

FRISCO

# All Aboard

FRISCO

1988

NUMBER 10

## Doodlebugging On The Frisco





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## DOWN AT THE DEPOT

By Ed Staples, 1929

For over forty years there traveled on Frisco rails a unique series of railroad conveyance scornfully yet affectionately called the "Doodlebugs." Officially known as gas-electric or gas-mechanical motor cars, the name "Doodlebug" was used by many to denote the insect like appearance of the rail car. Other more mechanically minded observers viewed them as an unorthodox contraption, in comparison to the stalwart steam locomotive, that at top speed could do no better than to "dillydally" or "doodle" down the track! What many of its early critics did not realize was that the gas-electric motor car, and its concept of an internal combustion engine powering an electric traction motor, was the early predecessor of the diesel electric engines that ultimately replaced the steam locomotive. The early skeptics also failed to realize the major contribution the motor car would make in providing passenger, freight, and mail service to many branch line communities.

The history of the self-propelled passenger rail car had its genesis in 1847 when the Great Eastern Counties Railroad of England put in service a steam-powered car that could accommodate seven passengers. One year later, a second car was added to the roster with an enlarged seating capacity of sixteen riders. Though primitive in design, these early motor cars soon became proof positive that a self-propelled rail car could provide service to many areas cheaper than could a complete train. While not officially mandated, such efficient service at a reduced cost became the objective of virtually every carrier that operated motor cars. In 1879, a compressed air-powered car was put into service and a year later the first battery-powered electric motor car rolled down the track. The first gasoline-powered electric driven rail car was built in 1890 by the Patton Motor Car Company in Chicago.

The first gas-mechanical motor car, one that is powered by a gasoline engine and a mechanical transmission, was produced by the Hydro Carbon Company of Chicago in 1899. While not as popular and efficient as the gas-electric cars, a number of the gas-mechanical cars were produced by a variety of companies. The McKeen Motor Car Company, the J.C. Brill Company, and the St. Louis Car Company were some of the most notable firms that manufactured the gas-mechanical equipment. Over the years, the Frisco operated as many as eight such rail cars. ☞

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a series of articles that will profile Frisco's motor car fleet and services.

If you buy a ticket on Frisco Lines to a certain point in Texas, you are bound to Prosper. If you doubt it, consult a list of Frisco stations. With the Aid (Aid is a Missouri town) of this list you will find numerous things in station names that are Peculiar (to use the name of another Missouri town).



### ST. LOUIS-SAN FRANCISCO RAILWAY COMPANY

Alphabetical

## LIST OF STATIONS

You may be tired of Valliant (OK) reading of heavier matter. If so, come for a trip of Frisco stations and I Hope (AR) you Success (AR) in remembering a larger number of them than you ever have before. First though, let us ask that the citizens in some of the towns Grant (OK) indulgence if we seem to kid. But surely all will be received in good Grace (OK).

At the very start it may bring tears to your eyes to read that there is a Red Onion on the Frisco in Kansas. Andover in Kansas is a Red Plant which may or may not have furnished part of Floral (KS). We have material for another "Casey at the Bat" on our lines. Oklahoma has both a Casey and a Batte.

It is to be doubted however, that Kaw Spur (KS) will give Crowe (KS) credit for furnishing the first part of its name. But there are two stations that might really co-operate: Barber (KS) might go down and work on Bushyhead (OK) and much good might be Dunn (MO). Arkansas would provide Combs.

We could have a Yale-Harvard football game right on the system. Arkansas and Tennessee have a Harvard and a Yale respectively and Missouri could furnish Fairplay and a Hero too who might thrill you with Long (AR) runs.

For those who like cards there is Bluff (MO) which is sometimes useful in a certain card game; however, don't put too much Reliance (KS) on it if you expect to win the Cash (AR). If bridge is your game, Doubling (MO) may help you. ☞

TO BE CONTINUED...

# The FRISCO SURVIVORS

On July 28, 1914, American newspapers announced the grim news that events in Europe were occurring that would ultimately lead to the beginning of World War I. Little did anyone know that those same events would ultimately lead to the creation of a distinctive class of Frisco steam locomotives, the 1600 decapods.

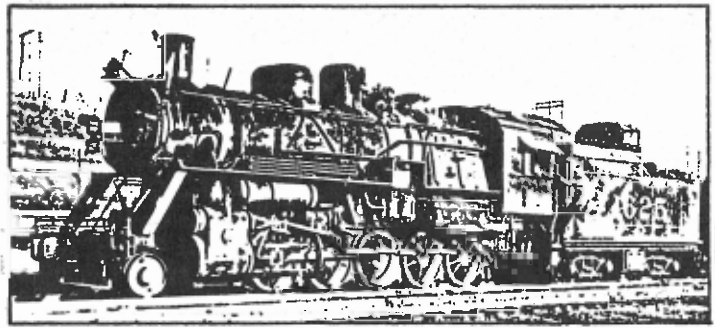
In an attempt to modernize their antiquated rail system and in preparation for the impending war mobilization, the Imperial Russian State Railways placed orders with a number of American companies for 1,000 locomotives and 30,000 assorted pieces of rolling stock. By 1915, approximately half of the locomotives had been built and shipped, with another 200 units either in final stages of construction or in preparation for shipment.

During 1916 and the first part of 1917 Russian armies suffered a series of devastating defeats on all fronts, many of which were aimed at their main railroad supply lines. Consequently, shipment of any further equipment was halted and a moratorium was placed on construction of any additional units. In the fall of 1917, the Russian position further deteriorated with the outbreak of a civil war that culminated in the overthrow of the government, on November 7, 1917, by a group of Bolshevik revolutionaries. All orders for American locomotives were canceled including the shipment of the 200 units already completed.

On April 4, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson stood before Congress and stated, "The world must be made safe for democracy." Two days later, the United States officially entered the war. In the months that followed, American war mobilization created a need for the coordinated shipment of a multitude of war supplies and personnel. To effectively meet the need, on January 1, 1918, the United States Railroad Administration took control of America's railroads, including the Frisco. To bolster the increased demands for rail traffic, the U.S.R.R.A. purchased the orphaned Russian locomotives and distributed them, under a lease agreement, to various American companies.

The Frisco acquired twenty of the Russian decapods, so named because of their ten driving wheels. Seventeen of the units were assigned directly to the Frisco and three were acquired from other companies. Designated as the 1600 class, Frisco's roster numbered 1613 to 1632.

The first eleven engines (1613-1623) were built by the Richmond Locomotive Works in the fall of 1917 and spring of 1918. Number 1624 was built by the Brooks



*Howard D. Killam Collection*

Locomotive Company, 1625 the product of the Schenectady Locomotive Works, and the remaining seven engines (1626-1632) were constructed by Baldwin, all in 1918. Eight of the engines (1614, 1615, 1618, 1621, 1625, 1627, 1630, 1632,) burned coal and the balance were oil burners. When placed in service, the 1600's were used on the Pensacola line out of Amory, the Western Division out of Oklahoma City, and occasionally on the "High Line" and "Leaky Roof" routes between Springfield and Kansas City. Two of the engines, 1617 and 1628, were assigned to Frisco's western subsidiary line the Quana, Achme, and Pacific.

It should be noted that there were in reality twenty-one engines that carried the 1600 designation. In the 1920's, a mysterious explosion in an Alabama coal field completely destroyed engine No. 1621. In need of a replacement, the Frisco negotiated a trade. In exchange for No. 614, a former 4-6-0 Kansas City, Ft. Scott, and Memphis Railroad engine, the Frisco acquired No. 101, the only 2-10-0 decapod on the roster of the Ft. Smith, Subiaco, and Rock Island Railroad, a short line operation in northwest Arkansas. Engine No. 101 thus became the second Frisco No. 1621.

By September, 1951, nine of the 1600's had been retired and of the remaining eleven, only two were listed as "in active service." By the end of the year there remained only five of the 1600's (1615, 1621, 1625, 1630, 1632) all of which found salvation from the scrapper's torch when they were purchased by the Eagle Picher Mining Company at Miami, OK. When the company closed down its operation in 1957, the engines were placed in storage. Seven years later, they entered the ranks of FRISCO SURVIVORS when the Eagle Picher Company graciously donated them to a number of historical organizations. No. 1615 found its way to Altus, OK and No. 1621 found a new home at the Museum of Transport, St. Louis, MO. On September 10, 1964, No. 1625, along with Frisco Survivor No. 4501, arrived in Dallas, TX, where it was added to the display roster of the Southwest Railroad Museum. In December, 1964, No. 1632 arrived at the Smoky Hill Railway and Historical Society's "Old Depot Museum" in Ottawa, KS. It is interesting to note that the Smoky Hill organization was originally formed in 1964 in order to secure No. 1632. ☐

# THE FRISCO FAMILY

# New Acquisitions

## THE OKLAHOMA CITY TERMINAL RAILROAD COMPANY

The Oklahoma City Terminal Railroad Co. was incorporated April 7, 1890, under the laws of the Territory of Oklahoma. It was incorporated by C.G. Jones and H. Overholser, of Oklahoma City, for and in the interests of the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad Co.

On June 21, 1901, the company conveyed its property, rights and franchises to the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad Co. At that date, its property consisted of about one mile of standard gauge, single track railroad, located entirely within the corporate limits of Oklahoma City. This line, which connected the tracks of the Choctaw, Oklahoma and Gulf Railroad Co. and the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad Co. was constructed by the Frisco between April, 1900, and November, 1900, and was placed in operation November 1, 1900. ☐

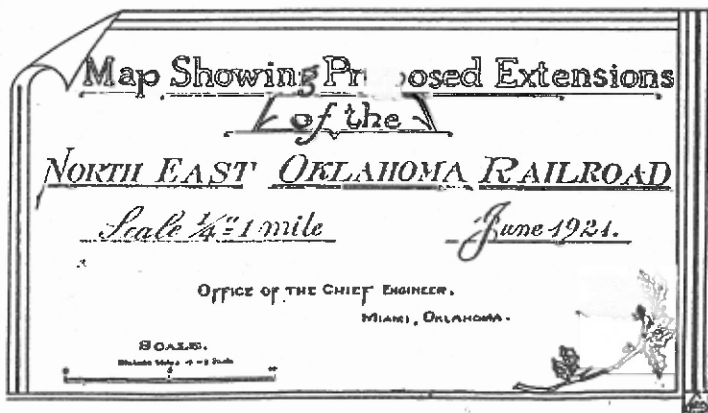
Next month... St. Louis, Oklahoma & Southern Railway Company



Alan Schmitt Collection

According to William E. Bain, in his book FRISCO FOLKS (1961), the Frisco set a rail industry record in 1912. On January 2, 1912, train No. 832 with engine No. 987 providing the power pulled into St. Louis with the longest stock train on record to that date. The train's consist included thirty-eight cars of hogs, twenty-two cars of cattle, and one car of sheep; a total of sixty-one cars and 1,840 tons of livestock. The record breaking load required a helper engine, No. 982, to assist it over the hills between Crystal City and St. Louis. ☐

The Museum is pleased to announce the acquisition of valuable historical and technical information from two Frisco predecessor lines. A complete set of thirty-six Right-of-Way and Track Maps and twenty-three Station Maps from the Kansas City, Clinton, and Springfield Railway Co. have been added to our archives. The K.C.C. & S., better known as the "Leaky Roof Line," was built between Kansas City and Ash Grove in the late 1890's and was purchased by the Frisco in 1928. The Track and Station Maps are dated June 30, 1917.



On January 1, 1967, the Frisco took control of the North East Oklahoma Railroad Co., a subsidiary line that ran from Carona, KS to Miami, OK with a branch from Baxter Springs, KS to Picher, OK. The museum has acquired well over 100 various Track Maps, Station Maps, track profiles, structure diagrams, etc., from the N.E.O. and related companies.

The Officers and Board of Directors would like to acknowledge with grateful appreciation Tim Kubat, Steve Squibb, and Jim McCloud, all of which made these valuable acquisitions possible. ☐

## FRISCO FOLKS

The museum is pleased to welcome the following new members to the FRISCO FOLKS:

John F. Bradbury, Jr.	Switchman	Missouri
Larry Parrish	Switchman	Kansas

The All Aboard newsletter is published monthly for members of the Frisco Folks, a support organization of The Frisco Railroad Museum Inc. The museum facility is located at 500 Walker St. in Ash Grove, MO. All correspondence should be mailed to P.O. Box 276, Ash Grove, MO 65604. All material in the newsletter is copyrighted by The Frisco Railroad Museum Inc. and may not be reproduced in any manner without the expressed written consent of the museum President. The Frisco Railroad Museum Inc. is not affiliated with the St. Louis - San Francisco Railway Co., the Burlington Northern Railroad Co., or any of its subsidiaries.