

**A STARTLING EXHIBIT.**

Over One Hundred Acres Within the City
Limits Exempt from Taxation.

Railroad Right of Way and What
it Covers.

Scores of Lots Covered With
Warehouses Included.

**A Detailed Statement Taken from
City and County Record—Plain
Facts and Figures.**

No city in the west has been more generous toward railroads than Omaha, in making donations of lots and lands and granting right of way through streets, avenues and alleys. Nowhere has this generosity been more shamefully abused than in this city. Instead of sharing the burdens of taxation equally with other tax payors the railroad companies which own property in this city have not only taken advantage of improper state laws to evade the payment of their just taxes, but they have gone way beyond their rights under these outrageous laws, by including in their lists of exempted real estate, under cover of right of way, hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of lots and lands, which are entirely outside of the 100 foot limit.

The Union Pacific returns to the state auditor at Lincoln as subject to taxation for right of way 31-10 miles in Douglas county, valued at \$355,721.80 or \$11,438 per mile. Outside of the city limits of Omaha there are 27 miles and a fraction of tracks in Douglas county, leaving a fraction less than four miles of track in Omaha subject to the right of way assessment which is the only one levied against the road. In the right of way trooper under the state law a railroad is entitled to 100 feet on either side of the track, still the Union Pacific and B. & M. roads in many cases have hundreds of feet on either side, and in other cases entire lots, which are not even touched by the prescribed 100-foot limit. These are all included in the right of way and thereby exempted from local assessment, and state, county and city taxes. The B. & M. railroad return a total right of way in Omaha of four and 85 100 miles, which includes all of its main line, switches and side tracks. The vast number of lots taken up by these companies comprise a considerable portion of what should be as assessable property in the city.

As stated there are many lots that are not even touched by right of way, and are leased by the railroad companies to wholesale houses, elevators, coal and lumber yards, etc. For example in city block 180, the entire block is returned as right of way to the Union Pacific, while as a matter of fact less than one-half of this block is used for such purpose. Again, between blocks 179 and 189, the right of way measures over 500 feet on either side of the track, when it should only be 100 feet.

The St. Paul & Omaha road return only a small number of lots for assessment. The total number of lots and parts of lots owned by the Union Pacific in Omaha and not taxed by local assessment is 224. This does not include quite a number on which assessment is made at a nominal figure several hundred per cent below that of adjoining lots and blocks. As an example Campbell & Reed own lot 8 block 321 which is assessed at \$700. The Union Pacific owns all of the lots in blocks 322, 323 and 324, which are assessed at the rate of \$100 per lot all around. The railroad companies return a list to the county clerk, giving the number of lots which they claim are exempt from taxation under the right of way law. There is a discrepancy in both the cases of the Union Pacific and the Burlington & Missouri River companies between what the roads give in as what are on the assessment books of the various wards. There are more lots put down on the books to be taxed than what they return under each and which are exempted from local taxes. The Union Pacific, as stated, has 224 lots and parts of lots on the books. The officers return to the state officials only show that there are 198 lots and parts of lots, leaving 26 to be accounted for. The B. & M. has 220 lots and parts of lots in the city, as shown by the assessors books of the various wards as being exempt from local taxation. Of this number the offices of the road return under each as being exempted property under the right of way law, as shown by the books, 144, leaving 86 lots to be accounted for. A considerable portion of this is comprised in the new freight depot grounds on the bottom, in blocks 131, 134, 156, 161 and 162, which were first assessed and afterwards cancelled by the obliging city and county officials as is shown by the accompanying list of lots. In many cases the lots are put on the books in the names of private parties, but there is no assessment and the lots are marked right of way. All lots in the city of Omaha belonging to railroad companies and totally exempt from taxation, because they are returned as depot grounds and right of way, is as follows:

FIRST WARD.

Union Pacific subdivision of lot 3, 23, 15, right of way (not in company's list); Union Pacific, lot 2, block 2, block 160, right of way (not in company's list); lot 3, block 160, right of way (10-10 lot in company's list); lot 4, block 160, right of way; J. M. Love (U. P. R. R.) p/w; O. & S. W. 4, block 161, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, block 160, right of way; O. & S. W. 11, lot 6, block 161, right of way; M. Clark (U. P.) e/s south of railroad, lot 1, block 189, right of way; W. W. Porter (U. P.) w/s south of railroad, lot 1, block 189, right of way; Union Pacific, lot 2, block 189, right of way; Union Pacific, lot 11-12, lot 3, block 189, right of way; M. Clark (U. P.) 11-13 lot 4, block 189, right of way; lot 1, block 190, right of way; lot 2, block 190, right of way; lot 3, block 190, right of way; lot 4, block 190, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, block 191, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 8, block 191, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 5, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 6, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 7, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 8, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 9, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 10, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 11, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 12, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 13, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 14, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 15, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 16, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 17, block 192, right of way; Union Pacific lot 5, lot 18, block 192, right of way; 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