

# Daylight

## REFLECTIONS

A Pictorial Album  
by  
NILS HUXTABLE





A thing of beauty is a joy forever:  
Its loveliness increases; it will never  
Pass into nothingness . . .

— John Keats



74449

4449

*Daylight*

SOUTHERN PACIFIC



# REFLECTIONS

by NILS HUXTABLE

STEAMSCENES

## **DAYLIGHT Reflections**

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## **DEDICATION**

In memory of Bob McVay, Frank Peterson, Bob Slocum  
and Walt Thrall, who photographed the  
DAYLIGHTS in their days of glory.

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## **PHOTO CREDITS**

FIRST AND LAST PAGES: Author.

FRONTISPIECE: Dressed in DAYLIGHT colors for the first time in a quarter of a century, No. 4449 thrusts mixed steam and smoke into the cool Spring air, as she passes New Era, Oregon, with the SACRAMENTO RAILFAIR EXCURSION. (Keith Ardinger)

FACING PAGE: Without diesel assistance, the 4449 attacks 2.24% Vincent grade. The 1984 WORLD'S FAIR DAYLIGHT has been numbered for a first section of the SAN JOAQUIN.

(Donald Duke)



# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> . . . . .	<b>7</b>
<b>DAYLIGHTS IN DECLINE</b> . . . . .	<b>19</b>
<b>AMERICAN FREEDOM TRAIN</b> . . . . .	<b>59</b>
<b>SACRAMENTO RAILFAIR EXCURSION</b> . . . . .	<b>65</b>
<b>WORLD'S FAIR DAYLIGHT</b> . . . . .	<b>75</b>
<b>GOLD COAST FLYER</b> . . . . .	<b>95</b>



## INTRODUCTION

In 1901, Southern Pacific Railroad introduced its first through train from San Francisco to Los Angeles over the newly-completed Coast Line. Passengers on the COAST LINE LIMITED were rewarded with views of California's finest scenery — distant mountains, rolling hills, fertile valleys, and best of all, the Pacific Ocean.

Soon, Espee was proudly promoting "the most beautiful train ride in the world," and with people buying tickets faster than the railroad could find seats for them, management realized a luxury "varnish" was in order. Improvements included all-steel cars and more powerful locomotives.

In 1922, the first high-speed DAYLIGHT began operating as a Fridays- and Saturdays-only seasonal service, with a Baldwin 4-6-2 and six cars, including a diner, in Pullman green. Again, public response exceeded expectations. The DAYLIGHT was soon running every day, year round, and with a rebuilt observation car. Journey time was trimmed to 12 hours.

Upgrading of accommodation and equipment continued, and new coaches for the popular DAYLIGHT were specially-built by the Pullman Company. In 1930, a new club-baggage car was added, and new Mountain-type engines supplanted the Pacifics.

Meanwhile, ten Baldwin-built "Golden State" GS-1 4-8-4s had entered traffic between Oakland and Portland. These dual service workhorses were to be the prototypes for the streamlined GS-2's that would be flashing along the Coast Line before the end of the decade.

The Depression, however, made new ideas and innovations seem inappropriate. The DAYLIGHT itself began to reflect the grimness of the times: its schedule was lengthened to include more stops. Club cars and observations were withdrawn. Patronage decreased, and the train often ran with only five cars.

SP President Angus D. McDonald resolved to get rid of the prevailing gloom. A visionary, McDonald believed the Southern Pacific's days of greatness lay ahead, and he meant to put his philosophy into practice.



One of his dreams was that SP should have the finest passenger trains anywhere, and the DAYLIGHT was selected for immediate modernization. What better way to boost the morale of employees and customers than to introduce more trains and create more jobs? Lightweight, high speed, streamlined, a new DAYLIGHT was about to take California — and the world — by storm.

Already, the Milwaukee had shown what it could do when challenged to a race with the wind by ordering a pair of 100-mph Atlantics for its HIAWATHA. Other railroads were camouflaging locomotives both old and new beneath bulbous noses, hoods, casings and skirts of sheet metal to make them look futuristic and fast.

At first, DAYLIGHT designers suggested a lightweight diesel flyer similar to the ZEPHYRS of the CB&Q, but Espee's executive committee wanted a prestige supertrain that would make its Coast Line passengers feel like royalty as they watched the Golden State unfolding before them.

After many proposals had been rejected, the DAYLIGHT task force, working closely with the research and development teams at the Lima Locomotive Works and the Pullman Company, designed a featherweight, partially-articulated 12-car train, with an oil-fired, streamstyled 4-8-4.

Two million dollars for a pair of GS-2's and their trains was an astronomical sum in those days, but the final designs dispelled any doubts. Within a year, Espee was ready to launch its glamorous DAYLIGHTS, complete with first class parlour car, tavern/coffee shop car, diner and parlor-observation. Painted red, orange and black, the new trains looked as if man had harnessed the sun. A special train name insignia was added: a winged orange ball with the word "Daylight" in stylish silver script.

FACING PAGE: From headlight to neon drumhead, the DAYLIGHT symbolized an exciting era in rail travel. In 1948, No. 99 pauses at Glendale, first stop on its westbound run. (Alan Miller Collection: Frank Peterson)





The DAYLIGHTS were designed with the comfort and well-being of the passenger in mind. The cars, constructed of corten steel, stainless steel and aluminum, were wide and spacious, with full insulation and air-conditioning. Three pairs of cars were articulated. Tight-lock couplers and electrically-activated air brakes ensured a smoother ride. Double-glazed five-foot picture windows gave passengers a grand view of the scenery as they sat in aircraft-type contour seats that reclined and rotated. Interior decor was both pleasing and restful, and a radio in every car except the diner provided an informative commentary. Finally, train crews were hand-picked and specially-trained in public relations.

First and second sections of No. 99 stand side by side (LEFT) at SP's Los Angeles Central Station in 1939, shortly before the opening of the new Union Passenger Terminal. No. 4411, second of the GS-2's, made the inaugural westbound run of the DAYLIGHT on March 21, 1937. Wearing green flags, No. 4424 was one of 14 high-speed GS-3's supplied by Lima later that year. (Howard Eichstaedt)

The six GS-2's supplied by Lima were updated versions of the earlier "Golden State" engines, incorporating a number of new features: cast frame and cylinders, a booster, Alco power reverse, and Nathan force-feed lubrication. Add-on equipment included a steam dryer-fitted superheater, American multiple front end throttle and Worthington feedwater heater. A smoke-lifting device was built into the skyline casing, sweeping side skirts extended from pilot to cab, and a nose cone enclosed the headlight. The engines had 73½" drivers, and a boiler pressure of 250 lbs.

In preparation for the new DAYLIGHTS, sections of the 470-mile route were rebalasted and relaid with heavier steel; curves were "eased" and passing tracks extended. Although the average speed for the trip was a modest 45 mph, the GS-2's could attain more than twice that on level track. They had no difficulty keeping the revised schedule of 9¾ hours, and apart from the 2.2% Cuesta Grade west of San Luis Obispo, where doubleheading was necessary, could effortlessly handle their 12-car trains.

The inaugural run received nationwide news coverage, and ridership skyrocketed. After just five months, the DAYLIGHTS had carried their 100,000th passenger, and ticket sales soon topped the \$2 million mark. Espee's dream trains were spinning gold, and more streamlined cars were ordered for the SUN-BEAM or "Texas DAYLIGHT." So popular was No. 98-99 that it frequently operated in two sections. New equipment arrived in 1940; the cars of the 1937 train formed the NOON DAYLIGHT, mid-day twin to the rechristened MORNING DAYLIGHT. Also streamlined were the SAN JOAQUIN and the LARK; the latter in a smart two-tone grey and white.



Train 13-14, the SUNBEAM, was entrusted, not to 4-8-4's, which were too large for the turntables on the former Houston and Texas Central, but to three rebuilt 1913-vintage Pacifics. With disc drivers and booster, stream-styling, nose cone, frontal valancing and recessed coupler, the P-14's looked even more bulletlike than the GS-2's. The SUNBEAM made the afternoon run between Houston and Dallas (264 miles) in 4¾ hours, including two stops. When a morning counterpart, the HUSTLER, was established in June 1938 to cater to local traffic, the SUNBEAM became non-stop on a mile-a-minute schedule. With Train No. 14, P-14 No. 652 (LEFT) blazes away from Houston in November 1945. (Emery Gulasch)



New features of the re-equipped MORNING DAYLIGHT of 1940 included baggage elevators. A car porter at Glendale (RIGHT) operates the controls. Note how the DAYLIGHT color scheme is carried across the exterior of the outer diaphragm at the end of each car. (Bill Olson)





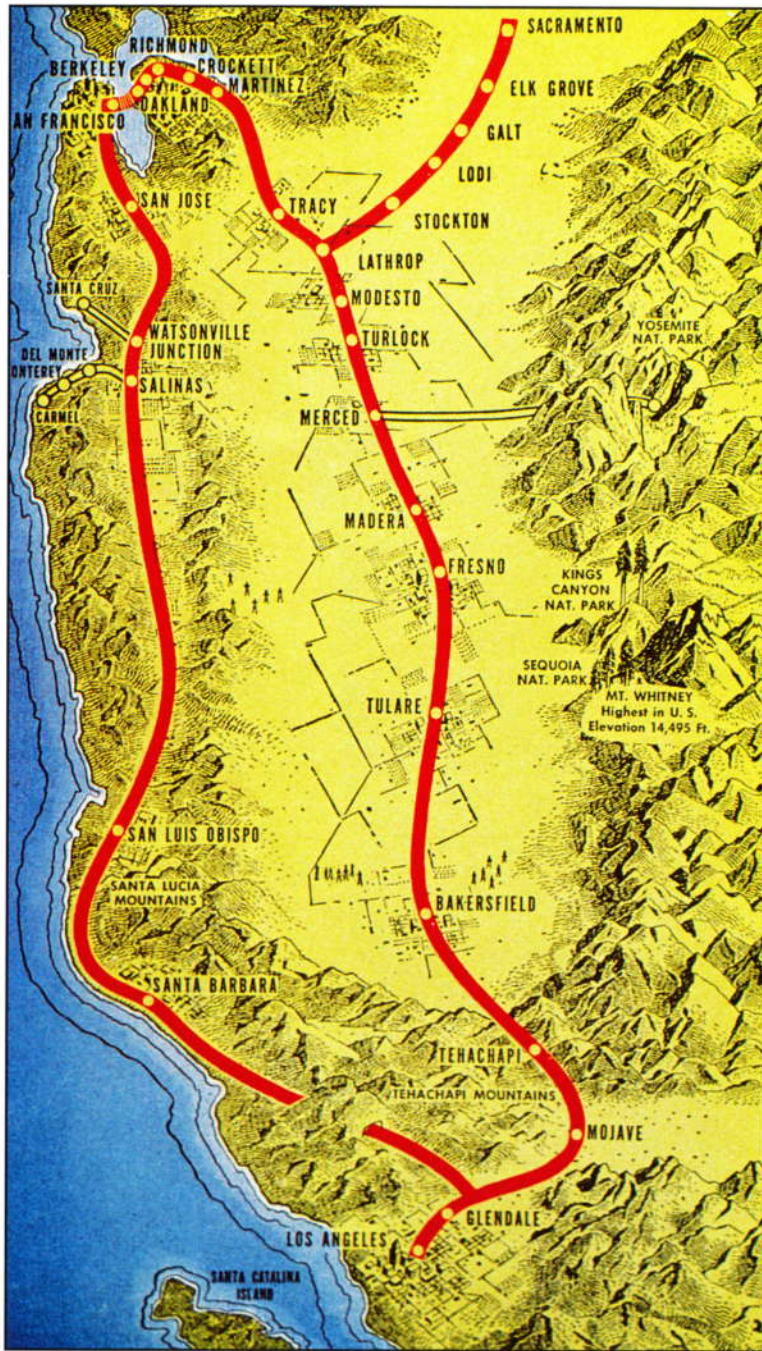
By mid-1941, Espree could advertise three DAYLIGHTS on the Coast and Valley Lines. Utilizing the cars of the 1937 train, the NOON DAYLIGHT (FACING PAGE), awaits departure from Third and Townsend in 1940, behind GS-3 No. 4428. Slogan for the new train, in effect a second section of No. 98-99: "If you miss the MORNING-DAYLIGHT, catch the NOON." (Jim Orem)

Three P-10 Pacifics were partially streamstyled for the SAN JOAQUIN DAYLIGHT. No. 2485 arrives in Modesto (ABOVE) with the first section of No. 51 on the inaugural run: July 4, 1941. (Al Rose)

A brand-new trainset headed by a recently-delivered GS-4, No. 4432, the re-named MORNING DAYLIGHT prepares to set off from Glendale (RIGHT) in May 1941. Blinding Mars lights on these engines made train identification difficult, so number boards were repositioned halfway back so as to be more visible at night. (Howard Eichstaedt)

"Three DAYLIGHTS" brochure: Rod Aszman Collection





LEFT: Map of the Coast and Valley DAYLIGHT routes, showing streamliner service to Sacramento, added in 1946. (Rod Aszman Collection)

The DAYLIGHT'S success had prompted Espee to order 14 faster, more powerful GS-3's with 80" drivers, but the ultimate in passenger power were the 28 engines of Class GS-4, which arrived in 1941 and 1942. Producing 5,500 horsepower, they could reach a maximum speed of 110 mph. Major changes on the GS-4's were a firebox and boiler of nickel steel to raise boiler pressure to 300 lbs., reduced cylinder diameter for additional tractive effort, spring pad lubrication on all drivers, a vestibule cab, and an oscillating Mars signal light, which threw a 3,000-foot figure eight warning beam beyond the regular headlight. The last two GS-4's fitted with roller bearings (No. 4458 had Timken and No. 4459 SKF), were classified GS-5.

The War halted plans for improving existing passenger services. To guard against a shortage of equipment, Espee discontinued 35 passenger trains, including the NOON DAYLIGHT. At the same time, the railroad requested more cab-forward 4-8-8-2's and 4-8-4's from the War Production Board, in order to cope with the heavy freight and military traffic. The GS classification was changed to mean "General Service," and an order for 16 GS-6's (six for the Western Pacific) went through. These "War Babies" — as the GS-6's were known — were a no-frills version of the smaller GS-2, minus skirts and DAYLIGHT paint, and together with their fancier sisters, many of which had been painted black, they began proving their versatility on troop trains and fast freights.

In 1946, strained by the war effort, Espee implemented a \$2 billion renewal program. The NOON DAYLIGHT returned, the other DAYLIGHTS were upgraded yet again, and more streamliners — including the SACRAMENTO DAYLIGHT — were introduced.

