



The Utah Parks Special

by Thornton Waite

A triple treat
VACATION BARGAIN

The National Parks of Southern Utah-Arizona

BRYCE CANYON

ZION NATIONAL PARK

GRAND CANYON

via **UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD**

The nation's railroads once ran seasonal trains in the summer and winter months, serving many parts of the United States. The *Utah Parks Special*, a Union Pacific (UP) train that ran between Salt Lake City and Cedar City, Utah, was one of these seasonal trains.

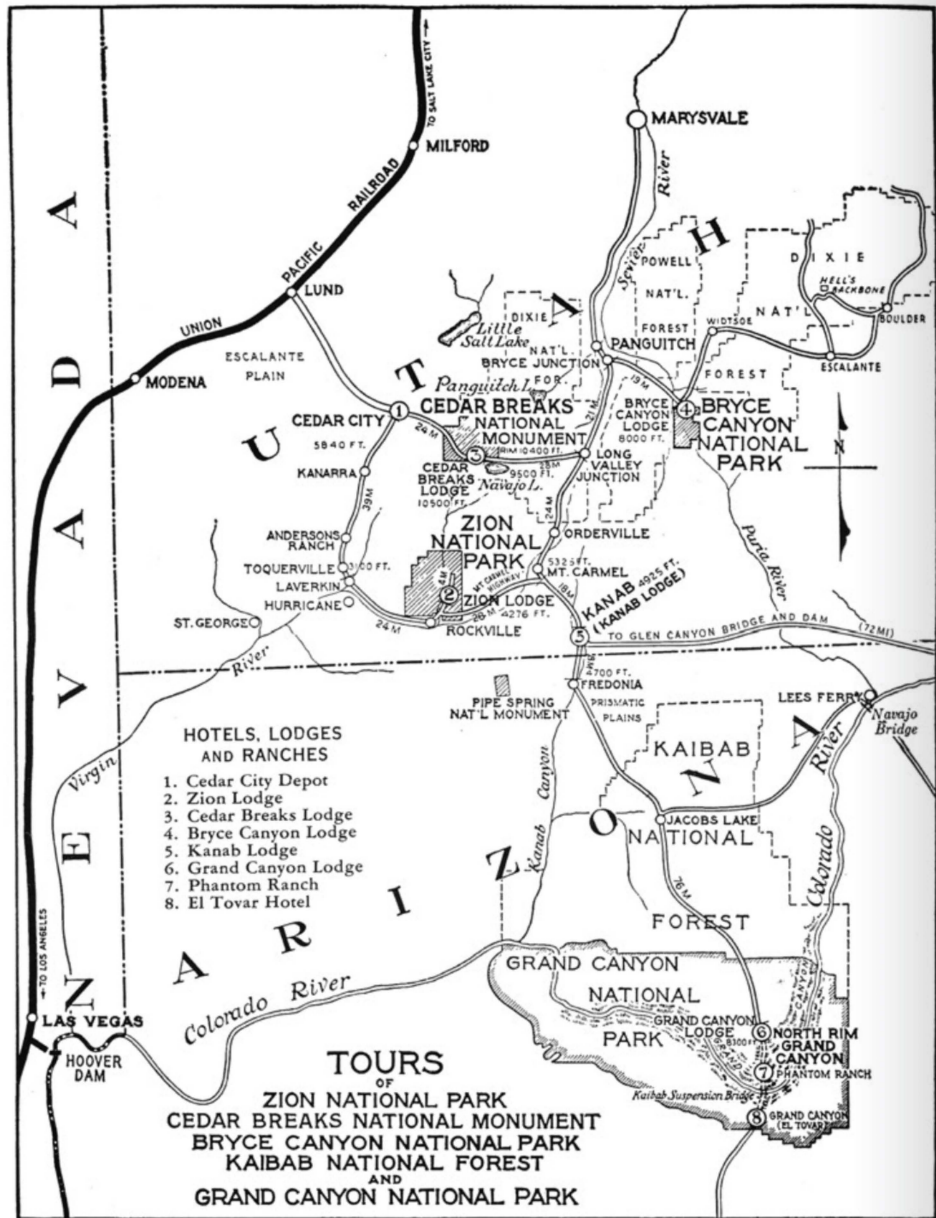
It was a relatively unknown operation, launched in 1923 and running only in the summer months to take tourists to the newly established national parks in southern Utah, but it fell victim to the Depression and World War II. Reinstated after the war, the train struggled to compete with the automobile and was discontinued for the second, and final, time at the end of the 1960 season. Coincidentally, that was the same year UP's *Yellowstone Special* to West Yellowstone and Yellowstone National Park was discontinued. The *Utah Parks Special* should not be confused with Union Pacific's *National Parks Special*, which ran between Chicago and Denver in 1940 and 1949-55.

Union Pacific and its subsidiary, the Utah Parks Company, were directly responsible for development of the national parks in southern Utah. Bryce, Zion, and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, as well as Cedar Breaks, were all accessible via UP's new branch line to Cedar City. The two companies worked together to develop and promote travel to, and within, the scenic areas and parks in southern Utah. The first segment of the journey was UP's *Utah Parks Special* from Salt Lake City to Cedar City. In conjunction with this train, UP's Utah Parks Company subsidiary provided road transportation from Cedar City to and through the parks, and provided lodging and dining facilities for tourists during their stays.

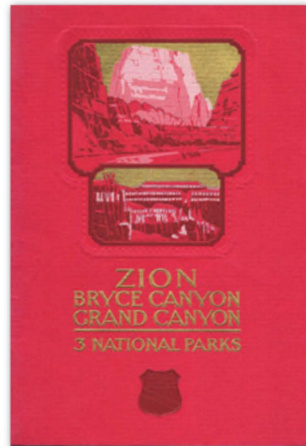
A railroad to Cedar City

Cedar City, Utah, is located in Iron County in the southwestern part of the state, 33 miles east of the Union Pacific main line between Salt Lake City and Los

A 1958 Union Pacific booklet promoting the national parks of southern Utah served by UP. AUTHOR'S COLLECTION; BACKGROUND IMAGE, HOODOOS IN BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK / CAROL M. HIGSMITH, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COLLECTION



FACING PAGE Even after Union Pacific passenger trains stopped serving the Cedar City Branch in 1960, the railroad continued to promote the hotel, dining, and tour concessions of its Utah Parks Company subsidiary in southern Utah's national parks. This map was issued by UP in 1964. AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



ABOVE Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad promoted its proximity to southern Utah's scenic wonders in this 1917 issue of *The Arrowhead* magazine. In 1929, UP issued this red-covered booklet promoting tourism to the area. AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

BELOW Tourists arriving at Cedar City to travel to the southern Utah parks could have breakfast at the Hotel El Escalante. The hotel, across the road from the depot, was owned by Union Pacific. SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY



Angeles, and roughly 250 miles south of Salt Lake City. The town received its name for the large stands of cedar trees in the valley, and it was initially settled to develop the iron ore from the nearby mines.

The history of the railroad to Cedar City dates back to the 1870s, when the Utah Southern Railroad Company was building south from Salt Lake City. On September 15, 1873, the Iron Mountain & Utah Valley Railroad Company was incorporated to go north from Iron City to a connection with Utah Southern at or near Payson, south of Salt Lake City. Little or no work was performed on this line.

On December 29, 1874, the Utah Southern Railroad Extension was chartered to extend a railroad line from Utah

Southern Railroad through Iron County to a location south of Cedar City. The new line would not have been routed through Cedar City, although it would have run near the town. Some surveys were performed, but no further work was performed on this line, either.

Cedar City Terminal Railway was the next line proposed to reach Cedar City. In 1884, 22 miles of rails and other equipment were purchased and moved to Cedar City by ox team. Some grading was performed that summer toward the coal mines east of Cedar City, but no further work was done.

When Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad (LA&SL) built its line between Los Angeles and Salt Lake City at the beginning of the 20th century, it bypassed

Cedar City. The railroad reached a location designated as Cedar City Junction, 37 miles south of Milford, on January 24, 1899, and this was the nearest railroad stop to Cedar City. The railroad announced that a branch was planned, to be built from Cedar Junction east to Cedar City, but no construction took place at this time. When the LA&SL line was severely damaged by floods in 1910, a route closer to Cedar City was briefly considered and surveyed, but the existing main line was rebuilt instead.

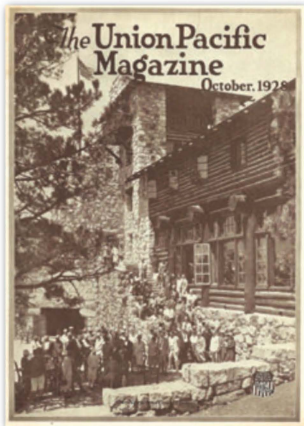
In addition to interest in building a rail line to transport iron ore, the scenic areas in southern Utah were slowly being publicized after the turn of the century.

In 1913, Utah Governor William Spry visited Zion, and in the same year former President Theodore Roosevelt visited the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, giving the area desirable publicity. The Zion area was set aside as a national monument in 1909, as were Bryce in 1923 and Cedar Breaks in 1933. In 1916, an auto stage to these areas was provided by W.W. Wylie, who already had facilities in Yellowstone National Park. His company provided transportation and camping services for tourists. At this time, roads were slowly being improved as the demand for better highways increased. Wylie used a dirt road which had just been completed from Lund, 36 miles south of Milford, to access these areas.

In August 1916, UP sent a special party of railroad and travel industry representatives on a bus tour to Zion and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon to scout the business potential of the area. They left the train at Lund and joined a party from the *Salt Lake Tribune* newspaper, who were traveling in automobiles to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. A bus they used was the first one that had ever been seen by many of the people in the area, giving an indication of how isolated it was. UP was interested in the area because it was considering taking over LA&SL at the time.

Governor Spry promised to help develop the roads in the area if the railroad would develop the tourist traffic. UP saw the potential for tourist revenue based on its successful experience with the Yellowstone Branch on Oregon Short Line, which took tourists to Yellowstone National Park.

UP also saw competing railroads earning revenue from tourist traffic to the country's national parks. Great Northern was promoting Glacier National Park, Northern Pacific was advertising trips to Yellowstone National Park, and Santa Fe was famous for trips to the Grand Canyon's South Rim. These railroads were also involved with operating hotel and other tourist concessions in those respective national parks, which was typical of the era. In addition, UP traffic to Yellow-



ABOVE LEFT The October 1928 issue of *The Union Pacific Magazine* featured UP's brand-new Grand Canyon Lodge, on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, on its cover. AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



ABOVE RIGHT Los Angeles & Salt Lake 2-8-0 6070 pulls into the Cedar City station with 2-103, the *Ticket Agent's Special*, circa 1929. The curved track is part of the balloon track used to turn the trains at Cedar City. UP MUSEUM

BELOW UP's station at Third West and South Temple streets in Salt Lake City — opened in 1909 and shown here in the 1980s — figured prominently in the railroad's passenger services to and from the southern Utah national parks. HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COLLECTION



stone National Park was increasing. UP felt that promoting business to southern Utah would be profitable, because the area had numerous scenic attractions and there were no competing railroads to contend with.

Unfortunately, World War I paused highway development in southern Utah for several years. In addition, road construction was proving more expensive than anticipated by the state government, despite the fact that convict labor was being used. Nevertheless, limited tourist services were provided from Lund, using the available roads and new camping facilities at the parks. Although passable

roads were in existence to Zion, Bryce, Cedar Breaks, and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon by 1923, travel over these roads to the parks was slow. However, there was growing interest in the parks. For example, traffic to Zion increased rapidly, doubling between 1914 and 1920 to 3,692 visitors.

Union Pacific President Carl Gray, successor to E.H. Harriman, saw the potential for added traffic to the scenic areas near Cedar City. He personally made a tour of southern Utah in 1921 to investigate potential for the construction of railroad branches. Gray was favorably impressed, and said the construction of

a branch line to Cedar City was under consideration. UP obtained full control of LA&SL that year, although it was operated as an independent line until 1936. In July 1922, President Gray made another visit to the area, along with the vice president in charge of traffic, H.M. Adams, and passenger traffic agent W.S. Basinger. They saw that development of facilities in isolated areas with no available utilities was going to be required, a daunting and expensive prospect.

In addition to the potential for tourist traffic, construction of the Cedar City Branch was also prompted by development of the iron ore district at Iron Mountain, south of the proposed branch, and a steel plant being built by Columbia Steel Corporation south of Salt Lake City at Ironton. In its 1923 annual report, UP noted that the Cedar City line was being built primarily to transport iron ore from the Iron Springs area.

Construction of the Cedar City Branch

In 1922, UP announced plans to spend \$5 million on the construction of the Fillmore Branch, which left the main line at Delta, and the Cedar City Branch. The railroad designated the new Lund station, 35 miles south of Millford, as the main line junction with the Cedar City Branch. The location was named after Robert C. Lund, a UP director, Utah state legislator, and mine owner. The railroad had originally reached what became Lund in 1898-99, but the area was not settled until 1911 when the valley was opened up for homesteading. It did not prosper due to the arid climate and is a virtual ghost town today.

The railroad also planned to take over the El Escalante Hotel in Cedar City and build hotels at Zion and Bryce, along with a smaller facility at Cedar Breaks. This was an ambitious program, because the new park facilities had to be built in iso-

lated areas. It took several years of planning, persistence, and hard work, as well as more than \$2 million, before the railroad's plans finally came to fruition. Work in the parks had to be approved by the National Park Service.

There was also the potential for lumber, coal, and other mineral traffic on the Cedar City Branch. At the time of the branch's construction, the population of the area it served was estimated to be 13,900, including the 2,550 residents of Cedar City.

Construction of the 33-mile branch was authorized by the ICC on October 18, 1922, and work officially started in March 1923. Completion was scheduled for December 23, 1923, but did not take that long. The line went through isolated desert country, climbing slowly from an elevation of 5,091 feet above sea level at Lund to 5,805 feet at Cedar City. Modern construction techniques made it a relatively easy project, and all material was easily delivered from the main line. There were no large rivers or streams to cross, nor were there any towns along the route, and only a few sidings were needed along the line. The Lund Highway runs between Lund and Cedar City, to the north of the railroad line.

The last rail was laid on June 15, 1923, and the line was officially opened on June 26. The first regularly scheduled passen-

ger trains began running on July 2, 1923. The opening ceremony of the new line and station was attended by President Harding, who was on his way to Alaska for the opening of Alaska Railroad. Just before Harding left Washington, D.C., on this trip, he declared Bryce Canyon to be a national monument, under the direction of the U.S. Forest Service, which was part of the Department of Agriculture. (While returning from Alaska, Harding stopped in San Francisco, where he died suddenly on August 2, 1923.)

UP's Cedar City Branch was officially completed on September 12, 1923, when a "golden rail" was laid. There was a speech by U.S. Senator Reed Smoot in memory of the late President Harding, followed by remarks from UP Vice President H.M. Adams. Stephen Mathers, director of the National Park Service, noted that there had been a 50 percent increase in visitors to Zion in the past year, attributable to the completion of the Cedar City line.

Cedar City depot

The \$75,000 depot that UP built at Cedar City was an attractive, one-story stone and brick structure at the corner of Main and First North streets. It was built using cream-colored bricks, and had bird's-eye walnut trim, simulating Philippine mahogany. There was a Barkalow Brothers

News Company newsstand opposite the ticket office. In addition to the waiting room, there was a men's smoking room and a women's rest room, which had rocking chairs, tables, and a large rug. Passengers arrived on the west, or track, side of the building and were picked up by four buses on the east, or street side. The depot had a wing on one end for baggage, and the passenger waiting room was on the opposite end of the depot. A porte-cochère provided protection from bad weather.

A balloon track, the only one in the state, was used to turn the trains as they arrived. The balloon loop was double-tracked, and there were additional sidings on the inside of the loop for passenger cars as well as locomotives, along with the freight house. A brick platform paralleled a set of depressed tracks in the center of the balloon, so that two passenger trains could be easily loaded/unloaded and serviced. The brick platform led to a ramp that went up to the level of the balloon tracks and to the depot. Minor improvements were made to the station in 1929 when a portico was added, the platforms by the tracks were expanded, and a bus shelter was built. In the same year, an employee dormitory was built in Cedar City.

Initial passenger service to Cedar City

Passenger service on the Cedar City Branch varied according to the season, and it changed over the years with the ebb

BELOW The Cedar City branch met UP's former LA&SL main line at Lund, Utah, an isolated, desolate spot in the middle of the desert. The 1929 Mission-style depot can be seen on the left. It was designed by Gilbert Stanley Underwood, an architect who designed many depots for Union Pacific. In the later years of operation, buses met passengers at Lund for the park tour. SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY



and flow of passenger traffic. It was busy in the summer season with summer tourist trains, and was a minor branch line with little traffic in the other seasons of the year. The summer train service varied over the years, ranging from through service between Salt Lake City and Cedar City to a connecting Lund-Cedar City train to a bus connection at Lund and, in the final summer of service, a Salt Lake City-Cedar City connecting bus service. For a few years the connecting train service to Cedar City ran out of Milford. The primary market was for tourists from Salt Lake City, although passengers from the East, Pacific Northwest, or California could schedule a transfer between trains at Salt Lake City.

Prior to completion of the Cedar City line, the railroad provided connecting automobile service with the main line trains at Lund to and from Cedar City. This connection was advertised for the 1923 season, with the promise that the roads were being improved. The first passenger train arrived in Cedar City on July 1,

1923. The trains were 603, Lund-Cedar City, and 604, Cedar City-Lund, as well as a Lund-Cedar City mixed train. They were scheduled to connect with the main line trains.

Aside from the summer-only trains for tourists to Cedar City and the southern Utah parks, passenger service was never very extensive on the Cedar City Branch due to the small population in Cedar City and the surrounding area. In February 1925, in the off-season, the railroad advertised two daily round-trip local trains in each direction between Lund and Cedar City, with three of the four trains connecting with main line trains.

By 1925, UP was advertising passenger service to Cedar City in the summer months. There were two sets of trains — numbered 25/125 and 126/26, and 3-103 and 104-4 — all of which ran daily. There was a through connecting sleeper, Salt Lake City-Lund-Cedar City, on the night train, and the local Lund-Cedar City trains undoubtedly were assigned another coach or combine car. The schedule

showed a morning train and a late-afternoon train.

In later years there was a station stop at Stock Yards, 2.2 miles west of Cedar City, but outlying station stops eventually were discontinued so that the only stations were at Lund and Cedar City.

All through trains stopped at Lund, where connections were made with the local trains to Cedar City. The through connections were via trains 3/103 and 104/4, the night trains. Train 4, the *Utah Express* had a 12-section/1-drawing room (12-1) sleeper, Cedar City-Salt Lake City, while train 3, the *California Express*, had a through 12-1 sleeper, Salt Lake City-Cedar City. Mail trains 3/4 ran between Salt Lake City and Los Angeles, with chair cars and coaches, and a 16-section tourist sleeper, making meal stops at Caliente, Las Vegas, and Barstow. Train connections to Cedar City were also made at Lund with trains 25/26, the *Continental Limited*, the day train between Salt Lake City and Cedar City, but there was no through service on the *Continental Lim-*

ited. It took approximately eight hours to travel between Salt Lake City and Lund, a distance of 243 miles, and another hour or so between Lund and Cedar City.

On April 18, 1928, the Utah Public Utilities Commission (PUC) authorized LA&SL to discontinue its Sunday passenger service on the Cedar City line, presumably due to a lack of traffic because the Mormons, the predominant religion in the area, observe Sundays as a day of worship. This discontinuance was apparently only for the off-season, as the trains ran daily in the summer months.

The Utah Parks Company

At the same time that UP built the Cedar City Branch, it formed a subsidiary called the Utah Parks Company, incorporated on March 29, 1923, in the state of Utah. Its capital stock was officially owned by the Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad Company, and the new company planned to build camp and hotel facilities at Zion National Park and operate tour buses between the hotels and camps.

This separate company was encouraged by the National Park Service, because the Park Service did not want it to appear that UP was monopolizing access to the parks. Control by Union Pacific was apparent, however, since the railroad immediately appointed its own landscaping artist, Samuel C. Lancaster, to supervise the building and construction of the Utah Parks Company facilities.

When UP announced plans to build the new branch line and park facilities, it said the Utah Parks Company would provide a loop tour of the parks in new motor coaches. Tourists would be able to visit Cedar Breaks, Kaibab National Forest, and Grand Canyon, Bryce, and Zion national parks. The tour would normally take five days, although longer or shorter stays could be arranged. This required a large investment on the part of the Utah Parks Company, as lodging and eating facilities, along with the necessary utilities such as water and power, would need to be built and maintained in isolated locations. All of this work would have to be

done with the approval of the National Park Service, which was anxious to have any new facilities blend in with the park environments, a new concept at the time. An agreement was signed with the National Park Service in June 1923 to build the facilities at Zion.

As part of the project, the company bought and finished building the El Escalante Hotel in Cedar City, convenient to the railroad station, at a cost of \$265,000. It was a two-story, rustic stone and wood-frame hotel, and was officially opened on March 29, 1924, in time for the 1924 summer season. The new hotel, owned and operated by the Union Pacific System, had 75 guest rooms, some of which had shower and bath facilities down the hall.

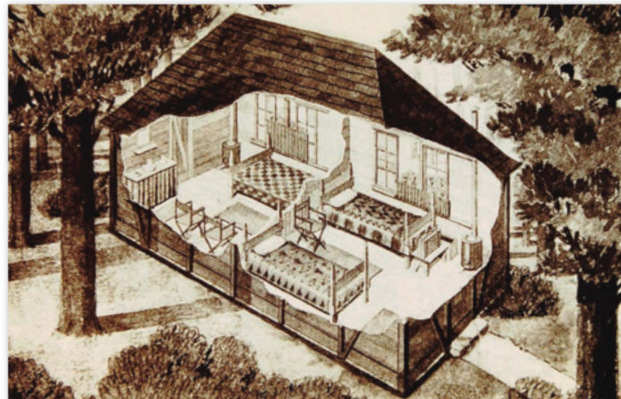
UP also set up a large bus station in Cedar City and bought out the Wylie tourist camp interests in Zion Canyon and the Parry transportation route from Cedar City to Zion. In 1917, W.W. Wylie had set up the National Park Transportation System and Camping Company, with a tent camp at Zion, a few miles above Springdale, and at the North Rim of the Grand Canyon in cooperation with the Parry Brothers, who provided the necessary transportation. The Parry Brothers closed their operation in 1918 due to World War I, and reopened for business in 1920. Under the name Utah-Arizona Parks Transportation Company, they offered a 10-day tour out of Cedar City. The Utah Parks Company acquired part of the Wylie and Parry companies in 1923, and the remaining interests in 1927.

The lodges designed by Gilbert Stanley Underwood at Zion, Bryce, and the Grand Canyon's North Rim provided all of the services necessary for travelers, including a post office, dining facilities, sleeping accommodations, an area for entertainment, and a lobby. Church services were held in the lodges on Sundays, and one could buy film, postcards, and souvenirs. Both standard and deluxe cabins were built at the three parks. They were "rustic," but had electricity and all necessary furnishings. Standard cabins had two rooms, which could be used separately or together. Originally, bath and toilet facilities were available in the main lodge. Deluxe cabins had two or four separate rooms, with a fireplace, private bath, beds, and other appropriate furnishings, as well as a private porch.

FAR LEFT Utah Parks Company motor coaches departing the original Zion Lodge, circa 1929. HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD / NPS; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COLLECTION

UPPER LEFT The exterior of Bryce Canyon Lodge, and (inset) a typical guest cabin. AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

LOWER LEFT Cutaway view showing the interior accommodations of "standard" guest cabins available at Bryce Canyon and Zion national parks. AUTHOR'S COLLECTION





ABOVE: A line of buses and cars at Cedar City. Based on the shadows, the *Utah Parks Special* is about to arrive. The buses are lettered for Sun Valley, another UP venture that needed buses in the winter for the arriving skiers. The railroad maximized the vehicles' utilization by moving them among its tourist destinations. SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY

Initially, UP apparently did not feel the tour groups would be very large, and encouraged Underwood to limit the size of the lodge facilities. However, it was immediately obvious that this decision was a mistake, and the park facilities were expanded over the next few summers.

The effect of UP's efforts to boost tourist traffic is indicated by the dramatic increase in business. In 1920, 3,692 people traveled to see the parks; by 1930 there were 55,297 visitors, most of whom came by rail. Visitors to the parks continued to increase each year, although more and more were arriving by automobile.

Utah Parks Company tours

Organized tours through Zion National Park began as soon as UP's branch to Cedar City was completed. UP provided escorted tours from cities such as Chicago and Denver, promoted by pamphlets and brochures available at its ticket offices.

Box lunches and tent accommodations were provided while the permanent facilities were being built, and rates for the tours were kept low with the encouragement of the National Park Service. In 1926, an two-day tour from Cedar City to Zion was \$24.75, board and lodging were \$5.50 a person, dinner was \$1.50, and showers were 8.25. In 1928, UP advertised a five-day, all-expense tour from Cedar City to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, Zion, Bryce, and Cedar Breaks for \$89.50. As early as 1927, UP provided a one-day tour to Zion or Cedar Breaks in addition to the five-day tour of all of the parks.

The basic "Loop" was a five-day tour, but short tours were available as well as longer stays. The tours typically started from mid-May to mid-June and went through the end of August or September. This was also true for the passenger train to Cedar City, which ran in conjunction with the tours. Side trips were available, and for a period of time it was even possible to view the Grand Canyon by airplane on the tour.

By summer 1928, the Utah Parks Company was providing tours to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, where it had built additional facilities. At that time, the tour season ran from June through October, while the special trains ran between mid-June and Labor Day.

Due to the popularity of the park tours, the Utah Parks Company purchased a new fleet of buses in 1925 with special demountable tops, similar to those used at other national parks. Other companies, such as Intelligence Tours, also provided bus services to the park facilities.

Many of the buses were White touring cars, which carried 11 to 13 passengers. Baggage was limited to 25 pounds per passenger. Most of the drivers were college students from the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. They tended to live in the area, were carefully hired, and trained to be courteous and reliable to help promote the image and attractiveness of the tours. By 1931, the Utah Parks Company was operating 65 buses out of Cedar City over 459 miles of intrastate roads and 195 miles of federal highways.

In 1961, after passenger train service to Cedar City had ended, UP continued to provide a five-day tour starting with a bus ride from Lund on the main line. After arriving at Zion National Park, there was an early afternoon departure to the Grand Canyon, with arrival in time for dinner. The next day was spent at the Grand Canyon, and on the fourth morning the bus left for Bryce Canyon, where the travelers spent the night. There was an early morning departure, and a brief stop at Cedar Breaks before arriving back at Cedar City in the early afternoon.

After struggling with years of unprofitability due to its seasonal business pattern, the Utah Parks Company finally ended its operations on December 31, 1968. UP donated its lodges and other park facilities to the National Park Service in 1972, and TWA Services, Inc., then became the concession operator.

The southern Utah national parks

Union Pacific served three of the region's national parks: Bryce Canyon National Park, 78 miles from Cedar City; Zion National Park, 56 miles from Cedar City; and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, 157 miles from Cedar City, in Arizona. Cedar Breaks National Monument is only 21 miles from Cedar City. Numerous other state parks and scenic areas in the vicinity are also popular tourist attractions.

Facilities designed for the Utah Parks Company exhibited a "Rustic" architectural style, in which the buildings blended with their surrounding environment, using natural materials in construction. This was a choice preferred by the National Park Service and started with the

construction of the Old Faithful Inn at Yellowstone National Park in 1903-04. The buildings were designed by Gilbert Stanley Underwood, who also designed several large stations for UP in the 1920s.

Zion National Park

Zion National Park is known for its sheer cliffs and rock formations. In 1909, Zion was established as the Mukuntuweap ("Straight Canyon") National Monument, and in 1919 it became Zion National Park, following the establishment of the National Park Service in May 1917. The first wagon road reached the park area in 1923. Union Pacific built extensive facilities in Zion through the late 1930s, with new facilities for tourists as well as housing for employees.

In January 1966 the original lodge was damaged by fire and a new lodge was quickly built to replace it. The new lodge is still being used, but it does not look at all like the original building. The original cabins were not harmed by the fire and are still in use today. Zion Lodge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 24, 1982, and became part of a larger Historic District including some of the other facilities on July 7, 1987.

Bryce Canyon National Park

In 1874, Mormons settled an area near the eastern edge of what is now the national park. A Mormon farmer, Ebenezer Bryce, first homesteaded in the area in 1875, and he built an irrigation ditch and a road to reach stands of timber. As local people began to use the road, they started to refer to the area where the road terminated as "Bryce's Canyon," and the park was named after him.

In 1919 the Utah state legislature petitioned the federal government to set aside Bryce Canyon as a national monument. Following the arrival of Union Pacific and formation of the Utah Parks Company, President Harding declared Bryce Canyon a national monument on June 8, 1923, just before he arrived for the opening ceremonies of the Cedar City line. It became Bryce Canyon National Park in 1928 after legislation doubled the size of the monument. The park was enlarged again in 1931 and 1942, and was run in conjunction with Zion National Park until it was made a separate entity in 1956.

Bryce Canyon Lodge, only a few hundred feet from the canyon rim, is the only unaltered lodge remaining of the three

designed by Underwood. It had the same facilities as the Zion Lodge, but its own unique design. It is a two-story stone and exposed wood-frame structure, with an irregular plan. The original section was completed in May 1925 and the north and southeast wings were added in 1926. Additional facilities were added in subsequent years, and in 1987 Bryce Lodge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Grand Canyon National Park

In 1893, this area became the Grand Canyon Forest Preserve, and in 1908, at the request of President Theodore Roosevelt, it was declared the Grand Canyon National Monument. Grand Canyon National Park was established in 1919.

The canyon's attractions were first promoted by Santa Fe Railroad, which ran a line from Williams Junction, Ariz., to the South Rim in 1901, and established the famous El Tovar Hotel.

In 1917, W.W. Wylie opened the first accommodations on the canyon's North Rim, at Bright Angel Point. Some nine years later, the North Kaibab bridge was built, making rim-to-rim travel possible.

BELOW: Perched on the Grand Canyon's North Rim, UP's original Grand Canyon Lodge opened in 1926. It burned in 1932, and construction of this replacement began in 1936. HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COLLECTION



Construction of UP's Grand Canyon Lodge started in 1927, and by June 1928 it greeted its first guests, with a formal dedication on September 15.

Unfortunately, the lodge burned down on September 1, 1932, along with two of the deluxe cabins. Reconstruction took several years, in part due to the Depression. In early 1936, UP submitted plans for a new lodge to the National Park Service to replace the original lodge. Costs were estimated at \$250,000, and construction was started in the summer of 1936.

The Grand Canyon Lodge complex includes the central lodge, 23 deluxe cabins, and 91 standard cabins. In 1940, some of the cabins were moved to the North Rim campground.

On September 2, 1982, the Grand Canyon Lodge, the North Rim Campground, and the North Rim Headquarters were all placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Depression years and World War II

Travel to the southern Utah parks proved so popular that Union Pacific inaugurated a special train from Salt Lake City through to Cedar City, the *Utah Parks Special*. The first *Utah Parks Special*, trains 103/104, departed on May 31, 1926, running from Salt Lake City to Cedar City, arriving the following morning. The train had a baggage car, coaches, and a 12-1 sleeper. The railroad advertised that it reached "Zion National, Bryce Canyon, Cedar Breaks, Kaibab Forest, and North Rim, Grand Canyon." As was the case for the Salt Lake City-West Yellowstone train, it ran overnight. The train departed Salt Lake City at 9:00PM and arrived Cedar City at 7:00AM on June 1. Many dignitaries were on board, including the new acting superintendent of Zion National Park, who had come from Washington, D.C., with his wife.

The train was upgraded in summer 1927, with a 10-section/1-drawing room/2-compartment (10-1-2) sleeper and a 10-section/lounge/observation car out of Salt Lake City. The train also carried a 12-1 sleeper from Los Angeles, interchanged at Lund with the *Gold Coast*.

Although the *Utah Parks Special* also ran in summer 1928, traffic evidently was not enough to justify its continued operation as a separate train, and in the summers of 1929 and 1930 two sleepers were added to Salt Lake City-Los Angeles mail trains 3/4 and dropped off at Lund to be forwarded to Cedar City. In 1929, there was also a through Los Angeles-Cedar City sleeper.

At that time, the *Utah Parks Special* provided through accommodations from Salt Lake City to Cedar City, with a 10-section/observation-sleeper, a standard 10-1-2 sleeper, and a chair car, running them from Salt Lake City on Train

3, the *California Express*. They were dropped off at Lund, and a standard 12-1 sleeper from Los Angeles on Train 20, the *Continental Limited*, was also set off there. These cars were made into one consist for Train 103 to Cedar City. In the off-season, a bus was substituted for the through trains between Cedar City and Lund.

In summer 1929, the train schedules to Lund and Cedar City were as follows:

Train 3, the *California Express*, left Salt Lake City at 9:30PM and arrived at Lund at 5:40AM. Although this train went to Los Angeles, it did not have a dining car, and stopped for meals at Caliente, Las Vegas, and Kelso, all to the south of Lund. The *California Express* ran through to Los Angeles.

Train 20, the *Continental Limited*, left Los Angeles at 9:40AM and arrived at Lund at 4:08AM. It continued east to Salt Lake City.

Cars left at Lund by these two trains were combined to form Train 103 and arrived at Cedar City at 7:00AM, in time for breakfast at El Escalante. This meant that the railroad did not have to provide a dining car in the train. After breakfast in Cedar City, tourists would board the bus for their tour of the park.

Returning, Train 104, the *Utah Parks Special*, traveled from Cedar City to Lund with the cars that had arrived that morning. The summer 1929 returns were:

Train 104 left Cedar City for Lund at 8:30PM, after the passengers had had eaten their dinner in Cedar City.

Train 4, the *Utah Express*, left Lund at 9:45PM and arrived at Salt Lake City at 6:20AM the following morning. This train did not have a dining car even though it had originated in Los Angeles, and meal stops were made at Kelso, Las Vegas, and Caliente, all to the south of Lund. It had through sleepers in the consist.

Train 19, the *Continental Limited*, left Lund at 1:52AM and arrived at Los Angeles at 5:30PM the following day.

In 1929, UP brochures boasted that the southern Utah parks were,

"... easily reached via the fine, fast, through service of the Union Pacific System by way of Lund, Utah, to Cedar City, Utah, the railroad terminus. Lund, with its handsome, new Mission-style station, is on the main line of the Union Pacific to Southern California, 243 miles southwest of Salt Lake City, 541 miles northeast

of Los Angeles. During the season through sleeping cars are operated from Salt Lake City, where connections are made with all trains from the East and the West, to Cedar City, and through trains from Southern California will stop at Lund, whence there is connecting service to Cedar City."

In 1929, UP built a new Mission-style passenger depot at Lund to provide improved transfer accommodations for travelers on the main line trains which did not go to Cedar City. This depot was designed by Gilbert Stanley Underwood, in conjunction with his other work for UP at the time.

The Depression did not immediately affect these train operations. For summer 1930, the train retained the 10-section/observation-sleeper car, a 10-1-2 sleeper, and a chair car or coach, Salt Lake City-Cedar City. It ran overnight as trains 3/4, the *Utah Parks Special*, between the two stations. There was also a through 12-1 Cedar City-Los Angeles sleeper, connecting with the *Pacific Limited* at Lund. Two round-trip Cedar City-Lund buses connected with other main line trains.

As the Depression wore on, it hit the railroads and tourist travel to the parks hard. In October 1930, the Utah PUC authorized UP to discontinue trains 3 and 4 between Salt Lake City and Lund, and trains 103 and 104 between Lund and Cedar City, and to operate this passenger service only in the summer months. Union Pacific Stages provided the off-season bus service.

For summer 1931, UP ran the trains as numbers 103/104, Salt Lake City-Cedar City, with the same 1927 consist. Utah Parks buses met other main line trains at Lund.

During summer 1932, the trains ran as 119/120, Salt Lake City-Cedar City, with the same consists as the previous summer, although the chair car (coach) now ran Lund-Cedar City. The train ran in conjunction with train 19/20, the *Pacific Limited*, with the sleeper dropped off and picked up at Lund. There was only one bus connection with a daytime main line train, the *Gold Coast Limited*.

Operation of the *Utah Parks Special* was discontinued in summer 1933, when through train service was temporarily suspended. Passengers had to get off the train at Lund and then take a bus to Cedar City. Two round-trip buses connected with the main line trains, one in the evening and the other in the morning.

Putting a positive spin on the change, the railroad said,

"At Lund you leave your Union Pacific train, and from there to Cedar City enjoy an hour's exhilarating ride across the Escalante Plain in



modern and genuinely comfortable motor-buses ..."

Union Pacific Stages operated the bus service between Lund and Cedar City, as well as between Delta and Fillmore to the north. Bus schedules varied over the years, but connected with trains to and from Salt Lake City.

Business began to pick up in the late 1930s, and in summer 1937 there was a through Salt Lake City-Cedar City sleeper. There were three round-trip buses a day between Lund and Cedar City. One connected with the *Pacific Limited*, and a second bus connected with both *The Challenger* and *Los Angeles Limited*, which ran close together.

Through sleepers were restored in summer 1940, with Salt Lake City-Cedar City and Cedar City-Las Vegas 10-1-2 cars on the *Pacific Limited*. With business continuing to improve, in summer 1941 there were three round-trip buses and one train, 314/315, Lund-Cedar City.

On October 19, 1942, the Utah PUC permitted a reduction in passenger service and the ending of Sunday service on the Cedar City line.

The *Utah Parks Special* after World War II

UP wasted no time getting back into the tourist business following World War II, starting with the 1946 season. Advertisements ran in national magazines and the railroad spent more than \$500,000 to repaint and redecorate the lodges at Bryce, Zion, and Grand Canyon national

ABOVE A view of the *Utah Parks Special* at Cedar City in summer 1956. The consist is short, and the train only ran a few more years. The tracks inside the balloon loop were depressed, with a walkway leading to the depot. RALPH GOCHOUR COLLECTION

BELOW Cedar City yard hosted a colorful variety of passenger cars in the summer months. RALPH GOCHOUR COLLECTION



parks, as well as Cedar Breaks National Monument, which had lunch facilities.

Through cars to Cedar City were again being provided in the 1946 summer season. As detailed in a schedule from its July 6, 1947, timetable, UP provided one train pair a day, 301 and 302, between Lund and Cedar City, connecting with the *Utahn* in the summer months only, as well as bus connections with other main line trains. Salt Lake City passengers could travel in a through 10-1-2 sleeper. For travel to and from Los Angeles, the train had another through 10-1-2 car. There were also bus connections with

other main line trains. In 1947, UP apparently discontinued its off-season mixed train, also numbered 301/302.

UP's Cedar City train schedule in summer 1947 was as follows:

The *Utahn*, Train 3, left Salt Lake City at 11:20PM and arrived at Lund at 3:58AM.

Train 4, the *Utahn*, left Los Angeles 9:30AM and arrived at Lund at 11:55PM.

Train 301 consolidated the cars set off at Lund, leaving at 5:20AM and arriving Cedar City at 6:30AM.



TOP UP GP9 185 is assigned to the *Utah Parks Special* at Cedar City in 1956. RALPH GOCHNOUR COLLECTION



ABOVE UP express car 3000, at Cedar City in 1956. RALPH GOCHNOUR COLLECTION

BELOW UP 10-1-2 sleeper *Lake Calliou* during layover at Cedar City in 1956. The heavyweight car was built by Pullman in 1925. It was converted to maintenance-of-way service in 1962, only six years after this view. RALPH GOCHNOUR COLLECTION



Returning from Cedar City, the summer 1947 train schedule was as follows:

Train 302 left Cedar City at 9:30AM and arrived at Lund at 10:40PM.

Train 4, the *Utahn*, left Lund at 11:55PM and arrived in Salt Lake City at 4:40PM.

Train 3, the *Utahn*, left Lund at 3:58AM and arrived in Los Angeles at 4:00PM.

Starting in the 1948 season, UP offered a through 10-1-2 sleeper from Chicago to Cedar City and a Los Angeles-Cedar City 10-1-2 sleeper, with connections via the *Utahn*. The Lund-Cedar City trains were numbered 301/302, and there were two other bus round-trips to connect with main line trains.

In summer 1949, UP began to switch cars at Milford, Utah, where it had a larger presence. Thereafter, travelers going from Cedar City to Los Angeles had to travel east to Milford and then double back through Lund to reach Los Angeles. Sleeper accommodations were the same as the previous year. The nameless trains on the Cedar City Branch were still numbered 301/302.

For summer 1950, the Salt Lake City-Cedar City and Los Angeles-Cedar City sleeper accommodations were both 8-section/1-drawing room/2-compartment (8-1-2) cars, and connections were made with the *Utahn*. Switching was done at Milford again, and the train ran as 301/302 Milford-Lund-Cedar City. Two round-trip Lund-Cedar City buses connected with the daytime main line trains.

For summer 1951, the Milford-Cedar City trains were numbered 309/310. There was an 8-1-2 sleeper, Salt Lake City-Cedar City, and a 10-1-2 sleeper, Los Angeles-Cedar City. Connections were now made at Milford with the *City of St. Louis* streamliner, trains 9/10. There was only one daily bus round-trip meeting the main line trains at Lund.

This arrangement held true for summer 1952, but with three round-trip buses to Lund from Cedar City. The train was called the *Utah Parks Service* in the public timetable. However, despite UP's best efforts, passenger travel by rail to the parks dropped rapidly, and in 1952 only 22 percent of the visitors at Zion, 20 percent at Bryce, and 27 percent at the North Rim arrived by rail.

For summer 1953, the Salt Lake City-Cedar City trains were numbered 309/310, and again named as the *Utah Parks Special*. They had a 10-1-2 sleeper and reclining-seat coach, Salt Lake City-Cedar City, with an 8-1-2 Cedar City-Los Angeles sleeper on the *City of St. Louis*, connecting at Milford.

Train connections and arrangements were the same for summer 1954, and UP scheduled connections with its Chi-

cago trains. In 1954, for example, travelers to Cedar City would board the *San Francisco Overland* at Chicago at 4:00PM, and arrive at Salt Lake City at 10:00PM the following day. They would then board the *Utah Parks Special* to Cedar City at 11:00PM, arriving Cedar City the following morning.

In 1955, the connections again were the same, but the accommodations had been upgraded. Sleepers from both Los Angeles and Salt Lake City were now lightweight 6-section/6-roomette/4-double-bedroom (6-6-4) cars, and through coaches were offered between Salt Lake City and Cedar City.

Accommodations varied slightly in the subsequent years, and in 1957 UP even provided through coaches between Cedar City and St. Louis. Through sleepers from eastern roads and the sleepers for UP tour groups provided a colorful display in front of the Cedar City depot, with these cars operated out of the Pullman Company pool for tour groups.

For summer 1957, the accommodations were unchanged, but connections were all made with the *City of St. Louis*.

Final decline and discontinuance

By 1957, UP determined it had lost \$35 million on the park operations since 1923, and it was not able to find any buyers for its facilities. Travel by train had decreased dramatically and was continuing to decline. A 1957 survey showed that 85 percent of all tourists to the southern Utah parks came by private automobile, and only 6 percent arrived by train.

In 1958, the Salt Lake City-Cedar City trains were still numbered 309/310. However, the accommodations had changed, with a Salt Lake City-Cedar City coach, a 10-roomette/4-bedroom sleeper, and a 10-6 sleeper Cedar City-Las Vegas, with car-to-car transfer for passengers to Los Angeles. All connections were again made with the *City of St. Louis*. This held true for the summers of 1959 and 1960.

The last through trains were scheduled in the 1960 summer season, although UP had apparently considered cutting service back to Lund that summer. The 1960 season had also been cut back, so that the summer service ran from June 10 through September 1, even though tours of the park were available starting June 1.

The 1960 schedule had the train leaving Salt Lake City at 10:30AM and arriving at Cedar City at 6:00AM. Returning, it left Cedar City at 10:00PM and arrived in Salt Lake City at 4:30AM, but sleeper passengers were allowed to stay on board until 7:30AM. By this time, the connections from Los Angeles had been changed to through sleepers from Las Vegas on the *City of St. Louis*, and the sleepers were 10-roomette/6-bedroom (10-6) cars.

In 1961, park travelers had to transfer to a bus at Lund, connecting with name-



ABOVE Assigned to Salt Lake City-Cedar City Train 310, the *Utah Parks Special*, UP EPA 946 stands at Cedar City beside a lightweight New York Central sleeper assigned to tour service in summer 1956. RALPH GOCHNOUR COLLECTION

less main line trains 5/6, day trains between Los Angeles and Salt Lake City. This continued until the train was discontinued. In 1970, UP still offered bus service between Cedar City and Salt Lake City and Cedar City-Las Vegas.

In the 1960s, after service to Cedar City had been discontinued, tour group cars were set out at Milford, and passengers transferred to buses for their park tour. A consist for the westbound *City of Los Angeles* in summer 1969 shows the first section of Train 103, the sleeper section, included three sleepers picked up at Milford to be forwarded to Los Angeles. These were UP 11-bedroom cars *Sun Ridge* and *Placid Waters*, and 10-6 *Pacific Lodge*. A summer 1970 consist, for the eastbound *City of Kansas City*, shows three sleepers picked up at Milford for Denver: UP *National Embassy* and *National Vale*, both 6-6-4 cars, and UP *Star Vale*, an 11-bedroom sleeper.

The Cedar City Branch today

With improved highways after World War II, most of UP's freight business on the branch gradually slipped away, as did the tourist trade, although iron ore continued to be transported by train. The line was relaid with heavier rail from Lund to Iron Springs in 1953, but the balance of the branch retained its original second-hand 75-pound.

Following the discontinuance of passenger service, the Cedar City depot was allowed to fall into disrepair. By 1984, it was no longer used and was boarded up, but on August 9 of that year it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was then owned by Best Western's Town & Country Inn, which built a large motel next to the depot. In 1994, the de-

pot was refurbished and rented out to small businesses.


The former Cedar City depot continues to be used for a variety of purposes over the years. The exterior of the depot was also refurbished, and it retains the large Union Pacific shield on both sides of the building.

There is infrequent freight traffic to Cedar City, mostly products such as lumber, serving a business park there. Iron ore traffic has been extremely cyclical, with an uncertain future. Tracks to the former depot have been removed, and the line ends in the weeds west of the depot.

UP's Lund depot was closed in 1969 and razed the following year.

Conclusion

Decades after UP ceased running passenger trains to Cedar City, *GrandLuxe Express*, the luxury cruise train formerly known as the *American Orient Express*, traveled over UP's Cedar City Branch for a few seasons. Running several times a year, the train was a reminder of the time when most tourists reached these national parks by rail.

It has been just over 100 years since Union Pacific reached Cedar City, and the railroad is now almost gone. Although passenger trains no longer run, the national parks in southern Utah remain a popular tourist attraction. Lodges and other facilities built by the Utah Parks Company are still in use, a reminder of the era when the only way to reach them was in Union Pacific's care. 

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