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Historical Society Of Pottawattamie County

June, 1999

Society Hosts Summer Learning Programs

The spotlight is on Lewis and Clark and Dr. Mathew Tinley in a pair of summer offerings from the Historical Society of Pottawattamie County. Robert Hastings and R.H. Fanders present "Lewis and Clark" Tuesday, July 20, and Richard Peterson presents "Dr. Mathew A. Tinley" Tuesday, August 17. Both programs are scheduled for 7:00 p.m. at the Community Hall, 205 South Main Street, in Council Bluffs. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

Pottawattamie County Trivia

(Answer is on page 7)



Until it was destroyed by fire in 1974 the Strand Theater entertained many area families. When was it constructed?

Where Lincoln Stood---

A First Hand Account of Abraham Lincoln's Visit to Council Bluffs

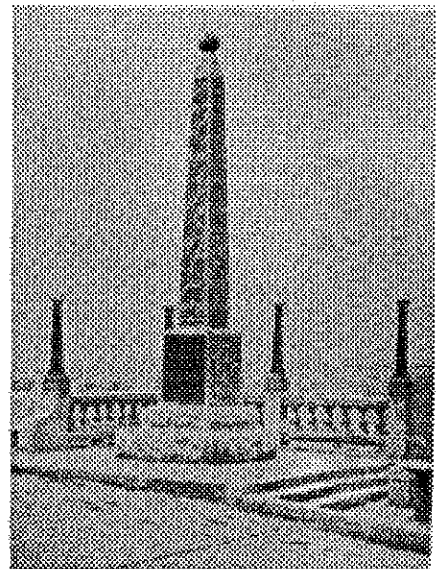
Most Bluffs residents are aware Abraham Lincoln visited our city and was impressed with the area for use as the eastern terminus of the Union Pacific railroad. The site of the visit is designated with a plaque and monument. The following is an interesting account of what actually happened that day as told a number of years later by the man that accompaniaied Mr. Lincoln to that site, then-Congressman W. H. M Pusey. The information is taken from an article printed in the Nonpareil July 10, 1891.

The immortal Abraham Lincoln once visited this city. It was as far back as 1859. Lincoln had just finished his great debate in Illinois with Stephen A. Douglas and had come west for a little recreation. He first went into Kansas where he stirred the grangers up with several rousing speeches. Then he came up the Missouri River to Council Bluffs. With him was Secretary of State Hatch, of Illinois.

The distinguished gentlemen were received by Hon. W. H. M. Pusey

and the late N. S. Bates who was then stage agent and afterwards mayor of the city. While here the visitors were entertained at the home of Mr. pusey who tells of the visit as follows:

"In the afternoon we drove Lincoln and Hatch over the town and showed them every point of interest. We took them to the bluff to which Oakland Avenue now leads where they could get a commanding view of the valley stretched out below. (Continued next page)




("Lincoln", continued from page 1)

The party took up a position just behind where Hon. Lucius Wells; residence now is, and there Lincoln stood in wonder and admiration gazing silently and intently upon the landscape before him. Just before leaving the spot Lincoln swept the valley with his long, slender arm and said to me: 'Pusey, that valley was made for railroads.' Lincoln doubtless had in mind the eastern terminus of the Union Pacific. The law making Council Bluffs the eastern terminus of the road had just been discussed in congress. Although the exact terminal had not yet been decided, Lincoln appeared to have this matter in his mind, and seemed to realize that the time was not far distant when this great line would terminate in the valley before him and thus unite the great west and the east into one grand and glorious country."

"I gave Lincoln and Hatch a public reception at my house while they were here and everybody who had heard of the Lincoln-Douglas debate was present and saw Lincoln. In the evening a public meeting was held in a hall that then stood on the northwest corner of Broadway and Sixth Street. The gathering was large. Lincoln and Judge Charles H. Test, of Indiana, were the speakers. Judge Test was the father of the late Col. James D. Test of this city. He is dead now. He was a fine talker-a regular, old-time campaign orator. I knew him intimately and admired him for his great knowledge of politics, national questions and manly traits of character."

"Lincoln made the first speech. It



Message From the President:

The sale of Carstens Farmstead was finalized on May 25. All members have or will soon receive a letter approved by our legal counsel from the Historical Society Board with the details.

If any member of the society does not receive their letter or has questions and wishes to come to a Board Meeting, please contact myself or Bob Hastings to be placed on the agenda.

Congratulations to William Cutler. He was honored in May at the 119th Iowa Funeral Directors Association Convention for more than 40 years of active service in the funeral profession.

Congratulations to Dick Peterson. He was 'Grand Marshall' for the Pride Week Parade. He joins the ranks of the many Historical Society members that have been Grand Marshal of the parade.

-- Darlene Vergamini

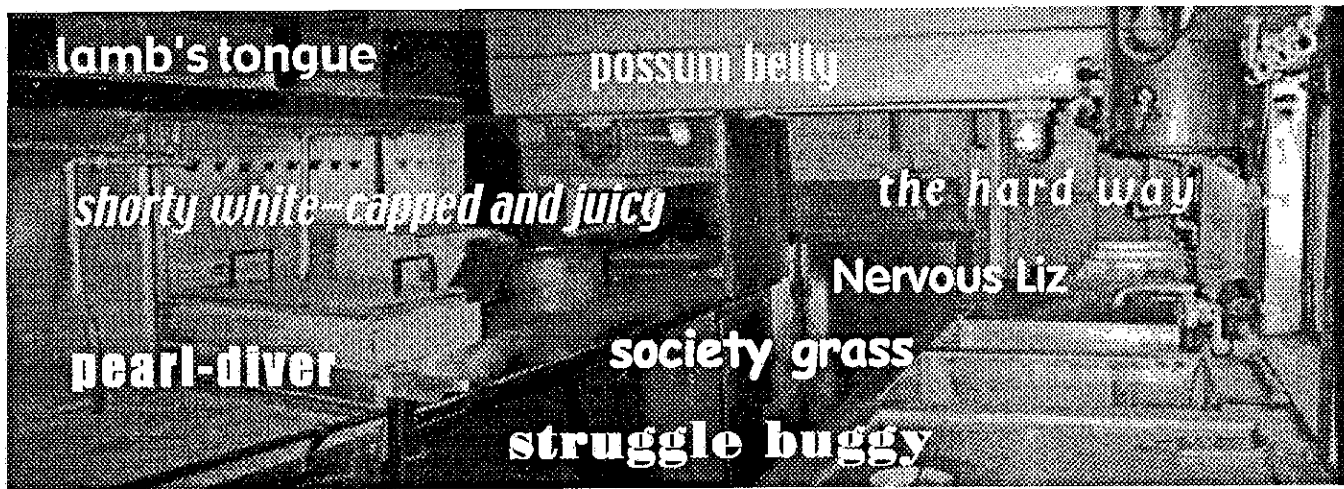
was a good one, but the audience could not must up enthusiasm other than light applause at its close. Then Judge Test spoke. He made a characteristic campaign address, and the audience went wild over him. In fact, he seemed to have made a better impression on the audience than Lincoln."

"A year after his visit Lincoln was nominated for the presidency and was elected. Not a great while after this I was in Washington, and went to see Lincoln in his office. The Union Pacific terminal was then before him for official consideration. He hauled out a map of the country, and I was surprised to see

him point out the very spot upon which he stood on the occasion I have mentioned, and remark, running his finger over the valley: 'Here's where we stood on the day I visited you, and this valley must be the terminal of the Union Pacific.'"

"Yes," remarked Mr. Pusey in conclusion. "Lincoln was a great man and I reverence his memory."





The Language of the Dining Car...

One of the most picturesque aspects of dining-car lore is the strange and unique language employed by those who worked the cars. Often a code to enable communication with each other to the ignorance of those outside the service, it is also a perfect example of how jargon can offer succinct summery. Expressions applied to passengers, to the equipment, to each other and to the food.

a cook's load- a train with very few people on board, fewer yet of whom ate in the dining car

crew's portion- a double order of food

for Nellie- another name for room service

a lamb's tongue- generous tip

the hard way- a signal from the waiter to the steward on how to make change for a troublesome passenger. If fifty cents in change was due, the steward would give the victim a fifty-cent piece, practically forcing the customer to leave the whole fifty cents as a tip

the easy way- when the steward would leave a quarter, two dimes and a nickel as the fifty cent change for cooperative passengers

snake- someone who doesn't leave a tip (as in "the snakes are eating me up tonight,")

burnt toast- an ugly woman

feed box or pie wagon- dining car

struggle buggy- an old dining car

smoke wagon- dining car in a train pulled by a steam locomotive

flat- dining car that is completely filled

forty-eight flat and standing- all 48 seats in a modern dining car filled with customers waiting

a large- a table for four

flattened out- a waiter whose deuce (table for 2) and large were filled with customers

top table- table section nearest the pantry

the dog house- the main refrigerator

tin can- buffet-parlor cars

eyes- the block signals that control train movements

greased- to get paid

possum belly- area under dining card floor where extra coal for stove or bedding for crew

stump- an economy meal

society grass- salad

nervous Liz- gelatin

poor boy- ham sandwich

poor boy walking- take-out ham sandwich

pearl diver- the fourth cook, whose duties included washing the dishes and pots, pans, and kitchen utensils

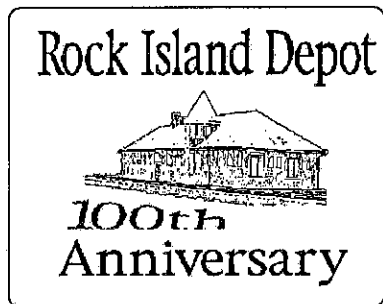
(From "Dining By Rail", contributed by Marcia Hastings; photo is a 1930's era Pullman kitchen, on display at Galveston Rail Museum, Galveston, Texas; photo by editor)

Dodge Park Rail Cars Prepare for Move to Depot

The following is a description of the two locomotives presently located at Dodge Park that are soon to become part of the display at the Society's Rock Island Depot.

Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Engine 915 Class K-4 Wheel Arrangement 4-6-0

Built in 1901 at the Havelock Shops in Lincoln, Nebraska, by the Burlington and Missouri Railroad as number 44. It was built for use in Nebraska and points west for passenger service. Later it was used on all classes of service. In 1904 the number was changed to 715 when the Burlington Route absorbed the western extension into one name. In later years the number was changed again, this time to 915.



The engine was officially removed from service in 1957 and had been in storage until given to the City. A sister Burlington and Missouri Railroad Engine set a speed record on March, 24, 1901, by running at a average speed of 98.6 miles per hour on a slightly descending grade eastbound between Eckley and Wray, Colorado. The Burlington and Missouri engines of this class were last built in 1904, with a total of 14 being built beginning in 1900. The engine weighs 156,000 lbs., and the tender weighs 35,000 lbs. loaded to capacity, with nine tons of coal and 5,000 gallons of water, the tender and the engine weighs 251,300 lbs. The weight on the drive wheels is 121,400 lbs. The firebox has

146.2 square feet and the grate area is 30 square feet. The valve gear is by Stephenson. The engine is 37 feet long and the tender 22 feet long. The wheel base is 52 feet 5 3/4 inches. The tractive power with 64 inch diameter drives and 19 inch by 26 inch cylinders i,@ 25,000 pounds. The overall height of the engine is 14 feet 10 inches.

Union Pacific Steam Locomotive #814 Northern type wheel arrangement 4-8-4; UP Class FEF — 266 Oil Burner

The 814 was originally built in September 1937 by American Locomotive Company at their Schenectady works. This engine was one of a group of 20, numbered from 800 through 819, purchased on Builders Lot S-May 1946 at Omaha Shops. Originally built with Standard "OK" Stoker to burn bituminous coal and was converted to burn fuel oil in May 1946 at Omaha Shops. The weight of 814 engine in working order is approximately 460,000 lbs. and the total weight of engine and tender loaded is 876,000 lbs. or 438 tons. The engine is 65 feet long and tender is 47 feet long for an overall length of 112 feet. The height of the engine is approximately 16 feet high from the top of the rail to the top of the smokestack with a total wheel base of 97 feet 4 inches. The tender is known as a 14-wheel semi-cylindrical of exceptional design and capacity, having a water capacity of 23,500 gallons and 6,000 gallons of fuel oil, having an approximate weight of 416,000 pounds loaded. The 814 has 77 inch drivers, 24 1/2 inch diameter cylinders, 32 inch stroke and a maximum traction effort of 63,500 pounds. The engine trucks, trailer trucks and drivers are all equipped with roller bearings. The inside diameter of the boiler is 86 inches and carries a boiler pressure of 300 pounds. It has a Type "A" superheater and exhaust steam feed water heater and two 8 1/2 inch cross-compound air pumps, and Walschaerts Valve Gear.

The 814 was used mostly in conventional passenger train service, operating in a pool between Omaha, Nebraska, Cheyenne, Wyoming, Denver, Colorado, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Huntington, Oregon. This locomotive was capable of operating continuously under maximum horsepower output at 90 miles per hour. The locomotive will negotiate curves of 20 degrees.

(Continued next page)

*("Dodge Park Railcars" continued from
previous page)*

During the last few years of operation, most of the mileage was made between Cheyenne, Wyoming and Council Bluffs, Iowa on fast freight and fruit trains. The last mileage was made in September 1957 and since that time, the locomotive has been stored at Council Bluffs, unserviceable. Total mileage for this engine was 2,779,409 miles. The locomotive received last classified shop repairs at Council Bluffs in July, 1957.

This locomotive was one of the latest type steam locomotives to be built in the United States. The Union Pacific roster included a total of 45 of those locomotives. Series 800 to 844 inclusive, the last one being built in December, 1944. This is the only locomotive with seventy-seven inch drivers left of this series in the United States.

Summer Recipes

One Crust Apple Pie

Fill uncooked crust with apples, sliced thin. Mix 1 cup brown sugar, 1 tbsp. flour, 1 cup cream.

Sprinkle with nutmeg or cinnamon. Bake until apples are done; top with whipped cream.

---Mrs. John G. Woodward

Scalloped Green Peppers

One dozen green peppers, ground. Place in shallow buttered baking dish. Mix with the peppers a cupful of bread crumbs, small pieces of butter, seasoning and sufficient milk to nearly cover peppers. Spread buttered bread crumbs over the top. Bake 1/2 hour.

---Mrs. C. T. Officer

*(First Presbyterian Church Cookbook,
1926; contributed by Darlene Vergamini)*

The Dash...

I read of a man who stood to speak
At the funeral of his friend
He referred to the dates on her tombstone
From the Beginning to the end.

He noted that first came the date of her birth
And spoke of the second with tears
But he said that what mattered most of all
Was the dash between those years

For that dash represents all the time
That she spent alive on earth
And now only those who loved her
Know what that little line is worth

For it matters not, how much we own
The cars, the house, the cash
What matters is how we live and love
And how we spend our dash

So think about this long and hard
Are there things you'd like to change?
For you never know how much time is left
You could be as dash mid-range.

If we could just slow down enough to consider
What's true and what's real
And always try to understand
The way other people feel

And be less quick to anger
And show appreciation more
And love the people in our lives
Like we've never loved before

If we treat each other with respect
And more often wear a smile
Remembering that this special dash
Might only last a little while

So when you eulogy is being read
With your life's actions to rehash
Would you be please with the things they have to say
About how you spent your dash?

(Written by Rabbi Israel Hirsch; contributed by Darlene Vergamini)

From the
Archive Files...

The following items were found in the newspaper archives and provide a little glimpse at daily life in our city in the past. Contributed by Darlene Vergamini.

Catholic Education in Early Council Bluffs

Mount Loretto, Our Lady of Victory and St. Joseph Schools Bring Back Many Students to Council Bluffs

To Council Bluffs belongs the distinction of having the oldest records of Catholicity in southwestern Iowa. The second largest city in the Des Moines diocese, the Catholic schools and churches are among the hand-somest in the state, and three large and one small school are maintained by different orders here.

Situated in a park of seventeen acres, surrounded by grand old trees and approached by a beautiful winding drive, Our Lady of Victory academy and Mount Loretto on East Pierce street, are two of the finest Catholic schools in the state. The buildings are large and airy and the spacious grounds furnished ample opportunity for the out of door amusements which the students are encouraged to enjoy.

Our lady of Victory academy is a school for girls exclusively, while at Mount Loretto, closely adjoining, is a school for boys over 5 and under 15 years of age. The school at Mount Loretto has been carefully arranged to meet the wants of the small boy not ready for the higher institution of learning. Realizing that it is pleasant for brothers and sisters to be together, the routine of the day provides for some time when children from the same family may visit, which together with the beauty of the surroundings, makes the school popular with families where two or more children must be sent away from home for their education.

Both schools are in charge of the Sisters of Mercy and excellent courses are provided, as well as special work in music, art and folk dancing. The main purpose to the academy is to give to young women a thorough training in the studies commonly pursued in the best woman's colleges and high schools.

St. Joseph's school, rebuilt in 1910, on the same site

as the old building, the corner of Fifth Avenue and Sixth Street, is the parochial school of St. Frances Xavier church, and is in charge of the Sisters of Charity. The boys of the parish were educated in the old school, the girls attended St. Frances academy.

With the rebuilding of the school its scope was enlarged to include also a course for girls and young women, and the other academy closed, except the conservatory, where the pupils still go for their work in music. The attendance at the new school averages nearly 300, and in addition to the grammar grades there is a four years' high school course for the girls.

With the closing of St. Frances academy the courses in art and the commercial work were done away with, but the twelve year course in music, under competent instructors, is still available.

For the benefit of the children of St. Peter's parish a school known as St. Peter's school is maintained adjacent to the church on Bluffs street. This school is conducted by the Sisters of St. Benedict, and is attended by all of the children of the parish, many of whom come from German families.

(*Nonpareil*, September 27, 1914)

Wednesday at twelve o'clock, noon, a marriage that was contracted under rather novel circumstances, will take place in this city. The "*inter spen et metu*" happy man introduced his Dulcinea to visit Crockwell's and while supplying her with double distilled deliciousness in the form of sgtrawberries and cream, popped the all-important question, with the result above mentioned. His example is worthy of imitation.

(*Nonpareil*, June 1, 1873)

There just has to be a good reason... right?

Just Why IS standard Gauge the Standard?

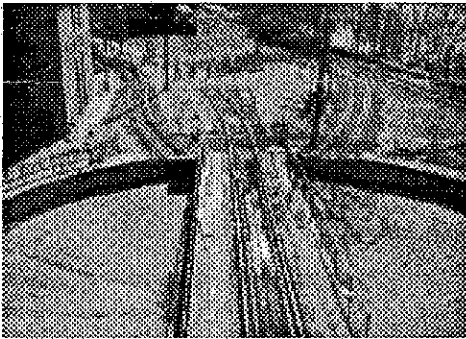
Didn't you always wonder?

The US Standard railroad gauge distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why is that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and the US railroads were built by English expatriates. Why did the English people build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did 'they' use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used building wagons, which used that wheel spacing. Okay! Why did the wagons use that odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried any other spacing the wagons would break on some of the old, long distance roads, because that's the spacing to fit old wheel ruts.

So who build these old rutted roads? The first long distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts? The initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagons, were first made by Roman war chariots. Since the chariots were made for or by Imperial Rome they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

Thus, we have the answer to the original questions. The United States railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is the original specification for an Imperial Roman army war chariot. Specs and Bureaucracies live forever.



Turntable tracks carefully adhering to the "standard gauge". (Photo by Barb Warner)

So next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's rear came up with it, you may be exactly right. Because the Imperial Roman chariots were made to be just wide enough to accommodate the back-ends of Roman war horses.

(Marcia Hastings, who contributed this thought-provoking article, admits she was a bit skeptical about this reasoning, but tells us she has seen this explanation in several sources and confirmed it as accepted fact with Bill Kratville at the U.P. Historical Museum).

Trivia Question Answer

The "Strand" had its beginnings in 1882 as the "New Dohany Theatre". In 1927 the building was remodeled to add the plush interior and it was incorporated under the name "Strand Theater Company" in 1933. The seven story ornate facade was installed the same year. The building was destroyed by a fire December 11, 1974, causing the roof to collapse.

This Month in the Past...

- 1491 Henry VIII of England was born; he reigned 1509-1547
- 1863 To free slaves, Harriet Tubman led Union troops into Maryland
- 1928 Velveeta cheese was invented by Kraft
- 1915 Girl Scouts were founded
- 1838 Iowa Territory was formed
- 1916 Boy Scouts of America was formed
- 1882 17 inch hailstones fell on Dubuque, Iowa
- 1882 Tornado in Iowa killed 130
- 1846 Iowa College was chartered in Davenport under sponsorship of Congregational and Presbyterian churches. Later changed location and name to Grinnell College
- 1885 Statue of Liberty arrived in New York City from France aboard the SS Isere
- 1810 John Jacob Astor founded the Pacific Fur Co.
- 1917 Raggedy Ann doll was invented

(Contributed by Darlene Vergamini)

**Historical Society of Pottawattamie
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Vice president- Cathy Danielson
Treasurer- Joyce Glessman
Secretary- Robert Hastings

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Depot- Marcia Hastings
Genealogical Committee- Alice Bontz

Newsletter Editor- Dr. Richard Warner

The Historical Society of Pottawattamie County is dedicated to the preservation of books, letters, sites, records, artifacts and buildings of historical significance in the county. The Society operates and is restoring the Historic Squirrel Cage Jail, Rock Island Depot, involved in the efforts to create a local museum, and is active in promoting historical and genealogical research.

Requests for information about Society projects, membership, and volunteer work are welcomed. Write the Historical Society of Pottawattamie County, Post Office Box 2, Council Bluffs, IA, 51502.

The Historical Society of Pottawattamie County Member Newsletter is printed eleven times a year and mailed to all members. The membership mailing list is maintained by the Society Secretary, Robert Hastings. Please direct any address corrections to Mr. Hastings at 322-0612 or to the Society post office box listed above.

Members are always welcome to attend a Board Meeting. Anyone desiring to speak at the meeting should send a letter or call either the Secretary or President to be placed on the agenda.

Historical Society

Of Pottawattamie County

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