

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

Web Site: hubcityrrmuseum.org

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Hub City Railroad Museum and SOU Rwy Caboose #X3115:

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.

Day of Two Noons

Continued from July issue.

A graphic account of what was probably a typical scene in railroad offices throughout the country at the zero hour is contained in the *Chicago Tribune* on the day following the change to Standard Time. It says in part: "Shortly before the new time was to be put into effect, a Tribune representative called at the office of the Train Dispatchers of the Pennsylvania, Burlington, Panhandle, and Alton railroads at the West Side Union Depot. The Division Superintendents, Train Dispatchers, Depot-master and Telegraph Operators were all at their desks. All looked unusually solemn, and all their faces showed that something of an extraordinary nature was about to happen. At about a quarter of 12 o'clock, Chicago time, the conductors, engineers and other trainmen dropped in one by one, each having his timepiece in his hand and watching closely the hands of the dials. Depot Master Cropsey had his chronometer under a powerful magnifying glass to be sure that he made no mistake. When the clock on the wall in the office, by which the running of the trains in the depot is regulated, stood at 12, it was stopped. The telegraph in-

struments were then connected with the pendulum of the clock in the observatory at Allegheny, Pa. Each move was faithfully repeated on the telegraph instruments, and at precisely 9 minutes 32 seconds after 12, Chicago time, the movement of the pendulum stopped, indicating that it was exactly 12 noon by 90th meridian time."

And the reporter added: "The fact successfully accomplished, a general murmur of satisfaction ran through the room."

Sunday was selected because there were fewer trains in operation at that time and the change could be made with the minimum of inconvenience and the maximum of safety.

Many cities and towns located on the borderline between two time zones found it difficult to decide which time to adopt. Pittsburgh and Erie, Pennsylvania, were on the borderline between the Eastern and Central time zones, and public opinion in those cities was divided as to which time should be used by business establishments, schools, churches, theaters, and citizens generally.

A St. Louis newspaper facetiously remarked that it wouldn't make much difference whether some of

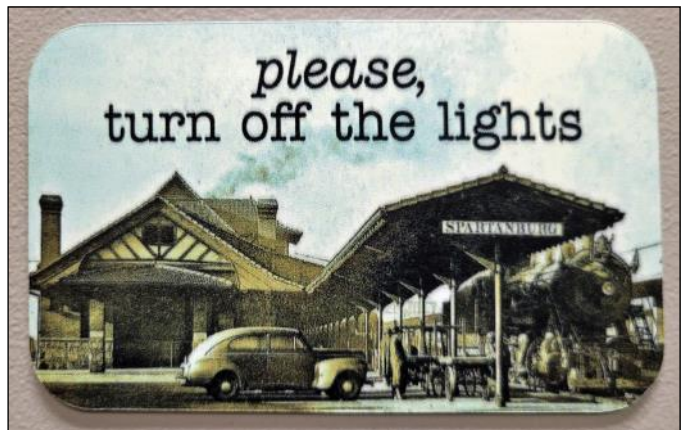
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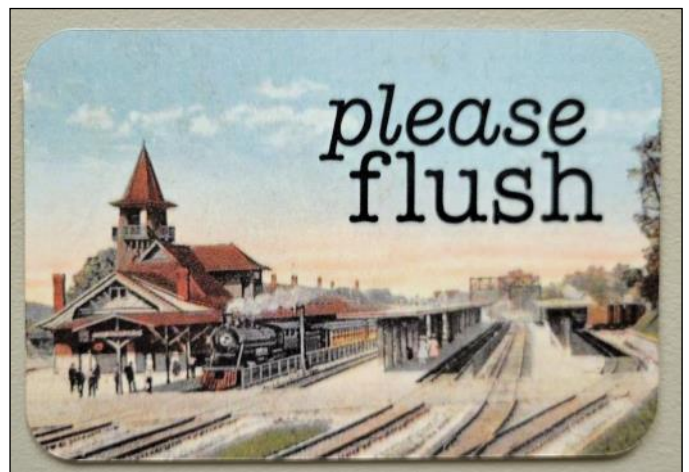
Museum Happenings

The Thomas layout can be a busy place and draws many families to the museum. →

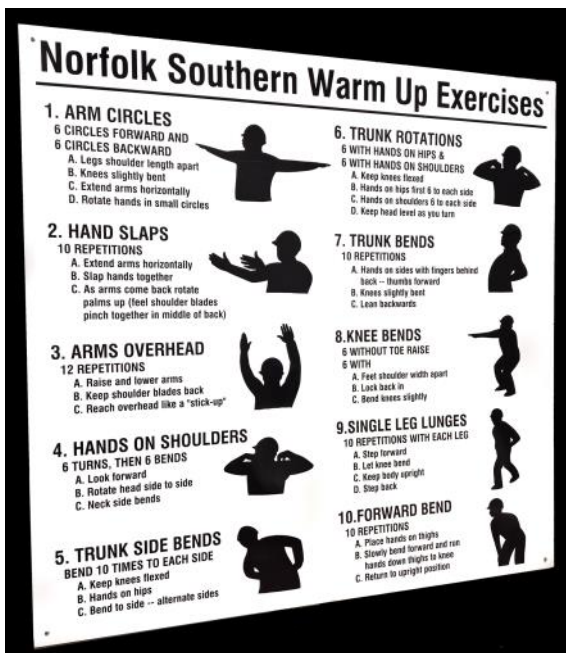
Thomas sometimes proliferates beyond belief. ↓



↓ Signs the city made for the bathrooms. ↑



← Signs installed in bathrooms at the museum to encourage exercise as proposed by the Norfolk Southern.



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.

the Western cities, like North Platte and Dodge City, used Central Time or Mountain Time "except to a man who was about to be hanged." Said the editor, "He will be good for another hour of life if he can induce the sheriff to stage the act by Mountain instead of Central Time."

Commenting on the annoyance caused by the change, one newspaper editor said: The change in time may be annoying to some, but those who are so annoyed should console themselves with the reflection that there is in the Fiji Islands a house which is so divided by the 180th degree of longitude that when it is Sunday in the parlor it is Monday in the kitchen.

A Problem For the Courts

Many legal complications resulted from the changes in time. An interesting case, reported from Iowa, involved the question of whether a fire insurance policy which expired on a certain day should be governed by solar or Standard Time. If sun-time governed, the policy was in force when the fire broke out; but if Standard Time governed, then the policy ceased to be in force 21/2 minutes before the fire started. The Supreme Court held that the presumption was that the parties to the contract intended sun-time and decided in favor of the policy holder.

There were many amusing incidents and a few slight hitches in changing from local to Standard Time. For instance, the mayor of Bangor, Maine, refused to recognize the new time on the ground that it was unconstitutional. He even threatened to have the police prevent the churches from ringing their bells on the new time, but popular feeling ran against him, and he did not carry out his threat. However, he continued to display the courage of his convictions, and Standard vs. Sun-Time became a first rate political issue in Bangor. The City Council voted for Standard Time; the mayor promptly vetoed the order, declaring that no one had power "to change one of the immutable laws of God."

While most of the clergy endorsed Standard Time, one Boston preacher opposed it on the ground that it was "a lie." There were many persons who favored some sort of standard time but could not agree that the system adopted was the best. Some wanted time throughout the United States to be uniform, without any time zones. For

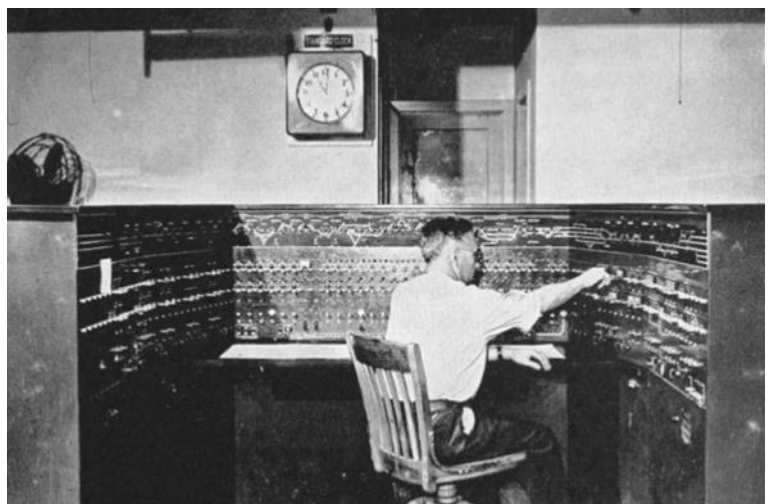
instance, there is a letter in *Railway Age*, for May 10, 1883, which says:

Give the railroads Washington time all over the country; say nothing about standards, or meridians, or even cosmic time. There will then be only two things to remember-Washington time and local time. The people are going to have their affairs run on local time, no matter what legislators or railroads may do. When a judge convenes his court he will use local time; when steam-boats leave for foreign ports they will leave on local time; the railways will bring passengers from distant parts to attend these courts, and to take their departures by these vessels; therefore, they must know when they will reach their objective point in the time of the place; that is all important to them.

Watches would not have to be changed. To carry new faces or sets of hands like an octopus to haunt people in their dreams, giving a bad turn to the ordinary nightmare of the peaceful citizen, and tending in the long run to make him a fit subject for the lunatic asylum.

Some Wanted 24-Hour Time

There were others who were convinced that a mistake was made in not adopting 24-hour time, thus abolishing the necessity of using a.m. and p.m. The *Richmond Dispatch* strongly advocated 24-hour time, declaring that there was no good reason for not adopting that system, and attributed failure to do so to "prejudice." The *Dispatch* concluded its editorial with the words "Away



A centralized traffic control board through which train movements are governed over many miles of railroad.

with old fogysm about 24-hour time."

The *Detroit Evening Journal* actually did adopt 24-hour time and published its paper with headings reading 14 o'clock edition, 16 o'clock edition, etc., proclaiming itself ahead of the times.

The Cleveland, Mt. Vernon & Delaware Railroad, now a part of the Pennsylvania Railroad between Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio, published timetables on a 24-hour schedule. For instance, Train No. 4 left Cleveland at 14:00 o'clock, arriving in Columbus at 21:10 o'clock. Train No. 3 left Columbus at 11:40 arriving in Cleveland at 21:04 o'clock. The timetable stated: The system used in the above table consists in avoiding the confusing division of the day into two equal portions of 12 hours and employing instead a continuous count from 1 to 24 hours. The days begin at midnight, as under the common system, but there is no possibility of confusion between the forenoon and afternoon hours.

But a few months after Standard Time was adopted this railroad fell in line with other roads and published its schedules in the conventional style. The American people soon came to accept Standard Time without question, and it has since spread to other lands until today it is in almost universal use.

It is an interesting fact that the method of reckoning time instituted by the railroads in 1883, although adopted and used by the Federal Government and states, cities and towns throughout the country, was put into effect without federal legislation of any sort. It was not until thirty-five years later on March 19, 1918, during the first World War that Congress passed what is known as the Standard Time Act.

The Standard Time Act gave the sanction of the Federal Government to the four-zone system adopted by the railroads and provided for "daylight saving" time to conserve fuel and increase national efficiency. The Interstate Commerce Commission was empowered to define by order the boundaries of each Standard Time zone and to make such boundary changes as it deems necessary.

The fact that the Federal Government did not pass legislation making Standard Time official until 1918 does not mean that government officials did not cooperate in making the Standard Time system a success. The contrary is true. All branches of the government cooperated wholeheartedly in the movement, and, of course, regulated their

own clocks by Standard Time.

No account of our Standard Time system would be complete without paying tribute to the invaluable scientific work of the United States Naval Observatory, which maintains elaborately equipped astronomical laboratories manned by a highly efficient staff of astronomers and technicians for the purpose of measuring the passage of time to the minutest fraction of a second.

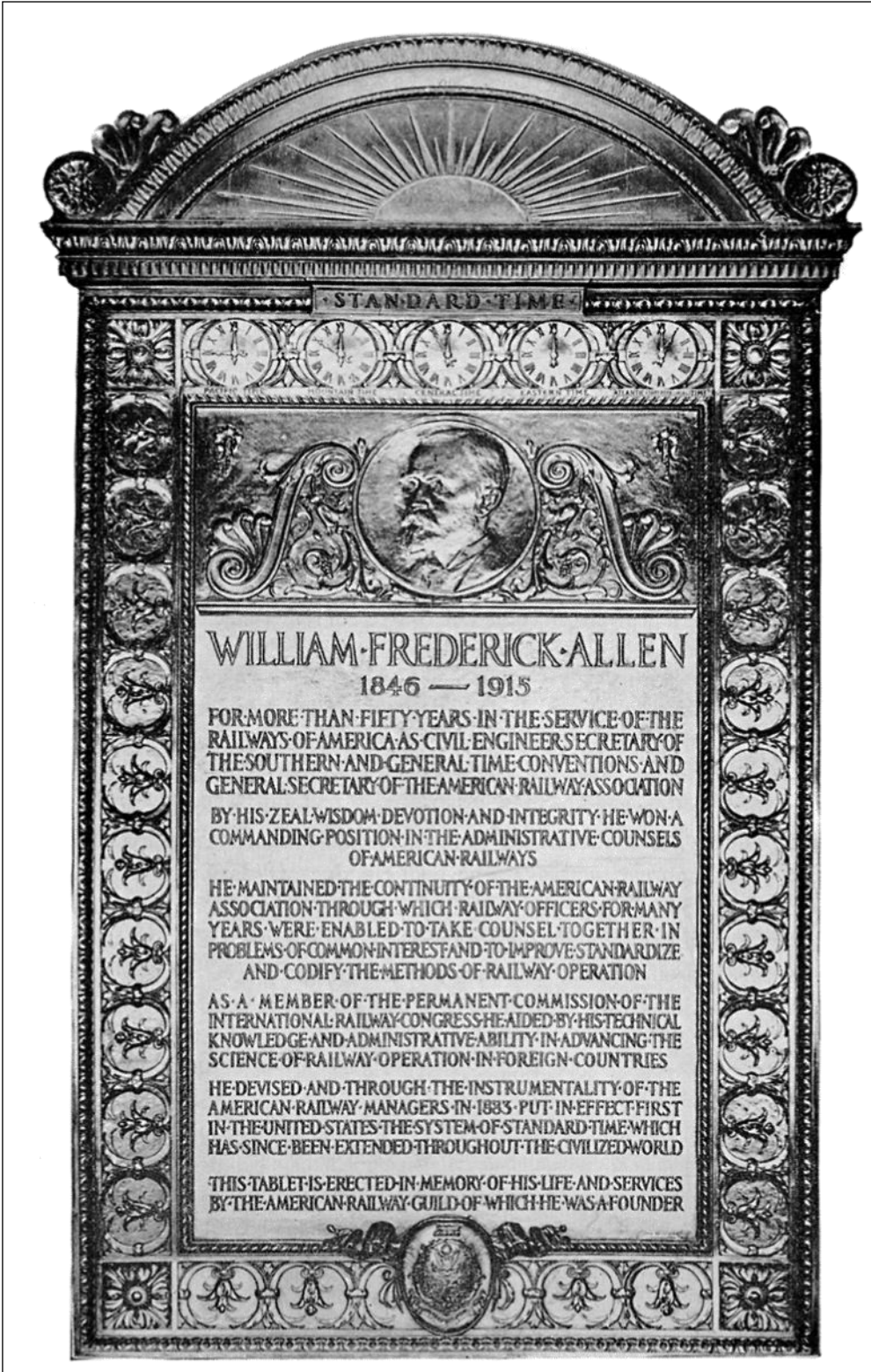
Washington is an extraordinary city in many respects. For one thing, it is a city of unusual and unique occupations. One will find in Washington every conceivable type of specialist. And of all the occupations which have come to the writer's attention, one of the most unusual is that of the astronomers at the Naval Observatory who, at a certain time each night, by use of a powerful telescope record on photographic plates the transit across a fine hair in that telescope of certain sixth to eighth magnitude stars hundreds of light-years distant. The astronomers then take an 18,000- or 20,000-mile ride around on the spinning globe so that they can get back in a position to repeat the performance the following night! This they do night after night, year after year. And in so doing, they collect the data necessary for the maintenance of exact time. Their findings furnish the basis for the radio time signals sent out at intervals and heard all over the continent- signals by which every clock and every watch in the railroad industry is regulated daily.

Daylight Saving Time

Daylight Saving "went into effect throughout the country on March 31, 1918, but it proved so unpopular that in the summer of 1919 Congress passed a bill repealing the daylight-saving provision of the Standard Time Act. President Wilson vetoed it, but Congress passed it *over* his veto, and national daylight-saving ended in October 1919. During the Second World War, Congress passed legislation providing for year-round daylight saving time throughout the country for the purpose of conserving fuel and electrical energy in the national emergency. Effective February 9, 1942, this legislation simply put the country ahead an hour without disturbing the four-zone Standard Time system. It was a great improvement over the hodgepodge of "daylight saving" systems superimposed upon the Standard Time system. The provisions of this act were repealed effective September 30, 1945, after the cessa-

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tion of hostilities, and once again the matter of adopting or rejecting daylight saving time was left to the discretion of states and local communities. ✓



Spartanburg Union Station

The Spartanburg Union Station on Magnolia Street was built in 1904, and once served the Southern Rail-



way, the Clinchfield Railway, and the Charleston & Western Carolina Railway. In 1949, as many as fourteen passenger trains daily traveled through Spartanburg along the Washington-to-Atlanta Southern Railway route, and both considerable freight and passenger rail commerce served to give Spartanburg its "Hub City" nickname.

Sadly, the original station building was torn down bit by bit until, in 1996, the remaining structure was gutted by fire. The week after the fire, 16-year-old Trey Davis III, then in high school, began an initiative to save the station, actually the freight portion on the complex, through letters, editorials, and visits to city leaders. The station was saved through a popular volunteer effort and subsequently restored. The building houses the Hub City Railroad Museum. Museum displays explore the region's deep and rich associa-



UNION STATION, SPARTANBURG, S. C.

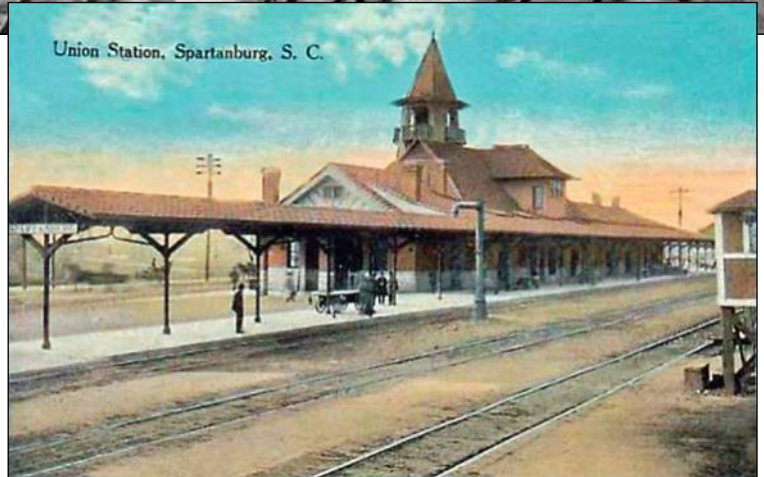
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tions with the railroad, textile, and agricultural industries.

Spartanburg is said to be named for the seasoned battalions of the two Spartanburg Regiments that fought under command of Brigadier General Daniel Morgan during the Revolutionary War at the Battle of Cowpens on January 17, 1781. The battle took place just north of what is now downtown Spartanburg. This overwhelming victory for the American forces turned out to be a deciding battle of the Revolutionary War and remains today a model of military strategy.

Early settlers to this area included French fur trappers, English woodsmen, and Scotch-Irish farmers. As with nearby Greenville, this area was also a favored hunting ground for the Cherokee and Cataw-



ba tribes, which occupied land west and east of this area, respectively.

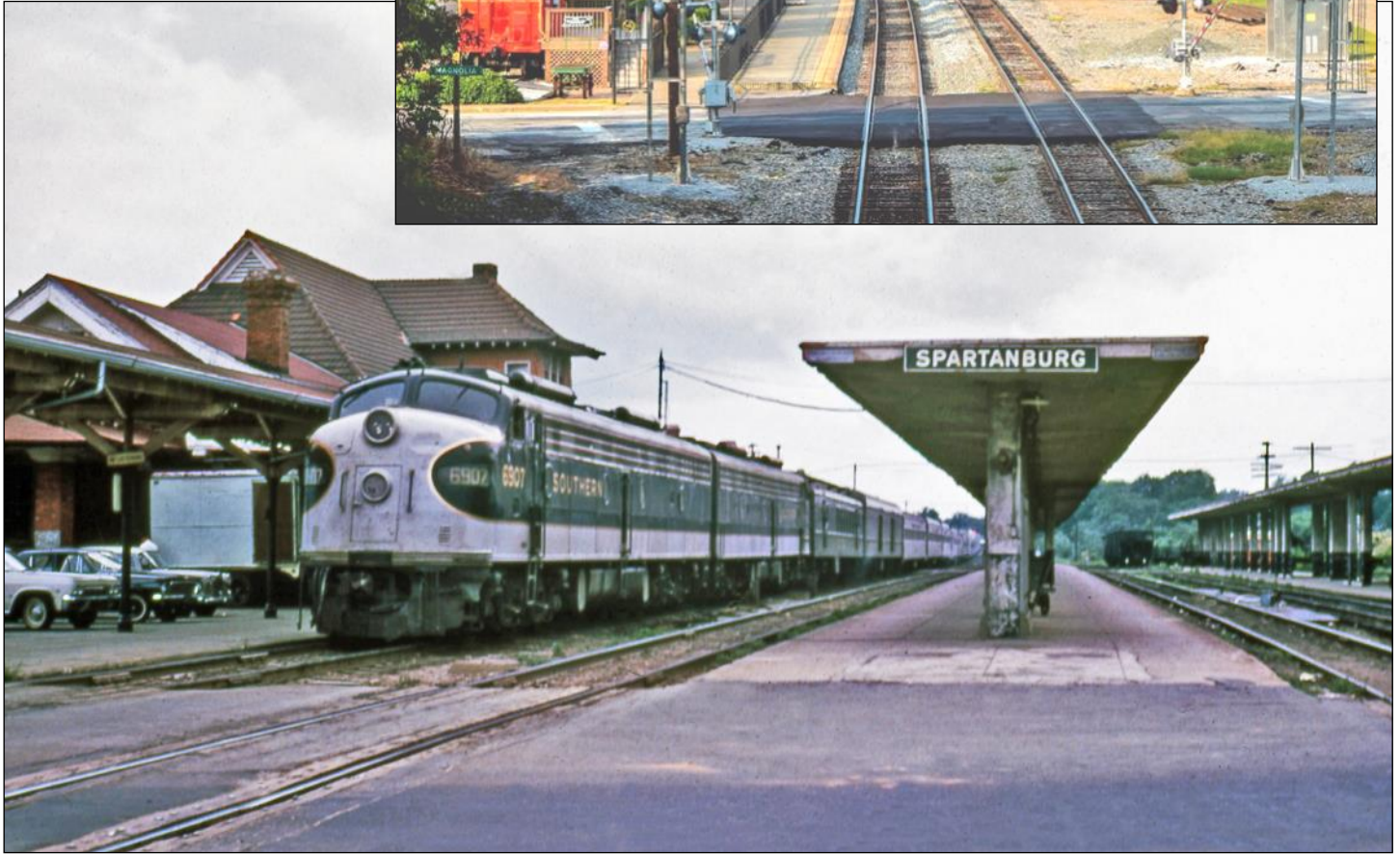
Cotton mills, though relatively sparse in the Spartanburg area before the Civil War, abounded here afterwards as in much of the Piedmont South, encouraged by the many streams and waterfalls associated with the fault line that runs through this area. The local economy has benefited from the BMW manufacturing plant located in the western end of Spartanburg County since 1996. Spartanburg is also home to the world headquarters and research facility for Milliken & Company, one of the world's largest privately held textile and chemical manufacturers.

Within the past decade, developers and community leaders have established an effort to revitalize Spartanburg's downtown district. This has resulted in the remodeling of Morgan Square, the restoration of several



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historic structures, and the relocation of several businesses and company headquarters to their downtown district. Today, the restored Magnolia Street station hosts the Hub Railroad Museum, an Amtrak waiting room, and a city office.



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