

Dispatcher

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RAILWAY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

DECEMBER 31, 1964

LOW RAILS IN LOWER CALIFORNIA

PART TWO

by Richard V. Dodge

THE BIG SINK

Historians report that much confusion and contradiction develop in attempting to unravel the stories of the short line railroads of Mexico. The Peninsular Railroad is no exception. The correct account could not possibly be developed from the limited articles which appeared in the newspapers. Graham apparently offered a different set of figures to the reporters at each interview. One time the distances are given in miles, the next in kilometers.

In the September 16, 1891 report, he added that five miles of track should be completed by next Saturday night (September 19). Work will have to stop there until the big fill around the head of the bay is graded and ready. It will take 60 days to get across. This

was the first reference to the need for a causeway across the "narrows." Graham later explained that the "narrows" is nothing more or less than an arm of the bay which runs back into the mainland a distance of three miles or more and covers thousands of acres to a depth of from ten to fourteen feet. But at one point, the contours of the shores are only 1,500 feet apart.

The Mexican Government would not allow a railroad type trestle to be built across the channel and insisted on an embankment. The average depth of water was fourteen feet and the railroad grade was placed six feet above high water.

Fill material was borrowed from a cliff on the southwest shore and was hauled out in one-horse cart loads and dumped into the bay.

In October Graham said that in filling the narrows, the tides (becoming swifter as the causeway lengthened) often carry into the sea as much dirt as the workmen have placed in a week. This made it necessary to use more rock, which had to be blasted out of the cliff. Next it was proposed to build a temporary trestle so that the train could be used to haul the fill materials.

In a statement which was published on October 26, Graham reiterated that: "You may say, and it will be correct too, that there will be twenty miles of track completed with trains running over it by December 1." (He didn't say what year.)

Five days later this prophecy was radically revised to: "Work is progressing on the filling up of the sink. Two or three months must elapse before the work is finished."

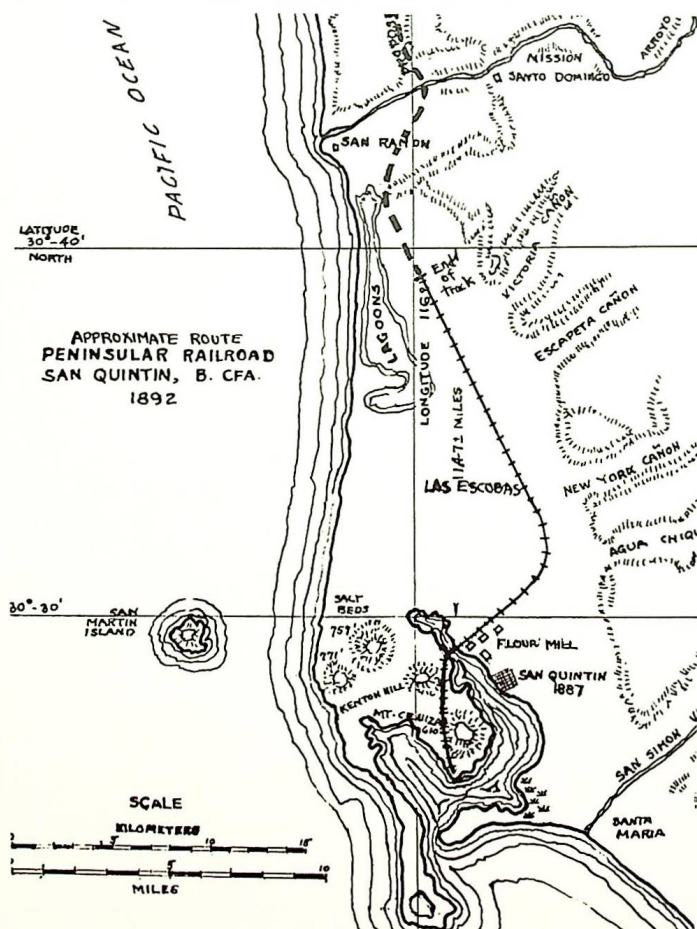
On November 19, another article reads that: "The track has now been laid up to the narrows, 4 1/2 kilometers. The line on the east side has been graded for a distance of 25 kilometers."

By January 25, 1892, Graham was supervising the building of the railroad bridge at the narrows. A wood trussed-type structure was erected to span the 75 feet gap near the northeast bank. It was then estimated that the bridge will be completed in two weeks and that from five to six weeks will be sufficient to close the first section.

True to form, Graham added to the confusion on January 27 by stating that: "The railroad proper begins at the station at San Quintin. From there the track is laid four miles northeast as far as the narrows where it stops."

It had been taken for granted that the railroad equipment had been unloaded somewhere on the eastern shore of the bay and that the "station" was located at the 1887 townsite. The latter would have been only a mile or two south of the causeway.

On the above assumption, why did they have to put in the expensive fill leading towards the southwest, then turn north, skirting the salt beds to reach Colnett? And evidence still traceable indicates that there was a roadbed extending northeast (towards the San Pedro Martir mountains) from the



causeway. It just did not add up. No one who was contacted could offer a satisfactory explanation.

This puzzle remained unsolved until, one day, Alan Storton, of the San Diego Gas & Electric Company, mentioned that, by chance he had come into possession of a most remarkable diary, written by Richard Stephens, engineer and surveyor of Port Dover, Canada, San Diego, California, and Ensenada, Baja California, covering the period AD 1890 to 1896. He was the one who made a preliminary survey for the Mexican Land & Colonization Company from San Quintin to the Colorado River and from Trinidad to Tijuana in which "the grades did not exceed 2%." His projected routes were not adopted.

His entries revealed that: "The new company proposed to lay out a new townsite around the base of Mt. Ceniza" (on the inner peninsula). "To reach the new town site it was deemed necessary to cross the eastern arm of the estuary. This required a large amount of filling and, strange to say, the contractor undertook to fill it up with earth and sand. As the gap narrowed, the tides rushed in and out with accelerated force, carrying large quantities of the filling down the estuary to be deposited on the bar."

"The contractor was paid on a cubic yard at the borrow pit basis instead of in the embankment."

"Failing to fill up the channel with sand, compelled him at length to use rock at \$1.25 a cubic yard. The gap was bridged with a trestle. Probably more than \$100,000 was sunk there."

Stephens continued, commenting: "The selection (of the base of Mt. Ceniza for a townsite) is questionable. A railway terminus here can only be a connection with navigation accessible to small vessels and a deep water terminus here can make an immense outlay."

He went on: "Having crossed the estuary (to get from the inner peninsula to the eastern shore) instead of leaving for Colnett by a direct route, for some unexplainable reason, the road was carried off easterly, over the mesa, making it 48 miles to Colnett or three miles longer with no lighter grades."

"On asking the contractor's engineer why the road was so located, he shifted the blame on Mr. Young, who was employed to layout a road on these lines. it is in order for Mr. Young to explain why he led the contractor's engineer out that way to lose himself on the mesa at an extra cost of \$45,000."

"When the Lower California Development Company purchased the District of San Quintin, they undertook to build that portion of the road from San Quintin to Colnett which was to be handed over to the Peninsular Railway Company, a corporation in embryo but which has shown a premature faculty of evolving water leases which is phenomenal."

Such is the denouement of the Mystery of the Sink.

CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS

The survey expeditions encountered many formidable obstacles in the attempts to establish practical routes.

Shaw's party met a "well nigh impassable canyon" about 18 miles south of Tijuana before reaching the Valley of the Palms. The rugged and varied scenery insured that the railroad, when completed, will be one of the most picturesque routes. The line will run for twenty miles through Palms Valley.

This north party was camped at Vallecitos in December 1891. It was hoped that a possible short cut could be found through the mountains between Vallecitos and Real del Castillo but none was located. The road would have to detour through Burro Canyon to Guadalupe.

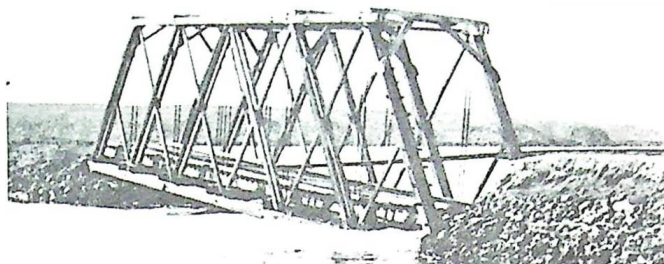
The building of a branch from Guadalupe to Ensenada was pronounced entirely impractical.

North from San Quintin the track would run within 100 yards of the Pacific Ocean for nearly 40 miles. The party from the south had reached Calentura by the end of July 1891. It would be about 25 miles from there to Valle de Trinidad but, on entering Soledad Canyon, the going got extremely rough. Wagons could not be used and paths had to be cut through the dense jungle which filled the canyon.

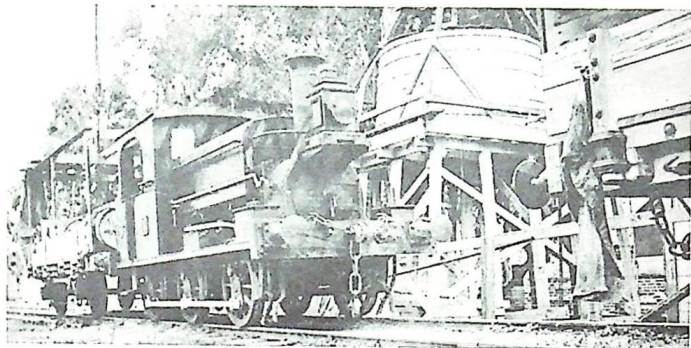
In making the ascent from the coast to Trini-

dad Valley (elevation 2,600 feet at Trinidad Hot Springs), three tunnels, one at least 1,000 feet long, would be necessary. 23 bridges with an average length of 300 feet would be required.

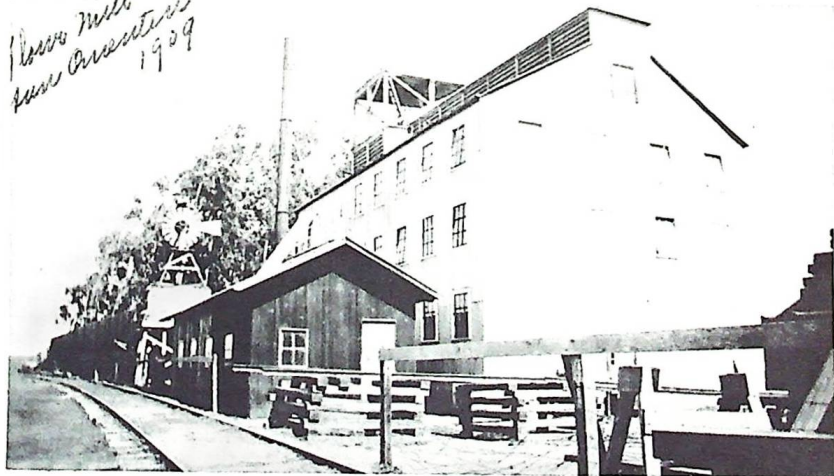
In October, Contractor Graham persisted in maintaining that there was no cessation of work but that plans were, to a greater or lesser extent, under the control of the Mexican Government by reason of an offered subsidy of \$12,000 a mile. Many changes in alignment had to be worked out before approvals could be obtained. Three different finished maps of every kilometer surveyed had to be submitted. Much extra work was brought about by the exactions, costing "a great deal of money, time and patience."



Bridge and causeway across narrows of San Quintin Bay, B. Cfa., Mexico. Between 1897 and 1908. (Fernando Gutierrez picture, Dodge Collection, Southwest Rly. Lib.)



Peninsular R.R. No. 1 and two flat cars at flour mill, San Quintin, B. Cfa. 1908. (Mrs. L. M. Hutchison, Tecate, Calif., Dodge Collection, Southwest Rly. Library.)



Peninsular R.R. main line and north side of flour mill, San Quintin, B. Cfa. Windmill pumps water to tank on roof. (Credits same as above)

At a meeting of the Mexican Land & Colonization Company's officials in London, Sir Edward Jenkinson delivered an address in which he said that everything is being done to keep down the expenses. The expenditures were unconscionably increased by the taking over of the liabilities of the International Company of Mexico.

In December 1891, J. W. Drout, of London, joined Sir Edward in setting out on an inspection tour of the proposed railroad routes.

In the meantime, in October, had come an announcement of prime importance to the proposed Yuma line. The Santa Fe, Prescott & Phoenix Railway Company, (locally nicknamed The Pea Vine), had been incorporated and was building southward from a junction with the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad at Ash Fork, Arizona. The Phoenix Gazette published an article in which it was stated that "there is no doubt that the line will be extended to the Colorado River to meet the San Diego, San Quintin and Yuma road now being built." But the proposed construction of the line from Trinidad to Yuma had been deferred for at least three years. Furthermore "Trinidad Pass" was doubtful as no survey had ever been attempted.

At San Quintin, the construction of an engine house and/or a depot had been started. A water supply was obtained from wells and windmills located about one mile northeast of the causeway.

THE FLOUR MILL

It was the confident expectation that many colonists would settle in the district and grow immense crops of wheat. A mill would be needed to grind them.

A site was selected at the northeast end of the causeway, just south of the railroad track. A corrugated iron on timber frame mill building was erected including a boiler room. The mill machinery was powered by a large reciprocating steam engine with a horizontal cylinder and a big fly wheel. This fine piece of machinery was built by Turner of Ipswich, England. A supply tank was installed on the roof of the mill and an intermediate windmill lifted the water to fill it.

An office building was constructed east of the mill. Warehouses, housing and other structures were added.

The mill was claimed to be the largest in Lower California.

THE DOUBLE FINISH

Up to the first of November 1891 Graham still expected to have the first section of 24 miles (a new figure) graded, track laid and a daily train running by December 1. When that was finished, the men and teams, he said, will be transferred to the Tijuana end. Plans had already been drawn for Bridge No. 1, 150 feet long, to span the Tijuana River ten miles southeast of Tijuana.

In a newspaper article December 15, some distances were given indicating a length from Tijuana to San Quintin of 235 miles. However the component mileages did not add up to that figure. Making adjustments for sinuosity, etc., the approximate distances in miles are:

Tijuana to Valle de Las Palmas	33
Valle de Las Palmas to Vallecitos	14
Vallecitos to Guadalupe	14
Guadalupe to Real del Castillo	18
Real del Castillo to Agua Blanca	35
Agua Blanca to Trinidad Junction	3
Sub-total	117
Trinidad Junction to Calentura	42
Calentura to Colnett	28
Colnett to San Quintin	48
Sub-total	118
TOTAL	235

From Trinidad Junction to Yuma was preliminarily estimated to be 130 miles.

A dismaying event occurred on November 12, 1891 when the California National Bank of San Diego closed its doors, presaging the panic and depression of 1893. This failure made financing difficult.

Field operations were temporarily suspended but both survey crews were again active in December. By January 27, 1892, the Shaw party was working from Real del Castillo and Wright's was camped in Trinidad Valley. As soon as the survey from San Diego to San Quintin was complete, the route to Yuma would be laid out.

In the same month, Managing Director Drout completed his inspection of the routes and returned to England. A report was expected in February. Then it will be definitely decided whether or not construction shall be continued. It was pointed out that the company had already spent over \$100,000. But on the day the railroad is finished and accepted by the Mexican Government, the company receives \$12,000 a mile, which means a transfer of \$2,400,000 (for 200 miles).

The long awaited news from the rail front came on February 23. The sink at the head of the bay has at last been filled and the work of laying the rails on the first section will now be rushed. Grading was then started on the San Diego end.

On March 16, Graham announced that the track is laid complete for the running of trains. Later figures reveal that the length of the first section was about 28 kilometers or 17½ miles, probably figured exclusive of side tracks.

Graham then began pushing plans for the trunk line and the San Diego branch. Chief Engineer Earle and 10 engineers were engaged in preparing drawings to send to England and to Mexico City. As yet there was no word from England.

Suddenly came a startling dispatch, from a San Antonio, Texas, newspaper. It read: "It is generally believed in Mexico that the Mexican International Company, composed of English capital, failed in a sly game to get control of San Quintin Harbor in Lower California. The International Company was evidently merely a cloak for Great Britain's plan to secure a coaling station."

In April, a critical situation arose in San Diego over the water lease. E.E. Babcock met with the aldermen and delegates and informed them that "he was of the opinion that the English stockholders were willing to have the lease revoked but that he could give no estimate of a purchase price until he communicated with them." He stated that the Lower California railroad would be completed and operated, that work was still going on but had been retarded owing to the delay in securing the accepted surveys from the Mexican Government. In May Graham went to Mexico City to place with the government officials complete plats of the entire line from Tijuana to San Quintin.

However, in an entry on July 23, 1892, Richard Stephens wrote: "All work is stopped." He mentioned that the bar of the harbor is still shallowing.

Babcock attempted to explain the delays in September. He said that: "The English company acted in good faith and but for certain discouragements in the way of raising money and in the Mexican Government refusing to give them the right to operate the road even when it was built, the work would have been completed. He knew positively that the Englishmen had spent over \$200,000 on the road and that, as they were out \$5,000,000 in maintaining the Lower California Colonization Company, it was to their interest to have an outlet to make the lands more valuable..... I know that the railroad will be built and that it was the intention to build it long before the water lease proposition was forwarded."

He said that he had so much confidence in the genuineness of the proposition that he had spent tens of thousands of dollars in building branch roads to connect (the Coronado Railroad) with the San Quintin road when it should have been completed.

Further futile attempts were made to revive the project in November.

Serious competition threatened in January 1893 when William H. Carlson, the Mayor of San Diego and San Diego's professional railroad promoter, visited Mexico City regarding a concession for the building of his San Diego & Phoenix Railroad across Baja California from the boundary near Tijuana to the boundary near Yuma. The concession was granted for a period of 99 years and would include a branch to Ensenada.

In an editorial in the San Diego Union January 17, it was revealed that the Southern Pacific also was planning to build to Ensenada and San Quintin.

The Lower California Development Company countered with the statement that it plans a continuation of the present railroad from San Quintin to Colnett, thence to Trinidad Junction where one branch will go to Yuma and another to San Diego.

Little developed after that.

In 1898, the National City Record reported that a (the) locomotive was being used as a stationary boiler to supply steam to the flour mill.

Apparently the engine was operated over the line at intervals, sufficient to hold the franchise.

In 1905, a field party, on horseback, of the U. S. Biological Survey, came down from the mountains and crossed the nearly level plain to San Quintin, at the head of the bay. Their report contained this information: "A mile above the town at the extreme head of the bay was a large flour mill, built to grind the colonists' wheat; and, extending from the mill a short distance northward on the plain, was a scrap of a railroad."

A photograph taken in 1907, looking northeast along the causeway, showed the bridge to be intact. Subsequently the tides undermined the abutment near the flour mill and that end of the structure dropped several feet.

SUCCESSIONS IN OWNERSHIP

Soon afterwards, J. H. Packard, General Manager of the Lower California Development Company, arranged the sale of the railroad and the Hanbury Hotel at San Quintin ostensibly to a Mr. Sanders of Florida. He, in turn, transferred the ownership to the Mexican Government. Apparently the railroad was then called Ferrocarril de San Quintin (FC. S. Q.).

In 1908, L. M. Hutchinson, acting as agent for Fundicion de Mexico, a foundry company, negotiated the sale of the railroad to a client. He awarded a contract to W. J. Cochran (the father of Bill Cochran of Ensenada) to tear up the tracks and to stock pile the materials at the flour mill. This work was started in the latter part of 1908 and was completed the following year. The engine and the flat cars were used in the dismantling operations. Cochran converted one car for use as a cook house. The track on the tilted bridge was restored to grade using ties for cribbing so that flat cars could be used to move the salvaged materials from the inner peninsula and the causeway.

Later in 1909 Mr. Hutchinson concluded the transaction, selling the locomotive, the cars, rails, fastenings and other equipment and some of the ties to the Arizona & Swansea Mining Company in western Arizona. All the material would have to be loaded on a ship and transported to a California port. Thousands of ties were sold and used as fence posts around Ensenada.

THE WATERY GRAVE

The bar and the harbor at San Quintin continued to fill with sand. Even in 1892, according to Richard Stephens, there was barely eight feet at the entrance to the inner harbor or easterly estuary. So all the materials and the equipment would again have to be lightered. The old lighter was still there and, though somewhat water-logged, could be made usable.

One day in the Fall of 1909, the British bark Drummair anchored outside. She was an iron ship with three masts "square" rigged and the fourth "fore and aft" rigged. She had been built by W. H. Potter & Sons, Liverpool, England, in 1882.

Then began the slow and tedious task of loading the barge at the flour mill, towing it the length of the harbor and transferring the materials from the lighter to the hold of the Drummair, using the winches and rigging of the ship. The rolling in the swells impeded the operations. The small tugboat Redondo had been sent down from Redondo, California, to assist.

Finally valiant Number One was pulled onto the lighter. The lighter with its valuable cargo was towed out and moored alongside the Drummair. The waves were

high and the Drummuir rolled rhythmically from starboard to port and back. Hoisting lines, evidently fitted with open hooks, were made fast.

The winch took up the slack and slowly the one spot was lifted. But in swinging her over the rail, a heavy swell careened the Drummuir, the engine fouled the rail and broke loose. There were cries of horror, a splintering crash followed by a mighty splash.

A copy of the Redondo Reflex of November 24, 1909, which Mrs. L. M. Hutchinson carefully preserved, printed her husband's account of the unfortunate incident, in part, as follows: "In loading the cargo at San Quintin the engine of the railway locomotive was dropped to the bottom of the ocean in about 42 feet of water. Here the crews of the tug and the Drummuir witnessed the wonderful work of a Japanese abalone diver. Naked and without helmet or diving apparatus of any description the Japanese dived to the bottom three times, endeavoring to recover the engine. The first time he made fast a line to the engine, but ran afoul the anchor of the Drummuir. Diving a second time, he again attached a line, but the engine was overturned in such a way that despite heroic efforts a third time the engine could not be raised."

In an article in the San Diego Union, the belief was expressed that efforts would be made to salvage the locomotive. "..... it is probable that the mining company which purchased the equipment will send a complete diving and hoisting outfit to the Mexican bay at once and bring back the engine which is said to be in a first class state of preservation."

But now, the consensus of opinions is that she still rests in peace, sunk into the muddy bottom of the Pacific Ocean just outside the bar of San Quintin Bay.

THE REMARKABLE TOW

1,600 tons of railroad iron, flat cars and other materials made up the cargo of the Drummuir. Towing lines were paid out from the tug to the Drummuir and from the Drummuir to the lighter. When all was set, the anchors were weighed and Captain R. Fleming, Master of the Drummuir, gave the terse command - Full Speed Ahead!

Then began what, according to old seamen, was "the most remarkable tow ever made along this coast for a boat the size of the tug."

The following quotations are from the account given in the Redondo Reflex: "The little tug (Redondo), which is of but 325 horsepower, towed from San Quintin to San Diego against heavy seas and unfavorable winds the ship Drummuir loaded with an entire railway system of 18 miles and a 250 ton lighter, amounting to about 6000 tons."....."Sunday, November 14, the tug with its tow struck a heavy northwest gale off the San Martin Islands and but one mile was made in 20 hours."..... "Upon the arrival of the tug at San Diego she was out of fuel oil having used 150 barrels and her supply of water was exhausted."

"At San Diego the lighter was left and the remainder of the trip the tug brought the Drummuir alone. From San Quintin to San Diego the journey occupied 72 hours and from San Diego to Redondo Beach the trip was made in 28 hours."

"..... The cargo of the Drummuir was a railway built 20 years ago by an English syndicate from San Quintin to (towards) Yuma, Arizona, which has been purchased by L. M. Hutchinson, of Ensenada., who was a passenger on the Drummuir from San Quintin and who is now here. Mr. Hutchinson has sold the railway system to the Arizona & Swansea Mining Company."

"A coincidence of interest is the fact that Captain A. H. Preble, master of the tug Redondo, delivered the same material for the railway at San Quintin 20 years ago, on the steamer Fulwell, and again, called for it with the tug on the trip recently completed.""The Drummuir will be here about three weeks while her cargo is being unloaded."

Mrs. Hutchinson, now living at Tecate, California, recalls that she and her husband later visited the Santa Clara Gold and Copper mines at Swansea, Arizona, and had the pleasure of riding to the terminal at Bouse, Arizona, the junction with the Santa Fe's line from Cadiz, California to Matthie, Arizona, near Wickenburg, over the rails of the Peninsular Railroad.

FINIS

The social revolution in Mexico, starting in 1911, overthrew the Porfirio Diaz regime. In 1917 a new constitution was adopted and the concessions which were granted by the Diaz government to the English syndicate were revoked.

According to Union Title-Trust Topics magazine, July-August 1955, the flour mill was dismantled in 1917 and the building materials and all the machinery except the horizontal steam engine were transported to Mexicali where the mill was re-assembled.

The former Mexican Government had made San Quintin a port of entry and a customs house was created to handle the immigration of colonists and the importation of supplies and equipment. In a book entitled: The Dominican Mission Frontier of Lower California by Percival Meigs, III, published in 1935 but apparently covering an earlier period, it is recorded that, aside from occasional shipments of supplies, the chief business of the customs house was in connection with the exploitation by a California company of the salt beds north of the bay. The May 1911 number of the National Geographic Magazine mentioned that the town of San Quintin consisted of a customs house, a store, and a few dwellings located back from a small wharf.

Little remains today at San Quintin as evidence of the grand development project and the Peninsular Railroad.

The base, cylinder and flywheel of the flour mill engine can still be found (1958) close by the new El Molino Viejo (the old mill) motel but heavy-duty hardware collectors are fast making off with the last vestiges of the machinery.

Looking southwesterly from the engine base, across the narrows, you will see that part of the causeway, projecting from the shore of the inner peninsula, has weathered the storms and the tides of years.

So endeth the story of the elaborate colonization scheme, with its network of railroad lines, which was hailed in San Diego as "The Greatest Thing Yet."

Richard V. Dodge, July 23, 1958

Editor's Note: The story, "Low Rails in Lower California" is being told in three parts. Parts One and Two relate the story of the Peninsular Railroad; Part Three will deal with the other Lower California railways. Part Three will be published as Issue 50 or 51. This series was written by Richard V. Dodge, now deceased. Mr. Dodge was Associate Editor of Dispatcher at the time of his death. He was also the author of the volume, "Rails of the Silver Gate." The original manuscript of the Lower California series is part of the collection of the Southwest Railway Library, Richard V. Dodge collection.

DISPATCHER

A feature and news publication issued quarterly (we hope) as an official publication of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego, Inc., P.O. Box 9351, San Diego, California 92109. Society officers are: Dwight E Couch, Jr., president; Jack Stodelle, first vice president; Walter Silberhorn, second vice president; Mrs. Gladys Skeen, third vice president; Robert Coyne, recording secretary; Mrs. Barbara Thomson, corresponding secretary; Fred Finke, treasurer; Clifford Skeen, historian; Corky Thomson, excursion director. Other Board members are: Earle Swaine, Charles Rezek, and Donald Decker. Dispatcher personnel are:

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SAN DIEGO & ARIZONA EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY

The warehouse at Santee alongside abandoned SD&AE right-of-way was moved in May, 1964.....On June 11, 1964 the westbound Roustabout consist at La Mesa included three locomotives and 17 cars.....First section of Spring Street widening and extension in La Mesa began in July. Road adjoins SD&AE right-of-way....Willard D. Keller retired July 31 as traffic manager. He was succeeded by Kenneth Frye. Keller held the position for seven years. Previously he had been with SP in Los Angeles and Imperial Valley.....In August after some track removal in La Mesa there remained the through track, a short south lead spur just north of Palm on the Spring Street side (many years ago there was a wye here with the stem going east on Orange), and a short north lead spur north of Allison on the Nebo Street side. Latter is a team track which may remain for a time. Former now serves a lumber company and an appliance store. This one will be removed shortly as Spring Street project two is now underway.....In August 1964 a rounaround replacing one in La Mesa was constructed on right-of-way alongside Fletcher Parkway between Jackson and Grossmont Center Dr.. ...Also in August 1964 the Roustabout(s) began running most of the time without a fireman.....In October 1964 the Navy decided it could get along without the Coronado Belt line if a second harbor entrance was to be built. SD&AE schedules two trains a week on the branch. (Second entrance plans are out for now, however.)....By November a highway crossing had been built on the main line at Dos Cabezas (3½ miles northwest of U.S.80 at Ocotillo) to provide access to a new section of Borrego State Park.....Also in November locomotive 4620 began handling the Roustabout run as 5100 series locomotives were becoming scarce. 4620 ran solo three to six times a week on the La Mesa branch. A few weeks later 4620 left the SD&AE leaving the field again to the 5100s. On December 3, 1964 the local SD&AE roster was: 5101, 5102 (bad order), 5108 yard service, 5115, 5119 (Coronado & South Bay), and 4620. SD&AE cotton cars occupied both tracks alongside the 10th Avenue Terminal warehouse on December 8. 6000 bales were shipped out December 17 for India.

And here's more SD&AE news.

A Charles Kent January 8, 1965 report. A Roustabout leaves at 8:30 a.m. for Chula Vista and Rohr Aircraft daily. On Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday the Roustabout serves the La Mesa branch (actually runs 3-6 times a week). On Mondays, Wednesday and Friday it travels to San Ysidro, Tijuana and Caliente. On Tuesdays and Thursdays it goes to Coronado and North Island. The 9 p.m. Roustabout normally works the main line only. There's a 10 a.m. short turn three or four times a week which supplements the 8:30 a.m. Roustabout. The 6:30 a.m. yard job assembles Train 452 and branch line trains, does interchange, and works the main to 12th Street in National City and the La Mesa branch to 32nd Street. The 2:30 p.m. yard does interchange, yard, 32nd St., wholesale and main line close in. It also breaks down the main line and branch trains. (Editor: hope we have this right. Anyway, it gives one the general idea.)

Here's the consist for the January 16, 1965 Train 451 - at San Diego. Locomotive units were: 508, 7210, 5777, 5873 and 5782. Caboose was 1071. Consist included the following harbor traffic: 1 scrap, 9 cotton, 7 alfalfa pellets and 25 fertilizer. Cars for Santa Fe interchange were 2 sugar, 1 mdse, 1 magazines, 1 machinery, 2 plaster for Ranch House on the Fallbrook branch, 1 plaster board for Fallbrook, 1 for San Juan Capistrano, and 1 for Carlsbad. Other cars were 1 mdse, 1 lumber, 2 beer (La Mesa), 1 shook (?) (Chula Vista), 2 flour, 3 furniture, 1 apples, 1 household goods for El Cajon, 1 paper, 1 milo and 1 plaster for El Cajon. That's 68 cars plus the caboose.

On March 25, 1965 D. H. Overmyer Warehouse Co. of New York announced construction of three buildings on a 16 acre site north of the Montgomery Ward warehouse in El Cajon. This means a 1200-foot line extension, construction of two spurs and up to 2000 cars per year. That's the La Mesa branch "main."

The Editor and friend George Turner on April 2 watched Train 451 pull in to Plaster City with four units and 60 cars. 18 empties were dropped and 10 loaded cars were added. Staff of three at SD&AE Plaster City. Work cars now at Jacumba.

REPORT 16-3; also DISPATCHER X1
IN THE GLARE OF THE HEADLIGHT - regular series by G. J. Oliver

I. The effect of the passing of Proposition 17 in the last election (what was Prop. 17, you ask!) was not long in appearing and many skilled workmen in the form of Locomotive Firemen are now looking for jobs (if any of you have use for any first class Locomotive Firemen, please contact the writer). A few were given "comparable" jobs, mostly switching, but how many such are there in an industry that is reducing its forces all the time due to automation and other efficient practices?

Most took severance pay, fairly generous, but small compensation to men who wanted to railroad because they loved the job and most of whom were fulfilling a boyhood ambition of working up to Locomotive Engineer.

A man must love railroading to stick with it as there is little attraction in the hours, time away from home, lack of real family life, and considerable hazards; any workman who loves his job is a better workman than one who is just putting in his time until payday.

The writer, one of the lucky ones who did achieve his ambition and stuck with it in spite of the drawbacks above plus six years of being furloughed during the depression, feels deeply for these men, many of whom he has worked with, and their innocent part in the present day "American Tragedy."

II. Engine watchers have noticed that the San Diegans are mostly powered by single "Alcos" for trains up to eight cars. As, from Monday through Thursday, most of the trains have only six cars, it is no trouble to make the time, even making up ten to twelve minutes under favorable running conditions. Eight cars takes all the breaks to bring in on time, but in a way is an easier job for the engineer as there are only two positions used for the throttle, closed and wide open.

Most of the enginemen prefer EMD power as it is quieter and much more responsive, but one has to respect the Alcos; they smoke and cough and are as responsive as a span of oxen, but they will move a train. Also, they ride much better (six wheel trucks) and we like that long nose out in front of us just in case someone disputes the right of way with us. However, the company doesn't consult the enginemen as to what power to buy or use on the trains, so we take what's there and take of into the smoggy yonder.

RAILFAN ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

RHSofSD Inc. Dwight Couch, president; Jack Stodelle, first vice president; Walter Silberhorn, second vice president; Mrs. Gladys Skeen, third vice president; Robert Coyle, recording secretary; Mrs. Barbara Thomson, corresponding secretary; Fred Finke, treasurer; Clifford Skeen, historian; and Corky Thomson, excursion director. Earle Swaine, Charles Rezek and Donald Decker are directors. Publications are: Newsletter, Corky Thomson, editor; and Dispatcher, Eric Sanders, editor.

PSRMA Inc. Stanton Kerr, president; Terry Durkin, vice president; George Goyer, secretary; and Charles Gerdes, treasurer. Board members also include William Wootton, past president, and Walter Hayward, museum committee chairman. Publications are Report, Eric Sanders, editor, and affiliation with Dispatcher. Excursions are in charge of Wallace Duthie.

SOUTHWEST RAILWAY LIBRARY - Phil Middlebrook, president; Eric Sanders, secretary-treasurer.

ORANGE EMPIRE TROLLEY MUSEUM - Raymond Ballash, president; E. J. Von Nordeck, vice president; James W. Walker, Jr., secretary; Newell McCracken, treasurer; Roger D. Fogt, Norman Johnson and William Bauer, directors.

Addresses: RHSofSD: P.O. Box 9351, San Diego 9; PSRMA - 10830 Fuerte Drive, La Mesa; SRL - 2744 Columbia, San Diego; O.E.T.: Box 501, Perris, California

REPORT: Mail to 7861 Normal Avenue, La Mesa, Eric Sanders, editor. 15¢ per copy.

It appears that Santa Fe has virtually written off San Diego - Los Angeles passenger service except for those passengers who require transcontinental connections or those who desire a leisurely one way trip a day. The California Public Utilities Commission has agreed to hear another Santa Fe petition to cut round trips to two a day. An ICC hearing has also been requested by the railroad.

As previously reported, AT&SF lost the mail contract as of July 1, 1964. Prior to that date because of the impending loss of the mail contract the Santa Fe had requested permission to cut the four round trips (five southbound Sundays and holidays) to two round trips daily. On May 17 the railroad further petitioned to be allowed to drop Trains 70 (leave LA 1:45am) and 81 (leave SD 9pm) without a hearing. Several hearings were held including one in San Diego on June 24 and 25. Protests were not numerous although Los Angeles bound commuters were outspoken about the suggested loss of service. On July 10 the PUC authorized the dropping of Trains 70 and 81 effective July 20. These two trains ran for the last time on July 31. Discontinuance of these trains was confirmed on November 24 by the PUC. However, PUC did not allow Santa Fe to further decrease its schedules. PUC said, "It is the policy of this commission to insist upon the preservation and maintenance of reasonably adequate passenger service." There was agreement that Santa Fe was losing money on its San Diegans but the amount of loss was in question.

Santa Fe in December petitioned PUC for another hearing and on March 29, 1965 a hearing was requested with the ICC. Santa Fe claimed a deficit of \$800,000 for the first nine months of 1964. PUC will schedule another hearing.

What about the San Diegans? What about the service? Prior to the end of the mail contract on July 1, 1964 headend cars numbered one, two or three per train. Southbound they ran as "rearend headend cars." After July 1, 1964 most trains included one baggage car - that is they did. In April 1965 many trains run without a baggage car. Snack car service today has also been cut. Dispatcher has no specifics on this.

Train consists observed include the following: July 5, 1964 No.81, one bag., two coaches; Tuesday, July 14, No.75, 3 units, 1 bag, 1 snack, five coaches; No.74 2 units, 1 bag, 1 snack, 8 coaches. In July trains ran week days with 3-8 cars; weekends up to 15. Usually two or three locomotive units. By late summer units were fewer in number. One hauled up to 8 cars; two units up to 15. On Labor Day, 1964, this train: 3 unit Alco, 17 cars. Alco 51 or GM 3 and 4 units handled all race trains. Labor Day one race train had 22 cars on the first train, 27 on the second. Four units hauled each train. One train carried 1114 passengers. (RHSofSD Newsletter)

In April 1965 consist was as low as two cars. With only one unit hauling most trains breakdowns became critical. "California Southern Express," a San Bernardino railfan publication, has carried interesting stories of traffic service interruptions. At press time Dispatcher received an unconfirmed report that additional units have been assigned to some trains.

Meanwhile welded rail is on the ground awaiting installation on double track between San Diego and Old Town. Welded rail was observed at Redondo Junction. RHSofSD Newsletter reports (in March, 1965), "The new line in the north end of San Diego is going in nicely, a faster curve at Elvira, welded rail and a longer double track. The new south switch is in and the old turnout has been removed at this writing. Several signals have been relocated at Pacific Beach and in Rose Canyon also." (Note: track relocation came about because of highway construction.)

On July 7, 1964, a long spur was being laid south of San Onofre into the Southern California Edison-San Diego Gas & Electric Co. nuclear generating plant, now under construction. In September 1964 Santa Fe brought in approximately 500 cars of potash to the bulk loader at Tenth Avenue Terminal. Motive power for freight trains in September 1964 was standard F-7, GP-9, and 1200 series GP-30. The City of San Diego in late 1964 said it wanted Santa Fe to retain track at Miramar Naval Air Station in order to provide rail access in future years to industrial property on the south side of U.S.395. The Solana Beach station, long abandoned, was removed or torn down in 1964. Track from Elsinore Station to the old Railroad Canyon Junction (the wye) also went out in 1964. New ballast on Escondido branch.

REPORT

of the
PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RLY. MUSEUM ASSOC., INC.

Issue 14 November 15, 1964

CAPTIONS FOR FERROCARRIL SONORA-BAJA CALIFORNIA PICTURES

The "Mexicali" southbound on December 30, 1961 on the Ferrocarril del Pacifico at Cementera, five kilometers south of Hermosillo. Picture was taken on the occasion of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego charter Fullman (coche dormitorio) trip to Guaymas.

Next picture is of the southbound freight. Powered by locomotive 2303, the freight is shown at Mexicali just prior to departure.

Bottom left. December 30, 1961 scene at Puerto Peñasco. Even though the time is 1 a.m. platform vendors were selling fish, corn-on-the-cob, pastry, frijoles, candy, fruit and other items to passengers on both northbound Train No. 1 and southbound Train No. 2.

Bottom right. Scene on the diner later in the same day. Train was then on the Ferrocarril del Pacifico somewhere south of Benjamin Hill.

BUY YOUR COPY OF DISPATCHER ISSUE 31

In Issue 31 of the Dispatcher excursionists will find a history of the Sonora-Baja California Railroad. In the same issue readers will find an account of a trip on the S-BC between Mexicali and Benjamin Hill.

If you would like to know more about the Ferrocarril Sonora-Baja California, purchase a copy of Issue 31. Price is 25¢ and copies may be obtained on this train.

"The Mexicali"

48-X1

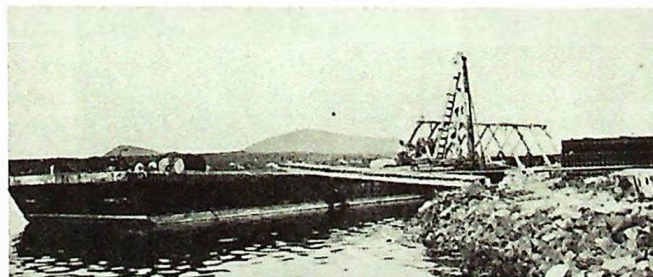
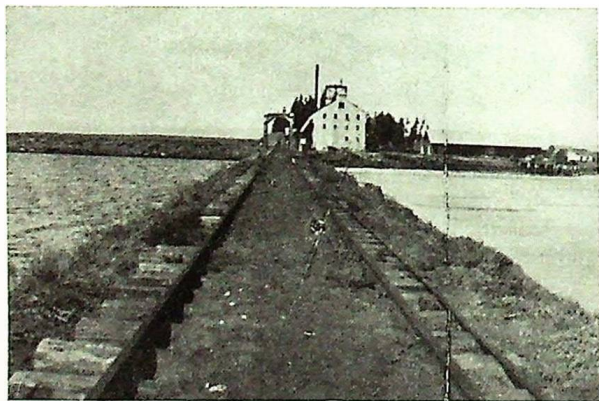
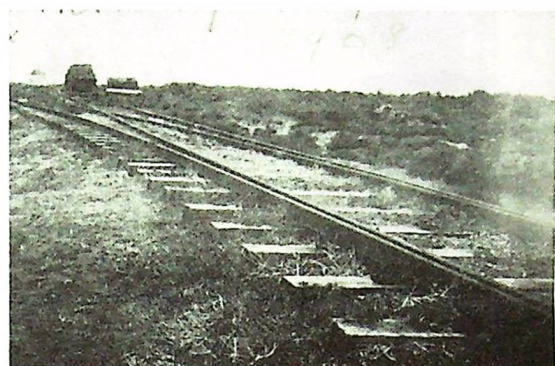
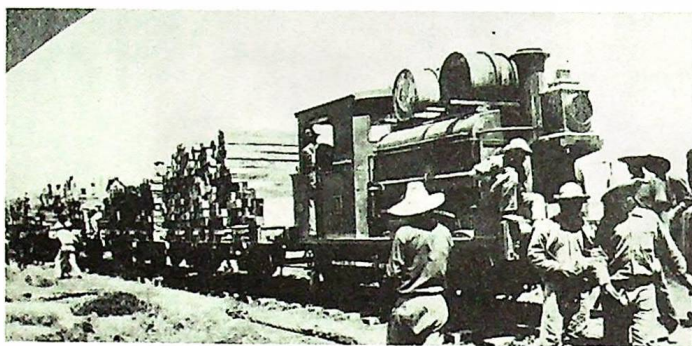
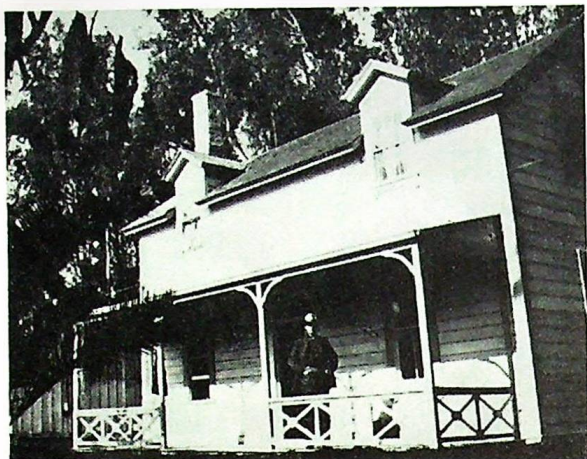
Welcome aboard this special Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Inc. excursion train. Come with us for a ride on the northern portion of the Ferrocarril Sonora-Baja California.

The cars and locomotive of today's train will be part of the consist of tonight's southbound "Mexicali." The Ferrocarril Sonora-Baja California and the Ferrocarril del Pacifico have joined forces to run the "Mexicali" in daily through passenger service between Mexicali and Guadalajara.



Baja's First Railroad

THE PENINSULAR RAILROAD, 1891-1909
AT SAN QUINTIN, BAJA CALIFORNIA



- L1 - Offices & residence at flour mill, San Quintin
Courtesy Bill Cochran, Title Insurance & Trust Co.
- L2 - Peninsular R.R.#1 and train load of salvaged ties.
Cour. Mrs. L.M.Hutchison, Title Insur. & Trust Co.
- L3 - Causeway, trestle, flour mill & warehouse. Note
water pipe. 1897. (Courtesy Percy Hussong, Ensenada)
- R1 - Station & Peninsular RR No.1, San Quintin, 1897.
(Courtesy Percy Hussong, Ensenada)
- R2 - Prior to tearing up of track at San Quintin, 11-08.
(Courtesy Mrs. L. M. Hutchison, Tecate, Calif.)
- R3 - Laborers picking up ties on the inner peninsular
at the borrow pit, 1909. (Courtesy Bill Cochran,
Title Insurance & Trust Co., Union Title, San Diego)
- R4 - The 400-ton capacity lighter is ready to load rail
at San Quintin, 1909. (Hutchison, Title Ins.& Trust)

SPECIAL NOTES:

1. Photographs on this page are from the Southwest Railway Library, Dodge Collection. However, the photographs were originally from the individuals or institution credited.
2. Photographs on preceding page are from the collection of the editor, Eric Sanders.

The old adage "Next time try the train" would have been appropriate at Gillespie Field this morning (ed: actually April 23) because it would have been one of the most unusual train rides in history.

The train, or at least a narrow-gauge passenger car, took the ride itself but it went by truck.

The 30-passenger inspection car, which used to make the 26-mile run between Plaster City in Imperial Valley and the mountains, was moved today from a storage site at Gillespie Field to a new storage site on the R.E. Hazard property in Mission Valley.

The car is part of a collection owned by the Railway Historical Society of San Diego. The society has long-range plans to establish a museum of old railroad cars and engines.

The 20-ton, narrow gauge passenger car was built in 1947 in U.S. Gypsum Company shops at Plaster City for a visit of industrialist Sewell Avery and for company use. It was constructed on a flatcar bed and boasts a rather unusual design.

In 1960 it was retired from use, purchased by the Society and moved to Gillespie Field site in 1961. The narrow gauge line based in Plaster City is the most modern one of its type in the country, according to a society spokesman.

The moving operation today was conducted by the Belyea Truck Company of San Diego which brought the car from the gypsum facility to El Cajon several years ago.

Other equipment now owned by the society which is waiting for a permanent home includes a San Francisco street car stored in Perris, Calif., an early model San Diego Electric Railway street car parked at the Whaley House in Old Town, a modern street car on the Del Mar Fair Grounds, a steam locomotive and a private coach formerly owned by John D. Spreckels. (ed: latter two are owned by the 22nd Dist. Agricultural Assn. but were brought to the Fair and are maintained by RHS.)

RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO excursion bus and an auto or two will journey April 25 to the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and the O.E.T. museum. RHSofSD also plans a Santa Fe yard limit rail excursion in San Diego and an October excursion to the Orange Empire Trolley Museum at Perris. Trucks have been assembled at the Whaley House for placement under Car 54. Wheels are former AT&SF velocipede wheels and side frames were cast locally. Trucks will support six tons. Motors could be added if and when. It's time again to prepare for the Del Mar Fair. Members will paint and sweep and then serve as hosts at the railroad exhibit.. RHSofSD has invited PSRMA to be responsible for street car 528.

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM ASSOCIATION Members are making parts for Charles Gerdes SDERY 316. Constructed or restored are two Route 5 destination signs, cross braces for the roof catwalk, and side ladder boards. Metal window guards, donated by Miss Helen Reif, have been cleaned up and sprayed with rustoleum. Activity continues toward the location of a museum land site. A PSRMA office will open at the Santa Fe San Diego station on June 1. It's Room 5. PSRMA has signed with Union Pacific for an October 24 excursion to Calico. (UP is now in Home Tower!)

SOUTHWEST RAILWAY LIBRARY SRL is seeking a baggage car for library purposes from Santa Fe. The railroad replies that it will consider the request but adds that station office space might be preferable. San Diego Trust & Savings Bank has donated two wooden office files to the Library. Indications are that additional collections will be given the library.

DISPATCHER ISSUE 48 shares three pages with Report. By so doing Dispatcher was able to subsidize two additional picture pages for this issue. Dispatcher is not complaining but the treasury is low. Issue 49, SDERY roster, is in preparation. Allen Copeland is assisting. Issue 48 is a 1964 issue; Issue 49 the first '65.

IN CLOSING. Delayed sympathy to the family and friends of Jesse L. Haugh. Mr. Haugh passed away in late 1964. His accomplishments were many and he was a recognized civic leader in San Diego. His son, Jim, succeeds him.

SAN DIEGO TRANSIT SYSTEM

The Haugh management purchased the San Diego Electric Railway Company (soon renamed the San Diego Transit System) in 1948. In the early 1960s the financial situation darkened and by 1964 the company was advocating public ownership. In the first half of this decade the City of San Diego has refused tax relief. Ernst & Ernst, a consulting firm contracted with by the City, recommended city purchase. Dissatisfied with the report the City appointed a "fact finding" committee, Justin Evenson, chairman. This committee recognized the crisis but favored continued private operation with financial incentives provided by the City and improved "business-government" cooperation. The City moved to authorize a \$95,000 annual grant to offset the payment of the franchise tax. Assemblyman Donovan has introduced an enabling bill at the state level which would provide for the formation of a public transit district encompassing six cities. Assemblyman James Mills introduced a measure to facilitate a local takeover. Senator Jack Shrade also introduced a bill. The City of San Diego apparently favors a trial of the Evenson proposals. Generally, South Bay Cities express considerable concern about the transit crisis; eastern area has not been as involved. Most everyone agrees that local transit is a must; some feel the problem is primarily San Diego's concern. Generally the public is apathetic. Area-wide the problem is gaining increasing attention. The La Mesa Scout has expressed concern. The San Diego Union is currently "running" a transit series; in the past the Copley press has given much space to transit needs. The San Diego Transit System through James Haugh continues to ask for action.

SAN DIEGO & CORONADO FERRY COMPANY

The Army Corps of Engineers on December 7 held a public hearing in regard to the State Toll Bridge Authority's application to construct a bridge between Coronado and San Diego. Six weeks later, California Governor Edmund "Pat" Brown announced receipt of federal approval. The \$30-million, mile-long structure may be ready for traffic by mid-1969. Bids for exploration borings for pilings were opened and a contract awarded. Work has begun. Coronado is seeking to have the toll plazas located on the San Diego side but the Authority reports that this is impractical. Without doubt in 1969 the familiar Coronado ferries will go out of business although by that time they will have been purchased by the Authority. Future of the North Island service of the Star & Crescent Boat Company has not been discussed but presumably its days are also numbered. However, because of the use of the facility by Navy personnel some limited operation might continue. There's no word on this.

A DAYLIGHT EXCURSION TO PUERTO PENASCO

A daylight run over the Sonora-Baja California Railroad from Mexicali to Puerto Penasco and return is set for May 30. A Roaming Tours special train will leave Mexicali at 8 a.m. and return about 7 p.m. Train will make at least two stops. One will be at the site of the graves (and well maintained crosses) of surveyors who lost their lives during the construction period. A layover in Puerto Penasco is also planned. The train will run on the short branch which extends from the mainline station to the townsite on the point. It will be a long day but excursionists will see the northern half of the railroad during daylight hours (regular passenger trains make overnight runs). Fare on the train is \$10. Write Roaming Tours, 3380 Granada, San Diego, California, 92104 for information.

AND THIS IS THE FINAL WORD: 1. PSRMA had to pay \$185 income tax to the federal government because it is not tax exempt federally. Exemption is being sought and a refund is hoped for; 2. At a Southwest Railway Library meeting Jerry MacMullen advised the organization that "educational" when applied to a non-profit group means just that. Public service, informational activity and publications like the Dispatcher are considered "educational." (ed - we think so, too!) 3. In order to avoid an October excursion conflict and because of some uncertainty about the status of Calico, PSRMA is cancelling its October trip and urges all fans to climb aboard the RMS of SD excursion train and go to Perris. PSRMA is considering another trip on an earlier date; 4. Issue 49 - July, we hope. No promises. Buy some back issues!