

Omaha Men Well Withstand Passage of Twenty Years



O.C. REDICK

TOM GODFREY

COURT CARRIER

GEO. F. WEST

F.A. NASH

HARRY E. MOORES

J.A. MUNROE

"JACK" FRANCIS

J.O. PHILLIPPI

WHILE their work is trying and nerve racking, there are no men who hold their age better than those employed by the railroads. A glance at the pictures of the men whose faces appear in connection with this article is proof of the statement. The men whose pictures are produced, show them as they looked more than twenty years ago, and also as they look at the present time. By comparing the pictures of twenty years ago and now, it will be noted that while time has treated the men kindly, it has plucked out a few hairs here and there and that it has played havoc with many mustaches. Still, perhaps, time is not responsible for the loss of beards and mustaches. Twenty years ago it was considered quite the thing and was very manly to wear whiskers. It is different now, and the smooth face, without the sign of a beard, is quite the thing.

Of the Omaha men whose pictures are here produced, they are all known by the majority of Omaha people. Some are among the pioneers, and all of them have been active in railroad circles. In the railroad world, many of them have been moulders of opinion, having risen from the ranks to places of distinction and responsibility, but they have kept on railroading, the prevalent idea being that once a railroad man, always one. If they are good ones, they stay by the game until they die, or become so old that they are retired on pension. Omaha railroad men, however, are not of the kind to wither up and go upon the pension list. They are too good for the pension rolls and consequently, as a rule, they keep right on receiving promotion after promotion until called by the grim reaper.

J. A. Munroe, vice president and general freight traffic manager of the Union Pacific, is a fine example of the ability of Omaha railroad men to develop into comers. He was born some sixty years ago down in the old whaling town of Bedford, Mass. His father was a minister, and it was the desire of this father that the son should follow in his footsteps. He was educated for the calling, receiving his degree from Andover college, and later studying at Dartmouth. About this time young Munroe heard the call of the wild and came to Wisconsin. There he got a clerkship with the old Green Bay & Minnesota road. He showed marked ability, and other roads were looking for just such young men as J. A. Munroe. The next thing that was heard of him he was a general freight agent, and in 1882 he came to the Union Pacific as assistant general freight agent. Two years later he became general freight agent, remaining in that capacity until Harriman took over the Overland. Harriman was looking for just such men, and in the reorganization that later occurred, Mr. Munroe

was promoted to the high position of general traffic manager, with the title of vice president.

A glance at the two pictures shows that he has not changed much in twenty or more years. He has the same kind and cheerful face as he carried two decades ago, and his personality, a most delightful one, is the same.

Fred A. Nash is another Omaha railroad man who has raced along with Father Time and has come close to beating the old gentleman at his own game. It will be seen that Father Time has removed a bit of Mr. Nash's hair, but he, himself, removed the mustache, not to make himself look any younger, but because his friends tell him that the elimination improves his looks.

Mr. Nash has been a railroader for more than forty-five years and has made good, now being general western agent of the Milwaukee. However, he was not always a general agent, for he started in his career on the top of a freight train on the Union Pacific, twisting brakes. That was in 1867, and he "broke freights" between Omaha and North Platte. He was not made of the stuff to ever ride a freight, and inside of a year he was a conductor. Then he went into the general freight office, and in 1875 was given a station at Floyd, Colo. In 1877 he was called to Omaha and appointed chief clerk in the office of the general superintendent, and in a short time was filling the position of master of transportation. In the early eighties, the Milwaukee people got a line on him and he went to Milwaukee as superintendent of the Wisconsin lines of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul road. It was during his early employment on the Milwaukee that he met and formed a lasting friendship with President Earling of that road. That relationship has always continued, and while it is denoted by Mr. Nash, his friends say that he is the closest to the president of the Milwaukee road of any official on the system. In 1882 Mr. Nash was appointed general western agent of the Milwaukee, a position that he has since held.

Thomas F. Godfrey is one of the Old Guard. He was born in Philadelphia, and before he was out of kilt he had decided that he would be a railroad man. When he went to school, with his pet idea uppermost in his mind, he studied civil engineering. Later he changed his mind and instead of building railroads, concluded to have something to do with running them. In 1870 he went with the Reading, and in 1875 joined forces

with the Pennsylvania as train agent, having charge of handling transportation during the Centennial exposition. Then he came west, and for two years was with the Rock Island at Atchison, Kan., resigning to accept a position with the Missouri Pacific, with which company he has since remained. For years he has been agent of the passenger department in this city, his jurisdiction covering all of Nebraska and a greater portion of Kansas.

Harry E. Moores belongs to the younger generation of railroad men. And while reasonably young in years, he is old in experience. You might say that he was born in a railroad office. His father, the late Frank E. Moores, was among the first of the Wabash agents in Omaha, and when Harry was 4 or 5 years of age, his father had him at the office, and even then let him sell tickets. That was thirty years ago. When his father resigned as agent of the Wabash in Omaha, Harry fell into the vacancy, continuing to hold the position until some two or three years ago, when he resigned to accept a position as traveling passenger agent of the Milwaukee, with headquarters in Chicago, where he has since resided.

If you saw Court S. Carrier, the genial agent of the Milwaukee's passenger department, twenty years ago, and then saw him now, you would not recognize him. In those days he wore a full beard that was his pride and joy. Now he has followed the fad and the beard has disappeared. In point of continuous railroading, he comes pretty close to being the dean of the Omaha fraternity, for he has been in the work nearly fifty years, having started as a telegraph boy when he was wearing short pants. In 1866 he got his first job with the Rock Island and it was over in a little town in eastern

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Iowa. Even at that time he was so small that in order to get at the telegraph key on the table, he had to sit on a soap box placed on his chair. In 1872 Mr. Carrier cast his lot with the Union Pacific, selling tickets at the old Union depot. He continued with this company, resigning in 1887, to accept a position that he still occupies in the Milwaukee's city ticket office in Omaha.

Although George F. West is out of the railroad business now and one of the heads of a big transfer concern, he has spent most of his life listening to the call of the rails, getting out of this line of work only a year ago. As early as 1880, when he was but 15 years of age, young West became a telegraph operator in the employ of the Grand Trunk, subsequently going to the Peoria & Pekin, and later to the Bloomington & Western, joining forces with the Northwestern in 1882, taking the position of operator and ticket agent at Marshalltown, Ia. Then he was transferred to Cedar Rapids, remaining there until 1887, when he came to Omaha as city passenger agent, later being promoted to general agent of the passenger department. This position he held until last year, when he went into business for himself. Besides being a railroad and transportation man, Mr. West is something of a

horticulturist, developing and owning one of the best and most productive fruit farms in this locality. It is a short distance north of Florence.

John Mellen, general agent of the freight and passenger departments of the Northwestern in Nebraska, is another railroad man who has made good. Mr. Mellen started in on his railroad career twenty-five years ago as a telegraph operator, handling the yard business at Clinton, Ia. In a short time he was given a better job and a few years later came to Omaha with W. N. Babcock, general agent, occupying the position of stenographer.

Having gotten where his work called attention to his ability, the rise of young Mellen was rapid after that. In a few months he was appointed chief clerk in the general offices here and then traveling freight agent. One year ago he was promoted to his present position. Besides doing efficient work for the Northwestern, Mr. Mellen finds time for recreation. He is an all-round athlete and one of the most active members of the Omaha Rod and Gun club. He is also very active in Young Men's Christian association work.

J. O. Phillippi, with the Missouri Pacific, with the exception of two years, has been in railroad work since 1870. A few years ago he broke into politics and was elected a member of the Board of Education in this city. Resigning his position with the Gould system he entered the insurance field. The new work was not just what he liked and after serving one term he returned to his old love.

Mr. Phillippi began his railroad career as a telegraph operator with what was then the North Missouri, now part of the Wabash system. He was at Ottumwa, Ia. Two years later he went to the Burlington, taking the agency at Plattsmouth, and in 1876 was promoted to the general agency at Council Bluffs. In 1880 he was made superintendent of Burlington lines west of the Missouri, with headquarters in Lincoln. In 1882 he quit the Burlington and took a general agency with the Santa Fe, being located in Chicago. Then he was promoted to assistant general freight agent, having charge of the business between Pittsburgh, Pa., and the Missouri river. In 1888 he resigned and cast his lot with the Missouri Pacific and has been with that company ever since with the exception of the short time that he was in politics.