

I Wish That I Were a Frisco Agent

By M. C. MOORE

MANY many times I have admired, yes, actually envied the local railroad agent in a small community. He is master of all he surveys.

He is the best known citizen in the town.

He represents the biggest industry in his community, the largest tax payer and one of the largest industries in the nation.

He is in constant touch with daily affairs and has advance information of coming events.

He is looked up to as a capable and efficient business man, and his advice is requested on matters of all kinds. He is known to be an expert on giving advice on crops, and whether it be cattle or tomatoes, he knows where the best markets are to be obtained.

The very activities of the town can be built around the Frisco station where he may be found.

And when it comes to activities outside his work, he can be and is, one of the leaders of his church.

He is a member of the Lions, Rotary or Kiwanis Club, the Chamber of Commerce, and other clubs welcome him as a member and he is looked up to as the contact man between the members of his community and the outside world.

What a chance he has to make friends, and what a host of friends he has! He doesn't walk along the street for a block without meeting friends and neighbors. It's either Jim or John or Mrs. Webster—and he knows that Jim has a new team of horses; that John is expecting his strawberry crop to be the best he has ever grown. He knows that Mrs. Webster has sickness in the home and he converses with each on the subject nearest to the heart.

Talk about a King! He is monarch of all he surveys.

But let us go a little further. In former years when there was little competition from other transportation agencies—in the days before the bus and truck and airplane, the agent was not concerned to a large extent with **ACTIVELY SOLICITING** the business houses. When there were shipments to move **THE SHIPPER CONTACTED THE AGENT.**

Today the situation is exactly reversed. The agent who spends the greater number of hours in active

solicitation is the agent who is showing the increase in revenue at his station. Which brings about the point that he, and he alone, is one of the most important contact men on the railroad. To the agent in a small or medium sized community is intrusted the policies of the railroad. To him is intrusted the making of friends for the railroad and the keeping of them.

Did you think of his job as such a big one? And do you wonder that I said I admired and actually envied him?

As I travel over the railroad in the interest of my work, contacting every class of employe, the first person I visit in a town is the agent. There are few questions that I can ask him about my assignment that he cannot tell me. Should I wish to go through some plant in town, I find he is a good friend of the manager. More and more I realize what an important person he is and I am therefore surprised at times to find at a few stations, agents with long years of service to their credit who have apparently permitted themselves to become discouraged over some fancied or perhaps real grievance and instead of getting it ironed out immediately, have permitted it to become a sword in the flesh. Instead of taking full command of the situation, which is rightfully theirs to take, these agents have not been keeping abreast of the times, but have fallen into a rut. In some communities they are simply drifting!

There is this to say for them. It takes fortitude and patience and a "dogged" determination to keep from getting in a rut and to keep from being discouraged sometimes. But suppose every agent on the Frisco let these periods of despondency get the best of him—what then?

There are many stations on the railroad, located in great wheat, grain and cattle territory. I'm talking now about the smaller stations—feeders for the main line. Many of them have been closed. Business didn't justify keeping them open. I wonder if a little extra effort, a little more display of "dogged" determination to bid good-bye to things that were lost and start new traffic would have kept them open!

Here's a case which is interesting. Up until a few years ago all the cattle

shipped from a community went over Frisco rails to market. Along came the trucks, hauling for cheaper rates, sometimes beating the train to market, and in all cases backing up to the farm for loading. The first year the revenue at this Frisco station decreased. The next year was even worse and today the agent says: "This used to be a big cattle country, but the trucks have taken all the business away." Perhaps he has brooded over the situation and in some cases his seeming helplessness in the face of such competition has gotten the best of him.

Not long ago the Sailing Day plan was put into effect. Store door delivery was established in Frisco territory over an area of 500 miles. Packing houses began to discount prices for cattle bruised in shipment by truck. All these things should have had the effect of helping the agent to pick up his old enthusiasm and go out after the business.

But the agent who broods over the injustice of the situation goes down in defeat. Cooperative shipping organizations and Sailing Days will help him to get back a good portion of the business, **BUT IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR HIM TO PERSONALLY KNOW HIS RURAL SHIPPERS, HIS FARMERS, AS WELL AS HIS BUSINESS MEN IN A MORE INTIMATE WAY.**

There is a certain community on Frisco Lines, its population numbering over 4,000 persons. It is within easy trucking distance of a large city and a big stock market. **HOWEVER, LITTLE LIVESTOCK IS MOVING BY TRUCK.** Upon inquiry we find that the agent in that town **IS TAKING AN INTEREST IN THE LIVESTOCK SHIPMENTS,** so much so that there is not a farmer within a radius of many miles of his station, whom he does not know, **AND CATTLE ARE DRIVEN AS FAR AS 50 MILES TO THE FRISCO STATION FOR LOADING AND SHIPMENT BY RAIL.** This agent knows his rural shippers. But he didn't get the business from the livestock men by contacting a few within walking distance of his station. There were many evenings after work when he

got in his car and drove to the farmer to make the contact. And he appraised the shipper of the Sailing Day plan, the rates and the service offered by rail.

And in another town there is an agent with the same number of years service, in a livestock territory, who has not had a car of livestock out for several years.

The first agent has evidently realized that he is the railroad's contact at his town, in his community. He is not vested with any more power or credit than the second agent, but the first man has realized the power of solicitation, of making contacts and of intimately knowing his shippers, while the second has evidently sunk for the time being, under the load.

It is true, the livestock business might NEVER be recaptured at the second station, but it is just as true, that nine chances to one the second agent has not closely and intimately and consistently contacted the shippers in his territory. At many stations the livestock men have indicated that they would like to revive the interest and make their community a livestock center. The agent should lead the enthusiasm and plans.

Another agent checks all cars that come to his station from a distance to find if the Frisco got the long haul.

Perhaps you have noticed in the Frisco Magazine, a list of foreign cars handled so speedily that no per diem was paid by Frisco Lines. This meant quick handling on the part of the agent, and cooperation between the agent and the shipper. These reports are splendid ones and will be carried as often as they come to the Magazine Department from J. H. Doggrell, superintendent of transportation.

It is also most gratifying to note the interest taken by the agents in their cooperation with the law regarding truck violations on the highways. Their work along this line has been most productive.

And still another example. An agent at one of the Frisco's smaller stations learned that a school project was being considered and incidentally the school board had decided to move the material by truck. Instead of giving up to the situation, HE MET WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD. His sales talk included references to the importance of the railroad to the town; the tremendous amount of school taxes paid by the Frisco, and the excellent service offered. In the end the school board changed the routing from truck to Frisco. This agent might have reported the routing already settled, but he made no concession to failure.

Each community presents its own problems but there are some fundamental rules which can be followed for all employes. The new times have made many changes in our daily life, and, incidentally, the transportation agencies are undergoing conditions that threaten their very existence. Competition of all kinds has taken from one and given to another. It therefore behooves each employe of the railroad to be alert and active.

The employe movement on Frisco Lines has assumed great proportions. Loyal employes devote hours an evening to the solicitation of business. They feel that the "contact" among their friends is the important thing, the fundamental basis of all solicitation. But they can only devote their outside time to the solicitation of business, whereas the agent has the day to make contacts, renew them and strengthen them.

But the agent says, you haven't been to my station. I haven't any help, have to do all the work around the station, file train loads of tariffs. When I go out, somebody calls to give me some business. When I'm in, I should be out soliciting. We don't have the Sailing Day plan here. We don't have adequate train service. Our rates are out of line with truck service!

When an agent says these things, I wonder if along with the real work, he is not spending too much time brooding over the various problems that confront him? I wonder just what he has done, constructively, to remedy the situation. Who hasn't problems now days? The higher up the ladder you go, the greater proportions they assume. But I wonder if he is harboring a sense of injustice at the organization that is responsible for his very existence?

I also wonder if the agent has overlooked this fine bit of constructive work. There are hundreds of contracts with truck men in connection with the pick up and store-door delivery program. Have these agents worked closely with these men, asking them, when they make delivery of a truck load of goods from the Frisco station to the store, to contact the boss and insure future shipments? The contract truck driver can tell the merchant that this service gives a home town man employment. More of them will keep him busy, and each one reacts to aid a big industry which pays thousands of dollars in taxes in a county, or a total of \$3,365,354 in its nine-state territory.

Let's say, for the sake of the agent, and with a firm conviction of the truth of the statement, that much of the old business has gone to the

"how-wows". If we can't get it back, let's not hang on to how good it "used to be", but make new business that will prove as profitable. The agent will have to start interesting the folks in his community in new endeavors. Starting a livestock shipping point, changing crops, planting fruit trees and acres of berries. And when the fruit is ready to ship there is not much doubt but what the shipper will remember the advice, and time and patience given him by the Frisco agent. Continual contact with shippers and patrons will keep "Frisco Service" alive, but it will take a double dose of one's personality, a lot of time and effort and enthusiasm, and a little, yes, quite a little study of the needs and resources of the people of a community.

I still think the agent in a small community is a little King! He need make no concessions. Life goes to the most fit and if one plan fails, then another must work. I think that an employe in such an advantageous position should exercise his power to the fullest extent. Don't you?

MERITORIOUS SERVICE

SOUTHWESTERN

August 19—F. Owens, section foreman, Jones, Okla., and Ernest Eidson, section laborer, Jones, Okla., discovered brake beam dragging on train 431, Jones, August 19, and promptly reported it to the train crew with result that the beam was removed. The record of each man was credited with five merit marks.

August 17—Cecil Moore, B&B carpenter, Sasakwa, Okla., discovered bridge E-531.7 on fire and immediately notified Foreman W. A. Lantz, with the result that fire was extinguished without a great deal of damage. The record of Mr. Moore was credited with ten merit marks.

September 10—C. N. Ellison, agent-telegrapher, Wetumka, Okla., noticed brake beam down on M-K-T 13472 in Extra 4147 north as they passed his station. He flagged train and brake beam was removed. His record was credited with five merit marks by C. T. Mason, superintendent.

UNIQUE VISITORS

Employes at the West Shops, Springfield, Mo., have been interested in the species of water birds which recently made the big pond at the shops their headquarters.

They resemble the big white stork, and it is thought that they migrated from some drouth area. Since the recent rains, most of them have taken wing.

The Better Housing Program Explained

FOR several years past, homes all over America have been steadily going down hill. Many property owners have been unable to pay for normal upkeep and repairs. A far greater number have delayed the larger improvements which mean better housing and better living.

You, yourself, are the best judge of whether your home would be more desirable with a new coat of paint, a new roof, additional plumbing, lighting fixtures or heating equipment. You know what would improve the appearance, rentability and efficiency of your own business property.

Now is the time to make those improvements. The National Housing Act was designed to help you improve your property and increase its value and usefulness. Through one of the simplest and most reasonable systems of financing ever devised, the Act makes it possible for you to make delayed repairs and provide better surroundings for your family.

If you have cash for property improvements, cash payment is, of course, the best method. The favorable time is now. If it seems more convenient to pay for such work out of your regular income, now is the prudent time to borrow—either directly from your bank, building and loan association or other institution cooperating with the Federal Housing Administration, or through your contractor or building supply dealer.

HERE'S WHAT YOU MAY BE ASKING

1. Who may apply? Any property owner, individual, partnership or corporation, with a regular income from salary, commissions, business or other assured source. It is not necessary to be a depositor in the financial institution consulted.

2. To whom do I apply? To any National Bank, State Bank or Trust Company, Savings Bank, Industrial Bank, Building and Loan Association or Finance Company approved by the Federal Housing Administration; or to a contractor or building supply dealer.

3. Do I borrow money from the government? No.

4. How much may I apply for? From \$100 to \$2,000 depending on your income, for improvements on any one property. A like amount in connection with not more than five

properties (\$2,000 maximum on each). Approval by the Federal Housing Administration, Washington, D. C., must be secured by the lender in advance for loans on more than five properties.

5. How long may notes run? For any number of months from one to three years. (Notes extending from 37 months to five years may be submitted to the Federal Housing Administration by financial institutions for special consideration.)

6. What security is required? Only that you have an adequate regular income and a good credit record in your community.

7. What assurance need I give?

(a) That you own the property. (Lessees under "repairing leases" may qualify under special circumstances which the local lending institutions can explain.)

(b) That the annual income of the signers of the note is at least five times the annual payments on the note.

(c) That your mortgage, if any, is in good standing, and that there are no past due taxes, interest or liens against your property.

(d) That you will use the proceeds solely for property improvement.

8. What signatures are required? Signature of the property owner; and (except in special cases) if the owner is an individual and is married, also signature of wife or husband. No other co-signers or endorsers are required.

9. What is the cost of this credit? The financial institution may not collect as interest and/or discount and/or fee of any kind, a total charge in excess of an amount equivalent to \$5 per \$100 of the original face amount of a one year note, deductible in advance.

For example: If you need \$285 for housing improvements, you might sign a note for \$300 payable in 12 equal monthly installments. In this case the note would not bear interest, because the maximum charge permitted (\$15) would be included in the face of the note.

If you borrow a larger amount, or if you repay in equal monthly installments extending beyond one year—from 13 months to 3 years—the total

"For those who live in houses, those who repair and construct houses, and those who invest in houses . . ."

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

charge permitted would be at a proportionate rate.

10. Do I pay any other charge? No.

11. How does this cost compare? Compared with ordinary 60 or 90 day bank loans, it is higher. Compared with the same type of loans payable in monthly installments, it is much lower than heretofore available. The reduced cost is made possible because of the Government credit insurance to the financial institution.

This type of loan makes it possible for you to spread the payments over a long period. You do not have to keep money on deposit with the institution making the loan. You do not have to give a mortgage. You need not have friends or others sign your note, and you reap the benefits of the improvements now.

12. How do I pay the note? By making regular, equal, monthly payments (seasonal payments for farmers and others with seasonal income) until the note is paid in full.

13. May the owner of any kind of property apply? Applications will be considered for credit to improve one-family, two-family, or other residences; apartment buildings, stores, office buildings, factories, warehouses, farm buildings.

14. Must I use specified building material? No, you are investing your own money (even though borrowed) in Better Housing. There will be no restrictions on your rights as an owner to use such materials and employ such methods of construction as you may desire—provided they meet the approval of the lending agency.

15. May I borrow to buy housing equipment? Yes, if the equipment is an integral part of the improved building. Furniture, refrigerators, stoves, etc., are movables (unless built in) and are not permitted under terms of your loan.

16. Where do I make payments?

(Now turn to Page 10, please)

THE LAST RUN

(A Short, Short Story)

BILL RYAN, a Frisco engineer with forty years' service to his credit, was on his last run. Bill had walked into the "super's" office at Chaffee, fully expecting to be handed his retirement papers and to be put on full time pension.

He had been through forty years of railroading without a single mishap—forty years without missing a day. And what was more, he had the best record of any man on the road, and was proud of it.

As he walked into the office, his "super" said: "Bill, one more run before you quit. I want you to take two cars of dynamite to Caruthersville and hold your train for six hours, in case of an emergency. It's dangerous," he added, "but it's mighty important."

Caruthersville! Bill knew that place, and he didn't like it. Caruthersville was located on a little bottle neck of a peninsula that stuck out in the old Mississippi as if to defy the rights of that mighty body of water. And now it was flood waters. The river level was eight feet above the streets of Caruthersville, within two feet of the top of the great levee which was the only protection for Caruthersville and the farm land of that entire section of Southeast Missouri. The same condition existed on the other side of the river, and the same menace was held over the farmers of Tennessee. Bill remembered many attempts to blast one levee or the other, made by some person who wanted to protect his property from the ravages of an uncontrolled river. Were the levee blasted, the break would permit the water to spread for several miles in a few hours, and, while it would give safety to property owners on one side, it would completely wipe out the other side.

Sand bags were of no avail against the current that roared around Caruthersville. Engineers had started blasting up sections of highway and throwing large slabs of concrete into the weak points of the levee, in the hope of holding back the river.

Bill hadn't wanted that run, but he was a loyal railroader of the old school. He took it and made up his mind he would hold his train the six hours required, in case of an emergency. If the levee did break, Bill would have to bring the entire population left in Caruthersville out to safety. It would be a very fitting last

run for an engineer with forty years' perfect record.

And so he took the two cars of dynamite at Chaffee—picked up two empty box cars at Hayti and pulled into Caruthersville on the dot. He was now on the derailing track waiting his six hours and watching a switch engine build a train of cotton, in an effort to get all the cotton out of a great compress warehouse located

ABOUT THE STORY

A suggestion was made to the reporters of the Frisco Magazine, a short time ago, that they try their hand at writing short short stories.

Here is the first one, submitted by J. J. Appling, machinist at Hayti, Mo. There is one point which might be well to explain to those not familiar with the shipment of explosives. The most strict rules and regulations for packing of this commodity are in force. Dynamite will not explode through jar or concussion, but will wreak havoc when it comes in contact with fire! This will explain the plot which "Bill" cooked up to save the day—but then, read the story!

Any employe may submit one of these short short stories. This one is purely fictitious and they may either be true or untrue. No story should contain more than 1,000 words, as it is impossible to devote more than one page in the Magazine a month to this feature.

All copy should be typewritten and double spaced, and should reach the Magazine Department, 835 Frisco Building, before the 18th of the month.

Who will be the next to submit a short short story?

in Caruthersville. Bill estimated that there was over a million dollars worth of cotton in that warehouse.

Then he heard a sound behind him, and, turning, saw a tall, roughly clad man in overalls climb into his cab.

"See here," said Bill, "you are not allowed here. What do you—"

Bill's conversation was abruptly halted, as he looked straight into the muzzle of a revolver, aimed at his heart.

Submitted by J. J. Appling, Machinist, of Hayti, Mo.

"Shut up," came the rough command. "Get back in that seat and back her up fast."

"We're on the derail," Bill said, and stopped suddenly when he felt the gun pressed against his ribs, and he looked into a pair of wild, insane eyes.

"Sure, sure, I know it, and you got two cars of dynamite on the back and it derails right at the foot of the levee, a little fire added, and it'll blow the levee," and the man let forth a peal of insane laughter. "Back her up!"

The man was mad, completely. He meant to break the levee and he could do it unless Bill could stop him. Bill caught his breath. The man stood in the middle of the cab, glaring impatiently at him.

Bill turned to his throttle, opening it slowly at first, then with a steady pull, he opened it wide. The train moved faster and faster, straight back for the levee. Bill glanced around. The man was standing in the middle of the cab, swinging his revolver and sending out peals of insane laughter.

Then Bill acted. With his left hand still on the throttle, he slowly dropped his right hand to the air control—most effective of all brakes. Very seldom will an engineer use more than two or three notches on the control to stop his train. The effect of full air is never used except in the most dangerous emergencies—but now!

Bill braced himself. With one motion of his left hand he closed the throttle. The same moment he jerked the air wide open with his right hand. The maniac never knew what hit him. He was hurled headlong into the coal chute, his head striking the bottom of the car with such force that the impact could be heard above the scream of air and the roar of the wheels. Bill reflected grimly that he would be lucky to get off with a fractured skull.

Then Bill turned once more to his throttle and slowly moved the train back to the head of the derailing track for two more hours of active service—then to retire with a perfect record.

AGENCY CHANGES

The following permanent agents were installed at the stations which follow their names:

Julius A. Robinson, Portageville, Mo., August 25; Victoria E. Wall, Eagle City, Okla., August 25; Charles A. Park, Hunter, Okla., August 28; June P. Sheets, Salt Fork, Okla., August 28; George A. Scholl, Decker-ville, Ark., August 28; Claude E. Hall, Gilmore, Ark., August 28; Percy E. Newell, Keighley, Kans., August 31; Marvin C. Baker, Deckerville, Ark., August 31; Forest C. Pepple, Burdette, Ark., September 1; Earl H. McClure, Dato, Ark., September 1; James M. Johnson, Pascola, Mo., September 1; James E. Wimberley, Yarbrow, Ark., September 1; Frank R. Schutt, Memphis-Peabody Hotel Ticket Office, September 4; Benedict J. Grieshaber, Luxora, Ark., September 4.

Jesse W. Asbill, Weir City, Kans., September 4; John W. Hutchins, La-Cygne, Kans., September 5; Arthur L. Nettles, Gilmore, Ark., September 7; Emil H. Hempler, Cameron, Okla., September 7; Mrs. Gertrude G. Hodnett, St. Paul, Ark., September 10; Floyd M. Carlock, Datto, Ark., September 10; James O'Connell, Haverhill, Kans., September 13; Harry S. Miller, Strauss, Kans., September 14; Mrs. Florence Bates, Fulton, Kans., September 17.

The following were installed temporary agents at the stations which follow their names:

Franklin C. Morris, Exeter, Mo., August 29; Glen L. Henson, Exeter, Mo., September 1; Carl T. Harvel, Springdale, Ark., September 3; Franklin C. Morris, Springdale, Ark., September 10; Clarence D. Blagg, Naylor, Mo., September 17.

Morrisville, Mo., station closed September 15th.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

The Cincinnati Enquirer of August 29, in its column headed "TWENTY YEARS AGO IN CINCINNATI", reports that at the Passenger Traffic Club outing at Highland Grove, held on August 29, 1914, the feature of the day was a ball game between two teams, one led by W. S. Merchant of the Frisco Lines, which won at the end of two exciting innings by the score of 19 to 17. The losers were captained by John Webster of the Erie Lines.

George P. Quillen, chief clerk in the Frisco offices at Cincinnati, writes Mr. Merchant, enclosing the clipping, asking if he won't come over and help out their Reds.

Students Use Frisco



The young ladies in the accompanying picture, most of them from points in Oklahoma, posed for the cameraman upon their arrival in St. Louis via Frisco Lines' Meteor, September 18th, enroute to Lindenwood College, St. Charles, Mo.

Mary Eleanor Guthrie, Katherine McMahon, Dorothy London, Jane Dudley, Myrna Huddleston, Virginia Estes, Opal Jane McWilliams and Ruth Bewley are from Oklahoma City, Okla.; Virginia Laws, Edith Ann Gorrell, June Myers, Hannah Grimes and Mary Lee McKirahan are from Tulsa, Okla.; Betty Rowland and Martha Edwards are from Enid, Okla.; Alice Douglass, Okmulgee, Okla.; Dorothy Lafayette, Checotah, Okla.; June Franklin, McLoud, Okla.; Virginia Little, Madill, Okla.; Mary Elizabeth Baptist, Peggy Rosebury, Shawnee, Okla.; Nell McGibony, Los Angeles, Calif.; Laura Fritz, Wichita, Falls, Tex.; Peggy Stein, Miami, Okla.; Katherine Keegan, Lawton, Okla., and Mildred Burney, Aurora, Mo.

AMERICAN ROYAL TO BE HELD OCTOBER 20-27

The 36th Annual American Royal Live Stock and Horse Show will be held at Kansas City, October 20 to 27, a month earlier than last year. A possibility of better weather conditions should assure a much larger attendance than in previous years.

The Premium List shows liberal premium offerings and classification consisting of Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Swine, Sheep, Draft Horses, Mules, Poultry, Saddle Horses, Harness

Horses, Roadsters, Ponies, Hunters and Jumpers, Horse and Mule Pulling Contest, as well as Fat Calves, Pigs and Lambs fed and cared for by 4-H Boy and Girl Club Members and Vocational Agricultural Students. There will be a daily program of judging the various classes of Live Stock and Horse Show Exhibitions each afternoon and evening except Sunday evening.

As in the past, this year's American Royal will be a well balanced Live Stock Exposition and Horse Show Classic. It is not strictly an animal Exposition. There are many educational and entertaining features, consisting of exhibits from the United States Government, agricultural schools and colleges, meat exhibits, lectures, moving pictures, Agricultural Chautauqua, Farm Women's Activities, Highway exhibits, Manufacturers Industrial exhibits, National Congress of Vocational Agricultural Students, Convention of Future Farmers of America, 4-H Boys and Girls Club Conference, Junior Rodeo exhibitions and other activities.

A CORRECTION

In the story of "Tip" Watson, carried in the September issue of the Frisco Magazine, a typographical error occurred as to the date of his service.

The story stated that he was made an extra passenger conductor July 28, 1875, and the date should have been June 5, 1895.