



ASTINGS has figured prominently as a railroad center since the inauguration of service on the St. Joe & Grand Island in the latter part of 1872. With only two lines of railroad Hastings would now be inferior as a shipping point to to numerous small towns throughout the state, but in the pioneer days the advent of the second line of railroad marked the beginning of an epoch of continued and substantial growth, for the second road gave the town an advantage over all others in this section of Nebraska.

Along the line of the Burlington railroad towns were located at intervals of twelve miles, upon sites given by the government, and in this county Inland was laid out three miles west of its present site with Juniata next in alphabetical order. The main line of the Burlington through Nebraska extended from Platts-



Residence of O. C. Zinn.

mouth, and was not completed through Adams county until June 1872.

Before the road was built through this county Inland was its western terminus. In June, 1872, trains were operated to Juniata, and in September of the same year the road was built to Kearney.

In a letter to the publisher of "The Book of Hastings" Superintendent E. Bignell, of the Lincoln division of the Burlington, under date of November 12, 1906, said:

"\* \* \* I ran an engine, hauling construction material for the line west of Hastings, before there was a house in Hastings, except one sod house \* \* \*, but I do not remember the date of the first regular train being put on. I remember my first trip very well because, on arrival at Juniata, where there was a water tank and station building, I asked the agent if it was Hastings. He replied in the negative, saying Hastings was seven miles east. This was in June, 1872."

Until the postoffice was established, on October 8, 1872, Hastings was not recognized by the Burlington railroad even to the extent of stopping trains for passengers to and from this destination. After the office was opened, however, it was necessary for trains to stop for mail and in this way passengers were given an opportunity to get on and off at this place.

The St. Joe & Grand Island railroad, then called the St. Joe & Denver City, began running trains into Hastings in September, and the competition of this road, together with the mail traffic, forced the Burlington to reconsider its first evident intention to prevent the growth of a town at this point.

For ten years after the Burlington began operating trains through Adams county Kearney was its western terminus, the road to Denver not being completed until May 25, 1882.

The Burlington branch from Hastings to Red Cloud, to connect with the southern line of the Burlington system, was built late in 1878, and for this road bonds amounting to \$20,000 were voted by Denver township on May 4, of that year. The Burlington's line from Hastings to Aurora was completed September 7, 1886, and service established on that day.

The builders of the St. Joe & Denver City railroad originally planned to construct the line through to Denver, Colo., and with that object in view a road was graded and track laid for some

miles northwest of Hastings. The plan was soon abandoned, however, and Hastings remained the western terminus of the road until the fall of 1879, when the construction of the Hastings & Grand Island formed a connection between the St. Joe & Denver City and the Union Pacific. Soon after service was established on the new line from Hastings to Grand Island the two companies were consolidated under the name of the St. Joe & Grand Island Railroad Company. The road gives Hastings direct connection with the Union Pacific, 25 miles north, and is a short and direct line south to St. Joe and Kansas City.

The Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley railroad was built into Hastings in 1889, and as with the road from St. Joe it was the purpose of the builders of the Elkhorn line to extend to Denver, but thus far Hastings has remained the terminus. Some years ago the name of the Elkhorn railroad was dropped and it is now known as the Chicago & Northwestern, of which system it has always been a part.



Lincoln Avenue, North from Seventh Street.

The Pacific railroad, now the Missouri Pacific, was built into Hastings in the winter of 1887-8 and was constructed to Prosser in the spring of the latter year. The operation of trains on this line began in April. For this road Adams county voted \$125,000 in bonds and the city of Hastings \$20,000.

The locating of the Burlington passenger station in 1873 caused considerable agitation among the citizens. The members of the original town company concentrated their efforts to induce the company to build the station within the area of the original town plat, while Mr. John G. Moore, who had the next homestead west, and other persons living near him, endeavored to influence the location in their vicinity. Mr. Moore donated to the railroad company a tract of some thirteen acres of land lying between Bellevue and Saunders avenues, and Third and Seventh streets, which was a part of his homestead. He also gave the company several building lots. It was this donation that caused the company to erect its depot on Bellevue avenue and when the company announced its intention of building the new station on St. Joe avenue, which was completed in the fall of 1902, the residents of the west part of town insisted that the original station had been established on Bellevue avenue for a consideration, this consideration being Mr. Moore's donation, and that the company had no moral right to build a new station in another part of the city. Mr. Moore, however, moved away from Hastings in the 80's and had no interests in the city at the time. From Hastings Mr. Moore went to Texas and died there a few years ago. The new Burlington station, which is one of the finest in the country for a city of Hastings' size, cost about \$75,000.

There are prospects that the railroad facilities of Hastings will be still further improved in the near future. A company has recently been incorporated in Denver for the building of a railroad from Omaha to that place and Hastings is included in the proposed main line right of way. A company has also been organized for the building of an electric interurban road from Omaha to Hastings. Besides these two projects a route has recently been surveyed from Hastings to Kearney, presumably for the Union Pacific, to be used as a cut-off between the Union Pacific and St. Joe & Grand Island railroads.