

Dayton-Oriented Chronology of the Carson & Colorado Railroad

with additions, corrections, and references

by Linda L. Clements

(last updated 5 May 2009)

[adapted and modified significantly from chronology by George Turner in
Narrow Gauge Nostalgia, 1965]

- 1880, January: Early surveys of new "Bodie Extension" of the V&T had been made. [Myrick]
- 1880, February 10: Route to Dayton is set for "Bodie Road." Dayton citizens donate land to V&T for depot. [Daily Nevada State Journal]
- 1880, May 10: Incorporated in NV as Carson & Colorado Railroad Company. H.M. Yerington, President, D.L. Bliss, Vice-President; D.O. Mills and William Sharon, principal stockholders. [per Turner, 1948 SP history]
- 1880, May 31: Work began with train to Mound House of 80 workers (mostly unemployed miners), a foreman, some officials, and a few visitors. [Myrick]
- 1880, end of September: Graders reach north end of Walker Lake. [Myrick]
- 1880, October: Graders reached Hawthorne; track laying started from Mound House [Myrick]
- 1880, October 27: Engine No. 1, the Candelaria, placed on the tracks at Mound House [Myrick]
- 1880, November 14: 3 miles of track completed from Mound House toward Dayton. [Nevada State Journal]
- 1880: (between November 14-30): Line completed to Dayton. [per newspaper articles]
- 1880, November 30: 7 miles of track completed from Mound House through Dayton. [Reno Evening Gazette, 1880-11-30]
- 1880, December 18: 14 miles of track completed. [Myrick]
- 1881, January: Two daily construction trains operating [Myrick]
- 1881, January 8: Free excursion train run from Mound House 29 miles to the end of the track in Churchill Canyon. [Myrick]
- 1881, January 28: The first public freight was accepted. [Myrick]
- 1881, February 2: C&C 50 miles past Dayton, construction of Dayton depot to begin the next week. [Daily Nevada State Journal]
- 1881, January-February: Flood damage in Dayton ; C&C tied up for 12 days [Reno Evening Gazette, 1881-02-07]
- 1881, February 3 or 4: First passenger train scheduled to reach Dayton (although passengers had already been riding back and forth from Hougham's ranch to Mound House, for free) [Lyon Co Times]
- 1881, March 1: Rails reached Walker [Myrick]
- 1881: March 10: The C&C RR began charging passengers 10-cents a mile to ride the train.
- 1881, April 7: C&C reached Hawthorne [Myrick]
- 1881: April 14: C&C sent a free excursion train with 800 people to Hawthorne. [Myrick]
- 1881, April 18: Line from Mound House to Hawthorne went into service. [per 1948 SP history]

- 1881, September 18: Dayton Depot being built [Lyon County Times]
- 1881, November 30: Carson & Colorado Railroad Company, 2nd Division, incorporated in NV. [1948 SP history]
- 1881, December 17: 1st attempted train wreck, in Churchill Canyon, was averted [Myrick]
- 1881, December 31: Line from Hawthorne to Belleville, NV, opened
- 1882, February: Railroad completed into Candelaria, NV. [per Turner]
- 1882, March: Line from Belleville to Candelaria opened. [1948 SP history]
- 1883, January 20: 200 miles of track completed, line to Benton, CA, opened. Bodie & Benton Railway was preparing to grade an extension to connect to C&C at Benton. [per Turner, 1948 SP history]
- 1883, March: Line from Benton to Laws opened. [1948 SP history]
- 1883, July 11-12: William Sharon takes Darius Mills on a ride from Mound House to Keeler. [Myrick]
- 1883, July: Railroad now extends to Hawley (Keeler), CA. Regular passenger service commenced in August. [per Turner]
- 1883, August 1: Regular train service from Mound House to Hawley [Keeler] begins. [1948 SP history; Myrick]
- 1888: C&C RR lays a spur C.C. Stevenson Mill (Rock Point).
- 1890, August: Construction began on 7½-mile-long Cottonwood Branch, built into timber area southwest of Hawthorne. Wood was used to fuel locomotives. [per Turner]
- 1891: Spur from Hawthorne to Cottonwood opened
- 1892, February 27: The Carson & Colorado Railway Company, incorporated in CA to consolidate three divisions and to refinance previous corporation. [per Turner, 1948 SP history]
- 1892, July 23 and August 2: The three divisions of the C&C RR Co. sold to C&C Railway Co. [1948 SP history]
- 1893: C&C RR spur to Rock Point Mill in Dayton removed. First cyanide plant built by Capt. Herman Davis across spur roadbed. [Dayton State Park brochure]
- 1900, March: C&C sold to Southern Pacific Railroad for \$2,750,000. R.J. Laws retained as Superintendent. [per Turner, 1948 SP history]
- 1902: 7.3-mile Cottonwood branch abandoned and track removed. [1948 SP history]
- 1904, July: Narrow-gauge Tonopah Railroad completed, connecting to C&C at Tonopah junction, 9 miles south of Mina, NV. [per Turner]
- 1904, December 3: C&C being straightened and standard gauged, crews working at Dayton where several "heavy cuts" are being made [Reno Evening Gazette]
- 1905, January 24: C&C "broadgauged" to near Wabuska [Daily Nevada State Journal]
- 1905, January 29: Train wreck fifteen miles below Dayton. No one hurt. [Virginia City Enterprise/ Reno Evening Gazette]
- 1905, February: Standard gauging done to and standard- to narrow-gauge freight transfer point at Wabuska. [Myrick, p. 181]
- 1905, April: Nevada & California Railway Co. incorporated in CA to construct and operate a railway line from Hazen (on Central Pacific Railroad) to Mojave, to meet SP, and a branch from Churchill to Mound House, to meet V&T. Like its predecessor, this was a wholly owned subsidiary of the SP. [1948 SP history, Turner NGW]
- 1905, May 11: N&C RW purchased physical properties of C&C RW, whose stock was owned by SP. [per Turner, 1948 SP history]
- 1905, June 24: Standard-gauging reaches Hawthorne [Myrick, p. 181]
- 1905, July: 116 miles of rails from Mound House to Mina standard-gauged, while 10 miles of narrow-gauge from Mina to Tonopah

- Junction equipped with a third rail for standard- or narrow-gauge operation. 16 miles of narrow-gauge through Hawthorne—founded by the C&C in 1881—abandoned. Mina made terminal for both standard-gauge and narrow-gauge trains. (Tonopah Railroad followed and standard-gauged their 60-mile line.) [per Turner]
- 1905, September: 28 miles of standard-gauge line completed from Churchill to Hazen, connecting former C&C with CP main line operated by SP. 9-mile cut-off completed from Gillis to Luning, NV. [1948 SP history]
- After Hazen cut-off completed, traffic on Mound House to Churchill line reduced to a mere mail route with an accommodation train once a day each way. [per Fannie Hazlett:]
- Length of standard-gauge line Hazen to Tonopah Junction was 138 miles; from Churchill to Mound House 26 miles, from Tonopah Junction to Keeler 151 miles (latter line remained narrow-gauge). [1948 SP history]
- 1905: Operation of 6-mile Candeleria Branch discontinued in 1905, and resumed in 1908 when an attempt made to work remaining low-grade ore in Candeleria.. [1948 SP history]
- 1905, October 5: Dayton Depot burglarized, safe dynamited [Reno Evening Gazette, Daily Nevada State Journal]
- 1905, November 1: Tonopah Railroad Co. and Goldfield Railroad Co. consolidated into Tonopah & Goldfield Railroad Co. Trains operated 9 miles between Tonopah Junction and NV&CA RW terminal at Mina under a trackage right to Tonopah Junction. [1948 SP history]
- 1907, January 10: 16-mile branch line from Hazen to Fallon opened. (Lengthened slightly in 1908) [1948 SP history]
- 1907, March: Flood takes out C&C trestle in Dayton
- 1907, July 1: SP took over operation of NV&CA RW under lease. [1948 SP history]
- 1908, February 24: Construction begun from Mojave, CA, of 143-mile standard-gauge to narrow-gauge. [1948 SP history]
- 1908, June: Standard-gauge opened to Cantil, CA
1908. October: standard-gauge opened to Searles.
1910. October 22: Standard-gauge “Jawbone Branch” opened from Mojave to Owenyo, CA, 16.7 miles north of Keeler. (Built to facilitate construction of the California Aqueduct.) [per Turner, 1948 SP history]
- 1912, January: Nevada & California Railway corporation dissolved and the narrow gauge assumed Southern Pacific designation. [per Turner]
- 1912, February 23: Properties acquired by Central Pacific Railway Co. for administration; operation by SP continuing under lease. After this date, car lettering reflected C.P.-S.P. [1948 SP history; Turner]
- 1932, March 1: 5½-mile narrow-gauge branch from Filben to Candeleria abandoned. [1948 SP history]
- 1932, June: SP requested discontinuance between Mound House and Wabuska. [Reno Evening News]
- 1934: Track dismantled from Filben to Candeleria [per Turner]
1934. April 25: 26-mile line from Mound House to Churchill abandoned. [1948 SP history]
- 1936: Track dismantled from Mound House to Churchill, NV. [per Turner]
- 1938, February 16: Final narrow-gauge train, powered by three engines, took all narrow gauge stock from the Mina yards to CA for operation on the Benton-to-Keeler section. Keeler became new terminal. One rail removed from 9 miles of three-rail tracks between Mina and Tonopah Junction and in Mina Yard. [1948 SP history]
- 1938, February 20: Operations discontinued on 50-mile narrow-gauge line from Tonopah Junction to Benton, CA. [1948 SP history]

1942: Early in 1942 rail and fastenings were requisitioned by United States for use by Navy Department in war effort. [1948 SP history]

1943, February 16: 31 miles of narrow-gauge line from Benton to Laws, CA, abandoned. Shortly thereafter rail and fastenings were requisitioned by Metals Reserve Co., an agency of the Federal Government, and sold to war industries for remelting or rerolling. [1948 SP history]

71-mile Keeler Branch was then the only narrow-gauge railroad on Southern Pacific's approximately 16,000-mile system. [1948 SP history]

1946, October 1: Operations of Tonopah & Goldfield RR suspended

1948, March: Tonopah & Goldfield RR track dismantling commenced

At this time only remaining portions of C&C were standard-gauge from Churchill to Tonopah Junction, NV, about 110 miles, forming part of Southern Pacific's Mina Branch; and narrow gauge from Laws to Keeler, CA, 71.3 miles, still narrow gauge, comprising Keeler Branch of San Joaquin Division.

1960, April 29: After 80 years of operation, service was ended from Laws to Keeler, the final remaining section of the far west's largest narrow-gauge.

References:

Fanny G. Hazlett and Gertrude Randall, "Historical Sketch and Reminiscences of Dayton, Nevada," *The Nevada State Historical Society Papers vol. III 1921-1921*, pp. 3-93.

David F. Myrick, *Railroads of Nevada and Eastern California, Vol. 1, The Northern Lines*, 1962

Southern Pacific Railroad, *The Carson And Colorado Railroad Company Historical Outline*, Compiled by S.P. Bureau of News, March, 1948

George Turner, *Narrow Gauge Nostalgia*, J&H Publishers, 1965

George Turner, *Slim Rails Through the Sand: Southern Pacific's Narrow Gauge*, Trans-Anglo Books, 1964.