

and about him he saw Kansas, the meeting place of the civilized and the savage.

It is often said that Holliday had a dream and that his dream came true. That does not do him justice. He had a concrete idea; and it was so realistic and so supported by the facts of recent history as he applied them to what he knew of Kansas and the West that as he pondered it it became a passionate purpose to which he completely surrendered himself. His was the spirit and the faith which inspired those men who organized the Atchison & Topeka Railroad Company here at Atchison just eighty years ago today.

Sometimes I wonder whether the choice of that corporate name did not show a shrewd knowledge of human nature. Holliday wrote the charter, which he, Challiss and Pomeroy procured from the Territorial Council some time before. It seems fair to assume that he knew he must take into account local prides and aspirations, and that he felt he could afford it because he knew also that announcement of the project under the outset as impossible, in the minds of unimaginative men. Hence the local name; but as interest grew and as both local and national support increased, the name was changed, so as to indicate better the determination to build a railroad into the very heart of the far West—to build not the Atchison & Topeka but the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe.

That was in 1863, a year of stirring events. The nation was torn with civil strife. The battle of Gettysburg and the capture of Vicksburg were not six months in the past, and the battle of Chickamauga less than five weeks; and at the very moment when the amended charter issued the cannon were roaring at Chattanooga and Missionary Ridge. Holliday must have had a belief in the permanence of the nation so strong, a faith in its future so profound and abiding, that all the clamor of war itself could not turn him from the great purpose to which he had dedicated himself, and which in quieter and happier days he was to see accomplished. If in these times some of us have an occasional moment of discouragement and doubt as to what destiny holds in store for the United States, we might take a lesson from C. K. Holliday; for he believed in this as a land of opportunity, blessed with men and women capable of whatever sacrifice might be required for its preservation.

There was a great celebration at the rail

head when the first seven miles was completed in 1868, and Holliday made a speech in which he predicted that in time the rails would bind together California, the Gulf of Mexico, the Mississippi Valley and the Great Lakes. In 1885 the operations reached the Pacific, in 1886 the Gulf, and in 1887 Chicago. Thus in nineteen years Holliday's prediction came true. Nineteen years of failure and success, famine and plenty. The sod house, the grasshopper, the drouth, the bumper crop; the Indian, the buffalo, the cattle trail; the desperado, gunfire at the saloon; Bat Masterson and Bill Tilghman and Wild Bill Hickock; the rail head and the plow advancing together; organization of government; law and order; culture; industry; wealth. Nineteen years of superb accomplishment.

Dodge City, Raton Pass, Santa Fe, the Needles, San Diego—those are names that call up all the romance of the West—for they mark the route along which the frontier was pushed back further and further, until it disappeared as the naked prairies became farms and gardens, the crossings of the cattle trails became cities, and schools and churches and homes arose to bear witness to the coming of pioneer men and women with the courage to survive. T. J. Peter, W. B. Strong, A. A. Robinson—these, too, are names to conjure with. They were railroad builders who found joy in the building and found no terror in desert or stream or mountain. They, too, were pioneers.

The Santa Fe claims the right to share with the people of Kansas the tradition of all these men, home builders and railroad builders alike.

Their complete story has never been written, and it cannot be; but it would be an epic of frontier courage and adventure, glowing with all the color of the West; an epic of countless days of individual hardship, countless acts of individual courage, and countless failures, all crowned by unmeasurable success. No fiction ever written has more dramatic interest than the taking of Raton Pass; unless it be the flight of the Mennonites from Russian despotism to the Kansas country opened by the Santa Fe. No fact in the economic history of the West has added more to its security and prosperity than introduction of hard wheat by the Mennonites; unless it be the driving of Raton tunnel or the building of the bridges across the Kaw, the Colorado, the Missouri and the Mississippi.

It is entirely proper that the people of Kansas and representatives of the Santa Fe

should celebrate this anniversary together. The history of the Santa Fe and the history of Kansas are interwoven from the beginning. In very large measure each has depended upon the other for its development, and we of the Santa Fe like to believe that neither has failed the other. We like to quote a passage from the annual report of our directors to our shareholders for the year 1888. That was the year after transcontinental operation commenced between Chicago and the Pacific and the Gulf, but this passage does not concern that achievement so much as it concerns the enlargement of the enterprise by construction of branch lines for the development of outlying territory remote from the transcontinental routes:

The history of Western railroad construction for the past quarter of a century has demonstrated that successful results can only be attained by occupying territory promptly, and often in advance of actual business necessity. This was the policy of the Atchison Company from the first. It led the way. It built, not upon assured returns of profit, but upon a faith which time has abundantly vindicated—that the great Western and Southwestern regions of the country were rich in possibilities and that the company which first occupied the territory would reap the first and greatest rewards. Every stockholder of the Company, every investor who contributed his money to the enterprise, thereby expressed his confidence in this policy. That it was a wise one no one questions or can question. Did it cease to be wise when the Company completed its line through Kansas, or when it reached Pueblo, or when it pushed across the Raton and entered New Mexico? The final development of the road into a transcontinental system did not, in the opinion of your Directors, justify the Company in assuming that henceforward it had no duty to perform except to operate its completed line. *** Adjacent to it were large tracts of country not inferior in soil, climate, or other natural advantages to that through which the main line extended. *** To occupy a portion of this territory seemed to your Directors, then, as it does now, an obvious duty. *** Drouths, failure of crops, excessive competition, continually decreasing rates, unwise legislation, strikes, and other calamities have befallen us, as they have other Western roads. *** but it must not be forgotten that neither railroads nor extensions are built with a view solely to immediate earnings. If wisely planned, they look to the future, to the growth of States and communities, and to those settled conditions on the basis of which all business operations are conducted, and without which no business can prosper.

Every mile of our new roads has been built by the Company itself; and no construction company has been interposed to increase the cost, thus securing to our stockholders their actual value of every dollar which has been expended upon their property.

To get the implication of that language, and to understand what it has meant to this State, one need only look at any map of Santa Fe lines in Kansas. We are proud of that passage, its courage, its vision, its

statesmanship and its recognition of public duty; and as this whole occasion makes more vivid the picture of the past, the Santa Fe renews its pledge, inspired by sound business considerations and good citizenship alike, of unfaltering loyalty to the great region of the West and the Southwest which it serves and on which it depends for its own prosperity.

The problems of the Santa Fe were not solved when its transcontinental lines were completed or when its network of branch and feeder lines was constructed, and there has never been a time when it could pause for an idle period of indulgent reflection upon things already done. But always, in the later period of improvement as in the earlier and more colorful period of construction, there has been the same interdependence of the Santa Fe and the great regions which it serves. The same mutuality of interest obtains today.

The ten years since 1929 have been a period of profound business depression which has put to crucial test practically every industry and every business institution of the nation. For the Santa Fe it has meant serious reduction in traffic and revenue, with increasingly disproportionate operating costs and taxes. Nevertheless, on the whole today finds the company with heavier steel, stronger bridges, improved equipment, faster trains and far better service than ten years ago. Lest this seem boastful let me hasten to say that while we are proud of these as physical facts, not exaggerated, yet we do not hesitate to state that they are the result of the very human desire to continue to live. Years ago President Strong announced this principle:

"A railroad, to be successful, must also be a progressive institution. It cannot stand still, if it would. If it fails to advance, it must inevitably go backward and lose ground already occupied."

The experience of the past ten years has proved abundantly the soundness of the thought so expressed. To survive, the Santa Fe had to improve both its property and its service; all the more so because of the untoward business conditions which it faced. Dearth of traffic meant stronger competition for what traffic there was. Extraordinary difficulties confronting Santa Fe patrons meant their greater need for advantageous transportation service. Reduction of operating revenue, both net and gross, required operating economies available only through the added efficiency of improved equipment and way. What President Strong said