

**THE STORY OF THE FIRST
TRANS-CONTINENTAL
RAILROAD: ITS PROJECTORS,
CONSTRUCTION AND HISTORY**

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The Story of the First Trans-Continental Railroad: Its Projectors, Construction and History by
W. F. Bailey

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The Story of the First Trans-continental Railroad

Its projectors, construction
and history



"I Fed the Men who Built It"



Compiled and Published by
W. F. BAILEY

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Preface

For some reason the people of today are not nearly as familiar with the achievements of the last fifty years as they are with those of earlier days.

The school boy can glibly recount the story of Columbus, William Penn, or Washington, but asked about the events leading up to the settlement of the West will know nothing of them and will probably reply "they don't teach us that in our school"—and it is true. Outside of the names of our presidents, the Rebellion, and the Spanish-American War, there is practically nothing of the events of the last fifty years in our school histories, and this is certainly wrong. "Peace hath her victories as well as War," and it is to the end that one of the great achievements of the last century may become better known that this account of the first great Pacific Railroad was written.

It was just as great an event for Lewis and Clark to cross the Rockies as it was for Columbus to cross the Atlantic. The Mormons not only made friends with the Indians as did Penn, but they also "made the desert to blossom as the rose," and Washington's battles at Princeton, White Plains, and Yorktown were but little more momentous in their results than Sandy Forsythe's on the Republican, Custer's on the Washita, or Crook's in the Sierra Madre.

The construction of the Union Pacific Railroad was of greater importance to the people of the United States than the inauguration of steamship service across the Atlantic or the laying of the Atlantic Telegraph. Yet the one has been heralded from time to time and the other allowed to sink into temporary obscurity.

To make good Americans of the coming generation all that is necessary is to make them proud of American achievements and the West was and is a field full of such.

The building of the Pacific Railroad was one of the great works of man. Its promoters were men of small means and little or no financial backing outside of the aid granted them by the Government. It took nerve and good Yankee grit to undertake and carry out the project. How it was done it is hoped the succeeding pages may show.

Fair Oaks, California, 1906.

**Poem read at the Celebration of the opening
of the Pacific Railroad, Chicago,
May 10th, 1869.**



Ring out, oh bells. Let cannons roar
In loudest tones of thunder.
The iron bars from shore to shore
Are laid and Nations wonder.

Through deserts vast and forests deep
Through mountains grand and hoary
A path is opened for all time
And we behold the glory.

We, who but yesterday appeared
But settlers on the border,
Where only savages were reared
Mid chaos and disorder.
We wake to find ourselves midway
In continental station,
And send our greetings either way
Across the mighty nation.

We reach out towards the golden gate
And eastward to the ocean.
The tea will come at lightning rate
And likewise Yankee notions.
From spicy islands off the West
The breezes now are blowing,
And all creation does its best
To set the greenbacks flowing.

The eastern tourist will turn out
And visit all the stations
For Pullman runs upon the route
With most attractive rations.

—From the Chicago Tribune, May 11th, 1869.