

# Roundhouse Notes

Paducah Chapter  
National Railway Historical Society  
Feb 2015

*More Historic railroad stories*

*From the Paducah Sun*

*From February 201th 1901*

Conductor WM. Holloway of the Illinois Central dropped dead in his caboose at Boaz Station a few miles below Paducah at an early hour this morning.

He left Paducah at 12:05 last night in charge of the second section of freight train 191. He was not ill when he left but about a mile this side of Boaz station began complaining and when the train pulled into the side track at Boaz, Flagman Henry Cooley ran up to notify the engineer.

When they returned to the caboose Conductor Holloway had rolled off a trunk and lay on the floor dead. The body was brought to the city at 5 o'clock on a freight train and taken to Nance's undertaking establishment.

Conductor Holloway's train was taken out from Boaz by Conductor Readon, who left the city on the 4 o'clock train. The deceased was about 35 years old and leaves a wife and two children, a boy and a girl who were visiting in Memphis.

His home was in Roadhouse IL but he has been running as a freight conductor on this road for two or three years. Coroner Phelps will probably hold an Inquest just as a formality sometime today.

The remains will be shipped this evening at 6 o'clock to Roadhouse IL for burial

*From Feb 22 1901:*

IC EMPLOYE AT FULTON  
SHOT WITH A 44 CALIBRE  
PISTOL

It Is Supposed a Drunken Man Shouting Promiscuously Fired the Shot

Condition Serious

Mr. H.R. Robertson a night clerk in the Illinois Central freight house at Fulton was brought to the city last night on the "cannon ball" in a serious condition from a pistol wound in the right shoulder. He had started out of the depot at Fulton about 1030 o'clock last night when somebody, presumably a drunken man shooting at random in the dark fired in his direction and a 44 calibre bullet plowed its way entirely through his body striking him near the right shoulder and passing through his lungs. The wound was dressed there and he was brought to the city and taken to the railroad hospital, where his condition today is very serious. Ed Smith the restaurant keeper was arrested this morning charged with doing the shooting. Smith is a young man said to be something of a "bully" and it is alleged was drinking heavily yesterday and openly carrying his pistols about the streets. In the afternoon he was whipped by a man from the country and it is said that this enraged him and in wandering about he probably happened to meet Robertson and shot him. His trial is set for tomorrow at 10 o'clock. The name of the man whipped Smith is Hodgeville and it is not known whether Smith shot Robertson thinking he was

Hodgeville or not. This afternoon the wounded man is resting as well as well could be expected at the railroad hospital and if he survives thirty-six hours there will be hopes of his recovery. Messrs. D Gholson and M.O. Payne brought the injured man to Paducah.

*From March 26th 1901*

A rear end collision occurred on the Illinois Central near East Cairo, KY this morning at an early hour. According to reports No 4 the fast train, ran into the rear of No 86 a freight train and the passenger engine was turned over, and the caboose and several cars in the freight train wrecked. Engineer Walter Sheppard, of the city, and his fireman were buried beneath their engine, and for a time were believed to be lost. They were soon rescued however, neither seriously hurt but considerably bruised up. Engineer Sheppard was able to walk about immediately after being rescued. His many friends here will be pleased to learn of his escape, for his call was certainly a close one. Engineer Sheppard came in at noon today on the passenger train. He received a terrible blow in the forehead, his left hand is cut and bruised and his left arm badly wrenched. His escape was most miraculous. The second section of 86 was waiting to cross the Cairo bridge when Engineer Sheppard approached on No 4, the fast train en route to Cairo. The flagman of the freight train was not far enough behind the train and Engineer Sheppard could not stop. He saw he was going to hit the caboose but there was no way to get out of the engine. He was forced to brace himself for the shock, penned up in the cab with no hope of escape. A.H. Williamson of Memphis his fireman jumped off a twenty foot trestle where the trains came together, but was not badly hurt. Engineer Sheppard was pinned for some time beneath his engine and could not be found, he was taken through a hole about a foot square.

# NEWS AND VIEWS

*Bob Johnston*

**SYMPATHY:** Sympathy of the club is extended to member Ann Johnston on the death of her daughter, Suzanne Rosborough, in Jackson, TN, on February 2<sup>nd</sup>,

**P & L:** P&L office car Bluegrass I, was in Frankfort on February 10<sup>th</sup> for the annual railroad reception for the Kentucky legislators. Other participants were CSX, NS, and R. J. Corman. In addition to BG I, RJC furnished their office/reception car, plus two cars from their dinner train. BG I and its power car went to Louisville over the week-end and after being placed in the CSX yard was picked up by R. J. Corman for the trip to Lexington and then, Frankfort. As usual, John Deming was one of the hosts, The P&L cars returned on Sunday night, the 15<sup>th</sup>.....On January 7, in a speech at the Rotary Club of Paducah, Paducah Port Authority manager, Ken Cantor, in the context of discussing their new crane, said that P&L Railway had agreed to support an application by the Port Authority to apply for Foreign Trade Zone status, which if attained, would be a boon for the railroad and all western Kentucky.

**1518 DISPLAY:** As this is being written, news media has been publishing reports that the city plans to dispose of the baggage combine and the transfer caboose in order to avoid cost of renovating them and also to make more

room for murals. The Rotary Club of Paducah has already announced plans to use one flood-wall panel. The city has sent out requests for proposals for cosmetically restoring the locomotive. Apparently roof protection is not included in the present plan. How this will be received by the public is yet to be determined

**CN :** On February 2-4, the CN R.R. held safety meetings in the Myre Room at the Carson Four Rivers Center.....The railroad has recently opened a shop for MOW and Signals in the former Shell Piping Building on Coleman Road, next to Maxon District tracks. It replaces the previous location on Noble Road and provides more room for trucks and equipment.

**I.C.H.S. PADUCAH MEETING:** The Board of Directors for the Illinois Central Historical Society held their regular mid-winter meeting in our museum's meeting room on Saturday February 7<sup>th</sup>. Routine business was transacted.

**NEW RESTAURANT IN FREIGHT HOUSE:** I talked today with Sara Bradley, who grew up in Paducah, and has worked in restaurants all over the country. She has leased about half of the space left in the south end of the Commerce Center building; and plans to open a "southern food," restaurant there, featuring local products. She is interested in the history and artifacts from

the freight house and neighborhood. Renovation work has begun, but target date is not known yet.

**METROPOLIS BRIDGE:** At the time of this writing, there is a stir in the rail fan community over a line in the BNSF multi-million dollar capital funds expenditure report that mentions Replacing a bridge in Metropolis, IL. Some assume this to be the Ohio River bridge, but this writer is inclined to believe they mean one of the rail bridges over roads leading into Metropolis, as I believe such a major project as replacing the P&I bridge would merit more than one line, and would obviously involve the CN which is a major user, not to mention P&L, which is also an owner. We are trying to get more info.

**JACKSON, TN RAIL:** One a recent trip to Jackson, I visited the N.C. & St. L. Museum which is in the old passenger depot, and is owned and operated by the city of Jackson. As many of our members who have visited it know, it is a very fine museum, but not much changed from the last time I saw it. It is located on live track with rail cars displayed on site. I also drove through Iselin Yard, formerly G.M. & O., and now the West Tennessee R.R., which operates from Corinth, MS to Kenton, TN. A few years ago there were big plans to make this line part of the Norfolk Southern

Corridor from central Illinois over CN trackage to Fulton, and then West Tenn, but they never materialized. The day I was there, the yard was full of covered hoppers and tankers, some possibly being stored. There were also at least 10 or more locomotives, mostly GE four axle models. Pat McDurmon reports that a lot of work is being done on tankers at a facility of the Ken-Tenn at Paris, and also that unit grain trains are being run from Corinth to elevators in Kenton (just south of Union City).

### NTSB REPORT ON MO.

#### WRECK:

On January 25<sup>th</sup> the NTSB announced findings on the May 2013 wreck near Chaffee, MO (just south of Cape Girardeau). At an interlocking, a UP freight T-boned a BNSF train, (which was already moving across the diamond), under a Missouri highway bridge, collapsing the bridge which had cars on it, and causing several injuries, none fatal. The report confirmed what always seemed obvious. The UP conductor and engineer were inattentive and sleep deprived and disregarded approach and stop signals. The conductor said he was doing “paper work, when the train passed the approach signal, then looked up, saw the red signal and put the train into emergency, but too late. The engineer claimed to remember calling signals, but had no recollection of the wreck, and thought he had a blackout. The event recorder showed that the horn had been blown erratically in the period before the wreck but had NOT been blown for a grade crossing. Obviously, if either crew member had been alert they

would not have gone through an approach signal and into a red block without reducing speed. The report found their “performance may have been compromised by fatigue as a result of working erratic schedules in the days preceding the accident.” (The writer, along with member Allan Rhodes, Jr., and our neighbor, Richard Glasscock, visited the wreck site the next day and heard the “on site,” preliminary NTSB report. The official said, of course, that they were only gathering information at that time).

#### PADUCAHAN’S SUCCESS:

On January 27<sup>th</sup>, short line holding company, Iowa Pacific Holdings, announced record breaking revenue, carloads, and passengers in 2014, with revenue over \$ 80 million. The company runs both freight and tourist train operations in many states, and paints most of its passenger cars and locomotives in Illinois Central chocolate and orange. Ed Ellis, the President, CEO, and principal owner, began his railroad career as a brakeman for the I.C. in Paducah. There are reports that Iowa Pacific is negotiating to acquire the former I.C. Granada District from Memphis to Canton, MS. This is the former I.C. main line for passenger trains on which Casey Jones had his famous wreck at Vaughn, MS. There are further reports that if the deal is consummated, they plan to have steam powered passenger excursion service and may be looking for a restorable steam engine, including Paducah’s 1518.

**C.B. & Q. 4960:** The Grand Canyon Railroad runs over the

old Santa Fe from Williams, AZ to the canyon. Originally they used only steam, but a few years ago switched to diesel with steam on limited basis. The recently announced 2015 schedule shows that former C.B. & Q. Mikado 4960 will make at least 10 trips. The locomotive which now burns waste vegetable oil for fuel and reclaimed snow melt and rain water for the boiler, pulled an excursion train from Paducah to Metropolis and return in the early 1960’s, on which the writer and his family rode. Tickets were purchased in the freight house, now the Commerce Center.

**MUSEUM:** Amy has been rearranging displays and exhibits, and adding and returning new ones. Glen is making progress on the new “O” gauge. We have to start making progress on preparing for “Little Obie,” which is scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup>. Please put it on your calendar now, as we will need a lot of help.

## Roundhouse Notes



Published monthly by the Paducah Chapter, National Railway Historical Society. *Send your news, photos to:*

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*Little Obie makes his return to The Museum March 14th*

**Meeting  
Tuesday-  
March 10th  
7PM  
At the Museum  
Meeting Room.**

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