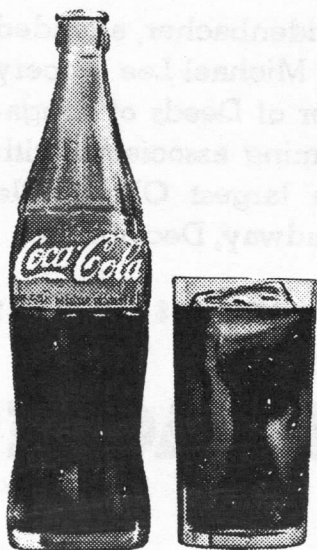




ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD was completed in five years and seven months—1851 to 1856. It was 705 miles in length—then the longest railroad in

the world. Laborers were brought from as far away as Europe to help build the railroad.

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## Girls Decorated First Train to Arrive In City

(Feb. 23, 1933)

In looking over my relics the other day, I discovered a picture of the first railroad train entering Mt. Pulaski on the old Peoria, Decatur & Evansville Railroad, now a branch of the present Illinois Central System. They were in a race with the old Gilman, Clinton & Springfield Railroad (also now Illinois Central) to build their tracks and reach the Mt. Pulaski Junction first, but lost the race by a few yards, and thereafter had to maintain the crossing. This was in the summer of 1871.

Three other girls and myself carried a wreath down to the train and decorated the headlight of the engine. For doing this they sent us each a picture of the decorated engine, which would entitle us to a pass over the road for one year.

I had an uncle who resided in Decatur at the time, who lived where St. Mary's Hospital now stands. He was my father's brother, D. S. Stafford, and he patented the first riding cultivator. I remember visiting him at his home in Decatur, and using this railroad pass.

I will be 74 years old next month, and this all occurred over 61 years ago. Those were happy girlhood days.

I thought this might be of interest to a number of old-time citizens. The engine of the train looked like a toy engine compared to the ones they use today.

Respectfully,  
Mrs. Mary E. Snyder.

## RAILROAD REPLACED STAGE COACH ERA

(Oct. 6, 1938)

The generations since 1871, will read about Mount Pulaski as it was in those days. The editor of the Observer was Frank Sloan. In the following paragraphs will be given extracts from the old paper:

The Gilman, Clinton to Springfield railroad, and the Pekin, Lincoln and Decatur railroad, are fast approaching our town, and should the weather prove favorable, the next 10 days will see both roads in Mount Pulaski. We earnestly hope the weather will prove propitious so that we will have ingress and egress to our fair little city, without resorting to the rather ancient method of stage coach conveyance, which in this age, is too slow.

(Note—The Pekin, Lincoln and Decatur railroad later became the Peoria, Decatur and Evansville railroad, which in after years was taken over by the Illinois Central system. The Gilman, Clinton and Springfield line was also purchased by the Illinois Central and is now a part of the system from Chicago to St. Louis.

### Grading at Salt Creek

We notice that the grading of the Mount Pulaski and Lincoln wagon road across Salt Creek flat has commenced.