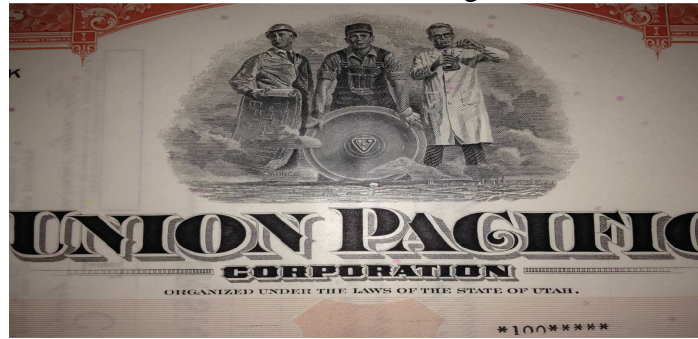


UNION PACIFIC, FREEMASONRY, AND NEBRASKA

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A portion of an old Union Pacific stock certificate

The Union Pacific Railroad since its inception has had a strong tie to the State of Nebraska; and many of its employees (past and present) have been dedicated Freemasons. The presentation is not intended to be all-encompassing. Such a task would be impossible. This presentation is intended only to give a sampling of some of the highlights which knit Union Pacific, Freemasonry, and Nebraska together.

A gentleman named Oakes Ames, who served in Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives representing the State of Massachusetts is credited with being the single most important person in the building of the Union Pacific leg of the transcontinental railroad. The towns of Ames, Iowa and Ames, Nebraska are named in his honor. Significantly, the upper-level of "Oakes Ames Memorial Hall" houses a Masonic Lodge in the north part of Easton, Massachusetts. Oakes Ames was nicknamed "the King of Spades" since he and his brother established the firm "Oliver Ames & Sons," which produced shovels and tools, mainly for the building of railroad track but also produced swords during the U.S. Civil War. Oakes Ames' brother, Oliver Ames (1831-1895) was a Freemason. His date of initiation is unknown, but he was awarded an honorary membership in Columbian Masonic Lodge in Boston.

Harry Porter Deuel (1836-1914) worked for the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroads. He once was an agent for the Kansas City, St. Joseph and Council Bluffs Railroad. Later, he became the Omaha passenger agent for the Union Pacific Railroad. He was a Freemason for more than 50 years, rising to become R.:E.: Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar in Nebraska, as well as being elevated to a 33rd Degree in Scottish Rite Masonry. Additionally, he was an active Shriner and also a member of the Elks Lodge. Deuel Chapter 11, RAM, of Grand Island, Nebraska was named in his honor.

Nebraska also provided a good share of the lumber, metal, and fittings used in the making of box-cars, rail-cars and later flatbed carriers used on the Union Pacific Railroad. My own Great Grandfather, George White, 33^o and a Knight Templar, worked as a doctor, veterinarian and farmer; and in the 1890s and early 1900s worked as a carpenter building boxcars for the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad. Business was so lucrative that some of the work was "farmed out" to competitors and it filled Union Pacific's needs; as well as boxcars needed by The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, which had as one of its founders Right Worshipful Bro. Cyrus K. Holliday (1826-1900) Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Kansas. Bro. Holliday was trained as a

lawyer, but he used his skills to be the first President of the A.T. & S.F. Railroad. He was a member of Topeka Lodge #17 and was instrumental in establishing the city of Topeka as a city, and also instrumental in moving the State Capitol to that City. He was slated to become "Grand Master" of Masons in Kansas; but he declined advancement due to his duties to his family and his job at the Railroad. The Santa Fe Railroad grew to be a formidable corporation. In recent years, it merged with The Burlington Northern, and is now known by the combined name of Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF).

Jerry R. Davis became Chief Operating Officer and later Chairman of Union Pacific Railroad in the modern era of the 1990s. When I authored an article in "The Scottish Rite Journal" in March 1998, entitled "Edmund G. Ross, a Masonic Profile in Courage," Bro. Jerry Davis wrote me a postal letter complimenting me on the article. In it, I quoted Bro. Edmund G. Ross: "True courage is an attribute mustered by individuals during moments of crisis. A courageous act is made without weighing its popularity or unpopularity. Instead, it relies solely on the belief that the act must be done because it is the right thing to do. In all cases, courage is being brave enough to take a stand, regardless of the outcome, regardless of potential praise or criticism."

Bro. Davis said he was a native of Sylvan Grove, Kansas, and was an Alfred P. Sloan Fellow at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, earning a Master of Science Degree in Management. Bro. Davis began his career at Union Pacific and served there until 1989. Bro. Davis then served as President of CSX Rail Transport. In 1995, he joined Southern Pacific as its President and Chief Executive Officer, where he served until 1996.

The New York Times newspaper made a banner mention in its issue of November 7, 1996, when it noted that Jerry Davis was named President and Chief Operating Officer of Union Pacific. Bro. Davis served as the Chairman of the Board of Pacific Fruit Express Company Inc. He served as Vice Chairman of Union Pacific Railroad. He has been a Director of Progress Rail Services since March 2006 and its subsidiary, Progress Rail Holdings since June 2005.

For his exemplary efforts, the Union Pacific corporation decided to rename the Roseville Yard northeast of Sacramento, California (the largest rail facility on the west coast) as "The J.R. Davis Yard" in May 1999 in honor of Bro. Jerry Davis.

Although not literally connected to Union Pacific, a man named Leland Stanford, the President of the Central Pacific Railroad, was a member of Prometheus Masonic Lodge #17 in Port Washington, Wisconsin as well as later joining the Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge in California). Bro. Stanford was instrumental in making the LITERAL CONNECTION between his Central Pacific Railroad with the Union Pacific tracks at Promontory Point, Utah, in 1869, which fully established a genuine Transcontinental Railroad. He was encouraged in his efforts to accomplish that "Golden Spike" meeting-point in Utah by Bro. Brigham Young, who joined Nauvoo Masonic Lodge, in Nauvoo, Illinois in April 1842.

It is well-known that William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody (a member of North Platte Masonic Lodge #32 and the North Platte York Rite Bodies and Tangier Shrine in Omaha; while later receiving the 4th-32nd degrees of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the Scottish



Rite, in New York) was hired to furnish buffalo meat to the hundreds of laborers constructing the Kansas-Pacific Railroad.

As "The West" became more civilized, by the latter 1800's and early 1900's: being "punctual" and "on-time" was considered a Virtue. Consequently, many Railroaders and many Masons carried gold pocket watches. Having an accurate clock was not just a fashion-statement, but a practical "must have" for any man of that era. A 21-Jewel Railroad watch was a coveted item. Many Lodges prided themselves by "starting Lodge meetings on-the-dot." Members would pull their fancy watches from their vest-pockets and often their Masonic "watch fobs" were conversation-pieces inside and outside of the Lodge Hall itself. In similar fashion, many Railroaders pulled-out their watches and equally prized themselves with arrivals and departures that were "on-the-dot." I, personally, have a couple old (written) "Union Pacific Railroad timetable" booklets...with maps describing the various "routes" with even the smallest town or hamlet mentioned with its corresponding "mile-markers." Included are notes about "maximum speed-limits," as well as "track geometry" grades, bridge conditions, restrictions on the use of the emergency-horn (whistle) and precautions to guard against overheating of "the Hot Box." (In the old-days the Hot Box was essentially bearings surmounted by flammable rags or cushions soaked in oil so the wheel-bearings would run smoothly.) Sadly, these were often prone to fires. Consequently, back then, the main personnel of a train were the Engineer, Conductor, Firemen, Brakemen, and (if applicable) Porters.

The Union Pacific's "Bailey Yard" at North Platte, Nebraska is the largest railroad yard in the World. Some 10,000 rail cars pass through the site daily. It is a repair-center as well as a command-center with the latest computerized control systems. Prior to this, it had a "watch tower" to serve similar functions. Currently, 23 U.S. States are served directly by the Union Pacific system. One aspect about the old "Railroad Timetable booklets" that I like are useful guidelines (which could almost be adapted to guidelines for Masonic Lodges in having a smooth & successful year). For instance:

- Review the work or task to be accomplished.
- Determine the tool, equipment, and material you will need.
- Consider how work-assignments will be made (i.e. Some group-assignments; some individual assignments).

Then, the pivotal categories:

- Explain WHAT is to be done.
- Explain WHY it is to be done.
- Explain WHEN & WHERE it is to be done.
- Explain HOW it is to be done and WHO is to do each segment.

Lastly, are two criteria I seldom hear:

- Brief only a portion of the job.
- Give additional briefing as the job progresses.

In a way, that is good "common-sense", so people won't be overwhelmed by too much information. Nor will they be tempted to shy-away, if it seems like an avalanche of data they cannot visualize (at first). With Union Pacific, they do things step-by-step. In Freemasonry: We do things Degree-by-Degree.

Bro. William P. Kennedy (member of Minnehaha Lodge #165 in Minneapolis, Minn) was President of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen. He began as a "news-butcher" on the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad in 1909. A "news-butcher" was typically a young



man who walked up and down the aisles of passenger-trains, attempting to sell newspapers, magazines, candy, and chewing gum to passengers.

This article cannot fully describe in detail all of the railways (past and present) which have served Nebraska. To do so, would take many volumes. Suffice it to say that NEBRASKA RAILROADS have been a pivotal in transporting wheat, milo, corn, soybeans, coal, automobiles, and general freight. In bygone times, trains even delivered the bulk of U.S. Mail traveling long distances, and trains still deliver flatbeds loaded with U.P.S. semi-trailer boxes. In their heyday, trains hauled numerous passengers (and in a few select areas such as those served by AMTRAK, they still do). Decades ago, contingents of Knights Templar Drill-Teams and/or Shrine Units (especially the 'Patrol' or 'Band') would "charter" a whole train bound for a national convention. Trains continue to transport crude oil, vegetable oil, chemicals and various other sundry items needed by manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers throughout the United States, and in the rest of the world. Union Pacific, in particular remains headquartered in Nebraska. Its payroll sustains many Nebraskans, and many of their employees are Masons (along with employees of "service industries" who serve employees of the UP) are Masons themselves. This ripple-effect benefits Masons and their family-members who prosper due to their employment or their investment in the Union Pacific or in related Industries. A considerable number of Lodge members are able to sustain themselves financially and pay yearly dues; many Blue Lodges and Allied Bodies are likewise kept in good financial stead. In short: the bonds between Union Pacific, Freemasonry, and Nebraska --- are long and deep. We are fortunate that the ties that bind -- are still strong and ongoing.

Sources / Recommended Reading:

- "Nebraska Grand Commandery: The first twelve years 1871-1883" by Fred O. Wyant.
- Historical Archives and Chronology. Union Pacific Railroad, Omaha, Nebraska.
- The New York Times, November 7, 1996 issuecategory: "Business Day".
- Personal correspondence between Bro. Jerry R. Davis and Bro. James A. Marples.
- "Edmund G. Ross --- A Masonic Profile in Courage" by Bro. James A. Marples.
- "Scottish Rite Journal" March 1998.
- Archives, "Union Pacific Railroad" and "Union Pacific Corporation".
- Archives "Atchison, Topeka, and The Santa Fe" (now BNSF).
- Denslow's "10,000 Famous Freemasons" by William R. Denslow.

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Companion and Sir Knight Jim is a Life Member of the Wichita York Rite Bodies (Wichita Chapter #33 R.A.M.; Wichita Council #12 R.& S.M.; and Mt. Olivet



Commandery #12 K.T.). He is also a Life Member of the Lincoln Nebraska Scottish Rite Bodies; The Robert-the-Bruce Association (California); The George Washington Masonic Stamp Club; Masonic Order of the Gordian Knot (Indiana); Masonic Order of the Sword of Bunker Hill; Kentucky Chapter #134 of National Sojourners and Heroes of '76; North Texas York Rite College #118 of Sherman, Texas; and Nebraska College S.R.I.C.F.

He is a Regular Member of The Allied Masonic Degrees; Grand College of Rites; St. David Conclave of The Red Cross of Constantine; Shawnee County Kansas Square and Compass Club; and Holyrood Council #61 of Knight Masons (Nebraska).

