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?



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10. How long does the train wait at each stop today? Is it a longer or shorter wait than in 1859? Why do you suppose that is?

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

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 4	R. S.
20	116	8	Joyner	7:18	7:22	20		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 a	nd 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	of from bet'w NAMES OF betw		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		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	l Water to l	oe taken only at the	places mark	ed, if it can	be avoided.		
	†Take Brea	akfast.						

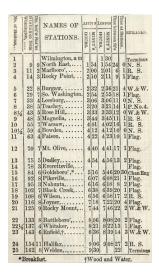


Figure 2. The original printed timetable for the Night Express Train North.

No. of	Distance Weldon.	Dis. be	NAMES OF	Arr	ivs	Lea	ves	Time b	Time at	
of Stations	eldon	bet'w Stus	STATIONS.	HOURS.	MINUT'S	HOURS	MINUT'S	between Sta	t Stations.	REMARKS.
25		T	Weldon, P. M.		100		45			Terminus
24	8		Halifax,		08		10			R. S.
231/2	12		Ruggles,	9	22		23		1	
23	19		Enfield,		42		46			P.No.3.
221/2	25		Whitaker,			10				Flag.
22	29	4	Battleboro',	10	17	10	18	12	1	R. S.
21	37	8	Rocky Mount,			10				R. S.
20	46		Joyner,			11			1	W.& W.
19	54	8	Wilson,		29		31		12	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		Pikeville,	12	18	12	19	9		Flag.
15	78		Goldsboro',			12				Ch. Eng.
14	83		Everittsville,		06		07	18	1	Flag.
13	86	3	Dudley, Milton,	1	16	1	18	9	2	Flag.
12	91	5	Mount Olive,	1	33	1	34	15	1	Flag.
11	198		Faison	1	55	1	56	21	1	Flag.
10%			Bowden	2	08	2	12	12	4	W.&W
10	106		Warsaw,	2	24	2	25	12	1	R. S.
9	113	7		2	146	2	47	21]	R. S.
814	120		Rose Hill,		02	3	03	15		W.& W
8	123		Teachev		18	3	20	15	1 5	P. No.
7	128		Leesburg		34	1 3	35	14		Flag.
6	132		So. Washington		46	3	47	11		Flag.
5	139		Burgaw,		100	3 4	10	19	1	W.&W
			Asheton,		1	1			1	Flag.*
4	147	1 8	Rocky Point	14	3) 4	131	20		Flag.
3	150		Marlboro',		4	0 4	41	5		I Flag.
2	152		North East,		4	7 4	48			I Flag.
ī	162	1	Wilmington, +	1	1	0		22		Terminu
*	61/		ile Station.		-				161	100 0
mar	æ√V ked,	Vo if	od and Water to it can be avoided. reakfast.	be	tal	ken	on	ly :	at	the place

Figure 3. The original printed timetable for the Night Express Train South.

On the web

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David Walbert is Editorial and Web Director for LEARN NC in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Education. He is responsible for all of LEARN NC's educational publications, oversees development of various web applications including LEARN NC's website and content management systems, and is the organization's primary web, information, and visual designer. He has worked with LEARN NC since August 1997.

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Figure 2 (page 6)

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Figure 3 (page 6)

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