TO MY ASSOCIATE EMPLOYEES:

In these days of cruel warfare when nearly every family among us has a heartache, I am not going to wish for you a Merry Christmas. However, I do hope that you will make this Christmas one of your best—that a serene courage may abide with you and that you will be joyful because of the helpful touch which you gave to some sorrowing soul or needy body.

"Above a weary war-torn world
There rings at Christmas-tide,
The Angels' song of hope and love
Of peace that will abide.
And in the darkness of the night
A star comes shining through,
To say our dream is not in vain
God's love will make it true."

I. B. TIGRETT, President.

GM&O Again Honored for Garden Campaign—Gets Highest Annual Award

For the second consecutive year, Gulf Mobile and Ohio Railroad has received the highest award of the National Victory Garden Institute, according to information received by Development Director S. A. Robert.

The Award was made to our Railroad for its part in sponsoring a Victory Garden program among its employes, and for giving seed free of charge to any employe planting a garden. GM&O was the only railroad in the nation to encourage the planting of Victory Gardens by giving away the necessary seed.

A plaque will be sent to the Railroad and it will carry an appropriate inscription telling of GM&O's part in the national food program.

(Continued on Page 3)

It'll Be A Merry Christmas
On The Rebels

Our Train Hostesses will play Santa Claus on Christmas Day by giving the children who happen to be on the Rebels that day a sock full of candies, nuts and fruits. The trains will be decorated with all the gay colors of the season, and there will be a tree in each train. In the photo at right, Hostesses Hammond, Morgan and Weems try their hand at filling Christmas socks.

New Orleans Party

The GM&O personnel at New Orleans got into the spirit of the holiday season with a party and get-together on Dec. 12. Everyone had a big time.
Proposed New Passenger Station for Mobile...

Purchase of the Gulf Terminal Company property at Mobile and plans for erecting a new and modern passenger station were announced during the month. Plans call for demolition of the present station and erection of a new structure of concrete and glass construction on the same location. The new station will have modern appointments throughout, affording Rebel passengers the latest conveniences in comfort. The above is an architect's drawing of the front of the terminal. Because of the war, no definite date of construction has been announced.

Passes Restricted to Essential Use During Holiday Period Dec. 22-Jan. 2

With the Christmas season bringing a rush of military and civilian travel, our Railroad—in line with the other carriers—has found it necessary to restrict the use of passes during the period December 22-January 2, inclusive.

This includes annual, term or trip passes. In order to travel on a pass during the restricted period, a permit will be necessary. And permits will be issued for the following reasons only:

- Officers and employees traveling on Company business.
- Railroad employees in military service, to enable them to visit their homes.
- Emergency travel, such as necessitated by serious illness or death.
- Students traveling between their homes and schools.

Practically all the railroads have the same, or similar, regulations governing the use of passes in the rush travel period. So if you hold a pass and expect to use it between December 22 and January 2, inclusive, decide first whether you are eligible for a permit, and get it before boarding the train. Permits will be issued through the regular channels for requesting passes.

WAR BONDS MAKE AN IDEAL CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Army Seizure Causes Pass Extension

The Company printing our new Annual Passes advises that the Government has taken over its entire building for use by the Army, necessitating moving of the printing plant to other quarters. This will result in a delay in issuing the new annual passes, and a circular is being issued extending present annual passes of the Gulf, Mobile and Ohio Railroad Company to and including March 31, 1945.

John P. Stewart Will Retire After 46 Years Service on Jan. 1

As the year 1944 completes the calendar, so will Chief Clerk John P. Stewart of the Master Car Builder Bureau write "finis" to his long railroad career.

For Mr. Stewart, the affable and bespectacled MCB Bureau chief whose duties it has been to keep a diary on all the freight and passenger cars on our Railroad that need repairs, retires on January 1 to lead a life of ease after 46 years of service. He started with the M&O back in 1898 as Painter Helper, became Car Repairer in 1901 and switched to the GM&N as Chief Clerk in the MCB Bureau in 1918.

Few persons, perhaps, not directly connected with the Bureau know of the maze of detail necessary to keep track of the thousands of freight and passenger cars on our line that must be repaired each year.

Every time our company repairs a car for another railroad, a record must be submitted to the car owner, with a bill and complete list of particulars. And the same procedure is followed by other railroads with respect to us.

And to govern all these charges and countercharges the Association of American Railroads has published a Code of Rules, which Mr. Stewart and other bureau people refer to as their "Bible." In addition to taking care of repairs, the MCB Bureau looks after weighing cars for shippers, and keeping tab on the empty or "light" weight of freight cars so that when a loaded car is put on the scales the shipper will be able to simply deduct the empty weight to obtain the actual load weight.

This is all past for Mr. Stewart, but we present it here to give our readers an insight into the railroad life of the retiring head of the MCB Bureau.
New Jefferson Barracks Bridge Spanning Mississippi River Dedicated...

The new $5,600,000 bridge across the Mississippi river at St. Louis, over which Gulf Transport Company is the only bus line to operate, was dedicated on December 9 in ceremonies participated in by the Governors of Missouri and Illinois and other dignitaries.

Upper left photo shows the Jefferson Barracks color guard standing in front of the Illinois delegation, on the main part of the bridge. Center top shows the span, which is seven-tenths of a mile long with a 24-foot highway and 199 feet above the water. Lower center photo shows the actual ribbon-cutting ceremony, with Governor Dwight Green of Illinois, second from left, and Governor Forrest C. Donnell of Missouri, right, participating. The pretty sponsors are Miss Florence E. Metter, for Illinois, and Miss Paula Marie Waldemer, for Missouri. Photo at right shows the sponsors with GM&O and Gulf Transport personnel who attended the ceremony. The Gulf Transport bus took our delegation to the event. Personnel from our St. Louis offices, including General Freight Agent J. S. Chartrand and Division Passenger Agent Dan Barnard, attended in the interest of Gulf Transport, which will operate some schedules over the bridge, providing a short-cut run to Columbia, Ill., and down to Waterloo, from St. Louis. Some of the schedules will continue to operate through East St. Louis also.

Onetime GM&N Chief Engineer Dies in Oregon

A lot of the oldtimers on our Railroad will be sorry to learn of the death of B. V. Wright, who was Chief Engineer on the GM&N just after the first World War. Mr. Wright died in Portland, Oregon, and was buried on Thanksgiving, according to advice here. He left our service to become associated with the Gilchrist-Fordney Lumber Company at Laurel, and later went to Oregon to work for the Gilchrist Timber Company.

Death took Section Foreman Eugene Dufford of Tolson Yards, East St. Louis from our ranks on December 11. Mr. Dufford died at the Missouri Pacific Hospital. Burial was at Trenton, Tenn.

GM&O Again Honored

(Continued from Page 1)

Records show that more than 3500 employees were furnished with seed, and two Railroad gardeners entered the national Green Thumb contest sponsored by the Institute. The entries were Mrs. Renie M. Vande vender, Agent at Lauder dale, Miss., and Mrs. Homer Davidson of Jackson, Tenn.

Lester J. Norris, chairman of the Victory Garden Institute's committee on awards notified Mr. Robert that GM&O had been honored. Other members of the committee include representatives of the New York Victory Garden Council, a gardening magazine, and the Quartermaster Corps of the U. S. Army.

Invest in the Future...
Buy an EXTRA WAR BOND Today!
GETTING SET FOR A RUN—Engineer C. M. Graham, seated in cab; Brakeman Adrian Betts, standing on the steps, and Fireman J. S. Jackson, lower, were warming this engine up as the camera caught them. The scene is at Meridian, in our yards there.

Speaks at Dyersburg Meeting

President Tigrett spoke at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce at Dyersburg, Tenn., on November 27, discussing the affairs of the railroad and touching briefly upon world events. The meeting, held in the Hotel Cordell Hull, was a special membership gathering of the Dyersburg Chamber of Commerce.

It's Quits for Miss Benz of Passenger Dept.

Miss Mary V. Benz, who spent 37 years to the day in the Passenger Department, serving during that time under four heads of the department, retired on December 1.

Miss Benz started to work in the department as a Stenographer on December 1, 1907, in St. Louis with the Mobile and Ohio, and ended her career in the Mobile Passenger office as Stenographer. She has returned to St. Louis to reside with a sister.

During her 37 years of service Miss Benz served under John M. Bell, C. Rudolph, and Stanton Curtis, who were General Passenger Agents, and under Passenger Traffic Manager P. E. Geil. During vacations, she traveled over much of the nation, from one coast to the other, at different times.

Sportsman You Should Know

Commercial Agent Robert F. (Bob) Reynolds, Jr., of our New Orleans Traffic force is making quite a reputation for himself as a sportsman these days. So much so that Val Flanagan, who writes the “Fishing ‘n’ Hunting” column for the Times-Picayune, recently devoted part of his column to him.

Now, the Rebel Route folks over in New Orleans, and all his friends down in the lower regions of Louisiana which he travels, have known for a long time that if you couldn’t find Bob Reynolds you could lay your last bottom dollar on it that he was fishing or hunting. And the writeup is a fitting testimonial to the fact that Bob knows his outdoor sports as well as he does his freight soliciting! (Let us know when you plan your next trip, Mr. Reynolds.)

Everything’s Ready for The Accounting Dept.
Christmas Party Dec. 23

Christmas Eve is always a festive day in the General Offices at Mobile and for many years Vice-President and Comptroller DeNeefe and his Accounting Department force have presented a yuletide program. This year, as in the past, they will start the Christmas holidays with a special wartime program. Mr. DeNeefe and members of his Department are inviting General Office workers to bring their husbands, wives, sweethearts or brothers who are in uniform. Of course, all workers in the General Offices are invited.

As Master of Ceremonies, our Vice-President and Comptroller is unequalled this side of Broadway and for the past three or four weeks there have been secret rehearsals behind closed doors after working hours. The actors and actresses will be taken from talent within the Accounting Department and if the music and song which emanate from these rehearsals can be taken as a sample of the Christmas presentation, then we urge you not to miss the show, which will be held on the fourth floor at 10 a.m. Saturday, December 23.

As a matter of fact, the show is so good that it is already “hooked solid” for the holiday period. It will be given for the USO at Mobile, at the USO’s request.

Rio Agent Passes

Agent J. E. Noble of Rio, La., who represented our Railroad for many years at that point, died November 24 in the Bogalusa hospital. Mr. Noble was well known on the Louisiana Division of the Line. The News joins his many other friends in expressions of sympathy to his family.
General Foreman at Tolson Retires

After 40 years of service with our Railroad, General Foreman J. W. Chisum of Tolson Yard shops at East St. Louis, has retired. He officially ended his career on Oct. 31.

Mr. Chisum entered railway service in 1892 with another line, and joined the M&O's ranks in 1904 as Machinist, holding that job until 1918. From 1918 to June, 1943, he was Roundhouse Foreman, and on the latter date he was named General Foreman at Tolson. He will now devote his time to taking a well-earned rest.

The Mail Train

We Will Miss Him

Dear Mr. Tigrett:

I am not gifted in letter writing, but I should like to, in my humble way, express my feelings toward you and the best railroad company in the country.

In retiring because of illness—after being employed by the Gulf, Mobile and Ohio Railroad for the past thirty-three years—I want to thank your very able and efficient and most likable assistant, Mr. Bisbee, and all.

It has paid me several very pleasant visits during my illness and has cheered me up considerably. He has also been a great help to me in preparing my papers for application for my annuity.

In passing, let me say that I have enjoyed very much my service with the GN&O and have the kindest feelings for all the officials and employees of every department. I am truly grateful for my many friends on the Railroad who so generously came to my relief.

I am happy and proud to have been just a small part of so wonderful an organization. My association with you and the Railroad will forever be a bright spot in my garden of memories.

Faithfully and sincerely yours,
(Sgd.)
T. A. Mason, Car Inspector
Iselin Shops
Jackson, Tennessee.

Railroads Are a Morale Builder, Too

Dear Mr. Tigrett:

I am setting forth my relationship with your rail lines in order to request a favor which I believe will actually help win the war.

My father has been an employee of the M&O, now GN&O, since 1908. He has served at Crawford, Miss.; Prattville, Ala., and is now at Gordo, Ala. In my childhood days, I knew the M&O by heart, every crosstie and fireman between Mobile and Union City, Tenn. I also am old enough to remember when the Birmingham and North Western ran eight passenger trains a day past Friendship, Tenn.

Would you please see to it that I am placed on a mailing list to receive each new timetable and advertising booklet as they come off the press? I may be in Germany in April, and a good old GN&O timetable would certainly make me feel at home when the mail orderly brings it up in his jeep.

In civilian life, I was an accountant. Although I never held a place with any railroad, I have twenty years of experience as a station agent behind me, because I've helped my Dad in his work.

Thank you very much for your kindness.

Lt. F. E. Randle, Jr.,
North Camp Hood, Texas.

Tour of Duty

The old men were proud to have served their country in World War II, and to have done so with distinction. It was a time of sacrifice and dedication, one that will always be remembered by those who lived through it.

First Missouri Hostess

First Rebel Hostess from Missouri is Miss Jewell Kruse, of Jefferson City, the state capital. Miss Kruse is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, where she won a degree in physical education, and she attended the University of Missouri for three semesters. She was the Badger Prom queen there during one of her terms. Like a great many other Rebel Hostesses, Miss Kruse taught school for a time, in her home city, where she also served as secretary to the state legislature one summer. She likes to dance and swim and anything athletic is in her line.

EMPLOYEE’S DAUGHTER NAMED

Mrs. Mignonette Lambert McDonald and Geary B. McDonald, daughter and son-in-law of Mrs. Edith Lambert of the General Office, have been elected Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron of Gulf City Chapter, Order Eastern Star.

DIARY

Dean of Agents

On the North End

Genial B. H. “Bert” King, who has been our Agent at East St. Louis since the first World War, holds the record of the longest service of any Agent on the north end of our Railroad.

That in itself may not sound unusual, but when you consider that Mr. King has been railroading for nearly 50 years, that’s enough to put him in the select class of oldtimers. And, as a matter of fact, Mr. King has done his railroading through three wars, from the Spanish-American to World War II.

“I’ve seen the troops come through here for all of them,” he reminisced the other day as he sat at his desk in the East St. Louis Freight Agency which overlooks the swirling Mississippi river and the city of St. Louis, “and I’ve seen the important part that railroads play in the wars.”

Spry despite his white hair and long years of service, Mr. King has a store of tales that would fill the freight house, and he can keep you interested for many hours at a time talking about the “old days” of railroading.

Beginning with the Mobile & Ohio on May 1, 1896, he has spent most of his time in the Operating Department, except for a tenure in the Traffic Department at Cairo for about seven years. He also was Agent at Cairo for about two years, prior to his East St. Louis service.
The Cassidey Boys Chance To Meet in French City

An overseas letter tells of the meeting in a French city of the Cassidey boys—Master Sergeant Gaillard Cassidey, Jr., formerly of the Receipts Dept., and Technician Fourth Grade Elwood Cassidey, formerly of the Purchases and Stores Dept.

It was a happy meeting, too, for they ate fruit cake sent them by the GM&O General Office Employees Club, and had a bottle of wine. Their meeting had its humorous angle, also. Gaillard had heard Elwood was in a certain town and went to see him with the idea of surprising him. Arriving, he stepped inside the office where Elwood was working, and just stood there.

"You look like you're cold," said Elwood, in a casual way. "Yes, it is cold out there," replied Gaillard. At that, Elwood recognized his voice and almost jumped out of his chair.

You see, Gaillard was almost inept, since he had grown a moustache.

EMPLOYEE'S SON KILLED IN ACTION

Lieutenant Malcolm Lauderdale, son of J. P. Lauderdale of our Jackson, Tenn., forces, has been killed in action near Bari, Italy, according to the War Department.

The many friends and associates of the senior Mr. Lauderdale were shocked to learn of his son's death. The young man, who held a master's degree from the University of Texas, had been in the Army for about two years. During his collegiate days he had been a star athlete, and later he coached track at Texas high schools.

Former GM&O Boilermaker Now Repairs Bombers

For his efficiency in assisting in repairing and maintaining battle-damaged bombers of the Eighth Air Force Service Command, a former Jackson, Tenn., Boilermaker of the GM&O has been raised in rank.

He is Sergeant Linville L. Holley, recently promoted from corporal at an Eighth Air Force Liberator station in England. Sergeant Holley joined the Army in December, 1942.

Safety Committee Members Inspire Their Parents

Wayne David Poole, member of the GM&O Junior Safety Committee, is proud of his dad's safety record, and rightly so. For his father, Car Inspector E. A. Poole of Tamms, Ill., has been working for the Railroad for 20 years without suffering a personal injury. And David is going to see that his dad keeps up the good record. He's one of our "Be Careful, Dad" boys.

The young daughter of Section Foreman J. A. Newby of Marion, Miss., is a member of the Junior Safety Auxiliary, and an active member. She is Miss Emogene Newby. Her father has 19 years of service with our line, and she's very proud of him.

General Offices Brightened

Offices in the General Office Building in Mobile look new again following a general cleaning and painting.

Miss Howard Leaves

After two years as a Rebel Hostess, Miss Cargill Howard leaves us as this issue of the News hits the press. Miss Howard once worked in the News office, as Secretary, and we regret to see her leave the Rebel Route family. Just what her plans for the future are, she hasn't said, but we hope that she'll be paying us a visit occasionally, at least.

Section Foremen Claim Annuities

Two Section Foremen named Green retired during the month—J. F. Green of Citronelle and Tobe D. Green of Baldwyn, Miss. Mr. Green of Citronelle has a service record of 43 years, and resigned effective December 1. Mr. Green of Baldwyn will officially retire on December 31, and his service record dates back 32 years.

Two other Section Foremen have been away from their jobs because of illness. They are J. B. Davis of Montrose, Miss., and J. W. Pirtle of Jackson, Tenn. We hope they are back on the well list soon.
Conductor Pat Lawson hopped aboard the Rebel at Citronelle the other day, wearing his hunting togs and a broad smile. We knew he'd bagged some big game, and sure enough, a little questioning brought out the fact that he was taking some venison home.

Deer hunting is a favorite pastime with Mr. Lawson, and we gathered that he'd rather get out on a good hunt than eat.

The Passing Scene—Cotton, unpicked for the lack of labor in some fields, sparkles in the sunlight as the buses and trains pass through North Mississippi.

Our new Agent at Louisville, Miss., is Pete Lowe, who succeeded James Deming, now located at Jackson, Tenn. J. E. Clay advanced to the Cashier's post left vacant by Mr. Lowe.

Say, fellas, Lester Schaffer writes that his outfit has a good supply of cigarettes down in the South Pacific . . . Les also tells us that he has planted a Victory garden with seed supplied by G.M.O. and devotes a paragraph to describing the native pets of his unit—parrots. You'll remember Les as being in the Traffic Dept.

We are glad to learn that Supt. D. F. Rice of Jackson, Tenn., who has been in the St. Louis hospital for several months, is doing nicely . . . trust he will be back among us soon.

Miss Jean Chapman, former Secretary in the Purchases and Stores Dept., bought a one-way ticket to Myrtle Beach, S. C., during the month. She was married to Corporal Cullman K. Leonard of the Army Air Forces on Nov. 26 . . . Our belated congratulations, Jean.

Master Car Builder R. B. Douglass has been taking it easy of late because of doctor's orders . . . and we hope to see him back around very soon.

Miss Mary Sudeith, Stenographer in the Chief Engineer's office, has been to San Antonio visiting friends and relatives in the service.

Former Rebel Routers at Jackson, Miss—Three of these men were with our Railroad at Jackson, Miss., prior to entering the Navy, and the fourth is the son of an employe there. From the left, they are: Tommie Dickson, S 3/C, who is aboard a floating drydock in the Pacific; Johnnie Lowry, S 3/C, aboard a yard oiler in Cuba; Raymond Jones, S 3/C, aboard a destroyer escort, and Jimmie Lossett, in boot camp at Great Lakes. The latter is the son of Boilermaker F. J. Lossett at Jackson, and the other three are his sons-in-law.

TO THE SERVICES . . .

MECHANICAL
Lincoln Johnson, Shop Laborer, Frascati Shops
Edward H. Humphreys, Mach. Hlp., Meridian
Wyatt H. Hall, Blacksmith Appr., Louisville, Miss.
Dewey D. Hicks, Car Appr., Jackson, Tenn.

OPERATING DEPT.
Edward E. Dillor, Brakeman, E. St. Louis
James R. Rape, Jr., Brakeman, Okolona, Miss.
Billy Hays Joe, Check Clerk, Corinth, Miss.
James Elbert Hudson, Brakeman, Louisville, Miss.

PURCHASES and STORES DEPT.
Lester R. Huggins, Laborer, E. St. Louis
Robert G. Richardson, Laborer, Jackson, Tenn.

ACCOUNTING DEPT.
Marjorie Mastexa, Rate Clerk, Mobile

TRAFFIC DEPT.
Coleson Wells, Buffet Hlp., E. St. Louis

ROADWAY
Albert Hopson, Sec. Lm., Lauderdale, Miss.

Faust Was In Capture of Brest

We hear from Johnny Faust that he's with General Hodges' First Army in Holland. Johnny, who is Lt. John C. Faust, participated in the capture of Brest, where 37,000 German prisoners were taken. An account in a recent edition of the Army newspaper, Stars and Stripes, sent home by Johnny, tells of the difficulties under which his group is fighting, and of the heroism of the boys.

The General Office bond quota is at least $125 closer to being met as a result of bond sales stunt in the interest of the Sixth War Loan. Much credit for its success should go to J. C. Billings of the Traffic Dept.

In telling of the masterful refinishing job done in a Rebel coach last month, the name of Bill Schuler, who actually laid the new floor, was not included in the list sent us. We are glad to give him credit due.

Employe's Son Gets High Army Rank

The son of Track Supervisor L. C. Arnold, Major General William H. Arnold, is one of the Army's youngest officers to hold that rank. He was recently promoted from Brigadier General.

Major General Arnold is said to be the Army's youngest division commander, heading an infantry division in the South Pacific. He holds several high awards, including the Legion of Merit.

HOME DURING MONTH

Fred Powell, former Clerk in the Transportation Department at Mobile, was on a much earned furlough during the month. Fred joined the Air Forces in October of 1942 and since that time he has seen a good portion of the world. For about six months, he was listed as missing from his unit in the Western European theater, but the full story of that will have to await war's end to be told. He wears the Air Medal, with an Oak Leaf Cluster and the Good Conduct Medal, besides his usual smile. He's the son of Chief Clerk W. F. L. Powell of the Mobile Local Agency, and is to be reassigned to duty following his furlough.
WHERE NORTH AND SOUTH MEET—
The Gulf Transport Railbiners on the St.
Louis to Mobile run, and vice versa, meet
at Columbus, Ky., where they pause for a
moment. Shown here are Fred Schaeck,
right, on the south run at the time; Larry
Sadowski, left, who was just along for the
ride at the time, and Bill Whelan, center,
on the northbound bus at this meeting.

This picture was made recently by Mrs.
J. W. Mothershead, Crichton, Ala., when she
cought seven of Gulf Transport's Bus Oper-
ators together. From the left, they are:
A. L. Davis, P. W. Norton, Earl Chapman,
J. W. Mothershead, Fred Clements, J. W.
Collins and C. H. Stewart.

East St. Louis Rate Clerk Does Pastels As Hobby...

W. F. Marsteiner, Rate Clerk in the East St. Louis Freight Agency, is making a name
for himself as an artist. The picture you see him holding was done by him recently, copied
from a photograph that appeared in the November, 1943, issue of the Rebel Route News.
It is a pastel, done with crayons, and Mr. Marsteiner did it in about six hours. The picture
now hangs in our East St. Louis Trendley Avenue station, where passengers may see it as
they purchase tickets for the trains.

Pine Tree Best Lumber Producer

The idea of growing trees on farms
much the same as you would grow a
crop of cotton or corn is spreading over
Mississippi and the South, whose vast
cropland is abounded in thickly
wooded forests.

In a concerted move to replenish the
dwindling supply of pine timber, farm-
ners are being encouraged to put in
tree farms. In Mississippi alone, there

Fewer Forest Fires . .

The Railroad's campaign against fires
starting along its right-of-way drew the
praise recently of a lumber company
forester. Noticing that there have been no
fires on his firm's lands adjacent to
our Line at Koch, Miss., Forester A. M.
Dexter of the Denkmann Lumber Com-
pny wrote Development Director Robert
that the interest shown by section crews
and the Company in general was appreci-
ated.

are now 35 of these units whose owners
are pledged to carry on improved prac-
tices with a view toward providing a
perpetual crop of timber. Alabama has
a similar system in operation, and Ar-
kansas, Texas and North Carolina also
have them.

The Southern pine will actually grow
faster than man can cut timber if prop-

Many persons who see this type engine
have wondered why the hood was on the
front. It is a special type heater utilizing
the steam of the engine—Steam that other-
wise would be lost.

The NEWS Wishes
All A Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year
Story of the Rebel Route as it Appeared in Railroad Magazine

By STUART COVINGTON

Besides its commanding position as a modern rail system which gave the South its first streamlined train and the world its first train hostess, the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio enjoys the enviable reputation of having contributed more to the field of historic lore than any other American road of comparable size.

Most colorful among the founders of the Rebel Route, as it is now called, was Col. William C. Fulkner, a dream-eyed lawyer and novelist who looked like Charles Dickens and was slain by a rival on the very day of his election to the Mississippi State Legislature. Another Rebel Route celebrity, Corp. Wilson W. Brown, worked as a locomotive engineer on a predecessor line, the Mobile & Ohio, before he took part in the Andrews railroad raid of 1862. Andrews, Brown and eighteen other Union spies seized the General in the heart of Georgia, ran her for eighty-six exciting miles, and were finally captured by the Confederates.

Casey Jones a Legend

And don't forget Casey Jones. Although the hero of the popular song was catapulted into fame from an Illinois Central engine cab, his rail career began on the M&O. Even today the Rebel Route clings to the Casey Jones tradition. The oldest runner on the GM&O roster is Joseph C. Brady, brother-in-law of the immortal Casey. “Joe” hired out to the railroad company on Christmas Day of 1898. He has always lived in Jackson, Tenn., the home town of Casey’s widow, Mrs. Jane Brady Jones.

Credit for the impressive size of the GM&O belongs largely to Isaac Burton Tigrett, a mild-mannered banker who turned railroader in 1911; at the age of twenty-six, becoming President of the Birmingham & Northwestern. When “Ike” took charge of the B&N it was a modest 45-mile pike running between Jackson and Dyersburg, Tennessee. This road had been chartered in 1910, completed in 1913. Using the B&N as a nucleus and with the aid of carefully planned mergers, Tigrett built up the 1959-mile Class I carrier we know today. Not many rail executives in any era can match this amazing record of achievement.

’Like Giant Vine’

The GM&O was fashioned by Ike Tigrett from the component parts of half a dozen other roads. It now spreads like a giant, irregularly-shaped vine from bustling East St. Louis, Illinois, through the rich and fertile valley of the yellowish Mississippi to the war-busy seaport cities of Mobile and New Orleans. This might be called the Nation’s baby trunk-line system. Its remarkable “second growth” was attained during a period when many of its more prosperous and well-established neighbors were finding it difficult to keep their financial heads above the water.

In short, the GM&O, under the firm, capable hand of Mr. Tigrett, bears the almost unique distinction of having progressed from a struggling short line to a well-to-do through carrier during a brief and exceedingly unstable period in which many older, stronger companies toppled into the hands of receivers.

Boasting two important north-south trunk routes between East St. Louis and the Gulf ports, together with an important line to Montgomery, Ala., once the capital of the Confederacy and now a teeming railroad hub, the young network is in a position to siphon into itself a sizeable share of the rich traffic that forever flows to and from the Midwest, the Northwest and the Gulf of Mexico.

In this and the January issue, the Rebel Route News will reprint in full the story about Gulf, Mobile and Ohio Railroad appearing in the January issue of RAILROAD MAGAZINE. We reproduce the article by special permission of Popular Publications, Inc., publishers of Railroad Magazine. The original story is illustrated with numerous photographs and drawings which for reasons of brevity by the News cannot at this time reproduce.

Author of the article is Stuart Covington, youthful writer of our Line city of Columbus, Miss., whose interest in railroading and writing has won for him much fame.

In reprinting the story, the News presents it compactly with the idea that the two insertions may be combined for a permanent historical account of the Railroad.

Passengers on the sleek silver and red streamliners, known as the Rebels, can still behold some of the fast-fading glamour of the Old South—a type of glamour that will never return. Industries, too, are changing. Immediately north of Mobile, Ala., the trains glide by remnants of a once-mighty monarch of the forest, the yellow pine, reminders of the awe-inspiring woods which used to cover mile after mile. In northern Mississippi and western Alabama you see mostly snowy cotton and golden corn.

Still riding GM&O passenger northbound trains, we reach the famed “blue grass” of Kentucky, on which some of the finest colts in America are munching their way to horsehood. And further north we gaze at the first real hills we have yet encountered along the route, the Alto Pass. At this pass helper engines couple onto freight trains to assist them over the grade and into the broad plains which give Illinois its nickname of “Prairie State.” At Cairo we cross the deep and fast-flowing Ohio River.

Nearly Century Old

Giant sawmills, dwarfed by their own sawdust piles and dotting the southern section of the GM&O, send millions of board feet of lumber to market. Long, snake-like trains of tank cars move oil from Louisiana to the East, while yellow fleets of reefers hustle Florida perishables westward through the road’s St. Louis gateway. Until the war, whole banana trains moved over the line three times a week, each hotshot carrying two cabooses, one for the crew, the other for banana messengers. GM&O hauls out the products of Dixie and brings in shipments which keep the wheels of Southern industry turning.

The GM&O is nearly a centenarian. The oldest of the railroad units which
form the present pattern dates back to 1847, the year after the United States had entered the War with Mexico. At that time a group of astute Mobile business men under the leadership of M. J. D. Bullyan conceived a sure-fire plan to develop their city's port. Eleven years previously, when Mobile's population was a bare 15,000, a railroad had been chartered to parallel Mobile Bay to Dog River. This early venture, the Cedar Point line, gave the citizens incentive to construct a road of their own but on a much grander scale. The Ohio River was their cherished terminal. Here, river traffic could be diverted to Mobile instead of following the sinuous Mississippi down to the city's competing port, New Orleans.

**Project Pushed**

The project appeared sound, and in the following January the Mobile & Ohio Railroad was incorporated by legislatures in the states involved, Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee. Construction began at once. Enthusiastic builders pushed the rails through dense forests of pine into flat Mississippi and then hillier Tennessee. By 1861 they reached Columbus, Ky. Another Columbus, the home of your author in Mississippi, was tapped by a fourteen-mile branch whose history bears considerable interest.

The new company desired to lay its main line rails into Columbus, Miss.; but timid citizens, fearing the din and grime of the little wood-burners, voted a sizeable sum to keep the fledgling railroads out of their streets; and so the light strap-iron rails were laid fourteen miles to the west. Later, however, the city fathers repented of their rash judgment and persuaded the Mobile & Ohio to construct a branch into the city.

**No Sunday Trains**

"But," they admonished company officials, "you must not run your trains on the Lord's Day. We cannot have our worship disturbed."

Thus it came about that for a long period of years no trains puffed into Columbus on Sunday. This arrangement annoyed the traveling public but delighted the M&O employees, who did not work on the Sabbath.

Many miles of the line were built by the brawn and sweat of enforced toil. A payroll of that era, still extant, sets forth the terms of contract in bold, flowing script. Names of the various slave-owners are stated, as well as those of slaves such as Big Jim, Bob, Tom, Elijah, etc. This labor was paid at the rate of twenty dollars a month, none of which, however, was turned over to the Negroes who did the actual work.

**Civil War Hinders**

In 1850 the new enterprise received a substantial land grant by act of Congress, and this material aid spurred on the progress of construction. But in 1861 an obstacle more formidable than all others blocked efforts to push ahead the new road—our Civil War was raging! The railroad sabotage which marked this conflict is too well known to need repetition here. It is enough to say that the M&O was wrecked from Union City, Tenn., near its northern terminus, clear down to Okolona, Miss., the destruction taking in trestles, bridges, stations and rails. Even the shops at Mobile were gutted.

When peace finally returned to the war-weary land, the M&O owned little more than it had possessed at its beginning—except, of course, of right-of-way. Track had either been ripped up or rendered unfit for service, and precious few engines or cars were still able to run. But the railroadmen rolled up their sleeves and turned resolutely to the task of rebuilding, this time without slave labor. The years that immediately followed General Lee's surrender were filled with disheartening hand effort. In an area overrun by "Carpetbaggers"; but by 1870 the Mobile & Ohio began to look like a real railroad again.

**Resources Meager**

The company's resources were still meager, and this fact, coupled with the national panic of 1873, threw the Mobile & Ohio into a receivership in 1875. For about seven years the road fought its way through this unhappy state of affairs, finally returning to solvency without a forced sale and without repudiating its obligations, much to the joy of security holders.

In 1883, while American railroad construction was at its height, the M&O reached the broad Ohio River at North Cairo, Illinois, thus fulfilling a dream of its early sponsors. The event was marked with gaiety, music, feasting and speech-making. But the road had not yet attained its final growth. Far from it! St. Louis, a rising star in the Midwest, beckoned further northward.

In 1886 the M&O made its first annexation, acquiring the narrow-gage St. Louis & Cairo, widening it to standard gage and opening through freight and passenger service between the busy new metropolis on the Mississippi River and the old established port of Mobile.

**Colonel Falkner Appears**

Meanwhile another arm of the future Gulf, Mobile & Ohio had begun to take shape. And here the dramatic figure of Colonel Falkner stalks into the picture. Born in Knox County, Tennessee, on July 6th, 1825, William C. Falkner studied law and served in the War with Mexico and the Civil War. After laying aside the sword, he turned to railroad construction. The first road he built bore the bewildering title of Ripley, Ship Island & Kentucky. It was completed in 1872, connecting Ripley, Miss., with the Memphis & Charleston line at Middleton, Tenn., and was one of the first narrow-gages in the country to provide both freight and passenger service.

The financing of this little pike was an epic in itself. Falkner tossed in all of his own slender capital and all he could borrow on credit. Besides that, people along the route were so eager to see the rails laid that they donated labor and the use of horses and wagons, also lumber, tools, land for the right-of-way—anything usable they could spare.

**Ambitious Project**

Falkner's original intention was to build clear through to Chicago, an ambitious project indeed! Under various names—the Gulf & Ship Island and the Gulf & Chicago — this venture was pushed. Falkner applied to the State for financial aid. At that time Mississippi had a standing offer of $4000 per mile for railroad construction within its borders. However, this applied only to broad-or standard-gage roads. The Colonel, who was also a lawyer, presented his case so effectively that legislation was passed including narrow-gages in the grant. Falkner then continued his efforts to extend his line both north and south, and it got as far as Pontotoc, Miss.

In those dark days the State of Mississippi resorted to the practice of leasing convicts to private industrial concerns for enforced labor. Those taking advantage of this system were mostly railroad and highway contractors,
among them the outfit which built the narrow-gage C&G from Ripley to Pontotoc. Nearly all that stretch was the work of convicts. Prisoners who performed this drudgery were closely guarded by men armed with whips and rifles. Punishment of barbaric cruelty is said to have been meted out for small offenses and many a poor devil would make a break for freedom when opportunity offered. Under bond for returning inmates to the penitentiary, the contractors often found it easier to shoot a felon trying to escape rather than attempt to capture him.

**Frenchman's Grave**

Passengers on northbound trains of the G&N today often notice and comment on a white picketed square on the right-of-way opposite a small station house in Gayle, a few miles north of New Albany, Miss. This fence is always kept in condition and freshly painted, while the grave it surrounds is trim and neat. At the spot is buried an unknown Frenchman who was helping to lay the C&G roadbed when a guard ended his life.

The story which is told—and probably true—is that this Frenchman, unable to speak English, had been picked up on a charge of which he was innocent and, unable to defend himself, was sentenced to prison. In some way he managed to post a letter to his home town in France, telling of his plight. An old neighbor wrote in reply that his wife was critically ill. This letter arrived at a time when the unhappy foreigner was working with other convicts on the C&G job. Rendered desperate by its contents, he tried to escape, but was brought down by a bullet, and was interred where he fell. Someone presumably Section Foreman John Walls, who took pity on the victim, erected the fence and planted flowers on the grave.

**Reminder of Dark Days**

Later, when the C&G was taken over by the Mobile, Jackson & Kansas City, the story of the grave was related to C. F. Morgan, General Passenger Agent of the larger road. By that time the Frenchman's last resting place had fallen into sad neglect. Mr. Morgan was instrumental in having it cared for.

"Aside from the pathos of the convict's death," commented E. T. Winston in supplying the story of this roadside burial plot, "the grave is a sad reminder of a dark page in the history of Mississippi, when the convict lease system was in vogue. As stated, the road from Ripley to Pontotoc was built by convict labor. Some of the oldest citizens along the line may remember the convict laborers, the guards with their Winchester rifles, and the man Rivinome who boused the outfit with his huge cat-o'-nine-tails whip. Every foot of the way between the two towns mentioned has been marked by blood and brutality of the convict system—now fortunately gone. There are many similar graves, unknown and unmarked, along the same right-of-way."

**Falkner Novelist, too**

Colonel Falkner was not only a soldier, lawyer, and railroad builder; he was also a novelist. His best known literary work, The White Rose of Memphis, was rather widely read in its day. This book was first published serially in a local newspaper, The Ripley Advertiser, in Falkner's home town. The owner of that paper, R. F. Ford, sleeps today in a modest grave adjoining Colonel Falkner's.

The Colonel's first literary work is said to have been a little pamphlet telling the life story of a criminal named McComb, who was hanged at Ripley. The condemned man turned over this story to the Colonel, who as a young attorney had defended him in court, with permission to publish it. Falkner doubtless after making the manuscript more readable, had it printed as soon as he received it; and on the very day of the execution he sold out the entire edition.

Another incident of note in Falkner's stormy career was his peaceful meeting with the senior of the two train robbing James brothers. This meeting occurred on a Memphis race-track not long after Jesse had been shot dead by one of his own men and Frank, clearing himself in court, had forewarned banditry and taken to the "straight and narrow path." The former gunman said in his Missouri drawl:

"Don't Molest my Road"

"Colonel, it's a real pleasure to know you, sir. I've enjoyed reading some of your books."

Falkner was equally gracious. "Mr. James," he replied, "there are some things I admire in the record of you two brothers. But," he added with a sly grin, "I hope that if you ever decide to resume the outlaw business you won't molest my railroad."

The railroad builder's career, always dramatic, ended with a sensational tragedy. One of Falkner's backers, R. J. Thurmond, presented a financial ultimatum to the Colonel at a time when money was needed to tide the railroad over a crisis; but Falkner turned it down and, instead, borrowed from a Memphis commission house. Thurmond regarded this as a deadly insult to his honor. When the Colonel became a candidate for the Mississippi State Legislature with the avowed object of promoting legislation to put the railroad on its feet, Thurmond ran against him. The campaign was a knock-down-and-drag-out affair. Falkner won. On election day, November 6th, 1889, he had just verified the returns and was walking quietly along the streets of Ripley when the embittered Thurmond shot and killed him.

**Buried Near Tracks**

Falkner lies buried in the local cemetery, very near to rails that flash the glint of Mississippi sunlight onto the white marble monument over his grave. Surrounding this shaft is an heroic-sized statue of the Colonel himself, dignified with whiskers and frock coat, extending one hand toward the railroad as if to guard and bless his handiwork.

A friend of his commented: "Every time the roar of a passing train resounds in the Tippah hills beyond; every time the shrill blast of its whistle echoes over the intervening vales; always, as these vehicles of progress pass northward or southward, they perpetuate the memory of the man whose genius and hard work made their existence in these hills possible."

After the death of Colonel Falkner, his son, J. W. T. Falkner, became President of the company, and a grandson, Murry C. Falkner, Auditor and Treasurer. The new management carried out the founder's policies. No bonds were floated and no debts incurred for a period longer than thirty days. The Gulf & Chicago is today a valuable part of the G&N system.

**Lines Welded Together**

A procession of names of various old-time railroads passes across the landscape. The Gulf & Chicago gave way to the Mobile, Jackson & Kansas City, which we have already mentioned.
in connection with the grave of the unknown Frenchman. The M&K&C eventually took over the narrow-gage Kingston & Mississippi Central, a rural line which meandered between Bay Springs and Laurel, Miss.; and in 1909 the enlarged road adopted a new and mouth-filling title, the New Orleans, Mobile & Chicago. This it retained until it passed into the hands of the Gulf, Mobile & Northern syndicate in 1915. The new owners contrived to push their road into Jackson, Tenn.—Casey Jones' old home town—and as a somewhat regrettable afterthought acquired the Meridian & Memphis which connected Union with Meridian, Miss.

Meantime, the first World War had forced Government operation upon the reluctant company; and in 1919, when it became once more a free agent, it chose Ike Tigrett hopefully to chart its new course.

Tigrett Elected

It is said that Tigrett was made President of the Gulf, Mobile & Northern, after holding a similar post on the Birmingham & Northwestern, for the simple reason that nobody else wanted the job. How true this is may be open to conjecture. However, one fact is undisputed: the GM&N at that time was in a shaky financial status. From this morass Ike Tigrett was to lift the growing system, even though he himself still possessed but scant experience in railroad operation. The ills of the GM&N were so patently financial, however, that the ex-banker Tigrett was just the doctor to cure them.

An earlier President of the GM&N, named F. H. Merril, had declared in the Mobile Register in 1889: "So great has been the amount of business done by the road during the past year that we were compelled to take off the mixed trains and run freight and passenger trains separately." This rosy dream had long since faded. Business had crept into a hole and pulled the hole in behind it. Ready cash was a rare commodity.

Rebuilding Begins

It was up to Ike, who admitted that he "didn't know much about railroad-
ing," to acquire funds to mend the line's leaky financial structure. After several disheartening refusals, he negotiated a meager loan, enough to save the patient's life.

And now, before following the GM&N to its completion, let's take a look at early days on the M&O, the St. Louis, Mobile section of the line. Soon after it entered Columbus, Ky., the road inaugurated a fast meat and fruit run, in conjunction with the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern (now part of the Missouri Pacific), which hustled througherefers from St. Louis and Kansas City to Southern points on the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis. This hotshot was heralded as the "Green Line." It was the fastest freight train on the division.

To quote J. N. Cornatzer, former M&O brass pounder: "Woe unto the telegrapher who laid out this train at any point! This old time train had a schedule as fast or faster than many freights of today."

Freight Problems

Long trains of bananas also were shipped via the M&O, moving from Mobile to Cairo, where the Illinois Central hustled the fruit to Chicago wholesalers. At Mounds, Ill., the road had extensive icing facilities for cooling the yellow cars of perishables. Ice was supplied from a large nearby lake which froze over in the winter, the ice being stored until the summer. Thomas Sprost, of Columbus, Ky., supplied dealers on the M&O with ice, shipping it in reefers to the various points. This enterprise kept Tom in business for many years.

The first man in charge of a Mobile & Ohio pay car was a Mr. Bersonjohn, who, as early as 1870, handed out pay checks from his traveling bank, the checks being exchangeable as payment for freight bills and tickets. Since pay in the early days was low, M&O engineers often obtained recreation without cost to themselves. A favorite pastime was racing engines with men of the New Orleans & North Eastern (now in the Southern system), whose tracks paralleled those of the M&O for several miles through Mississippi cotton fields in the vicinity of Meridian. This sport was finally halted by the General Manager, who posted a bulletin forbidding such practice.

Famous Race

Shortly after his announcement an M&O runner received a challenge from an NS&NE man, while for the sake of his honor he would not refuse. The race aroused much betting and both parties were determined to win. When the two enginemen approached Enterprise, the first station south, the M&O hogger pulled into the lead, becoming the victor. His exultation was short-lived, however. On arriving at the next station he met the General Manager, who, unknown to the engineer, had coupled his private car to the rear of the train at Meridian. The M. S. strode forward, demanding: "Been racing again, haven't you?"

The offender, recalling that the warning had threatened dismissal for all violators, quaked as he replied: "Yes, sir." He was greatly relieved to hear the brass hat comment: "Well, I won't penalize you this time, seeing that you won, but if you had let that son of a bisset on the NS&NE get ahead of you, there's no telling what I might do."

Many stories have been told by old-time engine and train men of the decrepit condition of the Gulf, Mobile & Northern back in 1912 and '13. These we have culled from an old issue of the GM&N News (now called The Rebel Route News). The following was related by Engineer O. A. McMullen:

Train Stories

"I was pulling Extra 41 north on October 10, 1912, with Conductor R. C. Brown. At milepost 172 our train parted and the track was in such poor condition that our main drivers were stopped so much longer than the front and back drivers that the brake rigging held them off the rail. We couldn't get enough slack in the brake rigging to disconnect. At this time engines were run with long driver-brake piston travel. We waited for Number 2, which had a very small engine. It was necessary for Number 2's engine to be continuously bumped into engine 41 until our drivers would touch the rail."

One conductor, J. J. Milan, said whimsically that he felt he'd had an exceedingly good trip on December 20th that year, when he left New Albany, Miss., on Extra 72 south with Engineer W. A. Wilson and experienced only nine hours and fifty minutes delay in meeting fourteen trains, and finally succeeded in reaching Ackerman, Miss., before having to tie up because of the "hog law."

(To Be Concluded in the January Issue)