

The 2008 “S” Spree Car, the CH&D Boxcar

Selecting an appropriate prototype for a Spree car is a difficult task. In addition to finding a nice looking car with a broad appeal, we have always tried to find a car with local tie to Southwest Ohio. In 1999 we brought you the Army flatcar with its crate load from Roswell to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. In 2002 it was the refrigerator car from Kahn's, a local company. In 2005 we presented the Ivory Soap boxcar from Procter & Gamble, a Cincinnati company. Note that in all three cases our local tie was to a company that shipped or received by railroad.

This year our tie is to a local railroad, the Cincinnati, Hamilton & Dayton Railway. I have found several references on the web to the fact that traveling hoboes referred to the CH&D as “Cold, Hungry, and Damp,” but our car is fresh from the shops sporting a beautiful bright red paint job. A forty foot, double sheathed boxcar, it dates from around 1917, and would be found in service long after that. To help you appreciate the role the CH&D played, eventually becoming part of the B&O, the following is a brief history of the railroad.

A Brief History of the CH&D, compliments of Wendell McChord

1846

The Cincinnati, Hamilton, & Dayton Railroad Company started life as the Cincinnati & Hamilton Railroad Company in 1846.

1847

The name was changed to the Cincinnati, Hamilton & Dayton Railroad Company in 1847.

1851

Regular service began between Cincinnati and Dayton in 1851. The original Cincinnati depot was located at W. Fifth and Baymiller. It was known as the Hathaway Depot or Sixth Street Depot. At the Dayton end the company rented a house for the depot until a more suitable station could be built. Several companies were building in and out of Dayton at the time and a Union Station was planned in 1852 to handle all the roads. The Dayton depot was called the Phillips Depot and was a two story brick on the northeast corner of 6th and Jefferson facing Jefferson Street. The distance between the two stations was 59.8 miles. All the railroads at Dayton originally crossed the Great Miami River on a double track covered bridge. The Dayton & Michigan Railroad Co. was chartered in 1851 to build to Toledo.

1853

Traffic opened between Dayton and Troy.

1854

Traffic was opened to Piqua.

1856

Traffic was opened to Sidney.

1858

Traffic was opened to Lima.

1859

Traffic was opened to Toledo.

1863

The Dayton & Michigan was leased to the CH&D.

1864

The Atlantic & Great Western (later the Erie) was finished into Dayton from Marion, Ohio. It was a broad gauge (6-foot gauge) that connected Dayton with New York City at Jersey City. It was part of a grand scheme to build to Cincinnati and connect with the Ohio & Mississippi, a broad gauge that connected at the Mississippi at East St. Louis. This would connect New York City with the Mississippi River by a broad gauge. The company was low on funds and could not finish the link between Dayton and Cincinnati by building their own road. Instead they obtained trackage rights from the CH&D. What existed between Dayton and Cincinnati for a number of years was a rather unusual dual gauge. The A&GW laid outside rails on the CH&D and that created a double four-rail track between Dayton and Cincinnati.

1895

The CH&D Railroad came out of receivership as the CH&D Railway Company.

1908

The B&O began operating the CH&D.

1917

The B&O purchased the CH&D.

1944

The former Dayton & Michigan, now the Toledo & Cincinnati, was deeded to the B&O.