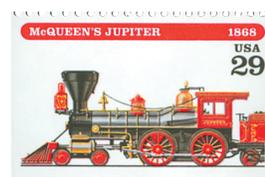


# This Day in History... March 20, 1869

## First Run of McQueen's *Jupiter*

The *Jupiter*, also known as Central Pacific Railroad #60, made its first run on March 20, 1869. Less than two months later, the *Jupiter* made history as one of the two locomotives that met at Promontory Summit, Utah to mark the completion of America's First Transcontinental Railroad.

*Jupiter* was a popular name for locomotives in the 1800s. Named after the "King of Gods" or the "God of the Sky," *Jupiter* was a name that inspired wonder and excitement. Walter McQueen designed his *Jupiter*, a 4-4-0 steam locomotive, and it was built in 1868 at the Schenectady Locomotive Works. Once complete, it was disassembled and transported by ship to the Central Pacific headquarters in San Francisco. *Jupiter* was reassembled and had its first run on March 20, 1869. It was run up and down a test track on Front Street and reportedly ran perfectly. *Jupiter* was then sent to Nevada to haul passenger trains. It would soon become a part of history...



*For many years it was believed the Jupiter was red, but a newspaper article was discovered in the 1990s that revealed it was blue so the NPS replica was repainted.*



*This stamp was issued for the 75th anniversary of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1944.*

Several years earlier, Theodore Judah approached the United States government with his dream of building a railroad that would extend from coast to coast. Eager to link the Western states to the Union, Congress agreed to his plan and in 1862 passed the Pacific Railroad Act, authorizing the building of a transcontinental railroad. Two companies were chartered to do the job.

In 1863 the Union Pacific Railroad began laying tracks westward from Omaha, Nebraska, while the Central Pacific laid tracks eastward from Sacramento, California. By May 1869, the railroad was nearly complete and plans were being made for a grand ceremony at the point where both ends would meet, in Promontory Summit, Utah. Project manager and financier Leland Stanford selected the two trains that would participate in the Golden Spike Ceremony – *Union Pacific No. 119* and *Antelope*. On May 5, Stanford took a train pulled by the *Antelope* to Reno, following *Jupiter* which was on its normally scheduled passenger run.

The railroad passed through a mountainside logging area, where workers were cutting down trees. They were used to seeing the trains pass and recognized *Jupiter* from its normal run. They didn't expect there would be another train behind it, so they rolled a log down the hill before they could see *Antelope* coming. The log landed just beside the tracks and the engineer was unable to stop the train in time. *Antelope* hit the log and was partially damaged, though it was able continue its journey at a slower speed.

With *Antelope* damaged, Stanford had to select a replacement, and chose *Jupiter*, just six weeks into its service. Pressed into action, *Jupiter* arrived at Promontory on May 7 and represented the western portion of the track in the special ceremony on May 10. In a jubilant celebration, officials from both railroads drove ceremonial golden spikes to hold down the last rail – the 2,000-mile-long line spanning the West had at long last been completed. A simple accident catapulted *Jupiter* into the record books.

After the ceremony, *Jupiter* remained in service with the Central Pacific. In the 1870s, the railroad dropped the names of their trains, so *Jupiter* became known as C.P. #60. It was later acquired by the Southern Pacific and renamed S.P. #1195 and converted to burn coal. It was sold one more time, to the Gila Valley, Globe and Northern Railway, which sold it for scrap in 1909. In the years to come, other trains stood in for *Jupiter* at historic reenactments of the Golden Spike Ceremony.

In the 1970s, the National Park Service commissioned full-size replicas of *Jupiter* and *No. 119* for the Golden Spike National Historic Site. The replicas make regular demonstration runs for visitors.



*These stamps were issued for the 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike Ceremony. They were issued as a rarely seen format – a se-tenant strip of three.*

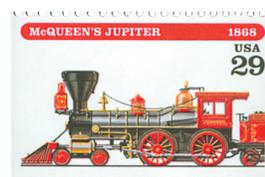
**Mystic Stamp Company • Camden, NY 13316**

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