

 Frank Beckwith
Printer and Stationer
Delta, Utah



April 23, 1938.

Miss Louise Stegner,
Omaha, Neb.

Dear Miss Stegner:

My father, A. C. Beckwith, was 48 years older than I, and consequently the wide gap in ages made it such that a mere boy was not talked to seriously, and a great deal of his connection with the heads of the Union Pacific were not recited to me.

My father was (supposedly the first) town marshall of the newly-growing town of Cheyenne, in about 1866 or so; he decided to follow the road west; went to Echo, Utah, then to Evanston, Wyo. The Beckwith Commercial Company owned stores at Almy, Wyo., Evanston, Rock Springs, Hannah, Carbon and Dana; also he individually at Echo and Grass Creek. This was when coal was very important. He was labor agent for the Union Pacific and hired the miners. His connection was high up and he personally knew Sidney Dillon, E. E. Dickenson, and other men high in U. P. affairs, but unfortunately we boys did not take much interest, and much more unfortunately, we did not save letters, Ms., photos, or other things which now would be valuable. I do not even know if there is even a single reference to my father in the U. P. Museum at Omaha. It is too bad that we missed our opportunity. My father knew Jim Bridger.

At the time of the Rock Springs, Wyo. Chinese massacre, when one, two, three or four Chinamen were thrown alive into

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their own burning houses, my father was labor agent, with the only stores (a persequite granted him) at the mines, and his life was threatened at that time; I was only a very small child; some years ago I wrote that up under the title "The Defection of Hi" and it was published in the Wyoming Times at Evanston, Wyo., but, as I had to use then assumed names, I do not think the story would be of interest to you, and would be considered pure fiction. During a long life of writing, I have jotted down a more or less connected series of early happenings, but as not a single thing of Union Pacific material is included, I do not think the "stuff" would interest you-- it was mostly my own little experiences.

As to books, I have read but little on U. P. history, but have tried to read extensively on Utah, some on Wyoming, and as much as I could on the old histories, biographies, recitals, etc. Conant's History of Wyoming mentions my father, and I have read it. My father was in Echo, Utah, I think in the summer of 1868 before the road came through; then when Evanston was made a division terminal, he moved to Evanston, kept in the store at Echo and Grass Creek for a while; he bought from Z. C. M. I., Salt Lake and Paxton-Gallagher Co., Omaha, Neb.

I am afraid I will be a disappointment to you.

So much went on that was over the head of a 11 to 19-yr old kid that I must say now, as I look back on in, "I missed my opportunity." Since then, knowing what I lost, I have tried to find out, and jot down what goes on around me here, and the

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reactions to my immediate environment; the physical things here and that I can reach my limited travel, I try to know, to write of in my paper, or to lay MS aside covering it. I have a number of those MS, but absolutely nothing of early Union Pacific days; what a shame, with a father who left Cheyenne early, to ride up on the advancing U. P., came to Echo in 1868 before the road; went to Evanston in 1871; rose highly in wealth from his U. P. connections, was head of nine stores (granted the exclusive franchise in U. P. towns,) once U. S. Senator from Wyoming, until they disqualified him by saying he was 'appointed' not elected as required by law-- etc., etc., etc.----- and his son almost a blank.

What a shame.

I am trying now to specialize on the Indians immediately about me, their rock writing (see the design on these letter heads), their myths, and Utah history.

I feel that in my father's experiences I have overlooked a big field. He hunted, trapped, sold sold, whacked bulls, did pioneering--- and the whole thing is almost a blank to me.

Men have been shot for less neglect.

I am very very sorry for it all now, and fully know my carelessness. "We never miss the water till the well runs dry." I missed a great opportunity. None of my brothers, nor my sister ever laid much attention to the past-- took it for accepted and let it slip between our fingers. Gone. Lost. Too bad.

Yours truly,

Frank Beckwith