



April

# THE FRISCO EMPLOYEES' MAGAZINE

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### THE FRISCO EMPLOYEES' MAGAZINE

The Frisco Employees' Magazine is a monthly publication devoted primarily to the interests of the more than 30,000 active and retired employees of the Frisco Lines. It contains stories, items of current news, personal notes about employees and their families, articles dealing with various phases of railroad work, poems, cartoons and notices regarding the service. Good clear photographs suitable for reproduction are especially desired, and will be returned only when requested. All cartoons and drawings must be in black India drawing ink.

Employees are invited to write articles for the magazine. Contributions should be typewritten, on one side of the sheet only, and should be addressed to the Editor, Frisco Building, St. Louis, Mo.

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# Frisco Meteor Celebrates Silver Anniversary on March 17-18 With Triumphant Run

*Famous Pioneer Train to Southwest Given Rousing Reception at Oklahoma City on Occasion of Twenty-fifth Birthday*

By W. L. H., Jr.

WITH the best wishes of St. Louis citizens bidding her godspeed and the same steady hand at the throttle of the locomotive up ahead that rested there when her first trip was made on St. Patrick's Day, back in 1902, the Frisco "Meteor", crack train between St. Louis and Oklahoma City, left St. Louis at 6:58 o'clock, the evening of March 17, on a Silver Anniversary tour that was to terminate in a glorious reception at Oklahoma City on her arrival the next morning promptly at 10:45 o'clock.

Soaring down the steel trails of the eastern division, over Rolla Hill, with power to spare, around curves at high speed, made safe by 100-pound steel rail and modern railroading, down grade and up grade, with never a change in the pace of giant stride, Engine No. 1503 held to the line with flying colors and the 9,120th trip of the famous train to Oklahoma was under way.

Up in the engine cab, the hand of Harry C. Dean, 42 years in Frisco service, 39 of them an engineer, held steady the monster of modern motive power which throbbed and roared its way toward a goal 542 miles away. His hand had been at a Meteor throttle on 6,200 occasions as nearly as he could figure it, but this was different, and Dean felt the thrill.

This was the Silver anniversary trip of a train that had pioneered into a new and virgin territory. Where Oklahoma City is today with its 140,000 inhabitants and splendidly growing city, a small town of a few thousand persons then sent its mail under a stamp which read "Oklahoma City, O. T." At Tulsa, a side-track or two and a frame station welcomed the Meteor of twenty-five years ago into "Indian Territory." The mammoth engine that responded so easily and powerfully to each notch in the throttle under his hand, was never dreamed of in the old days, and Dean may be forgiven if his thoughts wandered back twenty-five

years to the day when he took the now famous Meteor out of St. Louis on its first trip.

There were tea-kettle engines on Frisco Lines in those days—little 79, long now in white lead at Springfield was the first one. Dean knew it would be at Oklahoma City to scream a salute from its mighty whistle as the Meteor came in on the morrow. They changed them five and six times to get the little six-car train of wooden coaches from St. Louis to Oklahoma City when the first train went on. There was

one distinction Dean remembered, though—that was that the Meteor had the first electrically lighted coaches of any train west of the Mississippi River.

Why, it wasn't so different after all, in some ways. This Silver Anniversary trip had a good deal in common with that first trip which began at 2:30 in the afternoon of March 17, 1902. Dean recalled that Mr. Carl R. Gray, now president of the Union Pacific, was superintendent of transportation for the Frisco when the Meteor was first put in

service. His car was on the first train and Dean had handled him to Newburg, just as he was handling Vice-President Koontz's car to Newburg tonight. Then there had been some St. Louis city officials down to the old station in 1902 to see the new Meteor start on its journey, just as J. H. Brod, director of public safety, had come down to see the twenty-fifth anniversary train off. That was a beautiful wreath Mr. Brod had given him and the Meteor. And it was a nice thing Mr. Brod had said to him, congratulating him in front of all "brass collars", because he had never had an accident in those many years of service on the Meteor.

And they'd taken a lot of pictures for the newspapers in 1902, just like the newspaper boys had tonight, snapping flashlights up at the head end.



*Miss Sigrid Arne, feature writer of the Oklahoma City Times, presents Vice-President Koontz with a bouquet of roses, in honor of the Meteor Anniversary. Freight Traffic Manager Butler is at the right.*

Yes, Dean was probably thinking those things as his iron steed ate up the 119 miles to Newburg. He was "getting down" at Newburg to go back for a few hours' sleep in the Pullman, so he could get up in the morning to again take the throttle at Tulsa.

But there was a surprise awaiting him at Newburg. As his engine slowed down for the station, he saw the glint of musical instruments in the headlight's glare. R. Vandervoort, agent at Newburg, and the foremen at that point had gathered a little reception committee of their own to meet the train on its arrival at 10:30. The band, composed of boys and girls of Newburg, many of them the sons and daughters of Frisco employes' blared forth a welcome as the train came to a stop, and Dean's hand was wrung many times as he stepped down and turned his train over to another engineer. He was escorted back to his Pullman with many pats on the back and shouted congratulations, and the band was playing a selection for Vice-President Koontz and his party on the rear end as the train pulled out on the second leg of its history-making journey.

But while Harry Dean slept the sound sleep of all good engineers, passengers on the Meteor were making merry in honor of the occasion. The wreath of flowers bearing the legend, "Twenty-five Years—the Meteor", earned many an admiring gaze as it hung in the diner under the watchful eye of Superintendent Frabisch, and green carnations, the gift of the Frisco, were fastened to the lapel buttons of every male and to the dresses of each woman passenger.

An impromptu reception was being held in the club car and the famous Pullman Porter Quartet of St. Louis, sent on the anniversary trip through the courtesy of A. V. Burr, superintendent at St. Louis of the Pullman Company, sang song after song to the applauding passengers, who taxed the car's capacity.

But even on a Silver Anniversary trip, retiring time must come, and while No. 1503 continued its valiant journey through the night, the Meteor's passengers slept soundly, secure in the certainty that they were on one of the finest trains on one of the finest railroads in America.

The Meteor's passengers were up early the morning of March 18 to greet the delegation of well-wishers who came to the station at Tulsa upon the Meteor's arrival at 7 o'clock. Many Frisco employes were in the Tulsa crowd and J. W. James, executive general agent, boarded the train with Alvin C. Krupnick, Pathe News photographer.

And there were other welcome additions to the Meteor's party.

Miss Betty Kirk, feature writer for the Oklahoma City News, and Miss Sigrid Arne, feature writer of the Oklahoma City Times, had come up the night before to make the trip down with the Meteor. They joined Mr. Koontz and his party at breakfast, while Harry Dean again took his stand on the right-hand side of the cab and eased No. 1503 out of the station and on down the main line to Oklahoma City.

The silver anniversary trip of the famous train had been heralded far and wide in Oklahoma and at points along the line where the Meteor rushed by without hesitating, groups of cheering citizens dotted the station platforms to wave their greetings to the train

and her distinguished passengers and crew.

A surprise was in store for the Frisco officers at Bristow. That city and its citizens endeared themselves to the Frisco Railway for keeps, by meeting the train with a brass band of 40 pieces, and a delegation of 500 citizens, who came to pay their respects.

Vice-President Koontz and Messrs. Butler, Nourse, Nash and other officers were escorted from their car to a nearby truck for brief ceremonies, while the engine took water.

Mayor Malcolm Morrison, mayor of Bristow, in a brief speech, presented Mr. Koontz with a testimonial, signed by himself and the president of each of Bristow's civic clubs, expressing the appreciation of the citizens of Bristow for the excellent service the Meteor had given them, and wishing the Meteor, the Frisco and its officers and employes greater success in the years to come.

In a few words, Vice-President Koontz accepted the letter and assured Mayor Morrison and the citizens of Bristow that the Frisco had always had the interest of Bristow at heart and would continue to render the same excellent service which they so highly praised and appreciated.

Miss Nona Graham, of Bristow, then presented Mr. Butler with a huge bouquet of roses, the gift of Bristow to the Meteor.

The entire ceremony was broadcast to a huge "daylight" radio audience through the courtesy of radio station KVOO of Bristow.

When Harry Dean let his throttle out at Bristow for the next lap of the run to Chandler, Miss Arne was in the cab with Assistant Freight Traffic Manager Nash, gathering material for her story which appeared in the evening edition of the Oklahoma City Times.

At Chandler, Miss Betty Kirk of the News, attired in "regulation" overalls, entrusted herself to the care of Engineer Dean and rode into Oklahoma City on the fireman's seat for what she later termed "the ride of my life—and how".

Conductor Bert McCaslin received orders at Chandler that regular No. 9 was annulled and the Meteor ran extra into Oklahoma City. When the train stopped to make the turn at the "wye" Photographer Krupnick and Roy Anderson, of the Fox Films, St. Louis, who made the entire trip for his company, took their cameras and tripods to the top of the tender in order to get moving picture shots of the reception.

It was a proud and happy moment in the lives of every passenger and officer on the Meteor as the train pulled into the Oklahoma City station to be greeted by one of the most enthusiastic receptions ever recorded in the annals of that city, and surely the most genuine welcome ever given a famous train.

When engine 1503 rounded the last curve and came down the stretch into the station, engine 79, standing with full steam up at the station, screeched her welcoming blast, and No. 1503 answered time and time again with her deeper pitched whistle.

Three thousand Oklahoma Cityans had assembled at the station to greet their favorite train and the Oklahoma City Kiltie Girls' Band, attired in the picturesque kilties, played a welcoming tune which was heard above the cheering of the throng as the huge 1503 slowed to a gentle stop beside its ancient brother

of twenty-five years ago, diminutive engine 79.

On a raised platform, erected especially for the occasion, Mr. Ed. Overholser, president-manager of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, presented Vice-President Koontz with a huge floral horseshoe, the gift of Oklahoma City to its first fast passenger train to the north, and in a brief address assured Mr. Koontz and the other Frisco officials on the platform that Oklahoma City appreciated the Meteor.

"We appreciate it probably more than you realize,"

contrasted by the present and the past in engines, standing side by side at the Main Street crossing.

But Oklahoma City didn't stop with the station ceremony.

At 12 o'clock noon, 400 members of the Chamber of Commerce and the entire Frisco party attended a luncheon at the Oklahoma City Club, at which more assurances of the high regard in which the Frisco is held, were given. Behind the speaker's table, in full view of the audience, a four-foot working model of engine 79—the first Meteor engine—turned slowly on its drivers, and by an ingenious lighting effect, arranged by D. C. Houston, assistant electrical engineer at Springfield, the fire box flashed naturally, and the headlights and running lights glowed. Topping the engine, the floral horseshoe reminded the audience that the Meteor was celebrating "Twenty-five Years of Service" to Oklahoma City and the Frisco.

The Pullman Porter Quartet sang a greatly-applauded selection of songs during the luncheon, chief among them, "Let Frisco Roll", and when the dishes were cleared away, President Overholser turned the meeting over to Judge C. B. Ames, long-time resident of Oklahoma City, who acted as chairman of the meeting.

Following the introduction of the Frisco officers present by W. L. Huggins, Jr., Judge Ames introduced Vice-President Koontz, the honor speaker of the occasion.

"In honoring the twenty-fifth anniversary of this famous train," Mr. Koontz said, "I trust we won't lose sight of the fact that it owes its remarkable growth from a six-car train to its present size, not particularly to the Frisco Railroad, but to the citizens of Oklahoma City and her adjacent territory. It is

a remarkable tribute to the progressiveness of your people, that this Meteor is the largest train entering St. Louis out of 143 trains a day over 18 railroads. It carries more cars—eighteen most of the time—and more passengers than any other train into that terminal. That means to us railroad people that the Meteor serves a territory populated with live, wide-awake people. It means that your citizens are progressive and ambitious and that they are seeking something, and seeking something, they are traveling. Train service is never prosperous in a community where there is a dearth of business, or where the lethargic web of despondency entangles its people. You are honoring us today with this celebration, and we wish to honor you. Without your spirit of forward-looking building, the success of our famous Meteor would have been impossible."

Mr. S. S. Butler, freight traffic manager, was the concluding speaker, and praised the spirit which had



Above: Vice-President Koontz addressing the citizens of Bristow, Okla., on Meteor's arrival there, March 18. Note microphone at extreme right, which broadcast the ceremony over Station KVOO at Bristow. Roy Griffin, manager of KVOO, is at the left.

Below: Freight Traffic Manager Butler receiving Bristow's gift of flowers from Miss Nona Graham of that city.



Mr. Overholser said. "It was a boon to a town with pronounced growing pains when Engineer Ed. Kenney brought it to town for the first trip. It gave us our first fast passenger service to the North. It brought northerners down to us when they would never have come were it not for the excellent service provided by this train. And our gratitude goes further than that, because the coming of the Frisco to Oklahoma City meant that we wrested the capital away from our good neighboring city, Guthrie, and in that way started on the way to our present promise and affluence."

While the movie and still photographers took picture after picture of the unique ceremony, the Kiltie Girls' Band played several selections and several of their number danced the famous Highland fling. Vice-President Koontz wound up the station meeting by a short speech of acceptance of the floral horseshoe, and the crowd left the platform to gaze in admiration at the tremendous growth in railroad motive power as