

## EVERETT BUCKINGHAM AN EXAMPLE OF TIRELESS ENERGY

Another Instance of How Hard and Persistent Effort Leads Along the Path from Lowly Position to Places of Power and Responsibility in the Affairs of the Business World.

FROM a messenger boy in a railroad office at St. Joseph to general manager of the largest corporation in Nebraska thirty-six years later is the record of Everett Buckingham. Entering the employ of the St. Joseph & Denver railroad at the age of 11 years, Mr. Buckingham received practically all his education by hard knocks of railroading and was with practically the same company for thirty-six years, moving step by step from messenger boy to general superintendent of the Oregon Short Line, the highest operating official on the most difficult piece of territory in the United States, which position he resigned this month and at once accepted the position of general manager of the South Omaha Stock Yards company.

Mr. Buckingham did not rise from the smallest job on a small railroad to one of the largest jobs on one of the largest railroads of the country without the hardest kind of work. His time at school was limited, although he attended Christian Brothers college in St. Joseph for a short time before he went to work. His attention to his work and his love for work attracted business men. He wrote a splendid hand and was an adept at figures. It was axiomatic that when "Buck" had gone over a column of figures, which he did with great speed, there was no use for further verification. He was a glutton for work, and when he had things cleaned up in his office would make a trip over the line of the Union Pacific at every possible opportunity, nearly always spending his Sundays going over the Overland to learn all the ins and outs of the business. Before he was allotted a private car he would go out at every opportunity, taking a freight train or whatever was handy. In times of trouble on the road he was the envy of all the officers for the length of time he was able to go without sleep. Of a strong constitution, he could defy sleep and work for hours after others would have to give way to the god of sleep.

### Born in Indiana

Everett Buckingham was born at Lebanon, Ind., in 1856, and moved with his parents to Missouri shortly afterwards. His father, George W. Buckingham, a newspaper man, worked on different papers along the Missouri river and established the Boone County Pioneer at Lebanon and another paper at Kingston, Mo. The Atchison Commercial Press was published by the elder Buckingham and young Everett worked on this paper when they were short of help, receiving 50 cents a day for rolling papers. The money thus received filled him with the idea that he would like to earn some money for himself, for he had begun to learn the value of money, which will do lots of things.

When the family moved to St. Joseph, Mo., and Everett was 11 years of age he was offered a job as messenger boy in the office of the St. Joseph & Denver road, afterwards the St. Joseph & Grand Island, the pay being, what was then to him, the princely salary of \$2.50 a week. His first job at 50 cents a day had not been regular, so had not been able to save much on it, but when he got up to \$2.50 a week as a regular thing he was king of all and had his purse filled with coin of the realm at all times.

"So it is with lots of youngsters," said Mr. Buckingham. "They often have more money when they are getting short wages than after they begin to get a salary. You know the difference between wages and a salary."

Mr. Buckingham is a good deal like Topsy—he has simply "grewed up" in the railroad business. Working in minor capacities in St. Joseph for the road he remained at his post until the control of the road passed to the Union Pacific and he then moved to Omaha in 1880 at the age of 22. He was with the Union Pacific from that time until April 1, 1904, when he went to Salt Lake to become general superintendent of the Oregon Short Line.

When he reached Omaha in 1880 Mr. Buckingham was practically a stranger in town, but soon met Jay Foster and they decided to room together, which arrangement obtained until Mr. Buckingham decided to marry. In 1881 he decided to return to St. Joseph long enough to make Miss Ella Dunster his wife.

"We have looked upon Omaha as our home ever since that time," said Mr. Buckingham. "Although we have been in Salt Lake for the last three years, the family has always regarded Omaha as its home and there was rejoicing when I sent my folks word we were to return to Omaha to live."

### Family Makes a Record

Five children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Buckingham in Omaha: Mrs. B. L. Kemper, who still resides in Omaha; Mrs. Wayne S. Hemphill of Salt Lake City; Jay Buckingham, who is working for the Oregon Short Line at Salt Lake City; May Buckingham, who died last spring from the effects of an operation, and Robert, aged 9. The Buckingham family made one record when it returned to Omaha to reside last week. A week ago Saturday they were keeping house in Salt Lake City, and when word was sent for them to pack up to come to Omaha no time was lost and a week later—Saturday noon—they were keeping house in Omaha. Household goods can move over the great railroads of the country as fast as anything else when the right force is behind them.

F. A. Nash was the first boss Mr. Buckingham worked under when he came to Omaha. Mr. Nash was car accountant of the Union Pacific and Mr. Buckingham was his chief clerk until Mr. Nash resigned to become western agent of the Milwaukee and Mr. Buckingham succeeded to the position of car accountant. From car accountant Mr. Buckingham became car service agent, superintendent of car service and superintendent of transportation in succession. Under the latter title he was practically general superintendent of the road, although there was no such office at that time and the duties now performed by the general superintendent devolved upon him.

As his associates on the Union Pacific Mr. Buckingham has had some of the most famous railroad men of modern times, and through all changing administrations he worked on, forging his way to the fore until he reached the highest operating position on the greatest railroad system of the country. Entering the service under F. A. Nash, there followed J. T. Clark, S. H. H. Clark, T. L. Kimball, S. T. Smith from the old Kansas Pacific as managers of the Union Pacific. Under the Adams administration of the road were such men as C. S. Mellen, Baldwin, T. J. Potter, W. H. Holcomb, S. H. H. Clark again and Edward Dickinson, who about that time came from Wyoming as general superintendent and went to the Baltimore & Ohio for six months, but soon returned to the Union Pacific in 1899, when S. H. H. Clark returned from Missouri Pacific. Then followed the years of receivership, with Buckingham still at his post until 1898, when the Harriman people bought the road from the government and Horace G. Burt was made president. After Mr. Burt resigned, W. H. Bancroft of the Oregon Short Line was in Omaha as general manager and vice president temporarily until the coming of A. L. Mohley as vice president and general manager, after which Mr. Buckingham went to Salt Lake City with Mr. Bancroft as general superintendent of the Oregon Short Line.

### Toughest of Operating Jobs

That he was then allotted one of the toughest railroad operating jobs in the United States can be easily seen by a glance at the map. E. H. Harriman, as president of the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific, the Union Pacific owning the Oregon Short Line, conceived the idea of dividing his great transcontinental system for operating purposes on an equal mileage basis. That division left Mr. Buckingham in Salt Lake City at the hub of many lines branching in several directions and in charge of the operation of all. He operated the Union Pacific from Green River to Ogden, the Oregon Short Line from Granger to Huntington, the Oregon Short Line from Salt Lake City to Butte, Mont., and the Southern Pacific from Salt Lake City to Sparks, Nev. He was thus in the center of a vast network of lines, with general superintendents on all these lines shooting train after train into the hub and demanding train after train in return. None but a man of steel nerve with a giant's constitution could have



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withstood the strain of this problem. The Southern Pacific would get a train late in crossing the mountains, and it was then up to Everett Buckingham to try to hustle the palace on wheels along to make up the time that the government mails might not be delayed, that passengers might get from coast to coast in time to catch the boats and, hardest of all, to hustle the trainload after trainload of fruit across the continent that no delays in delivery might occur.

Added to the problem of running these trains was that of getting men to do the work in these times of man shortage all over the country. With all the railroads seeking the best men it was, indeed, a most difficult task to keep first-class men on the great American desert when they could find more congenial positions in the east or in the neighborhood of some large city. Mr. Buckingham met this problem early. He had men scouring the country seeking competent men and offering extra inducements to married men who would locate along the line and move their families there, knowing that a man with a family is much more apt to "stick" than a man who has no family ties.

"That must be a 'Buckingham special'" was an expression often heard along the line of the Union Pacific when Everett Buckingham was in charge of the operation of that pioneer route across the plains.

### Buckingham Specials

While the press agents of Jim Hill have been advertising the Great Northern and Northern Pacific as the greatest roads of the country for hauling long trains and heavy loads, that problem was worked out years before by Everett Buckingham in his various positions with the Union Pacific. Working in his office by daylight, Mr. Buckingham figured and figured and schemed and schemed on ways and means for increasing the trainloads which the Overland carried from the Missouri river across the Rocky mountains and from the west to the Missouri river. No railroad devoted itself so extensively to trials for increasing the trainloads to the great weight and length, with the minimum expense as did the Union Pacific under the administration of Mr. Buckingham. Although this fact has not been so

widely advertised, it was a common saying among railroad men that when a train of sixty or more cars went thundering by it was a "Buckingham special." The tonnage formerly handled by the Union Pacific with the small engines then in use is still one of the marvels of the age. A train of eighty cars is no uncommon sight on the Overland today, but the engines are twice as large and the track is in much better condition.

Modern railroading was practically in vogue on the Union Pacific when Mr. Buckingham joined that road, for the road was run by telegraph and embodied many of the modern ideas, although greatly improved at present. But in the days when Mr. Buckingham worked on the St. Joseph & Grand Island it was a different proposition; from 1871 to 1875 it had no telegraph service whatever, and from the time a train left Elwood for Hastings nothing would be known of its whereabouts until its return the next day. When a train was late nothing was to be done but sit patiently around the stove and wait for it to show up.

Mr. Buckingham well remembered when the telegraph line was installed in 1875. During that winter occurred one of the worst snowstorms of modern times and all the wires were blown down. Although connected with the clerical department in the general offices at that time, he was called into service to go out on the line to help repair the wires.

No man in the west in charge of operating departments has stood better with the men under him for such a length of time. In his various positions he had much to do with the making out of the pay schedules of the train and engineers and the men always knew they had a friend at court when Everett Buckingham was in the councils. He has always been a believer in paying the men who run the trains good, living wages—wages on which they could support themselves and their families in comfort and not be denied the little niceties that go to make up the comforts of a home. The men who haul the Overland trains have always received the top wages, and with the feeling that their superior officer was their friend, there has grown up a certain loyalty among the men of the Overland, which is the envy of many railroad managers of various parts of the country who wonder at the vast tonnage hauled over that stretch of steel across the west.

### Initiating Charley Lane

A good story is told of the way in which Mr. Buckingham and several of his associates in the offices of the St. Joseph & Grand Island road at St. Joseph started Charley Lane (first assistant general freight agent of the Union Pacific) out in the world in proper form. Buckingham was at that time a mere boy and a clerk in the auditor's office at St. Joseph, but he was a thoroughbred and now Lane is. Young Lane was sent west to learn the railroad business. His mother did not want him way out west alone among the Indians without plenty of money for all emergencies, so she sewed \$400 in a belt which was placed next his hide. She also sent word to General Manager Tuttle to take the money away from him and place it in one of the safes in the office. This was done, but Lane had entree to the safe. The other clerks, including young Buckingham, Jim Scanlon and others soon found Lane was easy—can you imagine such a thing?—and they went to borrowing his money right and left with the promise to return at pay day. They were not niggardly with the money, for they let young Lane accompany them when they went to spend it, and at the end of six weeks the safe was empty.

"I was out the \$400, but I surely knew all the car lines in St. Joseph," said Lane the other day in giving his version of the affair. "They didn't let me get lonesome in St. Joseph as long as my money lasted."

"Emergencies? Oh, there weren't any."

Everett Buckingham has three brothers and several married sisters. The brothers are all experts in various lines of railroad work. John E. Buckingham has been with the Burlington since a youth and has worked his way to the position of assistant general passenger agent of the vast system which that road operates west of the Missouri river; Hal Buckingham, much younger, is chief clerk in the general freight offices of the Burlington in Omaha, and George Buckingham is traveling passenger agent of the Union Pacific at Chicago. When some uncertainty existed as to the future position of Everett Buckingham, after he had resigned his position as general superintendent of the Oregon Short Line, rumor had it he was to go with the new Orient road.

E. Dickinson, now general manager of the Orient, was in Omaha and was asked if Mr. Buckingham was to go to that road and he replied: "No, he will not go to the Orient now; we can't afford to pay him what he is worth at this time, but when we get the line built I would like to have several Buckinghams."

Such is the tribute of the man with whom he was associated on the Union Pacific for so many years.

## Preserving the Real Spirit of the Christmas Holiday

A BRIEF two weeks, made up of days busy with hurried last errands, the writing of friendly messages on Christmas card and postal, evenings spent in anxious consultation over gifts for family and friends, and then the final bout with tissue paper, holly ribbons and Santa Claus seals, and another Christmas will have joined the muster roll of Yuletides past and gone.

And when the day is done, when the first eagerness is fled, and the time to think it all over is come, then there are those who are sure to confront the inevitable question, Has this Christmas been worth while? Has it been full of the holiday spirit? And, after all, what is the holiday spirit of which we hear so much?

Never does Christmas seem more worth while than when one stands on the very edge of the day itself, a bit tired, perhaps, with the strain of preparation—for who ever knew anyone to be ready betimes, all good resolutions to the contrary?—and thinks of the pleasure the well-filled stockings and pretty bundles are to bring on the morrow. The filling of each long receptacle till it bulges in most unexpected places is itself a joy. From the orthodox 10-cent piece or bright penny at the toe, to the candy-cane stop, it is packed with intense enjoyment.

Perhaps there is a tree to be trimmed. That, too, makes Christmas worth while. The very presence of a tree is in general the outward sign of a conspiracy, and secrets are always fun. From the moment the tall spruce is smuggled into cellar by backyard to the hour of its transformation into the dazzling fairy tree of Christmas eve, there is a gayety abroad. Tiptoeing silently about in search of gay, spangled fairies and fragile balls, mounting the stepladder with a glance behind for the pursuing Nemesis of a curious youngster, muffled the hammer when occasion requires its use, and then surveying the glittering whole with an artist's pride—these are part of the fun of Christmas.

But there is the evening to reckon with. Then the glittering tree of the night before has lost a bit of its freshness, the gifts concealed by white wrappings have been looked at and the charm of

mystery dispelled. All day long the bell has jingled at intervals, adding to the store of treasure trove, and satiate has followed eager enthusiasm. The dinner, too, is a thing of the past, with its overabundance of good things. Has anyone ever considered the dampening effect of a bounteous Christmas dinner on the spirit of holiday fun and frolic? On no other day does the ambitious housekeeper so heap Ossa on Pelion in her desire to promote the proper atmosphere. And yet, more often than not, the result is the sleepy lethargy that dulls the liveliest spirits.

Twilight comes, guests depart, sleepy children, perhaps a bit fretful from overindulgence in petting and sweets, are tucked into bed, and a tired mother and father have the leisure moment that means taking account of stock. When next Christmas comes, will they do the same things in the same way, or are there saner, happier ways to spend the best day of the year? Possibly they long, and who does not, for a merry Christmas with the most congenial, the nearest and dearest of their friends, those who like the things they do, care for the same books, the same pictures, love atmosphere and have a proper respect for tradition. Such friends and one's family are not always synonymous terms. And Christmas means family first, and friends, the friends of one's own choosing, second. Aunt Margaret is certainly not an addition to real gayety, and Uncle James is sure to be grotchety and to introduce unpleasant topics. If only their places could be filled by others more in touch. And yet, it has been only the excited, happy children and the gathering of the family clan that has made the day real Christmas to these loyal, if thrice-ome, old bodies.

There are those to whom the day has brought no real happiness, because it has meant a struggle to meet demands far too heavy for the family purse. Even self-denial of the most rigorous sort has not been enough, and so the head of the house fears the advent of New Year's and the avalanche of bills it will entail. And back of it all the motive has been false pride, a desire to keep up appearances, to give things that cost as much as the gifts expected in return.

Exchange of gifts is the kind of barter that

kills the Christmas spirit. "Oh, I must give her something, I suppose. I can't be the first to stop," or, "But she never sends me an inexpensive gift, and I'm not going to have her outdoing me;" these are the ideas that make of this holiday time a bitter farce. The same spirit is evidenced when the gifts received are scrutinized, their value in dollars and cents estimated and their inappropriateness commented upon.

For every man or woman who has spoiled the afterglow of Christmas by crippling himself, there is one who has come to the evening of the holiday with the uncomfortable consciousness that the day has lost its savor because nothing generous or kindly has marked the passage of the hours. No Christmas debts have been incurred because, forsooth, no gifts have carried good will and happy greetings, or, if gifts have gone, they have been niggardly, out of all proportion to the possibilities of the giver.

Why not acknowledge the holiday spirit by making our gifts real expressions of love? Cut off the yearly list the names of those whose presence there means duty. Let the holly-decorated parcels go to those who care for us, and for whom we care, or to those whose need is really greater than ours. At no time does the world respond more genuinely to human need. On no other season are hearts so easily touched. Merry Christmas is only with us when the good fairies are scattering gifts broadcast to those who are in want.

There is a well known recipe for making a Christmas story that is as old as the festival itself and as widely known. It is Christmas eve. The day has been cold and snowy. A small girl, perhaps a small boy, but a girl by preference, in ragged dress, and with wistful eyes, is flattening her nose against the window of a toyshop. Enter on the scene lonely bachelor, a bit crusty, and inclined to miserliness. The child's face touches him. He takes her into the shop, buys quantities of toys for her and the babies at home; loads a cab with goodies and drives to the wretched tenement where the child lives. At this point there is the possibility of choice. The widowed mother of the little heroine may be his long-lost love, or

the prompt adoption of the child follows. Then the story ends in a blaze of candles, with garlands of holly and mistletoe and Christmas carols as accompaniment.

A hackneyed story; a pitiful little tale, of course, worn out in yearly service. But there is the holiday spirit in every line of it. Every one has dreamed of playing the role of Christmas saint to those in want. So on the evening of the feast, when the day has become a memory, there will be no doubt of its worth-whileness; if a tree trimmed, a turkey given, an unexpected greeting to the man or woman with few friends is incorporated in the memory of the day.

Beginnings are so all-important, and the beginning of Christmas makes a vast difference in the feel of the day. What a pity that Christmas waits have never been part of our traditional celebration. We owe the grim old Puritans a grudge when we recall how they frowned upon the holiday customs of their English home. But, thanks to Cavalier Virginia, some of the quaint ceremonies remain. There are those who recall the peculiar thrill with which they woke in the frosty chill of the morning, to the strains of "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," or "Three Kings of Orient." The village choir, with a violin or two and perhaps a cornet, were ushering in the dawn. Then came a hurried scramble into warm clothes, a muffled ring at the bell, announcing the arrival of other up-betimes friends, and a dash into the open, with the wind blowing its "frosty pepper" up one's nose.

Brisk walking brought one to the dimly-lighted church, with its scattered congregation. There was the haunting smell of ground pine, spruce and laurel wreaths and long, pendent festoons of holly, with, over the altar, a star of flame.

More carols and hymns, all the old favorites, "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," "Once in Royal David's City," "Brightest and Best," "O, Little Town of Bethlehem," without which Christmas would not be Christmas, and then the familiar telling of the Christmas story.

Perhaps the day began for others with

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