

THE FRISCO EMPLOYEES' MAGAZINE



MAY 1930
Vol. VII No. VIII

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in HAND



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with
ACCURACY

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The watch shown above is the latest Model No. 7 of the famous Hamilton 992. The pocket watch (left) is the Farragut, a beautiful model in 14K filled yellow or white gold, with secometer dial as shown, \$55. The Raleigh strap watch is available in 14K filled yellow or white gold at \$57. Other Hamiltons from \$50 to \$685.

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 25,000 active and retired employes of the Frisco Lines. It contains stories, items of current news, personal notes about employes 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.

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

Distributed free among Frisco Employees. To others, price 15 cents a copy; subscription rate \$1.50 a year. Advertising rates will be made known upon application.

MEMBER



The KELLOGG GROUP

FIFTY-THREE YEARS A TRACKMAN

IT was in the year of 1881, and the little Frisco section house, the home of the section foreman at Osceoma, Oklahoma, was a desolate looking place, indeed. The "wide open spaces" stretched as far as the eye could see. Prairie chickens were no novelty, neither were wild turkeys, hogs and deer were so plentiful that they sometimes blocked the track in front of the Frisco train which steamed its way each day to Afton, the end of the line.

One day an old Cherokee Indian rode up to the section foreman's house. Across the pommel of his saddle were two sacks. Tied to the pommel was an axe handle. He dismounted and went to the door. Upon being admitted inside he asked if the section foreman might want some potatoes and green beans, and, an axe handle.

"Well," the section foreman replied, "I might. Let's see them."

The old Indian brought them in, two half bushel sacks, and dumped the top layer of each on the floor. They looked fresh and palatable, and the section foreman inquired the price.

"Fifteen cents—too much? Huh?" grunted the Indian.

The price did not seem exorbitant and with the axe handle thrown in, the deal was consummated.

And that is only one of the incidents which Pat Herd, genial Irish roadmaster of the Northern division, related of his experience in early railroading in the Indian Territory.

Fifteen cents! It seems a joke, yet when he went on to say that beef sold for three cents a pound; eggs five cents a dozen, butter three pounds for a quarter, and potatoes twenty-five cents a bushel, it was possible for the old Indian to purchase for his own supplies, two pounds of beef, a half dozen eggs and two loaves of bread, with his fifteen cents.

There are a comparatively small number of Frisco veterans who can recall those early days of railroading, and this, 1930, is Pat Herd's last year of railroading. He was born in 1861 and began his service with Frisco Lines on June 1, 1877, at Ritchey, Mo., working on the section of the old Atlantic & Pacific, and will be retired when he reaches 70 years of age this summer. He was sixteen years old at that time, and together with another boy his same age, made a "hand". The two of them worked together, for a dollar a day. He re-

Roadmaster Pat Herd of Carl Junction, Missouri, Recalls Pioneer Days as Retirement Nears



PAT HERD

calls that the foreman's name was Jim Dunn.

On the first of September, 1887, the foreman at Granby, Mo., one Dick Cox needed a man for a week or ten days and Mr. Herd took the job, and at the end of the month drew his first pay check from the old pay car. Jerry McCarty, the roadmaster fired Foreman Dunn, and the men walked out with him, which left Billy Gordon, the foreman who took his place ("a little dried up Irishman from Crocker, Mo.," so Mr. Herd described him) with only one man.

Mr. Herd applied for a job and secured it. He has spent a lifetime between Rolla, Mo., and Vinita, Okla., holding positions as section man and foreman until his appointment as roadmaster in 1892, with territory from Paris to Brownwood on the Texas Division. He remained at Granby until January 1, 1898, when he was transferred to Carl Junction, where he has remained for the past thirty-two years.

"I remember the first engine I ever saw," he said. "It was working laying track between Peirce City and Ritchey and was hauling rail and ties. It only had one pair of driving wheels about the size of those on a Ford automobile. The cylinders were about 16 inches long and about 12

inches or 13 inches through, and those were in the front end of the engine. Back of that was another pair of wheels about the same size, with no connections. The cab was open and small, and the little engine pulled a flat car about twenty feet long. The engine burned cord wood. The flat cars in those days held about two head of cattle.

"We had a great deal of trouble with that little old engine throwing live sparks out of the diamond stack and setting the fields on fire. Most of the track was dirt in the old days and we used 50-pound iron rail. All switches were stub switches and all frogs cast iron metal, six feet long, reversible."

The past severe winter brought to Mr. Herd's mind the winter of 1884, while he was in charge of the section at Dixon, Mo. The winter was cold and snowy and the ground was frozen up solid. The roadmaster came down and told him to lay off his men. So on the twenty-third day of December he laid them all off. He told them not to go far away, because as soon as the weather broke he would take them all back, however, they did not resume work until March 4, 1884, the day that Cleveland took his seat as president. And those two months were the only two months during his service that he did not draw a pay check from the Frisco Railroad in the track department.

He recalls many of the old-time conductors, roadmasters and engineers. He knew Jim Mansfield, Ben Gray, Andy Carey, Andy Otherson, Tom Sprinkle, Jack Carr, John Lopp, Ben Schuler and Ben Fenner, all old conductors, intimately, and the Hitchcock brothers, Russ Green, the Lyons and Dwyer brothers, Bert Coleman, Tom Nelson and Walter Knowlman, engineers. Mr. Herd also worked many days with "Bob" Holland, now retired roadmaster at Neodesha, Kans., as well as retired Roadmaster John Sheehan.

Mr. Herd has two children, a daughter and a son. The son is his daddy's clerk at Carl Junction and he has had thirty years of service with Frisco Lines, himself.

At a recent meeting of the section foremen at Joplin, under Mr. Herd's jurisdiction, he made an earnest appeal to the men to make this, his last year with Frisco Lines one of the best. He urged that they pay special attention to the rules of the

(Now turn to page 25, please)

WORLD'S LARGEST BERRY FARM IN ALA.

Moffett State Farm Near Huxford Has 220 Acres of Strawberries in One Field

FEW of the Frisco's 30,000 employes have ever heard of the Moffett State Farm, located on the Frisco's new Southern extension 10 miles north of Wetumpka, Ala., five miles from Huxford, Ala., and 60 miles north of Pensacola, Fla.

Indeed, there has been very little to hear about the Moffett State Farm until recently.

Two years ago the site of the farm was an area of 8,400 acres of unimproved land, with a scattered stand of second growth pine timber.

Then the state officials of Alabama became enthused over the remarkable soil fertility of this state-owned property, particularly in view of its close proximity to the state penal institution at Huxford, where convict labor could be secured.

Conferences with Mr. G. K. Fountain, warden of the prison at Huxford followed, and two years ago the rehabilitation of the tract's acreage was begun and Moffett State Farm became a reality.

The regeneration of the district is interesting indeed. First, 4,500 acres of the land was cleared and 2,000,000 square feet of yellow pine timber was secured, all of it sawed and dressed in the farm's lumber mill, and used in the construction of numerous farm buildings. The farm was fenced, and many miles of highway were constructed through it. Then followed the construction of housing accommodations for the 1,350 convicts who are

the farm workers, and their guards and overseers, and a hotel for the benefit of visitors.

The construction of five miles of railroad, with 60-pound rail, from the farm to a connection with the Frisco at Huxford was completed in record time, and small switching engines were purchased by the state to care for the switching of cars from the farm to Frisco Lines.

With all this work completed the actual farming began in November, 1928, when 40 acres of strawberries were planted. In March, 1929, 180 additional acres were put to berries, and today the entire 220 acres are producing lavishly. Agricultural experts claim this to be the largest strawberry farm in the world. The first car of the berries left the farm on April 2, via the Frisco to Chicago, and daily shipments are being made. Warden

Fountain estimates that fifty or more cars will be shipped this season.

Every facility for handling the strawberry crop is at hand, and sixteen packing sheds are located on the strawberry acreage. From the sheds they are trucked to the loading sheds, or to the pre-cooling plant which has seven compartments, six of them refrigerated with a capacity of five carloads. All berries are packed in 24-pint or 24-quart containers, each container labeled with a highly colored and distinctive label of the Moffett State Farm, and all berries are governmentally inspected and must pass an A No. 1 rating before shipment.

But development of the largest strawberry farm in the world is far from the limit of this modern plant.

During this year, the farm will ship the production from 320 acres of Irish potatoes, 100 acres of snap beans, 100 acres of cucumbers, and 100 acres of sweet corn. In addition, sufficient acreage of spinach, lettuce, okra, beets, peas, onions, cabbage and tomatoes has been planted to care for the feeding of the farm workers.

In order that this vegetable production may be properly conserved, a canning plant has been established and any surplus from immediate needs is canned and saved for future consumption.

During the spring of last year, Warden Fountain and his "guests" planted

(Now turn to page 25, please)

Squads of convicts are used to pick strawberries at the Moffett State Farm near Huxford, Ala. This picture was taken in the strawberry fields as the picking season began early last month. Several penitentiary buildings may be seen in the background.

