

RAILROAD HISTORY IN STATE IS TOLD

STARTED 89 YEARS AGO

First Steam Locomotive Operated Over Eight Miles of Rails in 1838; Marked Advance Seen

From a light steam locomotive, burning wood, eight miles in length, with wooden rails covered with a thin strip of sheet iron, to gigantic moguls speeding across the country at sixty miles an hour, over roadbeds which preclude every jar; from the rutted prairie trails over which the lumbering oxcarts and prairie schooners were unable to make more than a few miles a day under most favorable conditions, to more than 6,300 miles of improved state highways, crossing and recrossing the state in all directions, is the history of transportation in Illinois in the short span of eighty-nine years.

It was on November 8, 1838 when the first steam locomotive ever operated in the state of Illinois traversed the eight miles of railroad track which had been laid from Meredosia under the state charter granted for the construction of the Jacksonville & Meredosia railroad.

28,000 Miles of Track Today
Eight railroad projects were considered under the internal improvement plan before the Tenth General assembly, with an amendment providing for the construction of the Northern Cross to be given precedent. This line was laid out to cross the state from Quincy, via Jacksonville, Springfield and Decatur, to the Indiana line. This was in spite of the fact that north of this route was sparsely settled, with but two settlements worthy of the names of town—Peoria, a trading post on the Illinois river, and Galena, a mining camp in the northwestern corner of the state.

Under the rule adopted a combination of rail and water transportation was considered, with the railroads touching navigable streams, and to be constructed in either direction. Because of this the start on the building of the Northern Cross was at Meredosia.

The first rails were laid on May 8, 1838, and the first locomotive was run from Meredosia, over the completed section of eight miles, November 8, of the same year. From this beginning the state now has approximately 28,000 miles of railroads, being exceeded in mileage by but one state in the union.

Locomotive "Lost in Transit"
The first locomotive purchased for the railroad was shipped from New York to New Orleans, thence up the Mississippi and Illinois rivers to Meredosia. History records the loss of this locomotive in transit, and while there is some reason to believe it was later located, the commissioners in charge of the improvement were given possession of a locomotive purchased for use on the Bloomington & Mackinaw, another of the projected railroads.

With the locomotives far from machine shops, when repairs were necessary it was only by calling on the services of village blacksmiths that it was possible to keep them in even passable condition. About 1844 it became so irreparable that cattleguards along the railroad were boarded over and mules driven in tandem were used to pull the railroad cars.

One of the engines, when abandoned as no longer fit for service was turned over to James M. Semple, one of the senators from the state, who was desirous of making the experiment of fitting it with wide tires, later developed in the caterpillar tractor,

and making use of it as a means of pulling caravans of wagons across the prairies. This experiment proved costly and disastrous and the plan was abandoned, the locomotive standing a few rods from the track near Berlin, in Sangamon county, until it deteriorated into a pile of rust, or parts of it were carried away by the settlers in need of pieces of iron.

Wooden Rails in Use
The coaches were little larger than the stage coaches in use in that day, with seats along the side—being less than half the size of the busses which now tour the state highways.

The track was laid on mud sills 8 to 10 inches square, except at points where it was possible to lay ties on more solid ground. On the ties were laid "stringers" of oak, 4x6 or 4x8, notched and pinned together, and on these spiked strap iron 2 1/2 inches wide and about five-eighths inches in thickness, mitred and slanted, and from 12 to 15 feet long, so as to take the weight before the train had left the other. The ends curled, resulting in "snake-heads," which were frequently underrun by the wheels and shot up through the floor of the cars.

By January 1, 1840 the road was completed to Jacksonville, a distance of 28 miles, and the state taking over the interest of the private incorporators, completed the line to Springfield, May 13, 1842. The state ownership of the public utility did not serve as a precedent calculated to encourage the continuance of this policy. During state ownership the road was leased from time to time to private individuals or companies, the last lessee paying but 160 per month for the use of the entire line. The road was sold to the highest bidder in 1847 for \$21,000. This line is now a part of the Wabash system.

Paralleled by Route No. 10
For the greater part of the distance across the state the first railroad is paralleled by State Highway No. 10.

WARNS EMPLOYERS ON HIRING OF CHILDREN

George B. Arnold, director, Department of Labor, issues a warning to all employers to keep on the safe side in the employment of minors, even though they claim to be 18 or 19 years old.

The evidence of age specified by the child labor law is:

A duly attested transcript of the birth record.

A baptismal certificate or transcript of the record of baptism, duly certified and showing the date of birth and place of baptism.

A passport showing the age of the minor.

A baptismal certificate should not be accepted unless a birth record is not obtainable, and a passport is not acceptable unless neither the birth record nor baptismal record can be secured.

In case none of these records of the date of birth is available, and only in such cases, other documentary record of age is permissible under the provisions of the child labor law.

Director Arnold warns employers that false or incorrect statements made by minors or their parents, whether orally or in writing, do not protect or excuse the employer.

If the employer is in doubt as to what evidence of age he may safely accept, the Factory Inspection Division, 608 South Dearborn street, Chicago, will be glad to assist him if he will communicate with that office.

NOT SUCH A TASK

A fashion writer advises women to imagine her waistline to be at some point most becoming. Perhaps women in time can imagine the gown itself. Some of the more imaginative youngsters already contrive to imagine the skirt.—Woman's Home Companion.

It's not overseas flying but underseas flying that's fatal.—Dallas News

BLACKSHEEP

Continued from page 3

up the luggage and led the way to the hotel.

"We jes' opened the house last week. One other gent's registered." He placed his finger on "Reginald Heber Saulsbury."

"By the way," Congdon asked Leary, "you haven't seen anything of a little girl about here, have you—a child of eleven?"

"Not one of 'em but a whole passel," replied Leary. "There's a camp o' city girls across the bay."

"Well, I suppose that's the trick," said Congdon as Leary started upstairs with their bags. "Edith has been put in a camp. Not a bad idea. All I want to be sure of is that the child's in good hands."

"Dinner will be at twelve," said Leary.

At mealtime, Mrs. Leary entered the dining-room briskly. "Jes' help yerselves, gents."

"Ah!" ejaculated the Governor, pausing dramatically in the door and eyeing the newly arrived guests as though their presence filled him with astonishment. In a moment more he had introduced himself to Archie and Congdon.

"Rather odd my being here," he rippled on; "and I need hardly say that it's a pleasure to meet on this bleak shore two gentlemen of your caliber. I told a friend of mine that I was enormously fed up with cities and the general human pressure and wanted to go to the most God-forsaken spot in America. He answered without a moment's hesitation that Huddleston, Michigan, would satisfy my loftiest ideal of godforsakenness. He's probably laughing himself to death right now thinking how miserable I am. But I refuse to be bored."

When Congdon pleaded weariness, after dinner, Archie put him to bed and then sauntered away, following a dirt road that wound through the timber. In a little while he came upon the Governor lying with his back against a tree.

"Well, you landed him here!" he remarked, seating himself on a log and producing his pipe. "Or did he bring you? One would think you were old chums to see you together. Not a bad fellow, I should say."

"He's really a good sort," said Archie; "but I'll tell you the whole story."

The Governor listened placidly, interrupting only when Archie repeated what Congdon had said of Isabel.

"A wonderful girl!" he ejaculated. "Makes it her business to tease the world along. But now to get down to brass tacks. What you learned of

old Eliphalet Congdon's meddlesomeness jibes exactly with what I know of his character. Let me show you something, Archie."

He walked out upon the gravelly shore and pointed through the wide-fung arms of the bay.

"Do you see a little blur of smoke out yonder in the open lake? That's the Arthur B. Grover, I took up my option and the bloomin' thing is mine. It's got a crew of the smartest crooks in all America. And Perky's on board with old Eliphalet Congdon! But, my dear Archie—"

He refilled his pipe and when he had it going to his satisfaction waved his arm toward the camp.

"There's a queer business going on over there. That cousin of Isabel's is not a myth at all and that money may be buried over there somewhere. The cousin is laying himself out to annoy the camp in every way possible, even going the length of trying to starve 'em out. There's a stack of

supplies at the Huddleston station that they can't move."

"You forget," cried Archie excitedly, "that there are laws even in the wilderness! All we've got to do is to telephone for the sheriff and land him in jail."


"I grant all that," said the Governor, "but the notoriety of the thing would kill the camp. Once it got into the newspapers every father and mother who has a child would go right up in the air. It would make a great first page story—buried treasure—a war for hidden gold centered about a girls' camp—the haughty southerner planting his money in safe territory—all that is fruity-stuff for our special correspondent on the spot. No, Archie; ladies like our Ruth and Isabel must be protected from vulgar publicity. It's up to us to smooth out their troubles without resorting to bothersome legal apparatus. The camp has no telephone; the road round to that peninsula is all but inaccessible. They have a launch they're

in the habit of using to carry stuff across from Huddleston, but Mr. Richard Carey blocks the way. He is camped at the land entrance, with an army of lumberjacks to help him maintain a blockade."

"Then it's our duty to relieve the beleaguered garrison!"
"Well," the Governor remarked, "it's far more of a mess than I expected. But this is no time for weakening! Over there, Archie,—he pointed toward Heart O' Dreams—"are the two finest women in the world. We're going to stand by them no matter whose head gets cracked."
(Continued next week)

Woman's logic doesn't seem so inferior after you listen to a man's reason for liking a particular prizefighter.—Detroit News.

It seems the weather furnishes ample protection against air attacks from the eastern part of the world.—Toledo Blade.



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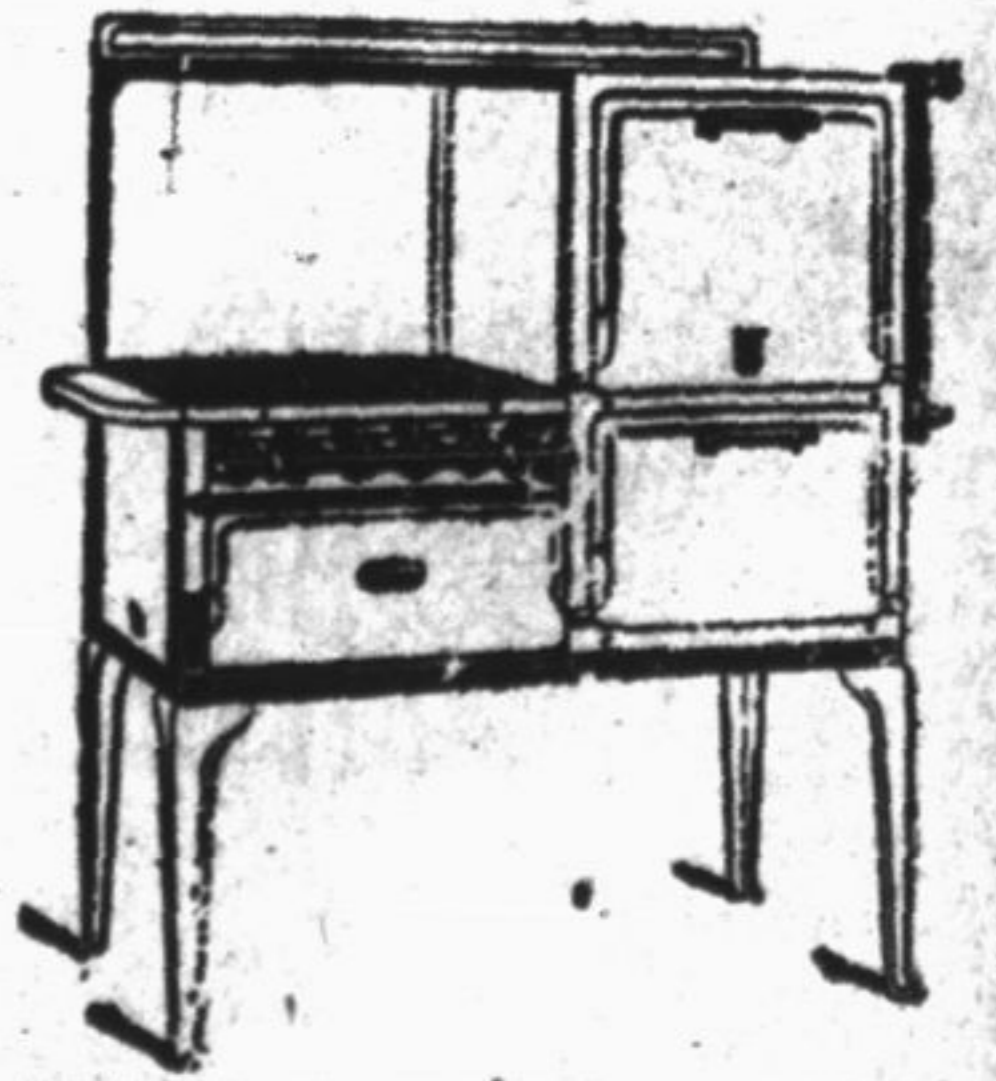
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