A railroad timetable

COMMENTARY AND SIDEBAR NOTES BY DAVID WALBERT

Timetable for the Wilmington & Weldon Railroad, 1859.

As you read...

Travel by railroad was much faster than other options available in the 1850s. Adults typically walk at 3 to 4 miles per hour — a bit less on hilly ground. A horse can travel 8 to 10 miles per hour at a trot — a reasonable speed for a horse carrying a rider over a distance or for a team of horses pulling a carriage, though the speed of a carriage would depend on the condition of the roads as well. How fast trains could travel is something you'll work out for yourself in the following activity.

ACTIVITY QUESTIONS

As in studying census data, we're going to need some math to work out just what, exactly, we're looking at in this document. We'll also use a present-day train schedule and the services of Google Maps.

1. What was the train's average speed in miles per hour on the entire trip from Wilmington to Weldon? From Weldon to Wilmington? (Hint: Remember to calculate the times *in hours*.)
2. How fast (roughly) did the train travel *between* stops, in miles per hour?
3. How did train travel compare, in terms of speed, to walking? To riding a horse?
4. How long did the train typically wait at each stop? Where did it stop the longest? Why do you suppose that was?
5. About how long would it take someone to walk from Wilmington to Weldon? To travel by horse?

   Go to Google Maps (see http://maps.google.com) and get driving directions from Wilmington to Weldon. How long does Google estimate it should take you to drive from Wilmington to Weldon? How does that compare to train travel in 1859?

   Compare this timetable to a present-day Amtrak timetable (see http://www.amtrak.com/servlet/ContentServer?pagename=Amtrak/Schedules_Page) (find the route going through Raleigh and Charlotte).
6. How frequently does the train stop now — more or less frequently than the Wilmington & Weldon did in 1859? Why do you suppose that is?
7. How fast does the passenger train travel now *between* stops?
8. How long does it take to get from Raleigh to Charlotte on Amtrak today? What is that speed, on average, in miles per hour?
9. How long does Google Maps estimate it should take you to drive from Raleigh to Charlotte? How do you explain the difference between the time needed by train and by car?

Google map: This interactive tool or multimedia is available in the web edition of this page.

Night Express Train — North

TO GO INTO OPERATION 31ST OF OCTOBER, 1859.

No. of Stations	Distance from Wilmington	Dis. bet'w Stat'ns	NAMES OF STATIONS	Arrives	Leaves	Time between St's	Time at Stations.	Remarks
1			Wilmington, a m		1:30			Terminus
2	9	9	North East,	1:54	1:54	24	0	N. S.
3	11	2	Marlboro',	2:00	2:01	6	1	R. S.
4	14	3	Rocky Point,	2:10	2:11	9	1	Flag.
5	22	8	Burgaw,	2:32	2:36	21	4	W.&W.
6	29	7	So. Washington	2:54	2:55	18	1	Flag.
7	33	4	Leesburg,	3:06	3:06	11	0	N. S.
8	38	5	Teachey,	3:20	3:21	14	1	P.No.4.
8 ½	43	5	Rose Hill,	3:33	3:33	12	0	W.&W.
9	48	5	Magnolia,	3:44	3:45	11	1	R. S.
10	55	7	Warsaw,	4:01	4:02	16	1	R. S.
10 ½	59	4	Bowden,	4:12	4:12	10	0	N. S.
11	63	4	Faison,	4:22	4:23	10	1	Flag.
12	70	7	Mt. Olive,	4:40	4:41	17	1	Flag.
13	75	5	Dudley,	4:54	4:56	13	2	Flag.

No. of Stations	Distance from Wilmington	Dis. bet'w Stat'ns	NAMES OF STATIONS	Arrives	Leaves	Time between St's	Time at Stations.	Remarks
14	78	3	Everettsville,					Flag.
15	84	6	Goldsboro',*	5:16	5:46	20	30	Chan Eng
16	92	8	Pikeville,	6:07	6:08	21	1	Flag.
17	95	3	Nahunta,	6:16	6:18	8	2	Flag.
18	102	7	Black Creek,	6:38	6:39	20	1	Flag.
19	108	6	Wilson,	6:56	6:58	17	2	R. S.
20	116	8	Joyner	7:18	7:22	20	4	Flag.
21	125	9	Rocky Mount,	7:44	7:46	22	2	W.&W.
22	133	8	Battleboro',	8:06	8:08	20	2	Flag.
22 ½	137	4	Whitaker,	8:21	8:39	14	3	W.&W.
23	143	6	Enfield,†	8:36	8:39	14	3	W.&W.
24	154	11	Halifax,	9:06	9:08	27	2	R. S.
25	162	8	Weldon,	9:30		22		Terminus
	*Breakfast.			†Wood and Water.				

Night Express Train — South

TO GO INTO OPERATION 31ST OF OCTOBER, 1859.

No. of Stations	Distance from Weldon	Dis. bet'w Stns	NAMES OF STATIONS	Arrives	Leaves	Time between Sta	Time at Stations.	Remarks
25			Weldon, P. M.		8:45			Terminus
24	8	8	Halifax,	9:08	9:10	23	2	R. S.
23 ½	12	4	Ruggles,	9:22	9:23	12	1	

No. of Stations	Distance from Weldon	Dis. bet'w Stns	NAMES OF STATIONS	Arrives	Leaves	Time between Sta	Time at Stations.	Remarks
23	19	7	Enfield,	9:42	9:46	19	4	P.No.3.
22 ½	25	6	Whitaker,	10:04	10:05	18	1	Flag.
22	29	4	Battleboro',	10:17	10:18	12	1	R. S.
21	37	8	Rocky Mount,	10:39	10:41	21	2	R. S.
20	46	9	Joyner,	11:05	11:06	24	1	W.&W.
19	54	8	Wilson,	11:29	11:31	23	2	R. S.
18	60	6	Black Creek,	11:48	11:49	17	1	Flag.
17	67	7	Nahunta, A. M.	12:08	12:09	19	1	Flag.
16	70	3	Pikeville,	12:18	12:19	9	1	Flag.
15	78	8	Goldsboro',	12:43	12:48	24	5	Ch. Eng.
14	83	6	Everittsville,	1:06	1:07	18	1	Flag.
13	86	3	Dudley,	1:16	1:18	9	2	Flag.
			Milton,					Flag.
12	91	5	Mount Olive,	1:33	1:34	15	1	Flag.
11	98	7	Faison,	1:55	1:56	21	1	Flag.
10 ½	102	4	Bowden,	2:08	2:12	12	4	W.&W.
10	106	4	Warsaw,	2:24	2:25	12	1	R. S.
9	113	7	Magnolia,	2:46	2:47	21	1	R. S.
8 ½	120	5	Rose Hill,	3:02	3:03	15	1	W.&W.
8	123	5	Teachey,	3:18	3:20	15	2	P. No.1
7	128	5	Leesburg,	3:34	3:35	14	1	Flag.
6	132	4	So. Washington,	3:46	3:47	11	1	Flag.
5	139	7	Burgaw,	4:06	4:10	19	4	W.&W.

No. of Stations	Distance from Weldon	Dis. bet'w Stns	NAMES OF STATIONS	Arrives	Leaves	Time between Sta	Time at Stations.	Remarks
			Asheton,					Flag.*
4	147	8	Rocky Point,	4:30	4:31	20	1	Flag.
3	150	3	Marlboro',	4:40	4:41	9	1	Flag.
2	152	2	North East,	4:47	4:48	6	1	Flag.
1	162	9	Wilmington,†	5:10		22	1	Terminus
	*16½ mile Station.							
	?Wood and Water to be taken only at the places marked, if it can be avoided.							
	†Take Breakfast.							

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Figure 2 (page 6)

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Figure 3 (page 6)

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