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The Pacific House



Pacific House was a large wooden hotel located at the northwest corner of Second and Market Streets facing east. It was originally built in 1869 by George Hulbert and was purchased and rebuilt in 1872 as the Pacific House for the Kansas-Nebraska Stage Company. This company had a contract to deliver U.S. mail and made daily stops every day except Sunday. The Pacific House was located near the one-lane bridge that crossed the Blue River at Market Street from 1870-1874. The Pacific Hotel was demolished in 1902.

Sebring Phelps Company

2

The Sebring Phelps Co. was located at the southwest corner of Second and Court Streets facing east. It sold carriages, a staple of Early Beatrice industry and business. Lou When had stated a carriage factory in 1871. By 1880, Beatrice had five



wagon construction and blacksmithing. They were located from the 100 block on East Court Street to the 100 block on North Seventh Street. Carriage manufacturing and sales continued until the popularity of the automobile brought it to an end in the 1910s. While the Sebring Phelps Company only existed for a short time, J.W. Mayer had a successful carriage manufacturing business in Beatrice for over thirty years.

3 The Burlington Passenger Station



The Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad Passenger Station is a Neo-Classical building that was designed especially for Beatrice. Burlington and Beatrice officials wanted the building to reflect the growth and affluence of the Beatrice community. It was the first of its kind on the Burlington Line. The station opened for business on December 5, 1906, and was to be used strictly for passenger service. Notables such as William Jennings Bryan, William Howard Taft and Theodore Roosevelt spoke here during political campaigns. The Burlington was the first railroad to reach Beatrice in 1871. The last passenger train was in 1962. This station was used for Burlington freight until 1973 when the Gage County Historical Society leased the building for their museum. The site is also the location of Beatrice's first building constructed in 1857, known as "Pap Towle's cabin." The Chicago Burlington and Quincy Railroad Passenger Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

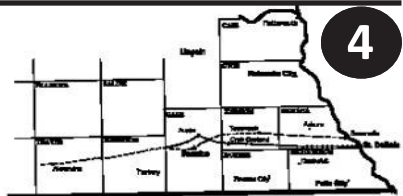
The DeRoin Trail

"There is not a better natural road anywhere to the Missouri river from the Little Sandy via Beatrice and Tecumseh to Brownville and a few days work

upon crossing would make it all that could be desired." (Traveler's letter written March 25, 1860; published in the *Brownville Advertiser*.)

"The route from Fort Kearny is naturally better than any other; in distance it is shorter than most other routes; the road is completely level...plenty of good water and pasture." (Letter from S.C. Berger, May 14, 1860; published in the *Brownville Advertiser*.)

The DeRoin Trail was a popular route for travelers to the Pike's Peak gold fields in the early 1860s. It linked Brownville, an early port on the Missouri River, to Beatrice. It was also known as the Main St. DeRoin Trail and the Brownville Road. It was originally an Oto Indian trail which started south of Brownville at St. DeRoin, one of the oldest towns in Nebraska. The settlement was named for Joseph Deroin, an Oto chief and owner of the land where the town site was located. The older trail passed through Austin, an early community east of present-day Pickrell, and was also known as The Austin Road. With the establishment of Brownville and Beatrice, the route changed to include these growing communities although



the DeRoin name continued to be associated with the trail.

In 1873, the Nebraska Legislature passed a law that required all roads to follow section lines. East of Beatrice, the old DeRoin Trail was vacated and the state highway was laid out much as it currently exists. However, Daniel Freeman and other residents who lived west of Beatrice resisted efforts to relocate the Trail. The route that angles northwest out of Beatrice toward Freeman's farm, now Homestead National Monument of America, remains as a testament of their effort.

5

Union Pacific Railroad Depot

The dark red brick Union Pacific Railroad Depot was built in 1900 and located on the east edge of present day Trailhead Park. It faced the Burlington



Gage County Historical Society Photograph

Passenger Station across its tracks which now forms the path of the hiking/biking trail. The Union Pacific line was completed between 1880 and 1884 from Kansas north through Beatrice to Lincoln. Beatrice was the Division Headquarters. Passenger service was offered until the 1960s. Freight service continued until 1985. The Union Pacific depot was torn down in 1986.

Beatrice Streetcar Railway Company **6**



Gage County Historical Society Photograph

The Beatrice Streetcar Railway Company Barn was located at 214 Court street in 1885; the year that the business was incorporated, purchased cars, and laid track. The sixteen passenger cars were painted cream and yellow with gilt numbers. The first run was made in November from the old Burlington Depot (located in the 100 block on Ella Street), south to Second and Court Streets, east to Sixth and Court Streets, north on Sixth Street to Summit Street and back. The line was eventually extended to "the suburbs" of Glenover and Belvedere. By 1891, the streetcar line had ten miles of track. Beatrice was experiencing its period of greatest growth, and subdivisions were being added in every part of the town. In order to make their land tracts more desirable, owners invested in the street car system. Due to the Panic of 1893, and the crop failures of the following few years, the economy faltered. New home construction stopped, and the street car system failed by the late 1890s.

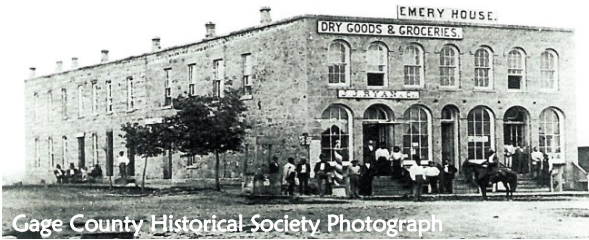
7 Kilpatrick/Collins Railroad Contractor

The original building on this site was constructed in 1872 by Dr. Herman Reynolds and Oliver Townsend, two of the founders of Beatrice. The first floor was a general store and the second floor was used as a community gathering place and early “city hall.” Many early governmental decisions were made at this location. Kilpatrick and Collins purchased the building in 1888 and used the second floor as their office. The Kilpatrick Brothers were major contractors for the Union Pacific Railroad. J.D. Kilpatrick was actually present at Promontory Point, Utah on May 10, 1869 when the last spike was driven, uniting the east and west coasts of the country by rail. When the Kilpatrick and Collins Company moved to this location, they employed 5,000 to 8,000 men and 4,000 to 5,000 teams to build 540 miles of railroad in Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado. The original limestone building was replaced by the current brick structure in 1923.

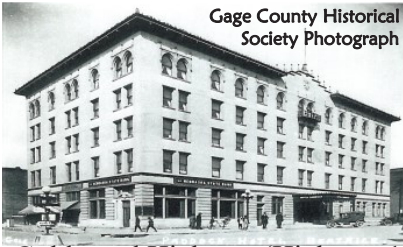


The Emery House

8



This early stagecoach hotel, located at the southeast corner of Fifth and Court Streets, was built by the McDowell brothers in 1869 of local limestone. Charley Emery, an experienced stage stop operator for the Overland Stage Company, was the manager. It was known as the Emery House from 1870-1881. This fourteen room structure opened on June 1, 1870. Although large for its time, the hotel's early popularity resulted in construction of an addition to the south in 1871. In 1872, John Halladay and Stephen Dodge purchased the hotel and furnished it for \$18,000. In 1881, M.V. Nichols, former president of the Northwestern Stage Line, purchased the hotel, remodeled it, and added yet another addition. A.G. Randall was hired to run it. It was known as the Randall House from 1881-1905. In 1908, M.V. Nichols had the building redesigned in the European style and renamed it the Burwood Hotel. In 1925, the east and north walls were replaced with dark brick to match the annex added across the alley on the south side. The Burwood Hotel was known for many years as a railroad hotel and remained in business until the 1970s.



Gage County Historical Society Photograph

The Paddock Hotel

9

The Paddock Hotel was constructed in 1924 at the intersection of Cornhusker Highway (U.S. Highway 77) and Goldenrod Highway (Highway 136.) It was designed in the Renaissance Revival style by Thomas Rogers Kimball, one of Nebraska's leading architects. This building replaced the original Paddock Hotel built in 1887 which burned in 1919. Over \$300,000 was raised by local investors within a few weeks to build the new 110 room structure that would provide accommodations for travelers and serve as a social center for the community. Beatrice was served by three railroads, all with depots located within walking distance of the Paddock Hotel. The total cost of the project was \$430,000, raised entirely by local subscription. Other businesses located in the hotel were a bank, billiard room, barber shop, beauty parlor, and coffee shop. The most famous guest was Robert Taylor, a movie star from Beatrice. The Paddock Hotel ceased operation in 1970 and was then converted into a residence for senior citizens. The Paddock Hotel was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987.

10

Spiegel Automobile Co.



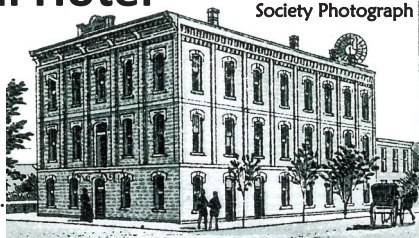
Gage County Historical Society Photograph

This 1922 building was built for the Spiegel Overland Car Company using the plans of W.B. Gilbert. It is constructed of dark brick with raked corners trimmed in white stone. It originally had full plate glass windows on Court Street as well as 25 feet on the Seventh Street side. The interior was finished in oak with an indirect lighting system and a full basement. The parking on the Seventh Street side was landscaped with flowers and shrubs. It was originally planned to be a one-story structure, but a second story was added with an elevator that would allow cars to be showcased in the large upstairs window. The cost of the building was \$40,000-\$50,000. The Spiegel Overland Car Company was a wholesale auto distributor in Southeast Nebraska and Northeast Kansas. In 1926, they were selling Packards, Whippets, and Willlys-Knight cars. In 1939, Glass Motor Company moved into the building and sold Dodge and Plymouth automobiles. After this company built their new facility across the street, the building became an implement dealership which continued in business until the 1960s. The 1922 building replaced a smaller 1887 wood frame building that had been bricked. It was a livery and boarding stable until the early 1900s. In 1907, it became the site of an implement business. In 1913, the building was sold to George W. Spiegel and the present building was constructed.

11 The Grand Central Hotel

Gage County Historical
Society Photograph

The Grand Central Hotel was located on the southeast corner of Seventh & Court Streets. It had its own well at the rear of the building, which was in use in the 1930s. The hotel was designed and built by William Hewerkerl in 1884. Its offices were located on the second floor in anticipation that the city would someday fill in the intersection to level the street, making the original first floor into a basement. In the 1880s, this intersection was perceived as being particularly dangerous and was the scene of a major streetcar accident. The vehicle overturned, and the passengers fell into the ravine. The hotel was also known as the Spafford and finally the Beatrice Hotel. It was razed in the 1940s.



Glass Motor Company

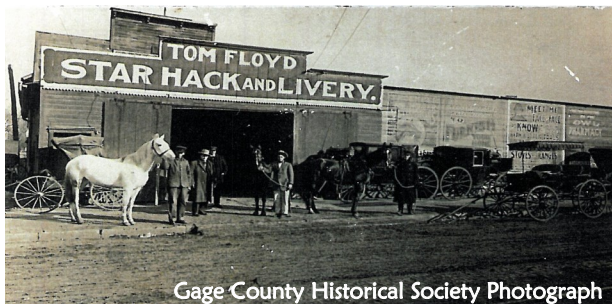
12



The Glass Motor Company was constructed in the 1940s. The streamlined Art Deco style building represented a modern trend in architecture and a modern trend in transportation—personal automobile ownership. The building replaced a Victorian era hotel that had catered to passengers on the older form of transportation—the railroad. The Glass Motor Company was a dealer for Dodge and Plymouth automobiles and trucks. It continued in business until the mid 1950s.

13

The Star Hack & Livery



Gage County Historical Society Photograph

The Star Hack and Livery was located at the northeast corner of Eighth and Court Streets. It was run by Thomas Floyd from 1906 to 1920. A livery stable had been located on this corner since 1890. Thomas Floyd added a Ford taxi cab

to his business in 1915, the first in Nebraska. In 1925, the Sinclair Refining Company built the corner filling station on this site. It became the twelfth gasoline station in Beatrice at that time. Livery stables were often located on the edge of downtown. In early Beatrice, the businesses on this block marked the edge of the downtown area. This block was not originally developed at all because it was the first site selected for the Gage County Courthouse and the source of the name Court Street. When the Gage County Board of Supervisors selected the alternate site that is actually the location of both the 1870 and 1891 Courthouses, no immediate decision was made about the disposition of this designated block. Daniel Freeman claimed it as abandoned property, fenced it and built a structure on it. He was successfully able to defend his claim of this block through adverse possession. Although it is in the Original Town Plat, its legal description is now Freeman's Subdivision.



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Founded in 1857, Beatrice is one of the 30 oldest towns in Nebraska. The original buildings were constructed along the DeRoin Trail that linked Brownville to the overland trails and Fort Kearney. This trail is now US Highway 136 (Court Street.) The present downtown area is where historic Beatrice began. The town was deliberately created to promote development along this major east-west road, now Court Street rather than using the traditional Court House Square design.

Today, downtown Beatrice remains an area of strong commercial and civic importance. The downtown continues to be Beatrice's largest commercial district, and its success is the success of the city's small business sector. It is the center of civil life including such public resources such as the Municipal Building and Auditorium, the Gage County Historical Society Museum, and Beatrice Middle School. The downtown is a religious center for over 2,000 members of 5 churches in the immediate area. The historic buildings in downtown Beatrice's historic district are some of the most distinguished in Nebraska and offer many opportunities for reinvestment and development growth in our community.

Main Street Beatrice is a community program for improving and strengthening the historic downtown district. Founded in 1996, our mission is to revitalize the heart of our community and promote a positive image of downtown by preserving our unique historic character, strengthening our district's economic base, and by emphasizing our downtown as the center of community life and activity.

The Main Street Beatrice district covers a 16-block area centered on the original downtown and the intersection of 6th & Court Streets, the crossroads of US Highway's 77 and 136. The Main Street district includes the site of the very first building in Beatrice, a log cabin that was located just north of the current Gage County Historical Society Museum (the former Burlington Passenger Station and Depot); stop #3 on this tour. We hope you can enjoy your visit to downtown!

Funding for the Transportation Heritage Sign Project was provided by the Nebraska Department of Roads Transportation Enhancement Fund.

Main Street Beatrice is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider