

Joplin Mo. Dec.19th.51.

Dears Friends and Family,-

Along with the Xmas greetings I just couldn't resist writing you a little note.

Fond memories of the past and friends. I often wish for a day or two around Wichita where I could meet and converse with friends of the past.

The pages of the book is slowly turning and the first chapters are written and we look forward to the others that are to follow us until the end. Hoping for the best we live our lives but fond memories linger of that which has passed.

Again at this time of the year we send our greeting to those that entered into our lives in the chapters of life closing.

And I wish to thank you for the past friend ship and co-operation and sincerely hope that our friend ship will forever continue.

Times is changing fast here in Joplin due to the coming of the Diesel power. Last week finished up our last steam engine operation.

We have at the round house six steam engines dead ready to be knocked down to be towed into Springfield for scrap. The 1227 is already to be towed in. the 1252-1228-1231-1253 and the 1249. These will be knocked down just as fast as the remaining force can dismantle them.

The first cut here at the round house was, one machinist, two machinist helpers, one boiler maker and helper, a truck man and a hostler.

Three remaining stationary fireman remaining on until such time as they can convert some other method of heat and air power. So at present there is remaining the three stationary fireman, two machinists and myself. And I have my fingers crossed relative to myself. But still in the curtailment program I can't see how they will operate with out a Hostler to handle the Diesels in and out of the house, refueling and sanding. With the two machinists on these Diesels need to be put in over a pit for underneath inspection. And as the tracks at present are such that the Diesels have to be moved my reason for thinking that a Hostler will be retained.

My hours before the curtailment was 7.30 A.M. until 3.30 P.M. They cut off the hostler from 4.30 P.M. until 12.30 A.M. and changed my hours from 6.00 P.M. until 2.00 A.M. But its a job and I am thankful for a job.

And as stated in hopes that the management won't cut off the remaining hostling job and try to have watchman handle these Diesels.

My concern about the situation is being a hostler fixture will in event the remaining job is cut off, will I be out or will I be permitted to be placed some where in this seniority district.

This is a question of grave concern to me. But in a letter from Mr. John Stroud Gen. Chairman an answer to a question relative to my situation his reply was, at present lets not cross the bridge before we get to it. And in his letter also he stated, -surely there will be sufficient engine handling at Joplin to require the assignment of a hostler; even though all steam engines are replaced with diesel engines, there will be need for hostling service, and we must insist upon our contract rights to this service. In any event that might eliminate hostling service at Joplin entirely, provided it can be done under our agreement rules, we will then in that case give due consideration to your status as an incapacitated hostler, keeping in mind the possibility of placing you wherever we could consistently with the agreement rules.

Going back to the beginning. When I hired out and established seniority as a fireman Sept. 29th. 1907 the contract at that time read; Joplin to be considered a separate terminal and Fireman out of Joplin only hold rights out of Monett in preferred freight and passenger service. But the joker in the contract at that time even thought you

did hire out and start at Joplin if later in event you worked up in seniority a few years later, promotion those days much faster than in later days; and went to Monett and took either the Ft. Scott run which was considered a preferred run or took passenger service out of there and your turn come for promotion and you were promoted while working on any preferred run (that is a man hired at Joplin) you established engineers rights on the four divisions out of Monett. I can recall several men that went from Joplin to Monett and exercised or obtained rights as engineers on the other three divisions. Frank Davenport was the last man in the earlier days to be promoted while working on a preferred run. But preceding him was, Jim Pendergrass, Henry Lake, Al. Mathis and at this moment can't think of the names of one or two more that reverted rights this way through the Monett engineers board.

After the establishment of Frank Davenports seniority through the Monett board this rule was changed so that in future all engineers promoted out of Joplin only held rights on the Carthage Sub.

Then the joint board in 1911 gave fireman out of Joplin equal rights in all classes of service. 1910 Joint board effected the Neodesha men giving them equal rights to all classes of service on the Carthage Sub. I was holding a job out of Joplin. One night on #304 Turney Adell, Pete Tomey, Charlie Phillips, Bill Frahs and Roscoe Garret all took out of Neodesha for points east. Charlie Phillips and Pete Tomey stopped off at Joplin the balance went on to Monett. Such a scatterment as they made in placing themselves. I lost out and had to revert back to the extra board and continued on the extra board until 1911 when Joplin was given equal rights on all classes of service out of Monett. Then I went to Monett and took a pool. There was seventeen chain gang pools at that time on the Carthage Sub. I got out of Monett on the 592 Engr. Pope my first trip. Stayed in Monett until 1916 when I was promoted and sent back to the engineers extra board at Joplin.

And bucked an engineers extra board at Joplin with six and seven men on it. Bowser, Stephenson, Patten, Lamme, Barber, Wade, Bethel and myself on the board at one time.

But times and the pages of the book keep turning. Joplin now on the verge of being abolished.

Now back to the changes, - in 1928 Joplin and Monett extra boards, fireman, was consolidated and after that date no more fireman was to be hired out of Joplin. All men hired out of Monett and supplied to Joplin as needed.

Now there is only two men left of the old original Joplin terminal, Oscar Fowler and myself. Mr. Fowler no doubt will continue on until retirement as an engineer. Myself under the assignment as a fixturer it looks rather blue to me at times while in my own mind and with what little knowledge I have of the present contract under the agreement of 1928 but what in event this place was abolished I could place myself as a hostler in Monett. That's my view of the situation.

Gods golden rule and commandments have been interpreted and changed by those that see a change needed to fit their views of life that this world is in a rather unrestly state.

So today we older men are confronted by the views of the younger generation and they don't hesitate to tell you, take out, make room for us, we are entitled to a job. So when it comes down to the final vote if in need I have give up and lost my faith in the motto, brotherly love in the organization. If so it would of never permitted the Master Machanic and Asst. Supt. to pull the stunt they did with me in 1948 all be cause I stood up for the men and made a statement that the 1400 class engines could not be fired Monett to Wichita and return, 480 miles with out some delay in doing fire cleaning work. They assigned the engines to this milage and determined there would be no kick back on their judgement.

I considered my self an average fireman and I couldn't do it. I tried it and failed the same as the fireman on the four crews on the round trip. And made my report that 480 miles was too long a continous trip on a hump back grate engine, hand fired for a fireman to maintain a fire what would warrent sufficient steam the entire round trip.

In the handling of men with different dispositions in supervision you run up against many problems and I had with some some difficulty but as a whole I left the job I think on the basis of the thoughts that I had when I entered the supervision job, to leave the ranks of the men as one of them just as I did when I entered. And as the days pass I am thankfull that I find amoung the men friends just like I had when I entered the job.

I was very happy to get the Xmas card from you with greetings and personally I wish to exchange to you my sincerest wishes to you and your family.

I had a talk the other day with our old chum J.R. Hammon Jr. who is Supt. Motive Power on the Eagle Picher Railroad, Terminal Cardin Okla. and their two stall round house is located at the Central Mill at this point.

The Eagle Picher lead Co. when the Frisco begin to end their steam locomotives going into Diesel power was confronted with a problem as they in the past had leased engines from the Frisco. Steam engines. Now that the Frisco was doing away with their steam power they had to revert to some other source to get their power. So they purchased five of the old 1600 class engines, my understanding at junk price per pound weight then paid the Frisco to over haul them, about a class 5 repair job. Then as fast as they were overhauled they were delivered to the Eagle Picher Lead Co. I think they still have one more out of the five yet to be delivered. After delivery them they are property of the E.P.L. All maintainence and upkeep their own responsibility.

Not a critic but I don't understand why the E.P.L. bought engines of this class when they could of purchased some of the 1200 class in the same way. And to my notion the rebuilt 1200 class engines would be far the best buy over those old 1600 class engines.

In the beginning I said that I would love some time to have the opportunity of coming out to Wichita and visiting with the men there.

So please excuse this lengthy letter but I just can't resist writing you. Again thanks for every thing. Give my best regards to all in and around Wichita and Neodesha.

Have a Xmas card from Jimmie Welsch. Will exchange with him.

I live three and a quarter miles from the round house here in Joplin. This section where I live is acres instead of city lots. This place is a half acre. I raised a wonderfull garden this last summer and expect to do the same this next year. We have all the City utilities out here except sewerage system. But this place is on sloping ground, have a septic tank, no trouble at all, gas, electricity, city water, city mail delivery, city garbage pick up. Bus service with in a quarter of a mile of our house. We like it fine out here except when the snow gets too deep and the round house so far away. Difficulty getting into town.

Best regards to all your family.

H. E. Carls

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