

Railroads – Some Background

Miles of Railroad

In 1830 – 23 miles of railroad

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oldest_railroads_in_North_America

Map of railroads in 1835 [in Why is Kearney Here? Folder]

In 1850 – 9,021 miles of railroad

http://www.cpr.org/Museum/RR_Development.html#1L

Map of railroads 1860 – pre Civil War (more in north) [in Why is Kearney Here? Folder]

In 1870 – 53,000 miles of railroad

http://www.cpr.org/Museum/RR_Development.html#1L

Map of railroads 1870 [in Why is Kearney Here? Folder]

In 1880 – 93,000 miles of railroad

In 1890 – 163,500 miles of railroad

<http://www.cpr.org/Museum/FAQs.html#Miles>

In 1916 – 254,000 miles of railroad (Peak year)

Building of Transcontinental railroad

Not “transcontinental”

Act Establishing the Union Pacific Railroad

<http://www.cpr.org/Museum/FAQs.html#Miles>

● What did the Pacific Railroad Act do for the Transcontinental Railroad?

The first Pacific Railroad Act was signed by former railroad lawyer, President Abraham Lincoln in 1862. The [Pacific Railroad Acts](#) formed the Union Pacific Railroad, authorized the route to be constructed by the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad, and provided [funding](#) for the transcontinental railroad in the form of [government bonds](#) (which had to be repaid with interest) and [land grants](#) (half the land for the railroads and half for the government in a checkerboard pattern so both would benefit financially when the initially almost worthless land would become valuable [in places where water was available] after the railroad was constructed). [Williams' Pacific Tourist](#), 1877, has advertisements regarding [lands](#) for [sale](#) from \$1 - \$10 per acre according to location (see pages [282](#), [283](#), and [284](#)). Also see the [Land Office Reports of 1861](#) & [1862](#).

By 1870 - Chicago a railroad hub

CB&Q – West out of Chicago to East Burlington, IL

Burlington & Missouri River RR – Land Grant railroad through Iowa

Burlington (on the Mississippi)

Ottumwa

Red Oak

Glenwood – opposite Plattsmouth (on the Missouri)

Transcontinental concept

Union Pacific not transcontinental

Junction of Burlington and UP would make railroads transcontinental

All transcontinental travelers would pass through that junction

Importance of Kearney's location – the Link in the Chain

About Feb-March, 1871 – James & George Smith took homesteads in Section 2

Two other men claimed the other two homesteads in the section

A sod house was constructed in the center of the section

D N Smith purchased Section 1 from the Union Pacific

April 11, 1871 - D N Smith and Asbury Collins, led by Moses Sydenham, crossed the Platte from Ft. Kearny and marked the spot on the UP where the junction connection was to be made - in Section 1

May 1, 1871 – Asbury Collins, Milton & Finley and Alfred Gay started west with cattle, farm equipment & furniture

Upon arriving here, they made arrangements to stay with the Smith brothers

Asbury telegraphed Louisa to join them

May 13, 1871 – Louisa and Lou arrived at Kearney Station (Buda)

Summer 1871 – Town platted ---- People began arriving

November 30, 1872 – Village of Kearney Junction incorporated – population 100

December 3, 1873 – City of Kearney incorporated – population 400 (may be little exaggerated)