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BUILT ON THE SHOULDERS OF VETERINARY GIANTS “A FAITHFUL FRIEND”

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“There will come a day, and it won't be long, when all who knew him are gone.” Lawrence Journal World

George took his job seriously.

This story begins at the Lawrence Union Pacific railroad station on a rainy night in the 1940s. There he was, cold and wet, without luggage or a means of paying for a ticket. But, without knowing it, he had found a home.

It was said of George that he never met anyone he didn't like. This affection was shared by all he greeted with a warm wagging of his tail and a friendly lick on the hand. The Depot Dog, as he soon would be called, was especially fond of soldiers returning from or heading off to WWII. Time has eroded the description of his appearance. There are no pictures. He may have been a white Shepherd or maybe a brown mutt, short-haired and short- legged.

His job was to meet each passenger train as it pulled up at the station. His fame grew as he welcomed travelers and barked farewell to those who were departing. Locals came to the station just to see him work the crowd. He was a politician.

George was taken in by the station's trainmaster. Each evening John Robinson would take George home. Between trains George would rest inside the station under the ticket counter on a pillow provided by Mrs. Robinson.

Only one person remembered meeting George when the *Lawrence Journal World* wrote about him in 2005. Norma Kampshroeder was 94-years-old at the time. She was a clerk at the station from 1942 to 1945. “He was a good dog,” she said. “We all just loved him.”

Railroad crewmen knew George too. One was “Joe Joe the Dog Face Boy”. In those days, trainmen had nicknames. Joe had animal friends up and down the rail line from Denver to Kansas City. I know this because “Joe Joe” was my Dad.

After greeting passengers George would head off to the dining car where meals were always found. Railroaders pooled funds for his veterinary care.

Someplace along the way, higher-ups ordered stations not to keep pets. In the same envelope with the directive was a dollar bill from the superintendent. It was his contribution for George's well-being.

On October 5, 1950 George's job came to an end. He was buried on property now occupied by the Lawrence Visitors Center. The railroad family-- George's family-- placed a stone marker which can be found near the entrance to the station.

When you're in Lawrence for a game or lunch drop by and say “hi” to George.

