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Over 600 railroad images added to South Dakota Digital Archives

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota State Historical Society-Archives at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre recently uploaded new photographs from the R.C. Lathrop Collection to the South Dakota Digital Archives.

Visit the State Archives website at history.sd.gov/archives and find the link to “R.C. Lathrop” or search directly at the South Dakota Digital Archives.

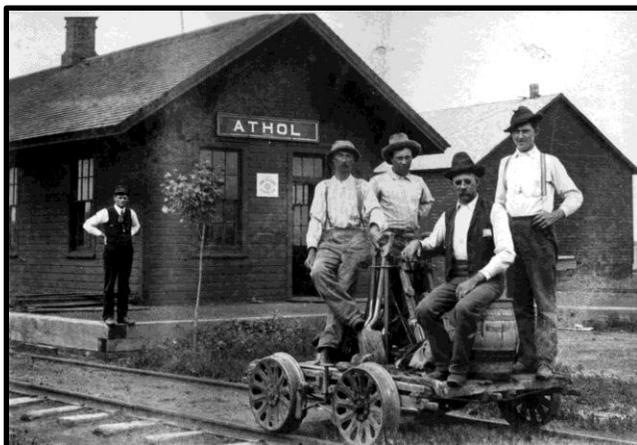
Over 600 railroad-related photographs were added to the online photo archives, with a particular emphasis on railroad depots. Other images include scenes of elevators, roundhouses, tracks, rail yards, water tanks and other railroad-related buildings from several South Dakota towns. The images date from the 1900s to the 1970s.

“The R.C. Lathrop photographs, recently added to the South Dakota Digital Archives, offer an exceptional view of railroad history throughout the state,” said Chelle (SHEL-ee) Somsen, state archivist.

Lathrop started working on the railroad at age 18. He worked 20 years with the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad and an additional 22 years with the Burlington, Northern & Sante Fe Railroad. He was a brakeman, conductor and switchman. He retired in June 2004.

In his spare time, Lathrop amassed a large collection of photographs, research materials and other items connected to railroad history in South Dakota. He donated these materials to the State Archives in 2011.

The South Dakota Digital Archives, an online resource launched in January 2012 by the State Historical Society-Archives, provides researchers digital access to unique historical records. There are currently over 53,000 images available online.



Editor’s Note: This photo from the R.C. Lathrop Collection shows a group of men on a hand cart next to the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad depot at Athol, S.D., ca. 1910s. (Photo courtesy South Dakota State Historical Society-Archives)

The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Education. The State Historical Society, an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit www.history.sd.gov for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.