

The train was scheduled to depart at 3:15PM, and the crowd was growing larger and more eager. Soon the gates were opened and the old train shed resounded with the noise of the crowd extending along the train.

At 3:18, we rolled smoothly out of Union Station and began our ride along the wide Mississippi. The passengers were surging back and forth, inspecting the train from end to end. Lovely Amtrak Hostesses were busy dispensing "bouillion" which seemed to flow smoothly and endlessly.

The crowds at the intermediate stations were joyous and excited as we rolled by, slowing slightly to acknowledge their presence. The sun disappeared and the world closed in until only the train and the celebrating passengers remained.

After a slight wait, we found seats in the diner and had a very tasty supper while rolling easily along the rails where the old Sunshine Special and Texas Eagle moved so long ago.

Will this train go the same way into history, or will it continue to roll, perhaps every day? Will the annoying problems be eliminated? Will you ride the train?

WE CERTAINLY WILL!



*WHERE IS IT? - Lawrence Gibbs, editor of the Central Oklahoma Railroad Club's "DISPATCHER", sent me this photo of a St. Louis-Southwestern passenger train with 4-8-2 #679 in the lead. A woman gave him this picture along with others recently, but nobody seems to know where the train is located. Can anybody help??*

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HOGHEAD AND AN ENGINEER

by: William Church, Retired MOPAC Conductor

Engineers come and go, and the passing of time for some, are like the footprints in sand that are washed away by the ebb and flow on the tides. Others are like scars on rocks, endure the elements of the ages. Such was "Uncle Bill" Wright, an engineer on the "Cotton Belt" who spent a lifetime running engines on the Paragould and Southeastern Branch from the namesake town of Paragould to Blytheville, Arkansas.

I heard many of the legends about "Uncle Bill" Wright from my dad, R.W. Church, who made many a trip between Paragould and Blytheville with him.

If "Uncle Bill" ever ran on the "Cotton Belt" anywhere else than the P.S.E. it was long before the days my father came to the line in 1909.

Maybe "Uncle Bill" did not know every person between Paragould and Blytheville, but it was a rare occasion that you would find someone in Northeast Arkansas that did not know that "Uncle Bill" was the engineer on the P.S.E.

In fact so many people knew "Uncle Bill" and his habits while running a locomotive that one young lady won a law suit against the "Cotton Belt" that arose out of a grade crossing accident in Blytheville, Arkansas.

The day of the accident aforesaid mentioned, a young runner off the extra board in Jonesboro had been called to relieve "Uncle Bill", who, on the rare occasion in his tenure of service on the "Cotton Belt", had marked off sick.

"Uncle Bill" was a very careful runner, and from his long years running on the P.S.E. knew every site along the line that posed a threat or hazard to his train or to the people who lived along the line.

Chickaswaba Avenue in Blytheville was a dangerous highway crossing, and over the years, "Uncle Bill" had made it a practice to approach Chickaswaba Avenue with his train under full control. Stop, and with the bell ringing and the whistle blowing, cross over the avenue at a snail's pace. In all of his years on the P.S.E., "Uncle Bill" had yet to hit his first automobile on Chickaswaba Avenue.

But this day, the new runner did not follow through on "Uncle Bill's" established pattern. Instead he barreled through Blytheville, sounding 14 long, loud and clear. Just as the pilot of the engine reached the crossing with the bell ringing and the whistle blowing, a young lady in a new Model "A" Ford Coupe dashed in front of the engine and was hit broadside, reducing the new car to so much scrap. Luckily the young lady escaped with minor cuts and bruises. She engaged a lawyer later on to recover from the "Cotton Belt" the price of the automobile.

At the trial the young lady conceded to the fact that she saw the train coming, heard the bell ringing and the whistle blowing.

"Why did you go across the railroad tracks if you knew the train was approaching?", the "Cotton Belt" attorney inquired of the plaintiff.

"Sir", the young lady answered, "everybody in Blytheville knows that "Uncle Bill" Wright always stops at Chickaswaba Avenue.

The jury ruled in favor of the plaintiff and the Appeal Court upheld the ruling.

One of my dad's favorite stories about "Uncle Bill" Wright was the time that the P.S.E. crew was called to take No. 17's connections from Paragould to Jonesboro. A derailment had delayed No. 17 long enough that her crew had to tie up at Paragould under the Hours of Service Law.

Dad said there was much speculation among all concerned about "Uncle Bill's" ability to handle No. 17 to Jonesboro. After all, he had spent his life on a mud line and had never been known to have handled any motive power larger than the small 0-6-0's that were the standard power in that class of service, and No. 17 had an 800 class engine with 100 cars. Quite a challenge for a veteran of over fifty years of branch line service to face.

If others were disturbed that "Uncle Bill" had never run an 800, let alone one with a tonnage train, "Uncle Bill" was not.

With the air of self-assurance of a man who handled tonnage trains daily with the "Cotton Belt"'s largest motive power, he assumed the seat of authority, worthy of the Queen of England greeting heads of States from the Throne in Buckingham Palace, wiped off the air reverse lever, the brass brake valve handle and throttle with piece of cotton waste and inspected the numerous gauges in front of him.

(continued on the next page)

Dad took the seat behind him because he was to ride the engine to Jonesboro to act as the pilot for "Uncle Bill".

The old runner moved the brass brake valve forward and made a brake test. When the exhaust stopped blowing at the exhaust port, "Uncle Bill" consulted his watch and checked the leakage of the train line, satisfied it was OK, then moved it forward to reduce the pressure to zero before restoring the train line to maximum pressure.

"Ready Bod?", "Uncle Bill" asked his conductor.

Receiving an affirmative nod from Dad, he shoved the reverser forward about three quarters down the quadrant, gave the throttle a gentle tug and the big engine moved forward, slowly taking up the slack car by car, giving additional steam when he felt the tug on the tender as the train moved forward until satisfied the caboose was moving. Then he put on a show of engine handling that the conductor and the rest of the crew had never witnessed in their railroad careers.

By the time No. 17 roared through Brookland, the crew members had no need to count the telegraph poles to check the speed of the train. The number of automobiles left behind in the 800's oil smoke that hovered over Arkansas 1 was enough evidence to tell them that the sixty-mile-per-hour mark was left far behind.

Dad confessed to a few anxious moments with he thought of the stop to be made at Jonesboro. Regardless how good a man was in getting a heavy train underway, stopping the same without jerking drawbars or breaking knuckles was another story.

After informing "Uncle Bill" the distance to the point where he was to spot the big 800 at the water crane, where the crew change was to be made, he crossed his fingers and sat back and waited for anything to happen.

But Dad's fears proved to be groundless. "Uncle Bill" was performing like he had been running a 4-8-4 with a tonnage train every day for a lifetime and started to make his stop, setting the brakes with an expert touch. He made his initial reduction, followed by another, reducing power until the big "Northern" gave out it's last bark and stopped with its tender spotted for water.

"Uncle Bill" then followed up by shutting off the throttle, moving the brake valve to full release, setting the engine brake, opening the cylinder cocks and putting the 800 on center.

Dad consulted his watch, stood up and spoke to "Uncle Bill".

"You came over here five minutes faster than I ever made on the "Streak", referring to No. 3, the "Blue Streak Merchandise", which was billed as the "World's Fastest Freight Train", and was also classified on the timetable as a "First-Class Train". "This is a first for me."

"Well Bob," drawled "Uncle Bill", "You just have been shown another first too. Now you know the difference between a Hoghead and an Engineer".

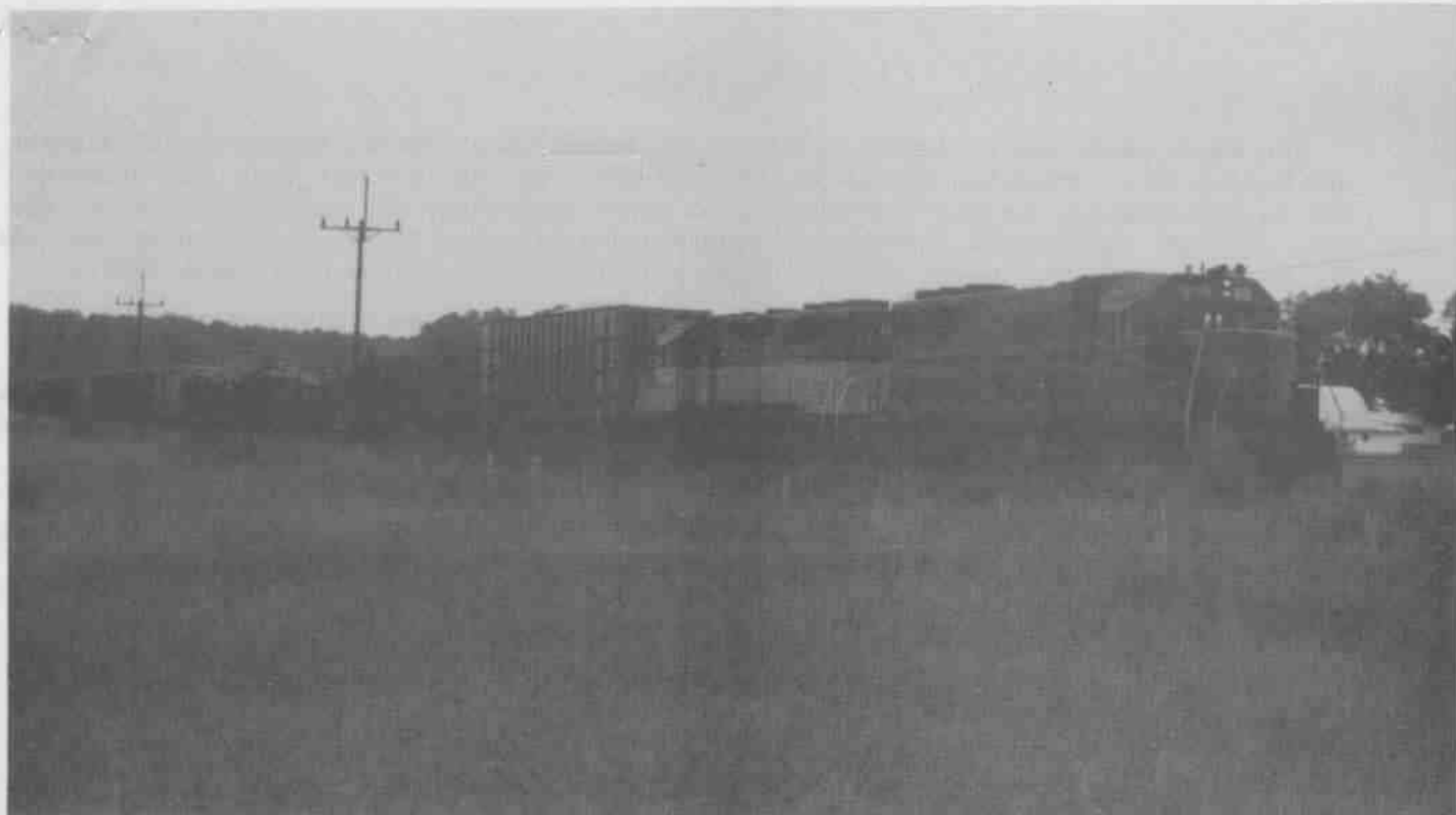
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(Story from William Church's book "My Love Affair with the Blue and Gold")



Cotton Belt 4-8-4 #807, like the one referred to in the story above. (Bill Church collection)



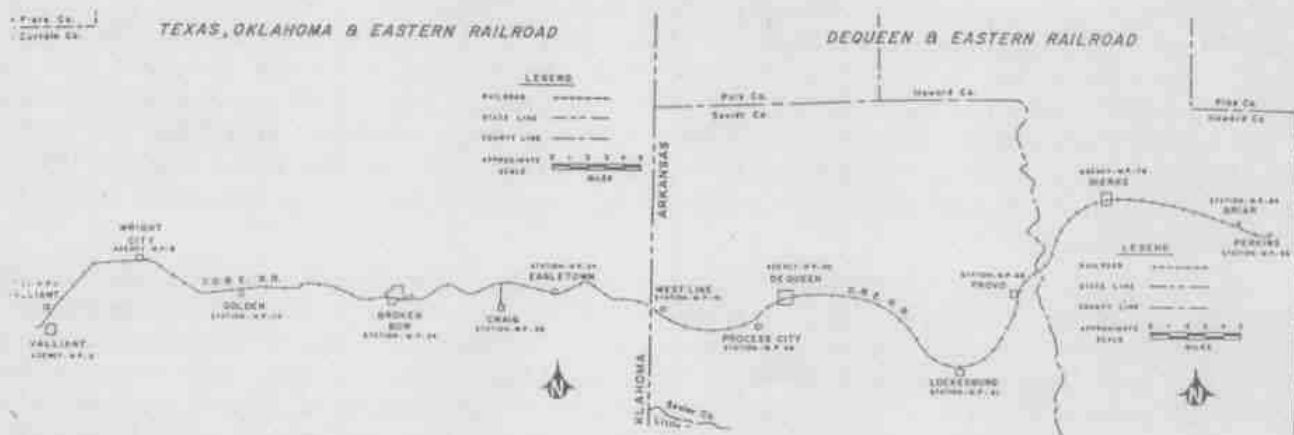


DeQueen & Eastern freight #7 nears DeQueen from the east during mid-afternoon, September 13, 1985. (Ziegenbein photo)

### CLASS III RAILROADS OF ARKANSAS

#### Part 8 - The DeQueen & Eastern Railroad Company

The DeQueen & Eastern Railroad runs from Perkins, Arkansas to West Line, Arkansas and connects there to the Texas, Oklahoma & Eastern, which runs from West Line to Valliant, Oklahoma. The two railroads officially connect at West Line, but in actuality they operate as one. As might be expected, lumber and forest products compose the majority of the traffic. The blue TO&E box cars and wood chip cars are familiar sights in California and many other western states. The 45-mile D&E connects with the Missouri Pacific in Perkins and with the Kansas City Southern in DeQueen. At Valliant, the 40-mile TO&E connects with the Burlington Northern (see map below).



D&E depot in DeQueen, Arkansas looking west.



Texas, Oklahoma & Eastern engine #D-22 at Dierks, Arkansas September 13, 1985.

The major yards and/or lumber mills are at DeQueen and Dierks, Arkansas and Valliant and Wright City, Oklahoma. Operations on some parts of the line are daily, 24 hours a day in some places. Current timetables show three trains per day in each direction (the only through train leaves Valliant at 1:00AM and arrives in Dierks about 4:00AM (#4) with the westbound leaving Dierks about 9:00PM, arriving Valliant around midnight (#3)).

All motive power is maintained at the enginehouse at DeQueen. The units are painted blue with narrow red and yellow stripes.

The D&E - TO&E presently employ 145 persons, consisting of 54 in track maintenance, 59 in train related service and 32 in depots and offices. The annual payroll is \$3,000,000 per year plus.

They presently own or lease 8 road locomotives of 2500-3000 horsepower each, 6 switcher locomotives of 900-1500 HP each, approximately 1600 rail cars and 700 rail cars assigned by the Burlington Northern and Missouri Pacific railroads. If all the above rail cars were on their tracks at one time, the cars would extend for 25+ miles.

In 1981 they handled 65,000 carloads of freight, consisting of wood chips, logs, post and poles, gypsum wallboard, lumber, plywood, feed, ties, insulation board and other miscellaneous commodities.

The D&E operates with written train orders and radios. A log book in the dispatchers office at DeQueen is kept up to date as to location of each train and other vehicles using the tracks.

Depots are located at Valliant, Oklahoma, Wright City, Oklahoma, DeQueen, Arkansas, and Dierks, Arkansas. The general office is located at DeQueen in a new brick building constructed in 1978. (The general office was located in Hot Springs from 1967-1977).

The DeQueen and Eastern Railroad was incorporated on September 22, 1900. Originally it was a very short line, which connected with the Kansas City Southern at DeQueen, giving the Dierks Lumber and Coal Company access to northern markets, but it has experienced steady growth over the years.

In 1902, the D&E line was extended to Lockesburg and then in 1905 the line was pushed on 15 more miles to Dierks.

The construction of a mill at Wright City, called Bismarck until World War I, was completed in 1910. In October of that year the company's second railroad was incorporated. It was called the Texas, Oklahoma and Eastern. It, like the D&E, at first went only from the forest back into the mill. The first TO&E line was only 8 miles long and went to Valliant, where it connected to the Frisco Railroad.

In April, 1911, the Interstate Commerce Commission initiated an investigation of the D&E Railroad and many other so-called "Tap Line Railroads" to determine, if in fact, they were common carrier railroads or plant facilities. This case was decided May 14, 1912. The Commission reluctantly decided that the D&E was a common carrier, but took it upon itself to prescribe divisions that the trunk line railroads could allow the "tap lines". Although the mill at DeQueen had not been rebuilt (it burned in 1910), the Commission stated that should it be, the Kansas City Southern Railroad could only allow the D&E \$1.50 per car. This amount was equal to the then prevailing switching charge at DeQueen.

The decision of this ICC case described the D&E at that time as follows: "The tap line consists of about 27 miles of main track connecting with the KCS at DeQueen, Arkansas, extending easterly to its terminal at Dierks, Arkansas. There are also about 15 miles of logging spurs and sidings. The tap line claims to have four station buildings along its line, costing about \$1,000 each, with a building used as its general office at DeQueen. It also has track scales for weighing carload shipments and shops for repairing its equipment. There are 5 locomotives, 3 box cars, 74 flat cars and 20 other cars, in addition 2 log loaders.

The tap line has 5 station agents, 1 train crew and a number of track and shop men. It is said that none of its employees work for the lumber company. But the salaries paid by the tap line to its officials, who are also officials of the lumber company, aggregate \$650 per month. It is said that there are six independent sawmills along its line and five cotton gins. The capacity of these mills is not stated, but seems to be small. There are five towns or settlements along the line, having a population of three or four hundred each, with one or two stores, and a county seat.

The tap line carries passengers, mail and express. Its revenue from that traffic aggregated \$7,000 for the fiscal year 1910. Its freight revenues for the same year aggregated \$46,603.76. The freight moved consisted of 49,217 tons of lumber and forest products and 5,031 tons of other commodities. The tonnage of lumber represented the shipments that had accumulated before the mill was burned. At the time of the hearing, very little lumber was left at the mill for shipment.

When the mill was in operation, the practice was for the tap line to load the logs on the logging spurs, making a charge of \$1.25 per car against the lumber company; the tap line set up an additional charge of \$6.00 per car for hauling the logs over the spurs to the junction with its main line, including the maintenance of the spurs; and without charge against the lumber company, the tap line hauled the logs over its main track to the mill. It also switched the lumber from the mill to the trunk line, a distance of about a quarter of a mile.

The trunk line allowed, out of its rates on yellow pine lumber, divisions varying from 2 to 6 cents per 100 pounds, the average allowance actually made approximately 4 cents. The rates from points on the tap line, however, are 2 cents higher than the rate of the trunk line from the junction point, so that the net allowance runs up to 4 cents or less, the average allowance being about 2 cents.

We are not advised whether the mill has been rebuilt and again in operation. But if so, no division should be made on its products in excess of a reasonable switching charge, which we fix at \$1.50 per car."

In 1912, with the construction of another mill and another town, Broken Bow, Oklahoma, the TO&E was extended 16 miles to that new plant. In 1908, the Dierks Mill at DeQueen had burned down and the company built a new mill at a location which is now known as Dierks.

On January 5, 1921, the two railroads, the D&E and TO&E were connected at a location known as West Line, Arkansas, at the Arkansas and Oklahoma line.

Almost from the beginning the Dierks Railroads carried passengers and mail. In the summer of 1928, a mixed daily-except-Sunday train left Valliant, Oklahoma at 1:30PM and arrived in DeQueen at 4:45PM with stops at such famous towns as Wright City (2:05PM), Golden (2:20PM), Oak Hill (2:30PM), Broken Bow (3:30PM), Eagletown (4:00PM) then through West Line to DeQueen. A Sunday-only/passenger-only train left Valliant at 3:15PM and arrived in DeQueen at 5:40PM. On the return, westward trip, the mixed train left DeQueen at 7:30AM and arrived in Valliant at 11:50AM with the Sunday-only train leaving DeQueen at 11:20AM and arriving in Valliant at 2:15PM. The mixed trains were numbered 10 and 11 and the Sunday trains had numbers 1 and 2.

The passenger phase of the operation was never profitable and in 1948 the Arkansas and Oklahoma public service commissions allowed the lines to discontinue these services. The passenger service was used extensively to bring produce to town and carry staple items home, also used on Sunday and holidays for picnic outings at Cossatot, etc.

The next expansion for the D&E railroad was in 1948 with the building of the Treating operation, which is now called Process City.

It was the establishment of a paper mill in Pine Bluff in 1957 that brought about the most sizable extension and an extension that was to attract nationwide publicity during a time when the trend was toward the abandonment of many small rail lines. An economical way had to be found to get pulpwood and wood chips to that plant in Pine Bluff.

The D&E and Missouri Pacific agreed to build a connecting line at a location about 10 miles northwest of Nashville and about 10 miles southeast of Dierks at a location now known as Perkins, Arkansas. It cost approximately \$500,000 to build this 10-mile section of track.

On January 10, 1957, with nationwide press coverage, the president of the two lines, Fred H. Dierks for the DeQueen & Eastern and Paul J. Kneff for the Missouri Pacific, drove the traditional golden spike to symbolize completion of the line. This golden spike is now located in the Sawmill Depot in Hot Springs.

The establishment of a gypsum board plant at Briar in 1963 using gypsum deposits found nearby was another by-product of this new connection. In 1960, the TO&E built a spur to supply rail service to a fiberboard plant that was being constructed south of its' main line. It is located between Eagletown and Broken Bow, Oklahoma.

Since Weyerhaeuser's acquisition of Dierks Forests, Inc., the railroad has laid the mainline with new heavier rail and has built 20 miles of new track for new yards and side tracks. It is a vibrant, active railroad and will be around for years to come.

- END -



*CREW CHANGE ON THE RUN - A Kansas City Southern crew is in the process of changing places on a southbound KCS freight at DeQueen, Arkansas on September 13, 1985. The long train never did stop while the crew was being changed. [Ziegenbein photo]*



*Kansas City Southern passenger train #1 near Redland, Oklahoma on March 9, 1963. (Photo by Mike Condren - it won 1st place in the 1980 Arkansas Railroad Club's photo contest)*

The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization of railroad and train lovers. The club meets once a month on the second Sunday. This month's meeting details can be found under the "PROGRAM" notice elsewhere in this newsletter. We are a chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

The ARKANSAS RAILROADER is the monthly publication of the Arkansas Railroad Club and is generally mailed in time to be received by the meeting date. In order for you to receive the RAILROADER, you must be a member of the Arkansas Railroad Club. Current dues are \$10/year for Arkansas residents and \$7.50/year for out-of-state. The publication is mailed to all members automatically. Dues are always due the first of the year.

If you would like to join, send your check made payable to the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB to the club's treasurer: Dick Byrd, 12 Flintwood Drive, Little Rock, AR 72207. You may also join the National Railway Historical Society through our club by sending \$9.00/year more.

Editor of the ARKANSAS RAILROADER is Ken Ziegenbein. Any change-of-address, stories, pictures, news, etc., are all welcome. Send all correspondence regarding the RAILROADER and all material contributions to:

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# ☆☆☆ PROGRAM ☆☆☆

The program for March, 1986 will be given by Tom Shook. He'll give a talk and slide show on the KCM&O (Kansas City, Mexico and Orient) Railroad, its history and connecting lines. Be sure to be there. Date will be Sunday, March 9 at 2PM in the Twin City Bank Building on Main Street in North Little Rock, just across the bridge from Little Rock.

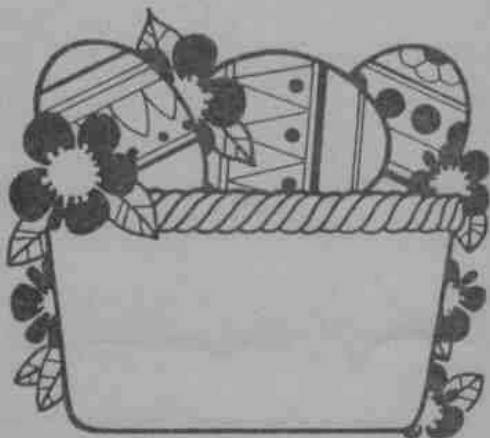
FROM "MORK AND MINDY" (a TV show):

MORK: "Loneliness is a disease of the spirit - And people who have it think that no one cares about them. - When children are young, there're told not to talk to strangers... when they go to school, there're told not to talk to the person next to them...and finally when they get to be very old, they're told not to talk to themselves... Who'se left?"

LEADER: "Are you saying that earthlings make each other lonely?"

MORK: "No sir, I'm saying just the opposite. That they make themselves lonely - they're so busy looking out for No. 1 they don't have room for 2.

"RAILROADER" EDITOR: "Please - enjoy your friends and never take them for granted. Talk to them, listen to them, confide in them and you'll never be lonely."



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Dues are \$10/year for Arkansas residents and \$7.50/year for out-of-state. Add \$9.00 additional if you wish to also join the National Railway Historical Society through the Club.

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NOTE — Dues are normally due January 1st of each year, but you may join anytime. You will be put on the mailing list as soon as possible.

WELCOME ABOARD!!!