

LONG FORM (for historical record) Entertainment Report for July 11, 2015

July 11, 2015. Southern & Mid-Atlantic Trolley Videos. Donald Nevin presented two videos, from Mark I Videos and Herron Rail Videos, featuring trolley and interurban operations in diverse cities and towns, including some interurban freight. The first of these started out with the Atlantic City and Shore Railroad interurban line (the "Shore Fast Line") in New Jersey before World War II, followed by views of this line in the late 1940s (it closed in 1948), with much of the latter footage being from a railfan event, which gave us views of some work equipment and some yard photos.

Next stop was Washington DC and its suburbs in the 1950s, featuring both PCCs and older streetcars in service when the system still had operation both under overhead wire (in the suburbs) and over conduit (in the city). We got to see some interesting photos including conduit centered between the rails in the city, a view into the plough pit (and the gymnastics required for the attendant to change the conduit plough out from under a car going into the suburbs and raise the pole, or the reverse for a car going in the other direction), and a signal tower integrated into the second floor of a building used for other purposes. This footage also included both GM New Look "Fishbowl" buses and older buses, along with a view views taken from inside PCCs. After streetcars, we saw the Washington & Old Dominion electric interurban operation, including freight. This featured much running through suburban rural areas in Virginia, as well as street running in small towns. This railroad discontinued passenger service in 1941 but soon temporarily resumed passenger service during World War II using gas-electric railcars and diesel-hauled coaches; passenger and mail service ended in 1951, and freight operation ended in 1968.

Next, we saw the Piedmont and Northern Railroad's North Carolina division electric interurban service in the 1940s, mostly featuring electric multiple unit interurban passenger trains (including some with apparent baggage/mail compartments), but also including electric locomotives. More on this system later, for we got to see a more extensive view of it in the second video.

Back in Virginia, we saw one of several of Virginia Transit Company's operations, the Richmond Division, in the 1940s. This also featured electric interurban passenger service in the 1940s; some of it consisting of 2 axle Birney cars. Next we saw another of their operations, Lynchburg Transit, providing service in hilly Lynchburg, VA, with streetcars having to climb impressive slopes using only electric power and steel wheel on steel rail adhesion. After this, we saw the Roanoke Railway & Electric Company service. At this point we had to end playback of this video due to increasingly severe DVD playback problems.

The second DVD was by Herron Rail Video (produced in 1995), *Trolleys in the South* (originally produced in two parts, but consolidated into a single DVD). Part 1 of this DVD started in Louisville, Kentucky, showing Louisville Railway Company (originally Louisville City Railway in horsecar and mulecar days) on the last day of service in 1940 on the line running along Bardstown Road, using cars of similar styling to Boston Elevated Railway Type 5s, but single-ended and single-sided, requiring turnarounds. Service was shut down allegedly due to Pennsylvania Railroad overpass construction, only 5 years after extension of the line. The only PCC operation in Louisville was a demonstrator unit that offered free service (which we also got to see) on the last day of service on this line, although as noted below, service continued on some of the other lines for a few more years. We got to see one of two preserved mule cars from the Nineteenth Century and some preserved streetcars dating from 1902. Louisville did have in regular service some Brilliners of appearance similar to PCCs. Louisville also had some cars that pulled center entrance trailers, which differed from Boston's Center Entrance cars by having two separate doors near the centers. Louisville also had Birney cars. We got to see service on lines other than Bardstown during World War II, with 3 lines persisting to 1946, with much of the footage coming from a fantrip, including a trip on officially out of service but still usable track, and a trip into the old interurban car barn. This brought up the note that Louisville's streetcars used 5' gauge.

The last of Louisville streetcar service was in 1947 (note that the associated Wikipedia article claims that the end of streetcar service was in 1948). We also got to see the Nashville-Franklin Interurban Railway service that extended to Louisville, using cars built in 1929. The cars of this system were built for other cities, sold to this line, and then sold to other cities when the line folded in 1941.

The next stop was Birmingham, Alabama, where we got to see the Birmingham Railway and Electric Company (later Birmingham Electric Company), featuring an assortment of different car types, providing service up to 1953. This system considered the streetcars to be for express service, with buses providing local service. In 1947, the system received 47 vintage Pullman Standard PCCs (built at the Osgood-Bradley plant in Worcester, Massachusetts); these were sold to Toronto, which later sold them to Philadelphia.

In the penultimate section of Part 1, we saw the Miami Beach Railway in the last year of operation (1939), using Perley-Thomas cars (resembling those of New Orleans), which later went to Porto Alegre, Brazil, where they operated into the early 1960s. Miami Transit streetcar service, which we saw next, shut down in 1941. This featured single track street running operation with very short passing sidings. Some of the service used two-axle Brill cars made in 1925. This section ended with footage from the early Twentieth Century of open cars pulling closed car trailers (both apparently converted from horsecars) in Melbourne, Australia ("way down south").

Part 2 of the same video started with interurban service (both streetcar and freight) on the Monongahela and West Penn Public Service Company lines in Parkersburg-Marietta-Vienna, West Virginia-Ohio area (Marietta being just north of the Ohio River and the rest being in West Virginia). We saw equipment including a home-built electric boxcab locomotive that demonstrated its ability to move fairly long trains. We got to see service over a toll bridge (over a smaller river than the Ohio) used by both interurban and automobile traffic. Service persisted through World War II and for a short while afterwards. Cars on this system were built in batches in 1902 and the 1920s. After this, we saw the City Lines of West Virginia (part of the same company) on a fantrip in 1947. Although these were named city line, they featured not only street running on steep hilly streets, but also interurban-style operation over high trestles in mountainous rural terrain, using interurban parlor cars built in the 1920s.

Next, we saw the Piedmont and Northern Railroad's North Carolina division (the company also had a disconnected South Carolina Division). Equipment included electric boxcab locomotives equipped with both trolley poles (as originally installed) and pantographs (installed in 1935); some of the locomotives were of size similar to modern diesel locomotives, but we also saw a large boxcab locomotive of 8 axles mounted on 4 bogies, in turn mounted on 2 frames, giving this locomotive better flexibility to negotiate sharp curves than standard diesel locomotives, while being easier on the rails and providing superior tractive effort. Thus, the system partially dieselized in 1951, but maintained some electric operation until 1958 due to continued need to run through sharp curves.

Next stop was Richmond, Virginia, with two-axle Birney cars as well as larger types (including at least one ex-Eastern Mass car) in street-running city service and private right-of-way suburban service. This included a yard photo, showing a good fraction of the fleet. The fleet included some center entrance cars, which were later cut into pieces for use as offices (presumably for dispatching) at the bus garages. Another yard photo showed lines of retired two-axle Birney cars awaiting scrapping, with interurban cars continuing to provide service in the foreground. Some two-axle Birney cars did offer interurban/suburban service in semi-rural terrain, including an impressively high viaduct. Next we saw Norfolk, Virginia, with service operated by Virginia Public Service Company (formerly Virginia Electric and Power Company, and before that Virginia Railway & Power Company, and now Dominion Resources). This system was expanded during World War II, but converted to buses only a few years later. It also featured interurban as well as streetcar service. Note that the Norfolk streetcars used 5' 2" track gauge. We also saw some Norfolk Southern internal combustion railcars used for interurban service. After this, we saw

Newport News streetcars, first in service, and then discarded (it is unclear whether they were later scrapped, or simply left derelict after the footage was taken).

As bonus footage at the end of the DVD, we saw retired streetcars converted into diners and the occasional office in the 1940s.

SHORT FORM (for Annual Report) Entertainment Report for July 11, 2015

July 11, 2015. Southern & Mid-Atlantic Trolley Videos. Donald Nevin presented two videos, from Mark I Videos and Herron Rail Videos, featuring trolley and interurban operations in diverse cities and towns, including some interurban freight. The focus was mainly on the South of the United States, but we also saw some Mid-Atlantic systems, and some bonus footage from Melbourne, Australia.

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