

# A Branchline Comes of Age

## Part One

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Each summer since the end of the Civil War, long-horned, long-legged cattle had traveled north from the thicketed pastures of Texas. At such fabled Kansas locations as Newton, Wichita, and Dodge City, the rangy beasts had climbed aboard trains of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Rail Road. Profits had boarded with them.

In 1884, the Santa Fe faced the prospect of losing the Texas cattle business. New farms and fences made it difficult for the herds to exit the south Texas ranges. Kansas was even more farm- and fence-ridden than Texas, particularly since western Kansas had begun receiving heavy rains a couple of years before. Domestic stock on the farms raised the problem of splenic fever. This tick - borne disease did not bother the longhorns that brought it up the trails, but few other breeds of livestock could withstand it. Most of Kansas had already banned Texas cattle, and legislation pended to quarantine the entire state. Infected cattle could still ride trains, but the disease was such a danger that railroad management was considering a ban of its own.

Railroad eyes turned towards the Panhandle of Texas, where fences were few and ticks fewer. Here the standard cow was the fat Hereford. Thousands of them had been imported by the firm of Finch, Lord and Nelson, livestock merchants of Burlingame, Kansas.

On July 4, 1884, the Santa Fe-affiliated Southern Kansas Railway gained permission to build two routes across Indian Territory. One route was bound for central Texas while the second looked towards the Panhandle. The western route was specified as heading southwestward from Kiowa, Kansas, to "Fort" Supply and along Wolf Creek to Texas. The right of way was to be 100 feet wide and the railroad would compensate the Indians for the land. Tariffs were to be the same as in Kansas.

The route was not unknown to the Santa Fe. Lewis Kingman had crossed the Panhandle in 1878. Four years later, a man named Baldwin surveyed eastward from Las Vegas, New Mexico. Other surveys had been made by the Santa Fe's partner in transcontinental enterprise, the Frisco. Now in charge of the Santa Fe's construction program in the Midwest, Kingman dispatched W. A. Drake from Kiowa.

Drake's survey missed "Fort" Supply and traversed the divide between Wolf Creek and the Canadian River, ending near present Canadian, Texas.

Railroad builder Grenville M. Dodge watched the Santa Fe with concern. He had an interest in the Fort Worth and Denver City Railway, which planned to cut northwestward across the Panhandle.

Dodge approached Santa Fe officials with a proposition: namely that if the Southern Kansas company would build no further than the center of Carson County, Dodge would arrange for the FW&DC to form a through-line junction at that point. The Santa Fe agreed, but no paper contract was made.

The Frisco was then pushing its line towards the Panhandle and New Mexico. Dodge is believed to have made a similar agreement with the Frisco for a junction at not yet existent Carson City.

It appears that when this junction was agreed upon, the railroads knew little about the place. It was not known that the FW&DC would encounter construction problems in the breaks of the Salt Fork of the Red River and would have to pass fifteen miles southwest of the agreed junction. Nor was it known that water was not available there.

In 1886, Santa Fe surveyor Phillip Smith examined a variety of lines across Texas and New Mexico. His principal line lead southwestward from Kiowa to Roswell, New Mexico. From there, Smith's examinations radiated outwards, taking him into the White Oaks mining district, down to El Paso, and through desert mountain passes -- including Abo -- to connect with the Santa Fe's main line.

Considering the land in the north superior, Smith advocated that the Englewood branch in Kansas be extended southwestward to connect with his surveys in New Mexico. The line to Carson City, he thought, should remain a branch.

Smith crossed and re-crossed the Panhandle for two more years. Many of his suggested lines would be built, but not the Englewood extension.

Construction towards Carson City began in 1886, and on April 16, 1887, the line southwest of Kiowa saw its first revenue freight: horses for Camp Supply.

The railroad established sidings and telegraph offices along its line but since the Indian Territory was not open to settlement, no towns were built. The tiny depots were mainly for operating purposes, although they did provide handy places to load cattle.

Beyond the Texas line, state law required that a local company had to own the tracks. Therefore, a new company, the Southern Kansas Railway Company of Texas, was chartered in Austin on November 2, 1886.

The charter described the expected route from the state line in Lipscomb County to the junction in Carson County, but this was the third route listed. The second line ran from the junction to the New Mexico border in Parmer County. "Line No. 1" ran northwestward from Fort Worth to the junction and beyond to the state line in Oldham County. This was a description of the projected and partially constructed line of the Fort Worth and Denver City Railway.

The obvious inference of the charter was that the Santa Fe desired to absorb the FW&DC. This speculation is supported by the Santa Fe's activities in Colorado at that time.

The FW&DC was part of a plan to connect the Rocky Mountains and the Gulf of Mexico by rail. The Denver, Texas and Gulf Railroad was to construct the northern part of the line, but it was a weak company. Early in 1887, the Santa Fe, desiring a line into Denver, offered to buy the DT&G.

Losing its northern partner would have left the FW&DC as only a local line, so Grenville Dodge quickly arranged finances for the completion of the Gulf to Rockies system. This saved the DT&G and possibly the FW&DC from being swallowed by the Santa Fe.

Texas was definitely open to settlement, but the railroad decided not to promote towns itself. The Santa Fe had many development projects underway in Kansas and did not want a conflict of interest. Therefore, right of way agent E. B. Purcell of Manhattan, Kansas, assumed the task of developing towns along the Southern Kansas. He subcontracted the Panhandle to Finch, Lord and Nelson, the same firm that had populated the area with Hereford cattle.

A great amount of speculation was involved in town promotion along the line. In April of 1886, E. C. Gray and George Patton departed Harper, Kansas, bound for the Panhandle. Finding railroad survey stakes next to the state line, they filed on adjacent sections in hope that they would profit from sale of a town site. Purcell platted Higgins on Gray's land during the summer of 1887, and Gray split his take with Patton as earlier agreed.

Sam Pollard was not so lucky. Railroad workers camped at a spring on Pollard's property, not far north of the Canadian River. One railroad man commented that the place was no better than an Indiana hog pen and the name "Hogtown" became popular. Since here was good water, and settlers were already stringing out along Clear Creek, the town site agents made Pollard an offer. Pollard was expected to donate the land and accept half of it back after it had been surveyed into lots. Pollard would not agree. He wanted cash for the entire site. He did not get it. A site was purchased on the south side of the Canadian from, oddly enough, the City of Manhattan, Kansas, Purcell's hometown.

The first train across the Canadian into the town of the same name was powered by locomotive #299, a consolidation-type not yet a decade from the erecting floor at Baldwin Locomotive Works. An engine originally assigned to the mountains of New Mexico might have seemed out of place on the plains, but it was not. Across Indian Territory, the SK

crossed several river valleys. The resulting long grades of 1% and frequent 6 degree curves were more than an American-type could reasonably handle. A consolidation engine was more than adequate for the conditions, but 299 was a fairly light engine of its type. It was better suited to the plains than to its old stamping grounds along the Rio Grande.

Engine 299 was to be busy, for on the plains beyond Canadian milled and lowed 8,000 head of cattle gathered by the Bar-C for shipment. Such gatherings prior to the railroad's opening for business were common. The Santa Fe learned to ship construction materials to railhead in stock cars, which carried a livelier cargo back.

Several miles up Red Deer Creek, Finch, Lord and Nelson did acquire the site of a construction camp. The first settlers named it "Miami," which was said to mean "Sweetheart" in an Indian dialect.

Where the Southern Kansas route emerged onto the plains, the railroad established Glasgow siding. The Kansans wished to build a town there, but the site was owned by the White Deer Land Company, which felt that the plains were not ready for settlement and which refused to develop Glasgow and Paton siding until the turn of the century. By that time, the sidings had taken the names "Pampa" and "White Deer" respectively.

Purcell purchased 30,000 acres, known as the Tyler Tap Lands, in Carson County and resold this land to Finch, Lord and Nelson. During the winter, they hired men to keep squatters away from the future site of Carson City. When the roadbed arrived in July of 1887, the Southern Kansas requested that the name be changed to "Panhandle City." The name painted on the depot when it was built in 1888 was "Panhandle." The following year, this was changed to "Panhandle," and that it has remained.

Rails had been in Canadian since summer, 1887, but the line had not been ready for regular operation. Finally, on September 12, the Operating Department of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Rail Road took over the 144.32 miles between Kiowa and Canadian. Another 22.24 miles to Miami was taken on November 15, and the final 50.20 miles began formal operation on January 15. The AT&SF was paid for construction with \$2,187,500 worth of SK of T securities. Trains #203-204, the Panhandle Express, began running from Kansas City and, a few months later, from Chicago. The train entered Texas at night. Citizens petitioned for a daylight schedule so prospective settlers could see the land.

Construction problems south of Panhandle and the need to build northwestward as quickly as possible caused the FW&DC to bypass the town. Company officials, however, felt that the verbal agreement with the Santa Fe should be honored. Therefore, a branch was planned from Washburn to Panhandle. The Panhandle Railway was formed on December 13, 1887, but construction had begun earlier. The fifteen mile line opened on April 26, 1888. A traffic agreement was made whereby all cattle and several other commodities bound for the northeast and loaded on the FW&DC between Quanah in Texas and Clayton in New Mexico would be delivered to the Santa Fe at Panhandle.

A bizarre traffic pattern soon developed. Cattle traveling aboard the Texas and Pacific Railroad and bound for the northeast could have been delivered to the Santa Fe at Fort Worth, but instead were switched onto the FW&DC for transport to Panhandle. This roundabout routing probably was due to Grenville Dodge's investments in both the T&P and the FW&DC.

The Panhandle gateway and attendant traffic agreements allowed the Santa Fe to dominate the cattle trade in a vast territory extending to the Rio Grande on the west and beyond the T&P on the south without building beyond Panhandle.

The Rock Island line, poised at Liberal, Kansas, obtained Congressional authority to build southwestward on March 2 1887, but lacked funds for the project. Had the Rock Island moved, the SK might have extended.

Another railroad not in the area was the Frisco. The Santa Fe's partner had bogged down just west of Tulsa, but surveys called for a junction with the SK at either Pampa or White Deer. The company would have used SK rails into Panhandle.

The railroad erected board-and-batten depots as needed. Higgins, Canadian, Miami, and possibly Panhandle received standard structures, the 24x80 foot structure at Miami being typical. Smaller stations received odd small depots of miscellaneous designs and origins. The basic depot at Paton (White Deer) was a frame structure of 12x16 dimension with two grounded box cars of 8x28 measurement for freight.

In 1898, the facilities at Pampa, a typical location, consisted of "a section house, station, two wells with steam pump(s) and a very large tank or reservoir for storing water.

Panhandle may have received a larger depot since the SK of T's corporate offices moved there from Fort Worth as of August 24, 1889. One source suggests that the office staff lived in the depot. A two-stall round house was built there. The stockyards were located two miles west of town and a special track was laid to them. After "fooling away over \$9,000," the railroad abandoned a 300-foot well and began hauling water from Miami.

As town builders, Finch, Lord and Nelson proved to be speculators. An observer commented that the towns were at a standstill. "The Managers and Agents still live in a tent, retail coal at a big profit, and sell water at thirty-five cents a barrel. They undertake no improvement, promote nothing of public utility and in no way show confidence in the town or country, and in every way show their purpose to skin the hide off of everything they can and leave the country. Their homes and families are in Kansas."

Farms were held off the market until other landholders had sold off their property. Then Finch, Lord and Nelson could sell their holdings at higher prices.

The town promoters became known as the "razoopers." O. H. Nelson eventually split with the firm, moved his family to Texas, and contributed greatly to the Panhandle's development during the remainder of his life.

Even with the "razoopers" in charge, population expanded enough to allow organization of Lipscomb and Hemphill counties in 1887, followed by Carson in 1888 and Roberts in 1889.

On December 10, 1890, the Santa Fe lines west of Wellington, Kansas, were separated from the Southern Division, becoming the Panhandle Division.

In 1891, the SK of T moved 73,310 tons of livestock and 5,718 paying passengers. Only one person was injured. Passenger revenues were \$8,389.40 and falling. Freight revenues were \$60,573.91 and rising. Employees totaled 67. Engineers made the top wages on the railroad: \$4.62 per day. All trainmen were employed and paid by the AT&SF, which billed the SK of T for the time these men worked in Texas.

Local folk were employed in various functions. Temple Houston's position of company attorney was described as a "plum." Judge J. C. Paul founded a bank at Panhandle in 1888 and became the SK of T's secretary and treasurer when the company's corporate offices moved there. "There is no big salary," he said, "nor very much honor about it, but I'll get free rides and additional business to pay me something." A number of people were employed for track maintenance as needed.

The Southern Kansas Railway of Texas had been built during a drought that the Santa Fe had thought would be brief. Also, there was a widespread belief that building railroads and plowing land caused favorable climactic changes. Phillip Smith had reported in 1886: "This is the most unseasonable year for the past eight years. Such being the case, it would appear reasonable to expect this to generally be a good agricultural country, especially when we assume the possible increase of rainfall with settlement and cultivation of the land, based on other sections of western country, which have been similarly circumstanced."

The drought did not lift and the company was losing money, year after year. So were most of the other lines the Santa Fe had built during the 1880's boom. The wet years early in the decade had given way to drought. Lewis Kingman was out of a job and the Santa Fe prepared to wait for better times.

The FW&DC felt the pinch as well and decided to sell the Pan-Handle Railway. During the summer of 1891, Santa Fe president Allen Manvel told the FW&DC's representative, G. T. Oliver, that the Santa Fe would lay no more rails in Texas. However, he suggested that Oliver purchase the line himself, extend it to Canyon, and obtain a new charter. Then the Santa Fe would lease the line for fifty years and guarantee the principal and interest on the company's bonds. Manvel's younger brother would participate in land promotion between Washburn and Canyon.

Oliver went to work and soon had a right of way and ten adjacent sections and a promised donation of half of the townsite of Washburn from that town's promotor. Santa Fe's B. F. Booker surveyed as far west as Fort Sumner, New Mexico. Then, the project fell apart when Baring Brothers, the financial house that had played a major role in Santa Fe affairs for years, collapsed.

The nation was entering a depression and on the Texas line it seemed as if everything was falling apart. Overgrazed pastures, drought, and falling prices were killing the cattle industry, which was the lifeblood of the SK of T. Track was allowed to deteriorate during most of the year, but it was reconditioned twice a year just before the spring and fall cattle shipping seasons. Some of the temporary help on track gangs were farmers unable to scratch a living from the parched soil. Dotting the plains were ruins of places where once people had lived. Some had returned east. Some, including Temple Houston, sought new fortunes in the Cherokee Strip on September 16, 1893. Full size depots replaced the old telegraph offices in Indian Territory, and Woodward won the railroad's shops. West of Woodward, the Panhandle Express became a mixed train.

When the mighty Santa Fe entered receivership on December 23, 1893, it seemed the crack of doom. However, operations continued normally while the Santa Fe endured reorganization. During 1894, the Southern Kansas of Texas moved 64,056 tons of livestock, which was 84.56% of the company's business. Merchandise accounted for 4%, grain was 3.43%, flour 1.07%, and 1238 tons of lumber amounted to 1.63%. A variety of other cargos each totaled a fraction of a percent. One hundred tons of agricultural implements was 0.13%, which was about one third of the alcohol traffic.

The company was still losing money. The separate status of the Panhandle Division was abolished on October 10, 1894, with absorption into the Southern Kansas Division. However, prospects had begun to brighten. On December 10, 1895, a new corporation, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, emerged from the bankruptcy of the AT&SF Rail Road. Down in Texas, rain had finally begun to fall. The handful of farmers who had remained began to grow some green. They had new neighbors and there was talk of new methods, new crops -- some way of making the sere plains bloom. The White Deer Land Company and others began to sell land and to build towns. As for the railroad to the Panhandle, the crisis had precipitated the next step in its growth.

A few hundred miles to the southwest, J. J. Hagerman surveyed the ruins of his Pecos Valley empire and planned for the future. His railroad had failed, he reasoned, because the line led southwards to the Texas and Pacific Railroad when the demand for fruit, the Valley's staple crop, was in the north. He had already built a wagon road to Amarillo; now the thing to do was to lay rails northeastward. Years before, Hagerman had sold another railroad to the Santa Fe, so he was personally familiar with the company and its managers. Also, in his employ at that time was Lewis Kingman. Making a Santa Fe connection would take money, so Hagerman set out to raise funds.

James Dun, formerly of the Saint Louis and San Francisco Railway, had become the Santa Fe's chief engineer. He had participated in the Frisco's decades-frustrated efforts to build a railroad to Albuquerque via a southern route. Dun saw the Panhandle line as part of such a route. He also saw Hagerman's project as a natural extension into New Mexico. He was also aware of the Rock Island preparing to extend its Liberal line to El Paso. Dun unearthed Phillip Smith's surveys and suggested that the Santa Fe should offer to help Hagerman.

## A Branchline Comes of Age

### Part Two

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(Text revised)

Late in the summer of 1897, president E. P. Ripley of the Santa Fe Railway received an inquiry from east coast financiers concerning a railroad project in eastern New Mexico. It seemed that once-powerful capitalist James John Hagerman had been soliciting funds to extend his Pecos Valley Railway. Hagerman had lost a fortune in the Pecos Valley and others were reluctant to follow his example. However, Hagerman's successful earlier career was something in his favor. Therefore, the money men directed questions towards Mr. Ripley. Some years before, the Santa Fe had purchased the Colorado Midland Railway from Mr. Hagerman. The purchase had later turned out to be a mistake, so Ripley may have hesitated to become involved. Nevertheless, he requested data from James Dun, his chief engineer. Dun reviewed Santa Fe survey reports in the area, finding that the Pecos River Valley had tempted the railroad for years. In 1878, the company's first charter in New Mexico had included a route southward from Las Vegas and along the Pecos to Texas. Other Santa Fe charters and surveys over the years had called for various lines into the valley. None were used, but interest had continued. In the mid-1880s, surveyor Phillip Smith had run several lines radiating from the Roswell area. The latest examination had been made in 1891 by B. F. Booker from the Santa Fe's railhead at Panhandle, Texas, to Fort Sumner in New Mexico. Dun also recalled surveys that had been made under his supervision while he had been employed by the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad. These had been for a planned railroad along the 35th parallel. The "Frisco" had not been able to build the line, but Dun had not forgotten the project. Hagerman's line appeared to be a step towards completion of the greater plan.

Dun's report to Ripley claimed that Hagerman's project was feasible. Ripley set to work, and in January of 1898, the Santa Fe, the Pullman Palace Car Company, and others agreed to back Hagerman.

Hagerman, who had experienced difficulty in paying his New York hotel bill, was overjoyed. The Pecos River Valley had been an oppressive weight for years.

The notion of irrigating the Pecos Valley had been conceived by retired lawman Pat Garrett, of Billy the Kid fame. Garrett enlisted other ranchers in the project but eventually left New Mexico. Charles B. Eddy assumed promotional duties. Garrett retained a minority interest in the corporation.

The financial trail led to Colorado Springs, where J. J. Hagerman had retired after a successful career in mining and railroading. Eddy was a born promoter and soon Hagerman, to his wife's alarm, was under an almost hypnotic spell. The siren song of the Pecos claimed the remainder of his life.

It claimed the bulk of his wealth as well. Much of it went towards land purchases and excavation of an extensive network of canals. Much more went into building the railroad. By 1891 the Pecos Valley Railway stretched from Pecos, a hamlet on the Texas and Pacific Railroad in Texas, to the town of Eddy, which would later be known as Carlsbad. After brief travail, the tracks reached Roswell in 1894.

A nationwide depression took its toll in the Valley. Hagerman gave financial aid to settlers. Then a drought ended with a flood. Many of the Valley's improvements were destroyed and the railroad fell into bankruptcy. By then the partners had quarreled and Eddy had departed. The now almost penniless Hagerman probably recalled his wife's fears as he traveled to New York in search of funds.

The key to prosperity, he figured, was a northern connection for the railroad. Fruit was the Valley's principal crop. The market was in the north, but the railroad connected to southern markets. Therefore, Hagerman tried to finance a connection with either the Rock Island or the Santa Fe. After months of rejection, he was glad to take Santa Fe money.

Since the Santa Fe was financing the new line, that company insisted on choosing the route. Hagerman wanted to build to Amarillo, but there was an alternative. The Santa Fe had long planned a line from Panhandle City to Washburn and beyond, passing south of Amarillo. However, by 1898 the Santa Fe felt that it would not be wise "to leave out a live town like Amarillo if we can conveniently take it in." This "live town" had resulted not only from the energetic promotion of H. B. Sanborn but also from the location of Palo Duro Canyon. This great gash in the flat terrain cut the southern plains trade area from Washburn. The first railroad location reached after going around the head of the canyon was Amarillo, and the town's future looked bright. Santa Fe officials were undecided whether to take it in or to kill its trade by building south of the town. Then a town promoter's arrogance settled the matter. When the Santa Fe had abortively attempted construction to Canyon City back in 1891, R. E. Montgomery of Washburn had offered to donate half of his town site to the railroad. Now Hagerman asked for a renewal of the offer plus \$20,000. It was a small price to pay to become the junction of rail lines in four directions. Montgomery, however, felt that the railroad had nowhere else to go. He would only give land for the right of way and for terminal facilities. Sanborn at Amarillo promised the \$20,000 and the Santa Fe took the bait. The Santa Fe-affiliated Southern Kansas Railway of Texas leased operating rights over the Panhandle Railway to Washburn, then to Amarillo over the Fort Worth and Denver City Railway on April 20, 1898.

Southwest of Amarillo there was a choice of a direct route passing north of Canyon or of a longer line through that town. Landholders at Canyon and southwards threatened to deny water to the railroad if it missed Canyon, so the longer route was chosen.

Meanwhile, Hagerman created the Pecos Railway Construction and Land Company to reorganize and extend the Pecos Valley Railway. A block of securities was used as collateral for a loan of \$750,000 from the Santa Fe and another block secured a bank loan of \$200,000. Transportation of construction materials over the Santa Fe was paid for with bonds. More securities were placed on the open market.

On March 10, 1898, New Mexico granted a charter to the Pecos Valley and Northeastern Railway. This company exchanged its securities for total control of the Pecos Valley Railway, but the majority of PV&NE securities went to the Construction Company. In payment for control of the new railroad the Construction Company had to perform specified tasks,, including building the line in New Mexico, supplying rolling stock, retiring the debts of the PV, and surrendering to the PV&NE all securities of the Pecos and Northern Texas Railway.

The Pecos and Northern Texas Railway had been created on March 19 in Texas to comply with a law requiring railroads in that state to be Texas corporations. In return for building the

line in Texas, the Construction Company would receive the P&NT's securities, which would then go to the PV&NE.

This web of legal prestidigitation gave Hagerman and the Santa Fe control of the Construction Company, which owned the PV&NE, which in turn owned the P&NT and the PV. Within a year, sale of Construction Company securities on the open market would allow retirement of all loans.

The Santa Fe wanted someone on the ground to see that the railroad's loan would be properly applied in construction. Several men were considered before Santa Fe eyes fell upon a man already on the scene. Howard C. Phillips had been with the engineering department of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad before going west for his health. In 1898 he was working for Hagerman in Roswell. James Dun interviewed him, hired him, and immediately loaned him to the PV&NE as consulting engineer.

Traditionally, the Santa Fe cut new construction projects into short segments and awarded these to a variety of contractors. This permitted construction in several places at once and an earlier completion date. However, this was not done on the Amarillo -- Roswell line.

On April 14, the Construction Company hired Mallory, Cushing and Company to build the entire railroad. Work began on the eastern edge of Amarillo on the first of May, and a material yard was built just south of the Fort Worth and Denver City connection. Tracks were laid directly on un-graded soil and cars were moved about by mule power until locomotives arrived. About 35 cars of construction material arrived daily and the yard was in chaos.

Phillips' investigation of the situation revealed that the material agent was perpetually drunk. Phillips soon found another problem. The contractor did not have enough men at work. With urging, Mallory-Cushing subcontracted the first few miles out of Roswell to Mendenhall Construction Company. This included 25 miles of roadbed and 15 miles of track, including the Pecos River bridge. By mid-July, new PV&NE rolling stock began arriving at Amarillo. The locomotives could take water at the 50,000 gallon water tank that had recently been erected by Fairbanks, Morse and Company and puff southwards for 8-1/2 miles.

Two factors delayed the opening the railroad to Canyon. One reason was that a cut north of town broke into harder rock than expected. The other reason was the tie supplier. The logger had filled out his contract for oak ties by purchasing inferior wood from other suppliers.

Mallory-Cushing accepted delivery without question, but Phillips and the Construction Company ordered the ties lifted from the roadbed and returned to the supplier. Several hundred cars enroute to Amarillo were halted and sent back. Gruff words passed between railroaders and foresters. Phillips traveled to the woods of Arkansas to investigate. In the end, the railroad used few oak ties and settled for the best pine ties to be had.

On August 18, the PV&NE began operation of a mixed train "connecting with all trains at Amarillo and with all stages at Canyon City." A regular freight was quickly added. By month's end, Canyon's stock pens were loading cattle and within seventeen days 121 cars had been dispatched. The Santa Fe, long experienced in such things, sent construction material westward in stock cars, which carried revenue cargo eastward.

Construction continued, but in a poor fashion. On part of the line, tracks were laid on planking set on raw sod. Then a rail-mounted grading machine rolled over the rails, scooping dirt under the ties as it went along. Phillips did not like the results and recommended returning to older methods.

On September 15, four Hicks stock cars loaded with ties came to grief when a train broke in two on the 1% grade north of Canyon. At about the same time, a locomotive creeping along at 8 mph over rain-softened track dropped its tender off the rails.

Santa Fe officials were not happy and insisted on changes. On September 24, PV&NE chief engineer S., R. Ballard resigned. His replacement was M W. Wambaugh, a Santa Fe man. Two days later, Hagerman relieved Mallory-Cushing of track-laying duties and took the task upon himself. On October 12, general manager E. O. Faulkner resigned and superintendent D. H. Nichols, a former Frisco employee, assumed double duty. These changes brought on brief labor troubles.

In October it was found that Amarillo could only raise \$15,000 of the promised \$20,000. The PV&NE and the Santa Fe agreed to share the cost of constructing a permanent yard at Amarillo if expenses exceeded \$15,000.

During October, 479 cars of stock were shipped over the incomplete line. The next ten days saw 261 more and another 90 cars were on order.

Meanwhile, construction continued in the rain. Using a primitive track layer, Hagerman's gang soon was capable of laying 2 to 2-1/2 miles a day. That rate did not last more than a couple of weeks, after which the crew could work only one or two days a week. The problem was not rain, but Mallory-Cushing. The track gang, once forty miles behind the graders, was now breathing down their necks.

Mallory, Cushing and Company had never put enough men to work. The roadbed was slowly and poorly prepared. In fact, much work was being left for the track gang to complete. At one place, a roadside ditch had been omitted, allowing a locomotive's burning coal to ignite several miles of grazing land.

In contrast, Mendenhall had worked since September 11 with few problems. The only delay to construction out of Roswell had been an outbreak of smallpox.

Rain changed to snow and December 15, the originally projected completion date, passed with the railroad far from finished.

Finally there was good news. The Construction Company had sold enough securities to repay the Santa Fe's loan. Now that he was no longer needed to oversee the Santa Fe's investment, Phillips lost no time in asking to be relieved of duty. Dun was impressed with his performance under bad conditions and did not want to lose the man. Dun invited him to his home for dinner and convinced him to stay with the Santa Fe. The remainder of the Amarillo-Roswell line, however, was built without Phillips' watchful eye.

February 11, 1899, dawned cold on the plains sixteen miles north of Roswell, just east of the Pecos River. Track men refused to work until the day warmed, so the last rail was not laid until 4:50 that afternoon. Mrs. Hagerman was provided a small hammer with which to tap the golden spike into a pre-bored hole in the final tie. The hole was too small and the spike would not go in. Mrs. Hagerman demanded a heavy spike maul and completed the task to the accompaniment of cheers.

The line opened for business on March first. In Texas 94.5 miles were owned by the Pecos and Northern Texas Railway, but were operated by the Pecos Valley and Northeastern Railway. The 113.2 miles of new line in New Mexico were part of the PV&NE proper. The Southern Kansas Railway of Texas had leased the Panhandle Railway from the Fort Worth and Denver City Railway, and purchase, which would come on January 1, 1900, was pending state approval. Between Washburn and Amarillo the Santa Fe affiliate used the rails

of the FW&DC. The SK of T and the P&NT moved into the southern part of the FW&DC's Amarillo passenger station. Despite the FW&DC's cooperation, that company was not happy. The newcomer tapped the source of the cattle trade, thereby cutting the FW&DC's revenues. Joint SK of T and P&NT facilities grew at Amarillo, including a freight house and permanent yard. A new roundhouse replaced one that had burned in October.

SK of T's offices moved from Panhandle to Amarillo. On August 1, 1899, Santa Fe lines west of Wellington, Kansas, were designated as the recreated Panhandle Division. Two months later, the SK of T was separated from the new division and given independent, but not divisional, status as the Texas Lines. Amarillo was headquarters.

Amarillo's rail importance, it was felt, would only be temporary. All interested parties felt that the long-planned direct line between Washburn and Canyon would eventually be built. When that occurred, the shops and offices would be moved from Amarillo to another city. No one knew what city would emerge with the facilities, but an ample water supply weighed in Canyon's favor.

Decade-old Canyon was one of the only established settlements on the new line. As such it received one of the few full-sized depots. Most sidings, if anything, got only tiny telegraph offices. Little town development occurred, though a handful of points did become important. LaPlata, the county seat of Deaf Smith County, had been missed by the railroad. After a vote, the town picked up its buildings, including the courthouse, and moved to Bluewater siding. The name was later changed to "Hereford" in honor of the cattle industry. Hereford's rail facilities included a telegraph office, stock pens, a section house, and a well. The railroad was awarded a portion of the receipts from town lot sales.

Before the Harvey House closed in 1904, trains stopped for meals at Bovina. The train usually had to make a protracted stop there anyway. Cattle habitually fed on spilled cotton seed at a warehouse siding. The main line was blocked in the process and railroaders had to drive the bovines away before the train could proceed. "Bull Town" was the common name for this place, but the official name was the Latin equivalent "Bovina."

Just to the west of the state line was Texico. This siding, due to a faulty government survey, lay on land that officially did not exist. This attracted a rough element and the resulting town was colorful to say the least. There was no way to enforce a claim on this land. It was not unusual for one man to build his house in another man's front yard or in the middle of the street. Houses frequently moved from place to place, sometimes in the dead of night with sleeping, unaware occupants inside.

Portales was the only established town in New Mexico east of Roswell, and it received a depot similar to Canyon's. Thousands of years before Portales had come into being, a spring-fed lake near here had provided good hunting for ancient man. The lake had vanished, and the spring rarely flowed in modern times, so a man peering into the darkness of the railroad's well was surprised to see water close to ground level. This inspired him to experiment with ground water irrigation, which would ultimately create agricultural prosperity for the region. The halfway point between Portales and Roswell was Kenna, which was named for a Santa Fe vice president. This station was in the middle of a long waterless stretch and was an oasis. At an unknown time long before the railroad came, a spring had been roofed over and buried. How long the spring was lost, or who covered it, is unknown, but eventually it was rediscovered. The resulting Hidden Spring Ranch gave much business to the new railroad.

Further southwest, the rails crossed the unusual geological feature known as Railroad Mountain. This is a narrow, flat-topped ridge extending east-west for about twenty miles in an almost straight line. It resembles a giant railroad roadbed, hence the name.

Improvements to the shops and other facilities at Roswell were in service by fall.

On January 24, 1901, the Santa Fe purchased the PV&NE from Hagerman for \$2,675,902.

The federal government relieved him of the irrigation projects a couple of years later. In retirement at Roswell, Hagerman had plenty of time to ponder a lifetime of successes whose fruits had been lost in the muddy waters of the River. Perhaps someone told him of cattleman Charles Goodnight's name for the Pecos: "The Graveyard of Hope."

The Santa Fe moved the PV&NE offices, including the building, to Amarillo. A single set of officers ruled both the Texas Lines and the Pecos Lines. The PV&NE was still separately operated and was called the "Peavine" from its initials.

The Santa Fe now owned a branch line 639.74 miles long that stretched from Attica, Kansas, to Pecos, Texas. All of it was low traffic line through semi-arid, unpromising land. But there was hope. President Ripley was now asking James Dun about the possibility of connecting the Pecos Lines with the Santa Fe's main line near Albuquerque. This endeavor would become known as the Belen Cutoff.

## A BRANCHLINE COMES OF AGE----Part Three

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If James Dun, chief engineer of the Santa Fe Railway System, experienced dejavu on the day early in 1902 that he ordered F. M. Jones to survey a railroad route across New Mexico, he was entirely justified. As chief engineer of the Frisco fifteen years earlier, Dun had ordered other men to survey the same path. He had been over the route himself. He was aware that ever since the Southwest had been wrested from Mexico, men had planned for a railroad to follow the 35th parallel. Dun had witnessed a half-century of effort. Company after company had raised the banner only to suffer the fate of ancient Babel. Now after the economic upheaval of the 1890's, the western third of the route was in Santa Fe hands while the Frisco held the eastern third. A great gap separated the lines.

The Union Pacific and the Rock Island Systems were building into the Southwest during the early Twentieth Century. These competing lines were not burdened with excessive grades such as plagued the Santa Fe's main line in northern New Mexico. The Santa Fe needed its own low-grade line to remain competitive, and a proposed connection from the Santa Fe-affiliated Pecos Valley and Northeastern Railway near the Texas border to the Rio Grande near Albuquerque seemed promising.

Dun knew the promise. But he felt that time was being wasted on a project that would never be completed and so informed Jones. Nevertheless, he issued orders to lay out a main line between Sabinal and Portales via Abo Pass. Jones found Sabinal to be lacking as a base and established his headquarters at Belen, a few miles up the Rio Grande. In March, he requisitioned three surveying parties and placed over them men who had had experience in eastern New Mexico. J. W. Stewart was to survey from Sabinal to the summit of Abo Pass. From there, S. A. Wallace was to find a path to the Pecos River near Fort Sumner. H. T. McGee was to assemble his crew at Portales and to survey east and west from there. Jones would earn bruises riding a buckboard to oversee the work of all parties.

Stewart had the least ground to cover, but his ground was difficult. After a basic line to Sabinal had been worked out, Jones directed him to find a line from Abo to La Joya and up the Rio Puerco to a connection with the existing main line.

Then Jones followed Wallace's location stakes to Willard. There, the line turned south to avoid rough country to the east. Jones followed the survey into Torrance, a small station on the El Paso and Northeastern Railroad. The surveyors had requested water at the depot and been refused. On learning this, Jones telegraphed Dun and requested that a few strings be pulled at EP&NE headquarters. Jones then pursued the stakes with more urgency. He found Wallace at the head of Yeso Arroyo. The crew had survived on pools of rain water that had dried before Jones' passage. Leaving Wallace and crew behind, Jones rode on to check on McGee.

McGee had surveyed southeastward from Portales to the Texas state line. This had to do with a proposed line between the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. Then he crossed the plains from Portales to Fort Sumner. At Dun's suggestion, Jones now had him work out of Texico.

Jones spent seventeen months making such journeys.

Resurveys were common. McGee tried several crossings of the Pecos. Wallace looked for a more northerly route from Willard to avoid the lone deviation through Torrance and the 1.4% grade on the Yeso. Stewart tried several lines through the pass, one of which was called the "long tunnel route" and another the "short tunnel route." Jones favored a line crossing the Rio Grande at Belen and climbing over the divide into the Rio Puerco valley. Jones even avoided the Pass entirely by running a line from Abo down to Rincon, which connected with a line across southern Arizona that other Santa Fe men were examining. Dun, now taking an interest, had an unexpected suggestion in May. He wanted a line from Abo to Santa Rosa that would connect with the Rock Island.

An outgrowth of Santa Fe / Rock Island Cooperation in Oklahoma, Santa Fe use of the Rock Island's line southwest of Hutchinson, Kansas, was favored by both companies. Jones laid out a good line to Santa Rosa via the Pintada Arroyo before another alternative appeared. The Santa Fe Central Railway was, at that time, building a line southwards from the city of Santa Fe that would pass through both Willard and Torrance. The Santa Fe could lease operating rights between those points and over the EP&NE to Santa Rosa. The Santa Fe would only have to build between Belen and Willard. The decision to construct this line came in September.

Despite the Rock Island plans, surveys continued for the entire line. Hell's Canyon, near Albuquerque, was examined and rejected. Jones preferred an eastern junction at Portales, but Dun insisted on Texico due to problems with the other town's promoters. By repeated revision, Jones and his subordinates eventually designed a line with a 0.6% ruling grade except for a few minutes of 1.25% on the west side of Abo Pass.

On October 30, 1902, the Santa Fe obtained a charter for the Eastern Railway of New Mexico. The main line was to extend from Rio Puerco station on the Santa Fe eastward to Texico. A branch was to follow the Rio Puerco Valley down to the Rio Grande and proceed to Abo Pass, another branch would head southeastward from what would later be called Melrose to the state line via Portales.

W. M. Smith began to purchase the right-of-way to Willard. Belen merchant John Becker helped in the task. Becker had supplied groceries and other services during the survey and accomplished the difficult task of winning praise from the surly P.M. Jones. The railroad named a station for him.

Stewart remained in the pass, trying new lines. Harry McGee began revising the existing railroad east of Texico. Wallace was dispatched to Dodge City to begin work on a line from there to the Rock Island at Liberal. It seemed that the Santa Fe wished to bypass the grades and curves of the Rock Island's line in Kansas. McGee joined him under Jones' supervision when this line developed into something that must have sent chills through Rock Island officials: A Santa Fe line parallel to the Rock Island but with a better grade line.

Santa Fe stakes led southwestward from Dodge City. Soon, they were running a few miles to the side of the Rock Island. Further along, they moved closer until, for one hundred miles, the lines were virtually side by side. South of Santa Rosa, the El Paso and Northeastern was paralleled to Llano, where a connection was planned with the proposed Belen-Texico line. In New Mexico, the Santa Fe survey called for a ruling grade of 0.6% and for 0.4% elsewhere. The Rock Island used a 1% grade.

It is likely that the Santa Fe never intended to build the line. It would have cost too much to build. It also would have passed through territory that could not support two lines of railroad.

Probably, the Santa Fe only wished to rattle the Rock Island's cage enough to get concessions on trackage rights.

Meanwhile, contractor B. Lantry and Sons had been working out of Belen under the eye of Jones' protege J. V. Key. By June of 1903, almost half of the grade to Willard had been completed. A temporary bridge was thrown across the Rio Grande and track was snaking eastward.

However, Wall Street entered one of its periodic declines and in July the Santa Fe ordered Jones and Key to call off their forces for the duration. The contractor, who had laid track to Sais at the mouth of Abo Canyon, protested that not finishing the work would throw him into financial difficulties. The Santa Fe loaned \$20,000 to B. Lantry and Sons until construction would resume.

During the hiatus, it became evident that the entire Belen Cutoff should be built rather than obtain permanent trackage rights over the Rock Island.

A stumbling block in justifying construction of the entire Belen Cutoff had been the need to completely rebuild several hundred miles of railroad east of Texico. Now, the Panhandle of Texas was finally being effectively developed. This meant that the Santa Fe's primitive railroad through the Pan handle would need upgrading anyway to handle the increased traffic. A new survey of the proposed route between the Pacific and the Gulf would feed traffic into the Cutoff near Texico. Earlier versions had planned to connect at Willard.

Finally, the ruling grade on the Santa Fe's new transcontinental route would rarely exceed 0.6%, while the Rock Island's line used 1%.

There was now ample reason to build, but the Santa Fe wished to spread out the cost of construction over several years by obtaining temporary trackage rights. The Rock Island was willing to deal.

By June of 1904, the Rock Island was proposing to separate the line west of Hutchinson, Kansas, from the rest of the System. The line in Kansas would be raised to modern standards. Use of the line would be charged to the two operating railroads at cost of maintenance. The Santa Fe, with 70% of the tonnage, would pay 70% of the expenses. The plan was clearly to the Rock Island's advantage. It would give the Rock a high quality main line with the Santa Fe footing most of the bill. Although the line would be separate, it would still be Rock Island owned. Also, this was a plan for forever when the Santa Fe wanted only a temporary deal. The Santa Fe refused.

The Rock offered to split costs equally, then, after the Santa Fe remained aloof, offered the use of the new Amarillo-Tucumcari line. The more eager and insistent the Rock Island became, the more reluctant the Santa Fe became. Consideration was still given to routing over the EP&NE and the SFC to temporarily avoid building through the rough area between Llano and Willard. It was thought best to purchase the Santa Fe Central to keep it out of enemy hands and to allow unrestricted use of its rails as needed. Early in 1905, the Santa Fe named a price and the little SFC named a larger one. No more time was wasted dealing with the SFC. In April, construction of the entire Belen Cutoff was authorized.

In May of 1905 when the Santa Fe announced its intent to build, the Rock Island had news also. Instead of the Santa Fe using the Rock Island, the latter company would use the former between Llano and Belen. The Rock Island had been using the poorly built and difficult to operate EP&NE to reach El Paso. The abandonment of this route by the big company would

have reduced the EP&NE to bankruptcy. Perhaps that is why the owners of the EP&NE sold the company in July to the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad.

As it turned out, the Rock Island continued to route traffic over the EP&SW and did not use the Santa Fe. F. M. Jones, for all his ability as a location engineer, was a poor construction engineer. Therefore, Dun sent Jones to other tasks and placed the construction project into the hands of J. V. Key and A. J. Hemstreet. The contract was awarded to Lantry-Sliarp Contracting Company, the corporate descen-dent of B. Lantry and Sons.

Key picked up work where he had laid off two years before; at the end of track at Sais. In the Canyon above, Lantry-Sharp's steam shovels bit cuts one-hundred feet deep into solid rock. One cut was 7,000 feet long. Work was slow due to a labor shortage and too frequent rockslides. Dun often complained about the lack of progress.

The Abo River was crossed seven times on bridges ranging from 216 to 500 feet in length. Some of the unreinforced concrete piers for these bridges rose 135 feet from the bedrock with 35 feet underground. The Missouri Valley Bridge and Iron Company took the task of installing steel girders atop Lantry-Sharp's piers. The usual falsework method was impractical here because of the cost of building falsework to such heights and because of the constant danger that it would be washed away by cloudbursts.

The solution to the problem lay in building a derrick on a flat car. The car's 64-foot boom could lift one-hundred feet of bridge steel with ease. Then the car could be rolled onto the bridge and the girder could be lowered into place. The new method was faster and simpler than the old. Rails were laid to each bridge in turn to aid construction. Track laying began at Sais on August 21 and did not reach Scholle, 5.6 miles beyond, until March 17.

With construction creeping through the Canyon, Dun ordered Key to ship construction materials over the Santa Fe Central to Willard and to lay track westward from there. That work began in August of 1905 and by the end of the year, track was in Abo station. Both railheads met near there on March 31.

Rail laying had begun on the waterless stretch east of Willard in December. Rail laying westward from the EP&SW crossing had begun two months earlier. An overhead crossing was made of the EP&SW at Llano. The concrete arch allowed ample room for future double tracks on both lines. The high fill was composed of dirt from eight miles to the west, where Lantry-Sharp steam-shoveled a forty-foot deep, 9,000-foot long cut. Rails west of Llano met on March 23, 1906.

Dun was pleased with Key's work. He raised Key's salary and allowed him to spend lime with his family. But to his dismay, Dun found that Key and other railroaders were spending time in Llano's saloons. The rail road issued reprimands and took legal action that closed saloons within three miles of railroad construction camps. That solved the problem at Llano but created one at Texico, which lost its saloons, too. The thirsty citizens of Texico promptly voted to bar railroaders from using the municipal well. Hemstreet had to bore his own.

Hemstreet had charge of construction east of Llano. The land was basically flat and offered little challenge. Track laying began at Texico on October 9, 1905. By February, rails had reached the Pecos River. The Pecos was not crossed for three months, partially due to a flash flood that washed away much of the temporary trestle.

Meanwhile, Dun concerned himself with the problem of supplying fuel to the new line. The coal field at Raton could not easily supply the need. Raton coal had to be taken over the old roller-coaster main line to Belen, then hoisted over Abo. The distance and grades were

prohibitive. The alternative was to ship over the FW&DC to Amarillo, then westward. This route was also round-about and was not Santa Fe controlled.

Dun wanted some sort of cutoff that would depart the main line near Las Vegas and encounter the Belen Cutoff at either Llano or Fort Sumner. Another possibility was to build a line from Clovis to Tucumcari and to use the newly-built Dawson Railway to French. These lines would not only have supplied fuel to the railroad, but also would have opened domestic markets in the Pecos Valley and on the Llano Estacado of Texas to Raton Coal.

However, surveys for these lines were not undertaken until 1910. In 1901, the Santa Fe had purchased the Cerrillos Coal Company. The mine at Madrid could be reached at a reasonable distance via Belen.

Water was also Dun's concern. Numerous test wells were drilled and at places the grade across ravines was left without an opening so that lakes could form. Of principal concern, was the stretch east of Willard. After much experimenting, Dun gave up hope of finding usable water here and began making plans for a Willard-Ricardo pipeline.

More satisfactory were the depots designed by M. H. Church. Dun loved the romance of Spanish names and architecture, and these concrete structures with arches and broad tile roofs tickled his fancy. The second floors of the depots provided living space in the small structures, while in the large depots this floor was used for divisional offices. The large depots were slated for Belen, Llano, and Melrose. In January of 1906, Dun asked contractors for four bids. They were to submit bids for twelve concrete depots and also for the same depots if built of wood. Bids were also requested for eighteen depots of concrete or of wood. The six extra depots may have been intended to replace old facilities east of Texico.

However, Nelson and McLeod won the contract for twelve concrete depots. Time was taking its toll on the aging James Dun. With health failing, Dun resigned as chief engineer on September 1, 1906, though he remained with the Santa Fe as a consultant. The new chief engineer was William B. Storey, Jr.

Storey's hand was felt immediately. Since Belen was so close to Albuquerque, he felt that the former place did not need a large shop complex. It was eliminated from plans.

Belen's new depot was struck also. The new line was to be temporarily operated as part of the Rio Grande Division, and Storey saw no need to build a division headquarters at Belen until the line was separated. The roundhouse at Llano, now renamed "Vaughn," was reduced in size and shorn of such extravagances as traveling cranes.

Melrose was the hardest hit. Dun had planned division points every 110 miles between Wellington and Belen. These fell at Waynoka, Canadian, Canyon, Melrose, and Vaughn. Melrose's divisional office depot was complete, and the roundhouse walls had risen six feet when Storey decided to move the division point to Clovis. This place was planned as a double divisional facility, serving not only the Belen Cutoff, but also the projected line from central Texas.

Dun's pipeline was postponed and Storey planned for trainloads of water to empty their cargos into reservoirs at selected locations.

Hemstreet's tracklayers working from Vaughn and Fort Sumner met at Duoro on March 20, 1907. Rails now connected Belen and Texico, but the line was far from complete. Temporary tracks had been laid around incomplete cuts and fills. Most of the track was still unballasted, but gravel pits had opened in Abo Canyon and near the Pecos River to fill the need. Sidings

had not been built. Fences and other roadside structures were not finished. Several bits of main track needed construction as well.

One of these was a line south from Clovis to Cameo on the Pecos Valley Line. The Pecos' junction was to be removed from Texico. The flat land offered little resistance to constructing the new line, but the citizenry of Texico offered much resistance to removing the old line.

One summer's evening in 1908, railroad forces began to take up the old line. It was too late in the day for enraged citizens to get an injunction. The next day was the fourth of July and courts would be closed. The following day was Sunday. By the time the courts would open on Monday, it would be too late.

Texico citizens telegraphed Avery Turner, general manager of the Pecos Lines. He was not in his office. He was somewhere out on the railroad and could not be located. A telegram was sent to the governor of New Mexico. He was not in his office. He was with Mr. Turner.

An armed mob of 150 citizens confronted the railroaders, but nothing happened. The matter was fought in the courts for months, but the line was already gone.

On the western end, rails were laid over Belen Mesa to a connection with the Santa Fe's western main line at Rio Puerco station. The Eastern Railway of New Mexico's line passed south of a ridge that the Santa Fe's old line climbed over. East of the ridge, a connection was made between Dalies on the new line and Sandia on the old. Routing trains over this connection saved a little effort and eventually the original Rio Puerco-Sandia line was abandoned.

On November 1, 1902, the Santa Fe had signed a contract to construct the ER of NM in exchange for that company's securities. A new but similar contract had been executed on October 16, 1905, and another on the twenty-third of the next June. The ultimate contract was signed November 30, 1906. The final agreement required the Santa Fe to also surrender the securities of the Pecos Valley and Northeastern Railway. The PV&NE was conveyed to the ER of NM on March 19, 1907. This virtually doubled the size of the company and extended its operations over two companies, the Pecos River Railway and the Pecos and Northern Texas Railway, into Texas.

The Santa Fe's Construction Department began operating scheduled trains on December 18, 1907, but the line was still incomplete. Wall Street had just begun another of its ill spells and, in February of 1908, the Santa Fe stopped all construction. There was still much to do on July first, when the Santa Fe's Operating Department took command of the railroad west of Clovis. Remaining work was to be completed by the division engineer. The Belen-Rio Puerco line was presently attached to the Albuquerque Division. Belen-Clovis was temporarily part of the Rio Grande Division, but dispatching was done upstairs at Vaughn. Lines east and south of Clovis were operated by the ER of NM's own operating staff, which had been inherited from the PV&NE.

The ER of NM owned considerable land. Legend claims that it was granted by the Territorial legislature with the stipulation that the land be settled with a productive, literate, English-speaking population that would aid the statehood cause.

The Santa Fe Land and Townsite Company was quite active on the Llano Estacado, the large plateau extending eastward from the Pecos River. The company did not neglect its customers once a sale was made. Settlers were instructed in dry land farming techniques and in shallow well irrigation.

When Curry County organized, the Santa Fe paid the advances on property taxes to aid the fledgling government. A standing offer of ten acres of land was pledged to any denominational college that would locate in a Santa Fe town. La Land did receive a college under those terms, but it eventually closed.

It is something of a wonder that Melrose grew as large as it did. In the fall of 1905, the infant town was composed mostly of dugouts and sod houses. Lumber was arriving, but the first winter was such that the construction material was burned for heat. More lumber raised the population above ground, and concrete, stone, and steel structures began rising at the railroad terminal. Then the terminal was moved elsewhere, leaving half built structures haunting the site like ruins of an ancient civilization, fire destroyed the town in 1914, forcing a retreat into earth structures. The rebuilt town was again burned in 1917.

The new division point of Clovis was built on land purchased from Clayton Reed. Reed was plowing his corn field when a stranger appeared and offered to buy the farm for the railroad. Reed discussed the matter with his family that night. He was in Texico the next day, planning to ask \$1,000 for each quarter section. The railroad offered \$2,500 before he could open his mouth. Clovis became the new junction for the Pecos branch, and terminal for the projected main line to the Gulf. The town also became a prosperous county seat. Rival hotels would send hacks to meet all trains. One day, the drivers began discussing the relative merits of their respective employers. The debate ended in frontier fashion with a bullet-torn body on the depot platform.

Rambunctious Texico had never been a permanent city. The inability to obtain title to property crippled the location. When the Capitol Syndicate founded Farwell just across the Texas line, many Texicans moved their portable houses onto land they could call their own. Syndicate lawyers managed to obtain the junction with the new Gulf line, but lost the Roswell junction. They tried to have Texico's new concrete depot jacked up and moved a few feet into Farwell but settled for having their platform extended into Texas.

West of the bluffs of the Llano Estacado lay Fort Sumner, one of the most historically interesting stations on the line. This had been an Apache reservation before the Civil War. Texas cattleman smelled government dollars and began trailing cattle to feed the Indians. This led to the establishment of ranches in the Pecos Valley and to rustling that was violently put down. The most famous rustler of the Lincoln County War, Billy the Kid, was killed in the community which grew up at the old fort.

On to Willard, the depots were few and wide-spread. The most important towns, Vaughn and Willard, had been established on other railroads before the Santa Fe was built.

Stations were frequent through the mountains to Belen, probably mainly for operating reasons, but scattered through the area were tiny communities, some of which dated back to the Spanish era.

The line was shaping up, but it was a main line to nowhere until several hundred miles of old branch line east of Texico could be rebuilt to main line standards.

## A BRANCHLINE COMES OF AGE----Part Four

By Bob Burton

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In 1996 I read a short version of this story, entitled "The 0.6% Solution: A Toonerville Becomes High Iron," to the West Texas Historical Convention. I concluded the presentation thusly:

"I wish I had a neat conclusion to this story. The Santa Fe keeps tinkering with this line, constantly making minor changes, and periodically it is heavily rebuilt. The first heavy rebuilding came in 1924, then in 1927 a second track was laid between Pampa and Canyon, to help with the oil field traffic. Another rebuilding came in 1946, still another in 1962, and another in 1992. Not one cent of this was done with anyone's tax dollars. Today in the Panhandle, signals change and switches move by remote control, connected by microwave to a computer somewhere in the suburbs of Chicago. And as we sit here now--earth-moving machines are at work and Navajo track gangs are laying mile-long strips of #136 rail on concrete ties. When they are done, there will be a new main line between central Kansas and central New Mexico, right beside the one we've been talking about. So I can't conclude this story. It's not finished."

The story of this modern refurbishment of the transcontinental main has been told by Fred Frailey in TRAINS magazine of October 2004 and April 2007. We might eventually see much more on this project.

The Belen Cutoff was more than a couple of hundred miles of new track in New Mexico. Officially, it stretched 1351.5 miles from Florence, Kansas, to Rio Puerco, New Mexico. About a thousand miles of this was old branch line trackage that needed total rebuilding. Yet even the entire Cutoff was only a fraction of president E. P. Ripley's main line improvement program.

Some double tracking had been done in the late 1880's on the approaches to Kansas City and Chicago. And in the final three years of the century, a second track was laid west of Emporia, creating two main tracks between Kansas City and Florence. Almost immediately, work began to double the main via Ottawa Junction, making three tracks on two routes to Emporia. As that job wound down in 1907, the stretch to Chicago was in the third year of its own improvement project. By 1912, the main line east of the Belen Cutoff had been completely double tracked except for the major bridges and a couple of segments in Missouri.

Beyond Belen, the Santa Fe planned a low-grade line west from Deming. On file was an Abo-Rincon survey to connect the Belen line with the proposed project. Another propounded connection via Roswell and El Paso had been embodied as the El Paso, Pecos Valley and Eastern Railway in 1901 when plans were afoot to build the Gulf Lines into the Pecos Valley. These abortive connections aside, the solo attempt to construct the Arizona line ended in 1908, when the Southern Pacific came in as a partner. The Santa Fe was unable to build its portion, but its line through Parker, Arizona, opened in 1910.

Meanwhile, F. M. Jones had been surveying along the old Atlantic and Pacific line. Double tracking began there in 1911 and continued sporadically for decades. The earliest benefits of this project included reduction of ruling grades east of Gallup from 1% to 0.6%. Also, the grades between Winslow and Needles that had reached 2.6% in the mountains became 1.8%.

Main lines were also being signaled. Hundreds of miles were newly protected by manual block towers during the first decade of the century. The first automatic signals had appeared in the form of Hall "banjo" signals between Kansas City and Holliday in 1892. Union Switch and Signal equipment first appeared in 1898, at a junction. Two years later it debuted in a road installation between Emporia and Plymouth. Continually improving versions of this equipment soon began appearing around the system.

In the center of all this improvement was the rebuilding of the old line through the Texas Panhandle. Yet even if it had not been part of the new transcontinental route, developments at trackside would have warranted its upgrading.

After some initial grumbling, cattlemen of West Texas defied Western legend by welcoming nesters. They had found that it was cheaper to feed cattle on small, fenced ranches than to graze them on endless prairies. Many ranchers had actually farmed for years, setting aside a couple of hundred acres to supply feed for the ranch's animal and human population. Some ranchers had even entered the cattle business only as a temporary measure. The three million acre XIT ranch, for example, had always been earmarked for farmland, but had been used for grazing until the railroad could relieve the remoteness. The White Deer Land Company was another such operation.

Some cattlemen sold parcels directly to settlers, but others sold large tracts to professional real estate dealers. Farmers were recruited in the Midwest, particularly Iowa, where the sons of earlier settlers were hoping for land of their own. Generally, prospective buyers were assembled at Chicago or Kansas City every two weeks and loaded aboard special trains.

Some land agents owned their own Pullmans. Most trains had a specific destination and were met by fleets of land company automobiles. Emigrants were given tours and put up at the land company's posh hotel. Hopefully, they would be impressed enough to buy.

The railroad had a stake in productive land at trackside. Said chief engineer W. B. Storey, "I don't give a copper cent for the speculator...I want to see people come into this country that will put it in cultivation. We want to begin hauling trainloads of produce out and we will never do that until the farmer gets absolute possession of the country." The railroad was quite active in settlement. The land was advertised in timetables and elsewhere, and a special magazine, *The Earth*, was published.

To keep the settlers productive, the railroad tried to teach the Midwesterners how to farm the arid Southwest. Experts were hired to travel the area, passing along information and advice. Experimental farms were sponsored, and irrigation wells tested. Occasional demonstration trains made the rounds.

During 1908, the Santa Fe moved 1,648 emigrant cars to the Llano Estacado, each carrying the goods of two or three families.

Population spread southwards from the railroad and demand for more transportation facilities grew. In fact, a motor bus operated between Amarillo and Lubbock by 1905, years before the railroad connected those places. The railroad did come, following the survey stakes of men with familiar names: J. V. Key, Harry McGee, and F. M. Jones. Construction started southwards out of Canyon in 1906. Plainview was reached that winter, and Lubbock in 1910. After some indecision and a few political battles, the gulf Lines were connected to the Belen Cutoff at Texico in 1914 and a web of branches covered the South Plains.

Amidst this activity, the old railroad was rebuilt.

As built, the old lines followed the natural contours of the terrain: essentially a “hogback” railroad. However, to reduce grades, McGee laid out a line that did not dip so deeply into valleys nor rise so high on crests. The new line was built atop the old if possible, but in places a completely new roadbed in a different location was necessary.

The best example of this is just north of Canyon, where the Palo Duro is crossed. Here, a 4-1/2 mile relocation straightened the line and changed 1% grades to 0.6%. The old roadbed next to the modern steel bridge can be seen from the highway. It's about fifty feet lower than the new line. A couple of miles north, and it can't be seen without hiking, the old roadbed crosses to the other side of the present line, crosses back, and curves over gorges and through long cuts in the bluffs.

Starting at the New Mexico border and working eastward: About 3 miles of new line was used to cross Running Water Draw west of Bovina. Not only was the grade reduced, a curve was slightly eased from 2 degrees-30 minutes to 2 degrees.

Six new miles west of Friona crossed Frio Draw. Part of the old roadbed is probably buried under the highway. <East of Friona is something that looks like a roadbed but is not. It is a dike protecting the track from flooding of the Frio.> At Hereford, the Tierra Blanca crossing was relocated. Both of these reduced grade and curvature.

Just east of Pampa, the railroad left the plains to descend into Red Deer valley. The descent required about 7 miles of new line to reduce the grade. Six degree curves were reduced to 2 degrees. The line is remote, but the original line could be seen at Pampa and Hoover. Recent construction may have eliminated traces of it. <If you are on US 60 east of Pampa on a day without mirages, keep an eye towards the north. You may see something unusual. There is an object shining on the horizon. As you pass, it does not move in proper relationship with other objects on the horizon. If you want to know what it is, take the road to Hoover.>

The railroad followed Red Deer Creek to the Canadian River. Between Hoover and Canadian were nine relocations; all short, a mile or two, or less. Generally these are curve easements. A major change was made immediately east of Canadian. The original line followed the south bank of the Canadian River for several miles before crossing on a trestle and following Clear Creek out of the valley. The new line crossed at Canadian, followed the river briefly, then proceeded directly to Glazier, reducing grade and curvature. The new bridge was a half-mile in length, consisting of four 260-foot steel truss spans on concrete piers with pile approaches. <The original steel bridge was replaced. >

There was a three mile relocation immediately east of Glazier next to the modern railroad. A short distance west of Higgins was a four mile relocation. <The track moves away from the highway, and the highway moves over a few feet and runs atop the old roadbed. There is an abandoned cut at the west end of this segment.>

A ten mile change east of Higgins left the town of Goodwin, OK, without rail service. The Santa Fe laid out a new town on the revised railroad and offered to move all structures of the old town to the new. The offer was rejected. Today, little remains at either location.

To enter the North Canadian Valley, ten miles were changed west of Woodward. <The old roadbed can be seen south of the highway immediately east of the road to West Woodward Airport. In the next few eastward miles, it crosses the highway several times. >

All these relocations were completed by 1908. In 1910 the railroad undertook a similar project from Mooreland to Waynoka, including Curtis Hill. < After the 1910 project, this line

was relocated again in 1924, and received a very heavy relocation in 1946. Several abandoned roadbeds run through the Cimarron Valley.>

To cross the South Arkansas River at Alva, the new line was raised twenty feet above the old. The original line and depot were left for local freight service, but a new passenger station was built on the new line.

Just west of Wellington, the old line descended into a small valley and climbed out the other side. The Rock Island was crossed at the bottom of the valley and Santa Fe trains had to stop before crossing. Helpers were always needed in both directions to lift trains out of the dead stop at the foot of the hill. The new line eliminated the grades and crossing with a high fill.

The largest line change was also the most controversial. This concerned the straightening of the line between Panhandle and Hereford. Since 1898, the Santa Fe had operated over the old Panhandle Railway between Panhandle and Washburn, then by trackage rights over the Fort Worth and Denver City Railway to Amarillo. Southwards, the System ran on the Pecos and Northern Texas Railway to Canyon, where the line turned west toward Hereford. Early plans had called for a direct Washburn-Canyon line, but Amarillo's economic growth and liberal promotion had called for a change. Once Amarillo had been chosen, a direct line southwestward had been considered. The longer route via Canyon had been picked for its water supply and for the good favor of local ranchers.

It had long been generally assumed that eventually the direct Washburn-Canyon line would replace the Amarillo deviation. However, Amarillo's economic importance had continued to grow. In 1903, the Rock Island's east-west Choctaw Route to Tucumcari had built through town, creating a common junction for all three of the Panhandle's major railroads. As with the Santa Fe earlier, Amarillo had offered the Rock Island a cash inducement to come to town. The railroad eventually wrote off \$2,947.13 as a bad debt, just as the Santa Fe had done with \$5,000. It was the best money Amarillo never spent.

Woodbury Howe made a Panhandle-Amarillo survey and there was talk of a direct line to Hereford that would bypass Canyon. That town would still be served by the Plainview branch. These proposals stirred up a hornets nest. Since the takeover of the Panhandle Railway had been authorized by the state legislature, that body had to approve its abandonment. Many legislators bristled when the bill was introduced. The idea of taking up one railroad line serving one set of communities and replacing it with another line serving other communities was repugnant. The bill died in committee.

However, Amarilloans made up in spunk what they lacked in greenbacks. They convinced the committee to come to Amarillo for a look around. While the committee's special train toured the existing rail lines, a delegation opposing the bill gathered at the Canyon depot. The special stopped short of the depot and reversed to Amarillo.

After much wining and dining, the resurrected bill was placed before the full legislature. Opposition was rabid, but representatives from East Texas voted it into law over the governor's veto. It seemed that the Santa Fe had been building a voting block to support a consolidation in East Texas. This political power had been redirected.

Construction began between Panhandle and Amarillo over a right of way purchased by Amarillo citizens, but rumors flew that the line would never be allowed to operate. State law prohibited a railroad from owning parallel lines. When the new line was ready to open, the Santa Fe had a loophole. Amarilloans pitched in to dismantle the original line in one night.

The new line opened the next morning, April 12, 1908, with no other Santa Fe line connecting its end points.

The Canyon City and North-Eastern Railway had been created by local interests on July 5, 1907. It was planned to, if needed, construct a direct Canyon-Washburn line and extend over the abandoned Panhandle Railway grade to Yarnell on the Rock Island. More talk took this company to Silverton, Stamford, and Lubbock. However, plans to bypass Canyon with the Santa Fe main line came to naught and so did the local company.

At trackside, several stations without facilities received depots, such as Black, and many stations already so equipped received improvements. This was as much for the needs of traffic control as for the needs of growing towns. Hereford, Woodward, Waynoka, Canadian, and Amarillo were the first stations to receive masonry depots.

A standard county-seat depot opened at Hereford in 1909, but an early newspaper description of the proposed structure is of an Eastern Railway of New Mexico standard. Hereford was headquarters of the Panhandle Short Line Railroad, which contemplated building north to the Rock Island and south as far as it could. The company completed a roadbed to Dimmitt before the Santa Fe bought off the promoter. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to revive the project, most involving lease by the Santa Fe if rails were ever laid on the roadbed. Woodward had been the half-way division point between Wellington and Amarillo. That distance was cut in thirds in 1910 and the town received a brick passenger station in partial compensation for its loss, the railroad publicized branch surveys north and south of town, but there was an ulterior motive. Another company was surveying a Raton-Oklahoma City line via Woodward and the Santa Fe wished to confuse matters. A couple of years later, however, the Santa Fe had little objection to a Missouri-Kansas-Texas (Katy) affiliate building through from Wichita Falls.

Waynoka was at a virtually perfect location for a division point. It was equidistant from Wellington and Canadian. It was at the foot of the 1% grade to Curtis. It was a few miles west of the Frisco junction at Avard that had opened March 1, 1904. A county seat-style depot was well in order, as were the reading room and other facilities.

Canadian became a division point and thus rated a county seat depot in 1908, but it almost needed one a year earlier. An inattentive employee accidentally set the old depot on fire. A couple of local young ladies, were loitering in the waiting room at the time. They rushed to a nearby restaurant and returned with a fire extinguisher to save the day.

No young ladies were present to save Canadian's newly erected roundhouse when it burned in October of 1908. Rebuilt by springtime, it burned again in May. Once again rebuilt, a wall was knocked out late in 1910 to accommodate the Santa Fe's compound prairie mallets. It met its final Wagnerian end in 1951.

When James Dun was chief engineer, Canyon had been earmarked for a division terminal. Dun's retirement, the new Panhandle-Amarillo line, and Amarillo's growing importance threw new light on the matter. Yet, there was a major problem: Amarillo had no surface water and deep wells could supply only a fraction of the need. The railroad had been supplying the temporary shops at Amarillo with trainloads of water from Canyon, where shallow wells amply supplemented three flowing streams.

Canyon was possibly too smug in its belief that the shops would move, due to the water problem. "Amarillo will have to show more water than just a few tears before the Santa Fe will make very great improvements there," opined the Canyon City News. "To sensible

people.. .the answer is plain—pipe it from Canyon City." The editor probably regretted his words, for in August of 1908, he reported that a company had been formed to follow his advice. The company's name and ownership were not mentioned, but the company's chief engineer was the Santa Fe's Harry McGee.

Two months later, in the pre-dawn hours of Sunday, October 18, a fire of unknown origin, burned the bulk of the shops in Amarillo. On Monday, Canyon wired president Ripley with an offer of \$50,000 plus all the land and water needed if the railroad would locate its shops in Canyon. The railroad made no comment and erected makeshift sheds at Amarillo and used some FW&DC facilities.

Working behind the scenes for Amarillo, were two of the Panhandle's most prominent citizens. Avery Turner had first been there when fierce Comanches ruled the plains. Later hired by the Santa Fe, he was the first man to ride a locomotive into New Mexico.

Eventually, he was assistant superintendent of the old Southern Division that had operated the newly-built SK of T. Now, general manager of the Texas and Pecos Lines—and a property holder—he wanted the permanent shops for Amarillo.

That view was also held by Judge O. H. Nelson. As a livestock breeder in Burlingame, Kansas, he had shipped the first stock of the fledgling Santa Fe. Later, he shipped thousands of Herefords to Dodge City and drove them southwards to populate the Panhandle. Soon, Nelson and his partners were hired to place a human population along the SK of T. The failure of that enterprise led to Nelson leaving the firm and settling himself in Texas. Now, as founder and general manager of the Western Stock Yards corporation, he was directly responsible for the shipment of tremendous traffic over the railroad.

Amarillo got the shops. A concrete depot/Harvey House/division office opened in April of 1910—without any mention in the Canyon newspaper. All passengers stopped here to eat or change to trains to the south. Next to the depot was a garden that demonstrated what could be grown in the area.

Canyon had received a new depot in 1906 when the branch to Plainview was built. City Fathers complained that the depot's passenger facilities were inadequate, particularly since the West Texas State Normal College would soon open at Canyon. The matter went before the Texas Railroad Commission, which ruled for enlarged facilities. Either the 1898 depot was reactivated, or a new wooden structure was built, but Canyon had separate passenger and freight facilities until 1925.

Atop the reconditioned roadbed the railroad placed treated ties from the Albuquerque plant. Then old steel weighing 56 pounds to the yard was replaced with 75 to 90 pound rail.

Fairbanks-Morse 350-ton coaling towers were installed at division terminals in 1908. Water facilities were improved over several years. Multiple wells were drilled in several locations and even Panhandle, where once effort had been wasted on a hand-dug well, became a water station. Often, gas-powered pumps worked beside old Eclipse windmills. At Woodward the railroad tapped springs several miles upstream and across the river. Steel tanks, often with treatment plants, first appeared at terminals and new water stations. Then in 1912, began a program to replace old wooden tanks with the familiar 24 foot diameter steel tanks.

The Construction Department had begun local operation on the New Mexico segment December 18, 1907, surrendering to the Operating Department on July 1. Much work still needed to be done, particularly completion of trackside facilities. Ice docks opened at Belen, Clovis and Waynoka on March 1, 1909. A small amount of transcontinental-traffic was routed

over the line eighteen days later, to settle the roadbed. By September 9, it was thought safe to divert the major portion of the transcontinental traffic to the Belen Cutoff. As a result, for fiscal 1909 the SK of T posted net income of \$429,646.70, the first ever profit in the company's history.

Stock at 144,033 tons was still the heaviest traffic, but other commodities were showing well, too. Where in 1894 the SK of T had carried 100 tons of agricultural implements, in 1909, it carried 3,755—which was a little over half of the liquor trade. Fruit and vegetables amounted to 1,767 tons in 1905, which was up from nothing in 1894, but totaled 81,231 in 1909.

Continued construction was indicated by 96,726 tons of railway materials and supplies. The line west of Clovis had been temporarily assigned to the Rio Grande Division, but dispatching was done at Vaughn. Lines south and east of Clovis as far as Amarillo were operated by the ER of NM while the Santa Fe still operated the SK of T. The ER of NM and the SK of T had no divisional status but were operated by a common set of officers under Avery Turner as the Pecos Lines and the Texas Lines.

Motive power on the main line consisted of 885-class 2-8-2s west of Clovis and 1050-class 2-6-2s eastward. Branches were powered by ER of NM (PV&NE) power and small Santa Fe engines such as the 151-class Ten-Wheelers that were limited to twelve loads between Canyon and Plainview.

On New Year's Day of 1910, the Santa Fe inaugurated a new transcontinental passenger train, the Navajo, which was to provide "a faster and finer tourist car service than has any other road." Although created for the Belen Cutoff, it ran via La Junta until the Harvey Houses opened on the new route in the spring. Late in 1911, the Frisco began forwarding California Pullmans through Waynoka to St. Louis, Memphis, and Birmingham.

Creation of the Pecos and Plains Divisions came on November 15, 1910. Dispatchers at Clovis, who had been relocated from Vaughn, controlled track west to Belen and south to Pecos. The Plains Division dominated things to Waynoka, where the Panhandle Division took over to Wellington. Division offices were upstairs in the Amarillo depot. The old office building that had been moved in from Roswell was expanded to serve as headquarters of the Western Lines. A telegraph line was strung across the open prairie to La Junta for control of the northern half of the grand division.

In 1891, Santa Fe lines in the Panhandle had employed 67 people. By 1899, the P&NT had 227 and the SK of T, with no trainmen, had 70. A decade later, the totals were 1,290, which included the P&NT branch south of Canyon, and 1,092, now with trainmen. Some employees worked for both companies and are listed twice. By 1912, Amarillo alone accounted for 1,200 paychecks.

In 1911, new locomotives specifically designed for the Belen Cutoff appeared. These were notably ugly 2-6-6-2 Prairie Mallets whose strength was equal to any load and whose speed was equal to the tortoise of legend. As delivered, they did not perform well, but modifications and experience improved matters. Roundhouses needed enlarging for these giants, as did sidings for the longer trains they pulled. The Mallets also forced the long-delayed ballasting of the cutoff.

The P&NT connection with the Gulf Lines was taken by the Operating Department on November 1, 1911. This traffic used the Canyon junction until a better line connected at Texico, March 1, 1914.

The Eastern Railway of New Mexico was absorbed into the Santa Fe proper on February 1, 1912. As required by state law, the P&NT and SK of T remained as local corporations. The Pecos and Northern Texas Railway was leased by the other July 1, 1914, but there had been an important change the month before. The Southern Kansas Railway had disappeared February 15, 1899, and it was thought that its orphaned subsidiary, the Southern Kansas Railway of Texas, deserved its own name, one that would better describe its location and importance. It came on June 5: the Panhandle and Santa Fe Railway. The threadbare branch line had come of age.