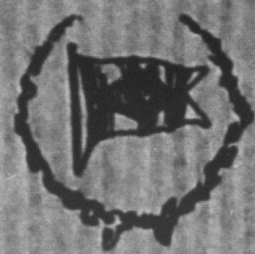
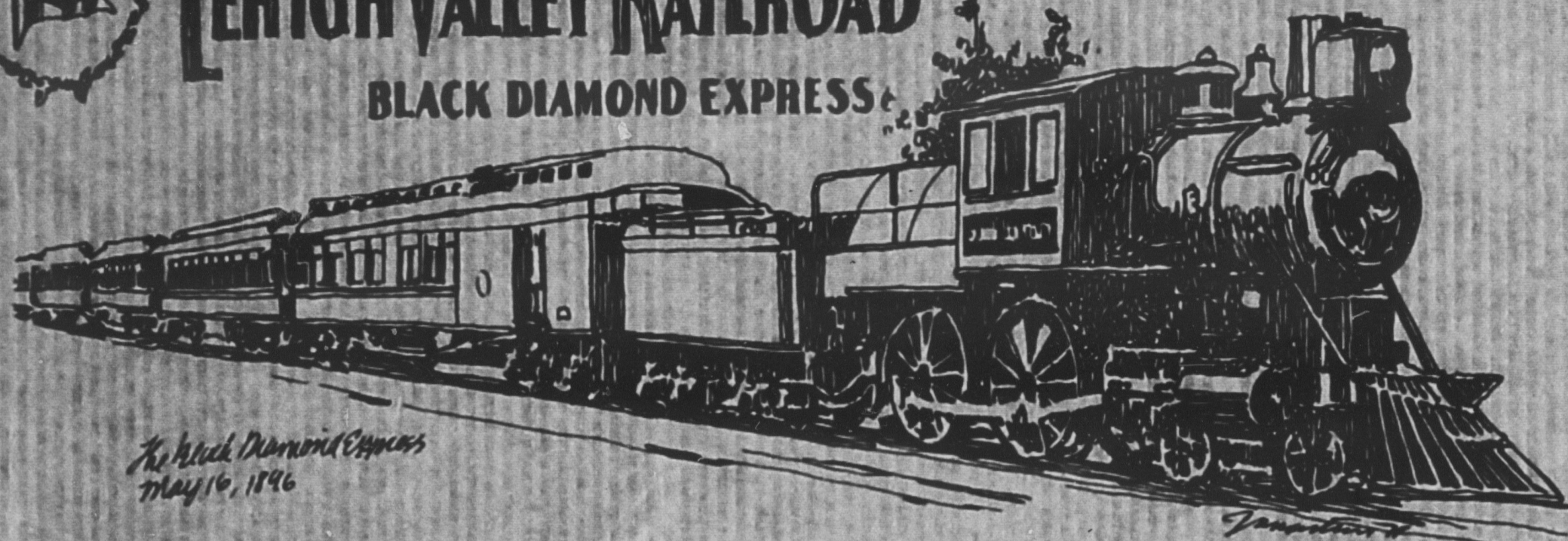


# Sayre



## LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD BLACK DIAMOND EXPRESS



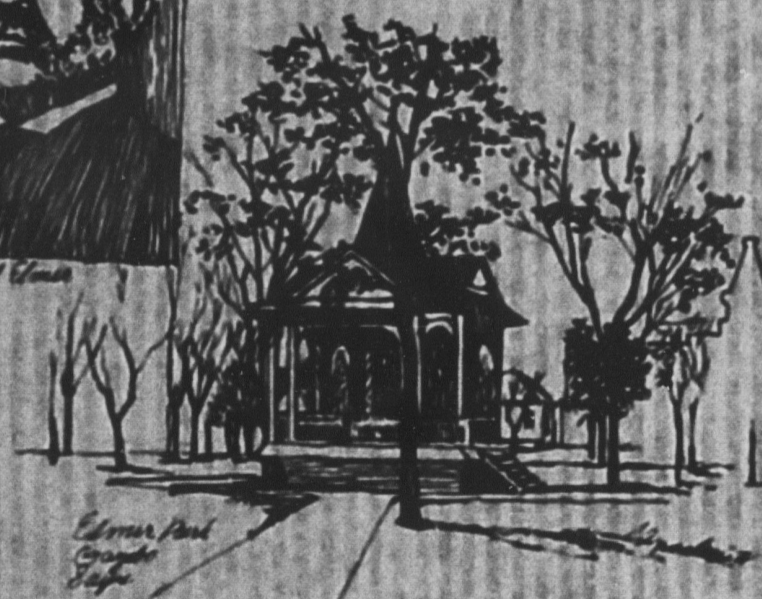
*The Black Diamond Express  
May 16, 1896*

ROBERT H. Sayre, Chief engineer and official of the early Lehigh Valley Railroad, had a dream as he stood on a hill overlooking the site on which he had chosen to build his new railroad shops . . . "What a magnificent location for a great city." Howard Elmer, local businessman, and his associates carried out the plan, purchasing, over a period of a few years, the land, and laying out the streets for the town of Sayre, Pennsylvania.

Today the town bears the name of the man with the dream, and the town park commemorates the man who carried out the plans. The pagoda that still stands there once



*Howard Elmer*



*Howard Elmer Park  
Sayre*

heard the lively tunes of the Lehigh Valley Railroad Band, and watched as Sayre Citizens followed the lovely tradition of planting trees around the park on Arbor Day, in memory of loved ones. Howard Elmer Park, recently saved from destruction by the citizens of Sayre, remains to remind us of the dream and the plans of Robert H. Sayre and Howard Elmer.

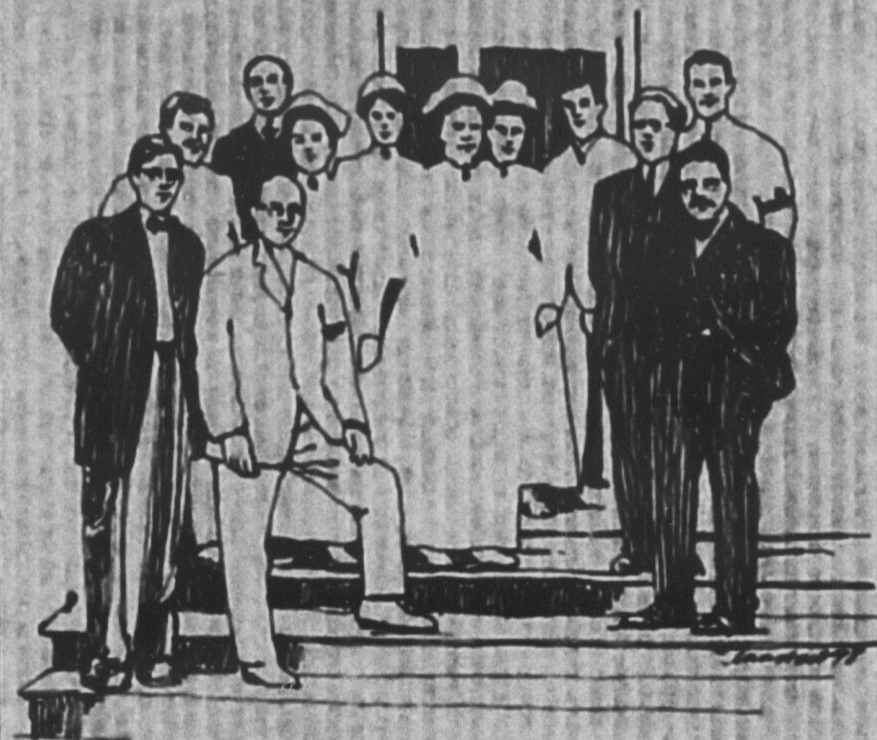
The Lehigh Valley Railroad was the *raison d'être* for the town of Sayre . . . and it was its total source of growth for many years. Built to connect the coal fields with routes to the east, passengers were only incidental to the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Yet, it is a passenger train, "The Black Diamond Express," that is most fondly remembered. Making its first

run in May, 1896 between Jersey City and Buffalo, it is recalled by those who saw it as "The handsomest Train in the World."

With the decline of Railroading, the name of Sayre has taken on a new connotation over the years, being coupled with the name of the Robert Packer Hospital or the Guthrie Clinic. But even this is closely connected with the history of the Lehigh Valley Railroad.

In 1877 Robert Packer, who was then president of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, moved to Sayre, erecting a large, elaborate Victorian mansion on a small hill overlooking the railroad shops. The housewarming for this spectacular home was said to be the grandest affair ever witnessed by the people in the area. Special trains were provided to bring the Towanda guests. Robert Packer died in 1883, at the age of 41, leaving the mansion to his sister. The growth of the railroad, and several very severe accidents in the shop area at Sayre, had brought to light the all too real need for medical facilities near the shops, and a group of townspeople approached Mrs. Mary Packer Cummings about the use of the empty estate for a hospital. She agreed to donate the estate, provided they name the hospital after her brother. Thus began the Robert Packer

Hospital, who's modern history began in 1910 with the arrival of Dr. Donald Guthrie. Together the Robert Packer Hospital and the Guthrie Clinic, have advanced and grown to bring the area the finest facilities and medical



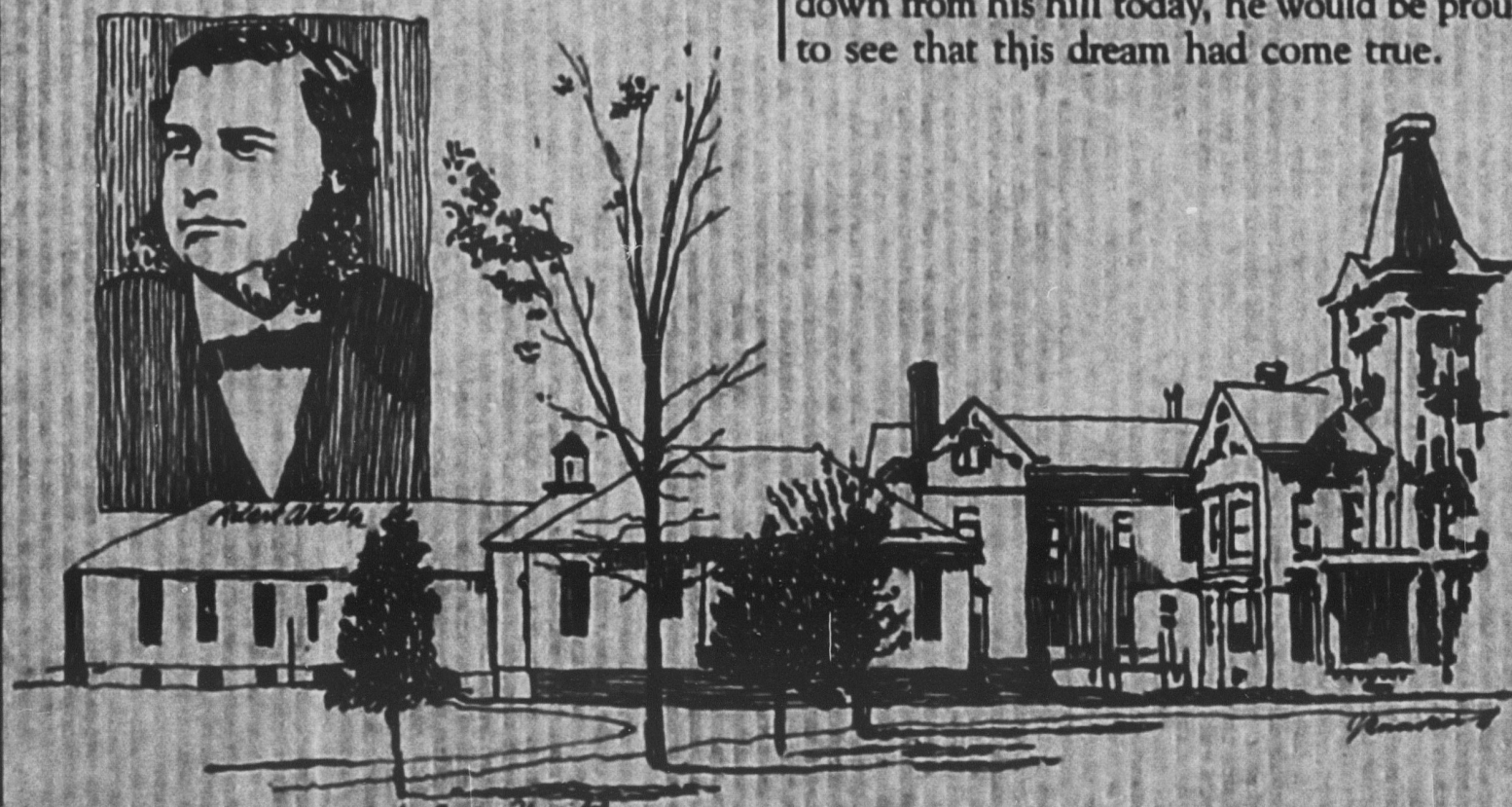
*1914 Robert Packer Hospital*

care possible . . . and their names have become synonymous with Sayre.

The town of Sayre has always been a progressive town, proud of its traditions, but ever cognizant of the importance of progress in all phases of its community . . . its school systems, its parks, its business area, and its government. If Robert H. Sayre could look down from his hill today, he would be proud to see that this dream had come true.



*Robert Packer*



*Robert Packer Hospital  
1900-1910*