

Edward Creighton  
(1820-1874)

Edward, born August 31, 1820, was the fifth of nine children of James Creighton and Bridget (Hughes) Creighton, Irish immigrants. In the farming town of Barnesville, Ohio, where he grew up, Edward was limited to a fifth grade education. With team and wagon he began to help support the family at age 16 and became head of the family upon his father's death on March 5, 1842. Edward Creighton began his career with pioneer telegraphy in 1847. First, he contracted to haul poles. He soon became construction superintendent for the Atlantic Lake and Mississippi Telegraph Company. At the same time he operated a construction company building streets and railroad beds. In 1856, Edward Creighton sold his teams and wagons and moved with several brothers, sisters, cousins and their families to Omaha. That fall he married his sweetheart, Mary Lucretia Wareham, and the following spring, backed by working capital of \$20,000, he brought his bride to the boisterous young riverport city of 600 in the Nebraska territory. Working for Western Union, he surveyed the territory westward from Omaha for the first transcontinental telegraph. Creighton studied various routes, and by process of elimination chose a central route which crossed a generous portion of the Nebraska territory and by which Omaha was firmly linked to the national communication system. Edward amassed a fortune through his development of the telegraph, cattle, freight, and banking... and was the state's first millionaire.