

Joplin Mo. December 16th.1955.

Mr. & Mrs. Jack Payy and Family,

Dear Friends,

I can not resist adding with our seasons greetings just a letter of appreciation of your thoughtfulness in sending greeting for season of year.

In words it is difficult to express my appreciation to ones that I mingled and worked with and after a parting of several years, to be remembered by those friends on the Holiday Season.

And with this expression, I wish to thank you.

Time goes on and each year we grow older in body but not in spirit.

Time will soon have a history mark on my life and rail-road career and in these two events friends that I made I cherish the memories.

Some time later in the spring I hope to visit both Neodesha and Wichita and mingle with the men at these two places and swap yarns of interest of events in the past six years.

Last Tuesday night I attended an Employee's Club gathering here in Joplin when Mr. L.W. Mink Asst. Gen. Manager presented the 25 year service award. Sure, I was on the front row but like a youngster attending a Xmas. program and getting as a reward a sack of candy and nuts and holding out both hands hoping to get two. I remarked how sorry I was that this program was advanced four months as I thought I should have at that time (next April) a pin for both coat lapels. At that time I will have 50 years.

One other employe and my-self stood up on the 49 year request. They took our pictures. This picture might appear some time in the, All-Aboard.

I entered service with the Frisco as a Clerk for the Round-House and Car Foreman at this point. April 24th. 1906. Seniority in engine service Sept. 29th. 1907.

So the half century mark is growing closer. And time changes things.

I wonder some times how I am going to explain to my grand-children just how those old steam engines puffed, made smoke, threw fire and why, just (over night) the Diesels took their place.

Frankly these Diesels are a young mans job, one who has years ahead to master their machanism. In my opinion all, both employee's and supervision, both are entering into a new world, over-night. And have much to learn in as much as they are changing, just as fast as the new model automobiles. Diesel is the beginning of a new area in power and use in railroads. Just a short time ago, unknown. Why, this statement. From my own experience, past 55 to 60 years.

You no doubt have noticed many, many times the old round house pits and imprints of what was once a round house north of the high-way in Burrton Kans. My Father worked for the Kansas Midland before the Frisco took over the branch Wichita to Ellsworth. I went my first year to school in Burrton. There was six of us boys in my family. When we finished the eight grade in school my Father seen that we went to work, and we followed in line, railroading. Three brothers older than I. Each day, morning breakfast, dinner and supper, the conversation was, -railroading. In 1897 when they abolished the round house force at Burrton and moved the terminal, the men that wished to go else where for employment the Frisco offered to secure jobs for them. My Father and another employe by the name of Evans ask to be given employment at Joplin. Starting at this time the six sons were put to work just as fast as they finished school.

Only three living now, my-self the only one railroading. And my time is growing shorter each month.

Comparison or point in this above statement. My-self, just an average student had steam locomotives as a desert at each meal. During the time I was trying to break in so many students, fireman, at first I won-



dered, some students to begin were blanks, I couldn't understand, why, I thought could any one be that dumb, why, a locomotive, you see them every day. One day a dream, I thought about my own Son. I couldn't recall but two times that he was ever upon an engine with me and then only for a few minutes, he had run short of ready cash at school. Then I thought of an experience my-self. Taking Masonic Degrees and trying to learn my proficiency lecture, First, Second and Third Degrees.

The man that I went to loaded me down, gave me 19 questions to start with. A month later I didn't know any more than I did when I started so I told the Secretary to keep my twenty Dollars, I didn't think that that I cared to go on. He ask a question, how many questions did this Doctor that was to drill me on the proficiency give you. I said nineteen.

This Secretary was a merchant and a customer came in. He ask me to wait a few minutes. When he returned he said I am going to give you three, no more, go out, keep these in mind and come back in a week.

Next time, three more and when I begin to see light added a couple more. It wasn't any time until I had memorized. All, and continued on.

Here was the lesson I learned and I hope that I practiced it when I was trying to teach students and fireman. A mind can only grasp so much, tell then some thing today, wait until tomorrow, explain some more.

This Diesel, - a conglomeration, of contactors, resisters, exciters, coils, the function of all these, a study for all, for very few men of today know Diesels. For myself today at my age I have lost my yen to master the parts. Only care to be an operator. Start and stop, and if the noisy things stops, send for a machanic, in name only for he may not be able to start the thing.

At present I am in yards here on what they call the #1 shift, 6.30 A.M. Only work two engines here. The other one goes to work at 3.59. P.M.

We have an hour and a half between 2.30 P.M. tie up time and 3.59 P.M. the second crews starting time. We make the hour and a half and some times, well today 25 minutes over into their time. 10 hours is limit to work for the switchmen before they get their second day.

My job doesn't work Sundays. Tonight had in 14 time slips and total 1793 miles. The other crew works an average of ten hours each night, and works seven days a week.

I have the pride and joy of all switch Diesels, No. 60. Biggest problem here in yards, wondering if you are on the ground or on the rails. If I recall the days gone by the flat bottom 1200 steam engines had nothing on this Diesel when it comes to rough riding.

We have two turn around road crews here. One machanical foreman, he is every thing, works 24 hours around the clock, Has to make trips to Baxter, Oronogo, Carl Jct. any where with in a radius of 25 miles.

Shortly after the first of the year our tie up point here will be changed from present location to 10th. street yards. What a mess these College graduates gets things into. They are educated, on paper, but lacking on practical operation.

Well Jack, I wish I could have a visit with you. I could talk faster than I can type. Would love to make a trip on Wichita Sub. with a good old 4000 class engine.

Mrs. C. and I in our old age live like a couple of old hermits, turn in when the sun goes down. Due to two major operations in past years Mrs. C. doesn't feel too good but able to keep going. She states, she wishes she had some of my pep.

Give my best regards to all and again thanks for the remembrance.

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H.E. Canighus