

# NORTH TEXAS HISTORIC TRANSPORTATION

Fall 2006

<http://www.northtexastransport.org>

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## "The History of Cars 25 and 411"

Part III by Lee Lavell

In the previous newsletter, the electric railway history of Cars 25 and 411 was completed. In this issue, we will embark on the history of these two cars and others to 1995.

Story has it that four Northern Texas Traction Company cars were purchased by Walter Wallerich for use on an 87-acre farm. His purchase and movement of the cars, including Nos. 25, a motorcar, and 407, 409, and 411, all trailer cars, is purported to have occurred in 1935 following the abandonment of the Fort Worth to Dallas line in 1934. Just prior to this in 1932, Eagle Mountain Lake was created, effectively making the cars lake-front property. Trailer car 409 was the only car situated separately; while the other three were arranged like the letter 'U.' Mr. Wallerich is said to have brought the cars out himself. The interesting photo included shows one of the trailer cars upon delivery.



Above: Probably taken shortly after its move, it is unknown whether this is the lone car, No. 409 or the first of two trailer cars for the three-car arrangement.

*History of Cars 25 and 411 (continued)*

The three-car arrangement is known to have been used as a house. It is believed that hired hands of the farm lived here first. At some point the three cars were enclosed inside a structure with a roof and siding. Several families lived in this "house" over the years. Over time the farm was sold and subdivided into smaller family size lots. Car 409 was now on different property than the other three. In 1968 Mr. Wallerich sold the three car lot to Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Hatfield.

The Hatfields ultimately sold the lot and different families came and



Above: Rear end of one of the trailer cars.

Below: Looking towards the rear of the compartment. Note the restroom and original drinking water drain tray.



went. When Mitzi McWilliams purchased the lot she wanted to build a house where the three cars were physically located. This was the beginning of a new era for the cars as a search was underway to find cars 25 and 411 a new home. Ms. McWilliams planned to have car 407 relocated to a different location on the lot.

The restoration era was soon to start and will be featured in the next installment.

The photos for this installment are courtesy of The Hatfields and Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Shutter.

Below: Motorcar 25 looking forward from the rear compartment.



## **“A History of Express Motor 330” Leon H. Sapp**

In 1902, the Northern Texas Traction Company ordered an express car from the Kuhlman Car Company to compliment its booming passenger business between Dallas and Fort Worth. The first car of its type to operate in Texas, it began life as No. 12 but due to the expanding fleet of passenger cars it was quickly renumbered to No. 30. It was so successful that it was used as a pattern to build three other nearly identical cars for the fleet.



*A History of Express Motor 330 (continued)*

As delivered, the car was equipped with then state-of-the-art technology. It had Brill trucks and electrical gear and powerful Westinghouse electric traction motors capable of powering not only the car, but up to three trailing freight cars as well. Inside the car, a large ice chest allowed for the delivery of block ice and in later years, twice weekly shipment of Pangburne's Ice Cream was provided to a grateful public along the line. Frequent service to the communities south of Fort Worth was appreciated by local merchants, as well as the general public, who could order items from the large merchants in Fort Worth and expect delivery no later than the next day. Always a "customer friendly" operation, it was not unusual for the motorman to stop at a remote crossing to unload some badly needed emergency repair parts for a farmer or to pick up a crate of fresh eggs for the big city markets.

Through the years the car underwent several major modifications. Originally having two baggage doors on each side, it was modified to have one larger door in order to better match the shorter depot unloading docks of the new branch line. Its original clerestory roof, long a source of leaks, was replaced with a lower arched roof and two side windows were added for better ventilation. The car had originally been painted a dark "Pullman Green." However, following an automobile accident in Burleson in 1926, it was repainted in "Transit Orange" to increase its visibility as it operated down the centerline of many city streets. About the same time a metal hood was fitted to the front of the car with several light bulbs inside that served to illuminate the front of the car. This allowed safe operation on city streets with the headlight extinguished for the comfort of automobile drivers who might otherwise be blinded by the bright headlight.



The car served faithfully on two express runs each day between Fort Worth and Cleburne until operations ceased in September 1931. It briefly returned to service on its original run between Fort Worth and Dallas until that line closed in 1934. At that time it was sold to the General Public as scrap as many cars from the Northern Texas Traction Company. Author and transit enthusiast John Myers located and rescued the car near Cresson in the 1990's where it was being used as a feed storage shed. In 2002, Myers graciously donated the car to the Burleson Heritage Foundation for restoration.

*Photos from John Myers Collection*

**“The Burleson Interurban Drugstore”**

**Leon H. Sapp**

Burleson's Interurban Depot was constructed in 1911 by the Northern Texas Traction Company to serve as its Burleson passenger and freight depot. An agreement was reached with a local druggist, Mr. A. H. Loyless who moved his business into the building. As payment for his lease he served as ticket and freight agent. Frequent passenger service to Cleburne and Ft. Worth with through connections to Dallas made local travel a safe and all weather affordable luxury in an era of dirt roads. At Dallas, other frequent Interurban connections reached as far north to Denison on the Red River, east to Terrell and south to both Corsicana and Waco.



*The Burleson Interurban Drugstore (continued)*

The Interurban brought the first electricity to Burleson, so naturally the first Edison Light Bulb in Burleson lit its interior. The drugstore offered a popular meeting place for local citizens who found its marble soda fountain with twice weekly shipments of fresh Pangburne's Ice Cream from Fort Worth (arriving by Interurban of course) a sweet luxury. Two small tables were placed near the soda fountain, each with an inlaid checker board. Many a game was played on Saturday afternoons to the delight of small crowds which viewed them as a spectator sport. Many a local romance was begun over a shared soda or a double banana split.

One of the first telephones in Burleson was located in the building, and customers were invited to place orders with Fort Worth merchants for delivery service by the electric cars. The Interurban would handle the exchange and transportation of the goods. Twice a day freight-only Car #330 would arrive at the unloading dock behind the depot discharging parcels for customers, shipments of stock goods for local merchants, and that most important of luxuries, fresh block ice from the plants in Fort Worth. The freight charge of 55 cents per hundred pounds dead weight was considerably less than that charged by the larger steam railroads and service was more frequent.



The last electric express motor to serve Burleson departed in 1934, but Druggist Loyless continued to dispense medicines, sodas and other essentials until 1935 when he moved to a larger nearby facility and accepted a position as Burleson Postmaster. The building then became the home of The Burleson News, later renamed The Burleson Dispatcher until printing operations discontinued in 1985. Since 2000, it has served as Burleson's Visitors' Center and Museum maintained and operated by the Burleson Heritage Foundation. Within its historic walls are found some of the best preserved history of this community and its people and the spirit which continues to grow, as does the city which this small building helped to build.

*Photos courtesy Burleson Heritage Foundation*

**Restoring Express Motor 330  
Robert Griffith**



In late July, North Texas Historic Transportation joined with the Burleson Heritage Foundation in restoring NTTC Express Motor 330. Leon Sapp, appointed by BHF to be the technical lead for the restoration effort has been joined by Burleson Heritage President Neal Jones and NTHT members Willie Kirby and Gabby Garbarino (pictured at left) on their regular Monday workdays. Burleson Heritage members Robert Griffith, Carolyn Kerr, Mary Norris, Doris Jo Haas, Michelle Griffith, and several others routinely come to help. And Lee Lavell, with a voluminous rolodex in the restoration of Cars 25, 411, and other NTHT pursuits helped BHF secure trolley poles, bases, catchers, and many more essential pieces of what makes an interurban car.

*Photo courtesy Robert Griffith*

*Restoring Express Motor 330 (continued)*

John Myers rescued Car 330 from the Westmoreland Ranch and donated it to the Burleson Heritage Foundation in 2002. The car's restoration has been underway since 1998 through the efforts of Myers, but the restoration has taken on new life with the addition of Leon Sapp, assistance from NTHT, and the addition of Burleson Heritage Foundation volunteers. Burleson Heritage and North Texas Historic Transportation hope to finish the car before summer 2007. When complete, Express Motor 330 will adorn the side of the restored Interurban Drugstore in Burleson, now the Heritage Visitor's Center, which is run by BHF volunteers. The car will be open to the public host a collection of Northern Texas Traction Company and Burleson Interurban memorabilia.

For more information on Express Motor 330 and how to help, log onto the Burleson Heritage Foundation's website at <http://www.burlesonheritage.org> or call the Heritage Visitors' Center at 817-447-1575.

## North Texas Historic Transportation News & Upcoming Events

### Leonard's M&O Subway Car Update:

We recently completed the cleaning and painting of the second truck to be used in Marty Leonard's M & O subway project. Gabby and Leon did a great job painting the truck following a thorough cleaning at The T's chassis wash setup in the Building Maintenance Department. Our thanks go to The T for allowing us to use this facility.

### Recent crime at the worksite:

Since the arrest of a transient criminal who allegedly murdered a local homeless man, the break-ins appear to have ceased at the El Paso Street lot. The four PCC cars and related equipment that NTHT stores on the lot suffered major losses, especially to the rectifier. While NTHT is saddened by such a senseless death, the thefts appear to be over and hope our luck continues.

### Final Payment on Car 333

Final payment for Northern Texas Traction Co. (NTTC) freight motor 333 was made recently. This clears the way for final evaluation of the movement, storage, and ultimate restoration of this vehicle, currently located on the Westmoreland Ranch near Cresson.

### NTHT meets with success in fundraising efforts:

Thanks to a lot of work on the part of Harold C. Wareham, Gabby Garbarino, Willie Kirby, Ole Osrunn, and Lee Lavell, North Texas Historic Transportation has raised \$3,810 dollars to match a \$5,000 challenge grant generously offered by the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Electric Railway Foundation. The expiration to meet the challenge is December 1, 2006. Of 112 letters sent out, 34 have responded with a matching donation as of press time, a whopping 30% success rate. NTHT thanks all who have contributed donations and spent time in this effort. Special thanks to Harold for his gift to NTHT of membership in the Funding Information Center. And we must not forget to thank the excellent staff of the Funding Information Center for their advice to us as we strive to achieve our financial goals.

### Next Quarterly Meeting Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006

The next quarterly meeting of North Texas Historic Transportation, Inc. is scheduled for 1:00 PM Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Knights of Pythias Building at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Main in Downtown Fort Worth. For information and directions, contact Willie Kirby at 817-478-0773 or via e-mail at: [wkirby@northtexastransport.org](mailto:wkirby@northtexastransport.org)

#### *NTHT OFFICERS*

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