

# THE PEACH BLOSSOM SPECIAL

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Sunday, June 19, 1994

Springfield, Mo.

West Plains, Mo.

Jonesboro, Ark.

Memphis

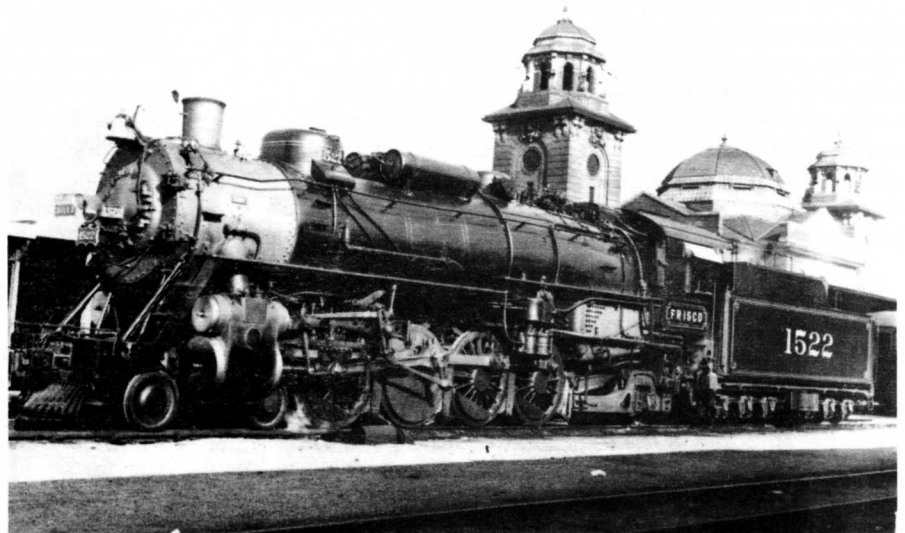
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Sponsored by the St. Louis Chapter, National Railway Historical Society  
In Cooperation with the St. Louis Steam Train Association, Burlington Northern Railroad and Norfolk Southern Corporation

## Welcome Aboard!

Your hosts in the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (NRHS), along with the members of the St. Louis Steam Train Association, and Burlington Northern Railroad, welcome you aboard this special steam-powered excursion train over the most rugged section of the former St. Louis - San Francisco Railway, or Frisco Lines.

Today's excursion is powered a steam locomotive which regularly ran over this route during its service career, Frisco 1522. Built in 1926 by the Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia, the 1522 regularly operated over the route of our train today between Kansas City and Birmingham, Ala., handling important Frisco passenger trains such as the *Kansas City - Florida Special*.



*Frisco 1522 at Terminal Station in Birmingham, Ala. in 1940, awaiting its run to Kansas City on the Kansas City - Florida Special. Photo by Frank Ardrey, Woody Bell Collection.*

This trip is operated through the courtesy of Burlington Northern Railroad as a special movement en route to the National Railway Historical Society convention in Atlanta. It marks the first time since its restoration that the 1522 has returned to this route, over which it operated so often and so well. Very special thanks go to Burlington Northern for hosting this extraordinary opportunity to recall and replicate a bit of railroad history. Also, sincere thanks to Norfolk Southern Corp. for providing the use of its excursion passenger train.

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## For Your Safety and Comfort

**Safety First!** These are the two most important words on the railroad, and they should be your two most important words today, too. For safety's sake:

- ◆ *Always watch your step!* Be especially careful...
- ◆ Getting on or off the train, or
- ◆ When walking about the train or between cars.
- ◆ At stops, watch your footing on uneven ground, gravel, and track ballast stone.
- ◆ Always step **OVER**, *never* on top of, the rail.
- ◆ Always **walk**, *never* run.
- ◆ Keep your head, hands and arms fully inside the train at all times!

- ◆ If you get a wind-blown particle in your eye, do not rub the eye. Let the eye's natural watering action remove the particle.
- ◆ A medical team is on board. *For medical assistance, contact any crew member.*
- ◆ Children should not play in aisles.
- ◆ Coolers and packages must be kept out of aisles.
- ◆ Please always follow the instructions of your car host or other NRHS or railroad crew members, especially at photo stops.
- ◆ No sandals, thongs or bare feet permitted. We reserve the right to insist on appropriate, safe footwear.
- ◆ **Alcoholic beverages may not be brought aboard or consumed anywhere on the train, nor anywhere on railroad property.**

# TO FULFILL A VISION: SOUTH BY SOUTHEAST ACROSS THE OZARKS

## *A Railroad History of Today's Route*

Our trip today across the Thayer Subdivision of the Burlington Northern Railroad takes us from the high plateau of the Missouri Ozarks to the broad, flat alluvial floodplain of the Mississippi River valley. It is a route of strong geographical contrasts. Beginning on some of the highest terrain in the Midwest near Springfield, our train eventually ends today's trip on some of the lowest and flattest land in the central United States.

Such geographic contrasts are perfectly in balance with the way in which our train contrasts with the railroad world of today: a steam locomotive operating among 3,000-plus horsepower diesel-electric locomotives; a passenger train moving in what is normally an all-freight-train environment; and intermediate stops for passengers, fuel and water contrasting with nearly non-stop expedited freight trains of today, filled with tri-level racks of automobiles, flatcars carrying highway trailers, and double-stacked containers riding in special well cars.

These contrasts show us the broad canvas upon which the nation's railways have painted their story of transportation service to the nation. For our route today, that story begins in Kansas City, in the period after the Civil War. It is a story of the vision of one of the most important railroad strategists of the mid-1800s, and how that vision was reshaped by the dynamic economic and social forces which always ultimately shape any business endeavor.

### **From Kansas City, Vision and Plans**

In the decade before the Civil War, Kansas City began to emerge as a moderately important trading center in western Missouri. A collection of small trading posts and river towns early in its history, it increasingly saw itself as a potential railroad center of strategic importance in its region.

But Kansas City's vault to commercial prominence through its railroads would have to wait until after the Civil War. Several events quickly brought the idea of Kansas City as a rail center to fruition. Most important of these was the completion on July 3, 1869 of a railroad bridge across the Missouri River. Built by famed engineer Octave Chanute in the face of difficult river conditions, the bridge linked Kansas City at Cameron, Mo. with the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad, which ran east and west across northern Missouri between its namesake cities. But with the H&StJ in the orbit of the rapidly expanding Chicago, Burlington & Quincy system, which was aggressively building links from Chicago all across Illinois, Iowa and Missouri, the bridge had even larger significance. It became the tool which forged an enduring strategic link between the Kansas City and the vast net of railways spreading westward from Chicago. That link would be seen ever after by Kansas Citians as the

decisive factor in the growth of their small town into a great commercial metropolis in the late 1800s.

A key player in these developments was James F. Joy, a skillful lawyer from Detroit who possessed a masterful grasp of railroad politics and strategy in the trans-Mississippi West, and who had adopted Kansas City as the centerpiece of his plans. Joy managed the H&StJ and the CB&Q for its key investors, capitalist John Murray Forbes and his fellow investors in Boston. It was Joy with whom the Kansas City leaders had negotiated to get the H&StJ connection built, along with its important bridge. It was Joy who had convinced Forbes to develop the H&StJ connection to Kansas City, and not the competing community of Leavenworth, Kans., located upstream from Kansas City on the Missouri River. And it was Joy who was privately investing in Kansas City real estate, including in land which would eventually be developed into the great stockyards and meat-packing complex that would affirm the city in its place on the nation's economic stage.

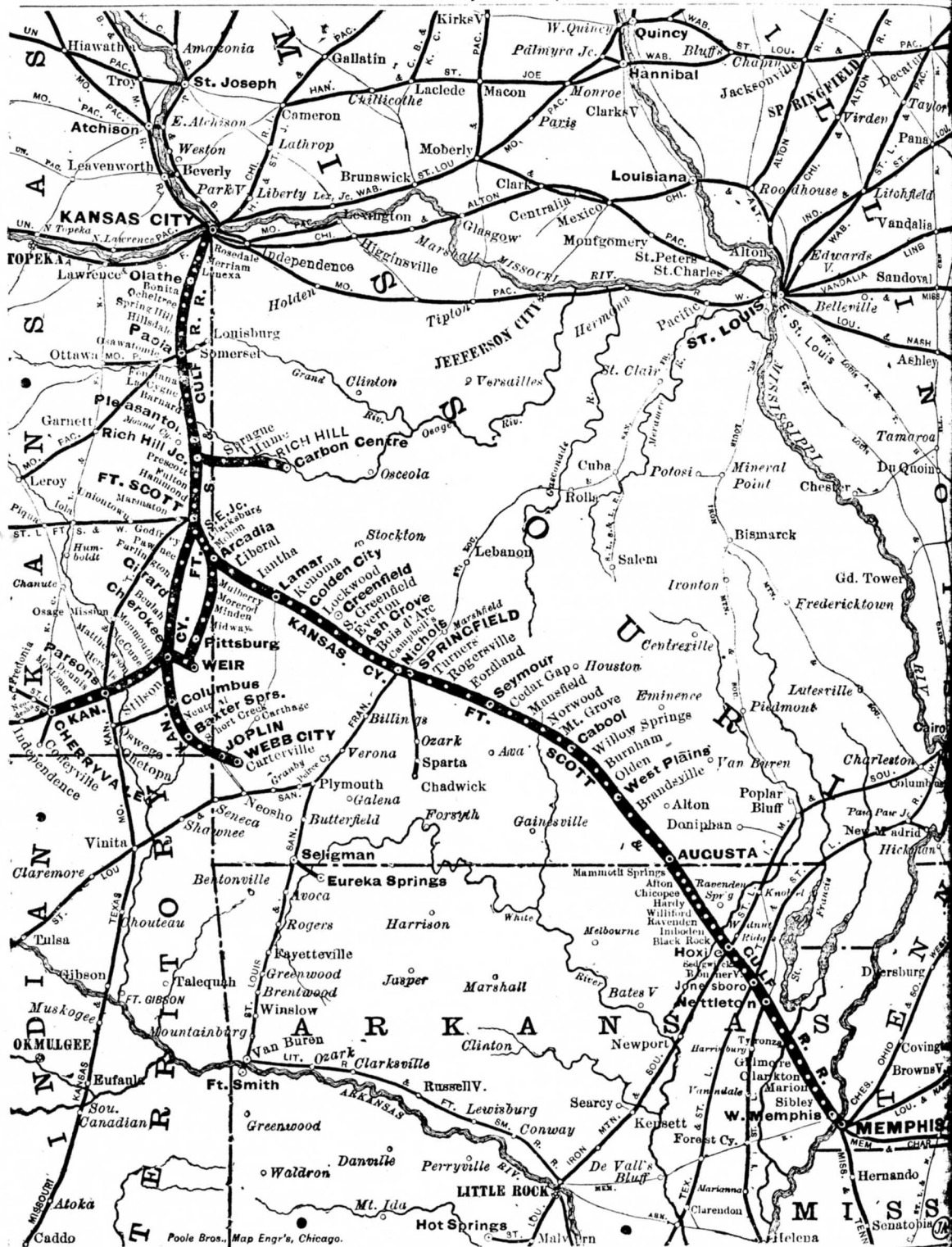
But even before Joy had become involved with the Hannibal Bridge, he was interested in building a railroad south from Kansas City toward the Cherokee Strip, or Neutral Tract, a 50 by 25 mile strip of land in the far southeastern corner of Kansas, held by the Cherokee tribes after their forced removal to the West from their native southern Appalachian homelands. In August of 1866, the federal government received the Neutral Tract in trust from the Cherokees as a settlement in the treaty of 1866. When a quick sale by the government under shadowy circumstances was voided in the face of public outrage, Joy pushed hard to acquire the lands in competition with four other railroad groups. He was successful in June, 1868, acquiring the entire 800,000 acre tract.

To help develop the tract, while remaining true to his Kansas City-centered strategy, he focused his attention on the Kansas & Neosho Railroad. It had been chartered in 1865 by Kansas City interests to run from Kansas City southwestward into the Neosho River valley in southeastern Kansas, then into Indian Territory (later Oklahoma) and eventually into Texas.

In October, 1868, Joy oversaw the reorganization of the Kansas & Neosho into the Missouri River, Fort Scott & Gulf Railroad. To begin its southward expansion, he wasted no time raising \$4,000,000 in capital in his usually skillful manner. By the end of 1868, the MRFS&G had reached Olathe, Kans., 20 miles from Kansas City. In 1869, its rails stretched all the way to Fort Scott, Kans., nearly 100 miles from Kansas City. And by the end of 1870, the road extended to Baxter Springs, at the southern tip of the Neutral Tract in the far southeastern corner of Kansas, very near where Kansas, Oklahoma and Missouri meet. There

# Kansas City, Fort Scott & Gulf R. R. Line

NOW COMPLETED TO MEMPHIS, TENN., AND OPEN FOR BUSINESS.



NO CHANGE OF CARS OF ANY CLASS BETWEEN KANSAS CITY AND MEMPHIS, TENN.

*This map of the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Gulf announced the opening of the line to service in the November, 1883 issue of the Official Railway Guide. Courtesy of the Barriger Railroad Collection, St. Louis Mercantile Library.*

Joy's road, by now known as the "Border Tier Road" for its route southward parallel to the Kansas-Missouri border, paused. It was ready to build into Indian Territory, where it held claim to a significant land grant.

Joy believed--correctly as it turned out--that the conditions of the Indian Territory land grant through the new lands of the Cherokee Nation could accrue to only one road, and that road must be the first to reach the Territory border with Kansas. He intended to be the first, and to secure the grant and its right of passage through the territory for his Border Tier Road.

But he wasn't alone in casting his gaze upon the Cherokee Strip and Indian Territory. The Union Pacific Railway, Southern Branch (a company actually unrelated to the Union Pacific despite its name, and which had recently reorganized as the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railroad, or Katy), had also built to a point near the Indian Territory border from Fort Riley in central Kansas. Its leader, Judge Levi Parsons of New York, hoped just as intently as Joy to reach the border first. As the two roads raced to lay track and then to have the completion of their lines certified to meet the conditions of law, sporadic violence broke out between their construction forces. But there was perhaps even more skullduggery. Long-time legend in the Cherokee Strip holds that an agent of the Katy, dressed as a Quapaw chief, hoodwinked Joy's chief engineer (none other than Octave Chanute) into believing that the border had nearly been reached, when actually it was several miles further south. However the deed was done, the MK&T was certified by President Grant as having reached the border first. Joy had his 800,000 acres in Kansas, but he had been frustrated in his drive southward to Texas through Indian Territory. If the growing cattle industry of the Southwest were to feed the stockyards of Kansas City, it wouldn't be on the rails of the Joy system.

As the Border Tier Road and the Katy had driven toward Indian Territory, local interests in nearby Springfield, Mo. watched with interest as these lines approached within about 100 miles of their city. In 1869, representatives of the Kansas City Board of Trade met with Springfield interests to begin developing plans for a road. Kansas City interests intended to finance and build the road with local capital, but without Joy, who had his own agenda, they were unable to fulfill their plans. Any railway connecting Springfield and Kansas City would not be built by Kansas Citians, but by Joy.

### Headed Southeast Across The Ozarks

Frustrated from entering Indian Territory, Joy turned his attention elsewhere. Following a suggestion by Octave Chanute, he began to survey a line from near Fort Scott toward Springfield, continuing on through northern Arkansas to the Mississippi River near Memphis. Joy had long been involved in railroad development from east to west with the Burlington system and the Forbes group, but he was now listening to another siren song of the Gilded Age: the belief in the

wealth of trade between latitudes, with northern manufactured goods and processed products flowing to the South, and southern agricultural products and cotton flowing north.

Between 1878 and 1882, track was completed in several sections between Springfield and a point near Fort Scott by two companies, the most important being the Fort Scott, South Eastern & Memphis Railroad Company. By the end of 1882, a direct rail link existed between Springfield and Kansas City, even as plans were being laid and another company formed to build from Springfield across the Ozark Divide toward Memphis. This line from Springfield to Memphis over which our train travels today is thus the farthest extension of James F. Joy's grand strategic plans. But it represents a tactical adaptation in those plans, not their strategic fulfillment.

From Springfield, the line was constructed to the Missouri-Arkansas border near Thayer between 1881 and 1883 by the Kansas City, Springfield & Memphis Railroad Co. (of 1881). This company was organized in that year by other Boston investors of the Forbes group, most notably H.H. Hunnewell, Nathaniel Thayer and Charles Merriam, for the purpose of building toward Memphis. The remainder of the route, from the Arkansas border to Bridge Junction, across the Mississippi River from Memphis, was constructed at the same time by a second company, the Kansas City, Springfield & Memphis Railroad Co. (of 1883).

In 1888, an overall reorganization combined many of these lines, still under the aegis of successors to the earlier investors of the Forbes group. The routes between Kansas City and Springfield were combined into the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Springfield Railroad Company. This company in turn was consolidated with the company which had built between Springfield and Memphis (the Kansas City, Springfield & Memphis) to form the new Kansas City, Fort Scott & Memphis Railroad Company. Other subsidiaries of the new company later added route miles from Memphis to Birmingham, Ala.

### Into the Frisco Family

In 1901, the consolidated Kansas City, Ft. Scott & Memphis was leased to the St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad, better known as Frisco. This company, descended from the Pacific Railroad of Missouri, the first common-carrier railroad west of the Mississippi, had built routes through its various predecessors extending southwestward from St. Louis to Oklahoma City and into Texas. The addition of the KCFS&M made the Frisco's system a large "X", with the two legs crossing a Springfield (Kansas City to Memphis and Birmingham from northwest to southeast, and St. Louis to Oklahoma City and Texas, northeast to southwest). With such a central position, Springfield became the hub of the Frisco system.

At the time of the lease of the Ft. Scott road by the Frisco, the SL&SF was led by Benjamin F. Yoakum, who held the company's top positions from 1900 to 1913.

Like James Joy before him, Yoakum believed in aggressive expansion, almost heedless to whether sufficient traffic existed to support the expansion. He aggressively pushed Frisco into Texas in the face of strident opposition by Edward Harriman and his Southern Pacific, coordinated services with the Rock Island (with whom he had previously clashed), and gained control of the Chicago & Eastern Illinois. The C&EI coordinated services with Frisco, giving its southwestern traffic access beyond St. Louis and southeastern Missouri to Chicago. Yoakum also spent heavily, upgrading the Frisco's and C&EI's fixed plants, cars and locomotives. But his expansion and spending left Frisco weak, and the 1913-14 depression on the eve of World War I plunged to road into bankruptcy. It was reorganized in 1916, emerging as the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway, but still popularly known as Frisco.

### From Steam to Diesel

In 1928, Frisco purchased the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Memphis outright in the boom days before the Great Depression. The Depression brought another bankruptcy, and then trusteeship between 1932 and 1947. But also before that bankruptcy, Frisco purchased some of the finest steam locomotives to ever operate on its lines: the 1500-class Mountain types, of which the 1522 powering our train today is an example. The 1522 and its sisters, nos. 1500 through 1529, were built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works at Eddystone, Pa., near Philadelphia. They were produced in three groups in 1923, 1925 and 1926. Built as dual-service engines, they were at home on a tightly scheduled passenger train, or on an expedited freight.

The first group of 1500s, nos. 1500 through 1514, were assigned to the territory between St. Louis, Springfield and Monett, Missouri. Frisco was so pleased with the performance of these engines that five more 1500s, nos. 1515-1519 were ordered in 1925. These additional engines put enough locomotives into the motive power pool to allow lengthened utilization cycles while fully protecting passenger train schedules. The 1500s began to run through from St. Louis all the way to Oklahoma City on trains such as the *Meteor*, and the *Bluebonnet* and *Texas Special*, which used Katy rails from Vinita, Okla. to Dallas and San Antonio. The 1522 came in the last group of ten engines, nos. 1520 to 1529. These were assigned primarily to the Kansas City - Memphis - Birmingham line, the route of today's excursion and the trip tomorrow from Memphis to Birmingham. On this route, the 1500s especially handled the important *Kansas City - Florida Special*. It is thus especially appropriate that the 1522 returns today for the first time since its restoration to the line it used so often in regular service.

After bearing enormous volumes of traffic during World War II, Frisco entered perhaps the healthiest period of its corporate existence. Postwar traffic was strong in its southwestern and southeastern territories, and the company carefully fostered its good connections with other roads to build bridge traffic between the roads on its flanks. Steam was retired and the road was fully dieselized in February, 1952. On-line traffic was

good, too, and Frisco tapped it with innovations such as the first bi-level automobile-carrying racks. These now ubiquitous carriers mounted on flatcars first served the Chrysler plants at Fenton near St. Louis, one of the company's major traffic sources. As with other roads, as freight business was reinvigorated, passenger service came to an end. For Frisco, the last passenger trains operated in 1967.

### A Vision Fulfilled

James F. Joy's vision had centered on the roads he controlled radiating out from Kansas City. But his plan was partially frustrated by his inability to gain access to the route through Indian Territory. Joy's business style also ultimately sapped his ability to fulfill his intentions. Where Forbes and other investors in his Boston group proceeded incrementally after careful planning, and only after consolidating gains from previous actions, Joy often boldly struck out in several directions at once. And most others in the Forbes group focused successfully on east-west railroads, Joy increasingly set his sights on north-south routes whose traffic prospects were not as strong.

Much of Joy's plan came to fruition over a century later when, on November 21, 1980, Frisco merged with Burlington Northern. At the heart of BN are the lines originally built by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, the road on which Joy had, as part of John Murray Forbes' group, developed his skills as a railroad strategist, and whose bridge at Kansas City had secured the foundations for his vision. With the BN merger, Joy's lines had in a very real sense come home again. But they were linked now in a vastly greater system extending from the Pacific Northwest to Pensacola, Fla., and from Canada to Galveston.

But it is at Kansas City that James Joy's vision is most fulfilled. Much of what he had seen for that city ultimately was achieved, and Kansas City today is one of the leading manufacturing, agribusiness and distribution centers of the nation. There, where BN's ex-CB&Q and ex-Frisco lines from several directions intersect, BN today handles vast quantities of coal, grain and merchandise traffic to and from all points of the compass carried in dozens of trains each day.

In today's world of dieselized, piggyback, double-stack railroading, our steam train, standing as it does in such contrast, is a reminder of the foresight that James Joy, Nathaniel Thayer, H.H. Hunnewell, Charles Merriam, John Murray Forbes and others brought to the railroads they built over a century ago. And it is a reminder, too, along with the expedited freight trains we'll pass, of the fulfillment of that vision today all along our route...but especially in a place called Kansas City.

-- Mark J. Cedeck, Historian  
St. Louis Chapter NRHS

# Along the Way: A Guide to the Route

## Burlington Northern Railroad Springfield Division Thayer Subdivision

Stations (named locations in railroad operating timetables) no longer in service are indicated by brackets [ ]. Other non-station locations of interest are indicated by an asterisk \*.

### Milepost (MP) and station name or point of interest

#### Cuba Subdivision Milepost

#### 237.5 Springfield (Commercial St. Team Track)

Our trip begins here at the former Frisco North Springfield yard, today known as North Yard on the Burlington Northern. We will first travel over a short portion of BN's Cuba Subdivision, the ex-Frisco main line to Lebanon, Rolla and St. Louis. The 1522 and its train arrived in Springfield yesterday over this route.

#### 237.2 43 Track

Our train enters Centralized Traffic Control (CTC) here at the west leg of the wye track. The tail track of the wye is the Middle Belt, leading to a junction with the original Kansas City, Fort Scott & Memphis line through the center of Springfield, and was formerly known as the Memphis passenger main. The Middle Belt was built to enable passenger trains to easily reach the original Frisco main from the Springfield passenger depot, located downtown on the KCF&M line. Today it is mainly used as the connection to the 11.9 mile Kissick Branch.

#### [236.7 Eastern Jct.]

Former east leg of the wye for the Middle Belt.

#### 235.1 Teed

#### Thayer Subdivision Milepost

#### 203.2 Teed

As we follow the curve to the right, our train enters the BN Thayer Subdivision. This track, known as the East Belt, was built in the 1960s as a connection to the Memphis line.

#### 206.2 W.S.

Formerly known as Willow Springs Junction. Located just east of the U.S. Hwy. 65 overpass, the East Belt connected here with the original Kansas City, Fort Scott & Memphis line through Springfield. Known as the Memphis passenger main, it was removed west of here about 1980.

#### 210.8 James River Bridge \*

308-foot combination beam and through plate girder bridge.

#### [211.8 Turner]

We begin the ascent out of the James River Valley and back onto the Springfield Plateau, ascending Rogersville Hill, a five-mile climb with two miles of 1.25 percent gradient.

#### [216.0 Palmetto]

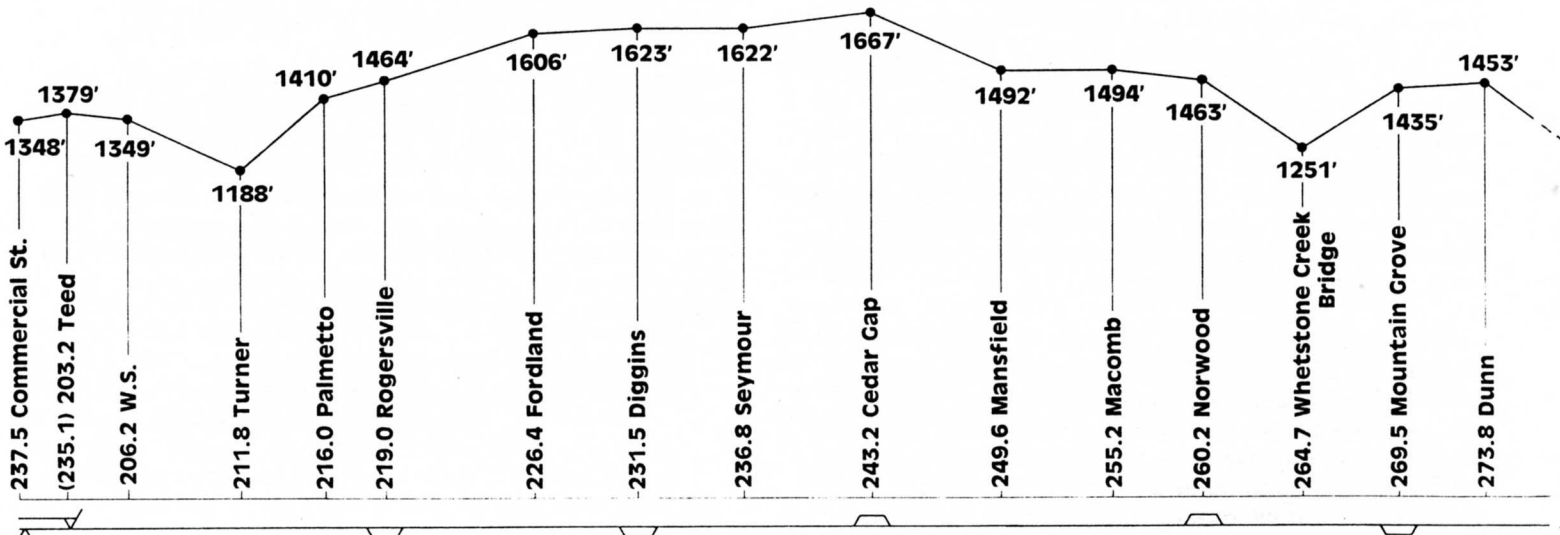
Here the line completes its climb out of the James River valley. For the next 27 miles it becomes a true "ridge-runner", following the crest between the watersheds of the James River to the north and Findley Creek to the south. Both flow into the White River south of Springfield.

#### 219.0 Rogersville

Pop. 995. 10,266 foot controlled siding. The railroad meets U.S. Hwy. 60, which parallels our route to Cabool.

#### 226.4 Fordland

Pop. 523. Our train crosses over old Highway 60 as we enter town. In 1931 W.A. Hagel opened his Nut Exchange here,



trading in black walnuts and pecans. Nuts were trucked in from as far away as Kentucky, Tennessee, Oklahoma and Arkansas. By 1940 the exchange was filling orders for 60,000 pounds of nut meats per year. Today the trade has died out, leaving Fordland just a sleepy little town.

**231.5 Diggins**  
8,844 foot controlled siding. Over the next 18 miles the train traverses a region formerly known an important fruit growing area. Today livestock raising predominates.

**236.8 Seymour**  
Pop. 1,636. Once an agricultural center, Seymour boasted a dairy, two canneries and a flour mill. It was also a center for apple shipping. An apple festival is held here each year.

**243.2 Cedar Gap**  
8,653 foot controlled siding. The tiny settlement was formerly the scene of the annual Cedar Gap Singing Convention. Families from the area would gather in the morning, bringing with them baskets of food for dinner on the grounds, and singing hymns and ballads until sundown.

The land around Cedar Gap is known as the Ozark Divide, an area surrounded by four different watersheds. Three are part of the White River basin, the fourth part of the Gasconade. We leave the ridge dividing the James River and Finley Creek, and drop 175 feet over the next 6.5 miles as the line begins to follow another ridge. This time the ridge divides the watersheds of the Gasconade River, flowing north to the Missouri, and Bryant Creek, flowing south to the North Fork of the White River.

**249.6 Mansfield**  
Pop. 1,429. Platted in 1884. One mile east of the town square is Rocky Ridge Farm, the home of Laura Ingalls Wilder from 1894 until her death in 1957. All nine of her "Little House" books, the basis of the TV show "Little House on the Prairie," were written here beginning in 1932. Laura's daughter, Rose Wilder Lane, based her book, *The Old Home Town*, on Mansfield.

[255.2 Macomb]  
About one mile west of here is the location of the last train robbery on the Frisco.

**260.2 Norwood**  
Pop. 449. 8,000-foot controlled siding.

**264.7 Whetstone Creek Bridge \***  
The tracks cross the creek, part of the Gasconade River watershed, on an 80-foot deck plate girder bridge. Here begins the ascent of Whetstone Hill, the southbound ruling grade, with 1.4 percent gradient for almost three miles.

**269.5 Mountain Grove**  
Pop. 4,182. 9,405-foot controlled siding. Originally founded about 1850 as Hickory Springs at a nearby site. The settlement prospered, shops were opened, and Mountain Grove Seminary was built in 1857. When the railroad bypassed the town, merchants moved their businesses to the present site, and in 1886 the town was established.

[273.8 Dunn]

**275.1 Big Piney River Bridge \***

**279.1 Cabool**  
Pop. 2,006. 8,380-foot controlled siding. Once a major poultry and dairy center, with the largest company shipping 60,000 pounds of poultry, 1,800 cases of eggs and 15,000 pounds of butter per week. A large Mid-America Dairymen cheese plant, at the east end of the siding, and a wood bathroom cabinetry manufacturer are the major industries.

**280.9 Big Piney River Bridge \***  
After crossing the river on a 286-foot pre-cast concrete box beam structure, our train leaves the valley via a sharp curve to the south (right). From here the tracks follow Potter Creek as we climb the divide between the Big Piney River and Eleven Point River watersheds.

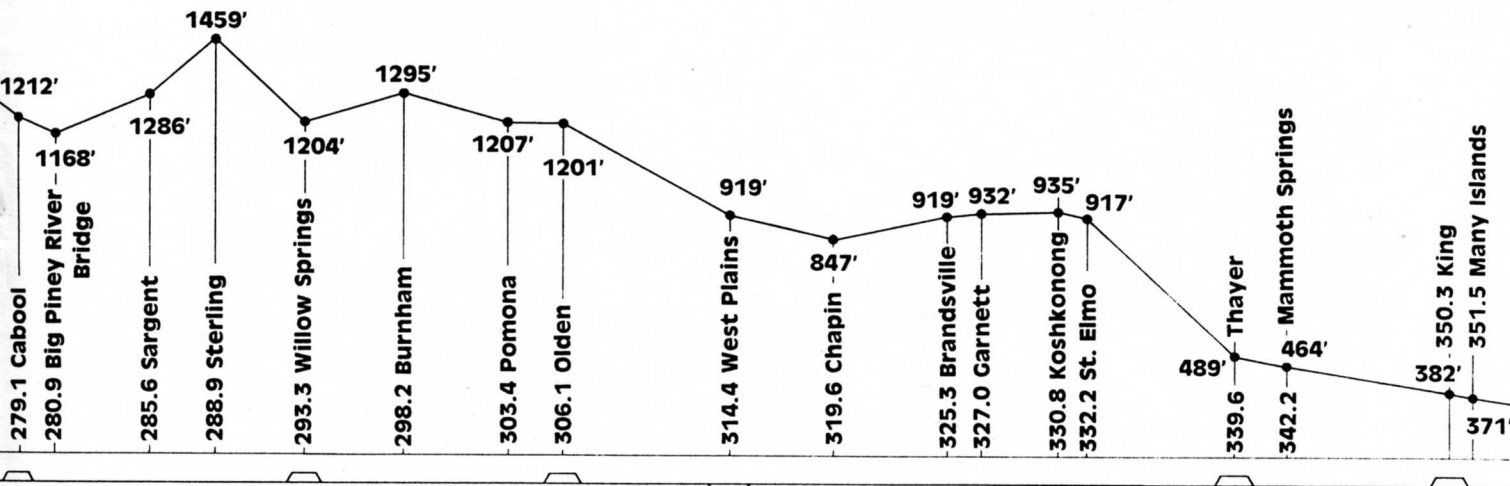
[285.6 Sargent]

[288.9 Sterling]

Former siding location. Begin descent of Sterling Hill, the northbound ruling grade of 1.5 percent for 2.5 miles.

**293.3 Willow Springs**  
Pop. 2,038. 7,437 foot controlled siding. The BN's "frog shop" may be seen to the right as we pass through town (watch closely). Turnout frogs are built and repaired here.

Route profile and track schematic by  
Brian T. McQuitty, St. Louis Chapter NRHS



Willow Springs was the junction with the Frisco's line to Mountain View, Winona, Van Buren and Puxico, Mo. The line was cut back to Chicopee (just east of Van Buren) in 1938, and totally abandoned in the late 1970s. The grade of the Puxico line diverges under the Hwy. 60 bridge and may be seen running along a red metal barn to the left.

- [298.2 Burnham]
- [303.4 Pomona]
- 306.1 Olden

9,046 foot controlled siding. Begin descent of "106 Hill", named for a northbound passenger train which stalled here on the grade. 1.4 miles of 1.5 percent gradient.

**314.4 West Plains**

Pop. 8,913. 8,699 foot controlled siding. Seat of Howell County. First settled in 1839 when Josiah Howell built his home near what later became the town spring. An ancient Indian trail ran north-south through the region, accounting for the more than 1,000 indian mounds in the area. The last Indians were the Osage, who along with the Delaware and Shawnee tribes, left the region in the 1840s. The village itself was founded in 1850 when John R. Woodside platted it and Josephus M. Howell opened the first post office. The town is named for its location on the plains west of the nearest settlement, which at the time was Thomasville. It became the seat of Howell County in 1857 and was incorporated in 1861. As with most southern Missouri cities, West Plains suffered from raids by both Union and Confederate forces during the Civil War. In February 1862 Confederate soldiers escaped encirclement by Union forces but returned in 1863 to burn the town. It remained uninhabited until the end of the war. In 1865 the town was resettled and had a population of 150 by 1870. West Plains became a regional marketing center after the arrival of the railroad in 1883.

Today West Plains is a center for hay and dairy production, and for cattle ranching. Marathon Electric Manufacturing is the town's largest employer, making electric motors for a variety of uses. Southwest Mobile Systems, maker of truck bodies, trailers and aircraft loaders for the military, and Bruce Hardwood Flooring are other large employers. Some of Southwest's many aircraft loaders may be seen to the left, along with stacks of hardwood lumber for Bruce.

West Plains is our first scheduled stop. If you are leaving the train here, thank you for traveling with us today. If you are continuing on Jonesboro or Memphis, the locomotive will be serviced here during the stop. Operating conditions

permitting, you may be able to briefly leave the train. Your car host will inform you, and give you instructions.

**[319.6 Chapin]**

A few miles past Chapin is Brandsville Hill, a two mile long climb with a maximum gradient of 1.35 percent. Also known by train crews as Strawberry Hill.

- [325.3 Brandsville]
- 327.0 Garnett
- 330.8 Koshkonong

Pop. 198. 8,723 foot controlled siding. Once known as the "peach capital of the world," Koshkonong became famous when peaches from the area took first place at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. The first orchards were planted in 1880 and harvested in 1901. During the boom years of the early 1900s, the town's population swelled to 3,500 during harvest season.

**[332.2 St. Elmo]**

Begin Koshkonong Hill, a descent of 430 feet in 8.6 miles, averaging 1.06 percent gradient.

**339.8 Thayer, Mo.**

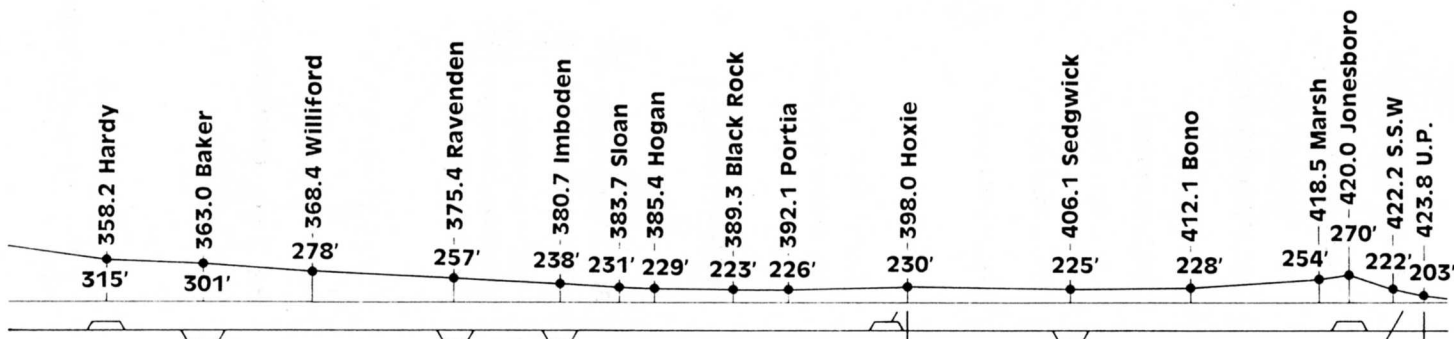
Pop. 1,996. 8,786 foot controlled siding. Named for Nathaniel Thayer, associate of James F. Joy and member of the Forbes group of Boston railroad capitalists. The town, which climbs the hill to the right of the line, was established by the railroad when it built through the narrow valley. Thayer was formerly an important shipping center for timber and dairy products. Thayer is a crew change point. Our train will stop here briefly to change railroad crews. Please remain on board.

**341.8 Missouri-Arkansas State Line \***

**342.2 Mammoth Spring, Ark.**

Pop. 1,097. Named for one of the largest springs in the world. Fed by rainfall over the high plains of southern Missouri, water rushes out of the spring at the rate of 9.78 million gallons per hour. Spring Lake, the pool formed by the spring and visible to the right of the train, is the source of the Spring River. The restored Frisco depot is also on the right. To the left is the federal fish hatchery.

Mammoth Spring was settled in the early 1800s as Head of the River. The town prospered due to an early grist mill powered by the spring's water. By 1886, when the railroad





arrived, the town was known as Mammoth Spring. In 1925 a hydro-electric plant was constructed at the mill dam, remaining in service until 1972. The State of Arkansas established Mammoth Spring State Park in 1957.

From Mammoth Spring the tracks follow the Spring River, only 50 miles long but noted for its natural beauty, and rapids alternating with deep clear pools. Rainbow trout thrive in the colder upper portions of the river, while walleye and bass are abundant in the warmer lower reaches. The river is also popular for canoeing.

**342.5 Warm Fork of Spring River Bridge \***

**343.6 Trace Creek Bridge \***

An often-used location for Frisco publicity photos as trains rounded the curve and headed onto the 62-foot through plate girder bridge.

**350.3 King**

7,742-foot controlled siding. Previously known as Fickinger.

**[351.5 Many Islands]**

**358.3 Hardy**

Pop. 538. Founded in 1883 by the railroad, the town is named for James A. Hardy, a 25-year-old track gang worker who saved his boss's life. At first a water stop, the town's businesses did not develop until around the turn of the century. Two resorts were built in the early 1900s; neither remains today. The depot was razed in the 1970s.

A devastating flood in 1982 forced the businesses along Main Street to move to higher ground. Wanting to preserve its original business district, Old Town Hardy was developed to replace the businesses that moved out. Today Hardy is known as the "Antique Capitol of the Ozarks."

**359.4 Little Flat Creek Bridge \***

**360.4 Cabin Creek Bridge \***

**363.0 Baker**

7,485-foot controlled siding.

**[368.4 Williford]**

Pop. 69. At one time limestone quarrying was done in the nearby hills. Several buildings constructed of native stone can be seen along the road paralleling the tracks to the left.

**369.7 Martins Creek Bridge \***

**374.2 William Creek Bridge \***

**375.4 Ravenden**

Pop. 330. At the turn of the century this was the stop for a now-defunct spa several miles away which boasted the healing powers of Ravenden Spring.

**375.9 Spring River Bridge \***

Our only crossing of the river is via a 395-foot deck plate girder bridge.

**380.7 Imboden**

Pop. 616. 8,574-foot controlled siding. Named for Benjamin Imboden, a Swiss pioneer who settled here in 1824.

**381.6 Harding Creek Bridge \***

**383.7 Sloan**

**384.5 Valley Stone**

**[385.4 Hogan]**

**389.3 Black Rock**

Pop. 736. Business track location. Here the route leaves the Ozark escarpment and enters the low, flat bottomlands.

**390.2 Black River Bridge \***

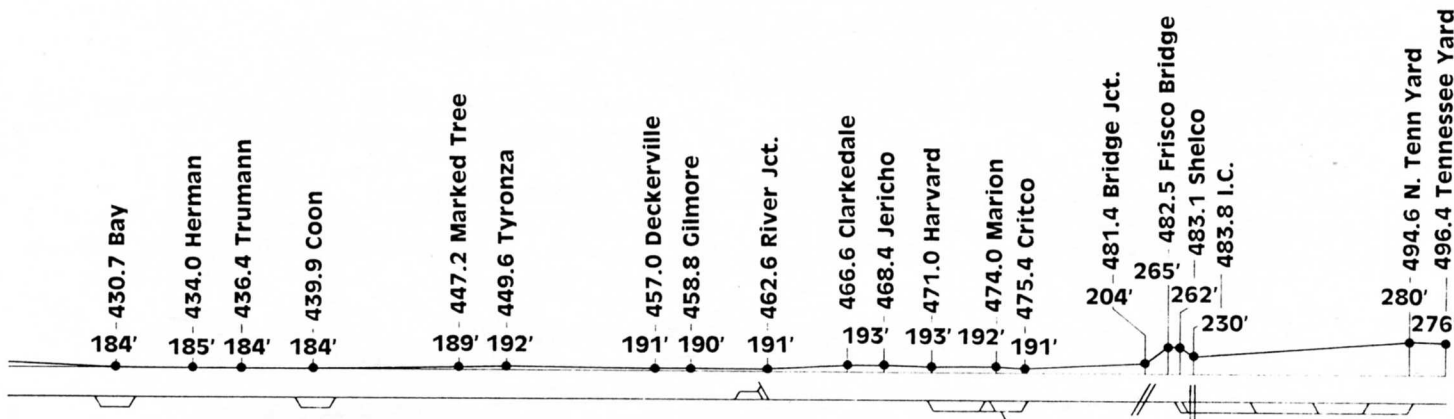
1,188-foot combination I-beam span and through plate girder bridge. The Black River has its beginnings in the Ozark Uplands of Missouri, entering the flat, marshy lowlands at Poplar Bluff, Mo. For the rest of the trip to Memphis we will be traversing the Mississippi Alluvial Plain, the terrain that dominates northeast Arkansas and southeast Missouri. Most of the bottomlands have been drained and cultivated, mainly in rice, cotton and soybeans. Where reclamation has not occurred, the land is timbered and swampy as was the entire area before settlement. The entire area is criss-crossed by numerous sloughs and drainage ditches.

**392.1 Portia**

**398.0 Hoxie**

Pop. 2,676. Our line crosses the Union Pacific Hoxie Subdivision, the ex-Missouri Pacific main line between Poplar Bluff, Mo. and Little Rock, Ark. The Hoxie Sub is part of the Cairo & Fulton, one of the earliest land grant railroads west of the Mississippi, running from Bird's Point, Mo., on the Mississippi across from Cairo, Ill., to Texarkana. The town was founded in 1903 and is named for M.L. Hoxie, vice president of the Cairo & Fulton's successor, St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern, a part of the Missouri Pacific.

BN's 4.4-mile Walport branch to an industrial park north of Walnut Ridge curves to the left shortly before crossing the UP. This is the remanent of the Frisco line to Poplar



Bluff and Cape Girardeau, Mo. Built as the Southern Missouri & Arkansas, the line came under Frisco control around the turn of the century. The line was cut back to Pochontas, Ark., 15 miles north of here, in 1965. The industrial park at Walport is built on the former U.S. Army Air Corps Walnut Ridge Basic Flying School. Built during World War II as a pilot training facility, the installation stored and scrapped surplus aircraft after 1946. Over 10,000 planes were scrapped here. The base was closed in the 1950s.

To the east of Hoxie is Crowley's Ridge, a narrow strip of hills running from extreme southern Missouri some 150 miles south-southwest to Helena, Ark. Varying in width from half a mile to 12 miles and averaging about 200 feet above the surrounding terrain, the ridge is a notable landmark. Its forested slopes and yellowish wind-deposited loess soil contrast sharply with the black alluvial soil through which it runs. An uneroded strip between two ancient channels of the Mississippi River, or possibly the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, the ridge gets its name from an early settler, Benjamin Crowley, a veteran of the War of 1812, who settled on it in 1820.

**406.1 Sedgwick**  
Pop. 86. 7015-foot controlled siding.

**412.1 Bono**  
**[418.5 Marsh]**  
**420.0 Jonesboro**

Pop. 46,535. County Seat of Craighead County and home of Arkansas State University. Spread on a level expanse of Crowley's Ridge, the area was settled in 1829. State Sen. William Jones, who advocated the county's formation, is the city's namesake. Jonesboro was incorporated in 1883. In 1909 the State chose the city for a district agricultural college. Among Jonesboro's notable citizens is Hattie W. Caraway, the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate in 1931.

Jonesboro is an agricultural center today. General Foods and Swift-Eckrich are located here, as well as BP Chemicals. As the train enters town a large Riceland Rice processing plant may be seen to the right. The St. Louis Southwestern (Cotton Belt) yard is visible after passing the rice plant, and our train will pass SSW's yellow wooden depot at the east end of the yard.

We will make our second stop at Jonesboro, near the university on the east side of town. If you are leaving the train here, we sincerely hope that you have enjoyed your trip. The locomotive will again be serviced here and, operating conditions permitting, those passengers continuing to Memphis may be able to briefly detrain. Once again, your car host will give you instructions.

**422.2 S.S.W.**  
Cotton Belt's St. Louis to Pine Bluff, Ark., main line parallels our route through town, until crossing beneath the Stadium Blvd. overpass (US Hwy 49).

**423.8 U.P. [Nettleton]**  
Here the line crosses the Union Pacific's (ex-Missouri Pacific) Wynne Subdivision, which runs between Dexter, Mo. and Alexandria, La. with trackage rights on SSW for the first 79 miles from Dexter to Jonesboro Jct., located about three miles north. Nettleton was the station stop on the Iron

Mountain & Helena Railroad for Jonesboro, which, already having two railroads, refused to give the railroad the customary land grants.

**430.7 Bay**  
Pop. 1,660. 5,857-foot controlled siding.

**[434.0 Herman]**  
**436.4 Trumann**  
Pop. 6,304. A cotton compress and a Baldwin organ and piano manufacturing plant are located here. In 1912 the Poinsett Lumber and Manufacturing Company, the main woodworking plant of the Singer Sewing Machine Company, was built here. The company owned thousands of acres of timberland which has since been converted to farmland. The Cotton Belt branch line between Malden, Mo., and McDonald, Ark. crossed the Frisco here until the mid-1950s, when the line was abandoned south of Trumann. The entire branch was abandoned circa 1970.

**439.9 Hatchie Coon**  
9,311-foot controlled siding. Known on the railroad simply as Coon. The wooded, marshy area to the left runs along the St. Francis River.

**[440.7 Pickett]**  
**447.2 Marked Tree**  
Pop. 3,100. Business track location. Located at the confluence of the meandering St. Francis and Little Rivers, which the train crosses on a 1,191-foot bridge as we enter town. The town was named for a blazed oak tree that indicated the ford across the St. Francis. According to tradition, the tree was marked by the Murrell outlaw band that terrorized the region during the 1830s. The landmark tree was washed away during a flood in 1890. Marked Tree is also where our route crosses the southern tip of the New Madrid Fault, source of the New Madrid earthquakes of 1812-13, the largest recorded quakes in North America.

**449.6 Tyronza [Tyronza Jct.]**  
**[452.0 Tyronza]**  
Pop. 858. Location of the former Tyronza depot.

**[457.0 Deckerville]**  
The Deckerville, Osceola & Northern Railroad, chartered in 1897, completed a line from Luxora, Ark. to here in 1900, connecting with the Frisco's Southern Division. It was sold to the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Memphis in 1901. The southern end of the line from Deckerville northeast to Evadale Jct. was abandoned in 1934.

**[458.8 Gilmore]**  
**460.5 I-55 Underpass \***  
**462.2 Turrell**  
Pop. 988. 8,598-foot controlled siding. A leg of the wye track for River Junction may be seen to the left.

**462.6 River Junction**  
Junction with the River Subdivision from Cape Girardeau and St. Louis. The line here begins to run atop the Mississippi River levee.

**[466.6 Clarkedale]**  
**[468.4 Jericho]**  
**471.0 Harvard**  
Begin a 4.4-miles of double track to Marion.

**474.0 Marion**

Pop. 4391. County seat of Crittenden County. Junction with the Hulbert branch, running 5.8 miles to West Memphis.

**475.4 Critco**

End two main tracks.

**481.4 Bridge Junction (Ark.)**

Begin the approach to the Mississippi River bridge on line constructed from 1888 to 1892 by the Kansas City & Memphis Railway & Bridge Co. The company and its 3.092 miles of line were leased to the KCFS&M in 1901.

**482.5 Center of Frisco Bridge \***

Our train crosses the Mississippi River into Tennessee. The Frisco Bridge, 5,015 feet long, was constructed between 1888 and 1892, and was placed in operation in May, 1892. The superstructure was fabricated by the Union Bridge Co., and constructed by Baird Bros. of Pittsburgh.

**483.1 Shelco (Tenn.)**

**483.8 I.C.**

Crossing of the Illinois Central's Riverfront line.

**487.9 North Yale**

**[489.0 Yale Yard]**

BN's automobile transloading facility is located here. Site of the former Frisco Memphis Yard and car shops.

**489.5 South Yale**

**491.5 Demo**

**494.6 North Tennessee Yard**

End two main tracks. Enter BN's ex-Frisco Tennessee Yard.

**496.4 Tennessee Yard**

Welcome to Memphis, as we end our 297.8 mile trip at BN's Memphis-area intermodal yard.

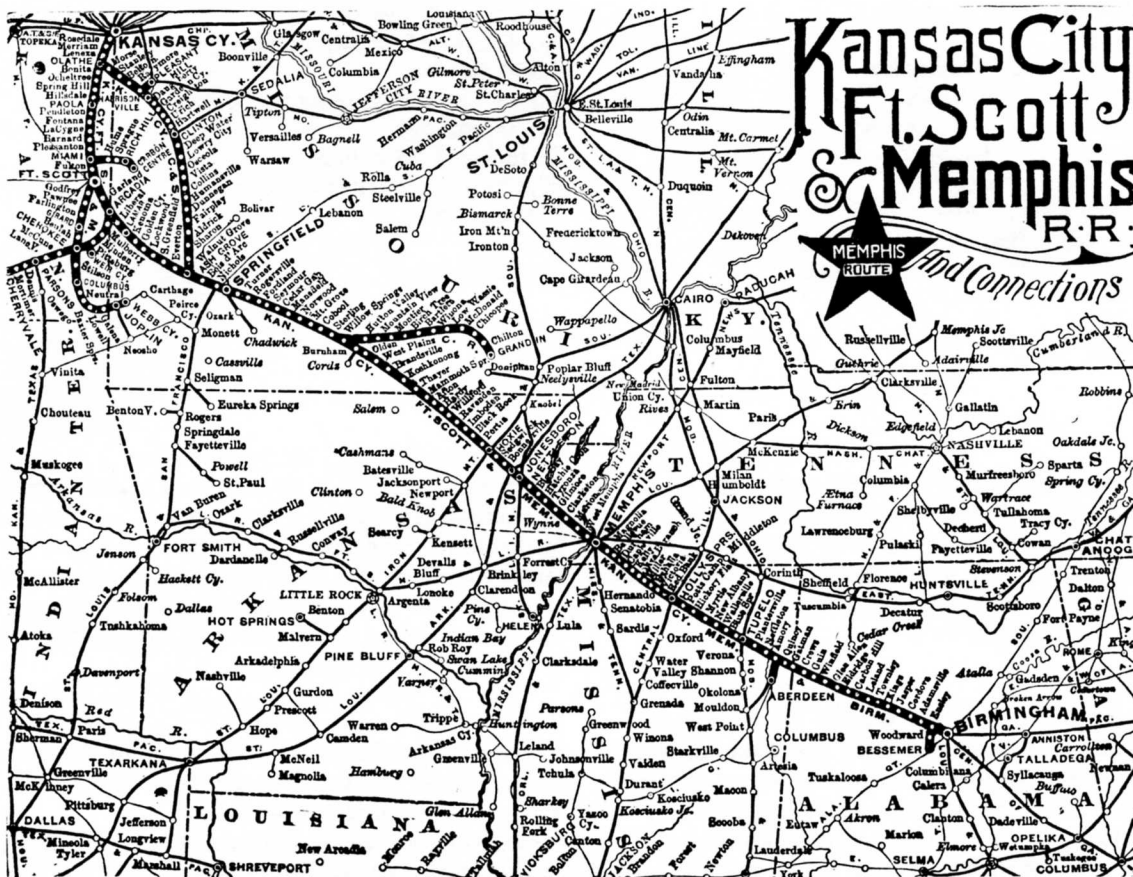
French merchants built the first settlement in the Memphis area in 1739. Named Fort Assumption, it shared the land with Chickasaw Indians until the late 18th century. When Tennessee became a state in 1796, Andrew Jackson, James Winchester, and Judge John Overton purchased land in the area and began to shape plans for a new city on the high bluffs between the Ohio Valley and New Orleans.

From this beginning Memphis has developed into a major trading center on the Mississippi. Federal Express, the area's largest employer, International Paper, Hunter Fans and Donruss have their headquarters here. The Memphis Naval Air Station is the largest inland naval base in the world with over 13,000 employees. Memphis is also a railroad center, served by BN, CSX Transportation, Illinois Central, Norfolk Southern, Cotton Belt and Union Pacific.

Thank you for traveling with us. We hope that you have enjoyed your trip, and we look forward to seeing you on board again. Buses will return you to your designated city or, if you are staying in Memphis, to designated accommodations.

-- Rick Sprung, St. Louis Chapter NRHS

Research assistance by Mark Cedeck, Charles Dischinger, Ron Kraus, Brian McQuitty and Jeff Schmid



Map of the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Memphis, April, 1889. Courtesy Barriger Railroad Collection, St. Louis Mercantile Library.

## About Your Locomotive – Frisco 1522



The magnificent steam locomotive pulling our train today, ex-Frisco Railway no. 1522, was built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia, Pa. in 1926 for the St. Louis – San Francisco Railway, more

commonly known as the Frisco. The 1522 is a Mountain-type locomotive with a 4-8-2 wheel arrangement: a four-wheel pilot truck at the front to guide the engine into curves; eight coupled driving wheels; and a two-wheel trailing truck supporting the firebox and cab.

Frisco 1522 is currently the only operational Mountain-type locomotive in the United States. Its restoration is widely considered to be one of the finest in the nation. The 1522 handled Frisco's important long-haul passenger trains, such as the *Kansas City – Florida Special*, which operated on the route of our trip today.

The 1522 was retired from service in 1951, and donated to the National Museum of Transport in St. Louis County,

Missouri in 1959. In 1985, a private, not-for-profit, all-volunteer group, the St. Louis Steam Train Association, began the restoration of the locomotive. In 1988, after a three-year restoration which absorbed 40,000 man-hours of labor, and some \$180,000 in parts and services, mostly donated, the 1522 operated its first trips. The locomotive is leased from St. Louis County by the St. Louis Steam Train Association, which operates the 1522 in cooperation with various railroads and excursion trip sponsors.

Today's excursion marks the engine's first trip since restoration on the ex-Frisco rails out of Springfield to Memphis, over which it regularly operated through the 1940s. It has previously operated other trips over ex-Frisco lines between St. Louis, Newburg, Mo. and Springfield. Only two previous trips over the former Frisco have been open to the public: the 1522's return to Frisco rails four years ago for the 1990 NRHS convention in St. Louis, and yesterday's trip from St. Louis to Springfield.

The St. Louis Chapter NRHS and the St. Louis Steam Train Association are grateful to Burlington Northern for allowing the use of the 1522 to power this special excursion on this historic route.

**Built**  
**Engine Weight**  
**Weight on Drivers**  
**Main Driving Wheels**  
**Fire Box Dimensions**  
**Fuel**  
**Tender Fuel Capacity**  
**Fuel Consumption**  
**Tender Water Capacity**  
**Cylinders – Bore/Stroke**  
**Tractive Effort**  
**Valve Gear Type**  
**Length – Engine and Tender**  
**Weight – Engine and Tender**

Baldwin Locomotive Works, Philadelphia, 1926  
342,200 pounds  
233,700 pounds  
69.5-inch diameters  
10 feet by 7 feet  
No. 6 heavy fuel oil, originally coal  
4,500 gallons  
About 13 to 15 gallons per mile  
11,700 gallons  
28 inches x 28 inches  
56,800 pounds without booster  
Walschaerts  
88.5 feet  
598,890 pounds

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## About Your Train and Its Features

### The Cars

Your train contains historic passenger cars mainly built in the 1940s and 1950s. Many of the cars operated in famous passenger trains of years past on the Norfolk & Western and other railroads. These cars are maintained and constantly updated to meet stringent safety standards.

### Your Seat

You may choose any unoccupied seat in your class of service. Once you have chosen a seat, however, please occupy *only* that seat throughout the day when seated. Please do not use adjacent seats to store luggage and other personal items--use the baggage racks for such items, please. **Only Premium Class passengers may enter or occupy Premium Class cars.**

### Food Service and Souvenir Car

Open approximately 20 minutes after morning departure from St. Louis. Located mid-train, this car features morning coffee and pastry, juice, ice cold soda, snacks and candy. Pick up your lunch here if you ordered one. There's also a great selection of souvenirs featuring Frisco 1522. The car closes about 45 minutes before arrival in Memphis.

### Restrooms

Restrooms are located at the ends of the cars. Please do not drink the tap water in the restrooms. Drinking water is available in the food service car. *Please do not dispose of diapers, sanitary napkins or other such items in the special ecological toilets.*