



**A new idea
and
how it grew**

Why the new "Hi-Level" El Capitan
was developed.

by
FRED G. GURLEY
President
The Atchison, Topeka and
Santa Fe Railway Company



About three years ago, it dawned on us that in many important respects the Santa Fe had become a completely new railroad since World War II.

We had laid enough new mainline tracks to more than reach from Chicago to Los Angeles. We had switched over completely to diesel power. We'd purchased thousands and thousands of freight cars. We had developed electronic signalling and communications systems and we had pioneered in the development of continuous welded rail.

This big, continuing program of modernization led us to call ourselves: "*America's New Railroad.*"

And there was another fact about all these improvements: All of them—including the research behind them—were paid for by Santa Fe. Santa Fe received no subsidies from tax dollars.

This fact led us to speak of our progress as: "*Progress that pays its own way.*"

It was this type of progress, we feel, that the Interstate Commerce Commission meant when it said (in January, 1949): "Responsibility for effective improvements lies directly with the railroads."

The ICC report also said: "Bold experimentation with new devices and methods seems to be required in some instances . . . Imagination and ingenuity must be brought to the task . . ."

In the spirit of that report, imagination and ingenuity were kindled at Santa Fe to meet the challenge of the times. Many of these new ideas developed in the early 1950s have already been put into practice.

A Few Examples

For shippers, for example, we have added such services as new mechanical temperature control cars, which can hold frozen food at unwavering sub-zero temperatures from coast to coast; new freight stations in Chicago and San Francisco; damage-free loaders; a new piggy-back service; a new electronic system for locating freight cars and speeding shipments.

For the traveling public, we have inau-

gurated the new San Francisco Chief and the new mainline service to Dallas—in addition, of course, to the millions we have spent in our continuing program of replacement and modernization.

The newest of these improvements is in our all-new "Hi-Level" El Capitan.



*A Train
We're Proud Of*

We've always been proud of El Capitan, which carries people 2,224 miles between Chicago and Los Angeles. It was the very first all-coach streamliner to run between Chicago and the Pacific Coast.

And the traveling public has shared our fondness for it. Since the day it was introduced, El Capitan has been one of our most popular trains. Almost too popular, in fact. Because in many months of the year we had to disappoint thousands of people who wanted to ride on it. There just weren't enough seats.

Naturally, we've made continuous improvements since its introduction. In fact,

equipment on the train has never been more than five years old at any time.

But we realized, back in the early '50s, that improvements and refinements to conventional equipment were not going to be enough. Thousands of people were coming down to the station every month, and we wanted to be able to take care of them all "Santa Fe style."

So the time had come for an entirely new El Capitan service—a new *kind* of train with dramatically new design.

It Didn't Just Happen

The question was: What kind of design?

We decided on a two-story train not just to be "different" but to help solve some of Santa Fe's special problems—problems that arise because a passenger riding El Capitan between Chicago and Los Angeles must travel 2,224 miles.

For passengers traveling more than half way across the continent, it is obvious that comfort and lots of room to roam around in are of vital importance. We wanted them to ride every one of those 2,224 miles in complete comfort.

So to achieve maximum comfort, what we did was design the train *to fit people themselves*.



People have legs. So we wanted seats with legroom enough for everyone, from the rangiest Texan to the vacationing schoolgirl... seats that let people stretch out in comfort.

People have eyes... and like to use them. So we sought to boost them up to the "second floor," where they get the most sweeping view of the scenery. And we have wonderful scenery on Santa Fe! We knew, from our experience with the dome cars on the Super Chief, the San Francisco Chief and the present El Capitan, that people preferred riding high.

People have ears. So we aimed to move them as far as possible from the sound of the rails.

These are some of the considerations that led to the development of the idea for the new Hi-Level El Capitan.

The Public Told Us "Yes"

We thought we were on the right track, but we wanted to be sure. The best way was to ask people what *they* thought.

To find out, we put two of these Hi-Level

cars into service in 1954. The response was enthusiastic. People liked the ride. They liked the views. And they liked the roomy comfort.

A year of testing, moreover, enabled us to discover things about the cars that could be improved. For example, we have redesigned the trucks (wheel assemblies), improved the baggage arrangements and the lighting, relocated the restroom facilities in the lounges. We made dozens of such refinements as the result of actual experience during the testing period.

The entire project was carried out with the help and cooperation of the Budd Company, to which we are very grateful.

We have bought 49 of these cars—enough to make up five complete trains. In each train, of course, will also be a dining car and a lounge car “at Big Dome height”.

The new El Capitan cost us millions of dollars. It will cost the passenger just the regular coach fare, plus a small extra fare we believe he will be glad to pay for the excellent service and extra comfort he will get on this top-flight equipment.

Why It Will Pay Off

Naturally, we expect our big investment to pay off, over a period of time. How?

Through greater economies, in both operation and maintenance, and greater revenue.



In the new train, we can carry 24 to 28 more people per car—even after giving every passenger more room. That's because the entire “upstairs” is devoted to seating passengers. Restrooms, baggage space, and machinery, including air conditioning units, are all “downstairs.” And the kitchen is downstairs in the dining car, so we get space to seat 80 instead of the usual 36.

All this means that we can carry 496 people in the new seven-car train, against only 350 in the present eight-car El Capitan. That's an increase in payload of 146 people—and a decrease of one chair car and one dining car in operating and maintenance costs.

Moreover, we believe that the new Hi-Level El Capitan sets such standards of comfort and luxury in coach travel that more people than ever will want to ride it.

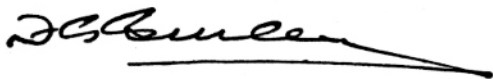
To sum up—with our new Hi-Level El

Capitan, we can provide more comfort for more people in fewer cars at less expense.

People On The Move

In this vast country of 165 million, more and more people are on the move. Many are going by plane, many others by automobile. But we think an increasing number will insist on what has come to be known as "Santa Fe style." With our expanded facilities, we look forward to serving more of these people—people traveling through the Southwest who want the rewards in comfort and relaxation afforded only by riding the new Hi-Level El Capitan and other Santa Fe trains.

We proudly present the new Hi-Level El Capitan as another milestone in the progress of America's New Railroad. Perhaps we're proudest of the fact that this is *progress that pays its own way.*



President

What to expect when you ride the new Hi-Level El Capitan

Upstairs is an air-conditioned "living room"—a full story (eight feet) above the noise of the rails. Up there, you get a new, panoramic view of historic Santa Fe country and enjoy the smoothest ride ever.

Your foam-rubber seat tilts back, so you can stretch out and put your feet up on the full-length legrests.

When you want to freshen up, you'll find spacious restrooms downstairs (with a special upstairs restroom in the lounge car).

You'll want to stroll to the "recreation room"—the two-story lounge car. You can sip a cocktail downstairs, or enjoy the magnificent vistas in the big dome-type lounge upstairs.

Dinner is served penthouse style. Soft music makes the Fred Harvey cuisine even more tempting. The dining car seats 80 compared with 36 in the average railroad diner. And no clatter—we've moved the kitchen downstairs.

Sound like a two-story home on wheels? It really is.



Dining upstairs on El Capitan