

MOVING THE THREE SPOT

by William Wootton

Word was received the last week in July from Terry Durkin that Mojave Northern engine No. 3 would be shipped from Victorville on Saturday, July 30. A few days later it was learned that the California Southern Museum had acquired MNR No. 2, and that both engines would be shipped together.

Dwight Couch, Bill Wootton, Walt Hayward, plus Dick Pennick, his wife and younger brother left for Victorville Friday night. After getting lost on the freeway in Riverside and taking care of a flat on Dwight's car all arrived safely in Victorville.

Both engines had been switched out the night before. By the time we arrived at the station, the consist of the local train for San Bernardino was complete. The steam engines were at the rear of the train, with two box cars between them and the caboose. On hand to greet us was Bill Garner, a CSRM member, and the engine messenger on No. 2.

After waiting for several trains, the local left Victorville at 7:47 a.m. On the head end were engines 817, 935, 1391 and 1356. The movement was restricted to 15 mph. Walt and Dick's brother acted as engine messengers on No. 3 while the rest of us roared down side roads, keeping up with the train and shooting photos at every possible location. At several of the crossings the conductor blew the air whistle on the caboose.

Terry Durkin, Kent Anderson, and Jeff Melquist caught up with the caravan half way between Hesperia and Summit. We were a little concerned that the driving boxes on the locomotives might overheat, but no signs to that effect appeared. The train passed through Summit at about 9:30. After a slow trip down Cajon Pass, the train went in the hole to clear the main. About noon we finally drove up to the San Bernardino station in time to see the train entering the yards. This, we thought, was the end for today.

Shortly after we arrived it was learned that the Santa Fe had decided not to store the engines in San Berdoo. Both we scheduled to leave for Perris the same afternoon. A hurried call was made to Perris to warn the Orange Empire Trolley Museum of our arrival. Then all travelled to a nearby restaurant for some badly needed lunch. We then went to "B" yard where the train was being made up for Perris.

The engines were again underway at 4 p.m. Slowly but surely the first train carrying steam engines to Perris in over fifteen years rolled along. Earlier in the day the first section had completed all of the local switching. Our train was made up completely of reefers destined to valley potato packing sheds. One stop was made at Val Verde to set out empties. The train and our engine finally arrived at the Perris station around 6:30 p.m. At that point some very tired engine watchers -namely us- headed for home. Both engines were switched to the south end of track sometime after 8:30 and there they stayed until the next Saturday, August 6.

The next Saturday, PSRMA, CSRM and OET members began the work of moving the engines via "snap-track" sections to the museum. Most of Saturday was taken up in moving the engines up a grade and around a slight curve onto the old right of way. Only one derailment marred Saturday's work.

The next day, the engines were moved to the end of the OET trackage. Shortly before midnight, an electric locomotive coupled on to the engines and moved them the remaining half-mile to the museum. Both engines now stand on the right of way, ready for the work crews to put them back into operation. Any volunteers?

The PSRMA and CSRM are indebted to the Orange Empire Trolley Museum for the assistance which they provided. A majority of the people who worked on the moving project were OET members. To them and those PSRMA members who helped out--a hearty thanks.

REPORT

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