

## Railroad Trials<sup>4</sup>

The Territorial legislature of Kansas had created by special Act approved August 30, 1855, the Leavenworth, Pawnee & Western Railroad Company, which found a place in the Pacific Railroad Act of July 1, 1862, though it had displayed little more evidence of life than to organize and seek purchasers for its securities. Some surveying was done and a contract was let for construction but very little work was done by the contractors. Samuel Hallett and General John C. Fremont acquired control and (June 6, 1863) the company was renamed Union Pacific Railway Company, Eastern Division. Construction was started shortly after certain capitalists represented by John D. Perry, Adolphus Meier, C. S. Greeley and others of St. Louis, Missouri supplied Hallett and Fremont with most of the money they expended on construction.

Late in 1863, Fremont was dispossessed, quarreling with Hallett and his associates and endeavoring for sometime but unsuccessfully to secure government recognition. Hallett was killed on July 27, 1864, by a dissatisfied employe, and the St. Louis and eastern capitalists eventually secured full control and completed the line. At the time of Hallett's death the branch was partly graded from Leavenworth to Lawrence, and from Kansas City to Lawrence to the main line the rails were laid over most of the distance. The first forty miles from Kansas City west were completed before June, 1865, and operation to Topeka was begun on January 1, 1866. The Leavenworth Branch was opened in May, 1866.

An Act of Congress approved July 3, 1866, confirmed the right granted the Union Pacific, Eastern Division, by the Act of July 2, 1864, to build more directly west than at first authorized, though it was granted no more subsidy in government bonds than that provided in the earlier Act. The line, had the Act of 1862 been followed, would have gone northwest from Fort Riley to a terminus near North Platte, Nebraska, but it was now authorized to proceed to a connection with the Union Pacific Railroad (the Omaha Line) at a point not more than fifty miles west of the meridian of Denver.

On September 15, 1865, observing the slow progress of the Omaha line, the company had sent out surveyors to locate an extension from Fort Riley to Denver and on February 9, 1866, the stockholders adopted the route so found. On July 11, 1866, maps of the surveys were filed at Washington, showing the line to Denver and Cheyenne . . . .

In November, 1866, the road was open to Junction City; Hays was reached a year later and Sheridan, 405 miles from the Missouri-Kansas state line, was the terminus in August, 1868. Construction was now halted, and no further work was done for a year. The limit of mileage for which

government aid had been offered had been passed and the hope of being able to complete with main line via Cheyenne to Salt Lake or beyond had been abandoned as the Union Pacific displayed greater financial strength; that company was now farther west in its building than the Kansas line.

The troubles of the Kansas company in obtaining money for construction were as great as those of the Union Pacific and conflicts with the Indians were even more serious and frequent.

In 1867 and 1868, on account of the certainty of the road's being cut off at Cheyenne from further extension in that direction, surveys were made for a line to San Diego and San Francisco substantially along the route afterwards taken by the Santa Fe System, but the company was unable to interest Congress or the country's capitalists in the scheme. An act of Congress approved March 3, 1869, authorized the transfer of the pro-



**Kansas Pacific train on the Great Plains.**

jected line from Denver to Cheyenne to the already incorporated Denver Pacific Railway and Telegraph Company, and in the following month the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division, was renamed the Kansas Pacific Railway. Extension from Sheridan to Denver was completed and opened for traffic on September 1, 1870. The Denver Pacific was completed from Denver to Cheyenne June 23, 1870.

The Kansas Pacific defaulted in its interest obligations in 1873, but a funding arrangement was made, deferring receivership; union, however, became necessary three years later. Henry Villard and Carlos S. Greeley were appointed receivers by the United States Court on November 21, 1876. Receivership was terminated June 14, 1879, when prosperity had reached the property. The Denver Pacific was also in receivers' hands, from April 2, 1878, to September 27, 1879. The two lines had been operated as one, and they were together consolidated with the Union Pacific on January 24, 1880, thus terminating their separate history.