

Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society



www.psrhs.org

August 2020 Newsletter

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Central Pacific Coach #12.** Pages 5-8



Central Pacific Coach #12 in its recent role as a Calistoga wine shop. Read about the remarkable history of this car on page 2 and pp. 5-8. Kyle Wyatt Photo

Scheduled Events & Notices



All Events Listed are Subject to Rescheduling due to CoronaVirus restrictions

Aug 27 NO MEETING IN AUGUST DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS

Sep 24 (TENTATIVE) PSRHS Monthly Meeting – 7pm – Program TBA



MONTHLY MEETING

There will be NO PSRHS Monthly Meeting in August. Our meetings will not resume until restrictions due to Coronavirus precautions have been lifted. Watch the monthly newsletter for updated status of future meetings.

PSRHS WEB CAM UPDATE

Completion of the initial web cam installation along the eastbound track near Applegate was delayed by the malfunction of a new piece of equipment that supports the wi-fi connection. A replacement has been installed and the camera is up and running. The last few settings are being dialed in before going live any day now.

Watch our web site www.psrhs.org for information on availability of the web cam for viewing.

PSRHS WEB SITE ADDITIONS

Our web site www.psrhs.org now offers readers the ability to view and/or download any of our monthly newsletters. Click on the link on the home page blog, or find the Newsletters page under the Yard Office tab. More changes are coming so check back often.

THE PLIGHT OF CENTRAL PACIFIC COACH #12

Scott Inman recently forwarded information on the plight of Central Pacific Coach #12 to your newsletter editor and several other people interested in railroad history and preservation. CP coach #12 was built by the Wason Manufacturing Company in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1869. After being retired from passenger and maintenance of way service, it was placed on the ground in the Stockton yards as a shed. It was salvaged in the late 1970's, cosmetically restored and placed inside the depot at Calistoga, CA, where until recently it served as a wine shop.

Further research shows that CP coach #12 played a major role in railroad history. Prior to completion of the first transcontinental railroad, cars for the new Central Pacific were shipped from east coast manufacturers by sea around Cape Horn. With the slated completion of the new transcontinental railroad in 1869, Wason shipped two coaches, CP #12 and #16, over the rails from Massachusetts to Omaha, where they were provided to a contingent of Army officers traveling over Union Pacific tracks to Promontory for the Golden Spike ceremony. The two cars were then connected to Governor Stanford's special train for the return trip to Sacramento. Thus these two coaches became the first pieces of railroad equipment to travel coast to coast over the newly completed transcontinental railroad. Furthermore CP coach #12 and Governor Stanford's car are the only surviving pieces of railroad equipment that were at Promontory for the historic ceremony.

Interested readers will find Kyle Wyatt's more detailed history of CP coach #12 on pages 5-8 of this newsletter, along with the car's unique historical significance.

That brings us to the rest of the story – the present-day plight of CP coach #12. The Calistoga depot building recently changed hands, and the current owner has someone who wants to remake the building into a restaurant. The conversion will involve an extensive remodel of the building's interior, and demolition of the railcar.

If the car is to be saved, a portion of one wall of the building would have to be opened, the car removed, and the wall closed back in. And of course, time is of the essence as the remodel project is already underway.

If you or someone you know would like to contribute monetarily or otherwise to the efforts to save historic railcar CP #12 from extinction, contact [Scott Inman](#) or your [newsletter editor](#) and I will forward your information to Scott.





Passing Scene – Double Stacks on the Donner Route

Here's one more view of double-stacks on the Donner route, taken in 2011. A westbound freight has just come through the Cape Horn tunnels and is traversing one of the Long Ravine steel bridges or viaducts on its way to Colfax. The locomotives are passing over a fill area beyond the far end of the bridges that was originally spanned by a curved wood trestle until 1876 when the trestle was filled in. Compare this photo with the one on page 4. For more information on the history of this location, see the Spring 2012 Donner Crossings Issue available on our www.psrhs.org web site under the Yard Office tab. *Photo by Roger Staab*



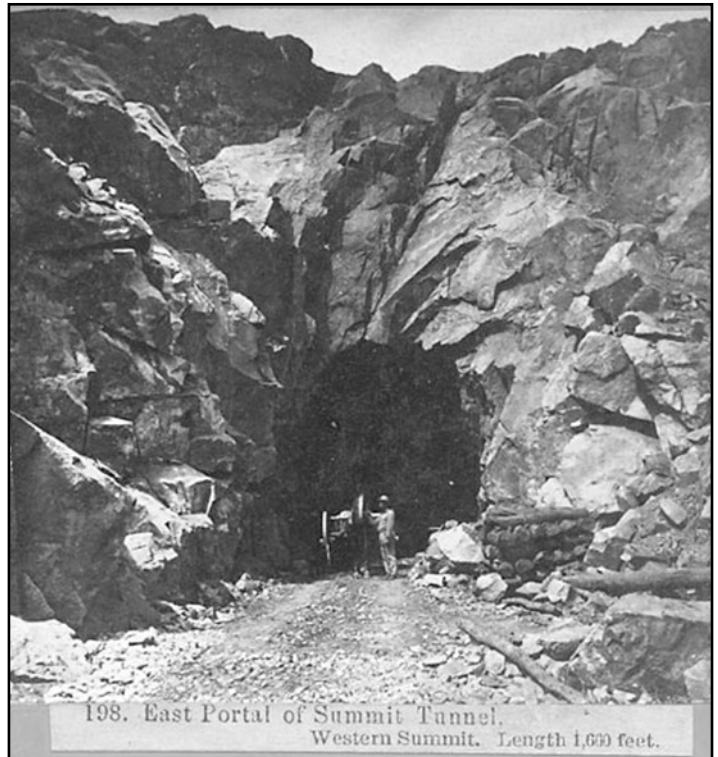
Amazon Smile Fund Raising

We are now part of the Amazon Smile fund raising campaign. We receive a donation to the society based on your purchases. Please feel free to copy and paste the link below and include it in all your emails.

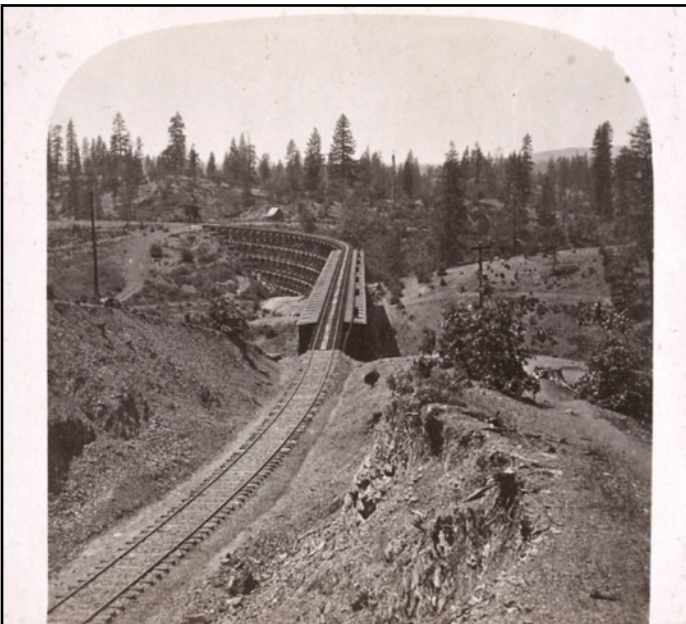
<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/68-0488569>

From the Archives

July Mystery Photo (right): This Thomas Houseworth image shows construction underway at the east portal of Summit Tunnel 6. It is likely that some of the granite rock removed from the tunnel's east end was used to construct the China Wall fill between Tunnels 7 and 8. *PSRHS collection.*



August Mystery Photo (left): What is the subject of this photo, and approximately what year was it taken? *Houseworth photo, PSRHS collection.*



Accidents/Other Incidents. *Colfax Record*, 9 Nov 1945. “**Derailment** – Two locomotives and eight cars of an east bound freight train were derailed early Wednesday morning in the snowshed area one and a half miles east of Norden. A considerable amount of snowshed was torn down and track torn up. Two engineers and a track walker were injured ... Engineer Brashear and fireman Clink were brought to Colfax, where Dr. Ione Kilgore attended to their injuries. The accident occurred when a heavy locomotive and a light helper engine went through a derailing switch. One locomotive turned almost completely over while another turned on its side. The “Big Hooks” and their crews from Roseville and Sparks were sent to the scene of the accident. Traffic was tied up on the east bound track all of Wednesday and most of Thursday.”

Membership Information

Individual Members = \$25.00/yr
Each Additional Family Member = \$5.00/yr

- Monthly Meetings (4th Thursday) and Newsletter
- Member Activities, History Pubs and Field Trips
- Display and Restoration Projects

PSRHS, P.O. Box 1776, Colfax, CA 95713
or join/renew online at www.psrhs.org

Reader comments, additional details, etc., are invited on any newsletter items or photos. Please forward comments, suggestions or information for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter to:

Roger Staab (530) 346-6722 roger.staab@psrhs.org

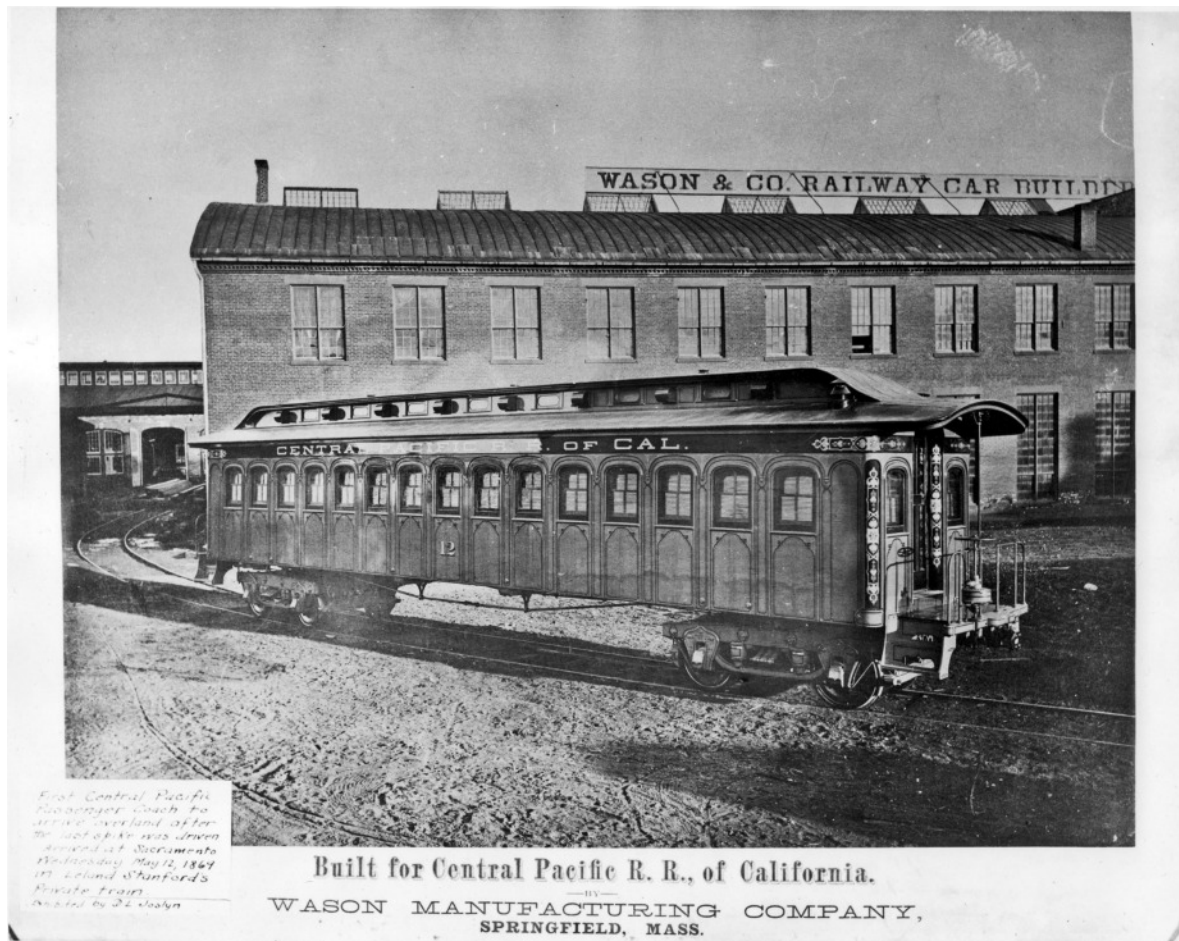


Central Pacific Coach #12 History

Kyle K. Wyatt

The historical information about Central Pacific coach #12 displayed with the car at the Calistoga depot has never been fully accurate. It is actually much more historically significant.

The car was built in 1869 by the Wason Manufacturing Company in Springfield, Mass. As Central Pacific #12, it was the subject of the classic builder photo representing all the Wason coaches built for Central Pacific in 1869.



CP coach #12 at the Wason factory in 1869 – Wyatt coll.

But even more significant, #12 was part of the very first group of Wason cars shipped for delivery to Central Pacific across the country by rail. More specifically, CP coaches #12 and #16 (in advance of other Wason cars shipped) were made available by Union Pacific to the officers of the US Army contingent that attended the Transcontinental Railroad completion ceremonies at Promontory on May 10, 1869. After the ceremonies, these two cars were attached to Gov. Stanford's special train on its return to Sacramento. So, besides Gov. Stanford's car (now preserved by the Nevada State Railroad Museum), Central Pacific coach #12 is the only other surviving piece of railroad equipment that was at Promontory for the ceremonies of May 10, 1869.



Further, CP coaches #12 and #16 were the very first pieces of railroad equipment to travel by rail from the Atlantic (Massachusetts) to the Pacific (California). All previous pieces of equipment traveled by sea to California. So I would suggest that CP coach #12 is a highly significant piece of California railroad heritage, and very much worth preserving.

The Daily Appeal.

ARRIVED.—The special train from Promontory Point, bringing ex-Governor Stanford and others who had been assisting in laying the last rail, and also a goodly number of passengers from the East, through by railroad, reached the city about six o'clock yesterday morning. In the train were the two new passenger coaches of which we made mention yesterday. They are by far the handsomest yet in use in the State, both as regards exterior and interior. The Wason Manufacturing Company, of Springfield (Mass.), are the makers. They are the first cars to make the through trip, and for that reason, combined with their fine appearance, they attracted a great deal of attention yesterday.

Sacramento Daily Union,
Volume 37, Number 5656,
13 May 1869

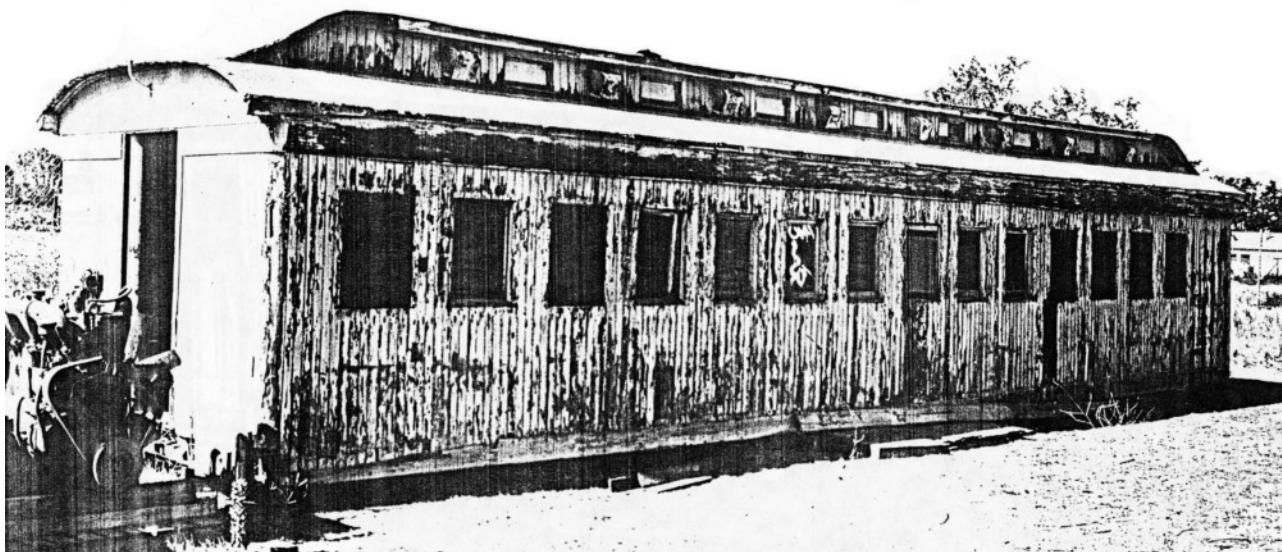
THROUGH BY RAIL.—The Sacramento Reporter, 13th instant, says :

The first cars through from the Atlantic seaboard arrived here about 5½ A. M. yesterday, in connection with a special train bringing ex-Governor Stanford and others. The cars—passenger carriages—are of the manufacture of the Wason Manufacturing Works, Springfield, Massachusetts, and the finest in every respect that have appeared on this coast. They are numbered respectively 12 and 16. The interior (both being of the same style) is finished most luxuriantly, the wood work being of birds-eye maple, black walnut and oak highly polished. The seats, of which the frames are cast iron, are cushioned and covered with crimson velvet, and are so constructed that they are self locking, and cannot be turned except under the manipulation of the conductor. There are racks for the reception of valises, packages, umbrellas, canes, etc. The roof is raised and arranged to ensure perfect ventilation. The blinds are double, so that the one half may be raised or lowered at the pleasure of the passenger.

Each is provided with a water closet. Aside from the ordinary brake they are furnished with Cremer's patent brakes, whereby the engineer, by means of a cord attached thereto, can instantly bring a train to a stoppage. The body of the car rests upon elliptical springs, and upon the trucks are friction rollers playing upon a traverse above, by means of which the trucks turn independently, accommodating themselves to curves. They are fine specimens of railroad carriages, and well worthy of inspection. In regard to workmanship, however, they cannot surpass the handiwork of our California artisans.

Marysville Daily Appeal,
Number 114,
15 May 1869, citing
Sacramento Reporter
13 May 1869

In 1891 CP #12 was renumbered CP #1106 as part of a system-wide renumbering. It spent its later years in commuter service on the Oakland-Berkeley-Alameda lines. After being retired from passenger service in 1912, and from maintenance service as CPMW #531 much later, CP coach #12 was placed on the ground by Southern Pacific as a shed in the yards at Stockton, California. Bob Dockery photographed it there both inside and outside – Bob's photos are now in the California State Railroad Museum collection.



CP #12, Stockton Yards, 1970s - Bob Dockery photo, Wyatt coll.



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The car was salvaged from Stockton in 1978 and converted into a wine shop inside the Calistoga depot, where it sits today, about to begin a new phase in its preservation story.



CP #12 inside the Calistoga Depot – Kyle Wyatt photo, July 27, 2020

Sister coach CP #16, which arrived in California with coach #12, was sold in 1912 to the Northwestern Pacific Railroad as their #122, became NWP MW #240 in 1936, and was later scrapped.

CP coach #43, now Sierra Railroad movie coach #2, is at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park.

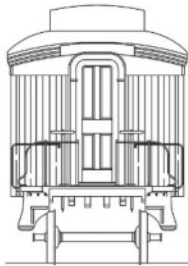


CP coach #43 in movie paint as Sierra movie coach #2 – Kyle Wyatt photo, November 14, 2017

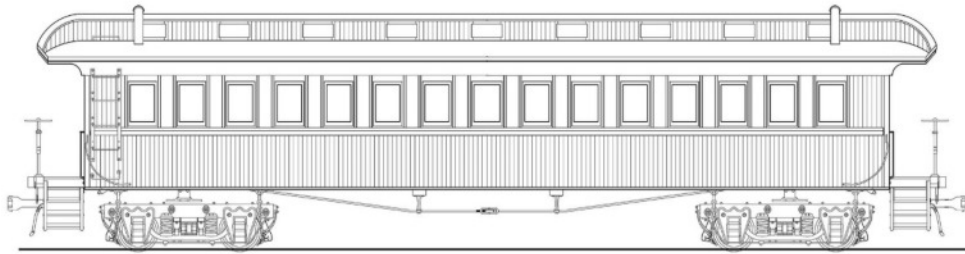
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END ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION

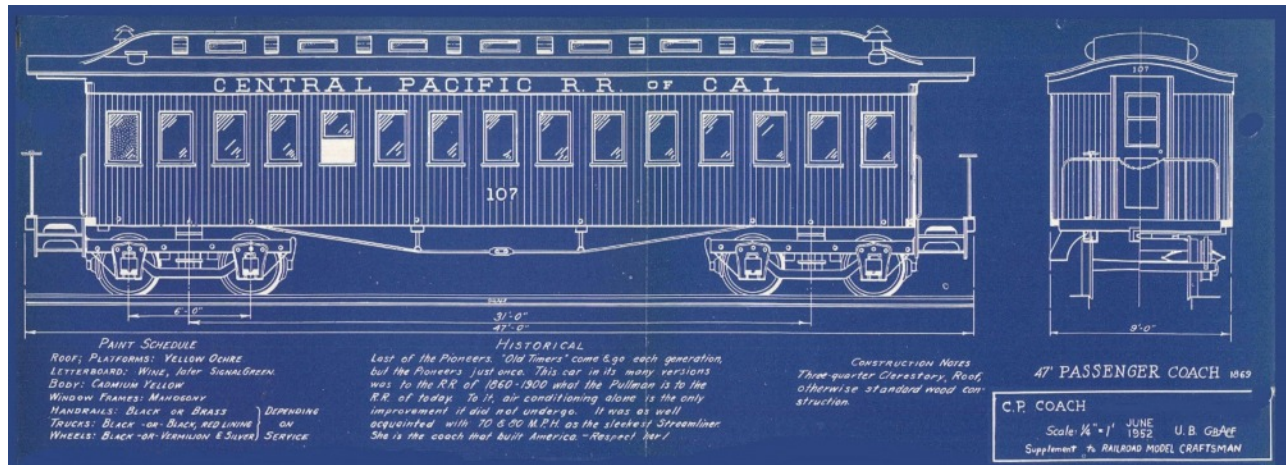
CP coach #43 as drawn in the 2017 Historic Structure Report on the car

CP coach #29, sold in 1912 to the Northwestern Pacific as their #123, is being restored by the Northwestern Pacific Railroad Historical Society in Petaluma.



CP coach #29, NWP #123, at the time it was delivered to the Northwestern Pacific RR Historical Society in 2010.

CP #s 43 and 29 are both fine cars as they sit today, but neither of them has the singular historical significance of CP coach #12 because of its attendance at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869, and being the first to cross the US continent by rail.



Central Pacific coach built by Wason – drawing by U. B. Graff, Railroad Model Craftsman, June 1952.