

Jane Earl Reed was the wife of Samuel B. Reed. Mr. Reed started working for the Union Pacific locating engineer. Reed worked for about six months surveying the railroad route between Green River, Wyoming, and the Wasatch Range in Utah. Reed basically laid out the proposed route that constructed line utilized by the railroad. By 1866, Reed changed positions in the company from surveying to engineer of construction and superintendent of operations. Reed supervised all phases of construction on the final railroad construction to Promontory Summit (Union Pacific 2007). Since Reed was leading the work for the Union Pacific, it would make sense that his wife and family were with him at least through the end stages of construction.

In 1895, Louis Howard Hyde, the grandson of Jane Earl Reed compiled the letters of Samuel B. Reed and made notes concerning Samuel's life (Hyde 1895). These letters written by Reed, mainly to his wife, are filled with detail of the difficulties of the race to the Promontories. Reed seems to have relied on his wife for support in his tough decisions, and comfort at a very busy and crazy time. Jane Ann Earl Reed was able to join her husband near the completion of the railroad. In April, Mrs. Reed, her three daughters and her sister, Miss Minerva Earl, arrived at Echo, in Weber Canyon, Utah. They stayed here with Mr. Reed until the joining of the rails. Unfortunately, the three girls contracted Scarlet Fever on the way to the Utah Territory and only one daughter, Anne, was able to "attend the ceremony of the laying of the last rail" with her mother and Aunt Minerva (Hyde 1895:117).

Other women who were present with their husbands who worked for the UP were Mrs. Isaac Sisson and Mrs. E. P. North. In March of 1869, the Deseret News wrote an article about the progress of the Union Pacific on the railroad. The article discussed a Mr. Isaac Sisson, Esq., "a regularly graduated grader," and foreman who was working on the railroad and that his wife was present "with him, and they are veritably at home in camp" (*DN* March 30, 1869b:n.p.). Little is known of Mrs. E. P. North other than she was present at the Golden Spike ceremony and that her husband worked as a civil engineer on the UP (CPRRMuseum 2007).

Another interesting story of a woman, associated with the UP, was found in an obituary located in the archives at GOSP. The woman, Caira Simpson, joined her husband who was working as an engineer on the railroad in Byron, Wyoming. Mrs. Simpson at first took her "meals in a tent boarding house, ... later [Mrs. Simpson] taking charge of the eating house built by the UP" (Golden Spike National Historic Site [GOSP] n.d.a). Mrs. Simpson continued to work with the railroad and was present at the driving of the last spike. Caira Simpson left her work with the UP in the summer of 1869, when she returned to New Hampshire to visit her mother and her first son was born (GOSP n.d.a).

Perhaps one of the most intriguing stories comes from the local Promontory lore. For many years the story was told that an entire family "took up housekeeping in one of Promontory's caves during the railroad construction" (GOSP n.d.b:7). In one of the GOSP trail guides for "The Big Fill Trail", this story was cleared up in 1988 by Edwin Hancock. According to the account given by Mr. Hancock his grandparents:

Earl Ewing and Anna Jenkins, had met and were married while working for the Union Pacific Railroad (his grandmother was a cook, his grandfather a