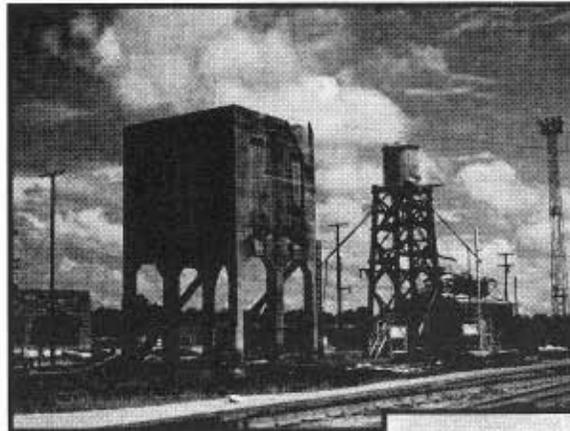


The Day Goliath Fell

With the end of steam locomotives on the Frisco in February, 1952, came the inevitable demise of the giants that fueled them - the goliath concrete coaling stations that dotted the system at over twenty-five locations. In the fall of 1953, the Frisco initiated a program of demolition of these symbols of a by-gone era with the demolition of the 300 ton station at Lindenwood Yard at St. Louis, MO.

According to the September 1953 **All Aboard** company newspaper, the St. Louis goliath proved to be a die-hard giant to bring down. Following the removal its upper superstructure, a total of thirty-six sticks of dynamite could only tip the structure down on one end. Three attempts were made to pull the tipple over, but the cable snapped each time. Finally, a huge crane that was borrowed from the Terminal Railroad Association held the structure upright so steel reinforcement rods could be cut thus allowing the giant to slowly tumble over.

Following the demise of the Lindenwood goliath, one by one the remaining giants of the steam era met their fate, as witnessed by the following rare newspaper photos of Lebanon, Springfield, and Thayer, MO., and Pensacola, FL.



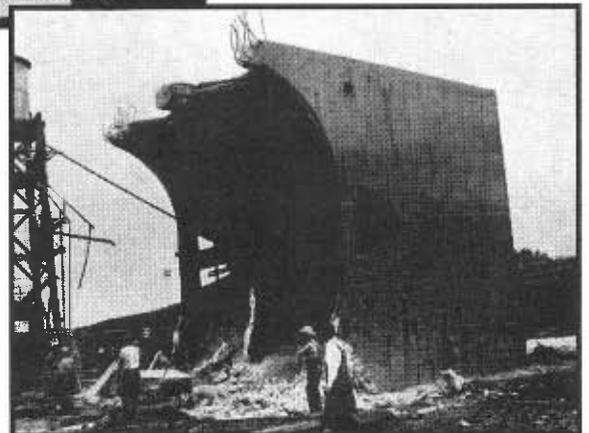
A remnant of the steam era, the Lindenwood coal station is shown with upper superstructure removed, awaiting the blast. Frisco photo

Dust and chunks of cement flew after the initial blast, but the tipple merely tipped. Steel reinforcing cables on the rear supports held the structure from falling over and breaking under its own weight. Frisco photo

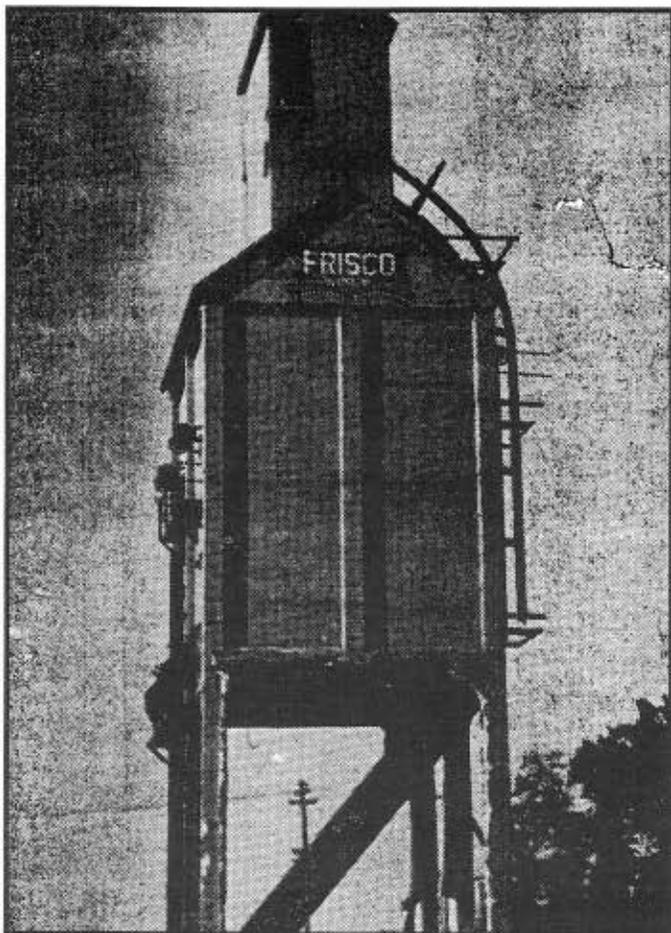


After the first dynamite blast failed, a Terminal Railroad crane held the structure up while the reinforcement rods were cut. Frisco photo

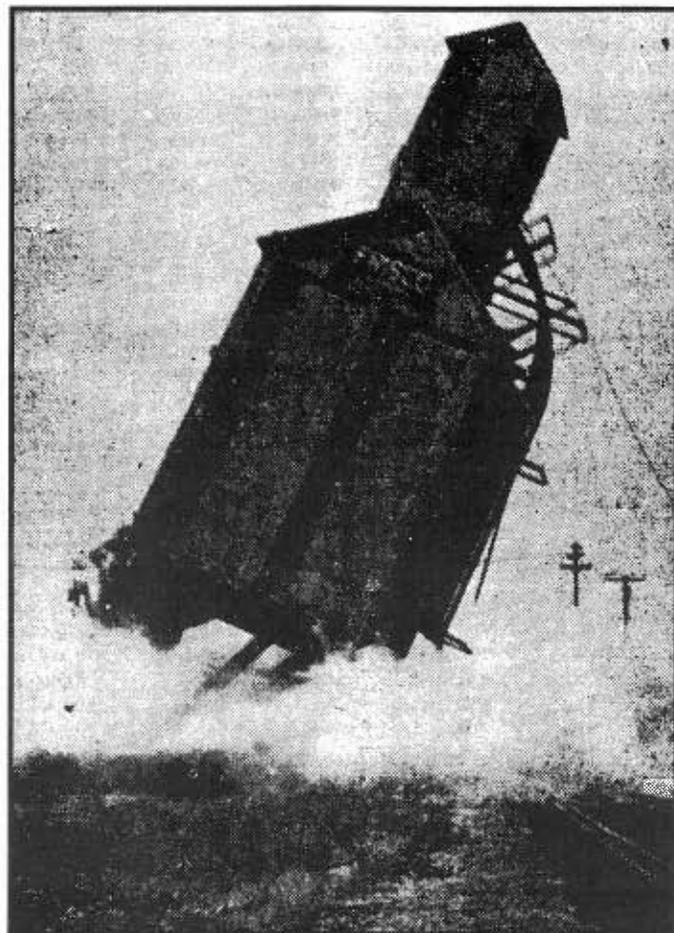
Finally defeated, the tipple lay on its side after being pushed over by the crane. Workmen finished the demolition job with more dynamite and a heavy iron ball. Frisco photo



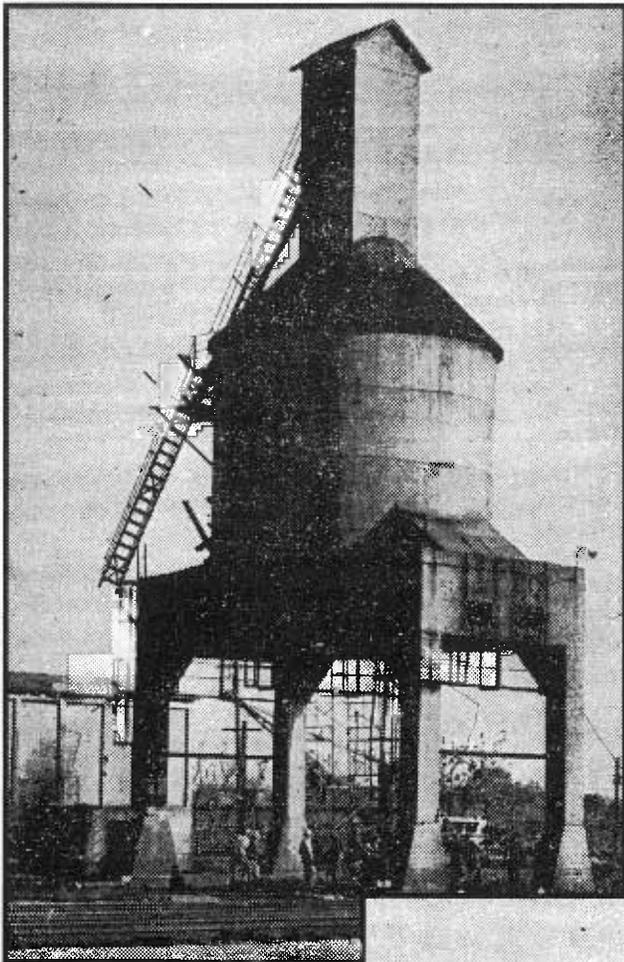
Lebanon, MO - October 19, 1953 Built 1934



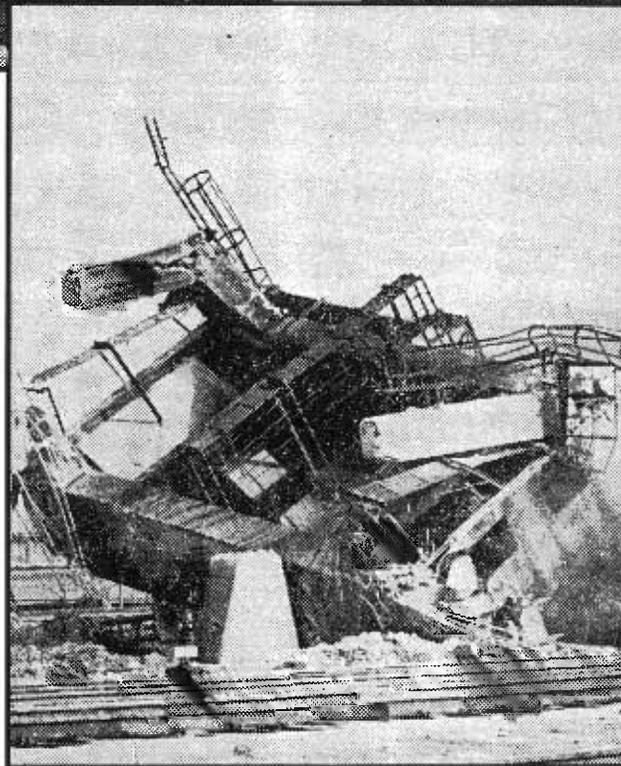
Photos from the Lebanon Daily Record, Monday, October 19, 1953



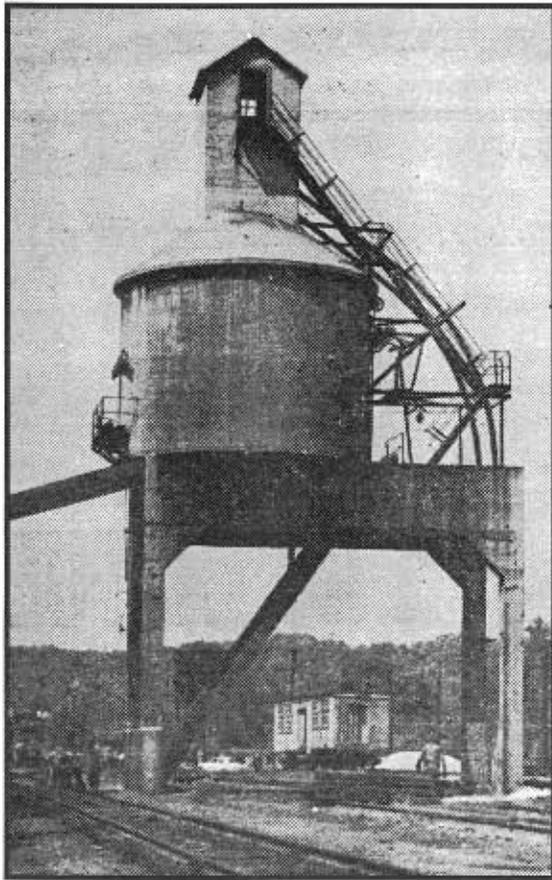
Springfield, MO - November 11, 1953
Built 1943



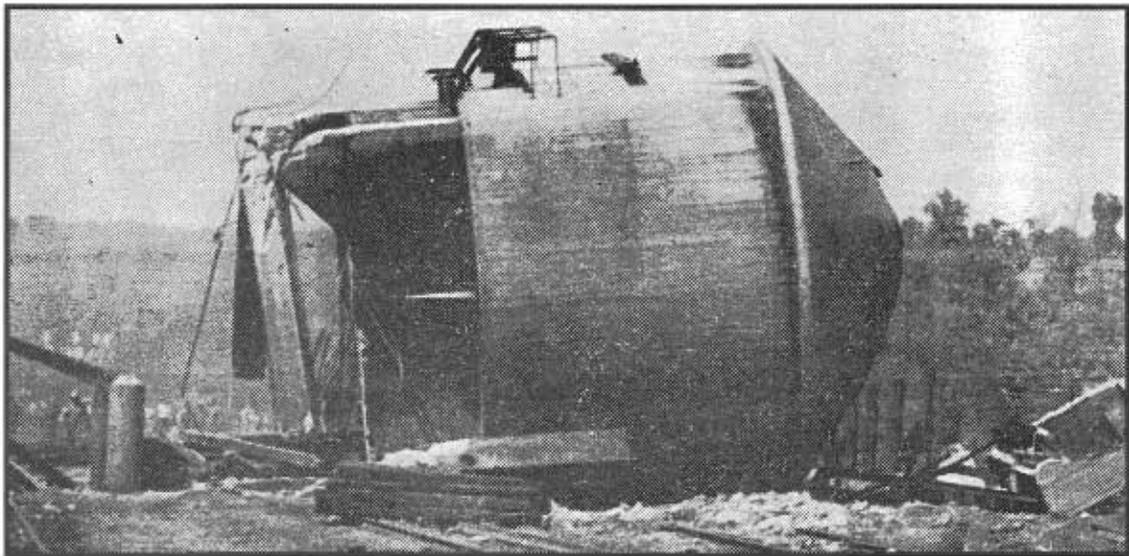
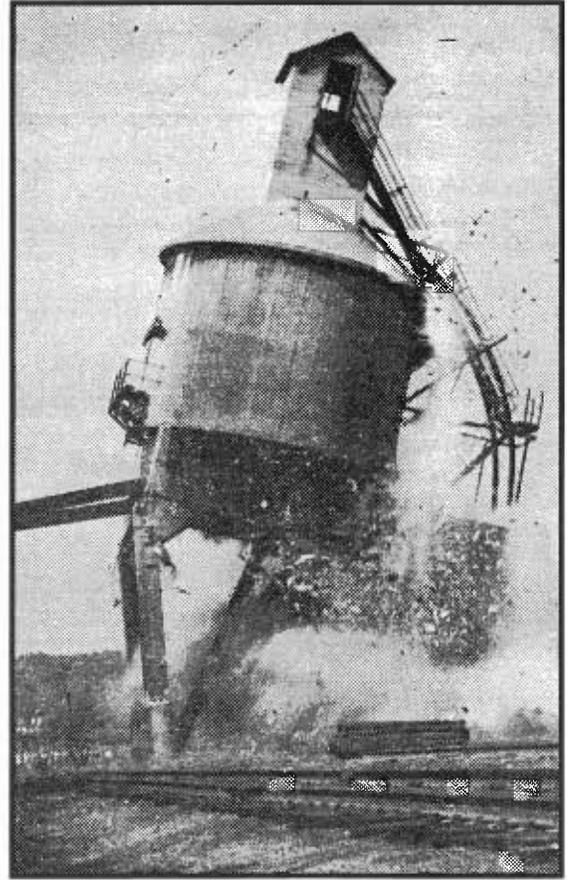
*Photos from the Springfield Leader-Press, Wednesday,
November 11, 1953*



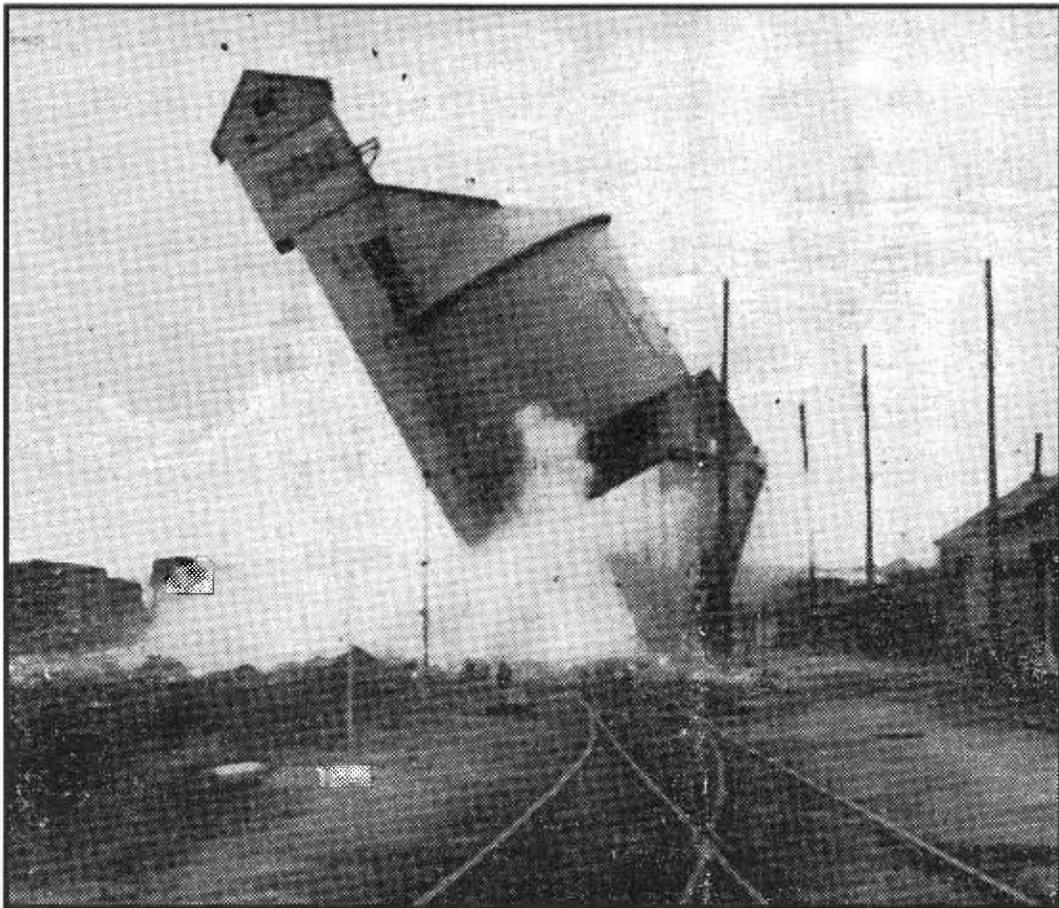
Thayer, MO - May 6, 1954
Built 1934



Photos from The Thayer News, Friday, May 7, 1954



Pensacola, FL - February 11, 1954
Built 1927



Photos from The Pensacola News, Thursday, February 11, 1954



DOWN AT THE DEPOT

Afton, OK
Station G348
Cherokee Subdivision
Southwestern Division

The Atlantic and Pacific Railroad Co. was incorporated July 27, 1866, by a special act of Congress, with authority to build a railroad from Springfield, MO, to the Pacific Ocean. It was organized and originally controlled by John C. Fremont, of New York, and certain of his associates, but on June 11, 1868, control passed to Andrew Pierce, Jr., and Francis B. Hayes, of Boston, MA., Clinton B. Fisk, of St. Louis, and their associates. In 1876 the same interests organized the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Co., to take over a part of the property of the company at a foreclosure sale, and in that year the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Co. commenced the acquisition of the company's outstanding capital stock. On January 31, 1880, control of the company was vested jointly in the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Co. and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad Co., through an indenture known as the "tripartite agreement." The property of the company, as finally acquired and constructed, consisted of three well defined divisions of standard gauge, single track railroad.

Between 1871 and 1882, the Central Division of the Atlantic & Pacific was constructed between Seneca, MO and Sapulpa, Indian Territory (OK), a distance of about 112 miles.



This rare "Hand-Colored Post Card Published by Fred Harvey" showing the "Frisco Passenger Station. Afton, Okla.," was mailed on a Frisco train (R.P.O.) in October, 1922.

Approximately twenty-three miles southwest of Seneca and 348 miles from St. Louis was Afton, Station G348 on the Cherokee Sub-Division, Southwestern Division.

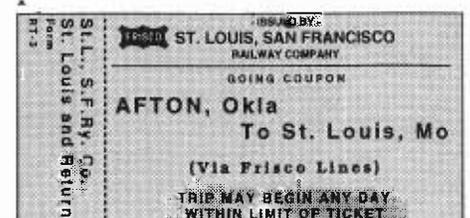
Although probably not the first depot in Afton, the station that served the traveling needs of the community for over fifty years was built in 1912. The 124'6" x 30' 4" brick structure was built on a concrete foundation with 13" walls. The 1/3 pitch hip roof was covered with tile shingles. There were two 16' x 636' brick platforms, separated by the passenger main track.

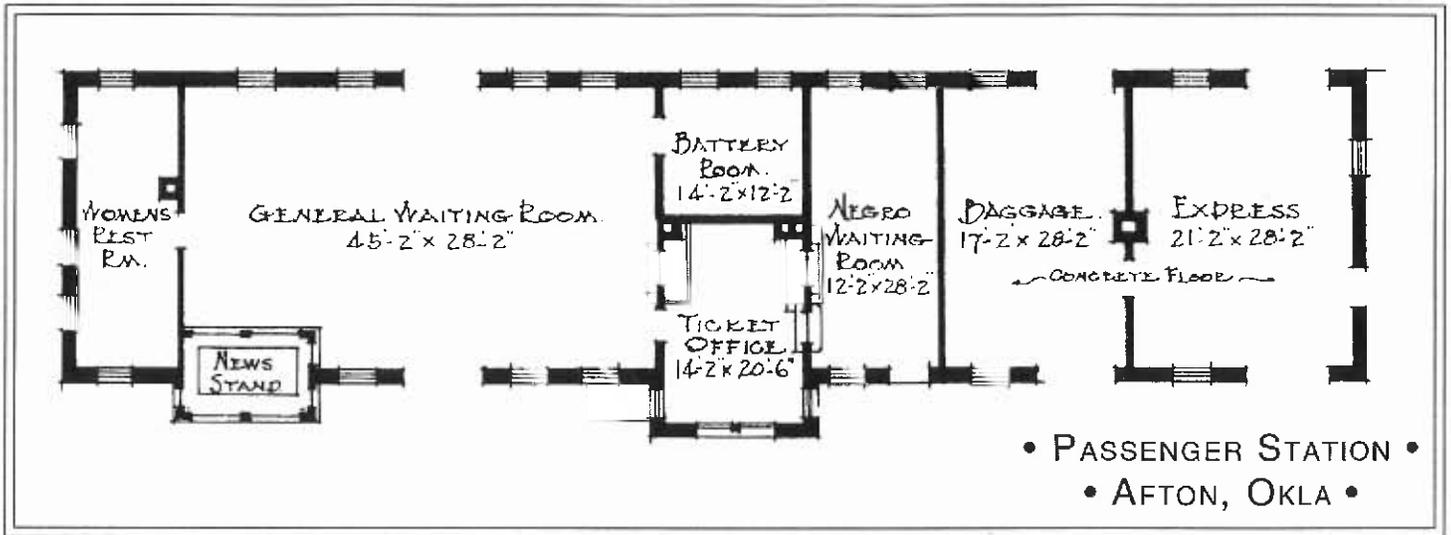
The interior ceilings were 12'6" in the waiting rooms and offices and 12'10" in the baggage and express end. The inside walls were finished with plaster and the building featured 7/8" x 3 1/4" maple floors in all but the baggage and express rooms which had concrete floors. Lighting was

electric and the original sanitary facilities for men were outside while female travelers were accorded the convenience of an indoor rest room. As was the custom in many early railroad depots, the Afton station included a "Negro Waiting Room.."

Two interesting construction notes about the depot, neither of which according to our records have any specific explanations, were 1) A 12' x 14' "Battery Room" located adjacent to the ticket office and 2) A construction notation that says the interior ceilings were "steel."

The depot also included a newsstand, probably operated by the Fred Harvey organization, that no doubt sold postcards like the one shown





It should be noted that Afton was listed as a station on both the Southwestern Division and the Northern Division - Afton Sub-Division, because it was the junction of the two divisions. Because of its strategic location, the Afton station was the site of a number of additional facilities, including:

- 150 ton, 50', Strait built track scales and scale house.
- Two 50,000 gals water tanks with water treating plant, pump house, and water crane.
- 250 ton mechanical coaling station, with three bins.
- Two elevated fuel oil tanks (20,000 and 200,000 gals) and fuel oil pumping station.
- 75' Philadelphia T.T. Co. steel turntable.
- Round house, machine shop, and boiler room.
- Freight house.
- Sand house and bin.
- Car material storeroom, car inspector's house, and Mechanical Department office and storeroom.
- Eight stock pins that included four chutes, three alleys, a 24' quarantine pin, all of which could accommodate up to nineteen cars.



With the exception of the newsstand being absent, the Afton depot still retained its original appearance when this photo was taken in 1959. Photo from the collection of H.D Connor.

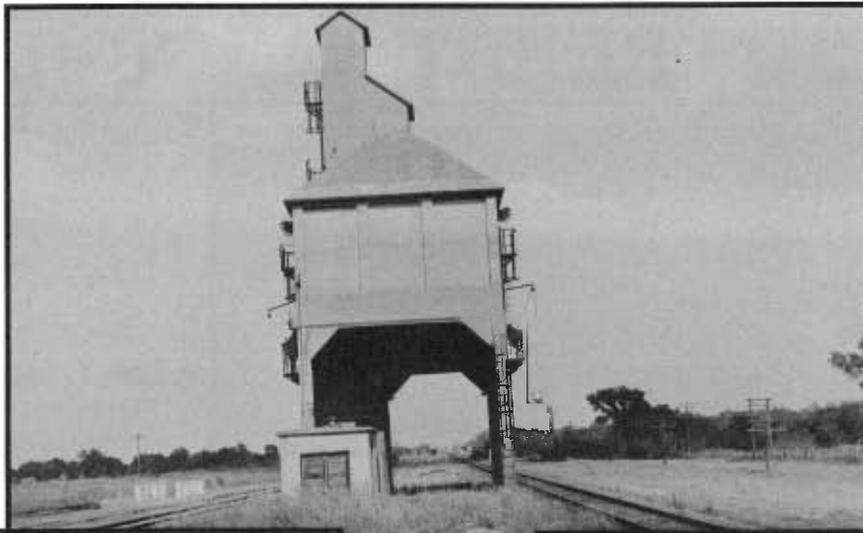
- Eight stock pins that included four chutes, three alleys, a 24' quarantine pin, all of which could accommodate up to nineteen cars.

The Afton station was also designated as both a regular and emergency icing station, as noted:

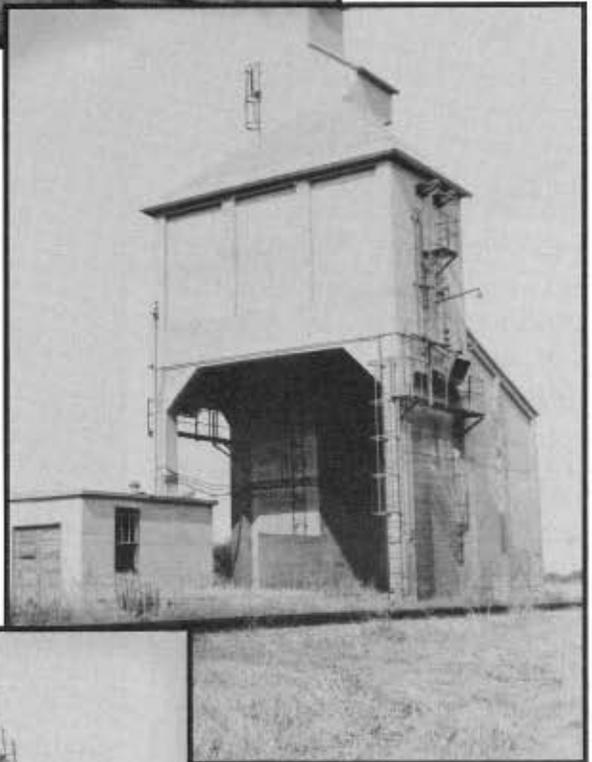
- Regular Station, "Only for Northbound traffic from Southwestern to Northern Divisions."
- Emergency Station, "Except Northbound traffic from Southwestern to Northern Divisions."

This is an interesting notation considering that the Regular Icing Station designation denoted that the station was, "...equipped and located so as to insure proper icing service of refrigerator cars..." while the Emergency Icing Station designation denoted that the station was, "...not equipped or located to take care of the regular icing of refrigerator cars..."

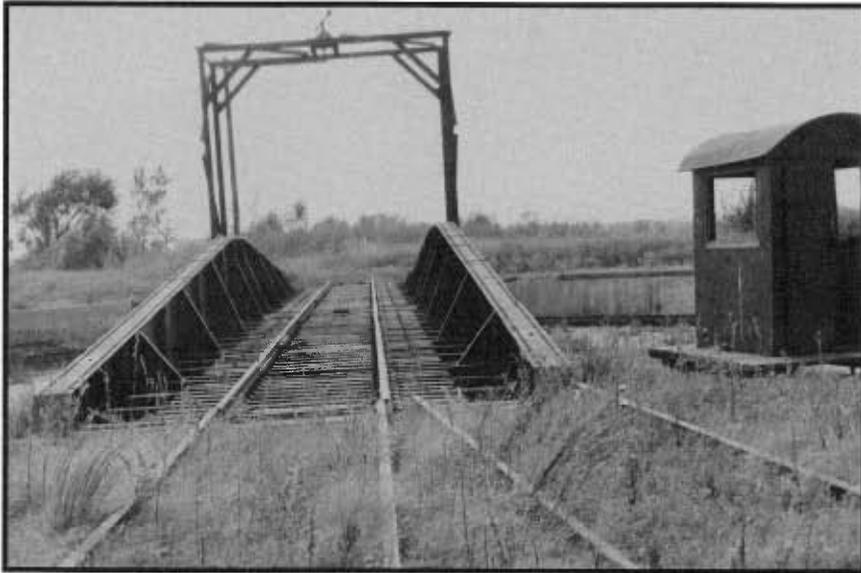
According to our records, passenger service through Afton ended with the final run of the *Oklahoman* on May 13, 1967.



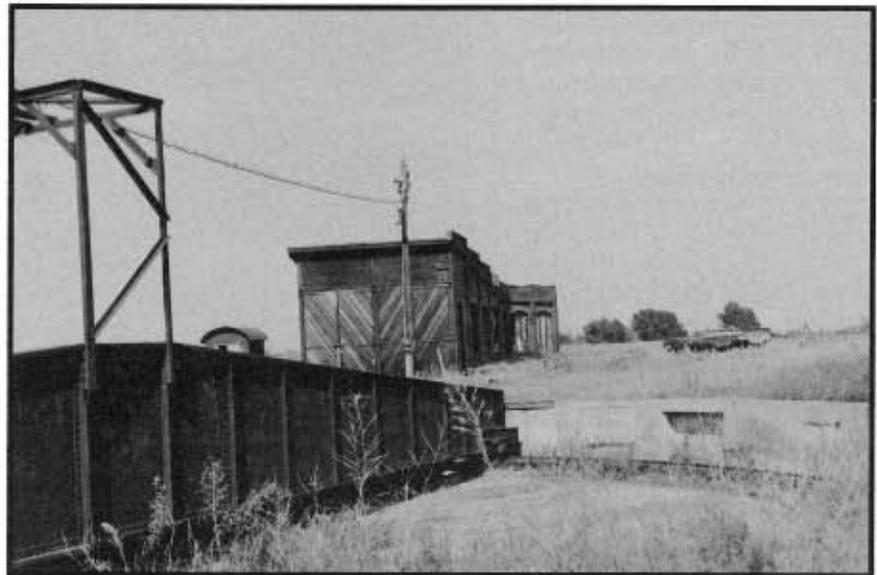
This impressive 250 ton mechanical coaling station had three bins and was built by the T. W. Snow Construction Co.



EDITOR'S NOTE: All photos of the Afton facilities were taken in September, 1959, and are from the collection of Tom Norvell.



Turntable, Afton, OK.



Turntable, Afton, OK, with engine house in background.



Freight House, Afton, OK.



Water Crane, Afton, OK.