

Dispatcher

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SDERY ROUTE NO. 1 - FIFTH AVE.

by Eric Sanders

(Note: The article below was first published in the May 1952 issue of Timepoints, monthly journal of the Electric Railway Historical Association of Southern California. Look elsewhere in this issue for information about Timepoints.)

Cable cars, horse cars, steam dummies, double-decker electric cars and PCC's are all part of the story of the San Diego Electric Railway Company's #1 car line. It is also a story of "firsts". The first horse cars ran on Fifth Avenue and it was the first line to be electrified by the SDery.

On July 4, 1888 the San Diego Street Car Company ran its first horse car two miles up Fifth Avenue (then known as Fifth Street). Expansion was fairly rapid and on January 30, 1892, San Diego's original street railroad had five horse car lines to sell to the newly-organized San Diego Electric Railway Company. Two of these lines were the Fifth Avenue and the Market Street (then H Street) lines.

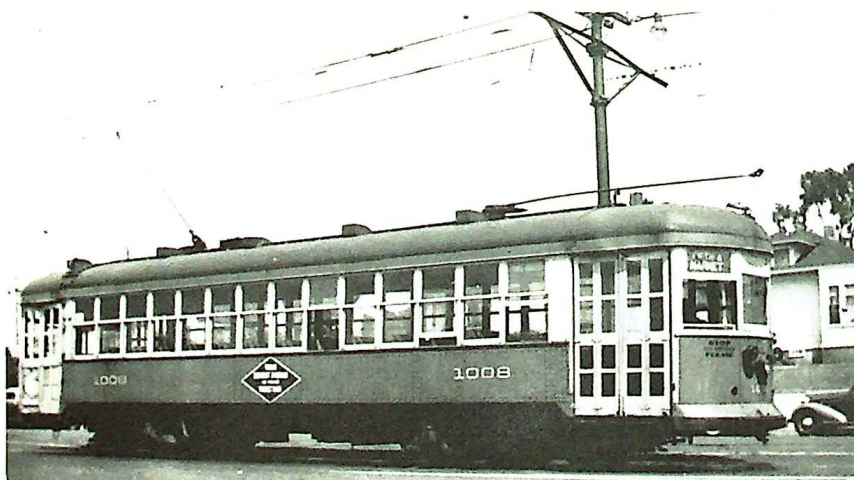
At the time of purchase the horse cars on the Fifth Avenue line operated over double track north from Fifth and L to Fifth and B, then on single track to Fir, and, finally, west on Fir to Third. An associated company, the Park Belt Motor Line, operated steam dummies over a "U" shaped route, one leg of which was Fifth Avenue from Fir to University. This company was also taken over by SDery. The new SDery Fifth Avenue line utilized the rights-of-way of both companies and during the year of purchase the new owners,



Above San Diego Electric Rly. Co. car 430, north on 5th at University, route 1. 2-29-46. (Both pictures - the author)



Below San Diego Electric Rly. Co. car 1008 (ex-Utah Light & Traction 650), at Park Blvd. & University, route 1. 9-3-44



A. B. and John D. Spreckels and others, electrified and rerailed with double track the route from Fifth and L to Fifth and University.

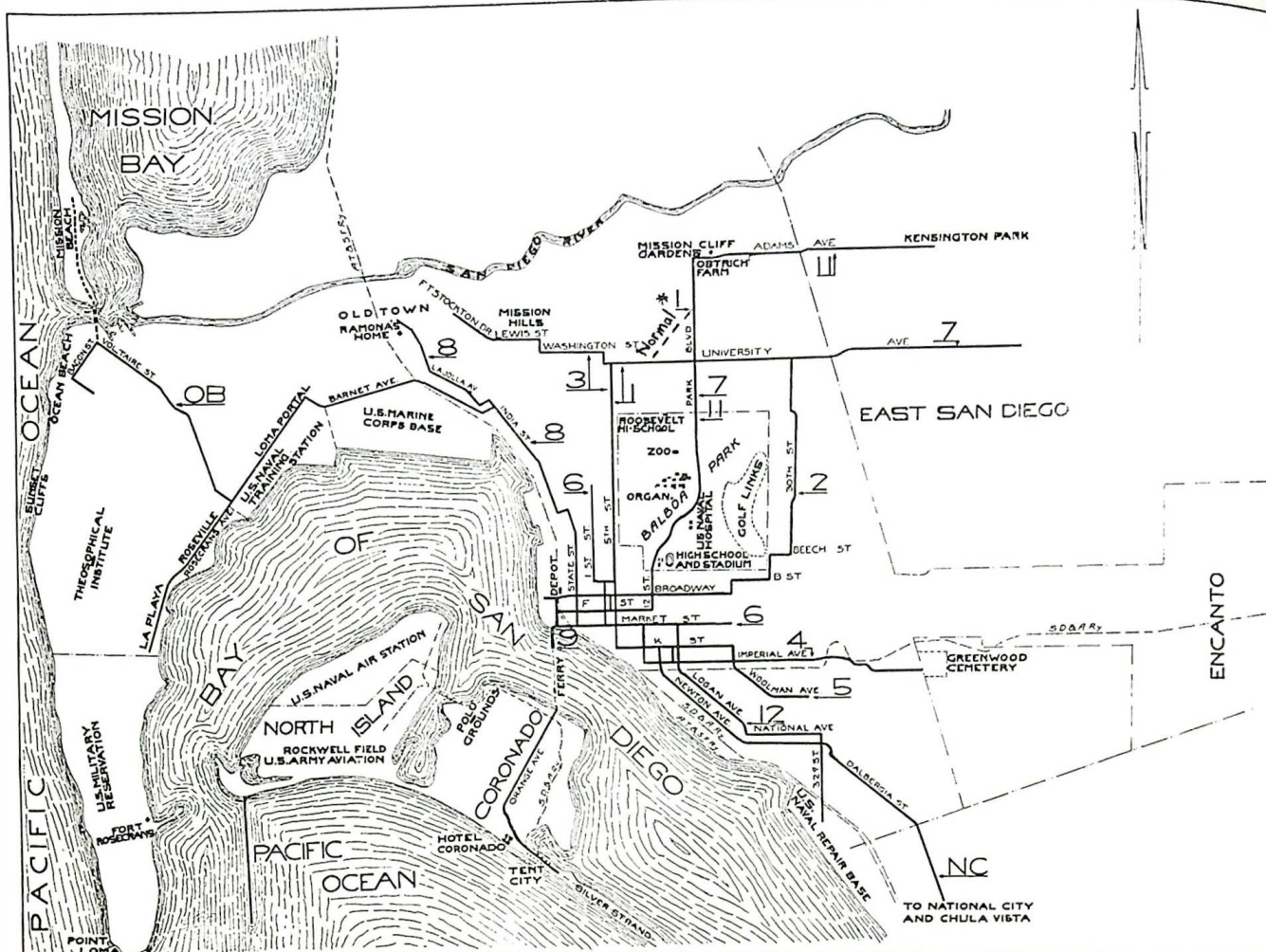
Double-decker car no. 1, one of the St. Louis Car Company's first cars (and their first for San Diego), on July 1, 1892 was placed in service on the line. Double-decker no. 2 reportedly went into service on the Broadway Line but it, too, traveled route 1. Because of their top heavy construction and the resultant hazard on sharp curves these cars, in 1903, had their upper decks removed.

The Fifth Avenue and the Market Street lines were through-routed in 1895 so that the cars operated from Fifth and University to 31st and National via Fifth, Market, 16th, Logan, 26th and National.

Cable cars had been operating in San Diego. On June 7, 1890, the San Diego Cable Car Company began operating its cable cars from Sixth and L via Sixth, C, Fourth, University, Normal (then known as University Boulevard), and Park to Adams, where was located the "Bluffs" (later known as the Pavilion and later still as Mission Cliff Gardens). Visitors to the Bluffs could listen to band concerts, look down on beautiful Mission Valley, eat picnic lunches, and enjoy the flowers and shrubbery. In later years an ostrich farm was to be located east of the area.

Due to the failure of the California National Bank during the depression the company, in January 1892 went into receivership. Operation halted.

Electrification was undertaken by a



Route map on back of stationery of "Office of General Manager," San Diego Electric Railway Company, San Diego & Coronado Ferry Company, and Point Loma Railroad Company. About 1922. Courtesy of the successor company, the San Diego Transit System. * Added by author

new company, the Citizens Traction Company. In 1895 this company apparently operated a horse car on the outer end of the line, as a City Directory lists a Pavilion horse car connection with the SDERy Fifth Avenue line. Electric service by Citizens Traction began on July 8, 1896.

Three years later the San Diego Electric Railway Company purchased the Citizens Traction and all of the latter company's track was abandoned except that between Fifth and University and the Pavilion. This section was added to SDERy's own Fifth Avenue line. SDERy officially acquired the franchise in March 1898.

The "San Diego Union" on January 19, 1899 reported a discontinuation of service on the outer end of the line. Possibly this section was only then being converted to standard gauge. In 1899 the east track on Fifth Avenue from Upas to University was abandoned, but in 1901 extensive track construction included rereiling of all remaining Fifth Avenue track except for an apparent additional abandonment of the eastern track between Quince and Upas. Much track north and east of Fifth and University was rereiled, single track as before. In 1905 more track was rereiled and added so that double track extended from downtown to Ninth and University. Track construction on Market Street section will be discussed in a later article.

The State Normal School was constructed in 1899 at the intersection of Normal, Park and El Cajon Boulevard. Later this school became San Diego State Teachers College.

Two shuttle lines were placed in operation by the SDERy in 1907 as the city expanded. From the terminus at the Mission Cliff Gardens (Park and Adams) one shuttle ran

out on Adams to a point west of the Kensington Park bridge (extended to Marlborough in 1910). The University Avenue shuttle operated from Normal and University to Fairmount and University. The latter shuttle was cut back to 30th Street on the eastern end in 1911 when the #2 line cars began operating on University Avenue to East San Diego. When the #7 line was constructed up through Balboa Park in 1917 it included all University Avenue operation from Park Boulevard to Fairmount. Shuttle service was discontinued on University Avenue.

Route numbers were adopted by SDERy on December 1, 1910 and the Fifth Avenue-Market Street line became Route 1.

Mission Cliff Gardens, still the line's terminus, was described in 1912 as a view spot with botanical gardens, a large bird cage, a paddock with eight deer, lily ponds, a pavilion for state society meetings, and a waiting room of cobble stone masonry and gray stucco. A privately-owned ostrich farm had been constructed by this date. East of the farm was the site of the Adams Avenue car house, constructed in 1913.

SDERy's "1915 Exposition" improvements included rereiling of all of Fifth Avenue and University Avenue track with 114-pound girder rail.

A major change came in 1916 when the Fifth Avenue line was rerouted along University Avenue to Park Boulevard and then north on Park past the junction with Normal to Adams Avenue where it ended as before. Track on Normal was abandoned. The new track was constructed with 114-pound girder rail. In later years additional track was constructed at

Park and University in order to provide "Y" turning facilities for single-end PCC cars, and lighter rail replaced 114-pound rail on Park Boulevard. This replacement rail is reported to have been used originally by the South San Diego Railway, a battery car line at the south end of San Diego Bay.

Sometime after 1916 the Adams Avenue shuttle was replaced by the #11 line and/or the #1 line. During that same period of time and over an undetermined route the #11 line did join the #1 in serving the University Heights area. On January 1, 1919 a new schedule showed #11 line cars operating during morning and evening rush hours up through the Park and on Park Boulevard and Adams Avenue to Kensington Park (its routing in final years of service). During the remaining hours alternate #1 cars operated out Adams to Kensington Park on a 20-minute headway. On the major part of the #1 line cars operated on a 10-minute headway. About the same time through-routing with the Market Street line was discontinued, and #1 cars turned west on Broadway to a terminus at the Union Depot.

In 1918 the #1 line was joined on Fifth Avenue by the #3 (Mission Hills) line which had formerly used First, Third and Fourth Avenues. The two zone system became effective January 1, 1920 and fares jumped from the 5¢ single zone to the 5-10¢ inner and outer zones. Four ride ticket strips sold for 30¢.

As of that date route 1 cars continued to operate from the Union Depot via Broadway, Fifth, University and Park to Adams. Route 11 cars were now operating full time from the Union Depot via Broadway, 12th, Balboa Park private right-of-way, Indiana, Park and Adams to Kensington Park. Both Routes 1 and 11 served Park Boulevard, north of University.

A shuttle service connecting with the Fifth Avenue line and giving limited service on part of the original #3 (Mission Hills) line was discontinued in 1920 and track was abandoned. On August 1, 1923 the #11 line was rerouted so that all cars traveled over the #1 route on University and Fifth Avenue. Routes 1 and 11 were "consolidated" (details lacking) with alternate cars routed through to Kensington Park. Routes 1 and 11 were again separated on July 1, 1924 when the #11 line was routed from the Union Depot via Broadway, Fifth, University, 30th, and Adams to Kensington Park, while the #1 line continued to cover its route from the Union Depot via Broadway, Fifth, University, Park and (this time continuing further) Adams to 30th where it now ends, once again connecting with the #11 line.

In 1924 the 400-series were placed in service and with them came catenary construction on much of the #1 line.

On July 15, 1931 yet another rerouting occurred. The #11 line was once again routed through Balboa Park, thus sharing the private right-of-way with Line 7. This time route 11 cars traveled north on Indiana and Park and then out east on Adams to Kensington Park. No. 1 cars followed this routing: Union Depot via Broadway, Fifth, University, and 30th to 30th and Adams. On December 1, 1931 the line 1 downtown routing was changed from the Union Depot to a loop: Fifth, Market, Third, Broadway and north on Fifth. The No. 2 line on May 8, 1935 was extended on 30th from University to Adams Avenue. Simultaneously the #1 line was cut back to Park and University, as its final outer terminus. (Although records show otherwise the author vaguely recalls a brief interval of time when cars were cut back only to 30th and University. As he remembers it, the terminus was soon changed to Park & University because of traffic conditions at 30th and University.)

The #1 line was very nearly abandoned in favor of buses before Pearl Harbor. The conversion was authorized in 1941 but, as in the case of so many other lines across the nation, was prevented by the outbreak of war.

The last routing change came on May 13, 1942, when traffic congestion on Broadway brought about operation over a loop revised as follows: Fifth, Market, Third, F Street, and north on Fifth.

PCC cars had been standard equipment on the #1 line for several years after 1937, but with the war came many changes. Almost all types of equipment were used on the route in its final years, sole exceptions being the New York ex-Third Avenue cars. The high cars obtained second-hand from the Utah Light and Traction Company

were especially ubiquitous on the #1 line. During peak hours in 1946, eight cars were in use on the route with a headway of eight to nine minutes. Base service was provided on the same headway with six cars.

SDERy announced on October 24, 1943 that passenger traffic for one month on the line totalled 487, 832. Lines 3 and 12 carried approximately the same number of passengers. Lines 2, 7 and 11 each carried approximately one million passengers monthly. (Route 7 rated first with 1,093,415). Routes 4, 9, and 20 were in the 100,000 to 200,000 bracket.

In 1944, PCC's and former Wilkes-Barre and Salt Lake City cars handled the Monday through Saturday runs. On Sundays the line was completely PCC-equipped.

The #1 line was abandoned ("temporarily" at the time) during construction of a University Avenue bridge spanning the new Cabrillo Freeway. It was never restored. Actual rail operation came to an end at 5.08 a.m. on Sunday, June 30, 1946, when owl car 400 reached the end of the line at Park and University. The writer and an employee, the latter had placed flowers above the front headlight, were the last two passengers to disembark. The writer's "souvenir" was the last transfer to be issued on street car #1 line.

As the car swung onto Park Boulevard for a short run to the Adams Avenue car house, the first bus (El Cajon Avenue, route F) took over. Because of a shortage of equipment the buses operated only to Fifth and University, where they connected with the #3 street car. Paper abandonment came on June 1, 1947 when street car route 3 became bus 3 and the F bus became the #1 bus, with both lines operating into the downtown area.

In 1948 the San Diego Transit System took over operation of SDERy's lines.

In more recent years with the adoption of a one-way street plan route 1 buses have operated over slightly different routing. Also on Sundays and evenings route 1 buses merge with the E (La Mesa-El Cajon) buses but retain the #1 tag.

Data comes from company history files, company magazines, San Diego newspapers, company booklets and advertisements, and personal records. Particular thanks to Richard Dodge, Fred Reif, Dale Harlan and Timepoints editor Laurence Veysey.

THE DISPATCHER

A feature and news publication issued quarterly as an official publication of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego, Inc. Society officers are: Wendal Byers, acting president; Charles Mann, second vice president; Earle Swaine, third vice president; Fred Finke, treasurer; Mrs Gladys Umbarger, recording secretary; L.W. McCleary, corresponding secretary; Wally Duthie, excursion director; Bob Weaver, historian; Corky Thomson is Newsletter editor. Dispatcher staff includes:

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Art Editor: Ellen Sanders
Contributors: Allen Copeland
Joe Strapac

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COMMENT

Thanks to Dick Dodge for his story, "San Diego's Grip Cars." May we sell many copies of this issue!

We're not so proud of SDERy's Route 1 - at least for literary value. For the most part, though, the data is valid. And in the same issue - this issue - there are the fine comments of George Kottke.

More traction? Yes, steam fans, we expect to do LAMTA next. After that we'll return to main line railroads.

When the SDERy Route 1 story first appeared in Timepoints back in 1952, Editor Veysey agreed that the author could use the material in his own publication.

Traction fans might consider a subscription to Timepoints. With rapid transit in the offing and with the continued operation of Los Angeles' street car lines there's news of the traction kind in Los Angeles. For the latest local and for a resume of national news plus special features consider sending \$1.50 to 936 South Genesee Avenue, Los Angeles 36.

If your editor had one wish - not counting family and job desires - he would wish for a railway museum in San Diego County. He firmly believes that there'll be one some day. RHSofSD finds it difficult to solicit help for Del Mar and for restoration. SDCRM couldn't get off the ground. But there will come a day. The question is: In whose lifetime?

NOTE: News Summary as of July 1, 1962

DISPATCHER Page 38-5

San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway Company is installing an 80-foot turntable, formerly at Colton, in its San Diego yard. A single track engine house, an engine storage track, and a new lead track are being constructed. New facilities will replace the two stalls in the old engine house and the adjacent wye. Grading has begun for a warehouse on the property in front of the old engine house. Spur tracks will lead to the new warehouse and one remains to serve the former SD&AE storehouse.

All other track will be removed. Thus SD&AE is consolidating its facilities in one yard. No longer will it be necessary to travel back and forth on one-way streets. Locomotive 5112 has been added to the yard roster. Other GE 600 hp. road-switchers now in San Diego are 5101, 5102 and 5119. (Locomotive 1000 is sent in for peak traffic loads.) With four locomotives available and following a successful trial run, three units will power the El Cajon branch trains when and as necessary. Main line motive power on the SD&AE is from general pool and includes all kinds of EMD hood and cab units, all mixed up and up to five in number.

Furnishings have been removed from the Coyote Wells station. Observation Car reports that three houses and two ex-passenger cars may be burned. SD&AE office personnel report that Southern Pacific just doesn't have the equipment for special trains, that SD&AE has no facilities, that it's a big project to bring in the equipment, and that there is much red tape involved in running a special train on the SD&AE. Officials say that SP-SD&AE do have good reasons to turn down special operations. The railroad most recently stated that it could not run a train for the 50th Anniversary program of the Cities of El Cajon and La Meca.

Operation on the Santa Fe Escondido branch was canceled or delayed for a three day period in late February. Oceanside Station Agent V. L. McGlenn stated that rails have been submerged twice in the last five years along Loma Alta Creek. He said the track needs to be raised but that action must wait until flood channel plans are formulated. He said that the six-day-a-week train inbound carries poultry feed and outbound carries citrus fruit and avocados. Trains also carry the usual branch line freight including building materials.

Santa Fe on Monday, April 23 presented combination car 111 to the City of Oceanside which in turn will lease the car to the Oceanside, Carlsbad and Santa Fe Model Railroad Club. Car is located on an oil storage spur. The San Diego Union reports that car is a chair-mail car built around 1930. It is located at the north end of Eighth Street. Former Soo Line Business Car 54 is owned by the Mt. Rubidoux Chapter of the Pacific Railroad Society and is located at the San Bernardino station. It was built by Barney and Smith in February, 1914 as buffet-baggage 1704. Soo rebuilt it in 1927. Lounge has five chairs, sofa and a Pullman-berth section. There are four staterooms, a dining room and a kitchen. Car has china, silver, utensils and bedding.

Here is a list of Santa Fe freights:

1. Nightly SDX-SBX: San Bernardino - San Diego - San Bernardino
2. Nightly 2nd SBX: Los Angeles - San Diego - San Bernardino
3. Daily Oceanside Local: San Juan Capistrano - San Diego Y.L. (at Pacific Beach)
4. Fullerton daily local: Fullerton - San Juan Capistrano
5. Second District local: San Bernardino - Los Angeles (each way)
6. Second District: Steel run San Bernardino to Los Angeles (this is the third side of the 2nd SBX triangle)
7. Second District: Pasadena turn (Pasadena to San Bernardino and return)
8. Third District: at least 10 freights each way daily.
9. One freight daily on most branch lines plus the Los Angeles harbor traffic

Observation Car put it this way, "For two months last year, expiring on December 14, Santa Fe tried an experiment to increase patronage on their Los Angeles - San Diego line. The fare was reduced to \$4.40 round trip, plus tax, from Monday through Thursday midnight to try to level off the peak loads on week-ends and half full cars during the week. This is the old commute service headache on a weekly basis instead of a daily basis. No conclusive evidence could be gathered during this time, so the same rate was re-instated for a four month period this year, January 22 through May 24." Dispatcher understands this rate remains in effect.

LET'S RIDE THE DAM TRAIN!

A sketch from the pen of Hiram H. Bice, Editor of the National City Record, edition of May 5, 1892, with technical inter-fusions by Richard V. Dodge

Sweetwater Dam that is! The steam motor road, named National City & Otay Railway, began operating 60-mile Excursions for a fare of One Dollar over its entire system in 1888 and they became very popular attractions for many years.

"One of the pleasantest jaunts I ever enjoyed in Southern California was a trip to the sleepy old Mexican town of Tia Juana (now spelled Tijuana). The day was bright and cloudless."

The N. C. & O. depot was near the foot of Fifth Street, now Avenue, in San Diego. For motive power the road had originally two steam dummies of 0-4-2 wheel arrangement, built by Fulton Iron Works in San Francisco, four Saddle Tank engines of the same wheel type, built by the Porter Company in Pittsburgh, Pa., and "the big engine", a Porter Saddle Tank 0-6-0 (rebuilt to 0-6-2) used for freight service. Numbers 3, 4 and 5, the regular passenger engines, weighed a mere 28,000 pounds on the driving wheels. The engines were fitted with "cow-catchers" at each end so that they did not have to be turned around. All were coal burners and there was an exuberant profusion of smoke and cinders.

One of the latter locomotives was waiting with a train of three or four coaches of fair size with open platforms, link-and-pin couplings and no air brakes. Open cars with single transverse benches were used when the weather warranted. The N. C. & O. track was in the north side of L Street, while the Coronado Railroad's occupied the south side.

"We left at 9 o'clock in the morning on the excursion train which was filled with sightseers."

The route was east on L Street to 13th Street, turning south into what is now Newton Avenue. At that time the area was entirely unimproved. The track was ballasted and planked and bridges carried the rails over several sloughs from San Diego Bay. (The original line had run out Harrison Avenue.) Out Newton the train jogged along to just beyond 32nd Street. There it curved to the right, descended into Chollas Valley "and soon we were speeding over the low, tide-washed land which separates San Diego from National City."

"As we pass through that town of 1,400 people, we find the same air of carelessness and attention which marks all Southern California towns. National City is very much scattered and from the Steele Block (4.2 miles, all distances in figures are from San Diego, on the northwest corner of National Avenue and 8th Street. It still stands, 1962, though somewhat modernized.) to Terrace is a distance of three miles (due to the fact that the route swings west on 12th Street to Eighth, now Cleveland, Avenue in order to traverse the old section of the town, thence east out 24th Street. The Company's Shops and Round House are located on 24th St. at Seventh Ave.) Near Terrace we pass the beautiful home of Mr. W. C. Kimball, one of the pioneers of the region (and founders of National City).....Beyond are some handsome residences. All this section is planted with young orange trees....."

"Now we descend into Sweetwater Valley (cross the river to Sweetwater Junction - 7.6 miles) and, after mounting a grade which brings into play all the power of the locomotive, we are in Chula Vista, one of the most favored spots in this favored land. From this gently sloping tract we look off upon the peerless bay, sleeping beneath the summer sun. Beyond are the hazy outlines of the Coronado Islands belonging to Mexico. To the east we see the Cuyamaca Mountains, while only five miles away rises

the blue heights of San Miguel. Far away in the south, rising clear from the hills around it, is Table Mountain, so-called from its flat-topped appearance. Though apparently so near it is 40 miles below the Mexican line."

"All around us are orange trees, pleasant homes and grounds and flowers..... Five years ago it was a desert of prickly pear and sage brush....."

"After passing (south on Third Avenue through Chula Vista) we came to an uncultivated section and after a mile or so of this, we begin to see on either side great fields of wheat. Grain growing has increased in importance in the last year.."

"We pass the town of Otay (12.2 miles) and see the large brick building once occupied (1890) by the Otay Watch Company. For a time this town enjoyed considerable prosperity from the presence of the large number of watch factory employees..... Large flocks of sheep are pastured in the upper portion (of Otay Valley) and much wine of excellent quality is made by the Italians who own vineyards here."

The train then crossed Otay River and climbed the south bank to what is now Palm City, proceeding due south to Tia Juana Junction near Nestor Post Office, 14.4 miles. There it turned west, then south to the village of Oneonta, where an exquisite view of Tia Juana River Valley greeted the tourists' smoke-filled eyes.

Grading had been started and a contract reportedly had been let for an extension of the motor road to the south, crossing the river and curving west to "International City", a subdivision laid out by the visionary William H. (Billy) Carlson and his partner, Higgins, near the initial monument marking the boundary between California, U.S.A. and Baja California, Mexico. Border Field is now located there. Like most all of Billy's projects, it fizzled.

The train probably backed to the Junction and headed for Tia Juana, "the last town in Southern California (18.5 miles). The boundary line passes through it and cuts it in two, the American half consisting of a single street of frame buildings and a few scattered houses. The American part has a live air but the Mexican part is the deadest place imaginable." (Note: Probably the California town would have looked just as dead except that, due to the floods in 1891, the old town was washed out and the remaining buildings were moved to higher ground near the border.)

"We join a file of tourists and put ourselves in a foreign country as soon as possible. The houses here are made of mud and most of the residents look as if they were. The only respectable persons seem to be the Custom Officers and the proprietor of a curio shop, who, we fancy, must live on the American side and go down to the town when he knows the tourists are coming."

"At the end of a straggling street is a small adobe church which, with its bell mounted on a post near the front door, is picturesque. Here the itinerant friar, who supplies the mission churches of Lower California, keeps his library and here he comes at stated intervals to say mass."

"On our return", we again pass through Otay and Chula Vista.

(Editor Bice overlooked the all-important subject of eats. When the 60-mile excursions were started, there was a new hotel at Oneonta and the southerly routings were reversed to go to Tia Juana first and then to Oneonta for lunch. After the hotel closed down, the train returned to National City and the tourists' appetites were appeased at Olivewood, the residence of Frank Kimball, through whose efforts the California Southern Rail Road, now Santa Fe, was constructed from National City to Barstow, or at the International Hotel in the Old Town.)

Retracing the clickety-clicks to Sweetwater Junction, "we branch off once more", turning east up the valley. Farming communities enroute include: Munger's

Ranch, Bonita, Bonnie Brae and Sunnyside. (In 1895, in the river bottom between Mungers and Bonita, an attractive picnic spot was known as Linwood Grove.) Passing La Presa Junction, later called Quarry Junction, we continue to the right "to visit the Sweetwater Dam, one of the greatest irrigating works in the west. The dam is placed in a narrow, deep gorge and is a splendid structure of solid masonry, costing \$296,000. It completely shuts off the flow of the Sweetwater River and commands an area of 300 acres." The rails ended near the base of the dam, 13.6 miles.

The construction of the dam was completed in 1888. It was of gravity arch design, 80 feet high. The capacity was 6,000,000,000 gallons. It was claimed to be the highest in the United States and was heralded as one of the wonders of the world. When greater storage volume became necessary, an addition raised the level ten feet in 1896. About that time a station was established on the La Presa Branch so that the tourists would not have to scale the heights. The crest of the dam was increased to a height of 110 feet in 1910. The upper portion at the north end failed in the flood of 1916.

The dam, as well as the railway, was built by The San Diego Land & Town Company, a subsidiary corporation of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad Company. The organization was formed for the purpose of improving and disposing of the lands donated by the people of National City and San Diego to subsidize the construction of the California Southern Rail Road. The Kimball Brothers had given more than 10,000 acres of their Rancho de la Nacion, expecting that National City would be made the Pacific Coast Terminus of the Santa Fe Route.

The editor failed to mention the side trip to La Presa, which was part of the 60-Mile schedule. Again the train backed to the Junction, then crossed the Sweetwater River and climbed up the north bank until the Spring Valley Canyon was reached. Here the scenery "rivals" that of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad in Colorado -- for a short distance. The train crosses the gorge on a deck type truss bridge of steel and wood, 70 feet above the creek bed and spanning 110 feet. It was designed to carry the loads of engines weighing 80 tons. Just beyond the bridge, the station was established and a pathway was cut to reach the top of the dam. The railroad continues east through deep cuts. Beyond, the track is very crooked, winding around the foothills to avoid having to climb a heavy grade. The curvatures make an equivalent of four complete circles, and the rails terminate in the townsite of La Presa, 15.5 miles. From that point, stage coaches carried passengers to El Cajon. Fruit, olives and other local products, including bottled mineral water, were loaded for shipment from that station. Materials for the construction of the Janal or Otay Dams were hauled by teams from La Presa to the sites.

"But the train is moving. We take our seats once more and soon we are in San Diego again."

Before reaching the terminal and after climbing the grade on L Street from 12th to 11th Streets, it was the usual practice to stop the train, a brakeman would walk ahead and open the switch to a siding. Then a "drop" or "flying switch" was made. The engineer starts the train ahead, throws the reverse lever over to bunch the slack, the conductor pulls the coupling pin behind the engine, the engineer returns the lever and yanks open the throttle. The engine jumps ahead like a scared jack rabbit, takes the switch and glides into the sidetrack. The brakeman closes the switch and the train rolls down the main line. Then the engine backs out, runs ahead to couple with the cars and pushes them to the depot. And all is set for the return to National City.

Flying switches are dangerous, even with freight cars only. Sometimes the brakeman may not throw the switch over in time, the engine may derail at the switch or the frog or, as happened on the Coronado Railroad at the ferry landing, no one was at the car brakes. It was rough on the rolling stock and the bumping post, not to mention the passengers.

What a trip the 60-Mile Excursion would be for rail-fans!

Feb. 11, 1959

by George Kottke

Economic conditions in the Mexicali Valley area of Baja California are holding up fairly well, in spite of a serious water situation which has developed in recent months. Farming operations by irrigation in Arizona have resulted in water being returned to downriver irrigation projects which is too saline and entirely unfit for use. This has caused widespread killing of crops recently. The solution also lies in highly-placed diplomatic and political channels and calls for immediate action as the present Water Treaty with Mexico guarantees that good water will be delivered, not that which is unfit for use.

Due to the foregoing no doubt, freight traffic on the Sonora-Baja California Railroad while not too bad, can stand a lot of improvement in volume. Regarding passenger traffic, the S-BC in common with the other Mexican railroads has been hard pressed to find a sufficient number of cars to handle the steadily expanding traffic volume. This is especially true of second class coaches. It is interesting to note that a number of former Pullman parlor cars are now operating as second class coaches on the S-BC and also the F. C. del Pacifico. At least one of these former Pullmans is equipped with the overstuffed sofa-type seats which started the change of style from the traditional walk-over seats in the late 1920's and early 1930's. Consequently the second class passengers who are successful in getting seats in these cars are actually riding in more luxury than many of the so-called "primera" class coach passengers, although without air-conditioning, of course.

Several round trips in the past several months as far south as the connection with the F. C. Chihuahua al Pacifico at San Blas, Sinaloa and using both of the two new Pullman sleeping car lines out of Mexicali have developed the following interesting information: Pullman traffic is showing a steady increase especially east and southbound. An increasing number of extra Pullman movements for special parties are operating via Mexicali and the S-BC. The new line of the F. C. Chihuahua al Pacifico is expected to increase these extra movements considerably as well as increase traffic in the regular cars. Some increase in Pullman traffic through Nogales also is noted. F. C. del Pacifico's "El Yaqui", train numbers 1 and 2, quite regularly include three instead of the customary two Pullmans in its consist. There have also been some suggestions or ideas relative to establishing a through Pullman line between Mexicali and Nogales. However, this would entail a drastic revision of present schedules on the Pacifico or the addition of an entire new connecting train between Nogales and Benjamin Hill. For that reason, such an expensive undertaking is not being seriously considered at this time. At present, there are direct bus connections between Nogales and Benjamin Hill where connections are made with S-BC's "Mexicali," train numbers 1 and 2.

Considering the interminable stretches of desert mileage on the S-BC, much of which consists of Sahara-like sandy wastes with consequently somewhat unstable subsoil and roadbed, the surprising fact is that the riding qualities are as good as they are. Recently, running time has been shortened one hour. Extensive rehabilitation of main line track and roadbed has been made possible by the use of much of the old Inter-California trackage as a short term relaying program. East and west ends of the line are very smooth. (George Kottke, March 5, 1962)

Two more trips over the F. C. Sonora-Baja California to Benjamin Hill and up to Nogales and return revealed in mid-March almost a sell-out in the two Pullmans eastbound, while the beginning of Easter vacation likewise brought a heavy influx of Pullman business and first class coach traffic just as in the United States. Northbound on Palm Sunday found three instead of the usual two Pullmans arriving in Benjamin Hill from Guadalajara, two having been added there in addition to the Mexico City car. It appears that if business continues to increase on the S-BC, that lounge car equipment of some type may be required.

F.C. del Pacifico has recently inaugurated Pullman observation round-end streamlined lightweight bedroom lounge bar sleepers on the crack standard-bearer of the road, the "El Yaqui", between Nogales and Guadalajara. In addition, there are now usually four Pullmans in the consist making a total of five sleeping cars each way every day. With the best of the road's air conditioned first class coaches also having been assigned to this train plus a full size dining car, equipment is now on a par with the Ciudad Juarez service and also comes much closer to the "Aztec Eagle" service than formerly. (George Kottke. April, 1962)

MORE NEWS ITEMS

The Chihuahua al Pacifico is in business. Various railfan publications have reported the line's status. Dispatcher's report comes from Wally Duthie. Our reporter rode the line from Los Mochis to Chihuahua. He stated that a single passenger train now makes two round trips a week. The train consist included one locomotive unit, a baggage-mail car, a reclining seat first class car, two less well equipped first class cars, two Pullman cars and a diner. During the shakedown period train speed is approximately 25 m.p.h. Rocks continue to be a hazard. Duthie reports that scenery in the mountains tends to the spectacular. He also noted the construction of a new station at San Blas. Schedule is as follows:

	Southbound				Northbound	
	Tu & F	Kmts.	Stations	Kmts.	Li & Th.	
Time is same as Central Standard (U.S.)	3:00pm	0	Lv. Ojinaga	Ar. 921	6:00am	Fri
	9:00pm	268	Ar. Chihuahua	Lv.	12:01pm	Tue
	9:30pm		Lv. Chihuahua	Ar. 653	11:30pm	
	2:25pm	883	Ar. San Blas	Lv.	7:00am	
	2:35pm		Lv. San Blas	Ar. 38	6:50am	
	Wed 3:30pm	921	Ar. Los Mochis	Lv. 0	6:00am	

Sample fares: SAT 1st Reclining 1st Lower Upper Dr. Room Compt.
 San Blas - Chihuahua 77.80 87.05 36.90 29.50 140.20 103.30 One Way

It all started when both the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific proposed to build pipelines from the Los Angeles area into San Diego. It all ended when Santa Fe Pipeline Company and Southern Pacific Pipe Lines, Inc. organized the San Diego Pipeline Co. The projected 10-inch line will carry military jet fuel, gasoline, turbine fuel, and diesel fuel for Navy and private use at a rate of 2,100 barrels an hour. Line will begin at Norwalk. Routing of the new company's line is not set.

Metropolitan Transit Authority of Los Angeles on June 19 announced that by 1965 the system's five street car and two trolley bus lines will have given way to buses. Change is desirable because of inflexibility and cost of present services.....PCC cars 3007 and 3008 have been sold to an equipment company for re-sale to Korea..... 3035 was wrecked many months ago in a collision. (Timepoints)....On April 22 LAMTA issued street car timetables J & P, R & S, and V. Route maps are provided..... 3093 jumped tracks on January 3, and another car did likewise at 85th and Central on April 10. (LA Times)

"The summer season appears to have gotten off with a 'bang' as Easter vacation travel showed a marked increase at an otherwise usually dull traffic period just prior to the annual summer vacation upswing. Especially pleasing is the increase in Pullman traffic. The Southern Pacific apparently is caught in an embarrassing situation. In an apparent effort to rid itself of the passenger business, it finds just the opposite taking place, at least for the moment. The Easter spring vacation period coupled with the first rush of earlybirds to the World's Fair in Seattle is causing station ticket agents at the smaller metropolitan stations some unforeseen gray hairs. For example, last Friday evening, train number 75, the westbound "Lark" sported four, yes four, diesel units on the point. Trailing them were twenty-two yes twenty-two, cars including seven coaches and nine Pullmans, all well filled, according to reports and personal observations." (George Kottke)

SAN DIEGO HARBOR RMS of SD EXCURSION on the SILVERGATE is scheduled for Saturday, August 18. Probable fares: \$3.50 for adults, \$1.75 for children ages 5 to 12. Come join us on this Saturday night for a summer evening cruise and help us finance the Car 54 restoration project. If you do not receive the regular excursion brochure please write the Society and request same. Post Office Box 9351, San Diego 9.