

USS 12

by Norman Holmes

Some things just don't come easy. Way back in August 1985 I asked Ken Boynton, who lives in Antioch to check around the USS plant in Pittsburg to see if they would have a retired Baldwin switcher we might acquire for our museum. The Baldwin fleet was still active, but they had an 80 ton GE center cab unit that was no longer in use and if I would write a letter we might obtain it.

I made a trip to Pittsburg, inspected the locomotive and felt it would fill a need in our collection. It has two Cummins diesel engines (one is in need of repair) which would make it economical to operate and one that we could operate in winter. Several letters, phone calls and a personal intervention by Bob Attama, a former USS executive and father of Mike Attama, gained tentative approval of our request. In Feb the USS plant joined with POSCO Industries of Korea to form a partnership. Changes in management delayed final approval of our request. Finally on May 22, 88 a letter arrived stating the engine was ours. UP Division Superintendent Jeff Verhaal was contacted about arranging for transportation of the unit to Portola. On May 30 Ken, Barbara and I worked on the GE, oiling journals, and gear boxes, repairing the hand brake and replacing air hoses and angle cocks. UP sent an inspector to look it over. He disconnected the traction motor leads and checked the wheels and air system—everything seemed OK for the move. USS put the unit outside on the interchange track and the Pittsburg turn coupled into it and started to pull. At 5mph the unit was bouncing so bad they were afraid to go any faster with it. They set it out to await further inspection. A UP mechanical supervisor was present when a second attempt was made to move it. Again it bounced so bad fear was it would derail. Speculation was that it had oblong wheels.

What to do? The unit sat outside the plant for a week-time enough for vandals to break all the windows and gauge glass and for someone to steal the horn. (We took the bell & builders plates off) I conferred with UP mechanical people and they offered to furnish use of their Petty-Bone crane and two flat cars to load and transport the loco to Portola. We would have to hire a second crane to help load the GE.

Another trip to Pittsburg was needed to determine what course of action was to be taken and what materials would be needed. Ken accompanied me again on this Oct 10th inspection. Four hours after I left Ken in Antioch, he was involved in an auto accident and hospitalized for a week. His help and expertise would be missed. A tentative date to load the engine was set for Oct 15th, however, on Oct 13th UP had a serious wreck on the High Line at Westwood. This took all UP's available cranes and crews, furthermore USS could not spot the GE for loading until Friday.

Finally, the loading was scheduled for Wed, Oct 22th. At 3:45 am, I aroused Jim Ley with a blast of my pickup horn. Time to hit the road to Pittsburg. A hot cup of coffee awaited Jim as the 230 mile journey began. Loaded in the pickup were ties, blocks, chain, a cutting torch and tools. Pittsburg was reached a little after 8, a gate pass secured and we were in the USS plant. Doug Jensen met us at the gate to help with the work. No12 was located along with two MP flats spotted for loading. Before long a UP wrecker foreman, two helpers in the Stockton wheel truck and the Petty-Bone crane with operator arrived. Some preparation work was necessary before loading could begin; the end plates had to be cut off, the truck retaining blocks removed and air brake lines disconnected. When this was accomplished, the Petty-Bone positioned itself, the Concord Crane Service crane arrived and got into position and alift was made. We had to call on the USS Baldwin to shove the trucks out from under the GE's body and shove a flat car in their place. Once this was done and the body secured the second flat was spotted so that the trucks could be loaded. With their help temporarily not needed, Jim and Doug managed to get a ride on the Baldwin. Not an everyday opportunity!

With the trucks out in the open, the cause of the rough motion was evident. Several of the wheels have deep grooves worn on the tread, so bad a flange was formed on the outside edge. This was not visible when the trucks were under the engine body. If when we get a wheel lathe the wheels will have to be turned. Meanwhile, a set of grinder shoes will be installed to try to true them this way.

The next four hours was spent securing the body and trucks for shipment. On the way home we stopped by to see how Ken was doing. He is sore, but getting well and he presented us with the horn of the 12. Someone thought the engine was going to scrap and took the horn, but brought it back when the engine's salvage became known. Jim and I got back in Portola at 11 pm, a 19 hour, 460 mile day.

In the wee-hours of 30th Oct the two flats arrived with #12. It so happened UP was making a trade with wrecker outfit derricks in Portola, exchanging the Salt Lake derrick for the one in Portola. What better time to unload the 12, as a crew was on hand to test the equipment. The 200 and 250 ton derricks had no trouble lifting the 56 ton GE body from the flat and placing it on it's trucks. The next day the B&L local moved 12 to our trackage, at 5mph....We now have a fine soon running example of GE's industrial power.....

UPDATE on SHORTLINE #8

by Betty Boynton

Feather River Shortline #8 is now officially 79 years old! Her bronze and black builder's plates #32160 read "Baldwin Locomotive Works, Philadelphia, Pa., Nov 1907." Shortline #8 is a standard gauge 2-6-2 Prairie type that was built for the Sierra Nevada Wood and Lumber Co. at Hobart Mills, Ca. With ample wood slabs to keep her firebox full, #8 transported forest products six and a half miles to Truckee for interchange with the SP. In 1917 #8 became Hobart Estates although her name was never printed on the equipment. During this time #8 was converted from wood to oil fuel. From 1932 to 1937 she carried the road name Hobart Southern Railroad. In 1937, the Overton Forest reserves at Hobart Mills became exhausted. The milling complex and allied narrow gauge and standard gauge railroads were abandoned and sold for scrap. Shortline #8 was then sold to the Clover Valley Lumber Co. at Loyalton in Aug 1938 and became a "woods switcher". She gathered logs from landings and spurs to make up trains in the Squaw Queen and Clover Valley area north of Beckwourth, assembling cars for the mainline haul to the mill at Loyalton. In 1956, her work days over, #8 was switched onto the scrap spur with a bleak future ahead. A reprieve from the scrapper came in 1958 when the little

engine, a World War I ammo car and former WP caboose were sent to Quincy. On Dec 24th, 1958, the equipment officially became the Feather River Shortline Railroad and the engine acquired her present name, FRSL #8

Over the years #8 put on added weight from layers of paint, grease and grime but never had a complete "right to the metal" restoration. Jim Boynton was the last person to run #8 under steam on May 19, 1962. In Aug 1984 he founded project Sequoia and took on this overwhelming task. Wed and Sat are work days, though small in number,

the members are large in enthusiasm and continue to work away the layers of memories. Steve Jackson, Mel Moore, Dean Hill, Jim Boynton, Al Thomson, Bob Beattie, John Marvin, Eugene Vicknair, Jim Ley and Mike Attama have worked on the cab, piping, brake system, tender connections, and fuel has been hauled from Quincy to Portola. The fuel has been made available by the Clover Logging Co., Plumas County School Dept, Sierra Pacific Industries, Detrick Tire Co., and hauled by Jim to Portola. Guy Dunscomb, assisted by his son Don is now producing a pictorial of

Western Steam and Shortline #8 will have a spot in the book. Edward Brown of the Plumas County Historical Society is also compiling articles about the Shortline for publication soon.

NEWS FLASH...Engine #8's boiler and firebox have at last been certified! What a birthday gift...the months of hard labor and delays are now paying off. We thank Rose Hersted for her excellent research effort that has aided this project greatly. Although much work remains, we hope 1987 will find the #8 back under steam power.....

TURBO PULLED.....by DAVE McClain our Electro-Motive Tech.....

Our "new" GP-30 UP 849 came to us relatively complete, except for the batteries. Matt Parker, Doug Jensen, Ken Roller, and I installed batteries taken from one of the inoperable Alco #3's.

After installing some oil filters and checking fluid levels water was added to the cooling system. Luckily only a couple of leaks were found.

The decision was made to crank the engine. The 608, as always, was used as a jump unit to bolster the ailing batteries. Doug took the start switch and I was on the layshaft. The engine came to life with minimal cranking. After the smoke cleared water began to leak out of the rear radiator connection. Apparently the UP had considered removing the radiator or maybe the engine and had left the connection loosened.

Mary R photo

We shut the engine down reluctantly and fixed the radiator leaks. When we attempted to restart the engine it would not respond!

The fuel pressure to the injectors and rack position were checked out okay--plenty of fuel going into the engine. Then Matt suggested that the turbo didn't sound like it was turning. An air box cover

was removed; air was not being expelled from the block. I went to the roof and found no air was coming out of the exhaust stack.

Suspecting the turbo, I removed the intake pipe to see if it turned during cranking. It did, but a comparison with 2001's turbo convinced us that it was not turning nearly fast enough--possibly the planetary gearing was broken.

Ski and I started removing shrouds and air box connections, the first step for turbo removal. Never having done this before, we took our time and worked together on the difficult bolts. When the roof hatch was loose and all the bolts were removed Jim was summoned from his operating duties with

