

# The Carrollton Railroad

By KENNETH E. KIPFER

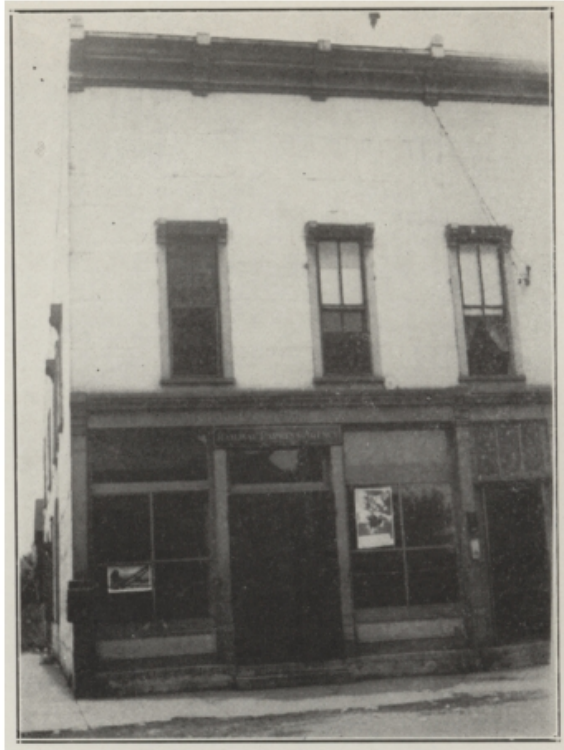
Although written in 1941, my story has as its inception the year 1905. This is a brief history concerning one of our few remaining prosperous short line railroads, prior to the war, and begins in the small Carroll County town of Carrollton Kentucky. Some thirty nine years ago, a small group of far seeing citizens banded together for the purpose of what turned out later to be the birth of The Carrollton Railroad.

Carrollton Kentucky, a prosperous little town of some 2900 community loving souls, situated high on the banks of the Kentucky and Ohio Rivers where the former joins the mighty waters of the Ohio, some 53 miles from the Queen City of Cincinnati Ohio. These people are proud of the fact they are being served by three forms of transportation, something which our larger cities cannot boast of, namely, highway, river, and last, but most important of all, a railroad.

In motoring from Cincinnati, one enters Carrollton, from the North East, over U. S. highway #42, which serves as one of its principal streets. Flanking both sides of this street are some of the most beautiful homes to be found in this section of the State, Carrollton, being a distributing point for prosperous tobacco growers of Carroll and surrounding Counties. Some of the finest burley tobacco is grown in this part of the State. Turning left, off the highway at the outskirts of the south western end of the town and traveling approximately two squares, you arrive at the general offices of The Carrollton Railroad. Upon entering the office one day I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr. R. L. Booth, the congenial and likable Vice-President and Treasurer of the railroad and were it not for his fine spirit of cooperation this story would not be possible, and to him I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude. We immediately began talking about his railroad and this is how it all came about.

The Carrollton and Worthville Railroad, as it was originally called, was incorporated with a capital stock of \$50,000 and issued first mortgage bonds to the amount of \$95,000 and began operation on April 19, 1905, with the following incorporators; Mr. H. Everett Randall, Mr. A. Z. Boyer, Mr. James Gayle, Mr. John J. C. Watson, Mr. Theo. C. Snively, Mr. Harry R. Moore, Mr. Charles E. Davis, and Mr. G. D. Crain. Among the incorporators, the first officers chosen to guide the destinies of this new venture were Mr. H. Everett Randall, President, Mr. A. Z. Boyer, Vice-President, and Mr. James Gayle, Secretary and Treasurer.

Starting from Carrollton Kentucky, the home terminal, this picturesque little standard gauge road threads and winds its single track right-of-way through the rich rolling farm lands of the Kentucky River valley in a south easterly direction, crossing two trestles enroute, for a distance of eight and eight-tenths miles to Worthville Kentucky, the Southern terminus, where connections with the Louisville Division of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad is made. Incidentally, all



The General Offices of the Carrollton R. R. Co.



A section of the C. & W. R. R. immediately after the sale in 1927. Looking toward Worthville, new rail being laid.

trackage of The Carrollton Railroad is located entirely within the boundaries of Carroll County. The railroad at present is operated for freight only, passenger service having been discontinued in 1926. The profile of the railroad and the locomotive now in service are of a nature that permits a maximum gross tonnage of 1800 tons to be handled either way. A 2% grade on a nine degree curve is encountered upon entering the yards at Worthville, while in the yards at Carrollton, a 3% grade is conquered many times daily.

The daily except Sunday freight train makes one round trip, leaving Carrollton at 7:30 A. M., returning at 9:30 A. M. The balance of the work day period is consumed in switching operations at Carrollton. Among the industrial plants which it serves are The Blue Ribbon Distilling Company, The Carrollton Furniture Manufacturing Company, manufacturers of high grade bedroom furniture, The Carrollton Coal and Sand Company, The Standard Oil Company and large tobacco warehouses. In 1940, 2276 carloads of sand and gravel and 717 carloads of burley tobacco, besides numerous carloads of furniture, coal and oil were shipped over their rails, all told, the average daily consist in 1940 totaled 10 cars. From December 1940 to February 1941, 10 to 22 million pounds of burley tobacco were also handled by rail and The Carrollton Coal and Sand Company averages an annual rail shipment of 150,000 tons of sand and gravel. No doubt the shipments of all the various industries have increased materially since our entry into the war.

As the one locomotive has exclusive trackage rights at all times, no fixed schedule is maintained and block signals, train orders and time tables are unknown, in so far as train operation is concerned. Communication between the two terminals, there are no way stations, is by telephone, owned and maintained by The Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company. The personnel of the railroad consists of twelve employees and are made up of the following, 1 executive, 6 in transportation, 4 of these being in train and engine service and 5 in maintenance of way and structures.

The only rolling stock owned by the company at present, is one 36 ft. box car purchased second hand from the Louisville and Nashville Railroad some years ago. This car is not used in interchange service, but stays on its own rails, being used to handle less than carload freight in local interline service. Their purpose in purchasing this car was to avoid the per diem payment to foreign lines, which they would be compelled to do, if foreign equipment was used in LCL service on their lines.

When operations began in 1905, the road was laid with 58 pound rail exclusively. In 1927 the road was sold to the present owners and the name changed to The Carrollton Railroad. A rehabilitation program was immediately inaugurated. New cross ties were installed, road bed reballasted with gravel and the old 58 pound rail was replaced with the 70 pound variety which is standard today, with the exception of one mile of track that is laid with 90 pound rail. Aside from the 8.8 miles of main line, the road also has 1.54 miles of siding and industrial track.

## Motive Power

The Carrollton and Worthville Railroad and its predecessor company, The Carrollton Railroad never owned or purchased a new steam locomotive in its entire existence to date. Being a feeder line for the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, it would seem only natural to turn to them for their source of motive power supply, this is more or less the general practice of the majority of all short line railroads which serve as feeder lines to our larger railroads, and with one exception all their steam locomotives were former L&N engines.

The honor and distinction of opening up this new railroad to traffic, belongs to engine 2104 which arrived in May 1905, a former D-10 class 8 wheel American type with 18x24" cylinders; 64" drivers and a tractive effort of 16,500 pounds. It was built by the Rogers Locomotive Works in 1886 and was promptly relettered and given number 101. This, no doubt, was a gala day for the C&W officials and the people of Carrollton. One might easily sense the proud feeling of satisfaction and security, when the 101 dug in with her 64" drivers and started traffic moving. The C&W was now officially in actual operation.

No. 102, the second locomotive on the C&W was formerly L&N #347, built by the Pittsburgh Locomotive Works in 1887, 4-6-0 type, with 18x24" cyls., 51" drivers and weighed 98000 lbs. The L&N sold it about 1908 and the locomotive remained in service until 1927 when it was scrapped.

The first two engines undoubtedly gave long and faithful service, as evidence to the fact, their third engine did not put in its initial appearance until 16 years later. This engine is the only one the L&N was not called upon to furnish. Engine 103, as it was known on the C&W, was purchased from The Southern Iron and Equipment Company of Atlanta, Georgia, in 1921. It was originally built by the Glover Machine Works, also of Atlanta, Georgia. This engine was somewhat different than the two former ones, in as much as the 103 was a 10-wheel or 4-6-0 type with cylinders 14x20", her former road number is unknown as well as specifications, other than those given. No record as to her original owner is available either, but it did, however, bear Glover boiler #14205.

In 1925 the C&W purchased their fourth engine, number 341 a GI6 class, 10-wheel 4-6-0 type with 18x24" cylinders; 55" drivers and weighed 98,000 pounds without the tender. It was built by the Pittsburgh Locomotive Works in the 80's. It seems, that with the arrival of this engine, the C&W dispensed with the practice of renumbering their engines, but instead, allowed them to carry the same number during their active career on the road. This practice is still in effect at this writing.

Engine 449 was placed in service in 1926, a class F-1 mogul or 2-6-0 type with 18x24" cylinders; 55" drivers and weighed 103,000 pounds without the tender. She was built by the Rogers Locomotive Works in 1882.



Carrollton Yard looking eastward, about 1927. Engine 460 in background.



The Main line looking eastward in Carrollton.

Engine 460 made its appearance in 1927, with dimensions slightly in excess of engine 449, the exact specifications, builder and date are unknown to me at present, but in all appearances she resembled a Rogers product. This engine and a sister engine the 459 were exact duplicates and the only two engines in their classification on the L&N roster. They were used in passenger transfer service between Latonia, Kentucky, and the old Central Union Depot in Cincinnati, Ohio, many years ago on the L&N. Trains of the Louisville Division, or old LC&L Division of the L&N as it was then called, terminated their run in the old Pennsylvania depot in Cincinnati, therefore, passengers arriving over this division from the South and wishing to continue their journey beyond Cincinnati, over some connecting line, other than the Pennsylvania or N&W railroad, would detrain at Latonia, and take the commuter to the Central Union Depot for their connections. These locomotives were a thing of beauty, painted a rich brown and trimmed in yellow with the inside of the cab and boiler head painted aluminum. The cab fittings were polished brass. After commuter service was withdrawn both engines were shipped elsewhere for service, engine 460 eventually finding its way to the Carrollton Railroad, as it was now called, the road having been sold in this year as previously mentioned. This engine gave good service for four years and in 1931 was replaced by engine 754 a class H7 consolidation, built by Rome in 1890, with 21x24" cylinders; 51" drivers and weighing 145,000 pounds without the tender.

Two years later, engine 754 was replaced by engine 755, a sister engine of the 754 in all specifications and details. It was with the advent of this engine that the Carrollton ceased purchasing their locomotives outright and began leasing them, a practice which continues to this day. Prior to this, all locomotives purchased by the company from the beginning of operations, were either scrapped or traded in on each succeeding engine.

Beginning to feel the pinch of the depression and with business dwindling as it did everywhere, the Carrollton struggled along admirably, so with tonnage becoming lighter and lighter the company again went back to lighter power, but as business gradually increased you will note heavier engines again drifted back to the Carrollton. The next engine for service was a light D-11 class, 8 wheel American type, number 122, with 18x24" cylinders; 64" drivers; 160 pounds boiler pressure and a tractive effort of 16,500 pounds. This engine, built by the L&N in the 80's, was practically a duplicate, with the exception of the classification, of the first locomotive used in the opening of the railroad in 1905. The Carrollton Railroad, so to speak, was right back where they started, in so far as motive power was concerned.

Engine 548 was in service in 1939. A class F8 mogul or 2-6-0 type, with 20x24" cylinders; 51" drivers; a boiler pressure of 160 pounds; tractive effort, 25,600 and weighed 136,200 pounds without her tender. She was a product of the Rogers Locomotive Works of 1906.

The year 1941 ushered in the heaviest and most powerful locomotive ever used by the Carrollton, engine 938, a class H20 consolidation, whose

21x26" cylinders; 52" drivers and 175 pound boiler pressure give her a rated tractive effort of 32,800 pounds. She tips the scales at 159,200 pounds less tender and was built by the Cooke Locomotive Works in 1902. This engine, or one of a similar class, is in service at present.

The only other form of motive power ever used by the Carrollton, were two gasoline driven rail cars, built by the company in 1919 and powered with Ford motors, to handle passengers and mail. These proved too costly to maintain and with the discontinuance of passenger and mail service in 1926, they were immediately scrapped. Thus ended a short and none too profitable experience in gasoline rail power.

The company does not have the facilities for handling repairs other than those of the lightest kind. For monthly federal inspections and heavy repairs, the engine is taken to the main shops of the L&N at South Louisville, some 50 miles south of Worthville, another engine replacing it while repairs are made. No turntable or wye is available at Carrollton or Worthville, and for reasons known only to the officials of the Carrollton, the engine is used headed toward Worthville at all times, therefore, when these engines are taken to Louisville, it is necessary to run them backing up. As the railroad does not operate at night, the engine is serviced, fire cleaned and banked and left standing on one of the yard tracks over night in charge of an engine watchman, as no provisions for keeping the engine indoors have been made, but it is a flourishing little railroad in every respect and serves its community exceptionally well by being under very capable management.

We now take our leave of the Carrollton Railroad, knowing full well the important task these short line railroads are performing and of the vital service they contribute to this great world conflict. In comparison to size, they are standing on equal ground fighting shoulder to shoulder with their big brothers, while their praise is being sung far and wide, but when hostilities have ended and the world settled back to a normal life once more, do not allow these noble little roads to sink into oblivion as they were allowed to do a few years back, but give them our active and moral support for a long and rightful existence. They are just as much a part of their respective communities as we are.



Engine 548 in Carrollton yards during lunch hour—1939.



Engine #938, heaviest and present engine in service on top of 3% grade, just visible in lower right hand corner.