



BATTLEFIELD DIVISION OF NORFOLK SOUTHERN TIMELINE

APRIL 2nd 1853 – A GROUP OF LOCAL BUSINESSMEN OF THE TOWN OF HAMPTON UNITE SEEKING TO FORM A MEANS TO GET THEIR GOODS OUT OF THE SMALL TOWN AND INTO A FAST GROWING AMERICAN ECONOMY. THE MEN EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES OF WAGON TRAINS BUT QUICKLY ABANDON THIS IDEA BECAUSE OF THE DANGER OF THE PERSONS ESCORTING THE WAGON TRAINS. AFTER SEVEN (7) MEETINGS CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP THOMAS R. AINS RECOMMENDS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A RAILROAD.

JULY 1853 – THE OFFICIAL FORMATION OF THE INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE IS BORN.

SEPT. 1853 – INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE ENTERS INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GREENVILLE & COLUMBIA RAILROAD TO CONNECT THEIR RAIL LINES SO THAT INNER HAMPTON CAN GET THEIR GOODS OUT OF THE HAMPTON VALLEY AREA.

NOV. 1853 – DURING REGULAR NATIONAL ELECTIONS, THE PEOPLE OF HAMPTON VOTE ON WHETHER OR NOT TO ALLOW THE INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE TO BORROW MONEY AGAINST THE TOWNS NAME TO BEGIN CONSTRUCTION ON THE 39 MILE RAIL SERVICE. (CONSEQUENTLY 28 MEN VOTED, THE VOTE WAS 22 YEA TO 6 NEA).

FEB. 1854 – GROUNDBREAKING AND CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON THE INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE. EMPLOYMENT ROSE IN THE TOWN OF HAMPTON NEARLY SOME 500%.

FEB. 1854-FEBRUARY 1859 – CONSTRUCTION WAS COMPLETED AND A GOLD SPIKE CEREMONY WAS HELD ON FEBRUARY 19TH, TO COMMEMORATE THE OCCASION.

MAY 1854 – INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE PURCHASES ITS FIRST ENGINE AND MAINTENANCE OF WAY CARS TO AID IN CONSTRUCTION. THE ENGINE WAS AN AMERICAN 4-4-0 TENDER AND SWITCHER, PURCHASED FROM SOUTH CAROLINA CANAL & RAILROAD CO. OF CHARLESTON, SC. THE ENGINE HAS SINCE BEEN SOLD TO A COLLECTOR.

MAY. 1859 – THE FIRST SHIPMENT OF GOODS TO THE “OUTSIDE WORLD” FROM HAMPTON BROUGHT THE BOOMING ECONOMY TO THE PEOPLE OF HAMPTON’S DOORSTEP.

SEPT. 1859 – WITH THE SUCCESSFUL RESULTS OF THE INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE, THE LOAN MADE IN THE CITY’S NAME WAS ABLE TO BE PAID BACK IN JUST THREE (3) SHORT MONTH’S FROM THE INITIAL DEPARTURE OF THE RAIL SERVICES FIRST SHIPMENT OF GOODS. THE LOAN WAS A 15 YEAR NOTE AND WAS REPAID IN JUST 5YEARS AND 11 MONTHS.

MAR. 1860 – THE TOWN APPROACHES THE RAIL SERVICE, (WITH A SORT OF YOU OWE US ONE ATTITUDE), SEEKING THE AID IN FUNDING A TOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT. THE RAIL SERVICE AGREES. LOCAL FAVORITE TALMEDGE COOPER IS APPOINTED FIRST POLICE CHIEF OF HAMPTON.

DEC. 1860 – INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE SUFFERED ITS FIRST SET BACK. A WAREHOUSE BUILT BY THE RAIL SERVICE TO STORE INCOMING PERISHABLE GOODS FOR THE TOWN BURNED TO THE GROUND DUE TO THE LACK OF AN ORGANIZED FIRE DEPT. AND ABSENCE OF A CITY WATER SYSTEM. THE WAREHOUSE WAS FULLY STOCKED AT THE TIME NOT ONLY WITH PERISHABLES BUT TOYS FOR THE CHILDREN OF HAMPTON FOR THE UPCOMING CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

JAN. 1861 – WITH THE MEMORY OF THE BURNED WAREHOUSE FRESH ON THEIR MINDS AND THE THREAT OF A CIVIL WAR BREWING, THE INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE ORGANIZES THE FIRST FIRE DEPT. OF HAMPTON. LOCAL TREE FARMER BRUCE QUINN IS APPOINTED THE TOWN’S FIRST FIRE CHIEF.

FEB. 1861 – THE SOUTH HAD DECLARED ITS INDEPENDENCE AND WAS BEGINNING TO SEIZE FORTS FROM THE UNION. ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RAIL SYSTEMS WERE ALSO SEIZED TO AID IN THE FIGHT FOR INDEPENDENCE.

FEB. 1861-FEB 1865 – THE INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE WAS THE CONFEDERACY’S BEST KEPT SECRET UNTIL GENERAL WILLIAM T. SHERMAN MADE HIS INFAMOUS MARCH FROM ATLANTA TO THE SEA AND BACK UP THROUGH THE CAROLINA’S. DURING THESE YEARS THE CONFEDERACY WAS ABLE TO STORE LARGE AMOUNTS OF WEAPONS AND OTHER SUPPLIES WITHOUT THE UNION’S KNOWLEDGE. DURING SHERMAN’S MARCH THROUGH SOUTH CAROLINA, A SMALL GARRISON OF UNION SOLDIERS STUMBLED ACROSS A WAREHOUSE FULL OF WEAPONS AND SUPPLIES. THESE SUPPLIES WERE BEING STOCKPILED FOR A LAST-DITCH EFFORT BY THE CONFEDERACY TO ATTACK WASHINGTON D.C. THE SUPPLIES WERE CONFISCATED AND THE WAREHOUSE BURNED FOR A SECOND TIME IN LESS THAN FIVE (5) YEARS. THE FIRE DEPT. MADE A VALIANT EFFORT AND STOPPED THE FIRE BEFORE THE ENTIRE BUILDING WAS DESTROYED.

JULY 1865 – ON THE 12th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE, THE ORGANIZATION UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE RAIL SERVICE. IN THE TRUE SPIRIT OF THE SOUTH AND TO COMMEMORATE THE ROLE THE INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE PLAYED DURING THE CIVIL WAR; THE RAIL SERVICE WAS RENAMED THE BATTLEFIELD RAILROAD.

1893 – SOUTHERN RAILWAY TAKES OVER GREENVILLE & COLUMBIA RAILROAD AND THEY HONOR ALL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN GREENVILLE & COLUMBIA RAILROAD AND THE FORMER INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE WHICH IS NOW THE BATTLEFIELD RAILROAD.

1894 – SOUTHERN RAILWAY IS OFFICIALLY BORN OUT OF OVER 150 OTHER SHORT LINES.

JUNE 1896 – THE PASSENGER STATION IS CONSTRUCTED IN NEW TOWNE. IT SITS ON THE SITE OF THE FORMER FREIGHT STATION

DEC. 1941 – RAIL SERVICE FOR THE BATTLEFIELD RAILROAD CONTINUES TO BRING PROSPERITY TO THE PEOPLE OF HAMPTON. YET WITH THE SIZE OF THE VALLEY, POPULATION GROWTH DID NOT KEEP UP WITH THE DEMAND OF THE GOODS BEING SHIPPED OUT OF HAMPTON. THIS WOULD LATER CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR THE RAILROAD. ON DEC. 7th, 1941, THE ENTIRE WORLD CHANGED. WITH THE UNITED STATES ENTRANCE INTO THE SECOND WORLD WAR, MOST MEN OF THE SMALL TOWN OF HAMPTON ARE CALLED AWAY TO DUTY. DURING THIS TIME THE RAILROAD STRUGGLES. THE ONCE TWICE PER WEEK SHIPMENTS WERE CUT DOWN TO ONCE A MONTH, BARELY ENOUGH TO PAY FOR THE FUEL. PAYROLL CHECKS WERE BEING DENIED AT THE BANK. THE WAR WAS WREAKING HAVOC ON THE ECONOMY OF HAMPTON.

SEPT. 1945 – THE JAPANESE SURRENDER COULD NOT HAVE COME AT A BETTER TIME. THE BATTLEFIELD RAILROAD WAS ON THE BRINK OF BANKRUPTCY. THE RAILROAD THAT HAD GAINED POPULARITY DURING THE CIVIL WAR HAD NOW FELL VICTIM TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR. MANY SAY THIS WAS AN OMEN SEALED BY THE FOUNDERS OF THE RAILROAD AND THEIR SECOND-GENERATION INHERITORS, WHEN THEY RENAMED THE FORMER INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE TO THE NOW BATTLEFIELD RAILROAD. THE NAME WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN POKING FUN AT THE UNION OFFICIALS THAT NEVER KNEW THE RAIL SERVICE EXISTED DURING THE CIVIL WAR. MANY PEOPLE OF HAMPTON HAD OFTEN WONDERED HOW MUCH MONEY THE RAILROAD WAS SITTING ON. NOW THEY KNEW, ABOUT FIVE (5) YEARS WORTH.

JAN.1946 - DUE TO THE RECENT FINANCIAL BURDENS EXPERIENCED BY THE RAIL SERVICE DURING THE WAR, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE RAIL SERVICE APPROACHES THE TOWN OF HAMPTON SEEKING FINANCIAL SUPPORT YET AGAIN. AFTER A SERIES OF MEETINGS, HAMPTON OFFERS TO PAY “BATTLEFIELD” OUT OF DEBT. THERE IS ONE CATCH THOUGH, THE TOWN OF HAMPTON WILL GAIN FULL OWNERSHIP OF THE “BATTLEFIELD RAILROAD.” THE BOARD AGREES AND AFTER THE SALE OF THE RAILROAD THE BOARD BECOMES AN ADVISORY BOARD TO THE TOWN CONCERNING “RAIL MATTERS.”

APRIL 3RD, 1953 – AT THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, THE TOWN OF HAMPTON WAS SURPRISED BY THEIR MOST DISTINGUISHED GUEST IN HISTORY. PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER. HIS SPEECH STIRRED THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE OF HAMPTON STATING, “...THE TRUE SPIRIT OF AMERICA HAS BEEN EVIDENT HERE FOR 100 YEARS. THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE INNER HAMPTON RAIL SERVICE SUPPORTED WHAT THEY THOUGHT TO BE A WORTHY CAUSE DURING THE CIVIL WAR AND AGAIN SERVED WHAT WAS A WORTHY CAUSE DURING WORLD WAR II. THESE MEN RETURNED FROM A TRAGIC TIME IN AMERICAN HISTORY THAT WAS TURNED VICTORIOUS, TO YET ANOTHER TRAGIC TIME FOR THEIR TOWN NOW RAVAGED BY WAR. WITH THE TRUE AMERICAN SPIRIT, THEY FOUGHT AGAIN TO REBUILD THIS GREAT TOWN...” PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S C.O. DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR WAS NONE OTHER THAN HOWARD S. CALE THE 4TH.

JAN. 1954 – HAMPTON HAS RIBBON CUTTING ON A TROLLEY LINE THAT RUNS BETWEEN OLD TOWNE & NEW TOWNE. IT IS STILL OPERATIONAL TODAY

MAY 1960 – THE RAILROAD BUILDS A NEW FREIGHT STATION LOCATED IN NEW TOWNE.

1982 – NORFOLK SOUTHERN IS BORN FROM THE CONSOLIDATION OF NORFOLK & WESTERN AND THE SOUTHERN RAILWAY.

DEC. 2003 – NORFOLK SOUTHERN PURCHASES THE BATTLEFIELD RAILROAD FOR \$12 MILLION DOLLARS AND RENAMES IT THE BATTLEFIELD DIVISION OF NORFOLK SOUTHERN. THE TERMS OF THE BY-OUT, ALLOWS THE TOWN OF HAMPTON TO RECEIVE A 17% FRANCHISE FEE ANNUALLY OF ALL PROFITS GAINED BY NORFOLK SOUTHERN AS A RESULT OF THE BATTLEFIELD RAILROAD. THIS EQUATES TO AN ESTIMATED \$3 TO \$4 MILLION ANNUALLY. NORFOLK ALSO ALLOWS BATTLEFIELD TO MAINTAIN AND UTILIZE THEIR OWN LOCOMOTIVES, FREIGHT, AND PASSENGER CARS ANYWHERE ON THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN. THE INITIAL FRANCHISE FEE WAS SET AT 21% UNTIL THE BATTLEFIELD RAILROAD MADE CONCESSIONS THAT WOULD ENABLE THEM THE USE OF THEIR OWN RAIL EQUIPMENT. NORFOLK MAINTAINS RIGHTS-OF-WAY ON ALL MAINLINES, WHILE INDIVIDUAL BATTLEFIELD COMPANY'S MUST CONTRACT MAINTENANCE THROUGH THE NOW BATTLEFIELD DIVISION OF NORFOLK SOUTHERN. SINCE THERE IS STILL CONSIDERABLE BUSINESS CONDUCTED ON THE RAILROAD. THE ADVISORY BOARD HAS NOW BECOME THE BOARD OF ADVISORS. WHILE NS OWNS TRACKAGE RIGHTS, HAMPTON STILL OWNS THE BUSINESS SIDE OF BATTLEFIELD SUCH AS THE PASSENGER LINE, MOW, AND EQUIPMENT.

JAN. 2005 - THE BDNS BEGINS SENDING LOCOMOTIVES TO THE FAMOUS JUNIATA LOCOMOTIVE SHOPS IN ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA FOR UPGRADES. THE FAMOUS BLACK AND BABY BLUE PAINT SCHEME IS BORN WITH THE ALSO FAMOUS CROSSED SWORDS LOGO.

TODAY – BATTLEFIELD DIVISION AND THE TOWN OF HAMPTON ENJOY A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH NORFOLK SOUTHERN. HAMPTON IS HOME TO SOME OF NORFOLK SOUTHERN'S TRAINING GROUNDS FOR CONDUCTORS, ENGINEERS, MOW PERSONNEL, AND SAFETY WORKERS.