



# ARKANSAS RAILROADER



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The old Rock Island Sunbelt Route (Choctaw Route) bridge across the Arkansas River March 4, 2005. The Clinton Presidential Center is to my right and behind me. They are going to make this bridge a pedestrian bridge by 2007. The Choctaw Passenger Terminal remains, and is to my left. (*Ken Ziegenbein photo*)



Busy street in Little Rock's River Market, April 16, 2005, showing a streetcar.



View of a streetcar from inside a local River Market restaurant. There were lots of tourists in the area, most visiting the Clinton Presidential Center. Some rode Amtrak to Little Rock.

# HISTORY OF THE CHOCTAW FREIGHT STATION

Little Rock, Arkansas

Much of this history was obtained by Bill Pollard and put on a web site (<http://www.trainweb.org/choctawterminal>). A printout was given your editor by Tom Shook. I don't think this was published in the Railroader before, but it deserves a permanent archiving.

## Background

In September 1898, the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad leased and later purchased the Little Rock & Memphis Railroad, a company which held the distinction of operating over the first railroad trackage in Arkansas. The LR&M had been in and out of receivership since the late 1870s, a precarious financial condition brought about by Jay Gould's diversion of through traffic to his own lines. The CO&G, owned by Philadelphia investors and coal mine financiers, sought entry into Memphis to expand their market for coal produced by company mines in Indian Territory (eastern Oklahoma). The Choctaw & Memphis Railroad was created as a CO&G subsidiary to operate the LR&M, while also constructing approximately 140 miles of new track from North Little Rock to Howe, I.T. When the new trackage was in place, CO&G would possess a direct route from Weatherford and Oklahoma City to Little Rock and Memphis. The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern, a Gould road, bitterly opposed the CO&G entry into Little Rock because it threatened Gould's near monopoly in the area. One of the Gould tactics to discourage CO&G expansion was a refusal to allow CO&G operation over either of the existing Arkansas river rail crossings (Baring Cross and Junction bridges) at Little Rock.

In the face of continued opposition from the Gould management, the CO&G made a decision to build a third railroad bridge across the Arkansas River at Little Rock, along with a belt line surrounding the city on a route which eliminated the need to share stations or other facilities with the Iron Mountain. The Choctaw bridge would cross the river near the existing LR&M shops in Argenta, entering Little Rock east of downtown. Belt line trackage would circle south of the city before curving back north, crossing the Iron Mountain tracks just west of Union Station, then continuing westward along the Arkansas River toward Perry County.

The City of Little Rock welcomed the impending arrival of the Choctaw, closing McLean street to provide right of way easements in the vicinity of East Second, East Third, and East Fourth streets. This area opened the southern approach to the Choctaw & Memphis bridge, and the contract for bridge construction was let on March 21, 1899. In September 1899, the C&M purchased the old Little Rock Infirmary property on Second Street, between McLean and Byrd, soon converting that structure into the general offices for the railroad. Additional land was secured for freight and passenger stations, and for railroad yards and servicing facilities needed to complete the terminal.

## Freight Depot

On August 25, 1899, the Arkansas Gazette reported that "Engineer Holt and his assistants are hard at work on plans and specifications for the imposing passenger and freight depots to be erected on Second and McLean streets, and also the terminal station at Memphis." Little Rock was to be the system headquarters of the CO&G, and both passenger and freight stations were of a design befitting the main terminal of the railroad. The job of constructing the freight station was awarded to local contractor C.W. Clark on October 28th. Charles W. Clark was well versed in brick building construction by virtue of his ownership of Clark Pressed Brick Company, one of the largest businesses in Malvern,

with a production capacity of 100,000 bricks per day. Station construction was initially delayed by a shortage of freight cars to transport building materials, and winter weather caused additional delays.

In the meantime, the C&M moved into their new headquarters (1007 East Second Street) in early November, and the river bridge was completed several weeks later. On December 10, 1899, the Choctaw began operating through trains between Memphis, Little Rock, Booneville, McAlester, Oklahoma City and Weatherford, still without benefit of formal freight or passenger stations in Little Rock. A temporary wooden depot had been hastily erected on a site just south of the Choctaw passenger station to serve Little Rock passengers, and freight traffic was handled at the former LR&M yards in North Little Rock. Site preparation for the new freight and passenger stations continued, along with construction of the East Second Street overpass.

By mid-December 1899, the foundation of the freight depot had been completed, and work was underway on the building itself. Construction of the passenger station lagged behind, with the basement area still being excavated in early January 1900. The Choctaw's freight agent and clerical staff moved into the office portion of the freight station in early March, and freight deliveries to and from the new station began on April 9, 1900, after the structure had been completed. When the freight station opened, the first floor of the Choctaw passenger station had not yet been completed; the passenger station would not be ready for occupancy until August.

### Function and Design

In an era when virtually all commerce, both passenger and freight, occurred via rail, freight stations served multiple purposes. The station was a transfer point from railroad car to wagons, and a site where local freight could be briefly



*This drawing of the Choctaw Freight Station was brought to the April 10 Club meeting by Tom Shook. You can see the Choctaw Passenger Terminal in the background.*

warehoused after arrival until it was picked up by the recipient. Industries without their own rail siding used the freight station as a loading point to transfer from wagons or trucks to boxcars. Much freight handled in this manner was LCL - less than carload - and the railroads customarily grouped this freight from several shippers into one car to a common destination. In this manner, the freight station functioned as the hub of local freight activity in a city, coordinating arrivals and

departures, storage, transfers between routes, and local pick up and delivery. An office area within the station typically housed the railroad's freight agent and numerous waybill clerks who prepared the extensive paper trail which documented each shipment. Follow an actual shipment to Little Rock.

The Choctaw freight station was constructed of pressed red brick, highlighted by intricate arched brickwork and stonework around doors and windows. The overall building dimensions are 40 feet wide by 215 feet long, with the front 40 x 40 section being two-story to accommodate offices on both floors. A door, located on the west side of the second floor, provided access to an elevated walkway leading to East Second Street. East Second Street was elevated on a stone retaining wall in front of the station as part of the overpass crossing the Choctaw mainline. A 15 foot loading platform surrounded the building, shielded from the elements by a substantial roof overhang which was

supported by wooden brackets set into the brickwork. An adjacent covered platform extended south approximately 100 feet behind the station.

The rear 40 x 175 section of the building served as the actual freight warehouse, with a series of vertical sliding doors allowing ready access to the loading platform on both the wagon (east) and rail (west) sides of the building.



Windows on the south exposure of the building were barred for security, a common practice to make the freight storage area more secure. The interior construction of this portion is quite unique, featuring long wooden roof trusses with iron rods bolted through the woodwork to stabilize the trusses, in a manner similar to that used for railroad truss bridges. It appears that 40-foot one-piece timbers were used for the ceiling joist component of the truss, with other timbers carefully fitted as rafters. The entire arrangement allowed the roof to be supported only on the exterior walls, with no interior vertical supports which would have impeded the flow of freight carts inside the building. Despite supporting a heavy slate roof for

many years, there is no sign of sagging in the 40-foot cross timbers, even 102 years after their placement -- a testament to the engineering design of the era.

The freight station was initially separated from the Choctaw passenger station by 12 tracks. Six tracks, adjacent and just west of the freight station, were used to primarily hold cars destined for loading or unloading at the station or other nearby industries. The next four tracks were utilized for switching both freight and passenger trains, and the westernmost two tracks were mainline tracks, located adjacent to the Choctaw passenger station in direct alignment with the river bridge.

### Subsequent Usage

After all construction was completed, the subsidiary Choctaw & Memphis was dissolved back into the parent company, the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad, on July 1, 1900. Unfortunately for the CO&G, the railroad's prosperity, its vast coal operations in Oklahoma, and its westward expansion efforts made it a desirable property for acquisition. In mid-1902, a financial syndicate controlling the Rock Island Railroad began buying CO&G stock and bonds, acquiring a majority interest later in the year. In what was a decidedly hostile takeover, the existing CO&G management was ousted and the railroad became a component of the Rock Island System. The CO&G name disappeared in 1904, but until the Rock Island's untimely demise in 1980, the Memphis-Little Rock-Oklahoma City route continued to be known as the "Choctaw Route" as proclaimed in the brickwork of the Choctaw passenger station.

Rock Island ownership brought some advantages, including greater traffic growth because the larger carrier was better able to compete with the Missouri Pacific/Iron Mountain - the other railroad serving most of Arkansas. Within a few years, increased freight traffic made the Choctaw freight station too small, and in 1911 the Rock Island opened a new, substantially larger freight station on the northeast corner of East Fourth & Rector. It was initially reported that the Choctaw freight station would be torn down to make way for additional tracks, once the new freight station was in

operation.

In actuality, the Choctaw freight station remained intact, and by 1913 had been leased to Reaves Transfer Company for use as a storage warehouse. Reaves Transfer, successor to Polk Transfer Company, operated a drayage and transfer service utilizing 50 wagons and 75 men. The proliferation of trucks forced most transfer companies to evolve into moving companies or disappear, and the reduced need for warehouse facilities caused the former Choctaw station to again change tenants.

By 1939, the building had been leased to Fisher Cement & Roofing Company. Fisher occupied the second-floor offices and stocked building materials in the former freight area, while the Rock Island used the first floor office for equipment storage. May Supply Company, a wholesale building supply business, leased the freight station from the Rock Island in 1944. A long term lease was signed March 1, 1947, and soon thereafter an annex area was constructed on the east side of the station to house the May Supply offices. In January 1961, "Mayco Warehouse Company" purchased the freight station and an adjacent garage (probably the open air shed south of the station). May Supply began to make numerous external additions to the west side and front of the building soon thereafter, essentially cocooning the original structure. This process obscured most of the building from public view by the mid-1960s, but also helped preserve the structure by protecting it from the elements. The entire complex was occupied by the May Supply Company into the late 1990s.

### **Historical Significance**

The Choctaw freight station is historically significant from several perspectives. Most notably, it is a companion structure to Little Rock's Choctaw passenger station, both having been constructed at the same time to serve the two components of railroad traffic - passenger service and freight service. The two companion structures provide a study and comparison of the railroad's view of what was necessary in terms of facilities to attract passenger and freight traffic in the city that they expected to be the permanent headquarters of the railroad. The passenger station exhibits a much more ornate design calculated to impress the traveling public, while the freight station is a simple, no-nonsense style designed for utility and the efficient movement of freight. It is remarkable to have two companion structures, built by the same company in the same era, survive for 102 years in restorable condition.

The railroad freight station was a center of commerce in larger cities, much as the rural flagstop depot was a transportation and communication hub in smaller communities. During the peak years of railroad service, four large brick freight stations served Little Rock, and a fifth freight station was located nearby in North Little Rock. In addition to the Choctaw freight station on the south side of East Second, the Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain's inbound freight station was located on the north side of East Second Street, across the street from the Choctaw, and the MP-Iron Mountain outbound freight station was located nearby, at East Markham & Byrd. The close proximity of these stations resulted in more or less constant wagon and truck congestion on East Second Street, contributing to the Rock Island's decision to relocate to East Fourth & Rector in 1911, rather than enlarge the Choctaw station. A fifth station, operated by the Cotton Belt, was located just west of the Main Street bridge in North Little Rock. Both Missouri Pacific freight stations were razed in the late 1960s, the Cotton Belt station was razed in the early 1970s, and the Rock Island's "newer" 1911 station was razed in March 2001.

The significance of the Choctaw station is more than just the last surviving freight station in Little Rock; it is the last surviving example of the brick, multi-story freight station in Arkansas. In addition to the freight stations in Little Rock, similar structures were once located in Pine Bluff, Fort Smith, Texarkana, Newport and several other important rail

junctions. By the late 1950s, railroads were exiting the less than carload freight business, turning smaller volume shipments over to truck transport. Little effort was made to adapt the large, rambling freight stations to other uses, and they were usually razed by the railroad to eliminate the expenses of maintenance and property taxes. Had the Choctaw freight station not been leased to a private business, it would have likely suffered the same fate.

In terms of specific railroad history for both Choctaw and Rock Island railroads, these companion structures represent the only surviving terminal facilities of the Choctaw from Memphis into Oklahoma, and they represent the last significant structures of the once extensive Rock Island System in Arkansas. Several smaller Rock Island depots survive, most notably Argenta (North Little Rock) and Lonoke, but nothing of the magnitude or architectural design of the two Choctaw stations in Little Rock.

#### **Future Potential (*September 2001*)**

Present plans call for the Choctaw freight station to be razed and the area to be used by the Clinton Presidential Library. Serious and extensive consideration should be given to preserving this structure, incorporating it with the Choctaw passenger station to create a unique asset for the presidential library grounds. The two-story office portion of the building readily lends itself to usage as offices or research areas, while the large open space of the former warehouse area could become a public meeting area, an adjunct to the Farmer's Market, a food court, or any number of other uses.

**November 21,2001 postscript:** On the day before Thanksgiving 2001, demolition crews moved onto the former May Supply Company site, quickly demolishing the old Choctaw freight station in the center of the complex at the same time that the Friends of the Choctaw Terminal were in court attempting to secure a restraining order to block the demolition.

#### ***(My - Ken Ziegenbein's - personal recollections of events regarding this 'newly discovered' Choctaw Freight Station (ne. Rock Island) that used to sit across from the Rock Island Passenger Station in Little Rock:***

Back in the spring/summer of 2001, when the land where the freight station and other structures were located was being made ready for the new Clinton Presidential Center Library, a group of history buffs, including myself and others from the Arkansas Railroad Club and other organizations, 'discovered' that the original Choctaw Freight Station was still intact underneath the green metal building of the May Construction Company. We took many photos of it under the shed and immediately started to try and save it from demolition (the Choctaw Rock Island Passenger Station had already been saved and was to become part of the new Clinton Library as a School of Public Service). Unfortunately, the blueprints had a 'footprint' already over the site where the Freight House was located and even though the people building the library listened to us about saving the structure, they said it was too late to change the blueprints and said the building had to be razed. Some legal action by others (NOT by the Arkansas Railroad Club or me) tried to get the razing halted, but it was too late and the Freight Station was destroyed the day before Thanksgiving 2001 in

one quick demolition effort.

At first I was angry with the city and Library people, but then began to realize it was almost as much fault of ours as it was theirs since we hadn't known about this structure until so recently. Had we realized that the Freight House was there 5 years before, it probably would have been saved along with the Passenger Station. Why didn't we know it was still there? Nobody seems to know how that fact slipped through the cracks. If somebody in the Arkansas Railroad Club or anywhere HAD known it was still intact under the May Construction Company shed, they sure kept it a secret and ought to share some of the responsibility for its destruction. Don't assume other people know about it. You can't stop a major construction project at the last minute any more than you can stop an Interstate from going across your land, especially a political and economic one like this was.

**LESSON LEARNED:** If you know of any building that you think needs to be preserved, contact some history organization and see if you can get it renovated and eventually placed on the National Register of Historic Places (like I helped do for the Hot Springs narrow gauge roundhouse in Malvern, Arkansas last year). It's a good feeling.

As far as the Choctaw Freight House, I no longer hold any grudges or blame anybody for its demise - the water has gone under the bridge; the ketchup has left the bottle; the toothpaste has been squeezed out of the tube. It's forgotten. Grudges held too long tend to hurt no one but yourself. Plus, in this case, the Clinton Presidential Center is having a major positive impact on tourism in the Little Rock area and streetcar ridership (now over 70,000 passengers have ridden them since November 2004). Whether or not you ever visit the Library (I haven't done so yet), it's economic impact has been better than anticipated. In fact, some days traffic is at a standstill on East Markham (now President Clinton Avenue) because of the tourists and groups driving and walking in the River Market District. Also, I have met several families and older couples who've ridden Amtrak's Texas Eagle to Little Rock to visit.



A few photos on the day of the demolition, Nov 21, 2001



Left photo shows one of the interior windows a month before demolition (*John C. Jones photo*). Right photo was taken in late summer 2001 of the front part of the Choctaw Freight Station, which had been painted green for the May Construction Company (*Ken Ziegenbein photo*)

*The following was written by Charter Arkansas Railroad Club member John Mills of Kansas in March 2005. If anybody wants to map the Little Rock trolley bus routes out and send me the copy, I'd appreciate it and would print it in a future Railroader. Also, we're looking for photos of the trolley buses. (Ken Ziegenbein):*

### **Little Rock's Trolley Buses Remembered**

Regarding Bill Pollards inquiry about what routes Little Rock's trolley buses operated on after street car service ended. Here is what I remember:

The Pulaski Heights (No.8) route starting at 5th & Main-St. ran north to Markham and Main and turned left and continued west on Markham to Victory St., turned south to 3rd and Victory, turned west on 3rd and followed the old street car line out 3rd St until it became Kavanaugh Blvd, followed Kavanaugh along the old street car line west to Kavanaugh and Hayes St. Trolley wire was continued from Hayes on west to Mc Kennley St., where a new turn-around was established. (The street car line had previously ended near Kavanaugh and Hayes St.) Returning to 5th & Main via the same route.

The South Main route starting at 5th & Main ran south on Main St. to about 22nd or 23rd St and turned west. At this point I can't recall how far west the trolley wires continued before turning south for a few blocks and then turning back east but as I recall the line then went east back to Main on about 24th St before turning north on Main St and followed Main St north back to 5th & Main. This line originated many of the domestic workers who worked in the homes of the upper class areas of Pulaski Heights and further west as the city grew west. The old street car line on the south end had

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gone further west on 23rd St to Ringo and made a loop south across Roosevelt Road a couple of blocks then turned back east to Arch St and back to 23rd and then east back to Main St. This part of the street car line had been discontinued several years earlier and shortened. I know for sure that this route did not cross Broadway to the west when the trolley buses replaced the street cars.

Starting again at 5th & Main the Fair Park (No.6) route went west on Capitol Ave (or 5th St.) to Victory St where it turned south to 8<sup>th</sup> then west on 8<sup>th</sup> to Wolf St, south on Wolf to 11th St, west on 11th to Park st, south on Park St to 13th St, west on 13th St (passed my stop at 13th & Woodrow St) continued west on 13th St to Lewis St, north on Lewis to 11th St, west on 11th St. to where the Street Car Private right-of-way began leading into Fair Park and terminating at the Travelers Field baseball park, now called Ray Winder Field.

The old streetcar line (Private right-of-way portion) had the tracks removed and paved over for the trolley buses to operate on this portion of the route. After turning around in front of the baseball park the same route was followed back to 5<sup>th</sup> & Main where it continued south to 9th St. Turning west on 9th St it went west to High St, where it turned south on High and turned around at about 34th & High (now called ML King, Jr Dr.) and returned to 5th & Main via the same route.

At 12th & High on the block over to 11th & High and east over one block a new trolley bus maintenance facility was built for the new trolley buses.

In 1955 the old Capital Transportation Company was hit by a work stoppage of the drivers and mechanics which resulted in bankruptcy, rather than settle the strike. Service was shut down for several days as I recall and "jittney" service was operated for several weeks. A couple of bombings and shootings took place during the strike but no deaths or injuries resulted. A new operation was started by a company called St. Johns Transportation using many of the drivers and mechanics who went on strike. However, the equipment, a bunch of used eight (8) year old second-hand pollution-producing buses from Toledo, Ohio, were placed into service and the new company went bankrupt too.

The relatively new trolley buses as well as all the other equipment of CTC were sold and disposed of. From this mess came the current Central Arkansas Transportation Authority I am told.

The electric trolley coaches were beautiful pieces of equipment and the ride was excellent. Due to their weight, travel on snow and ice was no problem. I might add that the Pulaski Heights and South Main were one and the same connecting routes as were the Fair Park and West Ninth St lines.

As I recall wires were also strung up between 3rd and 5th on Victory St so that specials could operate between the two routes over to Little Rock High School, now Central High School.

As my good friend Dr. Dan Monaghan of Garland, Texas used to say, "This was when the universe was in order and things were the way God intended," speaking of electric street cars and steam powered passenger trains. Also let me add that the old No.7 South Highland street car line did not get trolley buses but was replaced by an alternate bus route that went west on 14th St to Woodrow St and followed the old street car route as far as Cedar St and then south to around Roosevelt and Lewis St.

#### **2005 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB**

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The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization of railroad and train enthusiasts 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. Anyone interested in trains is welcome!

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 \$20 a year more, bringing the total to \$40 a year for both. Dues are always payable on January 1st 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: [trains@trainweather.com](mailto:trains@trainweather.com) The Arkansas Railroader is put on the Web monthly, and that address is: <http://www.trainweather.com>

The next program and meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be held **Sunday, May 15 2005** (notice this is the third Sunday instead of the second Sunday) at our usual site, Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church, 4401 Woodlawn Drive, Little Rock. Time will be 2 p.m. The program will be presented by Mike Condren from Memphis. Mike will talk about Memphis RR history among other things. The public is invited and light refreshments will be served.

**Looking ahead:** June will be our annual trip to Ron Esserman's Walden Too Railroad in near Dover, Arkansas (June 11) for a picnic and train rides. September 10 will be the annual picnic and visit to Peter Smykla, Jr.'s Paperton Junction Southern in Pine Bluff. November is slated to be at the recently restored Bald Knob depot, soon to be a hobby shop.

*(Thanks to VP Mark Silverberg for getting these programs lined up)*

## 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** -- Dispatcher train sheets, 1950-1970, covering any Mopac or Rock Island trackage in Arkansas. Particularly need MP Central Division sheets for any date prior to April 1960. Buying single sheets or in quantity. Also interested in other pre-1970 RR paper (morning reports, conductor timebooks, trainmaster work sheets, car inspector files, etc.) which show passenger train consists from the same roads and area. Bill Pollard (501-327-7083 evenings; or email: [arkrail@arkansas.net](mailto:arkrail@arkansas.net))

**FOR SALE** - DVD (DVD-R) of a couple of early Cotton Belt 819 runs out of Pine Bluff in 1988. These were put on DVD by myself, Ken Ziegenbein, from my personal S-VHS video tapes of the runs. I have both onboard and trackside shots. You can see many people who rode these specials, some of which are now deceased. While it is mainly of interest to ones who were there at the time, there are some good runby shots as well, some with Fall colors. Plus the DVD has a brief runby of Frisco steamer 1522 out of St Louis, also in 1988. Cost is \$6 each, which includes postage. Send order to Ken Ziegenbein, 1023 Claycut Cir, North Little Rock AR 72116.

**FOR SALE** - A special one-hour VHS video or DVD-R called "Rock Island Remnants" by James R. "Jim" Jones. Jones has assembled a tribute to the Rock Island for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its demise, which includes videos taken during the 1990s (long after the Rock Island went bankrupt) along lesser traveled remnants of the Rock that are still being served by various shortline and other railroads. Included are scenes of vintage Rio Grande GP's, Kyle Railway U-Boats, Little Rock & Western Alco's, plus Iowa Interstate, Denver-Rock Island and Union Pacific's Centennial on former Rock Island rails from the Colorado Front Range to the cornfields of Illinois. Cost is \$18 per video, which includes postage. Order from Tell-Tale Train Productions, Box 808, Colchester VT 05446. Or call Jim Jones, 802-862-3407. (I have not viewed this tape so can't comment on its content)

**FOR SALE** - "Off the Beaten Track" - A Railroader's Life in Pictures", by Roger G. Lewis (of Railway Age) is now available. It covers 75 years of railroads through Mr. Lewis' photographs. From 1930s main and branch line steam operations to dieselization

and steam's last hurrah in the 1950s, from obscure short lines to the predecessors of today's mega-railroads, this book contains close to 350 photos of nearly 100 different railroads, 99 percent having never been published before, according to the brochure. Cost is \$58 plus \$9.90 for postage. Send orders to: Simmons-Boardman Books, Inc., 1809 Capitol Ave, Omaha NE 68102, 800-228-9670, [www.transalert.com](http://www.transalert.com) Credit cards welcome.

**NOTE ON BOOKS FOR SALE** - I've listed several railroad books for sale below and have included addresses and costs of each should you want to order one. But before you order one, you might check with your local railroad hobby shop to see if they can get it for you, possibly cheaper. One such shop is run by our VP, Mark Silverberg, who runs OneTrackMind in Mabelvale, Arkansas (501-455-5050, [onetrackmindtrains@hotmail.com](mailto:onetrackmindtrains@hotmail.com)). Also, member Douglas Harley helps run a hobby shop (479-438-0781, [dharley2@cswnet.com](mailto:dharley2@cswnet.com)). And charter member Jim Wakefield has been selling railroad books for years (501-664-0232). If you know of any others in our club who run hobby shops or sell railroad books, let me know ([trains@trainweather.com](mailto:trains@trainweather.com)). Thanks. And don't forget that our club still has copies of two books for sale: "Railroad Stations and Trains through Arkansas and the Southwest" and "Shortline Railroad of Arkansas" by Gene Hull. (Ken Ziegenbein)

**FOR SALE** - An EXCELLENT photo book/binder called "Locomotives and Motor Cars - Missouri and North Arkansas Railroad," put together by Tim Kubat. It has many photos of the Missouri and North Arkansas Railroad, many of which I've never seen anywhere else. It is fascinating to browse through as each photo has a good caption. A lot of the photos were taken in the 1940s, but it does contain some later diesel shots. The book is being distributed by the Boone County Historical & Railroad Society, Inc., PO Box 1094, Harrison AR 72602-1094. Cost is only \$15.00 plus \$1.50 domestic postage.

**FOR SALE** - "Rock Island 1960-1969" - 964 pages of Rock Island "Rocket" magazines plus 224 pages of annual reports and an index with 4,098 entries, bound in a softcover 2 volume set for a total of 1,296 pages and over 2,000 photos. Cost is \$62.95 plus \$5 shipping. Call 800-456-5927 or write CRM, PO Box 941, Newton IA 50208. Credit cards accepted.

**WANTED** - Photos of Little Rock's trolley buses of the 1940s and 1950s. Contact Ken Ziegenbein, [trains@trainweather.com](mailto:trains@trainweather.com) or write 1023 Claycut Cir, North Little Rock AR 72116.

**WANTED** - Photos of the Choctaw (Rock Island) Freight Station in Little Rock before it was put under the May Construction building in the 1950s. Any photos of this in-tact freight station will be appreciated. Send to Ken Ziegenbein, 1023 Claycut Cir, North Little Rock AR 72116, [trains@trainweather.com](mailto:trains@trainweather.com)

## 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.

**TENNESSEE** - Tennessee Railway Company - Tennessee Railway Company (TNR), a wholly owned subsidiary of Norfolk Southern Railway Company, filed with the Surface Transportation Board a petition to abandon an approximately 27.01-mile line of railroad between milepost TE-0.95 near Oneida, and milepost TE-27.96 near Nicks Creek, in Scott County, TN. A final decision will be issued by June 17, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 260X, decided March 9, served March 18, 2005)

**CALIFORNIA - SUNSET RAILWAY COMPANY - SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY RAILROAD COMPANY** - SRY to abandon,

and SJVR to discontinue service over, a 0.20-mile line of railroad, known as the Sunset Subdivision near Levee, between milepost 19.80 and milepost 20.00, in Kern County, CA. Effective on April 20, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-170 (Sub-No. 2X); STB Docket No. AB-398 (Sub-No. 10X, decided March 14, served March 21, 2005)

**WASHINGTON - MOUNT VERNON TERMINAL RAILWAY COMPANY L.L.C** - To abandon and discontinue service on the southern portion of its line of railroad between milepost 0.369 and milepost 1.172, in the City of Mount Vernon, in Skagit County, WA, a distance of 4,240 feet. effective on April 22, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-771X, decided March 15, served March 23, 2005)

**UTAH - UNION PACIFIC** - To abandon a line of railroad, known as the Sugar House Branch, from milepost 0.0 near Roper to the end of the branch line at milepost 2.74 near Sugar House, a distance of 2.74 miles in Salt Lake County, UT. A final decision will be issued by June 22, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 195X, decided March 14, served March 24, 2005)

**MASSACHUSETTS - BOSTON AND MAINE CORP** - To discontinue service over a line of railroad known as the Mystic Wharf Branch, extending from milepost 0.0 to milepost 1.45 in Suffolk County, MA. (STB Docket No. AB-32 (Sub-No. 93X), STB Docket No. 355 (Sub-No. 31X, decided March 22, served March 29, 2005)

**KANSAS - BOOT HILL & WESTERN RAILWAY CO., L.C.** - To abandon a 15.8-mile line of railroad between milepost 0.0, at Bucklin, and milepost 15.8, at Wilroads, in Ford County, KS. Effective on May 5, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-927X, decided March 29, served April 5, 2005)



## AMTRAK NEWS

**TEXAS EAGLE MINOR DERAILMENT** - Saturday, April 16, 2005 -*From Bill Pollard. Thanks to Tom Shook for the call early Sunday morning.* - #22, the northbound Texas Eagle derailed (Saturday night April 16 in the vicinity of Grand Saline, west of Mineola, Texas. Only the locomotive derailed, and cars were eventually pulled back to DAL where passengers were housed overnight. ETA back at DAL was 12:15am Saturday night. Unknown whether UP freight loco was used, or Amtrak relief loco from FTW. Passengers were to be put on the next day's train in Dallas. There were no injuries to crew or passengers, and I have no further information on what derailed locomotive, but suspect that it happened at low speed while entering or leaving a siding, since no other cars were involved. The train that was pulled back to Dallas was part of #22's consist on Sunday, making that train 16 cars long!! Here's the consist:

DAL-CHI 186, SAS-CHI 87, SAS-CHI 1250 BAGGAGE CAR, SAS-CHI 39045 T/DORM/PASSENGER SLEEPER, SAS-CHI 38030 DINER, SAS-CHI 33001 LOUNGE, SAS-CHI 31508 COACH, SAS-CHI 34042 COACH, SAS-CHI 34058 COACH (FROM TRAIN 2 AT SAS), SAS-CHI 32080 SLEEPER (FROM TRAIN 2 AT SAS), DAL-CHI 32016 SLEEPER, DAL-CHI 34097 COACH, DAL-CHI 34052 COACH,, DAL-CHI 34091 COACH, DAL-CHI 33008 LOUNGE, DAL-CHI 38022 DINER, DAL-CHI 39014 T/DORM/PASSENGER SLEEPER, DAL-CHI 1237 BAGGAGE CAR.

To join/renew membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club (Little Rock Chapter National Railway Historical Society), fill out the form below. **Annual dues are \$20** for local dues (plus **\$20** for the national NRHS dues if you want to join the NRHS through our chapter, a total of \$40 for both local and national dues). Send to: Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Send check, made out to the Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for more information or visit us on the web at <http://www.trainweather.com> and click on *Arkansas Railroader*. Our email is [trains@trainweather.com](mailto:trains@trainweather.com).