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## Clinchfield System is Second to Panama Canal.

### Completion of the New Road From Elkhorn, Ky., to Spartanburg and Columbia Will Mark an Epoch in Development of South Atlantic States.

Some of the Majestic Scenery, Marvelous Engineering Skill and Wonderful Possibilities of the New Transmontane Line Connecting Middle West with Atlantic Seaboard.

"I am confident that through trains for both passenger and freight traffic will be in operation by direct route over the new Carolina, Clinchfield & Ohio line from Cincinnati, Chicago and the Middle West to the South Atlantic states, Florida and the Panama canal by way of the Flagler road within the next few years. When this is done and the national resources of the new section have been developed, particularly the coal interests,—the Panama canal having been completed and the South's industrial development having reached that stage of growth that many predict for it—then there will be an era of Southern activity the like of which this country has little dreamed. There is need for Southern people to think on these things and above all else to make ready for the time that is to come."

This statement was made by one of the best posted and most intelligent observers of men and events in the South a few days ago just after having investigated the possibilities and opportunities opened up by the new line. And those who have gone over the new road, which for scenic grandeur and engineering skill is not to be surpassed in America, will verily agree, says W. D. Adams in the Charlotte Observer. His article in full is as follows:

The Carolina, Clinchfield & Ohio road is now practically complete from Dante, Va., to Bostic, this state, where connection is had with the Seaboard Air Line. Through trains are now being operated daily from the present northern terminus to Wilmington and Southport, and thus has been achieved the dream of many Southern statesmen and engineers in that the rich coal district of Southern West Virginia, Southwestern Virginia and eastern Kentucky and the fertile fields of the Ohio valley have been brought in direct contact with the South Atlantic states and the ocean.

#### FEATURES OF THE NEW ROAD.

The new road presents so many interesting features that the whole story can hardly be comprehended in one brief article. It is a difficult matter to determine just what particular feature merits first place. To lovers of the beautiful and grand in scenery, it will appeal more so than any other road on this side of the Rockies. A new and heretofore untraversed territory has been opened up, one that eclipses by long odds anything in the neighborhood of Asheville, Saluda, Round Knob or Waynesville and far in advance of anything on the Chesapeake & Ohio along the Kanawha in West Virginia. Words are inadequate to describe the imposing majesty of the towering peaks of the Black mountains, which are so overwhelmingly visible for a distance of more than 15 miles as this new line half-way encircles the Catawba valley. Mount Mitchell, the highest peak east of the Rockies, stands out in all its majestic dignity and so also a score of other lofty peaks which constitute the Black mountain range. Of broad and fertile valleys, of foaming, tumbling streams and of skyward-reaching mountains there are hundreds, one following the other in rapid succession from Marion to Johnson City, Tenn.,

and then from Johnson City to Dante, Va.

SOMETHING OF THE ROAD ITSELF. Surpassing in grandeur even the scenery, God's handiwork, if such a thing be the road itself regarded from the engineering point of view. On the line between Dante and Spartanburg, S. C., are 35 tunnels, the aggregate length of which is six miles, and in a distance of 14 miles of the 20 South of Alta Pass, in which space the road drops 1,330 feet, with a compensated grade of 1.2 per cent., there are 18 tunnels of varying length up to 2,150 feet. The alignment of the road winds in and out among the mountains, crossing great ravines here and piercing mountain spurs there, never deviating from a specified course and constructed absolutely regardless of cost. For instance, just South of the great Blue Ridge tunnel at Alta Pass, the highest point of the line, 2,629 feet, the road as built covers a distance of seven miles and returns again to a point less than quarter of a mile from the starting point. At another place on this bend the direct distance between two points is but 182 feet, whereas the distance by rail is more than two miles.

The road is intended primarily for coal carrying purposes and although it penetrates districts heretofore considered inaccessible the maximum grade has been maintained at one half of one per cent, compensated against southbound traffic. In order to maintain this grade many excavations and an equal number of fills were necessary. One cut, that near Johnson City, is 3,800 feet long with a maximum depth of 85 feet; from which 500,000 cubic yards of material was removed. A number of fills more than 100 feet in height were also necessary.

In this connection, as illustrating the ingenuity of the locating engineers, the story is told of a smart promoter who acquired large holdings of real estate in Moccasin Gap, a natural pass to the North of Clinch mountain, the barrier to the Clinchfield district, through which it was believed the new road would have to go. By this route the road would parallel the Virginia & Southwestern for some distance. From careful investigation it was decided to take a short route through the mountain, much to the detriment of the scheming promoter, who was lying in wait for the railroad company expecting the nest-egg of a fortune by sale of right of way on the basis of the lot prices. By means of a tunnel, which while it cost something like a million dollars, saved several miles, the company sidestepped him and escaped. The guiding principle of those in charge of the new road has been to reduce grades and cut distances and by sparing neither time nor money, construct a system the future maintenance expense of which would be very little.

#### THE NEW ROAD AND THE SOUTH

Those who have interest neither in the scenery nor the engineering skill displayed, should be concerned in the great proposition of what the construction of the new road means to the South. Within the past two decades there has been a great evolution wrought. This sec-

tion is now a manufacturing region, one of manifold industrial activities and interests, so much so that the demand for fuel supplies and the question of transporting it direct from the nearest district where high grade coal is available has been a matter of vital concern. It has been known for a long time that the most extensive and valuable deposit of coal of excellent quality for general manufacturing purposes lie in a district comprising some 15,000 square miles in Southwestern Virginia, Southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. Heretofore these deposits have hardly been more than touched and the product evolved has always commanded a higher price than should obtain by reason of the long and circuitous haul. The recent rapid development of the South industrially, the completion of the Panama canal, and other agencies, has increased the demand for coal to a marked degree. The bringing of the South in closer contact with the Middle West by reason of this direct line will add to the general development, for it will undoubtedly in time reduce the price of coal and doubtless result in the readjustment of general discriminating freight rates by reason of the new gateway points created. These gateway centres have heretofore been in Virginia, the Carolina rates being reckoned therefrom. It will direct attention to the South, open new and heretofore undeveloped territory and otherwise promote development along lines of varied industries. Second only to the Panama canal, this new transmontane highway offers wonderful opportunities for Southern up-building.

#### LIKE A ROMANCE.

The history of the construction of this road, too, reads like a romance. It was not the product of one man's brain, nor the result of activity of any one faction or set of men, but the outcome of the thought and efforts of many individuals covering a period of almost three-quarters of a century. The idea was entertained even as far back as the '30's, Senator Robert Y. Hayne, of South Carolina, taking an active part in the movement looking to the building of such a road and was president of a company formed for the purpose. A glance at any map, particularly one that shows the railroads and coal fields, will make plain the need of such a thoroughfare of traffic particularly by the South Atlantic states. All the roads heretofore have run either parallel to or partially encircling the great Appalachian range, the utilization even of the passes being roundabout and on heavy grades. The mountains interposed so many impediments and barrels that any proposition that contemplated an actual direct attack has been approached with hesitation. However, at last the great problem has been solved, and the South is the gainer thereby, a fact, certain in extent, for time only to tell.

#### THE OLD 3 C'S.

As previously stated, the Carolina, Clinchfield & Ohio road, formerly the South and Western was designed primarily for a coal-carrying road. It was organized and constructed by capitalists interested in the mammoth Clinchfield Coal corporation, a company owning some 400,000 acres of rich coal lands in the famous Clinch-district of Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky. When these gentlemen, Messrs. George L. Carter, Thomas Fortner Ryan, W. A. Blair and others, acquired such large and valuable holdings, the first problem that presented itself was that of transportation, the getting of this coal to market. The proposition of building such a road through the mountains from the coal region to Johnson City, Tenn., and not through

the mountains of western North Carolina to the Atlantic seaboard was no new one. The old Charleston, Cincinnati, & Chicago road, better known as the 3 C's, had been organized as far back as 1888, and much construction work had been done up to the time the company failed during the panic of '93. This road was located along the Clinch river, in Virginia, from Fink to Clinchport, Tenn., and thence to Gate City on the Virginia & Southwestern, through Moccasin Gap and on to Johnson City. This line was largely graded and along the route from Hunte-dale to Johnson City, a distance of 33 miles, track was actually laid. In 1902-'03 other parties continued the work to Spruce Pine, N. C. In another direction the work was completed, the company owning 193 miles of road running from Marion to Kingville S. C., which was later acquired by the Southern. North of Marion, in the heavy mountain district, track laying had not begun when the panic of '93 came on and all work ceased.

#### MR. GEORGE L. CARTER.

And now enters Mr. George L. Carter upon the scene, to whose efforts more largely than to those of any other man is due the completion of the line. A large owner of coal lands, Mr. Carter appreciated the situation, realized the opportunity, and forthwith acquired the franchises, rights of way, abandoned works, etc., of the old 3-C's for the purpose of constructing just such a line as has been built. To tell of his labors would fill many volumes. He first interested Northern capital, additional coal lands were acquired and the nucleus of the holdings of the famous Clinchfield Coal corporation secured. The building of the road was then undertaken. Mr. Carter, keen business man that he was, looked into the future and resolved to construct a mountain road the like of which had never before been built in this country. He determined to spare no cost to build so that the future maintenance charges would be reduced to a minimum. Hence the road is on a one-half of one per cent compensated grade, with long cuts, deep fills, numerous tunnels and only the very best equipment of rolling stock, roadbed and track. The line is now finished from Dante, Va., to Bostic, this State, a distance of 207 miles, with freight and passenger trains in daily operation, and the work is now being prosecuted from Dante to Elkhorn, Ky., and from Bostic to Spartanburg, S. C., much work of general character having been done on both extensions. A little track has been laid in the direction of Spartanburg. This line is tentatively promised by October, and the Elkhorn extension by the fall of next year. The distance from Bostic, where connection is made with the Seaboard, to Marion, where the Asheville division of the Southern is crossed, is approximately 28 miles; from Marion to Johnson City 28 miles, and from Johnson City to Dante 81 miles. The extension to Elkhorn, Ky., will be about 45 miles and that from Bostic to Spartanburg 34 miles.

#### A SPLENDID ROAD.

The track all along the way has been ballasted with crushed stone and slag from furnaces and the rails are of 85-pound class, American Society section, in 33 feet lengths. The width of the roadbed on banks is 18 feet; in rock cuts 20 feet and in earth cuts 22 feet, including ditches. In many places where extra material was needed for filling, the adjacent cuts were excavated to a still greater width in preference to taking the material from borrow pits nearby. This plan has not only provided more generous room for the

roadbed and ditches, but will greatly reduce the expense of building second tracks or sidings. All passing sidings have been built 4,000 feet long between clearance points.

Some idea of the heavy construction work may be had when it is stated that a total of 16,000,000 cubic yards of excavation was made between Dante and Bostic a distance of 207 miles, of which about 40 per cent was through solid rock, 20 per cent was through loose rock and the remainder earth. From Bostic to Spartanburg the excavation will amount to about 2,000,000 cubic yards of rock and earth and from Dante to Elkhorn about 2,700,000 cubic yards, mostly through rock. The average cost per mile of the line when finished from Elkhorn to Spartanburg, a distance of 286 miles, will be \$125,000, while on the mountain grades on the south side of the Blue Ridge and along the cliffs of the Clinch river, the cost in many places ranged around \$200,000 per mile. The cost for the road itself, exclusive of the equipment, will be something like \$36,000,000.

#### INSPECTION TRIP MADE.

Last week a party of Seaboard officials, consisting of Mr. C. B. Ryan of Portsmouth, Va., general passenger agent; Col. W. C. Coleman of Washington, general traveling passenger agent; Col. C. H. Gattis, Jr., of Raleigh, district passenger agent, Mr. James Kerr, Jr., of Charlotte, city ticket agent, accompanied by Col. F. A. Olds of Raleigh and an Observer representative made a trip over the new line from one terminus to the other in Mr. Ryan's private car. At Bostic the party was joined by Mr. Charles T. Mandel of Johnson City, traveling passenger agent of the Carolina, Clinchfield & Ohio, and at Johnson City by Mr. J. J. Campian, traffic manager, one or both of whom were with the car as long as it remained in the Clinchfield territory. Among the other Clinchfield officials seen were Mr. M. J. Caples second vice president and general manager, Mr. Mark W. Potter of New York, chairman of the board of directors, who was also on a trip of inspection.

Leaving Charlotte Tuesday morning, according to regular schedule at 10:35 o'clock, Bostic was reached without delay on train No. 45, which runs direct through from Wilmington to Johnson City. Many improvements have been made in the roadbed of the Seaboard from Charlotte to Lincolnton. New and heavier rails have been laid and the track splendidly ballasted. Work is now being pushed in order that the ballasting may be continued on to Bostic, 73 miles, distant from Charlotte. The first view of the new road at Bostic is one to astound the ordinary observer. In addition to the heavy and splendidly constructed central track, there are a dozen parallel ones out in between the hills, far away from human habitation save the dwellings of the railroad people themselves hard by. A coal chute stands on one side and along the tracts are four or five monster Clinchfield engines, shifting Clinchfield coal cars here and there. This is to be a terminus where transfer is made to the Seaboard line when the coal begins to move in great quantities.

#### THE SCENIC ROUTE.

The road from Bostic north to Marion, while relatively heavy, is as nothing compared to what the line from Marion to Alta Pass discloses. For quite a distance along the way the new road is paralleled by the extension of the Southern from Rutherford-ton to Marion, which serves for no other purpose than to display the difference between the construction methods of a quarter of a century ago and those today. The main line of the

Southern stretching from Salisbury to Asheville is crossed about two miles east of Marion, the town itself not being included for the reason alleged that no rights of way was procurable.

The scenic part of the route is from Marion to Johnson City. A few miles north of Marion is the big bridge over the Catawba, 105 feet in height and over 900 feet long and containing more than 900 tons of steel. The view from this point up and down the valley is one to be remembered.

After leaving the river proper the valley is followed for quite a distance, the character of the country getting more and more rugged and the cuts and fills more and more precipitous. As the head of the valley is skirted, the view to the left of the Blacks, sentinelled by Mount Mitchell and the other lofty peaks, is as grand and beautiful as is to be found on the continent. Linville station, one of the many undeveloped town sites along the way, offers a splendid view of the entire range. And just six miles distant is Linville river, one of the finest trout fishing streams in western North Carolina. The other streams in this general section are well stocked. Linville Falls, on the Linville river, is one of the beauty spots of the State. From Linville up to Alta Pass, the summit of the range, there are tunnels after tunnels three in succession interposing at one point in such direct line that one can clearly see through all at one time. The grade is 1.2 compensated, although the ascent is something like 1,300 feet. In the development this line turns upon itself quite pronouncedly at five points. From one of the deep fills as the road winds about the mountain, the whole valley of the Catawba, with the encircling chains of mountains, is clearly visible. This has been designated Observation Point.

#### A NORTH CAROLINA CANYON.

After passing the Blue Ridge tunnel at Alta Pass, through which gap Daniel Boone is reputed to have made his first and second trip to the "dark and bloody" ground of Kentucky, in the early days, the road descends by gentle grades to Spruce Pine on the Toe river. This stream is followed until the Tennessee State line is reached, where its name is changed to the Nolichucky. The scenery all along the way is particularly beautiful especially in what is known as the Molichucky canyon, the road following the river for eight miles with the mountains rising as much as 1,200 feet directly over head. After reaching Unaka Springs, near the foot of this canyon, the country is fairly level until Johnson City is reached. At Erwin the shops of the new road will be located. This is 18 miles east of Johnson City, where the head offices of the company have been established.

The party reached Johnson City at 8:10 o'clock in the evening and spent the night there. The next morning the trip was continued to Dante, Va., which was reached about noon. Here actual operations are being conducted under direction of the officials of the Clinchfield Coal corporation, between 25 and 30 cars of coal now being produced daily whereas in a few weeks this will be increased to 50 cars. The further development will be commensurate with the demands, the supply and resources being limitless. The scenic beauty of the line from Johnson City to Dante, while not so overwhelming as that in the neighborhood of Alta Pass, is no less beautiful. The longest and most difficult tunnel on the line is that through Clinch mountain over 4,000 feet in length, although another is contemplated on the Elkhorn extension, which will be 15,200 feet in length, al-

most three miles. Dante is the very center of the coal district. A number of openings have already been made. Mr. John C. Winder, president of the corporation, a North Carolinian and well known in Charlotte, who now makes his headquarters in Roanoke, Va., will be located for the greater part of his time at Dante after July.

#### THE EQUIPMENT COSTLY.

At nearly all points along the line there is evidence of studied location and careful engineering particularly along the cliffs of the Clinch river and at Starne's Bend, where the new line gradually gains an elevation over the old location in order to strike high up into Clinch mountain. The bridges are all of the heaviest steel with strongest concrete abutments. The equipment consists of engines of the latest and most approved types, 100-ton passenger locomotives, 125-ton consolidation locomotives, and the Mallet type of locomotives weighing 182 tons. The coal cars are of 50 tons each. One of the sights along the way from Bostic to Marion is a string of these cars more than a mile and a half in length. Fifteen hundred more have been ordered, their cost approximating \$1,200 each. A locomotive is now at the shops for the new road, but difficulty is being had in getting it home, owing to the refusal of connecting roads to give it passage over their lines. The operation of trains over the new system is entirely by telephone, this service being in accord with the latest and most approved methods of railway operation.

The party remained in the Clinchfield territory four days, officials of the two roads discussing how best to arrange the schedules in order to accommodate the travel, and the lay members of the party enjoying the scenery. That there is to be a great movement to the Clinchfield territory is certain for one has but to see the country to covet a summer home there. At present the hotel accommodations of the resorts reached by the new line, such as Linville Falls and Unaka Springs, etc. are inadequate. Effort is being made to promote building along this line. Special effort will be made to properly advertise it.

Returning from Johnson City the cars leave at 8:20 in the morning Charlotte being reached without change at 5:15 in the afternoon. No more delightful two-days' outing is available in the State.

#### Marriage Delayed.

Measles, just plain measles, but aided and abetted by the Chicago health department have baffled young Cupid. In consequence the marriage of Miss Louise Wilson, principal sufferer from the measles, inasmuch as she has them and must await their disappearance before she can wed Arthur McCracken, has been postponed at least two weeks. It was arranged for the ceremony to take place today.

The wedding announcements were out and all preparations had been made Monday for today's ceremony. It was to be at the home of the father of Miss Wilson. Then, Monday morning the bride-to-be became ill.

"Mum," muttered Dr. Beaudry when he had seen the patient. A very light attack of the measles. I must obey the health department."

And the health department quarantined the house.

Pleading were of no avail. The bride-to-be became a trifle superstitious about postponed weddings and said so. She even said she would be married today or not at all, which caused the prospective bridegroom to urge that all means be used to persuade the health department. But his pleadings were in vain.

The wedding ceremony remains postponed.