

It's here! A special edition! The REPORT of the Pacific South-west Railway Museum and the South-west Railway Library JOURNAL have combined to bring you a facinating story. The story was originally given in a speech by Mr. S. A. Lamey.

Mr. Lamey's speech told the story of the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway's struggle for ex-istance. It was first given on February 26, 1953, and may well have been presented at a RHSofSD meeting.

We hope you enjoy our special edition.

Eric Sanders and Charles Kent,
Editors

* * * * *

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am very happy to come here tonight and tell you about our San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway. This railroad has had a terrific struggle for its existance.

Plans were first proposed for this railroad in 1853, when Congress authorized surveys for a railroad along the 32d parallel to the Pacific Coast. A company was organized in San Diego under the name of the San Diego and Gila, Southern Pacific and Atlantic Railway. Nothing more than a preliminary survey was accomplished by this company.

Another was organized in 1867, but nothing came of it.

5 But in 1872, the Texas & Pacific Railway made a survey between San Diego and Yuma. They later decided to route their line north into Los Angeles.

Again in 1879, a project was started with the backing of the Santa Fe Railway. This line was to go to Yuma, where the Santa Fe would build on east. But that was changed, and the Santa Fe was then built from San Diego to San Bernardino. A few years later the

line was extended to a connection with the Atlantic and Pacific at Barstow.

But the idea of a direct outlet to the east from San Diego would not stay dead. Again in 1893, plans were made. The San Diego and Phoenix Rly. was incorporated, but, this too, was never completed. They did, however, build out of San Diego, and by 1895 had a total of 13 miles of track to Otay. This project died for lack of support and became a stock promotion scheme along with the others of the era.

In 1906, the San Diego and Arizona Railway was chartered by Mr. John D. Spreckels in December. Mr. Spreckels promised the people of San Diego a direct and picturesque railroad to the east.

The first shovel of dirt was turned at 28th street in 1907. The S, D. & A. had begun.

In the course of construction there were to be four tunnels in Mexico. Tunnels 1 and 2 were completed in 1910. These tunnels have concrete portals and 30 foot concrete approaches on each end. The balance of the bores were timber. Tunnel No. 1 is 186.80 feet long and Tunnel No. 2 is 305.30 feet in length.

Construction was started from the east end of the line in 1911. The work begun just west of the New River bridge at Seeley, about ten miles west of El Centro. At that time the Holton Interurban Railway terminal was at Seeley. At this same time work was under way on Tunnels 3 and 4 in Mexico. These tunnels also have concrete portals and approaches. This is something the other 17 tunnels on the line do not have. Tunnels 3 and 4 were finished in 1915.

By 1917, construction had progressed on the east end to a point of entering Carriso Gorge where 17 tunnels were to be built. The railroad was originally capitalized for \$6,000,000. Because of the tunnels

and trestles that would be necessary in the 11 miles of Carriso Gorge the capital was raised to \$9,000,000. The section in Carriso Gorge cost \$3,939,000, an average of \$353,000 per mile.

In 1917, the Southern Pacific became a partner in the building of the S. D. & A. Their investment of \$9,000,000 raised the capital to \$18 million.

This same year work was started on the 17 tunnels and bridges necessary in Carriso Gorge.

Now, if I may, I would like to digress for the moment and tell you something about the Southern Pacific Company's training and their requirements for officers. So long as the S. P. is now a part of our railroad, this will make it clear why the officers of the S. D. & A. have been changed from time to time, as some of you may have noticed.

The S. P. has two systems, both Atlantic and Pacific, which when combined have 12,000 miles of main line. The Atlantic system extends from El Paso to New Orleans, Louisiana. The Pacific system extends from Portland, Oregon to El Paso, Texas. These systems are divided into divisions, and a division is a length of track under the supervision of a superintendent. They vary in length from 250 miles to 350 miles as conditions make it necessary.

There are 10 divisions between Portland and El Paso and the conditions vary on most of them. It is on the different divisions that these varied experiences must be had by the officers. This is a prerequisite for advancement as an official. First in order to hold the official positions higher than that of superintendent, such as Chief Operating Officer, General Manager and vice president in charge of operations, one must have had experience with the three basic elements that effect the railroad. These are the effects of intense heat, intense cold, and the effect of heavy rain. All of these experiences can be had on the 10 divisions of the Pacific system. Should an officer not had these basic experiences before reaching the superintendancy of a division, he will be transferred to the various divisions to acquire the experience. This gives cause many times to the transfer of officials. In my 44 years on the S. P. I have worked on all divisions between Portland and El Paso.

Now back to the S. D. & A. Railway. In 1919, after all the grades and hard work, the last of 21 tunnels was completed. Now we had 4 tunnels in Mexico and 17 in Carriso Gorge. These tunnels varied in length from 177 feet to 2596 feet. In addition, in the 11 miles of Carriso Gorge we have 14 sidehill trestles which vary in length from 76 to 376 feet. There are 110 curves in this 11 miles that would make $10\frac{1}{2}$ complete circles.

About this same time the National City & Otay Railway, San Diego, Cuyamaca & Eastern Railway and the Coronado Railroad (1917) were acquired by the S. D. & A. Railway. These were small railroads operating in and around San Diego, some having been built as early as 1886.

That portion of the railroad in Mexico was incorporated as the Tijuana & Tecate Railway. It extends from Tijuana to Lindero, a distance of 70.9 kilometers or 43.4 miles.

The S. D. & A. was officially opened on December 1, 1919. This railroad opened with 50 miles of 1.4% grade between Redondo, Mexico and Hipass (now Tierra del Sol), the summit of which is 3660 feet above sea level, and 26 miles of 2.2% grade between Coyote Wells and Hipass. The 148 miles between San Diego and El Centro had a total of 349 curves that would make 34 complete circles. When the road opened there were on the property: 20 all wooden coaches; 2 all wooden observation cars; 2 all wooden combination cars; 26 side dump gondolas; 21 steel flat cars; 10 steel gondolas; 8 tank cars; 2 switch engines (0-6-0); 7 ten-wheelers

(4-6-0); 1 light consolidation (2-8-0) and 6 consolidations (2-8-0). There was also one steel underframe private car for Mr. John D. Spreckels, built by the Pacific Electric Railway at Torrance, California, for a cost of \$78,000.

Just as soon as the S. D. & A. was opened for business, the people of San Diego were ready to use the line for their services. Mr. John D. Spreckels was the president and the S. P. sent the balance of the officials to the property. These consisted of Traffic and Mechanical Departments which for a time handled the Operating Department.

Business on this railroad was very good and it was thought that the investment would be good. But 5 months later the first of the trouble that was to come to the S. D. & A. started.

On May 10, 1920, Tunnel No. 7, which was 1200 feet long was covered by a slide. This stopped operation of the railroad for 199 days, from May 10, 1920 to November 23, 1920, with a cost of \$44,360 to reopen the line. Now comes the training I mentioned by the S. P. of their officers. Now the S. P. reviewed their personnel and sent Mr. A. T. Mercier to the S. D. & A. from the Portland Division in 1921. He was a man that had all the basic experiences. The S. D. & A. is one railroad that has all three basic elements to contend with. The heat of Imperial Valley, the cold and snow of the mountain at Hipass and the excessive rains up to not too many years ago lasted from November to April. Mr. Mercier came to the S. D. & A. as vice president. I was on the Portland Division at the time. I came to the S. D. & A. in 1922. I came to the S. D. & A. as trainmaster, yardmaster and chief dispatcher, which titles cover the operating department. However there was then a superintendent at San Diego.

After the railroad was opened in 1920, business, both passenger and freight, was surging and the road was making money. The passenger business increased to such an extent a second passenger train was inaugurated to run tri-weekly. It carried a through sleeper and coach, San Diego to New Orleans, connecting with the Sunset Limited at Niland. The regular passenger train handled a through sleeper and coach, San Diego to Chicago, connecting with the Golden State at Yuma. In 1923 this additional service was put on daily.

In 1922, we would handle 80 loads of rock per day out of Otay Gravel Pit, 1800 cars of lettuce and cantaloupes a season from Seeley to El Centro. We also hauled trains of cottonseed from Imperial Valley to the Potash Oil Plant, near Chula Vista. We also handled livestock to Potash for feeding. 300 to 400 cars a season were handled out of El Cajon containing Citrus and Grapes. The lettuce and cantaloupe business ended in 1924 when the crops went by truck to El Centro..

But even with the loss of the lettuce and cantaloupes we would locate other business on our line. The Portland Cement Company bought a large deposit of gypsum and built a plant at Plaster City. The plant originally cost \$1,000,000. The U. S. Gypsum Company later bought the plant and enlarged it by \$7,000,000. We now handle up to as many as 86 loads per day from that plant.

From 1922, until 1926 our railroad did very good. We were again beset by heavy rains and on December 8, 1926 our railroad washed out from Carriso Gorge to El Centro. On the day of this washout I was on the passenger train from San Diego to El Centro, where I was to meet Mr. William Sproule, then president of the S. P. We were to handle his private car to San Diego that night. When we left Jacumba it commenced to rain, and by the time our train reached Carriso Gorge, we found the water was running over the track. I told the engineer to stop and I walked ahead around the sharp curves to inspect the track. We made it through

the gorge, and after leaving there could see a bad storm coming up from Mexico. By the time we reached Seeley, which is 9 miles from El Centro, I knew we were washed out on the mountain. Upon arrival at El Centro I received the report that not only were we washed out, but that the S. P. was also washed out between Niland and Indio. Also it was reported that the highway was washed out between Jacumba and El Centro.

After placing Mr. Sproule's private car on our passenger train for Yuma, I left El Centro by motor car to inspect the washout. We could only get to Coyote Wells. From there we could see the rails and ties suspended in the air sometimes for a distance of 300 feet. In other places the track was covered with earth for like distances. The bridge at Coyote Wells was washed out, so I returned to El Centro and started to make up the gangs so as to get started the next day. I found a man at El Centro by the name of Mr. Petzer. He had just finished a big construction job there. He had about 30 mules and Fresnos and I was able to hire about 200 men. We loaded the boxcars that night and were on the job the next day. It was necessary to get piling and a pile driver which happened to be at Yuma. The second day we closed the bridge at Coyote Wells. The bad part of the washout was west of Coyote Wells. On the ninth day we were able to operate our passenger train from El Centro to San Diego at limited speed. After 30 days we were once again back to normal operation. This washout cost \$260,000 to repair. It was necessary for me to work with two crews, both day and night for 9 days.

But it seemed our railroad was not through with washouts. Again in February, 1927, we washed out between San Diego and Garcia in Mexico. This storm also took the railroad between San Diego and Lakeside and North Island. This of course stopped our whole operation as it affected our main line and branch lines.

We opened again in April after about a 60 day tie up. Now we were open again and in good shape, but we had lost most of our passenger business. It was necessary to discontinue our eastern connection with the Sunset Limited at Niland. It was not uncommon to see this train arrive in San Diego without a single passenger. We held on to our freight business to a certain extent, but later that year the plant at Potash was shut down.

In 1928, we were able to get some new business from the movie companies. While it was very good paying business, it was very dangerous to handle. We had three or four trains on this work for 30 days at a time working in Carriso Gorge.

In July, we had a change in our official family. Mr. A. T. Mercier was transferred and later became president of the S. P. in 1940.

We just barely made expenses in the years 1929, 1930 and 1931. Taxes alone to the State of California averaged \$70,000 per month. From 1931 to and including 1935 we were not able to pay the interest on our bonds, and in 1932, when we lost 3 tunnels, one by slide and 2 by fire, it became a question if the line would be reopened. The cost was going to be \$700,000, and it was considered only to operate the lines between San Diego and San Ysidro and El Centro and Coyote Wells.

At about 1:00AM on January 25, 1932, I was called at my home and advised that Tunnel No. 3 was on fire. This tunnel was 1297 feet long. As is usually the practice in such fires, I instructed the crews to barricade one end of this tunnel. Usually in such cases the fire will die for lack of oxygen. We usually have ties available along the line. I immediately left for the scene of the fire. I arrived about 3:00AM, and the barricade was complete. It so happened that there were plenty of ties near the entrance to the tunnel. As the fire did not die down as

I thought it should we barricaded the opposite end of the tunnel. This was to no avail, as we had a cave in 400 feet from the west end of the tunnel. With this draft caused by the heat in the tunnel, we had to take out the barricades and let it burn. This tunnel burned for 4 days. We were tied up for 45 days and ended up with two tunnels, one 318.83 feet and one 897.25 feet. After using a solid cargo of timber to repair this tunnel, we reopened March 10, 1932 at a cost of \$158,863.

Now our troubles were to continue as we had Tunnel 15 which we had been watching for over a year. This tunnel was beginning to slide. We were working on a 50 foot concrete approach, thinking this would save the tunnel. But 17 days after we opened tunnel 3, on the 27th of March, Tunnel 15, 1146 feet, slid in.

This was going to be a job, as without the tunnel it was necessary to build a bridge 633 feet long and 185 feet high. This bridge was built on a 16 degree curve. We you could understand there could not be much heart to go any further with reopening the road. But it was decided to build the bridge and a tunnel. Again it took a cargo of timbers and cost \$319,000. We reopened the road on July 5, 1932.

After 100 days, as you might know, we were up and trying again. But it seemed that 1932 was to be the bad year. For we were only open 3 months and 15 days, when fire struck again. On October 20, 1932, Tunnel 7 burned. This was about the end. Now we could not bore another tunnel, so the only thing we could do was to circle the distance with seven more 20 degree curves, something very grave on a railroad. At any rate, we layed the curves to bypass the 1150 foot tunnel. We opened the line once more after an 81 day tie-up and a cost of \$216,068. The date was January 9, 1933.

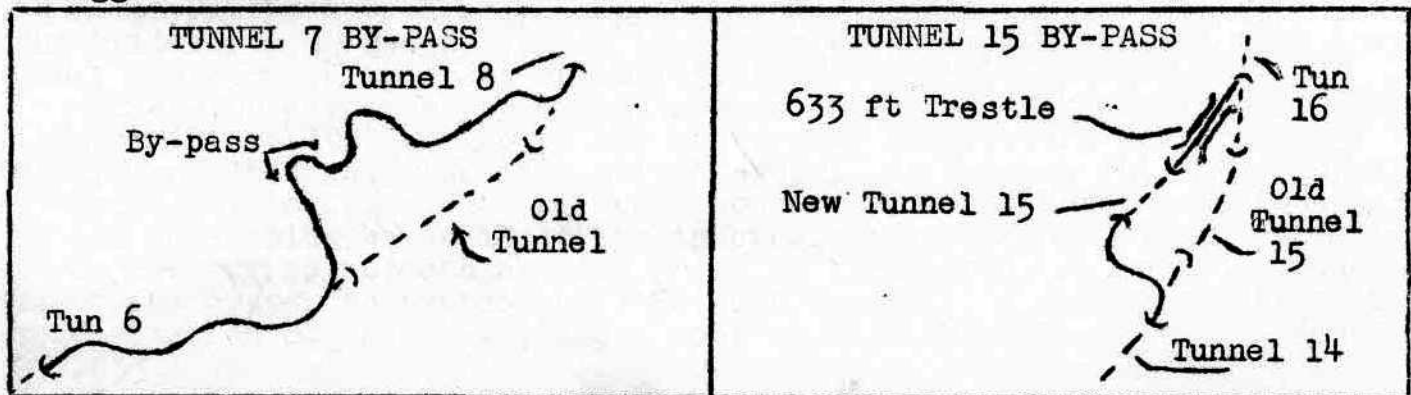
By this time our bonds were in bad shape. As the Spreckels interest did not care to continue, the S. P. took over the railroad entirely. We had a reorganization and in February, 1933 and renamed the railroad. It now became the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway.

From 1933 to 1940 our business was down, no doubt from our interruptions. We had lost many of our patrons. So the S. P. cut forces. I became chief in 1940.

With the War, came an increase in business. We had Camp Lockett at Campo, which necessitated several changes. Business was heavy on the North Island line also. But after the War our business dropped off to where we were again losing money. So in 1950, we decided to start proceedings to discontinue passenger service as it was losing \$400,000 per year.

In January, 1951, we discontinued the passenger trains and also discontinued the use of steam engines. By doing away with steam power completely, we are able to economize and stay out of the red.

This is the story of the SD&AE. No doubt you will agree it was a struggle to exist.



Length of Tunnels on
the SAN DIEGO & ARIZONA EASTERN RAILWAY

<u>Number</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Location</u>
1	168' 8"	Rodriguez Dam	11	281'	Carriso Gorge
2	305'	Rodriguez Dam	12	342'	Carriso Gorge
3	318' 10"	Lindero, Mex.	13	299'	Carriso Gorge
3 1/2	897' 3"	Lindero, Mex.	14	2597'	Carriso Gorge
4	597' 10"	Lindero, Mex.	15	177' 7"	Carriso Gorge
5	398' 6"	Carriso Gorge	16	239' 6"	Carriso Gorge
6	382' 4"	Carriso Gorge	17	650'	Carriso Gorge
7 Burned	1932	Carriso Gorge	18	309'	Carriso Gorge
8	2527'	Carriso Gorge	19	704'	Carriso Gorge
9	600'	Carriso Gorge	20	287'	Carriso Gorge
10	925' 10"	Carriso Gorge	21	245'	Carriso Gorge

Report

Of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Assn.

NEWS SUPPLEMENT

LOCOMOTIVE NOW AT PERRIS

Mojave Northern RR No. 3 was shipped from Victorville on Saturday, July 30. It arrived at the end of track at Perris the same day. Walt Hayward acted as engine messenger for the movement.

Also accompanying No. 3 was MN's No. 2, owned by the California Southern Railway Museum of San Bernardino. No. 2 also will call Orange Empire Traction home, at least for the time being.

On August 5, a Saturday, a work party of OET and Cal Sou members began the shore of moving the two locomotives the half mile to OET. PSRMA members who were on hand to help with the project included Walt Hayward, Eric Sanders, Everette Mardock, Kent Anderson, Terry Durkin, Charles Kent and Jeff Melquist.

The locomotives were placed on OET property on Sunday, Aug. 6. A lot of hard work remains to be done before operation can be realized. A lot of learning will be required also.

REPORT is the official publication of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Incorporated, of San Diego County, California. Officers are: Stanton W. Kerr, president; L. B. Adams, vice president; Charles Gerdes, treasurer; William Wootton, secretary... Report Editor is: Charles Kent.. Museum Address is 1050 Kettner Blvd, San Diego, California 92101. Report Address is 2418 Edding Dr., Lemon Grove, California 92045.

PSRMA NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT * ATTEND WORK PARTIES ** CONTRIBUTE

WORK PARTIES ARE THURSDAY EVENINGS

4880 Beaumont Drive, La Mesa

NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF PSRMA

SUNDAY SEPT. 18 7:30 PM

PLEASE BRING

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?????

Notices of delinquent dues were sent out with a recent issue of the Report. Only one more reminder. After that the mailing of the Report will be discontinued to those still in arrears.

SORRY WE ARE LATE

Because of a mimeograph machine failure this issue of the Report is quite late. Your editor has been busy and very much on the move. The Report's new mailing address is: 2418 Edding Dr., Lemon Grove, California 92045.

NEXT MONTH.....

A story on the movement of the locomotives from Victorville to Perris.....A bit of news from here and there.....Important club news.....Another page of the glossary.....
