

2012 Cemetery Tour



Railroaders,
Ranchers &
Thieves



Friday, Sept 14, 2012

4:00pm-8:00pm (*twilight tour*)

North Platte Cemetery, West Rodeo Rd

Tuesday, Sept 18, 2012

7:00pm (*non-walking tour*)

Holiday Inn Express, 300 Holiday Frontage Rd

Timeline of the Old West

This timeline of the American Old West is a chronologically ordered list of significant events, births and deaths, associated with the westerly expansion of white settlers across northern continental America. This shortened timeline is most specific to railroaders, ranchers, and Indians.

1842—John C. Fremont completes his exploration of the Platte River country with Kit Carson in Bellevue. He sold his mules and government wagons at auction in there. On this mapping trip, Fremont used the Otoe word *Nebrathka* to designate the Platte River. Platte is from the French word for "flat", the translation of *Nebrath-ka*, meaning "land of flat waters." 1846,



Feb 26 — William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody is born near LeClaire, Iowa.

1850's — Most Nebraska settlers were farmers, but another major economic activity involved support for travelers using the Platte

River trails. The Missouri River towns became important terminals of an overland freighting business that carried goods brought up the river in steamboats over the plains to trading posts and Army forts in the mountains. Stagecoaches provided passenger, mail, and express service, and for a few months in 1860–1861 the famous Pony Express provided mail service.



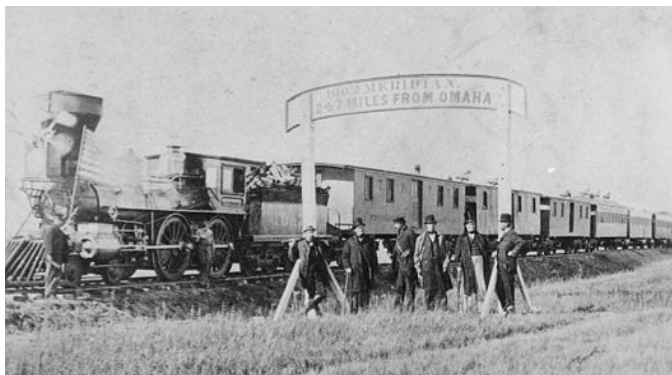
Many wagon trains trekked through Nebraska on the way west. They were assisted by soldiers at Ft. Kearny and other Army forts guarding the

Platte River Road between 1846 and 1869. Fort commanders assisted destitute civilians by providing them with food and other supplies while those who could afford it purchased supplies from post sutlers. Travelers also received medical care, had access to blacksmithing and carpentry services for a fee, and could rely on fort commanders to act as law enforcement officials. Fort Kearny also provided mail services and, by 1861, telegraph services. Moreover, soldiers facilitated travel by making improvements on roads, bridges, and ferries. The forts additionally gave rise to towns along the Platte River route.



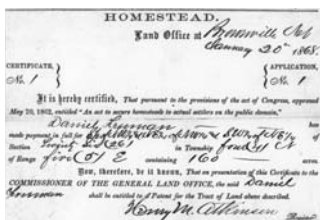
The wagon trains gave way to railroad traffic as the Union Pacific Railroad — the first transcontinental railroad — was constructed west from Omaha through the Platte Valley. In 1867 Colorado was split off and Nebraska, reduced in size to its modern boundaries, was admitted to the Union.

1862 — The Union Pacific Railroad Company, prior to later uniting with the Central Pacific Railroad, was incorporated on July 1, 1862 under an act of Congress entitled Pacific Railroad Act of 1862. The act was approved by President Abraham Lincoln, and it provided for the construction of railroads from the Missouri River to the Pacific as a war measure for the preservation of the Union. It was constructed westward from Council Bluffs, Iowa to meet the Central Pacific line, which was constructed eastwardly from San Francisco Bay (California). The line was constructed primarily by Irish labor who had learned their craft during the recent Civil War. The two lines were joined together at Promontory Summit, Utah, fifty-three miles west of Ogden, Utah on May 10, 1869, hence creating the first transcontinental railroad in North America.



The picture to the above shows the Directors of the Union Pacific Railroad gathering on the 100th meridian, which later became Cozad, Nebraska, approximately 250 miles west of Omaha, Nebraska Territory, in October 1866. The train in the background awaits the party of Eastern capitalists, newspapermen, and other prominent figures invited by the railroad executives.

1863, Jan 1 — Daniel Freeman submits the first claim under the Homestead Act for land near Beatrice Nebraska.



1867, Feb 8 — Nebraska is admitted as a state. There was some controversy over

Nebraska's admission as a state, in view of a provision in the 1866 constitution restricting suffrage to White voters; eventually, on February 8, 1867, the United States Congress voted to admit Nebraska as a state provided that suffrage was not denied to non-white voters. The bill admitting Nebraska as a state was vetoed by President Andrew Johnson, but the veto was overridden by a supermajority in both Houses of Congress.

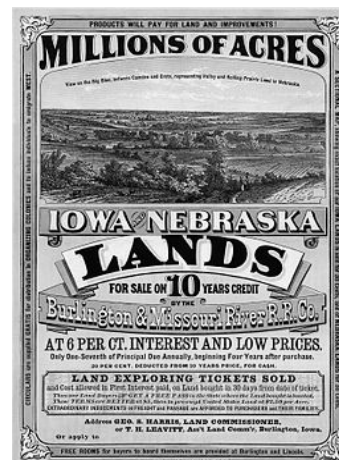


1870 — Chinese laborers are brought in by the Union Pacific Railroad in Wyoming and are paid \$32.50 a month as opposed to \$52.00 a month for American-born

railroad workers. Hiring cheap foreign labor will become a common practice for the railroad and other companies during the late 19th century. In time, this will create resentment from American laborers through-out the western United States in the belief that Chinese immigrants are competing unfairly for jobs and will eventually

lead to racial violence and labor unrest in years to come.

1870 — Railroads played a central role in the settlement of Nebraska. The land was good, but without transportation would be impossible to raise commercial crops. The railroad companies had been given large land grants that were used to back the borrowings from New York and London that financed construction. They were



anxious to locate settlers upon the land as soon as possible, so there would be a steady outflow of farm products, and a steady inflow of manufactured items purchased by the farmers. In the 1870s and 1880s Union veterans and immigrants from Europe came by the thousands to take up land in Nebraska, with the result that despite severe droughts, grasshopper plagues, economic distress, and other harsh conditions the frontier line of settlement pushed steadily westward. Most of the great cattle ranches that had grown up near the ends of the trails from Texas gave way to farms, although the Sand Hills remained essentially a ranching country.

Historical Nebraska Population

Census	Pop.	%± Change
1860	28,841	
1870	122,993	326.5%
1880	452,402	267.8%
1890	1,062,656	134.9%
1900	1,066,300	0.3%
1910	1,192,214	11.8%
1920	1,296,372	8.7%
1930	1,377,963	6.3%
1940	1,315,834	-4.5%
1950	1,325,510	0.7%
1960	1,411,330	6.5%
1970	1,483,493	5.1%
1980	1,569,825	5.8%
1990	1,578,385	0.5%
2000	1,711,263	8.4%
2010	1,826,341	6.7%



Jack Morrow

The actor to play Jack Morrow unfortunately was unable to do these performances. Please enjoy this display on Jack Morrow's life.

John Andrew "Jack" Morrow was born around 1832 in Pennsylvania to John and Sophia Morrow.

Researchers could find little information about his childhood, but he definitely went to explore the great American West at a young age. Speculations are that he was the black sheep of the family and from a wealthy family.

In 1860 (age 28), he is listed in the U.S. Census as an Indian Trader in Shorter County (now Lincoln County) Nebraska, with a personal estate value of \$10,000.

Jack stole and swindled money and goods from whomever he could. This notorious thief rose to the title of Lincoln County Commissioner in the Nebraska Territory, but his drinking and gambling consumed his wealth and he died in poverty in 1885.

Washington Hinman

Portrayed by Colin Taylor.

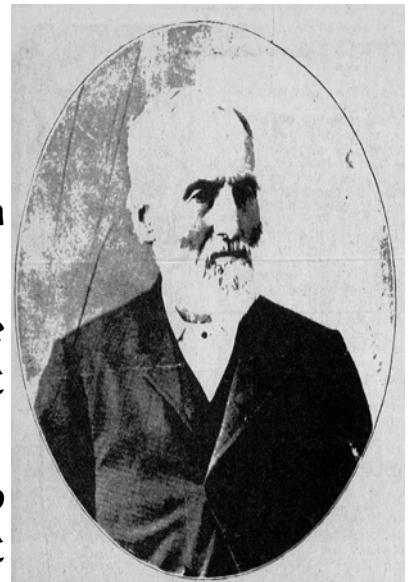
Washington Hinman was born in Wysox, Pennsylvania on September 14, 1819.

Washington was raised on a farm, but wanted to explore the Wild West. He left home when he was 19 to "go west young man, go west."

After exploring the upper Midwest, he headed to California with gold rush fever. Discouraged after not finding much gold, he wandered north into Oregon and got into the lumber business.

He saw an advertisement for Indian Interpreters at Fort McPherson, Nebraska and headed towards Nebraska. Once in the area, he settled down, built a house, and married.

Washington Hinman led a fascinating life and died at the age 84 on January 27, 1904.



Sarah Dwyer

Portrayed by Teresa Smith.

Sarah Duffy was born in January 1841 in Ireland. She grew up and married John Dwyer. They arrived in America on December 16, 1869 with their two wee ones, Alice (6 years old) and John (9 months old).

It is unknown when they arrived in North Platte, but researchers did discover that they owned a house on Front Street. Plus they owned the saloon right next door to their house. It is likely that they followed the Transcontinental Railroad construction westward and settled in North Platte.

John died in 1873, but Sarah kept the saloon open. She was a feisty Irish woman and knew that the saloon would keep her family fed.

Sarah died on March 7, 1901.



Morrell Case Keith

Portrayed by Bill Kackmeister.

Morrell Case Keith was born on November 21, 1824 in Silver Creek, New York.

He and his wife Susan moved to Apple Grove Iowa and ran a hotel. From there they moved to Topeka Kansas and he worked in the freight business, and six years later, they moved to Ogallala. He started his large cattle business on the Pawnee Springs Ranch. Keith County is named after Morrell Case Keith.

He and his wife only had one child, Mollie. She grew up and married a young promising local attorney, William Neville. Susan died on September 23, 1877 and his daughter Mollie died shortly after childbirth on May 10, 1882. leaving Morrell to raise his namesake grandson, Keith Neville.

Morrell died on September 29, 1899.



Judge Hanson Grimes

Portrayed by Gene Gilsdorf.

Hanson M Grimes was born in 1853 in Indiana to a blacksmith.

He attended Asbury University in Greencastle, Indiana and then law school at the State University of Iowa. He graduated in 1877, then passed the bar and became an attorney. He then married Mary and moved westward, eventually ending up in North Platte in 1884. They had one son.

In 1895, he was elected district judge and as such traveled all over western Nebraska presiding over many, many cases.

In 1914, he presided over his first murder trial in North Platte. The trial was tense and the entire town was divided about the innocence or guilt of the accused.

Judge Hanson Grimes died of a stroke in 1921. He was an honorable man, liked by all who met him, even those he ruled against in the courtroom.

Helen Ritner

Portrayed by Shelly Deardoff.

Helen M Thomas was born October 2, 1845 near Cleveland Ohio. At the age of 18, she married Alexander W. Randall. Randall was the Governor of Wisconsin from 1858 to 1861. They had one child together, Julia. They also adopted 1 boy and 3 more girls. Randall passed away in 1872. Following Governor Randall's death, Helen moved to Nebraska where she became Nebraska's first cattle queen.

She operated a dairy cattle ranch near North Platte. In 1885 she married William C Ritner. William apprenticed in the marble cutter's trade and established a tombstone business in North Platte, with branches in Colorado and Wyoming. After their marriage, they moved into North Platte, where they operated The Ritner Hotel, as well the monument company.

Helen was known for her social graces and good business sense. She died on October 6, 1918 at the age of 73.





Charles McDonald

Portrayed by Andrew Lee.

Charles McDonald was born October 25, 1826 in Jefferson County, Tennessee. He was the ninth of eleven children born to Alexander and Mary McDonald.

In 1859, Charles relocated to Cottonwood Springs and was responsible for the U.S. war department locating Fort McPherson south of Maxwell, Nebraska. In Cottonwood Springs and eventually North Platte, he owned and operated a general store and ranch until 1898. He helped organize Shorter County (now Lincoln County) and was elected the first judge. In 1878 he opened the Bank of Charles McDonald, which was later changed to McDonald State Bank.

He married Ora B. Henry in Omaha in 1858 and together, they had seven children. He had remarkable health and was seldom ill during his long life. He passed away on April 22, 1919 at the age of 92.

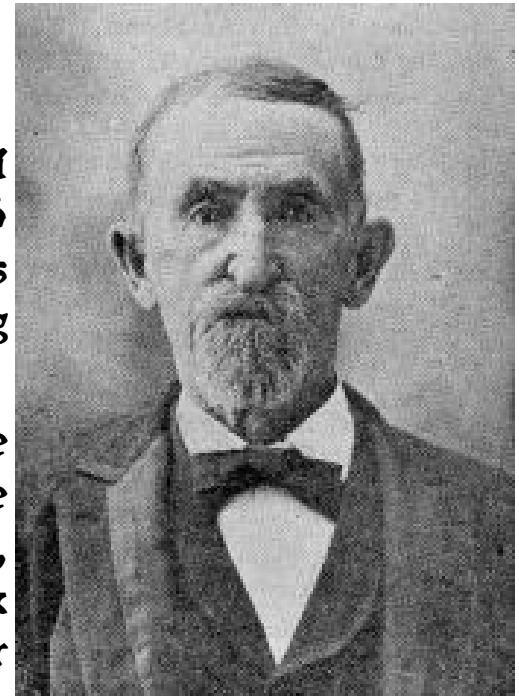
Edward de Morin

Portrayed by Michael Davis.

Edward Morin was born in Montreal Canada of French Canadian parents in 1818. At the age of 15 he left his family and explored the western wilds of western America. He made his living trapping and selling the fur and hides of many animals.

In 1848, he settled in this area which was the Nebraska Territory. There he married Valentine Peters. Together they had six children. In 1853, he established a trading post at the mouth of Box Butte Canyon, two miles west of what later became Fort McPherson. Moran was hired by the government as an Indian interpreter and scout from 1862 to 1872.

Morin died in 1902 at the age of 84.





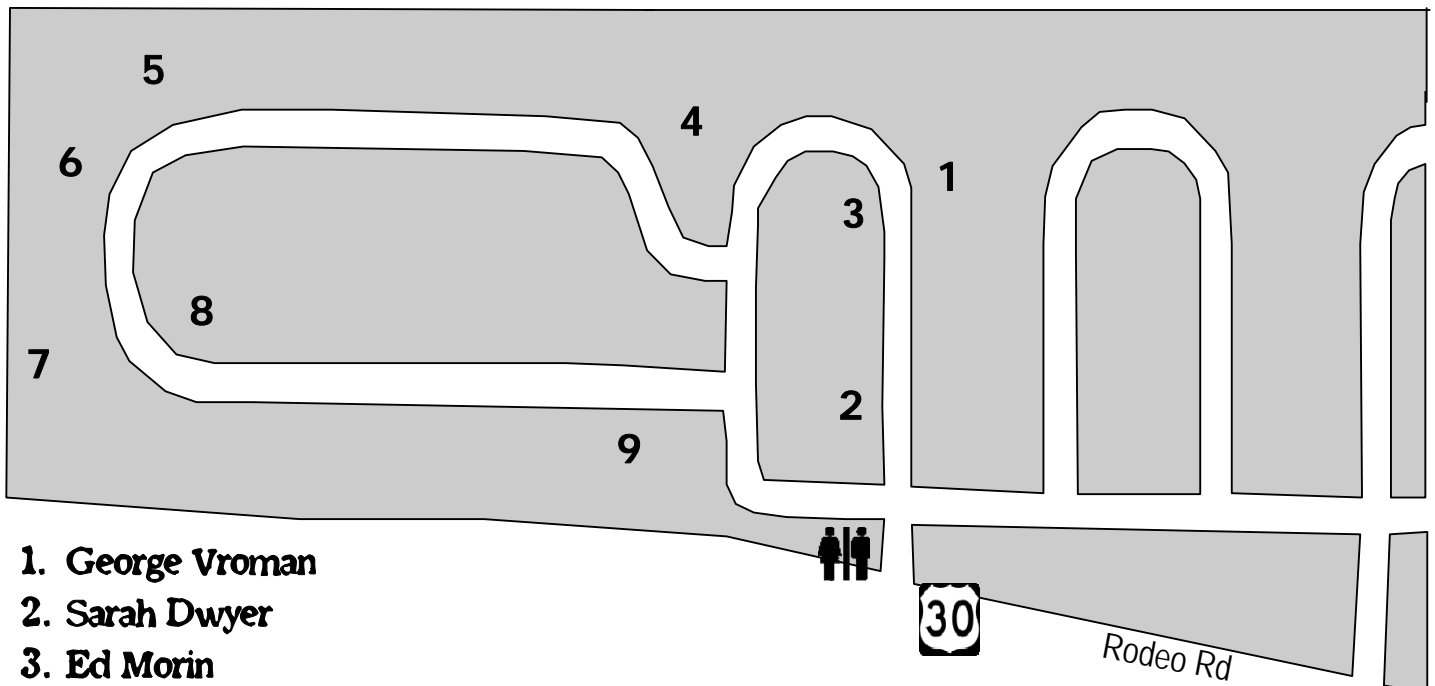
George Vroman, as told by his daughter Arba Vroman

Portrayed by Lois Lynes-Miles.

George W. Vroman was born September 27, 1841 at Fitchburg, Wisconsin. He had begun his time with railroads with the Wabash Railroad in La Fayette, Indiana in 1862, working as a fireman for 2 years, then ran an engine for 5 years.

George Vroman came to Nebraska in 1869, the year the Union Pacific Railway was completed. 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.

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."



1. George Vroman
2. Sarah Dwyer
3. Ed Morin
4. Morrell Case Keith
5. Charles McDonald
6. Washington Hinman
7. Helen Ritner
8. Judge Hanson M Grimes
9. Jack Morrow