



ARKANSAS RAILROADER



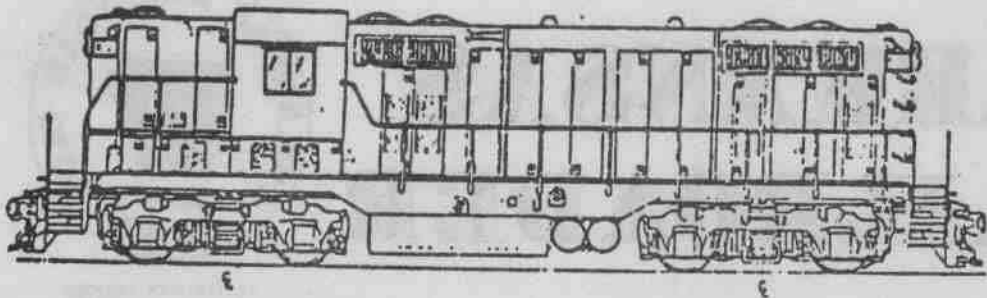
LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 1986



IN THE SHADE - El Dorado & Wesson Railway's ALCO #20 sits ready for action next to the office of the E&W in El Dorado, Arkansas on August 5, 1986. Huge shade trees cover the building. (Ken Ziegenbein photo)



GENERAL NEWS

CLUB HAPPENINGS - ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSOURI PACIFIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY will meet at the Ramada Inn in St. Louis the weekend of October 10, 11, and 12th, according to Mike Adams.

NEW 1987 OFFICERS NOMINATED - The following were nominated to be the Arkansas Railroad Club's 1987 officers: President - Peter Smykla; Vice-President - Carole Sue Shafer; Secretary - Polly Hamilton; Treasurer - Dick Byrd; NRHS Representative - Mike Adams. We will vote on these nominees at our Christmas meeting.

WANTED - Photos or plans of wooden, outside braced automotile cars and boxcars, especially of the MOP and SL-SF. Contact Dan Sanger, P.O. Box 14-18232, Boise, Idaho 83707 if you can help.

TRIP ANYONE? - So far, response to our planned round-robin Amtrak trip from Little Rock to Memphis (via bus) to New Orleans ("City of New Orleans") to San Antonio ("Sunset") to Little Rock ("Eagle") has been lack-luster with only 7 signed up so far. We need at least 16 before we're going.

The trip is planned for the weekend of November 1 and 2. Plans are to leave Little Rock by bus late Friday night, October 31, arrive in Memphis in time to catch the southbound "City of New Orleans" at 5:10 AM, arriving in New Orleans at 12:43 PM, catching the westbound "Sunset" at 2:35 PM, arrive in San Antonio at 3:40 AM, leave San Antonio on the "Eagle" at 8:40 AM, arriving back in Little Rock at 12:27 AM that Sunday night. Total time in transit is 48 hours.

Costs (if only 16 go, our minimum) would be \$155 coach only, \$213 per person (double occupancy) if you want a sleeper between New Orleans and San Antonio or \$250 per person single occupancy with the sleeper. If more sign up, then the rates would go down.

If you want to go, please contact tour chairman William Church as soon as possible at the following address:

WILLIAM CHURCH
217 WEST "J" STREET
NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR 72116
Phone: (501) - 753-4582

It was discussed at our September meeting that an alternative plan would be to have a Little Rock-San Antonio "Eagle" (train-only) turnaround. This would leave Little Rock about 7:00 AM Saturday morning, November 1, arrive in San Antonio late that night, leave San Antonio back to Little Rock at 8:40 AM Sunday morning, arriving back in Little Rock at 12:27 AM that night (the night of November 2). Total cost of this turnaround trip would be \$129 per person, without sleeper.

Let's discuss the options at our next club meeting, October 12. That is the date the final decision will be made. Call Mr. Church for more details.

☆☆☆ PROGRAM ☆☆☆

Next Club meeting will be Sunday, October 12 at 2 PM in the Twin City Bank Building in North Little Rock (on Main Street just across the Arkansas River from Little Rock). The program will be given by Matt Ritchie and will be a video show of trains in Colorado and Arkansas during 1986. Mr. Ritchie is asking that if anyone has a good 25" TV portable, please bring it as this would enhance the presentation. Call him at 753-5133 if you could help out.

(Arkansas Rail News begins on page 16)



Barely out of the shade, El Dorado & Wesson Railway's #20 just arrived at E&W's El Dorado headquarters on August 5, 1986. The engine and crew were returning from their morning's work. (Ken Ziegenbein, photo)

CLASS III RAILROADS OF ARKANSAS

Part 15 - The El Dorado & Wesson Railway

After the turn of the century, C. V. Edgar and some associates had a lumbering operation about 10 miles southwest of El Dorado, Arkansas at a place called Wesson in the south central part of the state. In 1904 the Edgar Lumber Company delivered its manufactured product to the Arkansas Southern Railroad, a subsidiary line of the Rock Island, by means of a spur track about 5 miles in length, owned by the Arkansas Southern but operated by the lumber company. This track joined the Arkansas Southern at a point known as Cornie Junction southeast of Wesson and was built of steel weighing only 20 to 30 pounds to the yard, the individual rails being from 6 inches to 30 feet in length.

The capacity of the mill was increased, so in 1905, the El Dorado and Wesson Railway was organized and built from Wesson to El Dorado to haul this increased supply of lumber to market. The E&W Railway connected with the Rock Island in El Dorado then instead of at Cornie Junction.

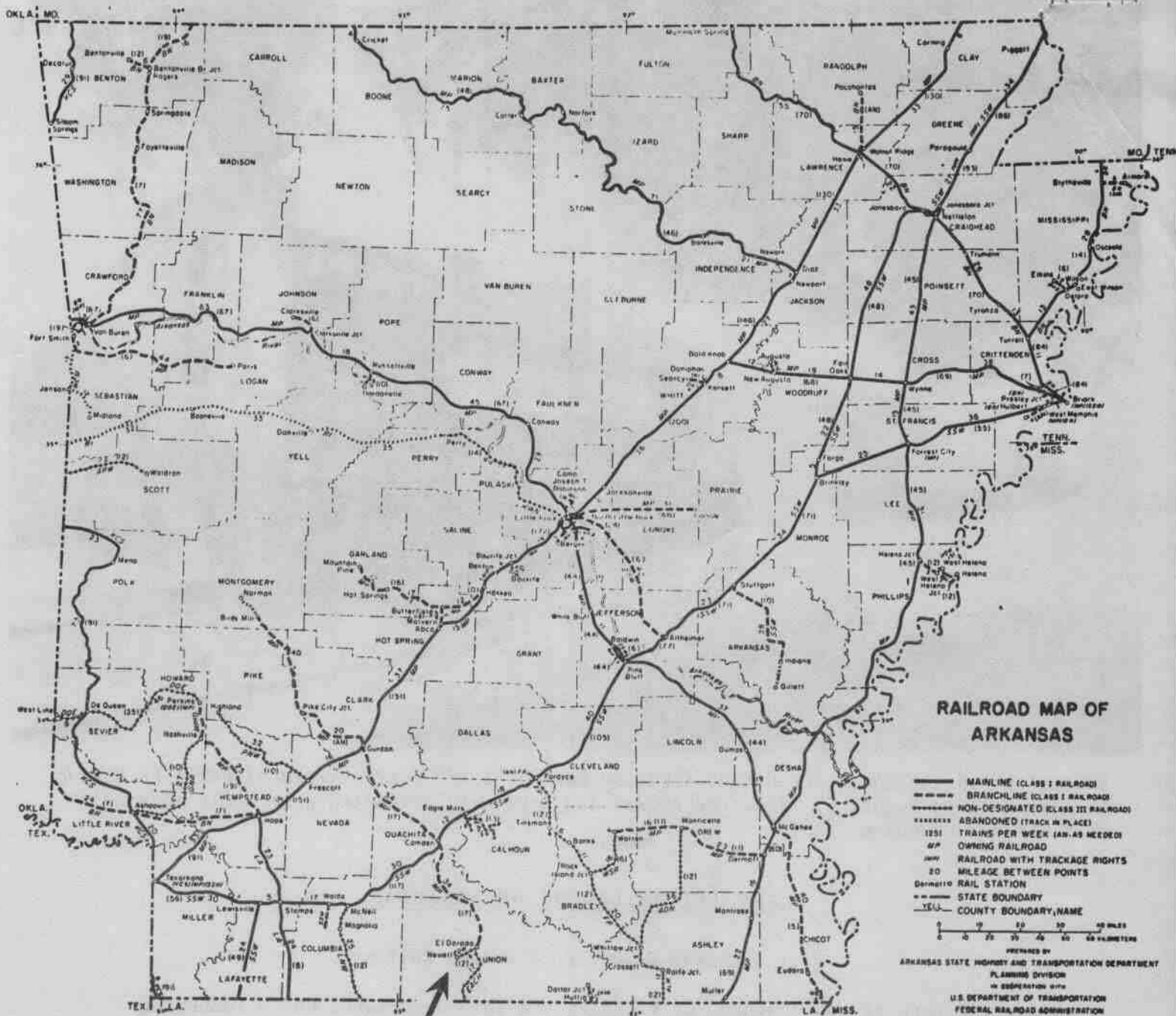
Before the tap line was built to El Dorado, a contract was entered into with the Rock Island, which contemplated that the Rock Island would contribute not to exceed \$100,000 toward the construction of the tap line. As a matter of fact, its contributions aggregated \$112,000, for which it demanded no note or other evidence of indebtedness from the lumber company or tap line. \$62,000 of this was repaid by 1912.



El Dorado & Wesson's offices are located in El Dorado. E&W #20 can be seen to the right of the trees.

The traffic in farm products and supplies was small, although the country through which it ran is said to have been occupied as a farming community before the Civil War. El Dorado had a population of 7,000 with Wesson having about 800 inhabitants in 1912.

The lumber company also owned an unincorporated logging track which operated under the name of Cornie Valley Railroad, 12 to 15 miles being described as main line



RAILROAD MAP OF ARKANSAS

- MAINLINE (CLASS I RAILROAD)
- - - BRANCHLINE (CLASS I RAILROAD)
- NON-DESIGNATED (CLASS III RAILROAD)
- xxxxxx ABANDONED (TRACK IN PLACE)
- 1251 TRAINS PER WEEK (AS NEEDED)
- MP OWNING RAILROAD
- RAILROAD WITH TRACAGE RIGHTS
- 20 MILEAGE BETWEEN POINTS
- RAIL STATION
- STATE BOUNDARY
- COUNTY BOUNDARY, NAME

PREPARED BY
 ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
 PLANNING DIVISION
 IN COOPERATION WITH
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION
 JULY, 1955

- INDEX TO RAILROADS**
- ADN ASHLEY DREW & NORTHERN
 - ALW ARKANSAS & LOUISIANA MISSOURI
 - AWP ARKANSAS WESTERN
 - AUG AUGUSTA
 - BN' BURLINGTON NORTHERN
 - B'N BAUMITE & NORTHERN
 - DYS DONIPHAN, KENSSETT & SEARCY
 - DOE DE QUEEN & EASTERN
 - DR DARDANELLE & RUSSELLVILLE
 - DYS DELTA VALLEY & SOUTHERN
 - EACH EAST CAMDEN & HIGHLAND
 - EW EL DORADO & WESSON
 - FP FORDYCE & PRINCETON
 - GAR GRAYSONIA, NASHVILLE & ASHMOON
 - NSW MELENA SOUTHWESTERN
 - KCS KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN
 - LA LOUISIANA & ARKANSAS
 - L'N' LOUISIANA & NORTH WEST
 - L'P' LITTLE ROCK PORT AUTHORITY
 - L'W' LITTLE ROCK & WESTERN
 - MP MISSOURI PACIFIC
 - PNW PRESCOTT & NORTHWESTERN
 - R' CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC
 - SL' ST. LOUIS SOUTHWESTERN
 - W'P WARREN & SALINE RIVER

and 10 to 12 miles as spurs. This track extended westward from Wesson into the timber. It was not as well built as the incorporated tap line and had some grades as high as 8 percent. In the operation of the Cornie Valley RR, the lumber company used 4 locomotives, 3 flat cars, 2 box cars and 75 logging cars. Apparently there was another small mill and some settlers in the vicinity of the Cornie Valley Railroad and their freight was hauled to Wesson in the same way that the El Dorado & Wesson hauled traffic for settlers along its lines, but the

Cornie Valley did not hold itself out as a common carrier. When this line was taken up is not known.

In 1912, it was believed that construction of an extension of the El Dorado & Wesson southward to Homer, Louisiana would begin soon to serve the expanding timber industry in that direction. This was never done.

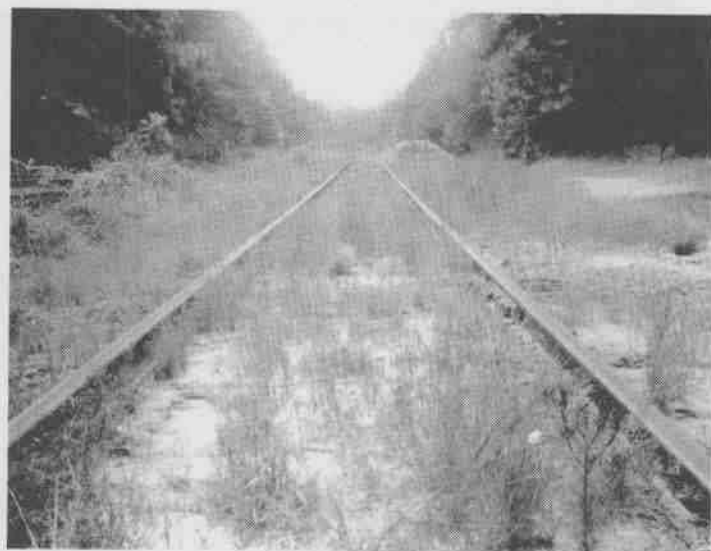
The E&W shops and headquarters were originally at Wesson with El Dorado being the end of the line. All operations originated at Wesson, including passenger trains. The E&W passenger trains left Wesson promptly each morning in the first quarter of this century, but returned from El Dorado only when the day's work was done. (Mr. H. D. Reynolds, Jr, President of the El Dorado & Wesson Railway, remembers that you used to work seven days a week, then six and now five).

In March, 1929, you could board the E&W passenger train in Wesson at 7:30 AM and return from El Dorado about 5:00 PM. The one-way trip took 45 minutes and included stops at Edgar, Newell, Spaulding, Morgan, Oil Hill, Pearson, and finally El Dorado. The schedule showed only two minutes between Spaulding and Morgan.

The El Dorado & Wesson Railway served the lumber industry well until 1928, when the sawmill burned at Wesson. However, in 1921, oil was discovered along the line and several oil refineries were set up. This gave the E&W additional business.

Only one oil refinery survived the Great Depression, but this was enough to keep the El Dorado & Wesson in business after the sawmill burned. Since then the railroad has gained a feed mill and Bromine industries.

In 1957, seven miles of railroad were abandoned from Wesson northward. In 1961, two miles were rebuilt to serve a chemical plant at Newell. In 1964, a second chemical plant was added and in 1968 a poultry industry feed mill was built along the line.



End of the line at Newell. A few tank cars can be seen to the left at the entrance to a chemical plant. (August 5, 1986)

El Dorado & Wesson President H. D. Reynolds, Jr., doesn't like to get rid of too much grass because the roots help prevent washouts. Here we're looking southwest off the Highway 15 crossing just south of El Dorado.

Today, 5.5 miles of main line track exists. The E&W owns two ALCO 1,000 horsepower turbo-charged switchers (#20 and 21), which are the line's 20th and 21st engines. Throughout its history, the El Dorado & Wesson has only owned one new engine - the rest being bought from other railroads.

Mr. Reynolds does not have a fondness for steam engines. He remembers too many days when he'd have to work on them for hours to get them operating. And once you found a problem, there usually were no parts available to fix it since the steam engines were so old.

The last steam engine ran on the E&W in 1958. It cost \$26,000 to operate one steam engine that last year. The first year a diesel was used on the E&W cost only \$900. Needless to say, all steam engines of the El Dorado & Wesson Railway were scrapped. The water tank was sold to Richard Grigsby of the Reader Railroad years ago, however.

Mr. Reynolds and his auditor and traffic manager Wilson Irby manage the E&W's resources well and spend money wisely. One way they found to save money is to run hot water through the engines at night instead of letting them idle. Mr. Reynolds stated that each engine burns about 4 gallons of diesel fuel per hour idling, which comes to about \$3,000 a month. Using about \$400 worth of natural gas to heat the water plus \$10 for water saves about \$2,600 each month - which is just that much more profit. (Exactly how this hot water keeps the engines warm was explained to your editor but I don't remember all the details).

The El Dorado & Wesson Railway never operated a year at a loss (although some individual months showed negative cash flows). It's still profitable today.

As of August 5, 1986, the E&W Railway served an oil refinery, two chemical plants and one feed mill. It hauls about 6,000 carloads per year, 60 percent inbound and 40 percent outbound. Employees total 16.

The station/office was built in El Dorado just for the railroad when its headquarters was moved there from Wesson in September of 1957.

Dark days may be ahead for the E&W. It seems the Missouri Pacific RR (U.P.), who now picks up the E&W's cars at El Dorado, once had a complete staff at El Dorado. It's down to a skeleton staff now, with computers taking over.

The Union Pacific has abandoned everything south of El Dorado, so the El Dorado & Wesson is on the tail-end of the larger railroad's branchline south of Gurdon. This branchline goes through Camden on its way to El Dorado - see map on page 4. If the Camden paper mill shuts down as it might in a year or so, the UP will probably stop operating south of Gurdon and take up the tracks from Gurdon to El Dorado. Apparently, it wouldn't be profitable for them to go to El Dorado just to pick up E&W's cars and East Camden and Highland's cars, another shortline in the area. All this remains to be seen, however.

The El Dorado & Wesson was owned by H. D. Reynolds, Jr.'s father since the early 1930's, when he bought out the stock. Until then, C. V. Edgar owned a majority of the stock. Today the railroad is controlled by descendants of the Reynolds and Banks families, but has a total of 28 shareholders in 10 states.

- END -

(Thanks to H. D. Reynolds, Jr., President of the El Dorado & Wesson Railway, for much of the preceding story. Also, thanks to Wilson Irby, Auditor of the E&W and to Bill Pollard on pointing me to the ICC REPORTS).

GONE ARE THE DAYS



William Church sent your editor a news clipping last Spring which stated that Anheuser-Busch, the beer maker, ended a long-standing tradition of letting their employees drink free beer on their breaks. This was to promote moderation in drinking.

Mr. Church went on to say that Anheuser-Busch, the maker of Budwieser Beer, owns and operates a major switching railroad in St. Louis, the Manufactures Railway Company. Besides handling all loads and empties into and from Busch Brewery in St. Louis, the Manufactures does a brisk transfer business between their yard in South St. Louis to the T.R.R.A. and Alton-Southern Railroad Yard in East St. Louis. Beer and chemicals are a large part of the traffic outbound while inbound traffic consists mainly of coal, grain and empties for the plant. Also, the Manufactures serves a large Chemical Plant and numerous industries in the vicinity of the Brewery. This railroad is far from being a one-engine-industrial line, but is a large modern operation.

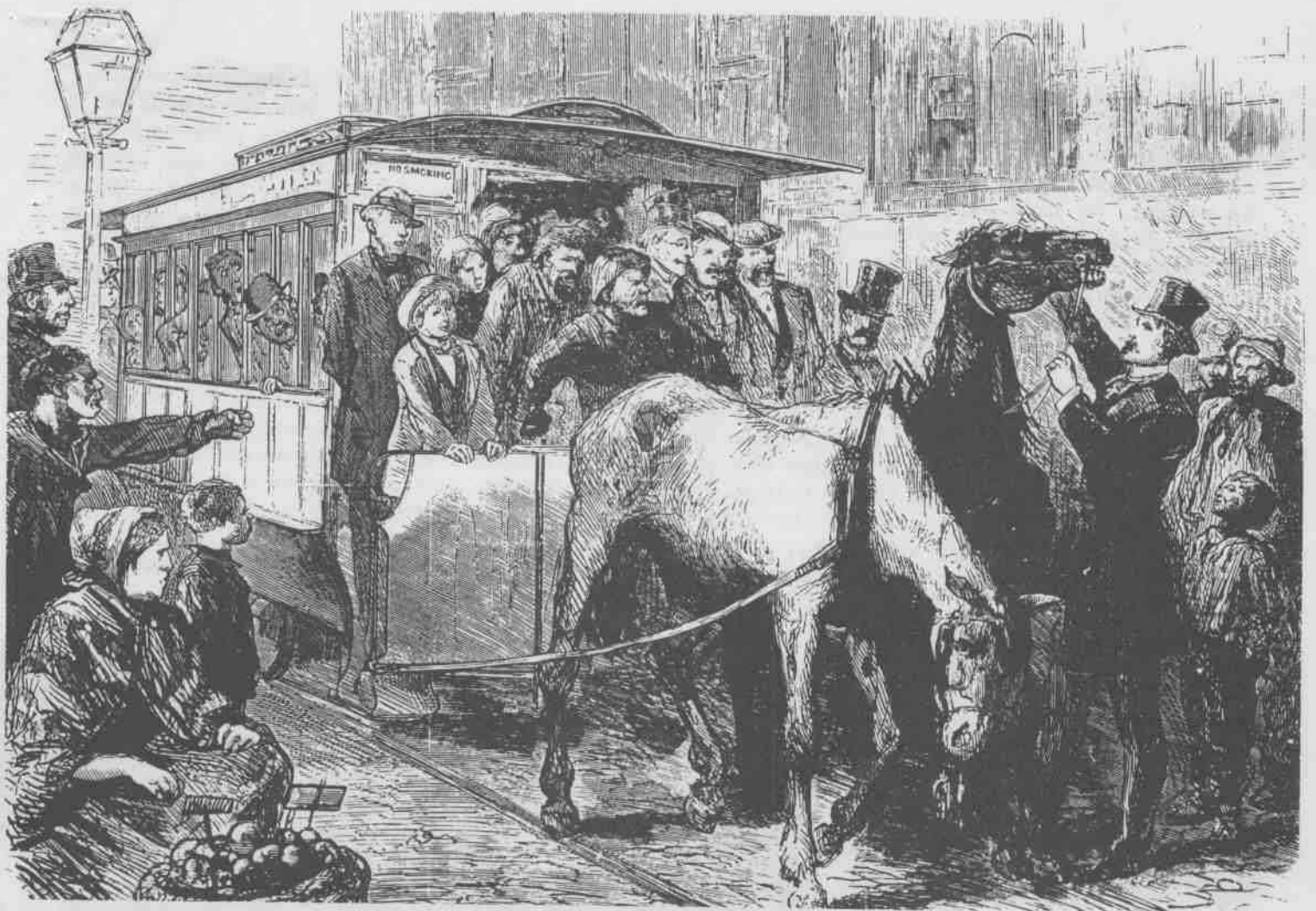
Company policy for all employees of the Anheuser-Busch Company was to allow them to consume, while on duty, all the Budwieser they could hold and take home cases of the brew for friends and neighbors.

The Manufactures' men were the envy of all the railroad men in the St. Louis district as they could drink all of the beer their heart desired or their belly could hold while on duty and not an official frowning on the practice!

According to this news article, all this has changed and now the Manufactures' boys are just like the other switchmen in the St. Louis District: bound by Rule "G".

"Life gets rough, don't it?"





FROM MULE CARS TO BUSES

by: Clifton E. (Gene) Hull

Metropolitan Little Rock has been experiencing a steadily increasing problem with public transportation. As the metropolitan area expanded, the transportation area grew in proportion, and the cost ballooned. As a larger percentage of the population became more affluent, fewer persons depended upon public transportation. Much dependence has been put upon subsidies from the Federal government, which has proved to be undependable. Perhaps public transit should become a governmental function and funded by county-wide taxation. Problems are not peculiar to the present transportation company. There were problems from the very beginning of public transit.

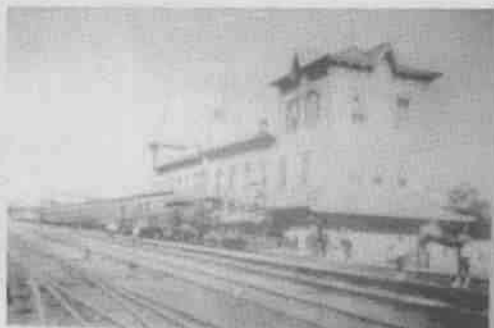
The 1870 federal census revealed there were 12,380 persons living in Little Rock, and a total of 484,471 in Arkansas. The devastation following the Civil War was beginning to dissipate. The area was feeling the pangs of rebirth. An aggravating gap in the Little Rock & Memphis Railroad had been closed by the completion of the bridge across the White River at DeValls Bluff in 1871. By 1871 there were 82 miles of the Little Rock & Ft. Smith Railroad completed out of Argenta, across the river from Little Rock. The capitol city was gradually being connected to the rest of the world. Prosperity was guaranteed. Little Rock was getting a glimpse of its future importance. Houses were actually having numbers attached to make them easier to locate upon streets which were assigned permanent names.

Along with the new affluence, fine homes began to appear in growing numbers south and east of the business section of Little Rock. The wealthier residents began to sense an assault upon their dignity from having to walk farther and farther to their businesses or places of employment. Madame was finding it more difficult to reach home after a shopping trip in town. Sidewalks were conspicuous by their absence (this is a familiar complaint today), and the street surface left much to be desired. The citizens of the principal city of the state, especially with their elevated standard of living, felt they deserved something better than walking through dust, or mud, to, in, and from "downtown".

As much as 20 years earlier, in the 1850s, little four-wheel cars, pulled by horses, were rolling on rails laid along the streets of Brooklyn and Manhattan. People rode in comfort instead of walking. The only difference between those cities and Little Rock was they were farther east and had more people, and their ladies' trailing skirts didn't gather a coat of dust or mud when they went shopping.

This condition of necessity caused the city government to grant a franchise to the Little Rock Street Railway Company on 17 June 1870. Mr. W. E. Wright was president of this ambitious outfit, and he proposed to use alternate sources of motive power for his cars - either mules or horses. The city agreed Mr. Wright could lay rails on any street he wished, so long as he had a half-mile in operation within three years, then he could build additional track whenever he pleased, or not build any more at all. There would be no competition, since the franchise stated no other company could lay track unless the Little Rock Street Railway were purchased first. Financing probably derailed Mr. Wright's company. No more was heard of it.

In May 1873 a fellow named Newman Erb cast his eyes westward and saw another flourishing form of transportation, and was sure he could profit from it. The Cairo & Fulton Railroad had built from the Missouri border to Argenta (North Little Rock), and was using a steam-powered ferry across the Arkansas River. Rails also were laid from Little Rock to Texarkana. A bridge was being built across the river between Little Rock and Argenta by the Baring Cross Bridge Company. An ornate and impressive depot was under construction below the crest of the hill at the west end of Markham Street. With all the passenger trains coming and going, there should be some means of bringing a goodly number of the passengers to downtown Little Rock, then returning them to the depot.



Little Rock's Union Station on July 14, 1890. Train #753 with engine #399 are seen left of the depot. (W.A. Anderson collection)

Mr. Erb asked the city officials for a franchise under which his Little Rock Railway Company would construct a horse-car line out West Markham Street from Main Street to the new depot at Victory Street. As the city fathers often do, they did nothing. The franchise request was left on the table. Another Little Rock Street Railway Company was formed on 11 August 1876 by Thomas Fletcher, Logan H. Root, R. S. Yerkes, John D. Adams, and John M. Harrell. This one "faded before it bloomed." So did two other franchise requests that year.

The following year, 1877, the city officials became serious about providing public transportation. Perhaps they wanted a company to serve a favored area of town, or one formed by more favored people. At any rate, they worked a franchise that was agreeable with everyone, and that gave no special advantages. Service would be limited to only four streets - Markham, Second, Main and Louisiana. An ordinance was passed 30 January 1877 authorizing a contract with a responsible company. Two days later there just happened to be such a company formed by John Cross, Charles R. Diver, and L. D. Cain. It was the Citizens Street Railway Company. John Cross accepted the franchise from the city clerk.



The no-special-advantages provision didn't last long. Right of way was granted to Cross, Diver and Cain, and their heirs for 20 years along Main and Center Streets, as well as on Second Street from the cotton oil mills at Sherman to Rector Avenue, then north to Markham, west to Cross, north to Water Street, then west to the railroad depot. On 2 June 1874 the Cairo & Fulton of Arkansas was consolidated with the St. Louis & Iron Mountain of Missouri to form the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern, and later the Missouri Pacific.

John Cross posted a \$1,000 bond with the city on 1 February 1877 to guarantee he would have the first half-mile of track in operation within six months. John Cross and Charles Diver were prominent businessmen with various transportation ventures operating or proposed at that time. One of these was a stagecoach line between Ozark and Eureka Springs.

May 29, 1877, was a day of celebration, and the folks of Little Rock were justifiably proud. Everybody was given the opportunity to have a free ride on the city's first streetcar. Rails had been laid a few blocks out Main Street, and by today's standards, it was a pretty rickety affair. A floppy-eared mule slowly plodded along pulling a diminutive four-wheeled "bobber" car. After all, it was the first public transportation, and people could ride instead of walk. What did Manhattan have that Little Rock didn't, except maybe more mules?



One of Little Rock's first mule-drawn streetcars. (Gene Hull collection)

The little car had an open platform on each end, with a dashboard about waist high where the mule driver-conductor was enthroned in summer heat and winter cold. His only protection was the "duckbill" roof which projected forward over the platform. Inside the car there were seats for about a dozen passengers. The only heat was that generated by warm bodies. A thick layer of dual-purpose straw covered the floor. The passengers' feet were relatively cozy where burrowed in the straw up to the ankles. It was most ungentlemanly to smoke in such close proximity of ladies, and the only alternative, except abstinence, was a jaw full of chewing tobacco. The straw was more convenient than a cuspidor - you couldn't miss it. By the time it was sufficiently saturated to require replacement, the straw had taken on a most pungent odor.

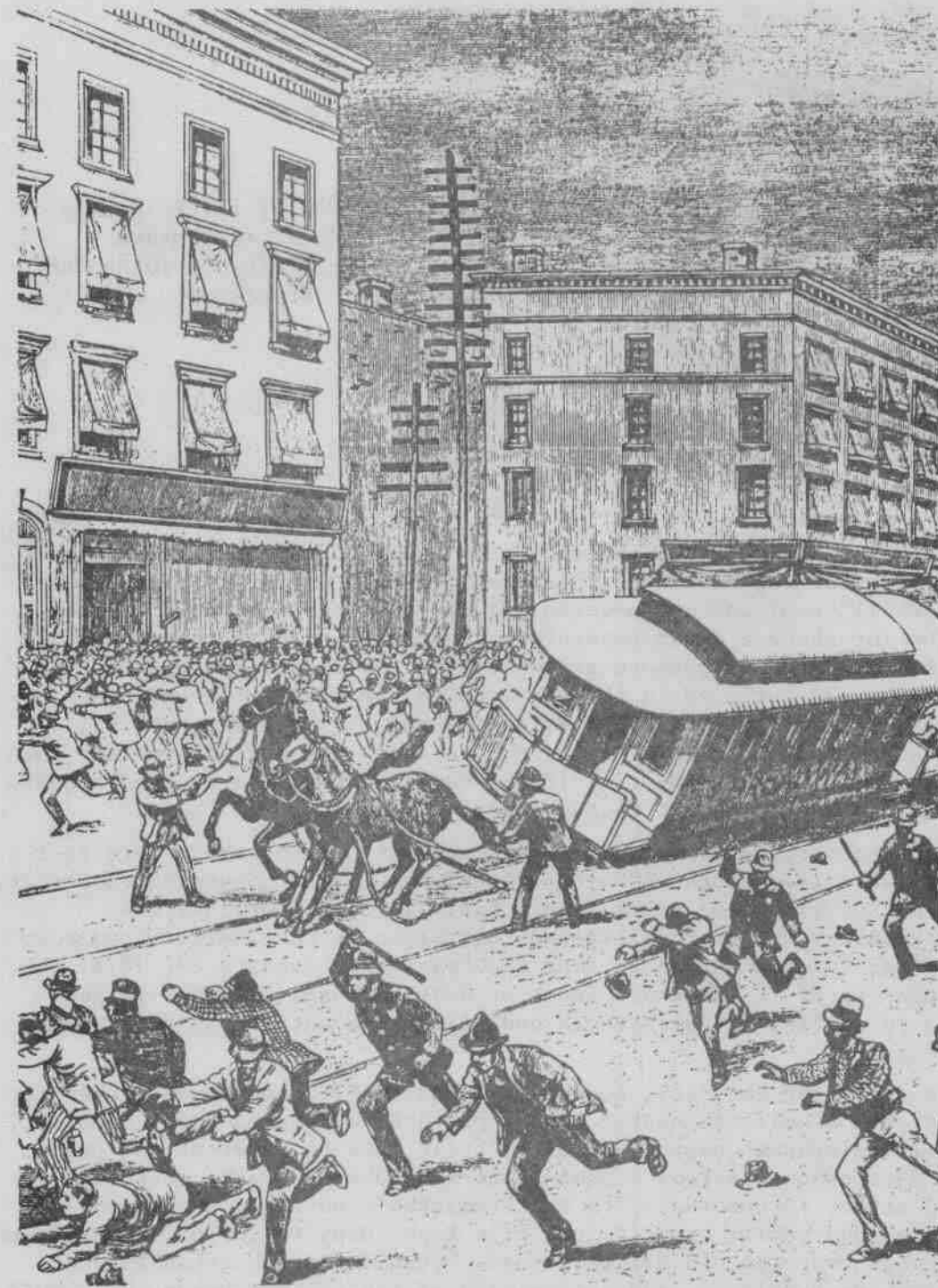
The little mule cars were very popular, and in less than six months there were four cars in operation. Rails were laid south on Main to Alexander Park at Seventeenth Street, where the old farmer's market was to be years later. Early in September 1877 the pontoon bridge across the Arkansas River was opened to traffic at the foot of Commerce Street. Neighbors from Argenta came across to ride the "cars". By January 29, 1878, the mules were delivering passengers to the train depot on West Markham. The four-legged motive power was housed in stables at Seventeenth and Main, adjacent to the Park, and at Ninth and Ringo Streets.

Progress was rapidly engulfing the city. About mid-January 1878 ground was broken for construction of St. Andrews Catholic cathedral at Seventh and Louisiana. James Hamblett, general agent of the Bell Telephone Company, came to Little Rock to interest the public in the construction of a telephone system. A demonstration was made at the editorial rooms of the Arkansas Gazette. In contrast with this remarkable advance in science, engineering, architecture, and public transit in Little Rock, many trains of white-covered wagons came rolling through over the old Military road, bound for south Arkansas and Texas. Two eras were brushing shoulders, and the melding of the two had begun. One would pass - the other would survive and flourish.

In spite of the persuasion by the Bell Telephone Company, the first telephones in Little Rock were installed in March 1879 for 10 customers by the Western Union Company. Progress of civilization was not confined to Little Rock. Folks of the capitol city rode behind their public mules to the fine Union Station on West Markham to watch the first fruit train leave town on the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern for St. Louis in early May 1884.

The nemesis of competition reared its head in 1884. The Little Rock Street Railway Company was formed by Thomas Darrah, Theodore Hartman, George Reichardt, and Charles F. Penzel. They got a city franchise and quickly built four horse-car lines --- one in front of the home of each incorporator.

In December 1887 the city granted a franchise to the City Electric Street Railway Company, which was formed by Howard Adams, John B. Jones, and M. W. Benjamin. These fellows were given right of way over nearly every street in Little Rock that didn't already have a horse-car line. This really was a radical bunch of men - their cars would be propelled by electricity, steam, cable, or some other approved source of power! There was not even one mention of a capable, economical, and dependable mule. In the final decision, the steam locomotive was chosen.



There was almost immediate conflict. Two transit lines using mules were still in operation, and there were many privately owned mules and horses in use in the city. These animals didn't react favorably around steam locomotives. There was another bit of contention due to the fact that the horse-car lines had extended their routes until it was necessary to work the animals almost beyond their endurance, and this was creating a bad image. The age of technology was progressing beyond the capabilities of flesh and blood.

In an attempt at compromise between four-legged motive power and the steam powered "iron horse", the Baldwin Locomotive Company at Philadelphia developed a little four-wheeled locomotive, which they called a "dummy". The thing was encased in a wooden body resembling an ordinary streetcar, to which the mules and horses were accustomed. It worked.

Two of these "dummies" were obtained from some unknown source, and were numbered 1 and 2. Each

engine was given an open-sided trailer car for passengers. The terminal was at the southwest corner of Second and Louisiana. The first trial runs were to be on 3 July 1888, and the selected passengers included the mayor, aldermen, street railway officials and as many ordinary people as could get aboard. Each car could seat 40 passengers.

The "dummies" were ready at Second and Spring Streets at the Federal Building (old post office). Howard Adams, president of the City Electric Railway Company (which was operated by steam) was at the throttle of Number 1. At 2:30 PM the engine started south on Spring. Number 2 was close behind. They proceeded south to Fourth Street, west on Fourth to Pulaski, south to Eighth, west to Wolfe, south to Eleventh, west to Barton, south to Thirteenth, and west to the Iron Mountain railroad tracks. Here was located West End Park, which was owned by the City Electric Street Railway Company. There was a large dance pavilion, a boating lake, a race track, amphitheater, and refreshment stands.

Two years later a really "hungry" competitor showed up. On 3 March 1890 the Capitol Street Railway Company was formed, and within a month had absorbed the steam and horse-car lines. In February 1891 the firm got permission from the city to operate cars by electrical power. Next month the company was reorganized and assumed a previous name - City Electric Railway Company. H. G. Allis was president; H. P. Bradford, treasurer; and attorneys V. M. Rose and George Ross. The company at that time had 22 miles of line, 45 cars, and 308 mules and horses. With the advent of electric power, 25 of the cars and all mules and horses were sold. Twenty cars were retained as trailers. The last horse-car operated in Little Rock on Sunday, 22 November 1891.

At that time 28 new electric cars appeared, at a cost of \$3,300 each. In conjunction, a huge power plant and car barn were built on North Street between Chester and Ringo, extending north 297 feet. The car barn floor was at the same level as North Street, and the coal-fired power generation station was at a lower level at the north end of the building. The barn contained eight tracks, each 290 feet long for storage of cars not in use. Between the rails of each track was a service pit eight feet deep for inspection under the cars.

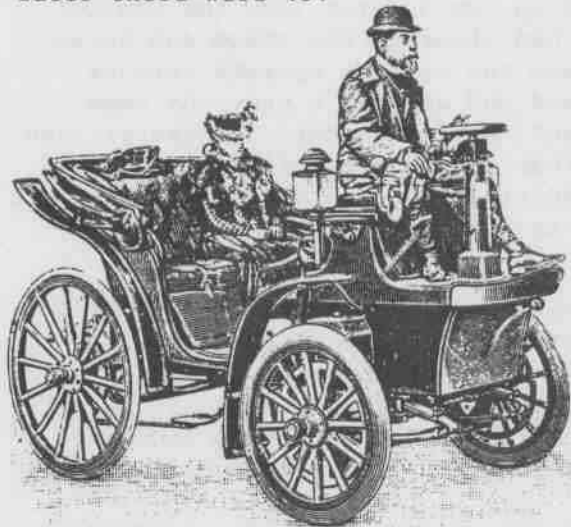


Gene Hull Collection

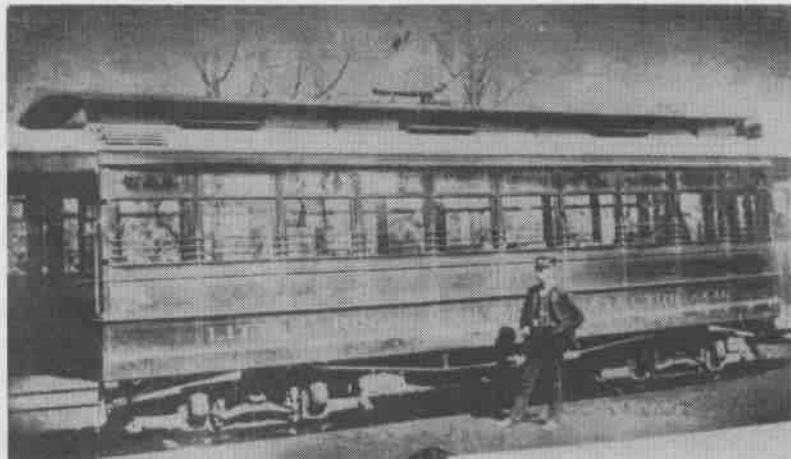
On 24 November 1891, electric - powered car Number 55 was pulled to the foot of Main Street, near the river, where company officials, guests, newspaper reporters, and several others climbed aboard. The main power switch was closed and more than 20 miles of overhead trolley wires were charged with electricity.

Mr. E. E. Downs carefully moved the controls of No. 55, and the first electric streetcar in Little Rock began rolling along Main Street. These little cars, and their successors, claimed a special place in the hearts of residents and visitors. No other public transportation system would ever appeal to so many people. In 1892 electric power was supplied along the "dummy line", replacing the steam engines, and the route was called the South Highland line.

On 3 June 1895 the Little Rock Traction & Electric Company was incorporated and took over all street railway property in Little Rock. Early in July '96 an ordinance was introduced in the City Council granting the Horseless Carriage Company the right to operate on the streets of the city. Breakfast bacon was selling for 9.75 cents a pound. In September a contract was awarded to the Grafton Bridge Company of New York for construction of a free bridge across the Arkansas River at the foot of Main Street. The quality of life was improving. On 11 June 1897 the last plank was laid on the free bridge. By 6 June 1902 three persons in Little Rock owned automobiles - W. C. Faucette, John McGuire and John P. Maser. Real competition to public transit had appeared. A year later there were 15.



An early-model automobile.



Conductor posing beside Car No. 221 for the Little Rock Railway and Electric Company about 1906. (Gene Hull collection)

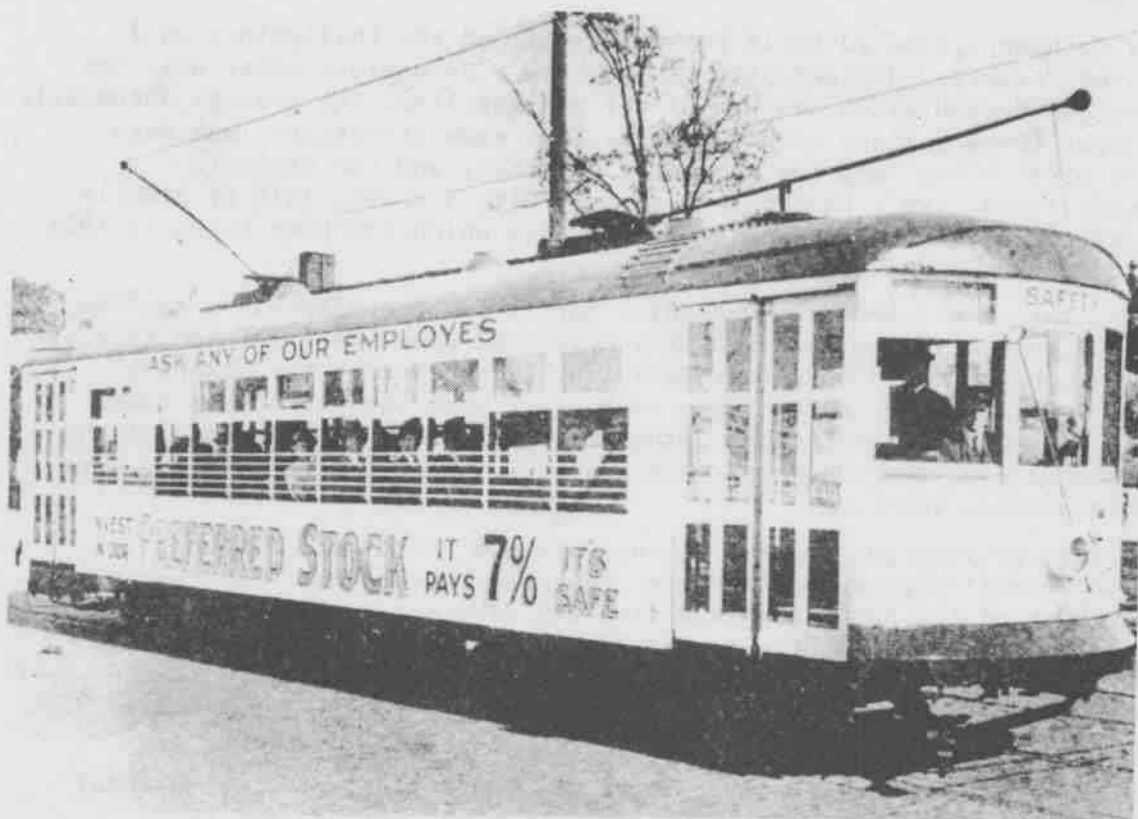
On 17 March 1903 the Little Rock Railway and Electric Company took over. By 1910 there were seven car lines in operation to serve Little Rock, which had a population of 45,000. Ridership increased until a pay-as-you-enter fare system was begun. Each car was painted a rich Pullman car green, with no trim. The electric headlamps were as powerful as those on a locomotive. The age of technology was advancing rapidly. On 26 March 1910 four automobiles containing several residents of Pine Bluff came to Little Rock in only four hours.

At this time the area of Pulaski Heights, on the hills west of Little Rock, was thinly populated over a wide area. H. P. Auten, one of the Pulaski Heights real estate developers, lived at the top of the hill near Oak Street. John Blackwood, a well-known lawyer, owned a farm where Cammack Village is today. The streetcar line had been extended almost to Blackwood's farm. The famous actress, Sarah Bernhardt, performed one night at the Forest Park Theater, and the crowd required 35 streetcars.

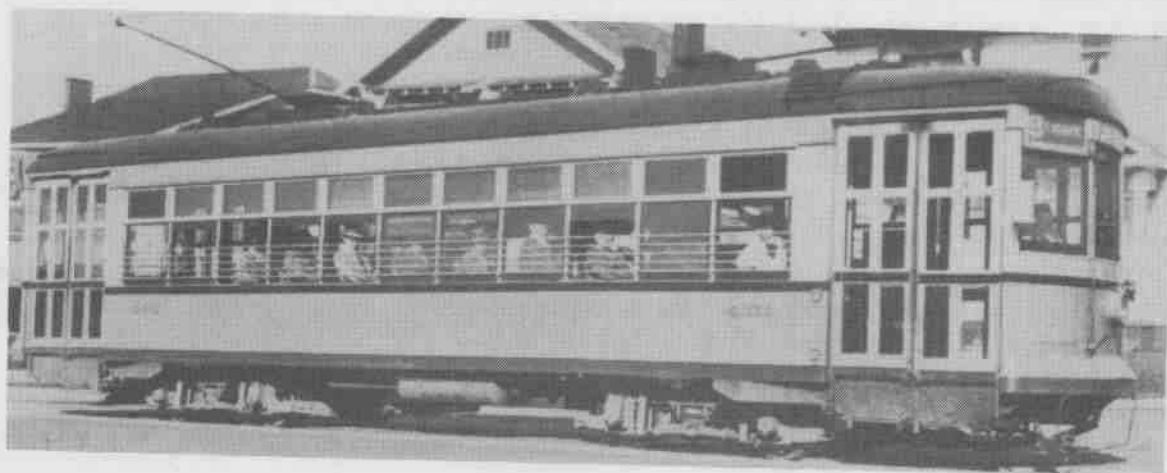
Nothing could halt the advance of progress. In August 1906 the Argenta Railway Company was incorporated to construct and operate an electric line on the north side of the river. Two car lines were built - one on Main Street and the other on Washington Avenue. The rickety old Free Bridge prevented a connection with the system in Little Rock. To correct the situation, on 21 November 1921, commissioners of the Broadway-Main Street Bridge District accepted the bid of the Missouri Valley Bridge & Iron Company for the completion of the two bridges. The new Main Street bridge was opened for use on Christmas Day 1922, and the Argenta cars rolled across to meet the Little Rock cars at Markham and Main.

Energy crises have not been prevalent, but there was one in December 1917. World War I was in full bloom, and bitter cold weather caught Little Rock in a freezing embrace. That was when the Little Rock & Electric Company ran out of coal to fire its boilers. By 8:30 PM Friday, 14 December, old Camp Pike (Camp Robinson) was in darkness. Power was cut off on many light circuits in town. The streetcars had stopped running at 6:00 PM because of low voltage. Workers down town had to walk home. Coal had been rationed by the Federal Government. Government needs had first priority, domestic consumers came second, and public utilities got what was left. The Little Rock Railway & Electric Company was rescued when Missouri Pacific (formerly St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern) officials agreed to send one carload of coal from the shops in North Little Rock (Argenta). It arrived about an hour later, and two cars came from Booneville. More coal was on the way from the Spradra fields. Production had been low during the summer due to labor troubles.

The streetcar lines were taken over on 10 April 1923 by the Arkansas Central Power Company, which was formed by A. W. Dobyms, A. F. House, and G. D. Cherry. Two years later this company purchased eight lightweight, double-end cars from the American Car Company in St. Louis. They also bought 30 Birney cars. Public transit ownership seems to have changed frequently. In October 1926 the streetcar lines and power plant were taken over by Arkansas Power & Light Company.



A rolling advertisement on a car of the Arkansas Central Power Company. (Gene Hull collection)



One of the 400 series double-end cars bought from American Car Company in 1924. Eight of these were obtained. (James Fair collection from 1928 ELECTRIC RAILWAY JOURNAL)



Birney 317 is crossing Broadway eastbound on Markham in the early 1930s. Thirty of these cars were obtained from American Car Company in Oct. 1926. Notice the Model A Ford to left. (James Fair collection)

By 1940 private automobiles had put a good sized dent in the streetcar business. Some tracks were being abandoned, streetcars were being scrapped, and some gasoline buses were appearing. Some expert in San Antonio, Texas, decided cities with fewer than 200,000 people didn't need streetcars. Little Rock had a population of about 80,000, so the cars had to go.

The Japanese war machine clobbered Uncle Sam in Hawaii and the Philippines on 7 December 1941, and the "experts" decided streetcars weren't so useless after all. The U. S. war machine consumed prodigious amounts of oil and gasoline. The average automobile owner was allowed about three gallons of gas a week. This made streetcars look even better. No one could predict how long the war would continue, and the Capitol Transportation Company found itself caught in a squeeze with a stable full of elderly streetcars built between 1898 and 1905. There were 27 cars which had been built in 1924 and 1926.

Traffic aboard the cars was crowded on weekdays, but it was "sardines-in-a-can" on weekends. Thousands of soldiers from Camp Robinson descended upon the town. Add to these the avid baseball fans who squeezed onto Fair Park line cars to watch the Arkansas Travelers do battle. Gasoline interlopers began to appear. When the war began, buses had taken over three of the six major routes. Management was anxious to get rid of the streetcars, and maintenance on the track and cars was at a minimum. Deteriorating cars sat on storage tracks outside the barn.

Old double-truck cars growled and groaned as they climbed to Pulaski Heights, delivering passengers to well-kept suburban homes. Remember the old East Fourteenth-South Highland line? Much of the South Highland line was single-track along an unpaved route, which later became paved Lewis Street. The line ended in a balloon turnaround just before reaching Asher Avenue. The East Ninth Street Line was combined with the one to Fair Park. The last few blocks of the line at Fair Park, near the baseball field, was on private property.

The war was over, and change came marching across the country. Forty-five faithful old streetcars had taken care of wartime traffic. Two old work cars and two snow sweepers remained. Little work car No. 151 frequently came galloping along with a four-wheel, flat-bed trailer with a few large spools of copper wire for a repair job. This flat car with its scarce copper wire usually was kept safe inside the barn.

A wholesale auction of streetcars to the highest bidder was arranged for September 1947. The last old double-truck car came crawling down from Pulaski Heights on 1 September. Fifteen of these cars went to Mexico. They were far from derelict, because they hauled Spanish-speaking passengers another 10 years!

A lot of the old cars became cozy homes along many Arkansas lakes. The company salvaged the good metal parts from quite a few others. On 1 September 1947 the fare was raised from six cents, used since 1923, to seven cents. Gasoline-powered buses were put in service on Pulaski Heights line. Trackless electric trolley buses were used for a while. On Christmas Day 1947 the last streetcar was retired. Next day electric trolley coaches began running on Pulaski Heights and West Ninth Street lines. They ran to Fair Park in 1948.

The status of public transit in Little Rock deteriorated for several years. Historians have ignored it. Different operating companies and various innovations came and went. Then a public-owned system evolved. In September 1971, Metroplan, a council of city-county governments, took steps for an application to the Federal Transportation Department for funds to purchase the ailing Twin City Transit, Inc. The city of Little Rock appropriated 50% of funds necessary to buy the private bus company. North Little Rock came up with 25% and the Pulaski County share was 25%. They asked the Federal Government for a grant of \$2 million, or two-thirds of the total cost.

The new regional area transit system was given the new name - Central Arkansas Transit. Was bigger better? On Friday, 27 April 1972, Metroplan presented a check to Twin City Transit for \$227,501.33 as a partial payment. At 12:01 AM on Sunday, 29 April, all equipment was transferred, and the three governments were in the public transit business.



A modern-day Central Arkansas Transit bus on a city street in Little Rock. These buses still traverse many of the same routes the streetcars did 50 years ago. (September 19, 1986 photo by Ken Ziegenbein)

During the intervening years the business of moving people from here to there and back again hasn't been a lucrative success. Perhaps the only answer (if public transit continues) is to make it a direct function of government, like fire and police protection, and funded by the general tax revenues. Would nostalgia and uniqueness of streetcars on a countywide system of rails attract adequate ridership? How about the above-mentioned system, with strategic destinations and frequent schedules, in addition to prohibiting private automobiles in the "downtown" area? With a metropolitan area almost countywide and still growing, public transportation has become a necessity. A city this size could not function without it. In the near future, solutions to the problem are going to be mandatory.



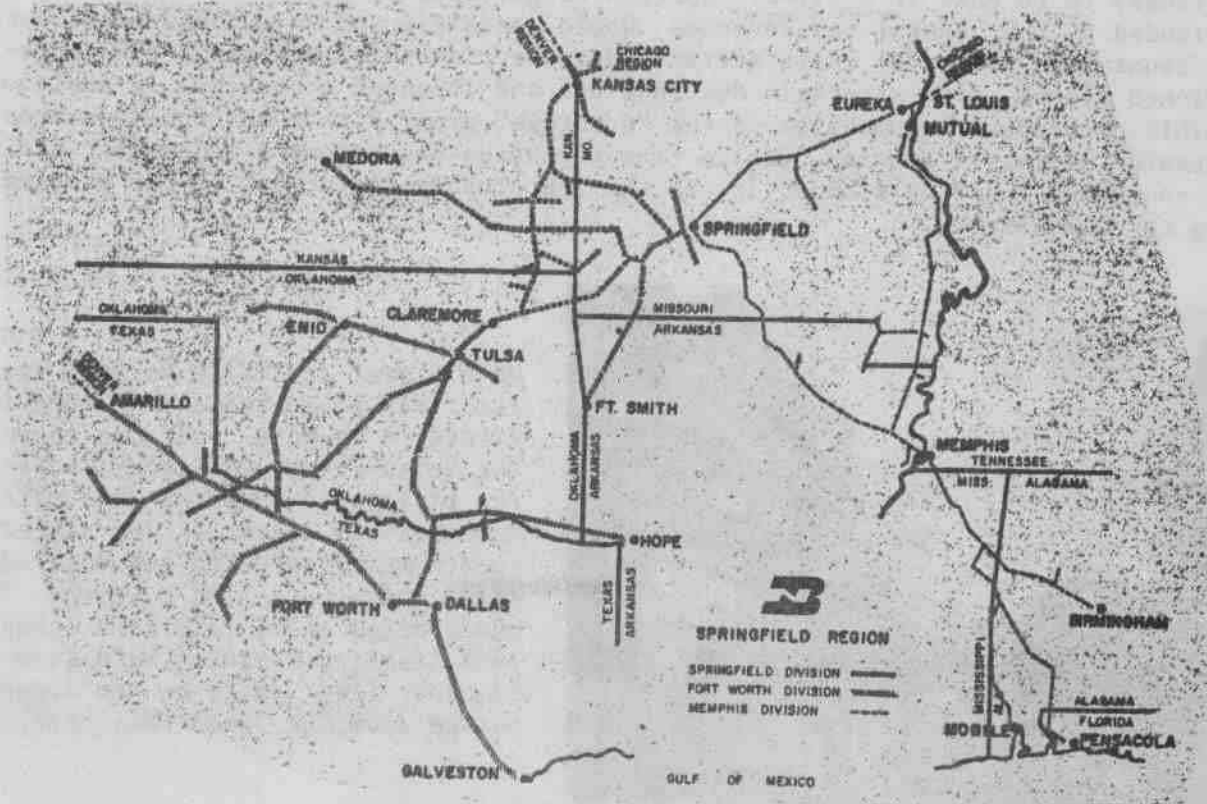
Main Street in Little Rock as seen in this 1985 photo shows that even the street itself is no more -- it was converted to the Metro-Centre Mall years before. In the process of building this mall, numerous old tracks of the streetcar system were uncovered and most still exist today under the pavement. The photo below shows this same scene in 1928 (looking north on Main from 7th Street). (Left photo by Ken Ziegenbein, bottom from the James Fair collection).



- END -



ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS



BURLINGTON NORTHERN CHANGES - BN's operating regions were realigned last June 1 in an organizational move, giving the Springfield Region additional territory (see map). The Billings Region and two operating divisions were dissolved and the Springfield Car Repair work will be transferred to the Havelock Car Shop in Nebraska. The Springfield Car Shop (formerly Frisco's) work transfer stems from the steadily declining workload for the system car shops. In recent years BN's car fleet has been reduced about 35 percent as the railroad replaced older, smaller cars with larger ones. As a result, the Springfield shop has been working at 1/4th capacity. The revised Springfield Region now includes 4,406 employees in nine states and has 4,750 miles of track. That segment of track in Arkansas has just been sold.

NEW TRAIN, NEW BUSINESS - Effective June 2, 1986 the Cotton Belt began Sprint Train Service between St. Louis and Dallas. The schedule and price are very competitive with other modes of transportation, according to R. R. McClanahan, Superintendent of the Pine Bluff Division. Other good news in the way of new business for the SSW is that Mid-American Packaging, Inc., a new firm, has begun operation in Pine Bluff producing paper products in the old Weyerhaeuser Company location and will be served jointly by the Union Pacific and the Cotton Belt. Current plans will expand production from their present rate of 100,000 tons per year to 300,000 tons within ten years. The Cotton Belt expects it to become one of their major customers in Pine Bluff.

Also, International Paper in Pine Bluff is planning a new product late this fall that will significantly increase their production. Their No. 1 machine is being up-graded and converted to produce publication paper of magazine quality along with catalog and a circular printing business at an estimated cost of \$300 million dollars. It is estimated that when full production is achieved, this machine will be rated at 200,000 tons annually, almost doubling the mill's total production. (Cotton Belt News)

COTTON BELT DENIES TRAIN WAS SPEEDING at accident site. Jim Johnson, manager of Public Relations for the Cotton Belt, denied that the train that derailed near Pine Bluff June 9, 1985 was speeding when the accident happened. He said a device that records engine conditions showed the 94-car train had been speeding while passing through Fordyce - not through Pine Bluff. He said the train was going 47 or 48 MPH. But Johnson said the Cotton Belt's own investigation had backed up the NTSB's finding that the tracks had not been serviced properly. Johnson said the accident would have occurred even if the train had been going as slow as 20 MPH. The weight and not the speed of the train was the most crucial factor. Johnson also said the Cotton Belt was being criticized unfairly about the information not given to the news media rapidly enough after the accident. He arrived from Kansas City at about 11 PM the day of the accident (the accident occurred at 2 PM). Getting from Kansas City to Pine Bluff on a Sunday afternoon is pretty difficult, he said. Johnson conceded that before he arrived information was slow in getting out to the public. (PINE BLUFF COMMERCIAL)



Union Pacific GP-38-2 #3939 was first out, but Cotton Belt 4-8-4 Northern #819 (trailing baggage car #1942, coach #183, "Jefferson County" and dome observation-lounge #1601, "Susacapejo", all in traditional SSW gray-and-black colors) was the hit of the show August 16, 1986, as Pine Bluff chose the site of its now-vacant Union Station to celebrate 150 years of Arkansas statehood. "Sesquicentennial Saturday" also heralded 103 years to the week of Pine Bluff's first (and permanent) transportation link to the rest of the nation, as Cotton Belt's line from St. Louis to Pine Bluff was completed with the driving of a silver spike in ceremonies at the Rob Roy Bridge across the Arkansas River on August 12, 1883. (Jim Johnson photo, Cotton Belt Railway)

OVERPASS STARTS - (Pine Bluff) - Clearing the right-of-way for the new railroad overpass in Pine Bluff has begun. The highway department in September accepted bids for the removal of several houses and businesses falling in the path. Clearing the land will take about three months and will be followed by construction bids. The overpass should be open to the public about a year after construction starts. The overpass will start just south of the Martha Mitchell Expressway, gradually rising up and over the MOPAC and SSW tracks on fourth street, then dip down toward West Sixth at the southern end. (PINE BLUFF COMMERCIAL)

MAN DIES IN TRAIN ACCIDENT - (Newport) - A South Carolina man died following an accident in which he and another man attempted to cross a railroad trestle that passes over the Black River near Newport. He was struck by a westbound train at 7:45 AM on September 4 while trying to outrun the train. His companion jumped to safety, holding on to the cement buttresses as the train passed overhead. Both men had illegally jumped a coal train in Missouri and had ridden it to Newark and were walking the tracks toward Newport when the accident occurred. (NEWPORT DAILY INDEPENDENT)

BONES - (Pine Bluff) - A complete human skeleton plus a skull and arm and leg bones were found in a thicket northeast of the Cotton Belt Railroad gravity yard in Pine Bluff on September 4 at a site that was once a cemetery. The skeleton was found in a six-foot deep pit that had been dug recently by a backhoe. Coffin handles and nails and a headstone dated 1915 were also found on this Cotton Belt property. The Cotton Belt contracted with a Little Rock funeral home some years ago to relocate remains from the Prairie Lake Baptist Church cemetery, but some bones were apparently overlooked.

EX-FRISCO BRIDGE PARTIALLY BURNED - (Pocahontas) - In what appears to be a probable case of arson, the old Frisco Railroad bridge in Pocahontas was heavily damaged by fire on August 20, 1986. The east end of the bridge was severely damaged and eight ties were burned through. The now-abandoned bridge is being preserved as an historic landmark. (POCAHONTAS STAR HERALD)

COTTON BELT WORKER RECEIVED AWARD - (Pine Bluff) - The Cotton Belt Rwy honored one of its employees, Mark Fell, on August 26 for his rescuing a man whose truck overturned in a water-filled ditch in Regional Park. The railroad's outstanding service award was presented to Fell by R. R. McClanahan, Superintendent of the Cotton Belt's Pine Bluff Division.

"END OF THE LINE" MOVIE REACHES NATIONWIDE AUDIENCE - On an interview on ABC-TV's "Good Morning America" program in late August, actress Mary Steenburgen, producing a movie about a fading Arkansas railroad town, said that her father worked for the railroad for 38 years in the North Little Rock area and it was like going home again for her to be making this new movie here. The interview was broadcast from the Benton set of the movie "End of the Line". The movie is slated for release next spring.

JURY AWARDS WRECK VICTIM \$1.5 MILLION - (Hope) - A jury voted in late August to award Randy Biddle and his wife a total of \$1.5 million in damages resulting from a collision on April 6, 1981 with a MOPAC freight near Hope, Arkansas. The jury's award was based on the negligence against the railroad versus Biddle's negligence, as conceived by the jury of 10 men and 2 women. Biddle testified that he did not hear a train whistle blowing before his truck collided with the train. The trainmen testified that the whistle was blowing before the accident (on Highway 32 outside of Hope). Biddle's attorney argued that "there's absolutely nothing at the railroad crossing but a railroad sign and a crossbuck". Biddle also testified that bushes and trees at the crossing obstructed his vision. Biddle became paralyzed for the rest of his life with no hope of recovery. The jury took 3 hours to reach its decision. They determined Missouri Pacific was 60 percent negligent and Biddle was 40 percent negligent. (HOPE STAR and TEXARKANA GAZETTE)

ADVANTAGES OF WELDED RAIL - According to D. T. Wickersham, Division Engineer of Pine Bluff's Cotton Belt Division, welded rail eliminates many problems including rough track due to low joints, fractures at joints, pull-aparts in cold weather, maintenance of joints and bolts, and welding of rail ends. It is less expensive to weld rails together than to drill and bolt them. Particularly with the impact of 100-ton cars, track quality and safety are enhanced with welded rail. Still, there are the problems of sunkinks. What are they?

Track which has buckled has a kink a few feet long and 12 to 30 inches out of line. Compressive forces can build up in rails by several means: the sun can heat rail to 35 degrees higher than the air, passing trains can push rail towards a fixed location, rail will creep downhill and get tight at the bottom of grades, and dynamic or independent braking can push rail ahead of trains. A rail free to move will expand about one inch for each ten degrees for each 1/4 mile ribbon. If the rail is tied down, as in our track, the same ten degree heating will develop a force of about 25,000 pounds in each rail. From a winter night to a summer day, our rail might change from 20 to 140 degrees. Our rail is adjusted to be neutral between 80 and 100 degrees...say 90. This means that the track has to be strong enough to control 50 degree increases and a 70 degree decrease.

To help prevent sunkinks, there are four tactics: control temperature by heating when rail is installed, protect CWR with slow orders when the ballast is loosened, remove a few inches of rail when necessary, and perform quality maintenance work on the track. Also, locomotive engineers are asked to handle trains so as to minimize slack action and to frequently inspect track in hot weather. (COTTON BELT NEWS)

GENERAL RAIL NEWS

AMTRAK MUSINGS - The "SUNSET LIMITED", Train #1 on July 26 broke apart at Spofford, Texas while traveling at 70 MPH. Train #1 with engines 708 and 723 and 11 cars had the last car, No. 32005, separate from the train causing an automatic emergency stop. When the train had stopped, there were 15 car lengths between the last car and the rest of the train. No injuries occurred. Inspectors could find no reason for the accident. (RAIL TRAVEL NEWS). In other Amtrak news, seems there are many head-end

cars on recent runs of the "SOUTHWEST CHIEF". On August 4, for example, Train #3 arrived in Los Angeles with 7 baggage/mail cars plus its regular consist. Also, The "BROADWAY LIMITED" between Chicago and Pittsburg continue to be 20 cars long, as of late summer. (THE MIXED TRAIN)

SP-SSW LOCOMOTIVE STATISTICS - As of January, 1986, both companies had a total of 1,932 road units and 461 yard units. The average age of all units was 10 years and 9 months.

MORE ON SP-SF MERGER - The National Industrial Transportation League, one of the nation's largest shipper organizations, has asked the ICC to reconsider the proposed SP-SF merger. This is the first time in memory that the HITL has taken such action in a proposed rail merger. Meanwhile, the ICC decision to deny the merger is being appealed. All is not over yet. (Part from SP UPDATE)

CARLOADINGS - Southern Pacific's total carloadings for July were 121,375, down 6.5 percent from a year earlier. It was SP's 21st month in a row of declining carloadings. Coal was the big loser with the loss of two major contracts, both power plants. Coal loadings dropped 49 percent. (SP UPDATE)

WHISTLE AT CROSSINGS? - California Attorney General John Van DeKamp says cities can't prevent trains from sounding whistles at city street crossings. He said California law does not allow cities to adopt ordinances preventing whistles. (Complain, complain - if you don't blow at crossings, you'll get sued for hitting some car without warning. If you do blow, you're too loud! What to do!

1985 COMPARISON OF CLASS I RAILROADS

<u>RAILROAD</u>	<u>REVENUE</u>	<u>INCOME/LOSS</u>	<u>NO. EMPLOYEES</u>	<u>1984 MILEAGE</u>
BN	\$4,048,544,000	\$453,970,000	37,885	27,583
CNW	823,661,000	-26,097,000	10,222	7,416
NS	3,425,194,000	488,993,000	35,975	13,584
SP/SF	4,198,240,000	242,768,000	50,109	22,639
MP/UP	3,709,696,000	245,418,000	36,115	21,350

(Above from the May/June BN NEWS)

BN PLANS TO TAKE HARD LINE IN LABOR TALKS - The Burlington Northern Railroad is readying a tough approach for labor negotiations for 1988. A top union leader has already strongly accused the BN of trying to incite a strike. And the unions say they're ready to fight. It appears the rail line will break away from the management council that traditionally bargains for all railroads collectively and will instead negotiate its own separate contracts with unions. Those contracts will allow it to use smaller train crews on longer runs and employ shop and maintenance workers in more than one task. If a bargaining impasse leads to a strike, the railroad will run trains on its 28,000 mile system with non-union crews. "We have discovered in the past that we tend to be more aggressive in labor matters than some of the other railroads", said BN President Darius Gaskins recently. Meanwhile, union leaders are amazed at Gaskin's remarks and add that they think BN management is trying to abolish collective bargaining. BN reported a \$785.4 million loss in the quarter ending June 30, the largest loss ever by a publicly traded company in one quarter. (FT. WORTH STAR TELEGRAM)

OPINION - To quote Arkansas Railroad Club member Jerry Nunn of Arlington, Texas: "These articles (on negotiations) are, I fear, only the first of what will be a long line of rail labor trouble stories. I really don't know who to side with on these controversies. While I feel railroad management often deals with their employees in an arrogant and punitive manner, I don't feel the employees are all that productive. I see no reason, for instance, a Santa Fe crew cannot take a train from Chicago to Kansas City without stopping, instead of changing crews in Chillicothe, Ft. Madison and Marcelline." Do other club members (or non-members) have a comment on this issue? I'll print it and keep it confidential as to who sent the remark if you so desire. Indeed, the railroad times are changing.

ANOTHER CRISES - Bill Bailey sent me an article from the LOUISVILLE TIMES regarding steam engine #152 and the continuing insurance crises. Engine 152, the 81-year old steamer that once pulled Teddy Roosevelt's campaign train and took Al Capone to prison has been used recently to haul excursions from the Kentucky Railway Museum. However, now it is a potential victim of the liability-insurance crises. In July the museum learned that the amount of insurance it must carry to cover the locomotive's excursions would jump from \$2 million to \$25 million next year. This insurance crisis also could cover the SSW 819 - will it run again?

TEX-MEX EXPRESS A SUCCESS! - The train run by the Tex-Mex Railroad between Corpus Christi and Laredo, Texas since last January averaged carrying 188 passengers on each of the first 66 round trips between the two cities through June and is termed a success. It's even making money! American Airlines is even offering a package deal whereby people can fly to Corpus Christi then take the train to Laredo. The train leaves Corpus Christi at 9:30 AM each Friday, Saturday and Sunday and departs Laredo at 4 PM those days. (HOUSTON CHRONICLE)

NEW RAILROAD IN NEARBY KENTUCKY - Besides the newly formed Arkansas and Missouri Railway in northwest Arkansas, the Paducah and Louisville Railway come into being on August 27, 1986, taking over most of the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad in the state of Kentucky. Total mileage of the "new" line includes 262 miles from Paducah to Louisville, 15 miles between Paducah and Kevil and 27 miles between Paducah and Clayburn. Sixty-three locomotives, mostly ex-GM&O GP-35's, 125 boxcars, 30 cabooses, 420 hopper cars, 50 general service freight cars, 250 covered hoppers and 125 gondolas also were purchased by the new company. There are new contracts with unions to allow three-man crews. The P&L will handle 35 trains a day. Its colors are black and green. (WHITE FLAG EXTRA - Owensville, Kentucky)

MOVIE WITH SP'S 4449 TO OPEN - Walt Disney Productions' "Tough Guys" is a movie starring Kirk Douglas and Burt Lancaster as two old-time train robbers who drop back into society after 30 years in prison. Angry with the way old folks and old trains are being treated nowadays, they stage one last heist. "Tough Guys" opens nationwide October 3, including Little Rock. (SP UPDATE)

92 DAYS WITHOUT FAILURE? - Special maintenance of older locomotives on the Burlington Northern is enabling the average number of days between engine failures to increase. The improved maintenance, making a locomotive a "STAR" performer, has increased the number of days between failure from 41 (overall fleet average) to 52 for the "Star" engines. Regional chief of the BN's Mechanical Department, Dale H. Propp, says the ultimate goal for locomotives is to operate for 92 days between FRA inspections without failure. (BN REGIONAL NEWS)

BN TESTING NEW LOCOMOTIVE - The Springfield Diesel Shop is being considered for BN's testing of a new Caterpillar 3,600 HP engine in October. BN recently purchased one engine for more than \$400,000 to be placed in a locomotive for testing of fuel efficiency and overall performance. An additional estimated \$200,000 will be spent to retrofit and upgrade the actual locomotive this engine will be put in. The engine is purported to be more fuel efficient, capable of using low-grade fuels, more tolerant of thermal expansion and contraction and have a lower risk of sealant leakage. Caterpillar officials say it is being designed for antifrees, resulting in an engine which can be easily shut off and restarted down to 8 degrees above zero. (BN REGIONAL NEWS)

CARS/TRAINS/MISMATCH - An article in the February NATIONAL ENQUIRER reprinted in the CONNECTING ROD Railroad publication of Kentucky had some interesting facts on highway/rail crossing mishaps. It said that 650 motorists are killed by trains every year and a major reason is an optical illusion that makes a locomotive appear to be going more slowly than it really is. "The larger the object, the more slowly it appears to be moving", said a Penn State psychologist. This illusion can be seen at airports, too. Larger airplanes appear to be traveling more slowly. As a result of this illusion, motorists often think the train is going slow enough for them to get across the tracks. Even though there are only 27,000 locomotives, over 7,000 cars are hit by trains each year. He goes on to say "More vigilant law enforcement may increase driver awareness of the dangers at crossings - and change driver behavior". Railroad's "Operation Lifesaver" tries to educate the public to prevent them from having an encounter of the railroad kind. (I wonder if studies have been done on colors of locomotives vs. accidents? Or on certain kinds of lights?)

FORM 19

FORM 3149

BERRYMAN HENWOOD, TRUSTEE

St. Louis Southwestern Railway Lines—Debtor

FORM 19

TRAIN ORDER NO. 10

Nov 30

1947

T.C. & E.

No 3 And Op

X

Opt.:

M

At

Combs

Order No 8 is cancelled

No 3 by 8:19 west at

Winer until 4:30 am

Walden 4:35 am Fisher 4:41 am

Hickory Ridge 4:47 am

Dillon 4:54 am Fair Lakes 4:59 am

Brown 5:05 am Hunter 5:14 am

For Fair Lakes Sec 24

By 8:11 and 8:12

9 to

Conductor, Engineer, Fireman and Flagman must each have a copy of this order

Com 3034 M. J. ...

The above is a train order showing Cotton Belt's 819 on the head end of the BLUE STREAK in 1947. It was sent your editor by P.B. Wooldridge of Lewisville, Arkansas.

The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization that meets the second Sunday of each month. To join, fill out the coupon on the next page. EDITOR of the ARKANSAS RAILROADER is Ken Ziegenbein, 905 Valerie Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72118. Write me if you have anything you'd like to see in this newsletter or if you have anything you want to contribute so far as stories or pictures are concerned. My phone number is Area Code 501-758-1340.

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

RENEWAL

NEW SUBSCRIPTION

YOUR NAME _____

YOUR ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER () _____

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!!!

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