The PALIMPSEST

AMERICAN "EXPRESS" TRAIN

Railroads Come to Iowa

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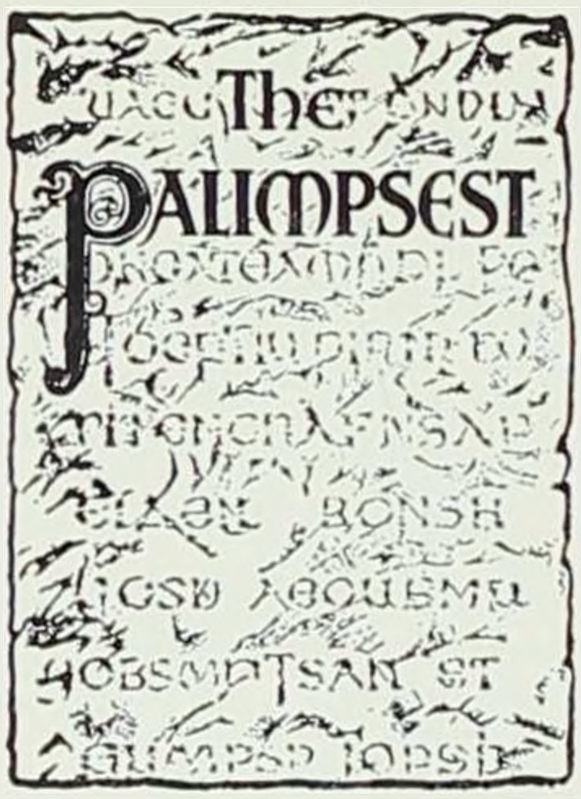

The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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(Outside) — View of Dubuque drawn by Lucinda Farnham in 1856 and lithographed by John Cameron, shows Key City as a bustling port of 12,000 with plenty of steamboat traffic to augment railroads. Picture courtesy Paul M. Angle, Director of Chicago Historical Society.

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THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

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The Rock Island Comes

Railroad building before 1850 was sporadic, haphazard, and controversial. While the practicability of steam railroad transportation had been demonstrated, opinion as to its importance relative to canal and river traffic was by no means certain. Each road, usually a short line, was a separate enterprise undertaken upon the initiative of adventurous promoters. Instead of forming a system to join commercial centers and connect waterways, the roads began and ended almost anywhere. As early as 1828, William C. Redfield had described a "geographical" trunk-line route from New York City to Rock Island, touching the important lake ports and affording a direct overland connection between the Mississippi River and the Atlantic Ocean, but the project did not materialize for a quarter of a century and then the line consisted of several roads separately owned and managed.

The first railroad to be completed between Chicago and the Mississippi had its beginnings on February 27, 1847, when the Illinois legislature incorporated "The Rock Island and La Salle Railroad Company". This corporation was granted the right to survey, locate, construct, and maintain a railroad "from the town of Rock Island on the Mississippi River in the County of Rock Island, to the Illinois River, at the termination of the Illinois and Michigan Canal". The capital stock was fixed at $300,000 and a commission was appointed to receive subscriptions.

Early in 1848 the stockholders met in Rock Island to elect directors and officers. Judge James Grant, an attorney and railroad enthusiast of Davenport, Iowa, was chosen president, N. B. Buford, secretary, and A. K. Philleo, treasurer. But a feeling of apathy was apparent in the towns along the route and the sale of stock was slow. Indeed, the people of Iowa seemed more interested than the settlers in Illinois, for the citizens of Davenport and Scott County subscribed for almost half the stock. Although meetings were held periodically, nothing seemed to be accomplished and by 1850 grave misgivings if not open dissension was expressed in many communities.

But help was coming to the Rock Island and La Salle Railroad Company from an unseen quar-

ter. In the fall of 1850, Henry Farnam, an engineer and contractor in New Haven, Connecticut, visited Chicago upon the invitation of William B. Ogden, who hoped to interest him in the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad. Farnam was impressed with the West and returned shortly with Joseph E. Sheffield, his friend and wealthy partner. Together they made a trip by carriage along the Illinois and Michigan Canal to La Salle and thence to Rock Island where they learned of the projected railroad. Visions of this eighty-mile road forming a link in a lucrative transcontinental system lured them to participate in the enterprise, but sober second thought made them realize that the short line would be almost certain to fail unless a terminus could be secured on Lake Michigan to connect with the eastern railroads and benefit from the commerce on the Great Lakes. After considerable negotiation, they agreed to build the road if the charter could be amended to extend the line from La Salle to Chicago. It was a golden opportunity for the local stockholders. The officers of the R. I. & L. S. promptly commenced planning for action at the next meeting of the Illinois legislature.

While James Grant was engaged in securing the revision of the articles of incorporation, the firm of Sheffield and Farnam contracted with

John B. Jervis to build the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana from Hillsdale, Michigan, into Chicago, a distance of one hundred and sixty-seven miles. Farnam believed that with the consummation of this work, the union of the Atlantic with the Mississippi would soon become an accomplished fact.

Meanwhile, fearful lest the canal interests would prevent the construction of a railroad paralleling the waterway, Farnam warned Grant on January 22, 1851, to "be sure to get the charter to make the road on the shortest route from La Salle to Chicago, and even if they insist on your paying tolls on freights taken from points along the canal." It was largely through this concession, perhaps, that the Illinois legislature passed an act on February 7, 1851, authorizing the extension of the railroad from La Salle to Chicago by way of Ottawa and Joliet, for the bill stipulated that the railroad was to pay tolls during the season of navigation on all business taken from or destined to any point on the Illinois and Michigan Canal or twenty miles west of its termination at La Salle. By way of compensation, the railroad was to obtain a right of way through canal lands and State lands, and the amount of tolls paid was to be deducted from its taxes. The name of the corporation was changed to the Chicago and Rock Island

Railroad Company, and the capital stock could be increased to any sum not exceeding three million dollars.

In compliance with the terms of the new charter, additional stock to the amount of $300,000 was subscribed and the company was reorganized with a larger board of directors on April 8, 1851. The officers of the Rock Island and La Salle took charge of the affairs of the new company until the annual meeting in December. With the encouragement of eastern capitalists, preparations for construction proceeded rapidly.

As early as December, 1850, before the charter had been amended, a survey of the route between Rock Island and Peru had been commenced under the direction of Richard P. Morgan, chief engineer for the Rock Island and La Salle Company. This work was almost completed by the following April.

At that time William Jervis was appointed chief engineer of the new company. He promptly began operations on the line from Peru to Chicago, ably assisted by Samuel B. Reed, John E. Henry, and B. B. Brayton. These men, and others who joined them later, were experienced in both canal and railroad construction. Some had held responsible positions on the Erie Canal, while younger men, such as Peter A. Dey, had been

employed on the Michigan Central or the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana.

The new engineers encountered unexpected delays from the unprecedented high water of 1851, and the board of directors was unable to let the contract for construction on June 26th as they had planned. They therefore determined to "refer the subject of making a contract for building the entire road to the Executive Committee, and have that portion of the line between Peru and Rock Island, revised and straightened, and the roadbed raised above the overflow of the streams". The surveys and estimates were completed in August and on September 6, 1851, a contract was concluded with Sheffield and Farnam in New York. Drawn by Judge Grant, the contract provided for "the construction and equipment of the whole road, including all cost, except right of way, station-grounds, fencing and incidental expenses", for the gross sum of $3,987,688. Of this amount, $2,000,000 was to be paid in seven per cent bonds, $500,000 in cash at the rate of $25,000 a month, and the balance in certificates of stock. The contract was unanimously approved by the board of directors at a meeting held in Rock Island on September 17, 1851. The bonds, secured by a first mortgage on the road, were issued to Shepherd Knapp of New York on December 23rd.

The firm of Sheffield and Farnam was well-qualified to build a railroad. Joseph E. Sheffield was a man of keen business foresight who had amassed considerable wealth in a North Carolina cotton mill. Returning to his native State of Connecticut, he had for fifteen years been closely associated with Henry Farnam in canal and railroad projects, matching his fortune against his partner's engineering skill, indefatigable energy, and bold courage. The risks appeared to be about equal, and it was mutually understood that "if any profit resulted it should be equally divided". While Farnam worked in the front lines, Sheffield took upon himself "the entire charge and control of the financial part of the enterprise".

Henry Farnam lost no time in beginning construction. When the board of directors met in Chicago on December 22, 1851, President Grant was proud to report that the contractors had "under-let the grading and masonry of the road from Chicago to Ottawa, eighty-five miles, and in a few days will conclude contracts for the same work as far as Indiantown, a distance of one hundred and twenty miles. A contract for building the bridge across Rock river, the heaviest work on the road, will be concluded in a few days. Engagements are also made for the iron for the whole road. Ten thousand tons, sufficient to finish it to

Peru, are to be delivered next year, and the balance the year following." The track was already laid as far as the junction with the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana at what is now the Englewood station and about eight hundred men were laboring on the line between Chicago and Ottawa.

President Grant felt that a number of factors combined to insure the future success of the company. The traffic of the Illinois River and the Illinois and Michigan Canal, the unity of interest with the eastern lines which were steadily extending westward into Chicago, the commerce of the Great Lakes and the coal beds situated along the line of the road, were of immediate significance. Equally important, however, were the proposed bridge connecting Rock Island with Davenport and the bill before Congress "to grant the State of Iowa land, to aid in constructing a road from Davenport to Council Bluffs, intersected by another from Dubuque to Keokuk". The rapid increase of population in Iowa, particularly in the southern and central portion of the State, he thought, would redound to the ultimate good of the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad. "It falls to our lot", he concluded, "to forge an important link in this great chain across the Continent, and we have every motive of pecuniary advantage,

and obligation of duty to ourselves and our country, to stimulate us to the successful completion of a work which we have commenced under such favorable circumstances."

Following President Grant's report at the annual meeting on December 22, 1851, a new board of directors was chosen consisting of John B. Jervis, James Grant, N. D. Elwood, Isaac and Ebenezer Cook, Elisha C. Litchfield, John Stryker, George Bliss, Lemuel Andrews, P. A. Whitaker, Charles Atkinson, Theron D. Brewster, and John Stevens. The officers elected were: John B. Jervis of New York, president; James Grant of Davenport, vice-president; N. D. Elwood of Joliet, secretary; and Azariah C. Flagg of New York, treasurer.

The choice of John B. Jervis for president was wise. Jervis had gained valuable engineering experience on the Erie Canal and on the Delaware and Hudson canal and railway system. In 1836 he had become the chief engineer on the Croton Aqueduct, and in 1850 had engaged in the construction of the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana Railroad. Exactly four months after he became president of the Chicago and Rock Island Company, on April 22, 1852, the first train of the M. S. & N. I. entered Chicago over the newly laid track of the Rock Island to the junction of the two

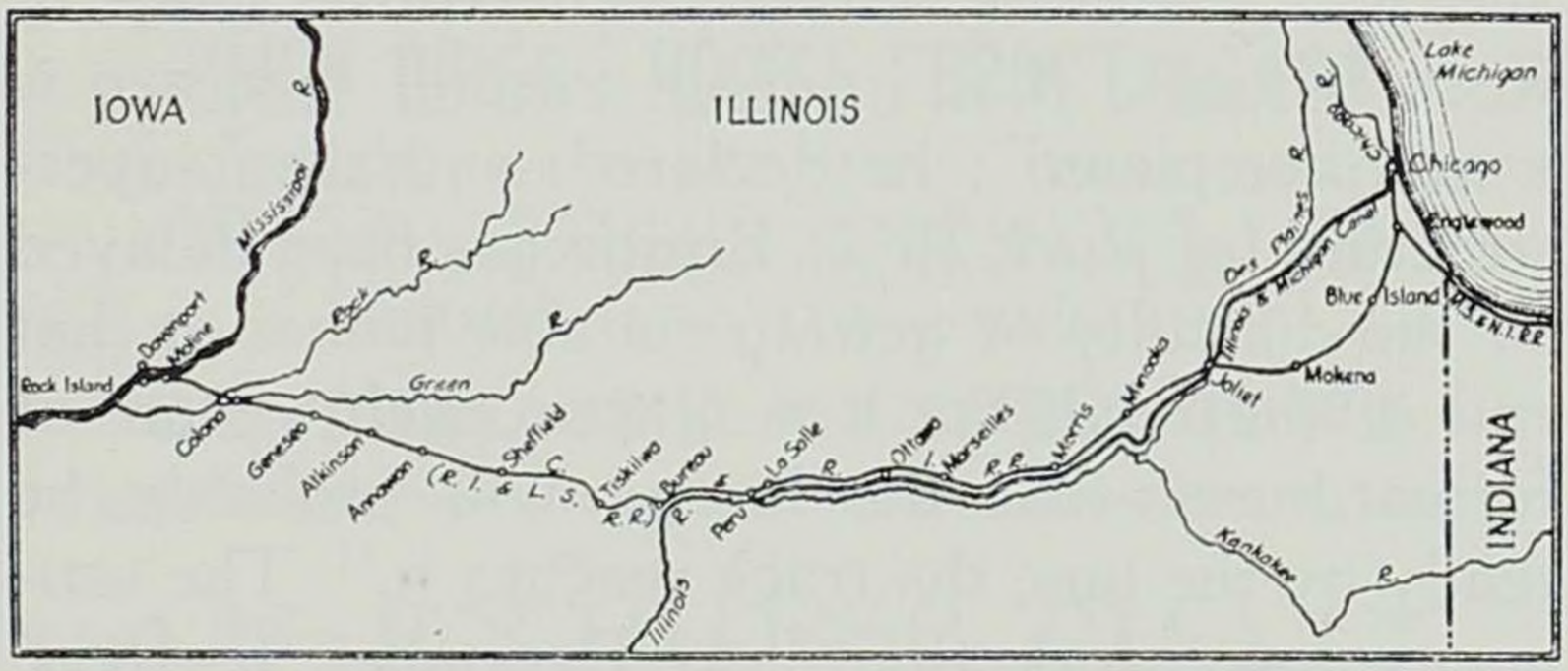
roads. The rails to this point (Englewood) had been laid early in January and thus the final links in welding the first railway bond between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mississippi River were completed under his administration.

The year 1852 witnessed a rapid extension of the road westward. By the first of October chief engineer William Jervis reported nine-tenths of the grading between Chicago and Peru completed and ready for track. The track layers were not far behind and on October 10, 1852, the locomotive "Rocket" came puffing into Joliet with six new and beautifully-painted coaches. The road was said to be "remarkable for its smoothness and solidity" and engineer James Lendabarker was able to make the run to Joliet "easily" in two hours. Among the passengers on this memorable trip, besides railroad officials, was J. A. Matteson, the Governor of Illinois.

The completion of the road to Morris on January 5, 1853, was the signal for another celebration. The "unceasing influx of travelers" into this hitherto "quiet village" led the Morris *Yeoman* to declare that "one would imagine that our town was the terminus of all creation instead of the Rock Island and Chicago Railroad".

Ottawa celebrated the arrival of the railroad on February 14, 1853, leaving only sixteen miles of

staging to the Illinois River. This was considered a "hard piece of road" but with the "iron going down rapidly beyond Ottawa" it was felt a "little patience on the part of the traveling public" would be rewarded by the completion of the road to Peru. Jubilant over the rapidity with which the



THE ROUTE OF THE CHICAGO AND ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD

Rock Island was being constructed, the Chicago *Tribune* observed that in "a few years more these rays of commercial light will stretch across our broad prairies forming a perfect net-work of communication from one end of the state to the other. Train after train will traverse our fertile plains, like busy bees, gather together the vast products of our rich soil and indomitable industry, and with the speed of the wind carry them off to some distant market."

A lull in construction followed the completion of the Rock Island to Peru. Track laying west of

that city was resumed in June and the contractors "commenced running passenger and freight trains to Tiskilwa September 12th, and Sheffield October 12th." Chief engineer William Jervis informed the board of directors on December 19th that the track was entering Geneseo that very day and was therefore within twenty-three miles of Rock Island. "The grading west of Geneseo is nearly completed", he declared, and the "superstructure for Rock River Bridge has been delayed by the difficulty of getting suitable timber at that end of the road, but it is now in such a state of forwardness, that the bridge will probably be ready by the time the track reaches it." The estimates for "work done" to December 1, 1853, totalled $3,440,000 as follows: grading and bridging, $1,202,000; track and superstructure, $1,432,000; stations, $191,000; equipment, $348,000; material delivered, $171,000; and engineering, $96,000.

Jervis reported a sufficient number of iron rails on hand in Chicago to complete the track by March 1, 1854. But the rolling stock stipulated in the contract — 18 locomotives, 12 passenger cars, 150 covered freight cars, and 100 platform freight cars, and 50 gravel cars — was already inadequate. "The traffic on the road has been so large," he declared, "that it has been difficult to

RAILROAD ADVERTISEMENTS,

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Running through to Iowa City and Washington without change of cars at the Mississippi River; 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 & Burlington Railway for Galesburg and Burlington, at Iowa City and Washington, with Western Stage Company's line of Mail Stages to Oskaloosa, Pella, Knoxville, Indianola, Fort des Moines, Winterset, Council Bluffs, and all the principal places in Central and Western Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska.

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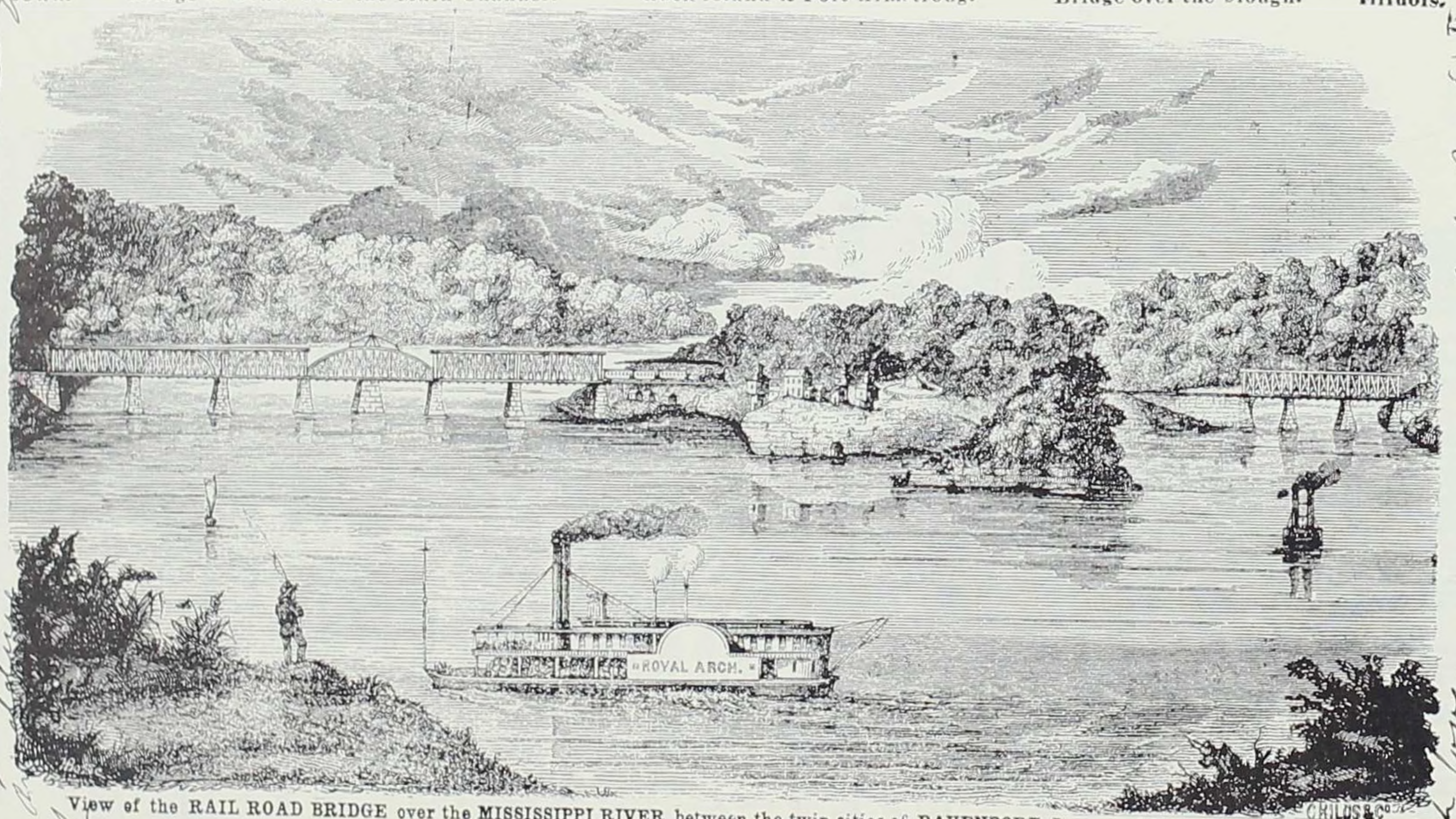
W. L. ST. JOHN,
Gen'l Freight and Ticket Ag't, Chicago.

From *Umberhine & Gustin's Dunleith City Directory and Advertiser for 1861*

The Chicago & Rock Island Railway Line was advertised in competitive cities as far distant as Dubuque and East Dubuque.

Iowa. Bridge & Draw over the Main Channel. Rock Island & Fort Armstrong. Bridge over the Slough. Illinois.



View of the RAIL ROAD BRIDGE over the MISSISSIPPI RIVER between the twin cities of DAVENPORT, Iowa, and ROCK ISLAND, Illinois.

[Sold at "The Iowa Book Rooms," Brady, between 2d & 3d sts., Davenport, Iowa—Eli Adams, Agent.]

Davenport, Iowa, Feb 8th 1855 1855

This steel engraving shows the completed bridge which was open to traffic in 1856. It appeared at the top of a personal letter actually dated a year before — February 8, 1855.

provide machinery fast enough to do the business, and leave enough to push the ballasting; consequently, this work west of Peru is not in as forward a state as other portions of the road; but the contractors propose to continue the distribution of ballasting material during the winter, and put it under the track in the spring. This course, if vigorously prosecuted, will enable them to complete the road by the tenth of July, 1854" — fully a year and a half earlier than the time designated in their contract. As soon as the road was finished, he predicted, two daily passenger trains through to Rock Island would be required, and "one additional train between Chicago and Peru, during the greater portion of the year." For the freight business, "at least one daily through train, one between Chicago and Peru and one coal train" would be necessary.

The completion of the railroad to the Mississippi was commemorated by two celebrations: one essentially local in character culminating in a banquet and jubilant speeches, the second national in scope and commonly denominated the Grand Excursion, involving a trip from Chicago to Rock Island and thence to Saint Paul by steamboat. The first of these celebrations was held in Rock Island immediately after the track laying was finished into that city on February 22, 1854.

The locomotive which drew the six first-class passenger cars out of Chicago on Washington's birthday was "handsomely decorated with wreathes and garlands". Every one was looking forward with "pleasing anticipations" to the thrill of gazing upon the bosom of the Father of Waters from the windows of the first railway passenger coaches to reach the great river. The train was welcomed by a salute of field pieces at Joliet and Ottawa, where municipal officials and other dignitaries joined the excursion. Over three hundred passengers were aboard the cars when the train left Peru and "sped its way across the broad and fertile prairies, anxious to reach its destination".

The booming of cannon heralded the approach of the first train to enter Rock Island and "such was the despatch used, that the last rail had scarcely been laid one hour, ere the cars passed over." A large temporary building in which to entertain the guests at dinner had been constructed in less than three days. When everybody had gathered about the tables, the "president of the day", N. B. Buford, introduced J. J. Beardsley, who delivered the address of welcome, dwelling at some length upon the "first union of the Mississippi and the Atlantic in the bands of commerce". In behalf of the city of Rock Island he declared it

"an appropriate time to do honor to a great achievement, that will mark an era in the history of the world's progress; and make our heart-felt and grateful acknowledgments to those who stood by our favorite enterprise in the days of its weakness and peril, and render a fitting tribute to those who with renewed zeal and fidelity have put in execution the wise design of the projectors of the Chicago and Rock Island railroad."

At the conclusion of his address, the company "helped themselves" to the abundant feast which was spread out in "prodigal profusion" before them. When every one had signified "enough", Buford arose and proposed thirteen toasts. Chief among them were the names of George Washington, Sheffield, and Farnam, the president and directors of the road, the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, the Rock Island and La Salle Railroad, and the states of Illinois and Iowa. There were also a number of volunteer toasts such as, "To the Irish Laborers — The men who dig our canals, build our railroads, work in our fields and stables; and only ask a living, and freedom to worship God."

Henry Farnam responded to the toast to the contractors, saying he "would rather build two railroads than make one speech". Then he simply but graphically traced the events of the past few

years. "It is less than one-quarter of a century, and within the recollection of the most of you, that the first locomotive made its appearance in the States. Now, more than fourteen thousand miles of iron rails are traversed by the iron horse with almost lightning speed. It is less than two years since the first train of cars entered the State of Illinois from the East, then connecting Lake Erie with Chicago. It is less than one year since the first continuous line of road was completed connecting New York with Chicago. Now, there are two distinct lines the entire distance connecting Chicago and the great prairies of the West with New York and Boston. Two years ago, there was less than one hundred miles of road in operation in the State of Illinois, and most of that was what is called the 'strap rail'. Now more than twelve hundred miles of road of the most substantial character is in operation, eight hundred of which leads directly to the city of Chicago.

"To-day, we witness the nuptials of the Atlantic with the Father of Waters. To-morrow, the peopie of Rock Island can go to New York the entire distance by railroad, and within the space of forty-two hours."

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

The North Western Comes

On June 2, 1859, Samuel J. Tilden, then a young New York lawyer, appeared with Ossian D. Ashley in Janesville, Wisconsin, and purchased at auction the bankrupt Chicago, St. Paul & Fond du Lac Railroad Company as agents for another company. The price paid was $10,849,-938 in stocks and bonds of the new organization. This was the Chicago & North Western Railway Company which had been organized on June 6, 1859. In 1930 this road operated over sixteen hundred miles of track in Iowa, almost one-fifth of its total track mileage, and poured into the coffers of the State treasury a larger sum in taxes than any other single railroad.

The North Western had its actual beginning on January 16, 1836, when the Illinois legislature incorporated the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad Company. This company was granted the right to construct and maintain a single or double

track railroad from the "town of Galena" to the most "eligible, proper, direct and convenient" point in the "town of Chicago". The capital stock was fixed at $100,000, and seven commissioners were appointed to secure subscriptions.

The charter of the Galena & Chicago Union provided for a board of seven directors and Theophilus W. Smith, Edmund D. Taylor, Josiah C. Goodhue, John T. Temple, Gregory Smith, Ebenezer Peck, and James H. Collins constituted the first board, with Theophilus Smith as president. Because of the uncertainty of railroad projects, the directors were empowered, if they deemed it advisable, to "make and establish a good permanent turnpike road, upon any portion of the route" and collect tolls thereon. The company was allowed three years to begin construction on its railroad and turnpike and ten years to complete it. Failure to do so would result in the forfeiture of its privileges.

The original charter was amended on March 4, 1837, when the time for "final completion" was extended to fifteen years. The capital stock was increased to a sum not exceeding one million dollars in addition to the amount already subscribed. In case it appeared "impracticable" to construct the road the whole distance to Galena, or "more advantageous" to the company or public interest

not to do so, the road might be connected with the Illinois Central at the most practicable point.

Born in the midst of the Panic of 1837, the G. & C. U. was paralyzed by the economic depression that swept Illinois and the nation during the ensuing years. Elijah K. Hubbard was elected president in 1837, and although he held this office until 1846, he was unable to resuscitate this almost still-born corporation, but managed to keep the charter alive until an aroused public sentiment caused men to muster up courage and renew their efforts in behalf of the almost forgotten railroad.

The initial impetus in this resuscitation began on January 7, 1846, when three hundred and nineteen delegates from northern Illinois assembled at Rockford. William B. Ogden, the first mayor of Chicago, was prominent among the Chicago delegates. The convention felt that the wants of the "farmers and business men of Northern Illinois" required the "immediate construction" of a railroad from Chicago to Galena, and considered it "indispensably necessary" that property owners along the line of the road subscribe to the stock. The route was "entirely practicable" and could be built at "little expense" so the delegates felt "no hesitation" in declaring the project would produce "ample and rich returns upon the money invested". A Central Committee of seven was appointed to

take the "most active and energetic means" to carry into effect the objects of the convention and receive subscriptions to stock. Since the road passed through public lands, the committee was urged to memorialize Congress to grant the G. & C. U. the right of way and alternate sections of land as a "fair equivalent for the enhanced value" imparted to the lands retained by the government.

Shortly after the Rockford convention William B. Ogden was elected president of the company. A year later, on February 24, 1847, the charter was amended to allow the election of as many as thirteen directors. The company was also granted the right of way through such portions of the public lands belonging to Illinois as remained unsold. Such lands were not to exceed one hundred feet in breadth and were to be "designated and marked" by plain landmarks within twelve months. A copy of the notes of survey and plat, with a description of the marks, was to be transmitted to the State Auditor within ninety days after the survey was completed.

The new board of thirteen directors was quickly elected. William B. Ogden, John B. Turner, Walter L. Newberry, Charles Walker, James H. Collins, J. Young Scammon, William H. Brown, Thomas Dyer, and Benjamin W. Raymond represented Chicago; Charles S. Hempstead and

Thomas Drummond came from Galena; William N. Davis resided at Au Sable Grove, Illinois; and Allen Robbins lived in New York. William B. Ogden was reëlected president and Francis Howe was chosen secretary and treasurer.

On August 10, 1847, the stock books were opened at Galena, Chicago, and intermediate points. The company was able to dispose of $250,000 worth of stock, Ogden himself raising $20,000 in one day on the streets of Chicago from farmers who were selling wheat. He declared the feelings manifested along the line were "so ardent, and so universal that it was quite apparent the country and the people immediately interested in the construction of the road, were able to, and would increase their subscriptions to an amount sufficient" to build it from Chicago to Elgin and own it themselves.

A corps of engineers under the direction of Richard P. Morgan commenced to "survey and locate" the line from Chicago to the Fox River in September. Morgan, a former engineer on the Hudson River Railroad, estimated the cost of the railroad at $2,648,000, or an average of $14,553 per mile. He reckoned the freight from the west would bring $166,000 the first year, while that from the east would produce $47,000. Passenger receipts he put at $150,000, mail at $30,000.

Morgan was convinced the success of the road was "entirely independent" of receipts along the line for if the country between the Mississippi and Lake Michigan were a "perfect desert" there would be enough business in a few years concentrated at Galena from Iowa alone to give ample support to the railroad.

Several factors existed to lend support to his contentions. During the forties Dubuque and other Upper Mississippi towns had gradually become convinced that a combination of St. Louis steamboat interests wished to "extort" large revenues from them. It was quite natural that these cities should feel resentful and welcome a railroad. Morgan believed the causes then operating to "draw off the products of the West" from the South would continue to exist and the great "natural superiority" of the route from Galena to Chicago would enable it to compete successfully with a navigation in which risk was "greater, and climate, in some instances, destructive".

It was not merely the building of a railroad to the Mississippi which presented its problems to the G. & C. U. An outlet for freight and passengers must be made to the Atlantic seaboard. The original plan contemplated a line of steamers across Lake Michigan to connect with the Michigan Central at its proposed terminus at New Buf-

falo, Michigan. Morgan favored extending the G. & C. U. around the southern tip of the lake to New Buffalo in case the Michigan Central failed to build its line to Chicago and estimated the cost of such a project at $328,000. President Ogden told the directors on April 5, 1848, that such a road would secure to the country through which it passed *"the great North-Western railroad thoroughfare for all time to come"*. The Michigan Central quickly decided to continue its track around the lake and the G. & C. U. accordingly reverted to its original plan pending the arrival of the Michigan road in Chicago.

The preliminary surveys completed, the company appointed John Van Nortwick chief engineer of the road. Van Nortwick found the "ruinous financial" situation in England had served to "tighten the money market" and the company accordingly decided to use the strap rail instead of the more expensive T rail, since "the eastern roads were abandoning the use of the strap rail, and hence would sell them and the locomotive engines adapted thereto very cheap". In his report to the directors Van Nortwick described the strap rail superstructure as a series of "cross-ties nine feet long and six inches thick, which are to be laid thirty inches from center to center; on these are to be placed longitudinal rails of Norway, or yel-

low, pine, a portion six inches square and a portion seven inches square, secured in place by triangular blocks or knees of scantling, firmly spiked to the ties on each side. Upon the longitudinal rails is an oak ribbon one and a quarter by three inches square, and on this ribbon an iron plate rail two and a half by three-fourths or seven-eighths inches, and weighing about thirty tons to the mile." The road between Chicago and Elgin was laid with this type of superstructure but was replaced by regular T rails during 1852-1853. Engineer Jenks D. Perkins was "borrowed" from the Syracuse and Utica Railroad to lay the new track.

It required approximately five years for the G. & C. U. to construct its line from Chicago to Freeport, a distance of 121 miles. Work was begun in the spring of 1848 and the Des Plaines River was reached on December 15th. This segment of the G. & C. U., scarcely ten miles in length, has the distinction of being the first track built and operated west from Chicago. In honor of the event the directors enjoyed a ride out to "end of track". While returning to Chicago they overtook a farmer and bargained with him to carry his wheat into Chicago, a city which was to become the leading wheat market of the United States.

The track was opened to Junction, 30 miles west of Chicago (now known as West Chicago), the

following year. Here the road swung almost due north to Elgin, a distance of 12 miles. From Junction, another road was later extended westward through Dixon to Fulton on the Mississippi River, a distance of 105 miles. Junction served as the northern terminus of the Aurora Branch Railroad and for a number of years the trains of that road and its successor, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, ran from this point over the line of the G. & C. U. into Chicago.

Goaded by the activity of Galena, the Dubuque *Miners' Express* of December 12, 1849, sent out the following clarion call for action: "The whole country — North, South, East, and West — cities, towns, hamlets, and villages, are crying out 'Railroads! Let us have railroads! !' This cry is approaching us from all directions, while here we are in Dubuque as unconcerned as if 'Whiskey Hill' and 'Dirty Hollow' were ever to be the only thoroughfares from and to Dubuque. Our neighbors of Galena are making arrangements to go and meet the Chicago road; Milwaukee and her sister towns are engaged in a vigorous effort to connect themselves to the Mississippi a few miles above us; while here we are asleep in a kind of dreamy-drowsy-stupid lethargy. We should make immediate provision to unite ourselves to the Chicago and Galena road at the latter place. . . .

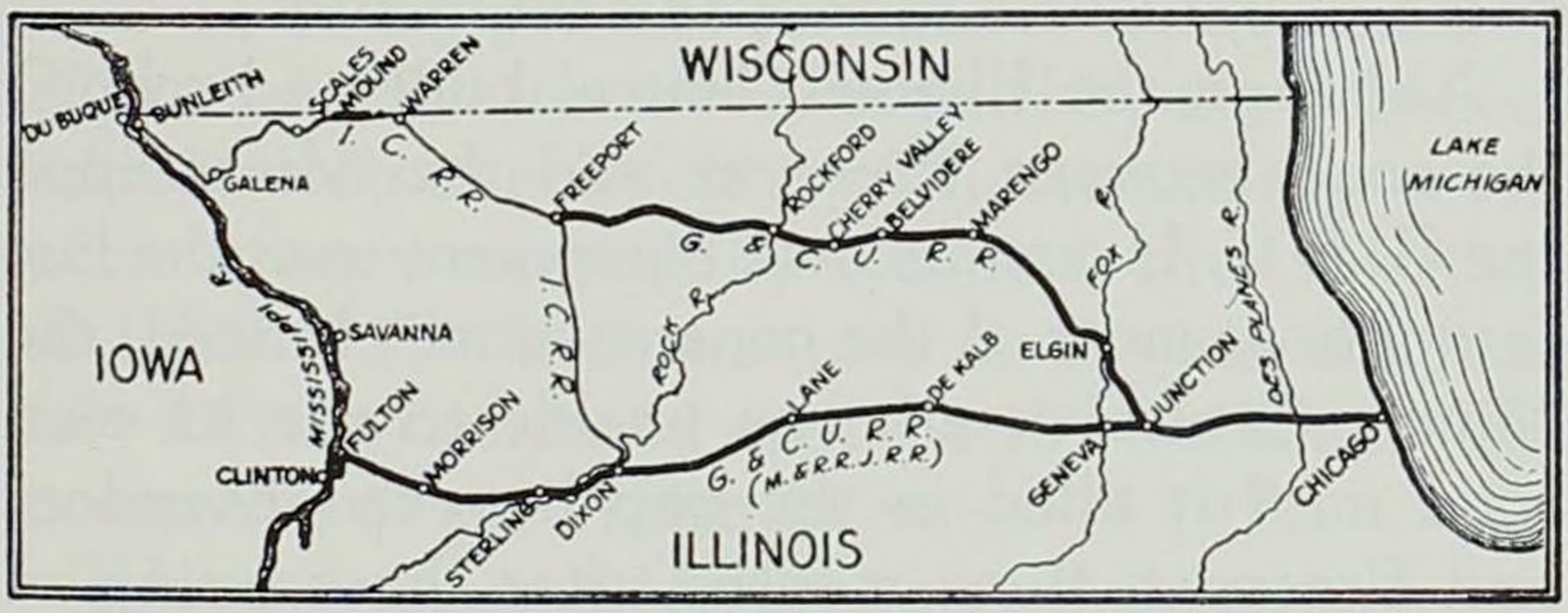
When in the future the road is extended to the Mississippi where is the guaranty that Dubuque will be the point reached?"

Elgin staged a "grand celebration" following the arrival of its first railroad on January 22, 1850. Belvidere was reached on December 3, 1851. At this time the building of a railroad during the winter was considered a wonderful feat and Jenks D. Perkins was highly praised for finishing the track to Cherry Valley on March 10, 1852.

The first train of the G. & C. U. puffed into Rockford "amid the firing of cannon and ringing of bells" on August 2, 1852. Heretofore stage-coaches had jolted their way over the rough prairies to Rockford and on through the hilly mineral region about Galena and Dubuque. The arrival of the railroad dispensed with stage coaches east of that city and the G. & C. U. advertised stage connections at Rockford for Galena and Dubuque; for Beloit, Janesville, and Madison; and for Dixon and Rock Island.

Two routes lay open between Freeport and Galena: one to the northwest by way of Warren and Scales Mound; the other to the southwest by way of Savanna. The Galena branch of the Illinois Central would occupy one of the routes for about fifty miles and Van Nortwick feared the country would not support two competing roads running

nearly parallel. "There can be no doubt", he declared, "that the true policy of both companies is to form a connection at such point as shall be found most practicable, east of Galena, and construct but one road to that place. It is understood that both companies favor and contemplate such



THE G. & C. U. FORERUNNER OF THE NORTH WESTERN

arrangement." Freeport was agreed upon by the two roads as the point of junction.

The entry of the G. & C. U. into Freeport on September 1,, 1853, ended the westward march of that company. The Illinois Central promptly took up construction on the Freeport-Galena division and by January 9, 1854, the track had been laid to Warren. Scales Mound was reached on September 11th, and the "iron horse" steamed noisily into Galena on October 30, 1854.

As early as 1852, Galena had stoutly opposed the extension of the road to the Mississippi, hoping to become the terminus and thereby the me-

tropolis of the entire region. Despite this opposition, the joint track of the I. C. and G. & C. U. was opened to Dunleith, opposite Dubuque, on June 12, 1855. A party of twenty Dubuque "ladies and gentlemen" had enjoyed a trip from Dunleith to Galena on the construction train the previous day and a grand celebration was held in July.

Although the Illinois Central built and owned the road between Freeport and the Mississippi, the G. & C. U. ran its own equipment over the line throughout most of the construction. Indeed, the Illinois Central itself was unable to use its own road until it filled in the gap between Mendota and Freeport, three months after the opening of the Freeport-Galena road.

The first locomotive of the G. & C. U. and the first to draw a train out of Chicago or west of Lake Michigan was the *Pioneer*. Built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia, the *Pioneer* had been placed on the tracks on October 24, 1848. It had a pair of driving-wheels, four and one-half feet in diameter, and weighed only ten tons. It had cylinders ten inches in diameter and an eighteen-inch stroke. Although the *Pioneer* was a second-hand locomotive, chief engineer Van Nortwick considered it to be in "good order" and capable of answering "all purposes" connected with the construction.

It was customary to name all the early locomotives. The nine locomotives to appear for service following the *Pioneer* were the *Chicago*, the *Elgin*, the *Illinois*, the *Belvidere*, the *Rockford*, the *J. B. Turner*, the *Marengo*, the *Minnesota*, and the *Iowa*. The *J. B. Turner* and the *Marengo* were twelve ton engines, the former rebuilt by the G. & C. U. and the latter manufactured by the Schenectady Locomotive Works. The remaining seven locomotives were built by Norris & Bros. of Philadelphia. The largest engine on the line weighed only 24 tons compared with the 409 ton Class "H" locomotive of the North Western in 1933.

Wood was used for fuel and the average cost per cord in 1850 was $2.13. Prices rose steadily as the G. &. C. U. cut the timber off its right-of-way and in 1854 the company purchased two coal burning locomotives on trial with the understanding that they were not to be paid for unless they were "successful" with Illinois soft coal.

A large proportion of the rolling stock of the G. & C. U. consisted of construction cars. In 1850 the company owned 4 locomotives; 3 single and 13 double covered freight cars; 6 single and 16 double platform cars; 11 gravel cars, 4 hand cars, and 2 new passenger cars of 56 and 60 seats respectively. The rising tide of immigration and general freight and passenger traffic is reflected

in the company's rolling stock in 1855. The chief engineer itemized the following equipment in the eighth annual report: 44 locomotives; 27 passenger cars; 3 second class and 9 emigrant cars; 7 mail and baggage cars; 397 "house" freight cars; 121 platform cars; 68 hand cars; and 98 gravel cars. This was the approximate equipment of the G. & C. U. when it reached the Mississippi at Dunleith.

To indemnify itself, perhaps, for its failure to gain a monopoly of the road from Freeport to the Mississippi, the directors of the G. & C. U. ordered their chief engineer to locate a line from Junction to a suitable point of connection with the Rockford and Rock Island Railroad from which point it would continue through Dixon to Fulton on the Mississippi. Van Nortwick was enthusiastic about the prospects of such a road. "There can be no doubt", he declared, "that this route must form the great trunk line west from Chicago to Council Bluffs and even west of that point, and that this is the one upon which Chicago must rely to secure the business of Central and Western Iowa rather than upon other western lines having eastern connections south of that city".

In 1854, the G. & C. U. was authorized to increase its capital stock to a sum not exceeding five million dollars and "to extend the Dixon and Cen-

GREAT CENTRAL ROUTE.

The Michigan Central
RAIL ROAD,

Between Chicago and Detroit, (284 miles,) is one of the connecting links in the direct line of Railway Communication between the Atlantic Seaboard and Chicago, the Mississippi Valley and the West.

ITS EASTERN CONNECTIONS

Are at Detroit with the Great Western Railway for Suspension Bridge, Niagara Falls Buffalo, Albany, New York, Boston, &c, and with the Grand Trunk Railway for Montreal, Quebec, Portland, &c.

MIDDLE CONNECTIONS,

At Michigan City with the New Albany & Salem Railroad to New Albany, Louisville, Greencastle, Lafayette, Cincinnati, and all interior Indiana points.

At Lake Station with the Joliet Division of the Michigan Central Railroad, intersecting the St Louis, Alton & Chicago Railroad at Joliet for Springfield, Alton and St. Louis, and the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad for Davenport, Muscatine, Iowa City, and all Central Iowa.

Also, at Matteson with the Illinois Central Railroad for Cairo, and all Lower Mississippi River points.

WESTERN CONNECTIONS,

At Chicago, (at the Great Central Depot,) with the Illinois Central Railroad to Dunleith, and the Upper Mississippi, also, to Central Illinois, Cairo, Memphis, New Orleans, and all intermediate points by all Rail or River.

With the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, to Galesburg, Burlington, Quincy, Ottumwa, Hannibal, St. Joseph, Leavenworth, Kansas City, etc.

With the Galena and Chicago Union to Dixon, Fulton, Galena, Dunleith, and all Upper Mississippi River Points.

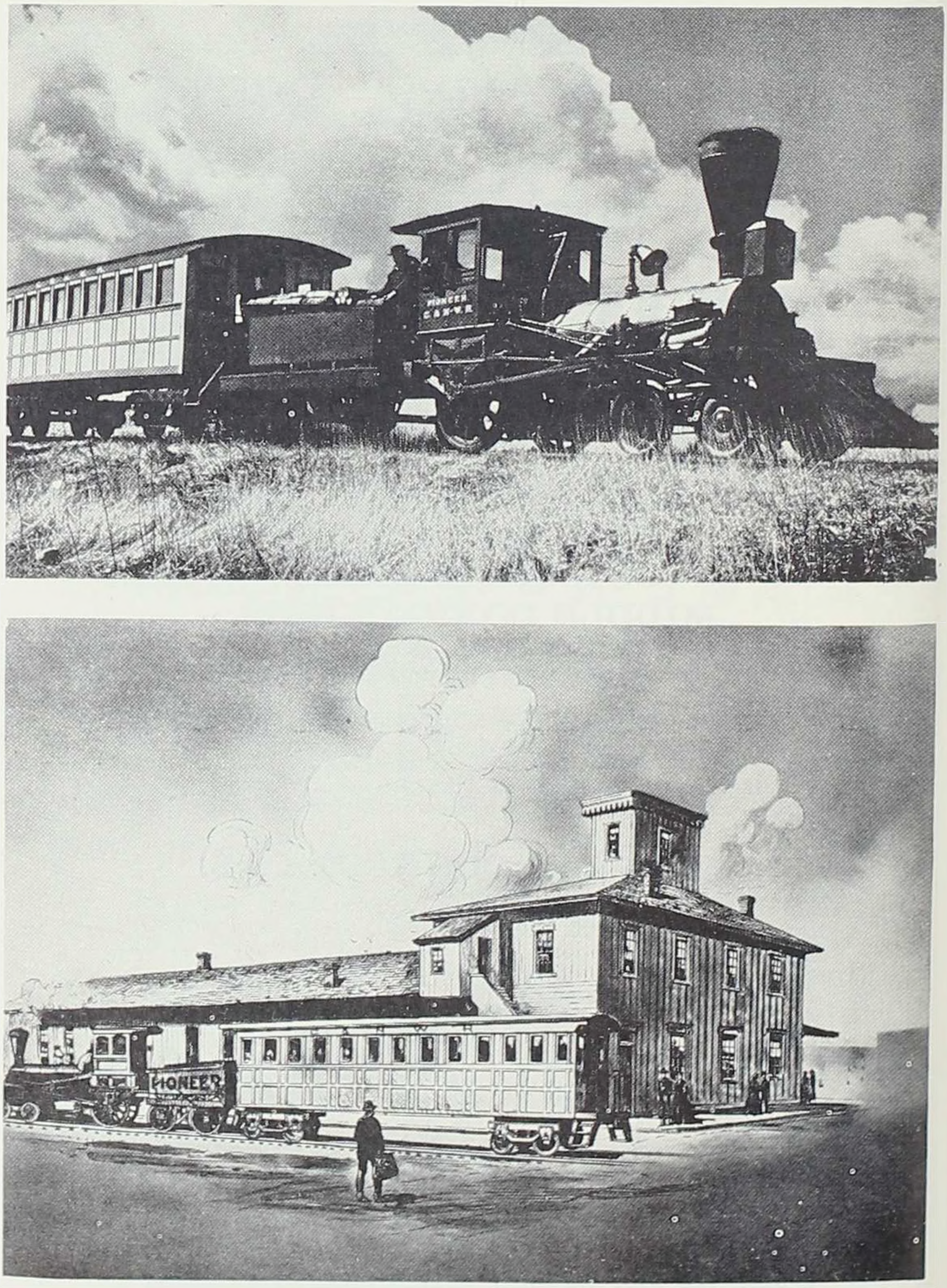
Also, direct communication with the Chicago and Milwaukee, Chicago and North-Western, Chicago and Rock Island, and the St. Louis, Alton and Chicago Railroads.

☞ The facilities and reputation of this Line and its Eastern connections for the transportation of Freight and Live Stock, are too well known and appreciated to require further notice.

OFFICERS:

J. W. Brooks, President, Boston; R. N. Rice, Gen'l Sup't, Detroit; C, H. Hurd, Ass't Sup't, Detroit; H. E. Sargent, Gen'l Ag't, Chicago; T. Frazer, Gen'l Ticket Ag't, Detroit; H. J. Spalding, Western Ticket As't. Chicago.

From *Umberhine & Gustin's Dunleith City Directory and Advertiser for 1861*



From Casey & Douglas *Pioneer Railroad*

Top — The *Pioneer* of the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad.
Bottom — Chicago's first railroad station in 1848. G&CU.

tral Iowa Route to Dixon, and, if they should deem it expedient, to the Mississippi river; or, to unite or consolidate with any other road on that route". President Turner soon reported a "lease and agreement with the Mississippi and Rock River Junction Railroad Company by which a continuous and complete line of railroad will be made and operated, under the control and management of this company" from Chicago to Fulton. The lease provided that the M. &. R. R. J. should "prepare the road-way for the superstructure" and that the G. & C. U. should "complete, stock, operate and manage it in perpetuity", paying the M. & R. R. J. seven per cent annually on their expenditures. As a reward for his faithful services chief engineer John Van Nortwick was made "President and Engineer" of the company with complete supervision of the "work and expenditures".

The construction of the road from Junction to Fulton was accomplished with unparalleled rapidity. By January 10, 1854, the track was opened to Lane, forty-five miles from Junction. Heavy snows made necessary "extraordinary" expenditures for labor, fuel, and repairs, but the road was completed to Dixon by December 4, 1854. Additional work the following spring brought the total cost of this division — Junction to Dixon — to $468,536.81.

Meanwhile Van Nortwick, following the consolidation of the M. & R. R. J. with the G. & C. U. on January 9, 1855, set about forging the last link in the road. The track was opened to Sterling on July 22, 1855. Two months later, on September 23rd, the train rolled triumphantly into Morrison, and on December 16, 1855, the iron horse puffed proudly to the banks of the Mississippi and slaked its thirst in the icy waters of the Father of Waters. The arrival at Fulton gave the G. & C. U. two points of contact with the Mississippi and Iowa in the same year, a feat accomplished by no other railroad. By May 1, 1855, the company had expended $5,866,263.06 on its roads and it was estimated that $1,375,000 would be required to complete and stock the two roads, including the double track between Chicago and Junction.

The merger of the Galena & Chicago Union and the North Western on June 2, 1864 — exactly five years after Samuel J. Tilden had purchased the bankrupt Chicago, St. Paul & Fond du Lac — was talked about "from the Atlantic to the slopes of the Missouri". It was generally conceded that the Galena road was the more desirable investment for it consistently paid rich dividends to its stockholders. It brought to the consolidation a total of 545 miles of owned or leased roads compared with 315 miles of the absorbing line. Prior

to the Civil War it had gained a reputation as the "leading railroad of the west" while the North Western "was so nearly bankrupt that it could hardly pay the wages of its employes, and could not pay the interest on its bonds".

Following the union of the companies the directors of the consolidated road issued an explanatory circular. "The union", they declared, "gives greater strength and power, favoring more advantageous and extended connections, and better relations with other railroads built and to be built, and will aid to prevent the construction of such roads as would only serve to create injurious competition, without any adequate increase of the aggregate earnings of the roads competing. Decided economy, material reduction of expenses, and increased and more profitable service on engines and cars will also be the result of coöperation in the place of competition, and of one management of both roads."

The pioneer name of the Galena & Chicago Union was dropped because "no portion of the consolidated roads" touched Galena. The name of the Chicago & North Western Railway Company was retained because it "involved no change of books or blanks" and was "sufficiently comprehensive" to include the territory traversed.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

The Illinois Central Comes

It was a crucial moment in the life of Stephen A. Douglas. The House of Representatives was in solemn session, pondering over his bill to make "a Grant of Land to the States of Illinois, Mississippi, and Alabama, in Aid of the Construction of a Railroad from Chicago to Mobile". The measure had already passed the Senate but a strong undertow of opposition had developed in the House. A similar bill applicable to Illinois exclusively had been defeated two years before because of the opposition of the South and East.

A skillful lobbyist, an adroit politician, Douglas had toiled day and night in behalf of his bill for aid in constructing the Illinois Central Railroad. He had won the support of the Gulf States by extending the line from Cairo to Mobile, a plan that had captured the imagination of the entire Mississippi Valley. He had even made sure of the support of Iowa by accepting Senator George Wallace Jones's amendment to extend the road from Galena to the Mississippi opposite Dubuque. His activity among his own constituents was attested by the petitions and memorials that poured in from Illinois. It was September 17, 1850, when the

vote was taken and the proponents breathlessly awaited the results. The bill passed the House by a slim majority and was signed by President Fillmore on September 20, 1850. It was a brilliant victory for the stocky politician from Illinois.

The land grant bill of 1850 was the initial step in a benevolent policy of government aid to western railroads. It granted to the State of Illinois alternate sections of land for six miles on each side of a railroad that was to extend from "the southern terminus of the Illinois and Michigan Canal to a point at or near the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, with a branch of the same to Chicago, on Lake Michigan, and another via the town of Galena in said State, to Dubuque in the State of Iowa". The bill also granted a right of way through the public lands with permission to take all the earth, stone, and timber necessary for construction purposes. Land already sold or preëmpted was not to be disturbed, other land being substituted. All unsold government land remaining within six miles of the road was not to be sold for less than $2.50 an acre, or double the minimum price of ordinary public land. In case the railroad was not completed within ten years all money arising from the sale of the land, together with the unsold land, was to revert to the United States. Government troops and property

were to be carried "free from toll" and mail was to be carried at such rates as Congress might prescribe. The same "rights, privileges, and liabilities" were granted Alabama and Mississippi. The Illinois Central was the first land grant railroad in the United States.

The Illinois Central had its inception about the time of the Black Hawk War. It was Lieutenant Governor A. M. Jenkins who first proposed a survey for the building of a railroad through central Illinois from Cairo to Peru. The project kindled the imagination of many far-sighted men and by 1835 it was the center of an animated political discussion. The scheme crystallized on January 18, 1836, when the Illinois legislature passed a bill authorizing the construction of a railroad from the "mouth of the Ohio . . . to a point on the Illinois river, at or near the termination of the Illinois and Michigan Canal". A group of fifty-nine men comprised the corporation, the most prominent of whom were Governor John Reynolds, A. M. Jenkins, Pierre Menard, Sidney Breese, and Darius B. Holbrook. The capital stock of the company was set at $2,500,000.

Nothing was done under the charter of 1836 but it served as the backbone of a similar project in the Internal Improvement Act of 1837. Stephen A. Douglas was a Democratic member of this

"most memorable, and least creditable" of Illinois legislatures. Among the Whigs was one, Abraham Lincoln, who headed the "Long Nine" from Sangamon County. Both men favored the Internal Improvement Act whereby millions were appropriated in this hectic legislative saturnalia. The largest single appropriation was $3,500,000 for a railroad running from Cairo via Vandalia, Shelbyville, Decatur, and Bloomington, to some point near the southern terminus of the Illinois and Michigan Canal from whence the road was to be continued by way of Savanna to Galena. The wild orgy of spending was cut short by the panic of 1837 with little to show for the millions spent.

Still another attempt was made to construct a central railroad through Illinois. On March 6, 1843, the legislature incorporated the Great Western Railway Company, commonly known as the Holbrook Company after its president, Darius B. Holbrook. Large sums were expended but conditions were not favorable and the whole scheme ended with heavy losses to the promoters and nothing gained by the State.

The failure of the Holbrook Company demonstrated the need of federal aid and from 1843 to 1850 all efforts had been bent in this direction. Sidney Breese, sometimes called the "Father of the Illinois Central", introduced the first land

grant bill but it was left to Stephen A. Douglas, who entered the Senate in 1847, to steer his bill successfully through both houses of Congress.

The grant of 1850 injected new life into the project for a great central railroad through Illinois. When the legislature assembled at Springfield in January, 1851, Darius Holbrook and Sidney Breese attempted to revive the Great Western Railway, but their proposition was frowned upon by most of the legislators. Charges of bribery and fraud filled the air, the leading citizens of Illinois were maligned, and a malicious political fight boded no good for the bill.

Suddenly, in the midst of the debate, a business-like memorial was presented by Robert Rantoul in behalf of a group of wealthy New York and Boston capitalists. These men proposed to build a railroad "equal in all respects" to the one running between Boston and Albany and in return would pay the State a fixed percentage of the gross receipts in return for the land. It was an excellent, clear-cut proposition that met with the hearty approval of the legislators, and on February 10, 1851, Governor Augustus C. French signed a bill incorporating the present-day Illinois Central Railroad Company.

The company was granted a perpetual charter, and was exempted from all property taxes. The

remains of the old State surveys and gradings, together with the federal land grant and right of way, was also conferred upon it. In return, the company was to complete the main line in four years and the branches in six. It was to build a first-class road and release the State from any responsibility connected with the grant. Finally, it was to pay Illinois seven per cent of the gross earnings of the company.

On March 19, 1851, a few eastern capitalists met in a dimly lighted room in New York City and formally organized the Illinois Central by designating themselves as directors, by accepting the articles of incorporation and making provision for the various requirements contained therein, and by electing Robert Schuyler as president. Schuyler was most active in organizing the corporation and guiding it through its formative years. He was an experienced railroad executive, controlling or directing such companies as the New York and New Haven, the Boston and Albany, the Alton and Sangamon, and the Great Western.

Equally important was Robert Rantoul, a leading Massachusetts lawyer, who succeeded Daniel Webster in the Senate. Rantoul was most influential in securing the charter from the Illinois legislature, and shaped the financial policy of the company. Prominent among the other directors

were Gouverneur Morris, Jonathan Sturgis, David A. Neal, Joseph W. Alsop, Franklin Haven, John F. A. Sanford, and Thomas W. Ludlow. All of these founders were men who "lived and moved in the healthy atmosphere of commercial probity and stood high in the estimation of their fellowmen. The enterprise upon which they pinned their faith they promoted and sustained to a large extent with their private fortunes."

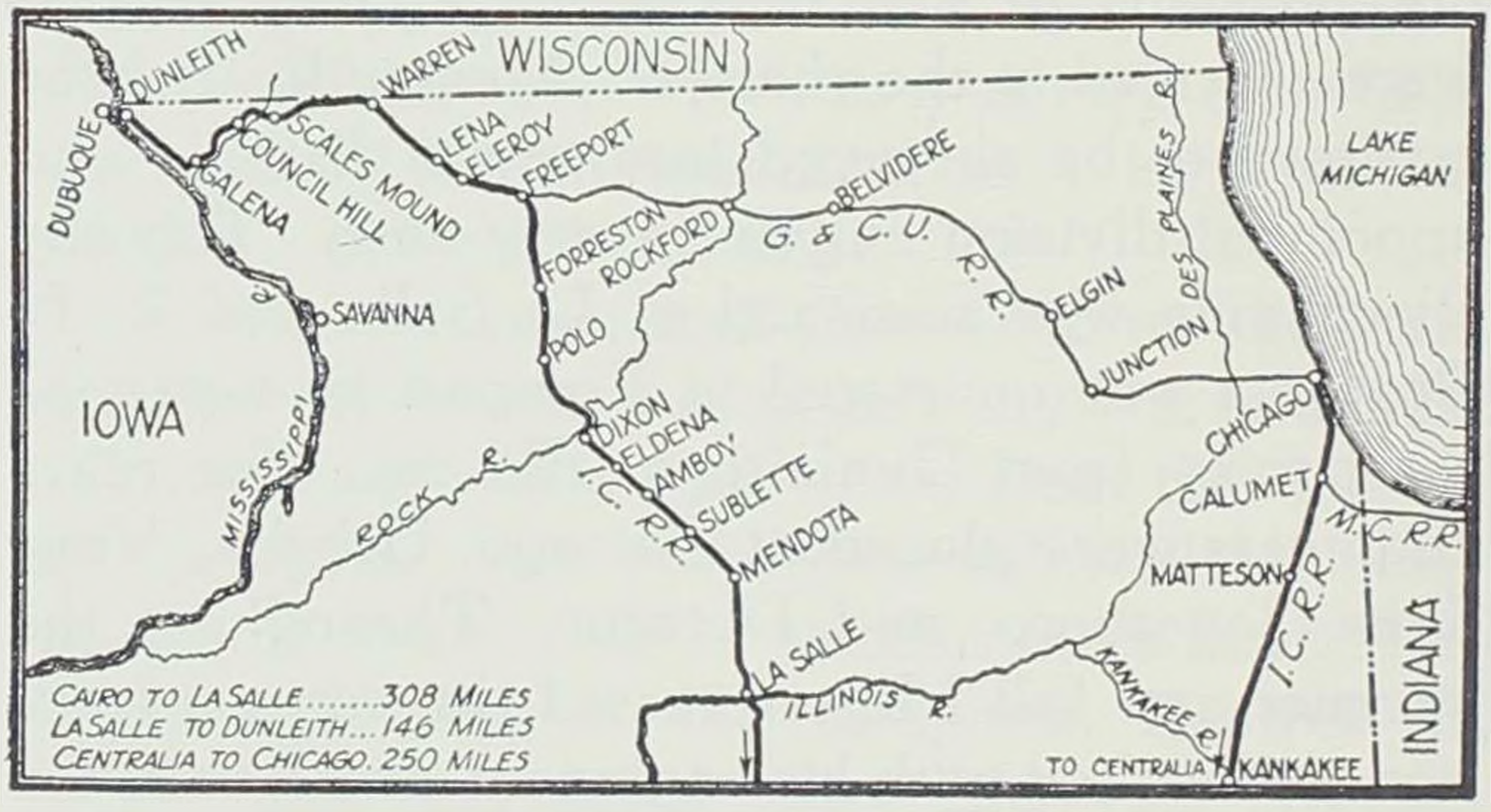
The charter stipulated that work on the main line must commence by January 1, 1852, and must be completed within four years from the date of incorporation. Six years were allowed for completing the branch lines. Within three days after the organization of the company, Roswell B. Mason was appointed chief engineer. Mason was a man of action, skilled in engineering and in railroad construction. He had proved his worth working under Schuyler as superintendent of the New York and New Haven. Several of the engineers who found employment under him in the building of the Illinois Central distinguished themselves in later life. Thus Timothy B. Blackstone built the Chicago and Alton Railway system and was for thirty-five years its president; Henry B. Plant founded what is now the Atlantic Coast Line System and the Plant System of hotels and steamship lines in the South; Grenville M. Dodge

became a major-general in the Civil War and the chief engineer of the Union Pacific.

The company was given considerable latitude in locating the road, for only five specific points — Dubuque, Galena, Chicago, Cairo, and the southern terminus of the Illinois-Michigan Canal — were specified in the charter. Mason divided the territory to be surveyed into seven districts and appointed division engineers over each. Timothy Blackstone was stationed at La Salle and B. B. Provoost was quartered at Freeport to supervise the survey from Dunleith to Eldena. The other engineers were placed at Chicago, Urbana, Vandalia, Jonesboro, and Decatur. Throughout the summer and fall Mason visited the various locations, consulted with his engineers, and late in the fall had "substantially" completed the profiles and maps of the route.

During the survey and throughout the construction of the road, the company was confronted with bitter contests and sectional rivalries all along the route. Savanna and Freeport were intensely jealous and each took active measures to secure the railroad, even going so far as to institute legal proceedings to force the company to choose the one instead of the other. Galena was hostile to the extension of the road to Dunleith, realizing it would mean the end of her commercial greatness.

Despite such opposition and bickering, the route was selected entirely on its economic and engineering merits. The main line from Cairo to La Salle was quite straight, only slight variations being made to include such important towns as



THE ROUTE OF THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL

Vandalia, Decatur, and Bloomington. One stretch of track south of La Salle extended sixty miles without a curve. On the Galena branch, the route via Freeport was finally selected and an arrangement made with the Galena and Chicago Union whereby the Illinois Central would build the road to Dunleith and both would enjoy a joint use of the track into Chicago. The location of the Chicago branch, now the main line, was selected in preference to one farther east, and Central was designated the junction point.

The formal construction of the Illinois Central was begun on December 23, 1851, when ground was broken at both Cairo and Chicago "amidst elaborate ceremonies, the salutes of cannon, and the ringing of bells". These proceedings were merely perfunctory in character to comply with the provisions of the charter. Throughout the winter the officers were busy with the preliminary work and by the spring of 1852 they were prepared to invite bids for the construction of the various divisions. By the following October contracts had been let for the building of all but fifty-two of the seven hundred and five miles of the railroad.

The construction of this "Colossus of Rail-Rhodes" was a stupendous undertaking, the proposed road being more than twice the length of the New York and Erie — at that time the longest railroad in the United States. The latter road, moreover, ran through a thickly populated region while the Illinois Central was surveyed through a virtually uninhabited wilderness.

Such sparsely populated country afforded few laborers — a serious problem in any such undertaking. The company was obliged to establish recruiting stations at New York and New Orleans. It also sent labor agents to Montreal, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Louis-

ville, and Saint Louis. Agents for rival companies lurked about the I. C. construction camps to entice workers away with offers of better pay. Unskilled laborers received one dollar a day, and in 1853 the workers between Galena and Dunleith struck for $1.25 a day and regular hours. About one hundred men marched through the streets of Galena to present their demands to the contractors. The standard working day was from ten to twelve and one-half hours.

A noted Iowan, Henry Clay Dean, declared the Illinois Central workers were the "real builders" of the road. Such men, he declared, would enjoy the blessings of a free country "as long as the wild shriek of the iron horse mingles its reverberations with the majestic murmurings of the father of floods."

Cholera spread a withering hand over the Mississippi Valley during the building of the road. Men at work one day were in their graves the next, one hundred and thirty dying at Peru within the space of ten days. Men who were not stricken "scattered like frightened sheep". 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 "milk sickness", alarmed the workmen and added to the difficulties.

Still another foe to construction was the presence of numerous saloons and the sale of whisky to the workmen. Drunken brawls and riots were not uncommon and in December, 1853, State troops were called into La Salle following a riot in which a contractor was murdered, another man killed, and several others wounded. At Cairo a citizen was killed following a drunken riot and one hundred and fifty laborers left in a body. The company made every effort to drive out the whisky dispensers, according to Mason, but they continued to "menace the work, and every new construction camp that was established was followed by the location of one or more of these disreputable groggeries."

Despite such handicaps the work proceeded with astonishing rapidity. The first section of track to be opened on the Illinois Central was the fourteen mile stretch between Chicago and Calumet. Opened on May 15, 1852, it formed a junction with the Michigan Central which ran the first passenger train from Detroit to Chicago over this Illinois Central track on May 21st. The Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana had previously entered Chicago from Toledo via Englewood over the Rock Island tracks on April 22, 1852. This company had insisted that the Illinois Central must build a viaduct to cross its track. Clashes

had occurred between the workmen of the two roads, but the Illinois Central finally sent laborers to build the crossing under cover of darkness. The watchmen of the M. S. & N. I. were taken by surprise and overpowered, and by dawn the crossing had been effected. Thus another link had been welded in the chain of railroads that were shackling the Mississippi Valley with the Atlantic seaboard.

The opening of the track to Kankakee on July 11, 1853, was hailed with enthusiasm by the Chicago *Democratic Press,* which declared the "magnificent thoroughfare" through central Illinois was "greater far than the Appian Way". "It will be the beginning of a proud era in the history of our city and State", the paper declared, "when the fiery courser first turns his head in the direction of his predestined track over the prairies of Illinois, the rivers and plains and gorges of Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama."

The main trunk of the road, extending from Cairo to La Salle and embracing 308 miles of track, had to be completed within four years from February 10, 1851. The first sixty miles between La Salle and Bloomington were opened for business on May 16, 1853, and a week later the first passenger train was operated over the route. Spurred by promises of a liberal bonus, the con-

DUBUQUE ADVERTISER

DUBUQUE & PACIFIC

RAIL-ROAD

On and after Monday, May 11th, 1857,

Trains will leave Dubuque and Dyersville as follows:

Mail Train will leave Dubuque 7, A. M., arrive in Dyersville at 10, A. M.

Returning will leave Dyersville 2 P. M., arrive in Dubuque at 5, P. M.

Accommodation Train will leave Dubuque 3 P. M., arrive in Dyersville at 6 P. M.

Returning will leave Dyersville 8 A. M., arrive in Dubuque at 11 A. M.

Both Trains connect at Dyersville with first class Coaches for **West Union**, Delhi, Manchester, Independence, Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Iowa Falls, Webster City, Fort Dodge and Sioux City.

Hack Connections at Epworth for Cascade, Anamosa, Marion, Cedar Rapids Iowa City, and Fort Des Moines.

Trains will start from the Company's Depot, which can be approached by Carriages and Wagons.

Freight delivered early in the morning will go out the same day.

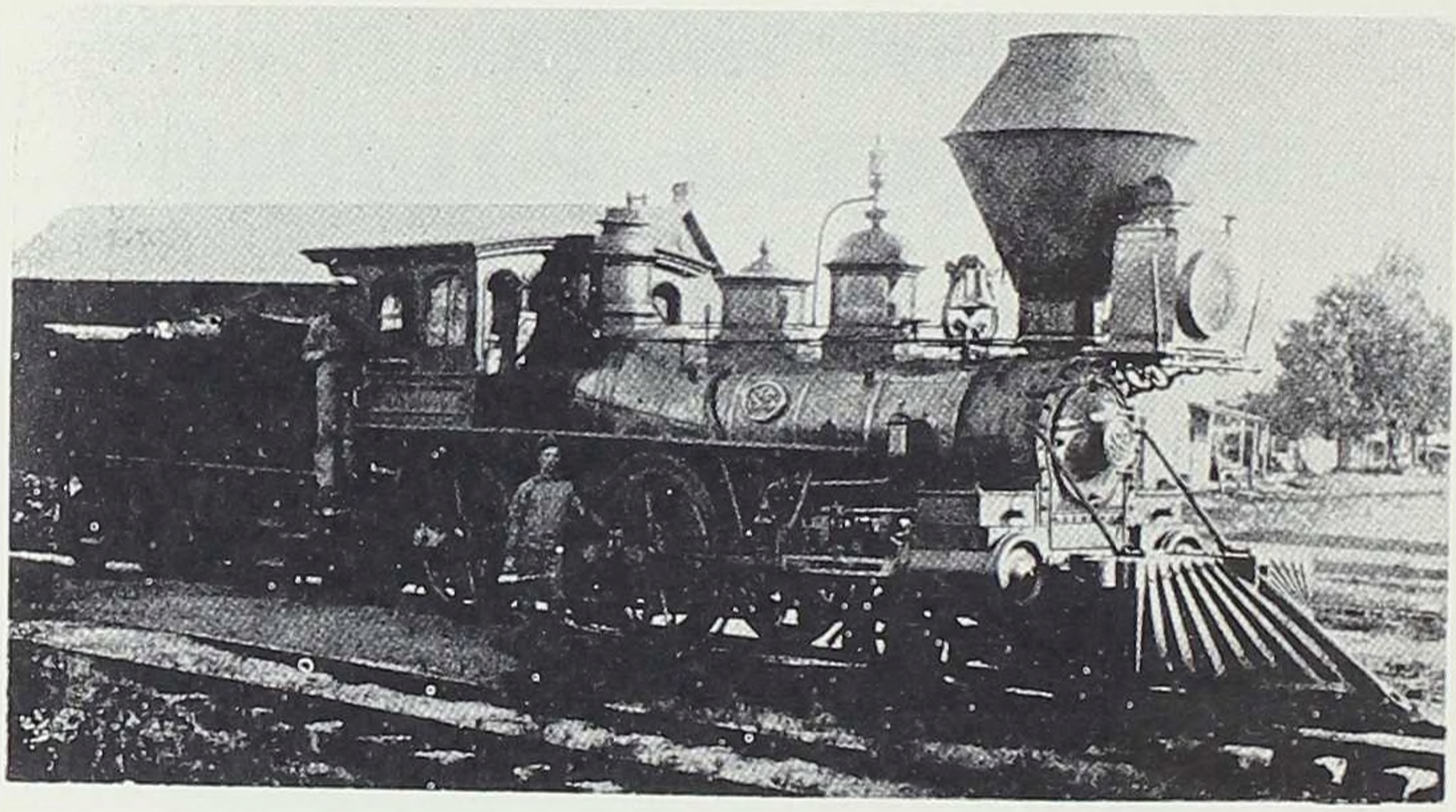
Passengers taking the 7 o'clock, A. M. Train from Dubuque, will have 4 **hours** in Dyersville, returning the same evening.

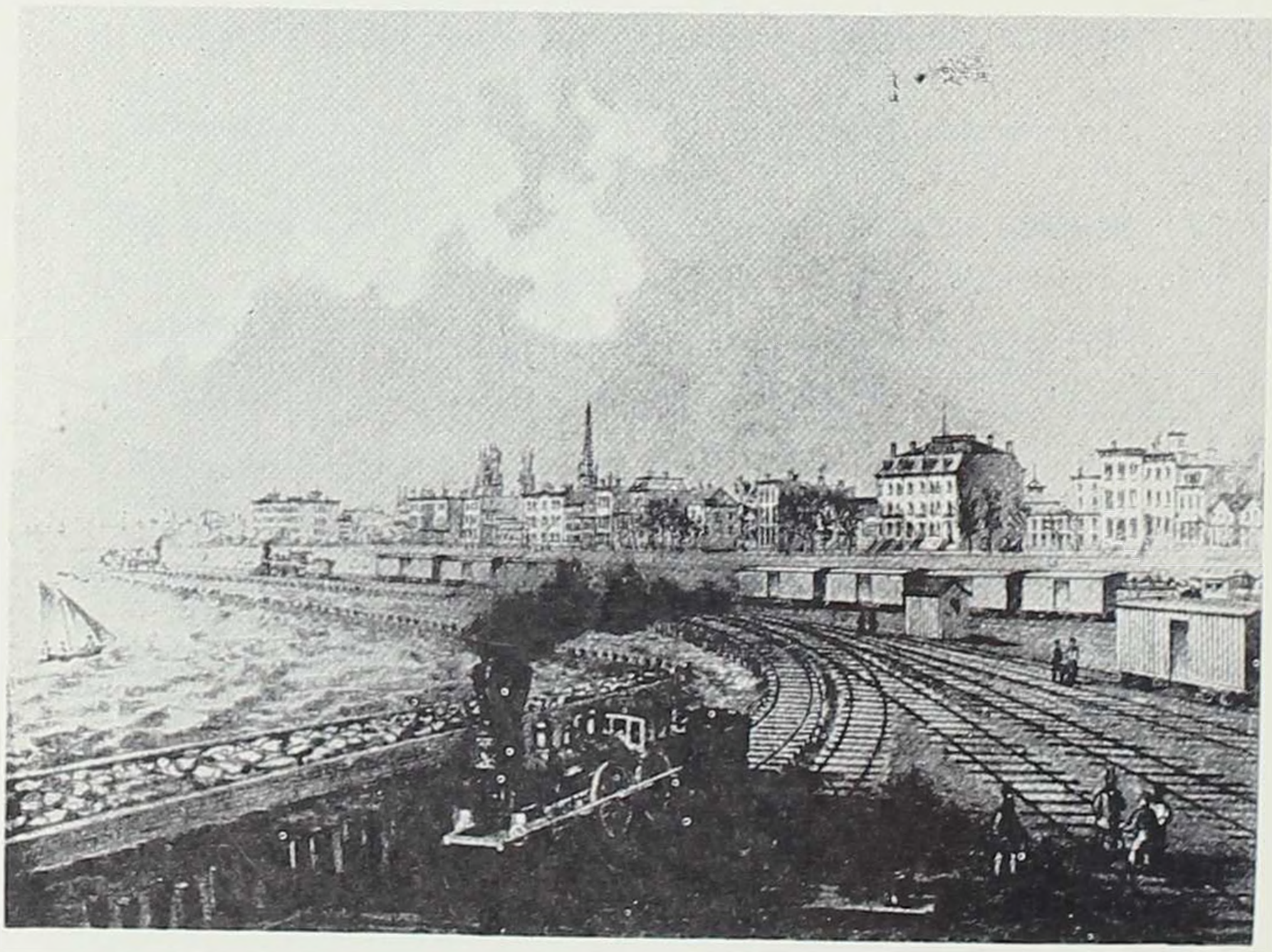
D. H. DOTTERER, Sup't.

J. A. PINTO, Gen. Freight Agt. **C. A. STOW, Gen. Ticket Agt.**

From W. A. Adams' *Directory of the City of Dubuque* (1857-1858)

The Dubuque & Pacific linked Iowa with the Atlantic via the Illinois Central and Galena & Chicago Union tracks. By 1860 the Iron Horse had reached Cedar Falls.





From Carlton V. Corliss' *Mainline of Mid-America*

Top — Typical Illinois Central engine of 1850's.
Bottom — Chicago Lake Front and Illinois Central tracks.

tractors engaged extra tracklayers and teams to cart iron a few miles in advance of the regular party where the extra party would commence work. When the regular party reached this point they in turn would go on a few miles in advance and continue their labor. The main track was completed and officially opened by January 1, 1855. "What more need be said", queried the Chicago *Democratic Press* on December 23, 1854, "of the energy and skill of those who have achieved this work? They need no eulogy from us — they have written one for themselves — written it in broad lines across our State — lines that are as immovable as the everlasting hills!"

Next to be completed was the Galena branch, which extended from La Salle through Mendota, Dixon, Freeport, Warren, and Galena, to Dunleith opposite Dubuque. The track between La Salle and Mendota was opened on November 14, 1853. During the year 1854 the road was completed between Freeport and Galena, the Galena and Chicago Union assisting the I. C. by transporting its rails and equipment from Chicago. The road was opened to Warren on January 9th, to Scales Mound on September 11th, and to Galena on October 30th. The leading citizens of the surly mining town were invited to participate in a free excursion to Rockford, a treat which the

Galena *Advertiser* believed would put a "final extinguisher" to Galena's old notions of travel by rail. The track from Mendota to Freeport was opened on February 1, 1855, leaving only one more link to be forged to cement Iowa with Chicago on the east and Cairo on the south.

It was a scant seventeen miles from Galena to the Mississippi and Iowa where the arrival of the railroad had been anxiously awaited. In the five years between 1850 and 1855, little Dunleith across the river from Dubuque had leaped from a population of five to 700. An engine house with a capacity of twelve locomotives was almost completed; a splendid freight house of "Dubuque Marble" graced the bank of the Mississippi; and the Argyle House was said to be one of the finest hostelries in the West.

The track was finished to Dunleith early in June, 1855, and some Pottawattamie Indians were given a ride on a construction car. An eye-witness declared the Indians "whooped and hallooed until they rivalled the neigh of the iron steed. But the shriek of that animal evidently took them down for one poor Indian jumped nearly three feet in the air when the engineer let his 'critter' loose." It was on June 12th that the railroad was officially opened to the Mississippi and another outlet provided for the resources of Iowa.

Dubuque turned out in gala attire on July 18, 1855, to celebrate. Cannons roared, bands blared out martial music, and the people sweltered in the hot sun. It was fitting that George Wallace Jones should be the president of the day. It was even more fitting that the speaker of the day, Senator Stephen A. Douglas, should reply to the toast: "*The Illinois Central Railroad.* — The great work of the age. Its roots firmly planted in the fertile soil of Kentucky and Missouri, its trunk and branches nourished by the genial climate of Illinois, and the heavy dews of Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota descending on its head, how can it but flourish?"

Meanwhile the Chicago branch remained unfinished. The track had been opened to Urbana on July 24, 1854, and to Mattoon on June 25, 1855, a week after the Dubuque celebration, and construction work was concentrated on the 77 mile stretch between Mattoon and Centralia. The last spike was formally driven on September 26, 1856. At that time the company owned 83 locomotives, 52 passenger cars and 1249 freight cars. The 705 miles of the "best built railroad in the West" had cost $26,568,017, or $37,600 a mile.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

The Burlington Comes

A triumvirate of men — a lawyer, a financier, and an engineer — brought the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad to Iowa. The lawyer, James Frederick Joy, was destined to see his name become a synonym for the entire Burlington System. The financier, John Murray Forbes, gave to the Burlington a "character and stability" which distinguished it sharply from most other roads of that day. The engineer, John W. Brooks, served as a director of the Burlington for a score of years and as president of the Iowa and Nebraska divisions. Constantly confronted by almost insuperable odds, Brooks proved himself "a perfect Napoleon" as a manager and engineer and was a vital element in the history of the road.

The coming of the Burlington to Iowa is replete with thrilling incidents. Although its corporate history began in Illinois, the prologue had its inception in the law office of James F. Joy in Detroit

in 1845. New Hampshire born, a graduate of Dartmouth College and the Harvard Law School, Joy had come west to Detroit in 1836 to practice law. Within a few months he saw the Michigan legislature appropriate millions for railroad construction across the State. During the ensuing years the Michigan Central was constructed from Detroit to Kalamazoo while the Michigan Southern was built from Toledo, Ohio, to Hillsdale. The panic of 1837 paralyzed further construction, whereupon a loud clamor arose for early completion of the roads by private capital.

Joy was among those who urged the sale of the property to a private company. He found an ardent supporter in John W. Brooks, a twenty-six-year-old engineer and former superintendent of the Auburn and Rochester Railroad. Although the Michigan Central was in "shabby" condition, Brooks and Joy felt it would be a profitable investment if it were rebuilt and completed to Lake Michigan. Brooks accordingly went east in the fall of 1845 in search of financial support.

Fortune led Brooks to the counting-room of John Murray Forbes, a wealthy Bostonian who had won a considerable fortune in China. Fascinated by the prospect of sponsoring a railroad through the Michigan wilderness, the young financier agreed to support the project, and

straightway hired Daniel Webster to draft a charter that would be acceptable to eastern capital.

When Brooks returned to secure the approval of the Michigan legislature, he found the State had placed its railroads on the bargain counter. The Michigan Central Railroad Company agreed to buy the Detroit-Kalamazoo road for $2,000,000, but the successful consummation of this act rested on Forbes's ability to raise sufficient funds in six months to pay for the property.

Forbes pitched into his task with enthusiasm. His good judgment and integrity quickly won the support of eastern capital and on September 23, 1846, the Michigan Central took possession of its property. Forbes was elected the first president and Brooks was appointed superintendent. By the spring of 1849 the old road had been rebuilt and extended to New Buffalo on Lake Michigan. More than six million dollars were required in the purchase, construction, and equipment of this line which still serves as a main artery of travel to Iowa by way of Chicago.

Both Forbes and Brooks realized that the rapidly expanding traffic was bound to invite competition. Some New York financiers had purchased the Michigan Southern road and commenced building around Lake Michigan. At the same time a railroad was projected along the southern shore

of Lake Erie to connect Toledo with Buffalo, New York. The completion of these two projects would give the Michigan Southern an all-rail connection between the Atlantic seaboard and Chicago, thus relegating the Michigan Central to the position of a purely local road. The directors of the Michigan Central promptly accepted the challenge by granting their officers unlimited powers to cope with this new and dangerous rival.

It was Joy who struck the first blow. Trained to detect loopholes in legal documents, he found the charter of the New Albany and Salem "conveniently vague" to allow that southern Indiana road to build a "branch" around Lake Michigan. While Brooks was engaged in racing the Northern Indiana construction force around Lake Michigan, Joy sought to procure an entrance into Chicago over the Illinois Central track. In the litigation that followed he obtained the services of Abraham Lincoln and an agreement was reached whereby the Michigan Central purchased $600,000 in Illinois Central bonds as the price for the privilege of using that track. Finally, the Michigan Central stockholders invested heavily in the Great Western of Canada in order to obtain direct access to the east by way of Ontario.

The first through train from Lake Erie entered Chicago on May 21, 1852, over the track of the

Illinois Central. It was a brilliant victory for the Michigan Central. The Michigan Southern had been running trains from Indiana into Chicago as early as April 22, 1852. A thirteen mile gap in Indiana, however, prevented it from beginning through service from Toledo until a day after the first through train of the Michigan Central.

But the rivalry between the two roads did not stop at Chicago. The smoke of battle had hardly cleared on this front when the Michigan Central found the rival company subsidizing and building the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad to the Mississippi. Would the Michigan Central accept the challenge? Did the ultimate returns on the capital invested justify the continuance of such devastating competition? The Michigan Central men looked to their financier for the answer.

Forbes realized that the gold rush to California was "the direct cause of the construction of four-fifths of the Western railways" begun after 1849. And while he did not minimize the economic, political, and military value of a transcontinental railroad, he was convinced that the rich prairies of Illinois and Iowa would yield the railroad investor his richest harvest. In 1852 Forbes wrote Edward Everett Hale that "the strong hands and empty stomachs of Europe, and the rich *Dollar-an-acre* Prairies of the West" must be

brought together by business methods and philanthropy. "California", he asserted, "is a cypher in comparison, a mere producer of the *measure* of value, not of value itself." Heartened by such glowing prospects, the Michigan Central directors determined to extend their line westward.

As chief counsel for the Michigan Central, Joy was delegated to rummage through the Illinois railroad charters to find an outlet to Iowa. Since the Rock Island was already under construction and the Illinois Central and the Galena and Chicago Union were extending their lines into northwestern Illinois, Joy scrutinized the charters leading to the southwest. Unable to find a road that stretched clear across the State, the resourceful Joy hit upon the idea of combining four roads that sprawled aimlessly in a southwesterly direction between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. Three of these — the Aurora Branch, the Northern Cross, and the Peoria and Oquawka — had been incorporated in February, 1849, by local capitalists. The Central Military Tract Railroad had been chartered by irate citizens of Galesburg on February 15, 1851, when the Peoria and Oquawka was surveyed. If the charters of these companies could be amended to permit the welding of the terminals together so as to give the Michigan Central a direct run into Chicago, the company

would have little to fear from its chief competitor.

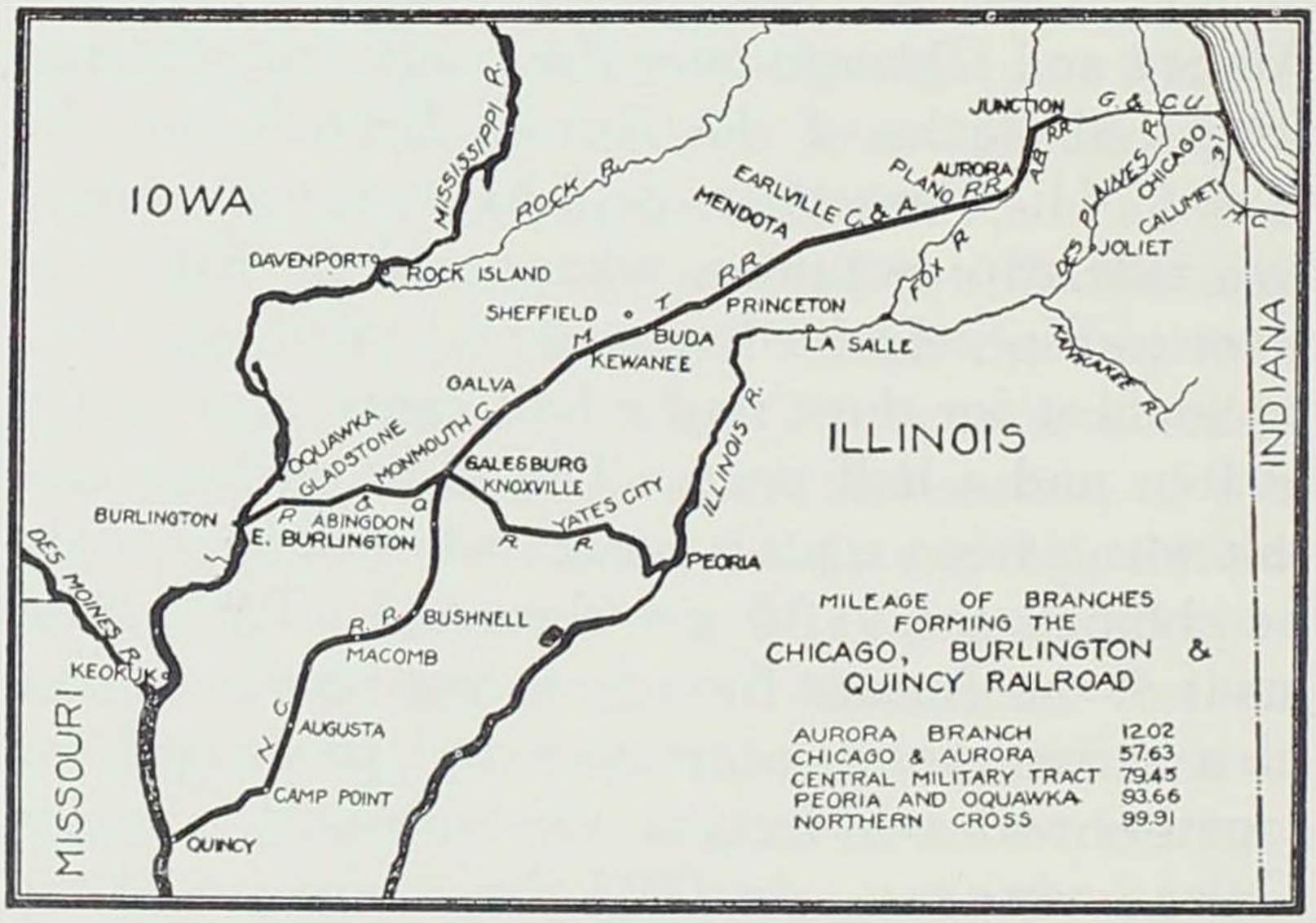
The Michigan Central managers lost no time in opening negotiations. Fortunately, they found each road in a receptive mood, for local capital had proven utterly inadequate. Indeed, three of the companies had already made overtures for aid in the East through such men as Chauncey S. Colton of the Central Military Tract Railroad and James W. Grimes, a director of the Peoria and Oquawka. By agreeing to furnish the required capital, the Michigan Central secured amendments to their charters at a special session of the Illinois legislature in June, 1852, which included the desired changes and made the project acceptable to conservative eastern investors. Forbes immediately set to work raising funds to push active construction. He had acted none too soon, for some of the companies were already on the verge of being connected with the Rock Island and would thus have been absorbed by the Michigan Southern interests.

The nucleus from which the present-day Burlington System developed was the Aurora Branch Railroad, a company that had been incorporated to build a single or double track railroad from the "town of Aurora" northward to some "eligible and convenient" point of connection with the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad. Contracts on the

Aurora Branch were let late in 1849 and on September 2, 1850, the road was opened for business to Junction (West Chicago), twelve miles directly north of Aurora. On October 21, 1850, through train service was inaugurated between Aurora and Chicago over the crude second-hand strap rail tracks of the Aurora Branch and the G. & C. U. Passengers paid $1.25 for this forty-two mile trip; potatoes, wheat, and shelled corn were transported for five cents a bushel; oats and buckwheat for three and a half cents; and barley at four and a half cents. The tariff on flour and salt was sixteen cents a barrel, while lumber could be shipped for $1.50 per thousand. The equipment of the Aurora Branch at that time consisted of a second-hand locomotive and passenger car together with two freight cars borrowed from the Galena company. In 1933 the equipment of the Burlington, which traces its corporate beginnings to the Aurora Branch, included 1300 locomotives, 1200 passenger cars, and 60,000 freight cars.

A number of changes were made in the Aurora Branch charter by Joy. First, the name of the corporation was changed to the Chicago and Aurora Railroad Company. Next, the new organization was permitted to increase its capital stock to a sum not exceeding two million dollars. Finally, the C. & A. was to extend in a southwest-

erly direction from Aurora to a point at least fifteen miles north of La Salle where it was to intersect the Illinois Central and also form a junction with the Central Military Tract Railroad. The



point selected, an uninhabited prairie in 1850, grew in a twinkling. Organized as a town in 1853, Mendota had 1800 inhabitants by 1855.

The first meeting of the Chicago and Aurora stockholders was held in Chicago on July 6, 1852. The directors and officers of the Aurora Branch were retained in office, but the presence of Joy and Brooks on the directorate signified the influence of eastern capital. The stock of the company was promptly over-subscribed, the Chicago *Democrat*

observing that the road was controlled by a "stronger and wealthier" group of capitalists than any other company. In the following year, 1853, Joy became president of the road.

Construction began at Aurora during 1852 and the line was completed to Mendota on October 20, 1853, eight days after the Rock Island was completed to Sheffield by the Michigan Southern. The track had been laid with a new rail which the company deemed "far superior" to the ordinary T rail. The Chicago *Tribune* was of the opinion that this "continuous or compound rail, over which the cars roll, as smoothly as if it were glass", made the C. & A. the "most comfortable" road out of Chicago. Brand new freight and passenger cars and locomotives of "unsurpassed" size and power had also been acquired. With fifty-eight miles of track in operation west of Lake Michigan, the Michigan Central was prepared to throw the full force of its energy into the development of the Central Military Tract Railroad.

This company had originally planned a connection with the old Rock Island and La Salle Railroad. The amendment to its charter dated June 19, 1852, authorized the C. M. T. to construct a road from Galesburg "in a northeasterly direction, on the most direct and eligible route towards the City of Chicago, to a point . . . on or near

the line of the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, or on or near the line of any other railroad or railroads connecting with or extending to the said City of Chicago". The route from Galesburg to Mendota was selected for its beauty and fertility. "If Illinois is the garden spot of the West," the Chicago *Tribune* of January 4, 1854, asserted, "the Central Military Tract is more certainly the garden spot of Illinois, and when this road is finished, piercing the 'garden spot' through its very centre, it will bring to our city an amount of trade and travel greater than all that we now derive from the various railroads connecting Chicago with the interior."

A preliminary estimate by engineer William P. Whittle on December 1, 1851, had put the cost of constructing the proposed Central Military Tract Railroad at $13,224.80 per mile. A passenger and freight depot at Galesburg costing $2500 and some first class passenger coaches costing $2000 attest the modesty of Whittle's estimates. Yet without more than local support, the progenitors of the C. M. T. did "not expect to carry the enterprise to a successful issue".

The entrance of the Michigan Central into the C. M. T. was followed by the election of John W. Brooks to the presidency. Under his able direction the road was completed and placed in

operation to Galesburg on December 7, 1854. In his report to the stockholders on April 2, 1855, Brooks listed the sources from which construction funds had been derived. A total of $727,111.80 had been raised on the 9861 shares of stock. Of this amount eastern capitalists had paid $541,925 on 7225 shares while western subscribers had advanced $185,186.80 on 2636 shares. Although the road had been "so far completed as to be open to public use", only seventy-five dollars had been called on each one hundred dollar share. Despite this fact one-sixth of the western shareholders had been able to contribute an average of only 42½ per cent on the amount called. A total of $1,491,000 in first and second mortgage bonds bearing seven and eight per cent interest had been sold at a discount. Smaller items listed by Brooks brought the total receipts to $2,413,955.52. Against this sum the company had spent $2,299,786.25 or $28,747.32 a mile for construction and equipment.

The C. M. T. earned $451,895.49 in its first year of operation ending April 30, 1856. The rolling stock consisted of 19 locomotives, 6 first-class passenger cars and 2 baggage cars, 50 coal and 51 platform cars, and 116 house freight cars. The company had experimented successfully with a rebuilt coal-burning locomotive and had accordingly

ordered four new coal-burning engines. These were "so constructed as to burn the smoke", thus avoiding one "serious objection" to coal as a fuel.

The Peoria and Oquawka, which had been authorized to build a railroad from Peoria to the "town of Oquawka", served as the means of closing the final gap in the line to the Mississippi. On July 1, 1853, the C. M. T. had arranged to have this company locate its road within the southern limits of Galesburg in order to provide a connection to Burlington. On October 3, 1854, the P. & O. made a joint contract with the C. & A. and the C. M. T. leasing its road between Galesburg and the Mississippi for three years following its completion. The track to East Burlington was opened for traffic on March 17, 1855.

The arrival of the iron horse on the banks of the Mississippi opposite Burlington was a proud event in the history of that city. A grand celebration was held on May 31st at which the "beauty and fashion" and "chivalry and power" of Ottumwa, Agency City, Fairfield, Mount Pleasant, New London, Keokuk, Davenport, and other Iowa towns mingled with the "selected" elegance and talent of the East. Arriving in ten "superb" passenger cars drawn by the "huge and gallant iron horse", the guests, among whom were Lewis Cass, Stephen A. Douglas, and Mayor Boone of

From *Umberhine & Gustin's Dubuque City Directory for 1861*

City Directories were full of railroad, steamboat, hotel, stage-coach, and commission merchants advertisements.

RAIL ROADS.

Burlington & Missouri River.

TRAINS LEAVE—8.00 A. M., and 5.45 P. M.
" ARRIVE—12.35 P. M., and 6.45 P. M.
Depot opposite foot of Elm.

H. THIELSEN,
Superintendent.

Chicago, Burlington & Quincy.

TRAINS LEAVE—6.00 A. M., and 7.20 P. M.
" ARRIVE—7.00 A. M., and 8.45 P. M.
Depot East Burlington. Office, North-west cor. Jefferson and Water.

R. F. HOSFORD,
Agent.

STAGE LINES.

Burlington, Wapello and Columbus City—Daily.

Office Burlington House.

J. L. PERKINS, Agent.

Burlington and Fort Madison—Daily.

Office, Barret House.

WM. BARRET, Agent.

Burlington Omnibus and City Express Line.

BARKER & GIFFORD, Proprietors, 14, Columbia.

FERRY BOAT—Runs constantly from foot of Columbia Street to East Burlington.

From A. Bailey's *Burlington Directory and Business Advertiser* (1862)

Chicago, received a warm greeting by the reception committee headed by Governor James W. Grimes. The evening was delightfully spent in music and dancing, speeches and feasting.

Only one segment, the Northern Cross Railroad, remained unfinished. Originally included in the Internal Improvement Act of 1837, the old Northern Cross was planned to traverse central Illinois by way of Quincy and Springfield. The first locomotive in Illinois was alleged to have been put in service on the eight mile track running eastward from Meredosia on November 8, 1838. During the ensuing years, however, the road had rotted away and on February 10, 1849, citizens of Quincy and vicinity had revived the title and in 1851 this company was authorized to construct a branch line "through the Military Bounty Tract, and terminating at the most convenient and eligible point at or near the southern termination of the Illinois and Michigan Canal". This act had been amended in 1852 to allow the Northern Cross to connect with a railroad leading into Chicago. Only twenty miles had been completed north of Quincy by January 19, 1855, when the Michigan Central took charge. The remaining eighty miles were completed by January 31, 1856.

It was not until 1864 that the web of steel, upon which the Joy-Forbes-Brooks triumvirate had been

spinning for a dozen years, was completed. By 1855 Joy had become president of both the Chicago and Aurora and the Central Military Tract Railroads. Two years previously the Chicago *Democrat* had expressed a hope that the Michigan Central would consolidate the names as well as the roads so that the editors could "with a single scratch of the pen" let the people know what they were talking about. The Chicago and Aurora was incorporated as the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company on February 14, 1855. This company absorbed the Central Military Tract Railroad on July 9, 1856, under the caption The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Rail Road Company. On April 28, 1864, this company purchased at foreclosure the Northern Cross which had been previously named the Quincy and Chicago. That portion of the old P. & O. which had been built between Peoria and East Burlington was acquired in the grand consolidation of June 24, 1864, when the company assumed its present-day title: Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

The Milwaukee Comes

Solomon Juneau was the founder of Milwaukee. In 1835 he preëmpted land where he had lived for seventeen years, platted the town, and began selling lots to the throngs of settlers and speculators who were attracted by the establishment of a land office at Green Bay. Rude buildings were flung up hastily and by 1836 the merchants were all doing a "land office business". The country westward to the Mississippi, however, was still a vast wilderness unsettled save for a crop of squatters around Fort Crawford at Prairie du Chien and the straggling, unkempt communities that clustered about Galena.

The creation of the Territory of Wisconsin on April 20, 1836, was heralded with delight. Andrew Jackson promptly appointed Henry Dodge as Governor, and a census was taken of this princely domain from which Wisconsin, Iowa,

Minnesota, and a generous share of the Dakotas were carved. The census that year revealed a population of 22,218, divided almost equally between those living west of the Mississippi in what is now Iowa, and the inhabitants of present-day Wisconsin. Four of the six counties east of the Mississippi — Milwaukee, Iowa, Crawford, and Brown — contained only 11,683 people, one-half of whom hailed from Iowa County which embraced the mineral region. An election was held and Governor Dodge ordered the legislators to meet at Belmont pending the selection of a capital.

Meanwhile, a number of men in the mushroom village of Milwaukee met in a "hotel" on September 17, 1836, to "exchange views and adopt measures" for building a railroad from Milwaukee to the Mississippi River. After several hours of solemn deliberation a committee consisting of Solomon Juneau, Byron Kilbourn, Hans Crocker, Benjamin H. Edgerton, and eleven others was appointed to correspond with citizens throughout the Territory, to circulate petitions, and to take steps to carry out the objects of the meeting.

The seeds sown at this rather inauspicious railroad caucus sprouted quickly and began to take root. When the legislators assembled at Belmont, Governor Dodge spoke at some length on the need for internal improvements and recommended the

construction of a railroad commencing from some "suitable point" on the Mississippi and passing through the mining country to the Rock River, and thence directly to Lake Michigan. A memorial was sent to Congress which resulted in an appropriation of $2000 for a survey, but the plan was nipped in the bud by a topographical engineer who turned in an adverse report after surveying twenty miles of the proposed railroad.

During the ensuing years a number of factors combined to cause the railroad question to be dormant. The paralyzing effect of the panic of 1837 was attested by the slow growth of population — by 1840 the Territory of Wisconsin contained only 30,945 people compared with 43,112 in the Territory of Iowa. Moreover, heated arguments had arisen over the respective merits of waterway improvements and the construction of highways, plank roads, and railroads. The bellicose attitude of the Jacksonian democrats toward "monster" corporations and monopolies had alligned public sentiment against railroads. Bitter rivalry and petty jealousy also combined to make the selection of a route utterly impossible during the early forties. Thus, after outstripping Green Bay and Sheboygan, Milwaukee found her efforts to become the eastern terminus of the projected line frustrated by the aspirations of Kenosha and Ra-

cine. At the same time the bickering among Potosi, Cassville, and Prairie du Chien prevented the determination of a western terminus.

During the forties the Territory of Wisconsin made a phenomenal growth in population. The number of inhabitants in 1846 was five times as many as in 1840 — a total of 155,678. By 1850 this number had increased to 305,391 compared with 192,214 for Iowa. Meanwhile, shipments eastward by way of the Great Lakes and Erie Canal rose steadily during the forties. As the population pushed westward over southern Wisconsin, Milwaukee realized more and more that the construction of a railroad would tap a commerce which otherwise would find its way eastward by the circuitous all-water route down the Mississippi and through the Gulf of Mexico. Although intensely jealous of Chicago, Milwaukee was forced to take up the cudgels with her sister city on Lake Michigan against Saint Louis and New Orleans.

It seems to have been Asa Whitney, who struck the spark that kindled the spirit of Wisconsin railroad enthusiasts. During the summer of 1845 Whitney journeyed westward from Milwaukee with a party of surveyors in quest of a practical route for a transcontinental railroad from Lake Michigan to the mouth of the Columbia River.

Whitney found "many good routes" between Milwaukee and the Mississippi and in a letter from Prairie du Chien declared that he was "perfectly satisfied" with the feasibility of such a project.

News of Whitney's plan spread like fire throughout Wisconsin and Iowa. "Once let the iron horse slake his thirst in the Mississippi," an Iowa memorial to the Wisconsin legislature declared, and "Congress will send him on to the ocean." A Lancaster editor believed a railroad should speedily unite the Father of Waters with Lake Michigan, even though "Sin and Death" got the contract. The laws of trade and the geographic position of Iowa, combined with her "boundless resources", asserted the *Grant County Herald,* "must and will force a channel of trade eastward" to the Great Lakes.

In 1847 the legislature of the Territory of Wisconsin was "flooded" with petitions from Milwaukee, Waukesha, Iowa, Grant, and other counties for the incorporation of a railroad from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi. But opposition to the scheme was still strong enough to defer the project. Finally, at the "urgent solicitation" of citizens of Waukesha on "behalf of the people of the interior", Governor Henry Dodge approved a bill on February 11, 1847, incorporating the "Milwaukee and Waukesha Rail Road Com-

pany". This organization was granted the right to "locate and construct a single or double track railroad" from Milwaukee to Waukesha with power to "transport, take and carry property, and persons upon the same, by the power and force of steam, of animals, or of any mechanical or other power, or of any combination of them". The capital stock was set at $100,000. Byron Kilbourn, William A. Barstow, Alexander W. Randall, Lemuel W. Weeks, and five others were appointed commissioners to receive subscriptions.

The commissioners met at the City Hotel in Milwaukee on November 23, 1847, and elected L. W. Weeks president and A. W. Randall secretary. The subscription books were opened on February 7, 1848, but despite the enthusiasm and fanfare a year slipped by before the $100,000 was subscribed and the requisite five per cent paid thereon. Meanwhile, on March 11, 1848, the company had been granted the right to extend its road from Waukesha to the "village of Madison" and thence to some point on the Mississippi in Grant County. The capital stock could be increased to three million dollars whenever the company decided to extend its road. Byron Kilbourn was chosen president of the Milwaukee and Waukesha company, Benjamin H. Edgerton, secretary, and Walter P. Flanders treasurer. Lem-

uel W. Weeks, Edward D. Holton, Alexander Mitchell, Erastus B. Wolcott, Anson Eldred, James Kneeland, John H. Tweedy, and E. D. Clinton served with Kilbourn on the first board of directors.

The company lost no time in beginning its surveys. On June 4, 1849, Kilbourn was appointed chief engineer with power to employ assistants and laborers to conduct the field surveys and prepare the line for construction. Benjamin H. Edgerton and Jesper Vliet commenced the surveys three days later and were soon joined by Richard P. Morgan, an experienced engineer. These men conducted their work with such "ability and untiring industry" that a line of "almost unrivalled excellence" was selected without a deep cut or high embankment, without a yard of rock excavation, and with only a few bridges of small dimensions. Contracts for grubbing and grading were offered for public bids in September, 1849.

Despite the failure of inexperienced contractors, construction work was prosecuted with energy throughout 1850, the company functioning under the more appropriate title of Milwaukee & Mississippi Rail Road Company. Lake boats were constantly discharging tons of heavy H rails at the port of Milwaukee for the line of laborers toiling between that city and Waukesha. By No-

vember the track had been laid as far as Wauwatosa, a distance of five miles, and the mayor and council of Milwaukee, together with legislators and prominent citizens, enjoyed a trip to the end of track. Among the "pleasing incidents" of the excursion was the presence of Solomon Juneau, who had never before seen a locomotive. Within the scant space of fifteen years, Juneau had seen Milwaukee grow from a cluster of Indian huts to a thriving city with "massive buildings" and 20,000 inhabitants.

A shrill blast from the iron horse announced the formal opening of the road to Waukesha on February 25, 1851. The event was celebrated with "great eclat" at Waukesha. Thousands lined the track as the locomotive glided majestically by with its coaches jammed with happy excursionists from Milwaukee. The raucous cheers of the backwoods farmers mingled strangely with the blaring band. A complimentary dinner was served in the "new and spacious Car House" of the Milwaukee & Mississippi, and a toast was drunk to the "first link in the great railway from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi."

The financial woes which beset the M. & M. were many and trying. Since neither Federal nor State aid was forthcoming, President Kilbourn called upon the farmers and merchants of Wis-

consin to support the project in order to keep out the dreaded bogy of eastern monopoly. By the spring of 1851, Secretary William Taintor placed the total subscription at $967,900, the city of Milwaukee alone having contributed $16,000 in cash and pledged its credit to the amount of $234,000. Individual stockholders had subscribed $435,600, of which $62,338.26 had been paid in cash and $282,300 in mortgages. The mortgages were on improved farm lands double the value of the subscription, and such securities were offered as collateral for the bonds of the company. During 1851 President Kilbourn issued $1,900,000 of stock in the company to Jacob L. Bean of Waukesha, receiving only "one mill on the dollar" in return. But on January 7, 1852, the board of directors removed President Kilbourn from office for his "illegal" conduct; for refusing to report the transaction; and for "withholding all information on the subject". The company declared "all stock null and void not reported to the Board."

A new era in the company's history was inaugurated when John Catlin of Madison was elected president. The need of outside assistance was fully appreciated by Catlin, who floated bonds "to extend the road far enough into the country" to make the revenue "sufficient to pay the interest" on the cost of the road. At the same time Catlin

appointed Edward M. Brodhead chief engineer and superintendent at a salary of $3500 plus $1000 for expenses. The "prudent and cautious management" of this skillful engineer proved of immense value to the company. In addition to a considerable freight business in 1852, three con-

THE ROUTE OF THE MILWAUKEE AND MISSISSIPPI

struction trains were "continually employed transporting iron, ties and gravel", without a single collision or the loss of life by any act of negligence.

On January 22, 1852, two weeks after Kilbourn had been removed from office, the track of the M. & M. was completed to Eagle. During the ensuing months the company was rigorously reorganized and Brodhead pushed construction rapidly. The road was completed to Palmyra, forty-two miles from Milwaukee, on August 3, 1852. Whitewater was reached on September 24th and on December 1st the first train steamed

noisily into Milton, sixty-two miles from Milwaukee.

An inventory of the rolling stock in January, 1853, listed 8 locomotives, 6 passenger cars, 35 eight-wheel box cars, 43 eight-wheel platform cars, 67 four-wheel gravel cars, and 7 hand cars. An additional locomotive, the *Madison*, was branded as "worthless" except for old iron. The company had spent $141,402.54 on this equipment which Brodhead considered would be sufficient to meet the needs of the company in 1853 if 2 locomotives, 15 box cars, and 2 first class passenger cars were added.

The M. & M. carried 25,544 tons of freight during 1852 — 12,639 tons westward and 12,905 tons eastward. Its richest harvest was reaped from transportation of grain. The 236,649 bushels of wheat carried eastward was more than double the amount of the total shipment of corn, oats, potatoes, barley, and rye. In addition to grain the trains rumbled into Milwaukee with wool, flour, butter, pork, livestock, flax, lumber, stone, and potash. Westbound trains bore the basic necessities of an ever expanding frontier community — lumber, laths, shingles, brick, furniture, stoves, coal, salt, merchandise and whisky. Immense quantities of iron were hauled for construction purposes. The revenue from the 41,093 passengers carried in

1852 totalled $31,997.09, compared with $43,-343.81 from freight receipts.

Even before Milton was reached, the directors of the M. & M. had determined to extend their line to Janesville. Since the charter did not provide for such a road, the Southern Wisconsin Rail Road Company was incorporated. This company let the contract for construction to Walter P. Flanders and others. Flanders, the treasurer of the Milwaukee & Mississippi, was in a position to enter into a contract with the M. & M., giving it the "right to run and operate the road for the term of fifteen years". This eight mile stub was completed to Janesville on January 6, 1853, at a cost of $98,969.18, and before the end of that year the "necessary enactments" were obtained from the legislature to consolidate the two roads. Brodhead urged the extension of the Southern Wisconsin line to the Mississippi in order to secure the business of the "most important agricultural and mineral portion" of Wisconsin as well as a "large portion" of the business of Dubuque and northeastern Iowa. The track was laid to Monroe by December 31, 1857, and a rich tribute was soon pouring into the coffers of the company.

Meanwhile, the contract for grading, masonry, bridging, and laying the superstructure of the road from the Rock River to Madison was let on April

4, 1853. The contractors agreed to complete the thirty miles to Madison by January 1, 1854, but the "unprecedented amount of public works" and the delay of four hundred tons of iron at Buffalo by the close of navigation hindered construction and the road did not reach Stoughton until January 2, 1854. During 1853 the M. & M. transported 67,000 tons of freight in addition to construction material. Brodhead was proud to report that 75,975 passengers had been carried without injury, and observed that the "only damage worthy of notice occurred when the train was thrown off the track in October, by running over a bull, which was repaired and all the loss of property connected with it satisfied for about $1,200."

Madison turned out in gala attire to celebrate the advent of the railroad on May 24, 1854. Thousands flocked in from the country and the streets of the capital were jammed. Many of the farmers had never seen a locomotive and waited impatiently on the banks of Lake Monona for their first glimpse of the awe-inspiring spectacle of an iron horse "with breath of smoke and flame". They were doubly rewarded, for the long train of thirty-two cars was drawn by two locomotives. More than two thousand visitors alighted from the cars, including the Milwaukee fire companies nattily attired in brilliant red uniforms and drawing their

"glistening engines". The excursionists paraded to the capitol grounds, where dinner was served. Speeches and toasts were interspersed with music and general merriment.

While the road was still in progress of construction to Madison, chief engineer Brodhead had sent out surveyors to determine the route from Madison to the Mississippi. Prairie du Chien was selected as the western terminus and during 1854 engineer B. H. Edgerton precisely located and staked out the line which ran in a northwesterly direction down the Black Earth Valley to the Wisconsin River whence it continued down the valley of that historic waterway to the Mississippi. Construction was again delayed, however. Late in the autumn of 1856 the railroad was still twenty-two miles from Prairie du Chien.

The "neigh of the iron horse" of the M. & M. on the banks of the Father of Waters was hailed with delight throughout northeastern Iowa. Acclaimed by railroad officials as the "Gateway of Trade — the Thermopylae of North Iowa Commerce", McGregor was particularly enthusiastic. "Be it remembered", warned the editors of the *North Iowa Times*, "that on Wednesday, April 15, 1857, at 5 o'clock in the evening, the cars of the Milwaukee & Mississippi railroad anchored on the banks of the great river. The shriek of the Lake Michi-

gan locomotive was echoed by the bluffs and responded to by a shrill whistle of welcome from a Mississippi steamer just coming into port. Hundreds of persons were in attendance to witness the arrival of the first passenger train, and when the smoke of the engine became visible in the distance there was such an expression of anxiety as we have seen when a new and great actor is expected on the stage. As the train came in view, and the flags with which it was decorated were seen waving in the breeze, a shout of welcome broke forth from the gazers that told how many hopes of friendly reunions were awakened in the contemplation of an easy and speedy return to their eastern homes. One large banner carried on its silken folds the busy emblem of 'Wisconsin, the Badger'."

The arrival of the Milwaukee & Mississippi opposite McGregor was accomplished at no small cost. By the close of the year 1857 the total valuation of the company was placed at $8,235,512.11. The cost of constructing the 235 miles of main line and 28 miles of side-track, including such particulars as right of way, fencing, depot grounds and buildings, water stations, and machine shops, was placed at $6,841,627.11. The rolling stock consisted of 44 locomotives, 33 passenger cars, 13 baggage and post-office cars, 411 house cars, 107

platform cars, 40 gravel cars, 39 hand cars, and 22 iron cars, valued at $808,980. The smallest item listed was the telegraph line between Milwaukee and Prairie du Chien which was valued at $7,600.

The company could take heart, however, in the report of $882,817.89 earnings for the year — passenger receipts totalling $399,089.65, freight $469,019.76, and mails and rent $13,808.48. An immense debt had been incurred and bonds would soon be due, but optimism was one resource with which the empire builders of the Milwaukee & Mississippi were richly endowed. The placid waters of the Mississippi, constituted no magic crystal to foretell the heavy shoals which lay dead ahead. When the panic of 1857 had subsided the Milwaukee & Mississippi Company was no more. But the line associated with such names as Solomon Juneau, Asa Whitney, Byron Kilbourn, John Catlin, and John H. Brodhead, is to-day a segment of a greater system — the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

Railroading in the Fifties

The decade of the 1850's was one of unparalleled railroad construction in the United States. In 1850 there were 8,588 miles of track in operation built at a cost of $296,260,128. Ten years later, in 1860, fully 30,598 miles of track had been laid costing $1,134,452,909. The significance of this vast increase was apparent to most Americans.

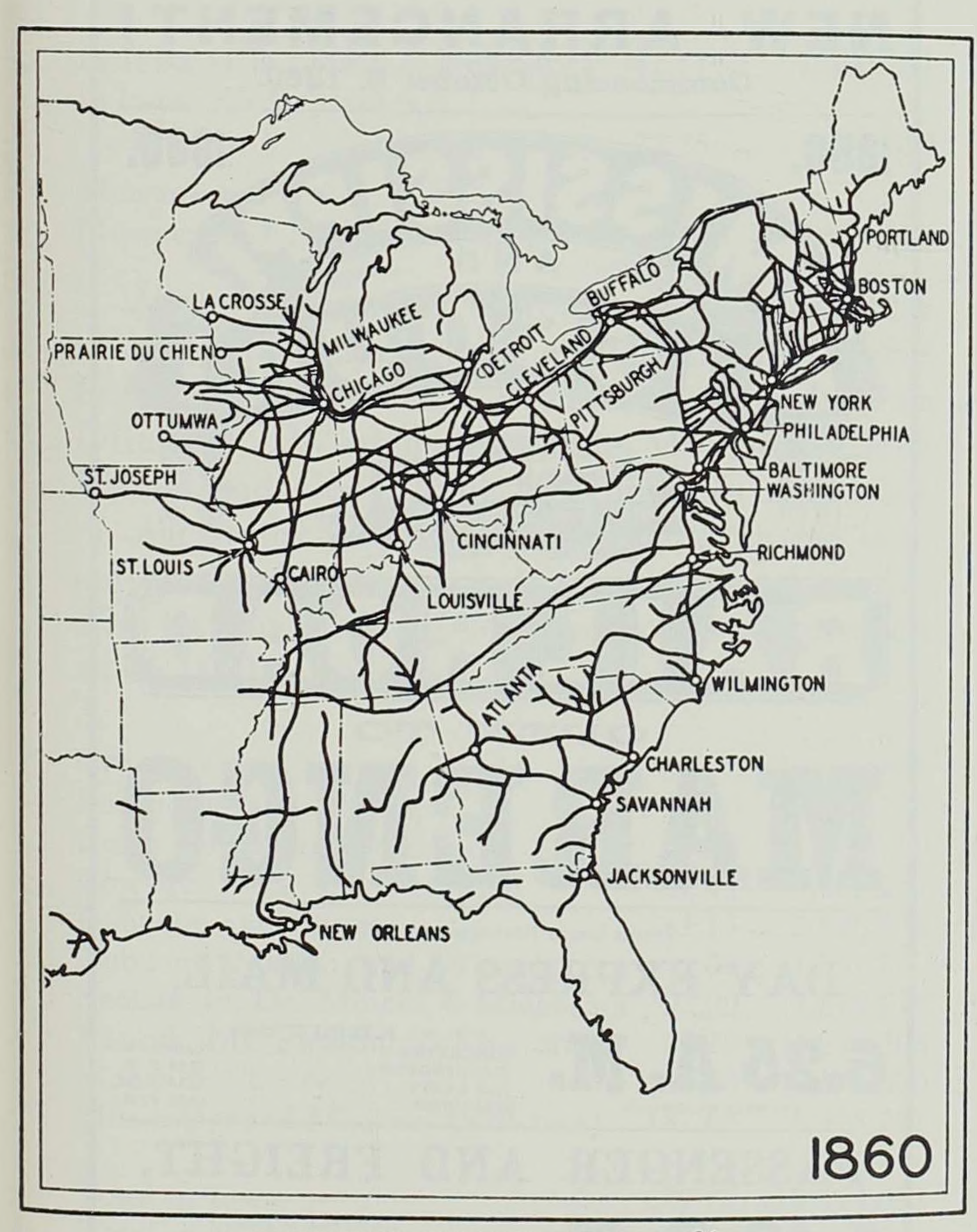
The Census of 1860 reported railroads had played a relatively unimportant rôle in the internal commerce of the United States prior to 1850.

Nearly all the lines then in operation were local or isolated works, and neither in extent nor design had begun to be formed into that vast and connected system which, like a web, now covers every portion of our wide domain, enabling each work to contribute to the traffic and value of all, and supplying means of locomotion and a market, almost at his own door, for nearly every citizen of the United States.

The Census of 1860 further revealed that nine Mississippi River towns had been linked directly with the Atlantic by rail. Of these nine towns, five were in Iowa — McGregor, Dubuque, Clinton, Davenport, and Burlington. LaCrosse, Wis-

consin, was united with Milwaukee and Chicago by rail, while Hannibal and St. Louis in Missouri were bracketed with the eastern seaboard. Only one point below St. Louis — bustling Memphis — had a direct connection with the Atlantic by rail. New Orleans depended on a circuitous connection with the Atlantic through the Illinois Central to Chicago, or by way of any railroads that tapped such towns as Memphis or St. Louis with the Atlantic. It took unremitting toil and fabulous fortunes to lay the foundations of such a mighty railroad empire. The Census of 1860 recorded the amount expended by five giant railroads of today as they forged westward to the Mississippi and into Iowa, laying their tracks at a staggering cost.

RAILROAD	MILEAGE	COST OF CONSTRUCTION
Rock Island		
In Illinois	181.50	$ 6,913,554
In Iowa (Mississippi & Missouri)	187.63	6,318,721
Burlington		
In Illinois	138.00	7,468,926
In Iowa (Burlington & Missouri)	93.30	2,492,758
Illinois Central		
In Illinois	738.25	27,195,391
In Iowa (Dubuque & Pacific)	111.18	2,836,833
North Western		
In Illinois (Galena & Chi. Union)	261.25	9,352,481



RAILWAYS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1860.

Note how Pacific-bound railways in the United States converged on Iowa by 1860.

its two sister states to the east, graphically demonstrates the tremendous westward thrust of the railroads in the wake of the vast hosts of settlers who caused Iowa's population to expand from 192,214 to 674,913 in the decade ending in 1860. The predominance of the northern routes and the fact that over half of the direct railroad connections linked the Atlantic with the Mississippi opposite Iowa was destined to play an important part in the impending Civil War.

Railroad building during the last half of the nineteenth century was a glorious adventure and no period was more thrilling than the Fabulous Fifties when men of wealth, vision, courage, and resourcefulness raced their iron horses westward to the Mississippi and laid the groundwork for the speedy conquest of the rich prairies of Iowa.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

GRAND RAILROAD FESTIVAL!

IOWA CITY, AND THE ATLANTIC CITIES,
CONNECTED BY RAILWAY!

THE NATIONAL TRUNK ROAD HALF COMPLETED TO THE PACIFIC!
On the parallel of New York, Chicago, Platte Valley and South Pass!

Iowa City, Dec. 18, 1855.

You are respectfully requested to attend a Celebration, at Iowa City, of the

OPENING OF THE MISSISSIPPI AND MISSOURI RAILROAD
TO THE CAPITAL OF IOWA,
On Thursday, Jan. 3d, 1856:

We hand you, herewith, a Card, which will serve you as a Pass over the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, over the Mississippi & Missouri Railroad to and from Iowa City; and to the hospitalities of our Citizens.

LE GRAND BYINGTON,
GEO. W. McCLEARY,
H. D. DOWNEY,

SAMUEL WORKMAN,
H. W. LATHROP,
R. H. SYLVESTER,

Committee of Invitation.

The above invitation was sent to "J. M. Parker and Lady" of Davenport in commemoration of the linking of Iowa City with the Atlantic by rail. Almost every Iowa town, large and small, held a celebration to welcome the Iron Horse in its midst.

Dubuque & Pacific Railroad.

ON and after January 25, 1858, trains will run by DUBUQUE CITY TIME, as follows :

Passenger Train will leave Dubuque at 8 45 A. M.

Arrive at Julien	9 20	Arrive at Farley	10 15
" Caledonia,	9 40	" Dyersville	10 35
" Epworth,	10	" Nottingham	11 10

Passenger Train will leave Nottingham at 12 30 P. M

Arrive at Dyersville	1 05	Arrive at Caledonia	2 00
" Farley	1 25	" Julien	2 20
" Epworth	1 40	" Dubuque	3 00

A Freight Train with Passenger Car attached wil leave Nottingham at 6 30 A M.

Arrive at Dyersville	7 20	Arrive at Caledonia	8 50
" Farley	7 55	" Julien	9 20
" Epworth	8 25	" Dubuque	10 15

A Frieght Train with Passenger car attached will leave Dubuque at 3 10 P. M.

Arrive at Julien	4 00	Arrive at Farley	5 20
" Caledonia	4 30	" Dyersville	5 45
" Epworth	4 55	" Nottingham	6 35

D. H. DOTTERER, Sup't,
C. B. STOW, Gen'l Ticket Ag't,
J. A. PINTO, Gen'l Freight Ag't

Jan. 27. 1858. d&wly(73

MISSISSIPPI & MISSOURI

RAIL ROAD!

ON and after Monday, April 12, 1858, and until further notice, trains will leave Iowa City daily, (Sundays excepted,) as follows

FOR DAVENPORT.

1st Passenger (mail) train..... 5:35 a. m
2d Freight train, with passenger car attached, 12:30 p m
3d Express train..... 3:3[illegible] p m

Trains arrive at Iowa City, daily, (Sundays excepted as follows:

1st Freight train, with passenger car attached. 10:50 a m
2d Passenger (mail) train..... 12:10 p m.
3d Mail train..... 9:45 p. m

Passenger trains over this Road run through from Iowa City to Chicago without change of cars or baggage, connecting there with trains over both the Michigan Southern and Michigan Central Railroads, for all points East and South. Also at LaSalle with Illinois Central Railroad North to Galena and Dunleith, and South to St Louis to Cairo.

Through tickets for all the principal points East and South can be procured at the ticket office in Iowa City.

Passengers are reminded of the necessity of giving distinct directions as to the destination of their baggage;

Keokuk, Fort Des Moines, and Minnesota RAILROAD

Change of Time.

New Arrangement!

Through tickets to St. Louis, Louisville, Cincinnati, &c. &c.

Two trains each way Daily—Sundays excep'ed.

LEAVING	Keokuk at	7 a. m
"	"	2.40 p. m
"	*Bentonsport*	7.30 a. m
"	"	3.30 p. m.

Connecting at the latter place with the Post conches of the Western Stage Company for all points in the Des Moines Valley, and throughout Middle, Western and South-western Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, &c!!

☞ Passengers for Cincinnati, Louisville and the South-eastern and Eastern cities, will find this the cheapest, most expeditious, and the most comfortable route to these points.

THROUGH TICKETS!

at reduced cost, to all points south and east of Keokuk may be had at the Railroad office at *Bentonsport*.

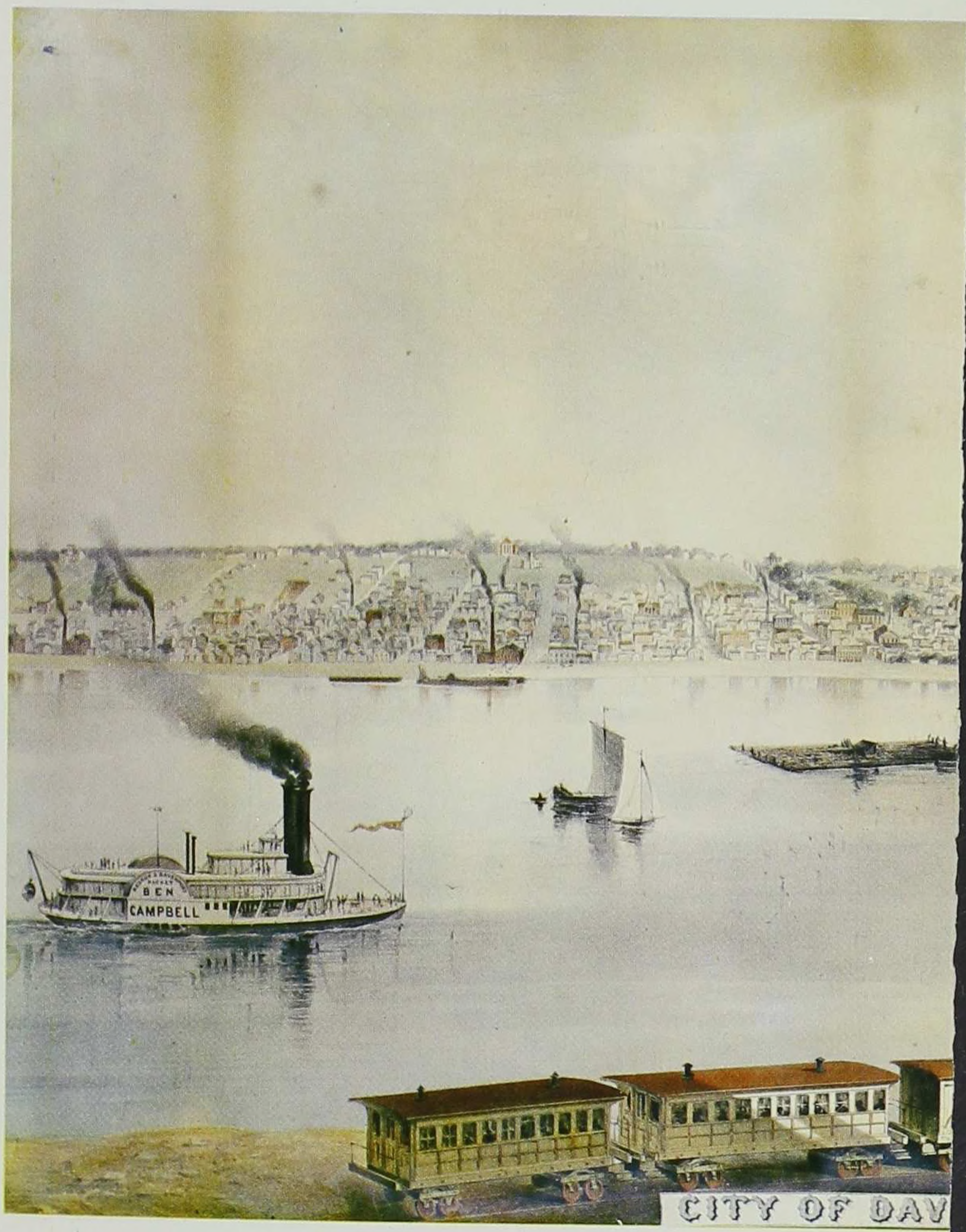
Passengers for the East should be sure to purchase tickets via *Bentonsport*.

S. DWIGHT EATON,
Engineer and Superintendent.

SAM. A. *BLACK*,
Assistant Superintendent, and General Passenger *Agent*.

Ticket Office at Rail Road Depot.
June 26th, 1858.

Newspaper advertisements of three Iowa railroads in 1858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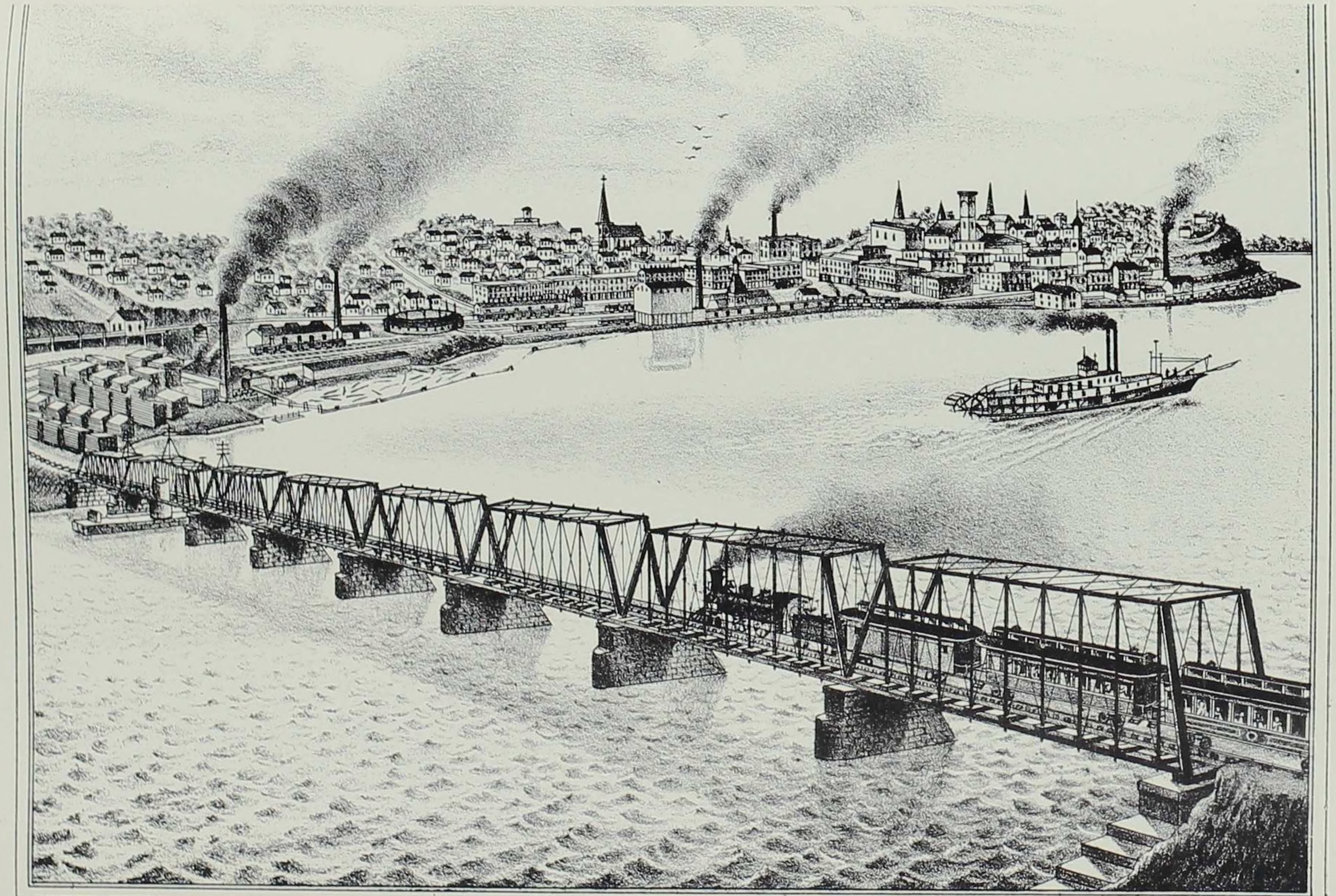
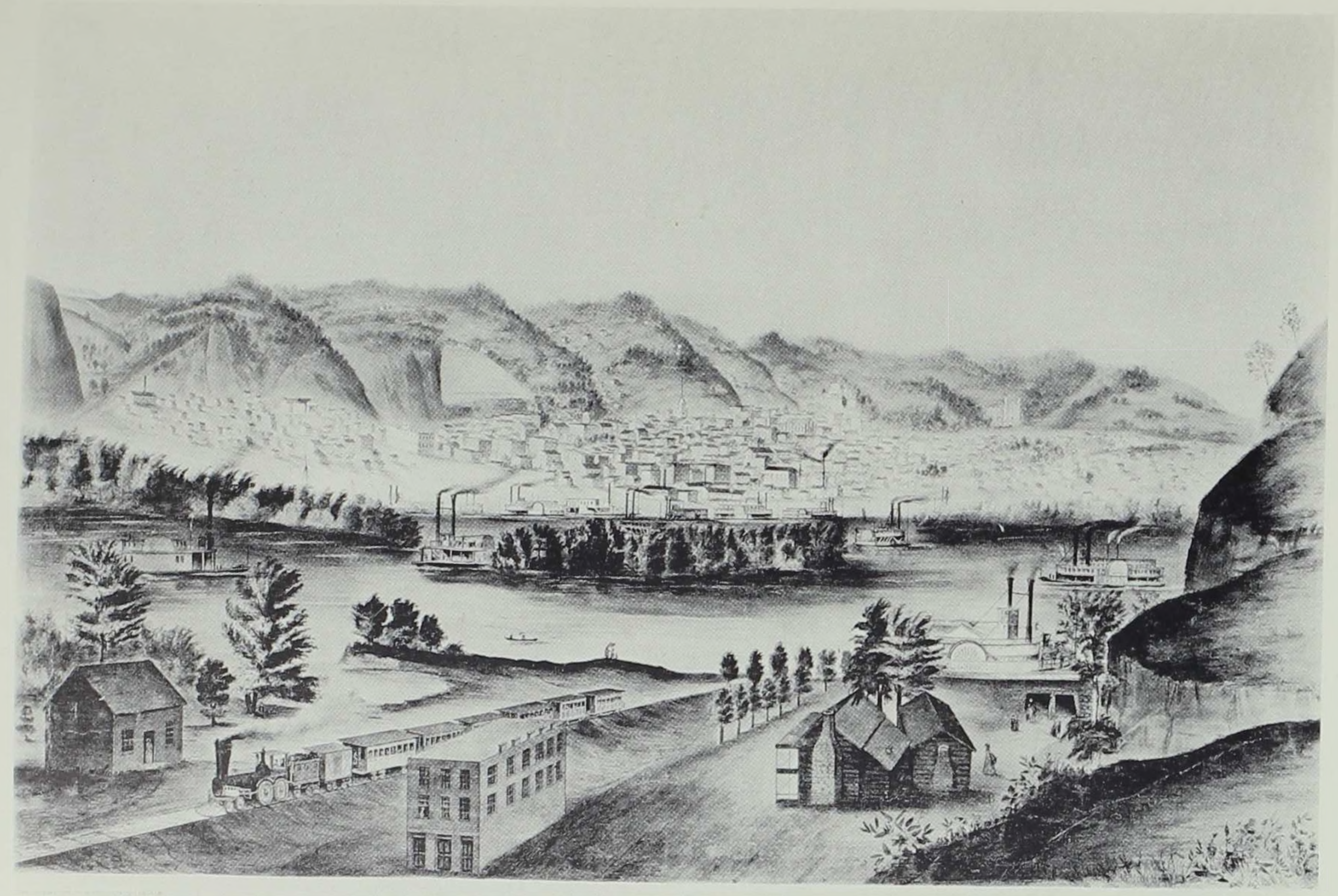


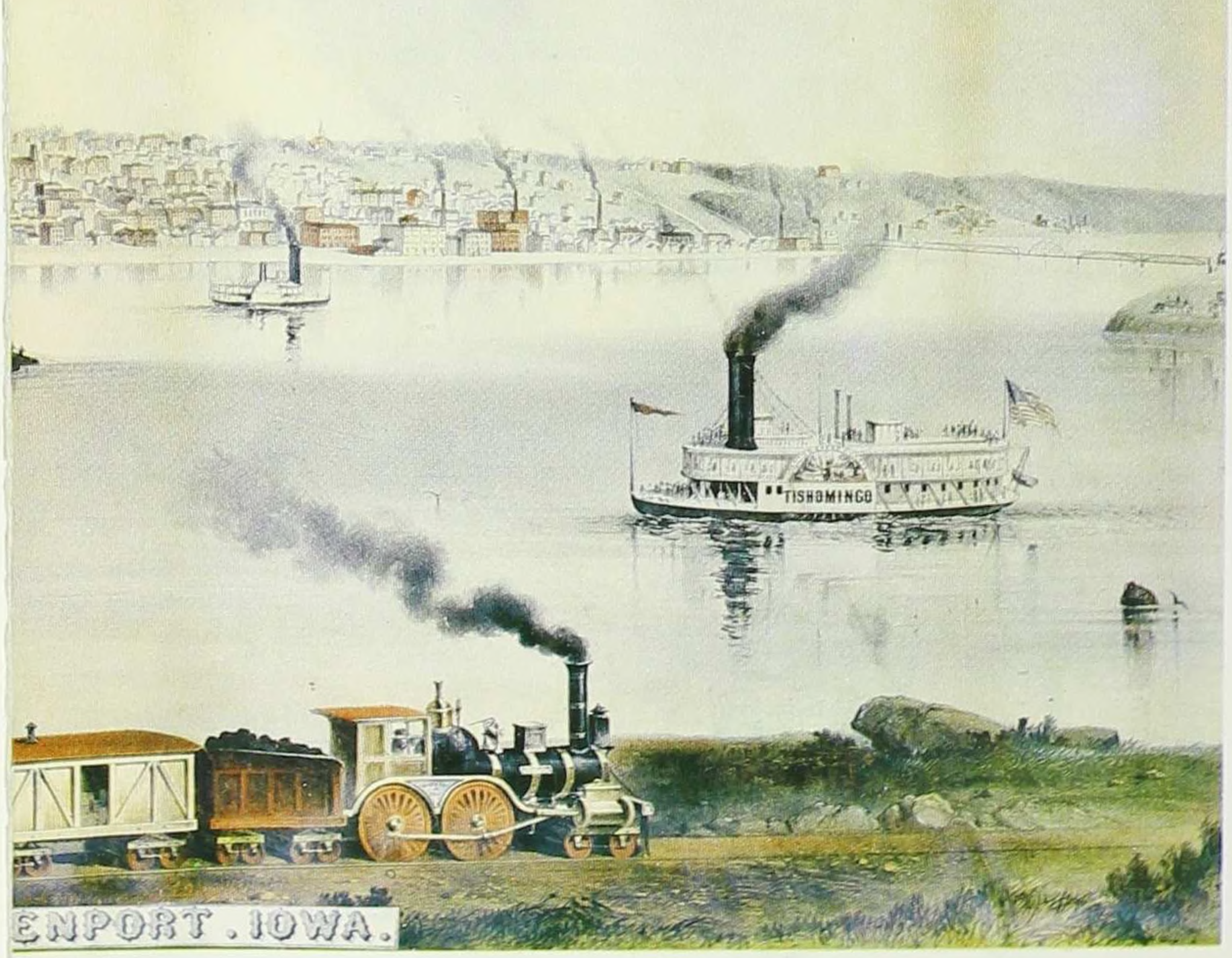
G. W. SALISBURY, DEL. ELGIN.

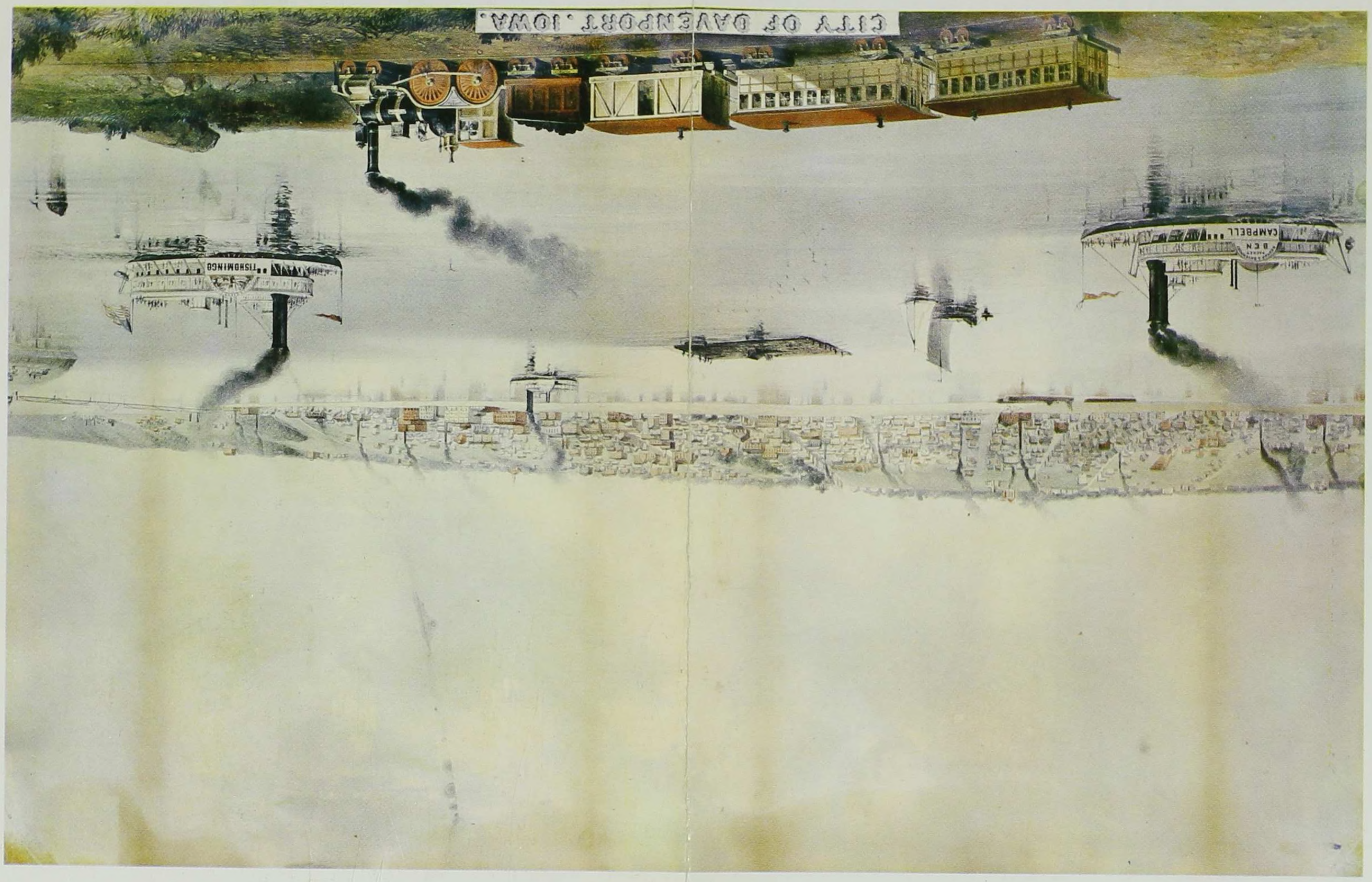
VIEW OF BURLINGTON AND RAIL ROAD BRIDGE AGROSS THE MISSISSIPPI. BURLINGTON, IOWA.

VIEW OF BURLINGTON AND RAIL ROAD BRIDGE AGROSS THE MISSISSIPPI. BURLINGTON, IOWA.



VIEW OF DUBUQUE, IOWA.


"TISHOMINGO
ENPORT . IOWA.


CITY OF DAVENPORT, IOWA.
TISHOMINGO
CAMPBELL