

Two Daylights Daily

By J. H. Faler.

★ Southern Pacific's West Coast streamliners carry 1500 passengers a day.



HIGHLY motorized California, with its one passenger automobile for each 2.8 persons, also has the world's best patronized trains, the *Daylights* of the Southern Pacific. San Francisco and Los Angeles, though separated by 470 mountainous miles, are yet but half a state apart, and this shrinking of distances in the huge West means that the business man of one city thinks nothing of running over to the neighboring metropolis for a day. The SP has capitalized on this, and the tourist trade, to the full.

Years ago the crack train up and down the coast was the *Daylight Limited*, about 12 hours running time. A jogging 40 miles per hour average was no mean trick over country that included the Horseshoe Curve at San

Luis Obispo (above) and Santa Susanna Pass (page 6), but as of March 21, 1937, everything was streamlined, even the name, and the first *Daylights* emerged.

Twelve cars long, the red and orange Pullman-built trains flashed up and down El Camino Real, the old mission trail, powered by six Lima-built 4-8-4's, Class GS-2, No. 4410 to 4415. Running time was cut to 9 hours 45 minutes, later to the 9½ hours of today. Leaving time at both terminals is 8:15 a. m., allowing a scenic daylight trip.

This speeding up necessitated much track work, heavier rails in some places, and a lessening of the most severe curves, particularly along the 113 miles that skirt the very edge of the Pacific Ocean. Many a high steel trestle

carries the line over arid ravines in the shoreline bluffs, and these trestles were strengthened.

Technicalities, however, didn't interest the public, but color and performance did. The *Daylight* started to pile up impressive passenger records. All coach seats were reserved, and in spite of two additional cars it was soon impossible to get seats except by reserving several days in advance. Extra sections of standard equipment handled the overflow, and even these were at times sold out.

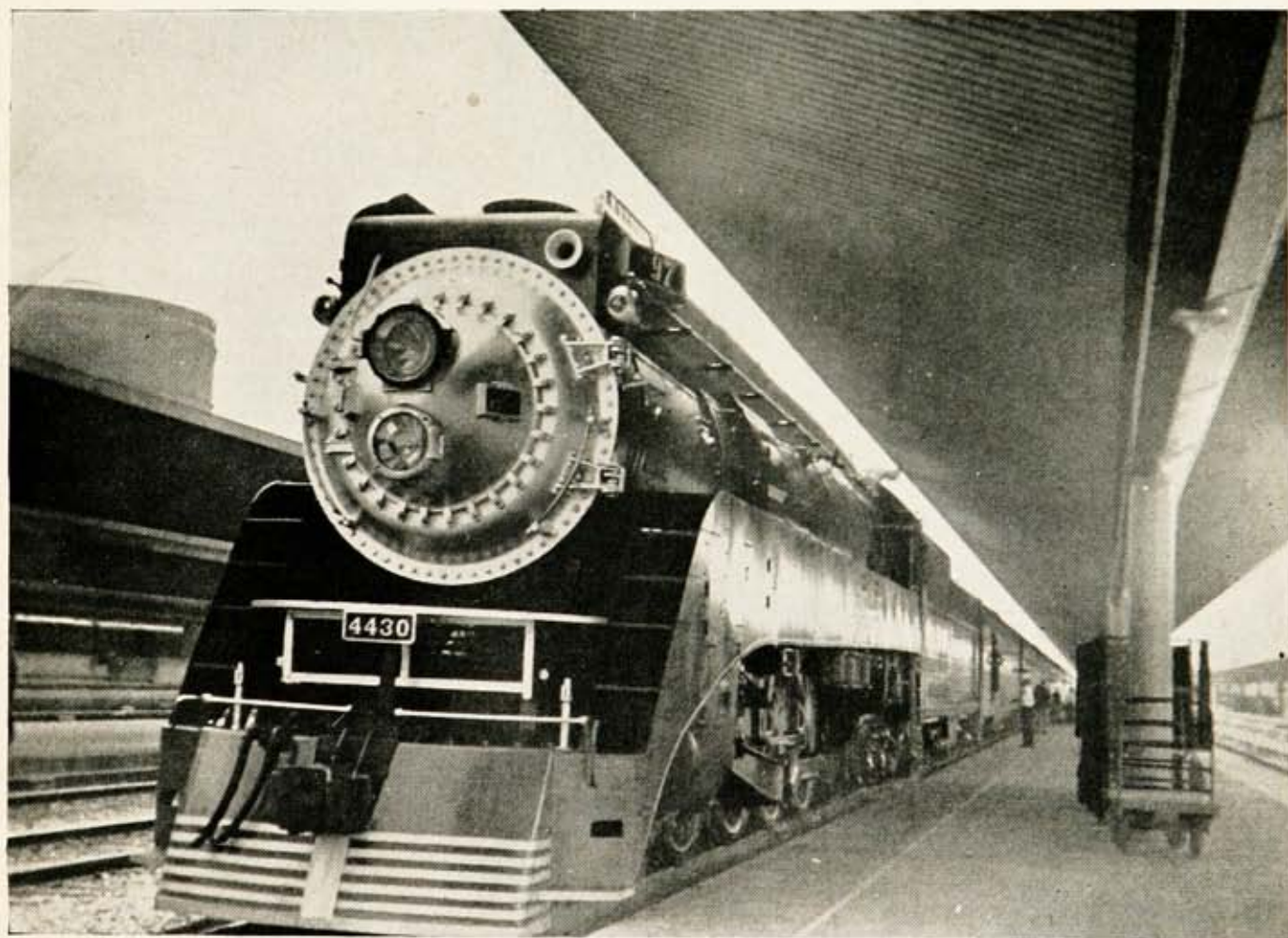
Additional equipment seemed almost inevitable, and in January, 1940, two spanking new 14-car trains replaced the original *Daylights*, and after a shopping the older trains were put on as *Noon Daylights*, leaving each terminal at noon. Now the two trains a day each way handle more than 1500 passengers a day!

Just this last Summer still another *Daylight* entered the fold, the *San Joaquin Daylight*, a

pair of trains giving fast day service over the longer Valley line between Los Angeles and San Francisco. This is the general route over which the Santa Fe entered the San Francisco-Los Angeles business three years ago with its combination streamliner-bus service.

The newest of these new trains include such refinements as elevators for loading and unloading hand baggage without delaying passengers in the vestibules, public address systems over which train passenger agents describe scenic features of the route, and three-car dining units with coffee shop on one end, dining room on the other, and kitchen in the middle.

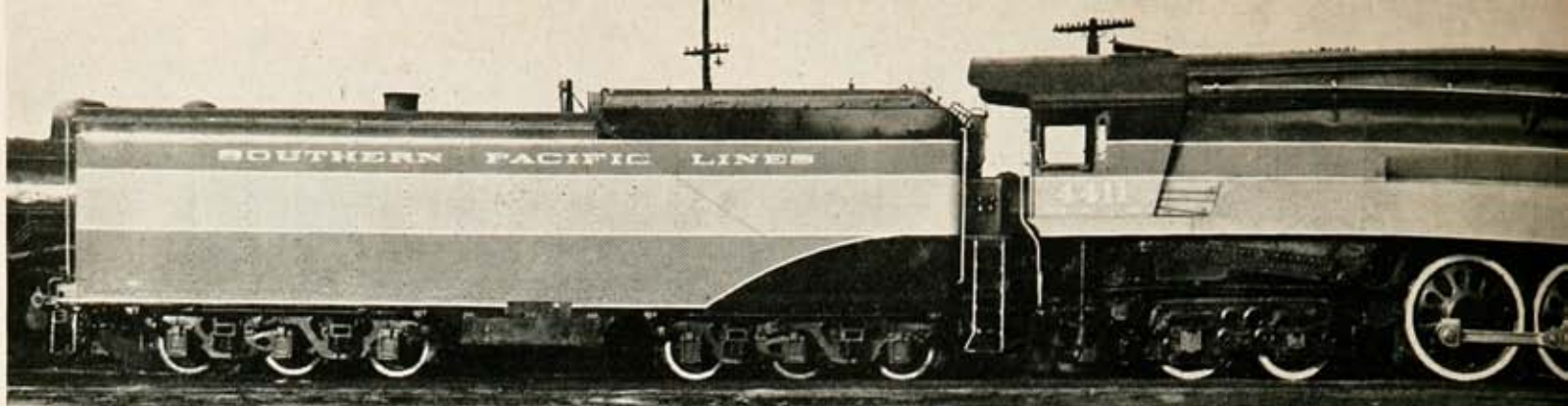
To the original six *Daylight* locomotives 34 have since been added, all much alike in appearance except that the last 20 have two headlights and completely enclosed cabs. Mechanical specifications have been changed for improved performance, putting to good use



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Noon Daylight ready to leave Los Angeles.

She will pick up more passengers at 12:18 at suburban Glendale, by 1:30 will be in sight of the ocean, at 2:13 in Santa Barbara, and at 5 o'clock will be rounding the Horseshoe Curve north of San Luis Obispo (see photo, opposite page) with a helper for the climb over the summit at Santa Margarita. The 4430 is first of the GS-4's, newest *Daylight* engines. The extra headlight gyrates to warn motorists at grade crossings.



the early experience with the trains, and the *Daylight* class of motive power is now used not only on the streamliners but on night passenger trains and the *Overnight* fast freight.

The *Morning Daylight* continues to be the most popular of the three

Daylights and engines.

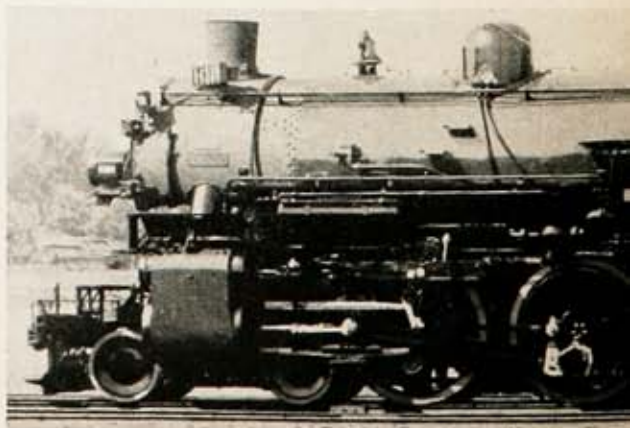
At top of page is one of the *Daylight* locomotives. No. 4411 belongs to the earlier Class GS-2 streamlined 4-8-4's, which have been added to by two later classes, locomotives 4423 to 4449, inclusive. These last usually pull the crack streamliners at present. The old *Daylight Limited* was pulled by Mountain type locomotives like No. 4328,

A *Daylight* circle trip.

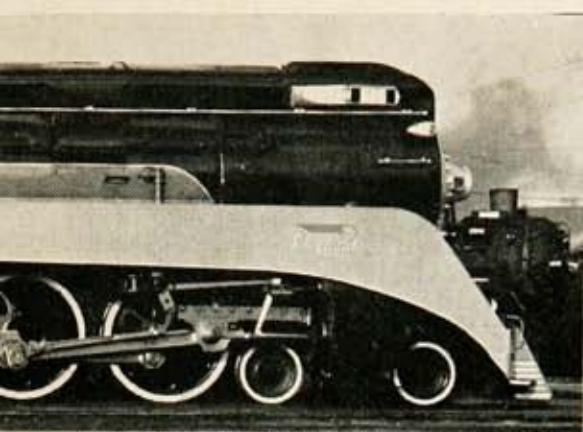
A fine two-day trip is up one Southern Pacific route between Los Angeles and San Francisco and back the other. The *Daylights* make this a comfortable, fast ride. Following the mile posts on the map, let's leave Los Angeles, milepost 483, on the *San Joaquin Daylight*, passing the junction with the Sunset Route to New Orleans almost immediately after we leave the fine new Union Station. Northward we go, to cross the San Gabriel Mountains (including Newhall Tunnel) and enter the Mojave Desert. There follows a long tangent much of the way to Mojave, where the Santa Fe's main line from Chicago to San Francisco joins for joint trackage to Bakersfield.

Beyond Tehachapi Pass, elevation 3793 feet, is Tehachapi, summit of the Tehachapi Mountains. On the descent the train winds around Tehachapi Loop, almost two complete circles making a difference of 77 feet in elevation. This loop was one of the railroad wonders of the world at the time of its construction. The broad San Joaquin Valley is a huge agricultural producer, backbone of Southern Pacific local freight traffic. The valley seems almost endless as the train sings northward, the Sierras dim against the eastern horizon. Fresno is the largest city between San Francisco and Los Angeles; Merced is the junction point for the side trip to Yosemite on the Yosemite Valley Railroad. Just before reaching Martinez, milepost 35, the huge Benecia Bridge can be seen from the right side of the train. This bridge replaced a four-track ferryboat in carrying the SP main lines to Ogden and Portland across the Sacramento River. Last lap is the ferry trip across San Francisco Bay with its incomparable view of the city's skyline.

Southward out of San Francisco on the coast route are a number of tunnels, carrying the line under



Middle photo, F. J. Peterson, 1748 S. New Hampshire Ave., Los Angeles, Calif.; others Southern Pacific.



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daytime streamlined trains, now carrying more than 600 reserved seats. Thus has the King's Highway of New Spain become the scene of a remarkably successful twentieth century modernization of railroad transportation.

bottom of page. The top train photo could be either a *Coast* or *San Joaquin Daylight* in any of the agricultural areas along the lines. The semaphore signals are characteristic, and notice that they are lower quadrant with a separate arm for distant signal indication. Santa Susanna Pass, middle picture, is one of the chief attractions of the Coast Line, another being the 113 miles of ocean shore right next to the tracks.

bayside bluffs and shortcutting an older line which climbed over the heights some distance back of the bay. Along the southern reaches of the bay are many fine residential suburbs served by SP suburban service. Here is Palo Alto, milepost 30, with Stanford University. South of San Jose, milepost 47, is a fruit orchard belt producing fine apples. Salinas, milepost 114, is near vacation-spot Monterey, once capital of California and at the north end of sunny Salinas Valley, the longest unbroken stretch on the coast route. In a little more than 100 miles the track gradually climbs to an elevation of nearly 1500 feet, and then after a series of tunnels through Santa Margarita Pass quickly drops down around Horseshoe Curve into San Luis Obispo, elevation 243 feet. Here can be seen not only a large SP engine terminal and the changing of *Daylight* locomotives, but equipment of the three-foot gauge Pacific Coast Railway, which the SP crosses some miles farther on.

After milepost 259 the railroad runs almost entirely in sight of the ocean for 113 miles. Take sun glasses for a bright day! As it approaches Point Conception, milepost 321, it is on a narrow ledge between cliffs and sea, and as each deep canyon runs into the coast the line crosses it on a high steel trestle. One of the longest is at Gaviota, milepost 336. Santa Barbara is the showplace of the coast, with one of the most beautiful missions and an interesting Spanish fiesta each year. South of here, oil wells can be seen out in the ocean, and one can also glimpse the Santa Barbara Islands.

After crossing the sugarbeet fields near Oxnard, milepost 404, the railroad climbs across Santa Susanna Pass, through the longest tunnel on the Coast Line, and into San Fernando Valley, where it joins the San Joaquin line at Burbank, just north of Los Angeles.



Linn H. Westcott.

