

Stockyards

Other stock yards – Amherst, Miller, Sumner, Gibbon, Shelton (sheep), Buda, Odessa, Darr, Pool Siding, Grand Island, Optic

No cattle trucks until 1930

Kearney City Directories

1892

Wm. T. Scott, contractor, office 17 W 22nd, res 223 W 21st

Kelly, Eva, res 1323ave E

Kelly, James E, hostler P Russell, res 1323 ave E

Kelly, W J, res 1322 ave E

Union Pacific Railway, James B Scanlan agt, passenger depot Railroad st and 1st ave, freight depot Railroad st and ave A

Hub

June 28, 1889

--The Union Pacific officials at the local station complained at the meeting of the city council last night concerning the stench arising from the refuse of the Kearney mill opposite. The matter was at once attended to by the mill management and the nuisance abated. Such a good example should now be followed by the Union Pacific officials abating the greater nuisance coming from their foul stock yards.

July 2, 1889

[A fine of \$1 plus court costs of \$19 was levied against H. C. Nash for maintaining a nuisance. He was operating a slaughterhouse along the north channel of the Platte about a block west of Central Ave. He had allowed Offal, refuse and unclean rubbish” to accumulate and since the weather had warmed up the smell was “disagreeable and unhealthy.”] It would seem that in passing by the U. P. stock yards, near the center of the city, and complaining of nuisances on the suburbs, was to say the least inconsistent.

Sept 2, 1889

At about 10 o'clock at night an east bound freight ran into a freight going west near the U. P. stockyards in this city, doing considerable damage. No one was injured.

Dec 14 1889

A Nuisance

A reporter heard several prominent citizens discussing the U. P. stock yards yesterday. They said that the yards were used all winter and spring and then when the warm weather came, the council would begin to consider the propriety of removing it as a nuisance. The residents of that part of town would endure the stench until cold weather came again, when the council would conclude that it no use to bother in the matter as there was no stench now...

Dec 27, 1889

--The stock yards are still in the heart of the city and will remain here until Gabriel—"Whatcher goin' ter do about it?"

Jan 8, 1890

--The agitation of the stock yards removal is again awakening. It is doomed to go.

Jan 14, 1890

--Two men appeared before the council last night to ask them to remove the U. P. stock yards. They said that every citizen living near that nuisance is up in arms against it remaining there.

Jan 21, 1890

The U. P. Stock Yards

There were several residents of the vicinity near the stock yards who were present at the council meeting, yesterday, to ask the council to move the stock yards. There is a great deal of complaint about this nuisance and all good citizens hope that it will be abated before t4he warm weather sets in.

Jan 24, 1890

The delegation of bankers, mentioned I another article, went to Omaha to attend the Bankers' State association....They went in a body to the U. P. headquarters, not for passes, but for justice. They asked that the fast mail be stopped here. It will stop.

They asked for better train services. It will come. They stated that the stock yards were a nuisance and should be abated. The company will move them. They asked for a new depot. The[y] promised to surely build it....

March 5, 1890

--Wm. Hecht is going to re-build the packing house as soon as the U. P road re-locates its stock yards. The farmers will hail this good news with joy.

May 9, 1890

--W. T. Scott is building a two story carpenter shop down near the stock yards.

July 2, 1890

[City Council meeting] The matter of vacating First ave. for the new depot came up next. [Discussion and proposed amendments followed. One to require the depot be finished by Dec. 1, 1890 passed. The ordinance for vacating the street passed.] Johnson moved that the council on bended knee implore the U. P. to move its stock yard.

Oct 18, 1890

[Article about development of town in the Wood River valley resulting from builfinh ogr yhr Black Hills Railroad] More lumber has been shipped to Sumner than to any point along the entire valley. The railroad company has put in extensive stockyards at this point, and have laid more sidetrack than at any other station.

March 18, 1891

--A child in a family named Kelly, living near the B & M stock yard died yesterday of scarlet fever. The county was called on for aid in burying. There is still another case of the fever in the house.

April 21, 1891

Reelected Mayor Ira Johnson delivered his inaugural speech at the city council meeting which included the following: "The railroad stock yards have been a source of annoyance to the property owners near them for the past six years. I hope the street and alley committee in conjunction with the board of health will use every means within their power to have them moved from within the city limits. If that cannot be accomplished, to see that they are cleaned, floored, and kept clean all the season round. This I trust will receive immediate attention, as warm weather is nearly at hand."

May 5, 1891

[At a City Council meeting] Mayor Johnson read a letter from E. Bignell superintendent of the B. & M. in response to a request to move the stock yards. He promised to put the yards in neat condition but said it would be out of the question to move them. There was quite a discussion, and some members seemed to want to get a whack at the yards.

May 12, 1891

[City council meeting – letter from UP general stock manager C. J. Lane – unreasonable to move stock yards but they would put 2 feet of dirt and sand in each pen and floor them, even put a cover over them if so ordered by the city council. Then the yard would be kept in order. They would do this as soon as they could get the men and materials here. There was a similar proposition from Supt. Bignell of the B & M.

May 18, 1891

--The U. P. stock yards are being cleaned and sanded.

June 2, 1891

--The U. P. stock yards are being floored.

July 23, 1891

The Hub commended the UP for all it had done in the past year in Kearney – the new depot and improvements around it, the repair of the stock yards which were then well kept, and the establishment of the "Kearney Express", a day train which made a round trip to Omaha every day.

April 19, 1892

[city council meeting] Authority was given the street and alley committee to put tiling along the B. & M. stock yards.

June 20, 1892

[A workman was injured in accident while laying pipes] to connect the U. P. stock yards with the water works....

Feb 18, 1893

[from the Shelton Clipper reprinted in the Hub] Lee Clanton met quite a painful accident this morning. He and his brother were coming into town together on horseback and when near the Union Pacific stock yards they started to run a race. Just opposite the home of James Mularkey Lee's horse stumbled and fell down throwing him onto hard frozen ground....

July 11, 1893

[city council meeting] Tout said P. J. Nichols, general superintendent of the Union Pacific, had given instructions to have the stock yards cleaned up and it would be done.

Sept 12, 1893

--A party from the west has been camping near the stockyards today with a drove of nearly a hundred burrows. He is selling them along the route and says he has disposed of thirteen here in Kearney. If he has, the citizens in neighborhoods where they are owned, will probably be treated to nightly serenades.

Dec 16, 1896

Dog ran errand home with note from Mr. Ormsby to wife to tie stockyards key to dog and send him back. Dog brought key to him.

Jan 6, 1897

Union Pacific Stock Business

.... [car loads of cattle came down the K & BH railroad from Amherst]

In the year 1896, the Union Pacific carried 11,508 cars of stock to the Union Stock yards in South Omaha.

Mar 26, 1897

--The Union Pacific has remodeled its stock yards at this place to enable shippers going through to feed here. Water has been in all the pens.

June 14, 1898

Had Tussle with Bums

Night Policeman Tundle had a tussle with bums last night at the stock yards and they came near getting the best of him. When the fight got warmest he thought of his club, brought it into play and brought his men to the city jail. They were walked out of town this morning in the rain.

July 8, 1898

[A gang of bums at the B & M stock yards made a fire from a bunch of materials there, then drained the water tank putting out the fire.]

Mar. 2, 1899

--The B&M force that has been repairing the scales at the stock yards completed their work yesterday and left this morning.

March 22, 1899

[the crew went on to the Lowell stock yards to make repairs there]

Dec 28, 1899

--The bridge gang of the Union Pacific is working on the stock yards today and improving the condition of the pens.

Jan 23, 1900

A Smashed Bicycle

On Saturday evening a Victor bicycle belonging to T. R. Bates was stolen and placed in the path of the fast mail of the Union Pacific. When the express struck it there was nothing left of the machine but the two wheels and handle bars, which were found in the stock yards. The chief of police was notified and up to this writing the culprit has not been found.

Oct 22, 1900

--The U. P. stock yards will undergo some changes and improvements and will be moved to another location.

Oct 23, 1900

--The Union Pacific stock yards will be moved east of the freight depot.

--Workmen are tearing up the earth about the old U. P. freight depot to make connection for the double track.

Oct 26, 1900

Union Pacific Notes

[brick work on the new freight depot was to begin in 5 days. Double track had been installed. West bound trains were to use the north track and east bound would use the south track.]

Surveyors have mapped out the land for the stock yards. The yards will be moved east of the freight depot and will be one of the largest this side of Omaha.

Nov 3, 1900

--A petition asking the city council to prohibit the Union Pacific railroad moving its stock yards east of the U. P. passenger depot is being circulated by east side citizens.

Feb 1, 1901

[someone from the Kearney Democrat talked to a man who was "one of the heaviest shippers both in and out o Kearney" who talked about UP activity in Kearney]

First, he talked about the new brick and iron freight depot that is just now ready for occupancy and which is equal to the Union Pacific freight depot at Omaha. Then he talked about the double-tracking from Buda to Watson's Ranch, changing the stock yards, the rebuilding and relocating of the switch yards and their enlargement.

[flag house on Central had been moved from the east to west side of the street. Officials had been in Kearney and measured property adjacent to the passenger depot to be used for a Union Pacific hotel.]

July 23, 1901

--The Union Pacific company has finished the work of providing for water at the stock yards.

Jan 4, 1902

The K. & B. H. is putting up new stock yards at Glenwood.

Oct 2, 1903

--O. B. Williams has a carload of young South Dakota horses for sale at the B & M stock yards.

July 18, 1904

[A case of beer was stolen from the Storz Brewing company beer vault on a Saturday night. The empty case was found near "the old stock yards in the western part of the city." The Dawson Co. sheriff in Lexington called the Kearney Chief of Police to see if any beer had been stolen. He said 5 bums had been in town and who said "they had drank a case of beer, just before leaving Kearney." When told there had, the Lex. Sheriff took the train for North Platte hoping to find them and return them to Kearney to be charged with burglary.]

July 23, 1904

A Bad Gang of Bums

A motley gang of bums and drunks was picked up by the police at the stock yards Friday evening. Complaint had been sent in, that a tough crowd was making its headquarters there, so the officers went down with a dray and rounded the fellows up. There were a half dozen of them and they were a fierce looking outfit. All were drunk and dirty and two of them had but one leg each. They were locked up until Saturday morning when they were drilled out of town

Aug 17, 1904

--A gang of Burlington carpenters has been in the city for several days, putting in a new track scale at the stock yards and enlarging and repairing the yards. They went south Wednesday morning.

Aug 18, 1904

A man traveling through Kearney died "as a result of being kicked by a horse at the Union Pacific stock yards." He had taken a job there earlier in the day breaking horses.

June 6, 1905

{at City Council meeting} Mr. Shaw from the First Ward [southeast Kearney] complained of a hole east of the U. P. stock yards, which has become a nuisance. [The street & sidewalk committee were delegated to deal with both railroads] "and instruct them that they must have their stock yards drained and that they must clean no more stock yards in the city without hauling the cleanings outside the city limits."

July 22, 1905

Wood Olinger Injured

Wood Olinger suffered a rather severe and painful accident at the Burlington stock yards Saturday morning. [He entered a shed and hit his head on the end of a 2x4 giving himself a gash which bled profusely.] ...and after the injured man had been brought to town in an automobile, Dr. Basten took five stitches in the cut.

Sept 19, 1905

[at city council meeting] The board of health and city attorney were instructed to see that the Burlington Railroad company drained its stock yards and right of way in that vicinity as required by law.

Dec. 5, 1905

[At city council meeting they spent most of their time discussing the water sanitation conditions] in the southeastern part of the city, [where there was fear of a typhoid epidemic. One council member attributed a case of typhoid to water contaminated by the Burlington stock yards and their lack of drainage.]

May 25, 1906

[the Burlington bridge crew made some repairs at the stock yards while they were in town]

June 5, 1906

[city council meeting] A petition signed by twenty-two citizens, asking that the B. & M and the U. P. railroad companies be prevented from keeping and feeding stock in their stockyards as the yards were becoming a nuisance, was received. On motion of Didricksen the city attorney was instructed to draft an ordinance requiring the railroad companies to move the stock yards at least ten blocks east.

July 14, 1906

[Two B & M officials were in town and looked over the stock yards, talked with businessmen and city council members. They said they would put the yards in good order and keep them that way. One of the officials said he would be back for the next city council meeting and present his case.]

July 17, 1906

[city council meeting – lots of discussion resulting in the city tabling the ordinance for the present upon the promise of the B & M official that they would keep the yards clean and not use them as a feed yard. Whenever the board of health said they were a nuisance, the ordinance requiring the stock yards to move could be brought up for third reading and passed.]

March 28, 1907

--Petitions are being circulated to have the stock yards, feed yards and "bull pens" removed from the First Ward declaring them a public nuisance in too close proximity to the residence portion of the city.

April 16, 1907

[city council meeting – three petition were presented and discussed. Didricksen moved the ordinance moving the stock yards, which had been tabled, be brought up and voted on. Motion lost but the clerk was to notify the railroads that the issue would be addressed at the next meeting.

June 7, 1907, June 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17

[Publishing of proposed ordinance prohibiting stock yards within city limits of Kearney. Limits were described as 11th street on the south, 10th Ave on the west, 31st St on the north. East line went from 31st & Q to the Union Pacific, west to K, south to the Burlington, east back to Q and then south to 11th.]

July 31, 1907

[The Union Pacific will move their stock yards to a location east of Ave K, south of their main line. There has been a delay because that property is leased and planted to corn. The UP has to cancel the lease and get an appraisal of damages. In the meantime they promise to keep the present yards clean and not hold livestock for “any length of time” before shipping.

The ordinance will affect anyone who has feed lots within city limits and they will be notified “to abate the nuisance”]

Oct 23, 1907

Complaints Filed by Citizens Against Yarding Stock in City

[A complaint was filed against a man for keeping a horse yards near the Burlington at 19th St. The man appeared in court and denied ownership of the yard so a new warrant was issued to John Doe. There was also a complaint filed against the Smith Bros who operate a slaughter house south of town.

Nov 19, 1907

[City council – Bignell, supt. Of Burlington was thee to state his side of the story. He said railroads are obligated to operate stock yards at shipping points for the convenience of the public. Grand Island asked them to move t heir stock yards there and Burlington had refused. In the case of Kearney they needed assurance that as the city expanded people who would be living near the new location would not complained as the people near the present yards were. However, he said they were willing to move if the other railroads were. Since the railroad owns practically all the property in the proposed stock yards area, the council did not believe there would be much complaint.]

Feb 4, 1908

[City council – city attorney instructed to find out the railroad companies’ intentions about moving their stock yards and report to the council.]

April 1908

[A for rent ad ran during the month for potato land “near the stock yard; east part of town.”]

July 1, 1908

About b. & M. Stock Yards

The Burlington is Fined For Maintaining Yards Within City

On June 23 a complaint against the maintenance of the Burlington stock yards where they are now located, was heard in police court and the date for trial set for June 30. [The trial was held, Burlington was represented by its agent, not a lawyer, and they did not present any evidence. The complainant, Fred Wilson, presented his.] ...the judge found the railroad guilty and fined the company \$25 and costs of \$5.15, with orders to remove the stock yards according to the provision of the city ordinance, within the next ten days. The case was appealed to the district court and will be heard at the beginning of the first session of that tribunal.

Monday, Dec 7, 1908

On Tuesday, December 8, several state cases will be tried. And the two stock yard cases of State vs. U. P. R. R. and State vs. C. B. & Q. R. R. These latter two railroad cases are over refusal of the companies to move their stock yards.

Tuesday, Dec. 8, 1908

The railroad stock yard cases have been continued until December 16 and the jury waived.

Dec. 9, 1908

--W. D. Clifton was at home on Tuesday to be present at the stock yards cases to be tried in the district court.

Dec 15, 1908

--District court will be in session on Wednesday and the stock yards cases will be up for hearing.

Dec. 16, 1908

--The stock yards cases were up in county court today and up to the time of going to press no decision had been reached in the matter.

Dec. 17, 1908

John Shea, of Omaha, assistant attorney general of the Union Pacific, was in the city Wednesday as counsel in the stock yards case.

Friday, Dec 18, 1908

[The case was heard Wed. & Thur. mornings. The Burlington agreed to abide by the decision in the UP case. After the arguments had been given the judge took the case under advisement. Each side can present briefs, the city in 15 days and the railroad 10 days later. The judge would give his decision at the January term which begins on the 25th.]

Feb. 25, 1909

....The other is that of the State and City of Kearney vs. C. B. & Q. railroad for failure to remove their stock yards. This is a test case....will not be tried until the term convenes May 3.

Apr 29, 1909

Stock Yards Being Treated to Spalls and Cinders

Each summer there are numerous complaints filed in the court against the stock yard of the two railroads here, on the ground that they are a nuisance because of their offensive odor. [There have been several attempts to move the yards. The UP is making an effort to recent odors by putting in a thick layer of cinders and spall (powered rock)

Aug 29, 1911

[city council – citizens from the south side near the Burlington stock yards appeared to object saying the stock yards was not being moved far enough east, the vicinity of Ave K would be okay with them.]

Feb 17 & 21, 1921

Manure Your Garden or Truck Farm

There is a large quantity of manure and cleanings from stock cars and stock pens at the Union Pacific stock yards, south of the tracks, east of Ave H to be had for the hauling. If you want to hire teams and wagon call W. S. Dow or Pete Shields.

July 1924

Annual protest to city hall about odor at stock yards.

July 22, 1924

--The city engineer and the city attorney are scheduled to pay Union Pacific headquarters a visit shortly to take up with them stock yards regulations and drainage under the tracks.

July 25, 1924

To Hold Conference with U. P. Officials on the Stock Yards

Hope to Reach Agreement on the Location of Yards

The city council, at a recent special meeting, passed a resolution, if enforced, would mean relocation of the Union Pacific stock yards.

[But it was passed without giving UP a chance to be heard so that was set for the next meeting.]....

To totally eliminate all possibility of future complaint can be accomplished only by abolition of all stock yards facilities in the city. That is out of the question, especially in Kearney, a city ranking high as a live stock shipping center. This the council fully understands, but the various members believe that some compromise location can be agreed upon.....

The railroad company has spent considerable money in recent years making improvements about the local yards and they are naturally reluctant about abandoning them.

July 31, 1924

Talk on Relocating of Stock Yards with U. P. Officials

Believed Satisfactory Plan Will Be Worked Out

....The plan believed to be workable is relocating the feeding yards at a point further east, possibly beyond the oil tanks. This will place them beyond all range of residential encroachment for many years

to come, “and if Kearney ever grows that far out of its present residential bounds we’ll willingly pack up and move again,” one of the officials said later.

[the loading pen would stay at its present location. It was the holding pens where hogs were fed that people were complaining about.]

May 23, 1925

[UP would move the feed lot portion of their stockyard but they wanted to close the road within their right of way that crossed Ave Q east of the coal chutes and swung around the stockyards. Instead, go south on Q to the section road [11th St?] and west into the city. Streets & alleys committee of the city council recommended approval of the request if the feed pens were moved.

In a related issue was brought up by one of the council members, that of squatters on the Union Pacific right of way between H & F. A large number of small shacks had been built pushing further and further onto the right of way and needed to be stopped before a shanty town” developed on railroad property.

The street in question was called North Depot street. It would be closed and a new street put in directly south of it which would result in the removal of many of the shacks.

July 29, 1927

--The Burlington is putting in a new spur of track near their stock yards, for use of two oil companies coming to Kearney.

November 27, 1927

An auction barn was being built in Ravenna by the stock yards. And in Minden in fall 1932.

July 6, 1930

Use of Truck for Marketing Shows Constant Increase

Number in Use in County is Growing Gradually

The business of shipping livestock to Omaha stock yards by truck increased by leaps and bounds during the first six months of 1930. [This included cattle, sheep and hogs from up to 100 going on 200 miles away.]

....Several men are engaged in trucking from Callaway and points as far west as Gothenburg on the main line, carrying live stock to the Omaha markets and picking up such return loads as may be available. Those engaged in collecting poultry and other farm products are also developing sidelines in the way of carrying general merchandise, thus making the operation of their trucks more profitable. In many instances truckers not only have regular routes which they serve, but also have designated depots where merchandise is delivered and collected for transit.