



# A REPORT ON THE SER CONVENTION AT PENSACOLA, FLORIDA (CONTINUED)



## THE OTHER RAILROAD IN PENSACOLA? THE FRISCO!

Our story goes back to March 3, 1849 when a charter was granted by the Missouri Legislature. Those were pioneer days in railroad history and the company was empowered to build a line from Franklin (now Pacific, Mo) a distance of 34 miles, southwest of St. Louis to Rolla, Mo., 77 miles away. There is no record of the celebration at Rolla, Mo., which must have taken place back in 1860 when the first diamond-stack locomotive snorted into town, but it must have been a satisfactory entrance, because grading went on at a vigorous rate between Rolla and the Gasconade River on the southwest. The only thing that stopped it was the Civil War in the spring of '61 and when that great struggle came, the Frisco section men dropped their picks and shovels and shouldered muskets.

The road suffered great hardships during the next few years, and we will skip that for now. Let's move ahead to 1876. By now the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad Co. entered the picture for the first time, This concern was incorporated under the laws of Missouri on September 7, 1876, and it operated both the Missouri Division and the line from Seneca to Vinita, which was known then as the Central Division of the Atlantic & Pacific. The new St. Louis & San Francisco Railway Co. entered upon a policy of expansion which far exceeded anything which had gone before.

The old Central Division was extended in 1882 from Vinita to Tulsa on the north bank of the Arkansas River, a distance of 65 miles. Previous to this, in March 1880, a line originally started in 1871 was completed from Pierce City to Wichita, Kans., 218 miles long. An extension of this line, 103 miles in length was then built from Wichita to Ellsworth, Kans., where connection was made with the Union Pacific Railroad in 1888. Another line from Monett, Mo., to Ft. Smith, Ark., which had been started in July 1880 was opened on January 1, 1883 and in the latter year, a line 34 miles long was also constructed from Pacific to St. Louis, Mo. Heretofore entrance to St. Louis had been made over the tracks of the Missouri Pacific Railroad company, but with this construction into St. Louis, the Missouri Pacific agreement was discontinued. An extension to Paris, Tex., started in July 1886 was completed one year later, and connections were made at Paris, Tex., with the Texas & Pacific Railway and also with the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe. By this time the Frisco had reached a point where it was being appraised by other railroads and in 1890 the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe had troubles of its own and a little later, in 1883, they defaulted on their bond interests and the Frisco entered receivership.

Three years later, in June 1896, the property was bought at public auction by a purchasing committee and turned to the then newly-organized St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad Company. At that

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time the line consisted of 990 miles of fairly well conditioned track, and with the acquisition in December 1897 of the Central Division of the Atlantic & Pacific, the owned mileage increased to the grand total of 1,218 miles. Construction had not ceased, and in 1898 the road completed its line between Kansas City and Springfield, Mo., via Clinton, Mo. Two years later, in March 1900, construction of the line from Sapulpa, Okla., to Denison, Tex., 198 miles away, was begun and rushed through to completion in March 1901. This was a fortunate move, for oil fields, adjacent to the line began to be developed shortly after it was built, and petroleum and its products furnished a large part of the tonnage then. They still do, for that matter. In 1902, this line was extended south to Carrollton, Tex., where a connection was made with the St. Louis Southwestern Railway of Texas and in 1908 with the Chicago, Rock Island & Gulf Railway, thus giving the Frisco trains and entrance in to Dallas and Ft. Worth, Texas.

In 1901 the Frisco acquired the lines comprising the Kansas City, F. Scott & Memphis Railway Company and the Kansas City, Memphis and Birmingham Railroad Company with branches, which gave them a line from Kansas City through Springfield, Mo., to Memphis and Birmingham, Ala., and from Kansas City through Ft. Scott, Kans., and Baxter Springs, Kans., to Joplin, Mo., and Miami, Okla.

In the same year an extension was completed from Miami to Afton, Okla., where connection was made with the Southwestern Division of the Frisco and permitted the operation of train service from Kansas City, Mo., to Dallas, Ft. Worth and Oklahoma city via Baxter, Kansas. Meantime building was also under way in another section of what was to become Frisco territory on the southwest. Mr. Ed L. Peckham of Blackwell, Okla., had projected what was then known as the Blackwell, Enid & Southwestern Railway, extending from Blackwell, Okla., to Vernon, Tex., a distance of 251 miles. At that time the line had been constructed from Blackwell to Enid, Okla., 48 miles, and the line had already been given its nickname of the "Bes" line, derived from the initials of the company's full and proper name.

In 1904 the Frisco completed its line from St. Louis to Memphis and this was really an event of great importance in the development of the Frisco system. Following the Mississippi River for a great part of the way from St. Louis to Cape Girardeau and then through the famous cotton fields of southeast Missouri and northeast Arkansas, the line traversed a county rich both in natural resources and in the history of America. Previous to this event of 1904, the Frisco had acquired control of the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad, thus giving it an outlet to the Great Lakes via St. Louis to Chicago. In 1907 control was acquired of the Gulf Coast Lines with important terminals at New Orleans. These lines, however, were detached from the parent company and construction of a connection link in Texas would have been necessary to complete the system through to the Great Lakes from Texas points. Things had progressed very favorably for the Frisco during the time it had last emerged from receivership in 1896, and in that 17 year period it had trebled its mileage and greatly increased its importance to the territory it served. Hard times descended again on May 17, 1913 when the com-

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pany with a total mileage of 5,155 miles was again thrown into receivership. On June 19, 1916, the property was sold under foreclosure to the present company, namely the ST. LOUIS SAN-FRANCISCO RAILWAY COMPANY, and in the transaction the Frisco lost the Chicago & Eastern Illinois and the Gulf Coast Lines.

Undaunted by this series of receiverships, the new company entered on a program of improvements, and the system was thoroughly rehabilitated from one end to the other. Principal lines were ballasted, heavier rails were laid, bridges rebuilt or sometimes replaced by entirely new structures, and heavier power and improved rolling stock purchased. This program of improvements involving an expenditure of many millions of dollars placed the Frisco in the front ranks among the railroads of the middle and southwest United States.

In the early days of 1868, the old Southwest Pacific Railway Company announced its intention of building a line connecting the middle southwestern sections of the country with tide water. From 1916 until 1925 no progress seemingly was made in this direction, but in July 1925, newspapers of this nation announced that the Frisco had acquired control of the Muscle Shoals, Birmingham & Pensacola Railway, a line 142 miles in length, extending from Pensacola, Fla. north to Kimbrough, Ala. Thus an idea that had actually originated 75 years before -- that of extending the Frisco lines to the tide water, had finally been realized and the extension of the line to Pensacola added prestige, not only to the importance of the city as a port, but also to the Frisco system as one of the great railways of the United States.

Incidentally, the "Frisco" was not named after San Francisco, CA. The name Frisco was derived from a combination of letters associated with the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway Company, the "FR" from Francisco the "IS" from St. Louis the "CO" for Company, which produced **FRISCO**. This *Frisco Line*, originating in Missouri, never made its way into Frisco, Colorado. It eventually ran south and ended up in Frisco, Texas instead.