

Author's Footnotes to the 4th Edition of The Slim Princess



THE SLIM PRINCESS

Since publication of the first three editions of this booklet major and minor developments affecting the branch have taken place. Foremost was S.P.'s application, on January 21, 1959, to the Interstate Commerce Commission for permission to abandon the narrow gauge completely. Rather than rewrite the original text which still contains the essential story of the road, the editor has thought it best to add these footnotes on lesser details.

- The official schedule still bulletins a trip to Keeler on Saturdays, but for the last year such service has been omitted. Closing of the mines and the soda ash mill has made it possible for the crew to handle all shipments from the talc works, only remaining industry at Keeler, on a five-day week.
- Increase in perlite (also spelled "perlite") mining brought the station name of Elna back into existence. This was originally a station on the C. & C. which was relocated in 1928 when the Tinemaha Dam was built. It long since disappeared, but in 1957, to serve the perlite industry, a siding and loading tower were installed on the old site. For a while shipments were averaging 28 cars a month. With the threat of abandonment, the mining company shifted to trucks.
- The original Carson & Colorado water tank at the Nevada Highway Department maintenance station at Basalt has been removed. In May 1957 it suddenly went the way of the One Hoss Shay when the tower timbers collapsed and the tank came tumbling down.



- Electric lights were finally installed in the Laws station, giving it some "modern" equipment during the last two years.
- The Keeler station was closed and the agency discontinued in August 1957, after authorization for this curtailment was granted by the California Public Utilities Commission. On February 24, 1959, the Laws agency was also discontinued and merged with the one at Owenyo. This leaves Owenyo the only remaining active station during this precarious period in the life of the narrow gauge.
- Among the minor changes is the disappearance of the order board at Owenyo, mentioned in previous pages as "the only semaphore on the branch." It was in need of repairs and since it was no longer being used was given to the Depot Museum at Rhyolite, Nevada. There it has been installed outside the old station of the Las Vegas & Tonopah R.R., a road which folded along about the time of World War I. The building now houses a casino surrounded by railroad atmosphere without rails.
- The water tank at Aberdeen has been completely razed. The only remaining signs are the concrete slabs which once based the tank's supports.
- Locomotive No. 9 has been in service over periods of several weeks on an average of twice a year since the diesel came. When No. 9 underwent an overhaul at Bakersfield in the fall of 1956 it was fitted with simulated diamond stack and box headlight and painted with gilt and red trim. This unauthentic appearance moved historical groups to make protests and the locomotive was restored to its original livery in the spring of 1958. No. 9's final active service was during July and August of 1959 when the diesel required shopping.
- Open gondolas formerly used for railroad club excursions have been rebuilt into flatcars with the wooden benches entirely removed. As these cars are no longer available, the company has adopted a policy discouraging excursions because of the hazard to passengers.

