



# ARKANSAS RAILROADER



Little Rock Chapter  
NRHS

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1 JANUARY 2001



Brand new PA #8001 hustles train #7, *The Southerner* up the hill in Little Rock in the summer of 1951. The Alco's, both PA's and FA's, were "smokers". Working with an inspector at the service track in North Little Rock, we never opened a crankcase inspection cover of an Alco that we did not find "metal shavings" on the collection screen. The General Electric traction motors, generators and etc. on the Alco's worked good but the Alco power plant just couldn't cut it. Mr. Dennison, the inspector, hated the Alco's and soon made a believer out of me too. (*John A. Mills photos*)

## 2001 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - John Hodkin, Jr., 506 Gordon St, N Little Rock AR 72117-4713 (501-945-2128)  
VICE-PRESIDENT - Jim Wakefield, 316 Auburn Dr, Little Rock AR 72205-2769 (501-664-0232)  
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BOARD '01 - Tom Shook, 1716 Alberta Dr. Little Rock AR 72227-3902 (501-225-8955)  
BOARD '02 - Bill Bailey, 8318 Reymere Dr, Little Rock AR 72227-3944 (501-224-6828)  
BOARD '03 - Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412  
BOARD '04 - Ron Esserman, 326 Esserman Ln, Dover AR 72837-7754 (501-331-2030)  
BOARD '05 - Leonard Thalmueller, 21 Hanover Dr, Little Rock AR 72209-2159 (501-562-8231)

## NEXT MEETING/PROGRAM

The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization of railroad and train enthusiasts (prototype trains, not model trains) that was formed in 1969. We are also the Little Rock Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. We meet on the second Sundays of most months at 2 p.m.

Dues to join the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB are currently \$20 a year, which includes the monthly *Arkansas Railroader* newsletter. If you'd like to join the NRHS through our club (thus being a member of the Little Rock Chapter NRHS and national NRHS), you must pay \$17 a year more, bringing the total to \$37 a year for both. Dues are always payable on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, but you may pay at any time (membership will extend through the following year).

To join or renew, send your name, address and phone number plus dues to the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB, PO BOX 9151, NORTH LITTLE ROCK AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for information. The newsletter editor's email address is: [ken@trainweather.com](mailto:ken@trainweather.com) The Arkansas Railroader is put on the Web monthly, and that address is: <http://www.trainweather.com>

The next meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be SUNDAY, JANUARY 14 at the usual place, Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church, 4401 Woodlawn drive in Little Rock. The program will begin at 2 p.m.

**NO COLOR THIS MONTH** - Like I said when I started using color in the newsletters with the November issue, I wouldn't use color every time...only a few issues a year. This largely depends on available color subjects, stories, cost, and my time needed to run off all the needed copies (about 5-6 hours).

**MINUTES OF MEETINGS** will resume soon.

**2001 DUES ARE DUE** - Use the enclosed forms to submit your 2001 dues. If you've already paid, please ignore the form. Look at your address label...it will say "THRU2001" if you've paid.

**2001 ARKANSAS RAILROAD CALENDAR - THIS WILL BE OUR LAST CALENDAR...**the 2000/2001 calendar from the Arkansas Railroad Club contains **18** black & white railroad photos taken in Arkansas over the years. This is a **16-MONTH CALENDAR** starting in September 2000, ending December 2001. THE PRICE HAS BEEN REDUCED to \$5 each (plus \$1.50 postage/handling per order).

Railroads/trains included this time will be: Missouri Pacific, Amtrak, Union Pacific, Louisiana & Northwest, Rock Island, Arkansas Midland, Kansas City Southern, Southern Pacific, Cotton Belt 819 then and now, Missouri & Arkansas,

Delta Eagle, Transitan industrial locomotive, DeQueen and Eastern, BNSF, plus some repeats of roadnames, but in a different time period. Contributors include: Bill Bailey, Mike Adams, Gene Hull, John C. Jones, Randy Tardy, John Mills, Robin Thomas, A. B. Simpkins, Thomas M. Binger, William Moneypeny, Gene Bailey, R. S. Plummer, Peter Smykla, Jr., Jonathan Royce, William J. Husa via Russell Tedder, and Tom Shircliff.

Send any calendar orders to the Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119.

**2001 NRHS CONVENTION** will be held at St. Louis, June 19 through 23, 2000. Three mainline excursions are planned, some possibly with steam. They are on June 19, 21 and 23. Through January 1, registration fees will be \$20, going up to \$25 after that. Registration forms are available from: NRHS Convention 2001, St Louis Chapter NRHS, 2129 Barrett Station Rd, St Louis MO 63131-1638. The convention's web site is: <http://www.stlouisnrhs.org/conv2001.html>.

The 2002 convention will be held in Williams, Arizona, October 4-6, 2002.

**ROBERT MCCLANAHAN's** wife died in November. We wish him well. His address is: 2106 Wellington Drive, Pine Bluff AR 71603-7628.

### *WANTED : FOR SALE OR TRADE*

The following is for those who want to find certain railroad-related items, information, or want to sell or trade such items with other railfans. We reserve the right to refuse listings if deemed inappropriate. The Arkansas Railroad Club is not responsible for misleading ads.

**WANTED** - Video or film of the Cotton Belt Railroad taken in the 1950s and 1960s. Any amateur file suitable, sound not necessary. Contact Charlie Harris in New Zealand at [railroads@clear.net.nz](mailto:railroads@clear.net.nz)

Mr. Harris found our club on the trainweather.com web page. If anyone has any of these films and doesn't have email access, just drop the club the information at PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. I'll forward it to him.

**FOR SALE** - DeQueen & Eastern 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary T-shirts, \$12 each plus \$3 postage. Send orders to and make checks payable to the Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119.

**WANTED** - Information on the Fort Smith & Western Railroad. My great grandfather was a brakeman for them. He died in a train accident in 1918, and I am looking for any information you might have. Contact Cyndee Bradley at [kncbrad@gte.net](mailto:kncbrad@gte.net) or send any information to the Arkansas Railroad

Club's address and it will be forwarded to Cyndee.

**WANTED** - Information on the history of the Arkansas Valley Railroad. I know it existed and was an extension of the Fort Smith Little Rock Railroad and reached Wagoner Switch, Indian Territory in 1886. I am particularly interested in the history and personnel involved with the laying of the tracks to Wagoner Switch, I.T. I found your site on the Internet and thought you could help. Contact Mike Thompson, 4022 Brown Road, Coffeyville KS 67337-7733, or email me at [doyleann@hit.net](mailto:doyleann@hit.net).

**WANTED** - History of the old Missouri Pacific Depot in Hot Springs and the old Rock Island depot there. I was visiting Hot Springs this spring and saw the restored MoPac depot, but there was no information on its history and I am amazed that there are no publications or photos of the old depots located there. I've been an engineer for 34 years for the Erie, EL., Auto-Train, Amtrak and am a charter member of the Florida East Coast Chapter, NRHS. Send information to Walter E. Smith, email [Wsmith@aol.com](mailto:Wsmith@aol.com) (or just send the information to the Arkansas Railroad Club and I will forward.)

**WANTED** - I am hoping anyone can steer me toward the manufacturers of the trains is

use during the late 1800s and 1900s. Specifically those in the Hot Springs area. I am researching for use in the Hot Springs Transportation Depot. Brenda Greenway, 804 Central Ave, Hot Springs AR 71901, 800-647-6336, [brenda@legacyfineart.com](mailto:brenda@legacyfineart.com), <http://www.legacyart.com>.

**WANTED** - My name is Michael Wisenfelder and I am a Research Assistant for the Brookings Institution in Washington DC. I am currently doing research on the BONUS MARCH of 1932 which was a World War I Veterans march on Washington during the summer of 1932. They hoped to petition Congress to give them bonus that was originally due in 1945 but they needed it to be payable immediately because of the Depression. These veterans used the railroads frequently in their trek across the U.S. and caused many disruptions. In some cases, they commandeered trains and had run-ins with Railroad Police. I am interested in primary sources of information on these events, such as diaries, letters, oral histories, etc. Any help appreciated. Contact Michael J Wisenfelder, The Brookings Institute, 1775 Massachusetts Ave, N.W., Washington DC 20036-2188, [mwisenfelder@brook.edu](mailto:mwisenfelder@brook.edu), 202-797-6082.

## RAILROAD ABANDONMENT PROPOSALS

The address of the Surface Transportation Board is: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, Washington DC 20423. The STB phone number for abandonment procedures (Office of Public Services) is: 202-565-1592. If you contact them, it would be handy to use the Docket Numbers. Their Web address is: <http://www.stb.dot.gov> if you'd like the complete listings.

These abandonment proposals have been printed in the Federal Register or have come directly from the Surface Transportation Board. They will go in effect unless one of the following occurs: 1) an offer of financial assistance is received; 2) a request for public use of the land is received (for instance, rails-to-trails); 3) petitions to reopen the case is filed. Railroads, before they can file these "notices of exemption under CFR 1152 Subpart F," must certify that 1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; 2) any overhead traffic can be routed over other lines; 3) no formal complaint filed by a user is pending and; 4) environmental reports, historic reports, transmittal letter, newspaper publication, and notice to governmental agencies have been met. Even though approval is granted for the railroads to abandon, it may be months or years before track is actually taken up.

**WEST VIRGINIA - CSX** - To abandon the Allegheny Division, Ohio River Subdivision, from m.p. BN-0.63 to m.p. BN-2.51 in Wheeling, West Virginia, a distance of 1.88 miles. Final decision by February 16, 2001. (STB Docket No. AB-55, Sub No. 583X, decided November 14, served November 21, 2000)

**FLORIDA - FLORIDA MIDLAND RAILROAD CO.** - To abandon the Leesburg Branch, from m.p. ST-762.10 in Wildwood to m.p. ST-773.71 in Leesburg, Florida, a distance of 13.23 miles. Included are the stations of Wildwood, Bamboo and Leesburg. Final decision by February 23, 2001. (STB Docket No. AB-325, Sub No. 2X, decided November 15, served November 24, 2000)

**TEXAS - UNION PACIFIC/ALAMO GULF COAST RAILROAD CO.** - To abandon a 3.49 mile line on the Kerrville Subdivision (the Line) near Leon Springs from m.p. 256.00 near Russell Park to m.p. 259.49 near Camp Stanley, Texas. Effective December 26, 2000. (STB Docket No. AB-33, Sub No. 162X, and STB Docket No. AB-576, Sub No. 1X, decided November 15, served November 24, 2000)

**WISCONSIN - FOX VALLEY & WESTERN LTD.** - To abandon the Green Bay-New London line, from m.p. 4.78 west of Green Bay to m.p. 38.98 in New London, Wisconsin, a distance of 34.2 miles. Included are stations of Oneida, Seymour, Black Creek and Shiocton. Final decision by March 2, 2001. (STB Docket No. AB-402, Sub No. 8X, decided November 22, served December 1, 2000)

**KANSAS - SOUTH KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA RAILROAD CO.** - To abandon an 8-mile line between m.p. 109.0 at Iola and m.p. 117.0 at Humboldt, Kansas and a 5-mile line between m.p. 382.0 at Sherwin and m.p. 387.0 at Faulkner, Kansas. Effective January 3, 2001. (STB Docket No. AB-471, Sub No. 3X, decided November 27, served December 4, 2000)

## ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

## GENERAL RAIL NEWS

### **DANGEROUS MOVES**

*(Vincennes, Indiana)* - An 18-year old college student was killed when he tried to roll under a moving train to get to the other side of the tracks. The male student was

warned not to try, but he did anyway. Police said he had just taken cocaine and had alcohol in his blood. The moral is to never go under a train, even if it's stopped or moving slowly (the train was moving 10

mph).

### **PHILIP ANSCHUTZ SELLING SOME SHARES**

Philip Anschutz, former head of Southern

Pacific and now a vice chairman of Union Pacific, will sell about 2 million shares of UP stock out of his 13 million shares for estate planning purposes. (*Union Pacific news release*)

#### OLD ROCK ISLAND TRACK ON TRACK

(*Lee's Summit, Missouri*) - In a story I ran a few years ago, the old unused Rock Island track between Kansas City and St. Louis was obtained by the Missouri Central Railroad. It is now starting to restore the tracks for use. Residents of several cities including Lees's Summit had tried to stop reactivation of the track since many houses had built up to the tracks. However, a U.S. Court of Appeals has ruled in November that a new environmental study was not needed and the Missouri Central can start the work. (*Kansas City Star*)

#### TRAIN SIMULATOR

Microsoft will launch a computer game called "Train Simulator," similar to its popular Flight Simulator. It is designed to capitalize on the resurgence of interest in model trains. Microsoft's market research has annual model train sales worldwide as \$1 billion, up 12% in the U.S. alone the past year. A recent demonstration of the new game at a train show in San Jose, California was very successful. Price for the new PC game will be \$60 to \$80. (*November 27 Wall Street Journal*)

#### CAMAS PRAIRIE GONE

The 67-mile scenic Camas Prairie rail line between Spalding and Grangerville, Idaho has been approved for abandonment. The scenic line climbs 3,000 feet and has more than 40 trestles. It was too expensive to

maintain, according to owner Camas Prairie RailNet. The last train ran Wednesday, November 29, tying up in Spalding at 3 p.m. Hundreds of railfans and others have photographed the line over the past summer and fall. (*Spokane Spokesman Review, November 30, 2000*)

#### 10 MOST ENDANGERED TRAIN STATIONS

According to the Great American Station Foundation's November 27 press release, the 10 most endangered train stations in the country are: Sacramento, California; Omaha, Nebraska; Osceola, Iowa; Bangor, Michigan; One, Illinois; Gary, Indiana; Bristol, Virginia; Sunol, California; Sparta, New Jersey; and Rural Retreat, Virginia.

## AMTRAK NEWS

#### DENVER-SPOKANE SERVICE?

Washington State apples may eventually help start passenger train service again between Denver and Spokane. Since Amtrak now hauls a lot of perishable items with its trains, it is thought that an apple contract would be enough to make the route of the old Pioneer workable again. (*Denver Post, November 18, 2000*)

## EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

**WORLDWIDE** - Trains Unlimited Tours is again offering rail journeys worldwide in 2001. For a brochure and more information call 800-359-4870 or write Trains Unlimited Tours, PO Box 1997, Portola CA 96122. Their email address is: [tut@psln.com](mailto:tut@psln.com). Website: <http://www.trainsunltdtours.com>



## MISSOURI PACIFIC LINES - A CORPORATE HISTORY - Part 18 (Gene Hull)

## Constructed Lines

From	To	Date Completed	Miles
Bald Knob	Augusta	12-29-86	12.39
Augusta	Wynne	9-10-87	32.29
Wynne	Memphis Bridge Connection	11-16-87	43.47
West Conn., Memphis Bridge	Frisco Connection	11-16-87	.79
Total .....			88.94

~~Color on accompanying map - Carmine, No. 159.~~

Note:- The "West Memphis Spur" (0.79 mile) was taken up in 1915. See "Other Mileage Changes," ~~page 106.~~

7. Kirkwood Branch Connection:

From connection with main line 0.63 mile south of center of depot at Robert Avenue, St. Louis, to junction with Missouri Pacific Ry. Kirkwood Branch at Broadway, completed October 1, 1888. Mileage ..... 0.39

Note:- 0.11 mile of this connection was sold to The Missouri Pacific Railway Company in 1904. See "Other Mileage Changes," ~~page 106.~~ Present length is 0.28 mile.

~~Color on accompanying map - Orange, No. 150.~~

8. Fort Smith Branch (Now Greenwood Branch):

From connection with K. & A.V. Ry. Fort Smith Branch, on old Arkansas-Indian Territory line at Fort Smith, Arkansas, to end of track at Greenwood, Arkansas, completed February 7, 1889. Mileage ..... 17.63

~~Color on accompanying map - Orange, No. 157.~~

9. Fourth Street Depot Spur:

From connection with main line 0.42 mile south of south line of Plum Street in St. Louis to end of track at Fourth Street depot, completed April 8, 1896. Mileage ..... 0.30

~~Color on accompanying map - Violet, No. 158.~~

10. Ivory Incline Track:

From H.B. on main line at Des Peres Bridge Junction to top of incline at Ivory Ferry, completed January 1, 1904. Mileage ..... 0.54

~~Color on accompanying map - Orange, No. 151.~~

11. Gilbert Branch:

From H.B. on main line 519 feet north of center of depot at Eudora, Arkansas, to end of track at Calvit, Louisiana, completed June 1, 1907. Mileage ..... 37.49

~~Colors on accompanying map - In Arkansas, Brown, No. 162; In Louisiana, Carmine, No. 206.~~

Constructed Lines

12. M.H. & L. Connection at McGehee:

From main line connection to right of way line, constructed in 1904.  
Mileage ..... 0.16  
~~Color on accompanying map - Violet, No. 178.~~

13. Arkansas Midland Connections at Helena, Arkansas:

From North Connection on Helena Branch to North Connection on Midland Branch (0.05 mile), and from South Connection on Midland Branch, 0.96 mile north of M. & N.A. Ry. crossing, to connection with Helena Branch (0.38 mile), completed July 1, 1910. Mileage ..... 0.43  
~~Color on accompanying map - Violet, Nos. 156 and 157.~~

Total mileage constructed ..... 316.98

The "River and Gulf" Mortgage

On May 1, 1903, this company, having purchased the property, rights and franchises of the St. Louis Valley Railway, the White River Railway Company, the Memphis, Helena and Louisiana Railway Company and the Memphis, Helena and Louisiana Railroad Company, all of which lines were under construction and not yet completed, placed a first mortgage on the lines of these companies, constructed and to be constructed, to secure an issue of four per cent, thirty-year gold bonds, the proceeds of which were to be used in the acquisition and completion of those lines. The mileage completed under the charters of those companies after their acquisition by this company is shown under the respective companies in Chapter IV. This mortgage is known as the "River and Gulf Divisions First Mortgage."

#### IV. PURCHASED LINES

##### 1. Doniphan Branch Railway Company:

Incorporated under the general railroad laws of Missouri by articles of association filed in the office of the Secretary of State of Missouri, July 18, 1882. Its line of road, from Neeleyville to Doniphan, Missouri, was completed May 1, 1883, 19.99 miles, or, by remeasurement of 1896 ..... 20.50

Termini: From H.B. connection with main line 865 feet north of center of depot at Neeleyville to end of track at Doniphan.

~~Color on accompanying map - Garman, No. 133.~~

The property, rights and franchises of the company were purchased by the St.L.I.M. & S. Ry.Co. by deed dated March 26, 1883, and the organization was no longer maintained and ceased to exist.

##### 2. Jackson Branch Railroad Company:

Incorporated under the general railroad laws of Missouri by articles of association filed in the office of the Secretary of State of Missouri, May 21, 1883. Its line of road, from Allenville to Jackson, Missouri, was completed October 15, 1884, 16.30 miles, or, by remeasurement of 1896 ..... 16.31

Termini: From H.B. connection with Belmont Branch 0.20 mile west of center of depot at Allenville to end of track at Jackson.

~~Color on accompanying map - Brown, No. 135.~~

The road was constructed by the St.L.I.M. & S. Ry. under an agreement with the stockholders of the Jackson Branch Railway Company, dated October 6, 1883.

The property, rights and franchises of the company were purchased by the St.L.I.M. & S. Ry.Co. by deed dated January 6, 1885, and the organization of the company was no longer maintained and ceased to exist.

##### 3. Kansas City and Southern Railway Company:

The Iron Mountain and Helena Railroad Company was incorporated by an act of the legislature of Arkansas, approved December 31, 1860 (Acts of Arkansas 1860-1861 p. 84), which authorized the construction of a railroad from Iron Mountain, or the northern boundary of the State, to Helena, Arkansas, and limited the time of completion to fifteen years from passage of the act. The time for completion was extended by acts approved January 31, 1867 (Acts of Arkansas 1867 p. 87), March 24, 1871 (Acts of Arkansas 1871 p. 106), and January 31, 1877 (Acts of Arkansas 1877 p. 2), to January 31, 1882.

An act approved February 6, 1867 (Acts of Arkansas 1867 p. 100) provided for aid in the construction of the road.

The first 12 miles was completed in 1879, and the road was completed to Marianna, 25 miles, in 1880, and to Forrest City, 42.60 miles, in 1881. The line was remeasured in 1893 and found to be ..... 42.90



Purchased Lines

The section from Helena to Marianna was built on a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge, which was changed to standard in 1881, and the line thence to Forrest City, completed on standard gauge. 1881

Termini: From end of track of Crowley's Ridge (Helena) Branch at Forrest City to end of track on south line of Louisiana Street, Helena.

~~Color on accompanying map - Green, No. 165.~~

The property, rights and franchises of the company were conveyed by deed dated February 21, 1882, to the

Kansas City and Southern Railway Company, which was incorporated under the general railroad laws of Missouri by articles of association filed in the office of the Secretary of State, June 10, 1880. By deed dated October 26, 1882, this company conveyed its franchise, railroad and equipment to the St.L.I.M. & S. Ry.Co., which deed remained in escrow with the Mercantile Trust Co. of New York until December 1, 1882, when it was duly delivered and thereafter, on or about December 15, 1882, possession of the road from Forrest City to Helena was delivered to the St.L.I.M. & S. Ry.Co. By way of further assurance of title a supplementary deed of conveyance, dated February 12, 1883, was given to the St.L.I.M.& S. Ry.Co. by the K.C. & S. Ry.Co.

No further organization was maintained by either the Iron Mountain & Helena R.R. Co. or the Kansas City & Southern Ry.Co., and those companies ceased to exist.

4. The Camden and Alexandria Railway Company:

Incorporated under the general railroad laws of Arkansas by articles of association filed in the office of the Secretary of State of Arkansas, April 3, 1889. Its line of road, from Camden to Eldorado, Arkansas, was completed January 15, 1891. Mileage ..... 32.48

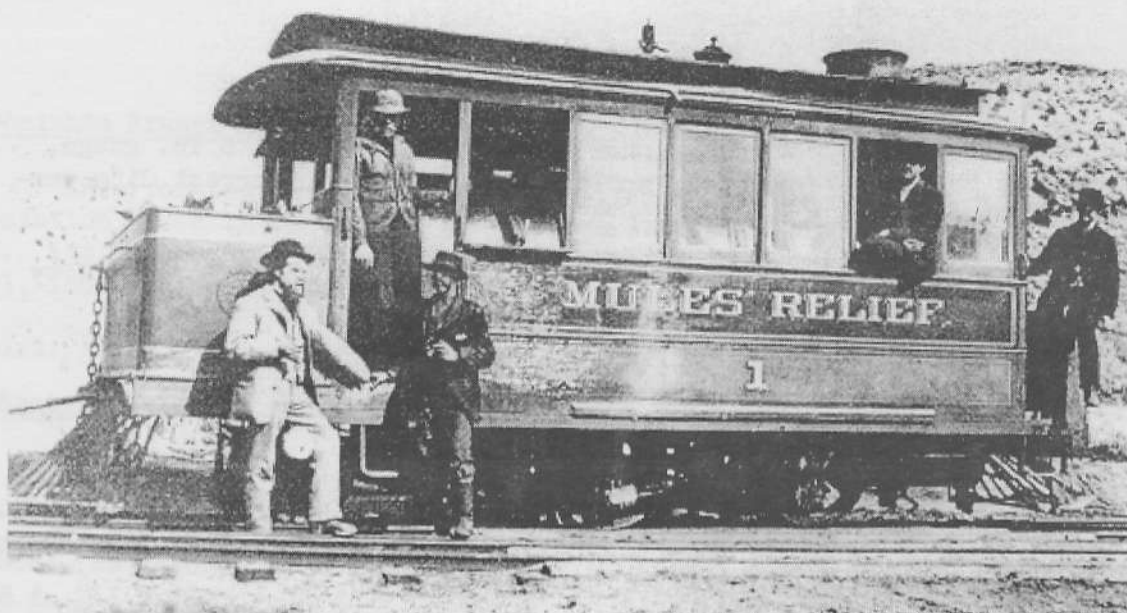
Termini: From end of track of Louisiana (now Camden) Branch, 0.14 mile south of center of depot at Camden, to end of track of "El Dorado Spur" at El Dorado.

~~Color on accompanying map - Orange, No. 201.~~

The property and franchises of the company were conveyed to the St.L.I.M. & S. Ry.Co. by deed dated May 27, 1892, and the organization of the C.& A. Ry. Co. was no longer maintained and ceased to exist.

5. The Little Rock, Mississippi River and Texas Railway:

(a) The Mississippi, Ouachita and Red River Railroad Company was incorporated by filing a charter in the office of the Secretary of State of Arkansas under the general corporation law approved January 8, 1851 (Acts of Arkansas 1850 p. 85), and by a special act of the legislature approved January 22, 1854, ratifying said charter (Acts of Arkansas 1854 p. 219), and additional act approved January 14, 1857, approving a change of route and validating the first act, which was defective by reason of failure of the Speaker of the House of Representatives to sign it (Acts of Arkansas 1857 p. 111). Its line of road extended from Chicot, on the



*Austin City Railway (Clifton to Austin, Nevada, 2.8 miles).  
Baldwin 0-4-2, shop No. 5586, at Clifton, Nevada, May 1881.  
(Gene Hull collection)*

### THE MULE'S RELIEF

by: Gene Hull

Austin, Nevada, is where it happened.

Before the transcontinental telegraph line was completed, the Pony Express riders carried U.S. Mail across the western Indian lands to San Francisco. The telegraph was completed on 24 October 1861, and the Pony Express riders rode westward into the annals of history, victims of progress.

This westward route became the Central Overland Road, and in 1862, Ben Holladay established a freight wagon-stage service along this road.

Bill Talcott had been a rider for the Pony Express, and after the "talking wire" was strung, he became a station agent for Holladay's Overland Stage Company at Jacobsville, Utah Territory. This was about where Battle Mountain, Nevada, is today. Nevada became a state in 1864.

The eastern half of present Nevada was mostly a desolate land in 1862, and it was here that Bill Talcott rode on a prospecting trip that Spring. It was an eroded desert land, supporting a sparse growth of juniper, rabbit brush, sage brush, and samphire with its

clusters of yellow flowers.

Sandy, gravelly soil reflected the heat of a pre-summer sun. It was a broken, hilly country, a parched land of subtle colors. The landscape was broken by hills, mesas and ridges, abrupt and steeply sloping.

Bill was at the northern end of the Toiyabe Range of hills, covered by dense stands of juniper. Along the western foothills of this north-south range ran the little stream of the Reese River, which flowed northward and disappeared as it sank into the desert near the Jacobville station. Bill was about 80 miles south of the station.

Clambering along the steep slope of one of the Toiyabe foothills, Bill discovered a stratum of silver ore. Such a find couldn't remain a secret very long. Prospectors came like honey bees to a clover field. By 1865 there were 10,000 citizens in a little town called Austin clinging to the crest of the hill. The Reese River Mining District was established, and the area was consolidated into the Manhattan Silver Mining Company in 1871.

Just 2.8 miles west of Austin the little town of Clifton was born. In 1880 a line of iron rails was laid southward from Battle Mountain, which was 50 miles east of Winnemucca on the Central Pacific, to a terminal at Clifton, 93.5 miles south. It was in February 1880 the Nevada Railway reached Clifton.

A very lucrative business developed immediately for teamsters and stage drivers. Civilization was invading the Nevada desert. Hauling freight and people up the steep slope to Austin raised a constant dust cloud between Clifton and Austin.

Austin was a thriving town on a hill. The Manhattan Silver Mining Company built a stamp mill at Austin to crush the silver ore before it was shipped out to a refinery. Allen A. Curtis was superintendent of the mill and a banker. Also, he was shrewd.

Allen asked the people of Austin to grant him a right-of-way from the terminal of the Nevada Railway at Clifton to any point in Austin. He was going to build a railroad! The folks were happy to oblige. Rails and ties were purchased from the Nevada Railway, which became the Nevada Central Railroad on 21 June 1887. Between May and early August of 1880 ties and rails were laid to the International Hotel in Austin. The grade reached 7 1/2 percent and some curves were as sharp as 40 degrees. The grade required the use of a switchback to carry the rails up the hill. The track was laid with a gauge of three feet.

This was the Austin City Railway. Allen Curtis surprised the people of Austin with his choice of motive power - eleven flop-eared mules! It required all these "four legged" locomotives to pull one car of ore up the hill to the mill. The motive power often balked, stopping a "train" in the middle of the street. This soon became a joke to the folks in Austin, and an embarrassment to Curtis and the other railway officials. At a board of directors meeting for the Austin City Railway a Mr. Paxton said, "Mules will be mules, my friends, and the sight of these beasts stalling on the city streets is a disgrace to the stockholders."

The people of Austin finally agreed the rails and mules should be removed from the streets

of their town. Curtis flatly refused.

"The Austin City Railway she is, and on the city streets she stays. But, there is one thing we can do."

He ordered a steam locomotive from the Baldwin Locomotive Works. It was decided it would be a "dummy" type engine with a wood passenger car body enclosing the whole engine.

In May 1881 a large packing crate arrived at Battle Mountain on the Central Pacific, addressed to the Austin City Railway. Some of the Austin officials must have been present, because the crate was dismantled there. The hot Nevada sun glistened on the new passenger car-locomotive. On the side of the car body, in bright gold leaf paint, was a large number 1, and just above it was the name MULES RELIEF!

A resounding cheer went up from the crowd of curious onlookers. A fire was built in the firebox, and after a head of steam was raised, the little contraption was taken for a short run on the Nevada Railway track. Then it was taken to the shop for some minor adjustment. The next day, 31 May 1881, the engine was run down to Clifton, where everybody in town came to see it.

About 11:00 a.m. on 17 June the MULES RELIEF rolled along the main street in Austin with her bell ringing and whistle shrieking. The whistles at the mill broke loose with a bellowing welcome. The next day the little engine took a crowd up the Nevada Railway a

few miles for a picnic. On 22 June she went to work on her home road, hauling a car of lumber up the hill at the amazing speed of five miles an hour!

The engine had 33-inch diameter driving wheels, and 11 x 16-inch cylinders. She bore Baldwin shop number 5586.

The eleven four-legged motive power were put out to pasture.

In the summer of 1882 the Austin City Railway trains ran at night because the track was being repaired during the day. The work finally was completed, and MULES RELIEF could work without her headlight burning. On 19 August the train slipped out of Austin and started down the mountain for Clifton. For some reason the brakes failed and gravity took over. On one of the sharp curves fireman Frank Duffy was thrown out of the passenger-car cab. About 100 feet farther down the steep slope the engine hit another curve, but couldn't hold the rail. Engineer Andy Wright was crushed to death in the wreck.

The engine was rebuilt, but the wood shroud covered only the rear end behind the steam dome. She continued to charge up and down Austin hill until the silver mines played out in 1889.

The MULES RELIEF chuffed gently along the Nevada Central rails northward toward Battle Mountain. She disappeared into history, along with the Pony Express and Ben Holladay's stagecoaches. 