

## Judge Greene's Railroad

In all Iowa there was no railroad quite like the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern. Other lines might be bigger, more powerful and better known throughout the country, but in the Hawkeye State no road was held in higher esteem than the old BCR&N. To begin with, it was an Iowa enterprise, run by Iowans and having headquarters within the state. Save for the Iowa Central, no local road came anywhere near it in size. Apart from being similar in mileage, the Iowa Central was poorer in service, vastly inferior in earning power, and of far less strategic importance. There was just no comparison. The Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern was in a class by itself.

The first president and leading spirit of this big "little" railroad, originally called the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Minnesota, was George Greene, sometimes called the Benjamin Franklin of Cedar Rapids, if not of Iowa. George Greene had many talents, and he was master of every one of them. As Cyrenus Cole put it: "During his [Greene's] time there was no good thing done in Cedar Rapids of which he was not a part, and often he was all of it." With this as an introduction, let us turn to the railroad Greene did so much to foster.



It will be recalled that when the Mississippi & Missouri was organized, it had planned to construct a line to the northwest, going through Cedar Rapids and up the Cedar Valley to the Minnesota border. In the turmoil to build west and southwest, the road to Cedar Rapids had been forgotten. Other interests broached plans to run a north-and-south line through the city. On October 2, 1865, the Cedar Rapids & St. Paul Railway was incorporated to link the two cities in its title. Two years and five days later another group of promoters formed the Cedar Rapids & Burlington Railroad to build a road from Cedar Rapids through Iowa City to Burlington. Neither of these roads ever ran a train, but their backers pooled their resources and united the two companies to form the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Minnesota Railway on June 30, 1868. Instead of going through Iowa City, however, the new road elected to go farther east, through West Liberty, crossing the main line of the Rock Island at that point.

Judge George Greene, Cedar Rapids' leading citizen and among the most ardent advocates of a north-and-south artery of commerce, was the road's first president. Charles Mason, of Burlington, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Iowa, became vice president; and J. D. Cameron of Burlington the chief engineer.

Thanks to Greene, who had valuable legal and financial connections in New York, funds were



easily raised in the East. In 1869, construction started in earnest, and in five years Greene had a compact 368-mile railroad with headquarters in Cedar Rapids. Building had gone on rapidly. Columbus Junction (where it crossed the Rock Island's Leavenworth line) was reached in 1871; and the 119 miles through Cedar Rapids and Cedar Falls to Plymouth Junction was spiked down in 1872. The same year also saw a 94-mile branch from Cedar Rapids to Independence, Oelwein and Postville in the northeast, and the 31-mile Muscatine-Riverside branch in the south. The latter line bisected the main stem at Nichols, below West Liberty. Before the panic of 1873 halted further construction, a feeder line was opened between Vinton and Traer — 24 miles.

The dream of a north-south road through Iowa with Cedar Rapids as its hub was a reality. A connecting link from Burlington down the river to St. Louis was already in operation; and on the north another connection was made at Plymouth Junction with the present-day Milwaukee Road, thereby forming a through line to St. Paul.

To say that Greene was railroad-minded, Cedar Rapids-minded and Iowa-minded is not enough. George Greene was a wonderful person. Born on April 15, 1817, in Alton, Staffordshire, England, Greene's parents had moved to Buffalo, New York, when he was two years old. Orphaned at ten, Greene supported himself and helped his



two younger brothers. He gained a relatively good schooling for his day, reading law in Buffalo and meeting his expenses by working in a physician's office. Shortly after his marriage in 1838 Greene came west to the Territory of Iowa.

It was in Iowa that Greene's versatility quickly became evident. First, assisting in David Dale Owens's geological survey, then becoming one of the earliest school teachers in Linn County, Greene continued to study law as time permitted. Upon being admitted to the bar in 1840, he moved to Marion as a practicing attorney. Elected to the Territorial legislature in the fall of that year he held office until 1842 when he moved to Dubuque.

In that bustling river town he continued his law practice, published a local paper called *The Miner's Express*, and in 1847 became an Associate Justice of the Iowa Supreme Court. He left the bench in 1854 to resume practice in various parts of the state. For a time he lived in Chicago but in 1865 returned to Linn County. In Cedar Rapids his interests proliferated at an amazing rate. As a lawyer, judge, banker, publisher, mayor, churchman, nurseryman, manufacturer, railroad president, opera house owner, educator and public spirited citizen his life was full, active and meaningful. From that time on Judge Greene remained in his beloved Cedar Rapids, which he helped to found, and of which he was a pioneer mayor.

Judge Greene aided in organizing the city's first



bank and later headed the Union Bank. He published the first newspaper, owned the largest hotel (Greene's Hotel) and opened the town's earliest legitimate theatre (Greene's Opera House). His Cedar Valley Variety Steam Works, which manufactured a wide range of farm implements, aided in bringing diversified industry to the community. But this is not nearly all: he helped organize a score of institutions including a water works, a hospital and a cemetery.

A lifelong communicant, Judge Greene aided in building the Grace Episcopal Church, of which he was its first Sunday School Superintendent. He also found time to head the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, the forerunner of Coe College. Best of all, however, he liked overseeing his Mound Farm, probably the first nursery in that locality. How the grand old man enjoyed showing his friends some of the 150,000 trees represented therein. Indeed, he had over 100 varieties of apple trees alone and a catalogue of the Mound Farm nurseries filled 20 pages.

If Greene can be said to have had one dominant interest, it was railroading. He was a rail enthusiast of the first order. Many and varied were the "paper" lines, surveyed, sometimes graded, but never operated, which he backed. Among them was the Dubuque & Keokuk, of which he was president. Dubbed the "Ram's Horn" because of its curious shape, the road was to go from Du-



buque to Keokuk by way of Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. However, when Cedar Rapids saw its first railroad in 1856, Greene was a director and a zealous supporter. That line was the Chicago, Iowa & Nebraska, now part of the North Western system. He was president of at least a half-dozen operating railroads and actively associated in even more railroad construction companies and railroad manufacturing concerns.

While heading the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Minnesota he made many trips east to finance construction, secure rolling stock and solicit traffic. Of these business activities he kept a diary which bubbled over with his various hobbies.

One of Greene's right-hand men was Dr. John F. Ely, vice president of the railroad. He came to Cedar Rapids in 1848 shortly after getting his "MD" from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. John's trip was occasioned by the death of his brother, Alexander, who was a prominent Cedar Rapids businessman. John, in helping his brother's widow manage the estate, found his sister-in-law and the town to his liking. He subsequently married the lady and made Cedar Rapids his home.

Closely associated with John Ely was S. L. Dows, and both were active in organizing railroad construction companies. Dows, like the doctor, was a director of the BCR&M. Finally, there was William Greene, one of the two brothers of Judge



NIGHT SCENES AT ROCK ISLAND STATION IN DES MOINES

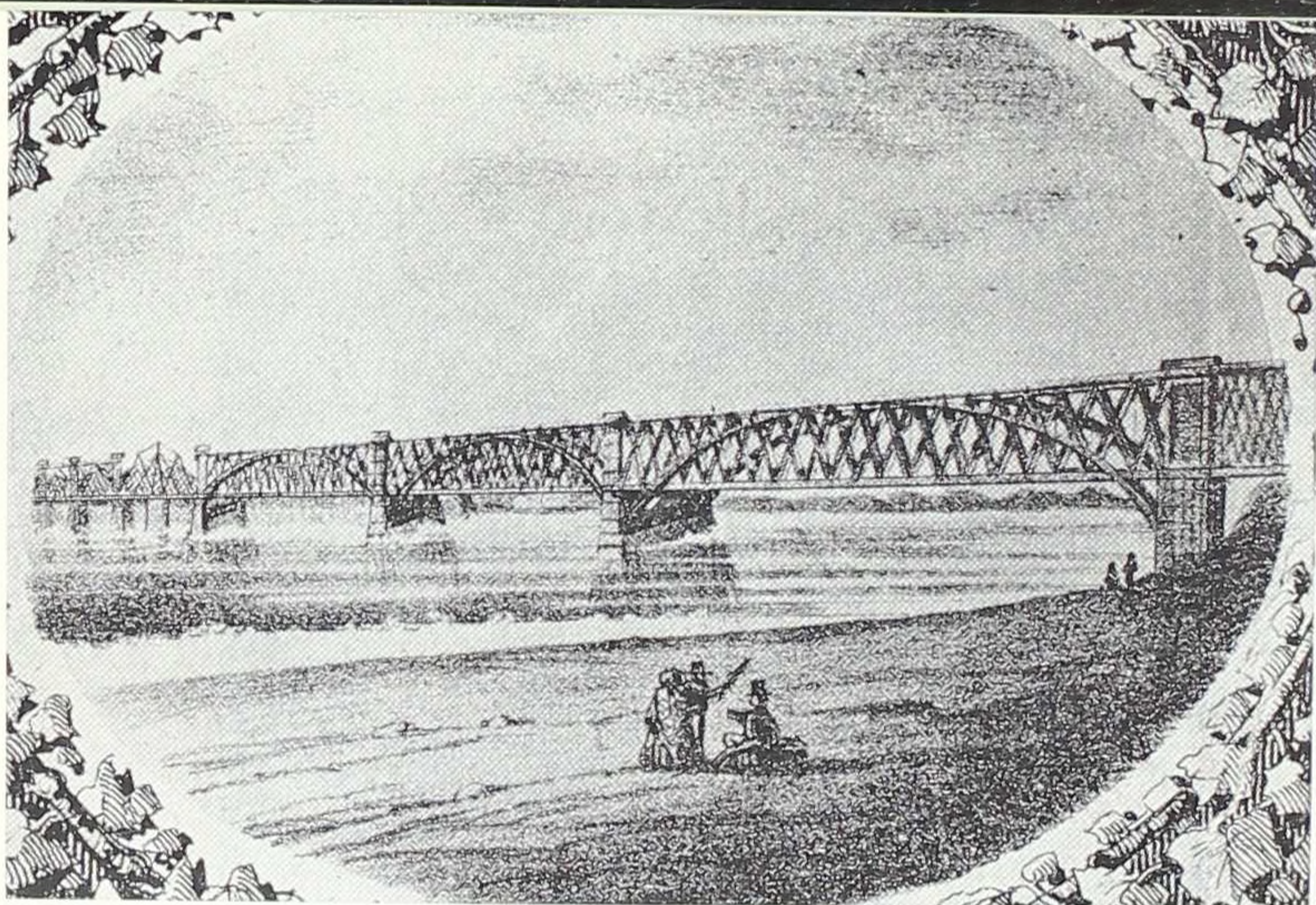


East-West and North-South *Rockets* meet in Des Moines.

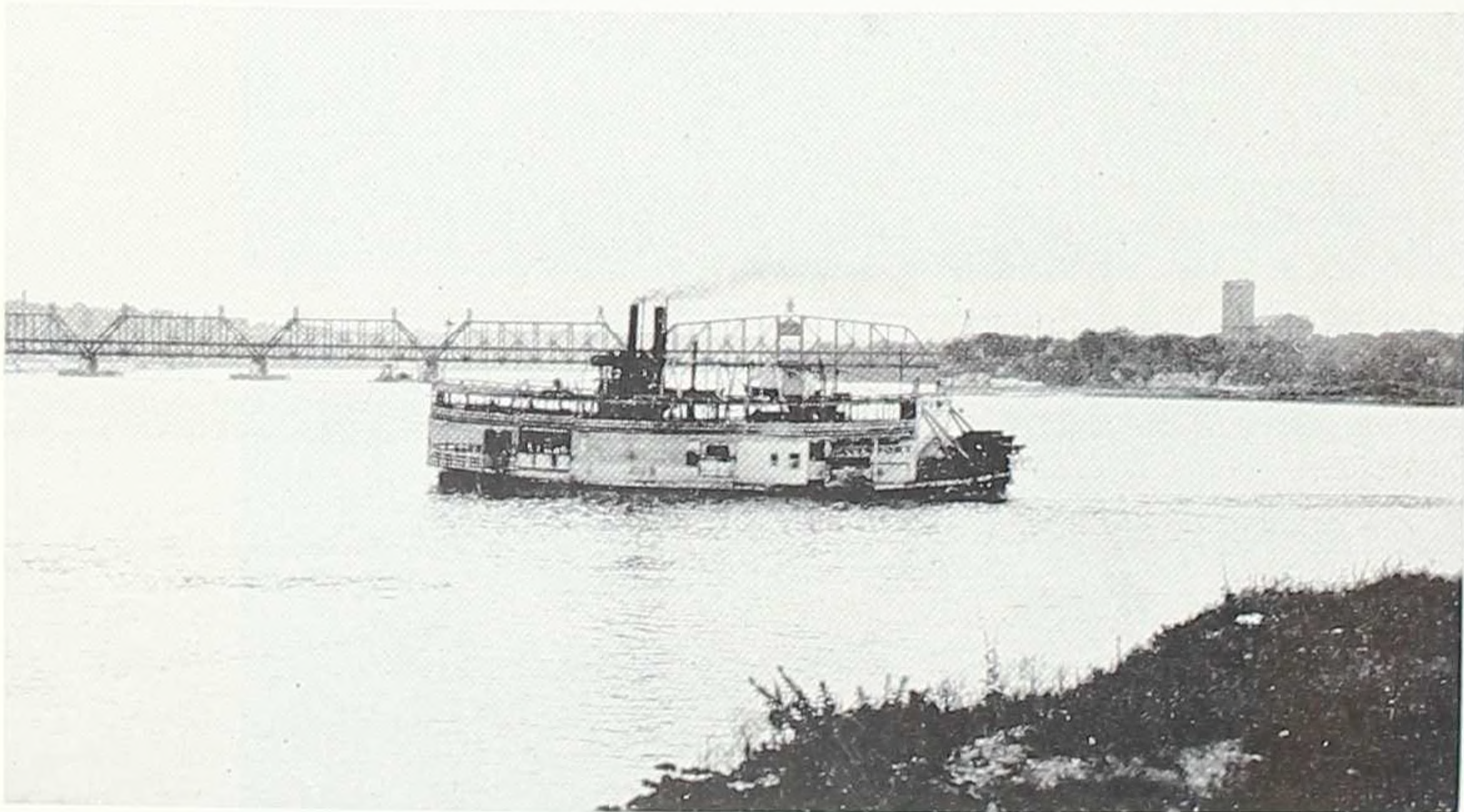


Westbound *Rocky Mountain Rocket* pauses at Des Moines on its 1,061 mile run to Denver. The Rock Island is the only railroad now hauling passengers and mail in and out of Des Moines

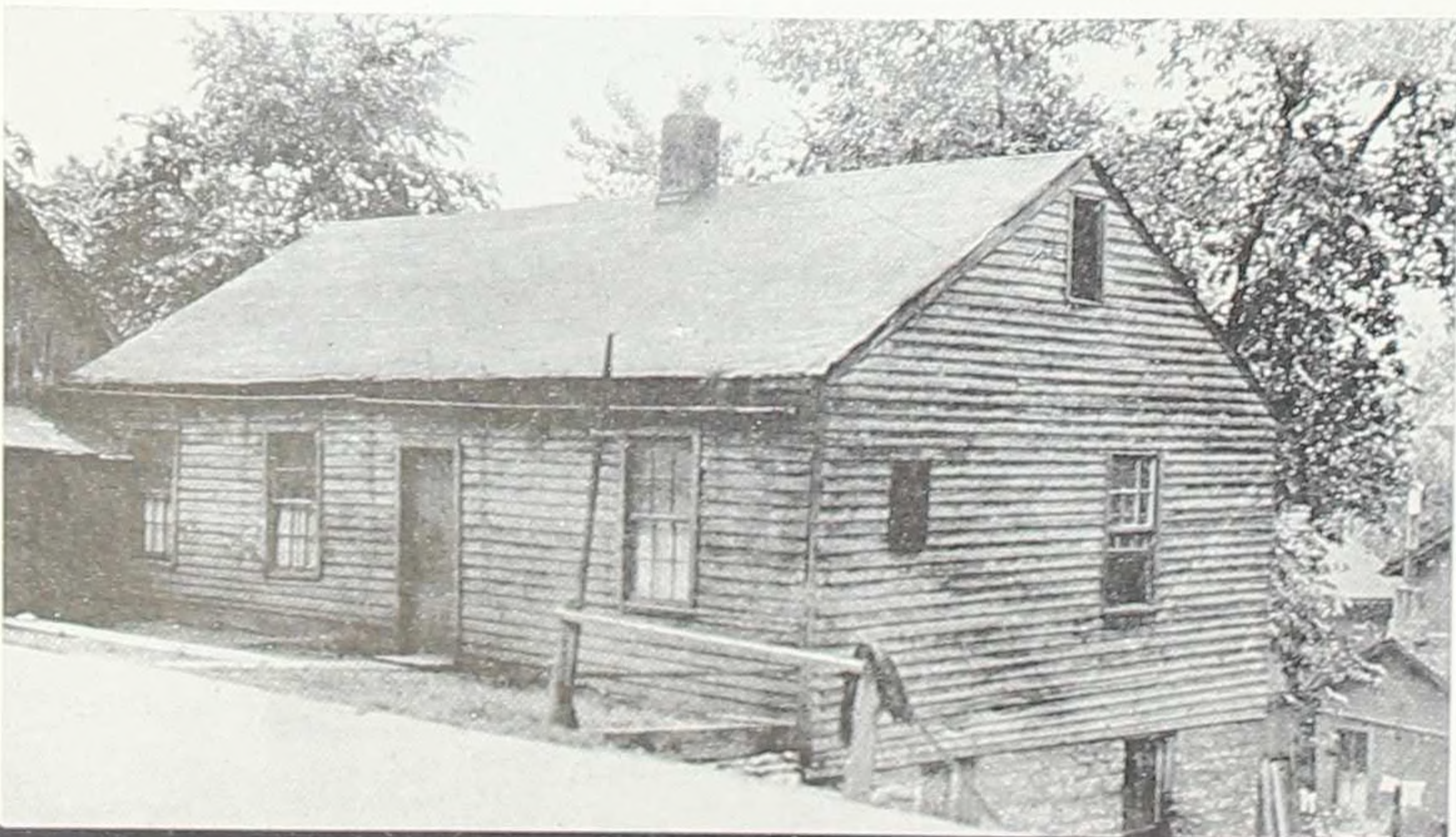




First  
Mississippi  
Bridge at  
Davenport



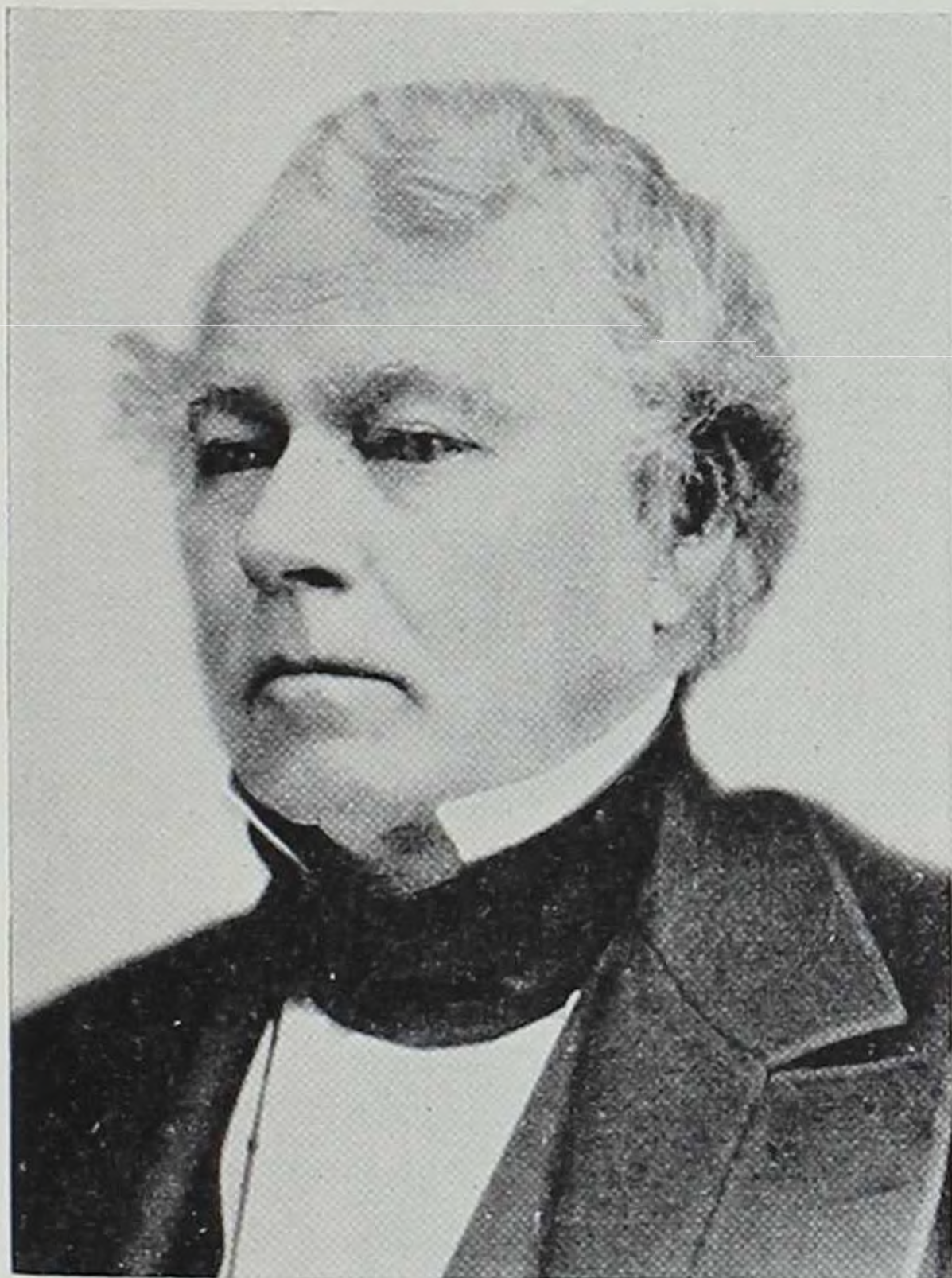
Ferry  
at  
Davenport



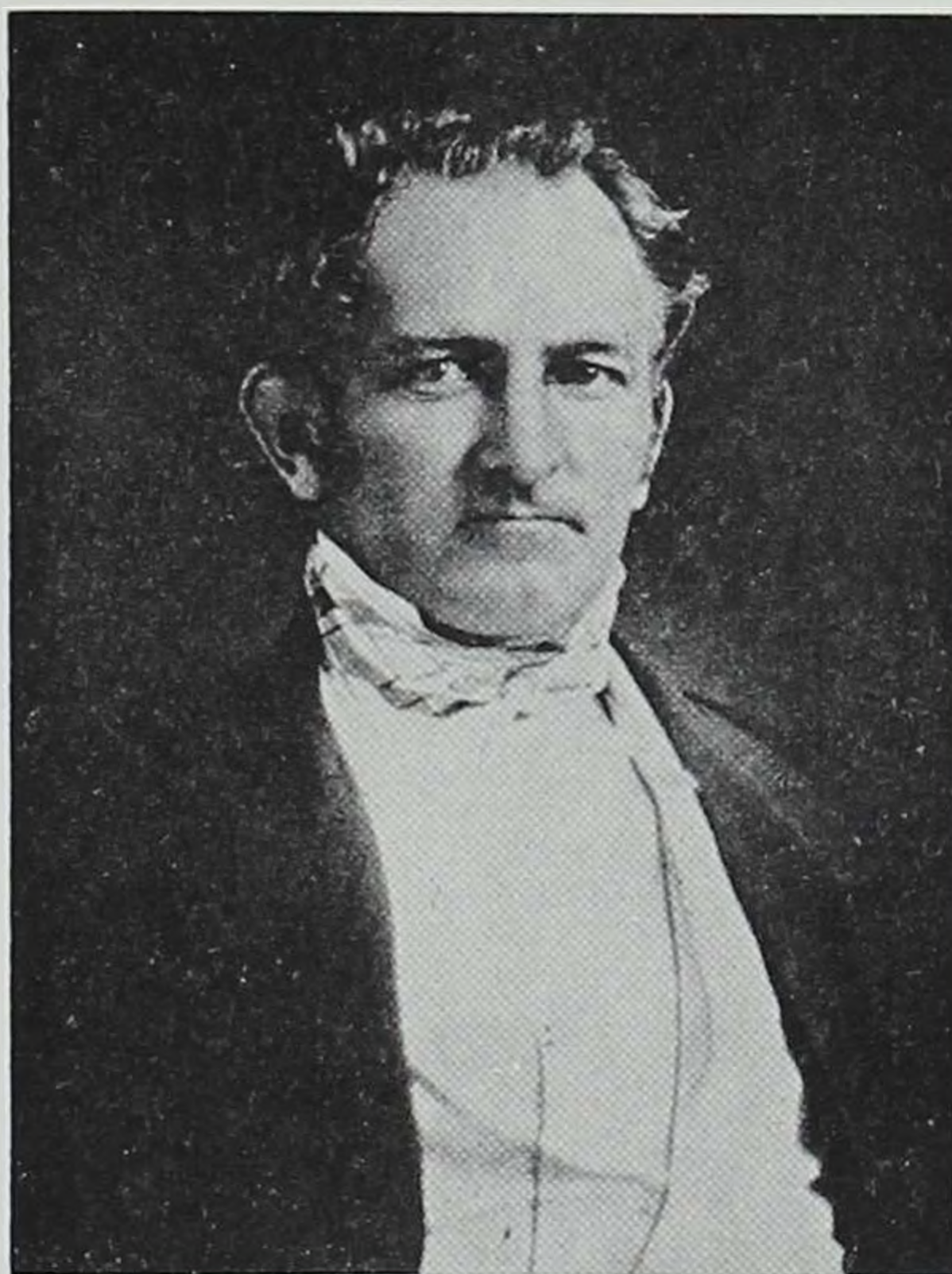
Antoine  
LeClaire  
Home —  
First  
Depot  
in Iowa



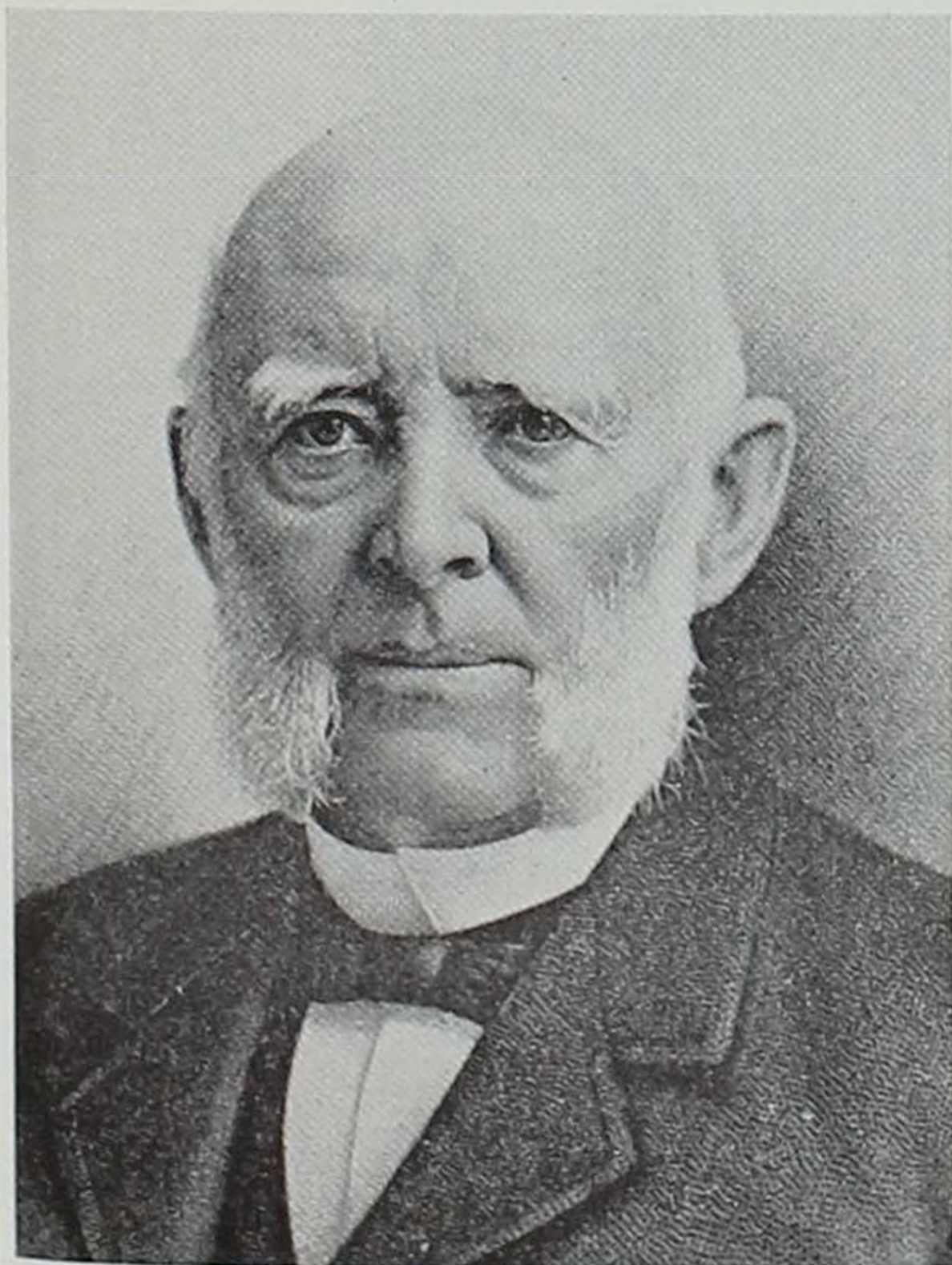
BUILDERS OF THE ROCK ISLAND



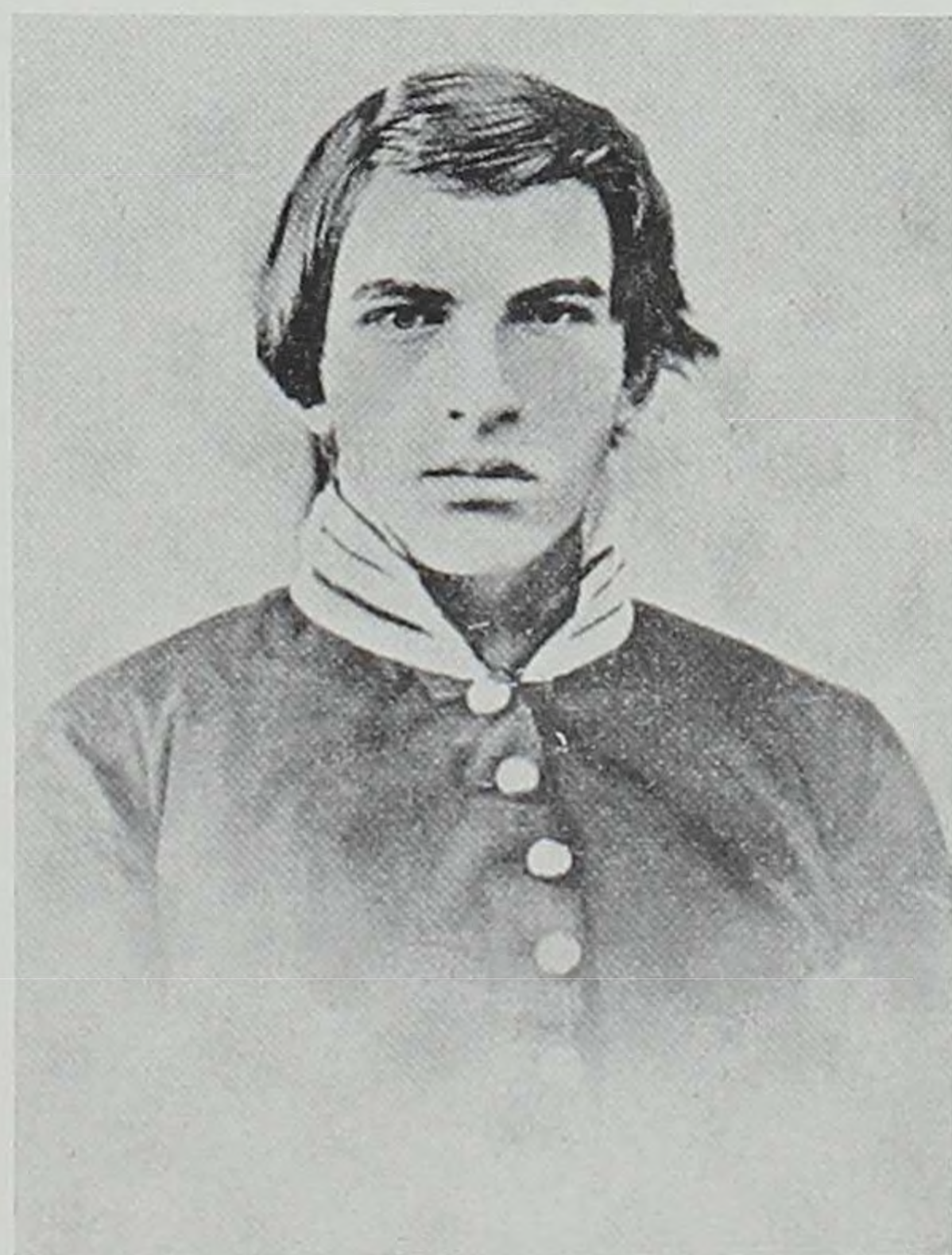
JOSEPH SHEFFIELD



HENRY FARNAM



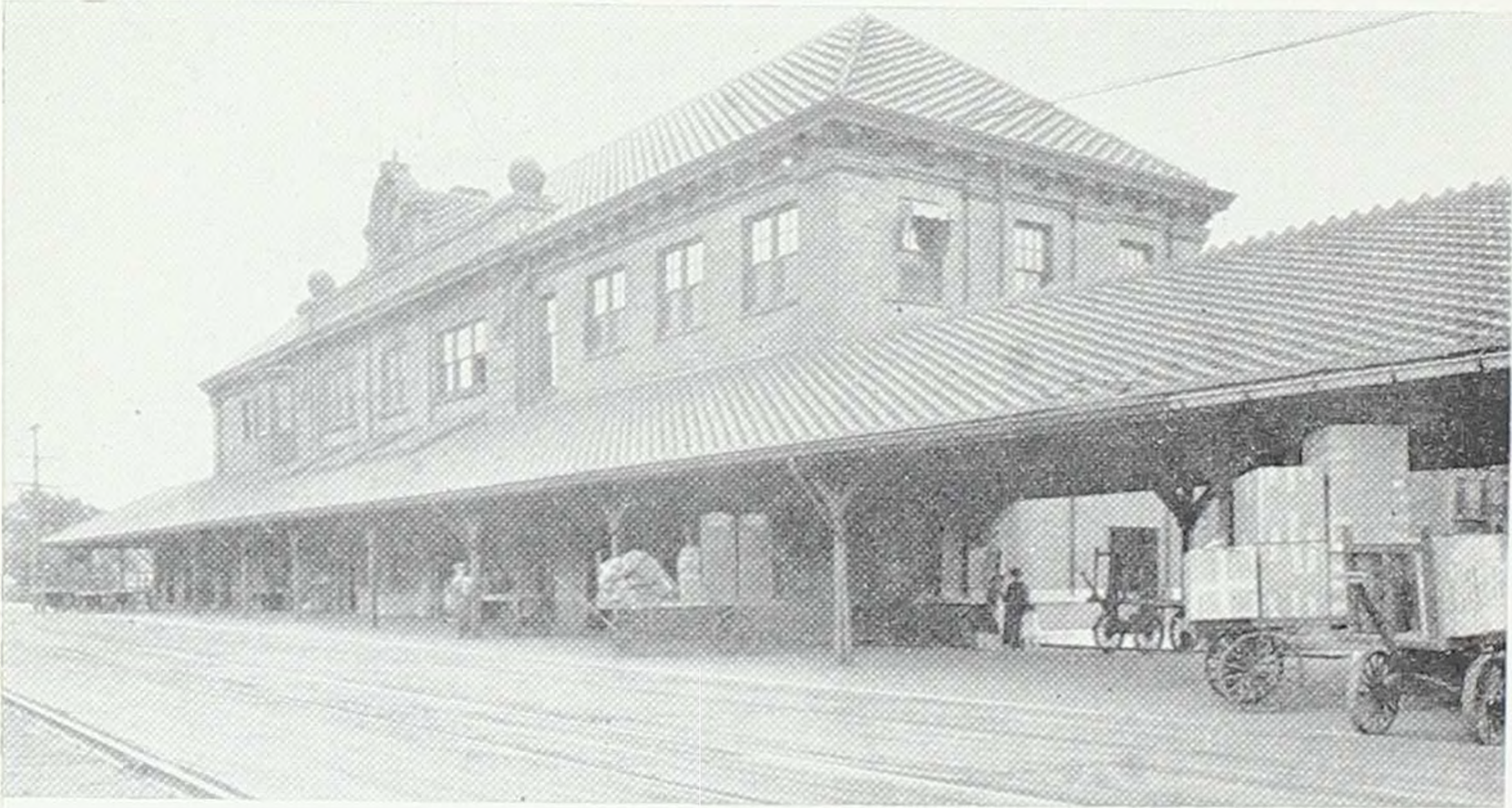
PETER A. DEY



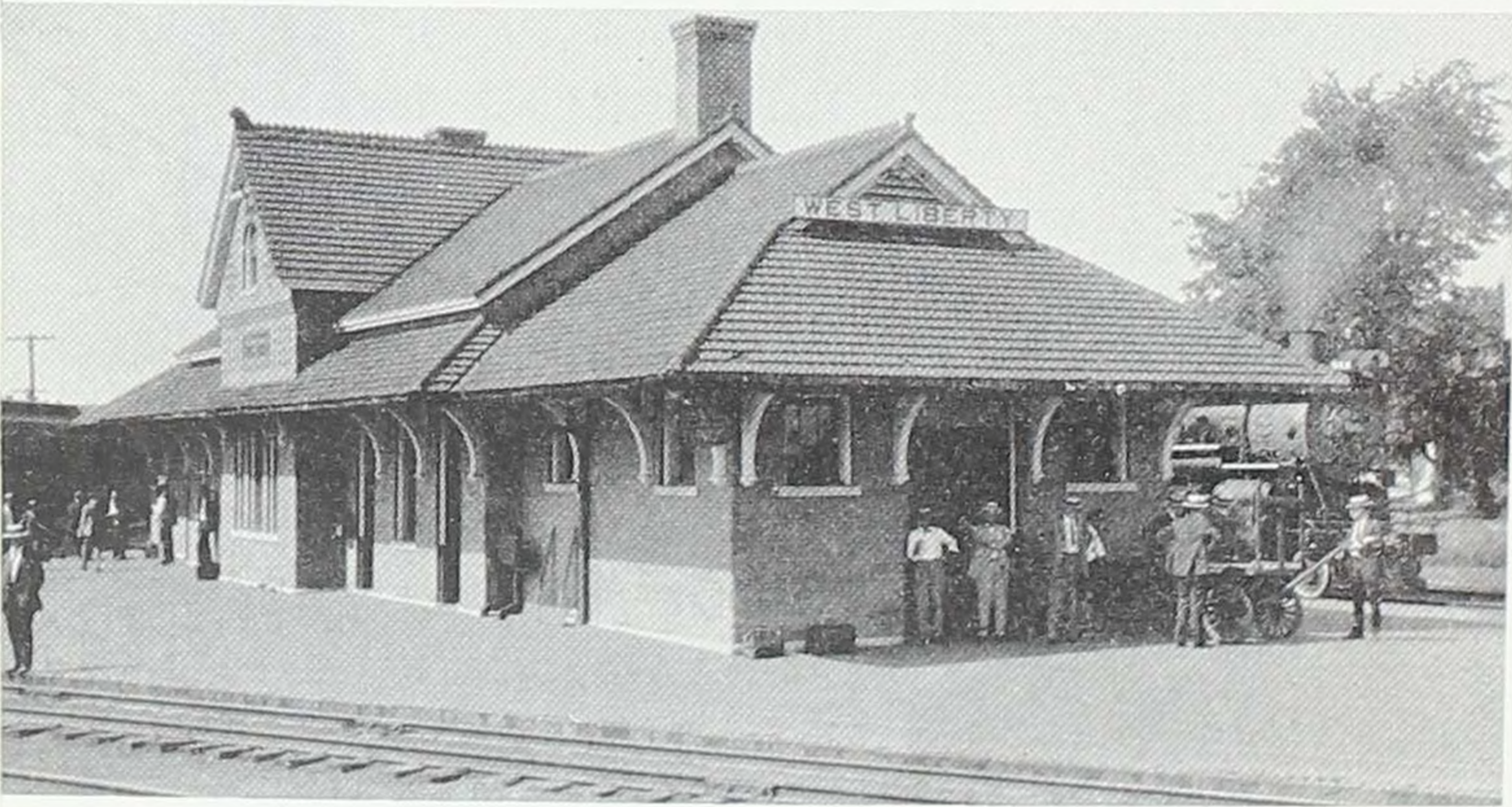
GRENVILLE M. DODGE



DEPOTS — REAL AND FANCIFUL



Davenport



West Liberty



Muscatine

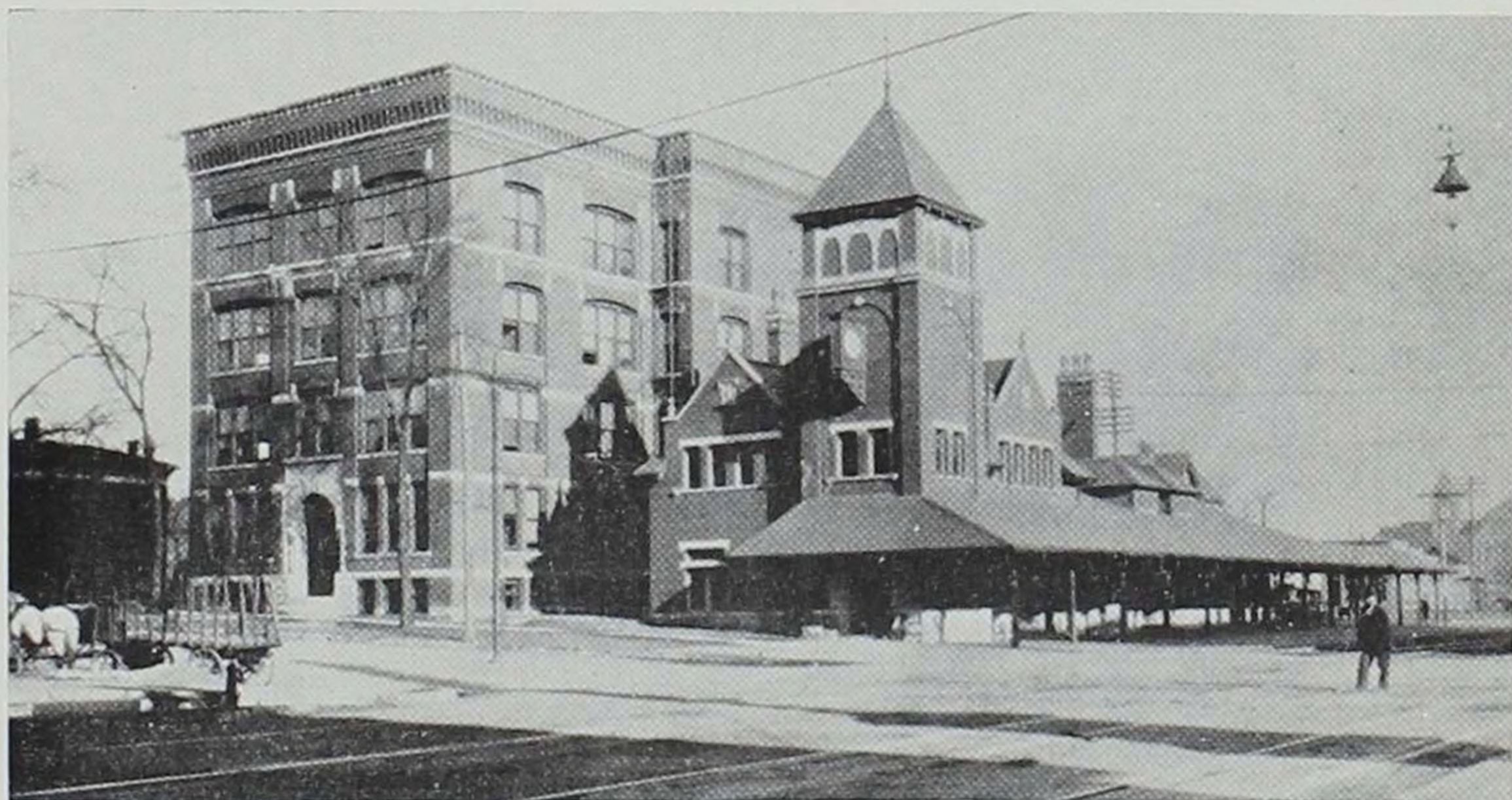


CENTER OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

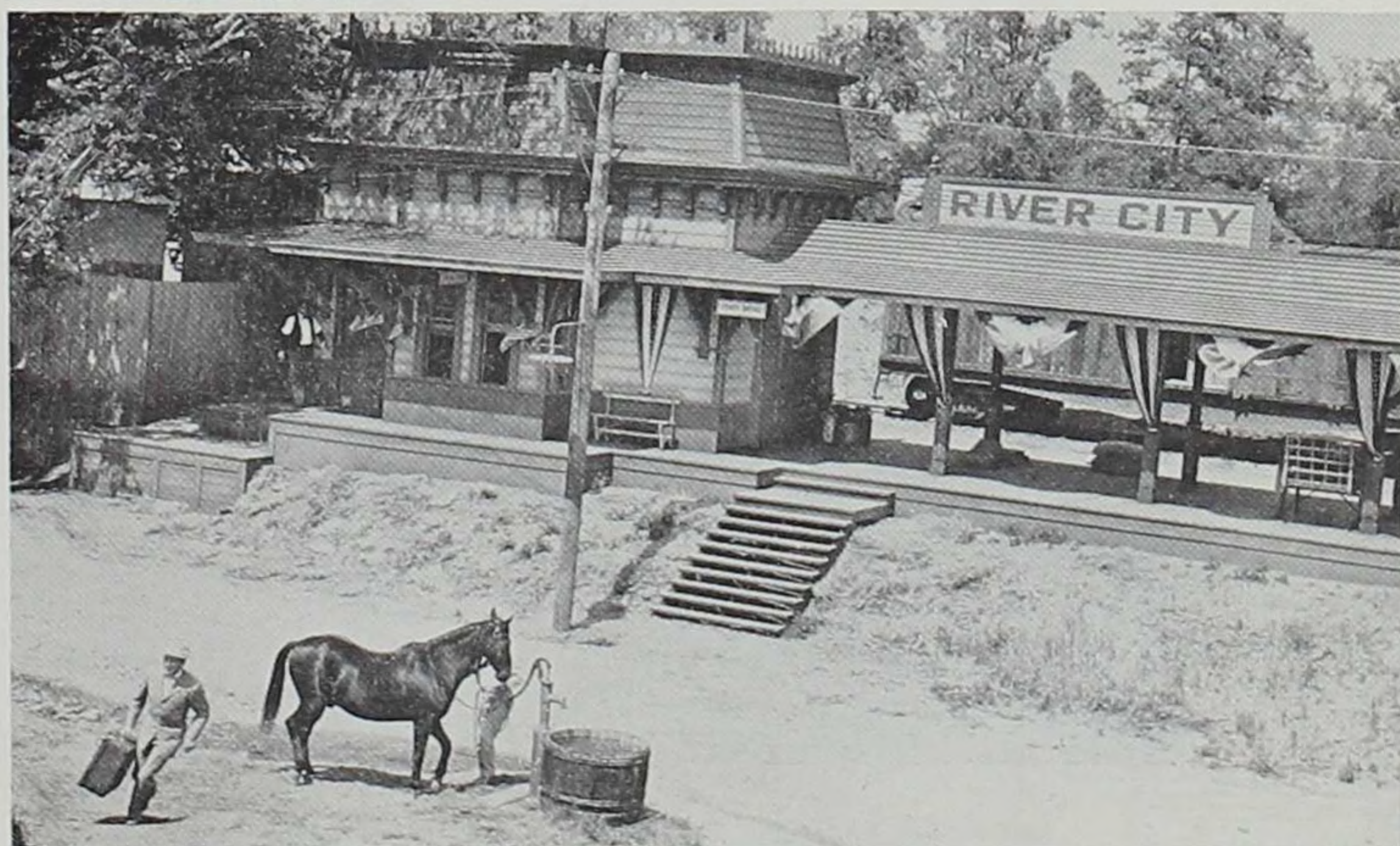
Iowa City



Cedar Rapids



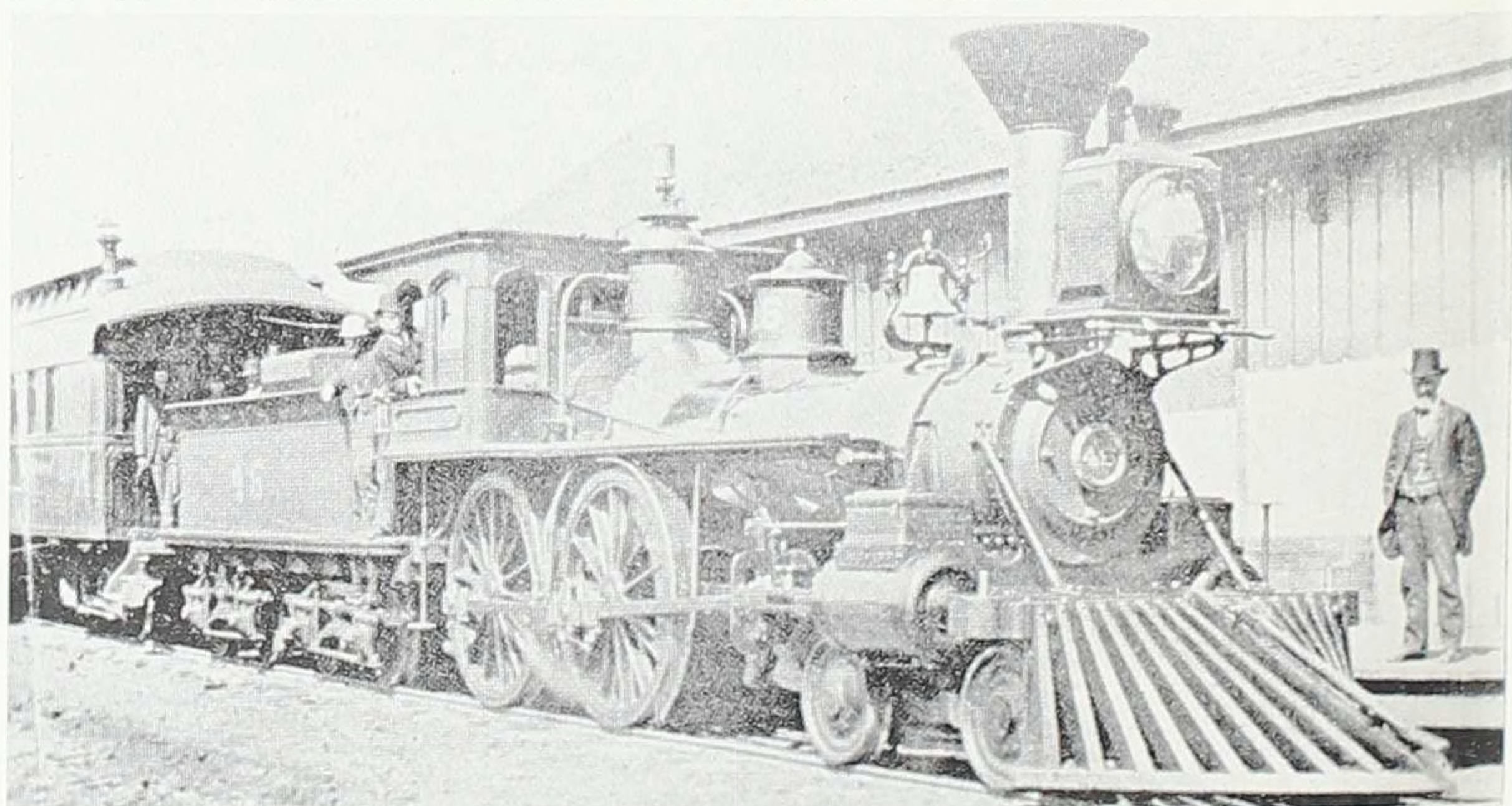
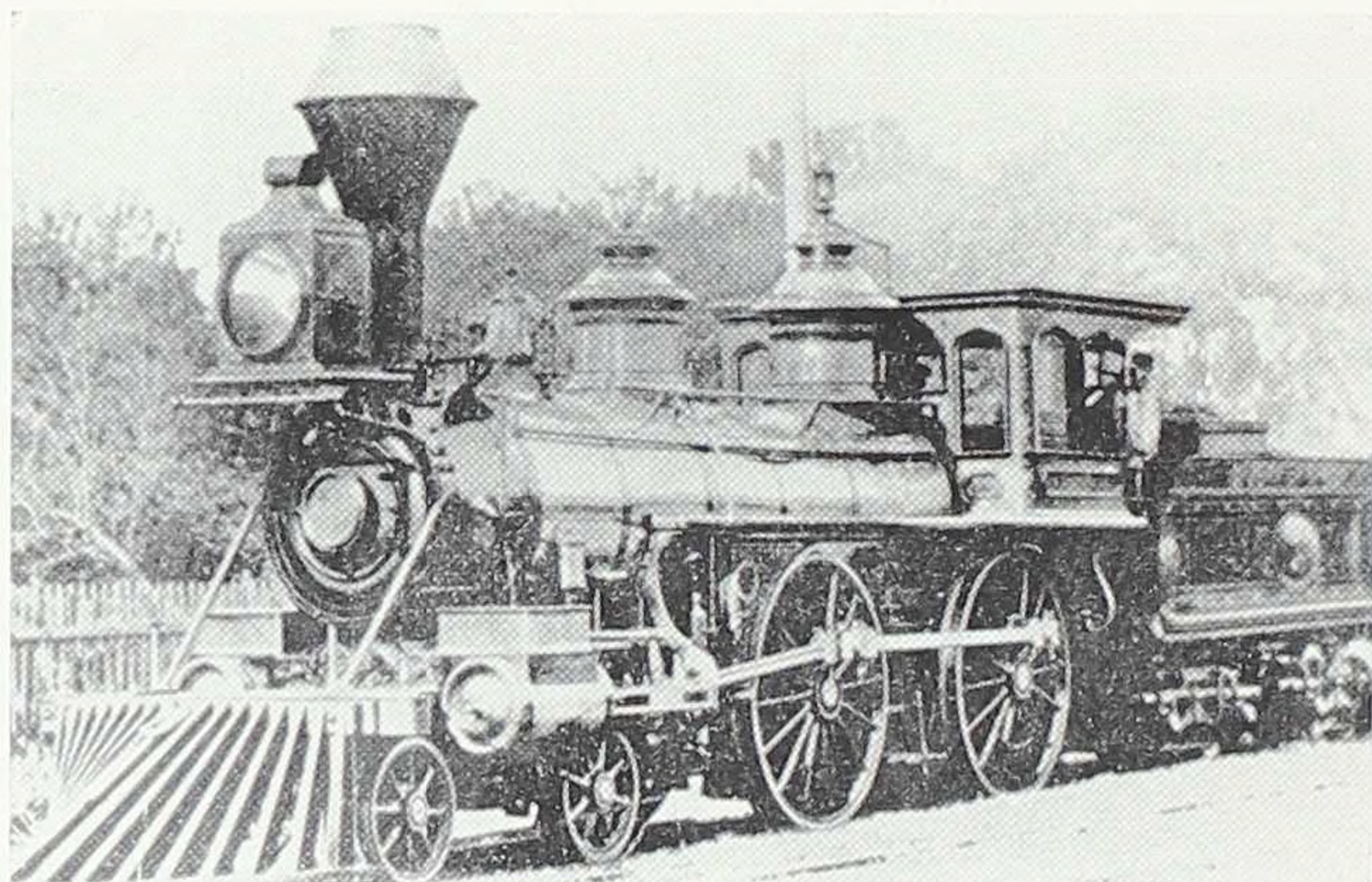
Mason City  
home of  
"The Music  
Man"



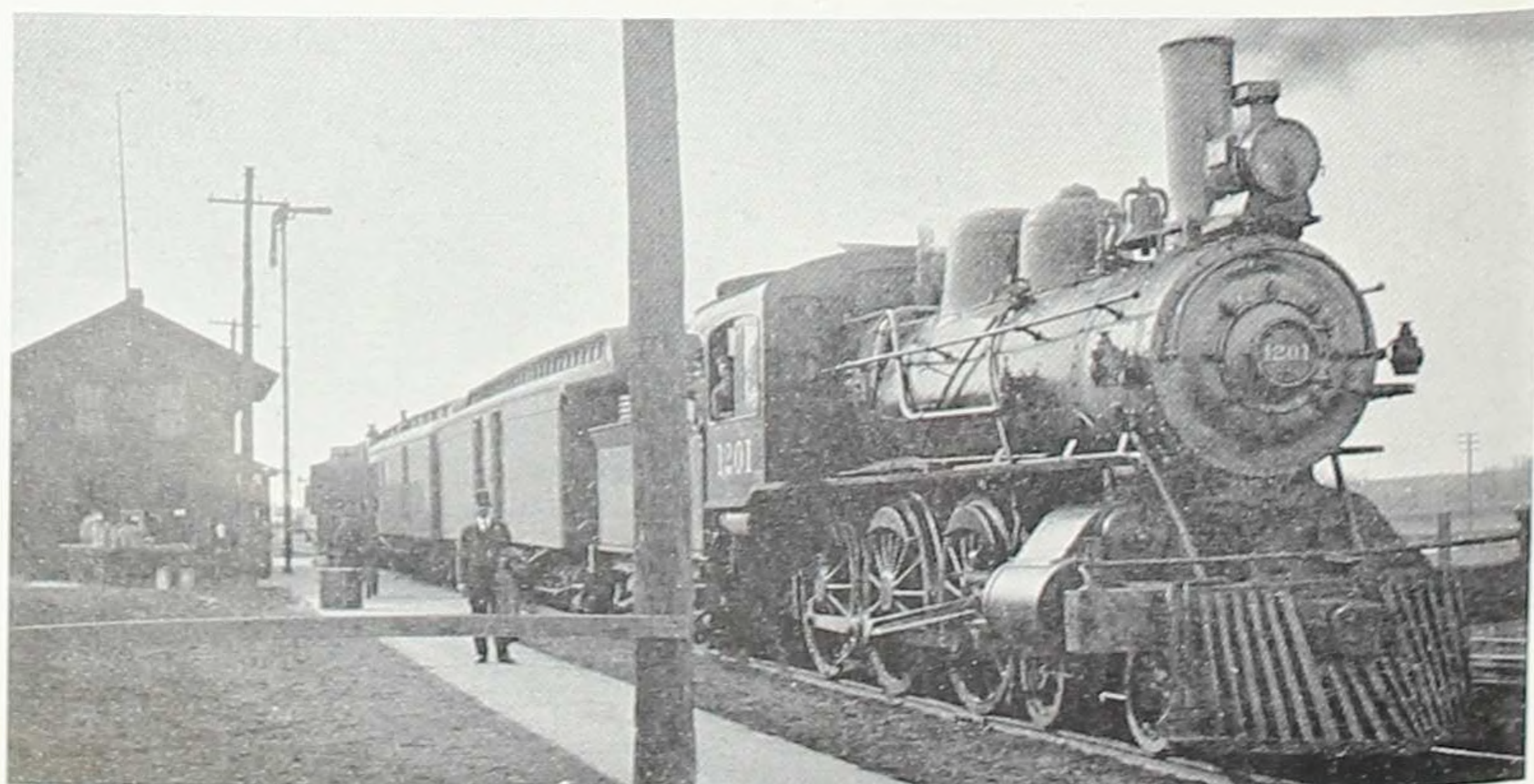


# THE STEAM AGE

Famous  
*Silver Engine*  
*America*  
Exhibited at  
Paris Exhibition  
— Purchased  
by Rock Island  
in 1869.



Early train at Indianola in 1881.

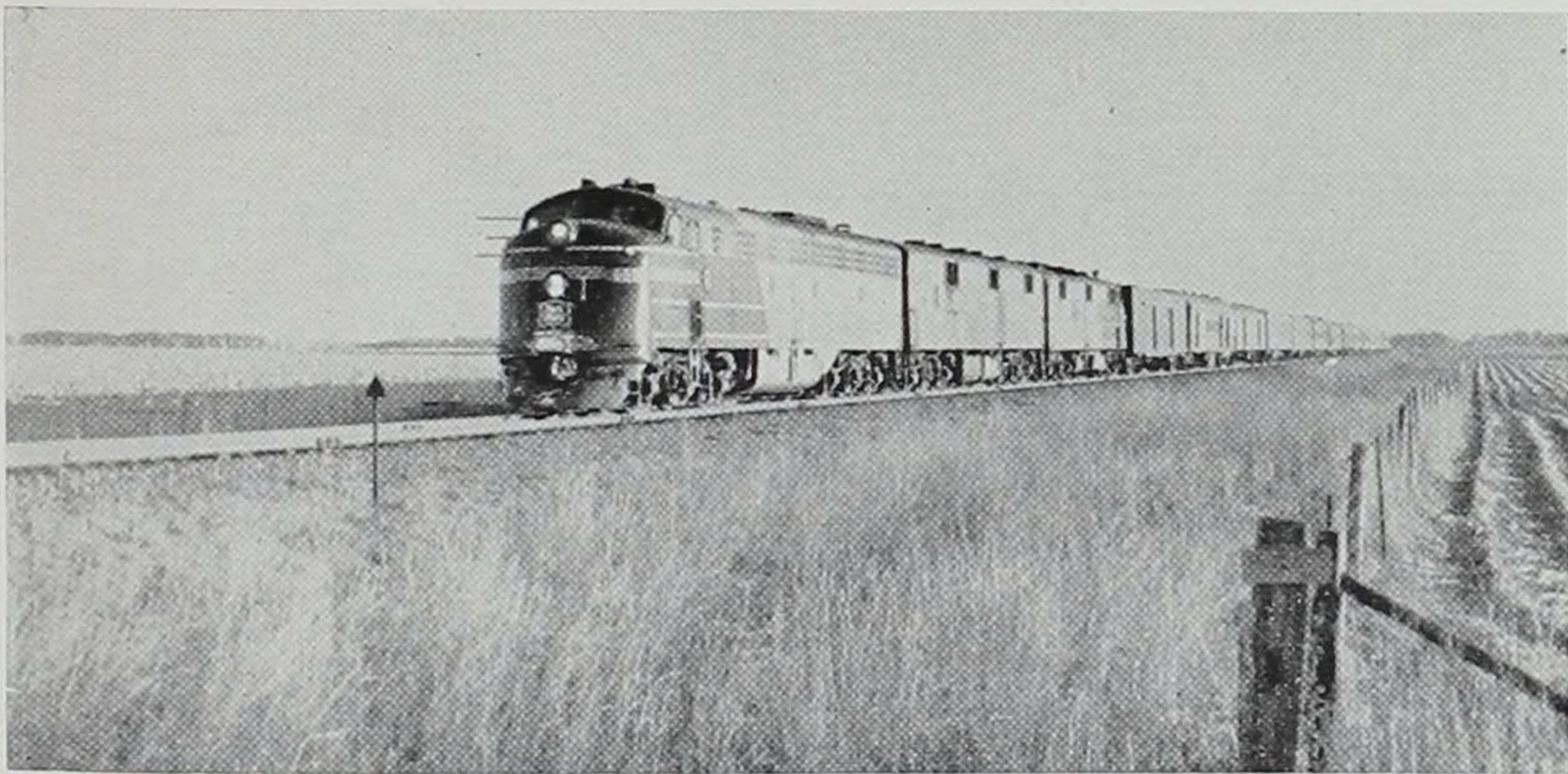


Middle and lower photos from V. P. Vander Maas Collection

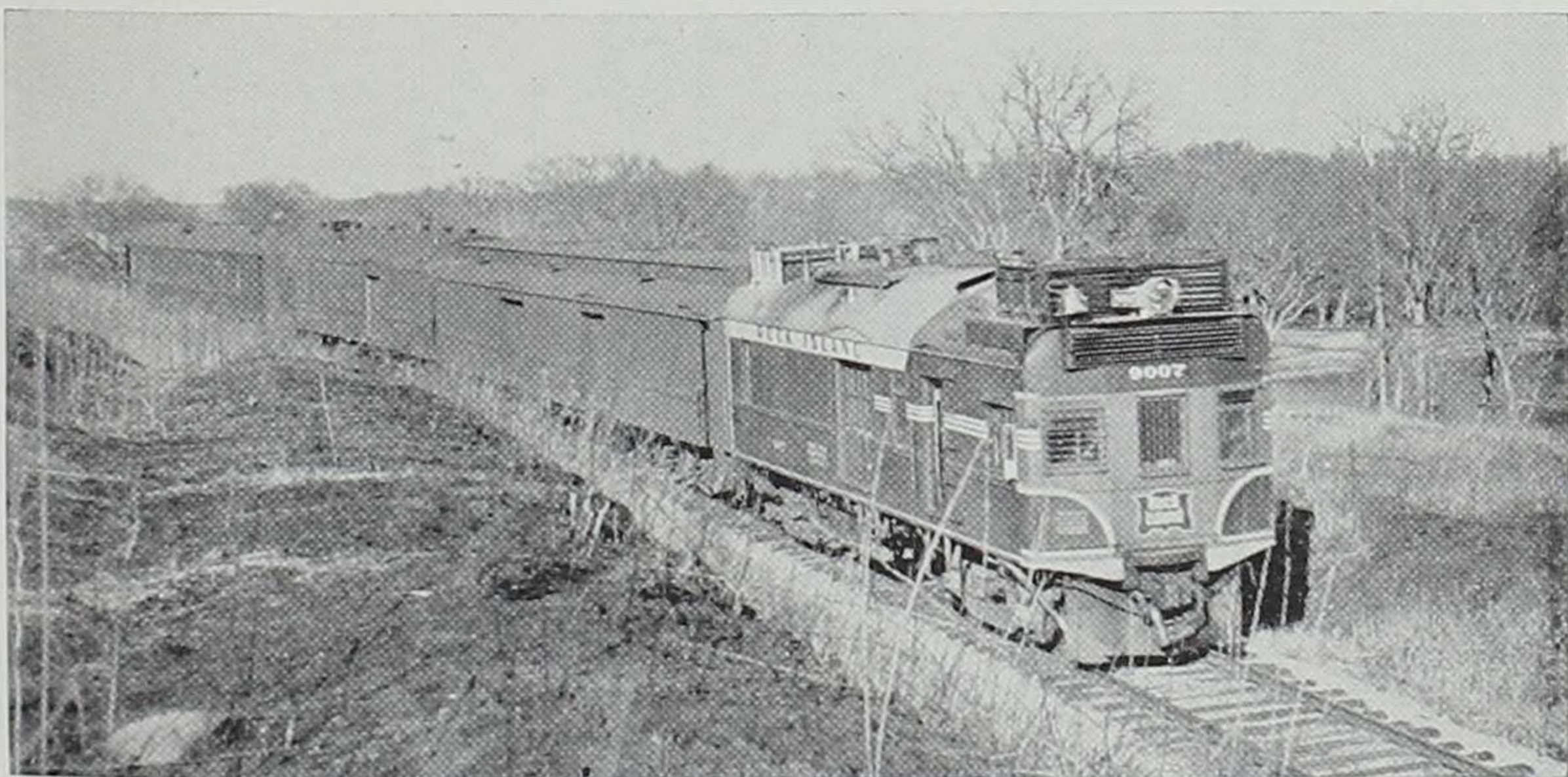
Ten-wheeler at Reinbeck on Watertown line of BCR&N.



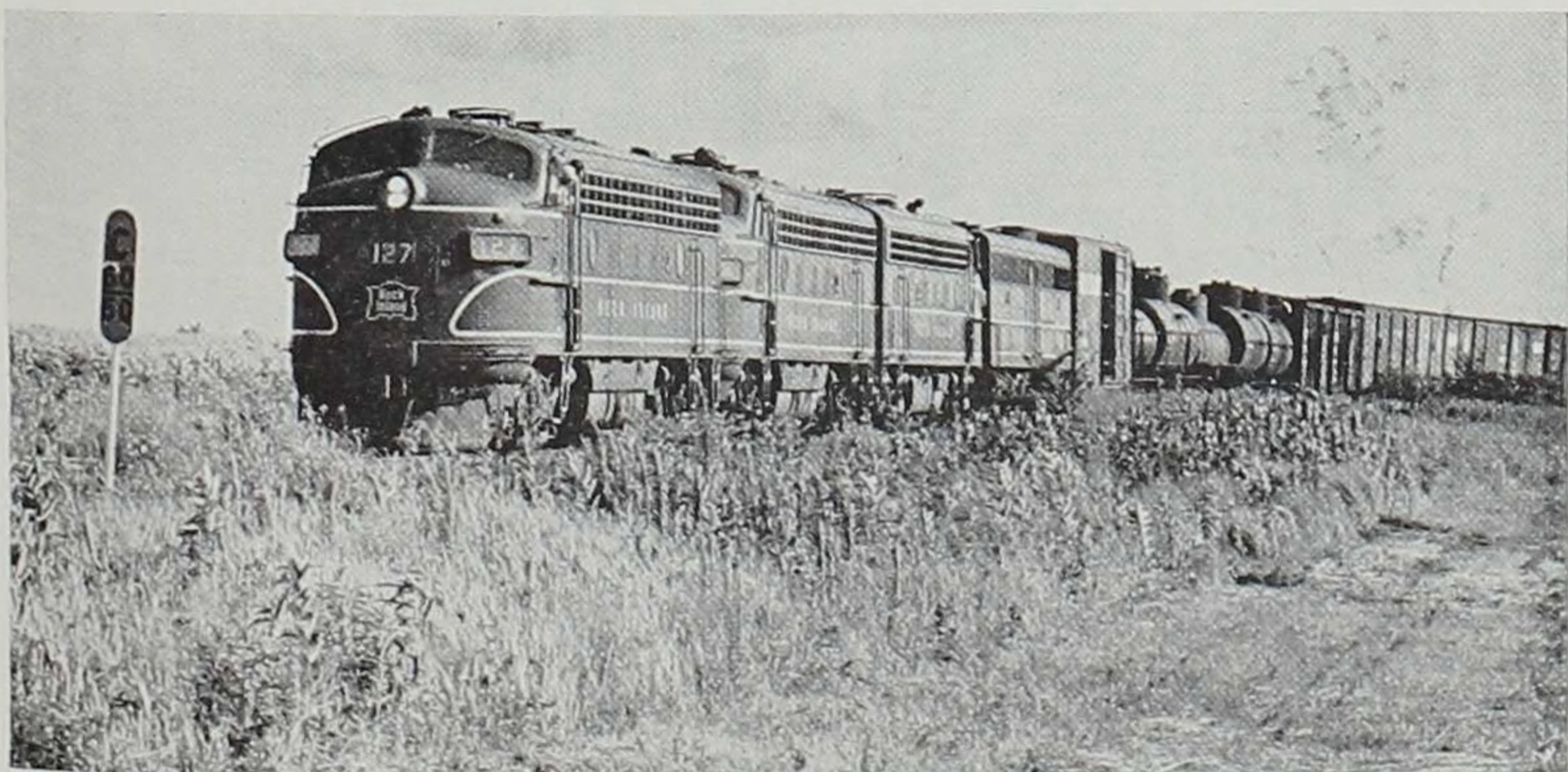
THE DIESEL AGE



*Twin-Star Rocket near Kensett on way to Houston.*



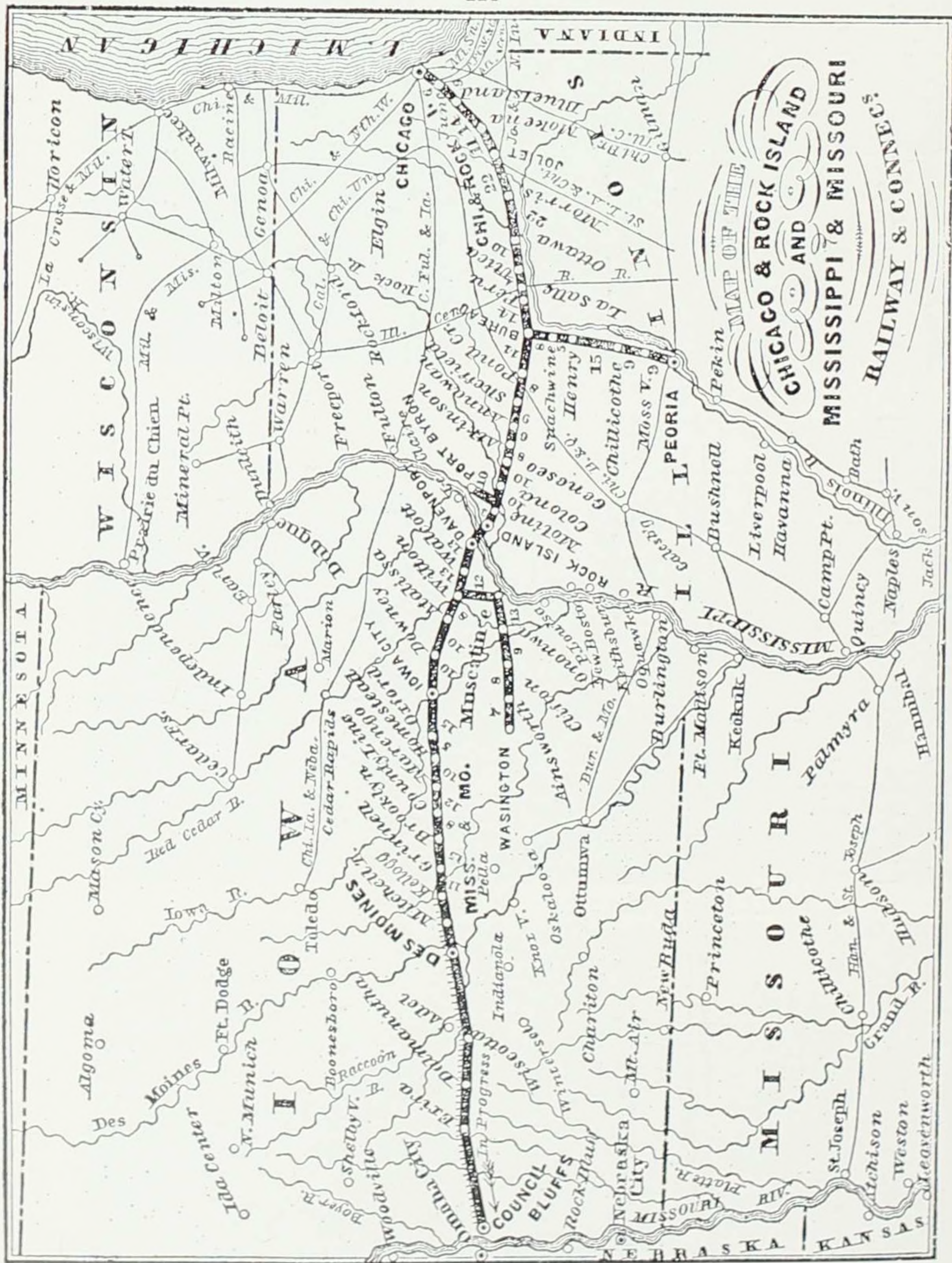
*Local passenger train near Graettinger in 1954.*



*Photos courtesy Don Hofsommer*

*Fast Rocket freight in southern Iowa.*





Map from Appleton's Illustrated Railway and Steam Navigation Guide. The 1865 edition contained seventy-five railway maps and much information about the towns and villages through which the trains passed in the United States and Canada.

From State Historical Society Library



# CHICAGO AND ROCK ISLAND RAILWAY LINE,

Composed of Chicago & R. I., Peoria & Bureau Valley, and Mississippi & Missouri R'ways.

CHAS. W. DURANT, Pres., and JOHN F. TRACY, Vice-Pres. Chicago & R. I. Railway, Chicago. JOHN A. DIX, Pres. Missis. & Missouri Railway, New York. G. H. BEARDSLEY, Asst. Gen. Supt., Chicago. W. H. WHITMAN, and A. KIMBALL, Asst. Supts., Rock Island, Iowa. EVERETT ST. JOHN, Chief Ticket Clerk, and LEWIS VIELIE, Chief Freight Clerk, Chicago, Ill. [Sept. 18.]

## [ADVERTISEMENT.]

### THE CHICAGO AND ROCK ISLAND RAILWAY LINE

is the only Direct Route from Chicago to Joliet, La Salle, Peoria, Rock Island, Davenport, Muscatine, Washington, Iowa City, Des Moines, Council Bluffs, Omaha, Denver City, and all points in Central and Western Iowa and Nebraska.

Passenger Depot, cor. Van Buren and Sherman Streets, Chicago.

An EXPRESS TRAIN leaves Chicago daily, running through to Kellogg and Washington without change of cars, at the Mississippi; making direct connections at La Salle with trains of the Illinois Central Railway for Dubuque, Galena, Cairo, St. Louis, and intermediate points; at Peoria, with the Peoria, Oquawka and Burlington Railway for Galesburg and Burlington; at Grinnell and Washington, with Western Stage Co.'s Line of Mail Stages to Oskaloosa, Pella, Knoxville, Indianola, Fort des Moines, Winterset, Council Bluffs, Omaha City, Denver City, and all the principal places in Central and Western Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska.

THROUGH TICKETS, via this Line, can be procured at all the principal Railway offices in the United States and Canada.

G. H. BEARDSLEY,  
Asst. Gen'l Supt.

#### CONNECTIONS.

- <sup>1</sup> Railways diverging from Chicago.
- <sup>2</sup> Junction of Mich. Sou. Railway.
- <sup>3</sup> Junc. of Joliet & Nor. Indiana, and Chicago, Alton & St. Louis Railways.
- <sup>4</sup> Crossing of Ill. Central Railway.
- <sup>5</sup> Peoria & Bureau Val. Railway.
- <sup>6</sup> Crossing of Peoria & Oquawka Railway.
- <sup>7</sup> Crossing of Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railway.

Way Fares, about three cents per mile.

Acc. Exp. Mail. Mls.				STATIONS.		Mls. Exp. Mail. Acc.			
P. M.	P. M.	A. M.		LEAVE	ARRIVE	A. M.	P. M.	A. M.	
4 45	9 00	9 00	0	Chicago <sup>1</sup>	315	5 00	4 30	9 50	
5 10	9 25	9 25	7	Junction <sup>2</sup>	308		4 05	9 25	
5 35	9 55	9 50	16	Blue Island	299	4 10	3 40	9 00	
5 58		10 10	23	Bremen	292		3 20	8 35	
6 13		10 25	30	Mokena	285		3 05	8 17	
6 45	11 10	10 55	40	Joliet <sup>3</sup>	275	2 47	2 40	7 45	
P. M.	11 45	11 20	51	Minooka	264	2 18	2 10	A. M.	
	12 15	11 45	62	Morris	253	1 45	1 45		
		12 10	72	Seneca	243	1 15	1 20		
	1 00	12 22	77	Marseilles	238	1 00	1 05		
	1 20	12 45	84	Ottawa	231	12 40	12 45		
	1 45	1 10	94	Utica	221	12 15	12 20		
	1 55	1 20	99	La Salle <sup>4</sup>	216	12 00	12 05		
	2 05	1 30	100	Peru	215	11 50	11 55		
		1 55	110	Trenton	205		11 30		
	2 55	2 25	114	Bureau	201	11 15	11 20		
	3 00	2 25	114	Bureau <sup>5</sup>		11 00	11 00		
	3 30	2 45	122	Snatchwine		10 05	10 32		
	3 50	3 00	128	Henry		9 45	10 15		
	4 18	3 20	134	Lacon		9 20	9 58		
	4 50	3 40	142	Chillicothe		8 50	9 35		
	5 25	4 05	151	Mossville		8 20	9 10		
	6 00	4 30	161	Peoria <sup>6</sup>		7 45	8 45		
	3 17	2 45	122	Tiskilwa	193	10 37	10 40		
	3 34	3 03	129	Pond Creek <sup>7</sup>	186	10 20	10 20		
	3 56	3 25	137	Sheffield	178	10 00	10 00		
	4 20	3 50	146	Annawan	169	9 35	9 35		
	4 35	4 05	152	Atkinson	163	9 20	9 20		
	4 55	4 25	159	Geneseo	156	9 00	9 00		
	5 25	4 55	170	Colona	145	8 33	8 35		
	5 54	5 24	179	Moline	136	8 06	8 06		
	6 00	5 30	182	arr } Rock } lve	183	8 00	8 00		
	6 05	5 35	182	lve } Island } arr	183	8 00	7 50		
	6 45	5 50	184	Davenport	181	7 45	7 35		
	7 25	P. M.	196	Walcott	118	7 00	A. M.		
	7 40		201	Fulton	114	6 48			
	7 50		203	Durant	111	6 40			
	8 05		209	Wilton	106	6 25			
	8 10		209	Wilton		6 20			
	9 10		222	Muscatine		5 15			
	9 55		234	Ononwa		3 55			
	10 40		244	Clifton		8 18			
	11 05		252	Ainsworth		2 52			
	11 30		259	Washington		2 30			
	8 20		212	Moscow	102	6 10			
	8 35		217	Atalissa	97	5 55			
	8 50		222	West Liberty	92	5 40			
	9 35		238	Iowa City	76	5 00			
	10 10		253	Oxford	61	4 10			
	10 55		269	Marengo	46	3 25			
	11 20		281	Victor	33	2 50			
	11 40		289	Brooklyn	26	2 30			
	12 25		304	Grinnell	11	1 50			
	1 00		315	Kellogg	0	1 15			
P. M.				ARRIVE	LEAVE	P. M.			

Going West—Chicago to Rock Island and Kellogg.

Going East.—Kellogg to Rock Island and Chicago.

From State Historical Society Library

Stations on the Rock Island from Chicago to Kellogg in Appleton Illustrated Railway Guide for 1865.





*(Our Stations will accept shares in Shares.)*

Souvenir "Bill of Fare" of "The Great Rock Island Route" around 1890.

PUT THIS IN YOUR POCKET.

## Breakfast and Supper.

BROILED AND FRIED.

Veal Cutlets, Plain or Breaded.

Beef Steak, Plain, with Mushrooms, with Tomato Sauce.

Breakfast Bacon. Sausage. Mutton Chops, Plain or Breaded.

Calves Liver, with Salt Pork. Sugar-Cured Ham.

FISH.

Lake Whitefish. Salt Mackerel.

OYSTERS.

Fried.

Raw.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Fried Mush.

Codfish Balls.

Stewed Chicken.

COLD.

Beef Tongue.

Pork and Beans.

EGGS.

Fried.

Scrambled.

Omelets, Plain, with Ham, with Herbs, with Cheese, with Tomatoes.

VEGETABLES.

Stewed Potatoes.

Saratoga Chips.

BREAD.

Vienna Bread. Buckwheat Cakes. Hot Rolls. Hot Corn Bread.

Plain Toast. Buttered Toast. Milk Toast. Oatmeal Porridge.

Maple Syrup.

Peaches.

Oranges.

Green Gages.

English Breakfast Tea.

Black and Green Tea.

Coffee.

Chocolate.

Iced Milk.

GUESTS WILL PLEASE EXERCISE PATIENCE, AS THE DISHES ARE COOKED AFTER THE ORDER IS GIVEN.

ALL MEALS SEVENTY-FIVE CTS.

A BOTTLE OF FINE FRENCH WINE

Is served, if desired, with each meal, for an additional 15 cts.

PUT THIS IN YOUR POCKET.

## WINE LIST.

CHAMPAGNE.

Mumm's Ex. Dry, . . . . . Qts. \$3.50 Pts. \$2.00  
Chapin & Gore, 47, Ex. Dry, . . . . . 2.50 1.50

CLARET.

St. Julien, . . . . . Qts. \$1.50 Pts. \$1.00  
Medoc, . . . . . 30

BURGUNDY.

Sauternes, . . . . . Qts. \$1.50 Pts. \$1.00

RHINE.

Barsac, . . . . . Hf. pts. 25

BRANDY.

Hennessey, . . . . . Per flask, \$1.00

WHISKY.

Sour Mash, . . . . . Per flask, .60  
" Cocktails, . . . . . " " .60  
Gin Cocktails, . . . . . " " .60

Bass' Ale, . . . . . Per bottle, .40  
Ginger Ale, . . . . . " " .25  
Hathorn Water, . . . . . " " .25  
Apollinaris, . . . . . " " .25  
Export Beer, . . . . . " " .15

CHOICEST BRANDS OF IMPORTED AND DOMESTIC CIGARS.

ALL MEALS ON THIS TRAIN

—ARE—

SERVED IN DINING CARS,

—WITH—

Ample Time to Enjoy Them.

From State Historical Society Library

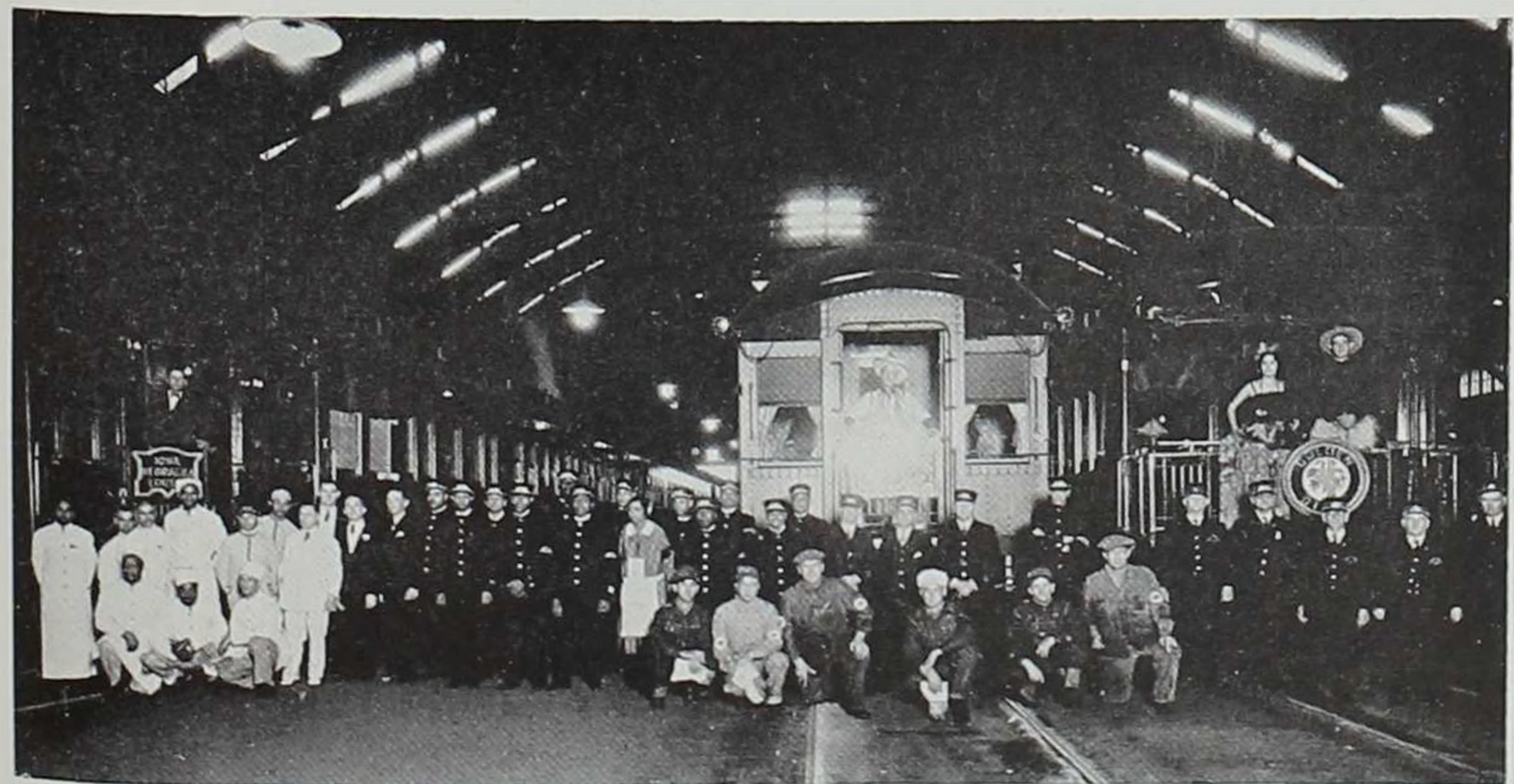




Business bar *Ellendale* used by C. J. Ives, President of BCR&N.



New engines for *Golden State*, *Rocky Mountain*, and *Iowa-Nebraska Limiteds* in 1929.

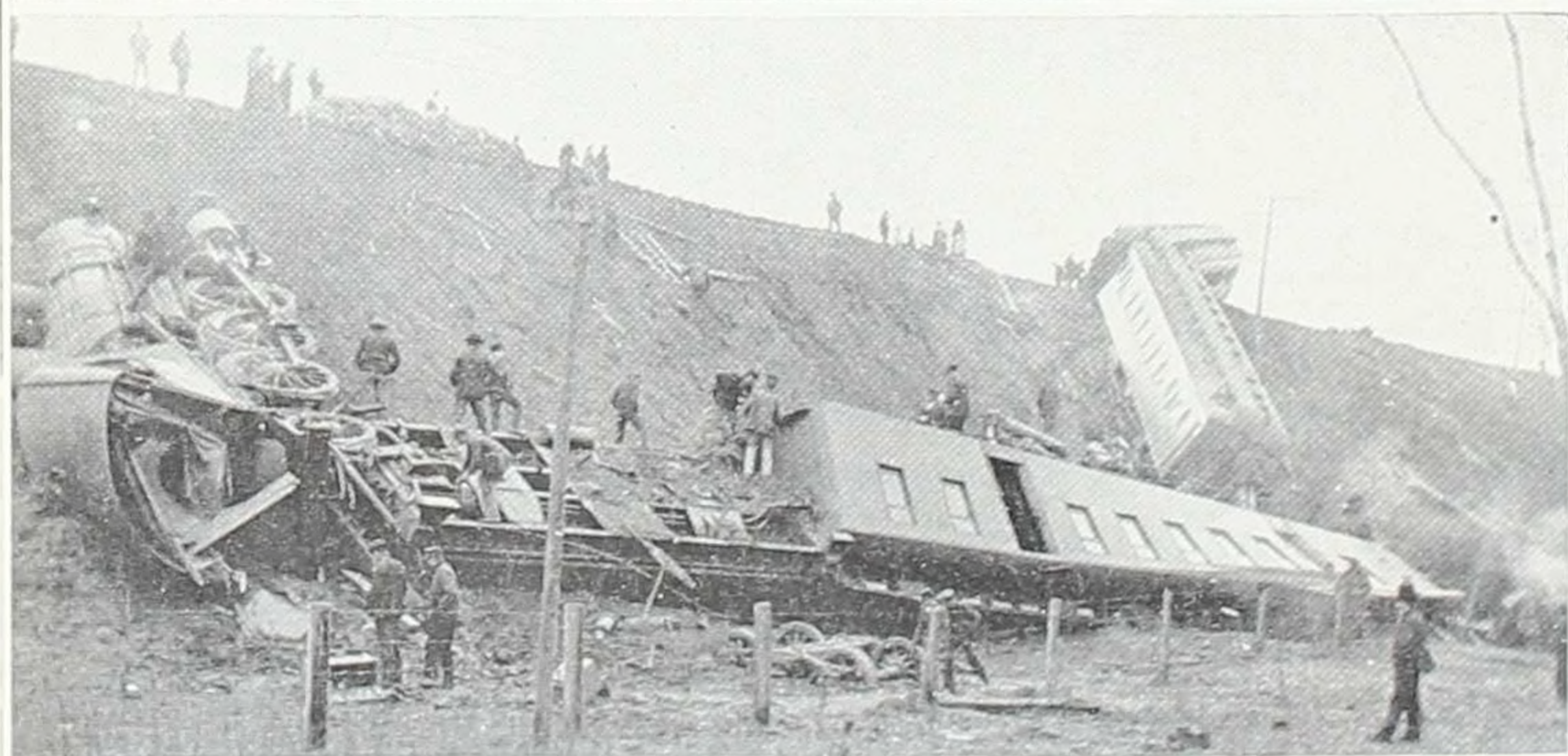


Crews of the three new trains exhibited in Chicago — Sept. 6, 1929.



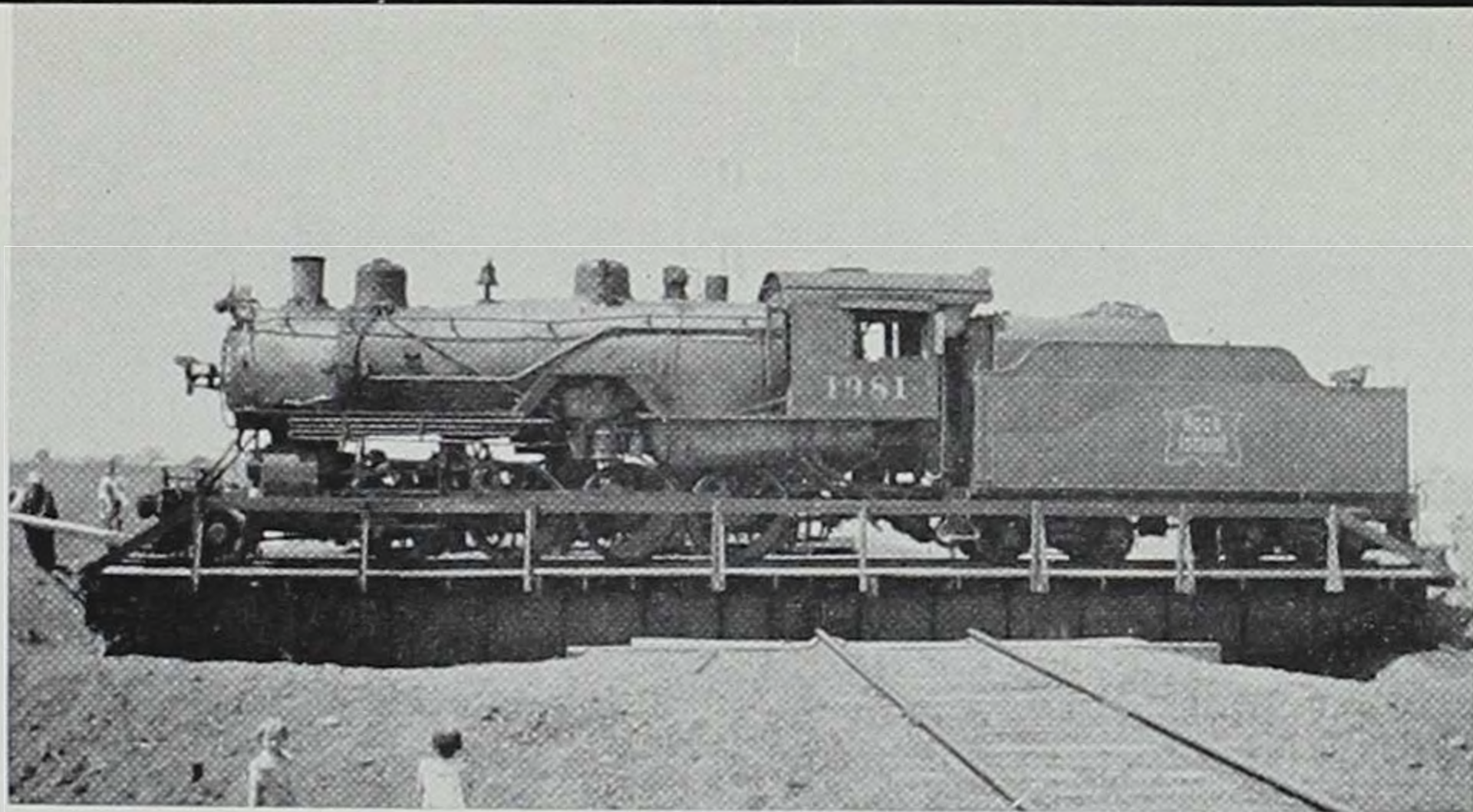


WRECKS  
Though not common, do occur, such as those near Amana, Letts, and Washburn.





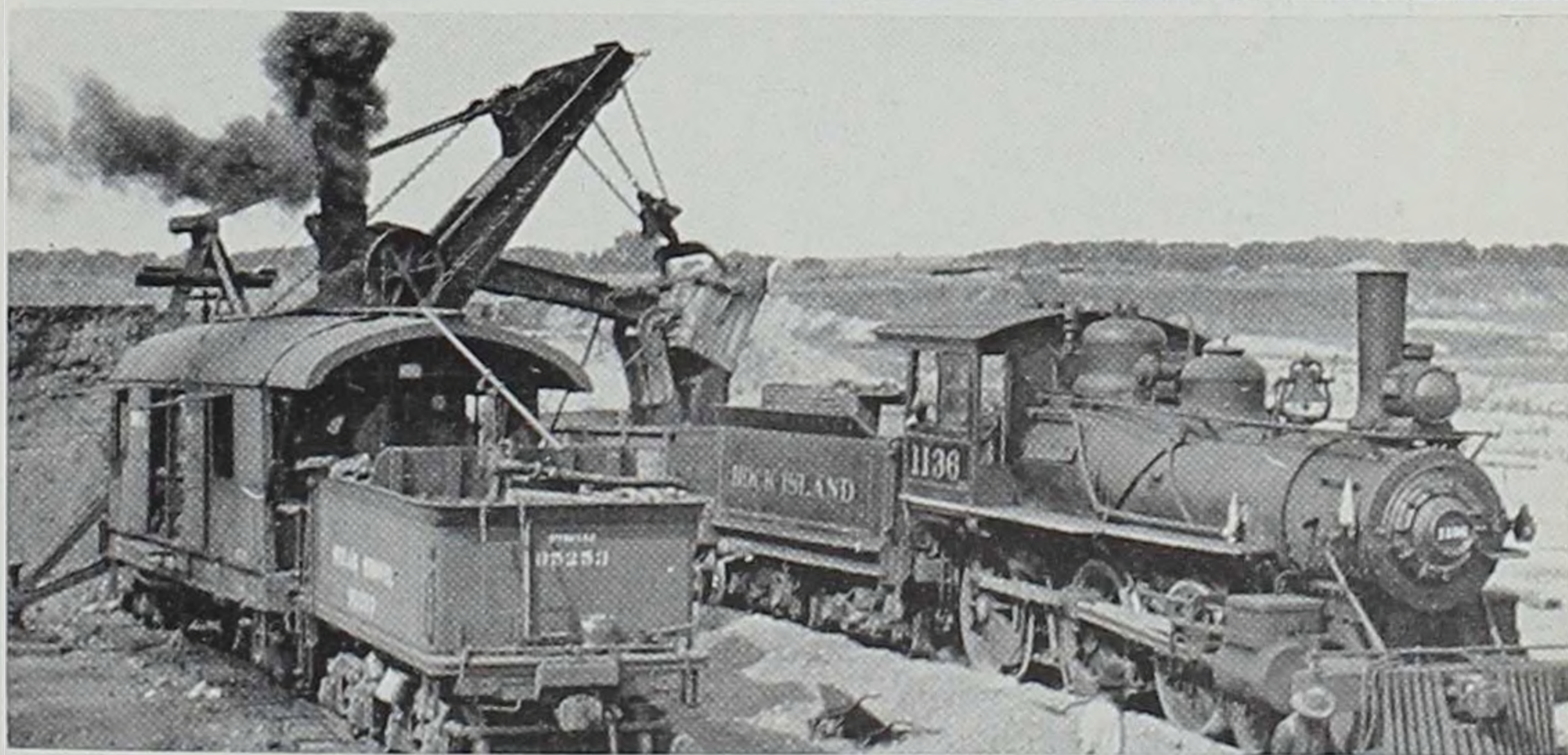
Turntable  
Lone Tree



Modern  
Truss Bridge  
at Avoca



Rock Island  
Gravel Pit  
Graettinger,  
1915



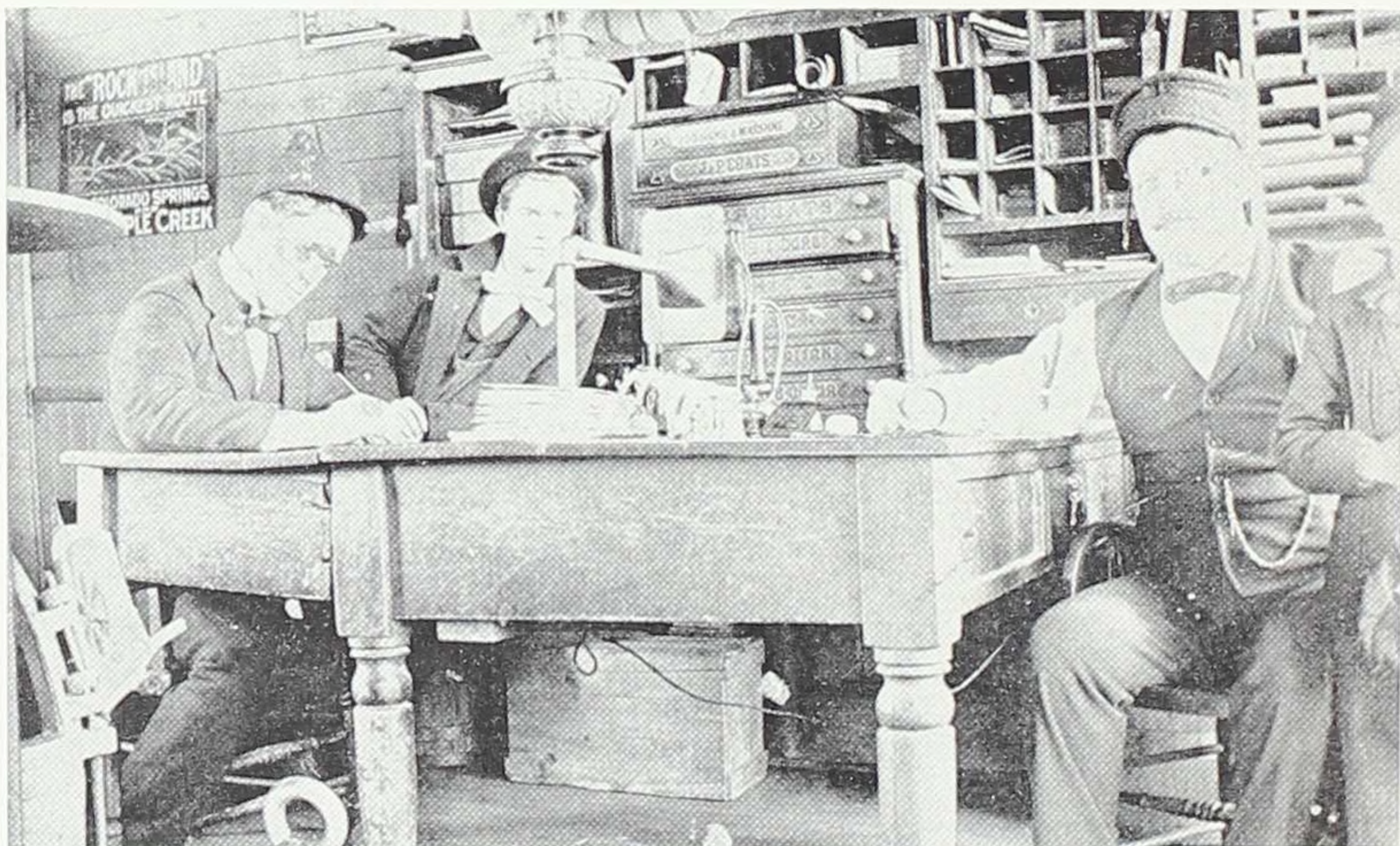
*Hunt Collection*

Building  
Atlantic  
Cutoff





# WAITING FOR THE TRAIN



Old  
Ticket  
Office



Milk  
Train  
Days

*Penningroth  
Collection*



Carload  
of  
Cabbage

*Schmitt  
Collection*

loading Cabbage Cars  
J. W. Rummells, Nichols, Ia.  
Aug 8, 1916 - 1271



FOR FREIGHT, FOR PASSENGERS, FOR FUN

Freight  
Train



Fourth of  
July, 1910  
Lone Tree

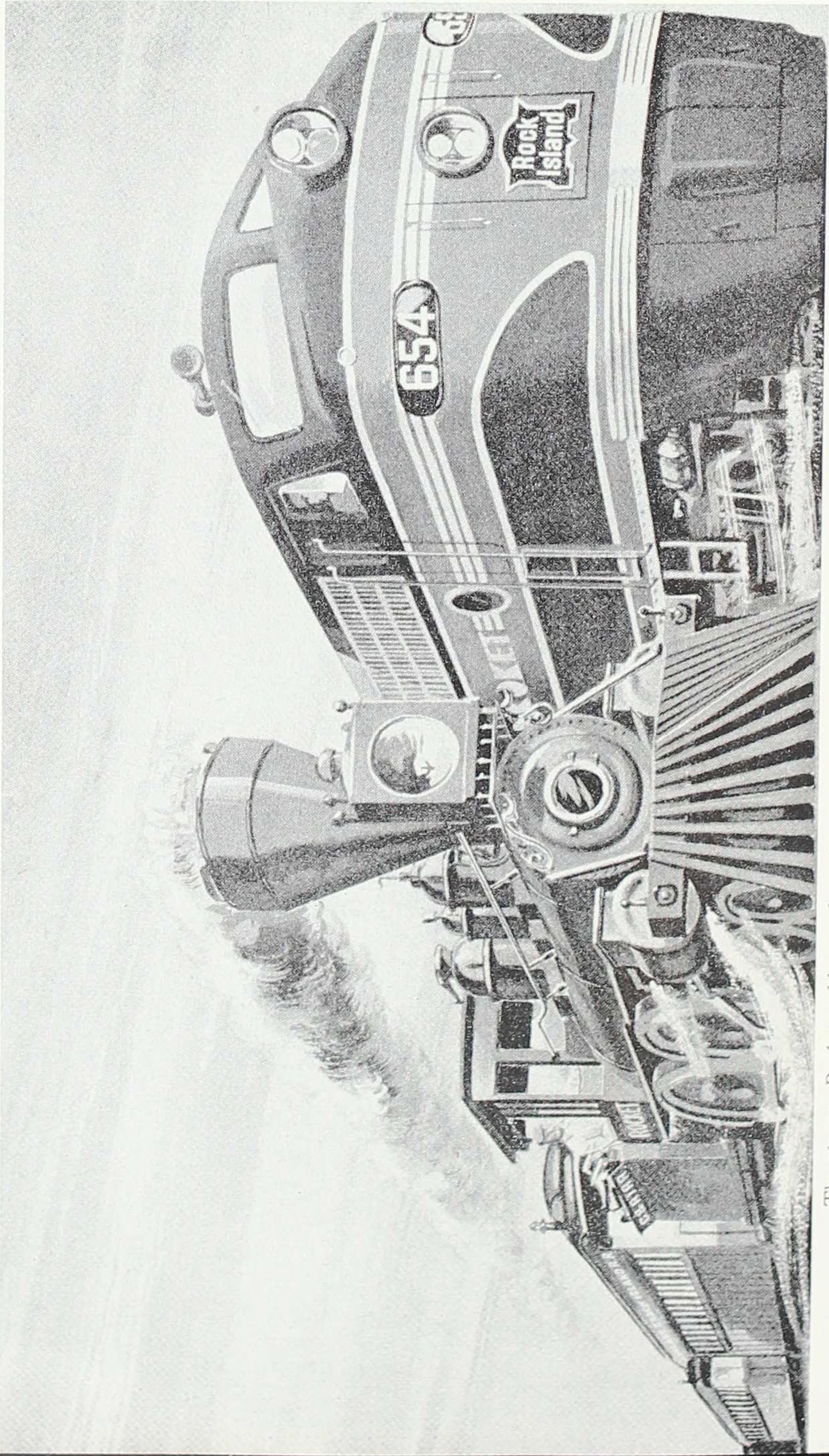


*Yakish  
Collection*

Waiting  
for the  
Hoover  
Special  
West  
Branch







The pioneer *Rocket* and her swift modern successor exemplify over a century of service to Iowans.



Greene, who became general superintendent of the road. In later years William headed the Cedar Rapids & Marion City Railway, which went by the Coe College campus. In fact, all these men played an important part in launching the school.

Unfortunately, the BCR&M suffered reverses after the panic of 1873, which resulted in a change of management and receivership. The ubiquitous John I. Blair saw his chance to get control of the road, and for a time Blair interests dominated its management. Nevertheless, the company defaulted on its bonds, and in May, 1875, W. W. Walker was appointed provisional receiver. Two months later General Edward F. Winslow superseded him as permanent receiver. This was the first and only receivership in the road's history.

An interesting sidelight on that trying period is that the bankrupt railroad paid its shopmen not in cash but by checks, which might be delayed in payment for an extended time. While not a legal tender, these checks were generally accepted by local merchants. The vendors got into the habit of calling the men "Time-checkers" and the area in which they lived the "Time Check" district. To this day some of the older residents still refer to the northern end of the west side, where the railroaders resided, as the "Time Check" section.

The property was reorganized in 1876 as the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad, and became one of the best-managed lines in Iowa.