

By 1904, and the construction of the Lucin Cutoff, the Promontory route was mainly used for local purposes, and not as a cross-country thoroughfare. Still there were women present in the Promontory area - keeping the railroad passengers fed and conducting other business for the railroad. Oral histories indicate families present at Promontory including G. T. Brown and the Houghtons, the Clay family at Blue Creek, and the Yagi's at Kelton.

The Houghtons, who purchased the Promontory store from G. T. Brown, were about the best known family in the Promontory area. Mr. Frederick Houghton and his wife Annie went to Promontory in 1907 where Mr. Houghton was the Postmaster and owned the Promontory store (*Box Elder News* 1907;1926). The store sold general merchandise, hay, grain, "sheepmen's supplies and accommodations for travelers" (*Box Elder News* 1909a:2). Frederick and Annie were divorced in 1909, and in 1911 Frederick married Katie Nurse, a recent immigrant from England (*Box Elder News* 1909a; Familysearch 2007; Gerritsen 1974). Katie Houghton came to the United States with nine large trunks full of beautiful clothing from England (Gerritsen 1974). She would work hard in the morning, then dress up for the afternoon. Katie brought one son with her into the marriage and in 1912 had a second child, Bernice Houghton (Gerritsen 1974). Frederick built a blue house for Katie, but she only lived in it for a few years before moving back into the store (Figure 9.35). Bernice said that her mother thought she would always move back into that house, but never did (Gerritsen 1974). Most of the local farming ladies thought she never did any work, because she always looked so nice (Gerritsen 1974). In 1926, Frederick died after an operation for cancer (*Box Elder News* 1926). Katie and her daughter, stayed on for another ten years, running the store and the post office. At this point, Bernice decided that she was done with Promontory, so she and her mother moved into Ogden (Gerritsen 1974). The Houghton women spent many years working at Promontory and left their mark in the area.

W. A. Clay recounts his story as part of an oral history program, conducted by the Utah State Historical Society, in order to preserve the memories of the railroad through the Promontories. W. A. Clay was only a year old when his father took a job as the telegraph operator at Blue Creek (42BO1149) in 1885 (Clay 1974:1). Clay describes the house he lived in at the depot as a small building with four rooms downstairs and a cellar and lean-to behind. He also remembered that there was a big water tank, and a turntable there (Clay 1974:7). The telegraph office was located on the platform to the tracks. The family lived here for many years where they had one more son and a daughter. Clay's aunt came and lived with them as well (Clay 1974:13). Clay said that she learned to be a telegrapher and communicated from the house to her brother-in-law at the telegraph office. Clay stated, however, that the CP didn't like women operators, so she was only allowed to work as a relief operator (Clay 1974:13) (Figure 9.36). Taro Yagi recounted his memories of life at Kelton as part of the same oral history project. He did not describe much, but remembered that he lived there with his father and mother, who were both from Japan (Yagi 1974:16).

As mentioned, not many women actually worked for the railroad itself through the Promontories. Although in Nevada, Larry Mullaly's research in the "Central Pacific Officers, Agencies and Stations lists for the years 1879, 1881 and 1885" shows a surprising number of women who worked as station agents for the railroad (Mullaly 2005). Perhaps because the