

# The Winding Valley and the Craggy Hillside

**A History of the City of Rosedale, Kansas by Margaret Landis.  
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## **Chapter IX** **EARLY TRANSPORTATION**

Thru the years Rosedale has shared in the "mutual experiences" and changes in public transportation.

We take for granted that "Shank's Pony" and "Old Dobbin" were probably the first methods of commuting from one place to another.

The Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad, in December 1868, afforded the earliest passenger train service to the Turkey Creek Valley.

Rosedale was four miles southwest of the Union Depot (Union Avenue) in the West Bottoms. Trains run morning and evening for the special convenience of the people of Rosedale. Fare: Three cents a mile was the legal rate.

In the 1880's, the Kansas City, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad built an amusement park at Merriam, Kansas. On Sunday trains ran nearly every hour to the park thru Rosedale and South Park.

By 1912, there were nine incoming and nine outgoing passenger trains daily thru Rosedale over the Frisco tracks. The passenger trains were described as "some of the finest trains in the West."

Passenger trains were "the means of transportation" for many years. Train travel thru the years has been the target of much competition -- the coming of the automobile -- cross-country bus lines and air travel.

Gradually, one by one, the railroads discontinued passenger train service on established runs. In July 1965, The Missouri-Kansas and Texas eliminated its last two passenger trains -- the last two trips being made to Dallas, Texas. The Frisco remained until February 1968, when its last passenger train left for Birmingham, Alabama.

LIVERIES Another early form of transportation was available at "Livery Stables." The State Line Livery was operated by H.W. Gates. In one of his advertisements of 1888, he would "furnish on short notice buggies, double rigs, saddle horses (for ladies of gents), hacks, etc. Everything in my stable is fresh and new. No rickety buggies or worn out horses, unsafe harness, etc. All animals thoroughly broken and warranted kind and gentle. Polite hostlers and prompt attention always ....."

## **STREET RAILWAY**

The earliest record that I have been able to associate with Street Railway transportation and Rosedale, Kansas is a copy of "Abstract of Corporate Record" from the Secretary of State's Office, Jefferson City, Missouri. The Kansas City and Rosedale Street Railway (St. RR 60), a Missouri Corporation, incorporated November 1, 1881, with their registered office in Kansas City, Missouri.

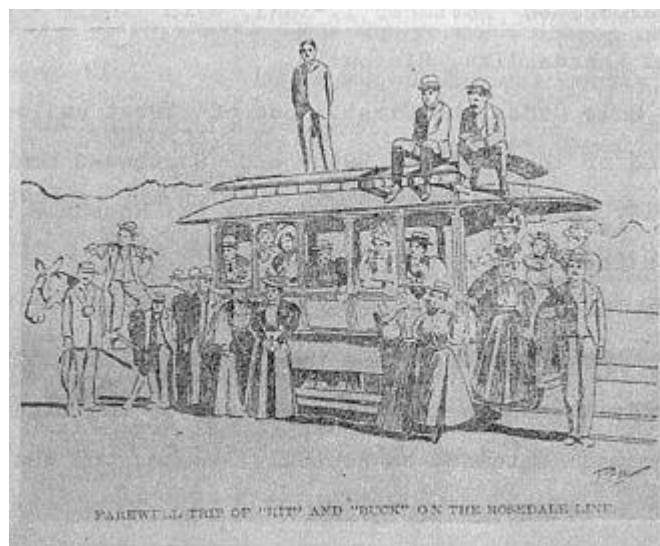
The Mule Cars, the first mode of street railways, came to the end of the line at 29th and Southwest Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri and those going to Rosedale walked to their destination.

After linking Southwest Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri thru Dr. S.B. Bell's farm and Marty's 3rd Addition with Kansas City Avenue in Rosedale, the "End of the Line" for the Mule Cars was extended to Rosedale Avenue, the Western City Limits of Rosedale.

August 1887, Rosedale Ordinance No. 106 authorized the Kansas City and Rosedale Street Railway to construct, maintain and operate a Street Railway in the City of Rosedale, Kansas ..... "A double or single track Street Railway, the motive power of which shall be Endless Cable, Electricity or Animal Power ....."

Mule Cars operated "on, along, through and over Kansas City Avenue" in Rosedale from 1887 to 1897. The Rosedale Horse Line connected at Eighteenth and Main with a Cable Line. At this point horse cars were attached to cable trains.

The Horse (or Mule) Lines were single tracks. At the end of the line the horses were transferred to the other end of the car. At the end of the line at Rosedale Avenue, there was a "Turn Table." In the winter time, straw was put on the floor to keep the passenger's feet warm.



(Kansas City Star - May 26, 1897)

May 26, 1897, the small, dingy cars with the slowly, plodding mules bade farewell to Rosedale. And so passed an era of passenger transportation with the faithful mules as motive power.

## **ELECTRIC STREET RAILWAY**

The West Side Electric Line, Grand Central Depot, Second and Wyandotte Street, Kansas City, Missouri formally opened the new road to Rosedale, May 23, 1897. The new trolley cars run from Second Street on Wyandotte and Southwest Boulevard to Rosedale. The new cars would carry the residents of Rosedale to the city "in half the time with greater convenience and comfort."

Thru the years Rosedale had a variety of street cars ranging from the big street cars to "Dinky's" .. "Puddle Jumpers" and the "Toonerville Trolley" types.

There were two City Street Car lines in Rosedale. The 39th Street Line and the Rosedale Line. Later the Roanoke Line traversed State Line to 45th Street; also, the two interurbans that went thru Rosedale.

## **BUSSES**

During the Mid-1930's Motor Busses became part of the Public Transportation System. After World War II, busses became more prominent.

Street Cars were replaced by Busses. By January 1959, Motor Busses comprised the entire system.

## **SUBURBAN ELECTRIC RAILWAYS**

The two suburban electric railways that went thru Rosedale were:

1. A line that served the area South of Rosedale. The line had been known by several different names:

The Kansas City and Olathe Railway  
The Kansas City, Lawrence and Topeka Railroad Co.  
The Hocker's Grove Line  
The Kansas City, Merriam and Shawnee Line

The street car line was a single track with "switch-over." The cars would wait for each other to pass.

The Kansas City and Olathe Railway started about 1903. The road was abandoned in 1934. During World War II the tracks were torn-up. The line was 7.1 miles long.

2. The Missouri & Kansas Interurban Railway Company was also known as "The Strang Line." This line connected Kansas City with Olathe - going thru Rosedale "on top of the hill."

The 1906 advertisements of the Missouri & Kansas Interurban stated: "The line from 39th Street and State Line to Olathe, Kansas, running on top of the old historic Santa Fe Trail, operated with Strang Gas-Electric Cars."

The last trip of the "Red Electrics" of the Missouri & Kansas Railway was made July 1940 to Olathe, Kansas. The Strang Line was the last of the Interurban Lines to be "Sold For Junk!"