Saddened by Deaths

The Railroad was deeply saddened to learn of the deaths of two of its Divisional Superintendents in separate tragedies during February.

Mr. S. G. Thompson, whose headquarters were at Murphysboro, passed away at Missouri Pacific Hospital in St. Louis on February 5. He had been ill only a short time. His fine Christian spirit, his warm, friendly smile and helpful ability will long be remembered. Mr. Thompson was widely known, having started his career on the south end as a brakeman in 1837. He had been Superintendent of the Murphysboro District since 1931, after serving in various other capacities.

He is survived by his wife and one son. A brother, R. C. Thomson, is Superintendent at Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

In the other tragedy, Mr. F. E. Wall, who had jurisdiction over the Eastern Division from St. Louis to Chicago and over the Western Division from Roundhouse to Bloomington, with headquarters at Bloomington, was fatally injured in a traffic accident in Chicago on February 29. His wife was painfully injured and General Superintendent W. S. Pipas of Mobile, who was also a passenger in the car, was slightly hurt.

Mr. Wall had had a background in the Engineering Department going back to his initial job in 1884. He had been Division Superintendent since 1901 and prior to that held other Operating Department positions. Calm and untruffled in connection with business and staunch in his friendships he will be badly missed by patrons and fellow employees alike. He is survived by his wife and one son.

Presented High Award

Assistant Vice President Frank J. Lott of Mobile was presented recently with the Newton D. Baker award for his outstanding work with the Mobile Community Chest and Council. The award was presented by Philadelphia banker Robert N. Hilbert, who represented the National United Community Funds and Councils of America. The presentation took place during the annual meeting of the Mobile Community Chest and Council.

While Mr. Lott was President of the Chest, the Gordon Smith Center was activated which will soon become all of the following agencies: Group Aid for Retarded Children, Mobile Association for the Blind, the Mental Health Center and Goodwill Industries.

Two Directors Elected

Two prominent business executives with extensive transportation experience were elected to the Gulf Mobile and Ohio Railroad Board of Directors at the February meeting.

They are William E. Mullins, Percy, Illinois, Vice President and Director of the Southwestern Illinois Coal Corporation, and Mr. Hjalmar N. Johnson, St. Louis, Vice President-Traffic of Ralston Purina Company.

The two new Directors fill vacancies on the 15-man board left by the deaths of Mr. William H. Bixby, a partner of G. F. Walker and Company of St. Louis and Mr. H. Austill Fluss, who was Chairman of the Board of First National Bank of Mobile. Together these two business men, who were regarded with great esteem and affection in their communities, contributed 53 years of exceptional guidance and assistance to the conduct of the affairs of the railroad.

The new Director, Mr. Mullins, is a mining engineer of international repute. He directed the development of his Company's Captain Mine at Percy five years ago, along with the design of special equipment and facilities which have made the Mine the Nation's largest producer today.

Our Mass-ter Movement coal trains originate here and are the first trains of their kind to have been designed and engineered simultaneously with the loading and unloading facilities, and as an integral part of the unit operation from the very start.

Mr. Johnson, the new director from St. Louis, has a wide experience in traffic and is a recognized authority in this field. He held traffic positions with Ralston Purina at Minneapolis, and was Production Manager of one of their large soybean processing and feed manufacturing mills in Iowa Falls, lowa, before being transferred to Company headquarters at St. Louis in 1956. Mr. Johnson has headed Ralston Purina's Traffic Department since 1963 as Vice President.

Colonels to Governor

Newly inaugurated Mississippi Governor John Bell Williams named Vice President and General Counsel James N. O'Quinn and Assistant Vice President Fred W. Johnson as Colonels. Mr. O'Quinn, whose headquarters are at Mobile, is a native Mississippian and received his LLB degree from the University of Mississippi. Mr. Johnson resides in Jackson, the capital city, and in his railroad work is widely known throughout the state.

Two Good People

"Congratulations for such two good people," an ill passenger on one of our trains wrote about Conductor H. J. McGraw of Bloomington and Mrs. R. S. Strzyzinski, an employe at that time in Glenn Yards Agency who was traveling aboard.

"I had contracted the flu and they were wonderful to me — very attentive and considerate — and believe me I was sick," said Mrs. Naomi Skoning of Lincoln, Illinois.

Mr. and Mrs. Strzyzinski now reside in Chicago where Mr. Strzyzinski is a G&M O Commercial Agent, having been promoted from Division Freight Agent at Chicago.
Bridge on Stilts in Limelight

As Modernization Program Announced

GM&O freight trains cross the Black Warrior River bottom at Tuscaloosa, Alabama over a trestle that is almost three-quarters of a mile long. Like "a black snake sunning in the swamp", the bridge soars 111 feet above the river bed.

Soon the busy structure will undergo another modernization operation. In the first step, on the 2,121 foot long north approach, five steel spans mounted on steel towers will be erected at 360 foot intervals. These 37½ foot long fireproof sections will separate the new timber construction. Besides adding strength, if one of the wooden sections should catch fire it would burn only between the steel towers. Expense and time for repairs would be confined to a single 360 foot section.

Story In Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Fire is a trestle's "greatest hazard," Ernest Allen, Division Special Agent at Tuscaloosa, told Journalist Andrew Sparks who did a recent story on the picturesque bridge for his paper, The Sunday Magazine of the Atlanta Journal and Constitution. "We've never had a fire on the bridge that I know of, but one of our men did put out a small fire close by a couple of years ago. We keep fire lanes around the trestle. We've never had any flood damage either as far as I know," Mr. Allen remembered.

Reporter Sparks says he doesn't know why, but news stories about railroad trestles have a certain fascination for readers. "They pull an unusually large number of letters of comment," he says.

Maybe the answer is in the lead to his story which read: "anybody who grew up in a railroad town, old trestles lead straight back into memory, back to forgotten afternoons of walking the rails to the river, looking for treasures like rusty spikes or ends of fuses that would burn blazing red with an acid smell. To a flat-land boy, the trestle was a mountain-top, a scary, forbidden footpath high above water and oozing swamp mud. Crossing it the first time was a heart-pounding hike, like scaling a strange peak or dropping into the blackness of an unknown cave. Some older boy in a crowd always knew a hair-raising tale about a guy having to hang on by his fingernails to dodge an unexpected freight."

Silver Spike Is Driven

Some of the early glamour of the Black Warrior trestle was recalled in this manner by the author.

"When it was finished, on a May day in 1886, bands played, townspeople gathered andoin (Continued On Page 4, Col. 2)
GM&O Is Key

FROM RAILWAY AGE

The problem was that part of Illinois grain crops have been held in the fields if Continental Grain Company was to get it dried in St. Louis and moved to New Orleans for export — as fast as possible.

The answer was to route a steady flow of corn-filled hopper cars toward New Orleans in daily-departing blocks — by integration of the corn-cars with a regularly scheduled Gulf, Mobile & Ohio freight train. Rails became the key to a consistent farm-to-port corn movement without serious pooling at any point.

The results: Within two months, Continental moved 3.2 million bushels of Illinois corn to help give New Orleans a record-breaking output; Illinois farmers cleared out their 1967 super-corn-fields; and GM&O gained nearly 70,000 tons of unloading that otherwise might have gone on barges. The moves also taught Continental the value of tight scheduling and of having complete logistical control.

"Without this operation, Illinois farmers would have had serious trouble marketing their corn, and it might have been held back in the fields and would have deteriorated there. The wagon would have been a major harvest lag," says James N. Zarvos, Continental's division transportation manager in St. Louis.

* Rails were essential. What it all boiled down to was fast, dependable rail movement between East St. Louis and New Orleans. Although it was necessary for Continental to dry the corn before shipment south, that part of the process was taken care of by the just-in-time completion of a new dryer (reportedly the largest in the U.S.) at the company's East St. Louis elevator in mid-October. However, corn could be dried only as fast as it could be moved out. So, it could come in from the fields only as fast as it could be shipped out. In previous years, Continental had used barges, but "this year they just couldn't have handled the huge harvest," Zarvos says.

* Zarvos met with representatives of the four railroads that would be needed, and in early October they drafted a traffic pattern centered on a basic unit of 28 covered hopper cars. Ted Deville, GM&O's traffic vice president at Mobile, played a key role in planning the movement.

* Barge time cut in half. According to Continental's officers, a consistent five-day loading/unloading time was maintained throughout the operation. Barge time for the same movement would have been between 10 and 20 days. The total spout-to-spout (East St. Louis) time for the hopper cars was six days.

The big month was November, when the "train-a-day" movement continued unbroken so that by Dec. 1 more than 750 carloads and 2.5 million bushels had gone to New Orleans. As a result, Continental's Westego elevator had a record-breaking export output in November of 142,900 bushels of grain. This was the largest known output of any Gulf elevator, according to Zarvos.

Heads Travel Club

General Agent Dan Barnard, well known member and a super salesman in our Passenger Department, is the new President of the St. Louis Chapter of the Skin Club of North America. He is an international travel organization composed of executive of the travel and transportation business.

Operation "Hot Pursuit" Keeps Cars Moving

Codie Thomas Retires

Division Freight Traffic Manager Codie E. Thomas, whose first job was as a clerk in the Bells, Tennessee Agency, retired on March 31 after more than 49 years with the Company. As the business day ended general office friends gave him a farewell party and best wishes. An ardent golfer, Mr. Thomas expects to spend his time competing in the area pro-am tournaments and visiting a daughter who lives in upstate Alabama.

Mr. Thomas had been DFTM at Mobile since 1951, returning there from Montgomery where he had been Division Freight Agent for four years. Prior to that Mr. Thomas had held various positions in the traffic department at Mobile after being transferred from Bells in 1924.

Mr. Browning DFTM

Promoted to DFTM at Mobile was Commercial Agent E. G. Browning who will head the office. Mr. Browning is well known in Gulf traffic circles. He has been with the railroad since 1957 and had held positions of Chief Clerk to Div. Frl. Traff. Mgr., Freight Service Agent, Freight Traffic Agent and Commercial Agent, all in Mobile.

Son Receives PHD

William J. Wilhelms, son of GM&O Tax Commissioner and Mrs. Maurice F. Wilhelms of Mobile, has received a Ph. D. degree in civil engineering at North Carolina State University.

He graduated number one in his class at Auburn University with a degree in mechanical engineering. After working for a Mobile engineering firm for a short while, he returned to Auburn as an instructor to obtain his Master's degree in civil engineering. Grants from Ford and National Science Foundations made possible his devotion of full time to study for his most recent Ph. D. degree. He is married and has four children. He has served two tours of duty as a reserve officer with U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.

This distinguished scholar has decided to follow an educational career and is assistant professor of civil engineering at West Virginia University.

The above Operating Department communication declaring a new offensive on something cars are posted in all strategic areas last month.

The dual objective of the concerted campaign as outlined on all divisional fronts is to make more cars available for shipper loads and to reduce excessive rental payments for foreign cars while they are on our line.

The enthusiastic cooperation of every man is being marshaled in support of the drive to keep freight cars moving.

The plan of battle includes these offensive measures:

1. Search out and dispatch all idle cars, particularly at little used sidings and small industries.
2. Guard against surplus equipment at large industries.
3. Get foreign cars to interchange points before midnight when new rental day starts.
4. Place loads at unloading docks before 7 a.m. to assure prompter unloading during customers free demurrage period.
5. Keep closer tab on future car needs
6. Better communications between terminals on cars on route
7. Ferret out the cars that hang around and do nothing.

Freight cars are the basic tool of our business. They cost between $10,000 and $25,000 apiece, depending upon the type and the various loading devices. Every day we must earn $10,000, plus $3,000 in interest, to pay on the debt we owe for our large, modern fleet.

Also we paid out almost $5,000,000 in rents for the use of other people's cars while they were on our railroad last year, and this is in addition to the amount we received in rents when our cars were on other lines.

Operation "Hot Pursuit" is now in full swing, "Think about it, Talk about it. Do something about it. KEEP CARS MOVING." This is the watchword.

Heads Civic Club

James (Jim) F. Brown, Division Freight Traffic Manager at Jackson, Mississippi, was named President of the Kiwanis Club there for 1968.
Held Every Job

D. D. Daley, left, District Storekeeper at Bloomington, has fifty years of service with the Company and all of it has been in the store department where he has held every job. It was a happy occasion when Manager of Purchases and Stores Claude Verbeck presented him this 55-year pin and gold pass.

3 Retire at Bloomington
(From the Bloomington, Ill. Pantagraph)

Two dedicated employees marveled Saturday over the many advancements in modern railroading as they spent their last hours in the (Bloomington) railroad yard. Gene L. "Butch" Heiser and W. Huff retired after many years with the Gulf, Mobile and Ohio Railroad.

Mr. Heiser made his last run behind the big diesel engines after 45 years in the cab of the various cars. He made his first trip from Chicago to St. Louis Dec. 30, 1922. He plans to spend much of his time in his basement woodworking shop and restoring furniture.

(Merced Missed A Day)

James W. Huff has never missed a day of work other than regular holidays and vacations in his 55 years with the railroad. The Signal Supervisor also spent all of his years with the signaling detail. Mr. Huff plans to spend his time at his home. He has no hobbies and plans to do as little as possible until spring.

Also retiring at Bloomington is Supervisor of Freight Claim Prevention Jesse Oliver, who is well known over the System. Mr. Oliver's service record goes back to 1929 and for a number of years he was Chief Clerk to the Freight Agent.

Tips Hat To Agent

"To a very fine gentleman and a very active civic leader we tip our hat to Mr. N. C. Hurley," The Alamo (Tex.) Crockett Times said in a recent article.

Training his excellent work with a big program, the newspaper went on to say, "Any job that Mr. N. C. undertakes he puts one hundred percent in effort in seeing that it is done right, and this policy pays off for him, for he has been working for the GM&O Railroad as Depot Agent since 1925."

The news story continued, "Mr. Bowen is also very active in civic life other than helping with the young ball players. He is a member of the Alamo Lions Club, of which he has held many offices, including president and is now Chairman of the Club; a member of the Alamo Lodge where he has been Secretary and Treasurer; and a member of the Church of Christ and is chairman of the Crockett County Chapter of the American Red Cross.

"He says kiddingly that between helping with the various civic projects, he finds it difficult to find time to make a living working for GM&O Railroad."

Evidently Mr. Bowen hasn't spent much time away from the Railroad Company work, the 65-year old man has never missed a day of work, and outside of vacation he has never missed opening the depot door for business.

Bridge
(Continued From Page 2, Col. 2)

paraded and a pretty girl drove down a silver spike to complete Tuscaloosa's connection to rail lines west of the river and join it to Artesia, Miss., and a railroad linking central Alabama with the Gulf Coast and points east.

And the article in the Atlanta newspaper continued.

Matthew Clinton, a retired Tuscaloosa high school teacher and a local historian, has a yellowed copy of the Tuscaloosa Times, printed on the first anniversary of that glorious day, which tells what it was like.

"Never before in the history of the town had the old Druid City presented such a scene of gaiety and rejoicing," Mr. Clinton read, holding the ancient paper carefully on a lightboard. "For 11 years our people had been fed with hope that Tuscaloosa would be intersected by an ancient rail road line to the south and west. . . ."

On that day, people came from far and near, including most Alabama newspaper editors who had gathered at Tuscaloosa for a meeting of the Alabama Press Association. Triumphant arrows were raised on Greenwood, emblematic of the city hall, arrows "wreathed with evergreens and bunting in the national colors and electric lights in colorful globes, arranged to give a brilliant effect in red, white and blue at night."

There was a parade with a brass band and open landaus carrying the president of the railroad, Mr. Hurley, other dignitaries and pretty Miss Kate Jemison, the railroad's daughter-in-law. At the station, Miss Jemison was presented a silver spike and a handsome oak hammer, and she drove down that final spike amid tremendous applause.

College Boy Pranks

The Atlanta Journal and Constitution article was of the opinion that life for the old trolley may have been more interesting and exciting because of being in a college town, home of the University of Alabama.

The story went on to explain and quoted Division Foreman Agent Allen: "A university student drove a car across this trolley a few weeks back. He just let air out of his tires and took off. We didn't know about it until later. One year some college boys got off the bridge until a policeman saw them and he stopped them. They've had much trouble with trespassers on the bridge. They know it's so high and dangerous."

The highly popular article also detailed many of the modern innovations in our operation such as the unit coal train, hot box detectors etc.

Commends Ticket Clerk

Thoughtful cooperation on the part of Springfield Ticket Clerk Charles W. Peek in helping a group of misplaced baggage quickly caused their host, Charles W. Merchant to observe: "such service is appreciated and adds even more to our high regard for the GM&O R.R."

The passenger bags had been left alone on the station platform and were returned to the depot when it appeared they were unclaimed and might be stolen. Mr. Peek telephoned ahead and had the bags back in Springfield on the next Northbound Train, notifying Mr. Merchant, who is Springfield Consulting Engineer, that his guests' traveling cases were at the depot. "Mr. Peek was extremely helpful and courteous," Mr. Merchant wrote to commend.

East St. Louis Agency

Marion Woods, long-time Warehouse Foreman and now a clerk in the East St. Louis Freight Office, was mighty happy to receive his fifty year pin and gold pass from Agent L. A. Boshard, standing. But Mr. Woods emphasized that he still has a lot of good years left that he wishes to spend in service for the GM&O.

Retiring in the same office is Rate Clerk Fred DeZonia to help take care of his father who has been ill for some time. "He will be greatly missed," Agent Boshard says. "He was always so friendly and helpful to all."

Milwaukee Office

District Freight Agent F. O. (Speedy) Kutz, well known head of our Milwaukee office retired recently after 52 years as association with the transportation industry there. Forty years of his railroad career have been with the Company and his many friends are wishing him well in his new role of leisure. Joining the Company as a Traffic Agent in 1927, he held various positions until he was made DFA in 1947.

Mr. Phelps succeeds him

He was succeeded by Donald E. Phelps who was promoted from Commercial Agent, the position he had held since 1959. Mr. Phelps has wide experience in rates, sales and service, having worked for two other railroads before joining GM&O in 1942.

Mr. Stryzinski Commercial Agent

The new Commercial Agent is Raymond S. Stryzinski who has been with the Company since 1926. He was Freight Traffic Agent at Chicago, had succeeded Mr. Allen there from Mobile in 1966. Prior to that he held various positions in accounting and traffic.

National Winner

The Tuscaloosa County 4-H Forestry Program, which the GM&O Agricultural and Forestry Department co-sponsors with several other businesses, has produced a national award winner in Wayne Hitt, Gordo, Alabama.

The program is directed by Extension Farm Agent James Cooper and like similar projects the railroad co-sponsors throughout its territory is designed to promote tree planting on wood lots and to encourage forestry conservation generally.

The national winner lives on a 400-acre dairy farm with 220 cows. "Most of our timber land was cut over pretty close just before we bought it, the youth says and goes on to list a long list of forestry practices he learned and used and which he feels instrumental in earning him the national award.