

The Scrambler

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Arkansas-Boston Mountains Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

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The Scrambler

Minutes of March 19, 1998 Meeting

The regularly scheduled March meeting was called to order by President George Alison at 7:00 PM. Twenty members were present together with guest Don Warden of the Siloam Springs Museum.

The February minutes were approved upon a motion duly made and seconded.

National Director Bob Oswald discussed the forthcoming National Directors meeting at Roanoke, Virginia. On the agenda is a proposal that would affect the NRHS President's ability to (1) make statements on behalf of NRHS and (2) enter into contracts on behalf of NRHS. Upon a motion made and duly seconded it was resolved that National Director Bob Oswald be permitted to vote by mail as he deems fit on any matters affecting the powers of the NRHS President.

Bob Oswald also mentioned a multi-media presentation on the A & M by Ron Lundgren at the Best Western Heritage Inn in Springdale on March 27.

Bob Oswald will present the April program "Wheels are Rolling". Ray Toler suggested that a Show and Tell program could be appropriate for the May program.

Chapter Treasurer Bill Ussery presented the Treasurer's report, a copy of which is on file. The report was approved by a motion duly made and seconded.

Under new business the following items were approved by motions duly made and seconded:

1. The Chapter will spend up to \$100 for the production of RPO souvenir postal covers to be sold in connection with the A & M *Railfan Special* to Fort Smith on March 28, 1998.
2. The Chapter authorized the expenditure of \$30 for rental of a booth at the Springdale Chautauqua that runs from June 12 through June 14 in downtown Springdale.

Ray Toler advised that the Tired Iron of the Ozarks spring crankup (April 18-19 at the Rose of Sharon estate in Gentry, AR) hopes to have an operating 15,000 pound one cylinder oil field engine in working order.

Bill Ussery reported on a visit he and several A & M conductors (including Chapter members Bob Oswald and Gene Schmitz) made to 87 year old Mary France. Mary, who lives on a farm south of Mountainburg, is best known for her waving at passing A & M passenger and freight trains. Bill circulated photos taken on the visit.

Bill Ussery also reported on a trip to view the White River Scenic Railroad. He was asked to work the afternoon of his visit but did manage to take some nice photos. Reservations on the White River Scenic Railroad, a Chapter member, may be made by calling 1-800-305-6527.

The program, presented by Tom Duggan, was a *History of Railway Post Office Service in Northwest Arkansas (1881-1968)*

Tom Duggan
Acting Secretary

Jim Crow Laws on Arkansas Railroads and Street Railways- Part 2

By Tom Duggan

In 1893 the legislature made changes to the separate coach law. The first change let railroads under thirty miles in length (previously 25 miles in the 1891 law) comply with the law by carrying a divided coach. The expanded definition directly benefited three railroads of more than twenty-five but less than thirty miles in length. All other railroads could carry a divided coach thus eliminating the problem of carrying an empty coach for blacks in areas without black passengers. The 1893 amendments also expanded the separate coach law to include sleeping and parlor cars as the original legislation spoke only of passenger cars. Also amended was the provision relating to law officers and their prisoners. Officers with prisoners would now be assigned to coaches where they would least interfere with the other passengers.

Although the separate coach act spoke stirringly of "equal but separate accommodations" events caused blacks to endure inferior accommodations. In 1896 the United States Supreme Court's *Plessy v. Ferguson* established the principle of separate but equal as law of the land. As early as 1898 black groups were complaining about the lesser quality cars and waiting rooms furnished by railroads. Because blacks were at the bottom of the economic ladder and could not afford to ride the trains there was a widespread belief that railroads skimmed on the quality of black accommodations. In 1905 the Arkansas Supreme Court heard a case involving the black waiting room on the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad depot at Hartford, Arkansas. The Court decided that "equal but separate" did not mean identical. Black waiting rooms need not be the same, need not have the same dimensions and could be used for other purposes when not used by passengers. The Frisco was quick to take advantage of the favorable court ruling. Arkansas-Boston Mountains Chapter member George Alison has a wonderful collection of Frisco architectural drawings used for constructing frame depots and other structures in the 1906-1914 period. The drawings evidence the clear racial distinctions. White waiting rooms were finished floor to ceiling in lapstrake pine while the black waiting room was half finished in lapstrake pine with the balance covered in whitewash. White waiting rooms were generally larger than black ones. Black waiting rooms were always adjacent to the baggage or freight area and had fewer windows than white waiting rooms. Passenger cars used for Jim Crow compliance generally were older. When passenger car air conditioning became commonplace it was often the case that Jim Crow cars lacked air conditioning.

There are relatively few legal cases involving the separate coach law. In December 1910 Lucie Green, a pregnant black woman, detained at the Altheimer depot of the Cotton Belt while en route from Little Rock to Jonesboro. The black waiting room was closed and a white man invited her into the white waiting room as the night was cold and wet. She sued the railroad, an uncommon event to say the least, and won a lower court judgment of \$155 because the railroad failed to provide a black waiting room. The Cotton Belt appealed the award to the Arkansas Supreme Court that held the award was in order because the railroad failed to comply with the separate coach law.

Another interesting case from 1915 took place when a white woman boarded a combination car on a Rock Island train at Price and rode three miles to Lawrence after paying the nine-cent fare. The conductor required her to ride in the black section with several other whites during the fifteen-minute duration of her trip. The woman, Linnie Allison, filed suit against the Rock Island and won a damage award of \$875 in a lower court because she was mortified and humiliated by having to ride in the black section of the car. The case went to the Supreme Court of Arkansas. It decided to remand the case to the lower court as it should have been decided on breach of contract by the railroad due to its failure to carry Mrs. Allison in a white compartment. The damage award of \$875 was excessive in light of the circumstances.

In 1903 the legislature decided to consider racial segregation on streetcars. The white public seemed to favor the idea of separate streetcars for each race. This would have placed an enormous burden on street railways as it would require twice as much equipment without any increase in revenues. Two bills, one requiring separate cars for each race, and one permitting single divided cars that carried members of both races, were debated. Senator George Sengel of Sebastian County, who had a financial interest in the Fort Smith Light & Traction Company, summed up his opinion as follows:

The street car systems of our state are not yet profitable property. I have been interested for several years in a system in Fort Smith and have not been the happy recipient of dividends. Help us develop our cities and in doing so we are willing to meet you halfway, but don't strike too hard with at one fell blow. Separate seats will please everybody, and enable the car companies to exist. To use double cars means confiscation of the street car companies for it means double capital and double employment of help.

The separate street car bill became effective March 27, 1903. It applied only to systems operating in cities with a population of five thousand or more. The street car companies could operate single divided cars, without a partition, or cars dedicated for the exclusive use of one race. In practice the companies operated divided cars. The bill used the term "colored" to refer to blacks. The burden of enforcing the law was in the hands of the conductor and failure to comply with his request was a misdemeanor subject to a \$25 fine. The new law angered the large black communities in Little Rock and Pine Bluff. Blacks were major users of the street car and in some cases accounted for 90% of fares on particular lines. Boycotts were organized in both cities and ridership fell sharply. Groups were organized to promote walking but the protests ended in failure.

Unlike the fixed partition found in railroad cars, the street car division was of necessity fluid reflecting the number of empty seats and the racial composition of the riders. Early street cars seated white customers at the front while blacks entered and were seated in the rear. The need to re-assign passenger seats over the course of a trip could lead to equal inconvenience for both races. There were quite a few complaints by whites that had not realized they would have to change seats often. However a 1914 Little Rock case established the right of the conductor to force riders to move from one area of the car to another. The conductor was also permitted to use force to evict individuals who refused to leave the car after failing to comply with his directions.

By the 1920s most street railway systems had converted to front door pay as you enter systems that required a single operator to collect fares and operate the car. This change presumably required riders of both races to use the same entry door.

Time passed and *Brown v. Board of Education* in May 1954 heralded the end of racial segregation in schools. In 1962 the United States Supreme Court ruled that any state statute mandating racial segregation on common carriers or facilities maintained by them was unconstitutional. Jim Crow was dead although the separate coach statute for railroads remained on the books in Arkansas until May 9, 1973 when Act 253 repealed it.

The Arkansas & Missouri Railroad Company

A & M Passenger Service Likely To End After 1998 Season

Your Editor met with Tony Hannold, President of the Arkansas & Missouri, on March 20 to discuss the special RPO souvenir cover to be sold on the Railfan Special of March 28. During the meeting I asked Hannold a number of questions. Hannold, who retires sometime in May 1998, was very dubious about continued passenger service after the 1998 season. Most tourist railroads have experienced lower ridership in recent years due to increased competition for leisure time dollars. He mentioned that the widespread availability of gambling was a particular challenge to tourist train operators.

The A&M passenger service has experienced a decrease in ridership from a peak of 21,000 to about 14,000 in 1997. The passenger service has always made money since full-season service began in 1988. To maintain net profits at satisfactory levels it has become necessary to cut out various aspects of the passenger service. He cited the discontinuance of the continental breakfast and the hostesses as examples. At the same time the vintage passenger cars and locomotives require expensive maintenance to remain in the first-class condition demanded by Mr. Hannold. Even with the substantial 1998 Springdale-Van Buren fare increases Hannold opined that 1998 would be the last year of A & M passenger service. He also mentioned that it had been difficult to find competent individuals to manage the passenger service in a manner satisfactory to Mr. Hannold. Another factor cited was the time and expense involved in litigation arising from the passenger service (I believe he was referring to the Federal sex-discrimination filed by one of the terminated hostesses).

Assuming that the service ends in November 1998, Mr Hannold plans to spend his first winter in retirement making arrangements to dispose of the passenger car fleet. He said that the railroad will make a profit on their disposal as apparently they were purchased at attractive prices. The 1899 Boston & Maine combine, long rumored to be donated to the Smithsonian Institution, will be going elsewhere. Negotiations with Bill Withuhn of the Smithsonian did reach a certain point but in the end the deal fell through as the Smithsonian lacked the necessary funding to properly display the combine. Hannold is concerned with the future homes of the passenger equipment. He hopes to find homes with well run and financially stable tourist train operations that can maintain the cars. He mentioned one existing New England tourist train operation that might meet his criteria.

I left the meeting with the sense that 1998 almost certainly will be the final year of A & M tourist train service. The A & M has a record of sudden changes but based on Hannold's comments I feel reasonably confident that 1998 will mark the eleventh and final year of A&M passenger service.

A & M Railfan Special A Success

Saturday, March 28 was clear with forecast highs in the 70s. It was a perfect day for the virtually sold out A & M Railfan Special from Springdale south to Fort Smith and return. The twelve miles from Van Buren (normal terminus for the passenger service) to Fort Smith rarely have passenger service with the last run taking place about ten years ago. The train, hauled by two RS-1's, consisted of three passenger cars, the 1899 B & M built combine and the A & M business car.

Photo stops were made at the south portal of the Winslow tunnel, the south end of trestle 1, Amaretta (near Frog Bayou and Arkansas Route 282), the bank of the Arkansas River at Van Buren (for shots of the train on the Arkansas River bridge) and at the Fort Smith Terminal. The planned stop at Rock Cut, near Schaberg, was cancelled due to wet ground caused by the heavy rain on March 27.

I found the most interesting stop to be the Fort Smith Terminal. The railroad operates a freight car re-building facility that creates cars used in per diem rental on foreign lines. The A & M has over 700 freight cars on its roster. The Terminal is also the site of a big yard where old freight cars are cut up and sold to steel mills for scrap.

The largely railfan crowd seemed to have a great day. Returning from Fort Smith the special encountered a slow order near Rock Cut caused by road work. This caused the train to arrive back in Springdale about 75 minutes behind the advertised return time of 5:00 PM.

On Sunday, March 29, the railroad ran a charter train from Springdale north to South Monett, Missouri, the A & M's interchange point with the BNSF. This 60 mile segment has rarely, if ever, seen passenger service north of Rogers. The charter party was said to be a group of Eastern railfans. Tickets were made available to the public at \$60 per seat.

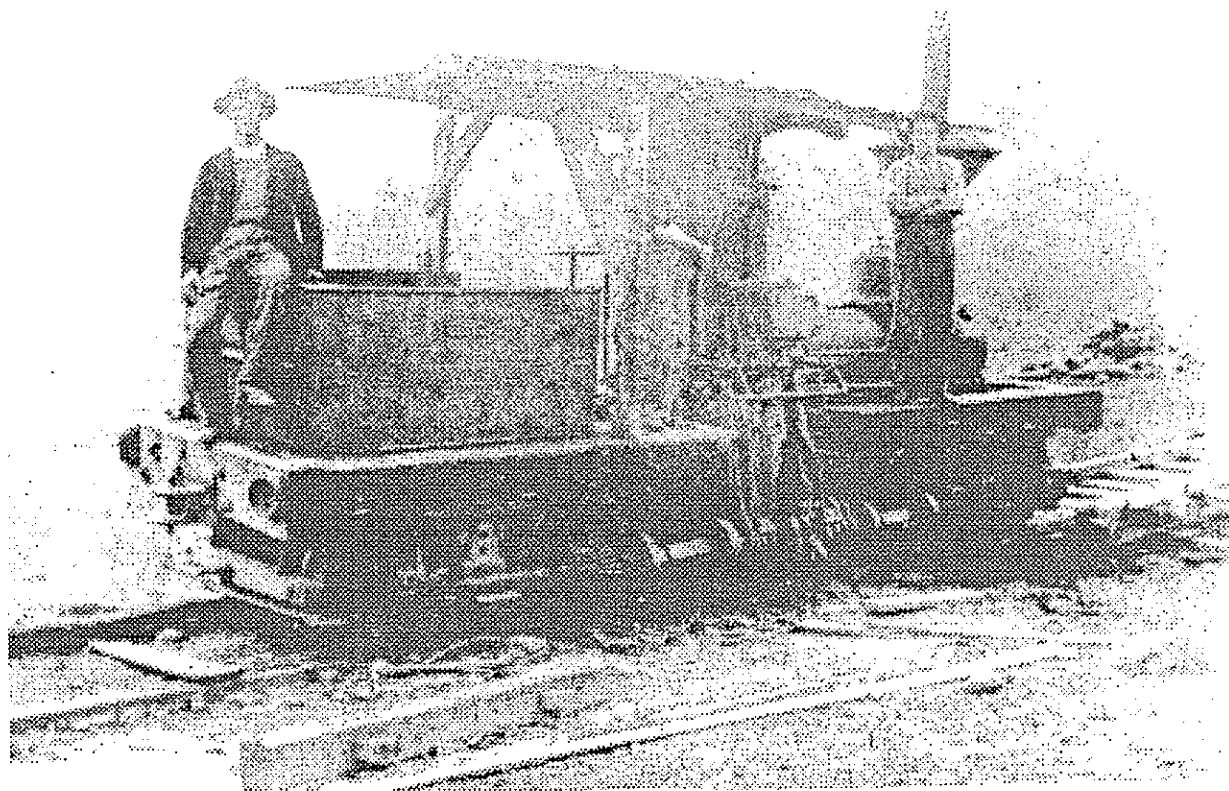
Northwest Arkansas Railroad History

The muddy image you see below represents your Editor's first effort to bring graphics into the *Scrambler*. As you can see much learning needs to be done; readers are asked to be patient during the likely lengthy learning period.

This is a photo of a Baldwin Shay steam locomotive that operated on a narrow gauge railroad located near Spoke Plant in extreme southwestern Madison County, Arkansas. This is the first narrow gauge line known to have operated in Northwest Arkansas. Chapter member Fred Lewis believes the engine to be about 8-9 tons in weight. The line, which we are calling the Spoke Plant tram, was approximately 1.5 miles long and was used to haul logs north for shipment by wagon to Pettigrew on the Frisco's St. Paul branch. The rails are made of wood.

This photo shows George Carr standing on the locomotive. The original of this photo is owned by Alva Carr of Fayetteville, whose father was George Carr. The tram was built by Jonathan Mullins who still has descendants in the area. Based on a number of factors the photo can be dated to about 1910. The Shiloh Museum has a different photo of the engine with a group of young men and women posed on the equipment.

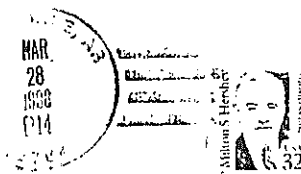
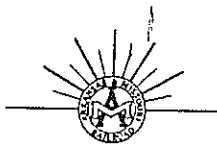
Traces of the Spoke Plant tram roadbed are said to exist. The Chapter hopes to make an excursion to the Spoke Plant area in 1998 to further document this interesting piece of Northwest Arkansas railroad history.



Railfan Special Souvenir Postal Cover

Thanks to the cooperation of Tom Maringer, a Springdale postal cover collector, Tony Hannold of the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad and Springdale Postmaster Larry Trees the Chapter was able to prepare a special RPO souvenir postal cover that was sold on the March 28, 1998 Springdale-Fort Smith Railfan Special. Each of the limited edition RPO souvenir postal covers contained a history of the RPO service that operated between Monett, Missouri and Paris, Texas. A limited supply of covers is still available and will be offered to Chapter members at the meeting on April 16, 1988 at the cost of \$1.00 per souvenir postal cover. Examples of the covers will be found throughout this issue of the *Scrambler*

ARKANSAS & MISSOURI RAILROAD COMPANY
306 EAST EMMA
SPRINGDALE, AR 72764



The Frisco's Monett-Paris Railway Post Office (RPO)

The line you ride today was first considered by the Frisco's Executive Committee in December 1878. The Frisco was concerned about the threat of another railroad building a line through Northwest Arkansas. The General Manager of the Frisco, Captain Charles W. Rogers (for whom Rogers, Arkansas is named), saw the line through Northwest Arkansas as a way to promote long-haul freight traffic to Texas. The Frisco was also attracted by the massive hardwood forests as a source of railroad ties and the potential for tourist traffic to the new resort town of Eureka Springs, Arkansas. In early April 1880 survey teams set out from Peirce City, Missouri (then a Frisco division point) to plot the new line. Grading from Plymouth, Missouri (later re-named Monett) to Avoca, Arkansas was complete by August 1880. Work also began in the Fayetteville area and on June 8, 1881 the first passenger train arrived in Fayetteville to start a great celebration

All railroads were required to carry the U.S. mail. Almost immediately a series of RPO routes were established in Northwest Arkansas.

Name of Railway Post Office

Pierce City & Fayetteville RPO
Pierce City & Mountainburgh[sic] RPO
Pierce City & Van Buren RPO
Pierce City & Fort Smith RPO

August-October 1882
October 1882-December 1882
Three weeks in December 1882
December 1882- July 1887

By 1888 Monett was an important junction point on the Frisco. It was also the base for numerous Railway Post Office runs to St. Louis, Oklahoma City, and Tulsa. In July 1887 the Monett & Fort Smith RPO began operations. It was extended to Paris, Texas in January 1888 as the Monett & Paris RPO. This 302 mile RPO operated until March 1935 when it was extended to Dallas and renamed the Monett & Dallas RPO. Nine years later in 1944 the RPO was cut back to Paris, Texas. The RPO was again cut back to Fort Smith in 1958 and operated as the Monett & Fort Smith RPO until 1965.

For more than thirty years the Frisco's line through Northwest Arkansas was its principal route to Texas. In 1899 the Texas bound traveler could take the *Texas Lone Star Special* or the *Texas & California Limited* that ran from St. Louis to Paris, Texas via Monett. In addition a local operated between Monett and Fort Smith. Each train carried a full-60 foot RPO car manned by Railway Mail service clerks. The clerks, paid between \$900 and \$1,000 per annum in 1899, had to know from memory the correct and fastest way to dispatch mail to every post office in the four states along the rail route. A clerk on the Monett & Paris RPO likely would have to know the correct routing for more than five thousand post offices. The correct routing would also involve extensive knowledge of the times and routes served by dozens of other RPOs. Clerks were tested every six months on their routing skills on a state by state basis. The minimum passing grade was 97% later relaxed to 95%. The postal clerks also were tested on postal laws and regulations.

The existence of the RPO brought many advantages to individuals and businesses in Northwest Arkansas. A letter deposited in a Chicago railroad terminal mailbox prior to 5:00 PM would be carried by night RPO trains to Monett. The letter, which cost one cent, would be delivered to the Springdale station by 8:28 AM thanks to the RPO. Residents of this area regularly enjoyed last evening's St. Louis and Kansas City newspapers the next morning. Registered mail on the RPOs enabled banks to send or receive gold and currency from correspondent banks in larger cities.

Working conditions for early RPO clerks were difficult. Lighting on the early Monett-Paris RPO cars was by kerosene lamps that emitted soot and dim light. Later Pintsch gas fixtures that used an explosive gas to provide a greenish light came into use. The clerks were on their feet constantly as they sorted thousands of letters, newspapers and later parcel post. The RPO cars were owned by the railroads and rented to the Railway Mail Service (RMS). The RMS required RPO cars to ride immediately behind the engine in order to lessen the danger of robberies. In the days of steam this meant the RPO clerks were coated with soot from the engine. RPO cars were normally of wood construction and only in 1916 did Congress mandate the gradual introduction of all-steel RPO cars. The combination of wood cars and location next to the engine meant that RPO clerks were at high risk in the event of an accident. From 1876 to 1905 there were 9,355 trains with RPO cars involved in accidents. During the same period 207 RPO clerks were killed, 1,516 sustained serious injuries and 3,764 were slightly injured.

In the 1920s the Frisco established a new route for its Texas trains using track of the M-K-T Railway. The new route avoided the difficult grades on the Monett-Paris line and reduced daily through trains from three to one. Monett-Paris was now a secondary line with one daily train that carried a RPO. It also connected with three small RPO routes in Northwest Arkansas including the Rogers & Grove, Oklahoma (1901-1933), Fayetteville & Pettigrew (1898-1933) and the Fayetteville & Okmulgee, Oklahoma (1903-1940). By 1954 the Monett-Paris *Meteor* carried a sleeping car to Fort Smith, coaches and a combination baggage-mail-express car with a 30 foot RPO compartment staffed by four RPO clerks. South of Fort Smith the RPO was but a 15-foot compartment manned by one clerk. Business south of Fort Smith was light and in 1958 the Frisco secured Interstate Commerce Commission authorization to discontinue passenger service between Fort Smith and Paris.

The Monett-Fort Smith train now operated as a nameless train with one diesel engine, an air-conditioned coach, one baggage car and a combination baggage-RPO car. Each train had crew of six excluding the RPO clerks. In early 1965 the train was carrying an average of five passengers per mile. The Frisco applied to the ICC for discontinuance of all passenger trains on March 15, 1965. Hearings were held in affected communities. Not even one person showed up at the Fayetteville hearing to voice their opinion on the proposed discontinuance. The ICC authorized discontinuance of the Monett-Fort Smith passenger train in August 1965. The last run of the train and RPO took place in September 1965.

The loss of the Monett-Fort Smith train and its RPO was not a unique event. In the 1950s and 1960s hundred of inter-city passenger trains were discontinued. Many trains carried RPOs that helped to offset heavy passenger losses. In many cases passenger trains were discontinued when the Post Office dropped RPO runs. The Post Office also began to use air for first class mail. The introduction of ZIP codes in 1963 and a shift to large sectional sorting centers also reduced the need for the labor intensive in transit sorting done by the RPO clerks. The last RPO operated between New York and Washington on June 30, 1977 ending all RPO service in the United States.

ARKANSAS & MISSOURI RAILROAD COMPANY
306 EAST EMMA
SPRINGDALE, AR 72764



A Visit to a Train Waver

By Bill Ussery

It has been a tradition since the first train rolled down a railroad for people along the trackside to wave at the train; it's crew and passengers. The railroad people always responded with a smile and a wave back. Sometimes that included two toots with the train whistle. Young people as well as older folks would find the time and place to be near when a train came thundering by. Many warm friendships have evolved from such encounters.

This has been the situation with a retired schoolteacher who lives several miles south of Mountainburg, Arkansas. Her country home faces State Highway 282 but the back faces the mainline of the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad. For many years now Mrs. Frances has come out onto her back porch and waved at each train as it went by. Sometimes she would just wave her hand but usually she waved a tea towel or dishcloth that was easier seen by the train crew and passengers. The passenger conductors have for many years alerted the passengers about Mrs. Frances as the train approached her home. All on that side of the train would wave back at her. Sometimes the conductor would have to explain what a tea towel or dishcloth was. Some of the younger generation on board was not familiar with these items. This proved to be highlight of the trip for many passengers and train crews. She met nearly all trains, freight as well as passenger. When she failed to be on her back porch she was inside caring for her invalid husband Fred who passed away in February of this year.

One of the passenger conductors suggested we give her mailing address to the passengers who might wish to drop her a card or letter. In 1997 many slips with her name and address were given out to passengers. As a result Mrs. France has received cards and letters from all over the United States. Many letters were from present or former schoolteachers. This was rewarding for both sender and receiver.

On March 12, 1998 four of us who work as Arkansas & Missouri passenger conductors out of Springdale and one conductor out of Van Buren went to visit Mrs. France in person. She was a most gracious hostess and was so very thrilled to meet us. We got a brief history of her teaching career in Chester and Mountainburg as she went on to obtain her master's degree in education. She had taught many second-generation children, the children of her earlier former students. At 83 years of age (she volunteered this information), she is still quite spry and alert. "Working with children all of her life has helped keep her young", she said.

While it is a high point for the train passengers, it is a highlight for Mrs. France when the train goes by and all wave at her. This helps make her day brighter. One day a freight engineer new to the run did not toot at her. She called the railroad and informed them that the engineer had "high-hatted" her. The railroad informed all engine crews that they should blow the whistle as they neared her home and give her two toots as a signal of recognition. All crews have been faithful to do this, much to the pleasure of all concerned.

To top off the visit to Mrs. France, her son Lanier who lives next door, took us on a quick tour of their cattle ranch. We visited their log cabin at the top of one of the Boston Mountains. At the cabin we were shown a headlamp from the steam engines used to help passenger and freight trains up the 2.8 % grade between Chester and Winslow, Arkansas. The locomotive was to be scrapped so Lanier salvaged the headlamp. The cabin also had other antiques.

Each time the train passes Mrs. Frances's home, it will take on a new meaning as she comes out to wave at all on board, especially for conductors Gene Schmitz, Bob Oswald, Bill Ussery, Tom Ross and Fred Tober.

(Editor's note: As I sat at the keyboard typing in this interesting story my wife handed me the *Morning News of Northwest Arkansas* for Sunday, April 5, 1998. On page A5 there was a major story about Tony Hannold's retirement and the "definite" end of all A & M passenger service at the end of the season in November 1998. Mrs. Frances will have many less trains to wave at after November 1998. A tip of the Editor's hat goes to Chapter Treasurer Bill Ussery for taking the time to share this human-interest story with our readers. Bill is now a "published writer" and you can join the ranks by sending in your story for publication in the *Scrambler*.)

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

So our Editor-in-Chief wants to see reviews of railroad movies! A film critic I ain't, but I'll play the game with some of the flicks in my library. Some of these are pretty good foreign films, and, not surprisingly, quite a few are oaters. Fair warning--some abound with implausibilities, improbabilities, and impossibilities, with a few absurdities. Upon which I shall pounce! OK, here we go--

SHANGHAI EXPRESS

Paramount, 1932. 82minutes. Black & White.

Marlene Dietrich, Clive Brook, Warner Oland, Anna May Wong, Eugene Palette.

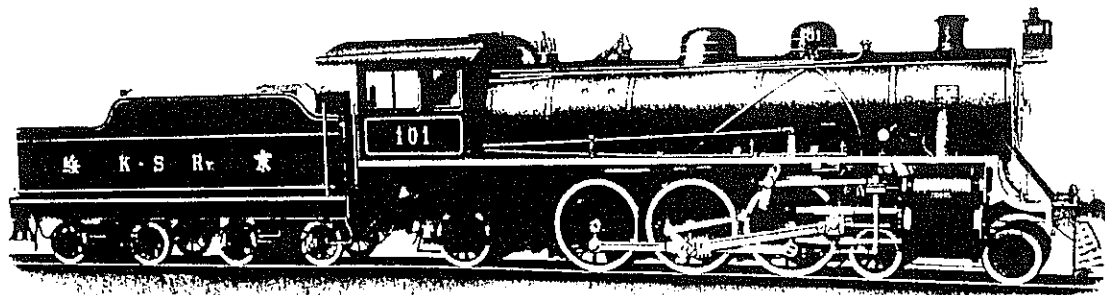
It's 1931 and civil war is raging in China. The notorious Shanghai Lily (Dietrich) is leaving Peiping for greener pastures in Shanghai on the same train as her old flame British Captain Donald Harvey (Brook). The rekindled romance runs hot and cold, all the while interrupted by the insurrection in which Warner Oland plays a significant part. (Later in 1931 Oland starred in the first of 16 Charlie Chan movies.)

An obvious inconsistency is the British management and operation of the railroad which looks suspiciously like the Southern Pacific.

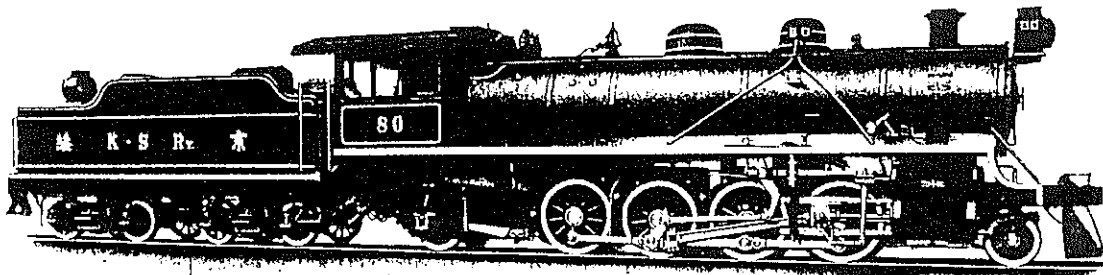
Lee Garmes well deserved the Oscar he won for his mood enhancing photography. Academy Award nominations also included Best Picture and Best Director Josef von Sternberg.

RCO

PEKIN-KALGAN RAILWAY



4-6-0 No. 101; 62" driving wheels, 20" x 26" cylinders, 180# boiler pressure, 25,700# tractive effort, total weight 177,000#.



2-8-2 No. 80; 52" driving wheels, 20" x 28" cylinders, 180# boiler pressure, 33,000# tractive effort, total weight 176,000#.

**ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Chapter established November 1987

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Meetings... ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS Chapter No. 158 (ABMT) Third Thursday of each month (except December dinner meeting). Meetings are held at the Shiloh Museum's General Store, 118 West Johnson, Springdale, Arkansas at 7:00 PM. Visitors are welcome at all meetings. Annual dues for 1998 are \$29 for individuals and \$31 for a family. Please call 501-750-8165 for directions to the Shiloh Museum

AMTRAK Sets October 31, 1998 Start Date for Northwest Arkansas Service

April 1, 1998 (via wire services) Following passage of the ISTEA authorization bill AMTRAK has announced that it intends to start a low-cost regional demonstration service (RDS) in Northwest Arkansas commencing October 31, 1998. An AMTRAK spokesman explained that RDS is a pilot program designed to bring the benefits of AMTRAK service to areas lacking any passenger rail service. The yearlong RDS project is funded by a \$3.5 million appropriation included in the newly-enacted ISTEA legislation at the request of Republican Congressman Asa Hutchinson

The new service is intended to show that AMTRAK can provide high quality service to new areas without massive expenditures for new equipment. In view of the short time to start up AMTRAK has taken a number of innovative steps. The planned service will operate hourly daily between Fayette Junction and Garfield pending execution of a definitive passenger services agreement with the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad. The railroad hopes to operate a Dickson Street Special on Friday and Saturday nights as a means of reducing drunk driver accidents. Shop personnel at AMTRAK's Beech Grove, Indiana facility will construct two sets of push-pull equipment powered by surplus GP-9 locomotives recently released from Northeast Corridor ballast train service. This first ever RDS program also permits AMTRAK to showcase its ability to provide innovative solutions to difficult problems. The recent banning of AMTRAK's Material Handling Cars (MHC) from most railroads has made available a large number of new cars. The former MHC cars will be renamed APC (All Purpose Cars) cars and reconfigured to carry 40 passengers, eight horses (or cows) and up to 18,000 chickens. The AMTRAK spokesman stated the APC cars will see service only at night for the carriage of animals. An incidental benefit for motorists will be reduction in evening tractor-trailer traffic thus reducing road congestion. Preliminary discussions have taken place with the sale barn in Springdale and AMTRAK is seriously considering the establishment of a special Thursday night service for farmers planning to sell cattle in Springdale on Friday mornings. This would require extension of the Arkansas & Missouri's existing East Springdale spur to the planned new Rodeo Grounds station.

The new service will also include some rarely seen rolling stock. During warmer weather AMTRAK plans to operate gondola cars so that both natives and visitors will have a chance to enjoy the scenery. Following the shock announcement of the Federal Railroad Administration requiring cabooses on all trains effective November 1, 1998, AMTRAK will operate cabooses on all of its RDS trains. The new cabooses, also available for charter, will include a Jacuzzi whirlpool, sauna, and a small restaurant-snack bar featuring authentic Ozark plateau foods and beverages.

AMTRAK hopes to use the Northwest Arkansas Regional Demonstration Service as a pilot program for testing new programs with substantial profit potential. It has had preliminary talks with Northwest Regional Airport representatives concerning a monorail to complement the \$16.5 million allocated in the new ISTEA bill for the new road to the airport.

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