



ARKANSAS RAILROADER



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

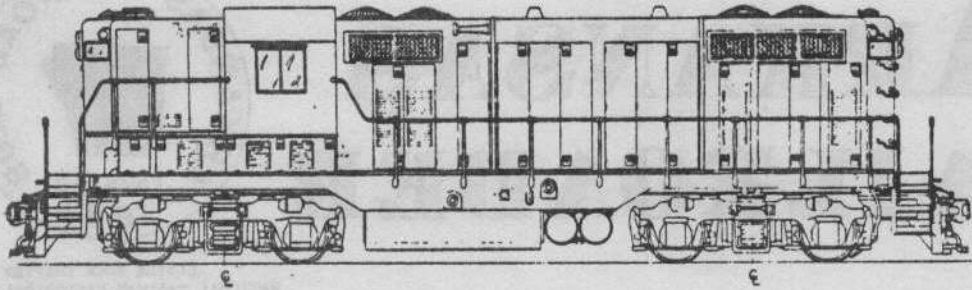
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MAY 1987



PROTECTING GHOST TRAINS, these signals along the abandoned Rock Island just west of Union Station in Little Rock keep the vigil...just in case. Photo taken in August of 1985 by your editor.



GENERAL NEWS

CLUB HAPPENINGS - ANNOUNCEMENTS

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ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB SHOW RESULTS: Total Receipts - \$1353.00; Total expenses - \$849.50; Net income to club - \$503.50. There were 418 who paid at the door. The April 4th Show & Sale can thus be deemed a success! NEXT YEAR the show will be held on March 26, 1988 at the same place in North Little Rock, so dealers, plan now to attend.

CORRECTION - In Ernie Deane's story about his father on the Cotton Belt in April's RAILROADER, it was erroneously reported that he pulled the "Texas Star". Of course, that should have been the "Lone Star".

LITTLE ROCK ANTIQUE BOTTLE CLUB will be having its Show and Sale May 16th and 17th at the State Fair Grounds in Little Rock (Hall of Industry). It will run from 9 AM to 5 PM Saturday and Noon to 5 PM Sunday. The 50¢ admission includes a flea market. Phone 501-882-6701 for more details.

THANKS FOR THE STICKERS - Thanks to Wayne Porter of Lincoln, Nebraska for sending in the Operation Lifesaver stickers that was placed in last month's newsletter.

DEADLINE for the June RAILROADER will be May 22.

☆☆☆ PROGRAM ☆☆☆

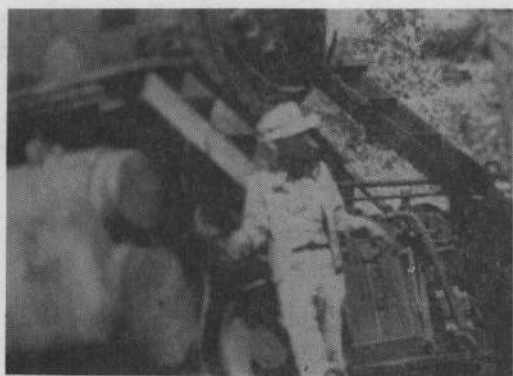
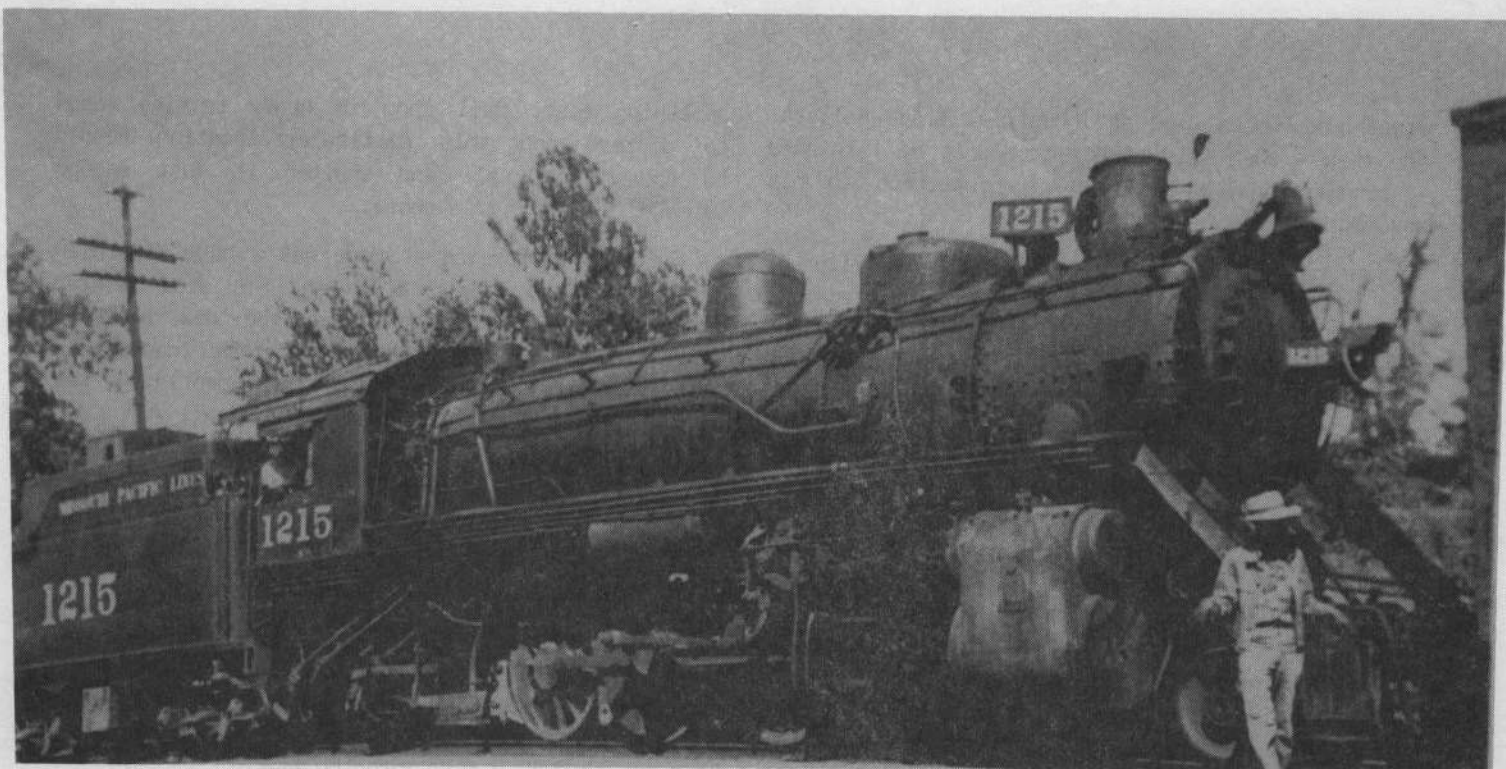
NOTICE DIFFERENT DATE for the May meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club. It has been moved to the third Sunday, May 17, instead of the second Sunday because of Mother's Day. The time will be 2 PM at the Twin City Bank Building on Main Street in North Little Rock.

The program will be given by none other than Mike Adams who will talk on "How to Make a Timetable."

ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

819 TRIP TO FORDYCE SUCCESSFUL - The 819 excursion between Pine Bluff and Fordyce for the annual Fordyce on the Cotton Belt festival came off without a hitch April 24 - 26. Large crowds were on hand to see this engine, as usual. When it will run again is anybody's guess. Chances are that if it does run, it will have to stay on Cotton Belt tracks.

(ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS continued on page 10)



Making "Ignorant Moves" - Gurdon, Arkansas 12/24/50.
(W. M. Adams collection)

THE PHILOSOPHICAL RAILROADER

by: W. M. "Mike" Adams

"De quoi s'agit-il?"

FIRST SECTION -Proud man, drest
in a little brief
authority, most ignor-
ant of what he's
assured...Shakespeare.

Some three decades ago - in the then bustling railroad terminal of Gurdon - there was a handsome silver-haired engine foreman. This toid veteran foreman called the shots on the 7:30 AM Yard Engine. Every day, Monday through Friday, this gentleman would get his turn-over from the night foreman and discuss the work to be done with the agent-yardmaster and the chief yard clerk. If there was anything that called for real heavy thinking they might even ring up the assistant trainmaster, wherever he was. The dignified switch foreman would then pocket his working dope, pick up his gloves, and heading out the door beckon his crew to follow with the selfsame instructions each and every day. "Come on boys - let's go and make some IGNORANT MOVES!"

One of the first things I learned when I entered the service of the Missouri Pacific was the incontrovertible fact that the closer you got to St. Louis, the smarter you became. It was also axiomatic that the higher up you got in the "ivory tower" at 12th and Olive Streets in the big city the brighter you were. The president occupied the penthouse on the 21st floor.

I never did get to St. Louis.... I did spend about five more or less happy years in the office of the general car foreman in North Little Rock. This office was located in the midst of the huge

car shop which was itself merely a part of the much larger "back shops" then known as the Baring Cross Shops.

On the Missouri Pacific at that time the Mechanical Department was part and parcel of the Operating Department and was headed up by a gentleman with the title of Chief Mechanical Officer. The CMO answered to the Vice-President of Operations but I got the idea from close observation and from keeping an ear to the ground that the CMO believed the VPO should answer to him. This idea permeated the mechanical department right on down to the scurviest laborer on the burn track. I really don't know how this erroneous impression got started but it certainly was deeply rooted. In my five years in the mechanical department, I used to hear THEM "run the railroad" and marveled at their ignorant moves. To put it bluntly and vulgerily, they couldn't switch a car of honey out from between two cars of manure...

Of course all the brains were not confined to that stately building in St. Louis. We had some massive cerebral development in the old Union Depot right here in Little Rock. There were several jobs over there that had outlived their usefulness years before. And - while all agents and yardmasters had to keep their staffs cut to the bone, you still had some "hats" in the UD making unnecessary phone calls and writing unnecessary and uncomplimentary messages designed to harry people on the ground who were trying to keep everything upright and moving. Some of these numbskulls didn't even realize when the railroad switched from steam locomotives to diesels and as an example, one kept ordering carloads of "cinders" out of the

roundhouse to be used as industrial track ballast. And then - when said cinders couldn't be furnished - became abusive all out of proportion to his assumed hegemony.

One day a wise guy slipped a thick file of this utter nonsense under the nose of a hard-case general superintendent of transportation and that put the straight air to a lot of this kind of rawhiding.

**SECOND SECTION - Hurrah for the Rail!
for the stout iron
rail,
A boon to both
country and town...
Ned Farmer**

In the "good old days" on the railroad (again say thirty plus years ago), acrimonious language was common. For all I know it may still be. One day a rail broke in the main line at Hope. The broken rail was right in the middle of the Main Street crossing and the crossing had to be dug out before the rail could be removed. This was the old-fashioned 39 foot rail section. And while removing the rail proved to be a simple matter - installing the replacement rail was

something else. Rail long in heavy service tends to distort and this particular location tended to squash the rail and shorten it just enough to make replacing it a chore.

The section foreman at Hope was a huge Hibernian by the name of Riley. Riley and his crew sweated and strained but couldn't get the new rail to fall into place. Enter on the scene the roadmaster, boss of all track workers. This gentleman was of the old, old school and we will call him John for that was his name. The bulk of John's ancestors also hailed from the lovely Isle of Erin. To make a short story shorter, John fell off his motor car and in seconds the very air around the crossing was blue and smelled strongly of brimstone. John waved his arms to punctuate his oaths and his face grew purplish red but then, suddenly, the rail fell into place and just as suddenly the harangue ceased. Turning around to where Riley and I had retreated, John said, calmly enough, "You got to CUSS a rail into the track!"

Not many weeks later I met John standing on the depot platform at Gurdon. His motor car had been pulled off to clear several approaching trains and John was rocking back and forth on his heels splattering the ties and ballast with tobacco



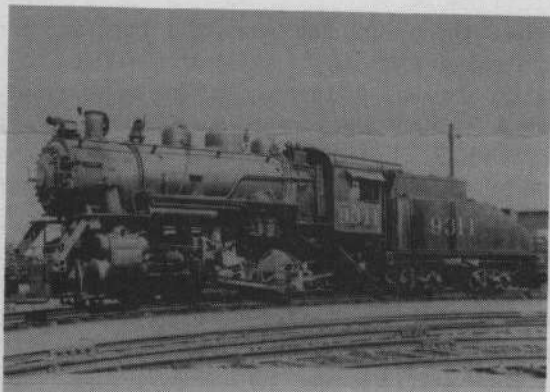
Coal chute, Gurdon, Arkansas, ca. 1951, looking north. One engine is on the Louisiana Division, the other on the El Dorado Division. (Mike Adams collection)

juice with a modest amount staining his once white shirt. John suddenly turned to me and said, "I've been working on the railroad 50 years today - and I've NEVER HAD A CROSS WORD WITH ANYBODY..."

THIRD SECTION - From early morn they hang about the book stall, the refreshment room....
John Davidson

On the old Missouri Pacific there were several subtle differences between a "traveling" switch engine and an ordinary, run of the mill "yard" switch engine. In the first place a traveler worked out of towns on line where it was necessary to run up and down the main line to handle switching in the general area. The crews were off the regular freight crew boards, consisting of a conductor and either 2 or 3 brakemen and worked under the "Trainmen's" agreement.

Yard engines worked in what was known as a "closed" yard under the "yardman's" agreement and the crew consisted of a foreman and either 2 or 3 helpers. Another difference and one having the most bearing on our story is the fact that a traveling switch engine was permitted a "reasonable" length of time to eat when hunger overtook the crew. A yard engine was allowed exactly 20 minutes to eat after the end of the fourth and before the beginning of the sixth hour after going on duty.



Last engine under steam on the Arkansas Division in March 1955. No. 9311 was used as a switch engine at Hope. (W.M. Adams collection)

Malvern was a pretty busy place years ago. We were working one traveling switcher seven days a week to handle the chores at Perla and Abco as well as Malvern. We had a large office force to handle the freight billing and had ticket clerks around the clock to sell tickets, etc.

The air base at Jacksonville was under construction at the time and much of the raw material, at least the sand, gravel and brick, came from the Malvern area. The thing that made for so much switching in addition to handle empties to be placed, spotting them and pulling the loads, was the fact that every car of aggregate had had to be weighed and on a normal day we were taking around 125 cars out of the sand and gravel company's tracks. During this period I was spending most of my time at Malvern and business reached the point where I saw the need for an additional traveling switch engine and ordered one to be put on.

The crews for traveling switchers at Malvern came off the North Little Rock board. The conductor had to be the oldest promoted man in the North Little Rock zone not working as conductor. Most of these individuals were working as baggagemen - a cushy job to say the least. The last thing these bullys and 99% of the other promoted men wanted was to be conductor of a traveling switcher at Malvern. I had this job set up so fast none of them had time to find a hole and I landed an old timer we call "Pop" off a baggageman's job on the north end. The three brakemen came off the North Little Rock extra board and were run of the mill journeymen.

As soon as the bulletin on the job went up, a brakeman named Eustace and, of course, nick-named "Useless", old-headed the job pending assignment. Eustace lived near Malvern and was on the other job but liked the hours of the new job. Just to set the record straight, he was a good brakeman - belieing his nick-name.

A conductor on the traveling switcher at Malvern had to be a good figure-head. He had to WANT to work and do a good job - in old time railroades you had to have your "head cut in." You could only occupy the main track with permission of the dispatcher and most of the time under what was called "track and time limits" as the south end was controlled by "signal indication both opposing and following movements" or what was commonly known as CTC.

If you entered the main track on signal indication you could do anything any other train could do - which did not include making a reverse movement without flagging. So - for this and several other reasons most of the work of the TS was done under T and T. With track and time, for a specified time and within specified limits you could occupy the main track and move in either direction at will. The only requirement was that all moves had to be made at LOW SPEED. Among other things LOW SPEED forbade you to strike anything or anybody. Any number of trains and switch engines, not to mention light engines, could be occupying the same limits at the same time and none of them had to be aware of the other - hence LOW SPEED - not to exceed 15 MPH.

On the evening under discussion trains had been thicker than flies in a barnyard, but in talking to the dispatcher and control operator, I could see a break in about 30 minutes so I got with Pop and told him to go eat and when he came back we could get some track and time and he could get some badly needed work done.

Pop tied his engine up in the north end of the Old Pass and took his crew, excepting one, up to the Working Man's Cafe to sup. I was tired and weary having had little sleep in the past 24 hours so I got in my car and drove out on the highway north and ate at a little cafe and momentarily forgot the railroad.

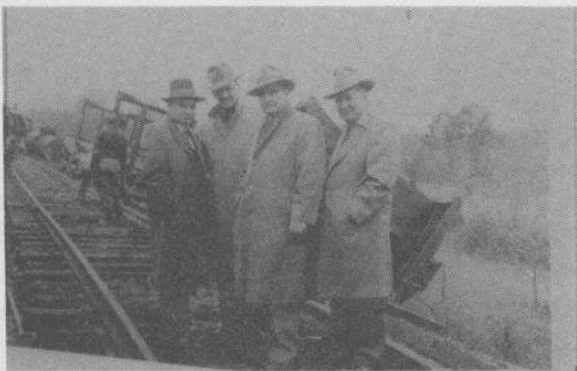


I just knew Pop would eat and get the job going and would be at Abco on the way to the gravel pit when I got back. Just over 45 minutes later I returned to the depot and to my disgust saw the engine still tied up in the Old Pass. I walked down to the crossing and found Eustace sitting there - he jumped up and hastily assured me, "I ain't with them other fellows!" He then told me he had been waiting nearly 30 minutes for the rest of the brothers. I started up the street to the cafe and just as I got to the door it swung open and Pop and the crew filed out.

I didn't throw my hat on the ground and stomp on it but I felt like it -- I did take him to task, pointing out that I considered 55 minutes a heck of a lot more than a "reasonable length of time." Pop looked at me and blurted, "Boss, we went in to eat and set down and they didn't take our orders -- a Rock Island crew came in and be-damned if they didn't RUN THEM AROUND US!"

**FOURTH SECTION - Along the wind-swept platform, pinched and white,
The travelers stand in pools of wintry light,
The trains' due.....
Siegrid Sasson**

There used to be an old tale from the early days of railroading about the boomer brakeman working as flagman on a drag freight. Said drag freight got hit in the rear by a fast passenger train and there was hell to pay. In the ensuing investigation the brakeman swore over and over, again and again that he went back the proper distance and gave violent stop signals with his lantern. The engineer of the passenger, lucky to survive, swore equally feverently, that he saw no flagman and no signals. After the investigation the boomer was lifting a cool one in a nearby saloon when the head man asked him if he really was out the proper distance and giving lantern signals. He again swore he was and then added, "I sure am glad they didn't ask me if that LANTERN WAS LIT!"



Arkansas Division "Mafia" on Norman Sub at the wreck of Train 880 March 14, 1955. From left - Jim Toler, Trainmaster (retired), W.M. Adams, Assistant Trainmaster (retired), Tom Manion, Division Engineer (deceased), Tom Reardon, Division Special Agent (deceased). Actually, all of Hibernian and/or Caledonian ancestry. (W. M. Adams photo)

In late 1954 I ran into the same situation, more or less, down in the miniscule settlement of Donaldson, Arkansas. Donaldson was located a dozen miles south of Malvern and was the site



Closeup of the picture lower left showing Jim Toler, Mike Adams and Tom Manion at the 1955 wreck of the 880. (W. M. Adams photo)

of a rather large lumber mill. This mill was about the only reason we kept an agent there. The station was a non-telegraphic office and no train orders were issued here but did have the usual telephone hooked to the message circuit. It was a flag stop for Train 4, which train was due there at 6:42 AM. The agent was a wiskery old gent who put away several containers of snuff in the course of a days work, much of which stained his clothing and the walls not to mention the floors. Snuffey, as he was called, reported to the superintendent that Train 4 had run his flag and failed to pick up a very important passenger, actually the general manager of the lumber mill, who was desirous of going to Saint Louis.

"Go down there and see what the problem is and get it straightened up," says the super to me. Even though it was bitter cold on my arrival at Donaldson I called the agent out on the platform to talk to him. I found out that he usually sold the tickets to this gentleman the evening before and had in fact done so in this case. It was also his custom to call Arkadelphia, first station south and have them give Number 4 a message to pick up a revenue passenger the next morning. Unfortunately on this day the phones had been temporarily cut out as the station was being re-worked. Rather than use the company's hard earned money and use a nearby Bell phone, Snuffey just decided to flag Number 4. Well and good.

The track through Donaldson was straight and level for over 16 miles and the engineer would have no problem in seeing a flag - even through trains in both directions, including Number 4, went through there about 80 per. I asked Snuffey if the engineer acknowledged his signal. "No sreee," he said, "he must have been going a hundred miles an hour....." Well, I guess it really did seem like that to him. I then asked him what he used to flag the train with and he unfurled his standard white flag. Said white flag to be used for that purpose - sometimes. "Snuffey," sez I, "for crying out loud at 6:42 AM this time of year it is dark as the inside of a horse - where in the devil was your lantern?" "Well sir," he says, "I got a lantern with a good wick but I AM OUT OF OIL!"

**SECTION FIVE - Lightening his load of links with pant and puff.
....Ibid**

Starting in the 1950s and continuing until the demis of what I call "regular" passenger service, the only marker light on the rear of a passenger train, at least on the Missouri Pacific, was a

red "bullseye" light shining to the rear. These lights replaced the familiar dual markers mounted high on either side of the rear car. Made from former back-up lights off the tenders of steam locomotives, the housing was equipped with hooks to hang it over the tail-gate and a handle for ready carrying. They were not all that heavy - nothing compared with a pair of oil-burning markers of the old persuasion. This light, a flagging kit and what was known as a "back-up" hose was the regular equipment of the passenger flagman, or, according to his hat badge, the TRAINMAN. The back-up hose was fairly heavy, rather long and somewhat ungainly and very dirty. It was coupled into the air hose on the rear of the train and hung over the tail-gate with the marker light.

So - a passenger flagman had to have all this equipment issued to him and he also had to provide himself with the approved uniform for first class service. These were a tasteful black fitted with silver buttons and a cap complete with the aforementioned badge. His duties, once the marker and tailhouse were in position and functioning properly, were in no way arduous. He was required to board and leave the train at the last entrance provided. If his train stopped under circumstances whereby it could be overtaken by a following train he was required to go back and provide flag protection.

In CTC territory this was no great distance as he only had to stop a train moving at low speed, i.e., not to exceed 15 MPH. He was required to look out around curves to see if all was "dark" and so signal the headend. He was required, when the engineer made a running brake test on leaving the initial terminal or where cars had been added to the train, to signal the engineer by means of the train communication signal when the brakes released on the rear-end. It was also required that he signal the engineer when the rear of the train was through any speed restriction such as entering or leaving double track. The bulk of his remaining work consisted of sitting on his fanny and counting the mile posts and figuring how much he was making and how fast he was making it.

Thirty-odd years ago Train 32 out of Texarkana each night picked up two cars at Gurdon. These cars, a combination baggage-chair and a roomette Pullman, came up out of El Dorado on Train 822. The Gurdon yard reversed the cars so the Pullman would be against the train with the combine on the rear where it could be cut off in Little Rock with no other switching involved. This move meant that our hard-working flagman had to carry, or get someone else to carry, a tailhose, a marker light, a flagging kit and any personal equipment he might have, about 150 feet and re-install them on the new rear-end of the train.

One night while the switching was being done on Number 32, the flagman, known as "Gump", was staggering up the platform laden with the tools of his trade and when he got to where the roadmaster, the general foreman, and I were standing he stopped suddenly and looking at me said, "You know - this wouldn't be such a bad job if you didn't have TO DO ALL THIS MANUAL LABOR."

**SECTION SIX - What is more English than
the country railway station?
...Hillary Belloc**

Our British cousins were masters of the MOT JUSTE as well they might be. Their railway signs and proclamations were right to the point. As witness the printed conditions on a ticket of the former London, Midland and Scottish Railway, "The Strict Condition Of The Issue Of This Ticket Is That The Holder Shall Comply With All Instructions Given By Officials." Or the handbill distributed by the Aylesbury Railway, "Some evil-disposed Person or Persons have lately feloniously Stolen and carried away, a quantity of RAILS, STAKES AND MATERIALS, belonging to the Company, for which any Offender, on Conviction, is liable to Transportation for Seven Years." Said transportation meant, I suppose, a one-way trip to Australia. The South Eastern and Chatham Railway went even further in their admonitions, "WARNING. The Extreme Penalty for Throwing Stones or other Missles at Trains Is Penal Servitude for Life."

British rail lines serving the west of England a century ago had to have bilingual signs as witness one in Euston Station, London, in 1883, "RHYBUDD Mae personau dredpasont ar reilffyrdd yn cael en perchenoci nue eu prydlesu can cwmpenini Y London and Northwestern Railway....." And so forth! In later years, English lines stipulated a pecuniary penalty, or else, as in a Halesowen Railway notice, "...renders himself liable to a penalty of Forty Shillings, and in default of payment, to one month's imprisonment for every such offense." As time went on even these admonishments were watered down.

The Chesire Lines in their station lavatories gave notice, "These closets are intended for the convenience of passengers only. Workmen, cabsmen, fish porters and idlers are not permitted to use them." In 1981 I observed a "CAUTION" sign on the old Great Western Railway depot in Windsor, England that merely observed that "any person detected in disobeying this order will be severely dealt with." Less stringent than in days of old but infinitely more romantic than the usual "NO TRESPASSING" found on most rail property in the USA.

**SECTION SEVEN - Guard sounds a warning
whistle, points to the
clock with brandished flag
..... Siegfred Sasson**

After a lifetime of rubbing elbows with locomotive engineers, I have come to the conclusion they are about like any other person. The long and the short and the tall. In this computerized world in which we now live - with SD 45's and DC 10's and other exotic motive power, we even accept the fair sex in the grand old Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. Now we have been talking basically, about the physical attributes of the engine driver.

Shifting to the innermost cerebral functions of the throttle twister, I have arrived at the conclusion that, as a whole, they tended to more

extremes. This could well be due to the inherent responsibilities of the position and, in the old days, the difficulty and hard work getting the ten feet or so from the left or fireman's side to the right or engineer's side of the cab.

In the old days if you made it in a quarter century you were doing well indeed. You might get promoted to engineer in a dozen years or less but this did not guarantee you the right side of the SUNSHINE SPECIAL. I helped give the rules examination to the 1955 class of engineers on the Arkansas and Memphis Divisions. This class is retiring right and left - they had all hired out in the early days of World War II. It was several years following 1955 before they wound up on regular engineer assignments. Any pictorial representation of a locomotive engineer before World War II invariably and incorrectly portrayed him as a "gray-beard."



**Iron Mountain Section
Crew, C. Piker Foreman,
Ward, Arkansas ca. 1914.**
(W. M. Adams collection)

Getting down to the story at hand, thirty some years we had an old engineer on the Gurdon extra board who went by the nickname of "TORNADO", the cognomen belieing his attributes and abilities. Tornado had passed up promotion for many years but dire man-power shortages at the onset of World War II caused the company to offer promotion to many aging firemen. Tornado was promoted and marked up as an engineer but was eventually restricted to yard and branch line service. Here all he could mess up would be a yard engine or a local.

Over the years, there has been many a joke in circulation around various railroads about the engineer who would never look back. Frankly me-thinks Tornado was the model from which this low humor sprang. Once he got on an engine and got his pipe going to his satisfaction he was content. He would do anything he was told to do, after a fashion, but HE WOULD NEVER LOOK BACK! The crews, starting with the fireman, had to watch over him carefully or else.

One fine Sunday afternoon in late 1954 (I say fine as it was not raining or sleeting) Tornado was called to handle a "gig" to go the 20 miles from Gurdon to PK Junction on the Norman Sub-Division and return. We had 20 loads of rock at the junction badly needed at Gurdon to weigh and forward to Texas and 23 empty gondolas in Gurdon badly needed at the quarries on the Normal Sub. We had to clean this stuff out of PK Junction before the local could operate Monday and sending the empties out

would help both Gurdon yard and the local the next day. So we called a gig with Tornado as engineer and an emergency conductor whose first name was Harold. They had 23 empty gons and a caboose and a 1200 class Mikado (2-8-2) for motive power. The yard crew built their train on what was called the Womble Main - the hostlers put the engine on and the crew took over.



With his hand on the throttle and eye on the rail -- Engineer Tom Burroughs and Fireman Tony Wayland leaving Ft. Worth, Texas on Passenger Extra 1112 South (Troop Train) ca. 1950. Engine 1112 was a heavy 2-8-2. (MOPAC Photo from Adams collection)

The caboose of the gig was standing right in front of the little office across the main tracks from the passenger station. Said office was shared by the assistant trainmaster, the roadmaster and the special agent or railroad "Bull" whom we irrevlently called the "SCREW." The job got their brake test and Harold came over from the telegraph office with their orders and clearance. He sent the swing man to the head-end with their copies and as soon as he saw the brakeman climb up on the engine started giving proceed signals or highballs. Harold waved and waved and waved. He took out a white handkerchief and waved and waved and waved. No acknowledgement - no nothing.

On the ball, I walked out and inquired as to the reason for their not getting on the road. Harold was panting for breath now but gasped out, "Old Tornado just won't look back!" I got my hat and hurried to the engine. Tornado was comfortably ensconced on the seat-box, his gurgling pipe putting the 1215 to shame. He looked at me and asked, "Hey, you going with us?" I answered negatively and asked him just what HE was waiting on. "Gracious," he said, "I don't know, I'm waiting on the crew - gracious, I'M READY TO GO!!!"

SECTION EIGHT - The officials seem to waken with a shout, resolved to hoist and plunder ---- Ibid.

The North Little Rock "retarder" of the Missouri Pacific was placed in service at 7:00 AM, Monday, March 21, 1961. Usually at that time on a Monday the yard would be, for all practicable purposes, clear. Due to a combination of circumstances the yard on that Monday was anything but clear. Behind before they started, the yard forces soon found themselves behinder and behinder. Everybody from the assistant superintendent and trainmasters on down through the yardmasters and switchmen and clerks and on and on down all the way to the caboose supplymen were trying to make do with

an entirely new system and making a mess of it. In 24 hours at least one-third of the cars in the yard were separated from their waybills, the hold tracks ran over and it became necessary to fill other classified tracks with no-bills. Now understand this...these employees were old-heads. Left alone, with another 24 hours, they would have pretty well straightened up the mess but then, help arrived from on high. Actually from the second floor of the UD - Room 204 to be exact.

The general manager and assistant general manager bulled their way into the crest office, chewed out everyone in sight and stormed up the circular iron stairway to the general yardmaster's office. Here they spent the rest of their time looking out of the windows, slowly mouthing cigars to tatters, pausing occasionally to scream over the intercom at the harried clerks and retarder operators and hump conductors. They made the local supervision run trains in all directions full of no-bills. This dumped them in Dupo and Memphis and Kansas City and other places. Of course, Dupo and Memphis and Kansas City and other places promptly burned up the wires trying to locate waybills and/or cars. Let the situation go and soon the entire railroad would feel it.

Luckily the VPO took a hand and told our friends from across the river to get their hats and get back to their termitarie and let the local people handle their own rat-killing. This they did. It took a little time but everyone soon got the hang of it and in a few short days the place was running smoothly. Oh - there were problems - there have always been problems trying to run a railroad. Unless I miss my guess they are still having problems. But - - now they have a winking, blinking, pulsating direct action, breech loading machine croaking out instructions and lining up moves. Electrified ignorance.

Looking back on a lifetime of railroading it seems that I remember a continuing series of "ignorant moves." As a matter of fact, although retired over six years, on my infrequent visits to the company property I detect some questionable moves still being made - to say the least. Moves that

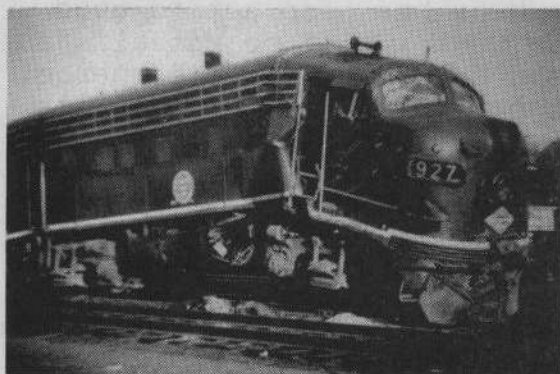


Photo of a crumpled diesel taken by Bill Pollard in March 1967.

tend to put to shame our stumbling and bumbling in the name of progress and efficiency in the good old days. Undoubtedly there is a brain somewhere, mechanical or otherwise, that is dictating the changes, changes, changes. Changes that I am sure look good to these space-age railroaders

but that are somewhat confusing to one born to the sound of a clattering ten-wheeler whistling for town.

"And the fellow who wrote it didn't know a God-damned thing. About how things were. He didn't know a thing. I bet things were just as they are now. A lot of folks wrassling round."

...Robert Penn Warren

"The end of man is knowledge."

...Ibid

XXX

Post Script - Good against evil, youth against age...
Ever shall the wise man ponder on the
conflict in this world.

...Anonymuous (Anglo-Saxon
Poet)

Just last week, needing a lantern battery, I found myself making my way to the Missouri - oops' UNION Pacific Hump Yard. As I approached the hump I found it covered with a multiplicity of maintenance of way equipment busy messing with the track. I parked and walking near the retarder end of the hump, ran into the track foreman. I had hired this lad several years ago and we talked for a minute. I asked if he was changing out rail over the hump and he said they were replacing the rail on the motion weighing portion only. "And," he added, "it won't fit, the rail is just too long!" With a herculean effort I overcame an impulse to tell him, "Jim, you got to CUSS the rail in....." and went sagely on my way. QUIETA NON MOVERE.

f i n i



"END OF THE LINE", the movie about layed off railroad workers that was filmed in Arkansas last year, is rumored to be released sometimes in late May. Be watching for it. SLSW engine 819 as well as several Arkansas Railroad Club members will have small parts in it.

LITTLE ROCK ZOO'S FORDYCE & PRINCETON LOCOMOTIVE was sold in early April to Ray Fureigh of North Little Rock for \$15,011. Mr. Fureigh says he may use it for a tourist railway in Pulaski County (Little Rock). He actually bid less for the engine than did the Eureka Springs & North Arkansas Railway, but they wanted to keep the engine in Little Rock. The Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society also offered to take the engine but their offer was never looked at. (PARAGOULD DAILY PRESS)

A "SAVE THE TRAIN" DANCE was held in Benton April 25 to raise money to restore the steam locomotive at Tyndall Park in that city. Admission was \$20 per couple. The locomotive has been leaking asbestos and needs to be redone or sold. It is not known how much money was made. (BENTON COURIER)

READER RAILROAD HAD EXCURSIONS - (Adams Crossing) - Special spring train excursions were held on the Reader Railroad (near Prescott) April 3 and 10. The 1-hour, 7-mile round trip took you back to the turn-of-the-century on a full-sized train with wood-burning steam locomotives. YES, the Reader is still in business. A number of exciting events are planned for the upcoming season. For more information, write to the Reader Railroad at P.O. Box 9, Malvern, Arkansas 72104.

AMTRAK'S NEW GREATER LITTLE ROCK STATION is still not a reality, but it is getting closer. On April 15, three Amtrak officials, including Eugene Price, assistant superintendent, made a tour of seven possible locations for the new station. These locations include: new construction or renovation of the current station in Union Depot at Markham and Victory Streets; two proposals for the Mabelvale Pike area; new construction at West Fifth and Rice Streets; Forbing Road and University Avenue; and on Riverfront Drive in North Little Rock.

UNION PACIFIC WORKERS WORRIED - (Van Buren) - The rumor is that Union Pacific may lay off or transfer 24 UP workers from Van Buren if and when the proposed takeover of the MKT railroad by the UP occurs. UP officials could not give specifics about when or how many employees would be affected.

DEQUEEN KCS DEPOT TO BE RAZED - (DeQueen) - After August, the KCS will no longer stop for crew changes in DeQueen and at the same time will raze the old DeQueen depot. This depot has suffered fires and the roof has been leaking for years and is believed to be almost impossible to restore. A April 14 editorial in the DEQUEEN CITIZEN has given up hope to renovate the old station: "As much as we'd like the idea of having a renovated depot, the smart thing to do is take plenty of pictures and let this one go." (DEQUEEN CITIZEN)

MORE DEPOT NEWS - (Mena) - The KCS depot in Mena has been put to good use. A state of Arkansas Tourist Information Center will be established in this depot, which will also house the Mena-Polk Chamber of Commerce. Grounds are being landscaped and the building is being restored to its original splendor. (MENA EVENING STAR)

RESTORED ROCK ISLAND DEPOT TO BE DEDICATED - (Lonoke) - On May 10, Senator Dale Bumpers will held dedicate the restored Rock Island Depot in Lonoke. This depot was constructed in 1912 and was purchased by the city in 1984. (LONOKE DEMOCRAT)

PINE BLUFF DIVISION NUMBER 1 - AS of early March, the Pine Bluff Division of the Cotton Belt was number 1 in safety over ALL the Southern Pacific, according to Superintendent R. R. McClanahan.

ROAD BLOCKED - (Waldron) - Arkansas Road 248 was blocked for two hours April 15 by three derailed KCS cars delivering corn. Waldron Police Chief and Arkansas Railroad Club member Bill Luttrell said no injuries were reported.

MOTHER, FOUR CHILDREN KILLED IN TRAIN-TRUCK COLLISION - (Trumann) - This tragic accident occurred March 25 when Lisa Ross, 26, drove her pickup truck in front of the Burlington Northern train on Main Street. Killed were Lisa, her three sons (Danny, 8; Allen, 10; James, 6) and her daughter Veronica, 4. Accidents also claimed the lives of two teenagers at other locations: April 7 at Marmaduke (Cotton Belt) and Thornton on March 26 (Cotton Belt). Arkansas continues to lead the way in these fatal crossing accidents.

LEASED LOCOMOTIVES - (Pine Bluff) - Twenty-two Paducah & Louisville (ex-MOP) units, blue and white, some with original MOP numbers, have been seen in Pine Bluff recently on the Cotton Belt.

GENERAL RAIL NEWS

FREEDOM TRAIN TO LEAVE MEMPHIS ON MAY 30 FOR BALTIMORE - Johnny Cash will join with CSX in a special movement using cars of the Memphis Transportation Museum on May 30, going from there to Baltimore to focus attention on all Prisoner's of War. Route cities are Birmingham (May 31), Atlanta (June 3), Knoxville (June 5), Lexington (June 6), Cincinnati (June 7), Charleston (June 10), Richmond (June 12), Washington D.C. (June 13) and Baltimore (June 14). (CSX NEWS)

ANOTHER KATY PURCHASER? - It has been rumored that the SOO Line is trying to come up with enough money to out-bid the UP in trying to take over the KATY Railroad. And speaking of the KATY, they are restoring the KCS interchange in Howe, Oklahoma using the ex-Rock Island tracks they leased from the state of Oklahoma. As you know, the line from Howe eastward into Arkansas has been dismantled last year. (THE DISPATCHER)

SP-SANTA FE MERGER - The Interstate Commerce Commission heard oral arguments on re-opening the case May 14. KCS is still trying to stop the merger from going through and is interested in purchasing the line for itself, or merging with the SP. (SP UPDATE)

SEVEN SP BRANCH LINES SOLD - The Louisiana & Delta Railroad purchased 7 SP branch lines in Louisiana March 14 totaling 200 miles of track. (SP UPDATE)

NEWS updated through April 26, this issue mailed May 1. Due to time constraints and other duties and general lack of news, this issue is rather sketchy.

JOIN THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

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.

Membership entitles you to a year's subscription to the ARKANSAS RAILROADER.

RENEWAL

NEW MEMBER

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Make your check out to the "Arkansas Railroad Club" and mail to:

Dick Byrd, Treasurer
12 Flintwood Drive
Little Rock, Arkansas 72207

For more information, call ARKANSAS RAILROADER editor Ken Ziegenbein at 501-758-1340. Call this number also if you have questions about your subscription, address, etc.

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!!!

The Arkansas Railroad Club is a non-profit organization that meets once a month on the second Sunday of the month. This month's meeting place is listed under the "PROGRAM" notice elsewhere in this publication. 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 before the monthly meetings. In order to receive this monthly newsletter, 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.

If you'd 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 paying \$9/year more.

Editor of the ARKANSAS RAILROADER is Ken Ziegenbein. EVERYTHING having to do with the ARKANSAS RAILROADER should be sent to the address below (including stories, pictures, diagrams, news, address changes, etc.):

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