



November 2019

THE MID-SOUTH FLYER



Entering a New Decade of Service

A Publication of the Mid-South Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, Inc

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CHAPTER NEWS

Chapter Information and Holiday Events

The Chapter's last program meeting for 2018 was in October at which member Larry Goolsby gave a great presentation about Seaboard Air Line Railroad passenger service. The next Chapter meeting will be the Chapter's annual meeting in January at which we will have a program presentation as well as will elect/re-elect Board members and officers.

Consider serving your Chapter by volunteering to be a Board member or suggest a Mid-South Chapter member who might want to be a member of the Board of Directors. You can suggest yourself or someone else by contacting James Lowery at JLowery2@gmail.com.

Dues renewal time is here. If you are a member of the Mid-South Chapter, you would have recently received a notice from R&LHS to renew your membership. Remember to do that by sending in your membership application or online at <http://rlhs.org/Membership/index.shtml>. New members can join online at <http://rlhs.org/Membership/index.shtml> or by printing and mailing the 2020 membership application. The website also shows the many benefits of being a member of the national organization in addition to being a member of the Mid-South Chapter.

Local Model Train Layouts to Visit. Just because the Mid-South Chapter will not be meeting until January, that does not mean that "railroad" things will not be happening. We offer the following model train layouts that you can visit during the holidays as well as events and trains to see at the Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum as shown elsewhere in this newsletter. Enjoy!

The Magic of Model Trains!

McWane Science Center
November 23 through January 5

You do not need to be young to enjoy this outstanding display of operating model trains. Especially featured are the hundreds of detail items of the countryside and towns through which the model trains run. No detail is too small for this miniature landscape. From the covered bridges and crowded downtown storefronts to multiple train stations and a drive-in movie theater, the Magic of Model Trains will keep you and your youngsters entertained for hours. Even if you only come yourself, it is fun to watch the joy and excitement of the children watching it as they discover the many details and watch the model trains running past them at eye level.

Smokey City Rails Model Railroad Club Layout

Outlet Shops of Grand River, Leeds
Mall location number 672

Through the hospitality of the Outlet Shops of Grand River, Smokey City Rails model railroad club's layout is operating at the Shops on the weekends. Hours are 10:00 am until 8:00 pm on Saturdays and 1:00 pm until 5:00 pm on Sundays. Visitors are always welcome.

Member Moment

The Member Moment this month features
Harold (Glen) and Sherry Kitts.

If you would like to be featured and tell your story, please contact Warren Jones. The story should total 400 words or less and ideally include a photo or drawing. Photos submitted should be 500 kB or larger.

wjones1302@gmail.com

MID-SOUTH FLYER

The *MID-SOUTH FLYER* is published bi-monthly by the Mid-South Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society (R&LHS), Inc. The R&LHS is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to the study and preservation of railroad history. National and chapter dues are \$50 annually and include subscriptions to the Society's twice-yearly magazine *Railroad History*, quarterly newsletter, and the chapter's e-newsletter, the *MID-SOUTH FLYER*. Contributions, article ideas and reader comments are welcome.

Ken Boyd, Editor
kenboydphotography@yahoo.com

MEMBER MOMENT

Harold (Glen) and Sherry Kitts

While we are not inclined to travel to the Birmingham area for regularly scheduled chapter meetings (a distance of 150 miles from Chattanooga), we nonetheless support the national R&LHS through financial contributions and are interested in the historical aspects of railroading in the South provided by the Mid-South and other chapters.

I was born and raised in Knoxville, Tennessee, and had two great uncles who both worked for the Southern Railway, one of two roads serving Knoxville during my time there. In 2000, I moved to Chattanooga to be closer to my: 1)

future wife, Sherry, and 2) to be closer to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum (TVRM) where I was training as a steam locomotive fireman on ex-U.S. Army steam locomotive No. 610.

In 2002, I acquired my Federal engineer's license as a duly-qualified, steam locomotive engineer and diesel locomotive engineer. I later achieved the status of instructor engineer, both steam and diesel, and trained many aspiring firemen and engineers, including my wife.

Sherry and I have been extensively involved with the rebuild/restoration efforts associated with ex-Southern Railway locomotives No. 630 and No. 4501, both owned by TVRM. From February to July 2014, we installed (conservatively) over 900 feet of 3/8-inch diameter copper tubing for the lubrication of the No. 4501 locomotive chassis (running gear) and steam (valve gear) components, including those lines feeding the cab-controlled airbrake system and the associated in-cab gauges.

We (Sherry and I) were also responsible for installing and completing the control-system tubing for the newly installed stoker motor and associated controls and other in-cab gauges.

We no doubt have many common friends, Bill (and wife Linda) Schafer, among others. Bill is a TVRM Board Director and a member and frequent contributor to national R&LHS publications, both Mid-South and otherwise. Bill began his employment with the Southern Railway and retired with 40+ years of service from its eventual successor, Norfolk Southern.

Our introduction to the national R&LHS came about in 2014 when we contacted Alden Dreyer, Shelburne, Massachusetts, the current VP Admin./ Corporate Clerk (and national R&LHS Bulletin back-issue administrator). Dreyer loaned his great-great-great-grandfather's watch to us for display in our 2015 national Association of Watch and Clock Collector's, Inc., national Convention Exhibit which was held in Chattanooga.

Therein began our enduring relationship with the national R&LHS. Alden can give you additional details from his perspective, but we (Sherry and I) were smitten and decided to join the national R&LHS for numerous reasons, among which were the scholarly research and history of Southern railroads and their impact(s)/contribution(s) to the post-Civil War South.

I could provide you with many accounts of our involvement with Southern railroad history but will leave that commentary for another time. Just be advised that we (Sherry and I) are, and forever remain, supporters of the tenets espoused by the national R&LHS and are appreciative of your effort(s) to keep us informed re: Mid-South Chapter events/happenings, by whatever means.



Photo by James (Jim) Coulson



HEART OF DIXIE RAILROAD MUSEUM

OFFICIAL RAILROAD MUSEUM FOR THE STATE OF ALABAMA

Welcome back to our second installment of museum news from HOD. Each time, we seek to provide you with a glimpse of events, activities, and projects taking place at HOD. We have made great progress in 2019, and we expect even bigger things next year. In 2020 we plan to return train operations to the Shelby & Southern Narrow Gauge RR. Then, two weekends in June, we plan to bring Jeddo Coal No. 85 steam locomotive to Alabama. Dinner trains are also being planned but at the moment, no time frame on availability. Many other exciting projects will be coming down the tracks as funding and dedicated volunteers to spearhead them are found. We are grateful for the Mid-South Chapter's dedication to preserving Alabama Railroad History. You can find us at 1919 9th Street in Calera, Alabama; just off I-65 Exit 228 between Birmingham and Montgomery. Thanks!



Photo courtesy of Alan Dismukes

Restoration Project - Closeup

Many of us older railfans remember riding the steam-fired park train at the Birmingham Zoo as a kid. After the zoo, the train was brought to HOD where she operated for many years. In 2012, the fires were dropped and rides were no longer offered for a number of reasons. Now, with repair work set to begin soon, we plan to once again return this piece of Alabama history to steam. New crews will need to be trained, if this interests you

Gift Shop

Looking for that special railroad gift item? Check out our specialty gift shop. We carry a wide selection of rail-related gifts. Best thing, all profits go back into museum operations!

Welcome new Executive Director

HOD is proud to announce that Mr. David Brewer from Oneonta has officially been hired. He holds a Master of Arts Degree in History and previously served for 20 years as ED for historic Rickwood Field. His first day was October 8, and he will slowly transition into the role this fall. Please help welcome Mr. Brewer to our team!

Train Ride Events:

Pumpkin Patch Express

Ran on Saturdays and Sundays in October.

North Pole Express

Fridays, Nov. 15, 22, 29, Dec. 6, 13

- ◆ Departure Times: 5:00 pm, 6:30 pm, 8:00 pm

Saturdays, Nov. 16, 23, 30, Dec. 7, 14

- ◆ Departure Times: 5:00 pm, 6:30 pm, 8:00 pm

Sundays, Nov. 17, 24, Dec. 1

- ◆ Departure Times: 5:00 pm, 6:30 pm, 8:00 pm

Sunday, December 8

- ◆ Departure Times: 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm

Santa Special

Saturdays, Nov. 30 Dec. 7, 14

- ◆ Departure Times: 11:00 am, 2:00 pm

Visit www.hodrrm.org to learn more about our events. To obtain membership in the Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum, please fill out our online membership application (https://hod.starchapter.com/form.php?form_id=8) or contact our main office at 205-668-3435.

THE FRISCO 4018 LOCOMOTIVE

Richard Neely, Ph.D.

Reprinted from *The Jefferson Journal*, Jefferson County Historical Association



When I was growing up in Birmingham, my family often went to the Birmingham Fairgrounds. While my parents were doing things like going to an art show, my brother and I went to “Kiddieland”. The most impressive attraction was a giant railroad locomotive.

My brother and I explored it thoroughly and it inspired a lifelong fascination with railroading. In 2009, the engine was moved to Sloss Furnaces where I have given tours for over 30 years and, now, I have the pleasure of including its story at the museum. I have also had the added enjoyment of re-painting it for the last two months with the help of my young cousins Issac and Eli Dorning.

The locomotive has added to an impressive collection of machines at Sloss. Not only do we have this addition to the collection, but Sloss has two steam shovels, a rail mounted crane, a diesel switch engine, diesel shovel and bulldozer, and the largest eight vertical steam engines left in the world.

There is a museum in Texas which has a locomotive steam engine like our new addition and by itself is a

National Historic Landmark.

Our engine was built in 1919 by the Lima Company in Ohio to respond to the need to move equipment for World War 1, but arrived too late for that job as the war ended in 1918. The engine was sold to the St. Louis-San Francisco Railroad in 1923. For the next three decades it hauled coal from Bessemer to Birmingham. Birmingham mayor James W. “Jimmy” Morgan saved the engine from scrap and it moved under its own power to Kiddieland in 1952. It was neglected in the 1980’s and 90’s and then moved to Sloss in 2009.

There were 625 originals and 641 copies produced of this design. The engine is called a light “Mikado” because the first contracts were to Imperial Japan whose engineers redesigned the firebox to their own specifications. It also included a 2-8-2 wheel set-up typical of this model. This was done during the reign of the Japanese Mikado Emperor.

Three companies built the design including ALCO (American Locomotive Company), Baldwin, and Lima.

Fully loaded it weighed 147 tons. One of the most romantic stories connected to it was that 200 were contracted to Imperial Russia, but the sale and delivery were interrupted by the Bolshevik Revolution. As of today, six are known in the United States. However, there are some still in Mexico and I am almost sure I saw two in China where the military prevented me from taking pictures unfortunately.

A good friend tells me that he has seen one in Russia. I was watching a show on abandoned places and two of them are in the woods in Vancouver where they were put to work hauling logs. Birmingham and Sloss Furnaces is very lucky to have such a treasure and we at the Furnaces hope that this will give you another reason to stop by the museum.

The engine and tender are in good shape for being outside most of its life. Fortunately, when it was out at the Fairgrounds it was under a shed. I would say that the greater part of its deterioration has occurred since it was at Sloss. Current Director Karen Utz has presented a plan for a new shed and I think this will save the engine.

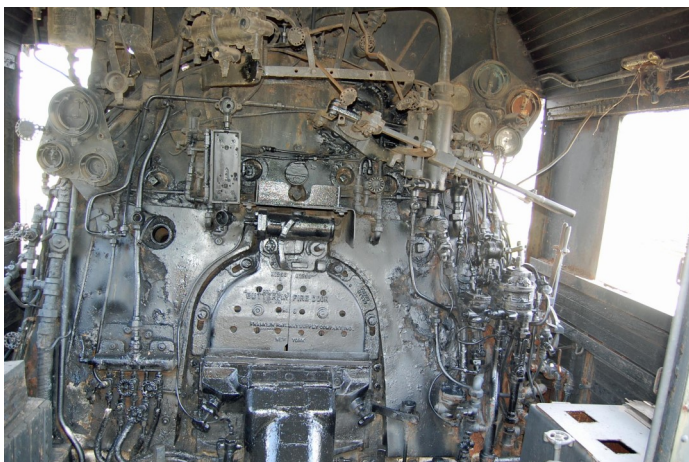
At the minimum, the sheet metal covering the boiler should be redone to seal off the boiler. Of course, complete restoration would require deep pockets. However, given the importance of this machine in our history and culture it would be a gift to future generations.



Author, Richard Neely, at the controls of the Frisco 4018 at Sloss.

Frisco No. 4018 Specifications

Configuration: 2-8-2
UIC class: 1 D1 h2
Gauge: 4 ft, 8 ½ in. (Standard gauge)
Leading diameter: 33 in.
Driver diameter: 63 in.
Trailing diameter: 43 in.
Locomotive Wheelbase: 36 ft, 1 in.
Wheelbase with tender: 71 ft, 4 ½ in.
Adhesive weight: 220,000 lb. (110 tons)
Locomotive Weight: 292,000 lb. (146 tons)
Tractive effort: 54,724 foot pounds.
Fuel type: Coal
Boiler pressure: 200 psi.
Cylinders: 2
Cylinder size: 26 in. by 30 in.
Valve gear: Walschaerts



ALABAMA FUEL & IRON COMPANY

PART V- MARGARET, ACMAR AND COLGATE MINES

John Stewart

This is the fifth installment in the series about Alabama Fuel & Iron Company (AF&ICo). This article continues the discussion from Part IV and addresses the Margaret, Acmar and Colgate Mining operations beginning in 1936.

In 1936, the report included a recount of the legal battle and trials for murder against one company employee. As noted previously, this occurred when a group of union organizers came to Acmar, and a gun battle occurred in which one organizer was killed. The two trials resulted in acquittals of all charged.

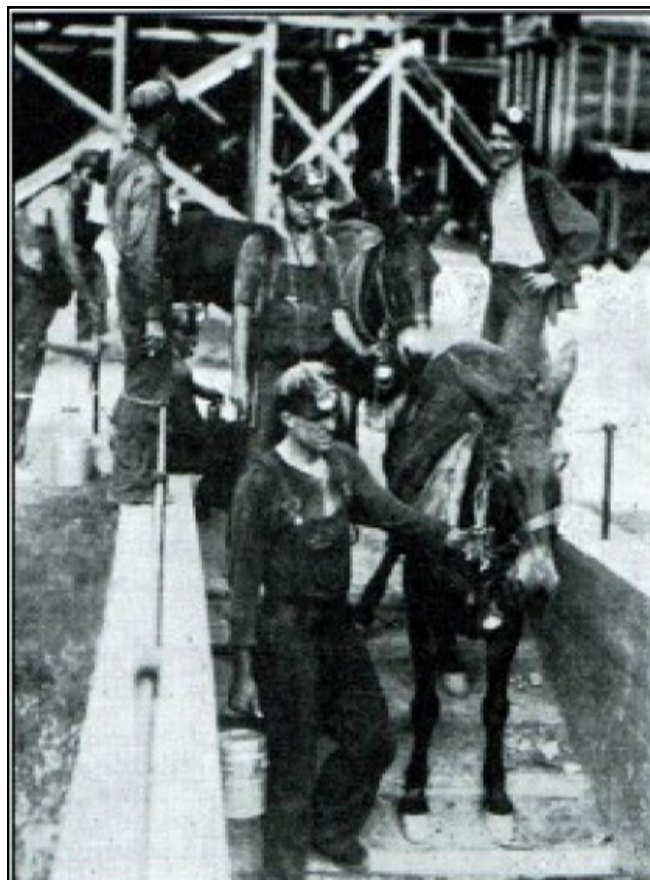
Production decreased slightly to 835,490 tons, all of this coming from the Henry Ellen operations, the company's share of state commercial production dropping to 12 percent.

At Acmar, the No 5 mine was producing 800 tons per day and was expected to continue. No 6 was producing 1,200 tons per day and was using "old style" mine cars from No 2 and 3 mines which were to be replaced in the future with more "modern, economical design" cars. The No 6 hoist had a new modern electric braking system installed, enabling savings in brake linings and improved safety. A bath house was built at Acmar.

No 3 New Acton was producing 325 tons per day, mostly from pillars, with an expected life of about 18 months. Even so, this was considered a high grade domestic coal. No 5 mine was producing 300 tons, also mostly from pillar work, with a diminishing production over two more years.

With the expected closure of these mines, a new seam was explored and developed beneath the existing seam. The new seam is 32 inches thick and good quality. A new slope, New Acton No 6, has been extended and entries were being driven to both sides. A temporary tiple was built, and the coal was being sold as both steam and domestic, under the name New Acton "Fancy Lump," medium lump and nut coal. It was expected that this seam could be mined with an "advanced long wall type operation."

At Margaret, the No 6 mine was producing over 1200 tons per day, with about 300 tons coming from No 8 (Brookston) mine. The No 3 mine was closed during 1936. A new steel and concrete tiple was built at the site of the No 3 old tiple. No 6 mine continued to be extended with good results, using mining machines and mechanical loaders. The No 8 mine was producing about 700 tons per day, with roughly half being diverted via No 6 to No 3 for loading to the CoG and the balance to the Seaboard Air Line Railroad (SAL). It was noted that a new lamp house for the miners' electric lamps was built on site to avoid the truck trip to the mine each day; a similar house was built at No 6 mine since No 3 was closed.



Miners and mules prepare to enter one of the mines in 1936. Mules were used to haul coal from the working face to the slope to be loaded on cars that were pulled up the slope by steam and later electric hoists. Mules were issued electric lamps to help prevent accidents. (Clemons, CoG Magazine)

For 1937, the report said that one of the major problems of the year was "overt acts of labor organizations, by the Washington authorities," but that none of it "found fertile ground in our organization." Mines did not generally work full time with Acmar at 181 days, due to lack of RR business; Margaret and New Acton worked about 9 months. Production was up to 968,750 tons maintaining the position of largest commercial non-captive operation at nearly 17 percent of total. Profit per ton ranged from 26 cents for Margaret coal and 13 cents for New Acton. It was noted that since so many employees had electric refrigerators, the company's ice plant did not earn any money. There were 145 families living at Overton and they were transported to work at Henry Ellen mines by company motor buses. Charles DeBardleben, the president of the company, lived at Overton. It was stated that Washington regulatory climate precluded the reopening of Overton.

At Acmar, the No 5 mine was producing 750 tons per day, although all entries had reached their limits; production was expected to last three more years. A short slope was proposed for areas of the left outcrop to prolong the life of the mine and since the land here was owned rather than leased. No 6 mine was producing at a rate of 1,200 tons per day, and was expected to continue for some time. New workings to the right side of No 6 would be developed by a new slope about 1 mile to the right of the current slope which would be driven from inside the current cross entries. This new slope would be called "Acmar No 7." The coal from this slope would be hauled by electric locomotive to the No 6 tipple.

No 3 New Acton was producing 225 tons per day, from pillars, and would be worked to exhaustion as the domestic market liked the coal, and there was strong demand. No 5 New Acton was producing only 150 tons per day, from robbing as well. Both mines were expected to close in 1938.

The New Acton No 6 slope, on a new seam at a lower level beneath the existing mines, did not produce the quality coal expected and was abandoned during 1937. It was stated that the market would not accept this coal as "Acton" quality.

Margaret No 6 was producing 1,000 to 1,300 tons per day including about 250 tons from Brookston (No 8) mine. No 6 continued to be extended using mechanical mining methods and was producing "the best grade of steam and domestic coal... ever sent out to the market."

A new Margaret slope was developed during the year and was located between No 3 (closed) and No 6, to be called No 9. This mine was accessing 100 acres of coal from adjacent workings previously cut off by a thrust fault. The new slope is at 350 tons per day expected to reach 500 tons daily, the coal being hauled to No 6 tipple on the same track as the No 6 coal.

Brookston (No 8) slope was producing 600 to 900 tons per day, depending on demand, and was divided between SAL and CoG. It was noted that Brookston had developed a good truck trade for counties nearby without rail service. A truck scale was installed and a new loading bin added - this lump coal brought the highest price of domestic coals. A modern bath house was built at No 8 to maintain even policy with the other mines, using a small monthly fee from miners to pay for the upkeep.

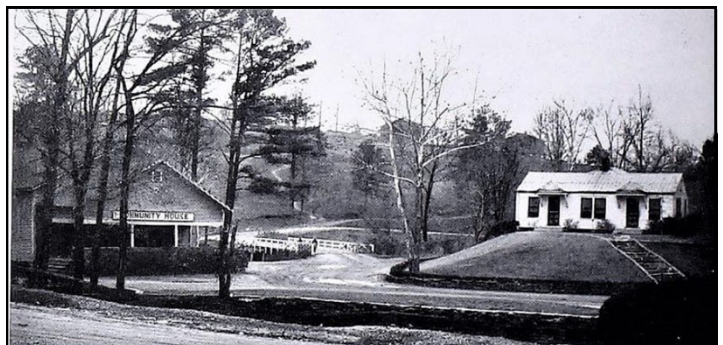
At Colgate the plants were performing well. The electrical plant had 3 steam turbine generators of 3500, 1,500 and 1,250 kW each. New circuit breakers were installed during the year. The shop continued its work with the ability to do all electrical repairs and rework in-house for armatures, motors or transformers as well as welding.

The report for 1938 stated "the coal industry is probably the sickest industry in our entire country...attempts at legislation...resulting in only increasing the cost of production...[enabling] laborless fuels to take our business." There was a business decline, which in turn reduced railroad demand, AF&ICo's main business, although some new rail customers were gained.

A relationship was formed this year with the Galloway Coal Co to be their sales agent for their Elk River Coal, a high-grade domestic coal. This was done due to the New Acton coal being nearly exhausted -- about one years production was expected at 200 tons per day. The relationship enabled the existing sales force to sell Elk River as part of their regular rounds so the commission on sales did not cost the company anything. The truck business at Margaret was increasing with a cash price at the mine of 25 cents per ton above the price for coal sold by rail.

A new production method for Margaret had been implemented in which machine cuts the rock ("parting") rather than the coal itself. This required new Arcwall mining machines and resulted in much cleaner coal. In addition, the Acmar miners were being admonished to mine cleaner coal, to aid their own workload, cleaner coal being easier to sell at lower cost. Overall, the profits for the year 1938 were driven for the most part by Margaret to the tune of 10 to 1. Coal profits amounted to less than half the company total, outweighed by combined commissary profits, royalties, rents, electricity for lights, and miscellaneous. A new power line was extended 1.5 miles to the adjacent Red Diamond mines selling them power at 1 cent per KW. It was noted that a new connection was made from Acmar to the SAL Parsons Siding to enable the company to sell Acmar coal to the SAL directly.

It was noted that a total of \$1.5 million in law suits were pending against the company related to claims on labor issues such as harassment or intimidation. Nearly all the cases were tried and won in lower courts but were going to be pursued at the Supreme Court. The company's lawyers offered a \$7,500 dollar settlement, which was successful, greatly improving the company's legal situation.



Top: Doctor's office, right, and Community House, left, at Acmar.

Bottom: Tipple at Margaret with car dump on the right, screening plant, middle, and truck loading on the left, c 1944. (Denney, Explosive Engineer Magazine.

The company implemented a program for employee suggestions for saving money, with a cash prize awarded to three winners before Christmas (\$25, \$15 and \$10). This was deemed very successful and was expected to be continued. The ongoing program of farming company land continued with good results. A new program was started to eliminate venereal disease in the mine communities. Blood tests were given and, of those infected, treatment was given by doctors. A blood test was added to the physical exam required for new employees.

The company implemented kindergartens in the company schools in order to prepare children better for first grade. Christmas gifts were given to 1,800 children as well as Christmas trees.

At Acmar, the No 5 mine was producing 750 tons per day, all from a careful plan of robbing pillars and other blocks of coal. The new slope at No 5 outcrop was being worked successfully, known as No 5 cross slope, at 175 tons per day being loaded out at No 5 tipple. No 6 Acmar was at a rate of 1,200 tons per day, developing new territory on the right known as Acmar No 7. This new slope was now connected from the surface to the No 6 third right entry, a distance of 1,000 feet. It was planned to build a new electric surface haulage from No 7 to No 6 tipple. Additional ventilation was required to be added at Acmar due to the extensive length of mine workings.

At New Acton, No 3 mine was being exhausted by robbing, with careful prep work required to maintain quality. This mine was expected to close during 1939. No 5 mine was closed in November 1938. With the failure of the No 6 effort, it was expected that New Acton coal would be gone in 1939. Current efforts were not able to meet domestic demand.

Margaret No 6 was producing 1,200 tons per day including 200 tons from No 8 Brookston. No 9 mine was producing 450 tons per day, using the No 6 tipple for dumping. No 6 continued to extend with good results.

During the year, a Jeffrey Arcwall coal cutting machine was purchased. Its value was that it would cut a "soft rock parting in the coal and enable the miner to load cleaner coal, with more in lump and domestic sizes." This coal supported the expanding truck trade of Margaret coal. A new 100-ton truck loading bin was added to the No 6 tipple with a loading boom and conveyor system from the tipple.

A new air shaft was required to be sunk 385 feet to the face of the No 6 slope. A new 8-foot diameter Sturdivant fan of 110,000 cu ft capacity from Overton was being installed.

Brookston (No 8) was producing 400 to 600 tons per day, with demand being split between SAL and CoG via the No 6 tipple. The truck trade for domestic coal continued at this tipple as well.

The Colgate plants were all serving well, and the sale of power to the Red Diamond mine is producing \$5,000 per year. The shop continued to serve for repairs and rebuilding.

The 1939 report to shareholders starts with a 10-year comparison

showing coal production having returned to pre-depression levels at 962,830 tons. The company was noted as still being the largest commercial non-captive coal operation and the only one that was non-union. The report added that New Acton was exhausted and that it consistently raised the average sales price per ton for the company. A coal strike in 1939 contributed to the increase in sales, as had been the case in 1937 – New Acton coal being shipped as far away as Massachusetts during 1939. It was the main domestic coal for AF&ICO, commanding a high price.

Significant capital expenditures involved housing repairs and rebuilding and moving houses from Overton to Margaret. In addition, significant amounts were spent on Acmar No 6 & 7 as well as Margaret No 2 & 6. Expenses were made for churches, schools, doctor's office, post office, a community hall, and a couple of wagon bridges on Black Creek.

Acmar No 5 was producing 700 tons per day, and the cross slope (left) improvement here was producing 200 tons per day. No 6 was producing 1,000 tons per day, enabled by installation of a 600-horsepower Nordberg hoist brought from Overton along with a new hoist house and generator room moved from New Acton No 6. No 7 continued to be extended from cross entries of No 6 slope. A new surface haulage and tipple were installed to connect to No 6, using an 8-ton electric locomotive from New Acton. A new 750-horsepower Hardie-Tynes hoist was purchased from Southern Mineral Land Company's Straven mine for No 7, and a 110,000-cu ft Jeffrey fan was relocated from No 4 Overton. Other improvements at Acmar included a new doctor's office, tea room and renovated community house and a new "Negro" school.

New Acton mines were noted as just about exhausted and were expected to close in early 1940. Domestic customers would be offered domestic size coal from the other operations.

At Margaret, the No 6 tipple was handling 1,200 tons per day, which included about 150 tons diverted from Brookston (No 8). Margaret No 9 was producing 350 tons and was expected to last 2 to 3 more years. Anticipating the end of No 9, a decision was reached to de-water and reopen Margaret No 2, idle since about 1920; initial production was expected in early 1940. This reopening was enabled by the use of machine mining techniques not in use in 1920. No 6 slope continued to develop and required a new ventilation shaft 585-feet deep serving an 8-foot Sturdivant fan of 110,000 cu ft capacity (moved from Overton). The 29 U model Jeffrey Arcwall cutting machine continued to be successful, and another was under consideration for purchase. Truck sales from Margaret were being focused at No 6 tipple, No 8 truck loadings being discontinued. No 6 truck loadings supported a full-time man and lump coal was being stored for winter sales. Twenty-nine rebuilt houses were moved from Overton and other improvements were made to existing housing.

Brookston (No 8) was operating at over 400 tons per day, depending on SAL purchases. As usual, surplus production was moved underground to No 6 tipple. The only truck sales at No 8 now were small amounts of steam coal sizes not prepped at No 6. Efforts were un-

derway to extend No 8 through a down thrust fault of about 15 feet for future development. Additional prospecting indicated that this would work.

Colgate plants and shops continued to serve well. With additional electric hoisting installed, it was expected that peak demand would exceed the 3,500-kW capacity. A new plan to purchase peak load power from Alabama Power was underway, with Colgate buying power at peak times and selling power at low-demand times.

Company records for 1940 did not include the president's report, but did include the informative operations report from General Manager F. R. Bell. It was noted that the Overton rail spur had been removed by CoG RR but that 170 families were living at Overton and working at Acmar or Margaret, riding in company trucks at no charge.

At Acmar, No 5 was working a double shift to produce 1,000 tons per day, driven by a favorable market. The No 5 cross slope was beginning to rob pillars as planned, and would likely be exhausted during 1941. The No 5 main slope was expected to last 2 to 3 years more but was producing based on robbing. Miners began using 275 new electric mine lamps to replace the former electric lamps in use. No 6 Acmar was producing 1,600 tons per day, also working a night shift, including about 100 tons from No 7 slope which was being developed. No 6 slope advanced but appeared to be reaching the vertical fault that was found throughout the Henry Ellen basin and that created a limit to all the mines. Even so, cross entries were being extended, and the mine was expected to last for "some years to come." No 7 mine was now connected to No 6 tittle by an overland electric haul way using an 8-ton GE motor; output was expected to reach 600 to 700 tons per day. This mine received 350 new electric miner lamps.

The No 6 headframe was rebuilt with creosoted timber; the former 10-year old structure was being replaced. A 65-inch steel pan conveyor was also rebuilt at No 6 tittle. A new rock dump system to accommodate increased output from No 7 was being considered.

The New Acton mines were now worked out, and the company was reopening No 4 Henry Ellen, a mine that predated AF&ICo and was closed about 1903. The mine accessed the Mammoth (aka Acmar) seam; this seam had a "middle-man" layer of rock that was not easily handled by hand mining. However, the coal below this rock layer, part of the main seam, was considered valuable as domestic coal to replace the New Acton coal in the market. Reopening the mine would require dewatering, then returning to the face some 900 feet down the slope.

At Margaret, the No 6 mine was producing 1,200 tons per day, including output from Brookston (No 8) not required by SAL. No 9 mine was producing 250 tons per day, a reduced amount, and retreat robbing of pillars and blocks was beginning. No 6 mine was continuing to develop new territory after encountering faulty areas. The old No 2 mine was beginning to produce after being idled about 1920. The mine output would utilize an electric locomotive line to the No 6 tittle using 60-pound rail. It was noted that an

underground reinforced concrete dam was built between the reopened No 2 and old idle No 1 workings. This dam would hold back drainage from No 1 and would reduce pumping costs for reopened No 2, which would use a new 1,350-gallon-per-minute, 650-foot head pump, located in the 15th left entry. Discharge would be via a new cast iron discharge laid some 5,000 feet to the surface. In addition, two new ventilation air returns were implemented. One hundred new Edison Model "P" cap lamps were purchased, and a new lamp house was built, along with a foreman's office and first aid room. Margaret mine housing required maintenance and a number of new metal roofs.

Brookston (No 8) was producing 400 to 500 tons per day, depending on demand from SAL. Surplus coal was moved underground, hauled out, and dumped at No 6 tittle. Brookston was extended through a fault, noted previously, and was working well. No 8 washer required updating.

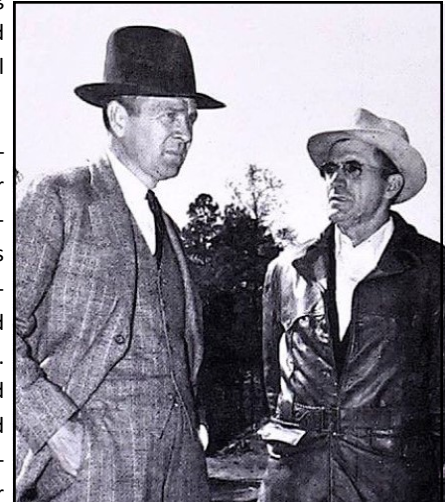
At Colgate, all plants and shops served well. The new Alabama Power connection had been brought in from Leeds and enabled peak power to be bought from, and surplus power to be sold to, Alabama Power.

It was noted that the farming program continued, as well as the welfare societies, "through which the employees conduct their collective bargaining...affecting wages, hours, and condition of employment." These groups were separate for white and colored employees and met monthly to discuss issues. A long-standing monthly management meeting was also held.

Prior to the March 1941 Board meeting, for the year 1940, a letter dated March 18, 1941, was received by the Board from Charles F. DeBardeleben expressing his regret for not being able to attend due to an ongoing illness. The letter showed an effort to be aware and involved in the ongoing activities of the company.

Charles F. DeBardeleben died August 31, 1941. The Board responded formally with a resolution at a meeting September 18, 1941. Business moved forward with the election of [son] Prince DeBardeleben as the new president of the company, at a salary of \$18,000 per year. The new president began his work with an outline of the work being done for a new Acmar No 8 mine, expecting \$40,000 in new capital expense. Charles F. DeBardeleben, Jr. [son] was elected to the Board, and a pension was approved for the former President's widow.

The annual report for 1941 included the traditional report by the president stating that the company produced 1,219,346 tons, the



Prince DeBardeleben, President and R. C. McClain, Supt. Of Mines, Acmar. (Denney, Explosives Engineering Magazine, 1944.)

largest output since 1925. Output in 1941 came from six mines, three each at Acmar and Margaret. It was noted that Margaret properties were completely developed and that now new mines might be opened. Labor conditions due to the war and defense employment were difficult. Also, Margaret coal was becoming ever more difficult to mine due to rock layers. Miners worked harder to produce a ton of coal, and longer haulage took more time, both reducing efficiency and output. Overall, wages had been higher and efficiency lower, causing a reduction in profit. Truck sales at Margaret added significantly to income, since no transportation was required and truck coal was sold at domestic prices. The company also continued to market the Elk River domestic and steam coal of the Galloway Coal Company in Walker County. A new laboratory had been built at Colgate so that daily tests could be made on washed coal by a chemist jointly employed by the CoG and AF&ICo providing better quality evaluation.

The operations report by Mr. Bell indicated that the two tipples at Overton were dismantled in 1941. Materials not already relocated were stored on site and materials from the old tipples were used to construct the new No 8 Acmar tipple.

Acmar No 5 was producing 550 tons per day, a reduction due to working out the No 5 cross slope and "squeeze" on the main No 5 slope. This caused roof failures and a reduction in coal expected to be recovered from robbing pillars. A reduced production of 400 tons per day was predicted for 2 more years.

No 6 Acmar was producing 1,650 tons per day, by itself, plus 700 tons per day from No 7 slope, the total was dumped over the No 6 tipple. No 6 had reached the vertical fault as predicted, although cross entries are still extending.

No 7 slope was still being extended, now at 2,500 feet from the surface, with production from the extended face as well as right-side entries into new territory. A new rock disposal system had been installed with a rotary dump and 36-inch conveyor to dispose of rock from both slopes without interfering with coal production. In addition, labor at the tipple decreased from 2 men to 4. Additional ventilation was added as required. The steel pan conveyor at this site was replaced with a 36-belt conveyor after constant maintenance.

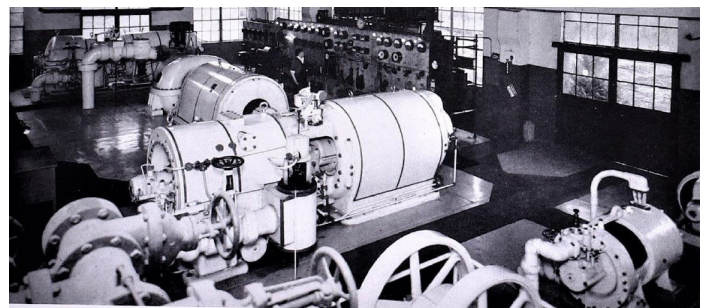


Acmar No 8 tipple, likely the last tipple to be built. The head house and dump on the right, screening house in the middle, with loadout to rail cars below and the truck dump on the left. Truck sales continued to grow during the 1940's. (Denney, Explosives Engineer, 1944)

The No 8 Acmar slope, former Henry Ellen No 4 (closed 1903) had been pumped out, slope renovated, and ventilation installed. New territory was being developed, working only the lower portion of the Mammoth (aka Acmar) seam. A retreating long-wall mining method was being implemented here, using cutting machines. This means that entries were extended to their limits, and then the seam was worked back toward the main slope along its face. A new tipple was being built at this mine, and the coal was expected to serve the domestic market mainly by truck. The new tipple would accommodate truck storage. Rail cars were also being served with the new tipple. Production was expected to reach 700 to 800 tons per day.

A gas explosion at No 6 Acmar killed 11 men, due to a spark from a switch on a hoist motor. Spark-proof switches were to be installed with more frequent inspections for gas.

Margaret No 6 was producing 100 tons per day. SAL was taking nearly all the coal from No 8 (Brookston) so little coal was being transferred to No 6. No 6 was experiencing large rock partings in the left workings but favorable conditions on the right, so work was focusing in that direction. Mining machines continued in use here, producing a high-grade lump coal that was selling well to the truck market. No 9 Margaret is down to 200 tons per day and was expected to be exhausted in 1942. No 2 mine (reopened) was continuing to develop well at 500 tons per day and was experiencing good mining conditions. This mine was also going to be utilized in



Colgate Power Plant in the early 1940's (Denney, Explosives Engineer Magazine, 1944)

retreating long-wall techniques. It was stated that this method takes longer to start up, but, once in place, the mine's efficiency was better. No 8 (Brookston) was noted at 450 tons per day, but that production was expected to begin to decrease with robbing begun on upper workings; several more years are predicted.

At Colgate, the plants and shops continued to perform well. The arrangement with Alabama Power was paying dividends as they needed power due to dry weather impacting hydro generation. Nearly one million kW were sold to the power company each month at six mills per kW.

All company programs for, and with, employees continued. The Welfare Societies continued to serve as in-house collective bargaining organizations. It was noted that selective service and defense work were drawing workers away. In addition, the C.I.O. union

reps continued to try to interest workers in organizing.

The President's report to the Board for year **1942** showed company production at 1,203,102 tons, a bit less than 1941. The new Acmar No 8 (old Henry Ellen No 4) contributed to the highest Acmar production in company history. It was noted that the Margaret operations were tenuous due to poor coal and longer haulage. Margaret was considered questionable but for the war effort. Truck sales continued to increase at both Margaret and Acmar locations. Fuel and tire rationing may have had an impact on this. Power sales to Alabama Power may have peaked; 1942 was a wet year, and the power company brought two new steam plants on line. Elk River coal sales (by commission) for Galloway Coal Co were up.

In 1942, AF&ICo came under investigation by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), through the first half of the year. The company was taken to federal court on complaints of intimidation and other charges over several years. The result was AF&ICo agreed to a series of stipulations and decrees issued by the NLRB. The president noted "there was no question of our being guilty of intimidation and other charges, from their viewpoint...we agreed to the stipulations... issued by the NLRB." These required the company to "cease and desist from the negative practices...and to take positive action such as rehiring men discharged for Union activities, paying back pay, abandoning the Welfare Societies as labor organizations, and, to void the written contracts with these organizations...we agreed to all of these conditions..." It was stated that a labor disruption was likely during 1943, and that, if a wage increase was granted to the unions, AF&ICo would have to go along. Reference was made to the Office of Price Administration and price adjustments being crucial if wages increase and companies were to survive.

The general manager's report indicated nearly 200 families were living at Overton (closed) and working at the Henry Ellen sites. All programs for employees were being carried out there as well.

On December 28, 1942, an extremely heavy rain flooded Acmar No 5 and No 8 (Henry Ellen No 4) with water. These two mines were put out of operation and were expected to be back in business by mid-February 1943. Miners were moved to a third shift at No 6 and No 7 mines with 3 seven-hour shifts keeping most working, but losing about 15-percent tonnage.

No 5 Acmar was producing 350 tons per day before flooding and was expected to be out of production by the end of 1943. A new electric hoist was installed and the water tube boilers used for steam hoisting were moved to Colgate, increasing steam capacity from worn out boilers.

No 6 mine was producing 1,600 tons per day, plus 600 tons from the No 7 slope at the No 6 tipple, for all shifts. Although the No 6 slope reached the vertical fault, the entries at this depth were doing well on both sides. Pumping improvements in the lower workings proved satisfactory with good capacity for the remainder of the mine's life. No 7 slope was still being extended forward and right side entries were proving out well. The conveyor improvements at No 6 tipple were working out very well.

It was noted that creek water below Colgate washer could not be

used at the bath house at No 6 mine due to acid and coal dust from the washer discharge. A new pump and water line, and two ponds were installed from the Cahaba River to remedy this.

No 8 Acmar was developing well, producing 750 tons per day when the flood occurred at the end of 1942. The slope was at 2,300 feet, and cross entries were being extended then mined successfully using long-wall techniques. Two new Jeffrey Longwall Coal Cutters were purchased and were producing a large percentage of lump coal but undercutting the longwalls. Production was expected to resume mid-February 1943, and then full production in another 60 days.

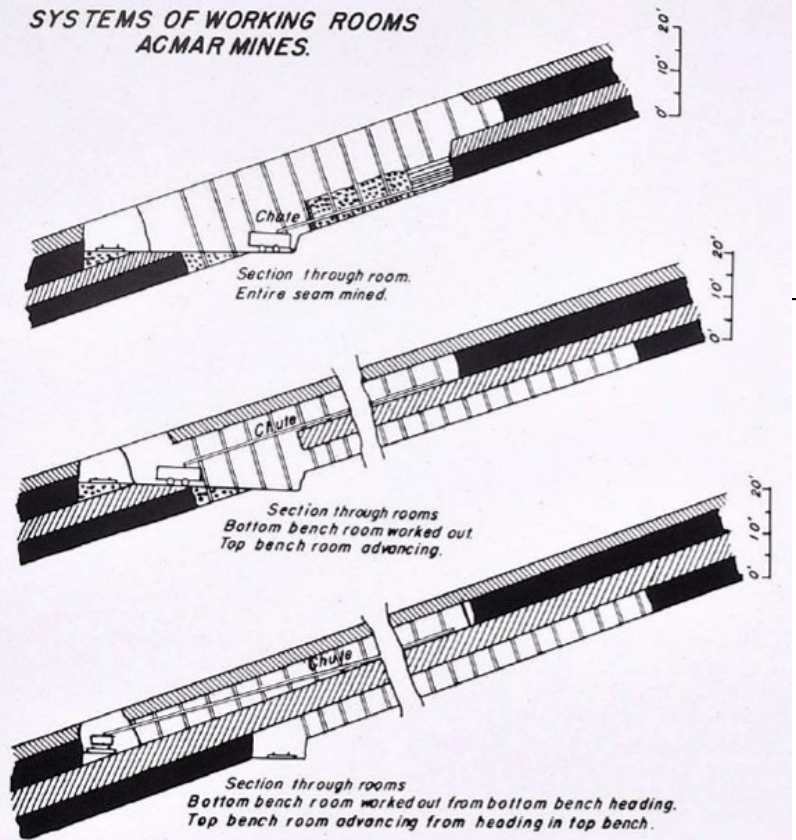
Margaret No 6 was producing 750 tons per day. All coal at No 8 (Brookston) was being used by SAL. Production at No 6 was reduced due to reduction in labor hours by the NLRB and a shortage of experienced miners. Inexperienced labor was being recruited with difficulty, most workers finding defense industry jobs. Also, the mining was apparently not considered desirable work as the coal quality was poor, requiring movement of much rock by hand. An auxiliary slope was being developed in the right side that was proving to be very good quality. No 9 Margaret was losing production as it was worked out, although several old slopes adjacent were being worked to the best advantage. All work at No 9 was expected to end in 1943. No 2 Margaret was at reduced production of 600 tons per day for the same reasons stated for No 6. The development continued into good coal, but additional pumping was required due to water coming from the old No 1 mine. No 8 (Brookston) was robbing in the upper entries and was accessed from No 6 left for the lower production to continue. No extension of the No 8 slope was planned, and life was predicted at 2 years, with production of 300 tons per day expected in 1943.

Company programs were continuing as in the past. It was expected that the ongoing farming program would expand due to national food shortages and rationing. Welfare societies continued to meet (no longer as collective bargaining) where ideas were discussed with employees on efficiency and other issues. Labor shortages were becoming acute as defense industries were working overtime with "fancy overtime wages" and NLRB was apparently placing limits on mining hours, restricting overtime. Safety supervision costs were the highest in history, and full-time safety inspectors were on the job monitoring ventilation and other safety personnel at all mines. Nevertheless, the "spirit of our employees continued to measure up...[reflecting] years of fair dealings that were appreciated by our employees."

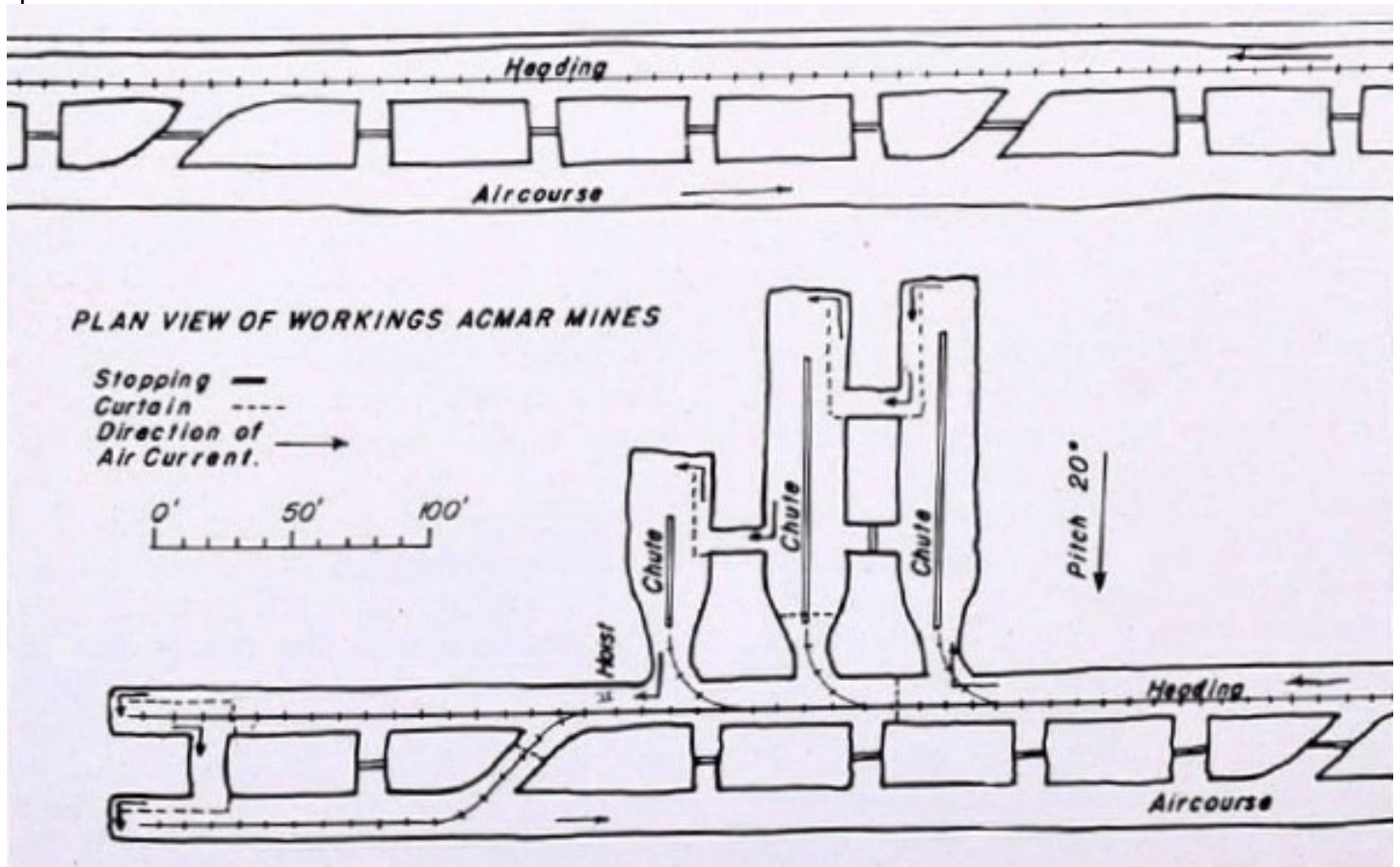
The president's report for **1943** indicated that production was down due to the manpower shortage as well as the impacts of the December 1942 floods which reduced production for at least the first quarter of 1943. Impacts at Acmar No 8 were so significant that entries had to be reopened, track relayed, timbers replaced, and roof falls dug out. The Margaret area had no new mines to develop and stripping operations were beginning at Brookston. The small mines at Margaret No 9 and 11 would be worked out early in 1944. Acmar mines No 5 would finish in 1944 and No 6 was on the retreat robbing. No 7 was at full production, being completely developed. A new mine at Acmar No 9 had just opened and would be served by truck haulage to the No 8 tipple. Truck haulage was stated to be efficient up to 500 tons per day, then rail haulage was better. Truck sales (different from haulage) were continu-



**SYSTEMS OF WORKING ROOMS
ACMAR MINES.**



Miners working the "Big Seam." Note the chute between the men bringing coal down from the working face. The Big Seam (Mammoth) was about 11 feet thick with a top and bottom "bench" separated by a layer of rock. Different methods were used as shown in the section view in the right image. This appears to be the method in the top diagram. In the diagram below, we see this in plan view. Note the typical slope (pitch) of 20 degrees. (Denny Explosives Engineer Magazine, 1944.)



ing to grow, with “trucks in line night and day, seven days a week, waiting for coal.” Galloway Coal Company’s Elk River and Jagger coal sales on commission basis continued to grow. Labor relations were said to be good, and it was noted that the Associated Miners (union) had “a large number of our employees in their organization...[and have been notified by NLRB] that they will be granted an election to prove they represent a majority of the employees. The UMW were resisting this election and had intervened at every step... after the election, regardless who wins, we will have to make a contract with whoever represents the majority of our employees.”

The general manager’s operating report notes that 200 miners were still living at Overton and were being trucked to work at Acmar and Margaret by the company. No 5 Acmar was producing 250 tons per day and was expected to be finished by the end of 1944, the effective life being extended by reduced production due to flooding. No 6 Acmar was producing 1,500 tons per day, including 350 tons from No 7 slope, being hauled overland by electric motor to No 6 tippel. No 7 was only working one shift due to labor shortage, while No 6 was working a double shift. No 7 had reached its planned limits, with cross entries being developed on the right and both sides of No 6. Although faulty areas were being found, it was planned to go to the planned limits of these mines. No 6 would begin robbing some pillars in 1944 which was expected to reduce production. The double shift work over 3 years is depleting No 6 faster than might have been expected. Based on this, it was said to be imperative to develop Acmar No 8 (old Henry Ellen) and the new No 9 mine as soon as possible. Two used 10-ton Autocar trucks had been purchased to haul from No 9 to No 8 tippel. No 8 mine had been “cleaned up” from the flooding and was back to 750 tons per day production. Clean up was more extensive and difficult than anticipated.

It was noted that the mining at Acmar No 8 had been changed from longwall system back to room and pillar. It seemed that the middleman parting in the Acmar seam was too poor to maintain a roof system for the lower bench of the seam. By changing back to room and pillar, both the upper bench and lower could be mined, although the miners would have to handle more rock from the parting. It would enable 50 percent more coal to be mined once the old system was restored.

At Margaret No 6, production was at 550 tons per day, reduced due to shortage of manpower. No 6 was extended forward as well as to the south side while determining the quality of material and the expectations for the life of this mine. Since the retreating No 8 (Brookston) mine drains to No 6 and would have its pumps dismantled soon, a new drainage system was added at No 6. This required an 8-inch bore, 390 feet deep and two 500 gallon per minute Worthington pumps at the 14th right heading with a large sump to collect and remove water from No 6 and No 8’s contribution.

Margaret No 2 (reopened) was producing 650 tons per day, also reduced due to labor shortage. Forward work had stopped while headings were extended. A “back slope” was being developed on the north side of No 2. No 2 was expected to eventually be developed to its planned limits. As No 2 continued to grow, additional

ventilation would be required. No 9 slope was being exhausted including “several old slopes” that were developed near No 9. No 8 (Brookston) was producing 250 tons per day, nearly all from robbing on retreat, and reduced production was driven by labor shortage. No 8 was expected to be exhausted during “next year,” but stripping along the adjacent outcrop was being investigated using a power shovel, anticipating 125,000 tons of coal available.

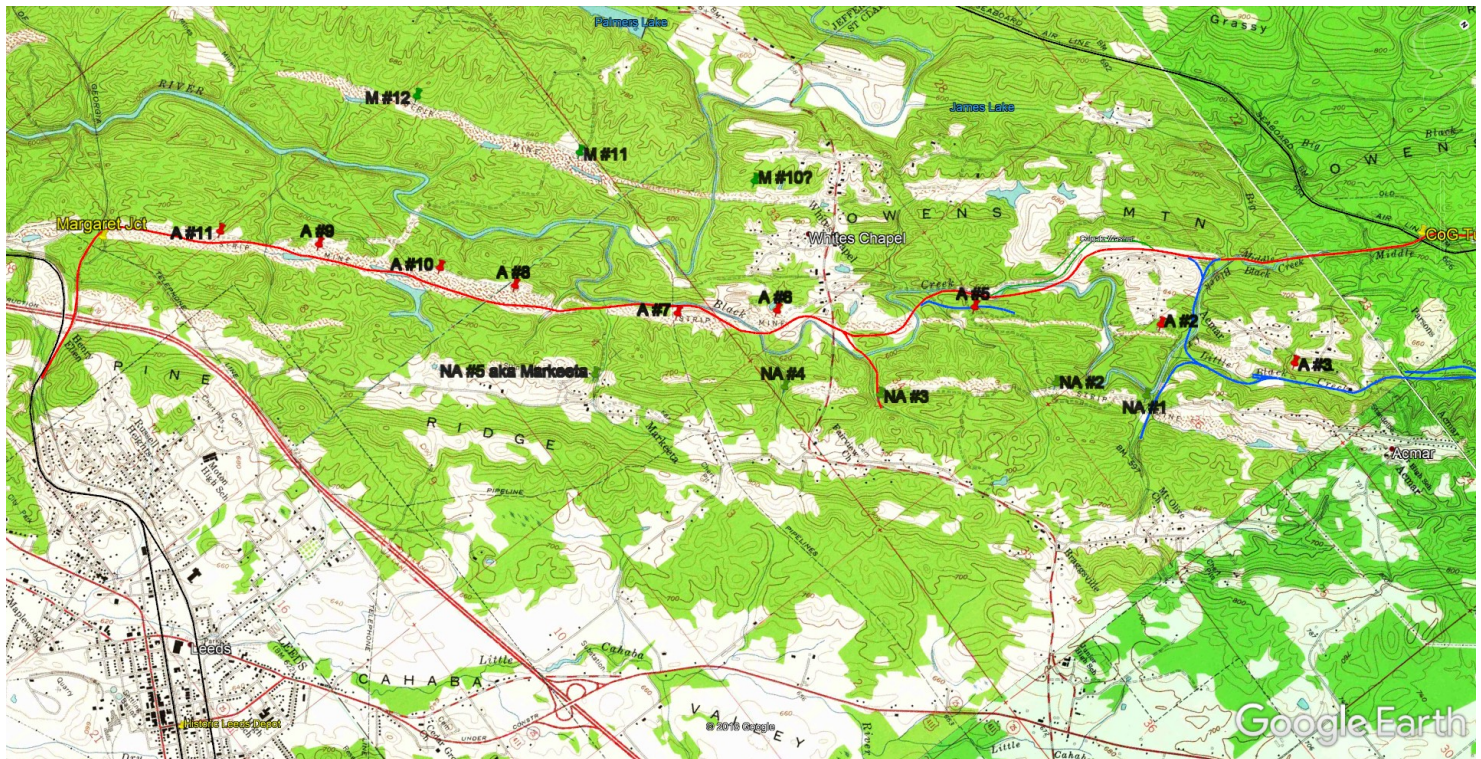
The Colgate plants and shops were in good shape. The laboratory was continuing operation for daily sampling (jointly with the CoG). The 1500-kW generator at Colgate had been rewound, and a “considerable amount of power had been sold to Alabama Power” during the year. Boilers moved from Acmar No 5 in 1942 had been brought on line and were improving efficiency as planned.

Employee programs continued at all locations. An enhanced safety program had placed a “safety man” with each 20 employees; there was now a safety inspector, as well as a mine foreman, working on safety issues daily, particularly checking ventilation and sampling air quality. It was noted that over 400 employees had been drafted in the military, plus an equal number leaving for defense plant work. Draft boards had begun to be more lenient regarding miner deferments, but “most of the best miners were drafted before they became lenient on the miners.” It was noted that “most of our oldest and most substantial employees have stayed with their jobs...this is one evidence of good feelings...between our Company and its employees of long standing -- that could not be bought with higher wages elsewhere.”

The corporate record at Hoole Library, UA, contains the President’s annual report, but no general manager’s report for 1944. This report began with a summary of four years showing that, although annual production had decreased, income had increased due to increased sales prices but that production cost increased at a greater rate than sales price reducing profit.

Margaret Division made money during the year “due to the fact that the Office of Price Administration (OPA) gave us a maximum selling price...of \$4.05 per ton against an Acmar price of \$3.70.” Margaret No 8 was still operating and was expected to continue through 1945. No 2 mine was the largest mine, now extending some 2 miles along the slope, which meant that ventilation was an ongoing problem. Thus, a new high-pressure fan had been installed, producing the same volume with half the power requirements. No 2 was running only a single shift and, if labor were available, two shifts could be run to improve production. A barrier pillar existing between No 2 and old No 1 mine which was being planned for recovery, contained some 80,000 tons of coal. The outcrop mines at No 9 and No 11 were exhausted and equipment was being removed.

At Acmar, No 5 was completely worked out, and equipment was being removed. About 70,000 tons of adjacent outcrop coal was stripped and dumped at the No 5 tippel. Additional coal was “being uncovered” near old No 3 Acmar and was expected to contain 75,000 tons. It was planned to uncover the old No 1 coal for stripping and was expected to contain some 300,000 tons of coal. No 6 and 7 Acmar were in retreat robbing but were expected to produce on this basis for



two more years. No 8 was the largest operation at Acmar with a lot of unworked territory due to the requirement to maintain pillars and blocks for roof control. The plan was to develop all entries to their planned extent and to rob all of these areas on retreat. No 9 Acmar was being developed "slowly with temporary hoist and tittle...and should be some of the best work at the Acmar Division." It was noted that a small mine had been opened "about 1/2 mile west of White's Chapel" with about 7,000,000 tons of coal. The output here was planned to be moved by truck to the railroad initially extending rail later if things worked out. [Is this Margaret No 10?]

Truck sales were noted as having decreased due only to a shortage of coal. It was expected this business could be expanded. Sales by commission of Galloway Coal Co's Elk River and Jagger coal continued producing royalty revenue of \$31,000.

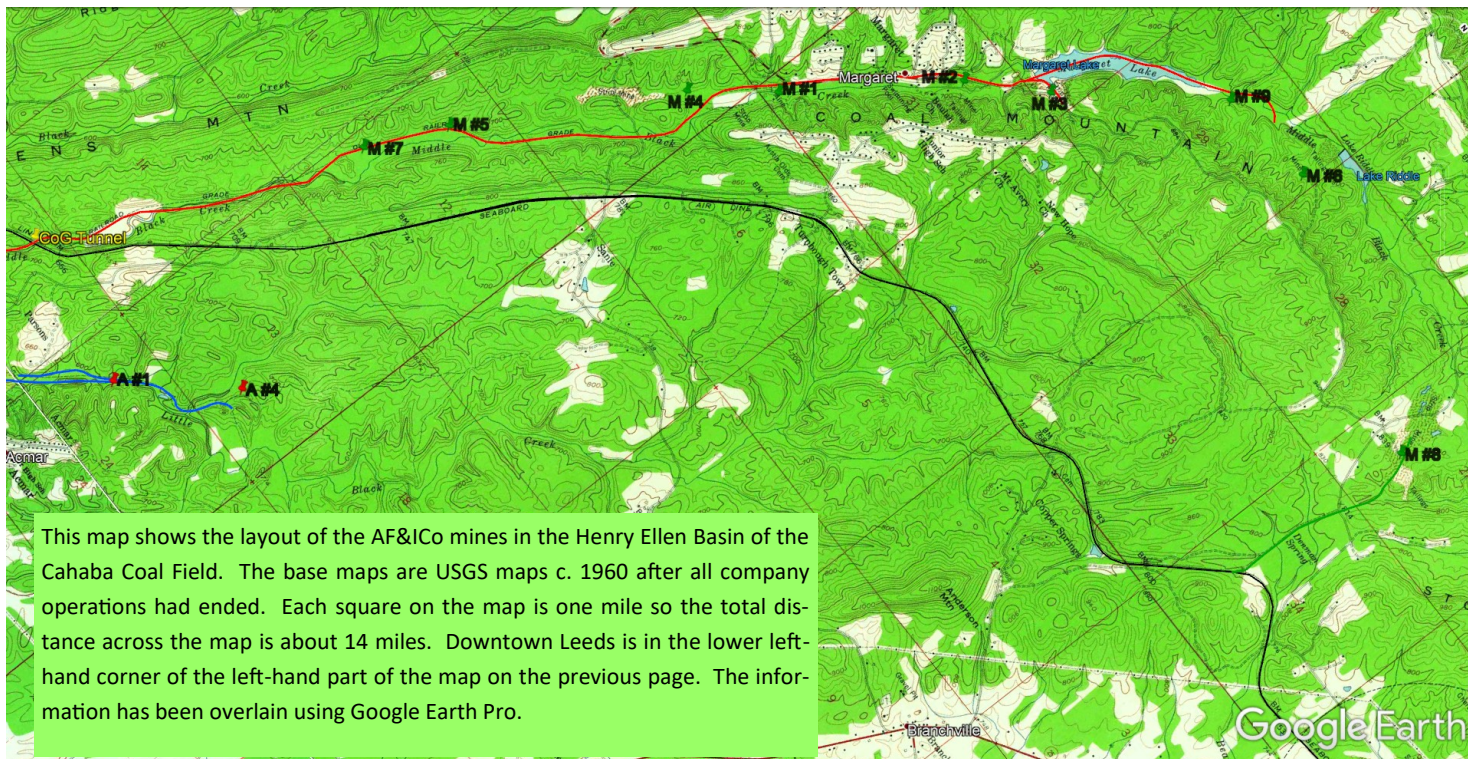
Labor relations were noted as being "the same...[good] and information that I receive is that [the employees] have not joined any labor organization either the local crowd or the UMW."

Corporate records were limited for the years 1945-1949. In 1946, AF&ICo purchased the Galloway Coal Company in Walker County for \$250,000. The year 1947 was the best year for the company, but, in 1948, business was poor in general as well as for the company. One of the company's coal yards, located at 10th Avenue downtown, was sold in 1948. Mining conditions had become more difficult and there was no quarterly dividend for 3rd quarter 1948. Various lands owned by the company were sold off to C. E. Gove during 1948, amounting to some 2,000 acres at various locations in Tuscaloosa, Jefferson and DeKalb Counties in Alabama. Henry T. DeBardeleben died in 1948. In 1949 the Russellville brown ore lands, idle for a number of years, were sold to Sloss for \$100,000. Railroad business was decreasing due to dieselization by most all southern railroads. Quarterly dividends were being paid on and off in this period, with no dividend for second quar-

ter 1950, noting "drastic reductions in personnel and increased operating expenses." A significant land sale occurred in 1950 involving lands in Walker County purchased from the CoG years earlier and sold to Alabama Power Company for \$1.25 million. Also this year, the villages at Acmar and Overton were sold to Marc Levine for \$175,000.

There was a **1950** Board report dated December 15, 1950. This meeting was very important, and it began the process of ending the operations of the AF&ICo. The stated reasons were summarized: the market for bituminous coal had been greatly reduced by competing sources of fuel; the operations of the company had been largely conducted on leased property, and present mines were solely on leased property; most of the coal that could be mined for profit had been mined; due to these conditions the mining of bituminous coal had become unprofitable and had been "hazardous to its stockholders without any foreseeable improvement in business conditions."

Thus the decision was made to cease business and liquidate the corporation starting immediately [December 15, 1950]. A plan for liquidation was presented to be approved by the Board and presented to the stockholders on March 6, 1951. There were 10 steps to the plan summarized: immediately cease all operations of mining and selling coal; surrender and cancel all leases and remove all equipment and sell same for cash; cancel all contracts; complete the sale of coal lands in Walker County [to Alabama Power Co]; sell all personal property such as leases, notes bonds and stocks; sell all remaining coal and ore lands and other real estate; pay all debts and distribute all available cash to stockholders in a series of liquidating dividends; complete liquidation shall be completed by December 1, 1953 or sooner, any property or assets remaining to be distributed to stockholders or trustees; all of this to be authorized by stockholders by signed resolutions; dissolution shall be vested in



the Board or a designated committee.

Final liquidation was declared July 17, 1953, by transferring all remaining assets to the Galloway Coal Company [purchased in 1946], and equalizing stock shares so that Galloway stockholders would own any remaining value of Alabama Fuel & Iron Company assets.

It was noted that there were a number of business activities of AF&ICo that were not addressed in detail in these articles -- the focus of these articles being on the Cahaba Basin operations of the Company. For example, the purchase and leasing of coal lands in Kentucky, the purchase of the Walker County land reference above and the brown ore operations in Russellville, Franklin County, Alabama. Likewise, the various labor and social issues discussed by others were not addressed here except in passing. For example, like all coal companies, worker safety and death were major issues, addressed by other authors, but not addressed here in detail.

Alabama Fuel & Iron was felt to be a unique organization, led by a unique family and in particular, Charles F. DeBardeleben. The extent of the company's coal operations and their position as the largest commercial non-captive coal operation in Alabama as well as their non-union position in the marketplace were unique. It seemed to the author, that this may be better understood with a view of their operations in a coal basin considered by many to be second-rate territory and on leased land at that. Whether one "likes" the DeBardeleben's or not, they surely provided strong vision and leadership to create and operate a unique organization across nearly half a century.

The chart on the next page shows information on the mines of AF&ICo in terms of years of operation and tonnage. In some cases estimates had to be made of some details.

THE MID-SOUTH FLYER



FLOMATON COALING TOWER

Ken Boyd