

# HE WELCOMED FRISCO LINES IN 1903

ON a high cliff just outside the little town of Pawnee, Okla., is the ranch of Major Gordon W. Lillie, better known as "Pawnee Bill." Below the house are the tracks of the Frisco railroad and daily trains run through the town and on into Enid, Okla.

"Pawnee Bill" is not only one of the most colorful figures of the west, but is one of the most famous characters in Oklahoma's history. One could not write the history of Oklahoma—the history of the west or the history of the Frisco Railroad's advent into that virgin territory, without bringing conspicuously into the picture this rugged pioneer who knew Oklahoma when a wagon wheel had never so much as broken its sod.

He came to Pawnee in 1879, and was commissioned to lead the boomers into the Oklahoma territory. He has seen the country grow and the railroads join town after town. He has seen the highways connect city after city, and since the arrival of the first Frisco train he has been one of the most staunch friends the Frisco has had in Oklahoma.

"Pawnee Bill" has been zealous for the advancement of his Oklahoma, and it was he who took the lead in preparations for the arrival and fitting tribute to be paid the first little Frisco train which steamed into Pawnee in 1903. People came for miles in covered wagons, hacks, buggies, on horseback, and the welcome which these Oklahomans gave the little train was expressed with six shooters and lusty cheers which drowned out the puffing and snorting of the little six-wheel diamond-stacked locomotive.

Indians stood around wrapped in gaily colored blankets. Cowboys sat astride their nervous mounts, gazing in wonder at this new form of transportation—this train which was soon to replace the old stage coach and link town to town, city to city.

And after the train had left there was a big free show, with roping of steers, fancy and trick riding by the cowboys and last but not least, "free ice water." In fact, according to "Pawnee Bill", the advertisement that ice water would be served was responsible for hundreds of people who gathered in the town that day.

But today ice water is not a luxury and trains come and go and have taken their place in the daily routine of the town. Drug stores, modern hotels and automobiles have made Pawnee, Okla., like any other modern town in the Frisco's Oklahoma terri-

## Major Gordon Lillie, Better Known as "Pawnee Bill" Recalls Olden Days of Oklahoma

tory, and while the Indians in gaily colored blankets may be found on the streets there today, they have departed in many ways from the customs of early days. The gaily colored blankets of the women are thrown over modern gingham housedresses. The Indian men, with their hair



*This picture of Major Lillie ("Pawnee Bill") was taken in 1908 at the time he signed up with the famous "Buffalo Bill" to combine their two Wild West shows. Thousands of Frisco employes will remember him as he looked in those days.*

braided and long, tuck the braids under a blue serge suit coat. No town located on a railroad can fail to absorb modern day customs, yet "Pawnee Bill" has kept alive much that was of interest from the pioneer days.

There are few people today who have not at some time or another sat in wrapt interest at one of "Pawnee Bill's" wild west shows, for it was through his show that he became known to thousands of Americans.

"Pawnee Bill's" first manual labor was on the Santa Fe building a spur to Honeywell, Kans., as a feeder line for the cattle business. Word was sent out that cattle would be hauled to the markets from that point, and by the time the road was built between 150,000 and 200,000 head of cattle had

been accumulated at that point. Some of them had come from Old Mexico and Texas.

But the work was too hard on this lad of 17, and while he was beginning his railroad career his father sent him a message that he had been appointed the Indian Agent at Pawnee, Okla. A school had been built for the Indians there, and so he accepted his new appointment. The government wished to keep the children away from their Indian environment as much as possible and so they ate and slept at the school, only returning home at the week-end.

"Pawnee Bill" was not familiar with the Indian language, but he carried a notebook and pencil with him and would ask the English-speaking Indians the Indian word for various terms which would be beneficial to him in his school work, and mastered the Pawnee language in six months.

In 1882 Buffalo Bill, also famous in early pioneer history, sent to Pawnee for some Pawnee Indians, but the government refused to let them leave their reservation without consent. It was necessary to send a runner to Arkansas City and send a message to Washington for this permission and wait for a reply. While this agent of Buffalo Bill's waited for the answer, he became well acquainted with "Pawnee Bill" and told him of the wonders of the eastern cities—the sights which one might see in New York City, the different customs of the eastern people, and "Pawnee Bill" made up his mind that he would see the world.

He wanted to travel with Buffalo Bill, and asked the agent to try to induce this western character to engage him to travel with his show. In 1883 Buffalo Bill wrote for "Pawnee Bill" to join the show and bring with him forty Pawnee Indians, and that was the first wild west show ever staged. The previous shows which Buffalo Bill had given were held in opera houses, and while they had the western atmosphere, they were designated as "hall shows." He finished the season with the show and then returned to Pawnee where he and his brother had a herd of cattle and "Pawnee Bill" took charge of the herd.

All pioneer Oklahomans will remember the winter of 1884. A snow of six or eight inches fell, and this was followed by a sleet storm, with another snow on top. It made it impossible for the cattle to find grazing land, and "Pawnee Bill" says that they

died like ants. He sold his chance of their survival to a rancher for a few hundred dollars, and in the spring of the year found him with an invitation to put on a wild west show for the Wichita Fair Association, and for like associations at Peabody, Newton and Hutchison. At the end of the season he had cleared around \$650.00.

In the meantime "Pawnee Bill" had married and he and Mrs. Lillie were visiting her parents in Philadelphia when he was approached there to put on a show. The show started again and traveled throughout the country, from Wichita, Kan., to Easton, Md., but it was a failure as far as finances were concerned and the last day of the show found the stock seized for small debts and the performers unable to get money for transportation home. A subscription was taken up to see the show out of town and back to their homes in the west.

Then "Pawnee Bill," wearing a threadbare suit, wondered just what to do next. The thought of factory and office work was appalling. He longed for the big open spaces of the west—his horse and his Oklahoma friends.

While he was debating his next move, a wire came from the Board of Trade of Wichita, Kansas, asking if he would assist in leading the boomers into the Oklahoma Territory. Through a friend he borrowed money for the train and stage coach ride back to Wichita. He rode into the town and glancing out of the car window he saw hundreds of people at the train.

"What's all the crowd here for?" he asked a fellow passenger.

"They're going to open Oklahoma to the settlers and I hear that they've sent for 'Pawnee Bill.' He's to arrive today and lead them in. I guess he's on this train," the man replied.

And before long "Pawnee Bill" was led to a landau, and preceded by the brass band, was escorted to his hotel.

He organized a colony of 3,200 people and this colony moved to Caldwell, Kan. There they were confronted by the Fifth Cavalry who would not allow them to go across the border, so they camped there on the fairgrounds. A wire from the president of the Board of Trade of Wichita told "Pawnee Bill" not to make any demonstrations, but to wait, that the Oklahoma Bill opening Oklahoma as a settlement had passed the House and they were rushing it to the Senate, and when it was passed by the

Senate the territory would be opened legally.

Edna Ferber's picture, "Cimmaron," popular throughout the country at this time, tells the story of that grand rush into Oklahoma for homesites. "Pawnee Bill" went into the territory from Caldwell, Kan. "You cannot imagine the various kinds of vehicles—people that went into that new settlement," he said. "There were hay racks and covered wagons and buggies and surries, pulled by six-horse teams, two-horse teams, mules—and in front of them all were the boys on



And here's "Pawnee Bill" as he is today with his favorite horse. A few of the "Old Town" buildings appear in the background.

horseback. Obviously they would reach their place first and many of them had already located their claims, through previous prospecting and were on their way to take possession of them. At exactly 12:00 o'clock, noon, on April 22, 1889, the gun was fired, giving these settlers the right to enter the new territory. I shall never forget the sight. I did not want to establish a claim, because these pioneers had to live there six years to establish ownership, and I had the 'show fever' and knew that I wanted to go on with my wild west show. But my brother and uncle both established a home.

"There was much confusion. The settlers did not know the way the sections ran, and while the corners were marked with huge stones, in the chaos which followed, the boundary lines became mixed. There were quarrels and killings over boundary lines, and some of those pioneers would dig up the rocks and throw them away and lay claim to sections which were not theirs. The 'sooners'—those men who had cheated and gone on into the land before the appointed time, got many of the good sections and many of them established their rights through lack of witnesses who saw them enter. In

one or two instances, when the real settlers reached the land, some of those who had cheated had their basements dug about six or eight feet.

"I remember I came out of the territory on the first stage coach. It had stopped at Kingfisher for supplies, passengers and to rest the horses and when they started again, they found one of the horses dead. In a quarrel between the driver and old 'Cannon Ball' Green over the dead horse, the driver quit and I rode out on the first stage coach with 'Cannon Ball' Green driving the horses."

"Pawnee Bill" returned east and started his Wild West show again and it was during this time that he established a contact with the Frisco railroad which caused him to number its officials among his best friends. The show carried around 650 people, besides the stock, tents, wigwams, wagons, etc., and oftentimes it would require about seven trains to haul it from one point to another. Much of it was handled on the Frisco, and "Pawnee Bill" recalls the excellent service which was given him. And from that start, the show was a success, both financially and otherwise. Besides touring the entire

United States many times, the show played nine months in Holland, Belgium and France. In 1908 "Pawnee Bill" joined forces with Buffalo Bill and the big combined Buffalo Bill-Pawnee Bill show was an attraction which will long be remembered.

But "Pawnee Bill" always maintained Pawnee, Okla., as his headquarters. He secured the land which is now known as his ranch through government permission. It was formerly the reservation of Chief Bluehawk, and the government transferred Bluehawk's reservation to another point, with the full permission of this fine old Chief.

While the "Pawnee Bill" show is now a memory—"Pawnee Bill" is determined to keep alive much of that pioneer Oklahoma atmosphere. He has a large herd of buffalo on his ranch, and breeds them and at this time has a fine lot of buffalo calves which he sometimes sells to shows. And a short way from his home is "Old Town" in which "Pawnee Bill" is entirely wrapped up at this time.

Here he has built a replica of an old trading post. Tourists may buy beaded moccasins, beads, peace pipes, Indian goods of all kinds. The walls are appropriately decorated in old

(Now turn to Page 27, please)

# AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK IS PROMISING

THE extreme drouth which affected the farms over the entire Frisco system in the summer of 1930, has failed to dampen the spirit of the farmer, according to W. L. English, supervisor of agriculture for the Frisco. Mr. English reports that there is more work done in preparation for the 1931 season's crop over the entire Frisco territory than there has ever been before. It is not an unfamiliar sight to see farmers taking advantage of the mild days to do their spring plowing in the nine-state territory traversed by the Frisco, and while it has been very dry, there has been enough moisture to permit this preparatory work.

Rain is needed in practically every state, but with spring approaching and with it the usual early spring rains, the crop situation presents a favorable outlook. March is a serious month for the wheat crop, but in Kansas and Oklahoma there is still sixty days before there will be any concern about lack of soil moisture.

"We have every right to expect a rainy season," Mr. English said, "particularly so since we have had such a long drouth. The rainfall has been less than average all over the middle-west."

The acreage of wheat in Oklahoma and Kansas is as great as it was in 1930 with a small reduction in Missouri acreage. The wheat territory has had the advantage of light rains all fall and winter and some snow. It is dry enough to cause concern only in a few spots. Mr. English advises that generally speaking, it is up to or above average condition at this time of the year, and prospects are for as big or a little larger crop than last year.

The shortage of feed has been largely relieved by wheat pasture in an open winter, enabling the farmers to get by with their livestock. There is quite a material increase noted in the sowing of oats for early spring feed and also an increase in corn acreage.

Owing to the enormous carry-over of cotton and the low prices obtained, the cotton acreage has been reduced to a small per cent. Indications are that the biggest reductions will be in Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas. These reductions are not noticed east of the river. The farmers, however, are planting other crops to take the place of their cotton acreage. Most of the substituted crops are feed crops, greatly needed because of the

## W. L. English Tells of 1931 Crop Possibilities in Frisco Territory



W. L. ENGLISH  
Supervisor of Agriculture

unusual shortage of grain and roughage at present. With a favorable summer season, there should be an ample feed supply grown locally to take care of all needs. This is probably the first time in the history of our country that this condition has prevailed in the cotton belt, or where cotton is strictly a commercial crop.

Part of the cotton acreage is being replaced with truck crops. There will be an increase in the Irish potato acreage, and a large increase in the acreage of radishes, beans, cabbage, cantaloupes, watermelons, spinach and like crops.

At the present time there are some well developed buds on the fruit trees and they are in excellent condition. The prospects for a normal crop are good. There are many splendid grape vineyards along Frisco Lines and Mr. English reports that the grapes are in excellent condition and work is being done now on the pruning in preparation for the coming year. Good weather has helped all work in the orchards which are farther advanced at this date than in any previous years.

The drouth of 1930 destroyed many

of the old beds of strawberries and while the prospects are that we will have a slightly smaller reduction in acreage, the beds that are alive are in excellent condition. The largest crop

of strawberries are expected from the districts around Monett, Mo., Sarcoxie, Mo., and Farmington, Ark. The crop of last year brought excellent prices, and were of unusually good quality.

In spite of many discouraging conditions, and a reduction in the number of dairy cows being milked, there has been an increase in the butter output. Low prices have forced better care in the elimination of the milking of unprofitable cows. A noticeable difference has been recorded in the care taken of the herds, which includes better feeding, with the result that we are getting more butter and have had a steady increase in this movement, which comes from the Ozark territory. Condenseries, located at Mt. Vernon, Neosho, Rogers and Springfield, are handling the milk.

There has been some intensive work done in the culling of poultry flocks during the last fall and winter, and only the producers have been kept. The warm weather has been an incentive to egg production, and at this writing the price of eggs is the lowest in many years. More care has been given the feeding rations, improved buildings have been erected for the flocks, and as a result, the production has been kept up to normal.

There has also been more consideration given to improving the conditions of turkeys in the turkey district in Texas, than to increasing the output. Low prices have prevailed due to conditions under which the turkeys are raised, but a decided improvement has been made in the breeding houses and in the feeding—two important essentials. There is a bright prospect for the turkey business in Texas next season. The movement of turkeys from Texas during the Christmas season of 1930 was excellent and the prices better than for the turkeys placed on the Thanksgiving market.

Due to the increased acreage, there is an excellent prospect in store for canned goods. The acreage of fruits and vegetables for canning purposes is up to normal, and an increase reported in acreage production. Practically all of the tomatoes come from the Ozarks in Arkansas and Missouri and Mr. English advises that they are expecting a good increase in the green wrapped business.

# TULSA TRIBUNE CHAMPIONS RAILROADS

The editorial which appears below, entitled "The Parasite Busses," was taken from the Tulsa Tribune of Sunday, February 1st.

## Regulation of Highways Urged by Leading Oklahoma Paper

**N**OTWITHSTANDING the fact that railroads are facing economic problems, due to the rapid development of the freight and passenger bus business, the railroads of the country are engaged in an expansion program which their earnings at this time do not warrant. This they are doing because there is need of expansion in all business enterprises if we are to restore the elusive prosperity.

But there is no such business promotion program planned by the bus operators.

Already the railroads are asking for the right to reduce their traffic rates that they may compete with the bus business. This should be granted. A few major railroads are planning to operate on a first and second-class fare, charging less for coach accommodation than for Pullman. This plan should maintain.

So long as the railroads are subjected to definite state and inter-state regulation, the bus and truck business should be subjected to the same rigid regulations.

The railroads at least stand on their own economic feet. The bus and truck business is a parasite business. It does not stand on its own economic feet.

The railroads are compelled to buy their right of way. They have to pay for every inch of ground over which they travel. They have to cut through the hills and fill the low lands, bridge the streams they cross and maintain culverts that will prevent damage by flood. Do the busses do any of this? Not one bit of it. They calmly let the public pay their road bill. They are a parasite business.

The bus and truck business in the last ten years has increased something like 870%. In these ten years the railroad business has decreased.

The railroads pay eighty-four times as much tax into the public treasury as the busses pay. The railroads maintain wages and plan expansion to absorb what they can of the unemployed labor, while the busses in many instances have used this situation to lower wages.

In addition to all of this, the busses endanger traffic on the highway. Busses are constantly getting healthier, they are growing bigger, longer and wider. In other words, they are continually taking up more

"—That the railroads are entering into an extensive building program to help restore the elusive prosperity, notwithstanding the fact that they are facing serious economic problems;

"—That the time has come when the government should compel the bus business to do exactly what the railroads have had to do—buy their own right of way, build their own road beds and maintain them;

"—That when we get to dealing with fairness to the railroads, the railroads will return their locals and there will be little need for the bus;

"—That rail transportation is going to serve the public needs for a long time to come and we are not ready to allow the railroads to become streaks of rust;

"—That the railroads are probably the largest single agency for employment of labor, and the bus and truck business cannot absorb railroad labor without so completely monopolizing the public highways, that the individual auto driver will be run off—"

These and other salient points are forcibly brought out in the accompanying editorial, which states in a most comprehensive manner the case of railroads against unfair competition by other forms of transportation.

space on the highway. This condition makes the highway to the average auto driver constantly a greater hazard.

It would be just as logical for individuals to operate motor cars on the railroads as for the public to continue to operate autos on a highway that the bus and truck traffic more and more seeks to monopolize.

Perhaps, as bus and truck builders and operators tell us, the railroad is out of date. Perhaps it is to go the road of the stage coach. Perhaps our railroad lines are to become streaks of rust. But if it is to come to that it means there will be so much bus and truck traffic, that the highways will practically be turned over to these parasitic operators.

Already freight trucks are operating in trains. The one trailer is common, the two trailer is not uncommon and the three trailer is already introduced.

The way to solve this problem is to order all cars that carry freight or passenger for fee to be denied the use of public highways. This can be done both by state legislation and federal law.

The time has come when the government should compel the bus business to do exactly what the railroads have had to do—buy their own right of way, build their own road beds and maintain them.

Until this is done, a license fee should be put upon every common carrier bus and truck that will equalize road maintenance with the cost maintained by the railroads. That is asking no more than we demand of the railroads. And we have no right to ask the railroads to pay the taxes they now pay, when we permit a less taxed competitor to enter the field on an unfair basis.

Massachusetts is already leading the way. Massachusetts now collects more than \$2,000,000 a year from its busses and trucks.

Naturally busses can charge less per mile and trucks can establish a lower freight rate when they have no road building to do and no road maintenance to meet. If we are going to give the busses and the freight and express trucks the advantages which they now enjoy, we should, so long as railroads are needed, maintain the cost of their road bed building, track laying and track maintenance. We should give it to them. That would be only fair because that is exactly what we are giving to the common carrier busses and trucks.

When we get to this basis of dealing with fairness to the railroads, the railroads will return their locals and there will be little need of the bus.

A railroad coach is a more comfortable vehicle to ride in, any time, than a bus with its narrow seat, narrow aisle and low ceiling.

When we treat our transportation agencies equally and with fairness, the railroads will come to motor-driven coaches and there is no reason why one every hour shouldn't leave Tulsa for all the stops between here and Springfield, Missouri. And every hour the same system of individual motor-driven coaches operated between Springfield and St. Louis. And so ad infinitum on all lines all over the rail network of the country. All these lines could carry local passengers for a fee no larger than that which the busses now charge for a thoroughly uncomfortable and inadequate service.

(Now turn to Page 27, please)

# CONDUCTOR'S GENIALITY GETS TRAFFIC

THE Frisco's Kansas City-Florida Special was ready to pull out of the Union Station at Kansas City and L. W. Worthington, Pullman conductor, was about to step on the train when he noticed a woman rushing toward him, waving frantically.

He hurried to meet her and, as he took her bag, she asked breathlessly, "Is this the Frisco's Florida Special?"

"Why, yes," he replied, "where are you going?"

"I want to go to Pensacola and I just got here. I haven't my ticket or reservation, and I want to make a connection at Amory," she told him.

"Now, don't worry about all that. Let me take care of it," he said. "That's my business. You get right on the train. We're leaving now and we'll arrange everything when you get your breath."

Within the space of a few minutes he had her located in a comfortable section and had the necessary information so that he could wire for her reservation at Amory.

"I can't tell you how I appreciate this service," she said. "It is sometimes difficult to travel alone and it is certainly a relief to unload the responsibility on someone who is so able to take it all."

When Mr. Worthington steps aboard his train, he not only assumes responsibility for each and every one of his patrons, but he treats them as if they were guests in his home. This fact is vouched for by hundreds of his "regulars," who call up at the passenger office in Kansas City, advising that they want to make a trip on the Kansas City-Florida Special, but they would like to catch it on one of Mr. Worthington's runs.

The letter "S" begins only two words for him. One is "Service," and the other is "Smile." His smile is a contagious one and he uses it effectively as an entree to conversations

## Unfailing Courtesy Has Given L. W. Worthington of Pullman Company a Wide Following

with his passengers and without fail he manages to arouse a splendid feeling among his patrons toward the road over which they are traveling.

The Kansas City Star of September 25, 1926, carried a feature story of Mr. Worthington's excellent care of 114 Florida refugees who traveled on his train from Birmingham to Kansas

was taking care of them. There were a number of mothers with small babies among the group, and Mr. J. R. McGregor furnished us with a case of certified milk. We managed to get them all to Kansas City and fed and cared for them as best we could.

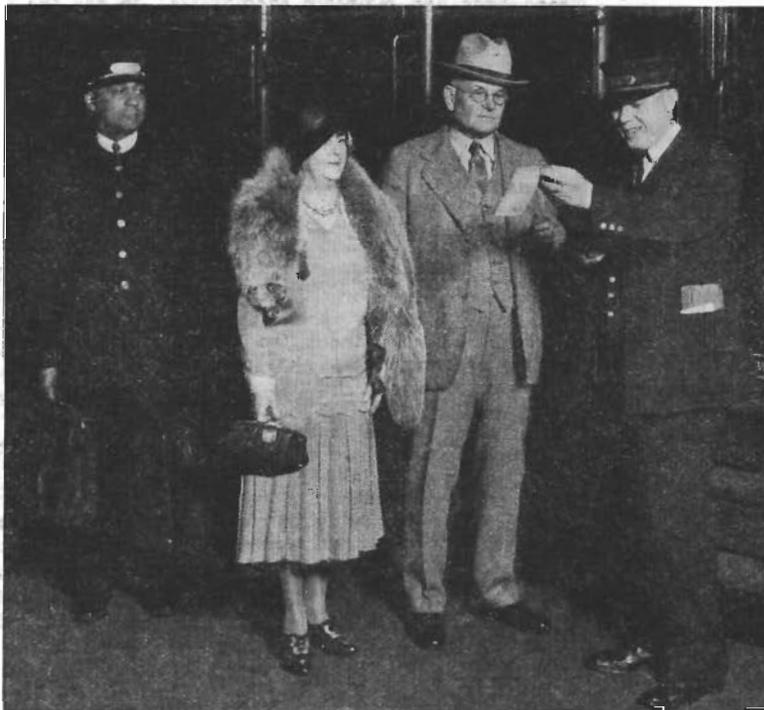
When we got off the train, they followed me to the passenger agent's office. There they sat down their belongings and as soon as I had turned in my reports, I took them over to the Travelers' Aid and saw that they were all cared for. They were most grateful to the Frisco for the care and attention received."

But in groups or singly, Mr. Worthington has a way of making friends for both himself and the Frisco in his daily contacts. He tells of an old Italian woman who got into a Pullman by mistake. She could not speak English and Mr. Worthington could not speak Italian. However, she had the address of her son in Kansas City with her. Mr. Worthington knew he could not make her understand about the extra charge for Pullman car space and so he made her comfortable and sent a wire at the next station to E. G. Baker, assistant general freight and passenger agent, asking him to get in touch with the son, request the deposit of necessary Pullman fare and to have the son meet his mother on the arrival of the train. This was done, and the Italian

woman was very grateful for the attention given her. She conveyed her appreciation to Mr. Worthington through her son. As a result of courtesies extended to her, Mr. Worthington now takes the entire family on the Kansas City-Florida Special with him twice a year and they always arrange the trip so that they may ride with him.

"Theres' a fine old gentleman on here tonight, a retired bishop, who

(Now turn to Page 26, please)



L. W. Worthington, Pullman conductor, trains 105-106, greets Mr. Luther Creason, president of the Creason-Grayson Lumber Company, and Mrs. Creason, of Kansas City, Mo., with his usual pleasant smile, as he inspects their tickets. They were patrons on his train January 28, enroute to West Palm Beach, Fla. W. Richardson, the porter, has been with Mr. Worthington on his runs for some time.

City.

"Those refugees certainly were a pitiful sight," he said. "Their belongings—what they had managed to save—were carried in pillow cases and sheets. They were a most destitute group. Some of them were provided with lunches, but I went into the coaches and found the ones who were without food and the dining car steward, Paul Morris, gave them a hot dinner. They seemed to feel that I