

# Carolina Conductor



Volume 12 Number 12

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](http://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.

# Interurbans in SC

## From 1888 to 1930s

Definition of an Interurban: Powered by electricity rather than steam, interurbans facilitated commuter traffic in South Carolina's upcountry and nationally until the coming of the automobile.

More complex than street railways, yet smaller than interstate railroads, interurbans occupied a brief position in South Carolina's transportation history. Powered by electricity rather than steam, interurbans facilitated commuter traffic in South Carolina's upcountry until the coming of the automobile. Running trains by electric power in this country did not receive serious consideration until the end of the nineteenth century. Frank Sprague developed a method of mounting the electric motor in a way that would not subject it to undue shocks. He demonstrated it in 1888 in Virginia, and the invention was an immediate success. The electric-powered railway was clearly technologically superior to previous means of transportation, the horse-drawn streetcar, and the cable car. In 1890 seventy percent of American street railways were powered by animals; by 1902 only three percent of street railways were not powered by electricity. By 1895 people had begun to recognize

the utility of electric railways for traffic between cities.

Few of these lines operated in the South, but one of the most significant lines in the country was South Carolina's Piedmont and Northern. Developed between 1910 and 1916, eighty-nine miles of track connected Spartanburg, Greenville, and Greenwood, with a spur to Anderson. In addition to the more successful Piedmont and Northern, South Carolina had two other interurban lines. The Augusta-Aiken Railway ran for twenty-six miles between those two cities. The road was operated by the Georgia-Carolina Power Company and opened for business on September 8, 1902, under the name of the Augusta and Columbia Railway Company. Its name changed to Augusta-Aiken after 1911, and the line was abandoned in 1929. The other line was in the low country: the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, which began operation in August 1898. A ferry took passengers from Charleston to Mount Pleasant, where they boarded the train for a ten-mile ride to the Isle of Palms. The road was originally operated by the Charleston Consolidated Railway, Gas, and Electric Company. The railway entered receivership in

Continued on Page 3 - *Interurban*

# Museum Happenings



↑ Santa and Mrs. Claus are checking to make sure the railroad has the needed supplies for this Christmas heading to the North Pole.

← A *Holiday Greeting* from Western Union could be sent at the last minute to someone you may have forgotten on your card list.

If you waited too long to submit your list to Santa you could always send a Western Union *Santagram*. ↓

## Holiday Greeting

by WESTERN UNION

CHECK	ACCOUNTING INFORMATION	TIME FILED	SAVE TIME... Telephone Western Union from home, office or coin-box. Telegrams from home will be charged on your phone bill.
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Send the following message subject to the Telegraph Company's conditions, rules and regulations, which are on file with regulatory authorities.

To \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

YOU MAY SELECT AND CHECK ANY ONE OF THESE SUGGESTED TEXTS OR WRITE YOUR OWN GREETING ON THE LINES BELOW.

<p><b>CHRISTMAS</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> With all good wishes for a very happy Holiday Season.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Christmas greetings to you and all the family.</p>	<p><b>BUSINESS</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Our good wishes for a happy Holiday Season and a Prosperous New Year go with this expression of appreciation of your business with us.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Heartiest greetings to you and your associates for a Happy Christmas and successful New Year.</p>	<p><b>NEW YEAR</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Best wishes for a happy New Year.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The happiest of New Years to you and yours.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> God grant you a New Year rich in blessings.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> May the New Year bring you and yours a full measure of health, happiness, and prosperity.</p>
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Additional Texts on Reverse Side

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

COPYRIGHT 1960 BY WESTERN UNION TEL. CO.

Sender's name and address \_\_\_\_\_

↑ Western Union Telegrams used during the Christmas season in the 1950s. →



# SANTAGRAM

by WESTERN UNION

CHECK	ACCOUNTING INFORMATION	(DATED) NORTH POLE	TIME FILED
		Via	

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To \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

YOU MAY SELECT AND CHECK ANY ONE OF THESE SUGGESTED TEXTS OR WRITE YOUR OWN GREETING ON THE LINES BELOW.

<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am on my way in my sleigh, loaded with toys for good girls and boys, and especially for you. See you soon.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> From the land of snow and ice, with a pack of presents nice, my trusty deer are bringing me down. Your house will be my first stop in town.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I received your message and will bring you as many gifts as I can.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Here I come. See my reindeer gallop. And though I am still quite far away, I will be there for Christmas Day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Jump into bed and close both your eyes, and tomorrow you will have a great big surprise.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I hear from your daddy and mother that you have been very good, and so I am coming as fast as I can to bring you some nice things.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have been working hard in my toy shop, and if I hear that you have been very good I may have some nice things for you.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have what you most desire. Thought I'd let you know by Western Union wire.</p>
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SAVE TIME... Telephone Western Union from home, office or coin-box. Telegrams from home will be charged on your phone bill.

(Signed) **SANTA CLAUS**

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Sender's name and address \_\_\_\_\_

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## Wanted—Articles for the Carolina Conductor

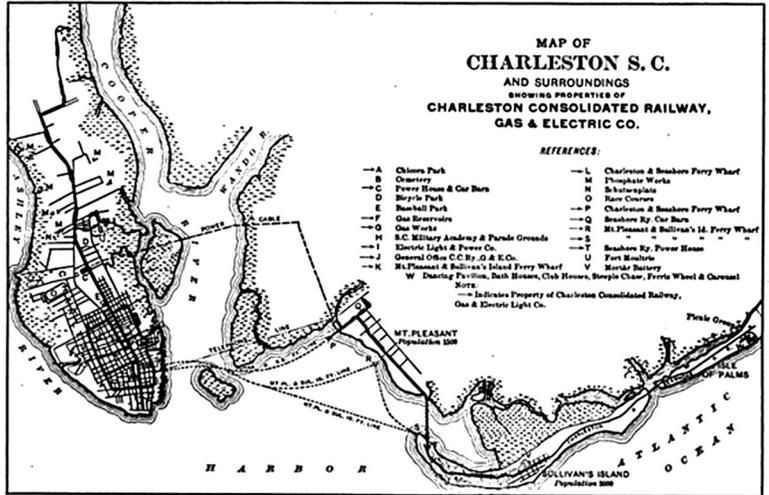
Submit an article of 200 words or more with some photos and captions and see them in print. Every one of us has some unique railroad experience that would make interesting reading for our membership. Your editor always needs more contributions of railway history and news.

1924 and was abandoned the following year.

Although the Piedmont and Northern remained in operation until 1969, the decline of the Augusta-Aiken and Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company mirrored national events. The automobile became affordable and popular in the 1910s, and trucks began to eat away at freight business done by interurban lines. By the 1920s it was clear that automobiles were not a passing fad, and interurbans were abandoned across the country. The Great Depression made a revival of the interurban unlikely, and this once popular transportation option passed from the landscape.

### Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company

The Electric Railway Journal of November 23, 1912 reported: "James Sottile and his associates have concluded negotiations to take over the Seashore Division of the Charleston Consolidated Railway & Lighting Company between Mount Pleasant and the



Palms Traction Company, which has elected James Sottile president and W.W. Fuller general superintendent and chief engineer."

The McGraw Electric Railway Manual of 1913 reported: "Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Co. Incorporated in South Carolina Jan. 9, 1913, to purchase the Seashore division of the Charleston Consolidated Railway, Gas & Electric Co., and to operate it as a separate property. Includes the railway between Mount Pleasant and the Isle of Palms, wharf property, ferry boats and the power house on Sullivan's Island. Does general lighting business in Mount Pleasant, Sullivan's Island and the Isle of Palms." The company operates 9 miles of track, 11 motor cars, and 8 other cars. Officers include; President James Sottile, Secretary Lawrence Pinckney, and Auditor E.E. Hortman.

The Electric Railway Journal of March 1, 1913 reported: "P.H. Gadsden, president of the Charleston Consolidated Railway & Lighting Company, has issued the following statement in regard to the negotiations to transfer the Seashore division of the company to the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, the organization of which was noted in the Electric Railway Journal of Nov. 23, 1912, page 1084: 'The contract with James Sottile, president of the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, for the purchase of the Seashore division of the Charleston Consolidated Railway & Lighting Company was conditioned among other things upon securing the release of the property by the trustees of the mortgage. At the last moment doubts were expressed by the trustee of its power to release. Mr. Sottile suggested several plans for our consideration which

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Isle of Palms, including all wharf property and ferry boats, together with the power house on Sullivan's Island, and have organized the Charleston-Isle of

would permit of the formal transfer of the property to him, but none of them effectually met the legal questions involved. It became necessary, therefore, to postpone the date for final settlement and transfer of the property until this question could be satisfactorily determined. In the meantime, it was agreed that we should operate the property for the account of the purchaser from Feb. 1st until the final settlement and transfer was effected.' ”

The Electric Railway Journal of April 12, 1913, reported: "The Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company is reported to have taken over the Seashore division of the Charleston Consolidated Railway & Lighting Company on March 15, 1913, at midnight.



Consolidated Terminals", Isle of Palms, S. C.

The Seashore division of the company has been operated since Feb. 1, 1913, for the account of the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, pending the settlement of details connected with securing a release of the property embraced in the division from the trustees of the mortgage."

The McGraw Electric Railway Manual of 1914 reported that the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company operated 10 miles of track, 11 motor cars, and 11 other cars. Capital stock \$1,000,000. Officers include President & Treasurer James Sottile, Secretary Lawrence Pinckney, and Auditor August Janssen, Jr.

In 1913, the South Carolina State Legislature passed an act giving oversight jurisdiction of all "Interurban Railways" to the long-standing South Carolina Railroad Commission. In their 36th Annual Report for the year ending December 31, 1914, they provided their first information on the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company: Ferry to Mt. Pleas-

ant 2.73 mi, to Sullivan's Island 1.46 mi, to Isle of Palms 7.69 mi.

The Electric Railway Journal of December 18, 1915, reported: "Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, Charleston, SC. This company reports that during 1916 it expects to build 1½ miles of 60lb. T-rail track."

The Electric Railway Journal of December 16, 1916, reported: "Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, Charleston, SC. This company reports that it will construct 1½ miles of new track during 1917."

The Electric Railway Journal of April 12, 1919, reported: "A temporary injunction has been issued restraining the Railroad Commission and the Attorney General of South Carolina from taking steps to enforce the order of the commission relative to the rates on the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company's line at Mount Pleasant, Moultrieville, Atlanticville and on the Isle of Palms. In an order promulgated recently by the Railroad Commission the petition of the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company for an increase in fares was refused, and the matter was turned over to the Attorney General to force compliance with the order of the commission of Oct. 2, 1918, directing that not more than 3 cents be charged for transportation over the railway. The company considered this unreasonable and confiscatory and appealed to the courts for relief."

The Electric Railway Journal of August 7, 1920, reported: "An opinion recently handed down by Judge Smith of the Federal District Court holds that the rates charged by the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company,

Charleston, SC, are illegal in that they violate the terms of a state law limiting fares to 3 cents a mile. The State Railroad Commission last year authorized the company to charge a straight fare of 3 cents a mile with a minimum charge of 5 cents. The company was later ordered by the commission to cease charging these rates. The company thereupon sought an injunction to restrain the commission from interfering with it in the collection of the 3 cent rate. The court held that the company has the right to abandon operation and to liquidate its assets."

The Electric Railway Journal of August 21, 1920,

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reported: "The Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, Charleston, SC, has been authorized by the South Carolina Railroad Commission to charge a fare of 5 cents a mile on its lines. Under the new system many of the stations heretofore maintained are abolished, the company making stops each quarter mile. The company some time ago took action to raise its fare above the previous 3 cent limit but was restrained by court order from doing so on the ground that a fare in excess of 3 cents a mile was prohibited under the State law. The company recently applied to the Federal District Court for permission to discontinue all service. It later asked the court to permit it to operate during a trial period of one year before rendering a decision."

The Electric Railway Journal of January 7, 1922, reported: "Federal District Court — Public Service Corporation Not Required to Operate at Continuing Loss. The public cannot require of a public service corporation the continued operation of its property under rates which would afford not only no adequate return on the capital invested, but would, entail a large continuing loss and the eventual exhaustion of the entire capital. Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Co. vs. Shealy et al., 266 Federal Rep., 406."

The Electric Railway Journal of April 29, 1922, reported: "The Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company's line is right across the bay from Charleston, with which it has connection by ferry owned by the company. The principal business is in summer, when all of the forty-two cars of the property are operated."

"The usual method of operation is to send out a motor car with trailer followed by a motor car, as the line does not have loops at its terminals. On the arrival of the two car train at the end of the line, the following motor car couples up to the trailer, which is uncoupled from the first motor car."

"This line has the distinction of having raised fares during the last five years from 30 cents to \$1.30 for the round trip."

The Electric Railway Journal of April 12, 1924 reported: "Perroneau R. Rivers, Charleston, SC, has been appointed receiver of the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, by order of Judge H. A. M. Smith, in federal court upon petition of the Baltimore Trust Company, Baltimore, Md., trustee under the indenture securing \$250,000 of 5 per cent

bonds. The sheriff of Charleston County, on Feb. 21, seized the ferryboats and cars of the company, under attachment proceedings. He was ordered to show cause why he should not be restrained from proceeding to advertise and sell that portion of the property which he seized."

"No resumption of operations of ferry and car service is contemplated. Meanwhile a public ferry and bridge service has been provided for in a bill passed by the General Assembly to take the place of service formerly run by the company."

"The company was incorporated under the laws of South Carolina on Jan. 9, 1913. It took over the Seashore Division of the Charleston Consolidated Railway & Lighting Company, a line of 10 miles, extending from Mount Pleasant to Sullivan's Island and Isle of Palms, with its equipment and powerhouse on Sullivan's Island. Mount Pleasant and Charleston are connected by ferry by the company by means of two ferry boats."

The Electric Railway Journal of May 3, 1924, reported: "Judge Henry A. M. Smith recently handed down a decree ordering the final sale of the property of the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, Charleston, SC, at public auction on May 7. Recently P. R. Rivers, Charleston, was appointed receiver of the company by order of Judge Smith in Federal court upon petition of the Baltimore Trust Company, trustee, under the indenture securing \$250,000 of 5 per cent bonds. The Sheriff of Charleston County on Feb. 21 seized the ferryboats and cars of the company under attachment proceedings. He was ordered to show cause why he should not be restrained from proceeding to advertise and sell that portion of the property which he seized. Arthur M. Huger, United States Commissioner, was named by Judge Smith in the order appointing a receiver as a special master in this matter. The property will be offered for sale by Mr. Huger."

"If efforts should fail to sell the property as a whole the master will be prepared to offer it in three parcels; the first will be composed of the wharves and slips located in Charleston, office furniture, materials and supplies; parcel 2 will be comprised of the tracks of the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company as they now lie, and parcel 3 will include the cables, lighting and power systems, poles and overhead wiring."

## The Augusta-Aiken Railway

Acronym: AARY, Year Chartered or Incorporated: 1901, Year Line Operational: 1902, Year Service Ended: 1929, Original Starting Point: Augusta, GA, Original Ending Point: Aiken, SC

1901 - The Augusta & Aiken Railway was chartered by the South Carolina Secretary of State on June 28, 1901.

1907 - Company authorized to sell all assets to the newly created Augusta & Columbia Railway on February 13, 1907.

1911 - On April 10, 1911, the Augusta & Columbia Railway was re-organized as the August-Aiken Railway & Electric Company. All subsequent reporting simply referred to this line as the Augusta & Aiken Railway once again.

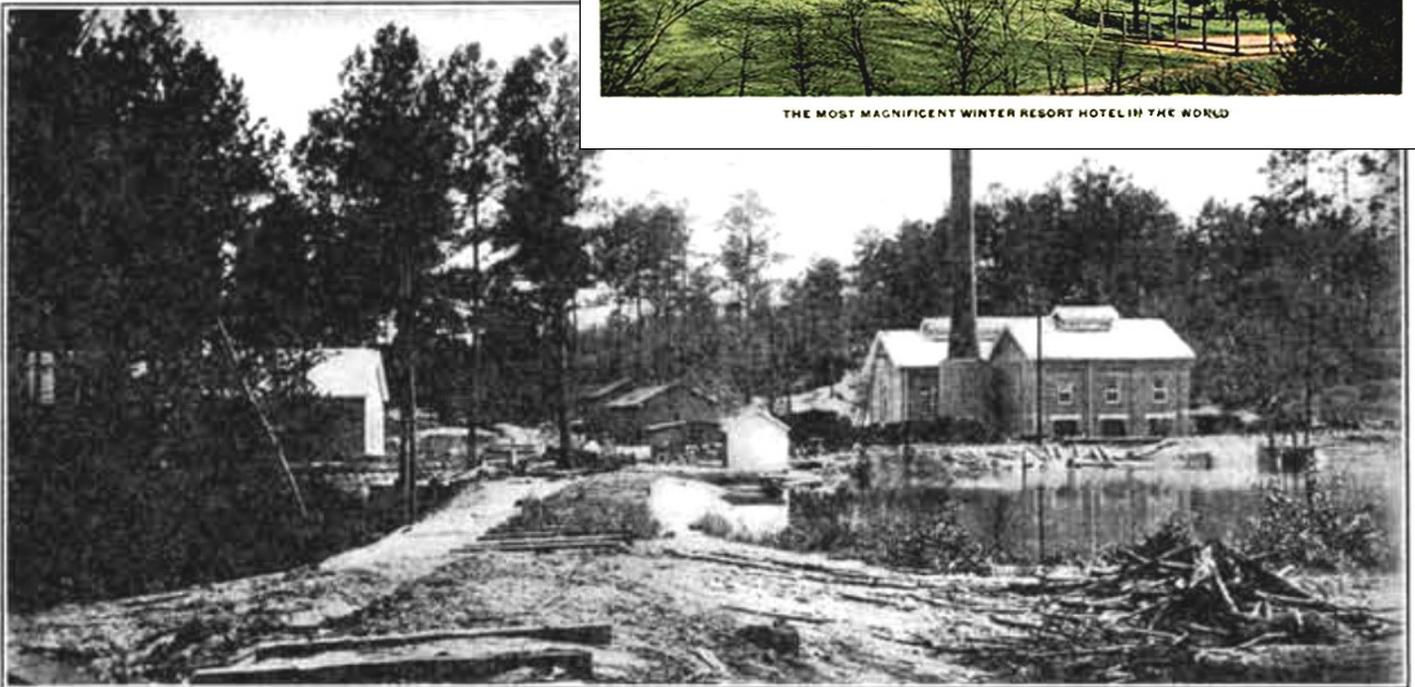
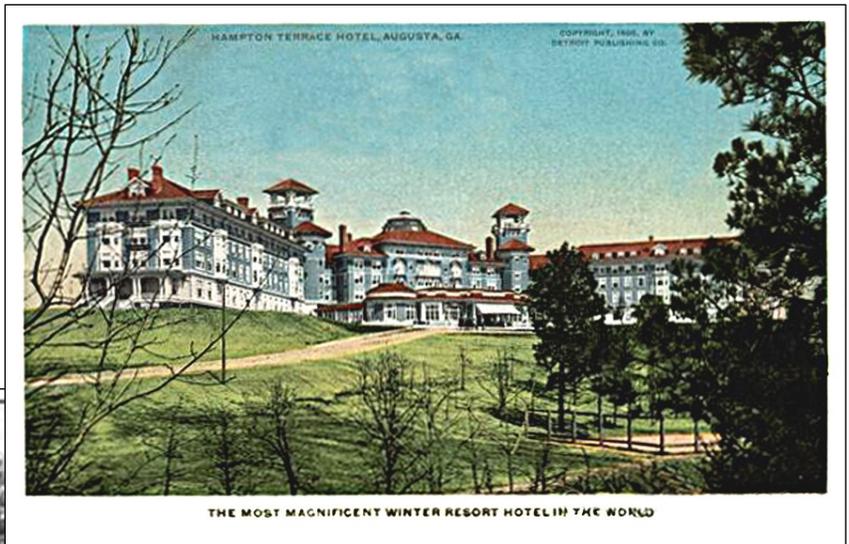
Around the turn of the century, James U. Jackson and other land developers began construction on the luxurious Hampton Terrace Hotel in North Augusta, South Carolina. An electric trolley was constructed to the resort hotel and quickly surveyed for extension to Aiken, South Carolina. The railroad reached Aiken in 1902 and began operations that same year. The Hampton Terrace Hotel had its own

spur track used to deliver coal and freight and remained an important fixture of the route until it burned to the ground in 1916.

Freight services over the line came in the form of an express car and electric boxcab locomotives. Most freight traffic consisted of coal delivered to the Hampton Terrace Hotel or to the numerous cotton mills along the line.

As with many other interurban railroads in the United States, the advent of the automobile helped bring about the end of the Augusta & Aiken Railway in 1929, when the line was completely abandoned.

In 1913, the South Carolina State Legislature passed an Act giving oversight jurisdiction of all "Interurban Railways" to the long-standing South



AARY power house, car house, and shops.

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Carolina Railroad Commission. In their 36th Annual Report for the year ending December 31, 1914, they provided their first information on the Augusta & Aiken Railway:

The 37th Annual Report of the South Carolina Railroad Commission for the year ending December 31, 1915 asserted that: "The Augusta-Aiken Electric Railway Company has installed, by order of the commission, permanent partition for the separation of the races on most of its cars, and has also installed closets at each end of the cars. This road has also made extensive improvements as to roadbed and track."

Stations and miles from starting point: Augusta, GA 0 miles, Tobin, SC 3.27 miles, Belvedere, SC 5.50 miles, Power House, SC 7.15 miles, Clearwater, SC 9.27 miles, Bath, SC 10.69 miles, Langley, SC 11.86 miles, Warrentsville, SC 15.92 miles, Graniteville, SC 16.66 miles, Sub-Station No. 5, SC 18.07 miles, Moseley, SC 20.61 miles, Arbutus Hill, SC 21.76 miles, Aiken, SC 23.61 miles.

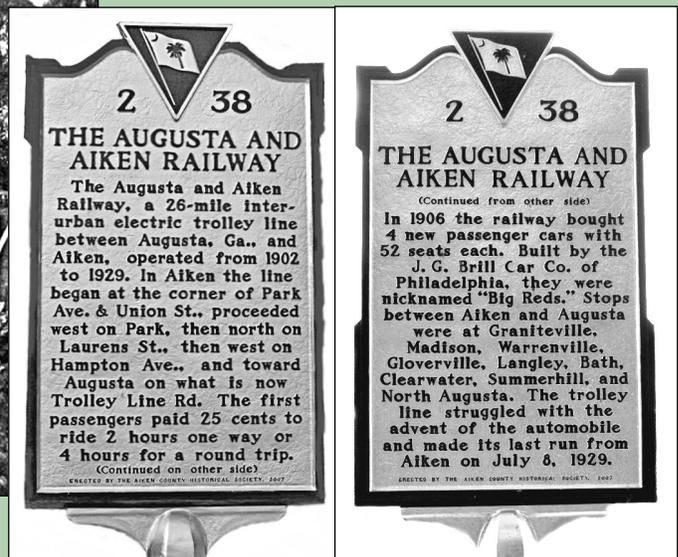
### Historical Markers

The Augusta and Aiken Railway, a 26-mile interurban electric trolley line between Augusta, Ga., and Aiken, operated from 1902 to 1929. In Aiken the line began at the corner of Park Ave. & Union St., proceeded west on Park, then north on Laurens St., then west on Hampton Ave., and toward Augusta on what is now Trolley Line Rd. The first passengers paid 25 cents to ride 2 hours one way or 4 hours for a round trip.

In 1906 the railway bought 4 new passenger cars with 52 seats each. Built by the J.G. Brill Car Co. of Philadelphia, they were nicknamed "Big Reds." Stops between Aiken and Augusta were Graniteville, Madison, Warrentsville, Gloverville, Langley, Bath, Clearwater, Summerhill, and North Augusta. The trolley line struggled with the advent of the automobile and made its last run from Aiken on July 8, 1929.



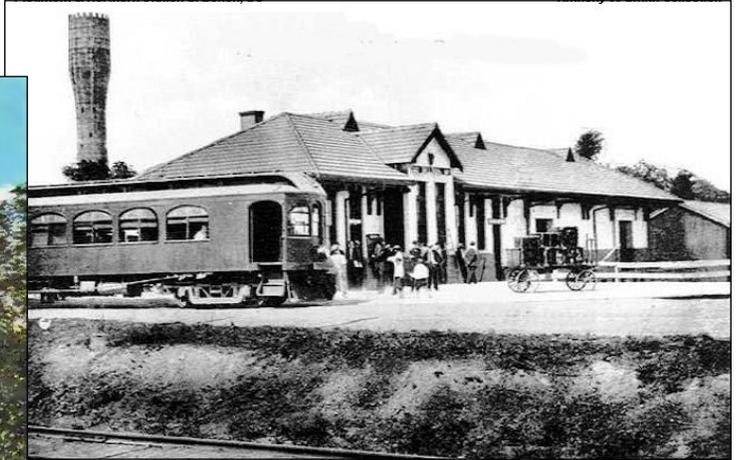
Wooden trestle on the AARY.



# Piedmont & Northern

We have previously covered this railway so I am showing some additional photos this month. P&N ran passenger service until 1951. *Ed.*

↓ P&N passenger train on the Chick Springs trestle.



↑ P&N train stopped at the Belton station.

↓ P&N train in Greenville circa 1914.



↑ P&N business car #100.



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