

Carolina Conductor



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Monthly Newsletter of the Carolina Railroad Heritage Association, Inc.

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Preserving the Past Active in the Present Planning for the Future

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Spartanburg Amtrak Station

298 Magnolia Street

Spartanburg, SC 29301-2330

Wednesday 10-2 & Saturday 10-2

Meeting Site:

Fountain Inn Presbyterian Church

307 North Main Street

Fountain Inn, SC 29644

Third Friday of the Month at 7:00 p.m.

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Articles can be submitted anytime.

South Carolina Central Railroad

The South Carolina Central Railroad (SCRF), a Genesee & Wyoming property, is a small short line that is headquartered in Darlington, South Carolina on original Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line trackage with a system that now stretches 51 miles in length.

The history of these lines dates back more than 100 years and in some ways it is perhaps surprising they survived at all after the turbulent years of the 1970s and 1980s.

Presently, the SCRF's interchange point is at Florence with CSX. Unfortunately, despite numerous lines once radiating into and out of the region many (all of ACL or SAL ancestry) have been abandoned.

The South Carolina Central does not have an extensive customer base but does have a diverse traffic base. Due to the significant amount of traffic the railroad now handles the future of this short line looks very promising.

History, the South Carolina Central was not always a G&W property; its heritage can be traced back to the late 1980's to a now-defunct short line conglomerate, RailTex.

This company emerged on the scene in 1977 and grew into one of the largest such companies of its day. It was eventually sold to RailAmerica on February 4, 2000. RA, of course, would go on to join Genesee & Wyoming in 2012.



South Carolina Central GP10 #8383 is seen here at Florence, South Carolina on April of 2001. The unit began its career as Pittsburgh & Lake Erie GP7 #5728.

History

The South Carolina Central Railroad dates back to 1987 when CSX Transportation was interested in

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Museum Happenings

The photo tells what *Train Day* was like on the May 11. →



← One of five groups of 3rd graders that visited the museum. Oh, for some of that energy and lots of questions.



↑ One of the new Charger diesels on Amtrak #19 running four and a half hours late.

Wanted—Articles for the Carolina Conductor

Submit an article of 200 words or more with some photos and captions and see them in print. Every one of us has some unique railroad experience that would make interesting reading for our membership. Your editor always needs more contributions of railway history and news.

shedding low-density branch lines all across its system massive eastern system.

Looking to diversify its holdings, short line specialist RailTex stepped and purchased the trackage naming the new railroad the South Carolina Central.

The company was founded by Bruce Flohr who was originally only leasing railcars. While this business was profitable he looked to widen his revenue stream and launched the small San Diego & Imperial Valley Railroad on March 8, 1984 (still in service under Genesee & Wyoming).

This new operation worked out an agreement with the Metropolitan Transit Development Board of San Diego to provide freight service over its San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway.

Flohr employed three strategies to increase business; aggressive marketing away from the primary rail line, acquiring non-union railroads, and purchasing second-hand locomotives.



One of the South Carolina Central's few switchers, SW1200r #8, is seen here in Hamlet, North Carolina during April of 1998.

This tactic proved very successful; when RailAmerica acquired the company it owned 26 railroads that totaled more than 4,100 route miles.

The modern short line movement continues to employ many of Flohr's practices today. The South Carolina Central's track is located in the northern part of the state and consists of two primary lines; one between Society Hill and Cheraw, and another much larger line between Florence and Bishopville.

The shorter section of track was the oldest constructed, dating back to the Cheraw & Darlington Rail-

road. The C&D was chartered in 1849 to connect its namesake cities and with strong financial backing had completed its main line between the two towns by 1853.

The company was severely damaged by the Civil War although a few years after the war had ended it rebuilt its entire line and extended it as far south as Florence, giving it a system covering 38.4 miles according to a later Seaboard Coast Line timetable.

By 1892 the railroad had reached Wadesboro, North Carolina after it acquired the Cheraw & Salisbury Railroad. This gave the C&D a line stretching exactly 63.0 miles and by 1898 it came under the control of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.



The present-day South Carolina Central Railroad with a pair of GP38's painted in parent Genesee & Wyoming's colors at Floyd, South Carolina on April 1, 2014.

After the ACL had merged with the Seaboard Air Line the entire line between Florence and Wadesboro remained in operation although it was later abandoned between Floyd and Society Hill (a section of line totaling 11.7 miles in length), and between Wadesboro and Cheraw (this section totaled 24.6 miles in length).

As for the second, larger section of track it also has components of original ACL trackage, with the rest former SAL property.

The section of line between Floyd and Hartsville was constructed by the Hartsville Railroad in 1889, meant to connect the Hartsville RR with the C&D and totaled exactly 10.0 miles in length.

The C&D purchased the railroad in 1895 before, again, it came under the control of the ACL a few years later.



The South Carolina Central Railroad original logo.

Finally, the only section of original SAL trackage runs between Bishopville and Hartsville and totals exactly 16.7 miles in length according to the SAL's official timetable.

When CSX Corporation was formed in 1980 the new company slowly integrated the new railroads part of the merger, a process not completed until CSX Transportation was born in 1987.

fluous or poorly performing. This was not isolated to the conglomerate's southern lines; significant portions of the former Baltimore & Ohio as well as sections of the Chesapeake & Ohio were either sold or abandoned.



South Carolina Central GP10 #75 at Floyd, South Carolina on April 1, 2014. The unit began its career in 1958 as Illinois Central GP9 #9375.

The properties now comprising the SCRF were always secondary lines and quickly discarded under CSX.

In all, after the abandonments the South Carolina Central operates a system stretching 51 miles in length today (its system offers more than 120 miles of active railroad although I can only guess that this includes all sidings and spurs).

In any event, after operating the SCRF for 13 years RailTex was purchased by RailAmerica, Inc. (itself an operator of numerous short lines) in February of 2000 giving it a handful of new railroads.

The road again changed hands in July of 2012 when Genesee & Wyoming bought out RailAmerica. Today, the company's classic blue and white livery with the state logo continues to disappear as locomotives are repainted into G&W's ubiquitous orange.

Its future appears strong although changing market conditions can always affect smaller roads like the SCRF. Its primary traffic base currently includes steel, chemicals, trash, plastics, and some agriculture.

In addition, its Rail Link, Inc. subsidiary offers switching, track maintenance, locomotive/car maintenance, and more.



A current South Carolina Central Railroad Map.

The entirety of the company's southern network was comprised of the former Seaboard System lines, which included the old Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line properties.

CSX was quick to shed corridors it deemed super-

SCRF Locomotive Roster

Road Number	Model	Type	Bilder	Year Built	Notes
8	SW1200R	EMD		11/1942	Built as Port Huron & Detroit NW2 #8.
21	GP9	EMD		7/1956	Built as New Haven #1201, became Conrail #7221.
75	GP10	EMD		12/1958	Built as Illinois Central GP9 #9375.
77	GP10	EMD		12/1958	Built as Illinois Central GP9 #9377.
2027	GP10	EMD		1/1951	Built as Santa Fe GP7 #2664.
2032	GP38-2	EMD		1978	Built as Florida East Coast.
2033	GP38-2	EMD		4/1978	Built as Florida East Coast #505.
2053	GP7u	EMD		11/1953	Built as Santa Fe GP7 #2882.
2130	GP7u	EMD		12/1952	Built as Santa Fe GP7 #2825.
2147	GP38-2	EMD		10/1973	Built as Southern #5098, became NS #5098.
2160	GP7u	EMD		5/1952	Built as Santa Fe GP7 #2729. (Sold)
2185	GP7u	EMD		8/1952	Built as Santa Fe GP7 #2742. (Sold)
5905	GP9	EMD		12/1954	Built as Chesapeake & Ohio #5905. (Sold)
6097	GP9	EMD		7/1956	Built as Chesapeake & Ohio #6097. (Sold)
6187	GP9	EMD		11/1956	Built as Chesapeake & Ohio #6187.
6412	GP40-2	EMD		10/1972	Built as Detroit, Toledo & Ironton #412.
6415	GP40-2	EMD		10/1973	Built as Detroit, Toledo & Ironton #415.
6439	GP9	EMD		5/1955	Built as Baltimore & Ohio #6439. (Sold)
6440	GP9	EMD		5/1955	Built as Baltimore & Ohio #6440. (Sold)
6541	GP9	EMD		6/1957	Built as Baltimore & Ohio #6541. (Sold)
6550	GP9	EMD		7/1957	Built as Baltimore & Ohio #6550. (Sold)
6555	GP9	EMD		7/1957	Built as Baltimore & Ohio #6555. (Sold)
7307	SD18	EMD		1/1963	Built as Chesapeake & Ohio #1807. (Sold)
7309	SD18	EMD		1/1963	Built as Chesapeake & Ohio #1809. (Sold)
8483	GP10	EMD		4/1953	Built as Pittsburgh & Lake Erie GP7 #5728. (Sold)
9490	GP40-2LW	GMDD		7/1974	Built as Canadian National #9490.



Vulcan Iron Works

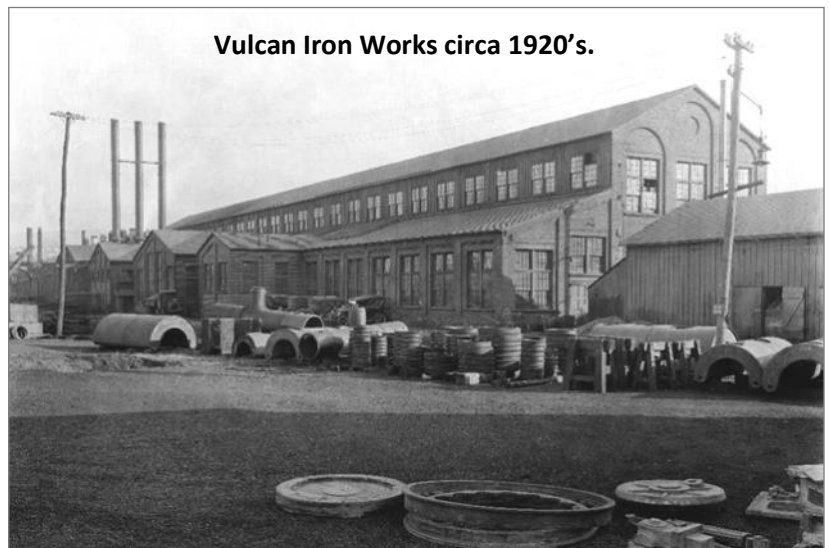
The Vulcan Iron Works got its start in the late 1860s due to the growing demand for anthracite coal discovered in central and eastern Pennsylvania. The manufacturer even preceded the H.K. Porter Company by nearly two decades, which became the leader in small, light duty steam locomotives for use in mining and general industrial applications. These models included several different wheel arrangements although the small, "dinkies" were usually the most popular. Ironically, the largest steamers Vulcan ever built were for foreign railroads in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and various countries in Europe. The manufacturer did survive into the diesel era, but the competition was too stiff to remain in business and it closed its doors in the mid-1950s. While Vulcan has been gone for many decades now several of its locomotives survive today, some of which are still in operation. Their small size and relatively easy maintenance have made them prime candidates for both restoration and preservation.

Through the years there have been many industrial foundries that have gone by the name of Vulcan with some half-dozen located in Britain and another four in the United States. The reason for this is the meaning behind the term Vulcan; historically, it was regarded as the Roman god of fire and smithery. The Vulcan Iron Works, which went on to build mining equipment and locomotives, was founded in 1867 by Richard Jones. More than 10 years earlier he had successfully built a steam engine to power a wooden boat in 1835 and with the growing railroad industry and demand for anthracite coal by the late 1840s, realized there was a market for mining equipment and perhaps even locomotives. In 1849 Jones began building machinery. Although it was nearly two decades following that he incorporated his company.

Ultimately, he chose Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania at a location on South Main Street



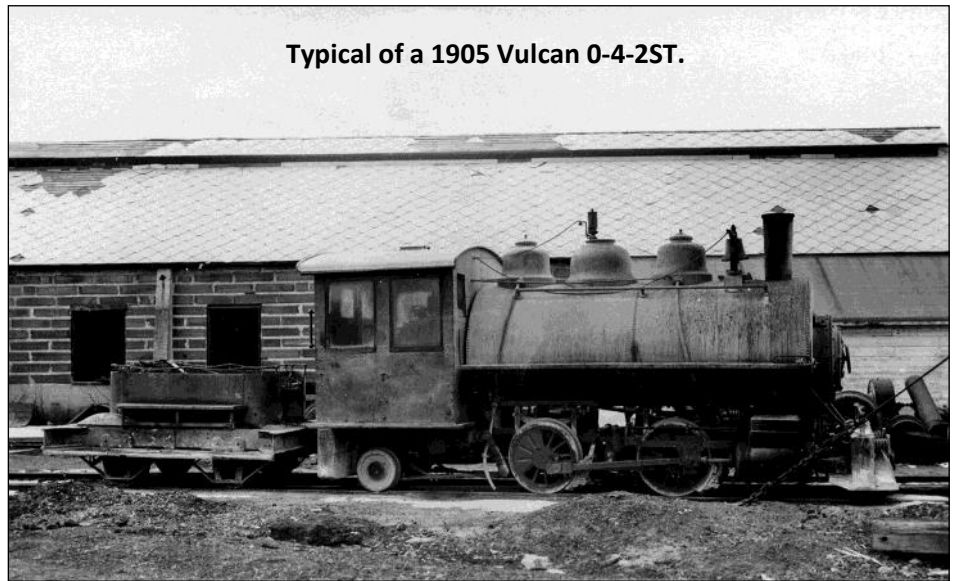
for his new operation which was situated within the heart of the anthracite coal industry. The entire property included a machine shop, foundry, blacksmith-boiler shop, pattern store, and an office. The plant also had strategic rail connections to Class I Lehigh Valley as well as the Lehigh & Susquehanna Railroad and the Pennsylvania Canal. The company began to expand as early as 1883 by acquiring the Pittston Iron Works and Wilkes-Barre Iron Works. Soon after this it had branch offices opened in nearby Hanover Township, West Pittston, and Tamaqua. It wasn't until its 1888 takeover of the Wyoming Valley Manufacturing Company, a small locomotive builder, did Vulcan officially enter the market.



Vulcan Iron Works circa 1920's.

Like competitors Porter and the Davenport Locomotive Works, Vulcan's most popular early wheel arrangements were 0-4-0Ts and 0-6-0Ts (also known as "dinkies") although by the time it had stopped producing steam locomotives the company had built some 108 different designs. Through the turn of the 20th century the manufacturer continued to grow and became Pennsylvania's third largest locomotive producer. The World War I period was another time of growth for the company as it employed more than 1,600 at its Wilkes-Barre facility and its locomotives became popular with European countries including Britain, France, Italy, and Germany, other countries in which their products could be found included Cuba, Australia, and Canada.

Around this time the company also began producing its largest wheel arrangements including 2-8-0 Consolidations and 2-6-2 Prairies. Following the war Vulcan also first began manufacturing non-steam powered locomotives, originally meant for use in the mining industry. These included battery and gasoline operated designs that could be used to move coal both in the mine



Typical of a 1905 Vulcan 0-4-2ST.

and outside the shaft. By the late 1920s the company was producing small diesel-electric switchers, such as the 8-tonner of 1926. Outwardly, they closely resembled what Whitcomb had been producing for some time.

By World War II the Vulcan Iron Works had reached its peak, employing more than 2,500. However, following the war the company began a rapid decline as steam power fell out of favor for diesels, during the war the government had placed restrictions on diesel development.

Ultimately, Vulcan was in no position to compete against much other larger manufacturers like Baldwin, Electric Motive, American Locomotive Company, and others; it simply did not have the research and development needed in diesel technology. In all, the builder constructed just 54 diesels, the largest of which was a 70-tonner model for the Carnegie Steel Company of Pittsburgh in 1944.

In 1954 Vulcan declared bankruptcy and closed its doors soon after. Today, you can still find their steam locomotives at places like Tifton,

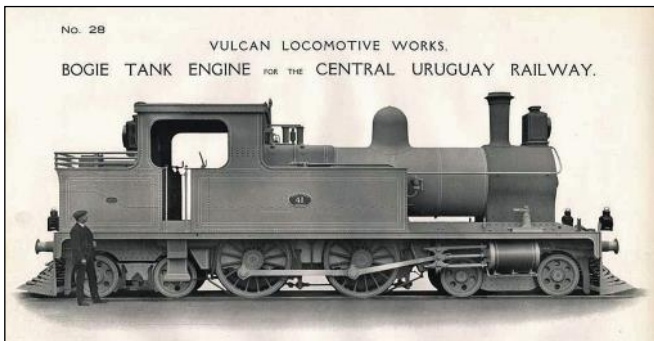


2 foot gauge Vulcan on the Wiscasset Waterville & Farmington.

Georgia; Wiscasset, Waterville, & Farmington (Maine); Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad; Little River Railroad (Michigan); Steam Railroading Institute (Michigan); New Hope Valley Railway (North Carolina); Cedar Point & Lake Erie Railroad (Ohio); Grapevine Railroad (Texas); and the Laona & Northern (Wisconsin).



Laona & Northern 45 ton Vulcan built in 1941.



Export Vulcan 4-4-0ST to Uruguay.

Vulcan Standard Gauge Diesel-Electric Locomotives with two complete power plants. Suitable for yard, terminal or ball-line work.

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