

# President's Report: Digitization Update

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On November 19 the R&LHS marked a digital milestone when JSTOR (an acronym for Journal Storage, see <http://www.jstor.org/>) released a searchable digital archive of *The Railway and Locomotive Historical Society Bulletin* (1921-1972) and *Railroad History* (1972-2009). Although R&LHS publications were already available from Proquest and in the America: History and Life database, neither of these options allow for keyword searching or the delivery of content in PDF format.

For those unfamiliar with JSTOR, it is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary sources. It is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of scholarly content. In addition, the size of the database (1,800 scholarly journals and 7,000,000 articles), ease of searching, availability and popularity in the scholarly community make JSTOR one of the leading sources of scholarly information in the arts and sciences.

Our agreement with JSTOR allows us to retain all copyright rights including the rights to our publication within the JSTOR archive. That means we are free to sell back issues and copies of articles from our publications without running afoul of our agreement. To advise the researchers of this fact, each article downloaded from the archives includes a full page copyright notice identifying the R&LHS as the copyright holder. For users unfamiliar with our publication, each link to our content also includes proper citation information in American Library Association (ALA), American Psychological Association (APA) or Chicago Manual formats. JSTOR even allows users to export citation information directly into a word processing program.

As you might expect, JSTOR does not provide content for free and our agreement does not allow for free or discounted access for R&LHS members. However, all university libraries have a subscription as do community colleges and many high schools. Likewise, public libraries and some museums also have institutional subscriptions which permit unlimited searching and a reasonable number of downloads. Some libraries may charge a small access fee and require you to bring a new (in the package) thumb drive to download your PDFs. Individuals can also purchase a monthly or yearly membership. A one month "JPASS" for \$19.50 allows unlimited searching and reading and downloading up to ten PDF documents. A one year JPASS for \$199.00 also allows unlimited searching and reading but increases the number of PDF downloads to 120.

Users can search the entire database, browse by subject or select specific journals to search. Selecting *Railroad History* or *The Railway and Locomotive Historical Society Bulletin* permits searching all of the content listed under those titles. Downloading a complete issue requires one check mark in the "Select All" box. Each issue is divided into its constituent parts including front matter, illustration (if any), individual articles listed in the order they appear in the journal and book reviews listed individually. When included, memorial notices are also listed individually. Contemporary issues of *Railroad History* also include the Editor's Seatbox, Short Takes, Preservation Topics,

More Books in Brief and Worth Reading when these sections are included in a particular issue. Each section is clearly marked with the proper heading and each listing appears as a hyperlink which opens the particular document for on-line viewing or downloading as a PDF.

Currently, JSTOR includes all issues of the *The Railway and Locomotive Historical Society Bulletin* except #2, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10 and 39A, 43B, 50A and 52A which will be added when JSTOR can locate reasonably priced copies. The database also includes special issues including "Locomotives of The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad: 1855-1904" (July 1937), "Locomotives of the Southern Pacific Company" (August 1941) and the "Millennium Special" (2000). Bonus issues 58A, 61A and 67A are also available.

*Railroad History* issues from 1972 (when the name changed from *The R&LHS Bulletin*) to #201 are also available. To protect our contemporary back issue sales and encourage new members to receive hard copies of recent publications, the JSTOR agreement provides for a five year blackout period for contemporary issues. The "moving wall" will advance when we publish new issues meaning JSTOR will always lack the ten most recent issues. With the publication of #213, we expect JSTOR to add #202 and #203 to the database very soon.

Finally, a word about revenue. Because JSTOR is a non-profit organization their institutional and individual access fees are very reasonable. Therefore, their payout for accessing and downloading R&LHS content is modest. The revenue split is calculated using a formula that includes total number of available pages in the database, the number of pages accessed and amount of revenue generated by the institutions and individuals paying for access. A best guess is that the R&LHS will receive between \$800 and \$1,200 annually, a figure that matches the annual revenue from back issue sales. Because many of our readers prefer a tactile experience when reading *Railroad History*, I expect back issues sales to remain constant. However, sales of individual articles will likely decrease as researchers become more familiar with JSTOR. One change that will NOT happen any time soon is moving to a digital only version of *Railroad History*. Before making a change of that nature, we will first offer RRH in digital format to members who wish to receive it in that format.

I hope you enjoy the speed, convenience and robust searching capability JSTOR provides. Please feel free to pass along your experiences (good or bad) and tips/tricks for accessing the database and searching our content so I can share your experiences with the R&LHS membership.