

Re: Santa Fe's Postwar CTX Freight Train

From: JThomp1945@aol.com

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To all:

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I will attempt to include what we've learned since Tuesday's version:

Train: ATSF's CTX. (The symbol CTX existed until January 1, 1971 when the Santa Fe adopted its new symbol system and it became the 805.)

Road Power: 4-unit freight FT sets, until 4-unit freight F3/F7 sets arrived in 1948-53.

Helper Power: 2-10-2s, 4-8-2s, 2-8-2s (often 2 or 3 steam helpers), also FT sets (full or partial), until GP7s arrived in 1950-53, and GP9s in 1956-57. Number of helpers depended on train weight.

Direction: Eastbound only. (In the 1940s-1950s the westbound version was the TDF train, and in the 1960s it was the QLA.)

Description: California-Texas Express (or Extra?). A high-priority, redball freight.

Origin: Cars from train 138 from LA to San Bernardino. Stopped for switching in the B Yard at SB.

Destination: Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, and Oklahoma (east of Belen but west of Kansas City).

Railroads Represented: ATSF (including SFRD), railroads from the Southwest, South, and Midwest, and some from the Northeast, tank cars from UTLX, Shell (SCCX), Shell Chemical (SCMX), Union (UOCX), Associated (AOX), and Richfield (ROX).

Products: Perishables and non-perishables going to Texas. Oil and other petroleum products including asphalt, sulphur, sulfuric acid, etc.

Train Length and Weight: In 1948, the average length was about 70 cars, with an average of 24 empties (roughly 1/3 of each train consisted of empties). Average weight was about 3000 tons. In 1956 a typical length was 90 cars, with 24 empties, and a weight of 3770 tons.

Car Types: Reefers, Boxcars, Tank cars, Gondolas, empty Stock cars, possibly others.

Typical Schedule: Leave SB at Noon in 1943, 8:00 am in 1946, 8:00 am in 1947, 8:00 am in 1949, 10:00 am in 1955-56. 8:45 am in 1966.

Operations Details: As far as San Bernardino was concerned, the game was to send cars east and let Belen sort it out. Could include perishables for points within that blocking. The CTX,

powered by four-unit 5400 hp sets of FTs in the 1940s, were limited in tonnage to achieve the 14.5 mph minimum continuous speed on the 2.2% grade between Ono and Summit. In the 1950s, high priority trains such as the CTX were reduced in tonnage or provided helpers to enable a speed of 16 mph.

There are a number of intermediate terminals between Belen and Kansas City where blocks of cars could be swapped off the CTX. Albuquerque, La Junta, Dodge City, Newton, and Emporia via the Raton route or Clovis, Amarillo, Wynoka, Wellington, and Emporia via the Belen Cut-Off.

CTX carried perishable and non perishable carloads and priority empties plus other empties if permitted. It ran from San Bernardino (later from Hobart-LA) to Temple, Texas. Cars were destined to Belen, Clovis, Slaton, Sweetwater, Brownwood, and Temple, where they could connect with other trains to serve places such as Colorado, El Paso, points east of Clovis towards KC, and Fort Worth/Dallas and Houston.

There were countless times when a symbol train was filled to tonnage with enough traffic to make up two or three additional trains. Hence, you might see a 2nd CTX.

Modeling the CTX Train: An online 1953 photo shows the first 21 cars, which were 8 reefers, 6 boxcars, 4 tank cars, and 3 gons. We could also include flat cars and empty stock cars. One-third to one-half of the cars should be ATSF (including SFRD). For the foreign road cars, we could capture the flavor of the Texas destination by having Southwest railroads well represented (MP, Frisco, T&P, MKT, etc.). And we could include a few cars from the Northeast, such as PRR, NYC, B&O, Erie, and Wabash.

If you would like other info added to this, just let us know. We can keep on amending it as long as we like.

Thanks,
John Thompson