

The Railway
Historical
Southeast



& Locomotive
Society, Inc.
Chapter

Newsletter No. 47, June 1998

TITANIC Victim Buried in Jacksonville

by Mike Mulhern

[Editor's note: Our resident maritime devotee has suggested this article on transportation history as it is now in the minds of many due to the recent movie. This is the first half of an article which appeared in Evergreen Cemetery's booklet. The story of the three survivors will be published later.]

April 15, 1912. S.O.S.! The R.M.S. TITANIC plunges to the bottom of the ocean. 1,503 perish. Only 705 survive, rescued after enduring exposure for up to six hours in freezing temperatures on the open sea. It is arguably the most famous ship and most noted maritime disaster in recorded history.

The voyage would leave those who participated on it with an indelible mark upon their souls. Those who survived — and there are six still alive at the time of this writing — would always have a

claim to fame and would enjoy a lifetime of celebrity for their association with it. The event possessed a macabre mystique and dramatic attractiveness that would cause it to be immortalized in song, books, and frequent cinematic reenactments on the silver screen.

Jacksonville was home for four of the ship's passengers. One went down with the ship; three lived to tell the story. And in the end, three of the four wound up being "shipmates" once again — this time in Evergreen Cemetery, an oasis of lush green tranquility on North Main Street within sight of the city's skyscrapers.

The three who are buried there are Rev. Robert Bateman, Amelia Isaac and Louis Garrett. The fourth, Ada Ball, moved away from Jacksonville shortly after the disaster and is buried elsewhere.



Rev. Robert J. Bateman

Two local researchers have written detailed biographical accounts about the Reverend Bateman. Edward A. Mueller, Executive Director and Curator of the Jacksonville Maritime Museum, wrote an article, "Robert James Bateman and the TITANIC," that appeared in Vol. 11, No. 4 (1987) of the *TITANIC Commutator*, the quarterly journal of the TITANIC Historical Society. Local freelance writer and amateur historian John Cowart wrote two stories, "State's TITANIC Death was Loss to City" for *Jacksonville Magazine's* December 1985 issue, and "Down with the TITANIC," which appeared in *Folio Weekly* on November 12, 1996.

According to these articles, Bateman was born in Staple Hill, England October 14, 1860 and became a student of the ministry at an early age. While attending a Salvation Army meeting in a London slum, he met his future wife, Emily Jane Hall. He married her when he was 21, just after his ordination. During the next 40 years, Bateman fathered seven children (three sons and four daughters, with his oldest daughter dying in infancy) and enjoyed a ministerial career that allowed him to serve as a pastor in Wales, Ireland, England and in Baltimore, Md., Knoxville, Tenn. and Jacksonville in the United States.

But ministerial work was only part of his contribution to the world. "Ministers for the most part did not receive salaries back in those days and needed a side profession in order to support themselves," explains Kathleen Ellinghaus of Boulder, Colo., who is the wife of Frederick William Ellinghaus, one of Bateman's grandsons. "The Reverend Bateman was a stone masonry construction worker in the employ of his father, Charles. This work involved travel, because stone masons were migrant workers who bid on jobs and took up residence near the job site until the project was completed. We know that he did masonry work in Toronto and in Texas, that he helped build a bridge in Baltimore as well as several down in the Florida

Keys. He also was involved in the construction of Union Station in St. Louis, which is now a shopping mall, and his name is on the cornerstone there."

His ministerial accomplishments were equally outstanding. In Knoxville just before the turn of the century, he founded the still-extant People's Temple. And when he returned to Baltimore for a second ministerial stint around 1903, he befriended Catholic Cardinal James Gibbons and became the first Protestant to speak in the Catholic Cathedral there. After establishing himself in Jacksonville in 1907, he was appointed by the mayor to serve as the city's representative to the National Conference of Charities in Richmond, Va. in 1908 and was even invited to the White House to discuss his work with President Theodore Roosevelt.

Bateman was also an evangelist and traveled about staging revivals as well as a magic lantern show, "the Passion Play," which contributed to the growth of his reputation. One of his revival converts (actually, "recruits" would be a better term) was Eli Stanley Jones, who later became a famous missionary to India and noted Christian author. Jones wrote about Bateman in his autobiography, *A Song of Ascents*, and described him in this manner: "Through his rough exterior, I saw there was reality within. He was a converted alcoholic, on fire with God's love. I said to myself, 'I want what he has' ... He was my paragon. I found myself imitating him ... I (accepted) him for what he was — a devoted, diamond-in-the-rough winner of souls."

Bateman's son Percy Bruce expressed similar praises for the reverend: "My father didn't rant or rave in the pulpit ... He had a magnificent speaking voice. He played it like an instrument. He taught, explained, reasoned — always a positive approach. At the end he would invite those whom he had persuaded to join him. He never told those who didn't they would go to Hell ... His themes were comfort, forgiveness and hope." Reverend

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Bateman was blessed with a good stentorian singing voice that he enjoyed using and played the flute as well.

Through the years, his ministry sharpened its focus away from pastorships and more toward creating missions at which he could minister to the downtrodden, the unfortunate, the alcoholic and the prostitute. Although some described him as a Methodist and others as a Baptist, his work was basically nondenominational in nature and supported by a number of Christian sects.

When he arrived in Jacksonville in 1907, it was a winter resort city full of transients and needy who found their way to the LaVilla area of town looking for a better life and employment upon Henry Flagler's Oversea Railway. Bateman decided to become their angel of mercy. With the aid of the First Baptist Church, he established the Central City Mission and tirelessly served all who crossed his path who were in desperate need of help. "The object of this work," Bateman wrote, "is to visit the sick, visit the jail, visit the workhouse, feed the poor, clothe the needy, hold nightly meetings, provide a home for fallen girls, (run) a free reading room, visit hospitals, (distribute) religious literature, encourage temperance, help restore lost relatives and send the wanderer home." He also provided free firewood to the poor when the weather turned cold, employing some of those whom he served to chop and deliver the wood.

Here is a monthly report Bateman wrote giving an account of 30 days of the mission's activity: "836 men were given beds and 1,284 meals were furnished ... 182 men were sent to work... 12 poor families were aided, five wayward girls sent to the rescue home, and homes were found for four boys and three babies (that were) left on the mission steps."

"He hobnobbed with the desolate Magdalenes, the malodorous, pitiable tramps, the wandering, friendless hobos, the poor, besotted drunkards — all the children of misfortune," said Jacksonville Ministerial Association chairman Edward Ley in describing Bateman's work. To that, another minister added, "He gathered the sin-scarred brood, the poor, broken ones, penniless, homeless, hungry and in rags. He housed the homeless (so they could learn) to help themselves." And his son, Percy Bruce Bateman, added this to the picture: "He was never too tired or too sick to

respond to any cry for help. He didn't inquire why someone came to him for help or the merits of their need. He helped in every way he could. We always had an extra child or two around the house. Once it was a little boy whose mother was a dope addict. Another time, it was the dearest little girl whose mother was not able to provide for her. He always found good homes for them and we hated to see each one go."

The mission was originally located at 608 West Bay Street. In August of 1911, owners of the property at the corner of Bridge (now Broad) and West Monroe streets offered a low rate of rent and with a long lease and the mission moved to that location not long afterward. "Both these areas have been taken over by the urban renewal that has been under way in LaVilla in recent years," John Cowart laments. "A pillar for the Automated Skyway Express marks one site, and there is now a parking lot on the other."

One of the highlights of Bateman's Jacksonville period was his activity with the Masonic orders. He joined that group in December of 1907 and rapidly moved up in the organization until he attained the rank of Captain General of Damascus Commandery No. 2 (York Rite) and Master and Chief of Kadosh, Florida Consistory No. 2 (Scottish Rite). He served as chaplain of the Solomon Blue Lodge #20.

In spring of 1912, Bateman journeyed to England to fulfill a variety of objectives. He wanted to visit his mother's grave, escort his sister-in-law, Mrs. Ada Ball (or 'Balls' according to some sources), to the United States and visit a number of charitable institutions, the most important of which was George Muller's famous orphanage in Bristol. Muller had transformed his operation into a self-sufficient institution that included stores, a bakery, a laundry, etc., and Bateman was hoping to copy it and create a similar home in Jacksonville, but for prostitutes rather than children.

When he was ready to return to the United States, he had the opportunity to cancel his berth on the ship he was originally scheduled to sail on and book passage instead on the R.M.S. TITANIC, which he felt would be a more memorable experience because of all the publicity associated with the fact it was the new Queen of the Sea making its maiden voyage. He and Mrs. Ball boarded the ship in Southampton, England as secondclass

passengers.

For the first few days, the voyage was uneventful and Bateman even had the opportunity to perform ministerial duties by assisting another minister stage a religious service in the dining saloon Sunday, April 14 just before dinner was served.

Then later that night, the famous iceberg came into the picture to alter everybody's plans. About an hour after the collision, Bateman turned up at Mrs. Ball's stateroom, knocked on the door to rouse her, located the life jackets for her and her roommate, and instructed them to proceed to the deck immediately. By the time Mrs. Ball finally decided to do as he said, the ship was elevated at such an angle that she had to hold onto something to stay on her feet.

Bateman was there at the final lifeboat on that side of the ship to greet her. As she boarded the boat, he put his overcoat (or a steamer rug, according to some sources) around her shoulders. Then, as the boat was being lowered, he tossed her a silk handkerchief (or a scarf or black necktie — once again, sources differ) and exclaimed, "Good-bye. Have confidence that if we do not meet again, we will meet in heaven."

There is so much activity attributed to Bateman during the ship's final moments afloat and it is very difficult to separate myth from fact. There were reports that he opened the gates that were preventing the passengers in steerage from reaching the lifeboats; that he instructed the band to play "Nearer My God, To Thee" as the ship went down; that he gathered the men still on deck to the rear of the ship and prepared them for death, then led them in the Lord's Prayer. All that is known with certainty is that he was one of the 1,503 passengers to die that night, passing away at the age of 51.

Ada Ball watched the ship's final plunge from the vantage point of her lifeboat, and would later recollect when interviewed by Jacksonville newspaper reporters that, in the end, it was engulfed in a cloud of smoke that obscured it from visibility entirely. She claimed her lifeboat contained 70 women and children, that there was a hole in the bottom of it that allowed the cold ocean water to leak in, and that because of its overcapacity, there was fear it would never get far enough away from the ship to avoid getting dragged down when the TITANIC finally went to the bottom. Fortunately,

one of the other lifeboats tossed a tow line their way and dragged them to safety.

At various times during the next few hours, Mrs. Ball found herself holding a baby that had been passed down into the boat as it was being lowered into the water, and manning an oar herself in an effort to put some distance between herself and the doomed liner. She said the lifeboat was so crowded, however, that she could never make a full pull. She also reported to her horror that people in the lifeboats were firing handguns at others in the water who were desperately swimming toward them.

The exposure finally got to her and she lapsed into semi-consciousness while awaiting the rescue ship CARPATHIA. She was unable to walk after being hauled aboard that ship and was admitted to New York's Sydenham Hospital once back on land to be treated for shock. After she recovered, she journeyed to Jacksonville to live for a time with her widowed sister.

The surviving Batemans entertained little hope that the deceased reverend's body would ever be retrieved. Memorial services were held in his honor on Sunday, April 21, a week after the sinking, both at the First Baptist Church and at the Central City Mission. Other memorial services were held in Knoxville, Tenn., and Fish Ponds, England, places where Bateman served as pastor, but the dates of these are not known. At the First Baptist Church service, \$2,000 was subscribed toward the establishment of a Bateman Memorial Home at which the work he had undertaken could continue.

Meanwhile, the White Star Line — which had owned the TITANIC — chartered four vessels out of Halifax, Nova Scotia to scour the Atlantic in the vicinity of the shipwreck and search for passengers' bodies. A total of 328 were eventually recovered, 119 of which were buried at sea; 150 were interred - in three Halifax cemeteries and 59 were transported for burial elsewhere. On Thursday, April 25, four days after the memorial services, body No. 174 was pulled from the sea by crewmen aboard the recovery vessel MACKAY BENNETT and — with the aid of a Masonic watch fob found in the clothing identified as being Bateman. "When the body was found, there was no water in his lungs — meaning he didn't drown — but there was a large gash on his head," says

Kathleen Ellinghaus. “Ada Ball saw one of the ship’s smokestacks fall onto the part of the ship where Bateman was standing, and she speculated that it struck him and that this is what killed him.” The body was delivered to Halifax April 30 and was shipped by train to Jacksonville a few days later, where it finally arrived May 10.

At the time Jacksonville residents became aware that Bateman’s body had been recovered, the world was still in shock and mourning over the tragedy of the sinking and a formal burial was arranged for his body with full honors. It was placed in the chapel at Marcus Conant Funeral Home, where it was left lying in state in a metallic coffin for a period to allow for visitation. Upon the coffin was a metal plate identifying him as a TITANIC victim; it also said that the greatest tribute that could be given him was for the work he performed here to continue.

The actual funeral was conducted Sunday, May 12 at the First Baptist Church and was accompanied by a full array of Masonic ceremonies. Bateman’s casket was carried into the church between two lines of members of the Knights Templar, who raised their swords to form an arch over the procession. This was also done at the entrance to Evergreen Cemetery after the body arrived there. Bateman’s lodge brothers posthumously conferred an honorary 33rd degree upon him, and he was laid to rest in the Masonic section of the cemetery in an unmarked grave.

Bateman had a life insurance policy with the Woodmen of the World that was discovered amongst his effects after he passed away, and the money it provided was used to make a distinctive green cenotaph to honor him. This was placed in another portion of the cemetery on July 13, 1913. Upon it are written the words, “Dr. R. J. Bateman. Born Oct. 14, 1860. Died April 15, 1912. He lost his life in the wreck of S.S. TITANIC.”

Many visitors to the cemetery have expressed surprise over the fact that Bateman’s actual burial site is unmarked while such a distinctive monument to him is located elsewhere in the cemetery. Longtime cemetery administrative staffer Vicke Southall offers this explanation: “The Reverend Bateman was a member both of the Masons and the Woodmen of the World. Both organizations owned property in the cemetery, and because he was such an outstanding individual, both wanted

to honor him. The Masons wound up with his body, but they didn’t allow big, upright types of monuments. The Woodmen of the World had no such regulations, so they went ahead and put up a cenotaph for him anyway on their cemetery property, even though his body was not buried there.”

It is interesting to note that Bateman, in his writings, twice predicted his demise aboard the TITANIC. In a letter sent to his nephew during a stopover in Ireland that did not reach its destination until after the sinking, Bateman wrote, “If this ship goes to the bottom, I shall not be there, I shall be up yonder. Think of it!” And when his locked desk was pried open in Jacksonville following his death, this poem, composed and handwritten by him on a black-bordered card, was found on top of his papers:

Do you shudder as you picture
All the horrors of that hour?
Ah! But Jesus was beside me
To sustain me by his power.

And he came himself to meet me
In that way so hard to tread
And with Jesus’ arm to cling to
Could I have one doubt or dread?

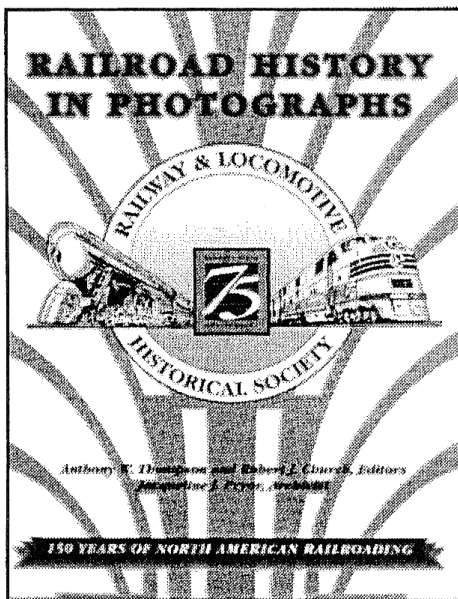
“I really don’t regard these writings as a premonition that he felt he was going to die in transit,” says Cowart, who discovered the letter and the poem while doing his research on Bateman. “Back in those days, most people regarded oceanic travel as a risky venture, and it was not that unusual for those who engaged in it to leave their affairs in order before departing just in case something happened.”

The fate of the members of Bateman’s family immediately following his demise is a debated issue. Cowart found evidence indicating the mission was a family venture, and that some of its members — including Bateman’s widow — remained associated with the Central City Mission for possibly a year or two following his death. But according to Edward A. Mueller, the family — while living in Jacksonville — maintained a second residence in Baltimore, and Mrs. Bateman and Mrs. Ball moved back to that home a very short time after Reverend Bateman’s death. “Following the

funeral, only a son and a daughter of Bateman's remained in Jacksonville., and that son, Percy Bruce Bateman, went to work not at the mission but at the Hutchinson Audit Company," says Mueller. "He stayed at that job until he enlisted in the Navy in 1918 for World War 1, and he didn't return to the city after getting out of the service. He eventually settled in Greensboro, N.C., where he worked for the Sinclair Oil Company until he retired in 1957." Mueller traced Ada Ball to Cockeysville, Md. "Ada was later joined in the United States by her two English-born sons and

she lived until 1967," he says. He found the steamer rug Bateman wrapped around her as she escaped from the sinking TITANIC in the possession of Percy Bruce Bateman's heirs in North Carolina. The silk tie he threw her is now owned by the Ellinghauses, who are the descendants of Bateman's daughter Grace.

"Interestingly, I have no leads about what happened to the \$2,000 that was subscribed to open a Bateman Memorial Home in Jacksonville," Mueller adds. "All I know is that no such home was ever built."



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Second Notice - Membership Renewal

Please take a moment and fill out the attached renewal notice. Your membership in the R&LHS and the Southeast Chapter is a great way to keep up to date on all the history in railroading. So if you've been a member, please stay with us as we continue to look at railroading past and present. If you're not a member, give us a try, I think you'll like membership in the R&LHS!

Our Treasurer, Jim Wilk, will forward the National portion and any other Chapter dues to the R&LHS Treasurer and other Chapter Membership Secretaries respectively.

Please choose and remit for the year 1998:

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2. Contribution to the SEC to help finance our publication effort _____

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Minutes of the Southeast Chapter, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society

The April meeting of the Southeast Chapter of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society was held in the 13th Floor Conference Room of the CSXT GOB on Thursday, April 9, 1998 at 6:00 P.M. A quorum was present. Chapter Chairperson Jim Smith chaired the meeting. There were no minutes of the May meeting. The Treasurer's report showed \$946.06 in savings, \$685.42 in checking for a \$31.48.

Old Business -

Jim Smith reported the reprint of the R&LHS Bulletin on Florida railroads has gone to the printer.

The 1998 dues have been sent out.

W. F. Howes is the interim chairman of the R&LHS Awards Program.

New Business -

The R&LHS convention and directors meeting will be May 22-26 in Scranton.

Jim Smith suggested the chapter print some of the photos from the Swingle collection as our next book.

Committee Reports -

Cliff Vander Yacht needs articles for the Southeast Limited.

Announcements -

There were no announcements.

Meeting Programs -

The program featured a video of a gathering of steam boats at Silver Springs, FL.

The June 11 program will be on the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Ski Train by Richard Dickerson.

Respectfully submitted,



1999 R&LHS&NRHS Pre-Registration Form

If you are seriously planning to go to the GREATEST railroad history event of 1999, then this is for you. The joint NRHS - R&LHS National Convention will be held in Sacramento, CA from June 21 to June 26, 1999. When you pre-register you will receive the registration package, which gives you information needed to sign up for convention activities and excursions, PRIOR to the members that have not pre-registered. So start planning for June, 1999 and pre-register.



1999 Convention Pre-Registration Form

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Registration is \$20 until January 31, 1999, \$25 thereafter. We accept checks, money orders, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express. Make checks or money orders payable to Central Coast Railway Club.

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☐ Check if you are not interested in pre-registering, but are interested in receiving the registration packet when it becomes available to non pre-registered members.

Mail the completed form to:

1999 NRHS and R&LHS National Convention
PO Box 8289
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1999 NRHS and R&LHS National Convention

You are invited to the joint 1999 NRHS and R&LHS National Convention sponsored by the Central Coast Chapter, NRHS and the Pacific Coast Chapter of the R&LHS. The joint national convention will be held from June 21 to June 26, 1999 in Sacramento, California. Some of the highlights will be:

Sesquicentennial - California's 150th birthday celebration. A three year celebration that highlights the states rich history in a variety of areas, including the major contributions by the railroads. The third week of June 1999 has been designated as the period to celebrate the railroads of the state. The NRHS and R&LHS National Convention is one of two official railroad events.

Excursions - We are negotiating with several railroads about their participation in the convention. While no contracts have been signed yet, excursions to scenic Sierra locations as well as Bay Area destinations have been requested.

Railfair - The California State Rail Museum, as an official event of the Sesquicentennial celebration, is staging a major Railfair similar in nature to the fairs that the museum held in 1981 and 1991. The Railfair will be occurring in Sacramento during the same week as the NRHS and R&LHS convention.

Meetings, seminars, & banquet - There will be the traditional day of meetings and seminars followed by the banquet. The seminars will be based around the history and the future of railroading in the Golden State.

Local events - Local tours and excursions of the Sacramento area will be featured.

We are now accepting pre-registration for the convention. Pre-registering discounts the registration fee to \$20 and enables you to receive the registration package, which gives the information needed to sign up for convention activities, prior to the members that have not preregistered. Pre-registration ends on January 31, 1999. After that date, the full \$25 registration fee will be required. To pre-register, fill out the form on the other side of this sheet and mail it to the address specified on it.

1999 NRHS and R&LHS National Convention, P.O. Box 8289, San Jose, CA 95155-8289

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Old Business -

Jim Smith displayed new sheets for the publication of the reprints of the history of Florida railroads from the R&LHS Bulletins. We have a 30-day extension from the printer on the quote for 1000 books with 100 hard covers for library sales.

New Business -

The Chapter has been asked to assist the new Chairman in processing the R&LHS awards program.

The executive committee has transferred dues and membership information to William Lugg of the Pacific Coast Chapter.

Bill Howes and Jim Smith will be attending the National meeting in Scranton.

Committee Reports -

Cliff Vander Yacht reported the April newsletter will be small.

Announcements -

ACL100 (in black paint) is at the Amtrak station for evaluation.

There will be a celebration at Waycross for the 25th anniversary of Rice Yard on Saturday, May 30.

Meeting Programs -

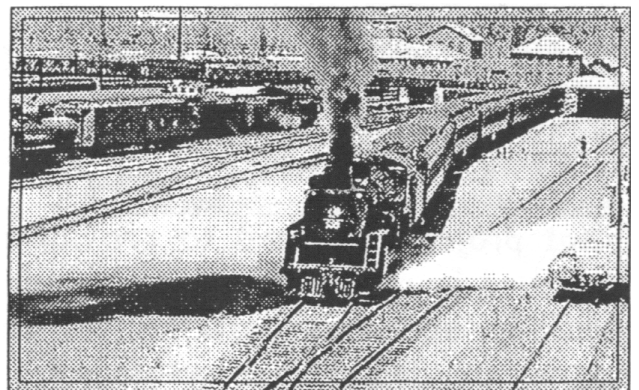
The program featured Midwestern interurban videos from Frank Dewey and Mark Bennett.

Respectfully submitted,



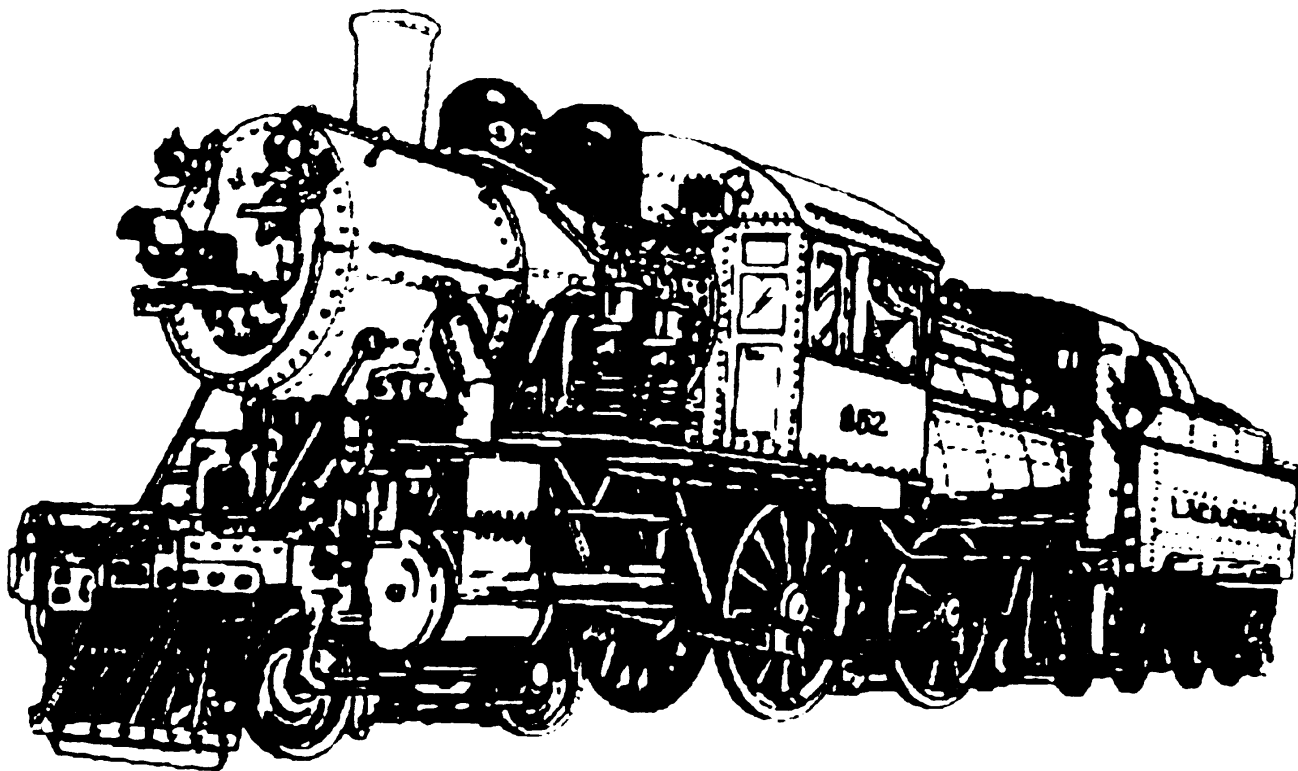
NRHS Announces Railcamp 1998

A pilot project has been designed to provide a background in rail history, preservation, operations and transportation career opportunities available to forty high school students. The Southeast Chapter may help cover some of the \$495 (exclusive of fare to and from Scranton) costs. Anyone interested should contact NRHS RAILCAMP 1998, PO Box 58547, Philadelphia PA 19102-8547 or <http://www.cs.uofs.edu/~steamtown> and/or SEC-R&LHS, PO Box 664, JAX FL 32201-0664.



July 19 - July 25, 1998
Steamtown National Historic Site

CN 3254 pulling an excursion.



Lackawanna #952 is now located at the railroad museum in St. Louis. It is the heartthrob of the brand new chapter of the R&LHS. The engine may be moved much closer to them, at Scranton, in the near future.

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Southeast Chapter
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Jacksonville, Florida 32201