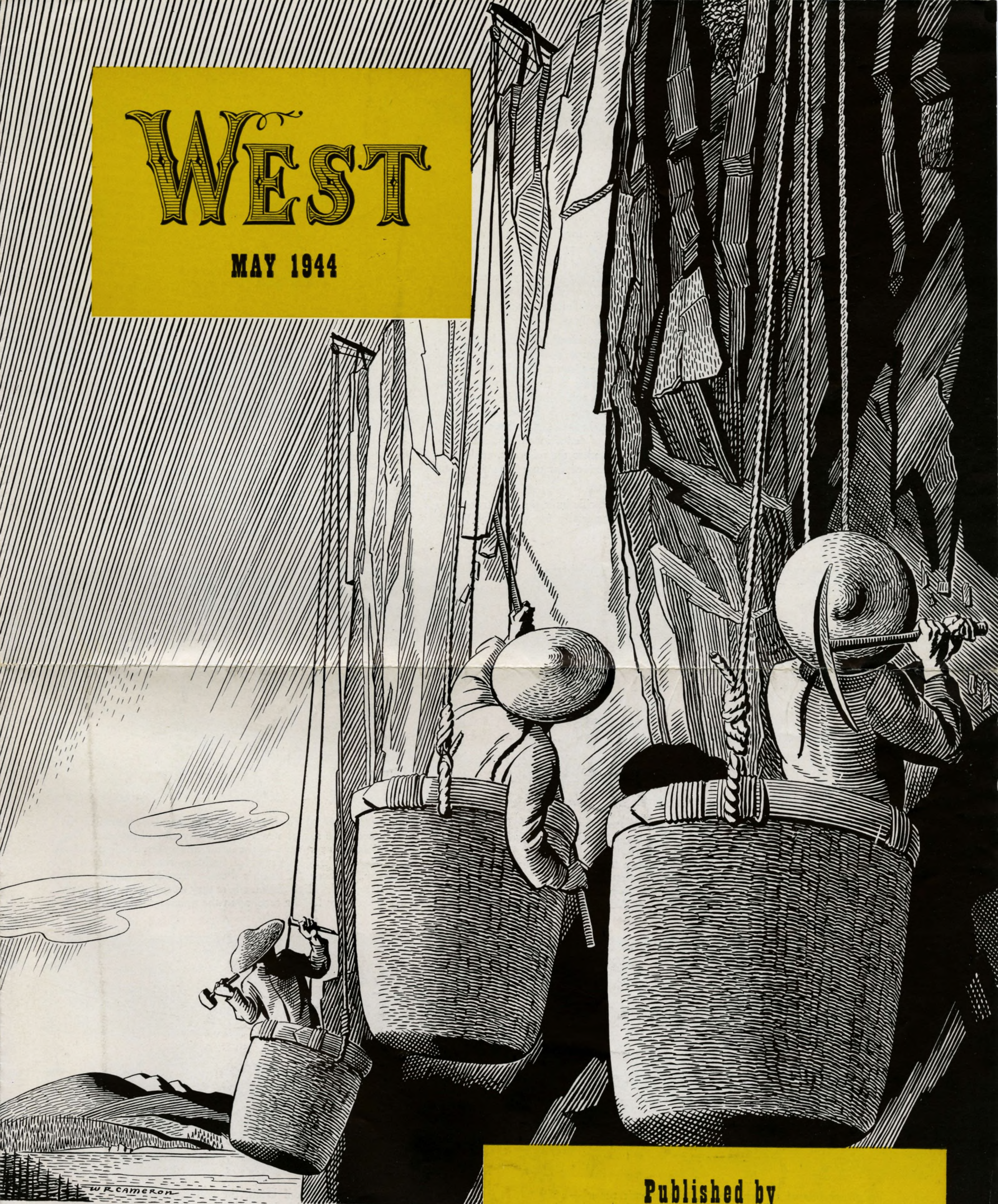


WEST

MAY 1944



"CROCKER'S PETS"

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How America's First Transcon



ALMOST legendary now is the saga of America's first transcontinental railroad, completed seventy-five years ago this month. Some day, perhaps, it will be the inspiration for an epic poem, or the long-awaited Great American Novel. But so many engineering marvels followed in its wake that the Pacific Railroad may never get full credit for the amazing impetus it gave to American growth and progress. Before this railroad, America was an uncohesive group of states which had just finished fighting among themselves. After the Golden Spike was driven, the United States were really united.

America's first transcontinental railroad was authorized, after considerable debate, by the Congress of the United States. The Union Pacific Railroad was incorporated to build a railroad and telegraph line westward from the Missouri River, and the Central Pacific Railroad to build eastward from California, the two lines to meet at a point then undetermined. The Government agreed to lend financial aid in the form of bonds, which had to be repaid, and land grants. In return for the land grants, the Government required the two railroads to handle Federal freight and passenger business at greatly reduced rates. (It has been estimated that the Government is receiving *every war year*, in the form of deductions in transportation charges, more than twice the total value of all the lands granted to the railroads, at the time they were granted. Over the years, the Government has received far more than the total amount realized by the railroads from the sale of these lands.

How Central Pacific (now Southern Pacific) and Union Pacific built the first transcontinental railroad is shown in the following pictures, drawn especially for WEST by W. R. Cameron, noted western illustrator.



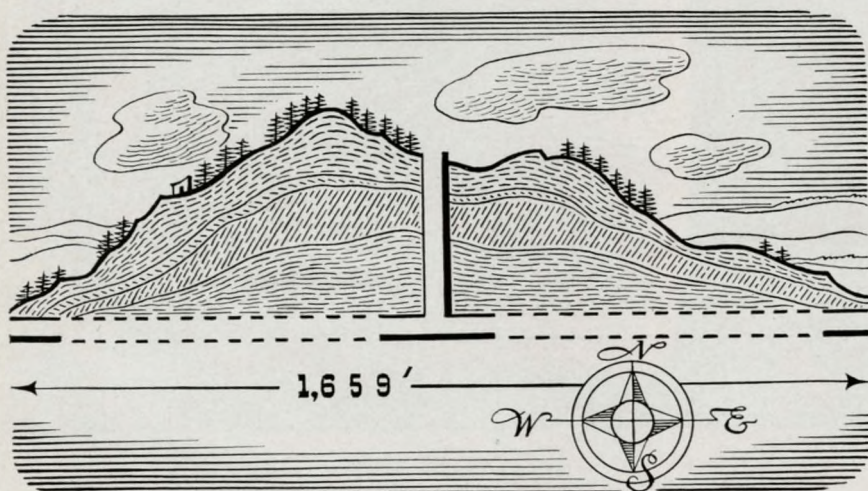
Theodore D. Judah is rightfully honored as the father of the Pacific Railroad. A young New Yorker, he came to California in the Gold Rush. In February, 1856, he completed the Sacramento Valley Railroad from Sacramento to Folsom, the first railroad in the Far West. Then he drew up plans for a transcontinental railroad over the lofty Sierra and took them to Washington, but Congress was too busy to listen to him.



4 **Stanford**, then Governor of California, officiated at Central Pacific ground-breaking ceremonies on January 8, 1863. (The place was Sacramento on Front Street near the foot of K Street.) But the Civil War delayed arrival of materials from the East, and it was not until October 26, 1863, that the first rail was laid. First passenger service was between Sacramento and Roseville, April 26, 1864. Revenue in first four days was \$354.24.



5 **Most of Central Pacific's** labor problems were caused by the gold fever. No sooner would a crew of men be hired than they would desert upon news of the latest gold strike. In desperation Charles Crocker, in charge of building the road, turned to Chinese. Dubbed "Crocker's Pets," they did valiant work, especially in the High Sierra, where they were lowered in baskets to chip a ledge for the roadbed in the granite cliffs (see cover).



8 **Toughest job** of all was drilling the summit tunnel—1,659 feet of iron-hard granite. There was no dynamite—nothing but hand tools and black powder. Crocker decided to work the tunnel from four faces, by sinking a shaft at the center and working toward both ends. The rock was so hard that seven inches a day was considered good progress! Explosives often shot out of the hole like a charge from a gun, without cracking the rock.

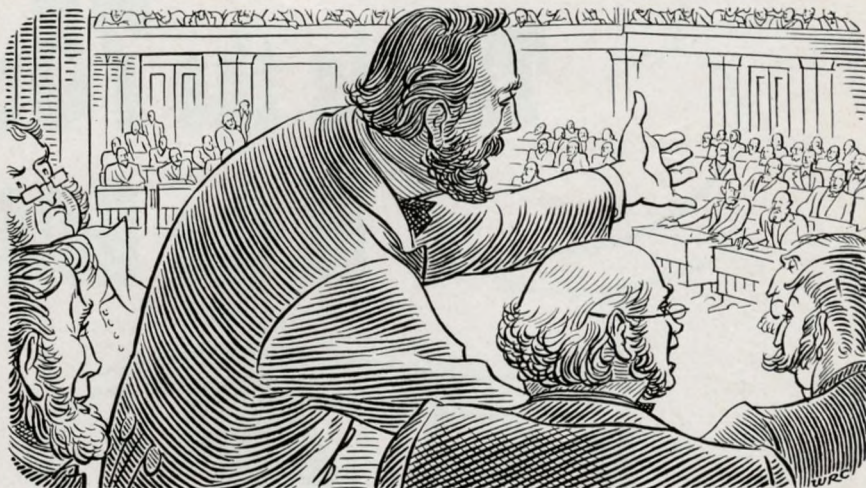


9 **Across Nevada** and Utah, the going was easy for Central Pacific, compared with the cruel fight against the Sierra Nevada. But it was easy for Union Pacific, too, and for miles the grading crews of the rival roads paralleled each other—one racing west, the other east—far ahead of the track layers. There was great competition to see which line could lay the most track in a single day. Records were made one day and broken the next.

Continental Railroad Was Built



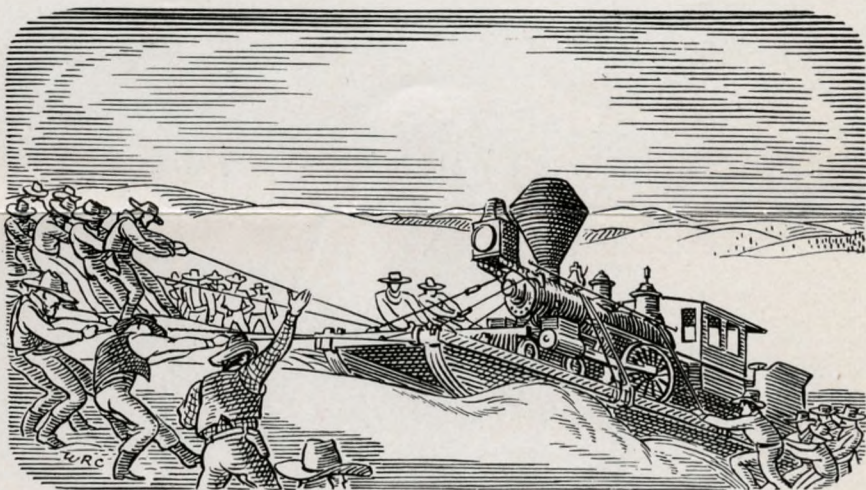
2 He tried to sell his idea to San Francisco capitalists, but they would have none of it. So Judah went to Sacramento and found four men who were willing to take a chance on his transcontinental railroad: Collis P. Huntington and Mark Hopkins, partners in a hardware store; Leland Stanford, a grocery merchant; and Charles Crocker, a dry goods dealer. They incorporated the Central Pacific Railroad Company on June 28, 1861.



3 Judah went again to Washington to try to secure passage of the Pacific Railroad Bill. This time Congress listened to the earnest young engineer from California, and the bill was finally passed by the Senate on June 20, 1862. President Lincoln signed it on July 1. Huntington, who had gone to New York to raise money for the enterprise, wired his associates, "We have drawn the elephant. Now let us see if we can harness him."



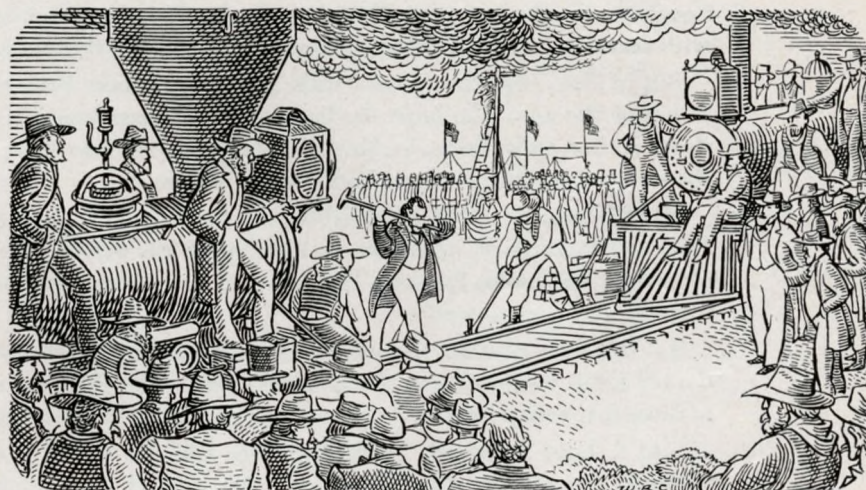
6 Central Pacific had to get its rail, locomotives and other heavy equipment the hard way—15,000 miles by sailing ship around Cape Horn. And it had many miles of difficult mountain construction to lick while Union Pacific was laying rail across the level prairies. To make up for the uneven race, Central Pacific relied on the courage of its workmen and the indomitable will of Charles Crocker to conquer the 7,000-foot Sierra Nevada.



7 Once, when a thirty-foot snowfall held up work in the Sierra, Crocker ordered three locomotives, forty cars and material for forty miles of track to be sledged over the summit and down to Truckee River Canyon, where the snow was not heavy enough to interfere with grading and track laying operations. It was a bold and daring move. On December 13, 1867, the first Central Pacific locomotive pushed its nose over the state line into Nevada.

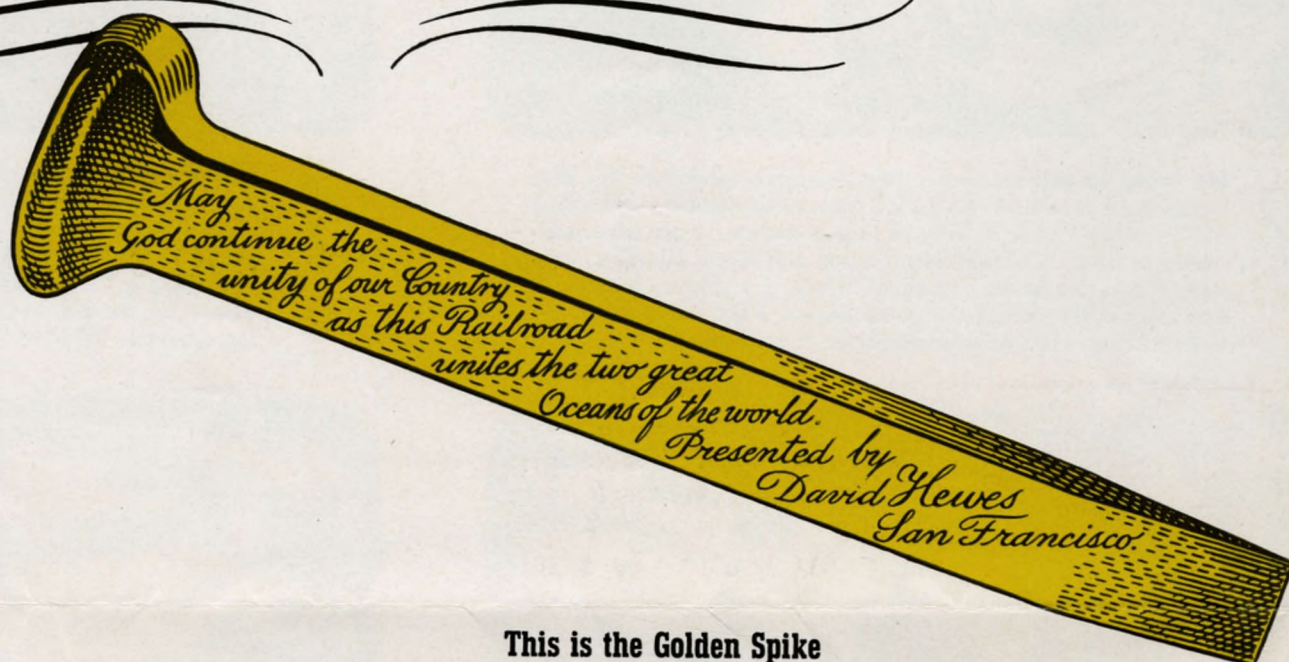


10 Crocker bet \$10,000 that his Central Pacific boys could lay ten miles of track in one day. Durant, vice-president of the Union Pacific, covered the bet. On April 28, 1869, eight Irish rail-handlers of the Central Pacific, backed by a small army of Chinese and other workmen, laid ten miles and 56 feet of track in a little less than twelve hours... at the rate of about 72 feet a minute! That record stands to this day.



11 The Last Spike! The place was Promontory, Utah, on the northern end of Great Salt Lake. The day, May 10, 1869. Prayer was offered by Rev. John Todd of Pittsfield, Mass. As Leland Stanford tapped the last spike into the tie, each tap of the hammer was repeated by telegraph on the bell of the Capitol at Washington and the great fire bell in San Francisco. The signal "done" was sent at 12:45 p. m.

This is the 75th Anniversary of the Golden Spike



This is the Golden Spike

It was donated for the occasion by David Hewes of San Francisco. The spike is now the property of Stanford University and is kept in the vaults of the Wells Fargo Bank.

...but we can't take time out to celebrate

Ordinarily we'd make quite a fuss over such an event as the 75th anniversary of America's first transcontinental railroad—of which Southern Pacific is a part. We'd have had a "Diamond Jubilee," with ceremonies, celebrations, banquets and all the trimmings.

But in May, 1944, Southern Pacific people will have little time to honor the men who built the first railroad across America and drove its last spike home on May 10, 1869. We're too busy keeping the war trains rolling on our 15,000 miles of line.

The historic line that rounded the northern end of Great Salt Lake to Promontory, where the Golden Spike was driven, was replaced by the Lucin Cut-off. The old rails have long since been torn up and sent to war.

But if it were possible to send a message back through the corridors of Time, we would send the grateful thanks of a railroad at war to those determined men who conquered the Sierra 75 years ago...

...to Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins, Charles Crocker and Collis P. Huntington, the "Big Four" who pooled their slender resources, convinced Congress that California must be linked by

rail with the other United States, and pushed the railroad through in spite of heart-breaking obstacles.

...to the thousands of Chinese workmen who helped lift the line over the Sierra Nevada with nothing but wheelbarrows, picks and shovels, and black powder...who hung from the cliffs in baskets and chipped the roadbed out of solid granite. They helped build a railroad that helps China now.

...to the eight indomitable Irishmen who, on April 28, 1869, laid ten miles and 56 feet of track in a single day—a record that has never been equalled.

The railroad they built is now a vital link in America's supply lines for the war against Japan. The railroad men and women who "keep 'em rolling" today salute the men who accomplished so much with so little, 75 years ago.

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The friendly Southern Pacific