

OUR MONTHLY MEETING IS SUNDAY, JUNE 13. Part of the program will consist of slides and movies of the Memorial Day Excursions powered by Southern's 2-8-2 No. 4501. The trips, on May 30 and 31, were from Knoxville, Tennessee to Asheville, North Carolina and return. A fine locomotive, a thirteen car train and beautiful mountain country should make for some good pictures.

Meeting time is Sunday, June 13, 2:30 p.m. at Missouri Pacific Union Station, Room 305, Markham and Victory Streets, Little Rock, Arkansas.

FURTHER EXPLORATION OF THE MISSOURI PACIFIC AND THE PACIFIC

by W. M. (Mike) Adams

In 1910 steel had come into general use for the construction of passenger equipment and trains became heavier and heavier. The Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain went shopping for bigger power. The 6500 series 4-6-2's and 5500 series 4-4-2's just could not cope with the increasing weights of the main line passenger trains. Accordingly an order was placed with the American Locomotive Company and delivery was made that Fall on 19 big new Pacifics for the Missouri and one for the Iron Mountain. The Missouri Pacific locomotives were equipped with 69 inch drivers, 23 by 26 inch cylinders, with a boiler pressure of 200 pounds of saturated steam. The single unit, number 6420, for the Iron Mountain was identical except for a Schmidt Superheater. The 6401 through 6419 weighed in at 246,000 pounds in working order and were immediately placed in service on the fast mail and passenger trains between St. Louis and Kansas City and St. Louis and Texarkana. Contemporary photographs taken of the Iron Mountain station in Little Rock circa 1912 show one of these fine big Pacifics ready to take out a north-bound passenger train.

This order filled a big gap. Still--they were not enough, and early in 1912 engines 6421 through 6429 rolled out of the erecting shop assigned to the Missouri Pacific and engines 6430 through 6434 went into service of the Iron Mountain. These engines were equipped with superheaters, 26 by 26 inch cylinders, 200 pounds boiler pressure, weighed in at 278,000 pounds in working order and exerted 40,900 pounds tractive effort. That actual ownership in use meant little is evidenced by the fact that in April of 1912 the 6433, an Iron Mountain engine, was used in making a fast run from Pueblo, Colorado east on the Missouri Pacific in charge of Engineer F. E. Mathieson on a silk special. The author has in his possession a photograph of Iron Mountain engine 6430 taken in the then new Kansas City Union Station in 1914. In 1913 the Iron Mountain received engines 6435 through 6439 and for the next few years these fine locomotives bore the brunt of fast passenger and mail service on the Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain.

Engines 6401 through 6420 were big brutes for the day--not too esthetic to the purist due to the off-set running boards, moulded domes and wooden cabs. They were later equipped with steel cabs but the running boards still went up and down like a roller coaster. In later years these engines were given superheaters and the cylinders increased to 25 by 26 inches and the drivers increased from 69 to 73 inches. For years it was common sight to see these locomotives with driver centers designed for 69-inch tires and equipped with extra thick rims to bring the diameter up to 73 inches. These locomotives and all the series through engine 6439 were equipped with the Cole trailer truck while the 8000 gallon 14-ton tenders rode on the standard arch bar truck. They were big rangy locomotives standing 15 feet 6 inches over the stack. The 84-inch boiler had the taper in the first course and the firebox contained 49.5 square feet of grates. In common with Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountains standards the headlight was mounted at the top front of the boiler and the pilot was the heavy wooden type used by the Missouri Pacific up until the early thirties. These locomotives had Russian iron jackets and while not fancied up with color and gilt, were, especially the 6421 through 6439 series, trim, good looking racers. Engines 6421 through 6439 had a smooth sided dome and the bell was mounted between the sand and steam dome. Engines 6421 through 6434 had a slight taper to the sand dome but on the 6435 through 6439 this dome became straight. All the later series had straight running boards which added much to their trim looks.

In the Spring of 1915 the Missouri Pacific inaugurated a fine through train in connection with the Denver and Pio Grande and Western Pacific between St. Louis and San Francisco. Named "The Scenic Limited", this all steel flyer was handled by the 6400's and a photograph of the 6426 handling this train out of St. Louis Union Station was used for years as a publicity give-away. The author has one of these in his possession--needless to say, it is priceless. In the Fall of 1915 the Iron Mountain placed into service what was to become one of the most famous trains ever operated in the United States, "The Sunshine Special". While the Scenic Limited continued to operate until replaced by the Colorado Eagle in 1942 and was maintained to a very high standard with the finest equipment and accelerated schedule, it never became the train the Sunshine Special was. Named by the Chamber of Commerce of San Antonio, Texas, the Sunshine Special when finally ousted by the Texas Eagles in 1948 was operating in three scheduled sections daily in and out of St. Louis with connections to and from Memphis and Lake Charles. The main line sections were operated with from 10 to 14 Pullmans each and during the hectic years of World War II were host to literally tens of thousands of military personnel.

The 6400's handled these trains from their inception until bumped off with the arrival of the oil-burning 6600's in 1925. In early 1916 the well-known illustrator William Harnden Foster was commissioned to paint a picture of the Sunshine Special under way. This painting hung in the Office of the President of the Missouri Pacific and was reproduced by the thousands and graced the walls of depots and business houses in Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain territory for years, and in some instances to this day. Engine 6434 was handling the train as

depicted in the painting. The author has one of these reproductions in his possession and like the photograph of the Scenic Limited, it, too, is priceless. The Missouri Pacific issued a perpetual calendar for many years with this painting on it and the famous and familiar buzz-saw emblem of the Missouri Pacific was graced additionally with the sketch of the 6434 under a full head of steam. Public timetables as issued in the glory days of steam operation had a line drawing of a 6400 on side and a Pullman observation car on the other. In the author's collection of railroadiana is a reproduction of the first advertisement of the Sunshine Special and--you guessed it--a 6400 is leading the way. To cap this all off, a dinner plate was made and sold at Missouri Pacific stations and on Missouri Pacific diners with a reproduction of Foster's painting of the 6434 gracing it. In April, 1921, still another group of 6400's rolled out of the Schenectady plant of the American Locomotive Company. Numbered 6440 through 6444, these engines differed in some details from the earlier units. For one thing, they were equipped with power reverse and with the new Delta Type "A" trailer truck. The sand dome was a large affair straddling the boiler and the headlight was mounted in the center of the boiler front. Basically this completed the 6400's as a group considering common specifications. Starting in 1924 a large Pacific type locomotive based on USRA standards was turned out by Alco and numbered 6445 through 6454. Other than to say they were re-numbered 6601 through 6609 in the 1930's, I will dismiss them here--they constitute another story.

Over the years the 6400's, naturally, came out of the various shops with different looks. The first move was to lower the headlight to the center of the boiler and equip them with power reverse gears and ladders extending from the running boards to the pilot deck. The power reverse put a hump in the running boards and took away much of their trim, racy look. Later many of them were given large sand domes straddling the boiler back of the first course and the bells were mounted at an angle at the top front of the boiler. Some, the 6436 for example, never received a large sand dome. Many were equipped to burn oil and five of them, the 6423, 6424, 6426, 6433 and 6436 were equipped with roller bearings, cast steel pilots and disc main driver centers. Many of these locomotives received a web-spoked driver center such as used by the Pennsylvania Railroad on some of their passenger locomotives. In their declining years, several of these fine ladies received footboards, front and rear, and 'doghouses' on the tenders and were used for just about anything. After the consolidation of the International-Great Northern and St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico into the Missouri Pacific Lines in 1925, several of these locomotives went to the so-called Texas Louisiana Lines and served out their time in that land. Engines 6406, 6408, 6614, 6422 and 6425 appear frequently in pictures emanating from those climes. In 1930 these engines appeared regularly in passenger service on the White River Division and handled the "Southern Scenic". This was usually a four car train and it was not uncommon to leave Aurora, Missouri behind, say the 6438, and 35 minutes later and 39.4 miles away, be discharging passengers at Carthage, Missouri. After topping Opal Hill some three miles out of Aurora, the line descended into Spring River Valley at Hoberg and was then on a water level grade to the Frisco crossing at the eastern outskirts of Carthage. Soon after World War II, when the insidious inroads of dieselization invaded the Missouri Pacific, these fine locomotives started going to the scrap

line. By 1955 all were gone and they were just a memory. Strangely enough, the last ones built, numbers 6440 through 6444, were the first to be scrapped.

Easy riding--easy to fire--snappy, they were great favorites with enginemen and given a train within their limits could get over the road with the best of them. As a youngster at Carthage, Missouri in the 1930's, I literally polished smooth a large rock located just north of the depot waiting for Train 232, the northbound Southern Scenic, to leave with Grant Hinton, George Kreslmeyer or Jim Harrison at the throttle of a 6400. A friendly wave from their lordly station made each day complete.

LETTERS TO RAILROADS BRING RESULTS. Our club secretary, Mr. Ross Holt, has written letters to officers of the railroads operating in Arkansas, both shortlines and mainline operators, advising them of the existence and goals of the Arkansas Railroad Club. He received a very nice reply from the Kansas City Southern, along with some material for the club collection. Most interesting was an advertising brochure from the 1940's. This booklet, several pages in length, gave descriptions of all the communities served by the Kansas City Southern and the Louisiana and Arkansas. It also included brief, but informative, histories of these roads and their predecessors.

EDITORS NEED HELP. Reread your first copy of the newsletter, please. In our first issue we said we hoped to cover the past, present, and future of railroading in Arkansas, or something like that. Many of you are in closer regular contact with the railroads of Arkansas than the editors. Therefore, you are better able to keep up with current events. If you are aware of a development which would be of interest to the rest of the club, write about it, get your name in print, and let us share it with our readers. We are also interested in historical material. Mike Adams and John Harper have provided us with some fine articles, and we hope to have much more from both of them. However, there is a great amount of information on our railroads scattered between our members, in their collections, and in their memories and knowledge. If each of the thirty or so people who have attended most of our meetings would write one short item or article, we would be glad to get all of them in print.