

Illinois Central Important To City's Growth

ATTRACTED SETTLERS HERE FROM EASTERN STATES AND EUROPE

The Illinois Central Railroad has played and will continue to play, an important part in the development and future life of the Mount Pulaski community. The condensed story below tells of its founding and growth down through the years.

Mount Pulaski, Illinois

The state of Illinois had developed slowly until the middle of the 19th century. Cities and towns were almost exclusively located on rivers or lakes. Transportation between these settlements was slow and difficult. The vast prairies on the interior of the state were unpopulated because of their inaccessibility. With the coming of the railroads in the 1840's rapid development of agriculture and industry took place. Markets for local goods were as close as the nearest railroad station. Industries, with newly created markets requiring more and more manufactured goods, sprang up throughout the state. The growth of Illinois was so rapid that only one other state ever equalled its record of expansion and development.

Chartered in 1851, the Illinois Central was planned to open the rich and fertile land in Illinois. When its lines were completed in 1856, the 705-mile railroad was the longest in the world.

Attracted Settlers

In the building of the railroad the Illinois Central sent men to the eastern cities of the United States and to Europe to attract settlers and workers to Illinois. The Illinois Central was the first railroad to employ colonization agents and establish a land office to sell land to settlers at low prices, on easy terms, and at low interest rates.

With the rapid expansion taking place in Illinois, industrial and agricultural centers began to appear and the competition between the railroads for the right to serve these centers became very keen. Mt. Pulaski, because it was served by two railroads, the Gilman, Clinton & Springfield, and, the Peoria, Decatur & Evansville Railroad, which connected several hundred industrial and agricultural centers, had a ringside seat when the great empire builders clashed over railroad routes.

Shortened Route

Soon after the charter lines of the Illinois Central Railroad were completed, the railroad began to look for a more direct route between Chicago and St. Louis. About the same time, a group of central Illinois business men filed

application with the state government for the right to construct a railroad running between Gilman, Mt. Pulaski, and Springfield. The Gilman, Clinton & Springfield Railroad, as the line was called, would connect up with the Illinois Central at Gilman and the Springfield & St. Louis Railroad at Springfield. The Illinois Central agreed to lend financial aid to help in the construction of the new railroad in return for the use of these lines to run their trains to St. Louis. This route was substantially shorter than the route previously used by the Illinois Central and put the railroad in a better position to compete for traffic between St. Louis and Chicago.

Official Opening Sept. 15, 1871

On Sept. 15, 1871, a special train carrying railroad officials and local dignitaries steamed into Mt. Pulaski to announce the opening of the Gilman, Clinton & Springfield Railroad and the beginning of through service between Chicago and St. Louis. With the opening of the line, residents of Mount Pulaski, had their first opportunity to use this new rail service. Special excursion trains were run over the Illinois Central to Chicago to the scene of the great Chicago Fire.

The Illinois Central was a pioneer in offering luxurious service to residents of Mt. Pulaski traveling between St. Louis and Chicago. It was the first railroad to introduce cafe compartment cars on this line. Also, it was the first railroad west of the Alleghenies to introduce stateroom sleeping cars on its lines. Serving Mt. Pulaski, such trains as The Lightning Express, The Diamond Express and The Daylight Express were known throughout the country for their excellent service and their travel comfort.

First Electric Headlight

Later in the same year that the Gilman, Clinton & Springfield railroad reached Mt. Pulaski another railroad began to serve the community. It was the Peoria, Decatur & Evansville. The history of the line includes no fewer than 28 companies, the oldest of which was the Peoria & Warsaw Railroad, formed in 1839 when there were only a few miles of railroad track in the state. It was on the Peoria, Decatur & Evansville Railroad that the first electric headlight was installed, an event which created almost as much interest among the people along its line as the first streamlined train created on the Illinois

Central many years later.

Both the Gilman, Clinton & Springfield and the Peoria, Decatur & Evansville, were in financial difficulty around the turn of the century. In 1899 the Gilman, Clinton & Springfield line was acquired by the Illinois Central. The following year the Illinois Central acquired the Peoria, Decatur & Evansville line.

Airplane and Train Race

No doubt many citizens of Mt. Pulaski remember the famous race in 1910 between the Illinois Central's Daylight Special and Walter Brookins in a Wright Brothers biplane, between Chicago and Springfield. In this record breaking flight, during which he averaged 33 miles per hour, Brookins followed the route of the Illinois Central. The train carried a special car of mechanics, extra gasoline, a portable forge, tools, and duplicate parts for the bi plane. The overall time of the plane was 7 hours and 9 minutes, including time lost at Gilman and Mt. Pulaski where the aviator came down to wait for the special train to bring him fresh supplies of gasoline. His time aloft was 5 hours and 45 minutes. The Daylight made the run in 4 hours and 47 minutes.

Soybean "Special Train"

Since 1855, when the Illinois Central promoted the first state agricultural fair ever held in Illinois, the railroad has been active in promoting agricultural development along its lines. Today the Illinois Central maintains the largest agricultural and forestry department of any railroad in the United States. When the soybean plant was introduced to this country in the early 1920's, the Illinois Central became interested in the plant as a crop for farmers along its lines. In 1927 the railroad operated a "soybean special" train throughout Illinois to acquaint farmers with the new plant. Today central Illinois is the soybean capitol of the world. Beef and dairy cattle programs were started by the Illinois Central and continue to be an active part of the railroad's program. More than 15,000 soil tests are made each year by the Illinois Central's testing laboratory as a service to farmers in the railroad's territory.

New Industry Located

Every third day a new industry is located along the lines of the Illinois Central. During the past five years 115 new industries, with the help of the Illinois Central industrial development department, have found their homes along the Illinois Central lines in Illinois alone. Such companies as Valley Steel Products, Norge Division-Borg Warner and Libby,

McNeil and Libby have located their plant sites along the Illinois Central.

\$100,000 Payroll Here

The citizens of Mt. Pulaski regard the Illinois Central as a local employer and a mover of their goods. In 1959 nineteen residents of Mt. Pulaski were employed by the Illinois Central. They earned nearly \$100,000 for their service.

Together F. K. Stanford, superintendent of the Illinois Division with headquarters at Champaign, R. W. Busk, district traffic agent at Mattoon, and C. L. Frazier, agent at Mt. Pulaski, work to maintain the high standard of transportation service which the citizens of Mt. Pulaski look to the Illinois Central to provide and which has earned for that railroad the distinctive title: "Main Line of Mid-America".

We will be looking for you next week at the Sil-Tennial.

WANTED!

3,000 LABORERS

On the 12th Division of the
ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD

Wages, \$1.25 per Day.

Fare, from New-York, only - \$4.15

By Railroad and Steamboat, to the work in the State of Illinois.

Constant employment for two years or more given. Good board can be obtained at two dollars per week.

This is a rare chance for persons to go West, being sure of permanent employment in a healthy climate, where land can be bought cheap, and for fertility is not surpassed in any part of the Union.

Men with families preferred.

For further information in regard to it, call at the Central Railroad Office.

173 BROADWAY,
CORNER OF COURTLANDT ST.
NEW-YORK

HOMES FOR THE INDUSTRIOUS

IN THE GARDEN STATE OF THE WEST.



THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD CO. HAVE FOR SALE
1,200,000 ACRES OF RICH FARMING LANDS,
In Tracts of Forty Acres and upward on Long Credit and at Low Prices.

THE situation of the enterprising and industrious portion of the community is directed to the following statements and liberal inducements offered them by the

ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD COMPANY,
which, as they will perceive, will enable them, by proper energy, perseverance and industry, to provide comfortable homes for themselves and families, with, comparatively speaking, very little capital.

LANDS OF ILLINOIS.
No State in the Valley of the Mississippi offers so great an inducement to the settler as the State of Illinois. There is no portion of the world where all the conditions of climate and soil so admirably combine to produce three great staples, Grain and Wheat, as the Prairie of Illinois.

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN MARKETS.
These lands are contiguous to a railroad 700 miles in length, which connects with other roads and navigable lakes and rivers, thus affording an unbroken communication with the Eastern and Southern markets.

RAILROAD SYSTEM OF ILLINOIS.
Over \$100,000,000 of private capital have been expended on the railroad system of Illinois. Inasmuch as part of the income from several of these works, with a valuable public fund in lands, go to diminish the taxes on the vast area, and must consequently every day decrease.

THE STATE DEBT.
The State debt is only \$10,100,000, and within the last three years has been reduced \$2,600,000, and we may reasonably expect that in ten years it will become extinct.

PRESENT POPULATION.
The State is rapidly filling up with population; 868,625 persons having been added since 1860, making the present population 1,723,663, a ratio of 142 per cent. in ten years.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.
The agricultural products of Illinois are greater than those of any other State. The production of the past year exceeded 1,000,000 tons. The wheat crop of 1900 approached 1,000,000 bushels.

35,000,000 bushels, while the corn crop yields not less than 140,000,000 bushels.

FERTILITY OF THE SOIL.
Nowhere can the industrious farmer secure much more profitable results for his labor as upon these prairie soils, they being composed of a deep rich loam, the fertility of which is unsurpassed by any on the globe.

TO ACTUAL CULTIVATORS.
Since 1854 the Company have sold 1,200,000 acres. They will only to actual cultivators, and every settler is invited to agree to cultivate. The road has low rates of freight, through these lands at an average of \$20,000 per acre. In 1860 the population of forty-one counties, through which it passes, had only 1,000,000 acres which 470,000 have been added; making the whole population 1,723,663, a ratio of 142 per cent.

EVIDENCES OF PROGRESS.
As an evidence of the thrift of the people, it is reported that 600,000 tons of freight, including 4,000,000 bushels of grain, and 250,000 barrels of flour were shipped in 1900.

PRICES AND TERMS OF PAYMENT.
The prices of these lands vary from \$5 to \$25 per acre, according to location, quality, etc. First class farming, well watered, and well timbered, at \$25 per acre, and the relative value of adjoining prairie land as compared with wood land is at the ratio of 1 to 10 in favor of the former. The terms of sale for the bulk of these lands will be

ONE YEAR'S INTEREST IN ADVANCE,
at six per cent. per annum, and six interest notes at six per cent., payable respectively in one, two, three, four, five and six years from date of sale; and four notes for principal, payable in four, five, six and seven years from date of sale; the contract stipulating that one-fifth of the tract purchased shall be cleared and cultivated, each and every year, for five years from date of sale, so that at the end of five years one-half shall be cleared and under cultivation.

TWENTY PER CENT. WILL BE DEDUCTED
from the value for cash, except the same should be at six dollars per acre, when the cash price will be five dollars.

Land Commissioner,
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

For the name of the Towns, Villages and Cities situated upon the Illinois Central Railroad, see pages 128, 129 and 130 of the Applicant's Railway Guide.



A VIEW OF THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL DAYLIGHT probably about the time of the race with the Brookins-Wright airplane between Chicago and Springfield.



FIRST ILLINOIS CENTRAL STREAMLINE TRAIN "the Green Diamond." The train was introduced in 1936 and continued in service until 1947 when equipment was replaced.