

MOTOR COACH AGE



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MOTOR COACH AGE

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THE MOTOR BUS SOCIETY

Since its founding in 1948, the Society has had as its main purpose the collection and publication of information about the history and progress of the bus business in the United States and Canada. Its membership includes representatives of many phases of the industry as well as students and members of the general public with an interest in buses.

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ABOUT THE COVER STORY

Before the trend toward consolidation of over-the-road carriers had really taken hold, a great many independent operators competed for the growing traffic that was attracted to buses as highways and vehicles improved. Similarly, several large manufacturers vied for equipment orders with buses that were attractively styled, each in its own fashion, to win the attention of travelers.

Many operators were partial to one make or other, but the five buses that constituted the original train connection fleet of the Union Pacific Stage Co. were each of a different make. This classic photograph affords those interested in that fascinating but long-gone era an unusual opportunity to contrast the varying approaches to the standard 29-passenger parlor bus with a six-cylinder engine of about 100 horsepower, typical of 1929.

From front to back: Yellow type Y, Mack AL (with a special Crown body), Pageol (of California), White 54 (Bender body) and ACF model 508, at the East Los Angeles transfer station.

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UNION PACIFIC STAGE CO.

Warren K. Miller

A little-known entity within the vast Union Pacific empire was the Union Pacific Stage Co., incorporated in February 1927, whose direct successor is about to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. Union Pacific Stage Co. is not to be confused with Union Pacific Stages, Inc., which was the railroad's long-haul bus subsidiary in the northwest and which was later merged with Interstate Transit Lines to form Overland Greyhound Lines. The stage company was completely separate and was originally set up by the railroad to operate winter tours in Death Valley.

In 1925, as described in Motor Coach Age for February 1970, the Union Pacific had organized the Utah Parks Co. to provide summer tour service from Cedar City to and around Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks, and later to Grand Canyon. As a way to attract more tourist travel over what was admittedly not a particularly scenic route between Chicago and Los Angeles, the UP conceived the idea of featuring Death Valley National Monument as the focal point of a three-day bus tour. Utah Parks vehicles could be used, for winter was the off season for that operation.

A survey party found the roads between Crucero (on the railroad) and Ryan to be in such poor condition that the bus service would have to begin at Ryan. Tour passengers were to detrain at Crucero and ride the Tonopah & Tidewater to Death Valley Junction (97 miles) and then the gas motor cars of the Death Valley Railroad to Ryan (22 miles). The round trip from Los Angeles took five days, with two days spent in the valley. The first season was from October 10, 1926, to May 15, 1927, and required the use of one Utah Parks bus and a spare sedan.

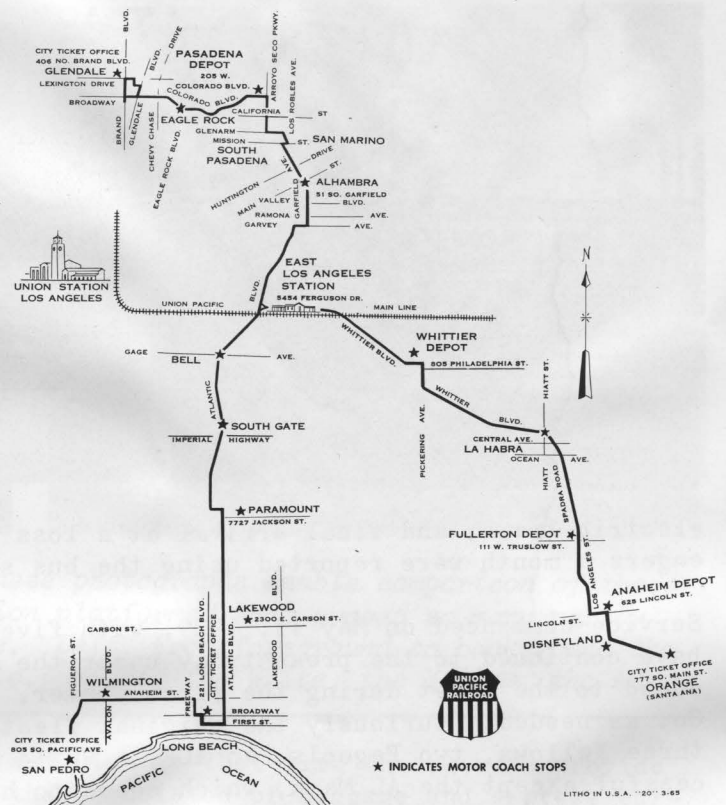
The town of Ryan was and is the center of operations of the Borax Co., famous for 20 Mule Team Borax, which is mined in the region. The company had at that time just opened the Furnace Creek Inn as a way to promote the area and their product; modernized and expanded, the inn is still serving the public today. A.L. Riddle, agent in charge at Ryan, and one driver provided the tour bus service during the first season, handling 118 passengers and then driving the bus and the sedan back to Cedar City.

Utah Parks Co. could not continue the Death Valley operation because the California Railroad Commission would not grant intrastate operating authority to an out-of-



A busy trainside scene when the East Los Angeles station was new. The first five buses in the fleet are all visible.

Routes and stops of the train connection buses, from a brochure promoting the service that was issued by the railroad in 1965. Today's American Pacific operation serves Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal, and there is no passenger service over the UP.



state corporation. As a result the railroad formed Union Pacific Stage Co. on February 28, 1927, and operated Utah Parks buses under lease, paying \$6.00 per day for 11-passenger GMC's and \$4.00 per day for seven-passenger Cadillacs. In the 1927-28 season, two buses and a sedan were required, going up to four buses and a sedan in the next year and then down again to two buses and a sedan for 1929-30. The tours were not a resounding success, only 954 passengers being carried in all four seasons. In the best year, revenue was \$5615.75 and expenses \$9874.87.

Mr. Riddle was transferred to the combined Chicago & North Western-Union Pacific Department of Tours after the 1929-30 season, but at some later time he turned up again in Death Valley operating as Riddle Tours and received an ICC certificate. Riddle Tours exists today, based in Las Vegas and owned by Las Vegas-Tonopah-Reno Stage Lines.

During 1928, the Union Pacific decided to discontinue a costly branch-line passenger train operating once a day between Los Angeles and East San Pedro and to offer a substitute bus service, to be operated by the new Union Pacific Stage Co. since that subsidiary was already licensed to do local business in California. A joint application was filed by the Los Angeles, Salt Lake & Pacific Railroad and the UP Stage Co., and in addition two other routes were sought: Los Angeles-Pasadena-Glendale and Los Angeles-Anaheim. Stiff opposition was presented by Pickwick Stages, Motor Transit Co. and Pacific Electric, and in order to obtain the rights, the railroad consented to a stipulation that the stage company would handle only passengers traveling to or from the East Los Angeles station of the LASL&P.

Construction of the new East Los Angeles station at Atlantic Blvd. & Telegraph Road, about 6 miles from Central Station, began late in 1928. The function of the station was compared to that of 125th Street in New York or Englewood in Chicago, and UP patrons were told of how much easier it would be to ride its connecting buses to such destinations as Pasadena, rather than "face the dismal prospect of heavy traffic, crowd congestion, taxi or trolley fare, transfer at another station to board an



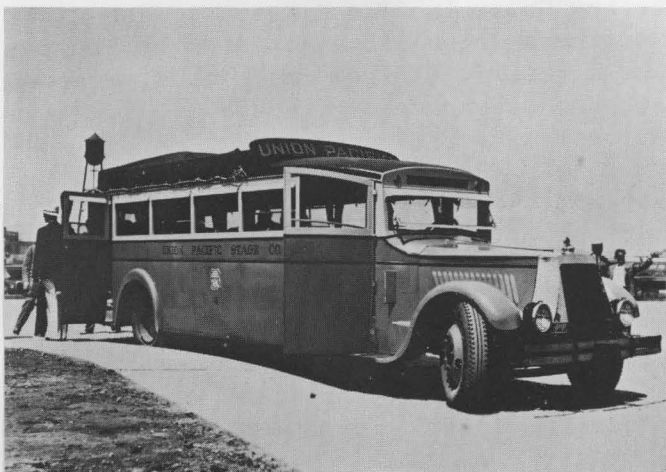
*UP Stage No. 3, the White 54,
posed at East Los Angeles in
1929. --White*

electric train, and final arrival at a loss of time and comfort." About 2000 passengers a month were reported using the bus service during 1931.

Service commenced on May 15, 1929, with five buses serving the three routes, which have continued to the present day under the same restriction. Three more buses were added to the fleet during the first summer, and sedans were borrowed from Utah Parks Co. as needed. Curiously the original fleet was not a standardized one, comprising three Yellows, two Fageols, an ACF, a White and a Mack. All appear to have been successful except the AL Mack, which seems to have had chronic problems and to have been uneconomical to run. Cadillac or Buick sedans were kept on hand for light runs or for use as second sections all through the 1930's, and they served most of the trips to Anaheim, which were lightly patronized at that time. Today this route serves Disneyland and is the mainstay of the service. The garage was in the UP yard about 2 miles from the station and was unusual in that there were nine individual stalls, each with its own roll-up door.

There were no major changes until World War II, although most of the original buses were replaced in July 1938 by six streamlined White 54-A's transferred from Interstate. Opening of a large number of military bases in the territory during the war required certain service changes, the first being an extension from East Los Angeles to the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal. This existed to transport troops from the various bases along the UP Stage routes to direct connections with Southern Pacific and Santa Fe trains.

Mack No. 4 being loaded at East Los Angeles, and a factory photo of ACF No. 5.





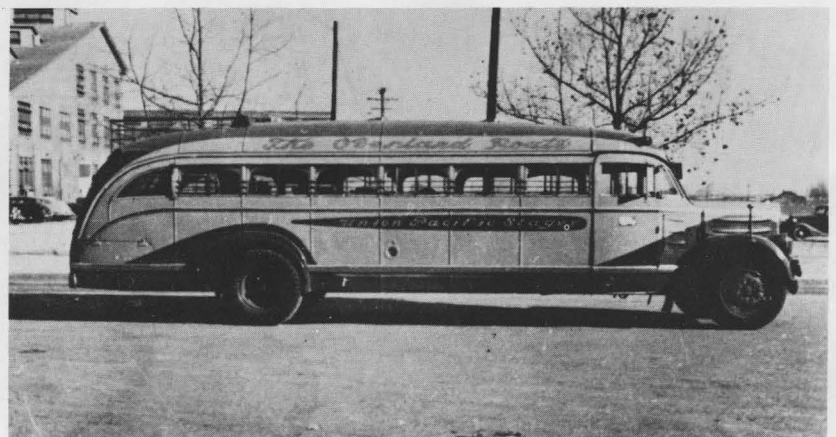
Counterparts to the view on the cover, these photographs enable comparison of those decorative but also functional "observation platforms" that graced so many parlor buses in the late 1920's and early 1930's. Left, From foreground to background the Yellow, the Mack, the Fageol and the White. Right, The White, the Yellow, the ACF.

UP Stage was also incorporated in Nevada and Utah at that time in order to provide railroad connection services. In Nevada this consisted of baggage and express carriage from Las Vegas to McCarran Field; no passengers were carried as far as is known. The Utah service replaced a mixed train and operated between Salt Lake City and Garfield to carry workers in a copper mine to and from their jobs. Four buses are known to have been leased from Interstate, and both the Utah and Nevada operations were abandoned by 1948.

Union Pacific Stage Co. again replaced its fleet of buses in May 1949 with 10 new GM PDA-4101's having 32 seats and a large walk-in baggage room at the rear, similar in design to a Flxible. These buses served through the declining years of intercity rail travel, ending on May 2, 1971, with the advent of Amtrak, which did not include the Overland Route in its master plan. Eight buses were left, No. 25 having had a short life before it collided with a PE train in Pasadena in 1950 and No. 30 being scrapped for parts in 1970. Service was virtually nonexistent for about a year, consisting mainly of a few charters for the railroad to take track crews to various points.

On May 8, 1972, UP Stage started regular operations again under a new name and with new ownership. A.B. Allen of Allen Transportation, Sacramento, and the present

One of six streamlined White 54-A's transferred from long-distance services to replace most of the original UP Stage buses during 1938. Interstate had 20 of these buses, which were among the earliest of streamlined Whites.



ROSTERS OF BUSES

Union Pacific Stage Co. (Los Angeles train connection service only)

1	Yellow	Y-W-320	?	29	1929	
2	Pageol		?	29	1929	
3	White	54	?	29	1929	
4	Mack	AL	652007?	29	1927	(1929) Demo? Crown body
5	ACF	508-3-B3	?	27	1929	
6	Pageol		?	29	1929	
7-8	Yellow	Y-W-320	?	29	1929	
9-12,14-15	White	54-A	?	29	1934	(1938) Interstate Transit Lines
21-30	GM	PDA-4101	173-182	32	1949	

Death Valley tours used buses leased from Utah Parks Co., and Salt Lake City-Garfield service used buses leased from Interstate Transit Lines.

American Pacific Stage Co.

23,27,28	GM	PDA-4101	175,179,180	32	1949	(1972) Union Pacific Stage Co. 23,27,28
901-910	GM	P8M-4905A	328-331,362-364,373-375	49	1973	
911-916	GM	P8M-4905A	534-538,852	49	1974	
917-921	GM	P8M-4905A	922-926	49	1974-75	

Current roster: 901-903, 906-916.

author formed a joint venture to buy the corporation and the buses from the railroad in order not to lose the ICC charter authority. Almost a year of negotiations were needed to reach an agreement that was approved by the ICC, one of the provisions being a change of name. "American Pacific Stage Co." was the chosen title, and orders were promptly placed for 10 P8M-4905A's to be painted in a new red, white and blue color scheme featuring the Amtrak logo. Three of the 4101's were repainted at the Eastshore Lines shop in San Francisco to provide temporary service, and new operating headquarters were established behind the Union Station. The 4101's provided all service until February 1973, and after the 4905's were in service the old buses continued to be used on train connection runs when the new equipment was all assigned to charters.

American Pacific Stage Co. today provides connecting service for Amtrak over the three original routes, although only the Anaheim line has regular service, the Long Beach and Pasadena runs being on an on-call basis. Charters are operated nationwide and in Canada. The company also has the contract to connect Oakland and San Francisco for Amtrak passengers; leased Eastshore buses are used for these runs.

Management believes that tourism will become the main source of revenue for the independent, unsubsidized bus companies, and thus American Pacific looks forward to an increasing amount of charter and tour business. With the high cost of all transportation today, both scheduled and charter service by bus continues to be a bargain. Future fuel shortages will create an even greater demand for an attractive bus service and will enhance the vital role of buses in our total transportation picture.



In Greyhound colors, Interstate Transit Lines 639 is seen at the Salt Lake City Greyhound shop in 1948 bearing a destination sign for the UP Stage Salt Lake City-Garfield service.



Seven of the 10 PDA-4101's of 1949 in the enlarged parking area created at East Los Angeles in later years.

UP Stage 28 at East Los Angeles during the last week of operation at the end of April 1971.

The yellow, red and gray UP color scheme as applied to the 4101's, here with the later "Route of the Domeliners" slogan.



No. 23 in the American Pacific colors, one of the three 4101's used to reopen the train connection service in May 1972.

Eastshore Lines PD-4107 309, ex Brush Hill, is painted in American Pacific colors for the Oakland-San Francisco run.

One of 14 P8M-4905A's in the American Pacific fleet for train connection trips and charters.

