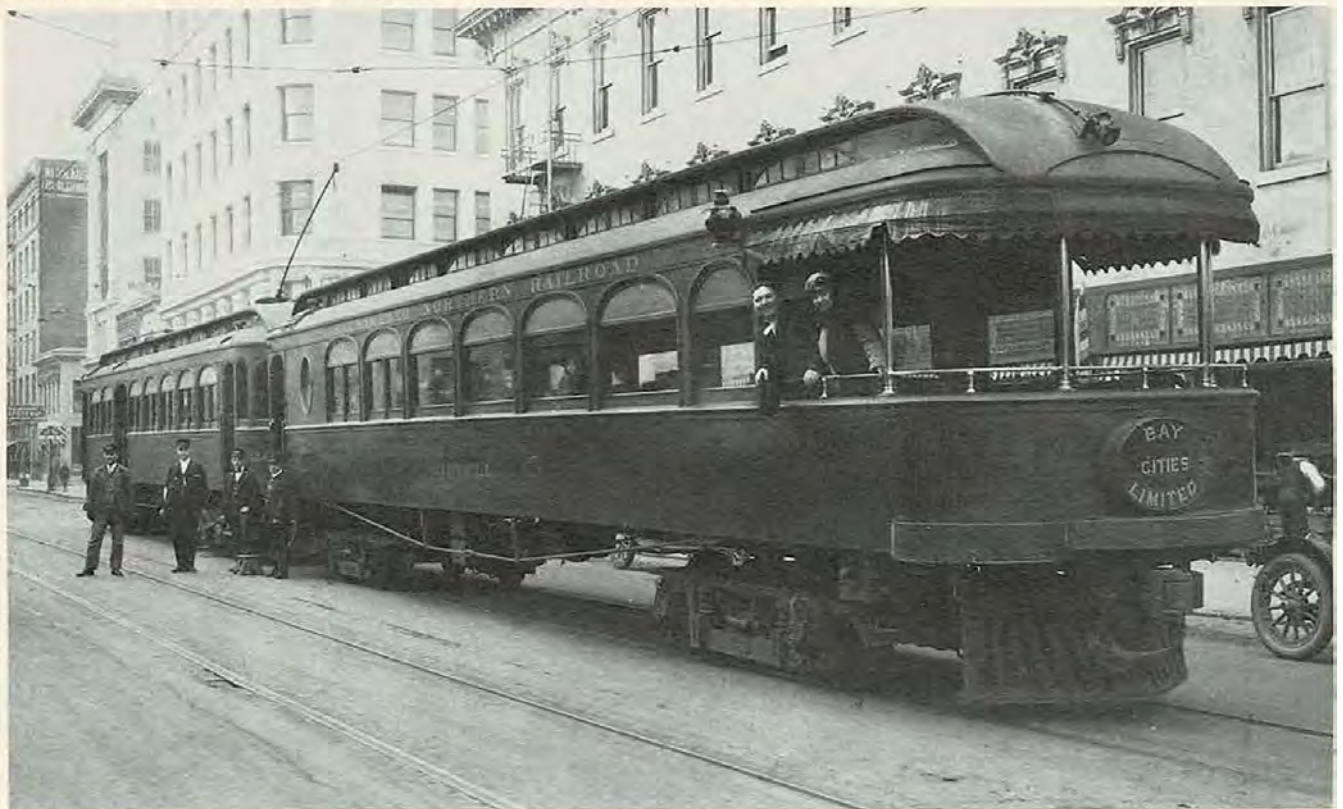


THE SACRAMENTO NORTHERN RAILROAD

The Sacramento Northern Railroad, at its peak, connected Chico and Oroville with Oakland, via the state capitol at Sacramento. The main line run of 185 miles was the longest interurban passenger run in North America. Its 300 plus miles of trackage covered the largest geographic area of any interurban line in the West, although Southern California's Pacific Electric did have more traffic and track miles.

The "North End" was composed of the Northern Electric, a more or less "typical" interurban line that operated on 600 volts DC (outside third rail) between Sacramento and Chico, with major branches to Woodland, Oroville, and Colusa. The main line was opened for traffic in the summer of 1907. The Woodland branch was laid down in 1912, with the connection to Colusa being completed the following year.

Sacramento Northern's finest, pausing in Sacramento before daily run to Oakland.



The "South End" began as the Oakland, Antioch, and Eastern, with through traffic between Oakland and Sacramento beginning in September, 1913. This 95 mile main line was powered by 1200 volts DC overhead wire (later raised to 1500 volts). The only major branch was to the Vacaville-Fairfield Area from Creed, about 30 miles southwest of Sacramento.

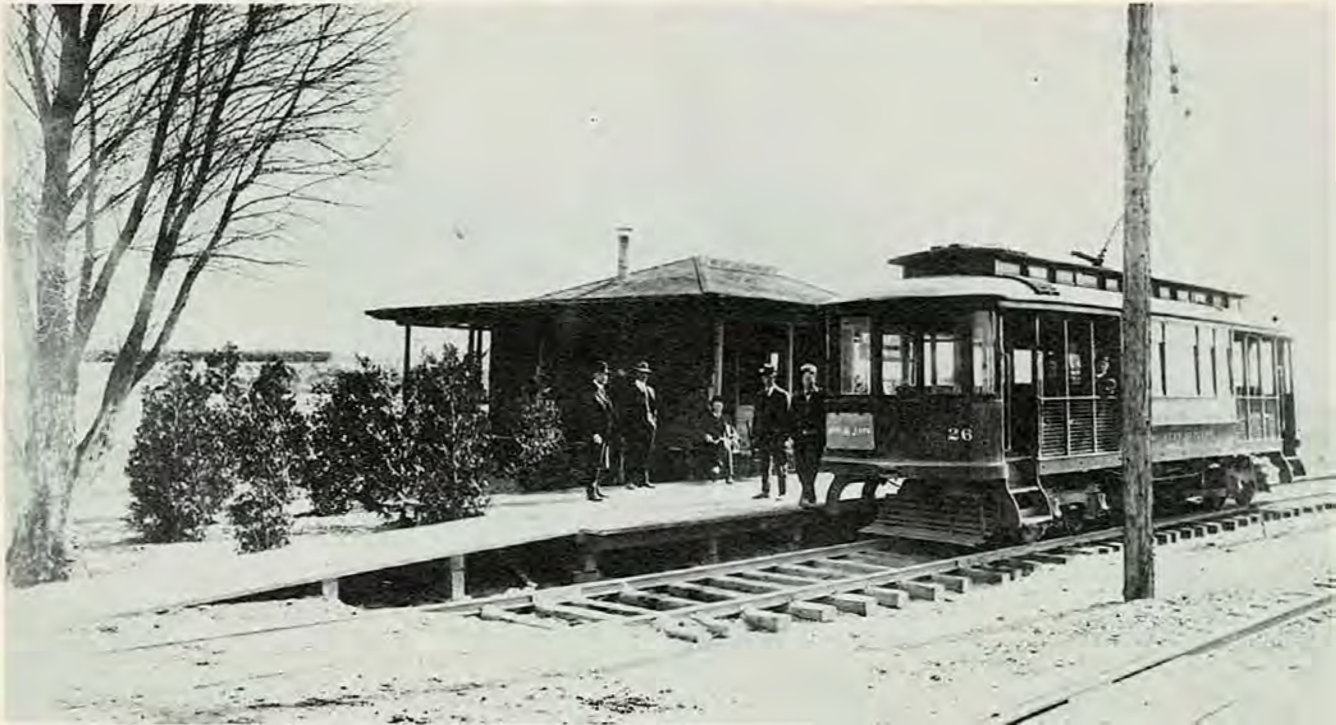
While topography of the North End can only be called typical for an interurban line, the "South End" was anything but! Leaving Shafter Avenue in Oakland, the line proceeded up a 4.6% uncompensated grade to achieve the crossing of the Contra Costa Hills. This grade, over a mile long, then eased to 2.6% before entering the 3458 foot Redwood Peak Tunnel, one of the longest interurban tunnels in the United States.

Due to the diversity of topography and the nature of the territory, water crossings were many and varied. There were conventional plate girder bridges, steel trusses, and timber trestles. The Lisbon Trestle across the Yolo Bypass south of Sacramento was over two miles long. In 1925, the bents of the trestle fell over like a row of dominoes under the weight of a trainload of steel. At Oroville, the Northern Electric crossed the

Feather River on a two span covered bridge. The longest bridge built by the interurban was the original M Street Bridge across the Sacramento River at Sacramento. Built in 1911, the bridge included two 175 foot fixed spans and a 400 foot steel truss swing span. The structure was replaced in 1935 by the present Tower Bridge, which includes a 209 foot steel truss lift span. The largest bridge used by the Sacramento Northern was the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge used for a few years before abandonment of passenger service, about 1940.

The Sacramento Northern exists today as a fragmented set of tracks connected by track rights over the Southern Pacific, Western Pacific, and Santa Fe railroads. Roadbeds and trestle abutments can be found in many places along the old line especially along Route 70 between Sacramento and Marysville. The old substation is still standing at East Nicolaus. Much of the early equipment is preserved today at the California Rail Museum located along the former main line at Rio Vista Junction. It may be reached by car on State Route 12 about halfway between Rio Vista and Fairfield.

Passengers boarding at Sacramento Northern's West Sacramento Station in 1914.





Bed Bluff

Tehama

Wyo

Vina

Stirling City

Para

Germantown

Fruto

Willow

Delavan

Sites

Colusa Jc.

Ramsey

Harrington

Wyckoff

Calistoga

Esparto

SACRAMENTO

Santa Rosa

Ellen

Shelbyville

uma

gnacio

an Rafael

T. MON.

salito

OAKLAND

SC

an Bruno

Davis

Waverly

Elmira

Solano City

Suisun

Willotta

Benic

Vallejo

Mantinez

LA

Ward

San

Ward

Woodland

Yuba City

Chandler

Arboga

Trowbridge

Pleasant Grove

Counman

Del Paso

Roseville

Folsom City

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Sacramento Northern Railway

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