



Phenix, MO

The History of a Ghost Town



If the statement is true that a town is only a town when it is on the map, then the only town remaining in Phenix, MO, is in the memories of those few who still call it home. A quick review of two state maps, editions 1965 & 1977 respectively, stand as a mute testimony to the demise of Phenix.

The 1965 map shows the town nestled between Ash Grove & Walnut Grove in northwest Green County, MO. The 1977 edition shows only a blank space where once was the home of over 500 Missouri residents. Thus, it seems appropriate to say that the history of **Phenix, MO** is *The History of a Ghost Town*.

The town of Phenix, like so many across the country, can trace it's beginnings to the railroad. In particular, the **Kansas City, Clinton, & Springfield Railway Co.** On September 6, 1884, the **Kansas City, Clinton, & Springfield Railroad Co.** was incorporated in the State of Missouri. On January 10, 1885, it consolidated operations with the **Pleasant Hill & DeSoto Railroad Co.**, incorporated in the State of Kansas on October 16, 1877, and formed a new company incorporated in Missouri on February 10, 1885 and in Kansas two days later. The end result was the new **Kansas City, Clinton, & Springfield Railway Co.**

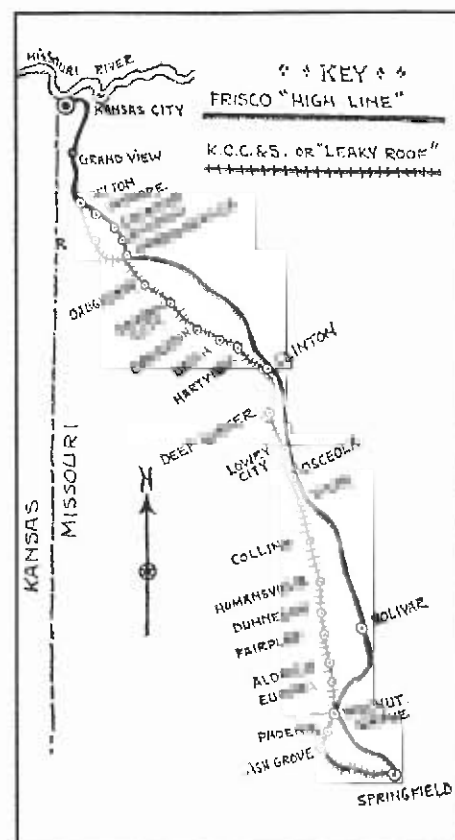
Even before the corporate proceedings were complete, \$2,400,000.00 was committed to construct a line from Olathe, KS, south to a connection with the Kansas City, Ft. Scott, & Gulf Railroad at Ash Grove, MO. On July 7, 1885, work started on the southern end of the line north from Ash Grove, and on August 14, 1885, the **Kansas City Journal** Newspaper carried the announcement, "The Kansas City, Clinton, & Springfield Railroad will commence regular passenger trains from Kansas City to Clinton next Sunday evening."

The plan was to build north from Ash Grove, south from Clinton, and meet at the Osage River at Osceola.

It should be noted that the **K.C.C. & S.** was saddled by a rival right from the start as John Blair, a New Jersey businessman, started building the **Kansas City, Osceola, & Southern**, the **Blair Line**, from Kansas City virtually paralleling the **K.C.C. & S.** The end result was a race to see which line would be the first to reach the Osage River. Blair won the race but the **K.C.C. & S.** was first to cross the river, completing a bridge at Osceola on October 29, 1885, connecting with the southern branch from Ash Grove, completed to the river some twenty-seven days earlier. The formal opening of the completed line was celebrated October 30 & 31, 1885.

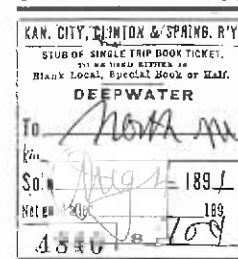
While blasting the right-of-way between Ash Grove and Walnut Grove, a large vein of limestone was discovered. Word of the discovery soon made its way to Kansas City and prompted Patrick Mugan, a lime manufacturer, to examine the site and ultimately start a small lime burning operation. In 1888-1889, two Kansas City businessmen either formed a partnership with Mr. Mugan or purchased his lime kilns and formed the **Phenix Stone & Lime Co.**

Between 1890 & 1910 there emerged a typical company town complete with a General Store, owned & operated by the company, a two-room school whose teachers were paid by the company, and thirty-two company-owned homes provided for employees through a payroll deduction rent. There was a large community building, built by the company and named Kiel Hall in honor of their chief New York sales representative, and a large city park that would serve as the location for regular concerts by the Phenix Orchestra.



In addition the town included a post office, two hotels, a Methodist Church, and an 18' x 39' depot complete with second floor living quarters (See Cover Photo). According to a long time Phenix resident, "When the train would pull into the depot, the residents would go to meet it so they could hear the news from surrounding communities and the big city. The presence of the train also found importance in the lives of the people because its arrival meant the delivery of the day's mail at the local post office."

In 1910, the **K.C.C. & S.** roster included twelve 4-4-0, 1884 Manchester built locomotives, Nos. 79-90, 175 coal cars, series 5001-5411 odd numbers, 100 box cars,



K.C.C. & S.
ticket stub
From
Deepwater, Mo
to
North Mo.
August 4, 1891
Cost: 10c

series 5002-5200 even numbers, and seven cabooses series 1-8. The passenger fleet consisted of three Mail-Express cars Nos. 157-159 and six Coaches Nos. 863-868. Two freight trains were operated on the line, Nos. 39 & 40, between Ash Grove and Clinton on Monday, Wednesday, & Friday, and Nos. 35 & 36 between Clinton and Olathe on Tuesdays, Thursdays, & Saturdays. Two daily passenger trains were in service: Nos. 3 & 4 between Kansas City & Clinton and Nos. 5 & 6 from Kansas City to Ash Grove.

Kansas City, Olathe, Belton, Harrisonville, Clinton, Ash Grove and Springfield

Table 54a
Kansas City, Clinton & Springfield Railway

Daily		Daily	STATIONS	Daily	Daily
AM	PM		Prisco Lines	AM	PM
7:00	8:15	1	Kansas City	11:00	4:25
7:15	8:30	2	Clinton	11:15	4:40
7:30	8:45	3	Belton	11:30	4:55
7:45	9:00	4	Harrisonville	11:45	5:10
8:00	9:15	5	Olathe	12:00	5:25
8:15	9:30	6	Clinton	12:15	5:40
8:30	9:45	7	Belton	12:30	5:55
8:45	10:00	8	Harrisonville	12:45	6:10
9:00	10:15	9	Olathe	1:00	6:25
9:15	10:30	10	Clinton	1:15	6:40
9:30	10:45	11	Belton	1:30	6:55
9:45	11:00	12	Harrisonville	1:45	7:10
10:00	11:15	13	Olathe	2:00	7:25
10:15	11:30	14	Clinton	2:15	7:40
10:30	11:45	15	Belton	2:30	7:55
10:45	12:00	16	Harrisonville	2:45	8:10
11:00	12:15	17	Olathe	3:00	8:25
11:15	12:30	18	Clinton	3:15	8:40
11:30	12:45	19	Belton	3:30	8:55
11:45	1:00	20	Harrisonville	3:45	9:10
12:00	1:15	21	Olathe	4:00	9:25
12:15	1:30	22	Clinton	4:15	9:40
12:30	1:45	23	Belton	4:30	9:55
12:45	2:00	24	Harrisonville	4:45	10:10
1:00	2:15	25	Olathe	5:00	10:25
1:15	2:30	26	Clinton	5:15	10:40
1:30	2:45	27	Belton	5:30	10:55
1:45	3:00	28	Harrisonville	5:45	11:10
2:00	3:15	29	Olathe	6:00	11:25
2:15	3:30	30	Clinton	6:15	11:40
2:30	3:45	31	Belton	6:30	11:55
2:45	4:00	32	Harrisonville	6:45	12:10
3:00	4:15	33	Olathe	7:00	12:25
3:15	4:30	34	Clinton	7:15	12:40
3:30	4:45	35	Belton	7:30	12:55
3:45	5:00	36	Harrisonville	7:45	1:10
4:00	5:15	37	Olathe	8:00	1:25
4:15	5:30	38	Clinton	8:15	1:40
4:30	5:45	39	Belton	8:30	1:55
4:45	6:00	40	Harrisonville	8:45	2:10
5:00	6:15	41	Olathe	9:00	2:25
5:15	6:30	42	Clinton	9:15	2:40
5:30	6:45	43	Belton	9:30	2:55
5:45	7:00	44	Harrisonville	9:45	3:10
6:00	7:15	45	Olathe	10:00	3:25
6:15	7:30	46	Clinton	10:15	3:40
6:30	7:45	47	Belton	10:30	3:55
6:45	8:00	48	Harrisonville	10:45	4:10
7:00	8:15	49	Olathe	11:00	4:25
7:15	8:30	50	Clinton	11:15	4:40
7:30	8:45	51	Belton	11:30	4:55
7:45	9:00	52	Harrisonville	11:45	5:10
8:00	9:15	53	Olathe	12:00	5:25
8:15	9:30	54	Clinton	12:15	5:40
8:30	9:45	55	Belton	12:30	5:55
8:45	10:00	56	Harrisonville	12:45	6:10
9:00	10:15	57	Olathe	1:00	6:25
9:15	10:30	58	Clinton	1:15	6:40
9:30	10:45	59	Belton	1:30	6:55
9:45	11:00	60	Harrisonville	1:45	7:10
10:00	11:15	61	Olathe	2:00	7:25
10:15	11:30	62	Clinton	2:15	7:40
10:30	11:45	63	Belton	2:30	7:55
10:45	12:00	64	Harrisonville	2:45	8:10
11:00	12:15	65	Olathe	3:00	8:25
11:15	12:30	66	Clinton	3:15	8:40
11:30	12:45	67	Belton	3:30	8:55
11:45	1:00	68	Harrisonville	3:45	9:10
12:00	1:15	69	Olathe	4:00	9:25
12:15	1:30	70	Clinton	4:15	9:40
12:30	1:45	71	Belton	4:30	9:55
12:45	2:00	72	Harrisonville	4:45	10:10
1:00	2:15	73	Olathe	5:00	10:25
1:15	2:30	74	Clinton	5:15	10:40
1:30	2:45	75	Belton	5:30	10:55
1:45	3:00	76	Harrisonville	5:45	11:10
2:00	3:15	77	Olathe	6:00	11:25
2:15	3:30	78	Clinton	6:15	11:40
2:30	3:45	79	Belton	6:30	11:55
2:45	4:00	80	Harrisonville	6:45	12:10
3:00	4:15	81	Olathe	7:00	12:25
3:15	4:30	82	Clinton	7:15	12:40
3:30	4:45	83	Belton	7:30	12:55
3:45	5:00	84	Harrisonville	7:45	1:10
4:00	5:15	85	Olathe	8:00	1:25
4:15	5:30	86	Clinton	8:15	1:40
4:30	5:45	87	Belton	8:30	1:55
4:45	6:00	88	Harrisonville	8:45	2:10
5:00	6:15	89	Olathe	9:00	2:25
5:15	6:30	90	Clinton	9:15	2:40
5:30	6:45	91	Belton	9:30	2:55
5:45	7:00	92	Harrisonville	9:45	3:10
6:00	7:15	93	Olathe	10:00	3:25
6:15	7:30	94	Clinton	10:15	3:40
6:30	7:45	95	Belton	10:30	3:55
6:45	8:00	96	Harrisonville	10:45	4:10
7:00	8:15	97	Olathe	11:00	4:25
7:15	8:30	98	Clinton	11:15	4:40
7:30	8:45	99	Belton	11:30	4:55
7:45	9:00	100	Harrisonville	11:45	5:10
8:00	9:15	101	Olathe	12:00	5:25
8:15	9:30	102	Clinton	12:15	5:40
8:30	9:45	103	Belton	12:30	5:55
8:45	10:00	104	Harrisonville	12:45	6:10
9:00	10:15	105	Olathe	1:00	6:25
9:15	10:30	106	Clinton	1:15	6:40
9:30	10:45	107	Belton	1:30	6:55
9:45	11:00	108	Harrisonville	1:45	7:10
10:00	11:15	109	Olathe	2:00	7:25
10:15	11:30	110	Clinton	2:15	7:40
10:30	11:45	111	Belton	2:30	7:55
10:45	12:00	112	Harrisonville	2:45	8:10
11:00	12:15	113	Olathe	3:00	8:25
11:15	12:30	114	Clinton	3:15	8:40
11:30	12:45	115	Belton	3:30	8:55
11:45	1:00	116	Harrisonville	3:45	9:10
12:00	1:15	117	Olathe	4:00	9:25
12:15	1:30	118	Clinton	4:15	9:40
12:30	1:45	119	Belton	4:30	9:55
12:45	2:00	120	Harrisonville	4:45	10:10
1:00	2:15	121	Olathe	5:00	10:25
1:15	2:30	122	Clinton	5:15	10:40
1:30	2:45	123	Belton	5:30	10:55
1:45	3:00	124	Harrisonville	5:45	11:10
2:00	3:15	125	Olathe	6:00	11:25
2:15	3:30	126	Clinton	6:15	11:40
2:30	3:45	127	Belton	6:30	11:55
2:45	4:00	128	Harrisonville	6:45	12:10
3:00	4:15	129	Olathe	7:00	12:25
3:15	4:30	130	Clinton	7:15	12:40
3:30	4:45	131	Belton	7:30	12:55
3:45	5:00	132	Harrisonville	7:45	1:10
4:00	5:15	133	Olathe	8:00	1:25
4:15	5:30	134	Clinton	8:15	1:40
4:30	5:45	135	Belton	8:30	1:55
4:45	6:00	136	Harrisonville	8:45	2:10
5:00	6:15	137	Olathe	9:00	2:25
5:15	6:30	138	Clinton	9:15	2:40
5:30	6:45	139	Belton	9:30	2:55
5:45	7:00	140	Harrisonville	9:45	3:10
6:00	7:15	141	Olathe	10:00	3:25
6:15	7:30	142	Clinton	10:15	3:40
6:30	7:45	143	Belton	10:30	3:55
6:45	8:00	144	Harrisonville	10:45	4:10
7:00	8:15	145	Olathe	11:00	4:25
7:15	8:30	146	Clinton	11:15	4:40
7:30	8:45	147	Belton	11:30	4:55
7:45	9:00	148	Harrisonville	11:45	5:10
8:00	9:15	149	Olathe	12:00	5:25
8:15	9:30	150	Clinton	12:15	5:40
8:30	9:45	151	Belton	12:30	5:55
8:45	10:00	152	Harrisonville	12:45	6:10
9:00	10:15	153	Olathe	1:00	6:25
9:15	10:30	154	Clinton	1:15	6:40
9:30	10:45	155	Belton	1:30	6:55
9:45	11:00	156	Harrisonville	1:45	7:10
10:00	11:15	157	Olathe	2:00	7:25
10:15	11:30	158	Clinton	2:15	7:40
10:30	11:45	159	Belton	2:30	7:55
10:45	12:00	160	Harrisonville	2:45	8:10
11:00	12:15	161	Olathe	3:00	8:25
11:15	12:30	162	Clinton	3:15	8:40
11:30	12:45	163	Belton	3:30	8:55
11:45	1:00	164	Harrisonville	3:45	9:10
12:00	1:15	165	Olathe	4:00	9:25
12:15	1:30	166	Clinton	4:15	9:40
12:30	1:45	167	Belton	4:30	9:55
12:45	2:00	168	Harrisonville	4:45	10:10
1:00	2:15	169	Olathe	5:00	10:25
1:15	2:30	170	Clinton	5:15	10:40
1:30	2:45	171	Belton	5:30	10:55
1:45	3:00	172	Harrisonville	5:45	11:10
2:00	3:15	173	Olathe	6:00	11:25
2:15	3:30	174	Clinton	6:15	11:40
2:30	3:45	175	Belton	6:30	11:55
2:45	4:00	176	Harrisonville	6:45	12:10
3:00	4:15	177	Olathe	7:00	12:25
3:15	4:30	178	Clinton	7:15	12:40
3:30	4:45	179	Belton	7:30	12:55
3:45	5:00	180	Harrisonville	7:45	1:10
4:00	5:15	181	Olathe	8:00	1:25
4:15	5:30	182	Clinton	8:15	1:40
4:30	5:45	183	Belton	8:30	1:55
4:45	6:00	184	Harrisonville	8:45	2:10
5:00	6:15	185	Olathe	9:00	2:25
5:15	6:30	186	Clinton	9:15	2:40
5:30	6:45	187	Belton	9:30	2:55
5:45	7:00	188	Harrisonville	9:45	3:10
6:00	7:15	189	Olathe	10:00	3:25
6:15	7:30	190	Clinton	10:15	3:40
6:30	7:45	191	Belton	10:30	3:55
6:45	8:00	192	Harrisonville	10:45	4:10
7:00	8:15	193	Olathe	11:00	4:25
7:15	8:30	194	Clinton	11:15	4:40
7:30	8:45	195	Belton	11:30	4:55
7:45	9:00	196	Harrisonville	11:45	5:10
8:00	9:15	197	Olathe	12:00	5:25
8:15	9:30	198	Clinton	12:15	5:40
8:30	9:45	199	Belton	12:30	5:55
8:45	10:00	200	Harrisonville	12:45	6:10

All A. M. time is given in light figures; all P. M. time in heavy figures.

PHENIX

7902+90 ±

03+60 Stone Box 2' x 2' x 2'

0061

98+10 P.S.
98+50 Demolition
98+50

98+10 P.S.
98+50 Demolition
98+50

98+10 P.S.
98+50 Demolition
98+50

AFE 18-KCC 6.8

Query Spur 552 - AFE 246 7/122

PS 5-57+
7900-63

D=30'00"

Power Ho. Spur 946

A.F.E. 258-12/9/23 - for Fly & New Track

D=30'00"

D=37'22"

AFE 24-KCC 4.5 - 6-1-26

S.W. 1/4 - N.W. 1/4 - Sec. 35-

C=10'00"
Δ=60'00"

P.T. 12+300

AFE 18-KCC 6.8 - 6-1-26

AFE 18-KCC 6.8 - 6-1-26

35

34+37+27

35

35

35

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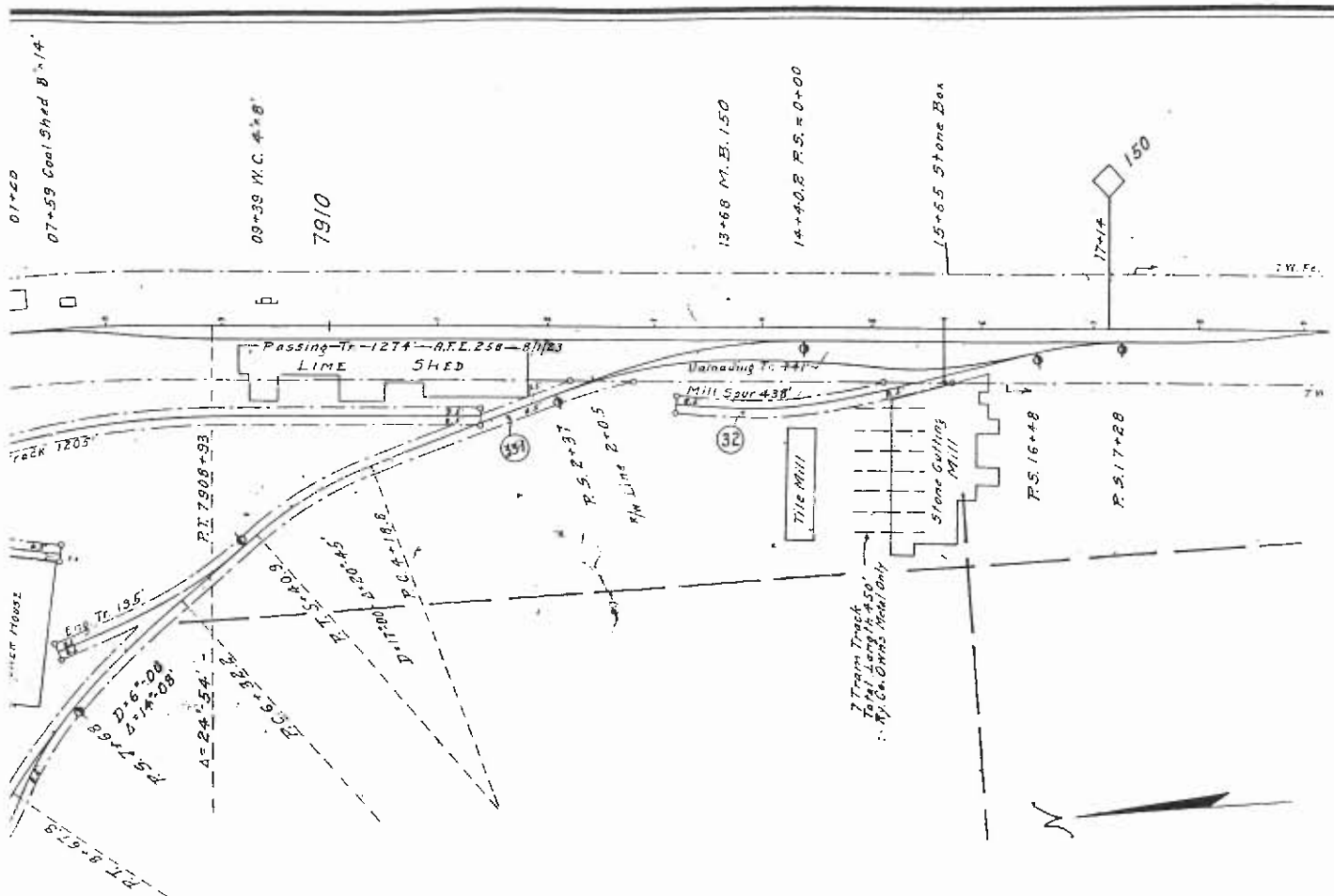
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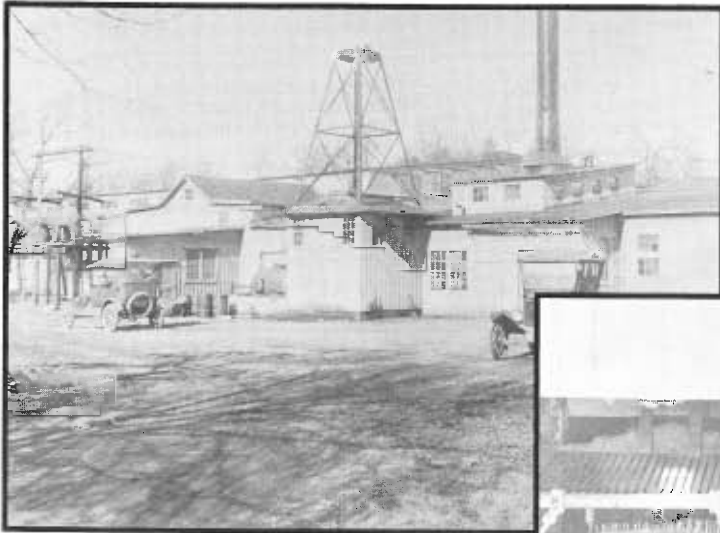
PHENIX, MO

RIGHT OF WAY & TRACK MAP

SUPPLEMENTAL TO MAP-35, VAL. SEC. 1-MO

KANSAS CITY, CLINTON & SPRINGFIELD RAILWAY

OPERATED BY THE
K.C.C. & S. RY. CO.
 FROM STATION 7889 + 80±
JUNE 30, 1917
 OFFICE OF VALUATION ENGINEER
 SPRINGFIELD, MO



**Stone Cutting Mill,
Avis Brady collection**



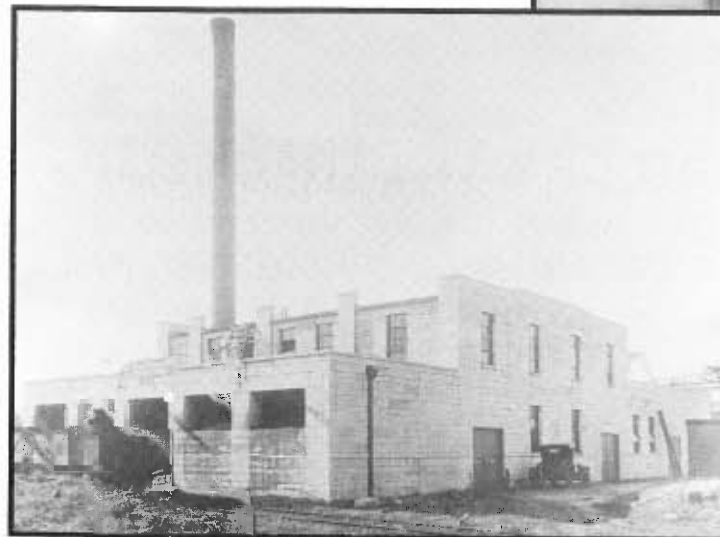
**Gang Saws, Stone Cutting Mill,
Avis Brady collection**



**Tile Mill,
Avis Brady collection**



**Pillar Cutting & Finishing,
Avis Brady collection**



**Phoenix Power Plant,
Avis Brady Collection**

On November 3, 1924, the Olathe to Ash Grove line was leased by the **St. Louis - San Francisco Railway Co.** and four years later, on September 1, 1928, it was officially purchased by the Frisco.

Although no one really knows what caused the town of Phenix to ultimately die, the beginning of the end seems to have occurred between 1934 & 1935. With the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, the financial strain of operating two parallel lines (*the Frisco purchased the Kansas City, Osceola, & Southern in June, 1900*), and the forced receivership & reorganization of 1932, the Frisco abandoned the line from Olathe to Stanley in 1934 and from Belton to Ash Grove the following year.

All that remains of Phenix today is the remnants of the quarry, one company house, two lime kilns,

the power house building, portions of the railroad roadbed, and lots of silent memories!

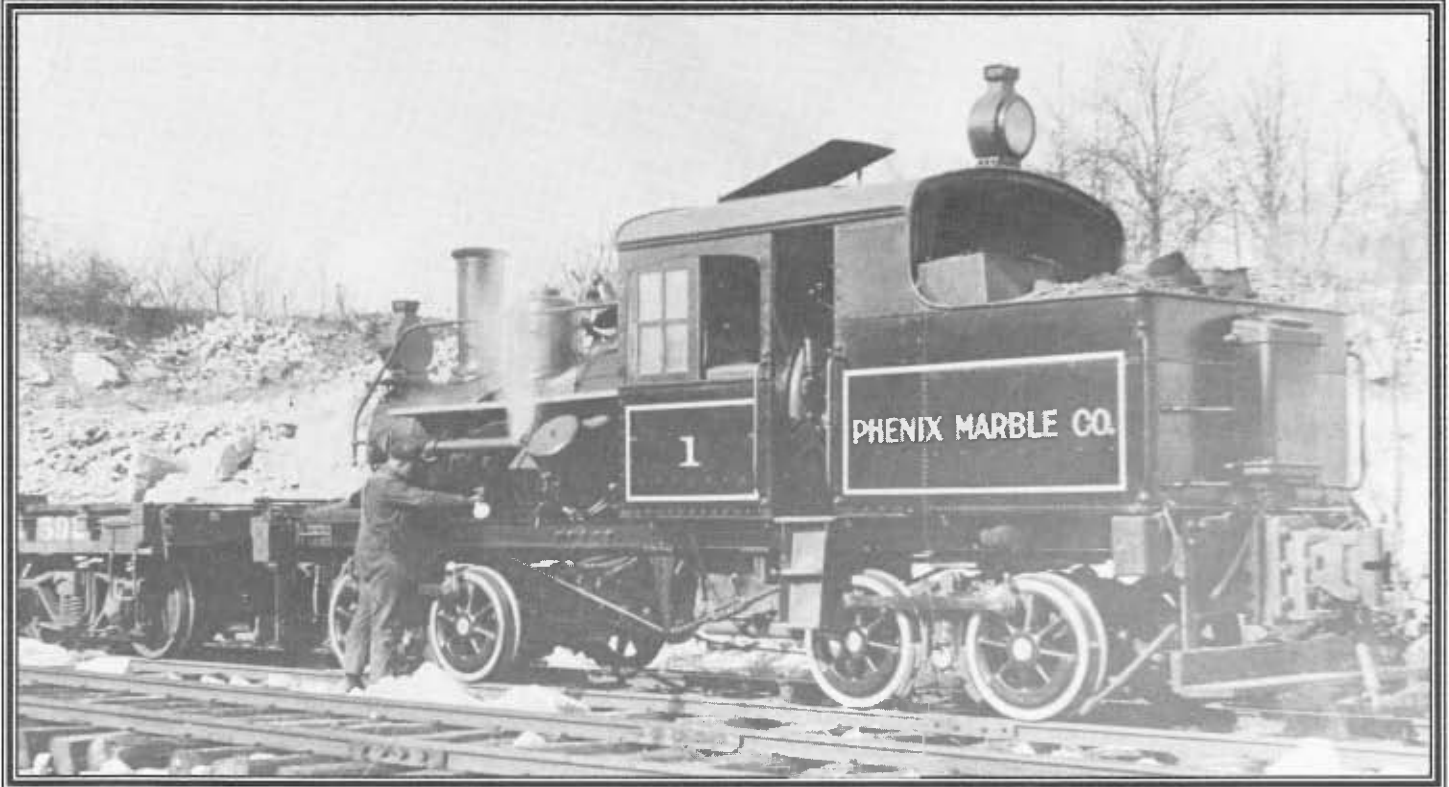
It should be noted that the **Kansas City, Clinton, & Springfield Railway** was better known by its nicknames. The most popular was ***The Leaky Roof***. The Dickey-Clay tile plant at Deepwater, MO at one time shipped about 250 cars of tile products each month. The roof condition of the boxcars mattered little to the shipper, so the defect was no problem, and many roofs were thus permitted to remain leaky.

However, on a rainy spring day at Clinton, the foreman of a flour mill saw that some of the cars with bad roofs had been switched to the mill siding for loading. "Don't ship out any flour today," the foreman passed the word in the mill. "They've sent us another batch of leaky roofs."

While not as colorful or well known, the line was also called the "***High, Dry, & Dusty***." The **K.C.C. & S.** tracks followed the uplands from Clinton to Olathe and thus provided open tracks for neighboring roads whose tracks were washed out by heavy rains. Diverted to Clinton to avoid high water, trains of the Katy, Rock Island, and Missouri Pacific often clogged the yards awaiting their turn to continue on to Olathe, thence their destinations by way of Frisco tracks. ☐

*"When other lines
Were wet and rusty
The Leaky Roof
Was high and dusty"*

Classic Frisco



It's Phenix Marble Company #1, a Hiesler steam locomotive, in switching duties on the passing track, Phenix Marble Co., Phenix MO, circa. 1910, and it's a CLASSIC!

Avis Brady collection