

The next meeting of the Southwest Chapter will be at Avila's Restaurant, 6232 N. Mesa, El Paso t 6 pm. Visitors welcome.

Special points of interest:

- 1910 Tukumcari
- SP 3806
- Bayard derail
- Chapter News

1910 Incident at Tukumcari

By Vernon Glover



From the Vernon Glover Collection

Only by chance did some detailed news reports and a few photographs come to our attention on this particular event that took place near Tukumcari in early 1910. Here is the story.

[The Tukumcari News and Tukumcari Times -- Saturday, January 15, 1910 (Vol 8, No 15) Page 1, Column 6]

"POLLY BLEW UP AT CABEZA -- Engineer Elkins Fatally Injured and Fireman Osborne Seriously Hurt. -- MEN SENT TO HOSPITAL

This morning at ten o'clock the boiler of the "Polly," the train that leaves Tukumcari at 9:20, on the Dawson road, exploded at Cabeza and Engineer Elkins and Fireman W. D. Osborne were injured. As soon as the news reached the city, the hospital car with surgeon was sent to the scene of the disaster. Train number one which reached here at 11:30, was held until the injured men were brought in and they were sent to the hospital at Alamogordo.'

Both men were conscious when they reached Tukumcari, and Osborne stated to the physician that he was not suffering much pain. Elkins is burned about the head and in several places on his body. His wife was notified of the accident and met the train here and accompanied her husband to Alamogordo. None of the passengers on the train were injured. The engineer and fireman both live here and are both well known citizens.

"Jimmy" Elkins, as he is called, is one of the most popular men on the road, and when the train bearing him came in to the depot this morning, you could hear a hundred persons asking "how is jimmy" "is he badly hurt" "[how] is Jimmy Elkins" "yes, I know Jimmy" and like expressions, sharing the esteem in which he is held by all [citizens]."

 [The Tucumcari News and Tucumcari Times -- Saturday, January 22, 1910 (Vol 8, No 16) Page 1, Column 1]

James C. Elkins Laid to Rest Last Monday -- Funeral Attended By Nearly Every Citizen. All Businesses Closed.

Five days after engineer Elkins was laid to rest, the Tucumcari News of Saturday, January 22, 1910, devoted two columns on its front page to the details of his life and times. James Elkins, born on June 26, 1876, in Texas, was one of five children. As a young man he came to New Mexico, where his first job was as a stage driver between Cerrillos and San Pedro. [The former was a stop on the Santa Fe main line serving a mining district and the latter was a copper camp on the south side of the Ortiz Mountains.] He soon came to work for the Santa Fe Railway at Waldo, New Mexico, the junction serving the Madrid coal mines. In May, 1902, he came to work at Alamogordo for the expanding El Paso & Northeastern line. In 1907, he moved to Tucumcari where the new owners of the road, called the El Paso & Southwestern, were expanding the Tucumcari Terminal to handle the ever-increasing coal and coke output of the Dawson mines. At the time of his death he was making his second run on the Dawson line between Tucumcari and Dawson, some 132 miles.

Elkins married Della Dosier in 1896, and at the time of his passing the couple had four children. The Times gave some further details as well. He owned two "nice" houses in Tucumcari. He made provision for his family with three life or accident insurance policies totaling \$4,500. He was well known about town and most of its citizens turned out for his funeral.

Curiously, the paper was silent about fireman Osborne. In the style of the times, however, the paper also printed some information on the operations of the Dawson branch of the EP&SW.

[The Tucumcari News and Tucumcari Times -- Saturday, January 22, 1910 (Vol 8, No 16) Page 1, Column 2]

"CARS DITCHED ON THE DAWSON" - When the accident occurred on the Dawson last Saturday fifteen miles from Tucumcari there was a temporary track put down, and there has been some trouble handling the cars over the new track. On Wednesday, engine No. 156 ditched several cars, and engine No. 151 ditched three cars. On Thursday engine No. 157 ditched three cars. In a short time the track will be repaired and the trouble will be overcome."

The three locomotives noted were all from a group of ten built in 1902 and 1903 for the El Paso & Northeastern companies. They were main line freight engines of 91 tons weight. Under SP ownership, the group became known as the C-18 class, numbers 3400-3409.



Photo from the Vernon Glover Collection



SP 3806 at El Paso on 11-9-52, photo by D.S. Richter from the collection of Gordon Bassett. Built by Lima in 1939; between 1939 and 1952, all the twelve AC-9 engines were in service between Tucumcari, NM, El Paso, TX and Tucson, AZ, where they mainly pulled freight trains and occasionally also passenger trains. In 1952, they were converted to burn oil instead of coal, and moved to California in freight service until retired in 1956. In the photo, the Franklin Mountains are in the background above the pilot, barely visible.

Derailment at Bayard, NM on the Southwestern Railroad



Dec. 1, 2013: SILVER CITY - New Mexico State Police released the names and ages of the three people killed in the train derailment that occurred Saturday afternoon, three miles from Bayard. Law enforcement previously reported that all three victims were men, however, one of the victims was a woman, Ann Thompson, 50, originally from Paulden, Ariz. The other two victims were Donald White, 38, of Silver City, and Steven Crose, 60, also of Paulden, Ariz.

A locomotive for Southwestern Railroad was pulling eight cars south to Santa Rita carrying Magnetite, a form of iron that is not hazardous, when it derailed around noon Saturday and fell 40 to 50 feet into an arroyo off State Highway 356 at mile marker three. The eight supply cars continued to run along the track until they reached a curve in the tracks and then derailed. The accident occurred on Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold property near the Chino Mine. The cause of the accident is still unknown. The Federal Railroad Administration will investigate the cause of the accident.

Crose and White both worked for the railroad. Thompson was Crose's girlfriend, said Wanda Shepard, Crose's cousin. It is also unknown why Thompson was inside the locomotive at the time of the crash as she did not work for Southwestern Railroad, Shepard said. Both Thompson and Crose had recently moved to the Hurley area just three weeks ago for Crose's job.



Ed. Note: These are ex-Santa Fe lines connecting with the UP at Deming and the BNSF at Rincon, NM.



Southwest Chapter
Railway & Locomotive Historical Society

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DECEMBER MEETING:

The Christmas meeting of the Southwest Chapter was held at the historic 1910 AT&SF Depot / Las Cruces Railroad Museum on December 11. Of the 21 people present were several wives of members and five members of the Harvey Girls of El Paso. Ron Dawson newsletter editor, deserved an award for driving in from Tucson. Lynn and Ric Brightman arranged for a great meal of Italian food in the Scale Room of the Depot Freight Section.

Special guest of the Chapter was Garland Coats, the Museum Director who arranged for the use of the Museum and gave tours of the station. He described the museum programs then Santa and Mrs. Clause arrived with sweet stocking stuffers and words of advise for all.

MEMBERSHIP: Please send in your renewal to the national office. You can go online to pay or request a paper copy to mail back. The membership in the Southwest Chapter is handled there. The R&LHS is the oldest organization in the U S devoted to rail history and technology.

JANUARY MEETING: The meeting will be back at Avila's Restaurant on N. Mesa at 6 pm. Please come and bring a friend or spouse. We need to have a minimum of 15 present to be able to use their meeting room. The program will be on the history of the Texas & Pacific Railroad that crossed North Texas from Texarkana and arrived in El Paso on December 26, 1881. Prince McKenzie will present the program. His ancestor helped to build that line.

MUSEUM NEWS: The Railroad & Transportation Museum of El Paso is still closed to the public during the reorganization process. The staff is planning a move from the historic 1912 Texas & Pacific Depot of El Paso this month. If you are interested in seeing the interior of that historic station, or helping with the move, please contact Prince McKenzie at: (915) 240-8384. Members of the Museum please renew their membership or join to help.

Museum's Website is: www.elpasorails.org