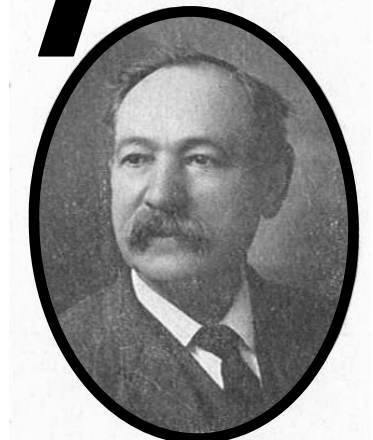


Ghosts of the UPRR Cemetery



Tour



Saturday, September 22, 2007

1:00pm - 5:00pm

North Platte Cemetery

Proceeds benefit the North Platte Public Library Foundation

Ghosts of the UPRR

Cemetery Tour

Putting this year's cemetery tour together was a challenge. It was tough deciding who to include, because there are just so many interesting stories to tell.

Our cast of characters includes Indian fighters, politicians, inventors, sportsmen, and even a librarian. All the "ghosts" either worked on the railroad, or their lives were touched in some way by the railroad. Some highlights include:

- ◆ *The wife of a railroader who struggled to carry on with five children after her husband's untimely death*
- ◆ *An original land surveyor who played a major part in laying out the railroad throughout Nebraska*
- ◆ *A woman who became famous for her generosity to the troops during WWII*
- ◆ *A sheriff who took on the railroad in a court case*
- ◆ *And pioneers who came to North Platte with the rails and left a legacy for others to follow*

Some have tragic stories to tell, but all played a large part in making North Platte and building the legacy of the Union Pacific Railroad in our community.

Please enjoy the
Ghosts of the UPRR



Ghosts and Their Portray-

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GEORGE W. VROMAN



George W. Vroman was born September 27, 1841, in Fitchburg, Wisconsin. He began his long railroading career in Lafayette, Indiana in December of 1861 as a fireman on the Wabash Railroad.

In the summer of 1863 he was promoted to engineer, and took charge of the round house at the state line between Indiana and Illinois. Six years later he resigned that position and came to North Platte to be an engineer with the Union Pacific. He ran a passenger engine on the Chicago and Denver Special, between North Platte and Sidney for the next thirteen years. In 1881 he became the general foreman in the locomotive department and had full charge of the machine shops until 1884.

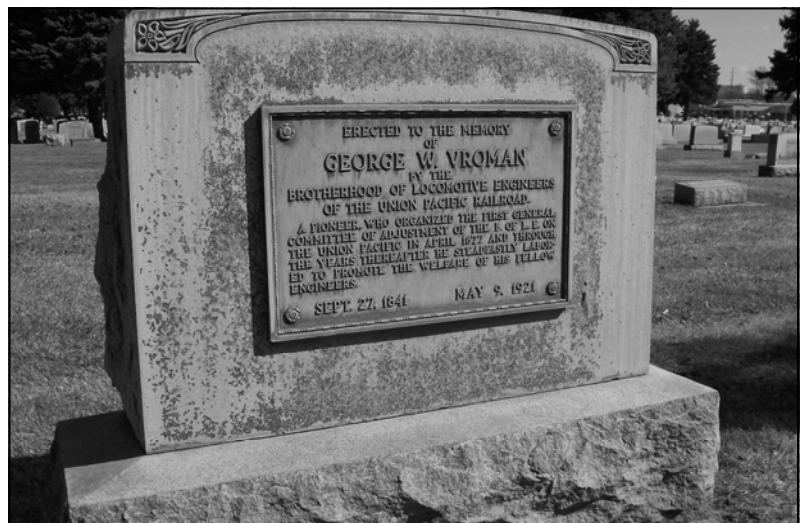
In 1877, Mr. Vroman organized the first general committee of adjustment for the settlement of grievances. He was elected general chairman of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE), an organization that works to protect the rights of its members. From 1891 to 1894 he was a salaried chairman of the system, overseeing twenty-four lodges and eight thousand miles of road.

In 1879, the first arbitration case in America between railway employees and the company took place in North Platte. Mr. Vroman, as chairman of the Brotherhood, took the case before the arbitrator, Captain Rustin. The next day the decision was made in favor of the employees.

In 1894, the Union Pacific issued a wage-reduction order. George knew that this would affect firemen, conductors, shop men, brakemen, and other employees. He took the matter to the U.S. Circuit Court in Omaha, before Judge Caldwell, where he introduced forty-one pages of records. The court ruled in favor of the workers. This was the first time a labor question had been taken to a higher court, and was one of labor's greatest victories!

George married Mary Jordan in 1874. They had five sons and two daughters. George proved his dedication to issues of labor relations when he named his second daughter "Arba Traction Vroman."

George W. Vroman died May 9, 1921.



FRED FREDRICKSON

Fred Fredrickson was born in Denmark in 1854. He came to America at the age of 17 to escape induction into the German Army and the Franco-Prussian War. He first settled in Lincoln, Nebraska and started cutting wood for the locomotives of the Burlington Northern Railroad. At the age of 21 he became a fireman and was later promoted to engineer.

In 1881 he heard that the Union Pacific was hiring engineers “in the west” and came to North Platte to get a job. He drove freight trains from North Platte to Grand Island until 1900 when he became a passenger engineer.

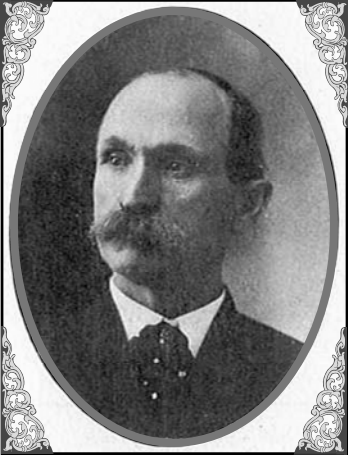
Fred married Anna Sillason on June 14, 1900, in North Platte. They had two children Margaret Esther and Morton Theodore.

He retired in 1914 after 43 years railroading. He died at the age of 91 on March 13, 1945.



Side note: In 1899 Fred ordered a Sears house kit for \$2,300 and built the house at 315 W 3rd Street in North Platte Nebraska. The house stood at that location for many years before being moved to the Lincoln County Historical Museum where it is available for tours. The museum is located 2403 N Buffalo Avenue in North Platte Nebraska, and is open May through September, Monday through Saturday 9:00am to 5:00pm and Sundays 1:00pm to 5:00pm.

GEORGE A. AUSTIN



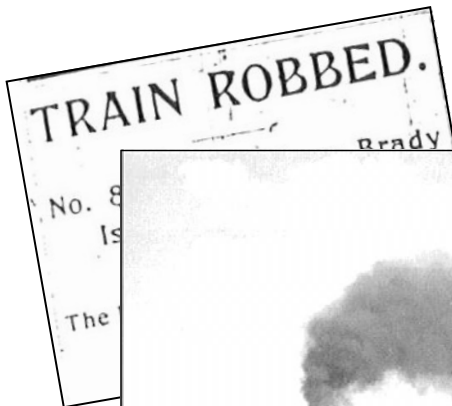
George A. Austin was born in Ireland on April 26, 1851. He began his railroad career when he was 21 years old as a section foreman in Roscoe, Nebraska. He worked his way up and within a year became a fireman.

George moved to North Platte in May of 1874 where he continued to work as a fireman; his first and last trips as a fireman were made with C.F. Tracy.

He was promoted to engineer in 1881. The next year, he was initiated into Division 88, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE).

On August 21, 1895, George was pulling a passenger train near Brady when he saw two bandits leap onto the baggage car, next to the engine. In their attempt to rob the mail, they managed to blow the door off the car's safe. George and his fireman uncoupled the engine from the baggage car, left the thieves and the rest of the train behind, and alerted the authorities at Gothenburg. The bandits were later captured. The Union Pacific Railroad and Pacific Express Company rewarded George with a gold watch for his bravery that night.

George was with the UPRR for 48 years. He had a perfect



CONFESS THEIR CRIME.

lsen Plead
obbing.



NOW IN LIMBO

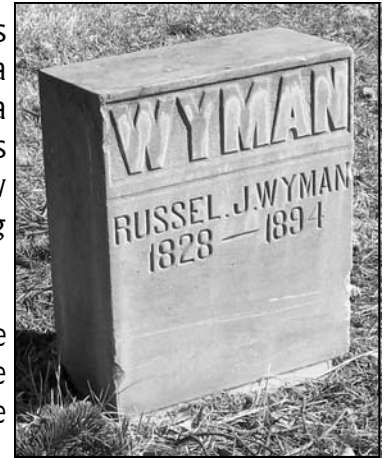
Brady Island Train Robbers In
the Clutches of the Law.

Hans and Knute Knudsen, Two Dances,
Arrested for the Robbery.

Train near Brady Nebraska in 1957

RUSSEL J. WYMAN

Russel Wyman was born October 25, 1828, in Vermont. He began his railroading days at the government-owned Orange and Alexandria Railroad in Virginia. During the Civil War the O&A Railroad was a target for attack. After the Civil War it merged with larger railroads supporting southern reconstruction. Russel moved north to New Hampshire where he worked as a locomotive engineer and traveling engineer.



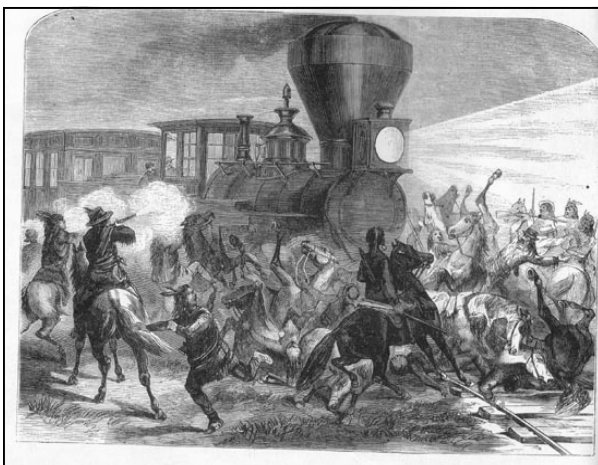
He moved to Omaha in 1866 and joined the Union Pacific Railroad. He ran the second engine out of Omaha to North Platte during the construction of the newly laid rails. At that time, North Platte was the end of the line!

Russel followed the rails as they expanded into Julesburg, Colorado, and then to Laramie, Wyoming. Indian skirmishes were common along the rail lines then, and Russel had many of his own encounters with them. When the rails reached Laramie, he returned to North Platte.

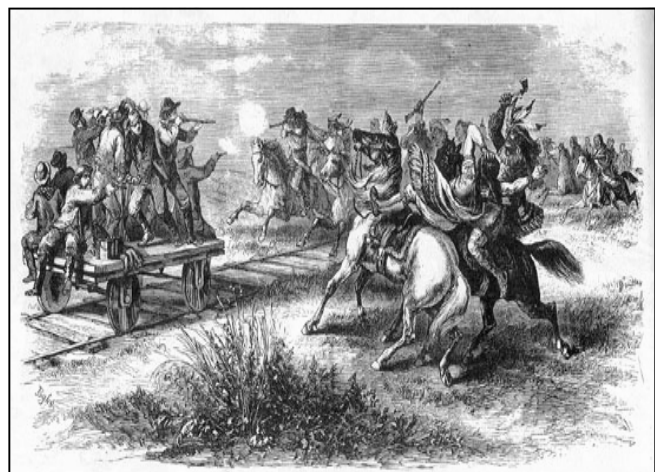
Russel ran a wood-burning engine from North Platte to Grand Island until after the roundhouse was built in 1867. Later, he was transferred to work in the shops, keeping the engines in good working condition.

He was a well-read and educated man, owning a book store on Front Street. He served as postmaster from 1869 to 1871 and ran the first circulating library in North Platte from 1870 to 1880. He was elected North Platte's fourth mayor, taking office on April 5, 1879.

Russel married Susan Herrick. They had four children; two daughters died in infancy, and two sons, Charles and Arthur, had careers with the railroad. Charles' son, Lester, retired from the Railroad on October 31, 1966, ending three generations and more than a century of service on the railroad. Russel died on January 1, 1894.



*Attack on Train,
Leslie's Illustrated News - July 9, 1870.*



*Attack on Handcar,
Leslie's Illustrated News - 1870.*

RAE WILSON



Rae Wilson Sleight was born March 31, 1916 to George and Blanche Wilson. She grew up in North Platte, Nebraska, graduating from high school in 1933. The Great Depression was in full swing and the “dust bowl” came into the American vocabulary, as great clouds of dust rolled across the drought-stricken Plains. President Franklin D. Roosevelt also took office that year and soon American optimism returned, thanks to his New Deal legislation.

Rae was working as a store clerk when Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese. Now the United States was in a war that had been raging in Europe and Asia for some time. The attack came as a great shock to the small community of North Platte, as it did to the entire nation. Ten days after the attack, word reached Rae that her brother and the local National Guard unit were due to stop briefly in North Platte. The news spread quickly and the families of the men gathered at the train depot with gifts. As the train came to a stop, it became apparent that these were not soldiers from Nebraska. Instead, the troops were part of the Kansas National Guard. The crowd froze as the mix-up sank in – but not for long! That now-famous North Platte hospitality and goodwill triumphed over disappointment as they handed their presents to the astonished troops.

That might have been the end of the story, except for the efforts of Rae Wilson. The joy on the faces of those men sparked an idea in Rae’s mind. Why not do this for every soldier passing through North Platte? So, on December 18th, she wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper proposing the idea of a canteen. Driven by the positive responses, she organized a committee. Using the Cody Hotel, located near the railroad tracks, they started serving the troops on Christmas Day 1941.

This, however, did not satisfy Rae. She saw the need to expand immediately. Confident and by no means shy, she approached the president of the Union Pacific Railroad, William Jeffers, and asked him for the use of the North Platte train depot’s abandoned lunchroom. He readily agreed, and directed Union Pacific employees to help in any way possible.

With the vastly improved location and facilities, the canteen began to take off. Rae worked hard and soon became ill. Doctors told her that she needed to move to a different climate to recover. So, in April 1942, she handed over the canteen to Helen Christ. Helen managed the canteen until it closed on April 1, 1946.

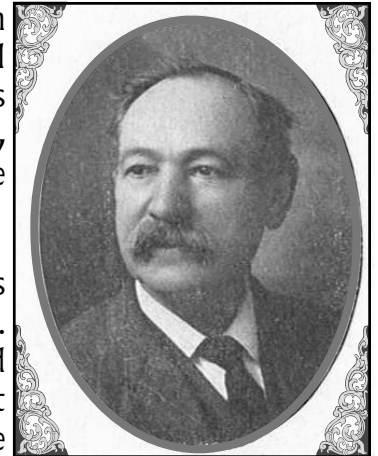
Rae returned from California to participate in the closing ceremonies. The organization she started served 6 million uniformed personnel. It had grown to involve 125 communities and countless numbers of volunteers. Rae eventually recovered from her illness and returned to North Platte, where she died in 1986. Her work continues to be honored in the memories of veterans and canteen workers alike.



JOHN J. SULLIVAN

John "Jack" Sullivan was born on a farm in Brookfield, Massachusetts, in 1840. A lover of baseball, Jack spent much of his youth on the baseball diamond, and went as far as semi-pro. At the age of 23, he began his railroad career as a wiper for the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad, where he was quickly promoted to fireman. After several years he operated a grasshopper engine.

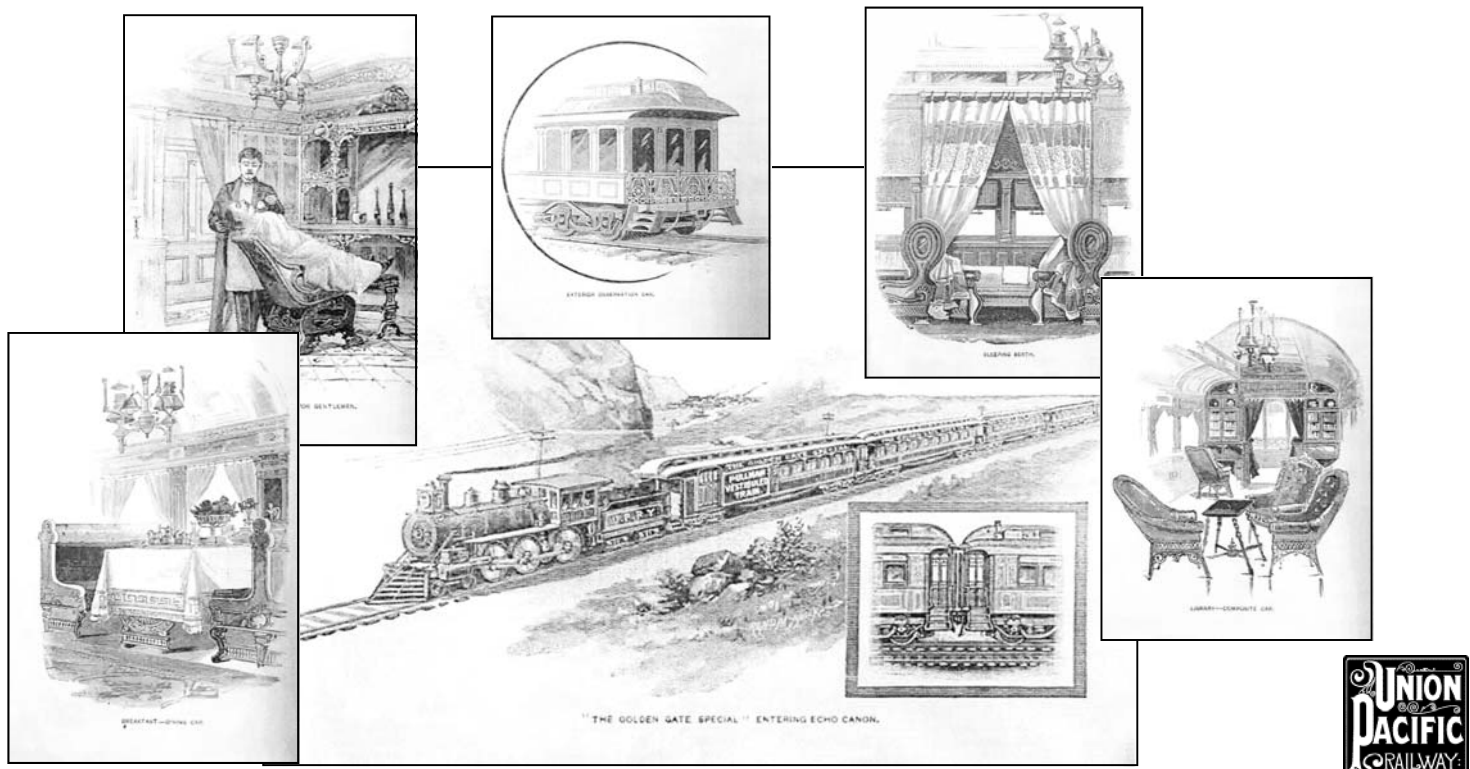
Jack wanted to move west and in the spring of 1871 he moved to Kansas City and eventually joining the Kansas City baseball team. Unfortunately, his baseball career only lasted one season and he moved on to Omaha. Still yearning for the Wild West, he moved further west down the line to North Platte where he hired on as an engineer with the Union Pacific Railroad.



He later became a fireman, and was promoted several times, eventually working his way up to passenger service. In 1886, Jack pulled the Golden Gate Special which was billed as "The Finest Train in the World!" It consisted of five vestibule Pullman cars. Passengers could go to a library, a barber, enjoy a luxurious bath, eat a five-course meal, smoke and converse, or sleep. All cars had electric lights and a steam heating system!

In North Platte, Jack married Catherine B. Bowler. They made their home on the corner of Fifth and Pine, where the Fox Theater stands today. They had three children. One son became an engineer for the Union Pacific Railroad.

Jack retired after 35 years of service and moved to Kearney. He was a member of the Division 88 Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. He died June 1, 1913.



JOSIAH B. PARK



Born on April 1, 1831 in Elmira, New York, Josiah B. Park was a man of many accomplishments. He was not just a railroader, but a visionary of the future of America's new frontier.

During his lifetime he was a civil engineer, a commissioned military officer, a surveyor, and a newspaper publisher. He held patents and developed irrigation in the state.

He took part in building railroads in Michigan, and had been in charge of the Tennessee and Alabama railroads during the Civil War. During that time, his railroad connections made it possible for him to become acquainted with General G. M. Dodge. Dodge, upon becoming Chief

Engineer for the building of the Union Pacific Railway, encouraged Josiah to come west to help build the new empire.

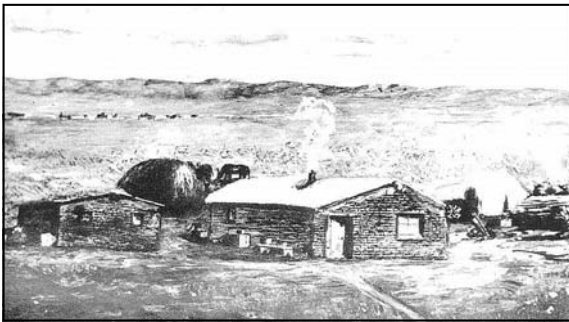
Perhaps his biggest contribution to the Union Pacific Railroad came in 1866, when he surveyed the government lands granted in the Pacific Railway Act of 1862. This opened Nebraska up for settlement. Through their sale, those lands helped the Union Pacific pay for the building of the railroad. Josiah, with the assistance of General Dodge, was appointed as the United States Deputy Surveyor. As part of his duties, he surveyed a large portion of western Nebraska.



Building the Union Pacific, Nebraska, Woodcut by Alfred R. Waud, 1867

Josiah, his wife, and two children came to North Platte in

1870. Within 48 hours he had constructed a sod house for his family. The site of that home is uncertain, but is believed to have been on or near the present location of the Craft State Office Building at 200 South Silber Street.



Josiah's homestead.

The year 1870 was a busy one for Josiah. He not only was surveying, but also establishing a newspaper, "The Lincoln County Advertiser." He also received a patent for an



JOSIAH B. PARK (cont'd)

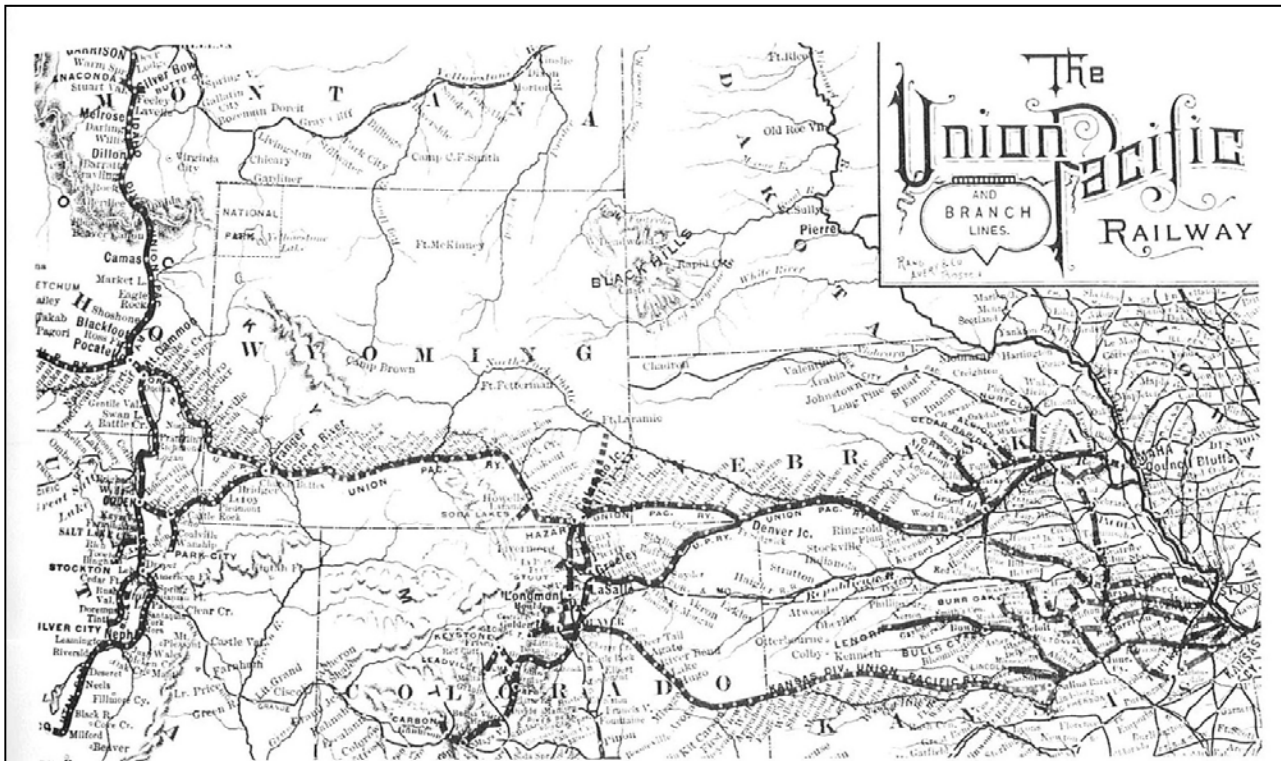


improved turbine water wheel. By 1871 he had sold the “Advertiser” and began publishing “The North Platte Democrat.”

Many men had already come to the Midwest and had written off the land as not fit to grow anything. Josiah, however, was very active in bringing people to Western Nebraska. As an appointed land commissioner of the railway, Colonel Park promoted its development and used his paper to “advertise” the country. He built the first irrigation ditch in the state, and brought the first alfalfa seed to be planted east of the Rocky Mountains. He also imported sugar beet seed from France, and encouraged farmers to study the plant and the process of sugar making.

Josiah came to his untimely death at the age of 42 on June 17, 1873, but left a huge mark on the progress of North Platte, Western Nebraska, and the Union Pacific Railroad.

Josiah’s son, William, stepped into his father’s shoes and carried on the tradition that help shape Nebraska history.



WILLIAM LEE PARK



William Park was born August 6, 1859 in Ovid, Michigan.

At the close of the Civil War, Josiah Park, (William's father) moved his family to Omaha Nebraska in August of 1866. Soon thereafter, the family moved west, arriving in North Platte by 1870.

William began working for the Union Pacific at the young age of 15 as an extra brakeman due to the untimely death of his father. At the age of 18, he became freight conductor and at twenty-two was permanently assigned to a passenger train. At the age of 30 he was appointed assistant superintendent of the Union Pacific Railroad, Nebraska Division, headquartered in North Platte. On July 12, 1899, Mr. Park and two other men filed a patent with the United States Patent Office for an uncoupling device for car-couplings. In 1900 he was appointed superintendent of the Wyoming division with headquarters in Cheyenne, and four years later was promoted to general superintendent of the Union Pacific out of Omaha. Mr. Park later broke his ties with the Union Pacific and went to Chicago to become vice president and general manager of the Illinois Central Railroad.

During World War I, he was the president of the Chicago and Great Western Railroad Company, later returning to the Illinois Central as vice-president. He stayed with the Illinois Central Railroad until his retirement.

Mr. Park was the one who gave William Jeffers his first position with the Union Pacific when he was just 14 years old. In 1936



Mr. Park wrote a book about the history of the building of the railroad titled "Pioneer Pathways to the Pacific".

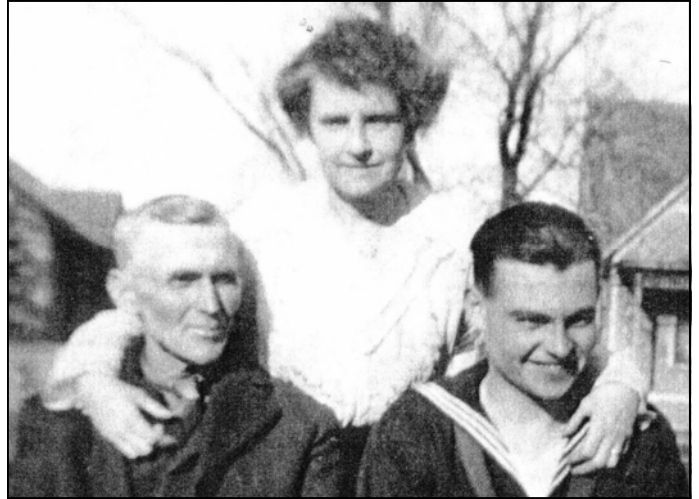
William Lee Park died on June 15, 1936.



JOSEPH LEO RODDY

Joseph Leo Roddy was born on June 1, 1867. He was eleven years old when his family came to America and settled in Dubuque, Iowa. He came to North Platte in 1886 and worked for the Peterson Red Front Grocery Store until he hired on with the Union Pacific Railroad in 1887.

He started his long railroad career as a call boy. Joe moved on to become a hostler, and was later promoted to engineer. Then in 1898, he had a terrible accident. A train engine fell on him and damaged his leg so severely that the leg was eventually amputated. He was off work for eighteen months. When he returned to work at the railroad, he was reassigned from engineer to crossing switchman at the Willow Street crossing. He held that position for over 31 years.



Joe and Mary Roddy with their son

Mr. Roddy was so cheerful while working at the Willow Street crossing that it became known as "Joe's Crossing." When he wasn't busy, he enjoyed conversing with visitors, especially the young children and pensioners. "Joe's Crossing" was always the favorite for many school children because he took special care getting them to and from school, safely across the tracks.

Joe married Mary Sullivan on June 17, 1896. He retired from active service on November 29, 1929, after forty-two years with the Union Pacific Railroad. Joseph Leo Roddy died on April 4, 1938.



WILLIAM S. DOLSON



William S. Dolson was born in Lansing, Iowa on October 3, 1857. When William was only 16 years old he went to Sidney, Nebraska and entered the service of the Union Pacific as an engine wiper. He spent about four years at the job and then applied for engine services.

He became a fireman, and seven years later was promoted to engineer. After 48 years with the Union Pacific Railroad, he retired on February 1, 1922.

Mr. Dolson married Margaret Platt on April 10th 1878. In 1912, William had a new stone house built on the corner of Sycamore and 6th Streets. This beautiful grand house still stands today. Margaret passed away in 1913 and William remarried Anna Guendell.

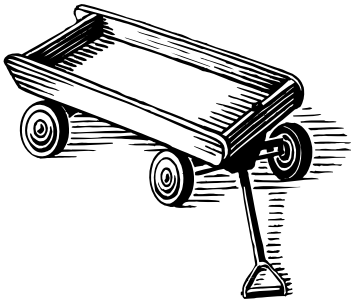
William was also well known for his shooting abilities. From 1900 to 1912 he attended all the state shooting tournaments and was winner of several of them. He was manager of the local North Platte Gun club for several years.

William S. Dolson died on January 19, 1928.

Side Note: The home located at 305 West 6th Street, reflects the origins of the early establishment of North Platte. This two-plus story home is located on the corner of one of the early main streets of North Platte. The style is "four point" with the most modern features of its time. The four point style reflects the symmetry of design of the box style luxury home. The front porch with the above balcony provides a wonderful location for entertaining family and friends during the hot summer months. Each floor level is delineated on the outside with exposed eaves and ornamental brackets. The name "DOLSON" is carved into the garage threshold.



ELIZABETH CRAIGIE



Elizabeth Clark was born March 3, 1858, in Scotland. She worked as a cook for a wealthy family in Edinburgh. At the age of 26, she married Alexander Craigie, a shoemaker, nine years her senior. They left Scotland immediately, hoping to find better opportunities in America.

They made their home in Philadelphia, where their two daughters were born. In the summer of 1888, the family headed west and settled about ten miles south of North Platte.

In North Platte, Elizabeth's husband got a job on the railroad. Each Sunday night, Alexander would walk to work, staying in town during the week, and then walk home on Saturday evening. Elizabeth and the children were left to run the farm during the week. During those years they had three more children.

On December 31, 1895, Alexander was killed in an accident at work. Elizabeth and the children lived on the farm for another six months but were unable to continue the farm operation. In June of 1896 Elizabeth bought a small two-bedroom house in North Platte. With five children to care for, she took in washing and ironing. They planted a large garden and relied on its produce to feed the family for the entire year.

Every week, Elizabeth loaded the children onto a small coaster wagon and set off for the cemetery to visit Alexander's grave. During this three-mile trip the children were not allowed to get out and walk because of the rattlesnakes in the ditches and on the cemetery grounds.

Elizabeth took the children to the Episcopal church near their home each Sunday, instead of traveling across the tracks to the Presbyterian church. It was from this church that she met Annie Kramph, a local civic leader. On a scorching August day, Annie came over to visit with Elizabeth. She found the house unbearably hot. Elizabeth had to use the coal-fired cook stove for heating both the wash water and the sadirons. The next morning a new two-burner kerosene stove was delivered to the home. The family was very grateful. Annie never admitted she had provided it.

Elizabeth died on December 10, 1939, after a brief illness and was buried next to her husband and



WILLIAM WOODHURST

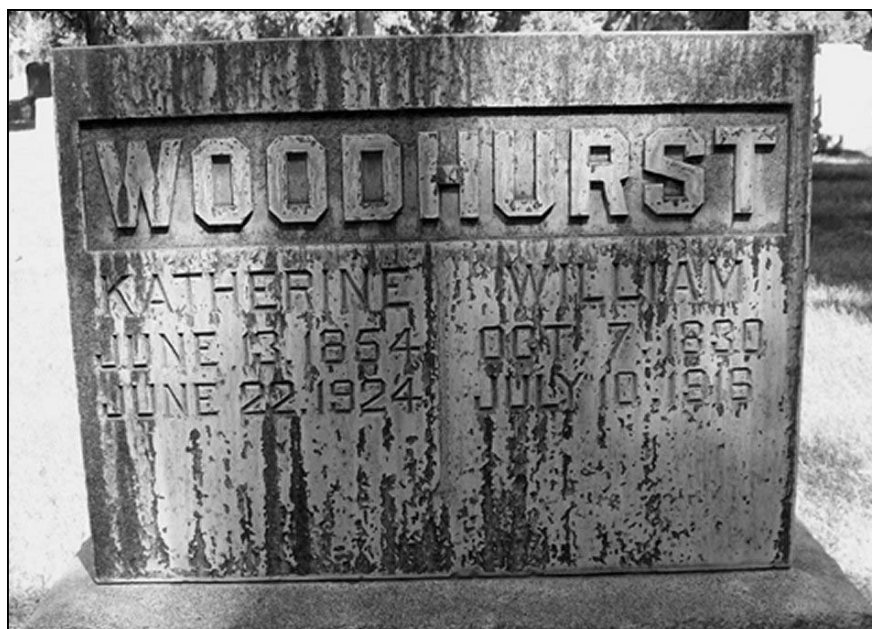
William Woodhurst was born in England in 1830. He and his parents immigrated to America, arriving in New York on May 15, 1837. In 1840 the family moved to Connecticut, and then to Ohio ten years later. William came to Nebraska in 1856, working as a plasterer and brick mason. Like many pioneers, he moved around a lot. In 1858 he moved to Missouri, marrying Mary Rogers a year later. By 1861, they had two sons, William and Charles.

In 1861, William left Missouri for the gold fields in Nevada, and then moved on to California. After four years on the west coast, he decided to move east, this time by ship. They sailed south and crossed the Isthmus of Panama, then went north headed for New York. A big storm badly damaged the ship, and they spent four days at Cape Hatteras before landing in New York harbor. From New York, they went to Indiana, and by 1867 William found himself in Omaha, Nebraska.

William and his family finally settled in Lincoln County in 1868. Shortly afterward, he was appointed sheriff, and the county treasurer called upon him to help settle a dispute with the Union Pacific. The State of Nebraska had ordered the railroad to pay \$49,000 in property taxes. He claimed that the railroad had refused, and was, instead, trying to negotiate the taxes through the court system. Mr. Austin, the county treasurer, ordered Sheriff Woodhurst to chain the doors on the roundhouse, essentially locking up the engines and stopping rail service. Sheriff Woodhurst performed his duty and the taxation issue came to an immediate end. Since then, there has never been a problem with the Union Pacific and property taxes.

In August of 1873, Mr. Woodhurst was appointed warden of the state penitentiary. During his time as warden, there was a rebellion and the convicts took possession of the prison.

In 1882 William and Mary divorced. He later married Katherine Dorn. They lived the rest of their lives in North Platte. William remained active in community affairs as a county commissioner. He died on July 13, 1916, at the age of 86.



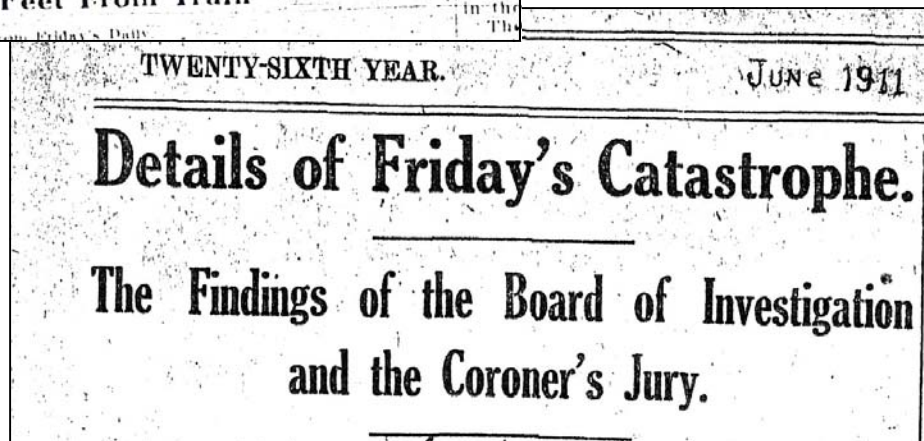
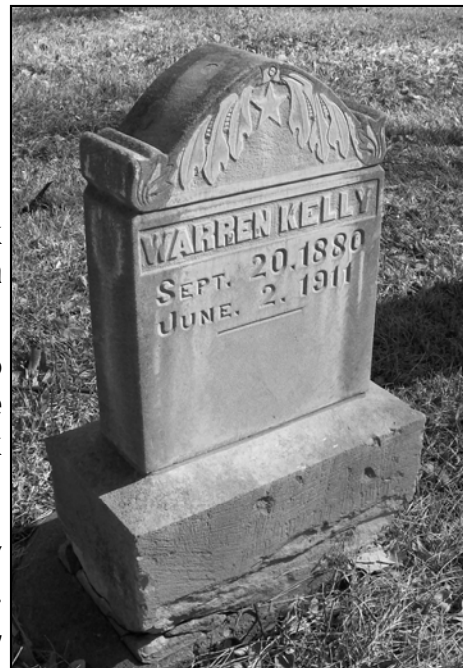
WARREN S. KELLY

Warren Silas Kelly was born September 30, 1880, in York County, Nebraska, to O.N. and Mary Kelly. His father was a butcher in York and was half-owner in a meat market business.

During his early years, Warren made his way across Nebraska to Paxton, and later moved to North Platte where he worked for the Union Pacific Railroad. He worked his way up through the rank and eventually became a freight engineer.

In February 1910, he married Sena Franzen of Sutherland. They made their home south of North Platte and were a happy couple. Then without warning, Sena, a bride of only one and a half years, became a widow.

On June 2, 1911, Warren was at the throttle of the second section of Train Number Ten eastbound, somewhere between Pallas and Birdwood, when the steam boiler that powered the train exploded. Warren and his two fellow crew members were killed.



WILLIAM M. JEFFERS



Young Bill is standing at left

William Martin Jeffers was born on January 2, 1876 in North Platte Nebraska. He was the son of an Irish immigrant railroad worker. Visitors can see his boyhood home and an exhibit on his remarkable life at the Lincoln County Historical Museum & Village.

He left school at age 14 to work for the Union Pacific Railroad. He worked his way up the organization as call boy, clerk, telegrapher, train dispatcher, chief dispatcher, trainmaster of the Green River Wyoming division, assistant superintendent, and then superintendent of the division in 1909. He became superintendent, and then general superintendent of the Nebraska district in 1915, and vice-president and general manager in 1917. In 1928

he became vice-president in charge of operations, served as president of the railroad from 1937-1946, and then as vice-chairman of the board of directors until 1953.

Jeffers did not become president of the UP until 1937, though he had been running the railroad since 1932. Railroads were harder hit than almost any other industry, and many went into receivership. But the Union Pacific stayed on a paying basis and maintained its \$6 dividend rate. The reason was Jeffers.

In September 1942, a personal call from President Roosevelt summoned Jeffers to Washington. He went immediately to the White House and was shown a report on synthetic rubber manufacturing. Japanese supremacy in the Far East had cut the United States off from supplies of natural rubber. A committee chaired by Bernard Baruch noted in its report that the know-how existed to make synthetic rubber, but attempts to build plants had run afoul of the priority system, which allowed other programs to grab critical components before the new plant could get them. "Of all critical and strategic materials," the report warned, "rubber is the one which presents the greatest threat to the safety of our nation and the success of the Allied cause." It urged that someone be placed in charge who could bull the problem through these obstacles. President Roosevelt wanted Jeffers to be that someone. Jeffers' reputation for business tenacity was recognized both in and outside the railroad industry.

In 1942, Jeffers agreed to serve for one year in the War Production Board as Rubber Director, where he organized the manufacture of rayon to boost the synthetic rubber industry. The nation got a quick taste of the czar's style. His first act was to thank and then fire everyone associated with the rubber program so that he could replace them with industry experts. Then, ten days after taking charge, Jeffers ordered nationwide gasoline rationing to conserve both fuel and rubber, and imposed a 35 miles-per-hour speed limit. The Baruch report had urged both moves, and Jeffers did not flinch from hitting Americans in their favorite place, the automobile.

Jeffers even made the cover of Time magazine in the July 30, 1945 issue. The article credited Jeffers with developing the streamliners, getting the rubber program "unkinked", and with foresight in 1939 about the likelihood of war and the need for the US



Washington Evening Star, Sept. 6, 1943

WILLIAM JEFFERS (cont'd)

to be ready.

Despite his position, Jeffers never forgot his hometown. After canteen originator Rae Wilson visited Jeffers during a North Platte visit, he ordered the station lunchroom turned over to the volunteers. His interest in the canteen's success continued through the war, with several personal visits to the center. Jeffers also made himself personally available for visits or phone calls from canteen officials regarding any problems or requests. The canteen he made possible was still operating when Jeffers retired from the Union Pacific presidency on February 1, 1946.

William Martin Jeffers died on March 6, 1953 in Pasadena California. At the funeral service, Bishop Joseph T. McGucken stated, "The passing of such a man is indeed a national loss. His name belongs in the shrine of our national heroes. Had there been more of his kind in the government during the last war, we might have secured a permanent peace. He was a rugged rock of our times and his memory will linger in the nation's history and legend."



Although Jeffers is buried in Omaha, Nebraska, his contribution to the Union Pacific Railroad cannot be overlooked during this tour.

There is a current movement to nominate William M. Jeffers into the Nebraska Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame selection criteria are:

- A person shall have been deceased thirty-five years to be considered.
- Shall have been born in Nebraska, have lived a significant part of his or her life in Nebraska or, made a contribution to society that was affected by his or her residence in Nebraska.
- Primary consideration is given to contributions in public affairs, the arts, the sciences, the professions. Secondary consideration is given to entertainment, athletics, and kindred fields where interest, publicity, and general recognition may for a time be intense, but where a contribution to society is secondary.
- Activities that have added to the welfare of society and to the reputation of the state shall be weighed more heavily than activities primarily benefiting the individual himself or herself.

If you would like to write a letter of support, please send it to:

Secretary
Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission
PO Box 82554
Lincoln NE 68501-2554



Chronological History of

1853 - Legislation provided for a Pacific Railroad Survey to find the best route for a transcontinental railroad.

July 1, 1862 - President Abraham Lincoln signs the Pacific Railroad Act creating the Union Pacific Railroad Company.

December 2, 1863 - Groundbreaking in Omaha, Nebraska for the Union Pacific Railroad.

July 2, 1864 - President Lincoln signs a bill doubling the land grants and liberalizing the financing for Union and Central Pacific.

July 10, 1865 - First rail is laid at Omaha, Nebraska.

August 1866 - Grading is completed through the Platte Valley, to Julesburg, Colorado. Grenville Dodge sets aside land for a town and division point at Mile Post 290.9.

December 3, 1866 - The first train enters the "hell on wheels" construction camp known as North Platte. Henry Stanley, special correspondent for the St. Louis *Missouri Democrat* reports, "Every gambler in the Union seems to have steered his course for North Platte, and every known game under the sun is played here. The days of Pike's Peak and California are revived. Every house is a saloon, and every saloon is a gambling den. Revolvers are in great requisition. Old gamblers who reveled in the glorious days of 'flush times' in the gold districts declare that this town outstrips them all yet." Union Pacific has a fleet of 16 locomotives, 200 platform cars, 12 passenger cars, and the Lincoln Car, converted for business car use. Casement Brothers has six locomotives plus boarding cars for use in track laying.

December 31, 1866 - Tracks are laid to O'Fallon's Bluffs.

January 2, 1867 - Mainline operations into North Platte officially open.

1868 - The first meeting of Free Masons in North Platte takes place in the machine shops.

May 10, 1869 - The Golden Spike is driven at Promontory Summit, Utah. The cost of the rail line from Omaha to Promontory Summit is \$59 million.

1872 - Grand Duke Alexis of Russia and party came to North Platte via the Union Pacific Railroad for a buffalo hunt with William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody.

1875 - Lodge Pole Division is changed to Mountain Division.

June 2, 1876 - A special train for Jarrett & Palmer (theater owners, traveling with three Shakespearean actors) making a trip from New York to San Francisco attains a speed of 72 miles per hour between Grand Island and North Platte on a track with a maximum speed of 45 miles per hour.

January 24, 1880 - Union Pacific Railroad merges with the Kansas Pacific and Denver Pacific gaining access to Kansas City and Denver via Cheyenne. The resulting company is the Union Pacific Railway Company.

February 1878-1913 - William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody resides and organizes his Wild West show from his ranch, Scouts Rest, north of town. The Wild West show was inaugurated in Omaha in 1883 with real cowboys and real Indians portraying the "real West." The show spent 10 of its 30 years in Europe. In 1887 Buffalo Bill was a feature attraction at Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. At the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, only Little Egypt's gyrations rivaled the Wild West Show as the talk of Chicago.

1893 - North Platte town residents gather at the roundhouse, ready to depart by train to escape a prairie fire.

1896 - William Jennings Bryan makes a whistle stop in North Platte during his campaign.

November 1, 1897 - A group of investors from Kuehn Loeb & Company, including E.H. Harriman, purchases the Union Pacific Railway main line at auction in Omaha.

1904 - Theodore Roosevelt makes a whistle stop tour.

1907-1922 - The North Platte branch is constructed from O'Fallon to South Morrill.

1908 - William Howard Taft makes a whistle stop tour.

1910 - Construction of a second mainline through North Platte.

1910 - Union Pacific completes a 70-mile connection between Topeka, KS and Upland, KS.

1913 - A North Platte twenty-eight stall roundhouse is built at a cost of \$171,000; a power plant at a



Union Pacific in North

cost of \$36,000; and a four-track conveyor-style coaling station with four 100-ton pockets, one over each track, at a cost of \$70,000.

1914 - Twenty-five miles of track are completed, from Hastings to Gibbon, Nebraska.

1915 - Union Pacific regains control of the St. Joseph and Grand Island Railroad.

November 17, 1915 - The North Platte Union Pacific Hotel and Depot burns down.

1917 - A double mainline is constructed from North Platte to Cheyenne.

March 20, 1918 - Dedication of an 80' x 263' brick North Platte passenger station on the south side of the tracks along Front Street, adjacent to the business district, replacing the wooden frame depot which burned down in 1915.

July 13, 1918 - September 1, 1919 - The American Red Cross affiliated canteen operates out of the Union Pacific North Platte freight house, serving 113,190 servicemen.

1923 - President Harding makes 2 stops in North Platte (going west to the coast and then traveling east on his funeral train).

1927 - A new bridge consisting of forty 50-foot spans is built over the North Platte River.

February 1934 - Union Pacific introduces the nation's first distillate-powered streamlined passenger train the M-10000.

1937 - A new machine and erecting shop is built for \$225,000, with an additional \$100,000 spent for tools at North Platte.

September 30, 1937 - Native son William Jeffers becomes president of the Union Pacific Railroad.

April 27, 1939 - Paramount Pictures' premiere train for the Cecil B. DeMille movie "Union Pacific" arrives in North Platte with movie star passengers Barbara Stanwyck, George Raft, Robert Preston, and a host of others.

1939 - North Platte branch is relocated for projected Kingsley Dam.

1939 - Pacific Fruit Express ices 136,215 cars of fruits and vegetables at the world's largest icing platform, which is 3,600 feet long. Located between two tracks, it is able to handle 80 spotted cars along both sides. Sixty thousand tons of ice is harvested from North Platte and Gothenburg.

1939 - Union Pacific has 1,000 employees in North Platte, with a payroll of \$2,076,812.00 The yard encompasses 47.75 miles of track, 19.24 miles of passing track, and 2.66 miles of industry track. The stockyards east of town covers 640 acres, and in 1938 3,353 carloads of livestock are fed.

December 25, 1941 - April 1, 1946 - The North Platte Canteen, located in the passenger depot, serves more than 6 million members of the armed forces. The record number of servicemen served within a 30-minute period is 2,000 soldiers, from four troop trains.

December 5, 1944 - Union Pacific's last steam locomotive, UP 844, is built by ALCO.

September 1, 1948 - The new \$750,000 North Platte Freight Depot opens. Three 1,200-foot covered platforms serve the station's six tracks, and four loading doors serve for trucking operations and warehouse space.

October 1948 - Dieselization between North Platte and Kansas City starts with the ALCO PAs.

For more UPRR North Platte history, see: <http://www.uprr.com/aboutup/history/npchron.html>



RAILROAD EMPLOYMENT POSITIONS (1800's through early 1900's)

Baggage Handler – The baggage handler's duties were to load and unload baggage from inbound and outbound trains.

Baggage Master – The baggage master was in charge of the baggage car. From 1840 to approximately 1920, passengers referred to him as the "baggage smasher."

Brakeman – Prior to 1888 when Westinghouse developed a reliable air brake, stopping a train or a rolling car was very primitive. Iron wheels, located atop cars, were connected to a manual braking system by a long metal rod. The brakemen, usually two to a train, would ride on top of the car. On a whistle signal from the engineer, the brakemen, one at the front of the train and one at the rear of the train would begin turning the iron wheels to engage the brakes. When one car was completed, the brakeman would jump the 30 inches or so to the next car and repeat the operation to apply the brakes on that car. The brakemen would work towards each other until all cars had their brakes applied.

Conductor – As train crews go, especially passenger trains, the conductor held the ultimate dignity. He had to handle passengers with diplomacy, but still be able to take care of minor crew problems such as a smashed finger. He typically worked his way up from flagman. He was the captain of the train and collected fares when there was no ticket agent.

Engineer – The locomotive engineer was a real hero in those early days. The engineer was allowed to have his engine painted whatever colors he chose. He was allowed to alter the sound of the whistle by placing wooden stops in it to create unusual and distinct sounds. Engineers usually started out years before as a wiper in a yard house, then worked their way up to engine watchman, then to switch engine fireman, then road fireman, then hostler, then to engineer.

Engine Watchman – This man's job was to keep water in the boiler and keep enough fire going in the firebox to move the locomotive within the railroad yard.

Fireman – This job probably had the sharpest contrast to that of the conductor. There were two types of firemen: switch-engine firemen and road firemen. The switch engine firemen worked in the yard and the road firemen traveled with the freight and passenger trains. The fireman's main job was to shovel coal into the firebox of the engine. Firemen knew that if they did their job well, that in about 3 years, they could move up to hostler and then to a switch engine engineer, before becoming a journeyman engineer.

Flagmen – Flagmen were called freight conductors. The flagman is the senior brakeman. He had to work his way up the ladder by being competent, avoid being killed, and he had to be able to read, as he would pick new orders for the train during the various stops. The flagman's job was to set flares and warning devices along the track to warn any oncoming train of possible dangers ahead.

Hostler – The hostler would go into the yard and pick up an engine from where the journeyman engineer left it running and move it into the roundhouse.

Switch-engine Engineer – This position was held by apprentice engineers learning the trade. Their job was to move railroad cars around the railroad yard. They got loaded boxcars on the right tracks and hooked up for the road engines to pickup just before leaving the station. Once the apprentice engineer proved his ability with handling the switch engines, the next promotion would be to road engineer.

Switchman – These brave men worked in the railroad yards, hooking cars together, sometimes while the cars were still moving. After automatic couplers were invented, the switchman's main job was having the siding and switching tracks in the correct position.

Wiper – The wiper's job was to work as 12 hour shift in the roundhouse, where he packed the internal moving parts of an engine with greasy waste material. This was the bottom rung on the ladder that eventually led to the engineer's seat!



CREDITS AND REFERENCES

Thank you to the following researchers, individuals, actors, books, and websites that helped create

ACTORS

Joel Bennett	Tom Hunt
Carolyn Clark	Bill Kackmeister
Michael Davis	John Noonan
Denise DiGiovanni	Wayne Pressnall
Jason Gale	Colin Taylor
Martin Gutschenritter	Kevin Winder
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WEBSITE RESEARCH CREDIT

<http://www.uprr.com>
<http://www.rootsweb.com/>
<http://npcanteen.net>
<http://www.lincolncountypeople.html>
<http://www.wikipedia.org>

Ghosts of the Union Pacific Railroad cemetery

BOOK RESEARCH CREDIT

Historic Railroads of Nebraska by Michael Bartels & James Reisdorff
Smoke Across the Prairie by James Ehernberger & Francis Gschwind
Souvenir of Silver Anniversary, Division 88, B. of L.E.
North Platte Canteen by James Reisdorff

BOOKLET LAYOUT & PUBLICATION

Cecelia Lawrence
 North Platte Public Library Foundation
 Morgan Greenwood
 Terri Johnson
 Sara Aden

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

IdeaLogic Marketing
 this North Platte Public Library
 North Platte Public Library Foundation
 North Platte Community Playhouse
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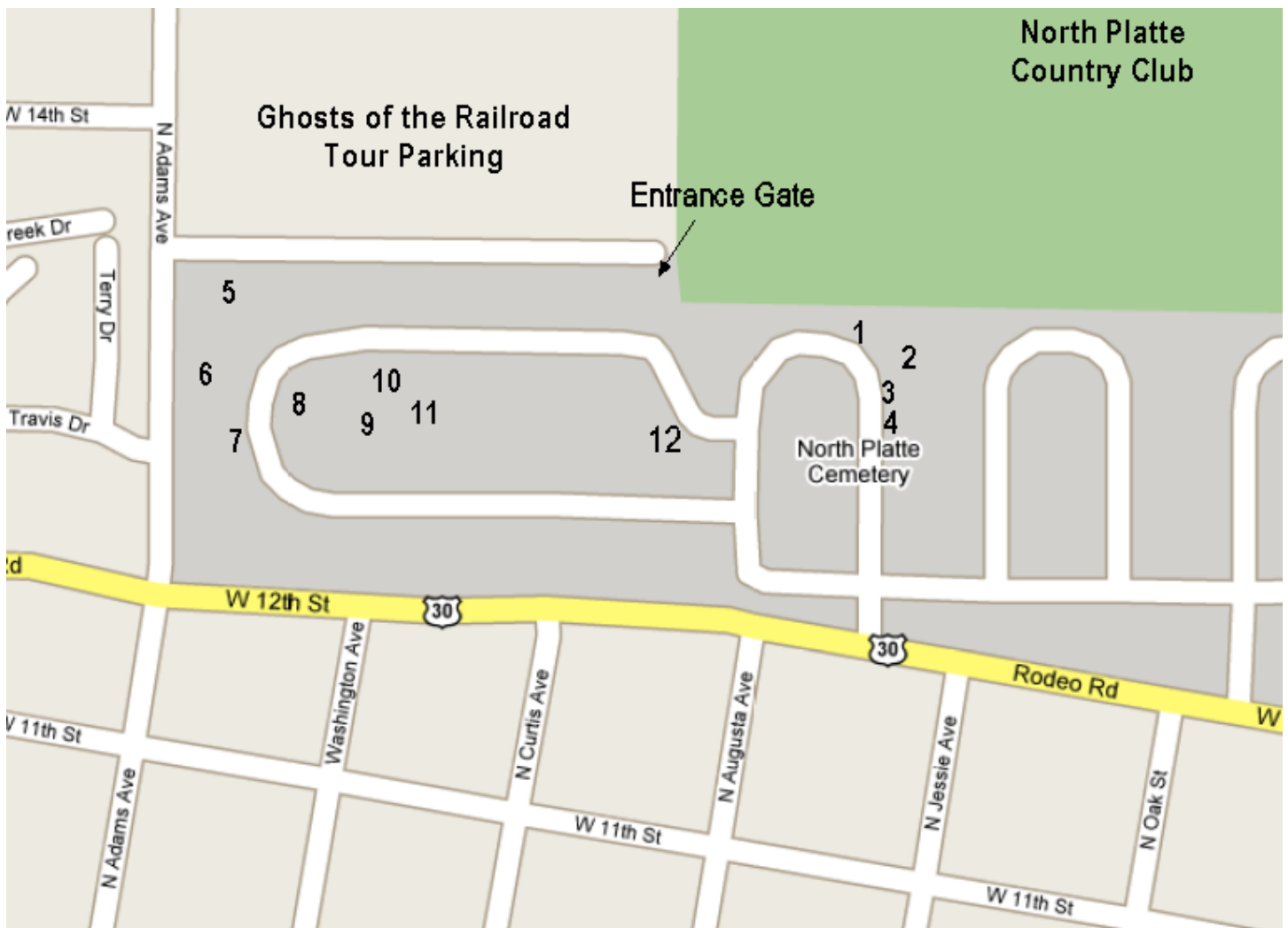
Sara Aden
 Linda Broge
 Kaycee Dye
 Naomi Getty
 Morgan Greenwood
 Brian Hirsch
 Cecelia Lawrence
 Jan Ravenscroft
 Cheryl Roblyer

EXTRA THANKS TO...

North Platte Country Club—Golf Carts
 A to Z Books — Event promotion & ticket sales
 Lyle Minshull & the North Platte Cemetery Groundskeepers
 Willa Brinkmeyer & the North Platte Community Playhouse Costume Department
 City of North Platte



Ghosts of the UPRR Cemetery Tour



Cemetery Tour Map

1. Russel Wyman
2. George Vroman
3. John Sullivan
4. Joseph Roddy
5. Fred Fredrickson
6. Elizabeth Craigie
7. William & Josiah Park
8. William Woodhurst
9. William Dolson
10. George Austin
11. Rae Wilson
12. Warren Kelly