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RURAL RAILROADS

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Rural Railroads

prelude

Trails to Rails



Aileen Smith Cunningham

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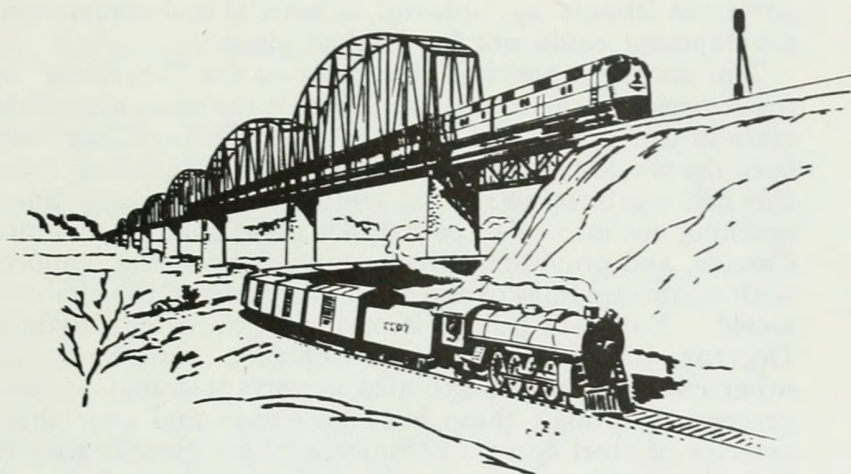
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*Ill. Hist
Survey*

PART I

TRAILS to RAILS

By
CARLTON J. CORLISS



A Story of Transportation
Progress in Illinois

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Foreword

WITHIN two life-spans Illinois has been transformed from an untamed wilderness into a great agricultural and industrial commonwealth, rivaling in many respects some of the foremost nations of the world. Most of this development has taken place within the memory of persons now living.

The secret of Illinois' remarkable progress is told in one word—transportation. Transportation was the key that unlocked the great natural resources of Illinois. It opened the door of opportunity to the farmer, the miner, the manufacturer and the merchant. Without good transportation Illinois' agricultural, industrial and commercial development could not have taken place.

The strategic position of Illinois as the "keystone" of the American railway system makes it the most accessible state in the Union. Its principal city, Chicago, has long been the world's greatest railway center. Radiating from this mid-western metropolis are thirty-odd railway lines, reaching out into every part of our great country and into Canada, and providing direct connections at the seaports with steamship lines to and from every part of the civilized world. East St. Louis, Peoria, Rockford, Springfield, Decatur, Joliet, Bloomington, Centralia, Galesburg and other cities of Illinois are also important transportation centers. Through these busy gateways and over these arteries of steel flows a commerce of far greater magnitude than was carried on in the entire country before railroads were introduced.

In the following pages we shall trace briefly the development of transportation in Illinois from the earliest times to the present day, and we shall consider the part which railway transportation has played in the making of this prairie state.

C. J. C.

Reprint - 1956

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ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST EXPRESS TRAIN

From a drawing by Robert E. Lee, by courtesy of Railway Express Agency, Inc.

TRAILS TO RAILS

CHAPTER I

Native Trails

WHEN the French explorers and missionaries visited the Illinois country in the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, they were impressed by the vastness of the prairies, the beauty of the forests and the abundance of animal life. Especially were they impressed by the strange "wild cattle" which traveled in great herds, sometimes in single file, sometimes plunging in wild stampede.

These "wild cattle" were the American buffaloes—the first "trail blazers" in the western country. In their annual migrations from the far western plains to the salt licks of Kentucky and the rich feeding grounds of the Allegheny slopes, they followed beaten trails which broadened into wide roads on high ground and narrowed to slender paths in the bottomlands.

From time immemorial these buffalo paths were used by the Illinois Indians in their overland travels to and from the Mississippi, Wabash and Ohio rivers. Later they became the pathways of the hunter, the trapper and the fur trader. Some of them developed into important routes of pioneer travel.

Daniel Boone and other pathfinders in the region west of the Alleghenies followed these great game trails for long distances through the wilderness. The old "Saint Louis Trace," believed to be the first overland route used by the Americans to reach the Illinois country, was originally a buffalo trail, worn deep by the hoofbeats of innumerable herds. This historic trail, also called the "Vincennes Trail" in olden days, extended from the Falls of

the Ohio, opposite the present city of Louisville, Ky., to a crossing of the Wabash River at or near Vincennes and thence westward across Illinois along a route now closely paralleled by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad to St. Louis.

The vicinity of old Fort Massac, where the city of Metropolis now stands, was the Ohio River terminus of several buffalo paths, which extended northward and westward through Johnson and Pope counties.

The Indians also used many trails of their own making in their travels to and from their numerous villages and water routes within and

beyond the present borders of Illinois. The red men usually located their villages on or near the banks of rivers or streams and used these natural water courses extensively in traveling from place to place. The light bark canoe, extensively used by the Wisconsin and Michigan Indians, was a luxury among the Illinois tribes, as the birch tree from which the bark was obtained did not



THE FIRST TRAIL-BLAZERS—Buffalo trails became the red man's paths and the white man's roads. From *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, January, 1869, by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine*.

grow in Illinois. A more common craft in Illinois was the hollow log canoe, or "dugout," heavier and slower than the bark canoe.

Just as the white men have centers, like Chicago, East St. Louis and Peoria, from which railroads and highways radiate, so the Indians had their radial points, or transportation centers. One such center was in the vicinity of Metropolis, on the Ohio River; another was near the mouth of the Kaskaskia River; another was near the site of Danville, on the Big Vermillion River, where the important

Piankishaw Indian village was located. Similar focal centers of Indian travel were at the mouth of the Chicago River, at Black Hawk's village on the Rock River, at the confluence of the Kankakee and Des Plaines rivers and at the northwest corner of the state in the vicinity of Galena.

Some native trails were well-beaten footpaths; others, but infrequently used, were so faint that even the most experienced hunter did not venture forth upon them without the aid of an Indian guide.

Of all the Indian trails in Illinois, the one most frequently used by the early explorers and fur traders was the "Portage Path," bridging the gap between the headwaters of the Chicago and Illinois rivers. The Chicago portage varied in length, depending upon the stages and conditions of the rivers. In periods of heavy rain and swollen streams, the navigable waters of the two systems almost joined, while in dry seasons a land journey of from fifty to one hundred miles was sometimes necessary.

Linking as it did the two most extensive systems of natural waterways on the North American Continent—the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River systems—the importance of the Chicago portage as a trade and travel route was second to no other man-made thor-

oughfare in the days of exploration, conquest and early settlement in this region.

The story of this historic old trail is one of intense romantic interest. Doubtless it was the warpath of the savage long before the coming of the Europeans. It bore the first white men ever to set foot upon Western soil. Along this narrow way plodded Father Marquette, Joliet, La Salle, the "Columbus of the West," and his faithful Tonti, Father Hennepin, St. Cosme and other historic figures upon their missions of discovery and exploration. It was the path of the sad remnant of La Salle's expedition en route to Quebec with news of their intrepid leader's tragic death. It was the route of the French pioneers—the first settlers of Kaskaskia, Cahokia and St. Louis. For a century or more it was a favorite route of priest, trader and trapper.

Another native path of unusual interest was the "Great Sauk Trail," which extended from the Indian villages near the present site of Rock Island eastward through the Rock and Fox River valleys, around the southern shore of Lake Michigan toward Malden, in Canada, where the Sauk and Fox tribes went each year to receive their annuities from the British Government. This famous old trail was used extensively by white men in the romantic days of the fur trade.



THE EXPLORERS—Rivers were the main pathways of explorer, priest and trader in their efforts to plant the seeds of civilization in this far western country. From *The Story of Chicago*, by Joseph Kirkland.

Native paths also linked old Kaskaskia with Fort Massac and the Rock River country. The Potawatomies, occupying northeastern Illinois, were connected with the Winnebagoes in the Rock River country by the "Kiswaukee Trail," which extended from the Marpocs Indian village on the Kankakee River to the vicinity of Rockford. A similar overland trail extended from the Marpocs village toward the great Piankishaw Indian village near where the city of Danville now stands.

The "Sauk and Kickapoo Trail" linked the Danville country with the Great Kickapoo Village in the Livingston County region. The old "Des Moines Trail," known to white men as early as 1680, led from the mouth of Bureau Creek, on the Illinois River, southwestwardly to the banks of the Mississippi River in Hancock County.

Green Bay Road, leading from Chicago northward through Evanston, Wilmette and Lake Forest, began as the "Green Bay Trail" of the Indians and was one of the principal routes of pioneer travel to and from eastern Wisconsin.

Some time after Kaskaskia and Detroit were founded by the French, in 1700 and 1701, respectively, an overland trail connecting the two and known as the "Kaskaskia and Detroit Trail," was blazed across the state in a northeasterly direction through the present counties of Washington, Marion, Fayette, Effingham, Cumberland, Coles and Edgar to the Indian villages near Danville and thence to Detroit.

At the salt springs, west of Danville, the trace formed a junction with an ancient Indian trail leading southward to Vincennes—thus linking the three foremost centers of French influence in the Great Lakes and upper Mississippi Valley regions—Detroit, Kaskaskia and Vincennes.

In those far-off days, however, travel and trade in Illinois were confined principally to the Illinois, Mississippi, Wabash, Kankakee and other water routes. French traders and trappers employed the bateau and the pirogue chiefly in transporting their furs and merchandise. These were open boats, considerably larger than the skiff or Indian canoe, and were each capable of carrying two or three tons' burden.



INDIANS ON THE MOVE—The travois was probably the first "vehicle" in the Mississippi Valley. From *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, February, 1868, by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine*.

Aside from the French settlements at Kaskaskia, Cahokia and Prairie du Rocher, near the Mississippi River in southern Illinois, and a few small fur depots in northern Illinois, the Illinois country remained, during the period of French and British occupation, an unbroken and largely unexplored wilderness in which the red men held undisputed dominion.

Until the early years of the Nineteenth Century outbound commerce in the Illinois country consisted almost exclusively of furs purchased from the Indians at river trading posts and shipped northward, principally by way of the Chicago and Wisconsin rivers, to the great fur depot at Mackinac Island in Lake Huron, and thence to Montreal by way of the Ottawa River portage.

This commerce was extensive. Trading posts on the Illinois River alone forwarded to Mackinac in one year 13,500 raccoon and muskrat skins, 10,000 deer skins, 500 cat and fox skins, 400 otter skins and 300 pounds of beaver skins. Barter goods shipped from Mackinac to the Illinois country for use in purchasing furs from the Indians consisted principally of cloth, guns, ammunition, flints, liquors, beads, needles, thread, mirrors, axes, hatchets, kettles, knives, tobacco and toys.

To the several assembling and distributing points for this trade came the Indians by canoe, on foot, on ponies, or with pony- or dog-drawn travois, to exchange furs for articles or trinkets that pleased their fancy.

The native trails leading to these trading posts eventually became the routes for some of the principal highways in Illinois.

CHAPTER II

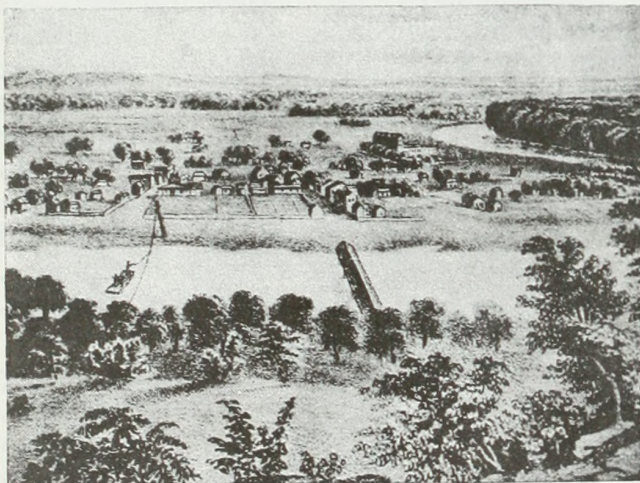
Pioneer Routes and Modes of Travel

IN 1800 the Northwest Territory was divided into two parts—one embraced the territory which later became Ohio and the eastern half of Michigan; the other, known as Indiana Territory, embraced the region now forming Indiana, western Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and that part of Minnesota lying east of the Mississippi River.

The entire Illinois country embraced fewer than 2,500 souls, exclusive of Indians. These were mostly French at Kaskaskia and Cahokia. Included in the number were a group of Virginians, who in 1782 had established New Design, the first important American settlement in the Illinois country, about twenty-five miles northwest of Kaskaskia.

Illinois was then on the far western frontier, bordering on the Spanish territory of Louisiana. A perilous journey of several weeks through unbroken wilderness, across mountains and unbridged streams and against the strong currents of the rivers lay between these courageous pioneers and the homes and loved ones they had left behind. Their feeling of isolation in this new country was expressed in a letter which Governor St. Clair wrote to his friend Alexander Hamilton:

"In compassion to a poor devil banished to



ANCIENT KASKASKIA—A capital and commercial center before Chicago and Springfield were founded, Kaskaskia, in Randolph County, dating from 1700, is believed to be the oldest permanent settlement in the Mississippi Valley. Courtesy, Chicago Historical Society.

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another planet," he wrote, "tell me what is doing in yours, if you can snatch a moment from the weighty cares of your office."

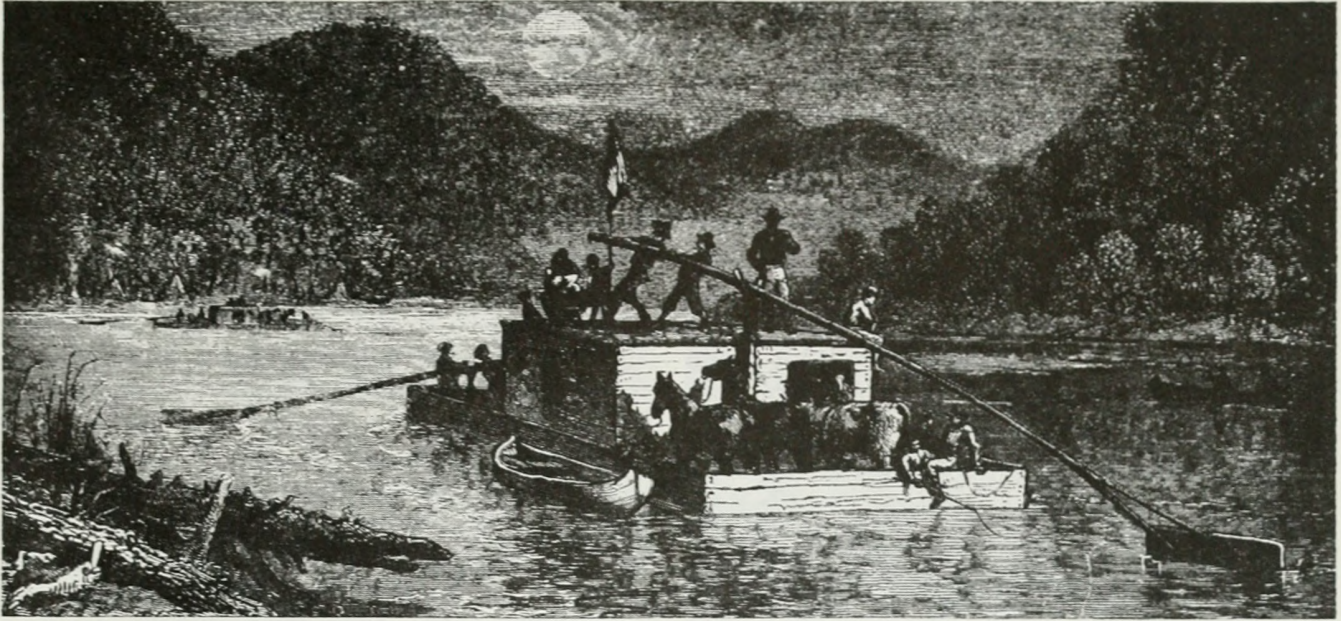
In that early period there were two well-established routes of travel from the States to the Illinois country. One was the Wilderness Road, through Cumberland Gap, and thence through Crab Orchard to the Falls of the Ohio, from which point the trip to Illinois was usually made by flatboat or keelboat. The other route was a pack trail through the mountains to Pittsburgh or Wheeling and thence down the Ohio River.

Families too poor to afford the luxury of a keel- or flatboat journey down river followed native overland trails, employing local boatmen to ferry them across the Ohio and other rivers which could not be forded. Reaching Illinois opposite Vincennes, or at Shawneetown or Fort Massac, these early pioneers followed winding native trails on foot or on horseback through the dense forests of southern Illinois to the American settlements on the Mississippi.

Such a journey, beset with many perils and hardships, frequently consumed four or five weeks' time. The savage was still a menace to be reckoned with. Bears still roamed the forests, and the blood-curdling cry of prowling wolves rendered nights a horror to even the most courageous. To avoid the perilous overland journey some of those using river transportation completed the trip to the settlements by water, a difficult undertaking on the Mississippi because of the opposing current of the river.

Mail arrivals at the Illinois settlements were then of rare occurrence. There was no mail service of any description west of Vincennes. Letters passing between the Illinois settlements and the outside world were intrusted to accommodating travelers or to river boatmen. Incoming mails, conveyed in the same manner, were infrequent and irregular in the extreme, and it was not uncommon for letters to be three to six months old on reaching their destination.

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"THE BOAT THAT NEVER RETURNED"—The flatboat was a down-river craft, too cumbersome and unwieldy to be propelled against the swift river currents. This is how many pioneer families came to southern Illinois, bringing household effects, implements, horses, cows, pigs, dogs, chickens, ready to start life anew in a new land. From *The Story of Chicago*, by Joseph Kirkland.

When Fort Dearborn was established at the mouth of the Chicago River in 1803, the nearest postoffice was at Fort Wayne, 150 miles distant, and for several years thereafter the mail was brought in to the fort once a month by foot messenger. This was probably the first regular mail service within the present borders of Illinois.

By 1805 several small American settlements had been established in the bottom lands along the Mississippi River between Kaskaskia and Cahokia, and the need of orderly communication between these isolated outposts and the seat of territorial government led to the establishment in that year of the first mail route in southern Illinois — between Vincennes and Cahokia.

Shawneetown, destined to play an important role in the early development of Illinois, was settled about this time by a group of Southerners engaged in salt-making in the nearby salines, and in 1806 a mail route was established between that settlement and Vincennes. In 1810 government post routes were extended to Kaskaskia, then the leading commercial center in the Illinois country, and to St. Louis, then an important fur depot of about 2,000 inhabitants.

A "post route" in frontier days might be merely a narrow trail or bridle path, marked

through the forest by notches cut in the trees and through prairie country by crude signs on poles driven into the ground! The mail courier usually traveled on horseback, with pouches suspended from the saddle and with his faithful musket and hunting knife always within instant reach. Mail arrivals were infrequent and often irregular, especially during winter and spring or in periods of Indian trouble.

One of the famous mail couriers of early days was young Harry Wilton, who later became a United States marshal. During the troublous times of the second war with England, when the Indians were on the rampage and none but the bravest of the brave dared to venture far from the settlements, Wilton, then a mere boy, thrilled the settlers by carrying the mails on a wild French pony through the enemy's country from Shawneetown to Cahokia.

When Illinois was admitted to statehood in 1818 its population had reached 40,000, confined almost entirely to narrow rims along the Mississippi, Wabash and Ohio rivers in the southern part of the state. More than nine-tenths of Illinois was a "howling wilderness over which the savage enjoyed undisputed dominion, outnumbering the whites three to one." Kaskaskia was the state capital.

Aside from the fur trade, the external com-

merce of the state was of small consequence. A few trips were being made each season to New Orleans by flatboats, keelboats or pirogues to exchange peltries, corn, flour, bacon, feathers and other products for tea, coffee, sugar, spices, cloth and other articles of small bulk. Such trips were hazardous in the



THE KEELBOAT—In the early days this was a popular river craft for travelers. The cabin was fitted with sleeping bunks, but passengers provided their own bedding. From *History of Travel in America*, by Seymour Dunbar, copyright 1915, used by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

extreme. Submerged logs, treacherous snags, sand bars and swirling currents took their annual toll of boats and men. Fortunate, indeed, was the crew that completed the round trip within six months.

The trip downstream, barring accidents, was made in a comparatively short time, but on the return trip the hardy boatmen toiled with long poles and oars from sunup to sundown to make headway against the swift current. Only men of iron sinew were fit for the ordeal. Flatboats, many of which were little more than rafts, were turned adrift in New Orleans or sold for firewood. Flatboatmen either returned home along the old Natchez Trace and other trails leading to Illinois or worked their passage upstream as oarsmen or polesmen on returning pirogues or keelboats. The overland trip was not without its dangers from unfriendly Indians, wild animals, or, still worse, from murderous highwaymen who lay in wait to relieve the returning boatmen of their proceeds from the trip.

The first steamboat on western waters was the "New Orleans," which appeared at Shawneetown, Golconda and Fort Massac in 1811-12 en route from Pittsburgh to New Orleans, but it was not until 1817 that the first successful

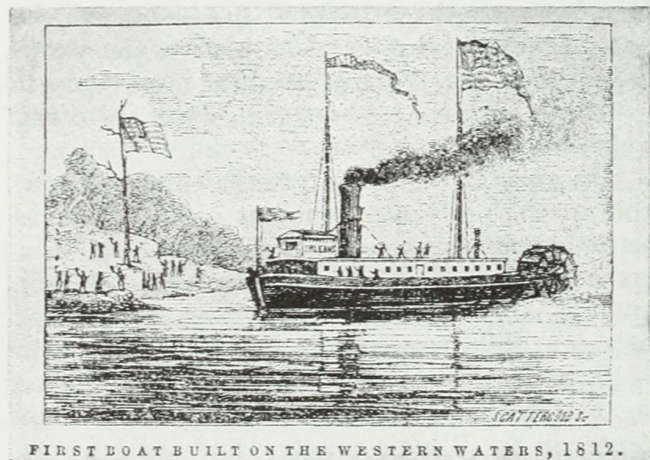
steamboat trip was made upstream from New Orleans to the Falls of the Ohio. The first steamboat to ascend the Mississippi River above the mouth of the Ohio was the "General Pike," which reached St. Louis in the same year. By 1820 there were seventy steamboats on western waters, and by 1830 more than 200 were reported.

The introduction of steamboats greatly facilitated river transportation, especially against the river currents, from New Orleans to Illinois and from Illinois to Louisville, Wheeling and Pittsburgh, but the cost of steamboat travel and freightage was so high that the use of flatboats and keelboats continued undiminished for many years. Abraham Lincoln, it will be recalled, piloted a flatboat from the Sangamon River to New Orleans as late as 1831.

In those days transportation costs by either land or water were so high as to impede both immigration and commerce.

In 1817 the steamboat fare from Shawneetown to New Orleans was around \$55. From New Orleans to Shawneetown, against the river current, the fare was \$110, and about a month was required for the journey.

The cost of overland travel varied. In 1822 a trip was made by wagon from Vandalia to Shawneetown and Kaskaskia and return, for which about 22 cents a mile was paid. Even as late as 1852 Colonel R. B. Mason, chief engineer of the Illinois Central Railroad, and a



FIRST BOAT BUILT ON THE WESTERN WATERS, 1812.

THE "NEW ORLEANS," of Pittsburgh, passed Shawneetown, Golconda and Fort Massac in the winter of 1811-12, en route to New Orleans. From *History of Travel in America*, by Seymour Dunbar, copyright 1915, used by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

companion arranged for a liveryman to carry them from Decatur to Springfield, a distance of forty miles, for \$15. This was at the rate of 17½ cents a mile for each person.

The cost of shipping freight was correspondingly high. In 1817 freighting from Pittsburgh down-river to Shawneetown was at the rate of \$20 a ton, while the cost of transportation upstream from Shawneetown to Pittsburgh was as high as \$70 a ton. The same ton of freight could be shipped from Shawneetown down-river to New Orleans for only \$20, which explains why most of Illinois' outbound commerce of that period moved to New Orleans instead of to Pittsburgh and the East.

The cost of land freighting in Illinois in that period was usually at the rate of \$10 per ton for each twenty miles.

It is readily seen that these prohibitive transportation costs checked the agricultural and industrial growth of the interior of Illinois. All important settlements were then located on the rivers, and the farther inland one was located the greater was the cost of getting his grain and other products to market.

High transportation costs also caused a great variation in commodity prices in different parts of the country. In 1825, for instance, wheat sold in Illinois for 25 cents a bushel while it brought as much as 87 cents in Virginia. In 1829 flour sold in St. Louis for around \$5 a barrel while it was costing nearly twice that amount in Galena, the difference being due largely if not wholly to transportation costs.

Although the cost of transportation gradually decreased as highway and river facilities were improved, it was left to the railroads to bring cheap all-year-round transportation to the great agricultural regions of the interior.

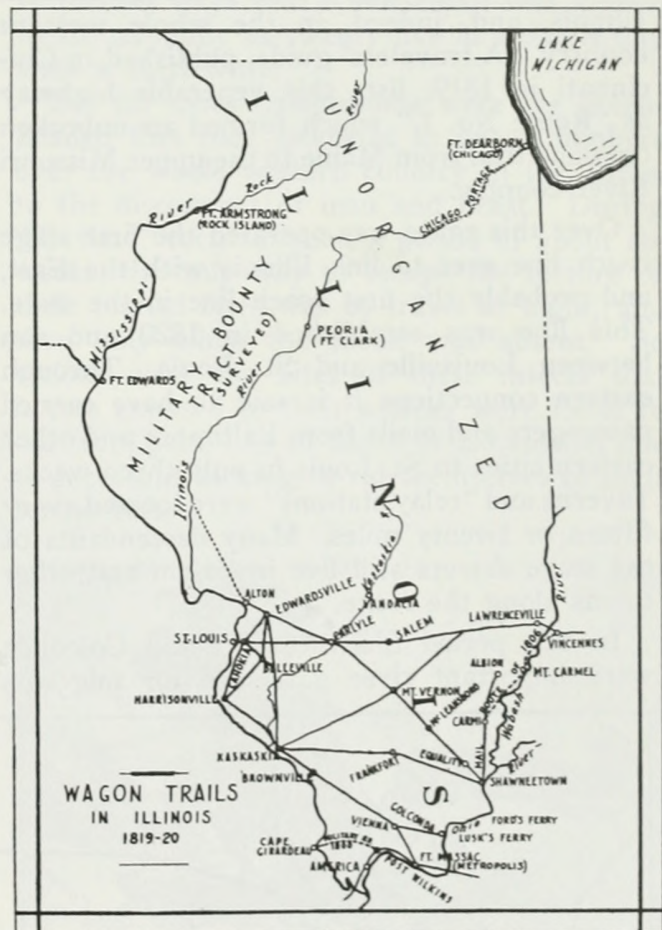
The federal and state governments were mutually interested in the improvement of transportation facilities in the unsettled interior of Illinois. Title to about nine-tenths of the total area of the state belonged to the federal government. These wild lands were offered to settlers at \$2 an acre until 1820, and thereafter at \$1.25 an acre, but there were few buyers because of the lack of transportation.

These vast tracts of wild lands could not be taxed by the state or by local governments so long as they remained unsold and unoccu-

ped. The desire of the federal government to dispose of the public domain to settlers influenced its decision to extend the National Road, sometimes called the Cumberland Road, westward from Wheeling, through Ohio, Indiana and Illinois to the Mississippi River in the vicinity of St. Louis.

This great highway project was started at Cumberland, Md., in 1811 and was completed to the Ohio River at Wheeling in 1818. Its extension westward was urged by Henry Clay and others interested in the West, and in 1820 Congress authorized the survey.

In the meantime the capital of Illinois had been transferred from Kaskaskia to a point on the Kaskaskia River which was later fixed as the crossing of the National Road, one of the chief routes of pioneer travel into the new West. The federal project, which required



From early maps, Chicago Historical Society collection, Dana's *Description of Bounty Lands* (1819) and other sources. A map of 1823 shows roads or trails from Edwardsville to Vandalia, Illinois to Ripley, and Edwardsville to the Chicago portage route via Peoria.

many years to complete, terminated at Vandalia. Beyond that point state roads were used.

Vandalia, a mere hamlet of a few cabins, became the capital of Illinois in 1819, and old Kaskaskia, once the rival of New Orleans and St. Louis—a gay capital and commercial center before Chicago and Springfield were founded—was left to its proud memories.

Crude trails or narrow bridle paths were the only semblances of roads leading to the new capital. Until a year or two later, when a wagon road between Edwardsville and Vandalia was opened, the nearest highway worthy of the name was the old "Saint Louis Trace," the pioneer mail route, extending across the state from Vincennes through Lawrenceville, Maysville, Salem, Carlyle and Cahokia to the Mississippi River opposite St. Louis.

For many years this old post road was one of the most important thoroughfares in Illinois, and, indeed, in the whole western country. A travelers' guide, published in Cincinnati in 1819, lists this venerable highway as "Route No. 1," which formed an unbroken overland trail from Maine to the upper Missouri River country.

Over this route was operated the first stage coach line ever to link Illinois with the East, and probably the first coach line in the state. This line was established in 1820 and ran between Louisville and St. Louis. Through eastern connections it is said to have carried passengers and mails from Baltimore and other eastern cities to St. Louis in only three weeks. Taverns and "relay stations" were located every fifteen or twenty miles. Many descendants of the stage drivers still live in Salem and other towns along the route.

In this period Shawneetown and Golconda were important river gateways for migrants

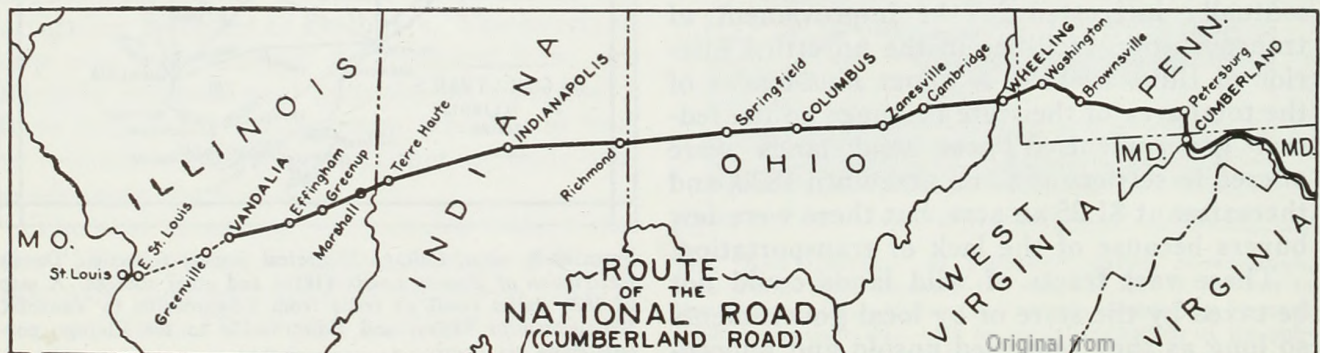
from Kentucky, Tennessee and other Southern states as well as for those coming down river from Pittsburgh and Cincinnati.

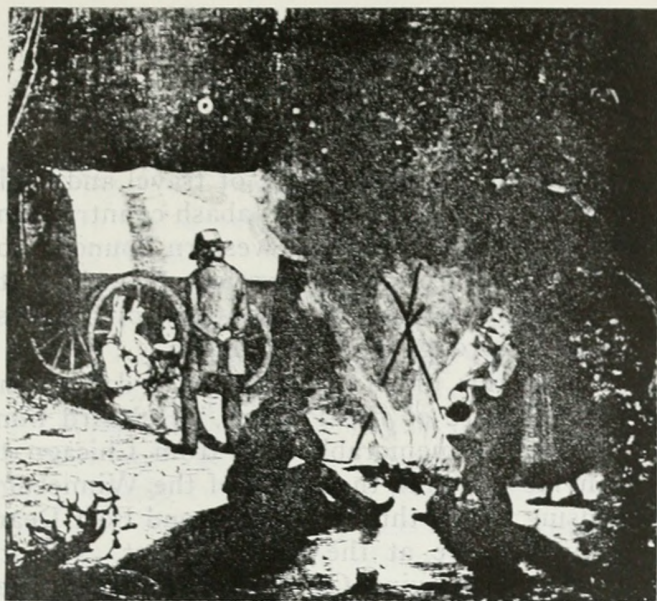
An important route of pioneer travel was from Shawneetown through Equality, McLeansboro, Mount Vernon and Carlyle to Edwardsville and Alton. From the latter point a trail led northwestwardly to the Military Bounty Tract, west of the Illinois River.

A road led from Edwardsville through Belleville to Harrisonville, on the Mississippi River. Edwardsville was also connected with Harrisonville by a road through Cahokia, and still another road led from Edwardsville direct to Kaskaskia. Kaskaskia was also reached by four other roads—one from Harrisonville, one from the "St. Louis Trace" west of Maysville, one from Shawneetown through Frankfort and Columbus, and one from Fort Massac and Golconda through Vienna. The latter, known as the "Kaskaskia Trail," was the route of some of the first American settlers in the Illinois country. A wagon trail also connected Shawneetown with Albion, in Edwards County.

Maps in the early 1820s show roads linking Vienna with Jonesboro, Brownville with Jonesboro and America, and Illinoistown with the Edwardsville-Vandalia road at Ripley or Greenville.

By 1821 the fertile Sangamon Valley was attracting settlers. Sangamon County was organized in that year, and a log court-house was erected on the site of the present city of Springfield. Soon thereafter a wagon trail was opened between that point and Vandalia. A trail was also broken from Edwardsville to Springfield and extended northward to the Peoria outpost on the Illinois River. As the first thoroughfare linking northern and southern Illinois, this pioneer trail figured prominently in the early history of the state.





EMIGRANTS HALT FOR THE NIGHT—Night after night spent in the open, day after day of slow progress across the prairies, the pioneers pressed on to contribute their bit to the making of Illinois and the Great West. Courtesy, Chicago Historical Society.

In a period of six years, from 1819 to 1825, the Illinois legislature organized thirty new counties, eighteen of which were in the interior of the state. A lone settler's cabin might be designated as a county seat, but presently that cabin would be surrounded by a sizable cluster of crude structures, including a county court-house, a jail, a tavern, two or three stores of a sort and in time a postoffice. With few exceptions the county seats also became the business and transportation centers of the counties.

A few stout-hearted pioneers were now penetrating far inland and hewing their homes out of the timber along the streams. John Hendrix and John Dawson erected the first cabins within the present confines of McLean County in 1822. In the same year Henry Sadorus settled in what is now Champaign County, many miles from the nearest neighbor.

These first settlers were far from markets, and the pathless prairie was their only highway. The present generation can never know the loneliness of these prairie pioneers, the privations and hardships they endured, the difficulties they experienced in getting to and from distant trading centers. Before 1825, when the first grist mill was erected at Blooming Grove, settlers were obliged to drive overland, through sloughs and unbridged streams, to

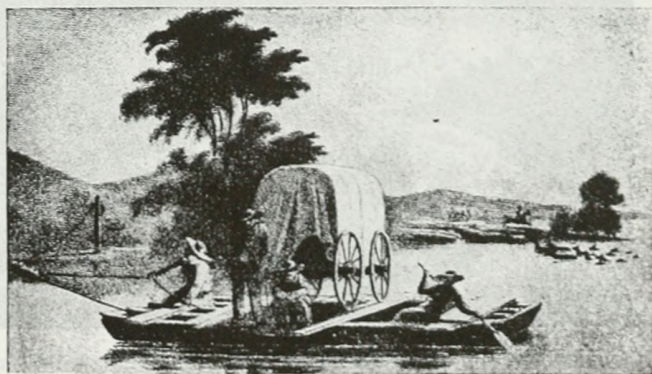
Attica on the Wabash River, 125 miles distant, to have their wheat ground into flour, or to Green's Mill, near where Ottawa now stands, eighty miles away.

Long trips were sometimes made to obtain salt. Plow irons were carried fifty or sixty miles on horseback to be sharpened, three or four days being required for the round trip. In the winter families were sometimes completely isolated for weeks at a time.

Settlers raised their own wool and flax, tanned their own leather and made their own boots and shoes. The women of the prairies spun and wove their own cloth, made jeans and other clothing and knit heavy wool garments to protect against the chill blasts of winter.

Aside from Indians and wolves, the prairie travelers had to keep constantly alert for rattlesnakes. So common were these reptiles in pioneer days that a horseman was known to kill as many as twenty-five in a single day with a cattlewhip.

But far more troublesome were the green-headed flies that swarmed in great numbers over the whole western country in the 1820s, to the discomfort of man and beast. During "fly time" each summer, a period of about six weeks, the only way to escape the torture of their fearful bites was to travel at night, and then only when the moon was absent. So vicious were the bites of these insects that horses exposed to their attacks were liable to die from pain, loss of blood or exhaustion due to incessant kicking to rid themselves of their tormentors.



CROSSING THE RIVER—Before the days of bridges, the problem of crossing rivers too deep to be forded was partly solved by the flatboat ferry. From *History of Travel in America*, by Seymour Dunbar, copyright 1915, used by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

CHAPTER III

Early Trails to Chicago and Galena

UNTIL 1823 the northern part of Illinois was an unbroken wilderness. Aside from the fur depots at Fort Dearborn (Chicago), Old Bunkun (Iroquois), Hennepin and Peoria, and a few lead prospectors and miners in the northwestern corner of the state, the country was virtually uninhabited except by Indians. Not a single wagon trail existed in this part of the state.

In that year Gurdon S. Hubbard, youthful agent of the American Fur Company, established a trading post at the present site of Danville, on the Big Vermillion River, and beat down a pack trail from that point through what are now Rossville and Watseka to Fort Dearborn, a distance of 125 miles—the first trail established by white men to the site of the future metropolis. Hubbard also extended his pack trail from the Danville post in a great half-circle through what later became Champaign, Piatt, Moultrie, Shelby, Effingham and Jasper counties to Vincennes. At Danville the trail intersected the old Indian path which extended southward through the Wabash Valley to Vincennes.

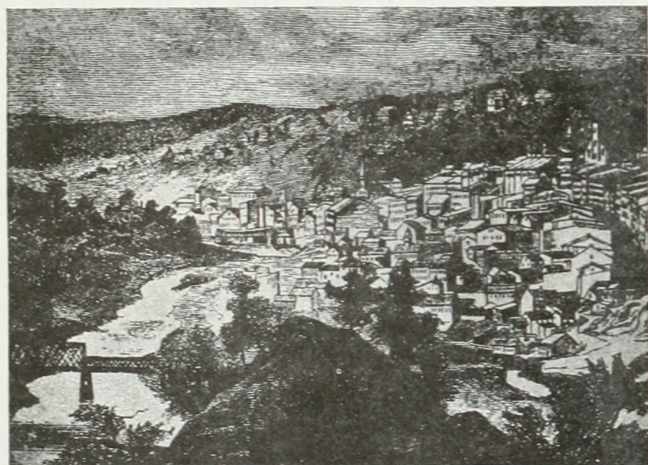
"Hubbard's Trace" north of Danville was made a state road in 1834, by which time it had

become an important route of travel and trade between Chicago and the Wabash country. Entering Chicago along the western boundary of the Fort Dearborn Reservation, this old state road became State Street, now one of the most famous thoroughfares in America.

Along this historic trail in 1827 dashed the "Paul Revere of the Prairies," Hubbard himself, on his memorable ride from Chicago to Danville to sound the alarm of the Winnebago uprising which threatened a second Fort Dearborn massacre at the Chicago post. Twenty hours after leaving Chicago the intrepid rider pulled his foaming horse up before the cabin of Peleg Spencer in the southern outskirts of Danville. The alarm was quickly sounded through the scattered settlement, and within a few hours a hastily organized relief expedition, equipped with flint-lock muskets and pistols, and led by young Hubbard, was hurrying northward. On the evening of the fourth day after Hubbard had left Chicago, the "Vermillion Rangers" reached Chicago, where they remained to protect the little settlement until a runner arrived at the fort bearing the good news that Chief Red Bird and his warriors had been captured.

In the same year that "Hubbard's Trace" was blazed to Fort Dearborn, fresh discoveries of lead in the hill country of northwestern Illinois were beginning to arouse widespread interest. Galena, the center of the new lead region, was beyond the frontier, in the heart of the wild "Black Hawk Country." Its nearest neighbor was Peoria, on the Illinois River, and a wilderness, vast and unbroken, separated the two. The Peoria outpost was reached overland by the old "Fort Clark and Wabash Trail" from Terre Haute, an old Indian trail from Danville, and by the newly opened post road from Springfield. North and west of Peoria only Indian trails existed, and none led directly to the lead country.

The first steamboat to arrive at Galena was the "Virginian," in 1823. Thereafter an intermittent steamboat service was maintained between the lead country and St. Louis, but dur-



THE "FIRST AMERICAN KLONDIKE"—Galena, scene of the first important mining rush in American history, was once the chief commercial city north of St. Louis. The Illinois Central Railroad brought the "Iron Horse" to Galena in 1854. From *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, July, 1853, by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine*.

ing the winter, when the river was frozen and the country was covered with snow, the mining settlements were reached only with the greatest difficulty across the rolling prairies, through tangled and frozen swamps and over treacherous river ice. Despite its inaccessibility, prospectors and adventurers were flocking to this new El Dorado.

In 1825 Oliver Kellogg broke a wagon trail from Peoria northward to a crossing of the Rock River at a place called Ogee's Ferry, above the site of the present city of Dixon, and thence to Galena along a route roughly paralleling that over which the Illinois Central Railroad was built nearly twenty years later. John Dixon, one of the notable pioneers of northern Illinois, employed some Winnebago Indians to ferry wagons across by means of two canoes placed side by side, each canoe supporting the wheels of one side of the wagon. The horses were forced to swim. The river crossing was later moved to the Dixon site, where a flatboat ferry was installed.

In 1826 a man named Bolles blazed a second and more direct trail between Dixon's and Galena, and shortly thereafter the "Lewiston Trail," branching from "Kellogg's Trail" near the northern boundary of Peoria County and crossing Rock River just above Prophetstown, in Whiteside County, provided a still more direct route from Peoria and southern Illinois to the mines.

The first postoffice in the lead country was established at Galena in 1826, and the mails were conveyed on horseback once a fortnight between Vandalia and Galena through Peoria. Two years later Dixon erected a log tavern and trading post at the ferry and brought his family here to live, for a time the only family on Rock River above Black Hawk's village.

In pioneer days "Kellogg's Trail" and Dixon's Ferry were known far and wide. Over this storied trail poured a motley caravan—New Englanders, New Yorkers, Pennsylvanians, Ohioans, Virginians, Kentuckians, in Conestoga wagons, in buckboards, in oxcarts, on foot and on horseback—lured by the magic word "Lead," just as the word "Gold" lured thousands to California two decades later. Galena became the scene of the first important mining rush in American history.

Thousands of adventurous pioneers poured



A "BULLWHACKER"—From *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, July, 1867, by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine*.

into the upper Mississippi country and the trans-Mississippi region over this and other trails leading to Galena and Dubuque. Along these trails in 1832 hurried General Winfield Scott's hastily organized expedition to quell the Black Hawk uprising, an expedition that included Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, Albert Sidney Johnston, William Hamilton, son of Alexander Hamilton, Robert Anderson, of Fort Sumter fame, Nathan Boone, son of the great Boone of Kentucky, and other notables. John Dixon was friend and counselor of Indian and white man alike. His tavern was a favorite gathering place for the officers, and it is said that under its hospitable roof Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis met for the first time.

The Black Hawk War marked an epoch in Illinois history. It removed for all time the menace of the savage east of the Mississippi River, a menace which had hindered settlement, especially in the northern part of the state. Shortly after the termination of the war, the first important Yankee migration set in toward the "Black Hawk Country," which now began

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HAULING ORE FROM THE MINES—The difficulty of transporting ore from mines to furnaces and lead from furnaces to markets, over miserable roads and across unbridged streams, accentuated the need for railroads. From *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, June, 1865, by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine*.

to attract the settler as well as the miner. Galena soon became the most important commercial center in the entire western country north of St. Louis.

In this period the principal currents of travel and trade in the Mississippi Valley were north and south, to and from New Orleans. Thousands of tons of lead were shipped down river, to St. Louis and New Orleans, each season. At one time in the 1830s or 1840s twelve to fifteen steamboats were loading or unloading on the Fever River in the vicinity of Galena.

In the winter months and during periods of low water some lead was shipped from the Galena region by wagons or sleds, but the miserable condition of the roads and the absence of bridges made this a costly form of transportation.

Many teamsters from southern Illinois drove 4- and 6-yoke ox-teams to the Galena mines to engage during the summer months in transporting lead from the diggings to the furnaces and steamboat landings. Their long overland journeys to and from Galena consumed many days, during which they rarely came in sight of a white man's habitation. Where there was no trace of a road, they drove across open country.

The first wagon-load of lead from Galena to Chicago arrived at the Chicago River in the summer of 1829, before anything more than native paths existed east of Dixon's Ferry. This trip, consuming eleven days, is said to have been the first ever made by wagon between the

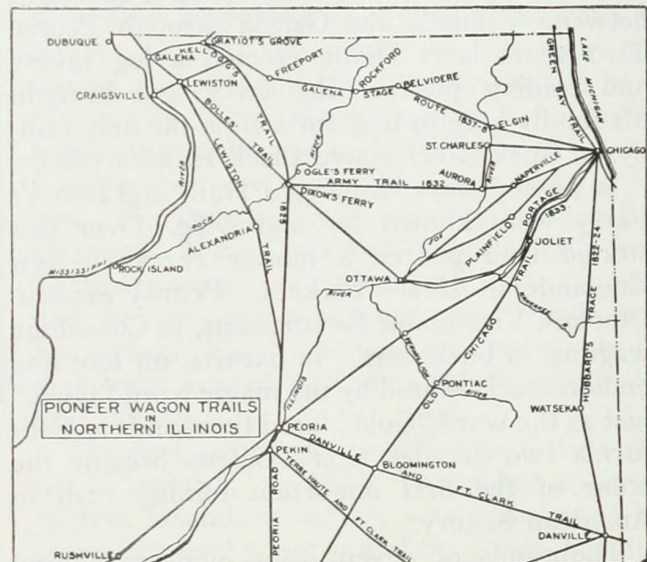
"Galena Lead Country" and Lake Michigan.

The first wagon road between Chicago and Dixon's was broken through Naperville and Aurora by General Scott's army in 1832. Two years later it became a state road, and a weekly stage line was opened over this route between Chicago and Galena by way of Dixon's Ferry. About 1838 a second stage line was established over a more northerly route through Elgin, Belvidere, Rockford and Freeport, striking "Kellogg's Trail" at Gratiot's Grove, near Warren. For fifteen years thereafter, until replaced by the railroads, stage coach service was maintained over these pioneer routes.

For several years the lead city rivaled Chicago as a trade and distributing center, and as late as 1842 its wholesale trade actually surpassed that of Chicago. In that period its mining operations were the most extensive in the West.

The first direct wagon trail from Bloomington to Chicago was broken in 1833, the year Chicago was organized as a town. Known to the settlers of central Illinois as the "Old Chicago Trail" and to Chicagoans as "Archer's Road," this thoroughfare played an important role in the early transportation history of Illinois. As the north end of "Hubbard's Trace" became State Street, so the north end of the "Old Chicago Trail" became Archer Avenue, one of the prominent thoroughfares of Chicago.

Into the bustling little town of Chicago over this long prairie trail came the drovers, expert horsemen, picturesque in their trappings, bringing droves of cattle, sheep and hogs from the



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Salt Creek country and the Mackinaw Valley. This was the trail of John Dawson and other prairie pioneers who brought to Chicago some of the first grain shipped from the lake port to Eastern markets. Southwestward from Chicago over this trail traveled some of the first Yankee immigrants to establish their homes in central Illinois.

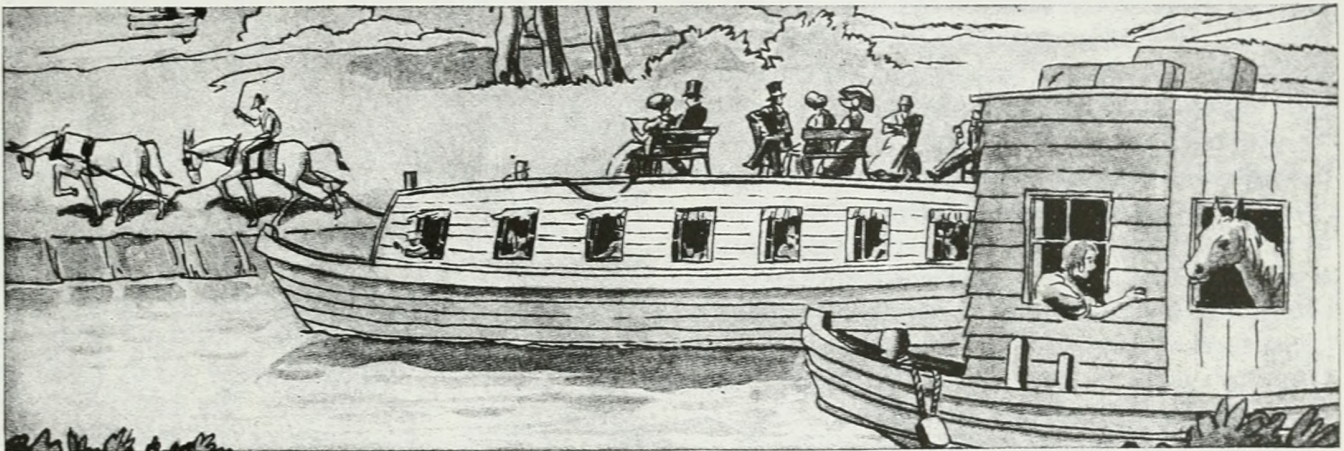
For several years not a bridge existed along the entire route from Bloomington to Chicago, and in times of high water great difficulty was experienced in crossing the Mackinaw and Kan-

kakee rivers. Mackinaw ford, near Lexington, was the worst of all, dreaded by teamster, drover and immigrant alike.

Springfield became the seat of government in 1837, and a trail to Bloomington and the "Old Chicago Trail" provided the most direct route between the new capital and Chicago. More than likely it was the route taken by Abraham Lincoln in 1844 on the first visit the "Sage of the Sangamon" is known to have paid to the city which was destined to become one of his great political battlegrounds.

CHAPTER IV

Internal Improvements



CANAL BOATS—Courtesy, *Wings of a Century*, A Century of Progress Exposition.

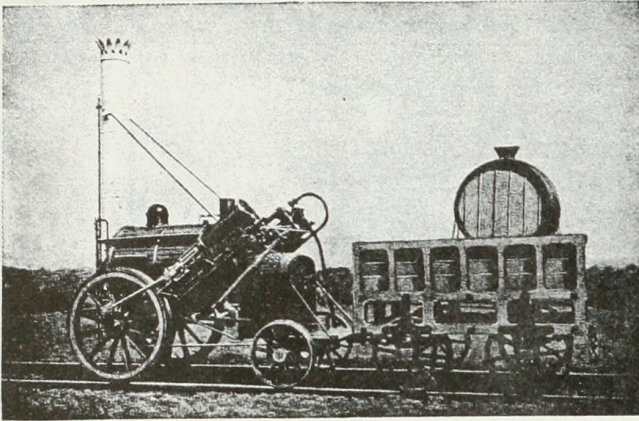
LACK of transportation facilities in the interior was the greatest impediment to Illinois' agricultural and industrial development. Citizens of the state recognized that a system of transportation superior to mud roads was necessary if Illinois was to take its place among the progressive commonwealths of the Union.

New York had built the great Erie Canal, opened in 1825. Pennsylvania and New Jersey had developed canal systems. Ohio was moving in the same direction. For many years a canal connecting the Chicago and Illinois rivers had been discussed. Shortly after the close of the war with England, in 1814, President James Madison had proposed such a waterway to Congress. Every governor of Illinois from the time of its admission to state-

hood, in 1818, had urged the construction of the canal.

In 1827 Congress granted Illinois alternate sections of land for five miles on either side of the proposed route to aid in financing the project. Included in this grant were large areas of the present city of Chicago, including part of the famous "Loop" business district. Townsites were laid out on canal lands at Chicago and Ottawa in 1830. Three years later, when the town of Chicago was incorporated, the settlement boasted twenty-four voters.

Little did those early Chicagoans dream that some of them would live to see the day when a great metropolis would replace their humble collection of log cabins and that many of their children would live to see the city become one



THE "ROCKET," built in 1829, was the first successful steam locomotive in the world.

of the world's greatest industrial and commercial centers and its greatest railway center.

It is safe to assume, however, that these early citizens were alive to the possibilities of railroads. Their imaginations were kindled, no doubt, by accounts of experiments which were then being conducted in the East. From Baltimore came reports of trips made by Peter Cooper's steam locomotive, "Tom Thumb." At Charleston, in South Carolina, the locomotive "Best Friend," was transporting persons and goods four times faster than they were being moved on the Eastern canals and at twice the speed of horse-drawn vehicles. In New Orleans another "puffing steam wagon" was arousing much interest.

These new developments caused many thoughtful citizens of Illinois to question the wisdom of building the long-contemplated Illinois and Michigan Canal.

Agitation for a railroad in lieu of a waterway began as early as 1831, at the very dawn of the railway era in America, when Chicago was a mere hamlet and there were but a few small settlements elsewhere in northern Illinois.

In the spring of that year James M. Bucklin, chief engineer of the canal project, surveyed two routes, one for the Illinois and Michigan Canal, which he estimated would cost \$100,000 a mile, and one for the Illinois and Michigan Railroad, which he estimated would cost \$25,000 a mile. After journeying to Baltimore and conferring with the engineers of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, Bucklin returned to Illinois and urged the abandonment of the

canal scheme and the construction of the railroad. He gained the support of the canal commissioners and Governor Reynolds, and on their recommendation the Illinois legislature, in 1833, authorized the railroad. Congress also authorized the change.

But that was the canal era. Very few steam locomotives were then in use in America, and the performance of most of them was far from satisfactory. A storm of protest arose against the change, and, upon taking office, Governor Duncan addressed a message to the legislature strenuously opposing the railway project and taking sharp issue with those who favored its substitution for the canal.

"Of the different plans proposed," said Governor Duncan, "I find that the board of canal commissioners, and my worthy predecessors, have recommended a rail road, in which I regret that I am compelled to differ. . . . In my judgment, experience has shown canals to be much more useful, and generally cheaper of construction, than rail roads. When well made they require less expensive repairs, and are continually improving, and will last forever, while railroads are kept in repair at heavy expense, and will last but about fifteen years. . . . There seems to be but little force . . . in the argument commonly used in favor of rail roads, that transportation upon them is uninterrupted in winter, as the canal will be open several weeks longer in the fall and spring than either the lake or river, consequently no inconvenience can result from its closing. . . ."

Governor Duncan's views finally prevailed. The railway project was temporarily abandoned, and the construction of the canal was begun in 1836. Lack of funds, political wranglings and other impediments delayed progress and at times entirely suspended work on the project, with the result that the canal was not completed and opened for operation until the spring of 1848. For the next few years, until Illinois turned decisively to railroads, the Illinois and Michigan Canal was an important artery of commerce and travel between Chicago and the Illinois and Mississippi river basins. One important effect of the waterway was to make the Illinois River valley largely tributary to Chicago instead of St. Louis, as it had previously been.

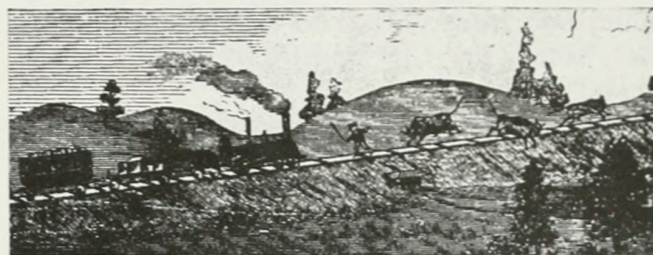
Paradoxical as it seems, the canal probably benefited Chicago and other communities along the route more before it was completed than it did afterward. The promise of great benefits to come, held out by canal enthusiasts and real estate promoters, stimulated settlement and increased land values in the 1830s and 1840s. Although the canal enjoyed a substantial packet trade for some years, it never played the great role its supporters had predicted for it as an agency of transportation.

Long before the waterway was completed, railway transportation in the East had conclusively demonstrated its superiority over canal transportation, and the railway fever had begun to sweep the country. Forward-looking citizens of Illinois foresaw in some degree the benefits which would result from railway development, though they did not foresee the tremendously important part it was to play in the future of their state.

As early as 1832, the year of the Black Hawk War, Alexander M. Jenkins, of Jackson County, then speaker of the house, had proposed a "Central" railroad between the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, at the present site of Cairo, and the western terminus of the proposed Illinois and Michigan Canal. It was a daring proposal considering that it involved the construction of nearly 300 miles of railroad through an uninhabited region, a mileage equal to the total length of all railroads then existing on the North American continent.

By 1835 the proposed "Central Railroad" had become an important political issue. Shortly after the legislature convened in that year a bill was introduced to incorporate a company with authority to build a railroad

"commencing at or near the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and extending to Galena." Among the prominent supporters of the measure, besides Jenkins, were Abraham Lincoln, then serving his first term as a representative from Sangamon County, and Judge Sidney A. Breese, of Carlyle, who in later



DISPUTING THE RIGHT-OF-WAY—An exciting moment on Illinois' pioneer railroad, the Northern Cross, between Meredosia and Springfield. From *Potter's American Monthly*, July, 1879.

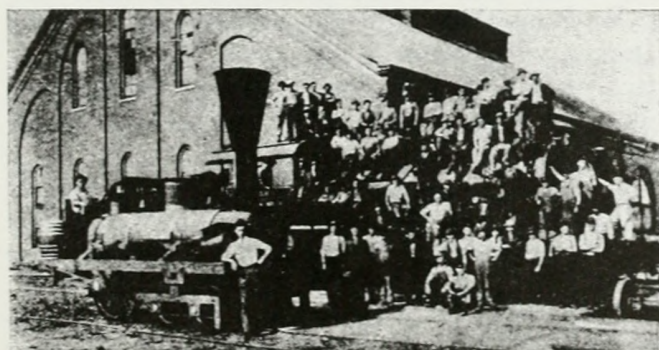
years, as United States Senator from Illinois, promoted the land-grant idea which led to the actual construction of the Illinois Central and numerous other western railroads in the period 1850-75.

The bill creating "The Illinois Central Railroad Company" was passed in January, 1836. Communities located along the route were naturally elated over the prospects of getting the railroad. Communities located elsewhere began to agitate for branch lines linking them to the "Central."

So great became the clamor throughout the state for railroads and other internal improvements that in February, 1837, the legislature passed the historic Internal Improvement Act, providing for a network of 1,341 miles of state-owned railroads extending into all parts of Illinois, except the northeast corner, which was to be served by the canal then under construction.

The backbone of this extensive system of state-owned railroads was to be the Illinois Central Railroad, extending from Cairo to Galena, through Mount Pleasant, Frankfort, Mount Vernon, Salem, Vandalia, Shelbyville, Decatur, Bloomington, Peru, Dixon and Savannah. The charter of 1836 was taken over by the state.

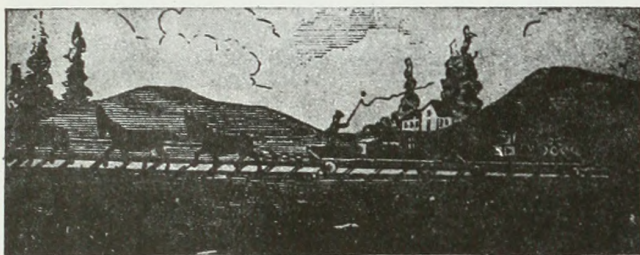
Four railroads, intersecting the "Central," were to traverse the state in an east-and-west direction, as follows: (1) From Warsaw, on the Mississippi River, to Bloomington, through Carthage, Macomb, Canton, Peoria and Mackinaw; (2) the Northern Cross, from Quincy to the Indiana state line, through Illinois at Mount



THE "ROGERS"—A replica of the first locomotive to turn a wheel in Illinois. Courtesy, Chicago Historical Society.

Sterling, Meredosia, Jacksonville, Springfield, Decatur, Sidney and Danville; (3) from Alton to the Indiana line through Hillsboro, Shelbyville, Charleston and Paris; (4) from Alton to Mount Carmel on the Wabash River through Edwardsville, Carlyle, Salem, Fairfield and Alton. In addition, there were to be two branch lines: from Mackinaw to Pekin through Tremont, and from Carlyle to Belleville. The act also called for the improvement of several rivers.

This stupendous project was to be financed



"FAST FREIGHT" IN 1845—One mishap after another finally led the Northern Cross Railroad to abandon its locomotive and turn to mule power. From *Potter's American Monthly*, July, 1879.

by borrowed money, estimated at approximately \$10,000,000, but this was soon found to be less than half enough. The state government was thus committed to a debt of at least \$20,000,000, or about \$268 for every family in Illinois at that time.

The collapse of this then-impossible undertaking, characterized by one historian as "Illinois' supreme folly," left the state in 1840 with a debt burden of \$14,000,000, about half of which had been spent on railway construction, and with only twenty-four miles of completed road to show for its costly venture into the transportation business.

This 24-mile railroad—the first steam railroad in Illinois—was a part of the Northern Cross project. The completed portion extended from the Illinois River at Meredosia to Jacksonville. It was crudely built of wooden rails upon which thin straps of iron were spiked.

Meredosia, in Morgan County, holds the proud distinction of being the birthplace of steam railway transportation in Illinois. Here, in the spring of 1837 occurred the groundbreaking ceremony which signaled the commencement of this pioneer railroad. Construction proceeded slowly toward Jacksonville. The first rail was laid at Meredosia on May 9, 1838.

The first locomotive ever built for an Illinois railroad was shipped from the East by water in the summer of 1838. After many weeks of anxious waiting the engine was reported "lost in transit." There is no record that it ever turned up or that the mystery surrounding its strange disappearance was ever solved.

The first locomotive ever to turn a wheel in Illinois was the "Rogers," built in Paterson, N. J., in the same summer and shipped from New York to New Orleans by sailing vessel, thence by steamboat or barge up the Mississippi and Illinois rivers to Meredosia.

The "Rogers" was a mere toy compared with the powerful giants of today. It had but one set of driving wheels two feet in diameter, and two sets of smaller wheels in front. There was no closed cab, no whistle, no spark arrester, no cow catcher, no bell. On its first run a few miles out of Meredosia, on November 8, 1838, the townspeople "could not understand its power. What made the wheels go round was a mystery they could not solve, and not a few were ready to award some supernatural power to the smoking monster."

Regular train service between Meredosia and Morgan City, a distance of twelve miles, was inaugurated on July 8, 1839, but not without the strenuous opposition of the stage coach line which paralleled the route. The railway company announced that the train would include "pleasure cars" for passengers as well as "burden cars" for freight shipments. The train tried to make the 12-mile run, with stops, in two hours. At Morgan City a connection was made with the stage coach line to Jacksonville, and in advertising the service the company called attention to the fact that the entire 24-mile trip by rail and stage between Meredosia and Jacksonville was performed in daylight.

By January 1, 1840, the railhead had reached Jacksonville, where it remained for more than two years following the collapse of the internal improvement project which virtually bankrupted the state government.

In the spring of 1842 sufficient funds were obtained to extend the road to Springfield. The arrival of the first train at Springfield on May 13, 1842, was the signal for an enthusiastic celebration. One old settler who brought his family to the railroad to see the train go by expressed the fear that if the locomotive ever ran near

his farm his cows would stop giving milk.

According to a local newspaper, "the cars ran from Jacksonville, 33½ miles, in two hours and eight minutes, including stoppages." The newspaper expressed the optimistic belief that "the distance could be passed over in an hour and a half." A traveler over this road in 1842 recalled that grass and weeds covered the rails and caused the engine's wheels to slip. At one place the passengers were called upon to "pitch in" and help the crew carry buckets of water from a creek to fill the engine tank.

The first attempt to operate a steam railroad in Illinois could hardly be called a success. Accidents were of common occurrence. The engine frequently left the track and toppled over into the ditch. Finally, after a series of misfortunes, mule power was substituted and the only locomotive then in use was sold. The new owner fitted the engine with wide tires and attempted to run it on the public roads or across the prairies. The engine thus equipped is said to have made a trip between Springfield and Alton, but not without the frequent aid of a strong yoke of oxen. Some persons, observ-

ing the tracks of this strange contrivance, were so mystified that they trailed them some distance across country to ascertain what kind of a juggernaut had visited their community. Their curiosity was satisfied when they came upon the engine, abandoned by its discouraged owner. The Northern Cross Railroad, which had cost the state a million dollars, was finally auctioned off in 1847 for \$21,500.

In 1837, the same year that ground was broken for the Northern Cross Railroad, two other short lines were built in Illinois. One of these, known as Charles Collins' railroad, extended four miles out of Naples, on the Illinois River. The other, built by former Governor John Reynolds and associates and known as the Coal-Mine Bluff Railroad, extended from Illinoistown (now East St. Louis) to a coal mine on the Mississippi Bluff, about six miles distant.

Both Collins' and Reynolds' roads were crudely built of wooden rails, without strap iron, and were operated by horse or mule power. Neither of them was operated on a set schedule; neither was a public carrier of passengers or freight.

CHAPTER V

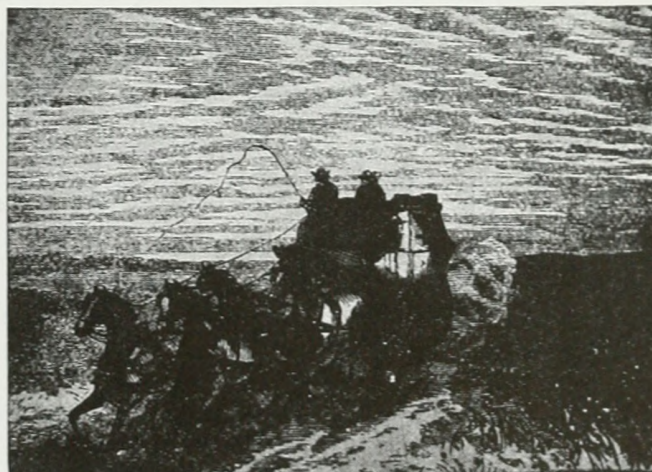
The Stage Coach Era

WHEN the old Northern Cross Railroad, between Meredosia and Springfield, turned from locomotives to mules, Illinois found itself back where it started a half-dozen years before—dependent entirely upon animal power for overland transportation.

The federal government had extended the National Road, only partly completed, as far west as Vandalia, and a few more dirt trails had been designated as state roads. Indeed, the statute books were filled with legislative acts making this or that trail a state road, but as someone observed, "it took more than a legislative act to eliminate the mud holes," and mud holes there were aplenty.

The black prairie soil of Illinois, sprinkled with a heavy rain, turned the best roads into interminable sloughs. Forest roads were a succession of puddles, gullies, upturned roots, stumps, twists, turns and overhead brambles,

which tried the souls of men and made travel a never-to-be-forgotten ordeal.



STAGE COACH ON THE ROAD—By traveling day and night, with a change of horses every few miles, coaches sometimes covered 75 to 90 miles a day, when conditions were favorable. From *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, July, 1867, by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine*.

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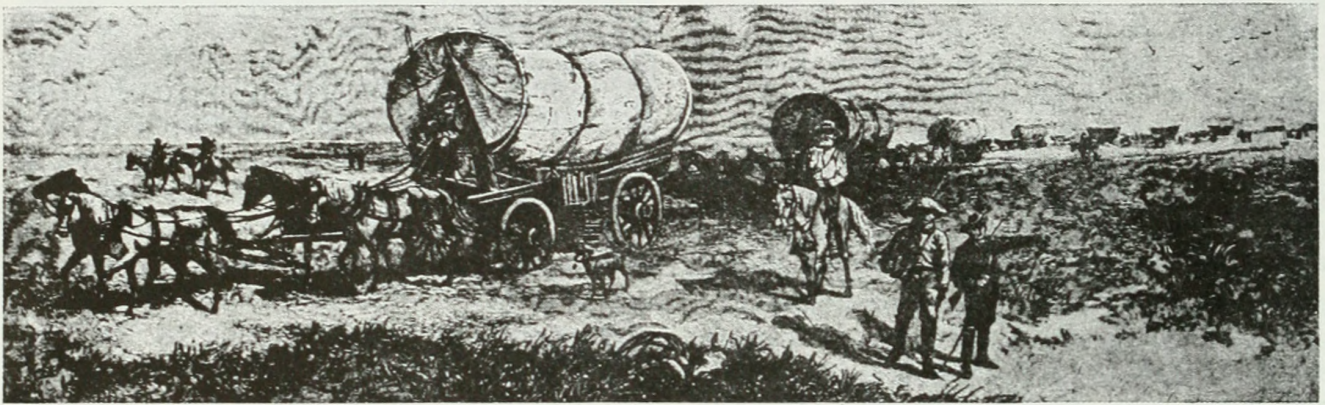
This was the heyday of stage coach travel. Since the advent in 1820 of the pioneer stage coach line on the old Vincennes-St. Louis road, several other lines, providing fortnightly, weekly, semi-weekly or daily passenger and mail service, had been established in the settled portions of Illinois.

The first stage coach line in northern Illinois began operating between Niles, Mich., and Chicago in 1833, during the first rush of Yankee migration. In that year the government improved the old Indian trail between Detroit and Chicago, and a tri-weekly line of stages was inaugurated over the route. The popular Concord coach was used, and there were relays of fresh horses every few miles.

Galena by way of Dixon's Ferry was established by Temple in the same year. A few years later a Chicago-Galena stage line by way of Rockford was in operation and by 1846 tri-weekly stages were running between Chicago and Galena both by way of Dixon and by way of Rockford and Freeport. A daily stage line was in service between Chicago and Peoria.

Arrivals and departures of stages at Chicago numbered eight daily in 1846, with an average of fifteen passengers to the coach.

Between Chicago and Galena and between Chicago and Peoria, the scheduled running time was forty-eight hours, but stages frequently arrived at their destinations many hours late, and complete suspensions of service



AN EMIGRANT TRAIN OF PRAIRIE SCHOONERS—A familiar scene in pioneer days. Courtesy, Chicago Historical Society.

The Chicago Road formed the western extension of the government pike along the southern shore of Lake Erie. During the 1830s and 1840s this was one of the great thoroughfares of emigrant travel, and, according to Milo M. Quaife, in *Chicago Highways, Old and New*, "the migration which poured along it into the New West was no less significant or picturesque than that which at a later period immortalized the Oregon Trail."

Stage coach travel increased so rapidly that in 1835 daily departures were made from Detroit for Chicago, and "travelers were compelled to make reservations in advance."

Chicago soon became the center of an extensive coach line service. In 1834 Dr. John L. Temple began operating an "elegant, through-brace coach carriage" between Chicago and Ottawa by way of Plainfield—the first stage coach to run west of Chicago. A line of weekly stages between Chicago and

for days or weeks at a time were not uncommon in periods of deep snows or heavy rains which rendered the roads impassable.

Westward, during this period, along the Chicago Road, the Danville-Bloomington road, the National Road and other overland trails, and even across the open prairies; moved picturesque caravans of covered wagons, the advance guard of the mighty migration that was to sweep the continent in the wake of railway development in the years to come.

Usually several prairie schooners traveled together, forming what was commonly known as an "emigrant train," so that if one of the cumbersome wagons became mired in the mud or stuck in fording a stream, as frequently occurred, ample ox-, horse- and man-power was on hand to extricate the vehicle. The difficulties of crossing unbridged rivers and streams were sometimes formidable, but still greater problems were presented by the fre-

quent sloughs in which wagons sometimes became almost hopelessly bogged.

When an especially bad slough was encountered all available teams were sometimes hitched together to pull the prairie schooners through, one by one. Occasionally the combined strength of all ox- and horse-power was not equal to the task, and it was necessary to wait for the next emigrant train to provide reinforcements.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the wretchedness of Illinois roads in the 1840s, as evidenced by the writings of numerous travelers who were compelled to use them. The Whisky Point Road, extending westward from Chicago, "was a fair sample of them all," according to Edwin O. Gale, in his *Reminiscences of Early Chicago and Vicinity*.

"When the frosts had come and the flowers gone, when the rains had filled the ground with moisture . . . making every depression a slough . . . then the wheels sank to the hubs, and the hearts of the drivers sank correspondingly. . . . The spring was worse, if possible, than the fall. . . . Woe to the farmer then who should presume to transport anything without a caravan of neighbors to assist with extra teams, to 'pack' the bags of grain from one stalled wagon to another."

With such transportation conditions to contend with, is there any wonder that the interior of the state had been slow in settling up and that millions of acres of fertile government lands in central Illinois had been on the market for years without purchasers at \$1.25 an acre?

The comparatively few farmers who had located on the prairies, distant from water transportation, were compelled to make long, tedious overland journeys to St. Louis, Chicago, Peoria, Terre Haute and Vincennes to exchange their products for a few simple necessities. Upon arrival it was not uncommon for a farmer to learn that the market to which he had come was overstocked. Under such circumstances, he could count himself fortunate if he succeeded in disposing of his load for enough to defray the cost of his trip.

Farmers were usually reasonably certain of being able to dispose of wheat at Chicago or St. Louis at some price, and there was a market at those centers for a limited number of hogs and cattle. A few of the larger cattle-

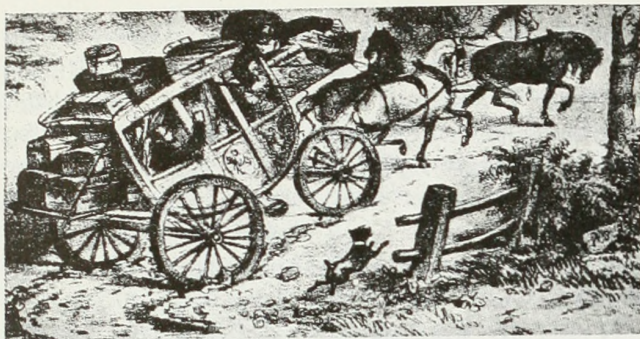
men found it to their advantage to drive herds on the hoof from western and central Illinois to New York and Philadelphia, a trip which required several weeks. In the late 1840s, when Chicago had become a sizable market, cattle and sheep were being driven to that market, on the hoof, from points as far distant as Danville, Bloomington, Pekin and Freeport.

Trips to market by wagon were usually made in the summer and fall, before the roads became next to impassable. Whenever possible, several neighbors would make the trip together; otherwise an effort would be made to "fall in" with some caravan en route. The farmers loaded their prairie wagons with wheat, salt pork, tallow and other products, and outfitted themselves with blankets, frying pans, coffee pots and provisions enough to last several days. With a team of four horses or six oxen, they were off at the first glimmerings of dawn.

A trip of 100 miles to market, barring serious mishaps, might be made in four or five days. A day would be required to dispose of the load and do the trading, and the return trip, with a light load, might be made in from three to four days, depending upon road conditions and the endurance of the animals. On these long journeys oxen frequently perished in the yoke and horses were cut or bruised in fording streams or bogging in the mire. The wear and tear on the wagons also added to the cost of going to market.



Original from
PREPARING BREAKFAST
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT
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ROUGH GOING—A stage coach trip over rough frontier trails was an experience not soon forgotten. From *History of Travel in America*, by Seymour Dunbar, copyright 1915, used by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

But one man's loss was another's gain. An especially bad stretch of road or a difficult river crossing brought many demands upon nearby farmers for ox- or horse-teams to help pull the marooned wagons and coaches out of the mire or up the steep river bank. A ford might prove more profitable than many acres of wheat or corn, and the farmer located near an exceptionally bad mud hole on a well-traveled road was envied by his less fortunately situated neighbors.

Under such unfavorable travel conditions as then prevailed in Illinois, it is not surprising that the citizens took a lively interest in accounts which reached them of the Russian plank roads in Canada, the first of which had been introduced in 1834. The plank road was constructed of heavy boards or planking laid crosswise upon parallel rows of heavy wooden sills. The craze for plank roads reached Illinois in 1844, and during the legislative session that winter three companies applied for charters to build plank roads leading from Chicago.

It was not until 1850, however, that the first section of Chicago's pioneer plank road was opened for traffic. This road, sixteen miles in length, was known as the Southwestern Plank Road, because it ran in a southwesterly direction from Chicago. It was a private enterprise which, like other plank road projects, obtained its revenue from tolls. During the next two years the road was extended first to Naperville and then to Oswego in Kendall County, with branches to Sycamore and Little Rock.

Encouraged by the success of the Southwestern, which enjoyed a thriving business from the start, several other companies were

soon formed to undertake similar projects. Within two or three years Chicago was served by four other plank roads, one extending northward along the lake shore, another in a northwesterly direction to the Des Plaines River, another westward through Elgin to Genoa, and another south ten miles to Kyle's Tavern. Three plank roads were built out of Freeport, and other plank roads were projected from Beardstown, Pekin, Canton, Rushville, Belleville and a few other central and southern Illinois towns.

The plank road served a useful purpose. It facilitated trade and travel. It enabled farmers to work their fields in good weather and go to market during rainy or wet weather. The farmer could load his wagon heavier. Deaths and injuries to oxen and horses and the wear on wagons were reduced. However, plank roads were costly to build and maintain, and with the introduction of railroads in the 1850s, the use of plank roads declined rapidly. Many soon fell into disuse and decay, and one by one the plank road companies passed out of existence.

Few plank roads reached far back into the interior. The greater part of Illinois was unaffected by their rise and decline. Travel and transportation in the prairie country continued to depend upon a few rude trails and dirt roads.

A graphic description of travel conditions in the early 1850s is left by Col. Roswell B. Mason, chief engineer of the Illinois Central Railroad. Referring to a trip which he and a companion made from Cairo to Chicago in November, 1852, Colonel Mason said:



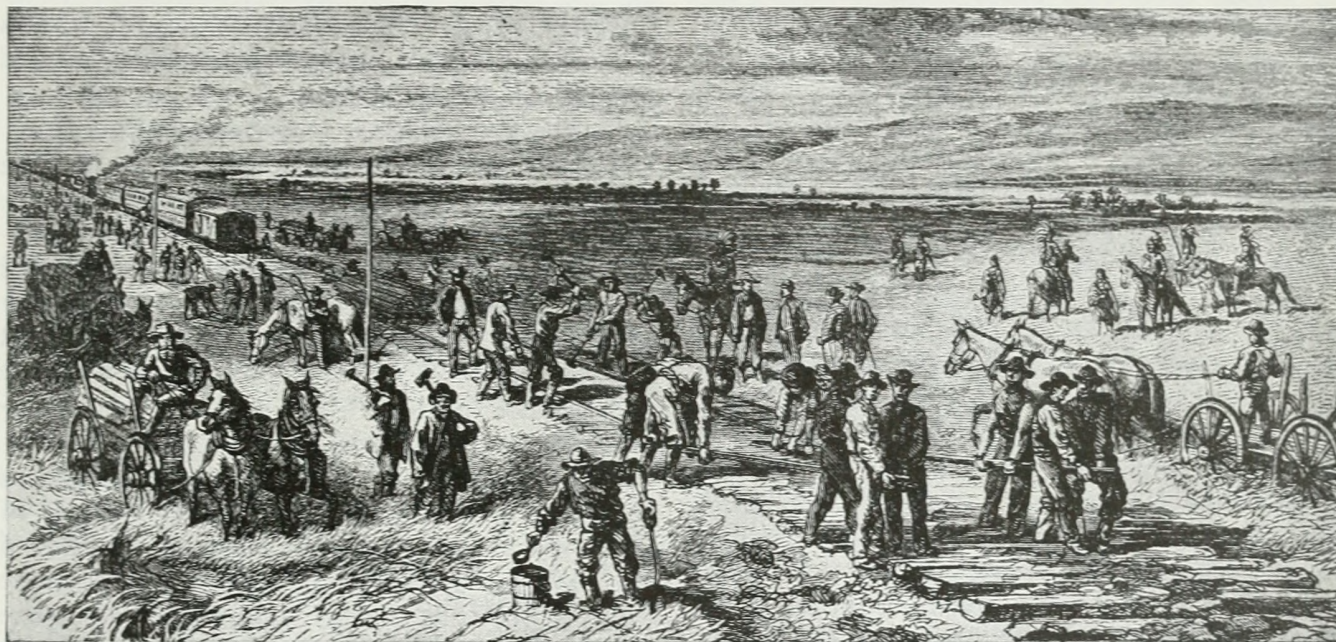
DRIVING HOGS TO MARKET—Many drovers brought hogs on the hoof for long distances to the Chicago market. From *Harper's Weekly*, October 31, 1868, by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine*.

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"Leaving Cairo November 18, we reached Vandalia on the 23d and Decatur on the 25th, with our team nearly exhausted and unable to go farther. The road was so bad it was thought nearly impossible to get through, and it was determined to go to Springfield, then to Alton by the newly completed railroad, and into Chicago by water. We found it difficult to get a team to take us to Springfield, but an offer of fifteen dollars induced a liveryman to agree to take us there, about forty miles, in a day. Leaving Decatur Friday morning, November 26, we toiled through mud, water and ice to a small town within twelve miles of Springfield,

arriving about dark with our team tired out and unable to proceed. A train left Springfield at 8 o'clock the following morning. An offer of fifteen dollars more induced a man to take us there in time for the train or else forfeit the money. We started at 2 o'clock in the morning. It was very cold. Ice of considerable thickness formed on the water, cutting the horses' legs badly. We arrived in Springfield twenty minutes before the train left. He earned the fifteen dollars and we had a comfortable journey to St. Louis, where we stayed over Sunday and took a steamboat Monday morning for La Salle, continuing to Chicago by stage."



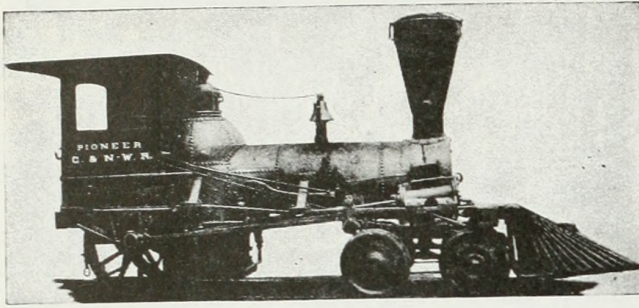
TYPICAL RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION SCENE—The building of a railroad across the sparsely settled prairies was a formidable undertaking in the early days. There were then no powerful steam shovels or track-laying machines to perform the prodigious tasks.

CHAPTER VI

Dawn of the Railway Era

THE year 1850 marked the real beginning of the railway era in Illinois. When that year opened there were about 7,400 miles of railroad in the United States, more than four-fifths of which were in states bordering on the Atlantic Ocean. Ohio had 319 miles of railroad; Michigan, 270 miles; Indiana, eighty-six miles; Kentucky, fifty-five miles; Tennessee, none; Wisconsin, none; and there was not a mile of railroad west of the Mississippi River.

In Illinois the old Northern Cross between Springfield and Meredosia was being restored as the Sangamon and Morgan Railroad, with its western terminal at Naples. Chicago, the future railway center of the continent, boasted one steam locomotive, well named the "Pioneer," which had been operated for several months over a few miles of railroad extending westward from the city. In 1850 this railroad, known as the Galena and Chicago Union (now a part of



CHICAGO'S FIRST LOCOMOTIVE—The "Pioneer" was the first locomotive to run west of Chicago. It arrived at Chicago on board a sailing vessel in the fall of 1848. By 1850 it was running as far west as Elgin. Courtesy, Chicago & North Western Railroad.

the Chicago & North Western), was completed to Elgin, forty-two miles from Chicago, and in September of that year a 10-mile branch connected this line with Aurora. Like the old Northern Cross, the Galena and Chicago Union was built of wooden rails capped with thin "straps" of iron. Over this primitive "strap-railroad" the noisy little "Pioneer" was bringing the first shipments of grain ever to reach Chicago by rail.

Of even greater significance to most of the people of Illinois was the passage by Congress, in September of that year, of an act providing for a grant of public lands to the state of Illinois to aid in the construction of the long-awaited Central Railroad.

Senators Sidney A. Breese and Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois each in turn had introduced and championed a bill in Congress for a grant of public lands to aid in the construction of the railroad. The Douglas bill, which finally passed, was for the three-fold purpose of speedily opening up the fertile but then inaccessible interior of Illinois for settlement, of increasing the value and speeding the sale of 11,500,000 acres of unoccupied public lands in Illinois, and of increasing the taxable wealth of the state. Moreover, even then the rift between the North and the South was widening, and it may be that some far-seeing statesmen recognized of what incalculable value this north-and-south railroad would be to the federal government in the event of war between the free and slave states.

Prominent among those who supported the Douglas land grant bill in Congress were Senators Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, Thomas H. Benton, Lewis Cass, Jefferson Davis, James Shields, William R. King, William H. Seward and Sam Houston, and Representatives William

H. Bissell, John A. McClernand, John Wentworth and Alexander M. Stephens.

The act, as signed by President Millard Fillmore on September 20, 1850, provided that the railroad should extend from a point at or near the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to the western terminus of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, at Peru or La Salle, with a branch line from that point to the extreme northwestern corner of the state, opposite Dubuque, Ia., and with another branch to Chicago on Lake Michigan.

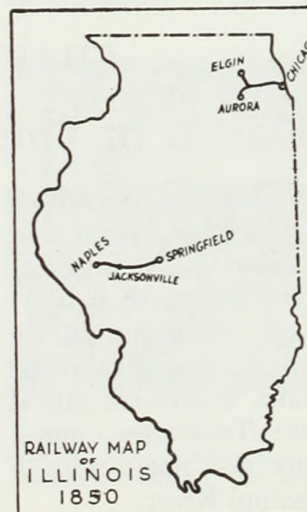
The passage of the act was a triumph not only for Senator Douglas but also for the state of Illinois. It rendered certain of fulfillment the long-cherished dream of the people of Illinois of a great railroad through the sparsely settled portions of the interior.

During the next few months the Illinois Central Railroad was the paramount issue in state politics. Two major questions confronted the people of Illinois: First, should the state undertake to build and operate the railroad, or should it transfer the land-grant lands to a company financed by private capital? Second, if not built by the state, which of three groups seeking the charter should be intrusted with the undertaking?

The citizens had not forgotten the disastrous results of the internal improvement scheme of 1837. At that moment the state was burdened with a debt of nearly \$17,000,000, of which more than \$3,000,000 was overdue interest. The state was in bad repute among investors due to its failure to meet interest obligations when they fell due, and, until it redeemed its reputation and

credit, it could not hope to borrow additional millions to finance such a stupendous project as the proposed Central Railroad, "especially as the line was to run through undeveloped territory where there was no likelihood of immediate profit from traffic."

Of the three groups of promoters which sought to obtain a charter, the one finally



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selected by the Illinois legislature to carry out the great undertaking was composed of outstanding business leaders of New York and New England. They included David A. Neal, Boston shipowner and president of the Eastern Railroad of Massachusetts; Robert Schuyler, probably the foremost railway man of his day and president of the New York & New Haven Railroad; Franklin Haven, head of the largest banking house in New England; John F. A. Sanford, noted fur trader and Indian agent; Jonathan Sturges, prominent New York coffee importer; Morris Ketchum, pioneer locomotive manufacturer; Gouverneur Morris, pioneer railway promoter; George Griswold, merchantman and importer; Thomas W. Ludlow, American agent of the Dutch banking house of Croomelin; William H. Aspinwall, president of the Panama Railroad and founder of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, and Robert Rantoul, Massachusetts statesman and successor to Daniel Webster in the United States Senate.

To this distinguished group of petitioners the Illinois legislature granted on February 10, 1851, the charter of the Illinois Central Railroad Company, with authority to build and operate a railroad 705 miles in length—more than twice the length of the longest railroad then existing in America.

The 2,595,000 acres of public lands which the federal government had granted to the state of Illinois were transferred to the railway company, but not without several provisions which would assure substantial and permanent benefits to both the state and the federal government. Among the provisions were:

1. That the railroad should be completed within a period of six years;
2. That the railway lands should not be offered for sale until the federal government had disposed of all of its lands within a distance of six miles of the railroad at double the former price.
3. That the railway company would pay into the state treasury 7 cents out of every dollar received for the transportation of passengers, freight, express and mails.
4. That the railroad would transport United States troops and property at one-half of standard passenger and freight rates.
5. That the railroad would transport United

States mails at 20 per cent less than standard rates.

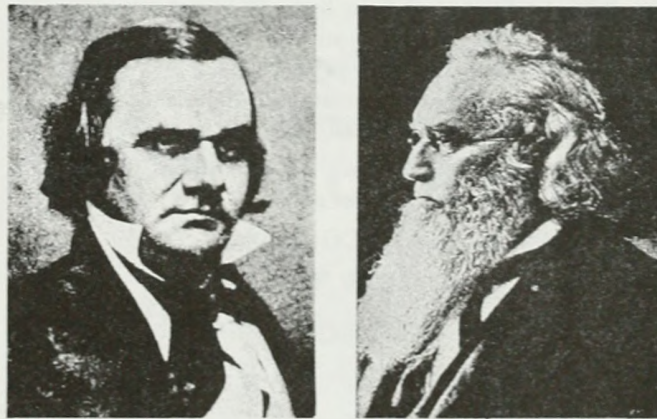
As we shall see later, the railroad, through these provisions, has paid dearly for the lands which it received.

Within a few months from the time the charter was granted, the Illinois Central Railroad Company had a large force of engineers in the field. On December 23, 1851, ground was broken at Chicago and Cairo, and the construction of what was destined to become the principal railway system in Illinois was definitely under way. Within a few months the road was under construction at several points, and thousands of laborers were arriving in Illinois to aid in the undertaking.

Although the population of the state was then in the neighborhood of 900,000, the majority of these settlers were located in counties bordering on the Mississippi, Wabash and Illinois rivers, Lake Michigan and the Illinois and Michigan Canal. The prairie country was still but sparsely settled.

The 366-mile route of the Illinois Central Railroad between Chicago and Cairo did not pass through a single settlement of more than 100 inhabitants, and it passed *near* only three settlements of any importance—Bourbonnais, on the Kankakee River, with 1,710 inhabitants; Urbana, in Champaign County, with 210 inhabitants, and Jonesboro, in Union County, with 584 inhabitants.

From the junction of the Chicago branch, near the present city of Centralia, to Galena, the



DOUGLAS AND BREESE—Senators Stephen A. Douglas (left) and Sidney Breese championed the Illinois land-grant measures which led to the building of the Illinois Central Railroad. Douglas photo by courtesy of Chicago Historical Society.

OWNER: HISTORY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

324-mile route encountered only eight towns or villages of more than 100 inhabitants; Vandalia, the old state capital, with 360 inhabitants; Decatur, with 600; Bloomington, with 1,594; Clinton, with 367; La Salle, with 200; Amboy, with 540; Dixon, with 540; and Freeport, with 1,436 inhabitants. Aside from these few small towns the route traversed a wild and desolate region, over which deer and wild game roamed without molestation and one might travel for a whole day without coming in sight of a human habitation.

The building of a pioneer railroad across the

prairies of Illinois was a formidable undertaking for that early day. Many and difficult were the problems confronting the builders. There were then no powerful machines to reduce the hills and level the valleys and swing the heavy timbers into place. The work had to be done by men of brawn, with shovels and picks and sledge hammers and crow bars.

Crews of "lumber jacks" were sent into the forests of Michigan, Wisconsin and southern Illinois to produce the cross ties and bridge timbers. Quarries were opened to supply the stone for the bridge and building foundations. Hundreds of ox- and horse-teams were employed to transport rail, ties, lumber, stone and provisions for many miles over miserable roads or across open prairies to the construction sites. Other hundreds of teams were used to move the earth from cuts and side borrows to embankments.

Iron rails were purchased in England and shipped across the Atlantic in sailing vessels, thence from Eastern ports to Illinois by way of the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes, or from New Orleans by the Mississippi and Illinois rivers. One vessel laden with rails for the Illinois Central foundered in a storm in mid-Atlantic.

Laborers were recruited in New York, Boston, New Orleans and other distant cities—hardy Irishmen, thrifty Scots, industrious Germans and Scandinavians, many fresh from the old countries. One contractor brought 1,000 men direct from Ireland. The railway company, with an eye to settling up its territory, gave preference to men with families. Arriving in Illinois, by rail, lake or river, these men were sent overland in prairie wagons to the numerous construction camps along the route. At times as many as 10,000 workmen were employed on the construction. It is estimated that within a period of five years at least 100,000 men were brought to Illinois to work on the railroad. Workmen were paid in cash, and the paymasters were obliged to make their way from camp to camp under heavy armed guards.

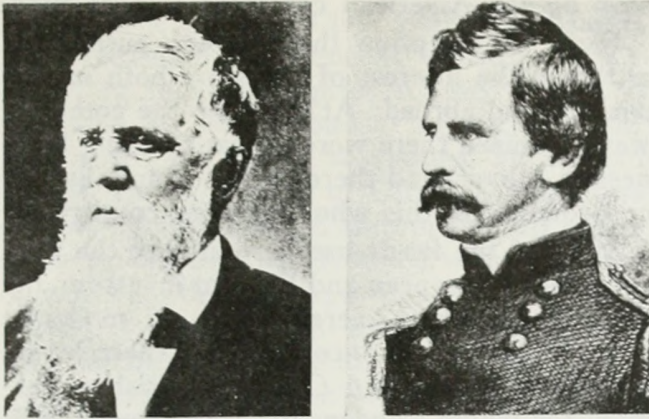
In those days Illinois was not as healthful as it is now, and the prevalence of cholera during the summer months created much unrest, "scattering the workmen like frightened sheep." Men at work one day were in their graves the next. Many panic-stricken workmen abandoned the camps at the first signs of the

WANTED
3,000 LABORERS
 On the 12th Division of the
ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD
Wages, \$1.25 per Day.
Fare, from New-York, only - - \$4.75
 By Railroad and Steamboat, to the work in the
 State of Illinois.

Constant employment for two years or more given. Good board can be obtained at two dollars per week.
 This is a rare chance for persons to go West, being sure of permanent employment in a healthy climate, where land can be bought cheap, and for fertility is not surpassed in any part of the Union.
 Men with families preferred.
 For further information in regard to it, call at the Central Railroad Office,

173 BROADWAY,
 CORNER OF COURTLANDT ST.
 NEW-YORK.
R. B. MASON, Chief Engineer.
H. PHELPS, AGENT,
 JULY, 1853.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR LABORERS—The Illinois Central recruited thousands of workmen in Eastern and Southern cities and brought them to Illinois to work on the railroad. As many as 10,000 men were engaged at one time on the project.



EARLY OFFICERS—Col. Roswell B. Mason (left), chief engineer of construction, under whose direction the original lines of the Illinois Central Railroad were built, and Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks, resident director of the railroad prior to the Civil War. Banks portrait from *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, March, 1865, by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine*.

epidemic. Hundreds died at Chicago, Central City, Cairo and other points. The prevalence of fever and ague and the fact that it was dangerous during the summer months to eat either beef or butter or to drink milk because of the dread "milk sickness" alarmed the workmen and added to the difficulties of the builders.

At many points, especially on the Chicago branch, there was much difficulty in obtaining good water.

Notwithstanding these handicaps, the work proceeded at an astonishing pace. On May 20, 1852, the first completed section of the road between Chicago and Kensington was opened. On May 16, 1853, the road was opened between La Salle and Bloomington, and on July 11 of that year the rails of the Chicago branch reached the Kankakee River. On November 14 the line was opened from La Salle to Mendota. In 1854 the following sections were opened: Freeport-Nora, January 6; Bloomington-Clinton, March 14; Kankakee-Ludlow, May 13; Ludlow-Champaign, July 24; Nora-Apple River, September 11; Clinton-Decatur, October 18; Apple River-Galena, October 28; Cairo-Sandoval, November 22; Mendota-Amboy, November 27.

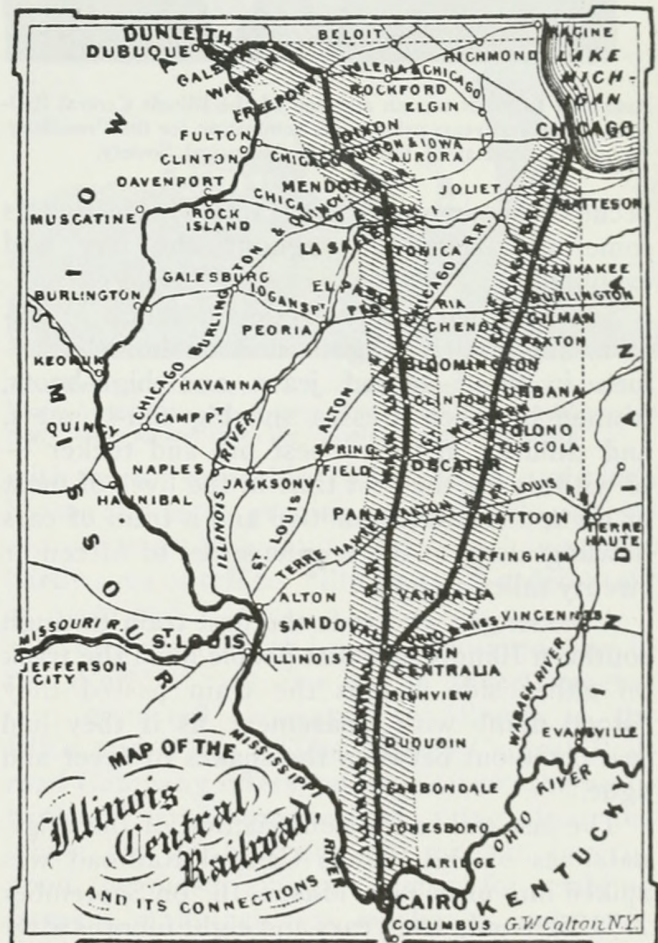
On January 6, 1855, the line between Sandoval and Decatur was completed, and on January 15 the Amboy-Freeport line was opened, providing a continuous railroad from Galena to Cairo. On June 11 the rails reached the Mississippi River opposite Dubuque, and on June 25

the section between Champaign and Mattoon was opened.

The joy with which the early settlers hailed the coming of the "Iron Horse" knew no bounds. It brought an end, once and for all, to the isolation they had experienced on the lonely prairies. It brought the merchandise and the markets of the world to their doors. It put an end to the long and difficult journeys to distant markets. It enhanced the value of their lands. It brought new neighbors, new comforts, new interests, new opportunities.

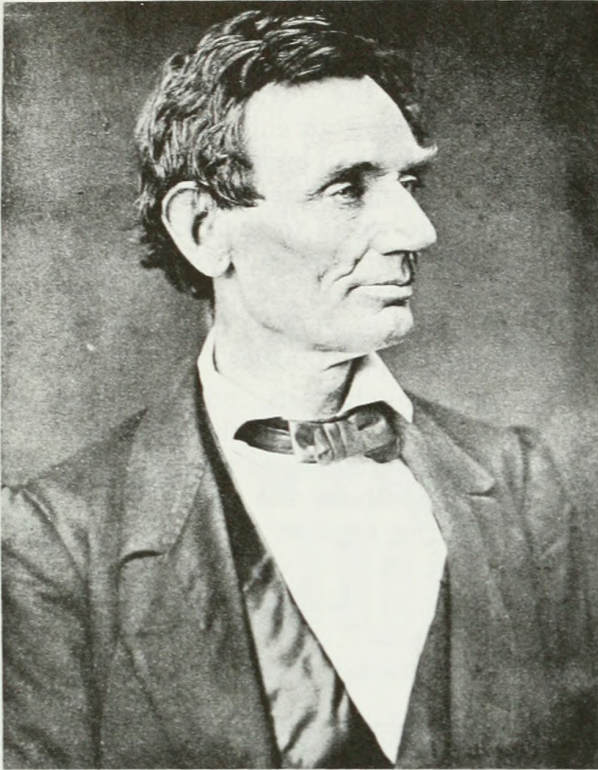
The pioneer children, no less than their parents, eagerly watched the progress of the engineers and builders and plied them endlessly with questions about the speed of the trains, the size of the engines and cars, the cost of travel, and so on.

The arrival of the first train was the signal for an enthusiastic celebration in the towns, with speech-making, music, a parade and a bar-



A MAP OF 1861, showing the original lines of the Illinois Central Railroad, completed in 1856.

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN was an attorney of the Illinois Central Railroad for several years prior to his nomination for the Presidency. Picture by courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society.

becue or picnic on the program. The festivities sometimes lasted throughout the day and evening.

Sun-browned settlers rode for miles, in ox-carts and prairie wagons and on horseback—men in snuff-colored jeans and high-boots, women in calico dresses and big sun-bonnets, and children in their “best bib and tucker”—to witness for the first time in the lives of most of them a steam locomotive and a train of cars bowling along at the terrific speed of fifteen or twenty miles an hour!

A passenger who rode the first train through southern Illinois said that people lined the track on either side and as the train passed they “stood dumb with amazement, as if they had just come out between the shakes of fever and ague.”

The last rail in the construction of the original lines of the Illinois Central Railroad was spiked into place near Mason, Ill., on September 27, 1856—only five years and eight months after the railway company had received its charter—signaling the completion of the longest rail-

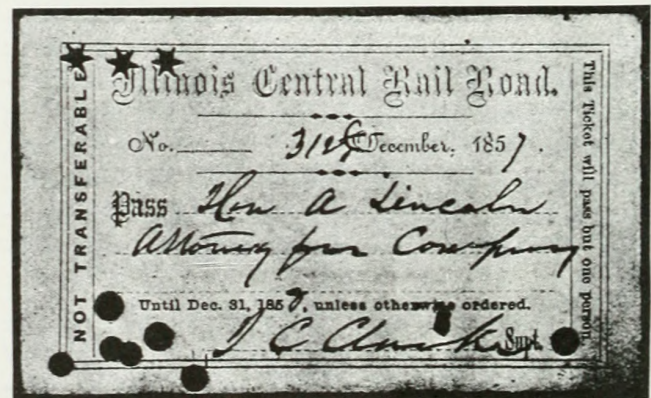
road on the American continent at that time.

From its inception the Illinois Central had attracted the interest of investors both in this country and abroad. At the time the company was organized there were no banks doing business in Illinois, and there were no capitalists of consequence in this whole western country.

Most of the funds used in building the road came from European and Eastern investors, the majority of whom were persons of moderate means. Besides the incorporators, these investors included Richard Cobden, British statesman, for whom Cobden, Ill., was named; William Gladstone, the great British premier; Lawrence Heyworth, member of parliament, for whom Heyworth, Ill., was named; Sir Joseph Paxton, for whom Paxton, Ill., was named; James C. Fargo, of the famous Wells-Fargo express company; Abram S. Hewitt, son-in-law of Peter Cooper, builder of the locomotive “Tom Thumb”; Wendell Phillips, noted abolitionist; Harriett Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and many other persons of prominence.

The unusual importance of the Illinois Central project naturally attracted the services of many persons of outstanding attainments. The chief engineer of construction was Col. Roswell B. Mason, a canal and railway builder of wide renown. Col. William H. Bissell, hero of the Mexican War and eleventh governor of Illinois, was one of its early officers.

Gen. George B. McClellan, of Civil War fame, was chief engineer and operating vice-president of the Illinois Central in the late 1850s. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside and Gen.



LINCOLN'S ILLINOIS CENTRAL PASS—The future War President made frequent trips over the Illinois Central Railroad, sometimes on business of the company, sometimes on speech-making tours.

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Nathaniel P. Banks, Civil War commanders, were treasurer and resident director, respectively, in the period prior to the war. Gen. Grenville M. Dodge, builder of the first railroad across the Rocky Mountains, Sir William C. Van Horne, builder of Canada's first transcontinental railroad, and Marvin Hughitt, whose name will forever be identified with the development of the Chicago & North Western railway system, began their railway careers with the Illinois Central in the early days.

By a unique provision of the railroad's charter, every governor of Illinois since the days of Augustus French has been a member of the board of directors of the Illinois Central. This was probably a wise provision, because the Illinois Central has for more than eighty years been one of the foremost factors in Illinois, out-

ranking every other railroad and probably every other private enterprise in the state in investments, employment, payrolls and taxes.

Abraham Lincoln was an attorney for the Illinois Central for several years, representing the railroad in the circuit courts of Champaign, Macon, DeWitt, McLean, Shelby and Vermilion counties on the old Eighth Judicial Circuit, as well as before the Supreme Court of Illinois. The famous McLean County Tax Case, in which he represented the Illinois Central, was probably the most important law case of his career. In 1859, Lincoln, as an Illinois Central attorney, was host to a group of state officers and prominent citizens on a complete tour of the Illinois Central Railroad lasting several days for the purpose of appraising the railway property.

CHAPTER VII

Illinois Is Transformed

WHILE the Illinois Central Railroad was under construction Illinois was undergoing a transformation such as few other regions of the world ever experienced. The railroad ushered in a new era in Illinois. The great project itself, by its magnitude, attracted widespread attention. Thousands of industrious engineers, mechanics and laborers came to Illinois to work on the railroad, later to purchase farms, enter business and become substantial citizens, the grandfathers of many present-day Illinoisans.

In order to promote the development of its territory, so essential to its success, the Illinois Central launched a widespread publicity campaign—the first important publicity campaign ever undertaken by an American railroad—for the purpose of drawing attention to the climate, resources and opportunities of this then “far western country.”

The advertising columns of many newspapers, farm journals and magazines were used in the effort. Thus, into tens of thousands of homes in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, the Southland, as well as in England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, Sweden and Norway, went these Illinois Central advertisements, carrying illustrations of luxurious crops of grain, shocks of wheat, baskets brimming



THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL'S No. 1—The arrival of this old “wood-burner,” signaling the opening of the railroad, was celebrated in many towns up and down the Illinois Central in the 1850s.

with corn, vegetables piled high, and with horses and cattle grazing on the fertile prairies—a scene of peace and plenty, beckoning the hardy sons of toil to “Illinois, the Garden State of America.”

“The Finest Farm Lands—Equal to Any in the World!!!” ran one of the advertisements that attracted thousands to Illinois in the 1850s and 1860s. “The Illinois Central Railroad Company offers, on long credit, the beautiful and fertile prairie lands lying along the whole line of railroad, 700 miles in length, upon the most favorable terms for enabling farmers, manufacturers, mechanics and workmen to make for themselves and their families a competency and a home they can call their own.”

"No state in the Valley of the Mississippi offers so great an inducement to the settlers as Illinois. . . . There is no part of the world where all the conditions of climate and soil so admirably combine to produce corn and wheat. In central and southern Illinois uncommon advantages are presented for stock raising. The great resources of the state, in coal, iron, lead, zinc, limestone, sandstone, etc., are almost untouched; they await the arrival of enterprising and energetic men. . . . Mechanics and working-men will find a free-school system encouraged by the state. . . . Children can live in sight of the school, the college, the church, and grow up with the prosperity of the leading state in the Great Western Empire."

The railroad supplemented its newspaper and magazine advertising with hundreds of thousands of illustrated pamphlets, as well as large numbers of posters and handbills, telling of the opportunities which Illinois offered the homeseeker. Colonization agents were located in Eastern cities and at the seaports. Representatives of the railroad toured Europe, delivering lectures on the opportunities which Illinois offered the immigrant and colonist.

In his book *The Illinois Central Railroad and Its Colonization Work*, Dr. Paul Wallace Gates says that in two months one Illinois Central agent distributed 26,000 land pamphlets in Massachusetts, New York and Connecticut. Another agent distributed 300,000 pamphlets to newspaper subscribers in Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia and western Pennsylvania. Eight thousand pamphlets were sent to sub-

scribers of the *Maine Farmer*. Thousands of copies were published in foreign languages for distribution in Europe. Large numbers were sent out from the Chicago office of the Illinois Central in response to inquiries which poured in by mail.

Indeed, so extensive and widespread were the railroad's efforts to attract settlers that nearly every person in the United States and millions in foreign countries must have read or heard a great deal about Illinois and its varied opportunities.

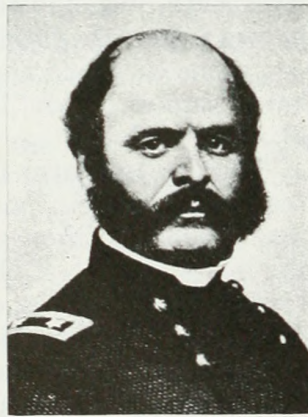
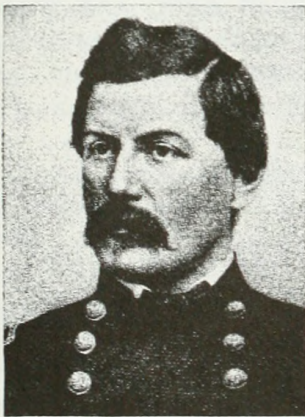
How many thousands of persons migrated to Illinois as a result of the construction of the Illinois Central and of the widespread publicity campaign which the railway company carried on, no one will ever know, but unquestionably the number was very large. Hardly was the construction of the railroad well under way before a tide of migration of unprecedented proportions set in toward Illinois.

Under the provisions of the federal grant, the Illinois Central could not offer any of its lands for sale until all government lands, in alternate sections, within six miles of the railroad had been sold. In 1850 the government owned 11,500,000 acres of wild land in Illinois, which had been offered to the public for twenty years, without purchasers, at \$1.25 per acre. Holders of government war scrip could purchase these lands for 62½ cents an acre.

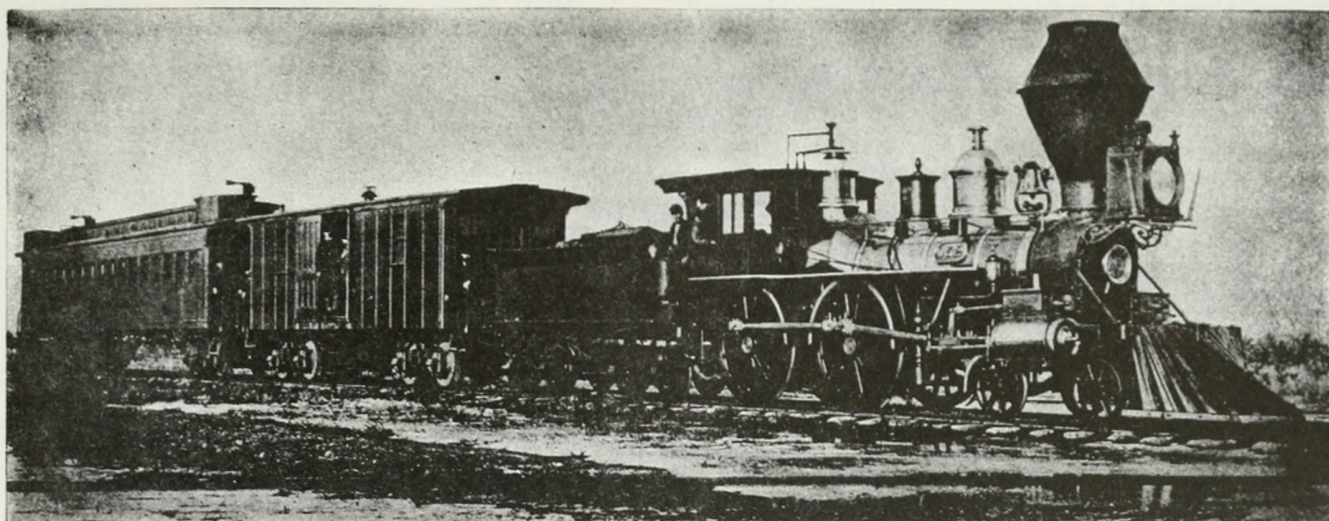
Following the passage of the land-grant bill, the government withdrew from the market all lands within six miles of the proposed railroad. When again put on the market, in the fall of 1852, they were offered and quickly sold at \$2.50 an acre, or for two to four times the prices which no one was willing to pay before the railroad was assured.

Thus the government lost nothing by the transfer of the lands to Illinois in return for the assurance that a railroad would be built through these vast areas of wild lands in the interior of the state. On the contrary, the government profited by the ready sale at increased prices of the millions of acres which it retained—lands which, without the railroad, would have been reduced to 12½ cents an acre under the Graduation Act of 1854.

When the Illinois Central lands were placed on the market in the summer of 1854, the land



MCCLELLAN AND BURNSIDE—These distinguished Civil War commanders, George B. McClellan (left) and Ambrose E. Burnside, were officers of the Illinois Central Railroad prior to the Civil War. Courtesy, Chicago Historical Society.



AN EARLY ILLINOIS CENTRAL TRAIN

office at Chicago was besieged by applicants eager to take advantage of the railroad's low prices and liberal credit terms under which some of the richest farm lands in Illinois could be purchased for a down payment of only 50 cents an acre, with seven years in which to pay the remainder.

By this time the railroads had reached Chicago from the East. Every incoming train brought its quota of homeseekers; others were arriving by lake steamer or covered wagons, to tarry a day or two in Chicago and then press on to contribute their bit to the making of Illinois.

Over the old National Road and other pikes from the East the white tops of prairie schooners, slowly wending their way westward, ever westward, met the eye of the arriving settler as the "Iron Horse" bore him across the prairies to his new home to be.

Where but a short time ago spread a desolate, unpeopled waste, the newcomer now beheld many evidences of human enterprise. Around nearly every little wooden railway station streets were being laid out; houses, stores, schools and churches were being erected. The sound of saw and hammer and the fragrance of spruce lumber were in the air.

Here and there and everywhere across the prairies farm houses were springing up; fences were being built; trees and hedges were being planted; cattle and sheep were grazing; fields of grain were yellowing in the summer sun.

Not to be outdone in enterprise by his new

neighbors, the old settler on the edge of the grove was erecting a frame dwelling to replace the crude little log cabin which he had built years ago, before the railroads brought sawed lumber and other building materials to the prairies.

On every hand were unmistakable evidences of the transforming, energizing influence of railroads, which were now being flung across the state and beyond its borders, into Iowa and Missouri and Wisconsin, pushing back the frontier and laying the foundations for agricultural and industrial development such as the Illinois Central was bringing to its territory in Illinois.

Wherever the "civilizing rails" went they brought the settler, the investor, the merchant, the mechanic, the promoter, the teacher, the preacher, to establish farming communities, villages, towns.

Assured of reliable transportation service, month after month, year after year, summer and winter, the manufacturer and the mine operator came to add their substantial influence to the building of new communities. Thus not only were new and nearby consuming centers created for the products of the farm, but cheap railway transportation enabled the Illinois farmer to ship his products to consuming centers hundreds of miles distant. Flourishing trade currents were thus set up on every hand, and Illinois entered upon an era of progress and prosperity hitherto unknown.

Numerous villages and towns sprang up like

magic along the routes of the "Iron Horse." Centralia was typical. An unredeemed prairie at the beginning of 1854; a railway station in midsummer; a few months later a fast-growing town of 1,900 inhabitants, with 275 dwellings, eleven stores, three hotels, two churches, a railway repair shop, a flour mill and a school. Two hundred and twenty-five farms were opened in the vicinity within two years.

At Champaign the Illinois Central established a station on the open prairie in the summer of 1854. Within a few months a flourishing village had sprung up. A year later Champaign was a community of 100 houses and four or five hundred inhabitants. Settlers were swarming in to take up the vacant lands in the surrounding country.

In 1850 there were only 23,000 acres of improved land in Champaign county; by 1860 improved acreage had increased to 170,000 acres. The growth continued until in 1950 there were 604,900 acres of improved land in the county. When the railroad was opened there were no manufacturing plants in Champaign County. In 1948 there were about 171 manufacturing plants in the county, and their output in that year was valued at nearly \$100,525,000

When the railroad was surveyed Carbondale was not on the map. When the railroad was opened it was a thriving village of 300 inhabitants. In another five years its population had quadrupled.

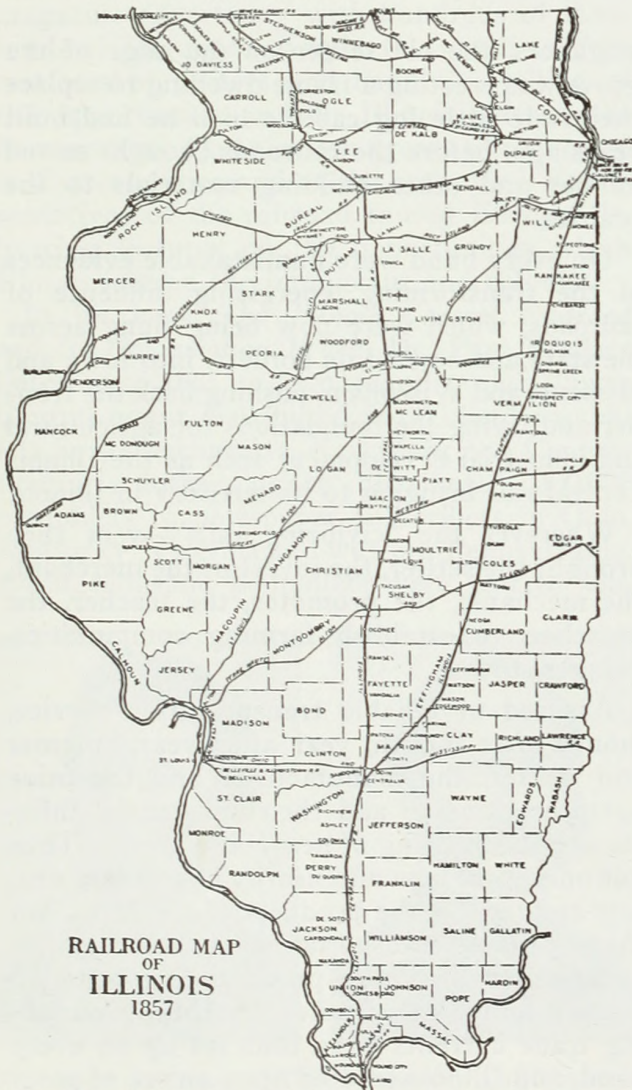
Mattoon sprang up almost overnight. In April, 1855, there was not a sign of human life; by August there was a large hotel, with another in process of erection, a postoffice, a dry goods store and two groceries to supply the rapidly increasing population. By 1856 Mattoon was a village of 500 inhabitants, with 113 homes completed and others going up on every hand.

When the Illinois Central was projected in 1850 the value of all farm property in McLean County was only \$1,665,000. Seven out of every eight acres of land in the county were in a wild state. In 1950 McLean was the richest agricultural county in the Middle West, with farm property valued at \$204,500,000, or over 123 times what it was before the Illinois Central was built.

In a single decade, from 1850 to 1860, the population of Illinois more than doubled. That of the thirty-two counties traversed by the Illinois Central Railroad mounted from 248,000 to 609,000, a gain of 145 per cent. In 1950 the population of these counties was approximately 5,500,000— twenty times that of 1850.

Still more striking was the agricultural and industrial growth of Illinois as a result of railway development. In 1850 only 5,036,000 acres, or 14 per cent of the land area of Illinois, were classed as improved. Ten years later 13,196,000 acres, or 37 per cent of Illinois' area, were improved. The census of 1950 reports 30,900,000 acres, or 86 per cent of the state's area, as improved farm lands.

The development of manufactures is another striking phase of progress. In 1850 the total



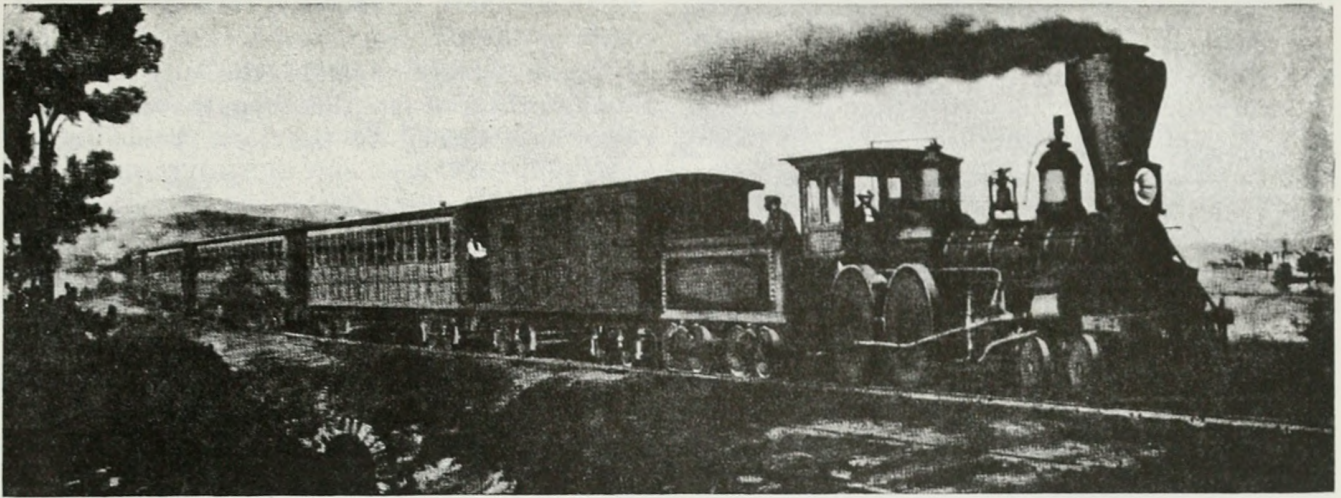
RAILROAD MAP
OF
ILLINOIS
1857

From *The Colonization Activities of the Illinois Central Railroad*, by Dr. Paul Wallace Gates, copyright 1934, reproduced by courtesy of Harvard University Press.

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THE EXPRESS TRAIN—A Currier and Ives print of 1859, reproduced by courtesy of the American Steel Foundries.

value of manufactured products in the thirty-two counties traversed by the Illinois Central amounted to only \$6,247,000. In 1948 the value of manufactured products in the city of Decatur alone was more than twenty-two times that sum!

In 1850, aside from the lead mines near Galena and two or three small coal mines in the vicinity of East St. Louis, the vast mineral resources of Illinois were almost wholly untouched. Railway transportation, providing direct year-round service from the mines and quarries to every market in the country, enabled these hidden reservoirs of wealth to be developed. As a result, Illinois' income from mineral production was a hundred times greater in recent years.

The growth of the great coal-mining industry of southern Illinois was coincident with the development of the Illinois Central Railroad. The first shaft mine was opened at DuQuoin a few months after the railroad was completed through that part of the state.

The only locomotives then operating in Illi-

nois burned cord-wood. In 1855 the Illinois Central began experimenting in the use of Illinois coal for locomotive fuel. Some were skeptical; they did not believe it could be done. One railway man declared that attempts to burn Illinois coal in locomotives were irrational and absurd; that it couldn't be done.

But within a few months from the time his letter was written the experiments were pronounced a success, and in 1856 the company placed orders for several coal-burning locomotives. By 1859 twenty-two of the railroad's 112 engines were burning Illinois coal. At the close of the Civil War practically every locomotive on the Illinois Central was burning Illinois coal exclusively.

Under the stimulus of railway development and the tremendous industrial expansion which followed, coal production in Illinois mounted from 400,000 tons in 1855, to 6,000,000 tons in 1880 and to 25,800,000 tons in 1900, with the Illinois Central ranking throughout this period as the leading consumer of coal in the state.

CHAPTER VIII

A Great Railway Center

"CHICAGO," said Charles H. Markham, "is a majestic monument to railway enterprise and achievement—a mighty tribute to the faith and courage of the empire builders whose genius and daring brought the

great American railway system into being."

Nowhere in Illinois—or in the world, for that matter—are the benefits of railway development more strikingly in evidence than in this great mid-western metropolis—the transporta-

tion center of the North American continent.

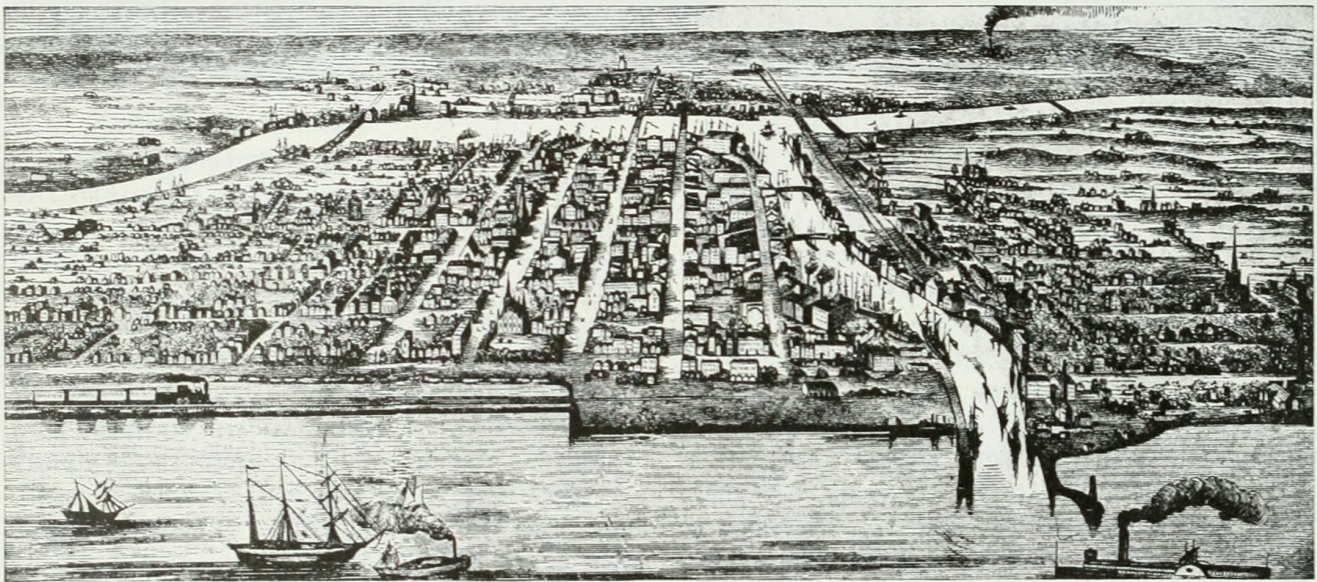
When the first Chicago railroad was proposed, in 1831, Chicago was "a mere collection of huts in a swamp." By the time the second railroad was proposed, in 1834, it was a flourishing village. Chicago continued to grow under the stimulus of these "paper" railroads and the promise of prosperity which they and the proposed canal were expected to bring.

By 1850, when the Illinois Central Railroad, with a "branch line" to Chicago, was first definitely assured, and the Galena and Chicago

The Northern Indiana Railroad won the race, reaching the city on February 20, 1852. The Michigan Central entered the city over the Illinois Central tracks three months later. Both roads now belong to the New York Central System.

In the meantime other railway companies were being organized to push lines into the undeveloped territory westward and northward from Chicago.

Late in 1852 the Chicago & Rock Island Railroad was opened to Joliet; the following



CHICAGO IN 1853—The Illinois Central originally entered the city on a trestle in the lake. This location was designated by the city council in order to relieve the city of the heavy expense of protecting the shore line against lake storms. The railroad built a breakwater at a cost to itself, and a saving to the city, of millions of dollars.

Union Railroad and the Aurora Branch were opened to Elgin and Aurora, Chicago had attained a population of 29,000. These pioneer projects brought Chicago into prominence as a railway center and stamped it at once as the coming city of the West.

"On to Chicago!" was the new slogan that resounded through the land. "On to Chicago!" said John Murray Forbes, of Boston, and straightway the Michigan Central Railroad, which then ran from Detroit to Michigan City, Ind., began its extension around the lake to Chicago "On to Chicago!" said John B. Jervis, of the Michigan Southern & Northern Indiana Railroad, and promptly that road was engaged in a spirited race with Forbes' road to see which should have the distinction of being the first to reach Illinois and Chicago from the East.

year it was extended to a junction with the Illinois Central at La Salle; in 1854 it reached the Mississippi River at Rock Island. This was the first railroad to link Chicago and the rail lines from the East with the Mississippi River. It was also the first railroad to cross the Mississippi River on a bridge, which was opened to Davenport, Ia., in April, 1856.

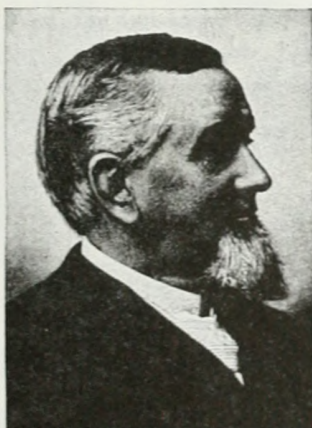
The Galena and Chicago Union reached Freeport in the summer of 1853, and two years later, by using the tracks of the Illinois Central west of Freeport, its trains were running from Chicago to the Mississippi River opposite Dubuque. Late in 1855 the Galena and Chicago Union completed a line of its own through DeKalb, Dixon and Sterling to the Mississippi River at Fulton—now the main line of the Chicago & North Western to Omaha.

In 1853 the Central Military Tract Railroad was opened from Aurora to Mendota, thus providing in conjunction with the Aurora Branch (Chicago and Aurora) and the Illinois Central a through rail route between Chicago and Bloomington. It was over this route that the first passenger train between Chicago and Cairo was run on January 8, 1855, before the Chicago branch of the Illinois Central was completed.

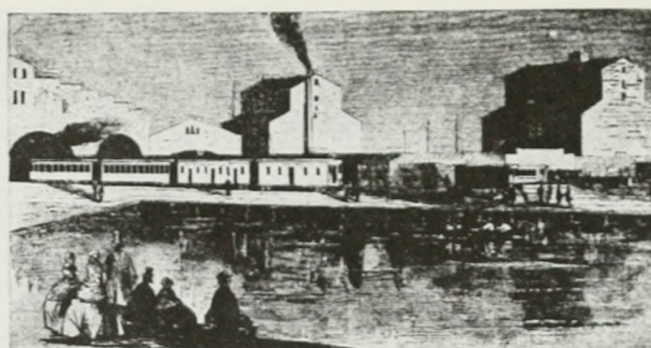
The Military Tract road was completed as far west as Galesburg in 1854, and in the following year the Peoria and Oquakwa Railroad between Galesburg and the Mississippi River, opposite Burlington, Ia., was opened. Shortly thereafter the Chicago and Aurora, the Central Military Tract and the Peoria and Oquakwa, forming a through rail route between Chicago and the Mississippi River opposite Burlington, were consolidated as the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad. The present Burlington line between Galesburg and Quincy was also one of the pioneer railway lines of Illinois, having been built in 1854-55 under the old Northern Cross charter.

The present Chicago & North Western lines between Chicago and Milwaukee and between Chicago and Madison, Wis., were opened in 1855.

In the fall of 1852 the Chicago and Mississippi Railroad, later the Chicago & Alton, was opened between Alton and Springfield. Two years later it was completed to Joliet. The completion of the Joliet and Chicago Railroad in 1856 provided a through rail route from Chicago to the Mississippi River at Alton. Meanwhile several other important railway projects were in progress. A compilation published in Gerhard's *Illinois As It Is* in 1857 lists forty-eight railway projects then completed or under construction in Illinois or coming from adjoining states. Seven of these roads were



GEORGE M. PULLMAN — Probably no man contributed more to the comforts of passenger travel. The company which he founded has long been the largest manufacturer and operator of sleeping cars in the world.



ILLINOIS CENTRAL TERMINAL, CHICAGO, 1859—The grain trade of Chicago was facilitated by these huge elevators, erected by the railroad. From *Harper's Weekly*, September 10, 1859, by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine*.

then actually in Chicago and several others were projected to terminate at Chicago.

During this period of feverish railway expansion, Chicago was a beehive of activity, growing by leaps and bounds. The following extracts from a letter written by an Illinois Central official in 1855 vividly portrays the scene:

"The census of 1850 gave Chicago 28,620. The papers of the city are glorying over the results of a census just taken which gives our city 80,023 inhabitants on September 1, 1855. Mr. Neal remarks 'this is the most astonishing thing that ever happened in the world.' There are 2,700 new buildings now going up. . . . Mr. Edgar was astonished, as every one is, at the magnitude and growth of the city. . . . On all hands I hear that more extensive preparations than for any previous year are now being made to build and improve over the whole city. . . . Hotels, depots, grain houses, store blocks, private dwellings, not to mention several churches and a theater, are to be erected in almost every division of the city.

"In eight blocks bounded by the Chicago River, the Illinois Central Railroad, Clark Street and Randolph Street, thirteen five-story brick warehouses are in course of construction; also nine five-story stone and brick warehouses and fifteen four-story common brick warehouses, one stone hotel six stories high and forty tenements. The Illinois Central is putting up a beautiful structure for office purposes. . . . These improvements are within that portion of the city nearest the station of the Illinois Central and are more extensive than those going up in other parts, but they are a fair measure of the progress of the town. I wonder if there is or was ever anything like it!" AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



PIONEER SLEEPING CAR—The introduction of sleeping cars on the Illinois Central in 1856 marked a great forward step in passenger travel. The *Amboy*, shown above, was in use in 1857.

Chicago, which in 1850 had fewer than 29,000 souls and only one partly completed railroad, had become by 1860 a city of 109,000 souls with eleven important railroads! It was now the undisputed railway and distributing center of the West.

Large quantities of railway construction materials and manufactured goods were being shipped in by rail and boat for redistribution to the North and West and South. As the railroads opened up these fertile regions, increasing quantities of grains and livestock were shipped to Chicago by rail for transshipment by lake or rail to the Eastern states.

To take care of the growing grain traffic, large grain elevators were erected by the Illinois Central and other railroads, as well as by private interests. Railway transportation soon made Chicago the world's largest grain market.

In order to promote the livestock trade and to bring together the buyers, sellers, manufacturers and transporting agencies, the Illinois Central and other railroads were chiefly instrumental in organizing the Union Stock Yards and Transit Company, which greatly increased Chicago's importance as a livestock market and meat-packing center and led to the development of the great meat packing houses whose names are now household words throughout the world.

Chicago's importance as a railway center also attracted steel and car manufacturers and others engaged in supplying the railroads with equipment, materials and supplies. One of these firms was the Pullman Palace Car Company, now The Pullman Company, which has for many years been the largest manufacturer and operator of sleeping cars in the world. The Pullman

Company and other railway equipment and railway supply companies have been highly important factors in the making of Chicago.

Chicago's superior transportation facilities also led to the establishment of the great mail order and wholesale houses which have contributed so much to the city's growth and prestige as a merchandising center.

Thus, hand in hand with railway development, the industrial development and commercial growth of this great mid-Western metropolis have gone forward.

Chicago's present-day importance is in large measure due to the fact that it is the focal center of the greatest network of railroads in the world. In order to understand the importance of Chicago as a transportation center, one's view must comprehend the entire railway system of the United States, because the railway lines which terminate at Chicago are but the delivering and receiving ends of many of the busy arteries of commerce that reach out—like the spokes of a wheel—to the far corners of the land.

The thirty-odd railway lines which radiate from the Chicago district belong to railway systems which embrace more than two-fifths of the total railway mileage of the United States. These systems own more than one-half of all the locomotives and cars and they perform more than one-half of all the railway freight, passenger, express and mail service in the country.

In the Chicago terminal district alone there are about 8,000 miles of railway trackage—enough to form twenty railroads abreast reaching the length of the state from the Wisconsin line to Cairo. Between three and four thousand

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passenger and freight trains enter or leave Chicago every day. In a recent year a passenger train arrived or departed at Chicago every fifty-eight seconds and a freight train arrived or departed every thirty-six seconds, on the average, day and night.

The railroads have been a dominant factor in

Chicago's growth and prosperity from the beginning of the railway era down to the present day, surpassing in wage earners and wages any other single industry in the Chicago industrial area and performing a transportation service of tremendous proportions, vital to the welfare of the city, the state and the nation.

CHAPTER IX

Growth of Railroads

WHILE the railroads were extending their first lines northward, westward and southward from Chicago in the 1850s, other railway projects were under way elsewhere in Illinois, and all Illinois was astir with railway activity.

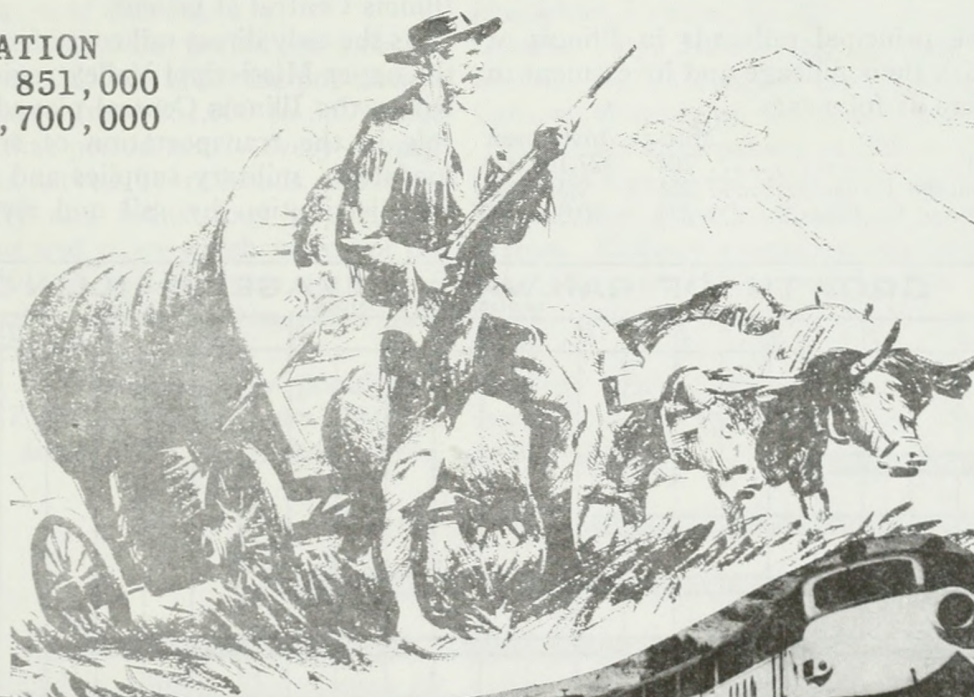
In the summer of 1855 a broad-gauge railroad known as the Ohio and Mississippi, was completed between Illinoistown (now East St. Louis) and Vincennes, intersecting the Illinois

Central at Sandoval and Odin. The entire line between St. Louis and Cincinnati, completed in 1857, was later changed to standard gauge. It is now a part of the Baltimore & Ohio System.

The old Northern Cross Railroad, which had been reorganized in the late 1840s as the Sangamon and Morgan, with its western terminal at Naples, was acquired by the Great Western Railway Company and extended eastward from Springfield through Decatur, Tolono

HOW ILLINOIS HAS GROWN SINCE BEGINNING OF RAILWAY ERA.

POPULATION	
1850 -	851,000
1950 -	8,700,000



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and Danville to Lafayette, Ind. This road, completed in 1856, subsequently became a part of the Wabash Railway system.

In 1856 the Terre Haute, Alton and St. Louis (now the Big Four Railroad) was opened between Terre Haute and Alton, forming connections with the Illinois Central at Mattoon and Pana. A branch line was extended to St. Louis, and over this route in the early days ran the Illinois Central's famous "Lightning Express," a Chicago-St. Louis train, equipped with "magnificent state room cars," and described as one of the finest passenger trains in the Mississippi Valley.

By 1857 Illinois was interlaced by a network of railroads—the early lines of several of the great American railway systems of the present day. Persons could travel and ship goods all the way by rail from the Eastern seaboard to Illinois and from Illinois into the newly opened regions of Wisconsin, Iowa and Missouri.

From fewer than 100 miles of short "strap" railroads in 1850, the railway mileage of Illinois mounted to 2,790 miles in 1860—more than existed in any other state in the Union except Ohio.

The twelve principal railroads in Illinois at that time, with their mileage and investment in the state, were as follows:

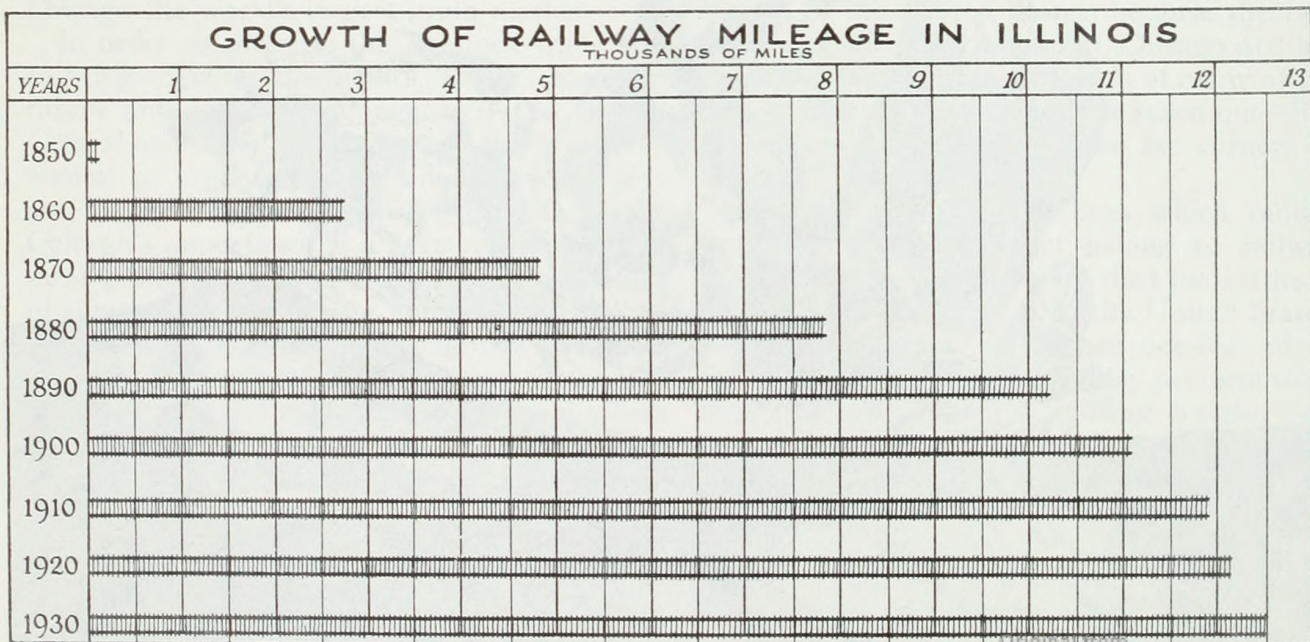
	Mileage	Investment
Illinois Central	705	\$27,195,000
Galena and Chicago Union.....	261	9,352,000
Chicago, Alton and St. Louis.....	220	10,000,000

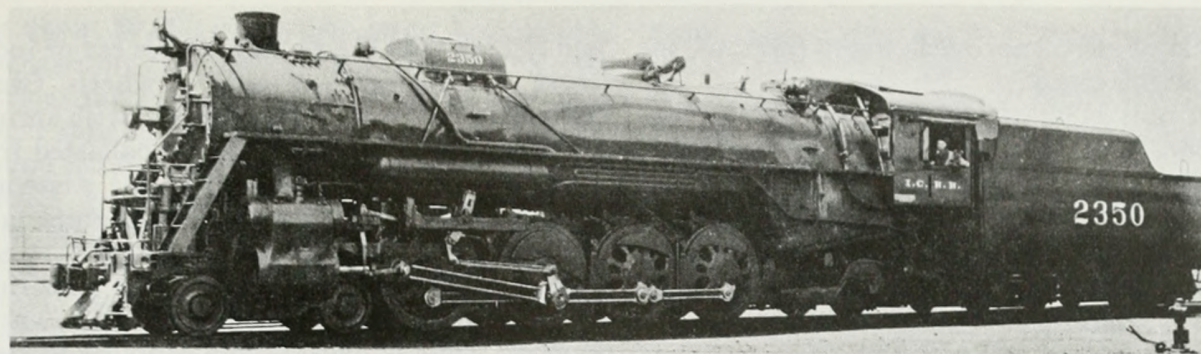
	Mileage	Investment
Terre Haute, Alton and St. Louis...	208	\$8,865,000
Great Western	182	5,086,000
Chicago and Rock Island.....	181	6,914,000
Logansport, Peoria and Burlington..	171	5,000,000
Ohio and Mississippi.....	148	4,871,000
Chicago, Burlington and Quincy....	138	7,469,000
Quincy and Chicago.....	100	1,979,000
Peoria and Oquawka.....	94	3,770,000
Chicago and Northwestern.....	66	3,311,000

Railway expansion was temporarily checked by the Civil War. During that great national emergency the railroads proved of inestimable value to the government in the speedy movement of troops, military supplies and mails. Particularly was this true of the Illinois Central, with its northern termini at Chicago and Dubuque, Ia., and its southern terminus at Cairo.

Had the Illinois Central been designed and built solely for military service, it probably could not have been better suited to the needs of the government in coping with the grave situation with which it was confronted. No one knew this better than President Lincoln and General McClellan, who had been in the service of the railroad in the years preceding the war, or than General Grant, whose home was on the Illinois Central at Galena.

As the only direct rail route from Chicago and the upper Mississippi Valley region to the Ohio River, the Illinois Central played an important role in the transportation of soldiers, horses, foodstuffs, military supplies and mails to Cairo for distribution by rail and river to military





A MODERN GIANT OF THE RAILS—Powerful locomotives of this type are used extensively for hauling perishable fruits and vegetables, packing-house products and other commodities which require fast movement.

and naval forces in the lower Mississippi Valley.

Shortly after the termination of the war, railway construction was resumed on a large scale. From 1865 to 1870 nearly one thousand miles of new railroad were opened in Illinois. During the next ten years, from 1870 to 1880, the state's railway mileage increased from 4,823 to 7,851 miles.

By 1870 Illinois had outstripped Ohio and had become the first state in the Union in railway mileage, a position which it held without interruption for forty years, until superseded by Texas in 1910. Texas, however, has more than four times the area of Illinois.

During that remarkable period of railway development, from 1850 to 1880, the population of Illinois increased from 851,000 to 3,078,000. At the close of that period nearly every county in the state was served by railroads and supporting a thrifty and industrious population. Numerous towns and cities which were not on the map in 1850 had become busy centers of trade and industry. Older communities had experienced a remarkable growth.

Bloomington had increased in population from 1,594 to 17,200; Belleville from 2,941 to 10,700; Aurora from 1,895 to 11,900; Alton

from 3,585 to 9,000; Danville from 736 to 7,700; Freeport from 1,436 to 8,500; Galesburg from 323 to 11,400; Jacksonville from 2,745 to 10,900; Joliet from 2,659 to 11,700; Pekin from 1,678 to 6,000; Peoria from 5,095 to 29,300; Quincy from 6,902 to 27,300; Rock Island from 1,711 to 11,700; Springfield from 4,533 to 19,700; while Chicago's population had increased sixteen fold, from 29,000 to 503,000!

Among the important cities of Illinois which were small towns or did not exist in 1850 are: Centralia, Champaign, Decatur, Elgin, Kankakee, Kewanee, Chicago Heights, West Frankfort, Urbana, La Salle, Lincoln, Mattoon, Granite City, Harrisburg, Harvey, Rockford, Moline, Mt. Vernon, Ottawa, Sterling, Streator, Canton, Waukegan, Cairo and East St. Louis.

While we have paused at 1880 to take note of the state's progress, that year did not mark a halt in the growth of Illinois or its railway system. Railway expansion continued through the 1880s and 1890s until in 1900 more than 11,000 miles of railroad existed in the state. Since then some 500 miles have been added, bringing total mileage up to around 11,500, or one mile of railroad for every 5 miles of land area in the state.

CHAPTER X

Railway Progress

EVER since steam railway transportation was introduced in Illinois, the science of railroading has constantly improved. Progress has been marked in every department of railway operations. Consequently, railway service is now vastly superior to that of a generation or two ago.

It will be recalled, for instance, that the first

railroads in Illinois were constructed of wooden rails upon which were fastened thin strips of iron to provide a running surface for the wheels. In the 1850s iron rails were introduced. These rails, imported from England, weighed about 50 or 56 pounds to the yard. In the 1870s steel rails came into extensive use. As the weight of locomotives and cars increased and the art of

rail-making was improved, the weight of the rails was increased.

Steel rails of vastly superior quality, weighing from 100 to 130 pounds to the yard, are now in common use in Illinois. Numerous other improvements, such as tie plates, improved rail fastenings, and ballasting have made the modern railway track smoother, stronger and safer than ever before.



A MODERN PASSENGER COACH designed to provide the maximum of comfort and convenience to the traveling public.

Bridges, too, have been greatly improved. When the first lines of the Illinois Central were built most of the watercourses were spanned by wooden bridges and trestles. A few of the larger rivers were spanned by bridges constructed of stone foundations and wooden superstructures, which supported the light locomotives of that day but would not be strong enough to bear the tremendous weight of a modern locomotive. The modern railway bridge is built of reinforced concrete and steel and is designed to stand the stress and strain of the heaviest trains.

Probably no part of the railway plant has undergone a greater change than the steam locomotive. The first locomotive operated on the Illinois Central burned wood for fuel. Its headlight burned whale- or coal-oil. It was equipped with two driving wheels and two small pilot wheels on either side, and its most conspicuous feature was a balloon-shaped smoke-stack five or six feet high. When fully loaded with wood and water, it would take twelve of these "Puffing Billies" to weigh as much as one modern locomotive.

Passenger cars used on the Illinois railroads in the 1850s would be curiosities today. They were built almost entirely of wood, narrower

and lighter than the average street car of today. Most of them had four sets of wheels, two at each end. Few cars were equipped with springs, and every bump of the rough, unballasted track was immediately transmitted to the passenger. Seats were hard, low-backed and uncomfortable.

There were no vestibules on the early passenger cars, and passengers could not walk from one car to another when the train was in motion. The old link-and-pin coupling caused a great deal of slack between cars, adding to the discomfort of the passengers. Sometimes these couplings failed and trains broke apart with disastrous consequences. Cars were lighted by dim whale- or coal-oil lamps or flickering tallow candles and were heated in winter by wood-burning stoves. Ventilation was poor, and there were no screens. Sleeping cars and dining cars were then unknown in Illinois.

Today what a contrast! The modern all-steel passenger trains are veritable "hotels on wheels," electric-lighted, fan-cooled or air-conditioned, steam-heated, well-ventilated throughout, equipped with comfortable sleeping cars, chair cars, club cars, reading rooms, and with dining cars that provide a service comparable to that of the finest hotels in the land.

Marked progress has also been made in freight equipment and freight train operations. The first freight cars on the Illinois Central were of 10-ton capacity. Modern freight cars are capable of carrying from 40 to 70 tons each. Automatic air brakes have replaced the old hand brakes; automatic couplings have replaced the old link-and-pin couplings; steel cars have replaced wooden cars on the more important trains. Where only two or three kinds of cars were once used, modern freight and express equipment includes coal cars, tank cars, flat cars, box cars, furniture cars, automobile cars, refrigerator cars, stock cars, poultry cars, heater cars, milk cars and so on. Today there are freight and express cars especially adapted to the transportation of every type of commodity.

As a result of numerous improvements in construction and the greater size and weight of present-day railway equipment, the cost of locomotives and cars now far exceeds the cost of equipment used on the early days of railroading in Illinois. For instance, the first locomotives purchased by the Illinois Central in the 1850s

cost about \$9,000 each. The latest locomotives purchased by this railroad cost over twenty-six times as much, or \$241,000 each. The first passenger cars operated on the Illinois Central cost around \$2,200 each. Modern steel passenger coaches cost about seventy times as much, or \$140,000. Pullman and parlor cars cost as much as \$200,000 each. The little wooden freight cars of the 1850s cost \$600 or \$700 each. Modern steel freight cars cost from \$6,000 to \$6,500 each.

In the early days the fastest passenger train between Chicago and Cairo made the run in twenty-four hours—sometimes. The trip is now made in less than six hours. Then the little locomotives could run only thirty or thirty-five miles without stopping to take on wood. Now a hundred miles or more between coalings are not uncommon. Then locomotives were capable of drawing only twelve small cars of freight. Today loaded freight trains of seventy-five to ninety much larger cars are not uncommon. Nowadays freight trains are operated on regular schedules at speeds unheard of a generation ago. The Illinois Central, for instance, provides a daily 41-hour freight service between Chicago and New Orleans and a 24-hour service between Chicago and Council Bluffs, Ia.

The little locomotives of the fifties were sometimes stalled for many hours in the snowdrifts. On-time arrivals were few; derailments were frequent; fatal accidents were all too common. The modern giants of the rails plunge through snowdrifts at top speed. Trains are punctual. Derailments and other train accidents are exceedingly rare.

Many factors have combined to increase safety in railway operations. Improvements in tracks, locomotives and cars and the more careful selection and training of railway employes have helped to increase efficiency and reduce accidents. Progress in these directions has also been due to telegraph and telephone communication and to electric signals, interlockers and automatic train control devices, all of which were introduced subsequent to the beginning of railway operations in Illinois.

All railroads in the early days were single-track lines. Thousands of miles of railroad in Illinois are now equipped with two or more tracks, which increase the capacity of the

roads, enable the speedier movement of trains and reduce the hazard of accidents.

The sleeping car wrought a revolutionary change in railway travel. In 1856 the Illinois Central introduced what was probably the first sleeping car service in the Mississippi Valley. Although these pioneer sleepers were small, narrow, crudely constructed and lacking in nearly all of the conveniences of the modern sleeping car, they marked a great forward step in passenger train comfort.

Three years after the first sleeping cars were operated on the Illinois Central, George M. Pullman's first sleeping car, a converted passenger coach, was placed in service, the first run being made on the Chicago & Alton Railroad between Bloomington and Chicago on September 1, 1859. This car was lighted by tallow candles and heated by two stoves, one at each end. There was no carpet on the floor. Carpet bags were sometimes used for pillows.

Today thousands of Pullman sleeping cars, embodying comforts and conveniences which were unknown even a quarter of a century ago, are in use on nearly every important railroad



A MODERN PASSENGER STATION—The Illinois Central station at Champaign-Urbana is designed to provide the maximum of comfort and convenience to the traveling public. Thousands of university students use this station each year.

in the United States—a service of which every Illinoisan may be justly proud, because Pullman has been an Illinois institution from its inception.

Illinois also participated in the development of the railway post-office car. The necessity of establishing fast and reliable mail communication with military forces in the lower Mississippi Valley during the Civil War gave George Armstrong, a government postal em-

ploye, the inspiration which resulted in the first car equipped to sort mail en route.

Armstrong was then stationed at Cairo, the southern terminus of the Illinois Central Railroad, where he had charge of receiving and dispatching army and navy mails. Here the idea of the modern railway mail service took root and was put into practice to the extent that "a letter mailed in Chicago for any one of the western and southwestern armies reached its destination as soon as a passenger on the fastest train could reach it."

In August, 1864, two railway mail cars, "imperfect in their conveniences and really laughable when compared with the handsomely furnished postal cars of today," were placed in experimental service on the Chicago & North Western Railroad between Chicago and Clinton, Ia. Before the close of the Civil War postal cars, equipped to sort and distribute mails en route according to the present general practice, were being operated between Cairo and Chicago, between Cairo and Freeport and over several other routes in Illinois. These experiments were so successful that the Armstrong idea spread rapidly, and within a few years mail cars similarly equipped, were in use on all the important railroads in the country.

Illinois was the birthplace of railway refrigeration, which represented another great forward step in transportation. Thanks to the

refrigerator car, Illinois now supplies the tables of millions of distant homes with meats, fresh eggs, dairy products, peaches, apples and other perishable products, and Illinois draws upon the groves of Florida and California, the plantations of Latin America and the truck gardens of the South and West for fruits and vegetables in great variety and at all seasons. Without this "ice-box on wheels" the meat-packing industry of Illinois and the fruit and vegetable industries of America would never have developed to anywhere near their present proportions and the diet of the average American would be far simpler, less attractive and less nutritious than it is today.

The first railway shipment ever made under refrigeration moved from Chicago to the East over the Michigan Central Railroad and connecting lines in 1857. The shipment consisted of dressed beef and was made in an ordinary box car equipped with two platforms, one at each end, inside the car, on which were placed several blocks of ice.

The first shipment of fruit under refrigeration upon any railroad in the United States was made from Cobden, Ill., to Chicago over the Illinois Central Railroad in 1866. The shipment consisted of strawberries, packed in several large wooden chests, each fitted with a compartment for ice. The berries brought high prices, and from that time forward fruit shipments under refrigeration increased rapidly. In 1867 the Illinois Central began operating the "Thunderbolt Express," the first all-strawberry train ever operated in the country, between southern Illinois and Chicago.

From these small beginnings has developed an industry of gigantic proportions involving the movement of hundreds of thousands of carloads of perishable food products annually.

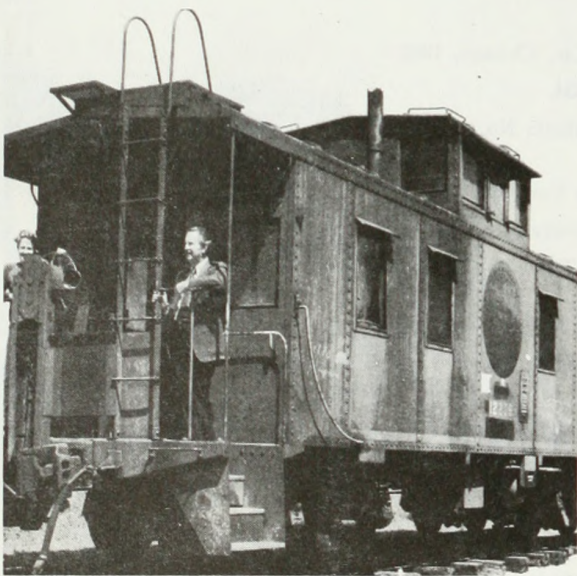
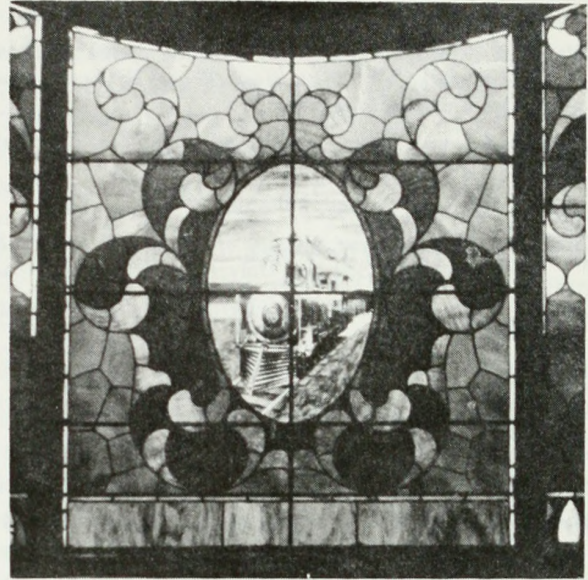
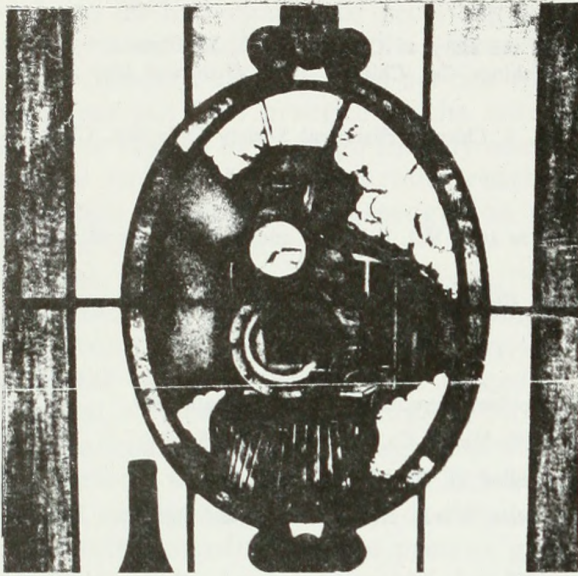
In these and in numerous other ways the railroads have been marching steadily forward, keeping pace with the nation's progress. In recent years their progress has not been so much in the extension of new lines as in increasing the capacity and efficiency of established lines through the construction of additional tracks, the enlargement of shop and yard facilities, the installation of heavier rails, the use of more powerful locomotives and cars and the speeding up of passenger, freight, express and mail service.



A MAJESTIC RAILWAY BRIDGE—At Metropolis, the site of old Fort Massac, landing place of the first Americans to establish their homes in Illinois, this great structure of concrete and steel spans the Ohio River, forming one of two routes of the Illinois Central between Chicago and New Orleans. The other and older route is through Cairo.

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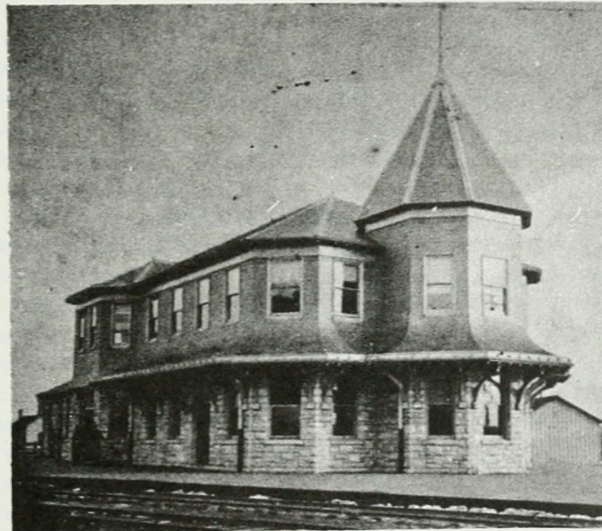
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PART II

RURAL RAILROADS - GREENE COUNTY

by *Eileen Smith Cunningham*



ROODHOUSE

"Handsomest depot from Chicago to St. Louis"

Arrival Time - Departure Time

Rural Railroad Saga - Greene County, Illinois

Carrollton - County Seat

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the following for help in this creative venture: Friends who loaned pictures; Greene County Historical Society; the late Mr. Levi T. Whiteside for historical materials [just a few days before his death in 1976]; Mrs. Ruth Packer, Boise, Idaho for introducing me to 'TRAILS TO RAILS'; I.C.G. Corporation for permission to include 'TRAILS TO RAILS'; and lastly, my sister, Norma Newton, Eldred, for her care and guidance and much research.

The Author



Her Mark



Peafowl, birds of the jungle.....domesticated but untamed....roam a farmstead freely. A.E.S.C.

CHAPTER XI

RAILROADS IN GREENE COUNTY

47

Levi T. Whiteside
Feb. 17, 1892 - May 1, 1976

Twenty four years after the first railroad was begun in Illinois a railroad was constructed from Petersburg to White Hall. The first train arrived in White Hall in 1862. As there was no place to turn around the train had to back down. The engine was a wood burner with a funnel-shaped smoke stack. The road was called the St. Louis, Jacksonville and Chicago Railroad. The original time card, dated September 28, 1863, showed that the trains connected with stages for Carrollton, and points south. By 1865 the road was completed to Carrollton. Then work was begun to connect it to a railroad from Chicago to St. Louis at Alton. Two crews worked -- one working north, the other south. The two crews met Dec. 30, 1865. Greene County then had rail service to St. Louis and Chicago. On Jan. 1, 1866, the first through train carried an excursion from Jacksonville to East St. Louis. On arriving at East St. Louis they left the train and crossed the Mississippi on the ice. T. B. Blackstone, who later became president of the Chicago and Alton, was the contractor who completed the road. To finance the road, stock was sold, and many Greene County people bought the stock. Later the original company was sold to the Chicago and Alton.

By 1870 the Chicago and Alton began to look westward and since White Hall had secured the crossing of Chicago and Alton with the Rock Island road, it seemed the logical thing was to put the junction of the Louisiana branch at White Hall. Meanwhile some of the citizens of Roodhouse thought it would be a nice thing to have the junction at Roodhouse. Interest rose high. A letter was sent to T. B. Blackstone, president of the road, asking what would be required to secure the junction at Roodhouse. He promised to have the route surveyed and would advise them later. As soon as the survey was started White Hall became alarmed and sent a delegation to see President Blackstone. Hearing of this meeting was held in Rawling's store and a committee was appointed to go see President Blackstone. The committee, consisting of John Roodhouse, J. T. Rawlings, and E. M. Husted, took a hand car to Jacksonville and a train to Chicago to see the president, who made the proposition to them that if they would secure the right of way from the Illinois River to Roodhouse and deed ten acres of land for depot grounds within a week, the junction would be made at that point. The funds were soon raised by subscription, the right of way obtained, and the junction was secured.

The first train to carry passengers -- an engine and caboose -- took sight-seers to the river across from Pearl as the Pearl bridge was not completed until 1871. The bridge was built on limestone abutments, which still stand today. However, a new bridge was later installed, construction of which began in July, 1913. The bridge was finished in May, 1914. It is still in use.

The first depot in Roodhouse stood north of the Palm Street crossing. Later a very fine depot, said to be the best between Chicago and Kansas City, was built in the western part of the city. It was remodeled in 1966 and is still in use. A notation from the White Hall Register, dated Nov. 4, 1871, says that

the first through train on the Louisiana Branch was put through last Monday, on which a number of our people took passage as a novelty. After a number of years of success the C&A began to have financial troubles and it was taken over by the B&O, and the name changed to the Alton. In 1947 it was acquired by the GM&O, which still owns and operates it.

CB AND Q R.R.

The Rockford, Rock Island and St. Louis R.R. was built from Beardstown to East St. Louis in 1870. It crossed the Chicago and Alton just north of White Hall. It was sold to the CB & Q May 18, 1876. The first depot at White Hall was destroyed by fire October 9, 1884, but it was soon replaced by one still in use. On February 12, 1870, the first train went through Greenfield. About 3,000 persons congregated to see the train go through. From Greenfield Argus, April 10, 1880, all of the workmen employed on the construction train struck for higher wages. They were receiving \$1.15 per day and asked for an increase of 10 cents a day. The only satisfaction they received was their time checks which were duly paid the next day and work was promptly resumed with a new set of laborers.

LC & W R.R.

There was some talk of building a railroad from Roodhouse east to some place in Macoupin County. Nothing came of it. But a company was formed called the Litchfield, Carrollton and Western with a plan to build an east-west road from Litchfield through Carlinville, Greenfield, Carrollton, and Eldred to the Illinois River. Work was soon begun and late in 1886 the road was completed. Two trains each way were provided between Carrollton and Litchfield and one train daily between Carrollton and Columbiana. The road did a good business for several years. In the early 1900's a new organization was formed which gave the road a new name -- Quincy, Carrollton and St. Louis -- with the idea of extending the road from Columbiana to Quincy, but the plan was never carried out. About September 1, 1905, the old LC & W was purchased by the C & A. Sometime later the track was taken up from the river to Eldred. A little later the track was extended southward from Eldred to East Hardin and Nutwood. Business was good for a long time. Calhoun apples were shipped by train loads in apple season over the newly built road, and tons of rock and limestone were shipped from the Eldred Quarry. Car load after car load of farm products were carried to market. Business fell off and the track was removed from Carrollton eastward. The Eldred branch continued in use until 1952.

Other short lines were built. A narrow gauge electric line hauled clay from the pits north east of White Hall to the kilns of the White Hall Sewer Pipe and Stoneware Company. About the same time a short rail line was used to haul clay from the pits at Drake to the railroad. This was used only a short time. Many persons have wondered why a railroad was

built across the east side of the square in Carrollton. Ripley, in "Believe it or not", said this was the shortest railroad in the world. Back in 1907 the AJ&P inter-urban was to come through Carrollton on its way north. But it ended in Jerseyville. It was thought the track could be laid at a better advantage than after paving which was to be done at a later date.

At one time the C&A was double tracked from Murrayville to Roodhouse. Due to cost of up-keep and taxes the second track was removed. In 1888 and 1889, in order to get a better grade, the C&A track, beginning at Drake and extending about two miles east, was replaced by another section of track somewhat north of the original one. With the coming of larger engines and heavier equipment, new heavier steel rails replaced the lighter ones on both the C&A and the CB&Q. During the 90's, the automatic couplers and air brakes were installed on all cars and engines. These improvements made railroading much safer.

TRAINS

After the beginning of the century steel passenger cars took the place of the wooden ones and the small engines with 4 drivers were replaced for the most part by large freight engines with six and eight drivers, built for power, and large passenger engines with six drivers built for power and speed. Some of these engines were still in use after almost one half a century.

Many freight trains were on the roads, day and night, carrying farm products, merchandise, cattle and hogs. In the early 1900's most freights consisted of about 40 cars, but at present, freights pulled by Diesels, consist of 100 cars or more. However, freight trains have decreased in numbers. When business was good, 18 or more passenger trains passed through Roodhouse each day. In 1904 large crowds of persons rode the trains to the St. Louis World's Fair. Sometimes extensions were run to St. Louis, Kansas City, and Chicago. Round trip to St. Louis on Sunday -- \$1.00. Excursion tickets to Chicago and Kansas City were as low as \$5.00 round trip. In this period the road was known as "The Only Way." Of all the passenger trains passing through Greene County in this period, "The Alton Red Hummer", running between Chicago and Kansas City, was the finest. It was claimed by some to be one of the best in the United States. Train crews changed at Roodhouse. Passenger crews, for the most part, lived in Roodhouse, but freight crews generally lived in Stater, Missouri, or Bloomington. The round house in Roodhouse serviced the steam engines, turned them around and got them ready for the next run. A reservoir, west of the depot, furnished water for the engines. Coal was shipped in, transferred from coal cars to the tenders of engines by means of a chute. When the Diesels came the reservoir and chute were no longer needed. Car repair shops, and an icing station along the tracks, gave employment to many men. Icing refrigerator cars was a principal business of the icing plant. The average total wages paid to employees was \$15,000 or more per month, and in the icing season considerably more.

Stations along the line of the C&A were Roodhouse, White Hall, Berdan, Carrollton, Kane, Drake, Hillview (the old time

cards show that Hillview was originally called Happyville, and later Pegram), Fayette, Greenfield, Kahm, Daum, Hurricane, Eldred, Clarke, King Station and East Harkin. Kahm, Daum, Hurricane, Clarke and King Station were flag stops. All others had a regular agent, but the larger places had one or two operators beside the agent. At present, 1968, the following is a list of the personnel at the depot in Roodhouse: a trainmaster, track supervisor, agent and operator, two telegraph operators, two crew dispatchers, and a swing dispatcher.

On the CB&Q, freight trains from Beardstown to St. Louis and return carried about the same class of freight as the freights did on the C&A, but serviced different places. Barrow, West Roodhouse (one time called Baldwin Station), White Hall, Wrights, Greenfield, and Rockbridge, were stations along the line of the CB&Q in Greene County. For many years the CB&Q ran 4 passenger trains per day between St. Louis and Rock Island. A reservoir about 2 miles north of White Hall furnished water for the engines. Later water was purchased from the city of White Hall, the water in both cases being pumped to an overhead tank near the depot. At Rockbridge the engines took water from a tank near the depot. The water had been pumped from a station at Macoupin Creek about one mile south of town. A coal chute at Rockbridge replenished the engines with fuel.

Some stations have been discontinued, such as West Roodhouse, and Berdan, and all stations along the line of the LC&W. When the tracks were no longer used, the right of way was generally sold to the individual who owned the land lying next to the tracks.

There were two crossing interlocking towers -- one, one and one half miles west of Roodhouse, and one just north of White Hall. These were so constructed so that if signals showed clear on one road it was impossible for the towerman to make a mistake and give a clear signal on the other road.

A good railroad could not function long without a good track and a good road bed. At first tracks were laid on the dirt, but as time passed ballast was used. The C&A ballasted its track with crushed limestone from the Pearl Quarry. The CB&Q used cinders and gravel. Several section crews kept the tracks in a good state of repair. Telegraph lines along the tracks and telegraph operators at the stations, who kept in constant touch with a train dispatcher, made the roads safer and more efficient. Western Union wires along the telegraph lines transmitted all other kinds of messages.

When extra work, as repairing washouts, or laying new steel, or repairing tracks after a wreck, was taken care of by extra gangs brought in from some other points. Bridge gangs repaired and painted the bridges. Some washouts should be mentioned. The Patriot dated February 22, 1912, states that 30 years ago long stretches of track were washed out near Apple Creek and Macoupin Creek. On the CB&Q, in August 1915, the track was washed out across Macoupin bottom south of Rockbridge. One of the latest washouts occurred east of Hillview June 14, 1947.

After World War II railroading made a decided change in character. Passenger trains were being removed. Freight trains became less and less. In the 40's and 50's Diesels replaced the old steamers. Business in general slumped. Grass could be seen growing between the ties and the rails in the empty north yards in Roodhouse where once hundreds of cars stood loaded with valuable freight ready to be made up

into trains and shipped to distant points.

Railroads were one of Greene County's greatest assets. Originally, excepting the Illinois River, they furnished about the only method of shipping commodities any distance. They paid their taxes and furnished employment to hundreds of people who have lived in Greene County.

Here are two stories seldom told, pertaining to Greene County railroads: The White Hall Register, date August 21, 1869, states that a former citizen of White Hall, now living in San Francisco, A Col. Henry S. Fitch, with possibly some other claimants, originated the idea of a transcontinental railroad. At any rate, it is a historical fact that Col. Fitch did much to the government officials and construction companies interested enough to make the scheme a success. This is taken in part from "American Railways", a publication of the 20's and in part from an article in the "Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen's Journal", published in about the same period, and written by the late Ray Pearce. A man by the name of David Lemon, well-known in White Hall, and who spent his last days there, an engineer, ran one of the two first engines over the portion of the track just completed when the two sections of the transcontinental railroad were joined at Promontory Point, Utah. The driving of the gold spike and the celebration of the event, are facts well known. But after the gold spike was driven and removed, an iron spike was driven into the same hole to make the road complete. Mr. Lemon asserted that the iron spike was the last spike driven in the track at the junction. He prevailed on Leland Stanford, President of the Central Pacific, to give him, (Lemon) the iron spike which Mr. Stanford did. In order to keep souvenir hunters from pulling a lot of spikes near the junction, signs were posted stating that the last spike had been removed and taken away. Mr. Lemon brought the iron spike back to White Hall. It was on display at the centennial celebration at White Hall in 1932, with an affidavit attached stating the facts.

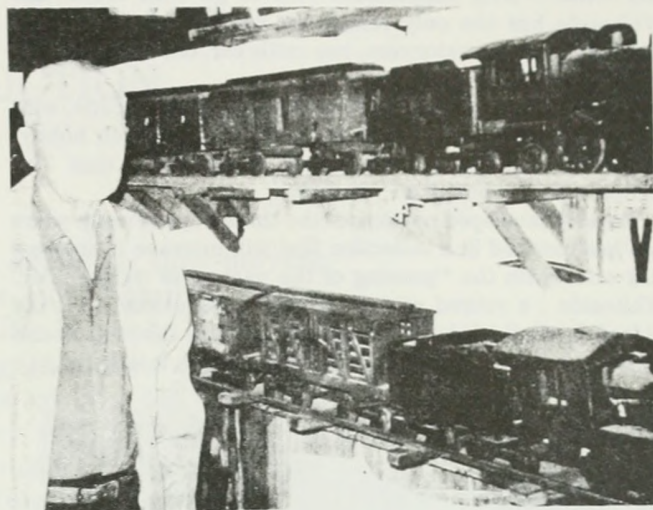
A few celebrities, besides Henry T. Rainey, used the Greene County rail lines. Just to mention a few -- President Franklin Roosevelt came to Speaker Rainey's funeral by special train. The presidential train went on to Roodhouse, was turned around on the "Y" and brought back to Carrollton so the President could make the return trip. Wm. J. Bryan rode the C&A from Jacksonville to Alton on one of his famous campaign tours back in 1896. The body Speaker Champ Clark was brought back to Bowling Green, Missouri, by special train, via Roodhouse.

LAST PASSENGER TRAINS

A Deisel powered passenger train from Godfrey to Roodhouse made its last trip January 2, 1951. Guy Langley was the conductor. An Alton Telegraph reporter rode the train and took pictures which were published in the Alton Evening Telegraph. That left one passenger train on the C&A through Greene County-- the one from Bloomington to Kansas City. But its time was to come. On April 14, 1960, a passenger train, consisting of a Deisel engine and one passenger coach, made its last run from Kansas City to Bloomington. A number of persons, riding the train for sentimental reasons, got off at Roodhouse. As we stood there and watched the train leave for its final destination, one old railroader, looking on, remarked that the "Casey Jones" era

of railroading was just about ended. Sometime later the CB&Q discontinued the last passenger train on the road. At this writing, 1968, a few long freight trains are about all that is left to transport heavy and long distance freight.

L. T. Whiteside
For Greene Co. History
1968



AMTRAK REVIVES INTEREST IN HOBBY OF 70 YEARS AGO

Lee Whiteside of Eldred, retired school teacher, displays his collection of miniature trains made by him and his two brothers seventy years ago. The hobby was developed by the three farm boys who became interested in "rails" as they watched the trains pass their farm.

With Amtrak, the new national railway passenger service May 1 creating a major change in railroad history, interest has been revived in a seventy-year old hobby of a Greene County resident.

Back in 1901 when the now much abused statement "I don't have anything to do" was not commonly heard among youth, Lee Whiteside and his two brothers, Guy and Russell, did "their own thing." The Whiteside boys lived on a farm near Roodhouse and they would spend endless hours watching trains pass by on the C and A which ran west out of Roodhouse. One day they decided to make their own trains-- of course on a much smaller scale.

Gathering materials from whatever they could find around the farm, including tin cans and wood, they started fashioning the exacting models such as pictured above. The first wheels were made of poured lead, but later the boys fashioned them of wood turned on lathes. The molds for the lead wheels were devised by whittling out pieces of wood with a knife or sometimes clay was used.

The rails for the track were made of split lathes, and the ties on which the rails were laid were boards split to the proper size. The rail gauge was 3 3/8 inches and the ties were 8 inches long. Each unit of the train measured 6" wide, 8" high, and were 18-20" in length. The painting and lettering on the "mini-trains" were done by the oldest brother, Guy. The track measured a total of 540 feet. The boys had five stations with side tracks at each station and at each end of

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

the track was a turntable. A train shed, in Casey Jones language, a "roundhouse" held all the trains.

Though vandalism was not as widespread as it is today, the Whiteside boys kept the shed locked so that visitors could not seriously damage their handwork. Mr. Whiteside points out that it also protected the trains from the weather.

At the peak of the project, the brothers had eight engines and tenders with supplement cars to go with them. Lee Whiteside has the only remaining units, 13 in all. These include two refrigerator cars, one cattle car, one caboose, and two engines with tenders.

Their interest in making the trains spanned a decade, with the boys spending most of their leisure time on their hobby. At times their father was known to complain that "he couldn't find a board on his farm."

The self developed pastime of the three boys seventy years ago has resulted in a collection that will increase in interest and value with the "passing of the passenger trains." Mr. Whiteside, a retired school teacher, lives across from the Eldred Grade School and will be glad to show the models and discuss them at greater length with anyone interested.



OBITUARY—LEVI T. WHITESIDE—MAY 6, 1976

Levi T. Whiteside, 84, a resident of Eldred for the past 46 years, died at 4:05 p.m. Saturday, May 1, 1976, at Reisch Memorial Nursing Home where he had resided two weeks.

Born Feb. 17, 1892, in Roodhouse, he was the son of William L. and Emma Johnsten Whiteside. He graduated in 1909 from White Hall High School and received his degree from Bradley University. He also attended Western Illinois University and MacMurray College.

Employed as a teacher in the Eldred School System for 35 years, he also served as principal there and retired in 1944. He taught at Carrollton High School until 1950. Following retirement, he substituted in Greene and Calhoun county schools.

The deceased was a member of Oak Grove Baptist Church in rural White Hall and Greene-Jersey Retired Teachers Association. He was a trustee of the Carrollton Fire Protection District.

Mr. Whiteside married the former Helen K. Greene on Nov. 10, 1917, and she died Nov. 16, 1972.

Survivors are nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by two brothers and a sister.

Visitation was from 3 to 9 p.m. Monday at Hires Funeral Home where funeral services were Tuesday at 2 p.m. with Rev. Warren Brown of Jerseyville, pastor of Eldred's Baptist Church, officiating. Mrs. Lawrence Thien, organist, played "How Great Thou Art" and "It is No Secret."

Casketbearers were Bill Banghart, Charles Vinyard, Robert Holford, Dick Pisarek, Lyndell Phillips, and Eugene Lemon. Interment was in White Hall Cemetery.

.....*Train leaves Eldred*

Passenger engine No.108 and working crew on C. & A. near Greenfield, Ill., Feb. 27, 1914.

—C. H. Burghardt, Photographer.



Original from

INTRODUCTION

THE pioneer settler drove his slow-moving ox-team across the lonely prairies, sometimes for a hundred miles or more, to have a few bushels of wheat ground into flour or to exchange the products of his toil for salt, thread, calico and other necessities which he could not produce at home. Luxuries were rare. Food was plain. Reading matter was scarce. Life was primitive.

Railway transportation was the "key to the prairies." It enabled farms far removed from navigable streams to be opened and cultivated profitably. It created towns and cities and great industrial centers—markets for the farmer's products. It made possible the development of Illinois' rich mineral resources. It attracted the manufacturer, the artisan, the investor, the merchant, the preacher, the teacher. It enhanced the value of property and created new wealth for the benefit of all.

Moreover, railway transportation enabled Illinois, far removed from the seacoast, to extend its commerce to all parts of the world. Great manufacturing enterprises and great merchandising establishments, forming the backbone of Illinois' industrial and commercial structure, owe their tremendous growth to the fact that these transportation facilities gave them a world-wide market.

CHAPTER XII

HISTORICAL EXCERPTS

Excerpts From
ELDRED
by
Norma Newton, 1974

RAILROADS

The coming of steamboats was considered a miracle, but was no comparison with the coming of railroads and trains to the midwest and Illinois.

SCENERY STILL THERE

[Undated Item From Scrapbook The Carrollton Patriot]

Fifty years ago this week, the Litchfield, Carrollton, and Western railroad was completed to the Illinois River to Columbiana. The Patriots' railroad editor dubbed it the "Rabbit's Foot Route" and indulged in this high-flown description of the scenic wonders between Carrollton and its western terminus:

"The Rabbit Foot Route can already lay claim to scenic wonders between Carrollton and its western terminus. From Carrollton to the Illinois River the travelers can see from the car window a variety of the most grand and lovely of Illinois scenery. For the first four miles the road passes through a prairie of as rich and beautiful farming lands as ever delightful to the eye of man.

The plain is dotted with frequent groves and comfortable and spacious farm buildings. From this road runs through the beautiful Hurricane Valley for about four miles, following the wanderings of the creek and flanked on each side by lofty, wood-covered hills. But the grandest view is at Palmer. Here is a rugged bluff of solid rock, whose perpendicular sides look like the buttresses of a monster fortification and towers just above the track hundreds of feet high, while stretching northward is a phalanx of rocky sentinels whose gray seamed sides give them the appearance of battle-scarred veterans. The remainder of the route to the river is over the rich Illinois bottoms, with the grand background of the Calhoun hills in the distance. The view here is unobstructed, and the eye can follow the course of the river for many miles in either direction."



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INTERNET ARCHIVE

Footnote -- The scenery is still there, but the railroad has floated down through the Illinois bottom from Palmer (now Eldred) and no passenger looks out from car windows at these rocky sentinels.

EXCERPTS FROM HISTORY OF GREENE COUNTY by Clement L. Clapp

1879

The charter of the Jacksonville & Carrollton Railroad was granted in 1851, but the first effort to raise money for its construction was during the next year.

At a meeting of the commissioners of the road, held in Jacksonville Monday, September 13, 1852, Hon. D. M. Woodson in the chair, it was "resolved that books for the subscription of the capital stock be opened from and after the 15th day of Sept., 1852, at Carrollton, under the control and direction of A. W. Cavarly, C. D. Hodges, and F. P. Vedder, at such time as they may deem proper. At White Hall under the control and direction of L. E. Worcester, Asbury Davis, and Emanuel Metcalf, at such time as they may deem proper. At Kane under the control and direction of Z. H. Adams and N. M. Perry, at such time as they may deem proper. At Jerseyville under the control and direction of A. B. Morean, C. H. Knapp, and J. Ploughman, at such time as they may deem proper. At Alton under the control and direction of George T. Brown, Edward Keating, Levi Davis, at such time as they may deem proper. At Manchester under the control and direction of Jas. Clinton, W. S. Andrews, and A. Hicks, at such time as they may deem proper. At Jacksonville under the control and direction of D. A. Smith, J. J. Cassell, and W. B. Warren, at such time as they may deem proper."

KANE HISTORY

1879

In 1854, when Josiah T. Hunt with Mr. Ollendorf his assistant was making the preliminary survey for the railroad, now known as the Jacksonville branch of the Chicago and Alton, it was earnestly hoped by the citizens of Kane that the road might pass through that town. The engineer made every effort to find a feasible route by which this could be accomplished, but when he made his report at the completion of his work he stated that he regretted exceedingly that it was impracticable. Three lines were run, but the nearest of them left Kane a half mile to the west and the route finally adopted was still further distant. The road was opened from White Hall to Godfrey, January 1, 1865, and in November of that year, Tobias Holliday, who owned a tract of land on the railroad, laid out a town on the east side of the road which was known until the establishment of the post office as Hollidaysburg. Subsequently Holliday's addition west of the track was annexed and became the business center of the town.

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.....the Kane Depot

1873 Atlas of Greene County

Now, however, it has three excellent lines of railroads running through it: the Chicago & Alton (Jacksonville Branch), the Rockford, Rock Island, & St. Louis, and the Louisiana branch of the Chicago & Alton. The first of these intersects the county from north to south, nearly through the center, and passing through its county seat and principal villages; the second named road runs in a somewhat zig-zag course, nearly through the center of the county, entering it in a south-westerly direction, and diverging at White Hall in a south-easterly direction, to the beautiful and enterprising village of Greenfield, then running south to the county line, whence it continues to St. Louis. The last named (Louisiana Branch), crosses the western half of the county from Roodhouse, and with a proposed road soon to be constructed, connecting Roodhouse and Virden, Macoupin county will form a continuous road across the northern part of the

HOMER HISTORY

1905

Dr. Peter Fenity commenced the practice of medicine in Old Kane May 18, 1857. During the years 1854 and 55, while the preliminary survey for the railroad, now the Chicago & Alton, was being made by J. T. Hunt and Charles Allendorf, endeavors were made to find a practicable route into and out of the town, but nothing like a proper grade could be found, and much to the regret of the citizens, the line adopted ran about a mile to the east of the place. This sealed its doom. The road was opened for business from White Hall to Godfrey, January 1, 1866.

**1885 History
Depots**

The C.&A. R.R. has had two depots in this city. The first one was erected in 1863, and was 20x40 feet in size. It gave place to the present structure which is 30x100 feet, in the fall of 1870. The first agent in the old building was Mell Leighton,

and Geo. McFadden, in the new one. He was succeeded by W. K. Morley, and he by G. W. Secor, the present agent, who took the post in 1871.

The first depot of the C.B.&Q R.R. at White Hall was built in the winter of 1870. It was destroyed by fire, Oct. 9, 1884. The work of rebuilding soon commenced, and the present structure was ready for occupancy in Dec., 1884. The old depot was 24x60 feet in size; the new one is 10 feet longer. The first agent was named Hesser. Thomas P. Raferty now manages the business of the company at this point in a gentlemanly and obliging manner. He succeeded John Beaty in this position.

TOWN OF WRIGHTS

Post Office

1885 History

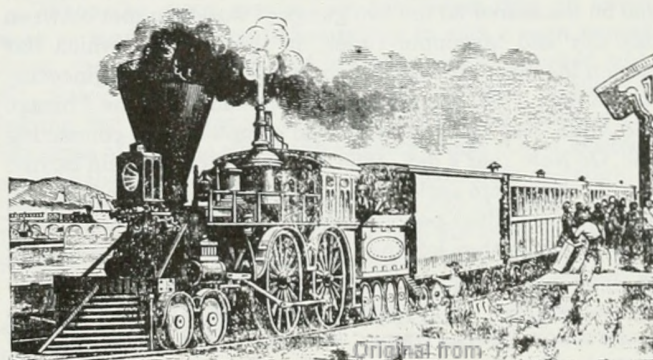
This was established in March, 1871, when A. J. Wright was commissioned as postmaster. He held the office until 1875, when he was succeeded by Jerry Bethard, the present incumbent. The office is in the store of the postmaster.

Railroad

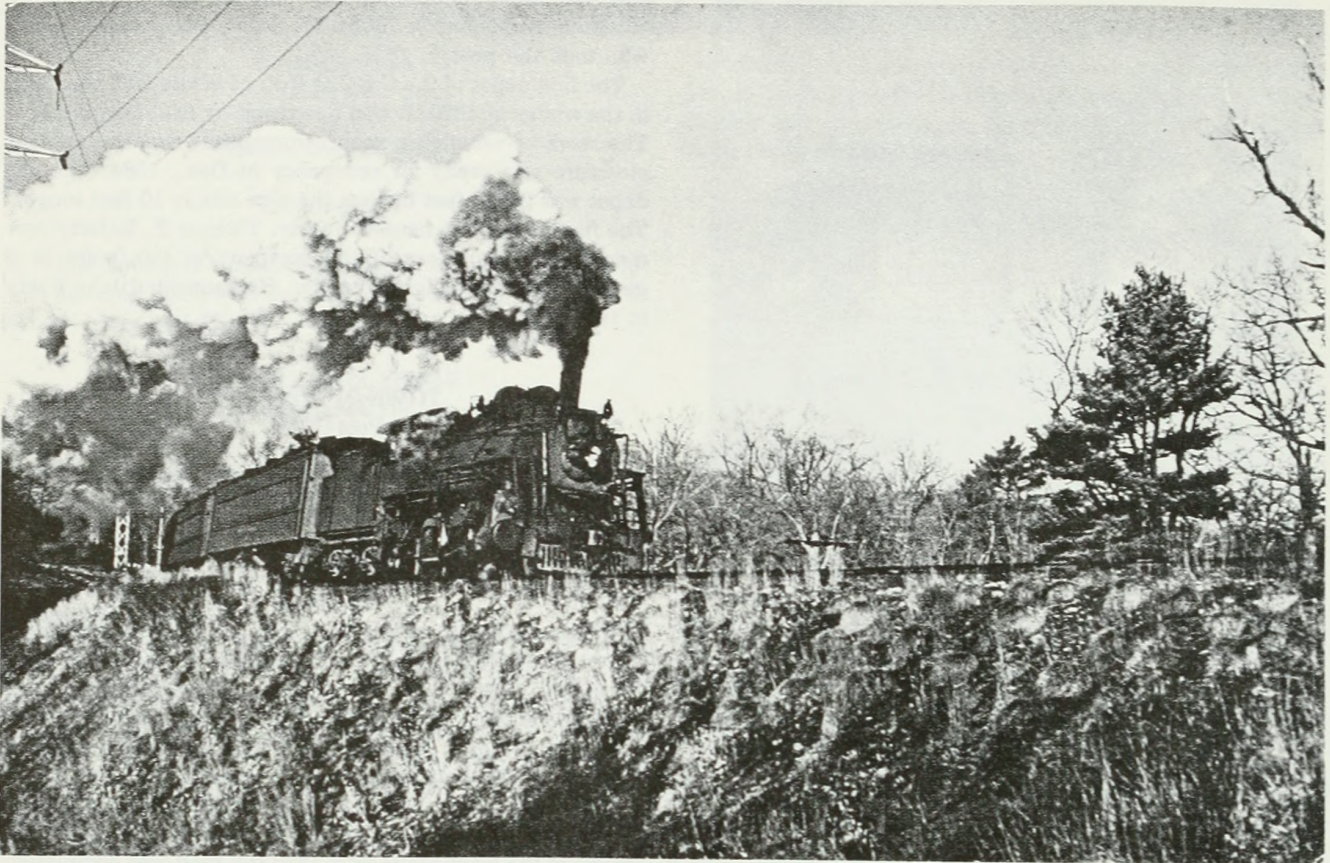
Wrightsville has connection with the outside world by means of the C. B. & Q. R.R. This railroad was constructed as the R.R.I. & St. L. R'y, and was completed through this place in the early part of 1870. In 1878, the company which built and owned it became bankrupt. A receiver was appointed and the road finally became the property of the C. B. & Q. R'y Co., who still continue to own and operate it. The first station agent at this point was A. J. Wright, who took charge of the business shortly after the road was completed, continuing in that capacity for about five years, and transacting the business of the road at his store building. He was succeeded by his son, James W., for five years. In March, 1870, the depot building was completed, and a telegraph office established, when John Ewald became agent and telegraph operator. There has been several changes since then, the present incumbent of the station being Charles Stone.

The American Express Co. have carried on business here since the construction of the railroad, and when the depot and telegraph office was established in 1880, an express agency was formed at Wrightsville by that company, who still continue to do business.

Came to Carrollton 70 Years Ago



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Railroads

The pilgrim who makes Carrollton his Mecca will enter the place over one or the other of two railroads--the Chicago and Alton, running north and south, and the Litchfield, Carrollton and Western, which runs east and west. These two competing lines give Carrollton good transportation facilities and reasonable rates therefor. This place and the adjacent territory contribute a considerable volume of business for both roads.

Carrollton first saw a railroad September 2, 1865, and the first passenger train came into the town two days later. The road was known as the Chicago, Jacksonville and St. Louis, and for three months Carrollton was its southern terminus. At the same time the road was built northward from Alton, and on December 30 the two gangs of workmen met between this city and Macoupin Creek, in the big cut, which has proven the most difficult and expensive piece of engineering on the line. T. B. Blackstone, now president of the Chicago and Alton, was the contractor who completed the connecting link. On New Year's day, 1866, the first through train carried an excursion from Jacksonville to East St. Louis, and several hundred Carrollton people joined the party. On arriving at East St. Louis, they left the train and crossed the Mississippi on the ice. A number of Carrollton people were stockholders in the road, but the city made no appropriation to aid in its construction. Greene county, however, voted to take \$50,000 in stock. This was afterward sold at 24, and the county poor

house was built with the proceeds. Judge C. D. Hodges became a director of the company early in its organization, and was for some years secretary and treasurer. Judge Worcester of White Hall was also a director.

A few years later the road was purchased by the Chicago and Alton company, and when operated in connection with the Kansas City line, became the most profitable branch of that system.

The Litchfield, Carrollton and Western railroad owes its existence very largely to the town from which it takes its middle name. The road was first projected by Carrollton enterprise, and the larger part of its original stock was contributed by Carrollton capitalists. It is so thoroughly a Carrollton enterprise that a brief sketch of its history is quite proper here.

Application for a charter was made March 7, 1882, and the first meeting of the stockholders was held here April 11, of that year. The records show that the capital stock of \$10,000 was all taken at this time, and that of the eighty-six stockholders, thirty-eight were residents of Carrollton and vicinity. Geo. W. Davis, Ornan Pierson, H. C. Withers and Thos. H. Boyd were members of the first board of directors. The first officers chosen were Geo. W. Davis, president; I. J. Peebles, vice president; Ornan Pierson, treasurer; H. H. Montgomery, secretary; all of Carrollton except the vice president. On June 27, 1882, \$50,000 was added to the capital stock, and of that amount \$39,500 was subscribed by Carrollton people.

HISTORICAL EXCERPTS

Work on track-laying from Carrollton eastward was begun in May, 1883, and the road reached Greenfield in July. The first train for the use of the public was an excursion running out from Carrollton to Greenfield on the evening of July 2, 1883. It was made up of a borrowed C & A locomotive and flat car, fitted up with amphitheater seats from the fair ground. Supt. N. J. Andrews was conductor, and he collected thirty-five round-trip fares from citizens who enjoyed the first ride over the new road. It should be added that the train got back to Carrollton the same night. Two days later a monster Fourth of July celebration at Robley's grove, near Daum station, gave the road its first rush of business. The road's first locomotive, the "Daniel Morfoot," and a passenger coach were purchased in October.

For the purpose of extending the road westward, the Western Illinois Construction Co. was organized October 12, 1883. H. S. Carroll was president, John Long, Vice President; and C. W. Keeley, secretary. This company took the contract for, and in January, 1884, completed, the road west of Columbiana. The eastern extension to Litchfield was not completed until May, 1887.

The present officers of the Litchfield, Carrollton and Western Railroad are: President, H. S. Carroll of Clarksville, Mo.; vice president G. W. Davis of Carrollton; secretary, H.H. Montgomery of Carrollton; treasurer, Ornan Pierson of Carrollton. The road was operated for some time by the Jacksonville Southeastern Line, and is now in the hands of a receiver, Joseph Dickson of St. Louis. The present general manager of the road is C. B. McCall.

CHAPTER XIII

HILLVIEW--WESTWARD ACROSS THE RIVERS

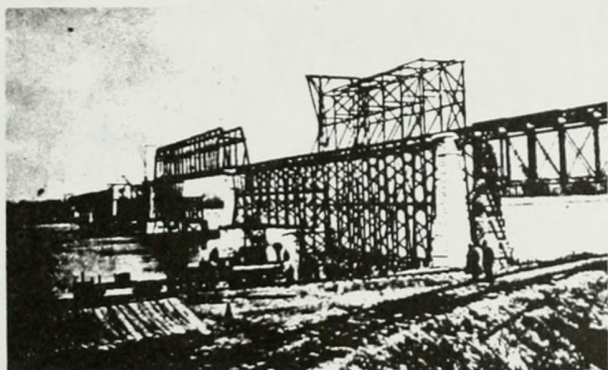
RETIRED RAILROAD MAN WRITES OWN HISTORY

August 1944

Lee Coates of Hillview who retired last August from railroad work on the Alton, after 55 years of faithful and efficient service, has written his own life story, which follows, as related by him in his own words.

"On March 24, 1850, at high noon, a party of gold seekers, namely, Lee Coates, C.C. Eaton, Alfred Pruitt and Lee Lakin, left Patterson, Ill. for California in a covered wagon drawn by two oxen named 'Buck' and 'Bride', crossing the Illinois River at Bedford Pike County and the Mississippi River at Louisiana. My father, who was the youngest man of the four, walked every mile from the west bank of the Mississippi to their destination carrying a single-shot cap and ball rifle and a single-shot cap and bill pistol the entire distance, landing in Placerville, Calif. on the last day of August. They had several encounters with bears and Indians and many other hardships.

Much of the early history of the Gulf Mobile and Ohio Railroad is written around Roodhouse, particularly as the railroad pushed its line westward before the turn of the century.



The first steel railroad bridge in the world being constructed over the Missouri River at Glasgow, Mo. as the Chicago and Alton (now GM & O) pushed its rails westward from Roodhouse in 1879.



"They fell in with other wagons going west to the gold country and finally had quite an emigrant train crossing the desert. It was slow traveling and water became very scarce. On one occasion they came upon a spring boiling up out of the sand and an Irishman in the crowd, jumping up and down, dove to the spring to be the first to drink. After a sip he jumped straight up and exclaimed: '---- ----, Hell is just a half mile from this place'.

"When the group reached its destination they all found work as they could, my father falling in with a man named Suter, the discoverer of gold in California. He worked with Mr. Suter two years and a half and returned to Illinois, leaving San Francisco on a sailing vessel and crossing the Isthmus of Panama where the Panama Canal is now located, walking the 28 miles to the Gulf of Mexico where he caught a boat to New Orleans and a river steamer to St. Louis, then a Peoria Packet to Grand Pass. The entire distance, except the 28 mile walk, was traveled by water.

On Nov. 30, 1854 he and my mother were married, he built a building in Patterson and started a store, living there for several years.

When the Chicago & Alton was built from Roodhouse to Booth in 1871-72, my father was checked in as freight and

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ticket agent at Drake on May 4, 1872. He worked there until the disastrous flood came down Hurricane Creek on Sunday night, June 20, 1875, when track and bridges in Drake and Dutch Mills were all washed back to Patterson, spending the remainder of their lives there and in Hillview.

There was no depot in Happyville. About the year 1892, Cyrus Hartwell, Alvin Pegram and John Kaiser built a store building about one half mile west from where the depot now stands in Hillview. They built their store next to the railroad right of way, and built a wide platform from the store to the railroad track, and a one hundred foot landing platform along the railroad track. They had contracted with the railroad to handle freight and passenger service. Trains stopped only when flagged. Mr. Hartwell, Mr. Pegram, and Mr. Kaiser asked the Post Office department to establish a Post Office in their store. Their request was granted; a Post Office was established and named Pegram, in honor of Alvin Pegram.

"I became interested in railroad work in later years and learned telegraphy under the late J. O. Raines at Drake during 1888 and on Dec. 21, 1888 I was checked in as agent at Strout for three weeks. On August 24, 1889 I was checked in as agent at Drake and remained there about 8 years, returning to Strout for a year and a half. On March 24, 1900 I was transferred to Happyville, now Hillview, and have lived there almost 45 years. On August 15, 1944 I retired from the service of the Alton Railroad after 55 years of service.

"I am thankful to the Almighty that I have been able to withstand these many years of strenuous work on a railroad and retire with best wishes to my many friends and acquaintances.

"I have lived and worked all my life within 15 miles of the place where I was born in Bedford, Pike County Illinois on June 17, 1865. Lee Coates."



TURN TABLE AT ROUND HOUSE



CHAPTER XIV ROODHOUSE -- RAILROAD TOWN

Gulf Mobile and Ohio

1873

Much of the early history of the Gulf Mobile and Ohio Railroad is written around Roodhouse, particularly as the railroad pushed its line westward before the turn of the century.

GM&O while a comparatively new railroad, is made up of many predecessor lines going as far back as 1847. The Company as it is known today was formed in 1940, when the Gulf Mobile and Northern and the Mobile and Ohio Railroads, which paralleled each other in Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee were consolidated. The northern terminus of the railroad was at East St. Louis. In 1947 the GM&O acquired the Alton Railroad and a new 3,000-mile system was formed, stretching from the Great Lakes at Chicago and Kansas City on the west to the Ports of Mobile and New Orleans on the Gulf of Mexico. This is the system today.

The line from Bloomington to Godfrey was chartered in 1851 as the St. Louis, Jacksonville and Chicago Railroad and was used by the old Chicago and Alton Railroad under a lease arrangement for many years before the C&A bought it.

In 1870 the C&A began to look westward. It entered into a number of agreements to get segments of the line built to Kansas City. The first segment from Roodhouse to a point on the east bank of Mississippi opposite Louisiana, Missouri, was completed in 1871. In the same year traffic opened from Roodhouse to Mexico, the Mississippi River crossing being by ferry boat. Two years later the river was bridged.

When the line reached Glasgow a great bridge was necessary. The Railroad hired General William Sooy Smith of Civil War fame as the engineer. He made a drastic proposal; that the bridge be built of steel. Previously all such big structures had been constructed of wood or iron. Steel was thought to be too brittle to handle the action of freight trains. Gen. Smith persisted and the bridge was built, the first steel railroad span in the world.

There is much important history in the early annals of the Company George Pullman built his first Pullman cars in the shops at Bloomington, and they made their first runs between Chicago and St. Louis. Later Pullman pioneered a dining car and the railroad was again the guinea pig route for this latest invention.

In recent years, also GM&O has been recognized for its many transportation firsts. It is the first American railroad to completely retire steam engines for the more modern diesel locomotive.

It was the first railroad to coordinate highway and railroad service, operating buses and trucks over highways paralleling its tracks. The first highway post office, a bus equipped as a railroad mail car carrying a mail clerk had it beginning as a GM&O operation. The railroad also originated the train hostess idea and brought the South its first streamlined train back in 1935.

This year the Railroad will spend about \$17,000,000 for new freight cars and locomotives to better serve its customers. Its entire fleet of road freight engines, numbering more than 100, is being replaced with newer more powerful ones.

A new style single purpose train that hauls coal around-the-clock from Percy to Joliet, Illinois, is said by experts in this new field to be the "most efficient" and "most advanced" of the three year old idea to mass move large volumes of goods moving regularly between two points at low costs.

At the head of GM&O is President Glen Brock, a native of Palestine, Illinois, whose father was a railroad engineer. Last year the Company had total revenues to \$84,160,000 and net earning of \$6,382,000.

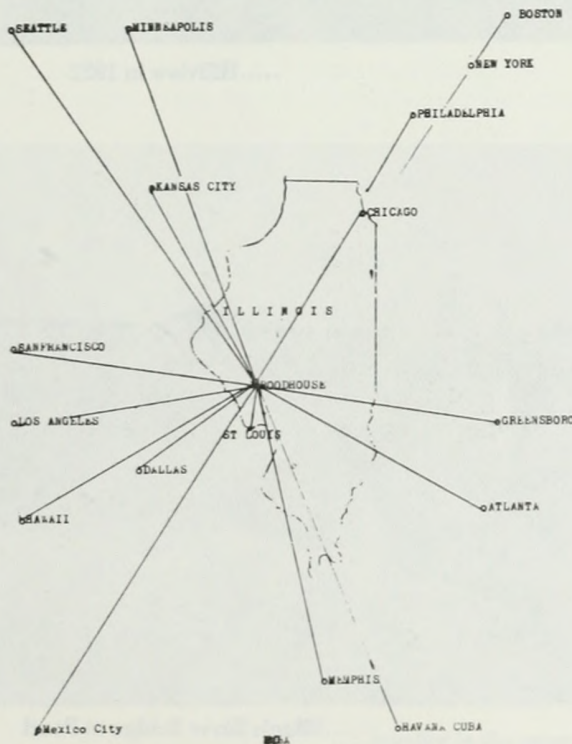
G. M. & O. Depot

The G. M. & O. Depot which stands west of the tracks has recently been remodeled to meet today's needs. The remodeling started in February of this year (1966) and was completed in April. This work was done by the G. M. & O. R.R. carpenter crew.

The second floor was converted into 13 private, air conditioned sleeping rooms plus an air conditioned lounge. This accommodates 9-15 sleeping people in each 24 hours. Each room is furnished daily with clean linens by the company.

The cost of the remodeling was approximately \$25,000 including painting of the entire building inside and out.

In the downstairs the former dining room houses lockers for each employee, and the old kitchen has been converted into a shower room for the employees use. The old express



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room is now Yardman's Headquarters including lockers for each man.

Also on the first floor are the trainmaster's office, supervisor's office, the old waiting room, agent and operator's offices of which the latter three are unchanged.

The personnel for the G.M.&O R.R. in the Depot: F. D. Allman, trainmaster; T. B. Hillman, track supervisor; J. F. Pilarski, agent and operator; L. R. Cloninger, operator; Paul Marsh, operator; Paul Roady, operator; Robert Shaw, crew dispatcher; and H. K. Mehrhoff, swing dispatcher.

The Round House employees are M. D. Hannaford, general formeman; C.B.Ruyle, rip track foreman; Cloyd Sawyer, clerk; machinists, Harry Vinyard, Lloyd Vinyard, Joe Donnelly, Bille Monroe. Clarence Carmean is a laborer. Claude Smock serves as supply man.

In the North Yards are ten switchmen, two engineers, one fireman, two hostlers and seven car inspectors. The clerks are L. W. Ballard, J. H. Whitworth, Louis Dee and Wayne Smock.

There are 14 trains in and out daily except on Sunday when there are 12.



.....Hillview in 1922



.....Pulling out of station for last time



....Illinois River Bridge at Pearl

CHAPTER XV

NEWS CHRONOLOGY OF RAILROADS



...Hailing the train

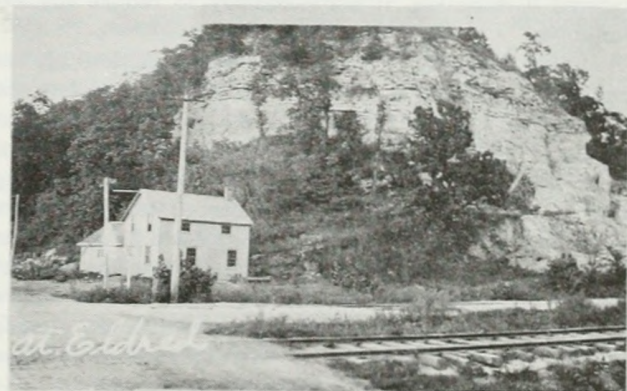


....Stuck in the snow

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following are new headlines, news items, news stories, and other contributed materials. Resource newspapers of Greene County were: The Carrollton Gazette; The Carrollton Patriot; The Greene Argus; The White Hall Register-Republican; The Roodhouse Record.



.....leaving in the snow



.....at Eldred

JUNE 19, 1852
Jacksonville and
Carrollton Railroad

We are gratified to learn that steps will shortly be taken to procure subscriptions to the stock of the Railroad from Jacksonville thru Manchester, Whitehall, Carrollton, and Jersey to Alton.

1854

Josiah Hunt former engineer of Alton and Terre Haute engaged to survey a route for the Jacksonville and Carrollton Railroad. Reports that he found the entire route from Alton to Jacksonville favorable for the construction of a Railroad.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
MAY 1, 1858

Office of the Jacksonville, Alton and St. Louis Railroad Company, Carrollton, April 19, 1858. To the Stockholders of the Jacksonville, Alton and St. Louis Railroad Company: respectfully submits the following report of the operations and condition of the work for the past year. At the date of the last able report made by my predecessor the Hon. D. M. Woodson, April 21, 1857 the contract for building and equipping the entire road has just been closed with Messrs, Edgertons & Sage, who shortly after sublet the grading and masonry of the eight miles of heavy work on the south end from Delhi to the point of intersection with the Chicago, Alton and St. Louis Railroad: Also those portions of the road between the Macoupin Creek and Carrollton, and between Manchester and Jacksonville.

Active operations were commenced on these several divisions in June, and by July a large and effective force was employed and continued with satisfactory progress until October.

It is needless to remind you that at this period a sudden financial crisis enveloped the business operations of the entire country with doubts and misgivings, and the general financial derangement coupled with almost the total failure of the wheat crops in the counties lying contiguous to the road, rendered it desirable, if not necessary to reduce the expenditures.

A proper regard for the pecuniary condition of the stockholders, and the consequent inability to negotiate the county bonds and other resources of the road without extraordinary and ruinous sacrifices, dictated a more prudent course - a husbanding of resources, and thus avoid incurring debts or sacrifices. It give me pleasure to be able to congratulate you, that the season promises to be propitious and the financial clouds are disappearing, affording us a most cheerful prospect for a speedy renewal of more active operations and an opportunity for those who are already engaged in this enterprise, as well as those who have hesitated, to push on the work with renewed energy.

The heavy work on the Piasas, also between the Macoupin Creek and Carrollton, is very well advanced.

December 15, 1860

The farmers beyond White Hall, and in the vicinity of Manchester, are already experiencing benefits and expressing their delight at the completion of the railroad at the latter place. It is giving them an easy access to market and we hope soon to, "enjoy the same blessing".

December 2, 1864

Last week the large stone culvert on our railroad, 2 miles south of town caved in, about 20 tons of dirt had been placed on it when it gave way.

April 29, 1865

Work on the railroad has been pushed almost into town. A few hundred yards north they have the machine digging up the field.

September 9, 1865

The first passenger train, on its arrival at this Monday last, brought a large number of the officers and employees of the railroad company, who, together with a number of invited guests from Jacksonville and White Hall, and accompanied by leading citizens and the brass band of this place, repaired to the Carrollton House, where they partook of a most excellent dinner prepared and furnished by John Headrick Esq. proprietor of the house, in honor of the event. It was a joyous occasion, and all parties manifested their appreciation of Mr. Headrick's kindness by partaking beautifully of the viands. Neat little speeches were exchanged by the gentlemen, appropriate and happy in their effect. We observed among the gentlemen present, Messrs. W. T. Beekman, superintendent, and Wm. Bacon, general agent and train conductor. Judge Worcester and George Wright, Esq. represented the board of directors. There were also a number of lady guests.

September 9, 1865

R. C. Samuel ("Dick Sam") son of Dr. J. B. Samuel of Carrollton has been appointed freight and express agent at Carrollton Station.

June 5, 1869

The incorporators of the "Pana, Carlinville, Carrollton and Clarksville Railroad Co.," met at the Carrollton Courthouse June 1, 1869 for the purpose of organizing the Company.

August 21, 1869

Pacific railroad, origination of plan. Honor due to old White Hall Citizen, Col. Henry S. Fitch.

August 28, 1869

New one needed, the old one being small, inconvenient, and inadequate depot.

September 4, 1869

Rockford, Rock Island and St. Louis completed to within 5 miles of Chapin, 23 miles of White Hall.

September 18, 1869

Location of R.R. and St. Louis depot undetermined.

November 20, 1869

A man-trap.

September 11, 1869

Incorporators of P. & L. RR meet

September 11, 1869

R.R. & St. L. through to Winchester - 16 days

September 18, 1869

Another railroad for White Hall.

September 25, 1869

Quincy, Alton & St. Louis RR important to White Hall.

October 2, 1869

Meeting of incorporators at Taylorville.

More about the RR.

October 9, 1869

Election of board of directors of P. & St. L.

October 16, 1869

R.R. L. & St. L. expected to reach White Hall by Nov. 1.

October 23, 1869

Vote for railroad.

Meetings at White Hall, Greenfield, Wilmington, Walkerville, Athensville, Mineral Springs, Roodhouse.

Special dispatch from Quincy.

Laborers on road paid.

Prominent railroad men here. First installment of iron delivered.

October 30, 1869

Editorial on coming election.

About voting.

Mortgage of Rockford, Rock Island & St. Louis to Union Trust Company of New York.

November 6, 1869

Report of election

Patriot of Carrollton thinks meeting of incorporators of P. & L. RR mistake.

Bridge

Across Seminary Creek County below Ford near Mr. Crafford's residence.

Railroads

November 20, 1869

Survey of Pana & Louisiana road is complete. Incorporators meeting report -- officers.

November 27, 1869

Estimated cost of R.R. & St. L. is 16 million dollars, 104 carloads of iron here.

Bond Issue**Railroads**

December 4, 1869

To vote on issuing \$10,000 bonds for capital stock of Rockford, Rock Island & St. Louis railroad.

Depot

December 4, 1869

New lantern.

December 11, 1869

Quincy, Alton & St. L. RR subscriptions. Distance from Pana to White Hall.

Railroads

December 11, 1869

Proposed to have watchman at depot.

December 18, 1869

Description of roads passing through W. Hall

December 24, 1869

White Hall to vote on \$25,000 stock.

December 4, 1869

An election will be held on Tuesday, January 4, 1870 at office of L. A. Brewster in W.H., County of Greene, State of Ill. to vote on authorizing the Trustees of said town to subscribe \$10,000 ten thousand dollars to the Capital Stock of the Rockford, Rock Island & St. Louis R.R. Co. Said bonds to be

issued when said line of road is completed and in running order from Beardstown, Cass Co., to W.H., Greene Co., Ill.; and to be made payable in 20 years from date and to bear 10 percent interest per annum. Said interest to be pd. annually.

Also, notice is given, an election will be held Tuesday, January 4, 1870 at office of L. A. Brewster, in W.H. Co. of Greene, state of Ill. to vote for or against authorizing the Trustees of said town to subscribe (\$25,000.00) twenty-five thousand dollars to the Capital Stock of the Pana & Louisiana R.R. Co. Said bonds to be issued when said road is completed to the Town of W.H. from either direction; said Bonds to be made payable in 20 years from date of issue, to bear 10 percent interest per annum, interest to be paid annually.

Railroads

January 1, 1870

Railroad bonds real estate value.

R.R. & St. L. having trouble with contractors.

R.R. & St. L. from Rockford to Rock Island completed last week.

January 8, 1870

Result of election.

January 15, 1870

Regular trains began to run on R.R. I. & St. L., time card Railroad election in Carrollton.

January 22, 1870

Railroads in this part of state.

Rally at Union Hall to take action to secure Pana & Louisiana RR for White Hall.

Report of meeting at Union Hall.

January 1, 1870

Conditions observed by the editor

R.R.I. & St. L. brought in material for their station.

January 8, 1870

Citizen of White Hall voted on a proposal to subscribe \$25,000 to the Capital Stock of the Pana and Louisiana Railroad, also \$10,000 to the Rockford Co. The proposal was carried.

January 15, 1870

The \$50,000 subscription for the Railroad passed.

January 22, 1870

Accident, Railroad

John Doyle injured.

January 22, 1870

W. H. making up: Railroad Meeting on Wednesday evening last, pursuant to notice, some 250 of the citizens of this town and vicinity assembled at Union Hall for the purpose of considering what should be done to further our interests in relation to the Pana and Louisiana Railroad.

The meeting organized by the choice of B. F. Baldwin Esq as chairman and I. D. Vedder Esq. as Secretary. Speeches were made by Messrs. Davis, Winter and Pearce and considerable enthusiasm was evoked. After the speeches, the books were opened for subscriptions to stock and a goodly amount was received not enough to build the road, but sufficient to indicate that the men of means in this vicinity were making up to a sense of the importance of the emergency.

It was decided to prepare and circulate, at once a petition to the Town Trustees asking them to order an election for the subscription of another \$25,000 to the Pana & Louisiana road.

This petition, as we write, is being numerously signed the Board will hold a special meeting on Monday evening and undoubtedly make the order and it is safe to say that the people will, by an overwhelming majority, vote the subscription.

Railroad Accident: On Wednesday afternoon as the Peoria Express was coming north and was within about a mile of the depot, a man was discovered sitting on the R.R. track in a very comfortable position. The warning whistle, sounded, but the man sat still. He wasn't going to get out of the way. Let the train go round him if it wanted to pass. These were apparently the sentiments of the man on the track.

But there was a want of sympathy therewith on the part of the iron horse and on it came, tho with considerably reduced speed. The man was lifted from his comfortable seat by the remorseless cowcatcher and summarily pitched off the track. It would naturally be supposed that the fellow was killed. He was not, however! And here is an argument against the total abstinence chaps. If the fellow hadn't been drunk, he would have been killed or horribly mangled, without doubt. Being drunk, he made no resistance to the assault of the locomotive and consequently fell very easily, escaping with a bruised side, a torn scalp and skinned hand.

It may be that the force of this argument is somewhat impaired by the other consideration that if the fellow hadn't been drunk, he wouldn't have been sitting on a R.R. track, indifferent to approach of a coming train. The fellow's name was John Doyle. He resides in the country not far from this town.

February 5, 1870

Mrs. John Stowers killed
Time and place of meetings

February 12, 1870

Letter from C. B. Ebey
Rock Is., Alton & St. L. through to Greenfield
The R.R. I. & St. L. R.R. is finished to Greenfield and the first train went through on Thursday. There were some 3000 persons in attendance. An excellent free dinner was served.

Report of Pana & Louisiana RR meeting on Apple Creek prairie

February 19, 1870

Editorial-necessity for raising subscription amount

March 5, 1870

Meeting of directors

March 12, 1870

Engineer of Carrollton railroad project
Pana Meeting

Depot

April 9, 1870

Petition circulated to move express office to Main Street.

Railroads

April 30, 1870

Last rail into St. Louis.

Officers return from New York. Place for crossroad not yet determined.

May 7, 1870

C.A. & St. L. R.R. waiting until crossroad is settled before building new depot

May 21, 1870

R.R.I. & St. L. has good rolling stock.

May 28, 1870

Band of disorderly men congregate near depot.

June 4, 1870

Well built by Rockford road full of water.

June 18, 1870

Annual meeting of stockholders of Peoria, Pekin, and Jacksonville RR.

Directors of C. & A. RR elected

Sleeping cars not yet convenient.

July 9, 1870

Route from here to St. Louis over R.R. I. & St. L. in operation but incomplete.

September 3, 1870

Branch railroad

Crossroad through Carrollton.

State Senator, took the contract for grading and bridging the railroad from White Hall to Louisiana, 38 miles.

September 10, 1870

Court will not reduce assessment.

September 24, 1870

Bonds sold in Greene County.

October 1, 1870

Work has commenced at Grand Pass

October 15, 1870

Work on railroad west of White Hall to Louisiana, Mo.

November 26, 1870

Meeting in Hardin to consider road through county.

December 17, 1870

50,000 stock of C. & A. RR sold to Hon. C. D. Hodges for \$12,000

December 31, 1870

C. A. to build new depot south of old one.

January 7, 1871

James Daniels, right of way agent, successful in settling with land owners.

January 14, 1871

What Wilmington thinks of new road

February 18, 1871

Total number of miles in Illinois, 5423 mi.

March 4, 1871

Freight car derailed and broken at curve south of town -- 8 cars thrown into Wolf Run.

March 11, 1871

New building completed.

March 25, 1871

Railroad too costly.

April 8, 1871

On March 22, 1871 the president of the Litchfield and Western Railway Co. presented the form of an agreement between the city council and his company with references to the subscription of the city to aid its construction. At the regular meeting on Monday last, the matter was taken up. The terms of the agreement was endorsed and acceded to by a vote of 3 for and 2 against.

May 13, 1871

Trip by editor on Southern Ill. and Southeastern railway.

May 27, 1871

Trip by editor on Louisiana branch road.

June 3, 1871

To be shipped from here -- 40 trunks and boxes and a great deal other tackle to be used in erecting the Ill. River

bridge at Grand Pass on Louisiana branch.

July 1, 1871

Directors elected for St. L., Jacksonville, and Chicago RR.

July 29, 1871

Rails laid almost across county, Louisiana branch

August 12, 1871

Depot will be at Drake, Straut or Shepherd

September 16, 1871

Louisiana branch about finished.

November 4, 1871

First through train from Roodhouse.

"To Kansas City"

The first through train on the Louisiana Branch from Roodhouse, was put thru last Monday on which a large number of our people took passage as a novelty.

An exceedingly good and interesting time was had and the excursionists are convinced that the road is first class and just as it should be.

Grand Pass RR advantage to Sandridge.

November 25, 1871

History of struggle between Roodhouse and White Hall for Kansas City road.

Boarding house completed.

December 9, 1871

Iowa and Illinois shipping much freight on new railroad

December 23, 1871

Greene County voted \$100,000 to Litchfield road and \$200,000 to Pana and Carrollton corporation.

January 27, 1872

How to go west

February 3, 1872

Railroad items

March 23, 1872

Incorporators of Springfield, Carrollton and St. Louis RR meet to organize

May 4, 1872

White Hall citizens obtained writ of injunction to prevent issuance or execution of bonds for Pana, Carlinville, C & C RR

June 22, 1872

Greene County bond and injunction case settled.

September 28, 1872

C. & A. RR will begin construction at point near west end of switch for turn table.

February 15, 1872

Well finished and success.

March 14, 1873

Mail robbery.

June 14, 1873

Election of directors of St. Louis, Jacksonville & Chicago.

November 15, 1873

Passenger schedule for Illinois railroad.

July 4, 1874

Railroad debt.

December 26, 1874

Railroad Statistics

December 19, 1874

"Catastrophe Averted"

The northern bound passenger train on the Jacksonville division of the Chicago and Alton railroad pulled through to

this city on Wednesday 2 hours late, after encountering serious obstructions and averting an impending catastrophe. It seems the train which left Kane on time, only 15 minutes ahead of an extra freight in the rear, and intending to pass the regular southern bound freight at Riverdale, (the station halfway between this city and Kane), encountered a lot of cattle which had broken out of the pasture on the down grade just south of Macoupin Creek bridge. The cattle kept to the track until approaching a smaller bridge were crowded so close that a number jumped down into the ravine on both sides while two or three ran upon the bridge and lodged between the rails and bridge timbers, the engine coming to a halt within five feet of the imprisoned bovines. It was now after 8 o'clock, and the train already 5 minutes behind. The night was exceedingly dark, but stout men rushed to the front, and in 5 minutes more had succeeded in dislodging one of the animals, while yet another remained with no time to spare. Five minutes more and trains were due from both directions. As one of the railroaders expressed it, "there was hell in front, and damnation in the rear!" Runners were sent in both directions to flag the approaching trains, while the command was given for the passengers to withdraw from the cars. At this juncture affairs assumed the nature of a stampede, and the men and women did not "stand on the order of their going." Off they hustled, and down the embankment many of them rolled in utter confusion while the red glare of the headlights from two approaching trains was thrown upon them, certainly the situation for a few moments was fearful. At the foot of the embankment there was a slough of mud and water which it was necessary to cross before getting out of harms way; and varied were the shrieks of women and children as they plunged into it, aided as best they could be by male passengers. It is said the wife of Hon. H. C. Withers, of this city, became so frightened that she sank down in the mud and water, under the impression that she was drowning, but was promptly assisted and saved. Luckily, however the flagmen had succeeded in arresting the progress of the nearing trains, so that they came to a halt a short distance from the passenger train at either end. Meanwhile the news spread to Kane and Carrollton, and the excitement ran high, as hand cars were dispatched to the scene. Those of the passengers from this place gave evidence of having been in the thickest of the battle.

Other passengers of Carrollton say the fright attributed to Mrs. Withers was some other lady passenger unknown to them.

Railroads

July 3, 1875

Established telegraph office at Drake

Railroad catastrophe

October 23, 1875

Assessment of railroad.

November 6, 1875

Agent reports business of Oct.

April 29, 1876

C. & A. owes \$40,000 taxes

May 6, 1876

Advised not to levy for tax.

April 28, 1877

Survey made from Hannibal to Hannibal by C. & B. & Q.

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July 28, 1877

Trains not running

August 8, 1907

The C. & A. road put in a side track at Schutz's mill, then known as "The Dutch Mill" west of Roodhouse.

April 13, 1878

Work is in progress on the narrow gauge Quincy and Louisville via Wilmington Railroad.

New steel rails will be put down between Greenfield and Rockbridge. Mr. Cantrells section will be the first to be supplied with these rails in this division.

April 27, 1878

Finding that Sheriff Jones was about to levy on their road bed, rolling stock etc. The C. & A. R.R. Company paid over to him on Monday and Tuesday lost their taxes for 1875-76-77 amounting to something over \$15,000 and it is well they did.

The railroad company is putting in a permanent coal bin near the depot. This will be a permanent coaling station. There is also some talk of putting in a round house here at no distant day. Greenfield figures prominently as one of the principal town on the line.

May 18, 1878

The coal shute is almost completed and for Greenfield is very ostentatious for a railroad building.

June 15, 1878

The tressel work for the new coal shute is being put in.

June 29, 1878

The tressel and track up into the coal shute is completed. Several car loads of coal have been unloaded there.

July 27, 1878

Excursion

From Greenfield to Emparia, Kansas and return August 12th, 1878 Round trip from Greenfield \$21.90 - Good Land for sale on this route, for from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per acre.

November 2, 1878

Business Rockbridge

Thirty men are at work on the new tressel across the Macoupin bottom south of the Mill.

The Railroad Company are tiling a distance of 75 rods from the slough to the tank already established in the bottom on the line of R. R. south of the Mill.

February 22, 1879

Roodhouse, pump in coal shaft. Prospects of Roodhouse, end of division and erection of stock yards.

May 3, 1879

Six car loads of steel rails are on the side track and will be laid soon from Taylor Creek to the Macoupin.

Accident, Railroad

November 22, 1879

South of Carrollton, engineer, fireman and brakeman killed. Every man on train injured.

December 27, 1879

Wreck at Berdan, 2 killed, 21 injured.

January 3, 1880

Accident north of Berdan caused by broken rail. Two killed, one employee, a negro Charles Payne and Col. Bond of Sangamon County, and 27 wounded. Train running too fast.

January 31, 1880

C. B. & Q. purchased charter for proposed railroad from Hannibal to White Hall

Controversy at Carrollton between William C. Rainey and C. & A. R.R. concerning lands where elevator was built

C. & A. reservoir at Roodhouse completed

R.R. Company purchased 3 acres of land from Frank Knight to complete 14 acre stockyards.

March 6, 1880

Surveyors located additional side tract one mile long at Greenfield depot.

April 10, 1880

Railroad

On Monday, March 29th, all of the workmen except two that were employed on the construction train under conductor D. Burleigh, struck for higher wages, they were receiving \$1.15 per day and asked for an increase of 10 cents per day. The only satisfaction they received was their time checks which were duly paid off the next day, and the train started out with a new set of laborers and business resumed as though nothing had happened.

May 25, 1900

Wreck in railroad yards here broke one car completely in two and damaged several others. No one hurt.

October 16, 1880

C. B. & Q. contemplated with White Hall Clay Works building reservoir on land owned by Simeon Ross.

November 13, 1880

The C. B. & Q RR Co. is filling the gaps that are not already laid with steel rail from the city south. This makes a solid steel rail from Chapin in Morgan Co. into Jersey Co. south of Rockbridge.

November 20, 1880

John Ewald is night operator at the depot.

December 25, 1880

C. & A. constructed iron bridges across Hurricane Creek, two at Schutz's Mill, one at Drake Station.

January 1, 1881

Petition circulated to issue bonds for reservoir.

June 4, 1881

Three freight cars were pitched topsy turvy over the embankment into the ditch in the bottom, just south of Rockbridge June 2 cause, broken wheel.

September 3, 1881

Collision between two trains on the I & St. L. railroad on Aug. 29. One of the train was No. 3 of the C.B.&Q.

November 12, 1881

Description of C.B.&Q. reservoir

November 12, 1881

Accident on new railroad south of J. W. Hettick's Sunday, November 6 hurting conductor and another person badly.

Railroad collision several cars jammed up. Nobody seriously hurt. November 8th, Tuesday.

November 19, 1881

The wreck train arrived in town Sunday and cleaned up the debris caused by the collision on the Thursday night, Nov. 12.

Railroad men's reading room, Roodhouse opened.

December 17, 1881

"A Smash up" train wreck between Rockbridge and Kemper Dec. 11. No one hurt.

December 3, 1881

C.B.&Q. to build new depot.

December 31, 1881

About 2 a.m. on the 24th a wreck on the railroad.

February 22, 1882

The biggest item of the week was the great flood of Sunday and Monday, Feb. 19 and 20, 1882. Railroad and telegraph communication was shut off during the week and no daily papers were received. The C.&A. had long stretches of track washed out near both Apple & Macoupin Creeks. The Mississippi River rose 95 inches at St. Louis and Macoupin Creek was four feet higher than ever before.

August 26, 1882

Litchfield, Carrollton & Western

A meeting of representative citizens of Carrollton and Greenfield was held at the latter city in the interest of the building of the Litchfield, Carrollton and Western Railroad. Carrollton pledged \$10,000 if Greenfield would raise that amount.

October 7, 1882

Bonds signed for Roodhouse and Scottville RR.

November 25, 1882

Survey of Roodhouse-Scottville RR completed.

ELDRED STATION

1883

The name of Palmer Station on L.C.&W road changed to Eldred, to correspond to the name of the post office (1880).

Item: (About 1883) by Ruth Schwallenstecker, Eldred Correspondent.

Originally the tracks were laid from Carlinville by the L.C.&W. (Litchfield, Carrollton & Western) and appropriately nicknamed "Hellwestern and Crooked". Later the Quincy, Carrollton and St. Louis assumed ownership.

March 1883

That new building on "Cap" Fry's farm north of Carrollton is not the L.C.&W. round house, but an octagonal barn!

June 1883

The L.C.&W. R.R. was completed between Greenfield and Carrollton and was ready to go on east from the former, or west from the latter -- depending upon where the most money was raised for the building of it. As soon as the road was completed between Greenfield and this city, suggestions of a name for the station, which was finally called Daum, were made.

July 2, 1883

The first train for the use of the public ever to run on the L.C.&W. R.R. was an excursion leaving Carrollton at 7:45 p.m. Monday, July 2, reaching Greenfield at 8:40 and returning at 11:30 p.m. The train consisted of an entire engine and a flat car furnished with seats from the amphitheatre at the fair grounds and covered with a canopy of domestic.

October 20, 1883

"Dan'l Morfoot" was the name of the locomotive on the new L.C.&W. R.R. to the east of here. The whistle of the "Dan'l Morfoot" on the L.&W. makes our citizens (Carrollton) feel good from head to foot.

December 1, 1883

The railroad stations west of Carrollton on the L.C.&W. have been named as follows: the first station was Bandy's; about four miles west was Hurricane Station (also Stone's crossing); the next at the bluffs was Palmer Station, named in honor of Governor M. Palmer; and the station at the river, Columbiana Station.

December 8, 1883

W. B. Farrow donated ground for the L.C.&W. depot at Eldred. Some compromising was done to secure the Stone Jug and the Bechdoldt mill which were in the line of the new L.C.&W. R.R. at Eldred.

The city bus (Carrollton) run by Oman Bridges made all trains at both depots, the C.&A. and the L.C.&W.

December 22, 1883

A special train was run over the L.C.&W. R.R. to accommodate those who wished to attend the supper at the Greenfield Methodist Church.

One hundred twenty five dollars was raised to build a depot at Daum on the L.C.&W. R.R.

December 29, 1883

Horatio Bandy boasted of being the first passenger from the west on the L.C.&W.

The L.C.&W. track-layers were putting down steel at the rate of from ½ to one mile a day and were within four miles of the river ... (completed January 15, 1884).

1884

January 26, 1884

The new railroad to the river at Columbiana was bringing many of the thrifty Calhoun residents to Carrollton to trade. C. W. Pong was the engineer.

Palmer was going to have to change its name because there was another place in the state by that name.

The people here at Pioneer think that riding to Carrollton via the L.C.&W. R.R. beats going by wagon.

February 6, 1884

As "Dan'l Morfoot" was coming from the river last Tuesday, he ran off the track and did some loud tooting for help. He must have become overjoyed by being just across the river from Kampsville. Joe King and George Bechdoldt say they put him back on the track and he went on his way. 82 passengers were aboard.

July, 1884

The first locomotive ever run on the L.C.&W. R.R. was a Chicago and Alton engine No. 47 on May 23, 1883. The line from Carrollton to Columbiana was completed January 15, 1884. Carrollton was named as the place of business for this railroad. Its capital stock was \$1,200.00.

October 10, 1884

C.B.&Q. depot destroyed by fire.

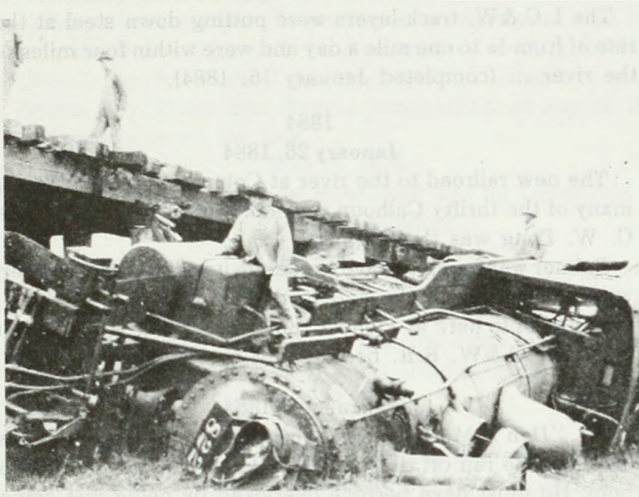
July 1886

Local stockholders of the L.C.&W. seemed happy that the contract for the dirt work for the whole line of the L.C.&W. from Greenfield to Litchfield by way of Fayette, Hagaman and Carlinville was let. This railroad ran special trains for a grand picnic and holiday celebration at Palmer, July 5. Horse races, foot races, a ball game, a platform dance and fireworks at night, were among the attractions.

The first locomotive ever run on the L.C.&W. railroad was a C.&A. engine No. 47 on May 23, 1883. The first train for the use of the public was run July 2, 1883. The line from Carrollton to Columbiana was completed January 15, 1884. Carrollton was named as the place of business for this railroad. Its capital stock was \$1,200,000.00.

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Like a fallen steed, the wrecked engine lies. This engine went off the tressel at Valley City, Illinois Nov. 11, 1918. Bluff Times Sesquicentennial Edition.

December 25, 1886

Wednesday witnessed the laying of the last rail. "The L.C.&W. completed on time."

January, 1887

S. C. Bass was manager of the Hurricane Elevator at Bandy Station.

January 18, 1887

The Litchfield, Carrollton and Western road opened regularly for business, the first time card appearing Jan. 16. Two trains a day each way were provided between Carrollton and Litchfield and one train daily between Carrollton and the river. George Avery was conductor, O. O. Kimball, engineer and John Huges, fireman. R. O. Soper was agent at Carrollton.

1888

J. T. Henley

July 27, 1888

With L. T. Whiteside, instituted condemnation suit against C. & A. R.R. for mutilation of land.

March 23, 1888

Accident

Engineer Downey killed west of Schutz's Mill.

July 8, 1892

A brakeman on the C.B.&Q. was instantly killed Monday evening at Taylor Creek bridge, being struck by the top of the bridge while on top of the car. His home was in Rock Island.

1896

May 22, 1896

There were no trains running on the L.C.&W. railroad Tuesday or Wednesday. The Tuesday morning passenger on its way from Carrollton to Greenfield ditched two cars the engine remaining on the track. The cars were thrown on their sides. No one was injured.

August 28, 1896

The morning passenger train going east on the L.C.&W. Tuesday collided with a steer between Fayette & Hagaman. The tender of the engine was derailed and the train delayed. No further damage reported except to the steer.

November 6, 1896

A northbound freight train collided with a couple of mules just south of town yesterday. One was killed outright the other had to be shot. Train okay.

April 9, 1897

The L.C.&W. excursion train that goes to Eldred next Sunday to give those who may desire to see the flood a chance to view the waste of water, will leave this station (Greenfield) at 9:29 a.m. returning at 5:56 p.m. Round trip only 50 cents.

September 3, 1897

Burlington Pump House destroyed by fire.

November 12, 1897

The L.C.&W. is getting back in shape for business again. Beginning last Monday the train schedule was changed to 4 trains a day.

January 28, 1899

Litchfield, Carrollton & Western Railway Co. went out of existence its property being turned over to Quincy, Carrollton & St. Louis Railway Co., a new corporation.

March 1, 1901

Tower house at junction of C.&A. and C.B. & Q. completed with inter-locking switches.

January 3, 1902

About 2 a.m. on the 24th a freight train was standing on the track here, and a sleepy conductor allowed another freight from the opposite direction to run into it. The result was several cars and two engines badly smashed and one conductor given the G.B.

June 20, 1902

Wreck West of Pegram, one half mile track damaged. Trains blocked.

July 3, 1903

Wreck between White Hall and Wrights, June 28. One man killed, another missing, 818 cars destroyed, traffic delayed 3 days.

August 14, 1903

Eldred, track of I.C.&St. L. taken up. All of track between Eldred & Carrollton removed.

October 16, 1903

People of Eldred celebrated arrival of first train since Aug. Made regular daily trips.

Original from

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December 2, 1904

Alton, Jacksonville & Peoria Railway Co. Move started for line from Alton to Jacksonville, Route proposed.

January 6, 1905

Petition presented to White Hall for operation and maintenance.

June 16, 1905

New ties distributed along line of old L.C.&W. from Barnett to Eldred.

August 18, 1905

Surveyors reach Jerseyville.

August 25, 1905

By Sept. 1 the Z.C. & St. L. R.R. will drop its name and become the C. & A.

September 8, 1905

Interlocking switch north of White Hall. Surveying party located at Manchester.

October 27, 1905

Injunction sworn out in Edwardsville Circuit Court, refraining company from starting work.

December 8, 1905

Injunction dissolved.

December 29, 1905

Chicago and Alton Gasoline motor car made first trip thru White Hall, Dec. 27.

August 31, 1906

Pump house dismantled north of White Hall. Lease for reservoir expired.

August 3, 1906

Train wreck near Fayette. Louis White, the brakeman killed, several people injured. He had been working on the road about 4 years and leaves a wife and 2 small children.

July 30, 1906

Q.C.&St. L. train wrecked near Fayette. C. E. White brakeman killed.

September 8, 1906

Masked men rob Burlington depot at Greenfield.

April 26, 1907

The first spike was driven yesterday afternoon in actual construction work of the A., J., & P. interurban line through Carrollton. Also a number of other spikes were driven, and there is now quite a little stretch of rock ballasted railroad track extending northward from the south-east corner of the public square. While some of our neighbor towns are busily engaged in building electric roads on paper, Carrollton is getting the real thing.

Several car loads of ties, rails and rock ballast arrived here the first of the week for the Alton, Jacksonville & Peoria interurban line, and during the past two days about twenty-five men have been at work, hauling material, grading and laying track on the east side of the public square. With the exception of the track that has been laid in Alton, this is the first track laying done on the road. The material used seems to be of the very best, and the rails are very heavy said to be 85-pound steel.

The track is being laid here now because it can be done to better advantage before the paving is put down. It may be a long time before this 500 feet of interurban track is connected with the outside world and before a car wheel turns upon it, but in the meantime it will stand as a silent guarantee that

the road is coming to Carrollton. Many people have doubted it until now.

January 18, 1907

The name of Stewart station on the C&A west of Roodhouse, was changed to Strout. (1877)

January 25, 1907

Much damage done by high water. Apple Creek on rampage. Apple Creek was four miles wide in some places. Four hundred feet of the C.B.&Q. track washed out south of White Hall. The bottom ranches were all under water and the levees were badly damaged.

October 31, 1907

Harry S. Christy, connected with the Clay industry at White Hall, and superintendent of the electric railway running out to the Clay field, died at his residence in White Hall Monday evening of the Brights disease. Mr. Christy was a son of Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Christy of Jerseyville and was about 35 years of age. He was married to Miss Killen of Jacksonville in 1895. Funeral at Jerseyville.

August 7, 1908

Ice house at Roodhouse burned.

January 1909

Sixty barrels of carp (fish) were shipped from Kampsville by way of Eldred January 9, to be served at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City, as the rarest delicacy of the season.

Accident

October 14, 1910

Wreck on C. & A., near Jerseyville. 14 persons injured. Local people in wreck.

December 30, 1910

Norman J. Crabtree with two others killed in C.&A. wreck, Farbor, Mo.

March 4, 1910

Robert Walker, Mrs. Myrtle Lorton, andson, victims.

1912

In 1912 the train went to Clark, King and Titus Stations. Tracks and train did run to Clark and King Stations before 1923.

Excerpt from Mr. L. T. Whitesides:

The old L. C. & W. or the P. C. & St. L. (Quincy, Carrollton and St. Louis) did extend its tracks a way into the bottoms, but it was on a different route (?). This would explain the new line to East Hardin in 1923 by the C. & A. (Chicago & Alton.)

July 11, 1912

Eldred - Houses are shipped in ready to put up, for the laborers to live in while working on the new railroad that has begun here.

August 16, 1912

John (Jack) Burris killed on crossing on Carlinville St. near Standard Oil Tanks.

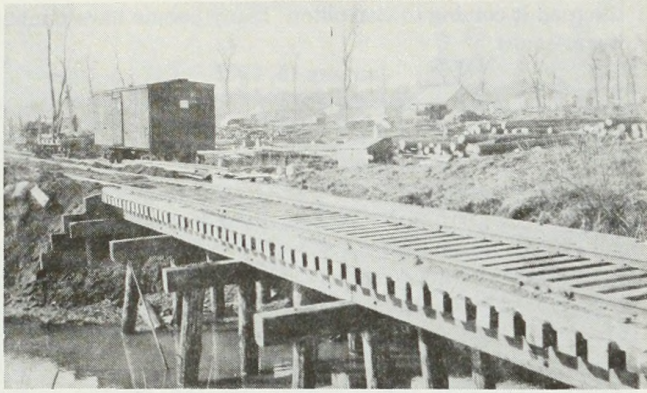
October 25, 1912

Walker Owens and Mamie Little struck by Burlington train, injured.

Accident

December 13, 1912

"Bob's train" (Eldred-Springfield daily) wrecked near Greenfield.



February 3, 1916
Flood and Train

This area had a triple dose of bad weather with the break in the Eldred levee, the heavy and damaging sleet storm in Carrollton and the Hartwell levee break that flooded 9000 acres of rich land the last part of January 1916. This flood backed up the water in Macoupin Creek, found a weak spot in the levee of the Eldred District and again flooded most of the 10,000 acres that had been covered with water the previous August.

While it was not anticipated that the levee would break, it was decided it was safer to move out. Accordingly, the job of loading the household goods of the entire camp at Clarksville on freight cars was about completed in the expectation that the railroad train on arriving at Eldred would come and take everyone out.

Then came the unexpected news that the levee had broken, and no one knew when the train would come. Fifteen women and perhaps twenty-five children started out on foot on the icy tracks to meet the train. This procession of women and children was followed by the freight cars pulled by horses. The wall of rising water approached but did not overtake the fleeing women and children on the 2½ miles to the safety of the train that came to meet them.

The five freight cars loaded with the goods of the campers were pulled by horses and pushed by men who splashed through water up to their waists for the 2½ miles before the train was sighted. No railroad train was ever quite so much appreciated. When the cars were coupled to the engine, the water was up to the firebox of the locomotive. The twenty-five other families living in the district over next to the river were rescued by boats from Hardin.

Editorial note by Norma Newton:

These camps consisted of people who were clearing timber from lands of the Clark Ranch and Wilcoxon Ranch. They lived in tents. Mrs. Janie Borman Wiles, Eldred, has pictures in her girlhood picture album of the Girl Scouts of Eldred, of which she was a member, taking gifts to the children in these camps at Christmas time. They had been taken down to the camps by a special train.

The Clark Ranch was later sold and became known as Cooke Valley Farms.

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March 25, 1915

Wreck on southern extension of the C&A near King Station. March 18, 1915

October 22, 1915

Tracks of Chicago, Jacksonville, & St. Louis reached Carrollton, account of 50 years ago.

March 24, 1916

On Friday afternoon of last week while Mrs. Lee Crouch and Mrs. Charles Jackson were walking down the Burlington track north of Matthew Welchs's they discovered some ties torn up and when they arrived at the crossing near Mr. Welch's home they discovered that the cattle guard had been torn up and was lying on the track. They knew it was almost time for the afternoon passenger and the south bound local freight was in sight headed that way so they waved their handkerchiefs and tried to warn the engineer, but he afterwards said he thought the ladies were flirting with the fireman so didn't try to stop the train. The trainmen did not see the danger and dashed into the debris full force, which shook things up pretty lively. The train was stopped as soon as possible thereafter and the track was cleared away before the passenger train arrived. The trainmen apologized to the ladies and thanked them for their efforts to warn them of the danger. We did not learn what caused the cattle guard to act up that way.

August 30, 1918

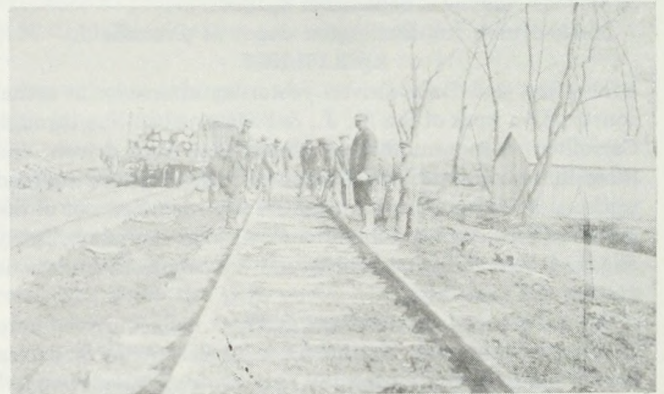
Train wreck of freight, no 83. 9 cars derailed in Apple Creek bottom.

October 18, 1918

Conductor Goad was between two cars removing the coupling pin and the air hose parted and struck him in the left eye. It caused a black eye and a painful wound.

February 18, 1921

It was fifty-one years ago this month that the first train made its appearance in Greenfield.



1923

In 1923, the tracks were extended from Eldred to East Hardin (12 miles) transporting grain and a large portion of the yearly apple crop from Calhoun County.

Changing hands again the Chicago and Alton became owners, under their ownership and the tracks to Columbiana, no longer in use, were torn out.

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November 8, 1923

The apple crop from all parts of Greene and Calhoun Counties were to be gathered by the end of the week and ready for shipment by rail. The northern part of Greene aggregated 588 car loads, which was said to be 100 more than 1922. Hillview alone shipped 30 cars of apples this season. For the first time in its history, Calhoun shipped apples by rail, ferrying them across the river at Hardin and loading at the New C & A extension.

February 14, 1924

The new terminal station on the C & A railroad branch, opposite Hardin, had quite a time getting started. One of its problems was in getting a name. It was called Lutzport, for a C & A official. Then the Hardin people, who had contributed liberally for the extension, named it East Hardin. In 1924 it was called Mamer for L. H. Mamer, who was principal owner of land in the drainage district. What the "town" would call itself didn't matter, because there were no people living there to express a choice.

December 4, 1924

Apple shipments from McClay orchard near Hillview amounted to 330 car loads, about 175,000 bushels, for the season.

September 17, 1925

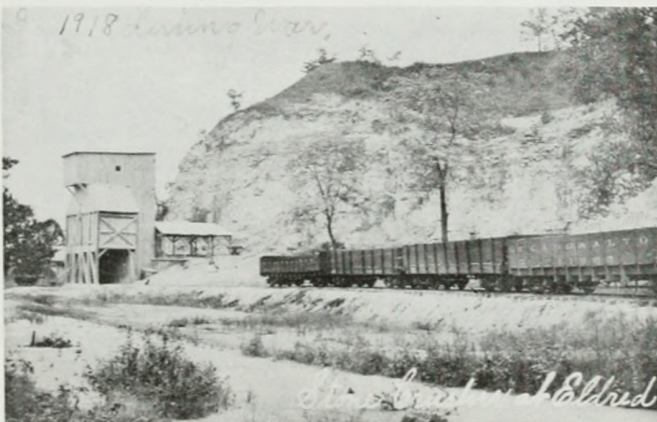
The new gasoline motor car on the Carlinville-Eldred branch of the C & A Railroad arrived September 9.

The train consisted of a baggage and express car with the motor in front, and a new passenger coach. Three men were in charge - R. M. Estel, motorman; B. M. Goad, conductor; J. W. Rathgeber, messenger.

The nickname of this train was Goad's goose, noted for the similarity to that familiar sound. John King of Carrollton recalls his father, Albert King's saying, as he took the train from Eldred to the Stone's Crossing, "You can get off at either end. They both stop at the same time."

August 19, 1929

Wreck, Hillview, 15 cars off track, Aug. 12. Two men died.



May 24, 1929

Are We To Lose a Railroad?

Word has been received to the effect that the C.&A. has petitioned the State Commerce commission at Springfield for permission to discontinue their agent at Greenfield, all of which indicates that the company is figuring on junking the line between Carrollton and Carlinville, perhaps on the plea that the proposed hard road will make the branch line a heavier financial drag than heretofore.

This same condition prevails over along the Bluff Line. That line seems to be headed for the junk heap and the proposed hard road to be built close along the right of way will hurry up the inevitable.

These changes would leave a large territory without railroad facilities and will prove quite a handicap to the farmers. But what's to be done about it? Nothing that we can see. The public isto blame. The only time the railroads are used for passenger service or stock shipments is when the roads are such that the public can't reach the hard roads. It is all right to sign petitions in an effort to keep the railroads running, but what about guaranteeing the railroad a profit for the service rendered? It is a serious question and has grown out of the tendency of the times to get the world on rubber wheels instead of iron ones.

December 20, 1929

Remodeling completed, C. & A. station.



March 21, 1930

Ralph C. Curtis, Henry Harris, Vincent Gidney, killed March 17, C. & A. crossing, north of Manchester.

June 24, 1932

History of Linder Twp. Litchfield, Carrollton & Western Railroad "Look, Cuss, & Wait."

Automatic signals

August 5, 1932

Plant controlling movements of trains over railroad junction north edge of White Hall completed.

February 12, 1932

C. B. & Q. to close Depot Wrights
Railroads
June 8, 1934

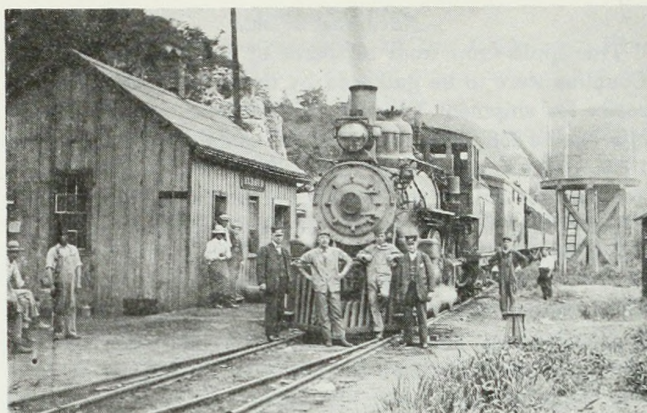
Burlington Zephyr train passed thru, June 6. Exhibition tour.

April 12, 1935

Zephyr, passed thru White Hall, April 6, transported 80 members St. Louis "Good Will" delegation. 30 min. stop.

December 8, 1950

Alton, Jacksonville & Peoria Railway Co. All passenger trains to be discontinued after Dec. 26, 1950.



Frank Schildt purchased the depot and a part of the right-of-way surrounding it. (1954)

The woodshop of Otto C. Newton and Sons was built on old railroad right-of-way.

Passenger service to Eldred was discontinued in 1930, although station agent retained at the depot until all service discontinued and door locked, August 1, 1951.

Work was begun tearing up the tracks of railroad, 18 miles, from Carrollton to East Hardin also several bridges. (1952)

Eldred Depot Closed

By Ruth Schwallenstecker

Eldred, August 1, 1951. (Special) — The old Eldred depot is no more!

The commerce commission has granted permission to discontinue the agency stations at Eldred and East Hardin, and maintain them as prepay stations.

The hearing was held at Springfield July 7 and the decision was handed down last week. The depot doors were locked Monday, August 1.

For the first time in over half a century Eldred is without depot agency service. With the advent of express and freight delivery via truck lines the need of railroad service in the community became less apparent and the G. M. and O. stockholders claimed they were operating on a losing basis.

Freight and express service will continue as in the past however, with invoicing to be handled at the Carrollton depot.

For several years, since passenger service was discontinued in 1930, freight trains made the trip on an average of twice weekly. Their principal business was the transporting of grain from the territory, and a large portion of the apple crop yearly during the apple season from Hardin.

The engines have been of the Diesel type the past three years, replacing the old style steam engines.

Originally when tracks were first laid they extended from Carlinville to Columbiana and were built about the year 1877 by the Litchfield, Carrollton and Western. (L. C. and W.), appropriately nicknamed the "Hellwestern and Crooked", because of the numerous bends along the route.

Later the Quincy, Carrollton and St. Louis, (Q. C. and St. L.) assumed ownership. In 1923 the tracks were extended from Eldred southwestward to East Hardin, a distance of 12 miles. Changing hands again the Chicago and Alton became sole owners of the lines, and they in turn sold to the Toledo, St. Louis and Western, who continued operations under the title of C. and A.

At one time the Baltimore and Ohio purchased the lines. They also operated under the title of C and A. The Alton railroad bought



....starting of Eldred Rock Quarry

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the holdings from the B and O and reorganized with Harry S. Gardner of Chicago as trustee. The Gulf, Mobile and Ohio acquired all the Alton railroad property in 1945.

The depot agent of the past 14 and one-half years, George Curtis, has seniority rights and will be transferred to either Chenoa or Chicago, which ever he prefers. Mr. Curtis has been an active member of the village board for eight years and interested in the civic affairs of the community.

Guy Fox will continue as section foreman, a position he has filled for over 25 years. His assistants are Roy Goans of Eldred, and "Snowball" Haneline of East Hardin. Haneline was section foreman at East Hardin for many years. The East Hardin depot agent, John Gaither, is being transferred to Murrayville. Western Union Telegraph service which has been so ably handled by George Curtis at the Eldred depot, will be received and relayed through the Red and White store at Eldred.

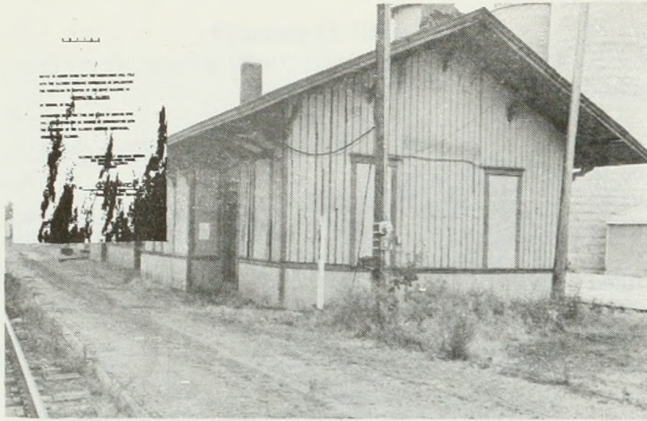


September 14, 1962

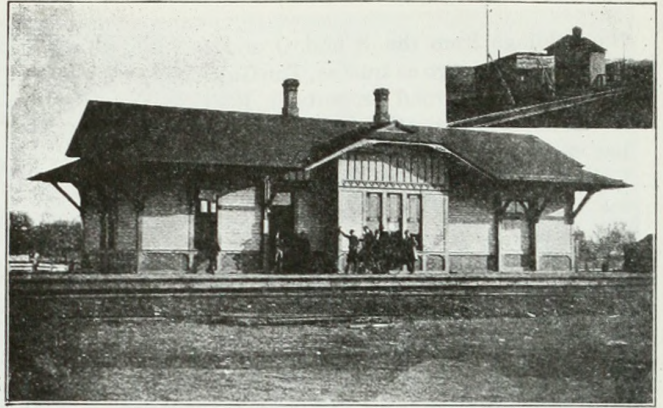
C. B. & Q Local Freight discontinued Sept. 1, 1962.



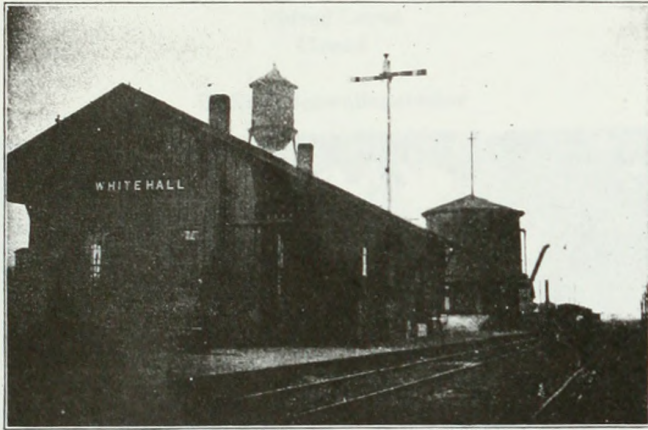
...Hillview flood of 1947



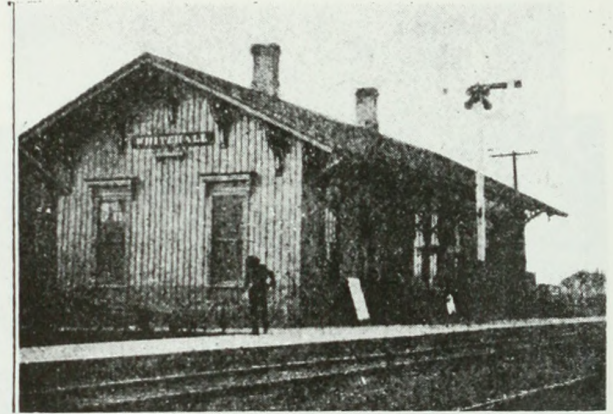
....the Carrollton Depot [1976]



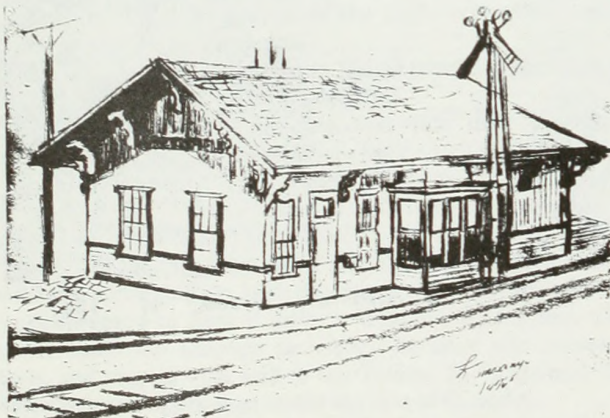
.....the Carrollton Depot [early 1900's]



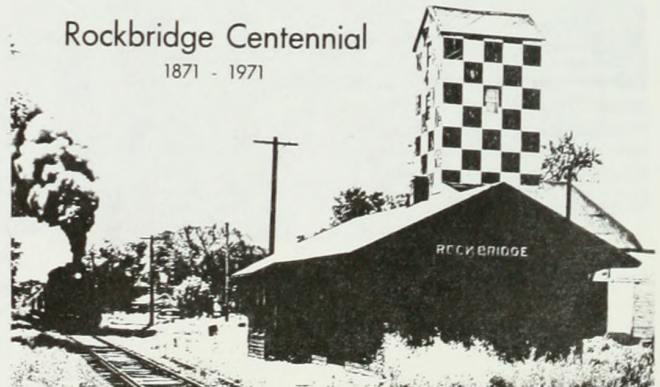
....the White Hall Depot [C.B. & Q.]



....the White Hall Depot [C. & A.]



....the Greenfield Depot



Original from the Rockbridge Depot

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Epilogue

From rails to trails

*God keeps on making children
but he has quit making land.*

With these words Reub Long, central Oregon's cowboy philosopher, summed up one of the most urgent environmental challenges now confronting the Nation. As population increases, human development sprawls across the landscape. Open spaces are carved into tiny plots, each to bear its own individual and specialized structure. The fields and forests around our cities are being covered with a crazy quilt of asphalt, shingles, and blinking neon lights. This intricate pattern of private property rights that has developed raises a multiplicity of barriers to our growing needs for open space and outdoor recreation opportunities. In particular, two important forms of recreation and travel—walking and bicycling—are barred by the fences, walls, and hedgerows of modern development. At the same time, our realization that fossil fuel supplies are limited is developing a tremendous demand for energy-efficient modes of transportation and recreation.

Fortunately, a great network of outmoded transportation corridors awaits rediscovery. Spanning the continent, linking cities with suburbs, and both with the rural countryside, they criss-cross every region of the country. These are the massive grid of old transportation routes abandoned by the Nation's railroads, canals, aqueducts, and interurban trolley lines.

Once these corridors have ceased to be of value for their original purposes, they can be converted into trails for hikers and bikers, thereby providing recreation opportunities for a public that once depended on them for transportation.

Sixty years down the track

Railroading is a dramatic chapter in our economic and cultural history. In 1916, the heyday of the American railroads, 250,000 miles of rail routes carried freight and passengers to and through every city and town larger than a country crossroads. Sixty years later, nearly 50,000 of these miles have been abandoned, and the rate at which more fall into disuse is accelerating. In October 1974 the Interstate Commerce Commission (the regulatory agency which must approve abandonments by interstate carriers) had 340 abandonment requests pending, involving 7,000 miles of trackage. And Congressional action to revitalize the deteriorating rail system of the Northeast through regrouping into better patterns will lead to the abandonment of many thousands of miles of rail lines.

This decline is the result of many complex and interrelated factors that have altered the way we live. The most obvious and most visible is the gasoline-powered motor vehicle, appearing as both the private automobile and the commercial truck. An ever-expanding system of roads and superhighways now takes passengers and freight virtually everywhere in the country. Additionally, a large majority of railway passengers was encouraged to shift to air travel.

Today, however, we are beginning to realize that the environmental and energy costs brought about by this type of life style are greater than we had imagined. Automobiles spew more pollutants into the air, use more fuel, and make more noise than railroads. Perhaps even more damaging, the highways required for our ever-increasing number of gas-guzzling combustion engines gobble up the landscape at an alarming rate. But dependence on automobile and air travel is not the only way to meet our transport needs.

There is an urgent need for a more balanced, energy-efficient vehicle mix. Bicycles should be more numerous and more frequently used, and mass transportation and rail facilities should be improved and more extensively utilized.

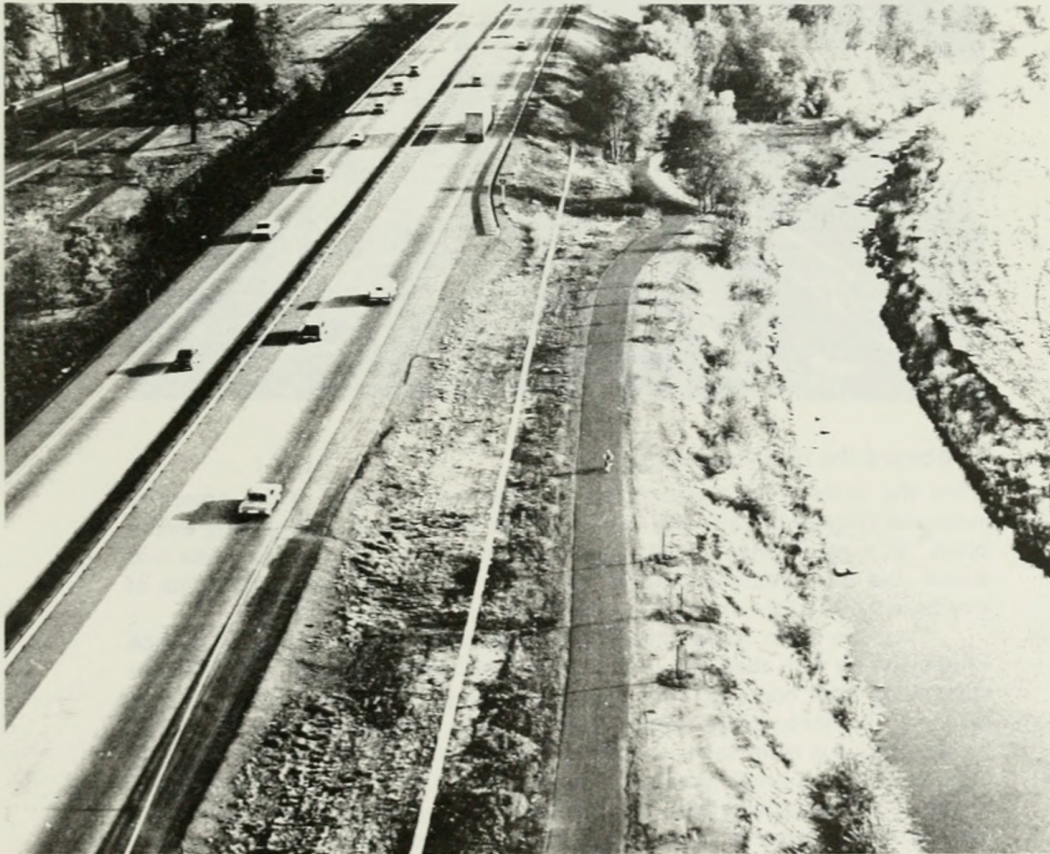


Bridges and Tunnels. Bridges and tunnels are examples of civil engineering feats of the past, and on trail rights of way, they represent a great recreation windfall. Spanning ravines and waterways, railroad bridges are often left intact along abandoned rights of way. More visible and generally of more interesting construction than highway bridges, they serve as a link with the past, and many are worthy of preservation in their own right. Where they span streams, railroad bridges can be used as fishing piers. Likewise, the tunnels that took railroad lines through mountainous areas provide a memorable experience for trail users. They add exciting variety to the hike or ride, and their cool, damp air offers refreshment on mid-summer outings.

Station Houses. Railroad rights of way consist of much more than raised roadbeds. Thousands of buildings, ranging from small passenger and freight stations to huge union terminals, were built along the track. Many of these abandoned stations are of architectural merit, and preservationists all over the country are rallying to their rescue. The concepts of adaptation and reuse are playing a major role as the old terminals are transformed into cultural centers, commercial shopping facilities, restaurants, and even multi-purpose transportation centers. In this framework, the right-of-way trail has an important place, since it can provide another form of access to these ancillary facilities. Moreover, the old station houses can be auxiliary to the recreation use. For example, an abandoned depot serves as the trail headquarters for Wisconsin's Sugar River State Trail. Bike rentals are now available in the station house. On longer routes, depots can be converted into hostels to provide shelter and rest facilities on overnight outings.

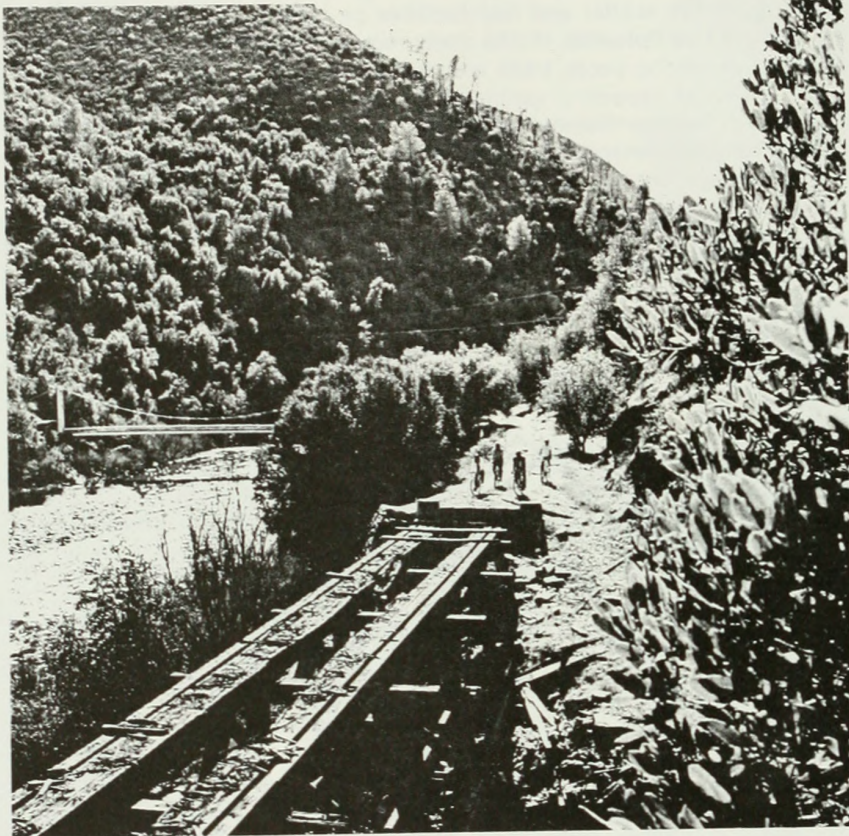
Multiple-Use Potential. Unlike many recreation facilities, such as tennis courts and swimming pools, trails are not limited to one specialized activity. Instead, they can support a variety of uses on a year-round basis. In 1972 the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation of the U.S. Department of the Interior conducted a National Recreation Survey which estimated the total U.S. participation in various outdoor activities in millions of activity days. The results, summarized in Table 1, demonstrate that the recreation activities suited to trails rank among the most popular.

Walking, bicycling, jogging, horseback riding, and backpacking all can be conducted on abandoned rights of way. Specialized activities such as picnicking, nature walks, and bird watching can also be accommodated. Furthermore, two growing winter sports — snowmobiling and cross-country skiing — can take place where the winter snow cover and local regulations permit.



The abandoned rail trail is a promising alternative to starting from scratch. When land prices and construction costs are spiraling upward, an existing right of way is less costly in terms of acquisition, manpower, materials, and energy. The carrier is often eager to sell, since the line is contributing no revenue at the same time that it is eating into its operating budget in taxes.

Once the right of way is acquired, the actual construction of a trail is a relatively simple matter. The roadbed is already in place, needing only the removal of whatever ties and rails remain, followed by laying of a suitable surface. When the modest expenditures required for construction are considered in light of varied and intensive use, the right-of-way trail must be recognized as a notable bargain.



All aboard the right-of-way trail

While the railroad continues to be an important element in the American industrial system, its role as a carrier of passengers has been greatly diminished. As a result, many of the pathways carved out for it have fallen into disuse and are threatened with destruction. It is fitting that these rights of way be acquired for conversion to trails for hiking and bicycling.

Over the same routes where Americans of the last century once took excursions by rail, their descendants may be found enjoying recreation or commuting from home to work. Like the railway, the trail presents a public resource, a thoroughfare along which all may journey through the landscape. That it is man-made is no reason why it should be any less carefully conserved than a great forest or clean water. Finally, the trail contributes a sense of continuity with our past, enabling new generations of travelers to understand the great economic, social, and technological forces that, like hammer blows on glowing iron, shaped the Nation that was to become modern America.

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RURAL RAILROADS, PRELUDE TO TRAILS TO RA



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