

HE TELLS OF AGENT'S DUTIES

"I'd like to see a story of the duties and ambitions of one of your station agents" was the recent verbal request of an ardent reader of the *Frisco Magazine* in talking to a reporter from the Magazine Department.

"You know some of your oldest employes in point of service are station agents. Just how do they spend their time and why is it so few of them ever have even a desire to leave the telegraph key and go to another branch of service? It seems to me they transfer to other departments less than any of your employes in other branches of railroad work."

Several days later a photograph of Mr. T. G. Hart, agent at Belton, Mo., arrived in the Magazine Department, and Mr. Hart was chosen as the agent to be interviewed for the requested story.

Belton is an average station and a good example. It is a thriving little city of 1,500 inhabitants, twenty-seven miles from Kansas City and does a \$40,000 business yearly, regardless of keen competition. The figures for 1927 show that there was a \$3,000 increase over the 1926 revenue.

Agent Hart has had twenty-one years' service with the Frisco. He was born just east of Bolivar, Mo., on July 25, 1881, and began his Frisco service on August 23, 1906, at Latour, Mo.

"I always wanted to railroad. None of my family has ever been in the railroad game, and I started work as a barber at Clinton, Mo. But I had a telegraph key set up in the barber shop, and through the agent I began to learn to work the key," he said.

His first position was at Latour, when he was given a train wire, and he began to receive and send messages for which he was paid \$20.00 a month. In 1908 he took the station at Peculiar, Mo., where he remained until May, 1911. Then he went to Osceola, Mo., where he remained until October, 1911, when he returned to Peculiar. In 1913 he took the agency at Brownington, only to come to Belton on May 28, 1918, where he has remained since.

The average passenger may wonder just what the agent does with all his time, as he passes through on a fast mail train and sees the station agent

Agent Hart of Belton, Mo., Reviews the Job of Station Handling

at his telegraph key, giving the signal to the dispatcher that the train has passed his station.

Mr. Hart explains it in detail. "You see it isn't only the large cities that bring revenue to the railroad, but the smaller town has to have a representative who will keep in close touch with the country surrounding his station, and get all the freight and pas-



Here is Agent Hart at his telegraph key performing one of the agent's important duties.

sengers which he can, routed via Frisco Lines. The station isn't large enough to support a traffic representative, and so the agent has many duties. He must act with courtesy and consideration, with tact and diplomacy at all times, for he is the personal and tangible representative of the railroad. He has only transportation to sell and he can offer service to the markets of the world. There are approximately 800 agents on Frisco Lines, who come in contact daily and hourly with thousands of prospective shippers, and it is through their pleasant and friendly contact that freight is shipped, passengers secured and good fellowship welded between the good people of these many towns and the railroad which brings and takes to the market, various commodities.

"He is looked upon as the channel to the outside world. He routes trips for his friends who wish to take

vacations—he routes freight—sends Western Union wires—handles express—helps unload mail and baggage and makes out a detailed report of his activities on numerous reports which must be most accurate.

"He knows his neighbor, and he is a friend to all. There are few strangers in town and when he picks up the phone to answer a call, he will know the voice of the person speaking, without asking the name. Perhaps they wish to know the time—or to inquire about a piece of express, or the rate on a load of hogs to Kansas City.

"At community gatherings, the agent usually occupies an important part on the program and he is introduced with pride as 'Our Agent,' and what he says is well received. Messages of death, of illness and visits of relatives, through the Western Union wire, read to the recipient over the phone, keeps the agent in close touch with the families that make up his thriving little city. It is his duty to break the news, either of sadness or happiness, and this he does in a tactful manner.

"He is always interested in the events which concern his town. He celebrates with the townspeople when his basketball, baseball and

football team scores a victory."

Every home in the town and for miles around set their timepieces by the agent's clock, for they know his time must be accurate. When the farmers bring their produce to town to ship out to the markets, via Frisco Lines, they like to discuss various problems with the agent, and he in turn discusses the farm problems with them, and when the wheat is cut—when the steers are ready to be shipped to market, the agent is well informed and asks for the shipment via Frisco Lines.

His position evolves itself into one of the most important cogs in the great transportation wheel of a railroad. Through the agent the railroad secures its raw products, and confidence in the agent makes it possible for him to solve the many problems confronting the shipper.

"Agents, as a rule, do like to get one station, make friends with the

1927 Brings 35 Per Cent Reduction in Number Freight Cars Damaged

IN 1927 Frisco Lines achieved a reduction of 35 per cent in the number of freight cars damaged by rough handling as compared with 1926, states the annual report on this subject, prepared by M. M. Sisson, assistant general manager, with his

headquarters at Springfield, Mo. When releasing the report, Mr. Sisson urged all superintendents to strive for still better results in reduction of rough handling of cars in 1928.

For 1927, as compared with 1926, the per cent decrease in the amount

of damage was 15.9 and the decrease in the amount of damage per car handled was 11.90. The per cent increase in the number of cars handled per car damaged was 46.1, the report shows.

The 1927 report follows:

DIVISION OR TERMINAL	NUMBER CARS DAMAGED			AMOUNT DAMAGE			NUMBER CARS HANDLED			PER CENT DAMAGED TO TOTAL HANDLED			STANDING DIVISION OR TERMINAL		
	1927	1926	1925	1927	1926	1925	1927	1926	1925	1927	1926	1925	1927	1926	1925
TERMINALS															
Springfield.....	7	11	21	\$ 865.00	\$ 1,205.00	\$ 1,886.00	751,521	778,355	862,004	.0009	.0014	.0024	1	1	1
Birmingham.....	31	45	70	1,702.50	3,470.00	2,043.00	768,914	847,330	733,402	.0040	.0053	.0095	2	2	2
St. Louis.....	68	79	87	1,184.00	3,265.00	4,768.00	949,970	778,539	784,363	.0072	.0101	.0111	3	3	3
Tulsa.....	105	143	263	8,019.50	2,638.00	8,408.50	735,696	682,658	862,312	.0143	.0209	.0305	4	4	5
Kansas City.....	130	213	192	4,497.00	4,908.90	7,457.00	865,251	707,406	718,459	.0150	.0301	.0267	5	6	6
Memphis.....	119	270	217	3,647.50	10,710.35	9,363.44	736,462	1,179,217	1,246,620	.0162	.0229	.0174	6	5	4
Total.....	460	761	850	\$19,915.50	\$26,197.25	\$33,925.94	4,807,814	4,973,505	5,207,160	.0096	.0153	.0163			
DIVISIONS															
Western.....	2	22	26	10.00	2,097.50	796.00	245,278	253,420	252,621	.0008	.0087	.0103	1	4	4
Eastern.....	20	35	24	1,057.48	925.28	1,350.00	846,215	889,782	900,175	.0024	.0039	.0027	2	2	1
Southwestern.....	32	158	184	1,703.00	4,828.50	5,019.01	1,078,105	1,163,685	1,162,294	.0030	.0136	.0158	3	5	5
Central.....	17	13	13	1,472.00	702.00	1,167.64	397,835	414,568	421,340	.0043	.0031	.0031	4	1	2
Southern.....	53	65	85	2,987.75	3,126.50	7,349.10	937,024	991,484	948,050	.0057	.0066	.0090	5	3	3
Northern.....	162	153	89	6,624.65	2,730.80	3,684.50	1,041,962	1,115,958	1,122,299	.0155	.0137	.0079	6	6	7
River.....	71	71	116	2,276.00	2,343.50	5,113.50	446,141	506,364	470,168	.0159	.0140	.0247	7	7	6
Total.....	357	517	537	\$16,130.88	\$16,754.08	\$24,479.75	4,992,560	5,335,261	5,276,917	.0072	.0097	.0102			
Texas Lines.....	33	30	25	570.50	604.65	591.50	142,261	160,686	173,837	.0232	.0187	.0144			
Total System.....	850	1308	1412	\$36,616.88	\$43,555.98	\$58,997.19									

townspeople, settle down and rear their family in a real homey atmosphere," Agent Hart continued. "Show me the man in the larger city who knows the names of his neighbors? And the agent's job is not a lazy one. Keen competition makes him lay awake nights planning the best service to suggest so Jim Brown will get his stock to market in two hours less time—or planning a trip for Mrs. Smith so she won't have to change trains at some point in the wee small hours of the morning. That's the way he wins friends by making their travel and shipping problems lighter.

"And then there's the call of the telegraph key. Once an agent—he can rarely ever leave it. It's fascinating. The agent is responsible for train loads of passengers. If he misses giving the engineer on the flyer a wait order he is responsible for life and limb. He holds the lives of hundreds in his hand each day.

"Now my two boys" Mr. Hart continued. "They don't even come around the station unless I ask them. One is twenty-one and attending Westminster at Fulton, Mo., specializing in finance and economics. The other is fifteen and attending high school here in Belton. They just don't take to railroading but it's up to them as to what they'll do when they're grown."

Natural gas has been discovered about two miles west of Belton, a

The Frisco Employes' Magazine has endeavored, from time to time, to present to its readers a cross-section of the duties of various employes. Train dispatchers, engineers, mechanical men, section foremen and others have had the trials and tribulations of their respective jobs "done" by the Magazine in various issues.

But never, it so happens, has a story representative of the duties of the more than 800 agents of this great railroad been published. And so the accompanying story of one Frisco agent, Mr. T. G. Hart, of Belton, Mo., is presented to Frisco readers.

Every railroad worker realizes the important position occupied by the agent in affairs railroad. In many instances he is the biggest man in his town. He is a fount of authority on train service, rates, equipment, weather, politics, and often social arbiter and peacemaker to boot. It is safe to say that he is always the best-known man in the smaller towns, and he is, also, the best-liked.

The editor is mighty glad to publish this story of the agent, one of the hardest-working, most sincere and best loved of all railway employes.

—W. L. H., Jr.

small laundry, cheese factory and creamery are locating in Belton which

Mr. Hart sees as revenue producers from his little city.

The Frisco Magazine printed an item concerning Mr. Hart in the April, 1924 issue, commenting on his accurate station accounts, stating that he had gone thirteen months without having had a mistake in his reports. Besides the station at Belton he is responsible for four blind sidings in three counties, namely Cass and Jackson in Missouri and Johnson in Kansas.

Besides just plain railroading, Mr. Hart has a hobby, and it is fishing. He is known throughout the country as the man who pulls them out when there just aren't any there.

"Here's your train," he said to the reporter, as he pulled on his gloves to help handle the baggage. "We're always glad to have visitors. Come again. And tell all the folks at these new Employe Club meetings that though we're tied down with our duties pretty well, we're working every day for more revenue for Frisco Lines and though we can't attend all the gatherings, we're doing our part at hundreds of stations."

A Large Order

"I want a dress to put on around the house," said the lady in the department store.

"How large is your house, madam?" inquired the new clerk.

NEWS of the FRISCO CLUBS

St. Louis Men's Club

That the fellowship of employes with each other and of employes with their officials, which were characteristics of business before the days of large corporations, is being reincarnated to a noteworthy degree among the approximately 30,000 workers of Frisco Lines as a direct result of the Frisco Employes' clubs movement was stated emphatically and with just pride by speakers at second monthly luncheon of the Frisco Men's Club, of St. Louis, attended by approximately 400 clubmen and held at the Chamber of Commerce banquet hall at noon January 19.

A sort of proprietary pride in their work is being manifested to an increasing degree among Frisco Lines employes in direct proportion as this system-wide club program gathers momentum, speakers said. Already "Mr. So-and-So" and "Mr. What's His Name" are being succeeded by "Hello, Bill" and "Howdy, folks," in every-day conversation among Frisco employes.

The spontaneous applause which often punctuated and invariably followed each address during the luncheon program testified that the large group of listeners was in hearty accord with the basic theme of the addresses, which was "Know Your Fellow Worker, You Will Like Him."

The meeting sped swiftly along the hour and a half of its duration with not a dull moment to be found.

Mr. J. E. Hutchison, vice-president in charge of traffic, said that these are troublous times in railroading, that great are the cares of railroad executives, and that were it not for the things which the Frisco Employes' clubs are sponsoring he would be a discouraged man. He said that the Frisco Lines have so many employes that heretofore it has been impossible for him to become acquainted with them and they with him, but that this system-wide Frisco club program would make that more readily accomplished.

He urged that Frisco employes all along the line try to understand the problems confronting the Frisco executives and put their shoulders to the wheel and aid in vanquishing as many of these problems as they could. He pleaded for ever increasing teamwork among the members of the great Frisco family.

A highly dramatic moment of the

meeting occurred at the close of the address by Mr. F. H. Hamilton, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. Mr. Hamilton elaborated on the underlying motive of the system-wide club movement—fellowship. He then said that, although he had but a few days previously passed the forty-year milepost of his service with the Frisco

Entering 1927 with enthusiasm at a high ebb, Frisco employes are continuing their splendid work in the organization of employe clubs at various points on the system.

As this is written (January 20) thirty-seven clubs have been formed on Frisco Lines, and reports of organization meetings for other clubs are on file with the central committee.

The slogan of the Frisco Men's Club at Springfield, Mo., "Know Your Fellow Employe," sounds the keynote. "The Friendly Frisco Family" might well become the watchword.

Through the medium of luncheons and dinners, dances and socials, smokers (men only!) and bridge parties, this huge industrial army of 30,000 employes is carrying forward the banner of Frisco Lines, by banding together for a thorough understanding of the ideals of Frisco service.

We are glad to welcome Hugo, Oklahoma; Thomas, Oklahoma, and Vernon, Texas, into the increasing number of employe organizations.

Where does the next Frisco Employes' Club charter go?

—W. L. H., Jr.

co, there was a man in the audience who had so far given more than forty-five years to Frisco service. Mr. Hamilton paused. The drop of a pin could have been heard. Then he called out in a loud voice:

"Felix, stand up." Mr. Felix W. Young, paymaster, arose and the applause was deafening.

Interpretation of one of the ultimate goals of the Frisco Employes' clubs movement—pride in one's work—was given by W. L. Huggins, Jr., director of publicity for the Frisco Lines and chairman of the Central Committee on Personnel and Employe Solicitation. He outlined the growth of the Frisco Employes' clubs movement and told how, since November 11, 1927, when the movement started on a system-wide basis, twenty-nine new clubs had been organized, bringing the total to thirty-seven.

Col. F. G. Jonah, chief engineer and

Mr. J. W. Nourse, general passenger agent, spoke briefly, and said they were thorough believers in the club movement. Mr. C. H. "Uncle Charley" Baltzell, a special representative of the general manager was introduced and also expressed his willingness to aid the club's movement.

Mr. R. L. Schoenberg, club president, who has been promoted to zone auditor at Tulsa, expressed his regret that, therefore, he must resign as president, but said he was sure the St. Louis club would prosper.

Mr. Chester C. Kratky, chief clerk to the president and chairman of the entertainment committee of the St. Louis club, was toastmaster during the meeting and conducted it in a breezy way, injecting considerable humor as he introduced the speakers. Arthur Stoehr, club secretary, opened the meeting by reading the minutes of the previous meeting, held at Missouri Hotel, December 5.

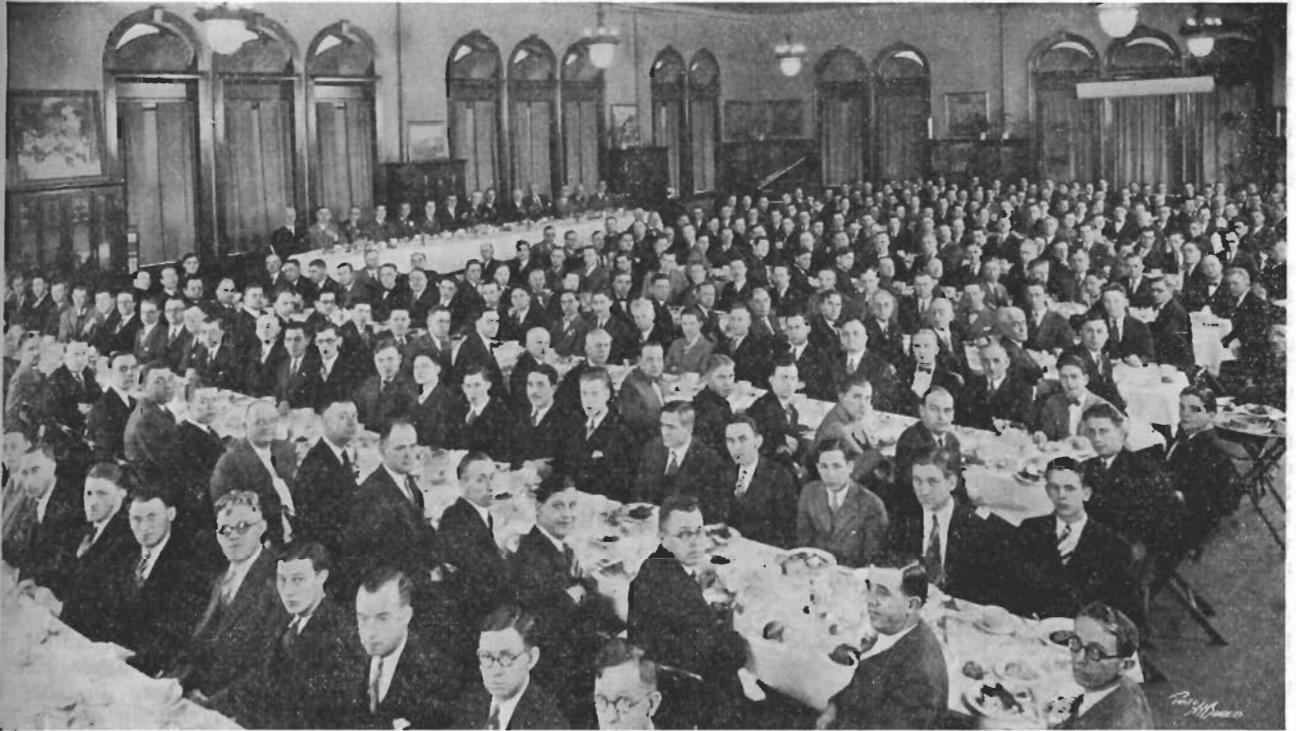
Entertainment consisted of piano selections by Ralph M. A. Firmenstein, secretary to the chief of the pass bureau, and vocal solos by Miss Hilda Netscher, soprano, of the Frisco Girls' Club of St. Louis, accompanied on the piano by Bert W. Baumgartner, of the advertising department.

Springfield Men's Club

"We must believe in the corporation we serve and with our interest aroused our value to our company will be the greater," said E. G. Nahler, St. Louis, general attorney of Frisco Lines, before approximately 400 members of the Frisco Men's Club of Springfield at the first regular meeting of the club, held the night of January 12 at the Springfield Chamber of Commerce auditorium.

The speakers of the evening were, Mr. Nahler and W. L. Huggins, Jr., St. Louis, director of publicity and editor of *The Frisco Employes' Magazine*, and chairman of the Central Committee on Personnel.

The meeting was called to order by J. W. "Doc" Seabough, president of the club. First on the program was a piano solo, "Ties Linking Us to Pensacola," played by John Kastler. Next was a novelty number, "Puffs from the Grades," played by a harmonica band composed of H. McNally, Harold Wilks, D. G. Stark and L. R. Prater, the latter singing "Annie Laurie." Next George Roop presented a vocal solo with guitar accompaniment.



The above photograph of the Frisco Men's Club of St. Louis, was taken at the January 19 luncheon of that organization held in the Chamber of Commerce Building in St. Louis. Four hundred general office employees attended the luncheon.

The two addresses of the evening followed. Mr. Nahler spoke on "A Progressive Frisco" and explained some of the multitudinous duties of the Frisco's law department. Mr. Huggins described the origin of the Frisco Employees' Club program, started early this winter, and explained that the program is of, by and for the employes, so that they will know one another better.

The closing number was a demonstration of old-time fiddling by Mr. Prater, who impersonated "Colonel Crumb." During this number and also the harmonica band number Jerry Coring, crane operator at the Springfield west shops, presented buck dancing.

President Seabaugh then introduced C. J. Stephenson, Springfield, assistant to the general manager, who introduced the following officials of the Frisco:

F. H. Shaffer, general manager; M. M. Sisson, assistant general manager; J. H. Doggrell, superintendent of transportation; J. H. Brennan, superintendent of telegraph; J. K. Gibson, assistant to the superintendent of motive power; A. W. Blume, general storekeeper; H. W. Hudgen, general claim agent and director, accident prevention; J. L. McCormack, superintendent of freight loss and damage claims; F. A. Beyer, superintendent of the west shops; P. O. Wood, assist-

ant superintendent of motive power; D. L. Forsythe, general road foreman of equipment; E. L. Magers, superintendent of the Eastern division; O. W. Bruton, superintendent of terminals; H. W. Johnson, car accountant; W. L. English, supervisor of agriculture and refrigeration; R. E. Bagent, assistant supervisor of refrigeration; G. M. Forrester, commercial agent; L. J. Leysaht, superintendent of the reclamation plant; F. E. Clark, passenger and ticket agent; G. F. Linster, assistant superintendent of telegraph; F. B. Holland; E. M. Carr, and W. D. Steele, assistant general claim agents, and Z. B. Claypool, assistant director of accident prevention, all of Springfield; E. H. Bunnell, comptroller; W. B. Wells, assistant freight traffic manager, and R. E. Drake, chief tie and timber inspector, all of St. Louis. Following the introductions, sandwiches and coffee were served.

The next meeting, also a smoker, will be held February 10, on the North Side.

The officers of the Frisco Men's Club of Springfield are: J. W. "Doc" Seabaugh, clerk in the office of the superintendent of motive power, president; C. H. Rice, claim agent in the office of the superintendent of freight loss and damage claims, vice-president; G. S. Danley, clerk in the general manager's office, secretary; Orville Coble, chief file clerk, office of

the general manager, treasurer; O. P. Raney, clerk, office of the car accountant, sergeant-at-arms.

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Two hundred and twenty-five enthusiastic Frisco employes of Tulsa met in Carpenter's Hall there the night of January 16 for a dance sponsored by the Frisco Magic City club. The well-known seven piece Harmonators Band of Tulsa, furnished the excellent dance music for the occasion. While most of those assembled danced the evening through, eight bridge tables, erected at one end of the hall, attracted a good deal of attention in competition for the prize offered by the club.

Messrs. W. L. Huggins, Jr., and C. C. Mills, who were out-of-town guests at the affair made short talks, and following these the "prize waltz", event-extraordinary of the evening, was held. First prize was won by Mr. A. L. Joy, business representative of the Central Trades Union and Mrs. Joyce, although several dancers finally eliminated made competition "hot" for the winners.

Miss Christine Vandever, secretary to superintendent of terminals. O. L. Young, as chairman of the committee on arrangements, was heartily congratulated on the success of the affair. Sharing with her in the party's success were W. B. Baxter and F. L. Cas-

tle of executive general agent James' office, who served on the refreshment committee and served hundreds of glasses of grape-juice to the dancers.

President Faye Warren has planned a business meeting for early in February, the exact date to be announced later.

Fort Scott, Kansas

J. O. Armstrong was unanimously re-elected president of the Frisco employes' Club of Fort Scott, Kans., at the annual meeting held January 17 at the Y. M. C. A. building. Frank H. McCann was re-elected secretary-treasurer.

The other officers elected are: Reid Darling, vice-president and general chairman of the solicitation committee, and Miss Dorothea Working, second vice-president and also director of entertainment.

Mr. Armstrong gave a short talk on "What the Frisco Club Has Done." The Club at Fort Scott has been in existence a year.

L. B. Clary, assistant superintendent; C. L. Payne, assistant superintendent, and C. O. McCain, general agent, both of Fort Scott, delivered addresses.

Mr. McCain spoke of "The Frisco Club from a Traffic Standpoint," and said in part as follows:

"I could give you some figures showing you that a large amount of traffic, both freight and passenger, had been secured by the efforts of the membership. We have been increasing our revenue, especially from a freight traffic standpoint, ever since the club began to function.

"The relation of the public and the carriers is that of the buyer and seller. Just as you are the buyer and he the seller, when you go to a merchant's place of business. The merchant is the buyer and you are the seller when our railroad is used for transportation of his goods to and from Fort Scott.

"It is gratifying to know that we have the hearty co-operation and support of each department in Fort Scott. It is desired that this splendid spirit will continue and that we work as a unit to render the standard of service to which the public is entitled. Let us get behind the officers for the coming year and assist them in every way possible in keeping the Fort Scott club to the front."

The musical numbers were well received and were presented almost sole-

ly by wives and daughters of Frisco employes. The musical program was: piano solo, Mrs. L. W. Pipkin; piano duet, Mrs. L. W. and Mrs. R. E. Pipkin; vocal solos, Mrs. F. H. Carson, accompanied on the piano by Miss Marjorie Carson; humorous readings, Mrs. Frank Lampton; whistling solos, Miss Maurine West, accompanied on the piano by Miss Marian Hicks.

This club closed its 1927 activities with a dance December 12, at Memorial Hall, which was attended by approximately 1,500 persons. P. J. "Pat" Moore, roundhouse foreman, directed the entertainment on that occasion and was highly complimented for his arrangement of the entertain-

Monett, Missouri

The Frisco Employes' Club of Monett, Mo., at its open meeting held the night of December 29 at Park Casino, was addressed by J. M. Russell, mayor of Monett; M. M. Sisson, Springfield, Mo., assistant general manager of the Frisco; C. C. Mills, St. Louis, Frisco accident prevention agent; J. K. Gibson, Springfield, assistant to the superintendent of motive power for the Frisco; C. H. Baltzell, St. Louis, a representative of the general manager's office; J. L. McCormack, Springfield, superintendent of freight loss and damage claims, E. L. Magers, Springfield, superintendent of the Eastern division, and others.

The meeting was opened with the playing of several selections by Lee's Boys' Band. J. J. Charles, president, then conducted a short business session. William Henry, chairman of the membership committee, reported that approximately 935 members had been pledged to the club. A. T. Brown, chairman of the traffic solicitation committee, submitted reports showing much success in obtaining routings "Via Frisco Lines."

Mayor Russell, in his address, spoke on the possibilities for good to be derived both by the community and the Frisco from the successful operation of the Monett club. He stated that a change of conditions had come about in the last few years that has made it necessary for railroad employes to do something in defense of their positions. For railroad employes to have steady employment, he said, it is essential that the railroad have the business.

Mr. Sisson said that while the clubs are organized primarily for boosting that there is another important factor connected with the clubs, the enabling of employes and officers to get together in a friendly spirit of co-operation and helpfulness which must result in good for all concerned. Mr. Sisson said that for the first eleven months of 1927 there were 780,000 less revenue passengers on the Frisco than in 1926, and that the freight business had fallen off in 1927, five million dollars as compared with 1926.

Mr. Gibson said that the Frisco Employes' clubs, although organized on a system-wide scale only recently, already had succeeded in getting much business and that as they become better organized will be stronger and



ment part of the program. Others on the entertainment committee for that occasion were: Dorothea Working, E. R. Schumaker, C. Jones, Roy Rector and Nelle Richardson. The decorations committee was: Mrs. H. A. Hanes, chairman; Mrs. C. O. McCain, Mrs. N. G. Rea, Mrs. T. C. Kost, Mrs. J. T. Richardson and Mrs. C. L. Payne. The reception committee was: Miss Working, chairman; Miss Nelle Richardson, Miss Marge Hendricks, Miss Blanche Bickne, Miss Laura Clark, Miss Gladys Roth, Miss Teresa Bayless, Mrs. Edith Austin, Miss Alice Hogan, Mrs. Thelma Linn, Miss Letha Linn, Miss Cleis Hunt, Miss Ruby Goodspeed, Miss Marie Hayden and Miss Faye Whitefill.