

Tom Thumb

5 Fun Facts:

- Built in 1830, the *Tom Thumb* was the first operable steam engine in America.
- The *Tom Thumb*'s inaugural trip took place on August 28, 1830, originating from Baltimore to Ellicott's Mills on the B&O Railroad.
- The top speed of the *Tom Thumb* reached between 10-14mph, an impressive feat at that time
- Developed by inventor/Businessman Peter Cooper, the *Tom Thumb* received its nickname for its small size and weight of less than one ton.
- The original *Tom Thumb* hauled passengers until March of 1831, and was later salvaged for parts in 1834.

Detailed Summary

On February 28th, 1827, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad became the first U.S railway chartered for commercial transport of freight and passengers. To perform such duties, the B&O initially relied on horses to pull its rail cars. That is, until 1830 when businessman and inventor Peter Cooper developed a small "0-4-0" coal burning steam engine capable of substituting horses to pull freight and passengers. The engine was built with an upright boiler, short wheelbase, and geared drive. Peter Cooper's steam engine made its debut run on August 28, 1830, as it pulled passengers from Baltimore to Ellicott's Mills on B&O trackage. It exceeded expectations at the time, as it traveled at speeds of 10-14mph.

The first successful steam engine in the U.S was later nicknamed "Tom Thumb" for its small size and weight of less than one ton. Although it was never officially entered into revenue service on the B&O, it still hauled passengers until March 1831. The original *Tom Thumb* was salvaged for parts in 1834. Peter Cooper would later be recognized for his invention in 1875 when he described and sketched a drawing of the famed steam engine.

In 1927, a replica of the *Tom Thumb* was constructed for the B&O's Fair of the Iron Horse. It was built based on Peter Cooper's general description of the steam engine, although a few performance enhancements were added instead of keeping full historical accuracy. The B&O museum is currently home to the *Tom Thumb* replica, where it can be preserved and appreciated for many years to come.

Engine Specs:

Railroad: Baltimore & Ohio Railroad

Type of Locomotive: 0-4-0, Peter Cooper's Locomotive

Date Original Built: 1829-1830

Date Replica Built: 1926-1927

Status: Operational

Weight of Drivers: 5800 lbs (replica)

Total Weight: 10,000 lbs (replica)

Tractive Effort: 820lbs (replica)