



Copyright, 1896, by Mitchell & Miller. THE END OF THE LEAP YEAR SEASON.—Life.

GOOD STORIES OF THE PONY EXPRESS

Three Journeys Across the Desert in the Sixties.

FIRST SYSTEM OF RELAY RIDERS

How the Famous Line of Messengers Was Established and How it Paved the Way for Railroad and Telegraph—Experiences of Riders.

From the Chicago Record.

The first regular method of transporting merchandise across the plains by ox-teams, when detachments of United States troops were placed in the New Mexico country to hold the border line against the encroachments of Mexicans about the time of the Mexican war. Then the frontier posts were along the Missouri river. When General Albert Sidney Johnson was ordered to move against the fighting moros in Utah...

Alexander Majors passed his eventful life entirely upon the plains. He learned to drive an ox team soon after he learned to walk and early in life he was engaged in the business of freighting upon the famous Santa Fe trail. He prospered in the business and when the demand came for a great caravan to transport the supplies for the army operating against the moros...

ESTABLISHING THE PONY EXPRESS

The discovery of gold in the Rocky mountains, near Denver, was the opportunity which Russell sought to prove his wonderful executive ability. He conceived the idea of establishing a daily stage line from the Missouri river to Denver and against the opinions of his junior partners who thought the plan too dangerous an experiment, the stage line was established. About this time Senator Gwin, of California, was seeking influence and aid to secure the opening of a stage transportation route across the plains somewhere along the 40th parallel of latitude. At that time the only overland means of transportation, other than of emigrant trains, was by the Red River route, operated by the Butterfield Stage company. That route across the Pan-Handle of Texas, through Arizona deserts to Los Angeles and thence to San Francisco, was much too long and the Californians were seeking to find a shorter route. The chief opposition to the central route was that it would be impracticable in winter, owing to the extreme cold weather and the heavy snows of the Sierra Nevada range.

One of his visits to Washington to look after his business of freighting army supplies to Utah posts Russell met Senator Gwin and was taken with the daring idea of a direct route to the Pacific that he immediately declared that the scheme was entirely feasible and that his firm could and would undertake it. They already had a stage route in operation to Salt Lake City and the remaining distance could be covered in good time, he was certain. The fact that the stage line was losing money rapidly did not seem to worry Russell at all. He felt assured that in time the country would settle up and that the stage route would result in great profit to the stage line owners; there was the hope of a heavy subsidy from the government for the mail service, which the stage route would afford if it proved practicable.

FOUR HUNDRED MUSTANGS IN RELAYS

In order to prove the practicability of the route Senator Gwin proposed the establishment first of a pony express, that by means of fast horses and relays at suitable distances dispatches and important business mail could be carried from the Missouri river to San Francisco in ten days. If this venture was a success the necessary equipment for the stage line must eventually follow and with it the change of the mail route from the Butterfield line to that operated by Russell, Majors & Waddell.

When Russell came back from Washington in the winter of 1859, said Majors recently, speaking of the days of the famous pony express, "he told us of the proposed scheme and wanted us to go in with him to try the plan. Both Waddell and I opposed it as being entirely too expensive and uncertain, but Russell insisted and was so enthusiastic that we finally consented and our firm prepared to open the route.

"Within two months we had secured between 400 and 500 wiry Mexican mustangs, had established relay stations from Salt Lake City to Sacramento, with a force of men at each station as keepers, riders and assistants and had furnished all the necessary equipment for the work. Each pony was to average thirty-five miles a day, three ponies making a relay in the best possible time. The messages to be carried were written or printed on tissue paper and the charge was \$5 a half ounce.

"The first start was made from Sacramento, the end of the telegraph line, on April 2, 1860. It was a great day in the history of that city. There were public addresses, a parade and a banquet. The city was decorated with flags and the express was started with all the glory possible.

CUTTING DOWN THE TIME.

"Our relay riders made over 100 miles before having over the dispatches to the next relay rider. Often they rode farther and on several occasions a rider was known to go 300 miles before he was relieved. From the day the first dispatch bag was started there was not a single trip made in less than the scheduled time of ten days between the Missouri river and San Francisco. The time by the Butterfield stage route was twenty-one days, so we demonstrated a time-saving of eleven days. Of course the earnings of the pony ex-

press did not pay a tenth part of the cost of the service, nor to mention interest or profit on the investment, but we never expected that it would. We were only trying to establish a through stage route and a freighting business to the coast along the central route and thereby make enormous profits we felt sure of earning. Although the time was limited to ten days, on two occasions a special effort was made to cut down the time. President Buchanan's message to congress in December, 1859, was carried from St. Joseph, Mo., to Sacramento in eight days and a few hours; the inaugural address of President Lincoln in March, 1861, was dispatched in seven days and seventeen hours.

"The pony express was maintained at a heavy cost. Indians raided the stations and killed the men; riders were shot while on the road; horses were continually dying from exhaustion and many teams were employed in freighting supplies to the relay stations and in the winter the mountains in the open winter time so that the pony riders would not be delayed.

TELEGRAPH LINE IS ESTABLISHED.

"The success of the pony express in shortening the distance between the frontier and California encouraged the Western Union Telegraph company to extend its line across the plains. Edward Creighton, of Omaha, who had built a number of lines in the west for the telegraph company, had long nursed this plan and in the winter of 1860 he rode to Salt Lake City on one of our stages, where he interested Brigham Young in the enterprise, then pushing on horseback over the Nevada desert and the Sierra Nevada mountains in the winter time he secured the co-operation of the California State Telegraph company. Returning to Omaha in 1861 he set to work building the line across the plains was undertaken. The stage stations of our company and the relay stations of the pony express made it comparatively easy for the construction parties to operate and in October of that year the pony express gave way to the telegraph company. During the summer of 1861 a stage route was established from Salt Lake City to Sacramento and in time the mails were routed that way instead of by the Butterfield line.

"The pony express and its daring riders hastened the opening of the overland route and I have no doubt that had it not been for our firm the telegraph, stage and even railroad lines across the plains must have been retarded for years.

ONE OF THE RIDERS OF THE PONY EXPRESS

lives in this city and he delights to talk of his experiences during that exciting year. The life of Jay G. Kelley, a well-known mining engineer, is full of interesting incidents. As a mere lad he ran away from his home in Boston and went to California on a clipper around Cape Horn. From that time until rheumatism compelled him to settle down to a quieter existence his life was full of adventure.

KELLEY AS AN EXPRESS RIDER.

"I joined a company of California volunteers in 1858," began Mr. Kelley, "and under Colonel Jack Hayes, a Texas ranger, and Colonel Hungerford, a Mexican war veteran, we proceeded into Nevada to exterminate the Plutes, who were on the warpath. After a decisive battle at Pyramid lake, we thought the Indians would settle down and behave themselves, so I left the volunteers and settled in Carson City. In the spring of 1860 Bolivar Roberts came to Carson City to engage riders and station men for the pony express. He wanted men of light weight who could ride well and who knew how to shoot. I suited him and was engaged at a salary of \$75 a month. We started out with three teams to establish stations, our party mustering fifty men. As soon as a station was located the men would be dropped off to wait until the pony express should appear. At that time I was 22 years old, weighed about 110 pounds and was as full of life as a boy could possibly be. It was all fun in those days and now I wonder how I ever survived at all.

MUSIC FROM A MOUNTAIN.

"Our next station was at Sad Springs, where good water could be obtained by sinking wells into the sand and wailing the holes with lava boulders found in the sand. We constructed a fort 100 by 75 feet of these lava boulders and ponies were kept in these rooms with the men to prevent their being shot or carried off by the Indians. Just back of the fort was a sand mountain and when the wind blew the sand fairly darkened the air. There was a curious phenomenon about that mountain which I never solved. When the wind was in a certain direction musical sounds could be heard coming from the mountain, rising and falling with the wind and changing tones like a great organ. Often I lay at night on my bunk and listened to these beautiful tones thundering from that sand mountain, and it was a delightful change from the monotony of our lives out on the Nevada desert.

"To the next station, a distance of thirty-seven miles, there was a stretch of sandy country which in these days passengers in Pullman cars find disagreeable to cross. There was not a drop of water about the way, and in the heat of summer or in the bitter cold days of winter that ride was awful. But at that station, called Cold Springs, a beautiful stream of water ran right by the station from a timbered canyon, and it seemed a paradise after that ride over the thirty-seven miles of trackless sand. In going from Cold Springs to Sand Springs, on the next day, I carried the Buchanan message. I killed my pony when twelve miles out from the latter place and had to trot into the station on foot, carrying the dispatch bag. When the man at the station saw me coming afoot over the desert they thought I was the advance of a party of Plutes and they rushed out to riddle me. I held my hands up, signifying a surrender, and then one of the men, by the aid of spyglasses, recognized me. I was covered with alkali dust and perspiration and so faded that I did not wonder that they failed to recognize me at first.

"East of Cold Springs was Smith



Creek and between these two stations was a thicket of quaking aspens along Edward's creek, several miles wide, where the only trail was a narrow, winding path through the brush. This was a fine place for the Indians to secrete themselves and wait for the express riders. One day a Mexican rider came into Cold Springs station with a bullet hole through his body. He told us he had been shot in the quaking aspens thicket, but he had held on and the pony had brought him into the station. He died shortly afterward. A few hours later the express from the west came in and I had to make the ride to Smith creek through that same thicket. I tell you I did not lose any time in making that ride. At the top of his speed the pony rushed through that winding trail where there could be seen a few feet ahead of us at any time. The bride reins lay on the horse's neck and I held my Sharp's rifle at all cock ready for any emergency. When I had passed the place and had stopped on rising ground to let the pony breathe I saw the brush moving slowly. I fired several times into the thicket when all motion ceased. I always believed an Indian was lurking there, but I did not stop long to make sure.

"Several days afterward I found the bodies of two soldiers stripped everything in the shape of wearing apparel in that thicket and we supposed they had been ambushed by the Indians. I was never bothered by Indians during my service as pony express rider, but a number of the riders were killed by them.

"I left the outfitting expedition at Cold Springs and reached the station keeper and his assistant in fitting up the place. We had to drag down fire wood from the mountains by hand and it was slow and fatiguing work. We did not know just when the rider would come along nor from what direction. We kept a pony saddled and bridled and were ready to make a change in a minute. We knew when a rider was near at hand, for our watchword was 'Pony, pony, pony,' cried at the top of the voice. All through the year this cry was sounded by the riders when approaching stations or passing emigrant trains along the way. The first rider was the Mexican who a few days before had been in the quaking aspens thicket. It was just at dusk when we heard the cry coming up from below and we rushed to bring the pony around. All the ponies were of Mexican stock, wiry and but tamed. We always had to blindfold them with a piece of leather until the rider had mounted and then when he was ready he would cry out 'Pony, pony, pony' and the rider would be pushed up. As soon as the broncho could see he would begin to buck and sometimes he would not settle down until he had nearly a pony during that whole which did not buck or jump stuff-legged. We could stand the bucking all right, for by showing our big teeth and kicking the grass surling we could hold close to the pony and were never thrown. But when the pony undertook to jump up and come to a stop, it was a different matter. I had a narrow escape from death one evening shortly after dark, when, on rounding a turn in the trail, I saw the light of a camp-fire ahead. I did not know whether the party was composed of Indians or emigrants and I had no time to inquire. Dashing the spurs into the mustang and crying 'Pony, pony, pony,' as I rode, I rushed right through the party as they clustered on either side of the road. As I came nearer I saw the men rushing around in evident fright. As I rode through the party they all whistled with firearms and bullets whistled about me until I was out of range. I learned upon my return trip that this party of emigrants had come on our overland route from a side route and had not become acquainted with the pony-express yet. They thought it was a party of Indians trying to stampede their stock. They apologized and explained the matter, until I had to let the case pass, though I had intended to have it out with that crowd for their stupidity. When the pony express was abandoned I returned out of the desert to Carson city and went to mining for a short time, until there came a call for volunteers to defend the posts against the Indians while the regulars went to war with the south.

"I was made captain of a company by Governor Nye and became commander of Fort Churchill, a post which I used to ride by when I was carrying dispatches.

"East of Cold Springs was Smith

"East of Cold Springs was Smith



Furs

Are at once a luxury and a necessity. They afford the greatest degree of warmth and comfort and are also the acme of style and becomingness. If a fur garment is poorly made, or of inferior materials, it fails of its purpose—it neither wears well nor looks well. If properly made of high class fur, it never fails to give full value in both appearance and service for every dollar of cost. We warrant every garment shown in our store to be the best that money can buy.



For the Holidays Be Sure to Examine Our Immense Line of

Cloth Jackets and Capes

Is complete and at greatly reduced prices, considering the quality and style. Our aim is to give the best goods for the money of any house in Scranton.

We manufacture Furs here in our store, and repair Furs of all kinds.

BEAVER AND BOUCLE JACKETS, price \$3.98, worth \$7.50.

PLUSH CAPES, braided and trimmed with Thibet, price \$3.98, worth \$7.50.

F. L. CRANE, RELIABLE FURRIER, 324 LACKA. AVE.

The Only Exclusive FUR AND CLOAK HOUSE In Scranton.



A Jaunty Fur Cap

Will change the appearance of any girl. Why not try one on and see? It will cost nothing, and it puts you under no obligations to buy. We want you to know the magnificent stock we have of serviceable and valuable goods. If you don't care to buy, perhaps you may tell your friends of us.

For the Holidays Be Sure to Examine Our Immense Line of

Cloth Jackets and Capes

Is complete and at greatly reduced prices, considering the quality and style. Our aim is to give the best goods for the money of any house in Scranton.

We manufacture Furs here in our store, and repair Furs of all kinds.

BEAVER AND BOUCLE JACKETS, price \$3.98, worth \$7.50.

PLUSH CAPES, braided and trimmed with Thibet, price \$3.98, worth \$7.50.

F. L. CRANE, RELIABLE FURRIER, 324 LACKA. AVE.

THE HUNT & CONNELL CO., Gas and Electric Fixtures, The Welsbach Light At Reduced Prices. 434 Lackawanna Ave.

A. E. ROGERS' Jewelry Store 218 LACKAWANNA AVENUE. We have nearly completed our Holiday Stock and are now prepared to offer as fine an assortment of JEWELRY, CLOCKS, WATCHES, CUT GLASS, ART POTTERY, BRIC-A-BRAC, SILVER WARE, LAMPS, PLATED WARE, as can be found anywhere. Look at our \$10.00 Gold Watches, warranted 15 years. Beautiful Banquet Lamp and Large Silk Shade, At \$4.45. Rogers' Triple Plated Knives and Forks are fine, At \$3.00. 213 Lackawanna Avenue.

JAMES MOIR, THE MERCHANT TAILOR Has Moved to His New Quarters, 402 Lackawanna Avenue. Entrance on side next to First National Bank. He has now in a Full Line of Woolens. Completing everything requisite for fine Merchant Tailoring. And the same can be shown to advantage in his splendidly fitted up rooms. A SPECIAL INVITATION Is Extended to All Readers of The Tribune to Call on "OLD RELIABLE" in His New Business Home.

Scranton Gas and Water Company Hyde Park Gas Company Scranton Electric Light and Heat Company Meadow Brook Water Company W. W. SCRANTON, President. G. B. HAND, Secretary and Treasurer. 115 WYOMING AVENUE.

DELAWARE AND HUDSON TIME TABLE. On Monday, Nov. 23, Pony, pony, pony, as I could not leave Scranton as follows: For Carbondale—5.45, 7.05, 8.15, 9.15, 10.15, 11.30, 12.00 noon; 1.20, 2.30, 3.33, 4.41, 6.00, 7.10, 8.30, 11.30 p. m. For Albany, Saratoga, Montreal, Boston, New England points, etc.—4.45 a. m.; 1.20 p. m. For Honesdale—5.45, 8.55, 10.15 a. m.; 12.00 noon, 2.30, 6.25 p. m. For Wilkes-Barre—4.45, 7.45, 8.45, 9.38, 10.45 a. m.; 12.05, 1.30, 2.33, 3.33, 4.41, 6.00, 7.10, 8.30, 11.30 p. m. For New York, Philadelphia, etc., via Lehigh Valley Railroad—6.45, 7.45 a. m.; 12.05, 1.30, 2.33 (with Black Diamond Express), 11.30 p. m. For Pennsylvania Railroad points—4.45, 8.20, 9.41 p. m. For western points, via Lehigh Valley Railroad—7.45 a. m.; 12.05, 3.33 (with Black Diamond Express), 11.30 p. m. Trains will arrive at Scranton as follows: From Carbondale and the north—4.40, 7.40, 8.40, 9.34, 10.40 a. m.; 12.00 noon; 1.00, 2.25, 4.37, 5.42, 7.45, 8.45 and 11.25 p. m. From Wilkes-Barre and the south—4.40, 7.40, 8.40, 11.55 a. m.; 1.16, 2.14, 3.48, 5.23, 6.21, 7.52, 9.02, 9.46, 11.22 p. m. J. W. BURDICK, G. P. A. Albany, N. Y. H. W. Cross, D. P. A. Scranton, Pa.

DUPONT'S MINING, BLASTING AND SPORTING POWDER. Manufactured at the Wapwallopen Mills, Luzerne county, Pa., and at Wilmington, Delaware. HENRY BELIN, Jr. General Agent for the Wyoming District, 115 WYOMING AVENUE, Scranton, Pa. Third National Bank Building. AGENCIES: THOS. FORD, Pittston, Pa. JOHN B. SMITH & SON, Plymouth, Pa. E. W. MULLIGAN, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Agents for the Repousse Chemical Company's High Explosives.