

Carolina Conductor



Volume 9 Number 7

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 & Hub City RR Museum

Meeting Site:

Fountain Inn Presbyterian Church

307 North Main Street

Fountain Inn, SC 29644

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

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

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Articles can be submitted anytime.

Seaboard Air Line

Acronym SAL

Year Chartered: 1887 in SC

Year Operational: 1887 in SC

Year Service Ended: 1967

Acquired / leased the following railroads associated with South Carolina:

1887 - Palmetto Railway.

1888 - Georgia, Carolina & Northern Railroad.

1900 - Florida Central & Peninsular Railway. / South Bound Railroad.

1900 - Chesterfield & Kershaw RR

1901 - Chester, Greenwood & Abbeville RR.

1907 - Chesterfield & Lancaster Railroad.

1907 - Catawba Valley Railroad.

1910 - Charlotte, Monroe & Columbia Railroad.

1911 - Raleigh & Charleston RR.

1915 - Carolina, Atlantic & Western Railway.

1915 - Merged with the newly-created Seaboard Air Line Railway Company on November 16, 1915, which had recently changed its name from the Carolina, Atlantic & Western Railway on November 8, 1915. Beforehand, the Carolina, Atlantic & Western Railway had already agreed to merge with Seaboard Air Line on October 11, 1915.

1918 - Built a new line from



Charleston to Savannah to compete with the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. Towns on Route (in SC): Charleston, Johns Island, Meggett, Sheldon, Okatie, Levys, Savannah. 1946 - Re-organized as the Seaboard Air Line Railroad. 1967 - Merged with the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad to form the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad.

On October 1, 1901, the South Carolina Secretary of State issued a charter to Seaboard Air Lines Railway with authorization to merge in eight (8) lines: Raleigh & Gaston Railroad (NC), Raleigh & Augusta Air Line Railroad (NC), Carolina Central Railroad (NC), Georgia, Carolina & Northern Railway (NC & SC), Seaboard Air Line Belt Railroad (GA), Palmetto Railway (SC), Chesterfield & Kershaw Railroad (SC), and the South Bound

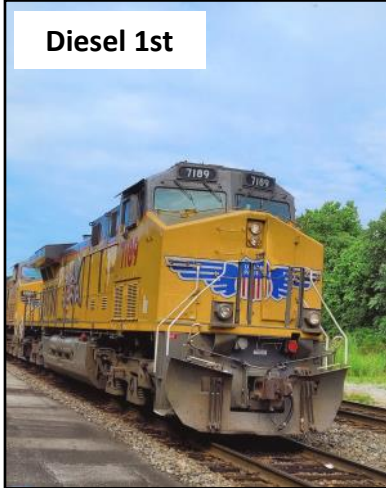
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Photo Contest



Diesel 2nd

Diesel—1st Bob Klempner, 2nd Bruce Gathman, 3rd Bo Brown



Diesel 1st



Diesel 3rd



Other 3rd

Other—1st Dave Winans, 2nd Danny Higgins, 3rd Bob Klempner



Other 1st

Best of Show—Dave Winans



Other 2nd



Steam 3rd

Steam—1st Joe Hudson, 2nd Pat O'Shields, 3rd Bo Brown



Steam 2nd



Steam 1st

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.

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Railroad (SC).

The profitable and efficiently-managed Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad (of Virginia), and the steadily-improving Raleigh & Gaston Railroad connected at Weldon, NC, offering their combined customers a very good option for transporting goods a good distance. Thus in 1870, the route of the combined railroads became locally known as the Seaboard-Inland Air Line.

In 1871, the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad came into control of a railroad then under construction southward from Raleigh and renamed that year as the Raleigh & Augusta Air Line Railroad. This new road reached Hamlet, NC, ninety-seven (97) miles south of Raleigh, in 1877, and formed a connection with the Carolina Central Railway, then operating across the state from Wilmington, through Charlotte, to Shelby.

The depression years of the 1870s, along with heavy advances to the Raleigh & Augusta Air Line Railroad, caused the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad to run into financial difficulties. Looking out for the best interest of both his own company and of the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad, President John M. Robinson of the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad, in 1873, acquired control of the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad and its new subsidiary, the Raleigh & Augusta Air Line Railroad. In Oc-

SEABOARD AIR LINE R. R.



The Great Short Line to the North,
South and Southwest.

—o—
GOING SOUTH.

Leave Yorkville, (via C. & L.)*..... 9 56 p. m.
 Arrive at Chester, (C. & L.) 11 12 p. m.
 Leave Chester, (S. A. L.) 2 07 a. m.
 Arrive at Atlanta, (S. A. L.)..... 7 30 a. m.
 Connects at Atlanta with all lines South, South-
 west and West.

—o—
GOING NORTH.

Leave Yorkville, (via C. & L.)*..... 9 56 p. m.
 Arrive at Chester, (C. & L.) 11 12 p. m.
 Leave Chester, (S. A. L.)..... 12 39 a. m.
 Arrive at Raleigh..... 6 30 a. m.
 Arrive at Portsmouth..... 11 35 a. m.
 Arrive at Norfolk..... 11 45 a. m.
 Arrive at Richmond..... 11 45 a. m.
 Arrive at Washington..... 3 40 p. m.

*Also makes good connection with Charleston, Cincinnati and Chicago railroad at Catawba Junction, for all points North and South.

B. A. NEWLAND, T. P. A.
 Charlotte, N. C.

T. J. ANDERSON, G. P. A.
 —o—

tober of 1875, Mr. Robinson became president of both the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad and the Raleigh & Augusta Air Line Railroad.

In 1873, the Seaboard & Raleigh Railroad was created as a merger of the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad and the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad. Both retained their identities until 1900 when officially merged into Seaboard Air Line Railway.

In November of 1881, the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad was able to acquire control of the Carolina Central Railroad. Its new president was John M. Robinson, who was also the president of the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad,

the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad, and the Raleigh & Augusta Air Line Railroad. The growing company, which had until this time had been primarily a north-south line, now owned a significant east-west line, and its "system" was becoming formidable.

The Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad acquired the Georgia, Carolina & Northern Railroad soon after it was chartered in 1886, and completed its construction in 1892, one year before President John M. Robinson finally passed away.

In 1892, John M. Robinson created the Seaboard Air-Line Company, which was a through rail-water route between Baltimore, MD and Atlanta, GA. From 1892 to 1900, the new company operated a loose affilia-

tion of the various railroad lines owned by the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad and the Baltimore Steam Packet Company (referred to as the Bay Line) which connected several eastern seaports. The Old Dominion Steamship Company joined in this route by furnishing direct connection at Portsmouth, VA with its New York boats.

In 1893, President John M. Robinson died, and was succeeded by R.C. Hoffman, who continued to maintain the company headquarters in Baltimore. E. St. John was elected as Vice-President, and Thomas J. Anderson was General Passenger Agent - located at Portsmouth, VA. A

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change was made in 1898 when John Skelton Williams acquired control of the Seaboard Air-Line Company, whose system at that point in time operated 946 miles of track in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. In addition, the Bay Line steamers ran daily between Baltimore, Old Point Comfort, Norfolk, and Portsmouth, and for several years towards the end of the century, into Richmond.

The Atlantic Coast Line had in August of 1894 made a historic run from Jacksonville, FL to Washington, DC, with the fastest portion of that trip from Ashley Junction to Florence in South Carolina, which was made at an average speed of 58.3 mph.

In November of 1896, a Board of Directors meeting for several of the various companies of the Seaboard Air-Line was held in Raleigh. After that meeting, the board and President St. John went from Raleigh to Gaston aboard the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad (which the company owned) and boarded the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad at Weldon for Portsmouth. To make a long story short, the company soon advertised to the public that this run had averaged "76 miles in 67 minutes," or 68 mph, just to prove to the public that the Seaboard Road could outrun the Coast Line.

John Skelton Williams of Richmond assembled the new Seaboard Air Line Railway, an outgrowth of the acquisition of the earlier-named Seaboard Air-

Line Company, over a five year period between 1895 and 1900, in a much swifter manner than John M. Robinson had put together the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad system in the previous two decades.

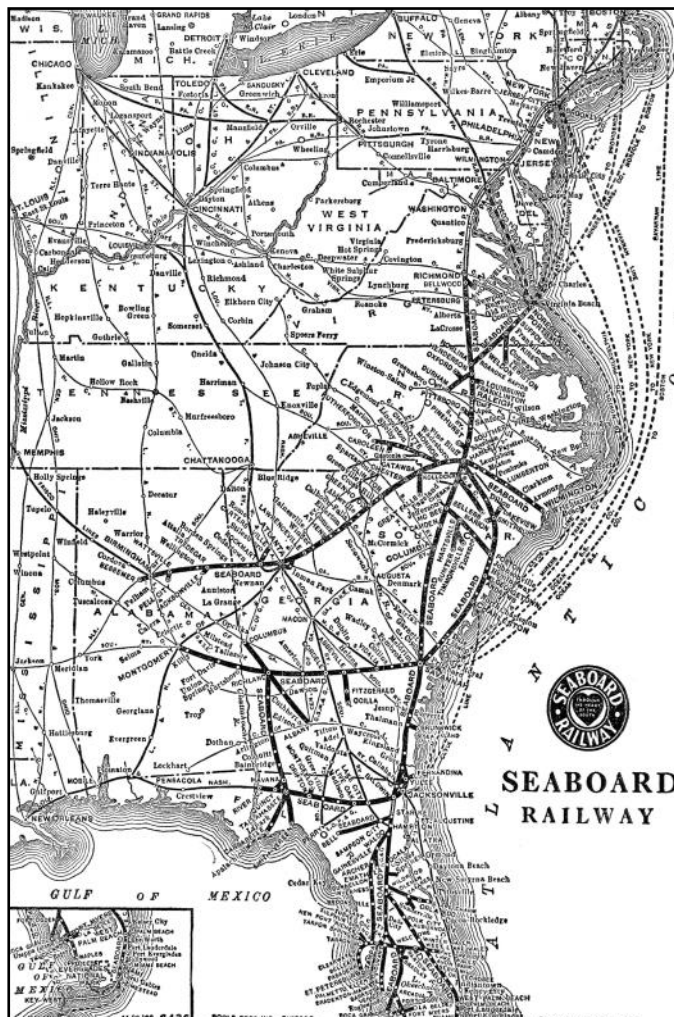
In 1896, John Skelton Williams, along with his associates, including J. William Middendorf of Middendorff, Oliver & Company, bankers of Baltimore, MD, acquired control of the Georgia & Alabama Railway, then in operation between Savannah, GA and Montgomery, AL. The Georgia & Alabama Railway owned vast terminal properties at Savannah, and operated a total mileage of 458 miles, including branch lines to both Columbus and Albany, GA.

This project was accomplished in February of 1899, when John Skelton Williams and associates took over the 944-mile Florida Central & Peninsular Railroad from its previous owners, W. Bayard Cutting and R. Fulton Cutting of New York City. The FC&P extended southward from Columbia, SC to Tampa, FL, and westward from Jacksonville, FL to River Junction. On September 14, 1899, control of the 57-mile Atlantic, Suwannee River & Gulf Railway was added as a FC&P property.

In 1900, the tracks of the three major components forming the new railroad were joined through the construction of only ninety-one (91) miles of main line track-

age between Cheraw and Cayce in South Carolina. Two subsidiary organizations financed by Seaboard Air Line Railway performed this new work. First, the Chesterfield & Kershaw Railroad built the fifty-five (55) miles above Camden to a connection at Cheraw with the Seaboard's small Palmetto Railroad, running eighteen miles northward to the future hub of the system at Hamlet, NC. Then, the South Bound Railroad Company of the FC&P system constructed the remaining thirty-six miles southward from Camden - both completed in 1900.

On April 10, 1900, the name of the Richmond, Petersburg & Carolina Railroad was changed to become the new Seaboard Air Line Railway that took over operation of the old

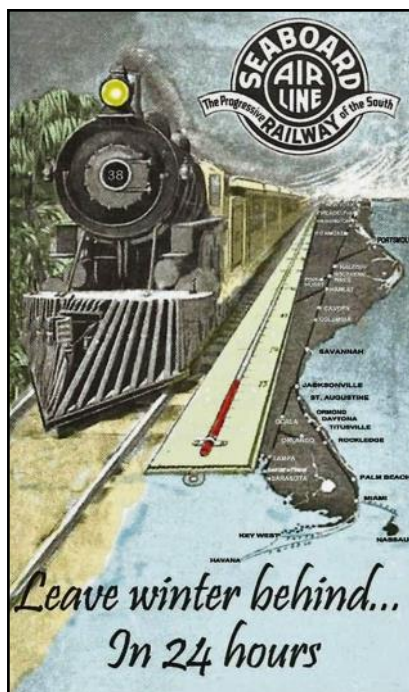


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Seaboard Air-Line System from Portsmouth to Atlanta, Wilmington, Rutherfordton, and Camden.

In December of 1911, the Seaboard Air Line Railway acquired the Raleigh & Charleston Railroad, which intersected with the SAL at Smithboro to the northeast of Marion, SC and at Lumberton, NC. That same year, the Seaboard Air Line Railway formally merged in the Roanoke & Tar River Railroad. In November of 1915, the Seaboard Air Line Railway merged in the Carolina, Atlantic & Western Railroad.



With the acquisition of the Carolina, Atlantic & Western Railroad in 1915, a newly-reorganized Seaboard Air Line Railway set up six operating divisions, with headquarters in Raleigh, NC. The Virginia Division managed lines north of Raleigh. The North Carolina Division managed lines from Raleigh to Hamlet, Monroe, Rutherfordton, Wilmington, and Columbia. The

South Carolina Division managed lines from Hamlet via Andrews and Charleston to Jacksonville and Baldwin and from Columbia to Savannah. The Georgia Division managed lines from Monroe to Birmingham. The Alabama Division managed lines from Savannah to Montgomery and Columbus. The Florida Division managed lines that went south and west of Jacksonville and Baldwin. The division offices were at Raleigh (also headquarters), Hamlet, Atlanta, Jacksonville, Savannah, and Tampa.

The new company quickly built a new line from Charleston to Savannah (see route below) to compete with Southern Railway. This new route, which included a new bridge over the Savannah River, was opened in 1918, and since that time has been exclusively used for freight traffic between Hamlet, NC and Savannah, GA. Its easy grades allowed steam engines to handle about double the tonnage rated for freight lines coming out of Columbia and was a very economical line to operate.

At this time, the new company began advertising itself as "The Progressive Railway of the South." It added the lettering "Co." to its rolling stock in 1916. In 1918, S. Davies Warfield became president of the company as well as the Old Bay Line.

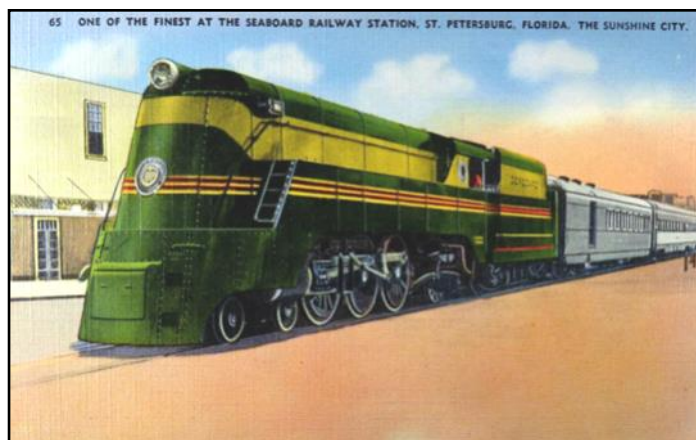
After the Great War of 1914-1918, President

Warfield led the Seaboard Air Line Railway Company into vast extension projects in the state of Florida to keep abreast of the real estate boom in that area during the early 1920s. Other railroads in both Florida and Georgia were added to the growing system.

Capital improvements were made over the entire system during this time, with heavier rail laid on the main line along with rock ballast. Beginning in 1926, Automatic Block Signals were installed between Richmond, Hamlet, and Monroe, as well as between Savannah and Jacksonville.

Upon the death of President Warfield in 1927, Legh R. Powell was named president. His administration leased a new building in Norfolk, Virginia for its headquarters. Thus stood the completed 4,500 mile line of the Seaboard Air Line Railway Company on October 29, 1919, when the stock market crashed in New York City and a state of business depression struck an unprepared nation.

Unfortunately, the Seaboard Air Line Railway was wedged in between the wealthy Atlantic Coast Line Railroad nearer the coast and the Southern Railway



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nearer the piedmont's fall line. With this fierce competition, the Seaboard Air Line Railway had not been able to accumulate the necessary financial resources to weather the lean years of the 1930s.

In December of 1930, the company was placed in the hands of receivers, and operated for fourteen and a half (14-1/2) years as a ward of the United States District Court in Norfolk, VA. Judge Luther B. Way presided on that bench at the time, and he was assisted by former SAL president Legh R. Powell, E.W. Smith, and then Henry W. Anderson. Soon, with loans from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation of the Federal Government, the equipment of the road was modernized

with the purchase of ten new steam freight locomotives along with new and rebuilt passenger cars. The Portsmouth locomotive shops were moved to Jacksonville in 1936, but coach and car shops remained at Portsmouth.

The North Carolina Division was eliminated with the Wilmington and Rutherfordton lines going to the Georgia Division. The Virginia Division ran through to Hamlet and the new Carolina Division took over both main lines southward from Hamlet to Florida. With these changes, the old Alabama Division was revived with headquarters in Americus.

An unusually large number of wrecks during the WW-II years prompted the company to expedite the installation of Centralized

Traffic Control with the return of peace.

Meanwhile, on May 31, 1945, the entire properties of the Seaboard Air Line Railway Company were sold under foreclosure at an auction held on the passenger depot platform in Portsmouth. The road was bought by bond holders for \$52,000,500 and reorganized in 1946 as the Seaboard Air Line Railroad.

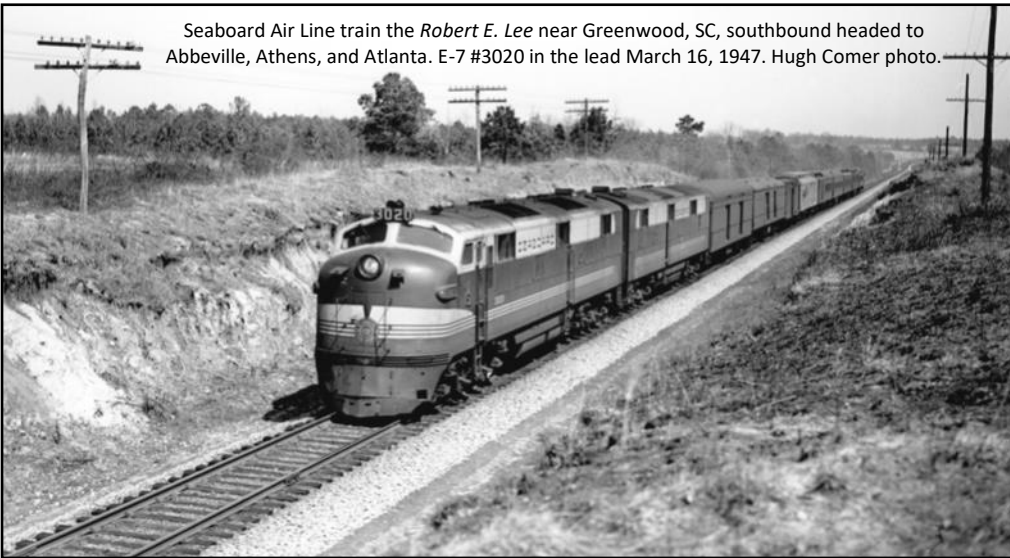
John W. Smith became president in 1952, and on March 1, 1958, merged into the company a short line railroad known as the Macon, Dublin & Savannah Railroad. In June of 1959, the company purchased all the stock of the Gainesville Midland Railroad and later gave away the Midland's steam locomotives for exhibition

#4500 Seaboard Air Line Baldwin Centipede model DR12-8-3000. The #4500 was built on the frame and trucks of the ill-fated 4-8-8-4 750/8 DE.



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Seboard Air Line train the *Robert E. Lee* near Greenwood, SC, southbound headed to Abbeville, Athens, and Atlanta. E-7 #3020 in the lead March 16, 1947. Hugh Comer photo.

bama Railroad Company, the Florida Central and Peninsular Railroad Company, the Georgia and Alabama Terminal Company, the Logansville and Lawrenceville Railroad of Georgia, the Richmond, Petersburg and Carolina Railroad Company, the Pittsboro Railroad Company, the Southbound Railroad Company.

At this meeting also will be settled the terms and conditions upon which the consolidation with each of the above-named railroad companies shall be made, or its property

purposes as souvenirs.

Finally, on July 1, 1967, President Smith of the Seboard Air Lines Railroad Company and President W.T. Rice of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Company merged their two companies to form the new Seboard Coast Line Railroad.

Excerpted from the 10/27/1899, article in the *New York Times*

RALEIGH, N.C., Oct. 26. -- A general meeting of the stockholders of the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad Company will be held at the office of the company in Raleigh, N.C., on Wednesday, Nov. 29, for the purpose of considering the change of its corporate title from that of "The Raleigh and Gaston Railroad Company" to "Sea-

any other name that may be selected and -board Air Line Railroad Company" or agreed upon. The meeting is held also for the purpose of considering the consolidation of the Raleigh and Gaston



Seboard #1472 model RS-12 built by Baldwin in 1951.

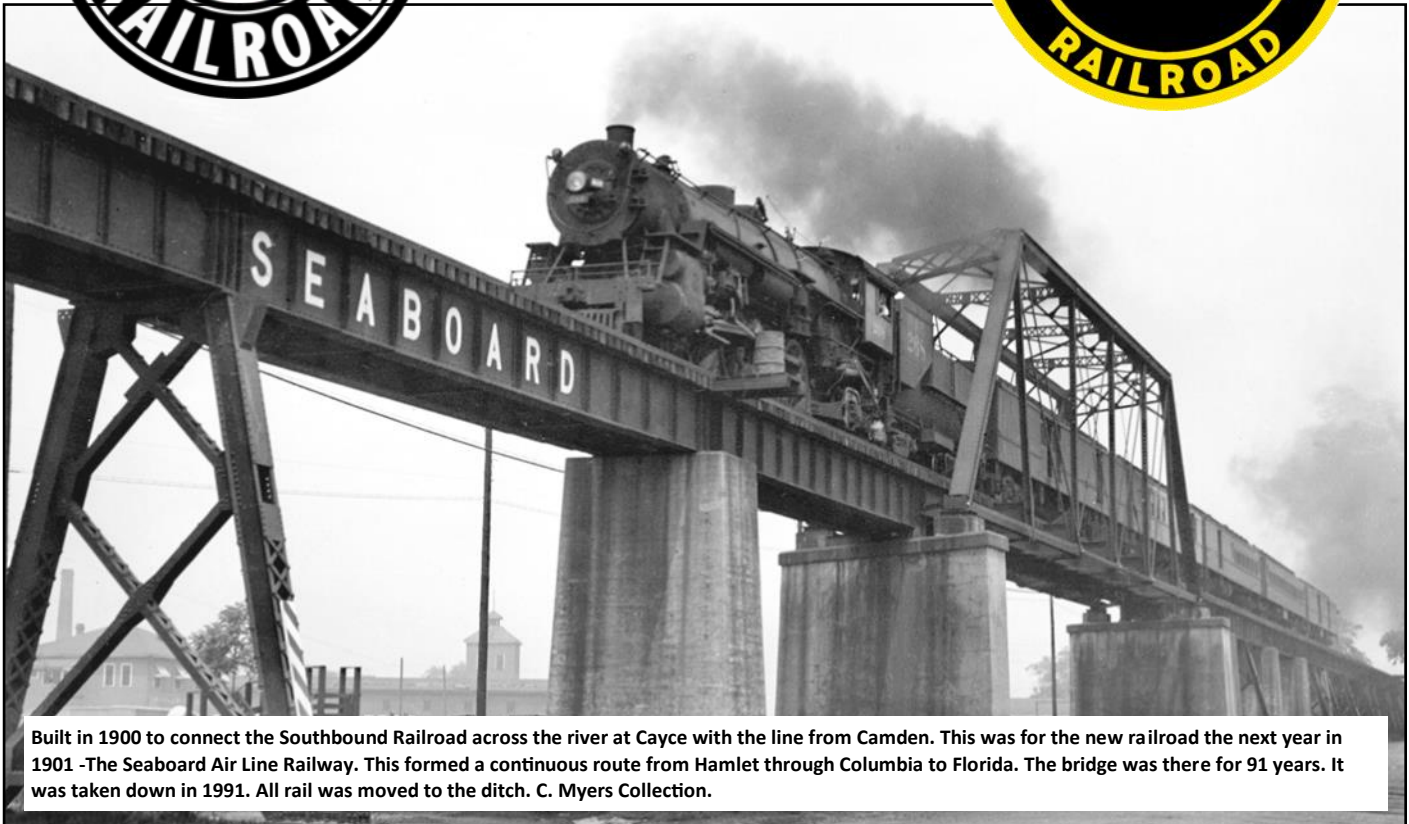
Railroad Company with the following railroad companies, or any of them: The Raleigh and Augusta Air Line Railroad Company, the Durham and Northern Railway Company, the Roanoke and Tar River Railroad Company, the Seboard and Roanoke Railroad Company, the Louisburg Railroad Company, the Carolina Central Railroad Company, the Palmetto Railroad Company, the Chesterfield and Kershaw Railroad Company, the Georgia, Carolina and Northern Railway Company, the Seboard Air Line Belt Railroad Company, the Georgia and Ala-

and franchises acquired. This will make necessary an increase of the capital stock of the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad Company from 15,000 shares of \$100 each, aggregating \$1,500,000, into 716,250 shares of \$100 each aggregating \$71,625,000.

This stock will be divided into two series of grades and provisions will be made for the preferences, conditions, and voting powers of each series or grade. The power to make this consolidation is given to this company under an Act of the General Assembly of North Carolina.

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Built in 1900 to connect the Southbound Railroad across the river at Cayce with the line from Camden. This was for the new railroad the next year in 1901 -The Seaboard Air Line Railway. This formed a continuous route from Hamlet through Columbia to Florida. The bridge was there for 91 years. It was taken down in 1991. All rail was moved to the ditch. C. Myers Collection.



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