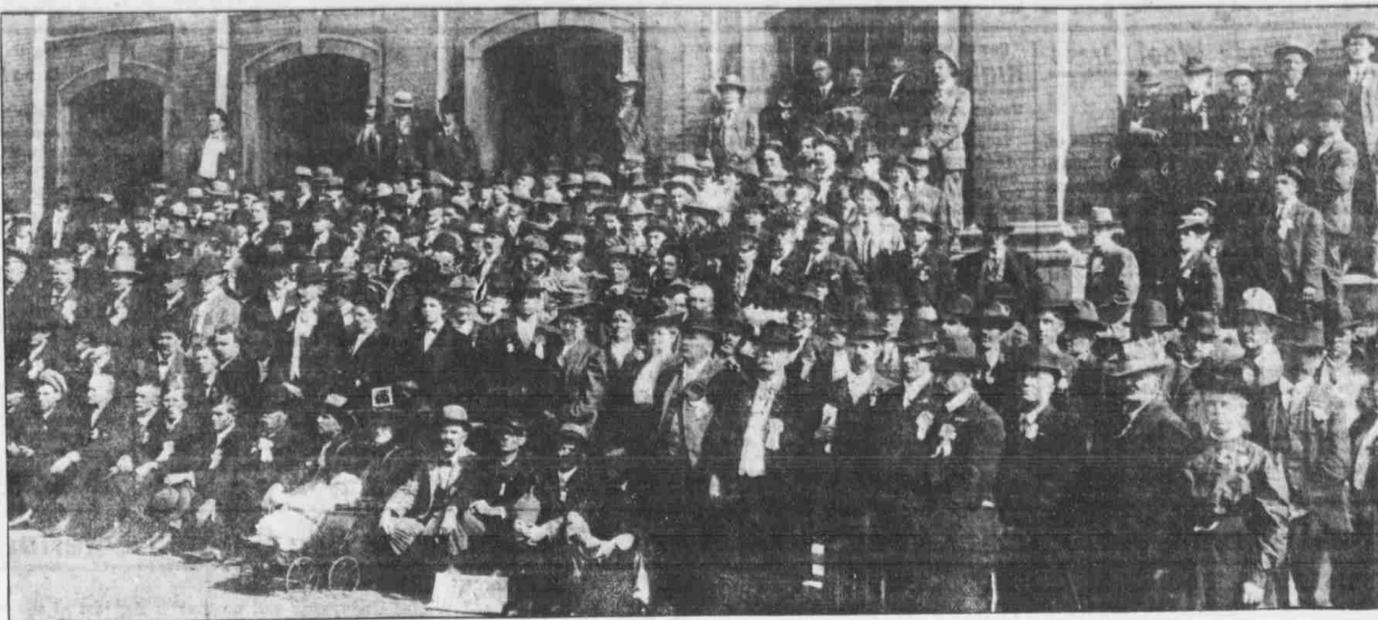


Rural Free Delivery and Its Relation to Modern Social Development



THREE WOMEN WHO ATTENDED THE CONVENTION OF RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION AS DELEGATES.



DELEGATES TO THE CONVENTION OF THE RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' NATIONAL ASSOCIATION WHICH MET IN OMAHA DURING THE WEEK.

SOME years ago Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard university, wrote an essay which he called "The Forgotten Millions." He had reference to the citizens of the United States who dwell in the country. He did not mean that these were neglected in legislative halls or in the public press, but he pointed out that between urban and rural residents something of a separation more than geographical had grown up, an intellectual demarcation through which the thoughts and interests of one group had become somewhat different from those of the other. This isolation he deplored, but did not exactly see the remedy.

President Eliot wrote before the rural free delivery service of the Postoffice department had flowered into its present efficiency. When he penned his able essay, a few tentative lines of service had been thrown out, but the able Bostonian had probably not heard of them, unless some of the mutterings always growled against an innovation had penetrated his severely furnished study. Since that day the service has attained tremendous proportions. State by state, county by county, and post-office by post-office, routes have been added, until there are now 40,000 men and women each day delivering mail to him who lives far from the urban smoke and the raucous noises of the city.

To enumerate the influences and institutions which make for the betterment of this United States would require publication, perhaps, of several folios. To say which is most potent for the public weal would involve an hazardous moral judgment. But taking the country districts by themselves, none will dispute the assertion that of the best institutions the rural mail delivery is the new and greatest.

It is a theme which tempts to rhetorical

United States who had preceded them. They had a grip on the interests of their association which was broad in scope and complicated in detail. They displayed an enthusiasm for their work in itself, which would have led irresistibly to the conclusion that they worked well, had this not been known otherwise. They put to shame hundreds of other conversions by singing "America" through each day. Singing it "through," everybody can sing the first verse, half as many the second stanza, but those men knew it all and sang it with unrivaled fervor.

The rural letter carrier has had from the start to contend with much more than appears at first sight. It is easily understood that the bad roads of a great portion of the United States have been a continual handicap to him, that storms and dust and a dozen other hardships of the kind are encountered the greater portion of the year and for days at a stretch. This is easily renounceable. This, however, is not all. The service has had to meet an obstacle of a less obvious kind, economic suspicion and hatred.

The wholesaler and the country merchant fought the service at its inception and fought it with all the political influence—and that is a good deal—which they could bring to bear. In spite of this, the service thrived. It proved itself a necessity and were it suggested that it should be done away with, the twenty millions of Americans now served by the rural free delivery men would unite in a heaven-shaking protest.

Moreover the jobber and the country merchant no longer opposes the country postman. Many of them have learned that speedy communication between vendor and patron will hurt no one in the long run and that the country merchant can now

make in many cases as speedy sales and turn over his money as quickly as the city shopkeeper.

The great question in which the rural free delivery department of the postoffice is now involved is but a part of this same proposition. Most men nowadays believe that the parcels post, at least a special local parcels post, such as advocated here by a representative of the postmaster general, is bound to come.

It may be recognized that the parcels post is a debatable proposition, that there are several angles to it and that opposition is not altogether selfish. But whether it comes on an universal scale or in modified form, or not at all, it is permissible to dwell on what its effect will be on the

rural delivery service. Not allowing for the extension of the service, a parcels post of the limited kind proposed will add to the income of the department the first year no less than \$15,000. It will make the service self-sustaining and will be, therefore, a national economy of the sum mentioned. The rural mail man will have his burden increased, but he wishes it so for no other reason than the desire that his department may pay for its keep and not be an expense to the treasury of the United States. This motive was expressed officially and in private conversation again and again during the recent convention. The members of the National Rural Letter Carriers' association showed in this as well as in other ways that they are citizens who, while they prop-

erly watch their own interest, place the good of the government above selfish considerations.

It is unnecessary to say that the roads of the United States are poor, so poor that they cause an immense loss every year, an economic waste which amounts up in millions and millions. There is no easy way of making them better. The way is, in fact, unusually long and hard. The problem had seemed to many so hopeless that until the spread of rural delivery hope of betterment had been largely given up.

Within the last few years there has been a change. Good road associations, good road clubs have been forming everywhere. The United States are poorer, so poor that it is not necessary to ask who

is responsible for the movement. The rural letter carriers knowing the existing evils better than any other living men, have started the ball rolling and are still showing behind it. They have seized on that modern miracle worker, the King log-drag, and have induced the farmers along their routes to use it. They have studied the question in every way. They know all about construction. They know all about up-keep. They know the financial questions involved. They can and do tell others and are making good road advocates in every home they visit and that means all the homes outside the cities on the United States. If America ever has thoroughfares equal to those of France, the credit will be due the country letter carriers.

for the first time at the Hotel Windsor, Philadelphia, their courtship having been conducted by correspondence with the exchange of photographs.

December and May.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Bolton, the 23-year-old groom and 20-year-old bride, who were married at Sunnyside, Mrs. Bolton's country place, at Johnstown, N. Y., spent the first day of their honeymoon on a long auto spin.

The village and country folks are taking the liveliest interest in the newly wedded couple, for Mrs. Bolton, as Mrs. Anna G. Anna G. Campbell, has been prominent here for generations.

The marriage was a great surprise to Mrs. de Peyster's friends. Rev. W. W. of \$10,000 a year in trust.

Curious and Romantic Capers of the Matrimonially Inclined

Wed to Ease Father's Mind.

BEARING on the eve of a trip for Germany that he would never see America again, John Osterman of Woodhaven, Long Island, insisted that his daughter, Miss Gertrude Osterman, be married to John Zipfel, also of Woodhaven, before he and Mrs. Osterman left for Europe, so that she would be provided for in case they should never return.

Miss Gertrude and Zipfel, who is a well known young German of Woodhaven, had been engaged for some time, but the decision of the bride's father took them both by surprise and the arrangements for the nuptials had to be made in a hurry. The ceremony took place on the very day that the old couple were to sail for Germany and it was held in Welskop's hotel,

on Jamaica avenue, Woodhaven.

Mr. Osterman gave away his daughter, and then, with his wife, he was hurried to the pier of the steamer on which they were to sail, happy in the knowledge that come what might his daughter would be well taken care of. For some time before the trip the old man had a premonition that he would never live to see America again, and, although his wife did not share his feelings, she, too, believed that it would be a good thing to have their daughter married before their departure.

Elders Tie Up.

A romance came to light in Media, Pa., in the marriage of a bridegroom 72 years of age and a bride of 80. The bride is from Georgia and her husband, W. C. Jamison, is from South Dakota. They met

Eisworth, pastor of St. John's Protestant Episcopal church of Johnstown, officiated, and the bride was given away by a cousin, William Herring of Philadelphia.

The interior of the house was profusely decorated with flowers from Mrs. de Peyster's own green houses. Only a few friends of the couple were present at the ceremony, after which a luncheon was served.

Mr. and Mrs. Bolton will remain in Johnstown until October, when they will return to Mrs. de Peyster's apartment in Euclid hall, New York.

Mrs. de Peyster's maiden name was Anna G. Campbell. She was the widow of Mr. Ross when she married the late Colonel Beekman de Peyster. By the terms of her first husband's will, she receives an income

of \$10,000 a year in trust.

North Platte Trade Boosters Spend Day Visiting Oshkosh Friends

AFTER having passed around Cape Horn with one of John Jacob Astor's first Pacific expeditions, Robert Stuart left the party at Astoria in June 23, 1812, with dispatches for Mr. Astor. While on this errand, on October 31, of the same year, he discovered the North Platte valley and passed down its entire length, reaching St. Louis on April 23, being the first white man known to have set foot on the virgin soil of this section of Nebraska.

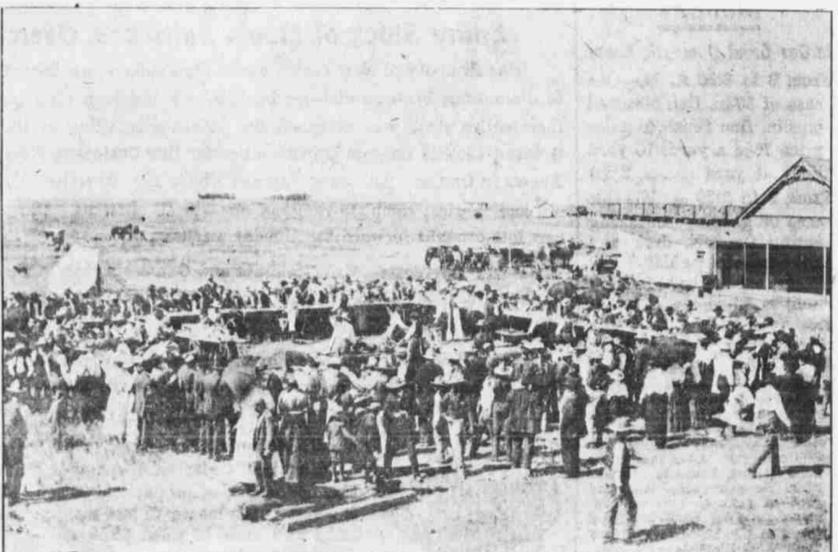
The next official record of this valley is the report of Captain H. E. L. Bonneville, an officer of the United States army on detached duty, who with a company of men and twenty wagons, entered the valley at Grand Island, on May 1, 1822, and camped near the west boundary of the state near the mouth of the Laramie river on May 25.

General John C. Fremont explored the upper Platte valley, starting at the mouth of the Laramie river, June 26, 1842, but did not traverse any of the portion in the state of Nebraska.

It was twenty-seven years later that the Union Pacific completed the first trans-continental railway in the United States, passing through a part of the territory, opening up to commerce and traffic of the world millions of acres of rich lands, making possible homes for hundreds of thousands of new happy and prosperous people.

On September 22, 1882, the Union Pacific railroad completed and opened for traffic a railroad line extending from O'Fallons, on its present main line, up the North Platte river to the town of Oshkosh, throwing open to greater development a new and productive section now only partially under cultivation. Like the average Nebraska soil, the surface of this land is composed of finely ground rock which was left deposited as the sea receded ages ago, and has been enriched by deposits of silt during the various revolutions which have taken place since. Its subsoil is of material through which the water readily percolates. This makes it tilable soon after rain ceases. It also prevents damage from excessive moisture during that part of the year when rainfall is heavy, it retaining as a sponge much of the water which would otherwise flow away, which is thus conserved for future needs. Hence the crops are apparently able to withstand drought which other lands can not.

The upper valley is susceptible of irrigation. Owing to the lack of transportation facilities the upper Platte valley has not been subjected to the intense cultivation which it will undergo from now on. However, its richness has manifested itself so unquestionably that a creditable display of agricultural products which can be successfully and abundantly grown in this section of the state. Products thus far successfully grown in this latitude of the United States are found thriving here, including all the cereals, alfalfa, beans and other vegetables and fruits. A scientific analysis of the soil proves it high in the nutrition which is so essential to prolonged fertility. The lack of transportation facilities having naturally caused the inhabitants to devote most of their energies to stock



SERVING THE BARBECUE AT OSKOSH.

raising. Higher cultivation may now be anticipated, since the advent of the railroad, large tracts have already produced crops of corn, alfalfa and sugar beets for market.

The far-sighted and enterprising merchants of the bustling city of North Platte have long recognized the resources of this valley and have had their commercial ambitions directed toward establishing themselves early in this field, so that with the opening of the new line by the Union Pacific all preparations had been made for an enthusiastic trade excursion to the town of Oshkosh. On September 22 a special train left North Platte laden with about 115 boosters, reinforced by a considerable number of people from Hershey, O'Fallons, Lawellen and Keystone, who were curious to see how their neighbors further up the valley were faring. All were amply supplied with the advertising matter and all other paraphernalia which the Omaha boosters consider essential to an undertaking of this kind. Some of the advertising matter was very elaborate, particularly a souvenir book containing a number of colored photographic views of North Platte. An excellent band accompanied the North Platters, rendering instrumental music and singing harmonically various well known and unknown songs. Wherever a stop was made the inhabitants were thoroughly rounded up and enlisted as supporters of North Platte's progressiveness.

As the train rolled along over the well-constructed branch line track of the Union Pacific the landmarks brought to the minds of the early settlers who were aboard tales of historic and personal interest, such as Ash Hollow was pointed out to the south the following bit of interesting history was recalled:

The Overland Trail, which was followed by the "Fury-miners," the Mormons and other western settlers, left the South Platte river at a place called "California Crossing" near the town now known as Meigs on the main line of the Union Pacific, entering the North Platte valley through Ash Hollow. Here the Indians were wont to fall upon the unwary traveler and many an unmarked grave is to be found in the canyon. In retaliation General William S. Harney became involved in his alleged massacre, ambushing some 300 Sioux Indians with their squaws and pappees in the hollow, exterminating them, for which he was afterward called to sentimental account by the eastern friends of the aborigines, to which "Old White Wolf," as the Indians called him, made answer that "lets make lice."

There is no one thing that so quickly brings the impetus required to make a community grow in prosperity and size as does a railroad. Oshkosh, a town of 1,000 people, located on the North Platte river in the center of Deuel county, with the opportunities now afforded by the Union Pacific, will undoubtedly grow into a municipality of some importance; in fact, its citizens have already become so enthusiastic that they predict shortly capturing from Chappell the county seat. It was on this day well prepared to greet and care for the friends from North Platte, who are to add them in their endeavor to boom. The fatted steer had been slaughtered and roasted in order that all might sample home grown beef. This was handed out gratis in generous chunks between overgrown buns, making a sandwich of such thickness that the jawbones of the hungry visitors were

stretched to their utmost in endeavoring to surmount and bite off an ample mouthful.

The western love of physical prowess was manifested in a spirited boxing match, which was arranged for amusement of the throng. A pugilist from North Platte defeated the local champion at the end of four rounds. A horse meet was another feature of interest, and some excellent runners and trotters, as well as the western buckler, had been gathered in from the four corners of this hitherto isolated locality. In the evening fireworks were displayed by the North Platte contingent, and dances arranged for the young folks.

Congressman Kinkaid, Judge Grimes, General Superintendent Park of the Union Pacific and Rev. Selbert of North Platte, spoke at the general assembly in the afternoon. It was with a feeling that much had been accomplished towards establishing a firm friendship and business relation between Oshkosh and vicinity and the North Platte people that the excursionists, tired and satisfied, boarded their train and started for home.

An abundance of water for irrigation is assured in the upper Platte valley. The river itself has a more uniform flow than farther east, and is fed by a number of fine streams, mostly on the north side, the most prominent of which is the Birdwood, discharging a volume of water sufficient to irrigate 30,000 acres of land and capable of furnishing water power for manufacturing. The Otter creek, Black Tail and Blue river are streams fed from what is known as the lake country, having a uniform flow throughout the entire sea-



NORTH PLATTE BOOSTERS MARCHING FROM TRAIN.



NORTH PLATTE BOOSTERS GETTING READY TO START.