

HARRIMAN IS DEAD, BUT HIS WORK GOES ON

Completion of Magnificent New Headquarters Building in Omaha Will Mark an Important Epoch in Union Pacific History

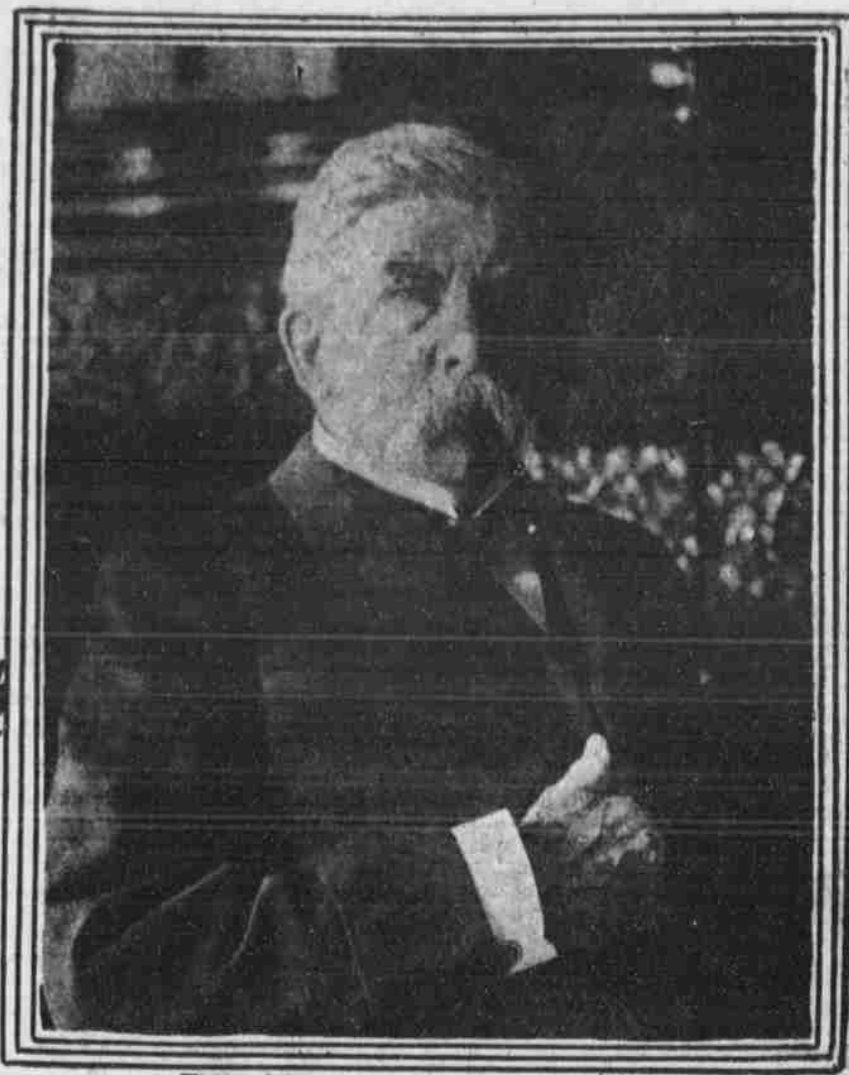


JAY GOULD

EX-GOVERNOR ALVIN SAUNDERS
WHO THREW FIRST SPADE OF DIRT
ON UNION PACIFIC

CHAS. FRANCIS ADAMS
AN EARLY DAY PRESIDENT

THOMAS
C. DURANT



GEN. GRENVILLE M. DODGE



E. L. LOMAX
GEN. PASSENGER AGENT



J. A. MUNROE
FREIGHT TRAFFIC MGR.



A. H. MOHLER
GENERAL MANAGER



E. H. HARRIMAN
AS HE APPEARED
WHEN HE LAST
VISITED OMAHA



THE ORIGINAL HERNDON HOUSE

"I THINK," said the late E. H. Harriman, as he sat on a camp stool sun-bathing in front of his tent in the outskirts of San Antonio, fighting the one losing battle of his remarkable career, "that the next year or so will bring about great railroad development. The Union Pacific, for instance, is about ready to begin definite action on a new headquarters building in Omaha, and various other projects for betterment are under way."

Mr. Harriman was talking to a newspaper man who had called for the daily health bulletin. Reticence, as a general rule, characterized the working days of the great rail wizard, but he was dying then—dying by inches, the falling shadow baffled only by his indomitable will, which rallied anew under glorious floods of West Texas sunshine—and as if to evade discussion of his physical condition, then the all-prevailing topic, taciturnity faded away and Mr. Harriman was strangely ready to talk of industrial expansion.

Mr. Harriman is dead—but the Union Pacific building idea survives. At Fifteenth and Dodge streets, Omaha, preliminary work is now under way, and a magnificent twelve-story structure—a building in full consonance with the importance of the road—will be the final outcome.

Just to what extent this building is a posthumous creation of the late Mr. Harriman, and just how far it is the work of Judge Lovett, Mr. Mohler and others, succeeding to enlarged power, is a Union Pacific family question into which the public has no occasion to pry. Be that as it may, whether or not it is the fulfillment of a Harriman conception, the building is assured and in that knowledge progressive Omaha rests supremely content.

To the ordinary man of affairs the construction of a modern twelve-story building is an undertaking of magnitude. To the master minds who guide Union Pacific destinies the task is a mere bit of commonplace routine. Difficulty has always melted away before the Union Pacific spirit—in fact, to the Union Pacific difficulty is merely the signal for increased effort. There may have been some difficulty in bridging Great Salt Lake, but the work was successfully done. There may have been some difficulty in many of the other notable engineering feats, but they were pushed to completion. Obviously, then, in a comparative sense, construction of the Union Pacific's new home is simply a matter of time enough for the builders to rear it.

It is only a coincidence, yet aptly fitting, that the Union Pacific building should be located on Dodge street. For it brings to mind the name of Dodge—General Grenville M. Dodge—who had much to do with building the road. Back in Washington City, and elsewhere, statesmen dreamed glowing day dreams of linking the Atlantic and

the Pacific by steel bands, but it remained for Grenville M. Dodge, as chief engineer, and other men of his type, to actually blaze the trail, running the gauntlet all of the while of Indian bullets, for he remembered that hostile warriors resented the invasion of the builders, and every mile of the Union Pacific from central Nebraska west to Utah was built within range of Indian rifles. Wherefore, the men who staked the route, threw up the grade, placed the ties and laid the rails were on the firing line of danger all the while—as much so as though they had been on the field of battle.

General Dodge, by the way, has lived to see his pioneer project unfold its greatness. He is a grand old man of the west, still active despite his advanced years—but that is a story of itself to be told at another time.

No one in Union Pacific authority will hazard a guess these days as to just when the new building will be ready for occupation, but the work is being rushed and there will be no more delay than is absolutely necessary.

And when at last the finishing stroke has come there will not, it is said, be a more ornate railway headquarters building anywhere in the United States. Twelve stories upward it will go, with a frontage of 199 feet on Dodge street and 146 feet on Fifteenth street. The construction will be of absolutely fireproof material, so planned as to give the greatest amount of light and air to each room. The exterior of the lower three stories will be of stone and the upper stories will be of dark brown brick, with terra cotta trimmings. The interior trim will be of quarter-sawn oak, with marble entrance halls. The latest electrical appliances will be installed. In short, it is proposed that nothing shall be omitted which makes for all that is ornate, all that is enduring, all that is modern in the way of architecture.

When in the course of events the time comes for Union Pacific removal from the old to the new, it will mark an epoch, for around the present Union Pacific building—the old Herndon house—there clusters a wealth of early-day historical lore.

"All out for the Herndon house," Pioneer Jehus proudly cried—of course they were proud, for wasn't the Herndon house the most prominent hostelry in Omaha? And in those days, when Omaha was a mere fringe of primitive architecture bedecking the river front, wasn't it an honor, as cabman honor is measured, to drive the Herndon house omnibus?

If brick walls could talk, what a wonderful recital of early-day Omaha life would pour forth. While not the first hotel in Omaha, the Herndon house was the first one of a pretentious nature, and, naturally enough, it at once became the center of affairs, both social and commercial. What the Jefferson today is to St. Louis, what the Albany is to Denver, what the Robidoux is to St. Joseph, what the Baltimore is to Kansas City, what the Auditorium is to Chicago, what the West is to Minneapolis, what the Ryan is to St. Paul, what the Claypool is to Indianapolis, what the Loyal, the Rome, the Henshaw and others are to Omaha of this era, the Herndon was to that Omaha of yesteryears—the Omaha with the making of which the Union Pacific had so much to do.

Dr. George L. Miller, Omaha pioneer, was a prominent factor in bringing the Herndon house into existence. It was looked upon as sort of a cornerstone of the coming city, and in its day many men destined to national prominence crossed its threshold and signed their names upon its register.

J. Sterling Morton and family boarded at the Herndon one winter and the story is often told of how Joy Morton, then a mere child, once came near taking the life of his brother, Paul. Dr. Miller was the hotel physician. He paid special attention to the Morton children. Joy Morton

saw the doctor administering medicine and his childish mind conceived the idea that he, too, would like to be a doctor. Finding a bottle of medicine that someone had cast aside, the lad doped his brother with a dose that almost proved fatal.

The "Train Incident," which is a tabloid way of designating the story of how George Francis Train became enraged at the management of the Herndon house and built a new hotel for spite, has been told and retold until it is indelibly impressed as a matter of local history.

Future generals, future governors, future United States senators and future cabinet officers, not to mention congressmen and lesser lights, thronged the Herndon house in its palmy days, for Omaha was then, as now, the principal gateway to the west, and the trek of man has ever been westward.

Socially, the Herndon house held full sway. Even in those primitive days of pioneering, when painted Indians were still lurking in the outskirts and when Council Bluffs still vied with Omaha for western gateway supremacy, there was a social side to life in Omaha, and many a night the belles and beaux of the coming metropolis whirled in the giddy maze, back and forth over the freshly scrubbed ball room floor of the Herndon.

But the historic association of the soon-to-be vacated building is by no means confined to the period during which it was used as a hotel—in fact, its tenure as hotel property was comparatively brief, for other and more commodious hotels further "uptown" came with advancing civilization, and after a shining career of a few years along came the Union Pacific railroad authorities with a proposition to take the property for a headquarters building, which was done.

As a railroad building the old place has been dignified by the presence of some of the master minds of the railroad world. The feet of Jay Gould, once the railroad king of the world, have mounted the steps of the erstwhile Herndon house many times, for in the earlier history of Omaha visits from Mr. Gould were by no means infrequent, and George Gould, son and successor of the then great man, has as a boy played about the halls of the old Herndon.

What will become of the historic

old place when Union Pacific headquarters are moved away?

That is an unanswered question, and it remains to be seen what use the railroad authorities will make of it. Despite the fact that the city in its onward march has grown away from it, the value of the ground upon which it stands increases year by year, and the building itself is in a good state of preservation—in fact, it has been remodeled from time to time and its appearance today scarcely indicates that it was once the original Herndon house, owing to the fact that it has been built over and materially changed. It belongs to the railroad and it is supposed that some sort of use will be found for it by the company.

Railroad building is a prosaic occupation for the most part, but even so, there is in Union Pacific history much of romance and poetry. An element of the romantic tinges the story of how Indians along the route fled awe-stricken as the first train took its westward flight. The shrill whistle of the locomotive was to their superstitious minds like the shriek of a lost soul, and the puffing, steaming, snorting iron monster was a thing of terror to them.

Abraham Lincoln was early to foresee the possibilities of a road to the west, and even while other national characters were inclined to look askance at the proposition, branding it as a chimerical, impossible dream. In 1858 Lincoln visited Council Bluffs and discussed the situation with General Dodge, who was already engaged in making preliminary surveys. At that time the president-to-be evinced

keen interest and later, after he was chosen as chief executive, he summoned General Dodge to the White House for a further conference.

No story of Union Pacific history is complete without mention of Dr. Thomas C. Durant. Dr. Durant was elected vice president in the first organization of the Union Pacific and, although not chief executive of the road, he is generally accredited with having had much to do with completion of the project, for it is related that he was of a singularly aggressive temperament. He was deeply imbued with the "do it now" idea. His career with the Union Pacific was strictly that of a builder. He devoted his energy, his money and his knowledge to successful termination of the con-

An Epoch of 1910



NEW UNION PACIFIC BUILDING, AS IT WILL APPEAR WHEN COMPLETED.

The building will be occupied as follows: First floor, general passenger and freight departments; second, vice president and general manager, general superintendent, purchasing agent; third, law department, general claim agent, Union Pacific coal department; fourth, engineering; fifth, auditor; sixth, freight auditor; seventh, auditor; eighth, passenger and ticket auditors; tenth, chief engineer and others; eleventh and twelfth, floors unassigned.

Union Pacific History

The formal "ground-breaking" incident to Union Pacific construction took place in Omaha December 3, 1863. The first spadeful of dirt was thrown by the late Alvin Saunders, war governor of Nebraska. The first train went out of Omaha a distance of fifteen miles November 14, 1865. It was composed of four flat cars. General Sherman was a distinguished member of the party. The first Union Pacific engine bore the name, "General Sherman." The road reached the Central Pacific at Promontory, Utah, May 10, 1869. That marked the completion of the continental link and was an epoch in United States history. The union of the two lines was signalized by the driving of a golden spike. The first Union Pacific station building in Omaha stood under the hill near the foot of Dodge street. T. C. Morgan was the first Union Pacific station agent in Omaha.