

Sacramento Record Union, Aug. 2, 1879

The New Depot - A very large building - Its location - What the erection of the building suggests.

"The work upon the new depot of the Central Pacific Railroad is now rapidly progressing. The floor joists and sills are nearly all laid, and before Saturday the skeleton form of the building will be a prominent object. The depot is being built upon the margin of China Slough, just south of the railroad shops, and will face almost directly north. The western end of the main pile will be upon the projected east line of Second Street, and the structure will extend easterly for 414 feet and over. It will be one of the largest depots in the West, and will be nearly 15 feet longer than the great machine shop at the railroad company's works. The style of the building will be Gothic; and without being elaborately ornamented, will be architecturally attractive, avoiding the extremes of severe plainness or excessive ornamentation. It will consist of a central pile of buildings--a portion being two stories in height--faced by a depot arcade or sheltered avenue 70 feet in width with 414 feet 4 inches in length, through which three tracks will be carried, the main one being almost in a line east and west with the new bridge, while one will lead around to and along Front Street. South of the track arcade and joined to it, the pile of buildings will be located and will be in length 164 feet and 4 inches. Beginning on the extreme east on the main floor, the plans show first a sleeping-car storeroom; 20 by 21 feet, with water closets attached; next west is a four-foot hall running across the building, and opening upon a front landing from which a broad passageway extends along the front of the buildings on the west of the hall, and opening upon the passageway or promenade is the barroom, 21 feet in length by about 15 in width; next to it is the gentlemen's waiting room, 35 feet 4 inches by 35 feet 7-1/2 inches in size. Attached to it is a series of water closets and washrooms. Next on the west is the ladies' washroom. Next on the west is the ladies' waiting room, which is 36 feet 11-3/4 inches by 35 feet 4 inches in size. Attached to it are a retiring room 12 by 14 feet, washroom and series of closets. Between the gentlemen's and the ladies' waiting rooms, and sitting half its size in each room, is to be built the ticket office, which is to be 14 feet front by 20 feet in depth. Back of the ticket office and fronting in both waiting rooms are to be two lunch counters, these forming the rear division line between the two waiting rooms, the ticket office separating them in front. Back of the two waiting rooms, with broad doors opening into either, is to be the dining room, 40 by 65 feet, with a kitchen on the east of it 20 by 20 feet, and a storeroom with pantry, closets, etc. The lunch counter between the two waiting rooms makes an oval sweep through the north wall of the dining room, and thus has a frontage in the latter apartment also. On the extreme west and connecting with the central building by the passage or promenade names it to be the baggage room, 20 by 39 feet in size, and fitted with closets and racks with patent lift to carry baggage to be stored to an upper chamber.

The second floor is the gentlemen's and ladies' waiting rooms, the baggage room and kitchen. Over the baggage room on the front is to be a baggage storeroom 15 feet 3 inches by 17 feet 4 inches in size and into which the patent lift mentioned is to open. Back of this room, and separated from

it by a 4-foot hall, is to be a conductor's room, 16 feet 6 inches by 20 feet in size. Over the ladies' waiting room is to be found the Superintendent's office, opening upon the balcony which extends over the longitudinal passageway or promenade on the first floor level. This room is 14 feet 4-3/8 inches by 23 feet 2-1/8 inches in size, and is fitted with two closets 6 feet 8 by 8 feet each, with washrooms, etc. Back of and connecting with it is to be the Train Dispatcher's room, 14 feet 4-3/8 inches by 31 feet 9-5/8 inches in size. Next a hall 5 feet wide crosses the building, and on the opposite side going east we come on the front to the stationery room, the dimensions of which will be 14 feet 4-3/8 inches by 15 feet 7-1/16 inches. Next to it on the east is the office of the Superintendent of the Sacramento Valley Company, and the room in back of it is a second office of like size, with closets, etc. In the rear of the stationery room will be the "time" room, and of the same size. The stairways lead up to this story from the promenade at either end.

Over the kitchen is to be a second floor, containing four rooms for servants, with a small hall and closets, the approach being by a stairway leading out of the storeroom below.

At each end of the structure will be built ornamental towers, rising somewhat above the roof. From the ground to the eaves of the building will be 27 feet 1-7/8 inches, and thence to the apex of the gable roof 22 feet 3/4 inch, making the total height of the structure 49 feet 2-5/8 inches. The building will be constructed entirely of wood, and will rest upon heavy brick foundation walls, which have frequent deep sunken piers of masonry.

While it is a subject of general congratulation that the company is to abandon the old time shed on Front Street and erect a depot building of a character becoming to the city, it is a common regret that the exigencies of ground space compel it to place the structure on the very margin of China Slough. In a day or two the frame work will go up, and be erected within 16 feet of the northern sloping bank of the slough where the water seeps into the porous soil, and passes off in vapor, carrying with it, according to medical testimony, the most noxious exhalations. The depot extends from the east line (extended) of Second Street in an easterly direction, with its front to the north, nearly direct. Therefore from the waiting room windows, and from the entire south side, the visitor will have a splendid view of those architectural beauties which line the south bank of the slough, while his nostrils will receive odoriferous whiffs of the volatile perfumes which used to delight the sense of smell from the graceful banks of Lake "of" Como, whence the accumulated filth of Chinatown and a good part of the rubbish of the rest of the city is daily dumped. When the visitor to Sacramento leaves the depot to come into the city proper he will pass down Second Street directly along the westerly margin of the slough, and for several minutes have a fine view in close perspective of the rear end of the elegant cottage residences of the Chinese, whose summer villas line the banks of the beautiful pond. If this does not give him a forcible first impression of Sacramento, he will be hard to please. One of the railroad engineers has suggested that if the city still neglects to clear our what three Boards of Health have formally condemned as a public nuisance, that it is likely the railroad company may be induced to erect high board fences

along the north and west banks of the slough to lead visitors to think there is a "deer park" within. If none of the more forcible and sanitary reasons for abating the nuisance existed, the fact of the new depot location should alone incite action efforts to wipe out that standing reproach to the neatness and cleanliness of the city--the pestilential rookeries and foul deposits on the south bank of China Slough."

Sacramento Record Union

June 10, 1880

"The Old and the New"

"The old passenger depot on Front Street, which is being now rapidly demolished by a large number of workmen, will soon be among the things of the past, and give place to improvements strongly demanded by the rapid progress of the city and the greatly increased and growing freight business consequent upon the terminal position to which Sacramento has attained as a great central buying and selling market. The facilities for handling and shipping which were a few years since ample, have become too entirely outgrown as to render new structures with far greater accommodations and means to facilitate the transaction of business a matter of positive necessity, and these are now to be provided by the new freight depot which is to take the place of the old Central Pacific Railroad buildings on Front Street. The system of tracks in that vicinity will be entirely remodeled, and in place of those now in use there will be six, and all between the rear of the freight depot and the river, thus avoiding annoyance in relation to teams and liability to accidents. It is understood that when the removal of the old passenger depot is completed, the construction of a new freight, suited to present demands, will be commenced, which will be 50 feet wide and probably extend from midway between I and J Streets to K. In order not to interfere with current freight transactions during its construction the north end will probably be built up as far southward as J Street, and then the present freight office removed thereto so as to permit the dismantling of the old freight building--as the new will in part occupy the same site--as when removed, the structure will be continued as far as K Street, or nearly. The building will be well and substantially built, but free from ornamentation, with double roof, with wide projecting eaves, and only one story, with the exception of a section immediately facing upon J Street, which will be built up another story in height for official headquarters and clerical work of the departments. When completed the track upon which cars will stand for loading and unloading will be so far under the projecting eaves that freight can be handled at all times without exposure to storms, which will not only be appreciated by those handling freight, but also by shippers of articles who require their goods to be kept dry. The size of the depot thus contemplated will be sufficient for all present requirements, but with continued growth of the trade and extending freighting, will in a few years, it is thought, make it necessary to extend the north end as far as I Street, and further additional room could also be made by building as much further south as exigencies may demand. Front Street, it is expected, will also be reconstructed, so as to reverse the grade and make the centre lower than the sides, and with underground escape drainage from the centre and midway of such block to the river."

"Change of Front Street Grade. - The following is the communication of J. R. Wilkinson, Resident Engineer of the Central Pacific Railroad to the Board of City Trustees yesterday in relation to a change in the grade of Front Street, in connection with the construction of the new freight depot: "It is the intention of the Central Pacific Railroad Company to build a new freight depot on Front Street, and make material improvements to the tracks pertaining thereto. The building will be placed on the west line of the street, and be 50 feet in width, extending from the north of K Street to about 100 feet north of J Street, with the intention of a further extension to the south line of I Street when required. To accommodate trucks, and facilitate the handling of merchandise, it will be necessary to change the grade of the two blocks between K and I Streets, on the west side. Mr. Bassett and myself have looked over the matter carefully, and find that this can be accomplished without changing the grade on the east side or detriment to the property. We would propose to put in cesspools in the center of the street and midway between I and J, and J and K Streets, with proper drains to the river. We would make a grade of six inches each way from the street crossings to the center of the blocks. The railroad company will put in a proper pavement on the west side to the center of the street and construct the cesspools and drains. They would ask the cooperation of your honorable Board and the property owners on the east side in making the pavement conform to the proposed grade. Will your honorable Board take such action to the matter as you deem proper at your earliest possible convenience, and oblige, yours respectfully, J. R. Wilkinson, Resident Engineer, Central Pacific Railroad Company."

July 19, 1880

"New Freight Depot. - Substantial evidence of immediate construction of the new freight depot on Front Street was furnished yesterday by the commencement of delivery of brick, lime and sand for the foundation and a force employed mixing mortar."

July 20, 1880

"The New Freight Depot. - The foundation of that part of the new freight depot lying north of the south line of J Street will be completed today. The delivery of timber and lumber to be used in the building was commenced yesterday, when several carloads were received. A large force of carpenters have arrived from Oakland and will today commence the erection of the framework, under the superintendence of Frank S. Dent, foreman of construction."

August 14, 1880

"New Freight Depot. - The new freight depot was yesterday being given its first coat of paint--a light drab, which looks very neat. The whole inside is receiving a coat also of Paris whiting, which gives the interior a light and finished appearance. The business of receiving and handling freight will be transferred to the new building in about a week. The old shed will then be torn down as far south as the old freight office, and the extension of the new building to that point carried forward. The new office for

headquarters and clerical force, at the foot of J Street, will be occupied, and the old office, with the remaining portion of the old depot, will be removed and the new depot extended to the north line of K Street, the same as that already constructed between I and J. A fine flagstaff, 40 feet in length, is painted and ready to be put up on the tower portion, and will stand immediately against the center of J Street. The architecture of the building of the rustic order, is finely in harmony with the proportions of the structure, and when the whole is completed it will be the finest freight depot upon the coast."

August 23, 1880

"The business of receiving and delivering of freight has been transferred from the old freight shed to the completed portion of the new freight shed."

August 31, 1880

"New Freight Office Occupied. - The last portion of the old freight building on Front Street, the old freight office, was torn down yesterday, and all business has been transferred to the new depot. The old office was abandoned day before yesterday, and business was commenced in the new, yesterday. The freight business of the company had so outgrown the former structure and accommodations that it rendered it exceedingly difficult to transact the work of receiving and shipping the vast tonnage. The new depot is so ample and conveniently arranged to facilitate the work that it will be appreciated alike by the shippers and employees. The new office is not only convenient and desirable, but probably is second to none in the United States for the purpose for which it is built. The office, which is located upon the second floor immediately in front of J Street, is 35 by 47 feet and 16 feet high. It is reached by a wide and easy flight of stairs, which lands in a lobby cut off on the north side, which is 10 x 37 feet wide. On the left of the lobby are three communicating windows opening into the main office--one for the Freight Cashier of the Central Pacific Railroad--one for the Cashier of the Sacramento and Placerville Railroad, and one for the clerk receiving pre-payment of freights. At the further end of the lobby, beyond these windows, is the door into the main office, which is a finely finished office 25 x 47 feet, having three large windows in front opening out onto J Street, and three in the opposite side, overlooking the river and Yolo side. There are also large ventilating windows at the top of the room, 3 x 15 feet, on the north and south sides, so that pure air and cool rooms are secured. This room is furnished with new cedar desks, standing outward against the walls, nicely furnished and having all conveniences, with center desks for chief clerk, safe and way-bill copying pressed in the center. On the chief clerk's desk is the telephone connecting with business houses and other offices in all parts of the city; and still another desk is fitted up with all telegraph appliances, and attended by an operator during business hours. On the south of the main office, and fronting on J Street, is a stationery room 8 x 23 feet, and in rear of this, also opening out from the main office is a room 8 x 23 feet, and in rear of this, also opening out from the main office, is a room 8 by 12 feet, fitted up with washstand, water-closets, etc. At the northwest corner of the main office a door opens into the private office of the Freight Agent, and which is also entered from the end of lobby. This office is 10 x 14 feet, and very neatly fitted up. On the north side of the lobby are two rooms, the front one upon J Street being 8 x 20, and which will be occupied as a train register's room,

and the other facing the river; 8 x 15, intended for a storeroom. These rooms are light and pleasant, and will be ample for all time to come for transacting the clerical work of the freight business. The walls and ceilings are cased with narrow beaded ceiling. The walls are painted a light green and the ceilings white. No locality has now better facilities and arrangements for receiving and shipment of freight than Sacramento, and it will be appreciated alike by the agent and his corps of assistants, and the general public. The personnel of the office is C. A. Stevens, Agent; D. L. Ross, short and over clerk; R. P. Burr, Eastern freight clerk; J. A. Cill, prepaid clerk; F. R. Folger, John Bradley, Eastern billing and extra baggage clerks; billing clerk - A. J. Kilgarif, Eugene Crouch, J. K. Young; train registers - J. S. Watson and E. D. Barber, the latter also attending to city collections."

September 9, 1880

"The remainder of the frame of the new freight depot, to the north line of K Street, has been raised and will be under roof and enclosed in a few days."

September 17, 1880

"The New Depot. - The new freight depot is fast approaching completion. The laying of the roof was finished yesterday, and the floor is all down, the sides mostly inclosed and the work of hanging the sliding doors for stopping the entrance is being pushed forward. The entire building will be occupied for freight business by the first of next month, and just in time for the unusual amount of freight handled each year in connection with the State Fair. Parties attending the State Fair with implements and materials of all kinds will appreciate the conveniences afforded by the new extension freight building, as it brings it within the power of the freight agent to extend far greater facilities and accommodations to shippers than was possible under the former conditions of things. A new larger sign, reading "Central Pacific Railroad", was placed in position yesterday, immediately facing J Street, and extending the width of the two story upright in the central portion of the depot."

September 25, 1880

"Freight Depot Completed. - Foreman F. S. Dent, who has had charge of the construction of the new freight depot in this city, completed the work upon the same yesterday, and left last evening with a force of 20 men for Colfax, where he will have charge of building another depot. The building there to be constructed will be 26 x 125 feet. A period of 61 days only has been occupied in the erection of the freight house just completed on Front Street. The work has progressed quietly but with the most economic control of forces and time, and the building completed is an ornament for its purposes to the city."