

Carolina Conductor



Volume 6 Number 5

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
Facebook: Carolina Railroad Heritage Association

Meeting Site:
Woodmen of the World Bldg.
721 East Poinsett Street
Greer, SC 29651-6404
Third Friday of the Month at 7:00 pm

**Hub City Railroad Museum and
SOU Rwy Caboose #X3115:**
Spartanburg Amtrak Station
298 Magnolia Street
Spartanburg, SC 29301-2330
Wednesday 10-2 and Saturday 10-2

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The Transcontinental Railway

A Brief History of Building the Transcontinental Railroad

Before the advent of the transcontinental railroad, a journey across the continent to the western states meant a dangerous six month trek over rivers, deserts, and mountains. Alternatively, a traveler could hazard a six-week sea voyage around Cape Horn, or sail to Central America and cross the Isthmus of Panama by rail, risking exposure to any number of deadly diseases in the crossing. Interest in building a railroad uniting the continent began soon after the advent of the locomotive.

The first trains began to run in America in the 1830s along the East Coast. By the 1840s, the nation's railway networks extended through-

out the East, South, and Midwest, and the idea of building a railroad across the nation to the Pacific gained momentum. The annexation of the California territory following the Mexican-American War, the discovery of gold in the region in 1848, and statehood for California in 1850 further spurred the interest to unite the country as thousands of immigrants and miners sought their fortune in the West.

During the 1850s, Congress sponsored numerous survey parties to investigate possible routes for a transcontinental railroad. No route became a clear favorite as political groups were split over whether the route should be a northern or southern one. Theodore Judah, a civil engineer who helped build the first railroad in California, promoted a route along the 41st parallel, running through Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, and California. He was so obsessed with the idea of a

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President's Message

April Program

The April meeting was held at 7:00pm at the Woodmen of the World Lodge in Greer on April 19, 2019. The Program for the evening consisted of noted author H. Roger Grant discussing three of his railroad oriented books. He also had some very interesting stories related to his career and the books he brought. Members also brought a book or two that they love and let those present at the meeting know why.

May Meeting

The May meeting will be held at 7:00pm at the Woodmen of the World Lodge in Greer on May 17, 2019. The program for the evening will be Railroadiana Night. Everyone is asked to bring a railroad artifact (lantern, RR watch, RR china,

etc.) and let us know the story behind the item. Please limit the railroadiana to one artifact per person so we can leave the Lodge before midnight.

Calendar of Events

Mark your calendars for the following events:

May 17, 2019 - CRHA meeting at the Woodmen of the World Lodge, 7:00PM

May 17 & 18, 2019 - Clinton, SC Rail Festival

May 23, 2019 - Field Trip to Aiken RR Museum

June 3, 2019 - Director's Meeting at Taylors Library, 6:30PM

June 4, 2019 - Monthly Train Lovers' Lunch, A&P Restaurant, Hwy 14, Greer, 11:30AM (all train lovers are invited, regardless of gauge, scale, sex, age, modeler or non-modeler)

June 21, 2019 - CRHA meeting at the Woodmen of the

World Lodge, 7:00PM

Caboose Renovation

The Caboose continues to be closed to the public during the ongoing renovation. We hope to have it back into service as soon as possi-



ble, but it appears that this will be a long-term situation. Seven of the new replacement window frames have been fabricated for the caboose windows. Thanks to Duane, Marv and Jim for all the time they have spent working in the Caboose.

In the interim, please visit the Museum. The HO model train inventory has been relocated to the Museum lobby. We have established a GoFundMe account to help with the renovation costs and appreciate all donations that are being made. If you would like to help with the renovation, please contact Duane Heard at 810-623-7444 or Dave Winans at 864-963-4739.

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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 local railway history and news.

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Train Day

By the time you read this, Train Day has already happened. Or did it?

At the time of this writing, the weather does not look promising. Should Train Day have to be cancelled due to the weather, we will be holding several smaller event days over the summer instead. For example, we can schedule a Model Train Day, or a Whistle Truck Day, or a Hub City Kids and Children's Museum Day, perhaps even a Touch a Truck Day. Thanks to all who helped with the Train Day preparation and hopefully on May 11 as well. Arrive early to help set-up and stay late and help to take-down.

Mark Your Calendars—Aiken Trip

A field trip to the Aiken Visitors Center and Railroad Museum is being planned for May 23. We may have the opportunity to chase the

Aiken Railroad, which will be in operation that day. We will meet at the Walmart parking lot in Simpsonville (3950 Grandview Dr, Simpsonville, SC 29680, near the Murphy's gas station) at 9:00AM for those who want to car pool. Lunch is planned for 11:30 at the Cracker Barrel in Aiken at 2352 Whiskey Rd, Aiken, SC 29803.

After lunch we will tour the museum located on the second floor of the Visitor's Center. After our tour, we have a couple of options. We may be invited to visit a local model railroad, we can visit the County Historical Museum or we could try and locate the Aiken Railroad operation. We could split into 3 groups, depending on what we are interested in. Additional information is attached to the message about this event.

Visit the Museum

Our latest Museum display is a tribute to the Trans-Continental Railroad, which celebrated its 150th anniversary on May 10th. Stop by to see the new display. The Hub City RR Museum is open from 10 to 2 on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

We have loaned the Spartanburg History Museum, located in the Chapman Cultural Center, a number of items that they have included in their Trains, Plans and Automobiles of Spartanburg display. The display was open to the public on April 25 and will run for several months.

April Minutes

Approved April Board of Director's Minutes are attached to the email.



Thanks,
Dave Winans
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transcontinental railroad that he became known as "Crazy Judah." Although Judah's plan had merit, detractors noted the formidable obstacles along his proposed route, the most serious of which was the Sierra Nevada mountain range. A rail line built along this route would require tunneling through granite mountains and crossing deep ravines, an engineering feat yet to be attempted in the U.S.

In 1859, Judah received a letter from Daniel Strong, a storekeeper in Dutch Flat, California, offering to show Judah the best route along the old emigrant road through the mountains near Donner Pass. The route had a gradual rise and required the line to cross the summit of only one mountain rather than two. Judah agreed and he and Strong drew up letters of incorporation for the Central Pacific Railroad Company. They began seeking investors and Judah could convince Sacramento businessmen that a railroad would bring much needed trade to the area. Several men decided to back him, including hardware wholesaler Collis P. Huntington and his partner, Mark Hopkins; dry goods merchant, Charles Crocker; and wholesale grocer, soon to be governor, Leland Stanford. These backers would later come to be known as the "Big Four."

Huntington and his partners paid Judah to survey the route. Judah used maps from his survey to bolster his presentation to Congress in October 1861. Many Congressmen were leery of beginning such an expensive venture, especially with the Civil War underway, but President Abraham Lincoln, who was a long-time supporter of railroads, agreed

with Judah. On July 1, 1862, Lincoln signed the Pacific Railway Act, authorizing land grants and government bonds, which amounted to \$32,000 per mile of track laid, to two companies, the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad.



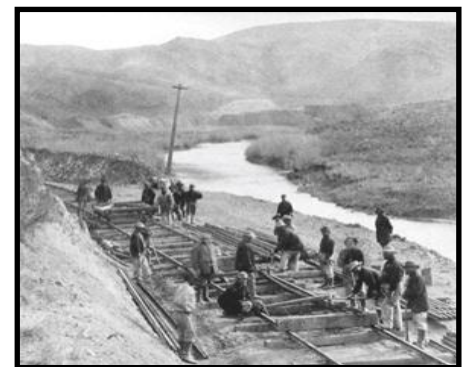
Building the CP in western Utah.

Almost immediately, conflicts arose between Judah and his business partners over the construction of the Central Pacific line. In October 1863, Judah sailed for New York to attempt to find investors who would buy out his Sacramento partners. Though he had made the voyage to Panama and across the Isthmus by train many times, he contracted yellow fever during this trip and died on November 2, one week after reaching New York City. Judah did not live to see the Central Pacific begin work; he departed Sacramento for New York a few weeks before the first rail was spiked on October 26, 1863. The Big Four replaced Judah with Samuel Montague and the Central Pacific construction crews began building the line east from Sacramento.

At the eastern end of the project, Grenville Dodge and his assistant, Peter Dey, surveyed the potential route the Union Pacific would follow. They recommended a line that would follow Platt River, along the

North Fork, that would cross the Continental Divide at South Pass in Wyoming and continue along to Green River. President Lincoln favored this route and made the decision that the eastern terminus of the Transcontinental Railroad would be Council Bluffs, Iowa, across the Missouri River from Omaha, Nebraska.

Thomas C. Durant, a medical doctor turned businessman, gained control of the Union Pacific Railroad Company by buying over \$2 million in shares and installing his own man as president. "Doc" Durant created the Crédit Mobilier of America, a business front that appeared to be an independent contractor, to construct the railroad. However, Crédit Mobilier was owned by Union Pacific investors and, over the next few years, it swindled the government out of tens of millions of dollars by charging extortionate fees for the work. Because the government paid by the mile of track built, Durant also in-



Track laying was easier on the UP.

sisted the original route be unnecessarily lengthened, further lining his pockets. Soon after the completion of the railroad, Durant's corrupt business schemes became a public scandal with Congress investigating

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not only Durant, but also fellow Senators and Representatives who had benefited from his shady dealings.

The Central Pacific's Big Four formed their corporation with a similar arrangement, awarding the construction and supplies contract to one of their own, Charles Crocker, who, for the sake of appearances, resigned from the railroad's board. However, the Big Four owned an interest in Crocker's company and each of them profited from the contract.

The race between the two companies commenced when the Union Pacific finally began to lay tracks at Omaha, Nebraska, in July 1865. (A bridge over the Missouri River would be built later to join Omaha to Council Bluffs, the official eastern terminus.) Durant hired Grenville Dodge as chief engineer and General Jack Casement as construction boss. With tens of thousands of Civil War veterans out of work, hiring for the Union Pacific was easy. The men, mostly Irishmen, worked hard and well, despite going on strike occasionally when Durant withheld their pay over petty labor disputes.

Finding workers was a more difficult task for the Central Pacific. Laborers, mainly Irish immigrants, were hired in New York and Boston and shipped out west at great expense. But many of them abandoned railroad work, lured by the Nevada silver mines. In desperation, Crocker tried to hire newly freed African Americans, immigrants from Mexico, and even petitioned Congress to send 5,000 Confederate Civil War prisoners,

but to no avail. Frustrated at the lack of manpower necessary to support the railroad, Crocker suggested to his work boss, James Strobridge, that they hire Chinese laborers. Although Strobridge was initially against the idea, feeling that the Chinese were too slight in stature for the demanding job, he agreed to hire 50 men on a trial basis. After only one month, Strobridge grudgingly admitted that the Chinese were conscientious, sober, and hard workers.

Within three years, 80 percent of the Central Pacific workforce was made up of Chinese workers, and they proved to be essential to the task of laying the line through the Sierra Nevada's. Once believed to be too frail to perform arduous manual labor, the Chinese workers accomplished amazing and dangerous feats no other workers would or could do. They blasted tunnels through the solid granite -- sometimes progressing only a foot a day. They often lived in the tunnels as they worked their way through the solid granite, saving precious time and energy from entering and exiting the worksite each day. They were routinely lowered down sheer cliff faces in makeshift baskets on ropes where they drilled holes, filled them with explosives, lit the fuse and then were yanked up as fast as possible to avoid the blast.

While the Central Pacific fought, punishing conditions moving eastward through mountains, across ravines, and through blizzards, the Union Pacific faced resistance from the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes who were seeing their homelands invaded and irrevocably changed. The railroad workers

were armed and oftentimes protected by U.S. Cavalry and friendly Pawnee Indians, but the workforce routinely faced Native American raiding parties that attacked surveyors and workers, stole livestock and equipment, and pulled up track and derailed locomotives.

Both railroad companies battled against their respective obstacles to lay the most miles of track, therefore gaining the most land and money. Although the Central Pacific had a two-year head start over the Union Pacific, the rough terrain of the Sierra Nevada's limited their construction to only 100 miles by the end of 1867. But once through the Sierras, the Central Pacific rail lines moved at tremendous speed, crossing Nevada and reaching the Utah border in 1868. From the east, the Union Pacific completed its line through Wyoming and was moving at an equal tempo from the east.

No end had been set for the two rail lines when President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railway Act in 1862, but a decision had to be made soon. By early 1869, the Central Pacific and Union Pacific were closing in on each other across northern Utah, aided by a Mormon workforce under contract to both companies. But neither side was interested in halting construction, as each company wanted to claim the \$32,000 per mile subsidy from the government. Indeed, at one point the graders from both companies, working ahead of track layers, passed one another as they were unwilling to concede territory to their competitors.

On April 9, 1869, Congress established the meeting point in an

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The portrait of the celebration of the driving of the golden spike.

area known as Promontory Summit, north of the Great Salt Lake. Less than one month later, on May 10, 1869, locomotives from the two railroads met nose-to-nose to signal the joining of the two lines. At 12:57 p.m. local time, as railroad dignitaries hammered in ceremonial golden spikes, telegraphers announced the completion of the Pacific Railway. Canons boomed in San Francisco and Washington. Bells rang and fire whistles shrieked as people celebrated across the country. The nation was indeed united. Manifest Destiny was a reality. The six-month trip to California had been reduced to two weeks. And within only a few years, the transcontinental railroad turned the frontier wilderness of the western territories into regions populated by European-Americans, enabling business and commerce to proliferate and effectively ending the traditional Native American way of life.

Cultural Impact Of Building the Transcontinental Railroad

Numerous “Hell on Wheels” towns proliferated along the Union Pacific construction route from Omaha, Nebraska, to Promontory Summit, Utah. The towns were famous for their rapid growth and infamous for their lawlessness. Many of the Union Pacific railroad workers were young Civil War veterans, many were Irish immigrants, and almost all were single. The close attachment to the railroads meant a constant stream of transient residents and a mixing of ethnic groups under the banner of the Pacific Railroad. The towns were often temporary and made up of tents and cheap board structures that easily could be

dismantled and moved to the next location. The towns offered everything from dentistry to hardware supplies to saloons and prostitutes. Although many “Hell on Wheels” towns disappeared as the railroad moved west, several communities, such as Laramie, Wyoming, endured and thrived in later years as railroad repair facilities and branch line terminals.

The Union Pacific's progress through the upper plains also put construction workers in the path of the Plains Indians. Civil War veteran General Grenville Dodge led the Army's forces against the Indians following the Civil War. Under his command, army troops battled Sioux, Arapahoe, and Cheyenne in Wyoming, Colorado, and western Nebraska. The November 1864 Sand Creek Massacre in Colorado, in which U.S. Army forces raided and killed 150 Cheyenne Indian villagers, and the Cheyenne retribution at Julesburg, Colorado, a few weeks later were commonplace along the future route of the railroad. Dodge became chief engineer of the Union Pacific in 1865 and the railroad's encroachment on Native American land led to continued conflicts during the construction of the westward line. By the end the eventual loss of Native American homelands as they were forced onto reservations.

Despite their confrontations with several Native American nations, the Union Pacific found an ally in the Pawnees, a tribe friendly to the U.S. government. Dodge recruited Pawnees to serve as a protection force against the Sioux as the rail-

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road made its way through the plains. In return, railroad officials gave Pawnees free passage on their trains. In a macabre demonstration, Thomas Durant recruited Pawnees to stage a mock raid on trains as entertainment for dignitaries riding as part of the Union Pacific's 100th meridian celebration in October 1866.

Mormon leaders, though supportive of the transcontinental railroad's advance through Utah, worried that the railroad would encroach on the character of their society. Indeed, sermons of the day focused on three changes, both good and bad, coming with the railroad: increased immigration of Mormons to Utah, economic help in the territory, and a proliferation of undesirable people moving to the Kingdom. To mitigate the unsavory elements of the railroad, Brigham Young established a School of the Prophets composed of church leaders to direct an economic plan of action. To show his support for the transcontinental railroad, Brigham Young purchased five shares of stock of the Union Pacific Railroad valued at \$1,000 per share.

In May 1868, Young signed a \$2,125,000 million contract with the Union Pacific to build the railroad line from Echo to the shores of the Great Salt Lake, a distance of 150 miles. In the fall of the same year, Young contracted with Central Pacific officials to build the railroad from Humboldt Wells, Nevada, to Ogden, Utah, a distance of 200 miles.

Chinese immigration began with the discovery of gold in California in 1848. Competition for mining jobs,

however, quickly turned to racial problems in the state. During the 1850s the unequal treatment of African-Americans extended to the Chinese. During the 1850s and early 1860s, the state legislature and numerous local governments passed anti-Chinese laws and imposed taxes to discourage Chinese immigration and to deny civil rights to those



Do your banking and buy your liquor at the same tent.

working in the U.S. But when the Central Pacific began laying tracks in 1865, white labor was scarce and unreliable. Charles Crocker's solution to the labor shortage was to hire out-of-work Chinese.

In February 1865, Crocker and his subordinate James Strobridge employed 50 Chinese workers as an experiment to verify their capabilities of performing the arduous labor of laying tracks. They passed the test. Within a few months, the Central Pacific's Chinese workforce began their assault on the Sierra Nevada range, the workers blasting through the most difficult terrain of the entire railroad line. Receiving only one dollar a day in salary and working twelve hour shifts six days a week, the Chinese lived in makeshift camps, sometimes in the tunnels they were blasting, and were often

called upon to perform the most life-threatening construction duties.

In July 1868, Secretary of State William Seward concluded the Treaty of Trade, Consuls, and Emigration with China. Known as the Burlingame Treaty, named after consul Anson Burlingame, China was given favored nation status and was meant to increase trade between the

United States. and China. A corollary component of the treaty increased the number of Chinese immigrants and provided civil rights protection for Chinese living and working in the United States. Immigration increased soon after the treaty was signed: 11,085 Chinese immigrants

in 1868, and 14,994 Chinese immigrants in 1869. At the height of the transcontinental construction period, the Central Pacific employed over 12,000 Chinese workers, which was more than 90 percent of the company's workforce.

The Central Pacific released Chinese workers in April 1869 with the completion of the railroad at Promontory, Utah. Racial tensions increased in the West as the workers returned to California in search of employment. In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act that barred future Chinese immigration and denied naturalization for those already in the United States. The act stood in place for 60 years until President Franklin Roosevelt repealed it in 1943 during World War II.

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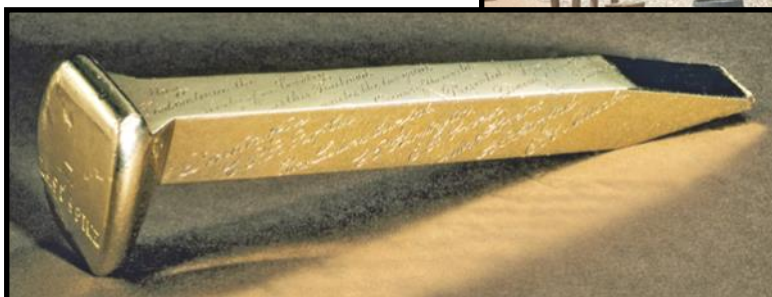
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National Park sign.



Exact reproductions of the original locomotives posing at the Golden Spike site.



One of the four original golden spikes driven at the ceremony in 1869.

Stamp commemorating the 100th anniversary.



CP loco was built by the Schenectady Locomotive Works.



UP loco built by the Rogers Locomotive Works.



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