

GREAT PLAINS DISPATCH

The Official Newsletter of the Great Plains Transportation Museum
and the Wichita Chapter National Railway Historical Society

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LOOKING BACK

By Michael M. Bartels



20 YEARS AGO

I almost missed this: Great Plains Transportation Museum sponsored an excursion behind Union Pacific 4-8-4 No. 844 from Salina to Oakley, Kan., Oct. 20, 1990, with bus return. (The engine and cars were in Kansas for the Eisenhower Centennial.)

30 YEARS AGO

Burlington Northern came to Wichita through merger with the Frisco Nov. 21, 1980. Consolidated rail operations began Dec. 1st. (The Nov. 23, 1930, Wichita Eagle had an article on Frisco's 50th anniversary here. The last rail was laid on Sunday, May 23, 1880, but there was local resentment about the bond issue.)

80 YEARS AGO

The city commission Nov. 10, 1930, let Wichita Transportation Co. change the routing of the College Hill and Cleveland lines so as to end streetcar traffic on First and Market in the downtown loop. College Hill cars will run through with Stockyards and Cleveland will run through on South Main, effective Nov. 17, 1930. A stub bus line was also established from Hillsdale and Douglas to Oliver and Douglas. (Wichita Eagle, Nov. 1, 11, 20, 1930; Wichita Beacon, Nov. 9, 14, 1930)

Missouri Pacific has 658 on its payroll in Wichita. (Wichita Eagle, Nov. 12, 1930)

Arkansas Valley Interurban asked the Hutchinson city commission Nov. 14, 1930, to let it build a new route to the Rock Island station instead of the present one to eliminate hauling freight over street railway lines. R.B. Campbell said AVI is rapidly becoming a freight railway. In 1921, 95 percent of its business was passenger with only 119 carloads of freight. In 1929, 50 percent was freight and this year more than half is freight with passenger business declining all the time. Last year it handled 5,300 carloads. (Wichita Beacon, Wichita Eagle, Nov. 15, 1930)

An addition to the AVI freight house in Newton is now completed and reconditioning of the passenger station is also finished. (Wichita Eagle, Nov. 18, 1930)

George M. Correll, 64, died Nov. 19, 1930. He was engineer on the first Orient passenger train when it left Anthony. (Wichita Eagle, Nov. 20, 1930)

A.J. Cleary, new vice president of the Wichita Transportation Co., had a long acquaintance with Pancho Villa while working for the Orient in northern Mexico. (Wichita Beacon, Nov. 23, 1930)

Wichita Transportation Co. has 258 employees with a bus company payroll of more than \$147,000 in the past year and a streetcar payroll of more than \$261,000. (Wichita Beacon, Nov. 28, 1930)

90 YEARS AGO

Work soon is to begin on construction of a concrete elevated platform at Union Station. For a long time travelers have complained about the roughness of the board-covered platform. Scaffolding is being erected for the purpose of repairing cornice work on the front of the building. However, chances of constructing the long-talked of train sheds appear to be very remote. (Wichita Eagle, Nov. 4, 1920)

AVI began using its new line into Wichita Nov. 8, 1920, running all passenger trains to the freight house at Douglas and Waco temporarily until the new passenger station was ready. (Wichita Eagle, Nov. 6, 9, 1920)

The Nov. 10, 1920, Eagle and Beacon had articles about a possible AVI extension to Salina. It carried approximately 750,000 passengers a year.

Safety platforms for streetcar passengers on Douglas Avenue are considered a success and the company is now fastening them to the pavement so automobiles won't move them by accidentally hitting them. Two more are to be built at First and Second and Main. (Wichita Beacon, Nov. 12, 17, 1920)

The Nov. 21, 1920, Eagle had a full-page article on saving the Orient. About 740 miles has been constructed from the south side of East Douglas Avenue in Wichita to Alpine, Texas.

Please see *Looking Back*, Page 5



**THE MISSION OF
THE GREAT PLAINS
TRANSPORTATION
MUSEUM**

To be *THE* Railroad Museum
Of Kansas.

Dedicated to record and exhibit the importance of railroad transportation in the human, agricultural, commercial and industrial heritage of Wichita, Kansas and the Great Plains.

To showcase that heritage with an "Action Display" of rail equipment operation. Giving visitors an exciting learning experience through motion, set in a unique, historic and scenic urban location.

To enhance the action display with significant and appropriate railroad locomotives, rolling stock, equipment and structures; through interpretive displays, dioramas, exhibits and media; and educational and community programs.



The GREAT PLAINS DISPATCHER is the official monthly newsletter of the Wichita Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, Inc. and the Great Plains Transportation Museum, Inc. Members receive the DISPATCHER as part of their membership. All material submitted for publication should be submitted by the 25th of the month for publication in the next months DISPATCHER. Submissions may be sent to the editor at: editor@gptm.us, 316-744-7259 or 700 E. Douglas, Wichita, KS 67202-3506

**NOVEMBER
NRHS PROGRAM**

Our own Mr. Lee Swanson will present a program on a personal perspective on railroad development in North-eastern Ohio

The meeting will be held Fri., November 19, at the *Great Plains Transportation Museum*, 700 E. Douglas, Wichita. Meeting time is 7:30 pm.

There will be the 6:00 p.m. informal dinner gathering at the Riverside Cafe, 739 W. 13th, Wichita before the meeting.

DECEMBER

Slide-Free-For-All. For our viewing pleasure bring slides or digital images or movie excerpts on a DVD. A slide projector, a computer, a DVD player, and a computer projector will be available. Bring your digital images on a CD (preferred) or on a jump drive. In December we will have the nomination and election of officers for 2011. The vice-president is in charge of programs and that position remains vacant. As of this issue of the DS we have volunteers to cover the January, February, April, May, and October programs. Unless someone takes the V.P. position the Chapter will need more volunteers for programs.

OTHER EVENTS

Nov. 27 – Joplin Museum Complex Train Show, Schifferdecker Park, Joplin, MO, 9-3. Rick Gardner, rickgardner@sofnet.com

Dec. 4-5 - Oklahoma City Train Show, Oklahoma State Fair Grounds, Oklahoma City. Sat. 9-5, Sun. 11-5. www.okctrainshow.com

Dec. 5 – Santa Arrives By Train, Great Overland Station, 701 N. Kansas, Topeka. 1-3 PM.

www.greatoverlandstation.com

Dec. 11-12 - MacTrax Show, McPherson Comm. Bldg., 122 E. Marlin, McPherson. Sat. 10:-5, Sun 11-4 skytracker@ks-usa.net

Dec. 11-12 – Oklahoma City Train Show, Oklahoma State Fairgrounds. Sat. 9-5, Sun. 11-5. www.okctrainshow.com

Feb. 12-13, 2011 - Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet. Cessna Activity Center. Sat. 9-6, Sun. 11-4. Phil Aylward 316-830-6608

LA JUNTA SUB NEWS

By Sam Andrews

The recent speed reduction to 60 mph for Amtrak on jointed rail in western Kansas has also resulted in freight speed being dropped to 40 mph which has created a major format change for BNSF traffic from Newton to La Junta. The double ended pool turns at both stations have now been dropped with Dodge City now being the away from home terminal for Newton to the east and La Junta to the west. Since these are now much lower paying and less desirable jobs (at least on the Newton side) no one really wants now to be on a pool turn. Recently the Newton side had three openings (out of five) on its conductor pool.

The change has also resulted in an increased workload for the Garden City road switcher. This job now is required to build east & west tonnage pickups which are now being grabbed by the two mainline jobs. In return, this has created a much less car count and work enroute for the La Junta-Dodge local. Prior to all this, the local would pickup at Garden twice a week with sometimes 80-90 cars making a 130-150 car train into Dodge being pulled by two little switch engines at times.

WATCH OUT! IT'S RAILROAD TIME

by J. Harvey Koehn

November is an anniversary month in time-keeping. For their operating purposes, railroads put into effect, on November 18, 1883, a system that divided the portion of the United States that the lower 48 states now occupy into four time zones. It was not until 1916 that Congress passed legislation to make time zones official in the U.S.

Before 1883 communities set their clocks to sun time. As railroads across this country developed and evolved, and people could travel faster than covered wagon speed it did not take long to figure out that noon in eastern Kansas was different from noon in central or in western Kansas. Therefore, railroads operating time-based trains encountered difficulties in keeping a schedule.

The originator of the time zone idea was Dr. Charles F. Dowd, a gentleman who did not work for the railroad. It is ironic to note that Mr. Dowd was killed on November 12, 1904 by a train at a grade crossing.

Railroads developed strict rules of time-keeping for train conductors and engineers. One of the paragraphs in the Standard Time section of the 1927 Santa Fe rule book states: "Conductors and enginemen and foremen and engineers of yard engines must compare watches with each other before starting each day's work and assure each other that their watches have been wound at a time which will insure their running at least sixteen hours. Brakemen, switchmen and firemen must compare watches with their conductor, foreman or engineman at first opportunity." The watches these crewmen carried had to conform to strict standards. There will be more about the watch and time standards in a future article.

The railroader's watch in the photo is a Waltham brand. A Burlington RR employee (Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy RR) used this watch during his years of service with the Burlington.

A descendent of this employee allowed the author to photograph this watch a few years ago. The Burlington did not have the presence in Kansas that others such as the Santa Fe, Rock Island, Missouri Pacific, Union Pacific, and the Missouri, Kansas & Texas, aka the Katy, had. There were four Burlington branch lines in northern Kansas that extended down into the state from Nebraska.



DEPOT NEWS FROM TOPEKA

Great Overland Station at Topeka have been preparing for the move of the Welda Santa Fe depot and various cars that were donated by the John W. Briery estate. This news was posted at www.greatoverlandstation.com.

November 6: We have been working diligently on getting all of the utility companies lined up and prepared to raise the power lines as we move the depot and caboose into Topeka here soon. It is planned for this week but the date and time is still pending until all signoffs are done. Due to the move being over a period of over 8 hours, we will not be announcing the specific details. This has been at the request of the movers and the City of Police Department as they don't want to have any delays due to spectators being in the trafficway or blocking roads. As it gets closer to the day, we will announce when the depot and caboose will be arriving at The Station. The parking lots and entrances into the Great Overland Station will be barricaded off to keep the road open for the wide load.

TOPEKA DRIVING TOUR

The Topeka Chapter NRHS is sponsoring its Fall Driving Tour on Saturday, November 20, and will follow the abandoned Santa Fe branch line that ran from Wilder Junction south of Bonner Springs through Leavenworth and on up to Hawthorne. Lunch will probably be at the restaurant in the former Santa Fe depot in Leavenworth. The tour will leave from Gage Bowl North, 200 NW Hiway 24, Topeka, at 8:00 a.m. If you plan to go along on this tour, let Robbie Chitwood know, 785-232-0351 or robchit@yahoo.com.

ANOTHER DEPOT MOVE

The former Santa Fe depot at Galva, Ks has been moved. After languishing trackside since it's last use for storage for the grain elevator, the depot has been purchased for use as a shop. Moving day was Sept. 8 and the depot now sits in the 100 block of north Mulberry. *McPherson Sentinel*

SOUTHWEST CHIEF SCHEDULE CHANGE

Due to lower speed restrictions imposed by the BNSF, the timetable for the Southwest Chief has been revised.

Scheduled time at Newton for #3 is now 2:45 AM, for #4 is now 2:59 AM.

UNION PACIFIC'S GREAT EXCURSION ADVENTURE

Union Pacific has started a contest to determine where a UP steam excursion will travel. Here is your chance to help bring UP steam back to Wichita. Visit <http://x.up.com/820> and vote for Wichita! Participants can vote once a day, so vote early and vote often. Bonus points are added when shared via Facebook and Twitter.

RAILROADING IN WICHITA NOVEMBER 1910

By Fred Tefft

November 1

Possibly the biggest Halloween undertaking was that of a crowd of boys in the northern part of the city, who attempted to demoralize street car traffic on the Stock Yards car line. They overturned the Park Place waiting station at 13th and Market streets and in so doing were careful to see that it fell directly across the car track. Needless to say, traffic was blocked for some time. Finally an officer with the aid of about fourteen men, managed to shove it off the track.

The first combination passenger and baggage coach for service on the Arkansas Valley Interurban railway arrived today. It was on exhibition near the Frisco depot all afternoon. Tomorrow it will be taken to Valley Center to await the establishment of regular service between that place and Wichita.

November 2

John Graham, ex-mayor, says he sees no reason why street car company refuses to give residents of North Riverside street car service. The company has its line repaired from Franklin avenue north across the river, and the only excuse it has for not running cars to Tenth street is not catalogued.

The Missouri Pacific passenger depot and the platform and tracks from Douglas avenue nearly to First street will be lighted by electricity. The depot will also be lighted on the interior by electric lights. Electricity will supplant gas in lighting the facilities of the Missouri Pacific company here.

Work started yesterday on the new feeder lines of the Wichita Railroad and Light company. Thirty linemen were at work installing the new system which will supply the line in Wichita with enough power for any emergency in any kind of weather. It will take about six weeks to complete the job, at cost of \$25,000. The new feeder system will give the company five times

as much copper along its lines and five times as much current as it has had heretofore. The copper wire being used is two and a half times as large as that now in use. There are 80 tons of it and it took four freight cars to transport it from the factory to Wichita. The wire alone cost \$18,000, exclusive of freight.

Superintendent W. R. Morrison says work will start some time this week on extension of the West Douglas avenue street car line. A switch will be put in just east of the Missouri Pacific tracks. Some other work is under way which may delay its completion all the way to Athenian, although there should be no delay as far as Millwood. The other projects under way now are the relaying of track from 9th to 12th on North Main and the putting in of some special work at 21st and Market to connect with the Arkansas Valley Interurban.

November 4

Article on proposed track elevation starting "Definite positive action in the matter of elevating the railroad tracks must be taken by the Santa Fe and other railways at once, or the city of Wichita will proceed to take drastic action to compel the railways to elevate their tracks," said Mayor C. L. Davidson yesterday. "This proposition has been delayed too long now."

Preparations have been made by official of the Midland Valley Railroad company to start two preliminary parties of engineers at work at once in connection with the proposed extension of the line into this city from Arkansas City. In anticipation of commencing regular traffic on the Arkansas Valley Interurban line, every effort is being made by the company's officials to complete the rate and time schedule. With the completion of these the first of next week everything will be in readiness for operating the line between here and Valley Center, which is the limit so far of construction.

November 5

Long article about delays in resuming service on street car line to North Riverside. No car service for three weeks -- all Riverside cars are using the west line on Franklin avenue. This blamed by W. R. Morrison, of Wichita Railroad and Light Company, on delays by paving company in completing pavement. West Douglas avenue line will probably be in operation some time before first of the year. No other extensions will be started this fall. There is talk of an extension on South Emporia, but nothing will be done here or elsewhere before spring. There is a large amount of work to be done on the Stock Yards line and on 21st Street. Work is well under way on installing the new feeder system from the new power house, an improvement which will cost \$25,000. The added power is thought to be sufficient to pull cars no matter how bad storms may become this winter.

November 13

Inauguration of passenger service on the Arkansas Valley Interurban Railroad is awaiting the completion of the cement work on the North Main street double tracking of the city railway company. President O. A. Boyle said yesterday it was quite possible cars would be running by next Saturday. When started the service will be a car every two hours each way. Yesterday the track laying to Sedgwick City was finished, but it is not all graded up or surfaced and setting trolley poles and putting in overhead equipment is to follow.

November 14

The Kansas Gas and Electric company is nearly through with the placing of its transformers at the Valley Center substation of the Arkansas Valley Interurban, and it is hoped to start regular train service between Wichita and Valley Center before next Sunday, although this depends on how the con-

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

crete sets in the paving of the street car tracks on North Market street. Mr. O. A. Boyle said the second car for the Arkansas Valley Interurban passenger service passed through Kansas City and should arrive here in a few days. It is a straight passenger car, where the first is a combination passenger and freight car.

November 16

Rock Island Railroad installing a telephone system connecting its freight depot with its new yard and roundhouse in the northern part of the city. Roundhouse, coal chutes, water service, and other facilities expected to be completed and ready for service December 1st. The new yards and tracks are completed and in use. There are six tracks, each 4200 feet long with a capacity of 600 cars. Eighty-five pound steel has been used.

Santa Fe depot to be heated by steam heat from heating plant at the new freight depot corner of William and Tremont streets. Steam heat will also be furnished the coaches which make up the Wichita and Western and Englewood trains, and all lay over coaches and sleeping cars.

November 17

The Arkansas Valley Interurban is to commence operating cars at 2 o'clock next Saturday afternoon. The cement work on the double tracking on North Main street was completed yesterday. Pullman passenger car No. 2 was unloaded at Valley Center early yesterday afternoon. It differs from the first one in that it has no baggage compartment, but is all passenger, with a capacity of 50 people.

November 18

Officers of Illinois Steel company, a lateral of the U.S. Steel corporation, in the city yesterday. A year ago Mr. O. A. Boyle negotiated with them for the contract of supplying steel for his road, and already the steel mills at

Gary, Indiana have delivered to the Interurban company 1,760 tons of steel rails and rail joints, costing approximately \$65,000.

November 19

Article -- "Regular Service on Interurban to be Started Today" First regular scheduled passenger car to leave at 2:00 p.m. At 9:00 a.m. a special car will run to Valley Center, returning about noon, for officers of the road and a few invited guests. All cars will leave the intersection of William and South Main streets until the tracking is completed to the depot at the corner of Water and First streets. Cars will run every two hours. Cars will stop to take on or discharge passengers on the city line at Main and 1st, 2nd, Central, Murdock, and 11th and at Market and 15th, 18th, and 21st and Main. Destination must be north of 21st and Main, and none picked up south of that point southbound. Fare to Valley Center 25 cents. To Sullivan's dam 10 cents.

November 20

Report on inauguration of Arkansas Valley Interurban service yesterday. The first car in morning was pulled from Valley Center to Sedgwick by a Frisco steam engine, No. 2699*. First car out on regular service (at 2:00 p.m.) carried 54 passengers. Cars will leave the intersection of William and South Main street at the City hall until the tracking is completed into the depot at Water and First streets. No tickets will be sold until the station is in use, cash fares only being taken.

November 24

The Interurban Railroad will run both cars on an early schedule service today from 10:00 a.m. and then throughout the day until 10:00 p.m. to permit all who have the holiday to make the scenic trip to Valley Center if they desire. Everything is now down to routine and with no delays or hitches anywhere.

November 26

There were 1091 passengers hauled on the Interurban on Thanksgiving day. At 10:00 a.m. the schedule of service was changed to hourly and all the cars were filled all day. On one trip the smaller car No. 2 made the run from North Main street to Valley Center in 20 minutes.

The first week of the Arkansas Valley Interurban's operation ended at 2:00 p.m. today. Estimating this morning's business, the Arkansas Valley Interurban hauled 4266 passengers during the first seven days. Two big days were last Sunday, with over 1200 passengers handled, and Thanksgiving with nearly 1100. The average was slightly over 600 passengers per day

Dr. Edward N. Tihen's Notes from Wichita Newspapers, Special Collections and University Archives, Wichita State University Libraries

* SL-SF 2699 shows as former KCFS&M 5, Baldwin 4-6-0 freight built 1871 and scrapped in 1914.

LOOKING BACK

From Page 1

Of the 200-mile gap between Kansas City and Wichita, about one-third is graded and many bridges are in position. It employs 600 in Wichita with a payroll of over \$1 million. The shop here is also now employed in rebuilding Frisco engines.

An ad in the Nov. 26, 1920, Eagle said Birney Safety Cars were now used in more than 200 U.S. cities. "The Wichita Railroad and Light Co. points with pardonable pride to the fact that it was among the very first to install the Birney Safety Cars--setting the pace."

November 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2  Work Session	3	4	5	6 Museum Open Work Day
7	8	9 Evening Work Session	10	11  Veterans Day	12	13 Museum Open Work Day
14	15	16 Evening Work Session	17 GPTM BOD	18	19 NRHS Meeting	20 Museum Open Work Day
21	22	23 Evening Work Session	24	25 	26	27 Museum Open Work Day
28	29	30 Evening Work Session				

GREAT PLAINS
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