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E. ROSEWATER, Editor.

THE CAMPAIGN.

We are authorized to announce Senator Van Wyck to address the citizens of the Third district on the issues of the hour at the following named places:

- Blair, Friday, October 20.
- Tekamah, Saturday, October 21.
- O'Neil, Monday, October 23.
- Norfolk, Tuesday, October 24.

Hon. M. K. Turner will speak with Senator Van Wyck at each of his appointments.

VALENTINE AND THE STAR ROUTE THIEVES.

The exposure of the villainies of the contract office in the postal department was one of the most triumphant reforms of General Garfield's administration. A bold and experienced postmaster-general, a fearless and determined attorney and an administration pledged in advance to purify if possible the public service were also responsible for the sweeping disclosures which revolutionized our postal service, hurled from office General Brady, and saved in a single year \$2,000,000 to the government. With so much of the story of the star routes as has been published in connection with the indictments and trials at Washington, the public is already familiar. It knows that for years a corrupt ring existed in the national capital, composed of government officials in the contract office, contractors who lived like leeches on the treasury, and senators and representatives who assisted in lobbying their steals through congress. Of these the most prominent in the senate was Dorcey, of Arkansas, now under indictment for robbing the government, while E. K. Valentine, of Nebraska, who he received his rightful deserts would stand in the same position.

Valentine's connection with the star route contractors dates from his first election to congress. As a western representative, from a state in which many of the stage routes were situated, and adjacent to the territories, which were favorite stamping grounds of the swindling contractors, Valentine's services in signing petitions for increase of service and expedition of the route were at once in demand. His signature was a familiar one at the contract office, and General Brady soon found him hand in glove with his pals. Valentine's earliest affiliations were with the Patricks, of Omaha, but he soon assisted Gilman and Salisbury, and undoubtedly drew his share in the divides which were made by these enterprising contractors. Up to the time of Mr. James' accession to office, everything went on swimmingly. Petitions for mail service, for increase and expedition multiplied, and were granted through the famous blue pencil "do this" of General Brady. Report after report of inspectors in the west, denouncing the frauds committed under the sanction of the postoffice department, were pigeonholed, and all the attempts at investigation by congress were smothered through the lobby, of which E. K. Valentine was an active member. "If Valentine's record in connection with the star routes was fully disclosed," said a Missouri congressman a few days since, "it would damn him in any state of the union." That record in connection with a single route THE BEE now gives to its readers.

The first star route thoroughly investigated by the department was No. 37,710, from Rock Creek, Wyo., to Etchelah, Mont. Postmaster General James, in an interview published in the New York Times, characterized it as "the rottenest in the service," and the exposure, which was made by Inspector John B. Furay and published in the same journal, created the first great sensation in star route circles. The contract for the Rock Creek route was originally let on a basis of one trip a week and taken on sub-contract by Patrick, who ran a weekly line of stages between the Union Pacific railroad and Fort Custer, Mont. Soon after obtaining this contract a petition for increase of service, signed by E. K. Valentine, was presented to General Brady and the trips were increased first to three and later to six times a week, while the time was expedited from 196 hours to 83 1/2. The compensation was of course increased to correspond. From the original \$10,000 at which the route

was first let it crept up to \$100,000, each increase being recommended and urged by E. K. Valentine as necessary to the growing country through which the stage line passed, when the fact was that three military posts, a couple of dozen ranches and a few perambulating cow boys were the entire constituency served. No member of congress who listened to Valentine's brazen-faced defense of this outrageous swindle ever doubted that he divided with the contractors the results of their plunder. His speech in the house of representatives when that body had decided to cut down the service on the Rock Creek route damns him as an accomplice, and cannot be explained on any other ground than that he shared the \$80,000 clear profit which Matt Patrick boasted that he made from this single stage line. Here is an extract:

There is one point that no gentleman, as I now recollect, has yet undertaken to explain. For instance, take this route that the gentleman from Illinois has just spoken of—the route from Rock Creek to Fort Custer. That route was originally let (and it is probable all the country demanded at that time) at a very slow schedule of once a week. They were eight days in making the trip from Rock Creek to Fort Custer—one hundred and ninety-six hours, I think it was. As the country began to grow, and the mails increased, at the want of that country developed, they asked for all facilities of service, and it was granted by this much abused official, General Brady, and I say rightly granted. I say that it was rightly granted because I asked for it myself, and I stand here ready to defend what I asked for then, because I believed then and I believe now that it was not just and right that it should be done, when it was increased to six times a week it was fair and right that the time should be expedited. But now, if this house stands by the sub-committee, and refuses to stand by the senate amendment, what do we find?—Congressional Record, Vol. 10, page 2073.

Notwithstanding Valentine's efforts, the service was cut down to three trips a week on the Rock Creek to Custer route, the pay was decreased \$80,000, and the Patricks sold out to Captain Marsh, who is now running the line on an honest schedule and a fair and above board basis.

THE BEE has not in its present issue the space to expose Valentine's corrupt connection with the other star route in Wyoming and Dakota, The Rock Creek infamy confessed by his own mouth is enough to damn him in the eyes of the country as thoroughly as Dorcey or Minor or Redell.

Summarized this route which Val declared in congress was one of the main arteries of the west, was confessedly the most rotten in the service. Originally let for \$10,000, it was increased to \$100,000 through the efforts of E. K. Valentine and the false statements of the contractors. The report of Inspector Furay disclose the following facts:

- First. That less than half the capital sworn to as invested by the contractors was actually so invested.
- Second. That only 125 pounds of mail started daily from Rock Creek.
- Third. That less than one ounce daily was carried on the extreme end of the route.
- Fourth. That the northern end of the route, which Val pronounced as a "main artery of trade," was paralleled by a direct daily line and that a single pouch with nothing in it was carried to and fro to keep up appearances.
- Fifth. That in accordance with instructions from the contractors, false returns of arrivals and departures of mails were every day made to the department.
- Sixth. That postmasters along the route were in collusion with the stage contractors.
- Seventh. That the unanimous opinion of army officers was that a letting of three times a week was ample.

No one can read the history of route 37,710 and doubt Valentine's guilty complicity in the swindle. From the moment when the expedition was first granted on his personal endorsement until the day when he stood up in congress and vainly endeavored to prevent any reduction in the amount out of which \$80,000 was being stolen by the contractors, Valentine was the aider, abettor and defender of the steal. He urged its necessity. He boldly declared that the expedition was rightfully granted. He praised Brady as a much-abused official. The moment Furay's report was sent in, when it was found impossible to purchase him here, Valentine's services were sought to suppress the reports at Washington, and to save the line. If the office of the second postmaster-general could speak it would tell a story of the frantic efforts of the Nebraska representative to save his guilty pals from exposure and to continue the fraud which was robbing the treasury and the tax payers of the nation.

Valentine defends his course on the ground that he believed the service necessary for the public interest. This has been his favorite plea for all his fraudulent actions. He robbed John Rush of his honestest "for the public interest." He grabbed \$1,800 back pay "for the public interest." His vote in favor of the river and harbor steal was given "for the public interest." We believe from the facts given that Edward K. Valentine was a coparcener and co-conspirator with the star route swindlers against the national treasury; that he received and

pocketed his share of the "swag," that his advocacy of these raids upon the government was paid one, and that his defense of the job as done in the interests of his dear constituents is a shallow plea which will deceive no one. This is the man whom a pecked convention of republicans have foisted upon the party in the Third district as a candidate for a second re-election to congress.

Twenty years ago the good republicans of the Western Reserve called before them that staunch abolitionist and brave old man, Joshua Giddings. They accused him of having returned to Washington by a route which increased by a few dollars his mileage, and asked him to explain what they called a dishonest raid upon the public treasury. His defense not proving satisfactory, he was defeated for congress, and his place was filled by a less able man, but one in whom his constituents had confidence. Mr. Giddings' republicanism was undoubted. His services to his party were unquestioned. His offense was a trifling one. But neither record nor republicanism stood in the way of justice. Can the republicans of Nebraska afford to be represented by a dishonest land register, a judicial bag grabber and a corrupt and inefficient congressman like Valentine? Are not any one of the weighty charges brought against his record enough to bar him out from receiving the suffrage of the people of the Third district, especially when an honest capable and efficient man like M. K. Turner, offers himself as a candidate for the office.

APPENDED IS.

INSPECTOR FURAY'S REPORT.
I have the honor to report that I was on route 37,710, from Rock Creek, Wyo., to Etchelah, Montana, and back again over the same route, and with reference to the subject matter of your instructions, I have respectfully to state that the contractors are operating the route as a daily stage line, having twenty-six stations, including both terminal stations, or twenty-five "routes" varying in length from nine to twenty-two miles, and that they employ fourteen drivers, one hundred and twelve animals. Adding twenty more animals in use as herd ponies and upon grain teams, etc., and we have an aggregate of one hundred and thirty-one animals active employment on the whole route from Rock Creek to Etchelah.

With regard to the weight of the mails carried out of Rock Creek I conclude from observation and from inquiries made of the postal clerks at the Union Pacific railway office, that 125 to 135 pounds daily would be a large estimate of the average daily weight as far as Fort Fetterman, eighty-five miles, and from Fort Fetterman to Fort McKinney, perhaps 100 pounds would be a maximum daily average, although, as will be seen in enclosure "A," the postmaster at Buffalo, two and one-half miles from Fort McKinney (south) estimates the average weight at seventy-five pounds daily, and as he sees this mail daily his observations deserve respect. Between Fort McKinney and Fort Custer, 135 miles, the daily average cannot exceed 40 pounds, and between Fort Custer and Junction (between Junction and Etchelah 8 miles) it cannot average over one ounce daily each way included. I am now speaking of the mails carried north from Rock Creek to Etchelah, from Etchelah south to Rock Creek they are different.

Although Etchelah duly enters on the mail bills every day as having left (Etchelah) "one through pouch" and "one way pouch" and receipts on the Rock Creek mail bills daily for "one through pouch" and "one way pouch," the plain simple truth is that the P. M. at Etchelah never received in his official life more than one "way pouch" that from Fort Custer and the entry by him of these two pouches as having been received in his office or sent out of it, is not because he presumed that the postmaster who is running the office, said to me, "It is the instructions" so to do. Where he got his "instructions" I could not guess, unless it was from some one connected with and interested in keeping up "the appearances" of the thing at the contract office of the department.

Upon calling the Etchelah office to account for thus acknowledging the receipt, and claiming the forwarding of a pouch never received and never forwarded by him, his answer suggested an incident once observed in Ogden, Utah, where a Mormon was selling "hot pies," and upon being remonstrated with by a purchaser who found his pie frozen solid, justified himself by saying that he presumed that the pie was all frozen, but that "hot" pies was simply the name of the pie.

The way the mails are pouched is as follows: The Union Pacific railroad postoffice make one pouch for Fort McKinney direct, the rest of the mail is thrown into Rock Creek postoffice.

This latter postmaster makes up first a little direct exchange pouch from calling the Etchelah office to account for thus acknowledging the receipt, and claiming the forwarding of a pouch never received and never forwarded by him, his answer suggested an incident once observed in Ogden, Utah, where a Mormon was selling "hot pies," and upon being remonstrated with by a purchaser who found his pie frozen solid, justified himself by saying that he presumed that the pie was all frozen, but that "hot" pies was simply the name of the pie.

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miles this pouch contains just such matter as is addressed to Etchelah only this and nothing more. And in going from Junction to Etchelah, the stages of these contractors and the stages of the Union Pacific and Missouri routes, both seven times a week routes traverse the same track and route, being with one single exception, one of the most bold frauds in the revenues of the postoffice department. I have witnessed in my experience of eleven years.

While upon this branch of the case, I will add that Paul McCormick, the former postmaster at Junction, also called the attention of the contract office to this swindle, but without success, and after Mr. McCormick retired, as will be seen by the enclosed letter of Henry Kaiser, postmaster at Junction postoffice to me (enclosure "B") his (McCormick's) successor, as he states in his letter and stated to me verbally, formally reported the fraud not less than twice, and, as he thinks, several times to the second assistant postmaster general, without being able to elicit a response or any action. His partner, Harold Borup, stated to me that he had not so opportunely come along, he certainly should have exposed it through The Chicago Times.

The above sketch will serve to show exactly how the matter stands and what reason either the contract office or the contractors can urge as to why they have run and been paid for running the eight miles between Junction and Etchelah, while the same identical road was covered by another daily stage route, for which the department was also paying, is past my comprehension. I should, in fact, like to hear what the reason prompting the contract office to fail and refuse to curtail this service was?

To return, however, to matters under consideration. As will be seen, the Etchelah postmaster only receives one pouch but receipts on the mail bill for two pouches. He then bills to Rock Creek two pouches while indeed he only forwarded one pouch, and when this one pouch reaches Fort Custer (43 miles south of Etchelah) the postmaster there puts what through mail he has and the "mail bill" into a pouch and then puts on a brass lock and from Fort Custer this "through" pouch to Rock Creek goes, accompanied by a way pouch.

At Fort McKinney as they so south they pick up the additional pouch of mail carried by the Union Pacific and when this one pouch reaches Fort Custer (43 miles south of Etchelah) the postmaster there puts what through mail he has and the "mail bill" into a pouch and then puts on a brass lock and from Fort Custer this "through" pouch to Rock Creek goes, accompanied by a way pouch.

So much thanks to the amount of mail carried, and as to the manner in which the service is performed. I found that as upon most other long routes this route has the "send away" instructions upon it to a very vigorous extent. To explain, stage men for some reason seem to regard that the most important thing about running a stage line is to keep the ends of a stage line in proper shape, and hence the terminal drivers, or those who "drive" upon each terminus of a long route have instructions to leave for the terminus at a given hour, "stage or no stage," the purpose of course being to keep up a record of arrivals and departures and at most cities even if the postmaster does not "stand in" with the contractors for a stage to arrive is sufficient evidence for him as a terminal postmaster, to his own opinion, as to the manner in which the service is performed. I found that as upon most other long routes this route has the "send away" instructions upon it to a very vigorous extent. To explain, stage men for some reason seem to regard that the most important thing about running a stage line is to keep the ends of a stage line in proper shape, and hence the terminal drivers, or those who "drive" upon each terminus of a long route have instructions to leave for the terminus at a given hour, "stage or no stage," the purpose of course being to keep up a record of arrivals and departures and at most cities even if the postmaster does not "stand in" with the contractors for a stage to arrive is sufficient evidence for him as a terminal postmaster, to his own opinion, as to the manner in which the service is performed.

Next comes Andrew Foote, postmaster at Fort Fetterman, who is also the trusted agent of the stage company, and until recently even kept his office in the stage company's barn. Then we have Buffalo, where the postmaster is also the agent of the stage company, although, as I think, a good square man. At Fort McKinney E. B. Smith was until very recently not only the postmaster, but also the agent of the company. At Big Horn postoffice the postmaster, Thomas Creighton, keeps the station, and until some time since "tended" to the company's stock for them. At Bingham postoffice B. F. Smith is the postmaster, and also the stock tender of the stage company. At Fort Custer Theodore Borup, is commissioned postmaster. He is also post trader, and his partner, Charles Wintermute, is the business man of the stage people and also runs the postoffice. At Junction Harry Kaiser is postmaster, and his business partner agent of the stage company, and at Etchelah J. C. Gray is postmaster, and leaves the station, besides the stage people and is capable of doing just what he is told to do, not a very flattering "lay-out," certainly, for an inspector to obtain disinterested knowledge from, especially while they all receive free travel over the route and such other considerations in the way of salary, etc., as makes the stage company the better master to serve.

Now as to whether the service is necessary for the section of country supplied. Before speaking of this I would say that I am not unaware of the fact that the present is a troublesome and excited time, and that under the pressure of public opinion it is possible that the department may be led into severely curtailing service, which when first placed as it now is, was perhaps not needed, but which settlements &c., since have made a necessity, hence I have been exceedingly careful to inform myself as fully as was possible upon what was the needs of the section supplied by this route, as I regard that it would be a grave error in me or any other official of the department to make recommendations that would do violence to the public or injustice to the contractors, as a correct public sentiment will very soon react and correct of its own force and justice any such spasmodic action.

How this route came to be made a daily route and how its service was expedited to its present exalted condition I do not know—nor can I—

the north. So much for the south end of the route during a period when the roads were just as good as they could possibly be, being without head or any other interrupting obstacle as I of my own knowledge know. Now as to the north end. During the winter or from say November 1st to April 1st, to the 15th, they had similar orders to the driver to "lead away" from Fort Custer "stage from the south or no stage," and similarly to the programme at the south, and they were thus able to score an "arrival on time," no matter how old the "mail bill" that the stage brought in, if only the stage got in before 6:30 p. m., it was recorded as an "on time" arrival. The commanding officer at Fort Custer stated to me that at one time in February last he had almost despaired of getting any mail, and accordingly sent out one of his "back trains" south some distance and brought the mails into his post, finding them laid up at some point south of his post, and the records of arrivals at Etchelah are all marked during the period as good!!!

Again, Walter Frewen, the brother of the postmaster at Powder River, a wealthy cattle man, stated to me, as nearly as his memory served him, that from February 10th to 20th last they had no mails at all from the south at Powder River, and still the records of arrivals at the terminal office fail to show any such failures. In fact, the statements of citizens, of officers of the army, of the commanding officers of the three posts—Fetterman, McKinney and Custer—as well as of the stage people themselves, all go to show that they had an awful time with snows and delays, etc., none of which I will presume to contradict; but then if I had only before me the record of "arrivals and departures" made by the terminal postmaster, and believed the faithfulness with which it is alleged to have been kept, I should have to question the truth of these stories, because there is a fatal confliction.

I am instructed to report whether failures are reported by the postmasters as they should be, and as stated above, I must say not, but if these postmasters have first, faithfully billed through mails, and second, faithfully listed all mail bills received on the days upon which the mails were actually received, and not anticipated, then the department has a better record on file of the arrivals of mails, and the time occupied in transit than I could possibly obtain by any means, hence my telegraphic request to you from Fort McKinney to cause that copies of those mail bills on file for the period covering from January 1st, 1881, to April 15th, 1881, be sent me, but which have not been received, and in their absence I cannot tell or even make a guess as to whether the mail bills have been ante-dated or not.

If, however, they were faithfully rendered, a comparison of these with the reported record of arrivals and departures for the last six months will show the department conclusively whether the through mails have been delayed, and if so, to what extent.

If, however, during that period, or preceding say April 20th ult., they show that the mails got through on anything like regular time, then the mail bills have unquestionably been ante-dated. I am very sorry that the copies of mail bills requested have not been received.

Now as to the status of postmasters on this route:
First, Rock Creek, Herbert Thayer is postmaster, and a very clever young man, a son of General John M. Thayer, late governor of Wyoming, and he and his brothers (and father), so far as is known, all there is to or of Rock Creek station on the Union Pacific, and hence are largely dependent on a business way upon the maintenance of this route. The Thayers own a store at Rock Creek, at one end of which is the postoffice, and at the other end of the same room, on the same side of the building, is the office of the stage company, and although they are separate individuals, of course, still the thing taken as a whole is very suggestive of twins in interest.

Next comes Andrew Foote, postmaster at Fort Fetterman, who is also the trusted agent of the stage company, and until recently even kept his office in the stage company's barn. Then we have Buffalo, where the postmaster is also the agent of the stage company, although, as I think, a good square man. At Fort McKinney E. B. Smith was until very recently not only the postmaster, but also the agent of the company. At Big Horn postoffice the postmaster, Thomas Creighton, keeps the station, and until some time since "tended" to the company's stock for them. At Bingham postoffice B. F. Smith is the postmaster, and also the stock tender of the stage company. At Fort Custer Theodore Borup, is commissioned postmaster. He is also post trader, and his partner, Charles Wintermute, is the business man of the stage people and also runs the postoffice. At Junction Harry Kaiser is postmaster, and his business partner agent of the stage company, and at Etchelah J. C. Gray is postmaster, and leaves the station, besides the stage people and is capable of doing just what he is told to do, not a very flattering "lay-out," certainly, for an inspector to obtain disinterested knowledge from, especially while they all receive free travel over the route and such other considerations in the way of salary, etc., as makes the stage company the better master to serve.

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I only know that whoever commanded it were either not fully advised as to what the public needs really were, and hence favored it ignorantly or else they favored it from selfish motives.

As I went upon the road (north) I first called upon Lieut. Col. T. M. Anderson, Ninth infantry, commanding the post at Fort McKinney, and he expressed to me then as his personal opinion that so far as the needs of the military department were concerned he was of the belief that a good, honest tri-weekly service would be quite sufficient, as his post was connected by a direct wire with the department headquarters; but Col. Anderson asked that I see him again as I returned, which I agreed to do.

At Buffalo, two and a-half miles south of Fort McKinney, the postmaster, H. B. Robertson, in writing expressed to me (enclosure "A") that it was his belief that a tri-weekly mail service was quite sufficient for the needs of the public. His letter will fully explain itself.

At Fort Custer I called upon Gen. J. W. Davidson, who is full colonel of the Second cavalry, and as Custer is occupied by seven companies, and therefore the most important post of the route, (as McKinney has but five and Fetterman but two companies), and Gen. Davidson not only said that he regarded tri-weekly service on this route as amply sufficient, but he asked me to give him an endorsing a recommendation to tri-weekly service, and also of cutting of the superfluous service from the north end of the route, etc., etc.

It does an inspector's real pleasure to meet an old public servant who is so frank and square as I found Gen. Davidson to be. He stated that he was connected by telegraph directly with his department headquarters, and would supply the emergencies of his post, and that an every other day's mail would, in his belief, entirely supply the officers' wants of the post.