

## THE B&O STEAM LOCOMOTIVE *ARABIAN* VISITS COLUMBUS, OHIO

**Excerpted from the Columbus Dispatch article, October 16, 1888**

The novel feature of the parade was the running of an engine and passenger coach from the depot to State street, on the street railway tracks. The programme contemplated the running of the train to the Court House, but this had to be abandoned, as it was found impossible to get the engine over the automatic switch at the intersection of the Oak and High street lines at State. The engine used was the "Arabian," owned by the B. & O. road, and built by Phineas Davis in 1834. It is the oldest now in existence, and, compared with the ponderous machines of the present time, is a crude piece of mechanism. The intention was to haul two coaches – a Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati & Indianapolis baggage car and an old J., M. & L. combination passenger and baggage car. Owing to unfavorable circumstances this could not be done, and only the latter car was coupled up.

The engine and cars were placed on the track about twelve o'clock last night. Before this was done, it was necessary to widen the gauge of the engine five and a half inches so that it would conform to the gauge of the street railway track. This caused the driving wheels to bind against the driving boxes, making it almost impossible for the engine to run. This caused most of the trouble along the route and accounts for leaving one of the coaches behind.

(CONTINUE HERE)

A crowd collected around the engine, which stood on the track at the west side of the tunnel, at an early hour this morning, hundreds of whom waited until 10:25 (railroad time), when the start was made. John Devine, of Newark, selected as engineer, and Frank W. Arnold, of this city, who was to do the firing, were at work on the machine for a couple of hours before the start was made. Mr. Devine is one of the oldest engineers now in active service, having commenced with the B&O in 1842, and is still with the same company. For over forty years he has been an engineer and is now running the yard engine at Newark. He is sixty-four years old, well preserved and active. Since he was placed in the cab as engineer Mr. Devine has never taken a drink of whisky nor does he use tobacco in any form. He had run as fireman on an engine constructed similar to the "Arabian," but found some difficulty in making the old machine work today, as it has been out of service for many years. Mr. Arnold is well known in this city. He was formerly a fireman on the C. St. L. & P. road, and is a past grand master of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. Engineer Patrick Hardigan, one of the oldest men in point of service on the Pan Handle, and Patrick McGenry, who pulled the throttle, were on the engine to assist Mr. Devine, who was very careful and used every effort to avoid an accident of any kind.

Three unsuccessful attempts were made to start from the tunnel on the trip south. The flanges on the driving wheels would not take the track at the switch, and the machine persisted in efforts to come

up town on the east track. A couple of narrow escapes from accident occurred during the time the engine was being moved back and forth in the efforts to get it on the right track. Wagons crowded the street, and some of the drivers were wreckless in pulling close to the engine. A one-horse coal wagon started across the track a few feet in front of the engine just as it started forward. A serious collision was averted by the promptness of the engineer, who shut off steam. When the engine stopped the front and rear wheels of the wagon were fastened on the corner of the engine in such a manner as to prevent it going either forward or backward. After a little parleying as to the best way to release the wagon, a number of men took hold of the vehicle and landed it on the west side of High street. At another time, when the engine was under way, Oak street car No. 68 was approaching the tunnel on the east track. The flanges again caught on the switch and headed for the streetcar, and the spectators looked for a crash, but the engineer came to the rescue again, and succeeded in bring the machine to a stop before it reached the street car.

At this point it was about decided to give up running the engine, as some considered it impossible. Fireman Arnold and one or two others protested against this, and insisted on one more trial. Superintendent Atcherson, of the Consolidated Company, who had cleared the track for the engine, was on hand to assist in the start. A switchman came to the rescue and suggested the use of a wedge to make the engine clear the switch. This was acted upon, and worked successfully. The engine [then??] proceeded up High Street. A short stop was made at the Long street switch, but this was [crossed??] in safety. The next stop was just north of Broad street, where the steam went down. It took Fireman Arnold about ten minutes to make the exhaust pipe show the "White feather," as [??] it when the steam began to expand and another effort was made. Just south of Broad [?] the "Arabian" to [?] as it bound the wheels so tightly [??] impossible for the engine to proceed.

[unreadable]

.... State street was reached. Here the arms of the automatic switch proved an obstruction that could not be overcome with safety, and it was decided to return to the depot. Superintendent J.H. Atcherson and Assistant Superintendent Fred Atcherson, who were present with those in charge of the engine, endeavored to devise some way to get safely over the switches, but it was finally abandoned, and the thousands of people who had gather along High north of State street, were disappointed at not being able to witness the novelty of a railroad train on a street car track.

While preparing for the return trip several of the state officials who had been invited to ride boarded the coach. Among these were Commissioner of Railroads and Telegraphs W.S. Cappellar, Auditor of State W.E. Poe, Inspector of Shops and Factories Henry Dorn and Mine Inspector R.M. Hasoltine, Superintendent Peabody, of the Midland road and one or two others were also on the coach. After the start was made it was smooth sailing until the Long street switch was encountered. At this point the coach passed over all right, but the "Arabian" left the track.

As the train was approaching the general offices of the Midland road, Train Dispatcher Shoemaker put out a red flag for the trainmen to watch for orders and furnished them the following:

No. 1,	Shadesville, Oct. 16, '88.	
Cond'r and Eng'r Wild North		
Avoid the Tunnel South Union Depot.		
	32	
O K	11:06 A.M.	B. R. B

This incident of the trip produced much merriment among those on board. The term "Wild" as applied to a train denotes that it is not running as a regular train but is on nonscheduled time. The figure "32" is used to denote that the orders should be handed to the train men without requiring them to make a stop at the station. The initials "B. R. B." stand for the Brotherhood of Railroad Brakemen now in the city in such large numbers.

At the switch the coach, which was being pushed, passed over safely, but the wheels of the "Arabian" left the track, and it was necessary to pull her back and forth several times before getting the drivers on the rails. The car was uncoupled to facilitate in this work. From this point the run was without incident, barring the excitement caused by the Wild West Combination, who again met the train between Long and Spring streets, and brandishing their repeating rifles in the air, kept up a fusillade until Chestnut street was reached. Trouble was experienced again at the tunnel switch. The engine left the track and headed for the tunnel, but was soon stopped. The coach was uncoupled and pushed back on the track west of the tunnel, the place from which the start was made. The engine, after being forced back and forth over the rails and stone pavement a few times, took the right track and was soon against the coach, where the train was turned over to the wrecking crew of the Pan Handle by Engineer Devine.

Following is the official report of the trip, as dictated by the engineer:

Left at 10:25 a.m., getting off the track three times at tunnel switch, causing a loss of time. A narrow rail, just south of Broad street, caused drivers to drop inside of the rail, causing more delay. The return trip was made with but few delays, reaching the tunnel switch at 11:35 a.m.
--

Commissioner Cappellar, whose duty it is to inspect the roads of Ohio, reports the street car track in bad condition for steam railroading , orders the speed reduced to one mile an hour, as provided in the statutes and directs the superintendent and general manager to put the track in good condition by the next centennial .