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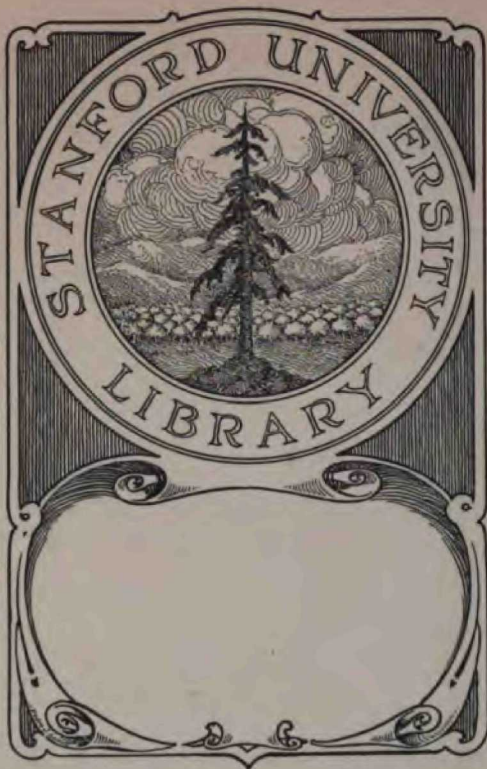
REPLY

TO THE

LETTER OF L. L. ROBINSON.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

FEBRUARY 14, 1885.



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OFFICE OF THE CENTRAL PACIFIC R. R. COMPANY
OF CALIFORNIA,
SACRAMENTO, FEB. 14, 1885.

*To the Hon. C. A. Sumner and H. Epstein,
Chairmen of R. R. Committees.*

GENTLEMEN :—Recently I received a printed copy of a letter dated Feb. 3, directed to you, purporting to have been signed by one L. L. Robinson, of this city, containing charges against this Company, of which I have been President since its organization. Recently, and since the death of T. D. Judah, Esq., the late Chief Engineer of this Company, I have heard rumors of a similar character, and emanating from the same and kindred sources, but this is the first time they have appeared in a tangible form, so that they could be fairly met. Lest your committees, who may not be aware of the true facts, should be misled by the numerous falsehoods in that letter, and especially as a matter of justice to the memory of Mr. Judah, it is proper that it should not be suffered to pass without notice.

ROBINSON THE ENEMY OF JUDAH.

Mr. Robinson states that he was intimately acquainted with Mr. Judah, and seeks to convey the impression that he was his confidential friend. *Such, at least, was not the case* during Mr. Judah's connection with our Company. From the time Mr. Judah entered the service of this Company in 1861, our relations were necessarily very intimate, and I *know*, as do others of his personal friends, that he regarded Mr. Robinson as his bitterest enemy. He often referred to previous railroad transactions both in this State and Florida, in which he claimed that the latter had wronged him, of the truth of which, however, I know nothing, except what I learned from Mr. Judah. But of this I am certain, that while Mr. Judah was in the employ of this Company, Mr. Robinson was the last man he would have selected as a confidant, or even as friend.

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JUDAH RECOMMENDED THE ROUTE.

I am certain that he never told Mr. Robinson, or any other person, that the route selected by this Company for their railroad "was a hopeless one," or that he "opposed the location as it now exists," for Mr. Judah was a truthful man, and such a statement would have been a falsehood. Mr. Judah, never opposed the route as located, *but always recommended it in the strongest terms*, and it was upon the strength of that recommendation, officially made as our Chief Engineer, that the present route was selected. And on this point I will say, that there was no dissenting voice among the Directors in making the location, nor have they, at any time since, entertained the least doubt of the wisdom of that selection. The location was not made until after a personal examination by several of the Directors, of that and various other routes mentioned in Mr. Judah's report.

HIS REPORTS PROVE IT.

In that letter Mr. Robinson endeavors to implicate Mr. Judah in an attempt to practice one of the basest of frauds. He tells you that the latter *knew* that the route thus selected was impracticable. This charge is made in the face of the fact, that Mr. Judah had published to the world, in various reports over his own signature, as the Chief Engineer of this Company, in which he recommends this very route in the strongest terms, and not content with a mere recommendation, he fully sets forth its peculiar advantages in detail, and the reasons why it was to be preferred to other routes.

HIS REASONS GIVEN.

These reasons will be found on pages 10 and 11 of his report made in October, 1861, and are as follows:

THE PROMINENT FEATURES OF THIS LINE MAY BE BRIEFLY ENUMERATED AS FOLLOWS:

- 1st. It crosses the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and reaches the Truckee River, in 123, and State line in 145 miles from Sacramento.
- 2d. Big Bend of Truckee, or Humboldt Desert, is reached in 178 miles.
- 3d. It crosses the State at nearly its narrowest width.
- 4th. It pursues nearly a direct course from Sacramento to the Big Bend of Truckee.
- 5th. It forms a local road for the counties of Sacramento, Placer and Nevada.

- th. It commands and will perform the entire business of Nevada Territory, Washoe, and the Silver mineral region.
- th. It will also command the business of the newly discovered Humboldt mineral district, Pyramid Lake, Esmeralda, and Mono mineral districts.
- th. It crosses the Truckee Meadows at the head of Steamboat Valley, which, with Washoe Valley and Eagle Valley, connects with Carson Valley, enabling a branch road, with light grades, to be built to any point on Carson River.
- th. It reaches eastern base of Sierra Nevada in $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Summit.
- th. It follows the valley of Truckee River, without obstacle, to Big Bend, or Humboldt Desert.
- th. It entirely avoids the second summit of Sierra Nevada.
- th. Its maximum grades are 105 feet per mile, or less than those of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.
- th. The grades down the Truckee will not exceed 40 feet per mile.
- th. The elevation of line is maintained, continuously to the summit—there being no down grade running easterly to Summit.
- th. A uniformly descending grade is maintained from the summit easterly to the Truckee, or eastern base.
- th. Encounters no elevated plateau of table-land at Summit.
- th. Running to and from summit with maximum grades, cannot have an extensive snow-line.
- th. Runs through extensive forests of Pitch and Sugar Pine, Fir, Cedar, and Tamarac, which latter two species of timber are abundant, and will furnish excellent cross-ties.
- th. Crosses no deep river canons or gorges.
- th. Its longest tunnel will not exceed 1,350 feet in length, and no shafting will be required.
- st. Shortest radius of curvature, 573 feet.
- d. Navigable waters of Sacramento River at all seasons of the year its western terminus; Washoe and the Grand Basin its eastern terminus.
- d. At Big Bend of Truckee, the line is in position to proceed *via* the Humboldt to Salt Lake, or follow the Simpson route to same point.
- th. *Saving in distance over route via Madelin Pass and headwaters of Sacramento, as surveyed by Lieut. BECKWITH, from Lassen's Meadows, or Humboldt crossing, 184 miles.*
- th. *Saving in cost of Pacific Railroad line, taking Lieut. BECKWITH's estimate from Lassen's Meadows, or Hum-*

- boldt crossing, as compared with cost of present proposed line, in thirteen and one half millions of dollars.
- 26th. Reduces the time of passenger transit to and from Washoe to 8½ hours. Passengers leaving Virginia station at 5 A M., will reach San Francisco the same evening.
 - 27th. Saving in cost of transportation of freight to citizens of Washoe or Nevada Territory, one million of dollars per year.
 - 28th. Affords a market for low-class silver ores (now thrown aside), for shipment to Europe, from over 3,000 mining claims.
 - 29th. Is advantageously located for an extension to Oregon.
 - 30th. Completes first western link of Pacific Railroad, overcoming its greatest difficulties.

So also in his report of 1863, he sets forth at length the comparative merits of the different routes examined by him, and conclusively establishes the superiority of the route selected.

ROBINSON CHARGES JUDAH WITH FRAUD.

If Mr. Robinson's statement is true, then Mr. Judah, in making this report, thus recommending that route, was guilty of a wilful falsehood, and perpetrated a deliberate fraud upon this Company and the public; and he carried out the fraud, and imposed upon the members of Congress and the National Government, in laboring for the passage of the Pacific Railroad Bill, and using his surveys, maps and profiles for that purpose.

HE CHARGES HIM WITH CORRUPTION.

To add still further to the malignancy of his statement, he charges that Mr. Judah obtained from the Company \$100,000 of its bonds, not to expose this, his own villanous fraud. The statement as thus made virtually refutes itself, for if he had been guilty of such deceit, of such a stupendous fraud upon the Company, upon the Government, and the public, he certainly would have kept it secret, for who so interested as himself to conceal it? Above all, he would never have disclosed it to his deadliest enemy, or the Company who would be so greatly injured.

THE BASENESS OF THESE CHARGES.

Happily, Mr. Judah's character as an Engineer, respecting which he was peculiarly sensitive, and as a man of integrity, stands too high to be reached by such infamous assaults. His friends will read these charges with astonishment, if they can be astonished at anything coming from such a source. These

charges are made after he has been laid in the silent tomb. *They never would have been made if he was living.* The author of these base charges stands, by his own confession, in no enviable position, having participated, by his silence for years, in covering up the alleged fraud. *He stamps his own character with infamy, while attempting to stab that of the dead.*

CHARGE OF BRIBERY DENIED.

As to the charge that Mr. Judah received from this Company \$100,000 of its bonds, to induce him to conceal his own fraud, or for any other purpose, it is absolutely *false*, and without even the shadow of foundation. The Company paid him a liberal salary for his valuable services as their Chief Engineer. That salary was paid in the stock of the Company, and in cash, but not one of it in bonds. Whatever bonds he may have held, were obtained in private transactions with other persons, with which transactions the Company had nothing to do. So, also, the statement that he left the service of the Company is equally false, as he continued its Chief Engineer up to his death.

ROBINSON NOT SATISFIED WITH SURVEYS.

Mr. Robinson, it appears, is not satisfied with the character of the surveys made by this Company. They were not made to satisfy him, or at his suggestion, request or advice, nor did he pay a cent to have them made. They were made for, and under the direction of, this Company, who paid large sums to have the work well done. The first one was made under directions to make a thorough, accurate, instrumental survey of a route for a railroad over the mountains, and especially of all points where serious difficulties might be expected; a survey upon which railroad capitalists could rely in investing their money. Mr. Judah carried out these instructions to the satisfaction of the officers and stockholders of the Company, to the satisfaction of Congress, of the best railroad capitalists and engineers of the Atlantic States, and especially to the satisfaction of the public, who were gratified at learning that a practicable route had been found over the dreaded Sierras. But Mr. Robinson is not satisfied, and we are not surprised at it.

STOCKHOLDERS AND CAPITALISTS ARE SATISFIED.

The stockholders of this Company, some of whom have invested large sums in the enterprise, and Eastern capitalists have not hesitated to take hold of the work, confident that the route is not only entirely practicable, but a remarkably good one for such a mountainous region. These men are acting upon a

thorough knowledge of the facts, but Mr. Robinson without that knowledge, and upon very slight information, expresses his dissatisfaction with the surveys made by this Company, which include the only thorough instrumental railroad survey ever made over the Sierra Nevada mountains to the valleys beyond, all others being only limited in their extent. He admits the fact of this survey having been made, for he says he "examined the stakes along the line," but he seems to have been appalled by the "physical obstacles" to be encountered. Then let him stand aside for those not so easily frightened. It is not surprising that one, whose practical railroad experience has been confined to a road over a level plain, should not be fitted to encounter rugged rocks and hills.

CHALLENGE MET AND REFUTED.

But he goes further, and challenges the production of any field notes, plans or estimates, upon which Mr. Judah's reports were made. If he means by this to say that there are none, then he asserts another falsehood. He, of course, writes without any *personal* knowledge, for he has never stepped foot inside of our Engineer's office. But the field notes, maps, plans, profiles and estimates, not only of that first survey by Mr. Judah, but of several other surveys, are there carefully preserved, and can be examined by any *gentleman* who may be interested in the matter.

FALSE STATEMENTS TO GOV. NYE.

In this connection I will state that one of your United States Senators, Gov. Nye, when on his way to Washington, called at this office and stated that he had been told that this Company had made no survey over the mountains. It afforded us a great pleasure to exhibit to him all the original notes of that survey, with the maps and profiles prepared under Mr. Judah's direction. He declared that he was perfectly satisfied, and in strong language expressed his contempt for men who could fabricate and circulate such base falsehoods.

ROBINSON DON'T LIKE THE ESTIMATES.

He also finds fault with Mr. Judah's estimates of the cost of the work. The latter had the means of making the estimates, while the former *knows* nothing about it. His main point is that as the road passes over a summit 7,000 feet high, greatly exceeding that of any other railroad in the United States, its cost must be proportionably great. In this he shows his ignorance of engineering. The altitude of the summit affects the *grade* of a road, but not necessarily its cost. If the slope of the Sierras

was a uniform plane from the base to the summit, while the grade would be heavy, the cost of construction would be no greater than over a plain surface in the valley. It is the irregularities of the surface and the presence of rock which makes a railroad expensive, and these may exist as well in a valley as on a mountain side. The slopes of the Sierras are rough and rocky, and therefore the work upon that portion of the Pacific Railroad located over it, is expensive—but the total rise and fall in ascending to the summit of 7,000 feet, and descending to the valleys beyond, is only 8,800 feet, while the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in surmounting a summit elevation of only 2,700 feet, rises and falls 7,000 feet. This difference is due to the fact that there is very little undulatory grade upon the Central Pacific line.

HIS ESTIMATES FALSE.

Mr. Robinson, in saying that the Central Pacific Railroad will cost \$250,000 to \$300,000 per mile, states what is not true, and is speaking of a matter respecting which he has no knowledge and no reliable information. His statements of the points where the greatest expense will be incurred, betray his gross ignorance of the whole matter. Thus he says, that the most expensive part of the line, is "from the summit to the Truckee River, while, with the exception of about one mile, immediately at the summit, no extraordinary difficulties are met with on that part of the route.

JUDAH'S ESTIMATES CORRECT.

When Mr. Judah estimated the work at about \$90,000 per mile, he came near the truth, as he had the data from which to make his calculations. The recent surveys (which have been more full and accurate than the first made), as well as the known cost of the work already completed, confirm the accuracy of the original estimates of Mr. Judah, and any increase in the expense is accounted for in the increased cost of material and labor, caused by the war and other unanticipated events.

FALSE STATEMENT OF COST OF RAILROADS.

He attaches to his letter a statement of the cost of several Eastern railroads. He does not state the source from whence he made that compilation, but the tables in the office of this Company show that his statement is grossly incorrect. Thus he states that the cost of the Boston and Worcester, the Eastern and the Great Western Railroads each at \$100,000 per mile, while the tables show that the first cost \$64,659, the second \$55,659 and the third \$23,151. A man who can thus wilfully falsify well known facts, is unworthy of belief in any of his statements. It

is equally untrue that the cost of labor and material in California, is double that of the Atlantic States. The object of these gross misstatements is obviously to prove that it is impossible, with any reasonable outlay of time and money, to build *any* railroad over the mountains, for it is evident that the cost over any other route would be as great if not greater.

ROBINSON'S MOTIVES.

I can well understand why he is anxious to have the Pacific Railroad appear impracticable. He is the holder of a large amount of the stock of the Sacramento Valley Railroad, a road which probably would not sell to-day for the amount of the incumbrances upon it. And the construction of the Pacific Railroad, or even its extension twelve miles east of its present terminus, will so divert the trade from that road, that it will hardly pay necessary expenses. It is his interest, therefore, to delay as much as possible the construction of the National Railroad, that he and his friends may retain the monopoly of the Nevada trade. To accomplish this, he hesitates not to villify the dead as well as the living, to falsify the most notorious facts, and to scatter broadcast the most slanderous articles. He hopes thus to induce legislation injurious to the National work, and prevent capitalists from investing their means in the greatest enterprise of the age. Indeed, he has the audacity in this very letter to advise the Legislature of Nevada to adopt a policy, which he admits will "hurt" the Central Pacific Railroad, a part of the nation's great highway.

DETERMINATION TO BUILD THE ROAD.

But, as has already been shown, his statements as to the impracticability of the route adopted for the Pacific Railroad, are not entitled to the least weight. I assure you and the people of Nevada, who are so deeply interested in this question, that it is entirely practicable, and that too, without requiring any exorbitant outlay of money. The time required to complete it will depend upon the means within the control of the Company, and its ability to procure money upon its securities. Our enemies are laboring hard, utterly reckless of the means employed, to prevent us from obtaining money, and if the Legislature of Nevada should see fit to aid them in their schemes, and endorse their policy, it may possibly result in delaying the completion of the National road. But whatever course may be adopted by others, the public may rest assured that this Company intend to build the road, and that too as speedily as possible with the means they can command. Men who openly declare such a road impracticable, will, of course, never *seriously* attempt it. Convinced as we are of its entire feasibility, we shall devote all our energies to the work.

WAGON ROAD FALSEHOOD DENIED.

He tells you the Wagon Road ruled the location of the railroad, *a charge I most emphatically deny.* In making this charge, he again betrays his ignorance of facts, for the Wagon Road was not commenced, nor the Wagon Road Company organized, until long *after* the railroad was located. It was constructed because it was necessary for the railroad. Without it, the railroad until completed, could only have done a local business. With it, it is already fully prepared to compete successfully for the Washoe trade.

FALSEHOODS ABOUT SURVEYS EXPOSED.

He says that this Company has no locating survey beyond Ilinoistown, and refers to Rogers' Report to confirm this charge. That statement is false, as is nearly every statement in that report of Rogers. Robinson, indeed, admits its falsity, by telling you that he has examined the stakes. But he charges that the Company "found the work so heavy they dare not make public the results of the location." In this, he again states a falsehood, for the results of the survey were published to the world, in the Report of our Acting Chief Engineer, S. S. Montague, Esq., made on the 8th day of October last, copies of which we sent your Committee. It will be found fully set forth on pages 13 to 16 of that Report.

Mr. Robinson says he knows that Mr. Judah "never even rode over the Placerville routes." I am informed by one who is well acquainted with all his explorations in the mountains, that this is not true; that Mr. Judah did go over that route, and took the altitudes with an aneroid barometer; but of this I have no present knowledge. The reason this Company never surveyed that route, was because Mr. Judah stated that from his observations, and the reports of Goddard and other engineers, he was satisfied that it was impracticable for a railroad, and that it was useless to expend time and money in making a survey. As stated in our former letter to your Committee, "persons interested in that line promised to furnish the Company with full information respecting it, but never did so." Having failed to furnish this information, we presumed they were satisfied of its impracticability.

LOCATION OF ROUTE TO REESE RIVER.

He tells you that the Pacific Railroad route runs north of Reese River. Mistaken again. No location has yet been made of the line east of the Big Bend of the Truckee. If the route by way of Reese River is found to be favorable for a railroad, it will undoubtedly be adopted, and there will not be the least difficulty in taking that route from the present terminus of the location.

CENTRAL PACIFIC ROUTE THE SHORTEST AND BEST.

He says Illinoistown is not as near Virginia as Latrobe. Here he is again mistaken, as a glance at any map will show; that is, if any map can be found with Latrobe correctly marked on it. The stages are daily disproving it, for last summer they made the trip from New Castle, 23 miles west of Illinoistown, to Virginia in from four to six hours less time, than those from Latrobe, and during the winter it has been made most of the time in about 24 hours less staging.

Numerous other falsehoods and misstatements might be pointed out in this, in some respects, remarkable letter, but I deem it unnecessary. Enough has been shown to determine its character, and a more full examination would only weary your patience.

In conclusion, I would state that this Company opposes no railroad enterprise on this coast, but, on the contrary, seeks to be friendly with all. We regard Nevada as affording one of the best markets for the agricultural productions and manufactures of California, and the Pacific Railroad will afford the facilities imperiously demanded by that trade. Every railroad built in California, by cheapening the cost of transportation of property, lessens its cost, and enables your people to purchase more largely. In that way every railroad constructed is a benefit to the Pacific Railroad. Even the Latrobe Railroad will, without doubt, ultimately become a feeder to it.

LELAND STANFORD,

Pres't C. P. R. R. Co.

STATEMENT OF CHARLES CROCKER.

In addition to the foregoing reply, I will add that Mr. Judah, in his lifetime, exhibited to me a letter from L. L. Robinson to him, in which he, Robinson, stated that unless the Central Pacific Railroad Company purchased his interest in the Sacramento Valley Railroad upon his own terms, which he fixed at an extravagant price, that he would throw every obstacle in our way that he could; that he, Judah, was well aware of the difficulties in the way of building railroads in California, with no opposition, and all interests favorable to it, but with the active opposition of his Company, wielding a money influence of \$30,000 per month, we could not hope to succeed; and that he, Robinson, would wield that influence with all his power and energy against the Company, both here and at the East, unless they complied with his terms. The Company did not purchase his interest, and he has been fulfilling his threat ever since, and has done his utmost, hesitating at no means which he thought would accomplish his object.

CHAS. CROCKER.