FREIGHTING IN THE EARLY DAYS OF UTAH.

braska Historical society Mr. Henry T. larke of Omaha, one of the ploneers of Nebraska, as well as one of the foremost men in the State, delivered the following interesting address relating to life in the West over forty years

It is with pleasure that I respond to the request for some word as to the "Early Freighting," as I realize that few are left to tell the story of those

But little freighting was done north of the Platte river until the opening of the Pike's Peak gold excitement, about 1859. The route from Bellevue, where we outfitted and freighted from, and from Omaha, was westerly, crossing the Elkhorn river by ferry, or ford, near Elkhorn City, nearly west from Omaha, entering the Elkhorn and Platte valleys at that point, and thence up the Platte valley. Some crossed the Platte to the south side at Shinn's ferry, owned by Elder Shinn, a few miles southwest of the present town of Schuyler, Colfax county, others continuing up the Platte on the north side to a point near old Fort Kearney and Dobytown, crossing by fording the river to the south side of the Platte there, and continuing on the south side of the Platte and of the South Platte to Pike's Peak, or Cherry

Creek, now the beautiful city of Denver Many of the Californians and Mor mons going to Salt Lake City and Cal-ifornia kept on the north side of the Platte and up the north fork by old land marks. Court house and Shimney rocks (the former eight miles southeast and the latter seven miles west of Camp Clark), and on west. The roads were usually very fine and

the grass good; were it not so, it would have been hard to supply the mining population.

A train usually consisted of from twenty-two or twenty-six teams, five yoke of cattle to a team, and two wagens leaded with 4,000 pounds on the front and 3,000 pounds on the trailer, or rear wagon, with a short pole. There were also two-horse cook wagons. Usually a wagon boss, or manager, and assistant, had charge, and whose pay varied from \$75 to \$150 a month, and teamsters, at from \$35 to \$60 per month. Men usually slept under wagons; some-times trains carried and used tents, and at times the men crawled under wagon

In going into camp the teams would form a corral, swinging to the right and left until they came together and fol-lowing in this way the first wheels of the rear wagon, and when all were in form-ing a complete corral, oval in shape, leaving only room for the cattle to pass out. The opening was closed by chains when the cattle were in and the wherls of the wagons were all chained together so that in yoking wild cattle the corral would be able to hold them, and in case of attack by Indians, we would be able The cattle were then unyoked and driven out to water and feed, we keeping two or more men with them so that they would not stray or stampede. When ready to bring in the cattle to yoke they were all driven within the orral, each man getting his own teams. The usual drive was fifteen to eighteen miles a day, one team trailing on after the others. Many of the wagon bosses and men could take the time of north star when the sky was lear. Usually we would start the teams in the spring as soon as grass was up, so as to make good feed, and, with active work, make two trips to Denver (600 miles) and return in a season. If spring and grass were backward, at times we had to drive back late in the fall to reach the Missouri river, or would "grass" cattle in the sand hills of Western Nebraska, where the buffalo grass was plenty, until spring.

FROM THE MUDDY TO DENVER. The prices paid for ox team freight pound from the Missouri river to Den-ver. Oxen would have no feed but grass, and men were in camp from spring until the season was through. The cooking was usually done on sheet iron or cast iron stoves, or pots and bakeovens in absence of stoves. The

bill of fare usually was of dry salt side pork, bacon, corn meal, flour, beans, dried apples, coffee, tea and sugar, us-ing "buffalo chips" for fuel.

When in camp in dry weather the men would be looking to the setting of tires of the wagons, and if any were loose, not having machinery to reset or upset, or shorten the tire, the wagon felloe would be increased with one two thicknesses of heavy cotton duck tacked on. Then this would met and the wagon tire placed on the ground surrounded by "buffalo chips" and set on fire. When red hot and and set on fire. When red hot and fully expanded it would be lifted on to the wheel and as soon as in place, wa-

At the annual meeting of the Ne. | duck or felloe, and it would shrink into ! place. It was seldom that a tire had be set a second time.

On the dry and sandy roads the oxen often became footsore and lame and had to be shod, and before starting we would provide ox shoes to be used if needed. They were made in pairs for each foot and required but a little cold hammering to fit the foot.

In the summer of 1863, the Platte river having so nearly dried up as to make it difficult to secure water for the cattle, and having a large train of some twenty-two teams, loaded with valuable merchandise of all kinds, and being anxious about the train. I took the stage and overhauled it at Fort Kearney and went with it to Denver. With plenty of Indians and men scarce and hard to secure, I soon became an expert at cooking, setting wagon tires, and shoeing oxen, and, when necessary, driving a team, or doing any other

We sank headless barrels in the Platte, by diaging out the quicksand to secure water from an under flow, and usually drove much of the night when cattle will walk much faster than in the day time, and got our train through to Denver in good time, where we sold our goods at satisfactory prices.

The quick freighting by horses and mules, was done the year around, and usually on goods that were in want, such as coffee, sugar, candles and flour, and other goods where the supply was short. It was usually done in our and six mule, or horse, teams, the freighter carrying his own supply along for the trip, storing corn as he went west, at ranches or stations where he could secure hay and stabling, to use on his return. Some made money of this, receiving 8 to 12 and 15 cents per pound, as also did many farmers and small freighters, with a single team loaded with butter, eggs, poultry, dressed hogs, sausages, lard, etc.

We used to drive six days in a week, and remain in camp all day Sun-

day. I think that most of the freighters except Alex Majors. Waddell and Russell drove seven days, but I think we made as good time as those who did not lay up for Sundays.

PREPARE FOR THE REDS.

The fall of 1865 the Indians were very bad along the west Platte valley, and the government had stationed troops along the valley to protect the people, stages, mail and freighters passing, stages, mall and freighters passing, the officers insisting that they should the officers insisting that they should keep together as much as possible. The owing is the order issued to W. Watson, in charge of our outfit at Fort Kearney, by Captain E. B. Murphy, formerly of Plattsmouth, and of later years one of the active enterprising citizens of Arapahoe, Furnas county, Ne-braska, who died about a year ago:

T. Oct. 16, 1865.—Special Order No. 256: In compliance with special order No. 41, C. S. headquarters department of the Missouri, the trains now at this post are ready to start west if or-ganized into a company for mutual protection and the safety of the train. Mr. W. W. Watson is hereby appointed conductor and will be held responsible for the holding of the organization and train together. In no case will he permit the train nor men under his charge to strag. gle along the road. He will camp as near military posts as possible and will report any insubordination among the men belonging to the train to the commanding officer of the post nearest the place where such insubordination shall have arisen. By order "E. B. MURPHY, "Captain Seventh Iowa Cavalry Com-

manding Post.

"H. P. LELAND,
"Lieutenant and Post Adjutant." On the morning of November 31 1865,

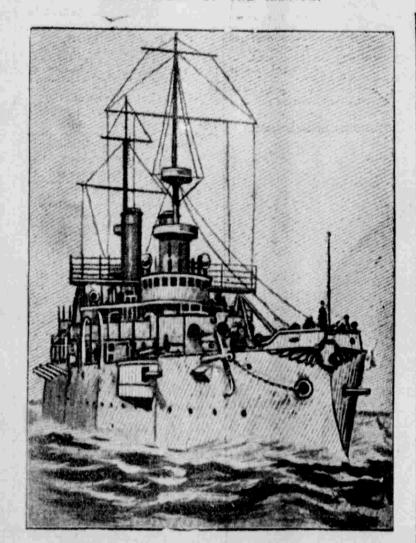
the commander of Alkali station ordered the outfit to drive double file, as Indians were bad. This made it very slow work and we could no make the progress as when driving gle file. On the night of the same date, near Sand Hill station, on the south side of the Platte, shortly after our teams had gone into camp, and the cattle had been turned out, the Indians, and I think probably some bad white men, attacked our men in charge of the cattle and ran off eighty-seven oxen and some ponies. One of our men, Richard Evans, was shot. The cattle were driven across the river to the east and north of our camp, but our goods were not disturbed. The following is a memoranda of same:

Omaha, Neb., Feb. 25, 1891. United States Government.—To Clark & Brothers, Dr.: For property stolen from said Clark & Brothers, by the Sioux Indians, November 3, 1865, at Sand Hill station, Nebraska Territory,

Eighty-five oxen\$9,350.00 One mule 150.00 One saddle One revolver 25.00

Total value of property stolen \$9,547.00

GREAT SPEED OF THE ILLINOIS.



The battleship Illinois, which is now being turned out by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock company, will be one of the fleetest vessels in the American navy. Her builder's test has caused the naval experts to believe that she will be able to make a speed of 17.25 knots an hour when under full steam. Her boilers are said to be better than those of the Kearsage and

Pioneer H. T. Clark, of Omaha, in World-Herald, Recalls the Difficulties of Trade in the Fifties-Bloodthirsty Savages, High Prices and Slow Travel Features of the Times-A Vivid Story.

Add interest from November 3, 1865, 1

o date of payment. Mr. A. M. Clarke was with the outfit, and being unable to find and recover the stock, when the next day and bought of Bauvoa, at Bauvoa station, cattle to move all but three wagons, and I presume some parties may have, some few days or weeks later, been able to buy some of our stock of the same or other ranchman, they having been traded them for a small price, or received a payment of old accounts of whisky.

The following year, at an Indian coun-cil, at Fort Laramie, the Sloux chiefs knowledged robbing us and were willing to pay for the same. The United States superintendent of Indians, Judge Cooley, said the claim was good, but he had no money belonging to the Indians with which to pay it. This is a copy of

In the matter of the claim of Clarke & Co. against the government of the United States of America for the loss of stock taken by the Sioux Indians at Sand Hill station in the Territory of

We, the undersigned chiefs and head men of the Sioux nations, acting for and in behalf of said tribe, and in open council, acknowledge and admit, that on or about the 3rd day of November, 1865, at Sand Hill station, in the Territory of Nebraska, a band of the said Sloux took and drove away eighty-five head of oxen and killed one mule, the property of Clarke & Co., and the said stock or any part thereof has never been returned to the said Clarke & Co., or paid for by the Indians. Done at Fort Laramie, D. T., this

day of A. D., 1866. In presence of Valet Jaut, United States Indian agent. To this document the following Indians affixed their signature by making their mark: Spotted Tall, Swift Bear,
Boy Hawk, Hawk Thunder, Tall
Thunder, Sharp Nose, White Tall, Big
Mouth. The Man That Walks Under the
Ground. The Black War Bonnett,
Standing Cloud, Blue Horse, Big Head.

These signatures were secured in the presence of Chas. E. Bowes and Frank Lehmer, who signed as witnesses, and both of whom are old Omahans. The United States court of claims of-ficers allowed our bill some years ago,

we did not get our money until July, 1898.

We were quite successful in the selec-tion of goods, in freighting and selling the same, seldom having anything but what paid a good margin. Merchants in the mountains would pay well when they wanted goods, but woe to the man who had to sell when goods were not in

HIGH PRICES THOSE DAYS.

Eggs, at times, would sell at \$1,50 dozen. One year we had a large quanti-ty of butter and sold it at \$1 a pound, wholesale, in packages of 100 and 120 pounds, Octagon steel and rope were articles that brought good prices when wanted, 50 cents a pound readily, but one-half of that when a good supply scarce and sell at \$20 to \$30 a sack, so with coffee, sugar and candles. Cove oysters, peaches, canned corn and wax candles were like gold dollars-always

In 1866, in closing out our stock at Denver, we traded to Bartle & Metz, formerly merchants from Bellevue, canned turkey and chicken, spices, etc., valued at \$1,300, for 320 acres of land in Sarpy county, and later sold the same for \$16,000.

It took a four-horse stage six days and nights to make the trip from Denver to Omaha, and the fare one way was \$125. Our food was hot bread, ba-con, or side pork, corn bread, dried ap-ples, unpeeled dried peaches, beans, coffee and sugar.

The stage driver would commence to whoop a mile or more from town; and by the time we arrived at a station, breakfast, dinner or supper would be under way, and a team ready to hitch

With the competition of the Union Pacific the freighting on the overland route, from points on the Missouri river to Denver and Salt Lake ceased, and the base of supplies was from points on the railroad to army stations and other points north and south of the road, Among those east of the mountains was Sidney, in Nebraska, 416 miles west of Omaha, where Pratt and Farris and other freighters in 1876 were hauling with large cattle, mule and horse outfits, from Sidney and Fort Sidney to Camps Robinson, Sheridan and the Black Hills mining centers, such as Custer City, Deadwood, Lead City and Rapid City, and other points, fording the North Platte some forty miles north of Sidney, near where Camp Clark was at this time.

HOW CLARKE BUILT HIS BRIDGE. In the winter of 1875 and 1876, Stephens & Wilcox of Omaha and other merchants requested that I should look over the North Platte line to Camp Robinson and Sheridan. They and other Omaha jobbers wanted to make a short line between Sidney and the military stations and the Black Hill military stations and the Black Bill gold country, which was then going as far west as Cheyenne, and crossing the Platte at old Fort Laramie, ninety miles west of Camp Clarke, and see if it was practicable to bridge the Platte at that point. I did so, and reported favorably. The bridge would be some 2,000 feet or more long. They then undertook to form a bridge company and put in a bridge, but found Omaha people were not willing to put money in so large an undertaking in the Sioux so large an undertaking in the Sloux and Cheyenne Indian country, and had to give it up. Then they came to me and wanted to know if I would put in a toll bridge and accept a bonus. I answered, "Yes." and the amount named was satisfactory. They soon made up the amount and I placed one of my bridge foremen in the lumber yard of Katers & Son, Moline, Ill., and Schruker & Miller, Davenport, Ia., to construct the bridge.

The Chicago, Rock Island and the Union Pacific railroads saw the importance of the move and freighted all

portance of the move and freighted all material free of cost from those points to Sidney-consisting of three large wagon train loads and teamed it from

Sidney to the river.

The iron was manufactured at Milwaukee and piles secured in the hills southwest from the bridge site. This bridge was completed in June, 1876, and was one of the strongest and best of the Platte river bridges; the seventh one I built, and is still standing. It was strong enough to carry mining machinery over, on short coupled wagons, drawn by seven to ten yoke of cattle, being, in fact, strong enough

to carry a railway train.

This bridge is some nine miles east This bridge is some nine miles east of Chimney Rock, and is seven miles north and west of Court house-old landmarks on the California, Oregon and Sait Lake trails, which are still and the court of the to be seen, some on river bottoms and some on bench lands, where the great overland trains went to those western

were thousands of

pushed by men, women and children, and I have often thought as I have crossed the trails from time to time of the suffering of the many unfortunates, and of the riders got on the plains we and of the many buried on the road.

As soon as this bridge was completed, there were many waiting to

cross, going north and south. MADE SIDNEY A GREAT TOWN.

Then came a stampede from the Black Hills, of some 150 people, claiming the mines had played out. Captain Jack McColl of Lexington, Neb. came to inquire if they could cross the bridge, or would they have to go east on the north side, to the town of North Platte, about 130 miles away and cross the combined Union Pacific and highway bridge, as they all wished to keep together, and many of them were broke and had no money. I re-plied that they could cross, and those that had money could pay and those that had none could pass free.

This looked discouraging, and I thought of the old saying, "a fool and his money soon parted." Fortunately for the writer, there was much gold in the Black Hills and much travel from Sydney to points north over the bridge. With the opening of the bridge and short route between railroad and Sidney, Deadwood, Custer City, Lead City, Rapid City, and other mining camps, the travel changed from Cheyenne and other points, to Sidney, and in a short time Sidney was the great starting point for all eastern and western ern people; the Indian supplies and travel changing from Cheyenne to Sid-ney, and Sidney was the most lively of any railroad town on the Union Pa-cific, and the road between Sidney, and the hills was soon black with people coming and going.

The postal department of the gen-ral government would not furnish mail to the Hills, claiming it was In-dian country, and they had no interest there, although the revenue department of the government collected on whisky.

To make a success of my undertak-ing I thought it desirable that there should be mail facilities in the Black Hills and put on Clarke's Centennial Express and opened up postoffices in all the leading mining camps in the Black Hills.

I placed Centennial envelopes on sale in all the camps, Omaha and Chicago and some of the railroad ticket offices. had these made small so as to in-lose in ordinary envelopes so that parties could send them when writing to friends and insure quick replies. made the trips each way once a week.
The riders had no stopping stations between Sidney and the bridge, and but one between the bridge and Red Cloud (Camp Robinson), and none between Camp Robinson (Red Cloud), and Cus-

ers were men of nerve, and killed many horses in the long rides. What rest the riders got on the plains would be to

stop with a lariat in hand while the ponies fed on the grass.

We paid \$100 and \$125 per ton for hay, and 12 to 15 cents per pound for corn

in the Hills.
I arranged with the postal department to turn over all malls to me at Sidney, for points in the Hills, and for it to accept all of my mail at Sidney. With the war department, through Omaha headquarters, I contracted carry the army mail between Fort | Sidney, Camp Clarke and Camp Robinson, and for the government to give me protection for the bridge, and they built a two-story block house on the island on which the ends of the bridge rested. The lower story of the block house was twenty-two feet square and the upper story was thirty-two feet square; the upper lying across the cor-ners of the lower story, making it octagon in shape, with port holes on all sides. It was made of sawed timber, lying one above the other and spiked down. The roof was also made of sawed timber. They were anxious to protect the bridge and placed a squad of infantry in the block house and a company of cavalry on the south end of the bridge, at Camp Clarke store and postoffice. They were large patrons postoffice. They were large patrons of the bridge in passing supplies, quartermasters' commissary stores, artillery, soldiers, etc., and with the Sloux and Cheyenne Indian war on, as it was late on in 1876 and 1877, it would have been hard for them to have got along with-out it. They paid me large sums of money for the use of the bridge. The nearest bridge west was ninety miles. at Fort Laramie, and 130 miles to North

The rates for crossing were \$2 for two horses, two mules or oxen, wagon and driver, and was 50 cents for each additional horse, mule, ox or man. had more fears that some Jad white men would burn the bridge than the Indians; the latter had always been friendly to me at Bellevue, in 1855, when we had 1,000 Omahas and the Sfoux and Cheyennes, from '76 to '77 and later. Later on I contracted with March & Stephenson to put four-horse coaches on to carry my mail, paying them \$4,000 per year, and thus get stage services between Sidney, Camp Clarke, Camp Robinson, Rapid City, Deadwood and other towns and camps in the Hills, and later the government contracted to transport the mails, taking the place of Clarke's Centennial express.

The bridge was a great success, but the Centennial Express was unprofitable owing to the large expense for men, horses and feed.

There were but few buffalo in the valley after 1876. The last one I saw

was an old stray bull, in 1877. In passlog north on the stage I saw him some
river would be abandoned for cames
cial purposes, and which is better x.....x our return we passed within a few rods of him, on Greenwood creek, with a score or more of steers, all frothing at the mouth, trying to drive him away, taking him for an Interloper. They were unsuccessful, as he took his own time to go. This was near where the Indians had killed young Schaffer's family, from Plattsmouth, a short time

In the matter of early transportation east and south, there has been a wonderful change, as formerly we were de-pendent on the Missouri river during the season of navigation, when free from ice. We had the large boats from Omaha to St. Louis that plyed between New Orleans and St. Louis in the winter season and often 1,000 miles up the river from Omaha in summer. Many of them were very fine boats and count-ed on ten to fourteen days for a trip ed on ten to fourteen days for a trip from St. Louis to Bellevue or Omaha. The fare for passengers was about \$20, which included stateroom with board. Freight was from 35 to 40 cents per 100 pounds on merchandisc and 25 to 35

cents per 100 on corn, and 30 cents to \$1 per 100 on wheat.

In 1865 I have loaded steamers with wheat at \$1 per 100, or 60 cents a bush el. At that time gold was worth \$240, or \$140 premium, and wheat \$2.40 a bushel. All corn was shipped in gunny bags, a coarse square bag holding about 140 pounds, imported from Calcutta, India. Wheat was shipped in cotton bags, now selling at 15 cents a piece. We paid as high as \$1.15 each for them.

I had the pleasure of shipping the first wheat on the Union Pacific railroad, from Fremont and North Bend to Omaha, purchased by Hon, E. H. Rog-ers of Fremont, and Mr. Cottrell, father of L. R. Cottrell, grain dealer at North Bend, now of Omaha. I think the freight was 22 cents from Fremont and 25 cents from North Bend, per pounds, about the same price as from Omaha to Chicago, and more by 5 cents per 100 pounds than to St. Louis, at that time by railroad, and that with three great railroads to St. Louis and five to Chicago, and the Missouri river a failure for transportation.

WONDROUS TRANSFORMATION.

As we now nook back over the past twenty-five years from 1876, with the loss of Custer and the many faithful followers, the Cheyenne Indian war-then forty years to the great Pike's peak gold discovery, and pushing for-ward to the same; then again back to the many thousands of Californians and Mormons passing, who went West on foot and by wagon over the great overland route, fifty years ago, we stand Then only a few thousand people lived

in Iowa and Nebraska along the Missouri river valley, not knowing what they had before them-dependent on the Missouri for transporting all supplies, save the staples we raised. I have often thought how fortunate Nebraska people were in having Council Bluffs, Glen-wood, Rockport, etc., along the east side of the Missouri river, the same to supply us with flour, meal, meat, butand eggs, and the great river, for a half of the year, bringing in supplies.

cial purposes, and which is better navigate today than thirty '0 years ago, being free from snags, then to think of the three great means to cago—a night's ride to St. Louis of the total purpose. cago a hight stride to st Louis cago, with princely Fullman and cars attached, instead of a ten teen days' trip to and from St.

And then to look to the great roads reaching to E California and Oregon and California and Oregon and our orient—a night to Denver and the to the Pacific ocean. And then cities of Omaha, Lincoln and the fine, active cities all over the State—one of the most health more sunlight and the highest deducation of any State in the education of any State in the best and most intelligent and ous people, best soil and man ous people, test soil and market by the great staple products of life shart corp, oats, cattle, hogs and shep with the third largest packing intain the world, and that only lifted was

May we not stop and think of the wonderful progress we have made and what of another fifty years? If he has what of another fifty years? p been our fortune to see all this part of the areat link from New York, Chicago San Fr. Portland to Hawallan Ishnag China and Australia over our what may we or my salar what may we or our chill this, the twentieth century? as we start with it, may it not be with the feeling that "we have built beite than we knew."

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