

Durham & South Carolina Railroad ^[1]

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Durham & South Carolina Railroad

by Whitmel M. Joyner, 2006

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The Durham & South Carolina Railroad (D&SC) was one of six rail lines that reached into [Durham](#) ^[3]'s prospering [tobacco](#) ^[4] business in the early twentieth century. Beginning in 1905, the D&SC ran 30 miles south from Durham, generally following New Hope Creek and River, to the [Wake County](#) ^[5] town of Bonsal, where it interchanged with the [Seaboard Air Line Railway](#) ^[6]. By 1917 it had extended south to Duncan in [Harnett County](#) ^[7], where it connected with the [Norfolk Southern Railroad](#) ^[8] (NS).

The D&SC was moderately successful, at one point owning as many as three locomotives and considerable rolling stock. In 1920 it was leased for operation by the NS, which bought it outright in 1957. In 1982 the NS was acquired by the [Southern Railway Company](#) ^[9], which operated D&SC's line until it was largely dismantled in 1985.

The East Carolina Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society then purchased the surviving remnant of the line for purposes of historical preservation and public recreation. The name of the railway became the [New Hope Valley Railway](#) ^[10] (NHV), a standard-gauge railroad with about five miles of track and headquarters and shops in Bonsal. The line runs northward, touching [Chatham County](#) ^[11] and returning to its terminus in Wake County near New Hill. The NHV provides regular passenger service throughout the year, as well as special seasonal events, and supports the North Carolina Railroad Museum at Bonsal. The railway's name honors a D&SC predecessor line that was incorporated in 1904 but never built.

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