

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

History of Railroads in Kentucky

by

Mr. William H. Strategier

A Paper from the Archives of the Gist Historical Society

December 5, 1950

www.nkyviews.com

PAPER READ BY MR. WILLIAM H.
STRATEGIER BEFORE THE CHRISTOPHER
GIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY
TUESDAY NIGHT DECEMBER 5, 1950
AT THE COVINGTON WOMAN'S CLUB
AT COVINGTON, KENTUCKY

SUBJECT -- THE HISTORY OF THE
RAILROADS IN KENTUCKY 1830-1860

This is an abridgement of a paper submitted during the Summer Session of 1950, at Xavier University, in History Course 247, by William H. Strategier, July 24, 1950.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of transportation is intimately connected with the expansion of the frontier in the history of the West. From the time the voyageur set foot upon the American continent he had to think about where he was going, and how he was going to get there. Each man had his particular incentive for penetrating the frontier. The hunter went in search of food; the trader and trapper for commercial reasons; the pioneer in quest of adventure, and the settler to establish his home. Their needs would be different, consequently their means of transportation varied.

The trader, trapper, and hunter traveled on foot or rode a horse over the passable Indian paths, his belongings following on pack-horses. Thus his movement was slow and arduous.

The pioneer or settler needed a larger conveyance for his many belongings, and a road upon which this vehicle could travel. Therefore, highways had to be made into the West and the forest and mountains overcome.

Much earlier the explorer had employed the water routes in journeying from the Atlantic Coast to the interior. In the North, the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes, by a variety of routes, afforded easy access to the Ohio-Mississippi system. From the South, the Spaniard moved upward from the Gulf, by way of the Mississippi, into the Louisiana Territory.¹ These water routes offered only a limited area for colonization, and land travel remained a pressing problem even after the American Revolution.

¹Robert Riegel, America Moves West, (Henry Holt & Company Inc., 1947), 5-6

Once the frontiersman settled in the West, his troubles did not cease. Transportation still remained uppermost in his mind. Western interest necessitated a close contact with the East, for the West needed capital to develop the land, once it was procured. "Marketing the crop contained the key to prosperity."¹ Bulky staples were almost the sole produce that could be converted into money, with which to pay debts and buy land. Consumption and sale at home was impossible. The various methods employed to overcome this handicap of distance constitute an interesting story. Roads were improved, canals dug; the steam engine supplied the river boat with motive power. Transportation was greatly facilitated with these improvements and innovations. Yet one more device had to appear on the American scene, overshadowing all other means of transportation.

The railroad was born at a time when internal improvements were being agitated throughout the nation. No one could foretell at that time, that the railroad of today could become a gigantic octopus with its steel tentacles reaching into every state, and almost every city. Those states which fell behind in railroad production paid for it dearly in commercial progress. The history of Kentucky's railroads concerns itself, to a great extent, with this problem.

A commercial rivalry between Lexington and Louisville arose with the advent of the steamboat. Lexington, once the leading commercial city in Kentucky, was gradually losing ground to the "Falls City," on the Ohio River. The only way to overcome this disadvantage was to embark upon a program of land communi-

¹ Frederic L. Paxton, History of the American Frontier-1763-1893, (Chicago, 1924), 402-403.

cation. The railroad seemed to be the best method of fulfilling this objective. In this attempt Lexington was thwarted by Louisville, which dominated the Kentucky legislature. The Panic of 1837, also added to Lexington's difficulty by draining heavily the State's financial resources, thus curtailing what little railroad construction there was at that time.

Although an early adventurer in railroad construction, Kentucky did not begin to compete commercially with her neighboring states until the post Civil War period. This paper will confine itself to the ante-bellum days when Kentucky first embarked upon railroad construction.

The Lexington and Ohio Railroad

Railroad construction, in the days prior to the Civil War, involved not only the overcoming of engineering inexperience and financial obstacles, but also biased public opinion. For sixty years the trader had used the rivers to market his crop, making the Mississippi-Ohio River System the center of attraction. The South was bound to the river and hoped river traffic would forge an economic bond with the West. It was only natural then, that the public was indifferent to an untried method of travel.¹

Lexington, Kentucky, although a southern city, found itself in an unique situation. It dominated the Bluegrass region of Kentucky, and overshadowed such rivals as Frankfort, Paris, and May's Lick. For, Lexington was the market center of the New West, and boasted of various industries such as rope-walks, tanneries, potteries, and powder mills. Its ascendancy was a pride to her citizens and was much coveted. Being a

¹ Thomas D. Clark, A Pioneer Southern Railroad, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1936), 75.

publishing center and home of the first western college, Transylvania, Lexington had few rivals as a literary and cultural center.¹

In the early 1830's, however, Lexington's commercial superiority was slipping away to other Kentucky cities. For the city's founders had overlooked access to a navigable stream, and since the steamboat was the foremost practicable carrier of freight and passengers, the Athens of the West, was isolated.² Louisville and Cincinnati were growing rapidly, thus causing Lexington to foment with discontent. Kentucky newspapers - the Gazette, the Observer, and the Reporter carried accounts, during the early 1820's, of railways in England.³ When the news of English developments reached Lexington, railroads became a favorite topic for discussion.⁴ Lexington undoubtedly was also influenced by the system of canals, inclined planes, and railways begun in Pennsylvania in 1826.⁵ The Baltimore and Ohio Railway was begun July 4, 1828.⁶ These events disposed the citizens of Lexington more and more to the idea of railway travel. It was a possible solution to their dilemma.

When the railroad was eventually proposed, there were few opposed to it. The only dissenting voice seemed to be the

1. Riegel, op. cit., 75

2. T.D. Clark, A History of Kentucky, (New York, 1937) 262-263

3. Railways had been used in manufacturing plants in England since 1671. Balthasar Meyer, History of Transportation in the United States before 1860, (Washington: The Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1917), 307.

4. John W. Starr Jr., One Hundred Years of American Railroading, (New York, 1928), 125.

5. Riegel, op. cit., 238.

6. Ibid., 240.

cattlemen who wanted to know how the proposed road was to effect their industry. This local opposition was not enough to deter the railroad enthusiasts from their course of action. A charter¹ was obtained from the Kentucky State Legislature on January 27, 1830, which called for a railroad to be named the "Lexington and Ohio," and to be built from Lexington to some point, to be determined, on the Ohio River.²

Elisha I. Winters was elected president³ of the proposed railroad and Henry Clay was made chairman of the board of stockholders. The capital was fixed at \$1,000,000.⁴ and the directors reserved the right to increase this amount to \$2,000,000 if necessary. Subscription books were opened early in February, 1830. The first days subscription seemed to indicate the railroad would have tremendous success, having totaled \$204,000. Lexington became a stockholder to the amount of \$25,000.⁵

Preliminary reports of the engineer in charge of construction called for an inclined plane at Frankfort, 2,200 feet long, to descend not more than one foot in every fourteen. The rest of the road would be practically level. No cut was to be

1. "A railway charter may be defined as a special act of a legislative body authorizing a person or persons duly organized to construct and operate a railway or railways in a certain territory under certain conditions." Balthasar Meyer, Railway Legislation in the United States, (New York, 1909) 53.

For general characteristics of railway charters see, Ibid., 53-54

For a typical charter see charter of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Co., Ibid., Appendix I, 263.

2. William Elsey Connelley, and E.M. Coulter, History of Kentucky, Vol. II., (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1922), 730.

3. Starr, op.cit., 125-126

4. Starr sets the capital stock at \$300,000.

5. Connelley and Coulter, op.cit., 127

deeper than nineteen feet and no embankment over twenty feet high, and no bridge to be over thirty feet in length.

Subscriptions having met their quota and the preliminary work of surveying the road being completed, actual construction was begun October 22, 1831,¹ but not without much catering to the Southern temperament. An elaborate ceremony accompanied the auspicious occasion. A Federal salute was fired at sunrise, three military companies formed an escort for the various dignitaries and civic organizations, as they marched from Transylvania College to the building site.² Governor Thomas Metcalfe was on hand to drive the first nail that would fasten the rail to the tie. Simultaneously seven salutes boomed forth from seven sections of the road to be put under construction immediately, church bells rang, and the ceremony ended amid the strains of "Yankee Doodle" and "Hail Columbia."³

As the martial echoes died away in the autumn air, the work of laying the ties continued. None of the engineers in the United States, when railroad construction was in its infancy, had definite ideas about this new mode of transportation. Experiments in construction were continuous and generally costly.⁴ The first error committed by the engineers of Lexington and Ohio, was in the choice of material for the ties. What is under the wheels is

1. Ibid., 730

2. Perrin, Battle; and Kniffin, A History of Kentucky, (Louisville: 1887), 525.

3. Wilson, Samuel M., History of Kentucky, Vol. II., (Louisville: 1928), 158.

4. Meyer, History of Transportation, 313.

more important than the rolling stock. Consequently, when longitudinal sills of limestone 10 inches thick and 15 inches wide and 18 feet in length, with crossties laid beneath at intervals of 4 or 5 feet, began supporting thousands of pounds of rolling stock in freezing winter weather, they would crack into pieces. Thus, the work of the first few months had to be ripped up and wooden ties made to replace the limestone sills.¹

Progress was maintained, however, at a snail's pace, and the road was ready for its formal opening in 1832. Two miles of road were then completed on the 16th of August.² "A splendid car was put on," large enough for sixty passengers, who were delighted with the experience of traveling at the rate of ten miles an hour, with the aid of one horse. This was progress and worth traveling fifty miles to behold.

One year later the track was completed from Lexington to Villa Grove, a distance of six miles, and the cars made regular trips carrying mail and passengers, this completed the first division.

The second division was completed to the top of the hill at Frankfort, by January 1834. An inclined plane was needed, at this place, to make the descent into Frankfort, since funds would not permit the digging of a tunnel. The inclined plane proved a dangerous contraption, and one occasion a wreck caused several deaths, so this method was abandoned.³ Cholera and

1. Ibid., 360

2. Perrin et al. op. cit., 526. Gives the formal opening date as the 14th of August, 1832. Clark in his History of Kentucky gives the date as the 15th of August, 1832, and maintains the load to be but forty passengers.

3. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 265-266.

financial embarrassment, also, added to this engineering difficulty, and caused the "Lexington and Ohio" to fall short of its Ohio goal.¹

In the charter of 1830 the exact location of the Ohio terminal point was not specified. Maysville, Covington and Louisville, were among the cities suggested, but Portland, just below the Falls and a short distance from Louisville, was finally decided upon. Construction of the railroad from this end was begun at the same time as that at Lexington. Results were unsatisfactory, however, and seven years passed before the road was put in operation from Portland to Louisville. There was local opposition to the railroad in Louisville because of the noise made by the cars, in passing through the community. Operation was discontinued between Sixth and Seventh Streets when an injunction was filed against the company. Soon afterwards, the road was turned over to the Blind Asylum for operation, and finally forced out of business.²

The Louisville and Frankfort division of the railroad had little success, but this did not effect the energy of its counterpart, the Lexington and Frankfort. Efforts were being made in Lexington to replace the horse, as motive power, by the use of a steam driven locomotive.

The application of the steam engine to river transportation revolutionized this mode of travel, but some doubt was expressed as to its applicability in long distance railway traction.³ In 1834, Thomas H. Barlow devised a steam locomotive, and

1. Wilson, op.cit., 160

2. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 266

3. Meyer, History of Transportation in the United States,

Joseph Bruen, another Lexington man, constructed it at his machine shops, near the corner of Water and Spring Streets.¹ It was a small contraption with no cab, and a tender that resembled an open box-car. Two large beams projected from the front, in place of a cow catcher. To these beams hickory brooms were attached to sweep the tracks.² The early Lexington and Frankfort locomotive was unsuccessful, and there is some doubt as to its ever having been used on the road,³ although engines made in the East were used for regular service after January, 1835.⁴

Regular service on the Lexington and Ohio Railroad was not of long duration. The Panic of 1837 caused the state to take over the railroad. This did not prove satisfactory, and in 1842 operations came to a standstill. In 1843, a lease was granted to Philip Swigert and William R. McKee for repair and operation. New rails were bought and laid, "the snakeheads" of the old track were removed, and operation resumed. Operation of the road became profitable and the private operators prospered. Then, in 1848 the state reclaimed the road.⁵

The reclaimed Lexington and Ohio was sold, in 1848, to a new corporation, chartered as the Lexington and Frankfort Railroad. The western section, from Louisville to Frankfort, had been acquired by another corporation and chartered the previous year, (1847), as the Louisville and Frankfort Railroad Company.⁷

1. Wilson, op. cit., 160

2. Meyer History of Transportation in the United States,
468.

3. Wilson, op. cit., 160

4. Starr op. cit., 132

5. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 266-267

6. Ibid., 266-267

7. Starr, op. cit., 135

Thus came to an end the first major¹ railroad in the history of Kentucky.

Improvements were made by the Lexington and Frankfort Railroad. New "T" Rail was laid throughout, and a new grade completed along the cliff at Frankfort. Trains were finally able to run from Lexington into the city of Frankfort, in 1850, without transferring to stagecoach at the top of the hill.²

While the Lexington and Frankfort was undergoing improvements, the Louisville and Frankfort had resumed construction of its railroad. A bridge was built across the Kentucky River, and a tunnel dug through the Frankfort Hill. At last the railroads were connected, the Lexington and Ohio railroad dream was brought to fruition.³ In 1881 this pioneer railroad became part of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.⁴

The Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad

The Lexington and Ohio Railroad was nearing completion to Frankfort when a new project drew the attention of Kentucky's cities.⁵ This was the Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad. Col. Blanding, its leading promoter, conceived a great interstate road connecting important cities for their

1. The word "major" is inserted here to avoid the long and tedious argument concerning the Lexington and Ohio and its claim as being the first railroad in Kentucky, and the first railroad west of the Allegheny Mountains. cf., Paxton, op.cit. 407. Lewis Collins, History of Kentucky, revised by Richard H. Collins, (Covington, Ky., 1882), Vol. II., 747. Meyer, History of Transportation in the U.S., 468. Wilson, op.cit., 158-159

2. Covington Journal, March 16, 1850

3. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 267.

4. Starr, op. cit., 136

5. Connelley and Coulter, op. cit., 732

common commercial benefit.¹ The necessity for such a road was evident to all the concerned parties. It was fortunate that added support would be furnished by South Carolina's United States Senator John C. Calhoun, who became a director of the railroad.²

In February of 1835, Calhoun presented an amendment report to the Senate, that would permit the distribution of surplus revenue among the states, until the tariff should reach its minimum under the Compromise Act of 1833. At the time he did not specify how he expected the Southern and Western states to use it.³ But the Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad suited his plan and he hailed the project joyfully.⁴ Calhoun's interest was not solely commercial, for he wanted to forge an economic bond between the South and the West that would help to keep them united politically.⁵

Colonel Stephen H. Long of the Topographical Engineers surveyed various tentative routes, and the Cincinnati group formally proposed the plan to the citizens of Charleston. A special committee of the Charleston Chamber of Commerce considered the proposal and reported on it favorably.⁶

A committee under William Henry Harrison was then charged with the duty of securing the cooperation of the various states.

1. Meyer, History of Transportation in the U.S., 309-310

2. Perrin et al., op. cit., 528

3. Charles M. Wiltse, John C. Calhoun, Nullifier 1829-1839, (Indianapolis: 1940), 324

4. Ibid., 324-425

5. Wilson, op. cit., 161

6. Wiltse, op. cit., 324-325

This proved an easy operation. Cincinnati in the 30's was a great livestock center and the railroad would bring much of central Kentucky's trade to her markets.¹ Eastern Tennessee favored the railroad to end its economic isolation. Charleston was endeavoring to maintain her position as a leading Atlantic port.² Kentucky embraced the proposal when the promoters promised branch lines to Louisville and Maysville.

A grand celebration was held, during February 1836, in Cincinnati, honoring the land grant given by the State Legislature of Kentucky for the railroad. In the spring of 1836 the organizers turned their efforts to raising funds and private subscriptions soon amounted to \$1,000,000.³ Fund raising was unusually easy, but money soon became the subordinate issue.

In July, 1836, a large delegation traveled to Knoxville for the Great Southeastern Railroad convention, which was presided over by Governor Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina. Early negotiations progressed favorably, with all states endorsing the railroad.⁴ As the order of business moved to the selection of a route, the storm broke. The Kentucky delegation was disunited due to the ambitions of the different cities.⁵ Maysville and Louisville were jealous of Cincinnati's commercial position, and failed to give whole hearted cooperation in the new venture. Lexington, on the other hand, desired the railroad.

1. Clark, History of Kentucky, 267.

2. Ray Allan Billington, Westward Expansion, (New York, 1949), 339.

3. John M. Allen, A Brief History of the Cincinnati Southern, unpublished MS. 1.

4. Ibid., 2.

5. Clark, History of Kentucky, 267.

She could deprive Louisville of much of its central Kentucky trade, since the railroad was to run from Cincinnati to Lexington, with only branch lines going to Louisville and Maysville. This made Lexington the focal point in Kentucky. Louisville and her neighboring communities looked upon this situation with approbation, since they did not wish to see any more of the state's banking business concentrated in Lexington.¹ Finally the one state failing to grant a charter to the Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroads was Kentucky.²

While Kentucky was having its troubles trying to charter the railroad, complications arose in other quarters. South Carolina's representatives insisted the line should run through Columbia to Knoxville, for the purpose of utilizing the Cumberland Gap in entering Kentucky. Delegates from Georgia were just as stubborn in their demands for an extension of their state's network from Atlanta to Knoxville. Directors of the railroad finally voted to build through Columbia. This outraged the Georgia faction and they joined with disgruntled members of Eastern Tennessee, resulting in their withdrawal from the company. This schismatic group laid plans to build a separate railroad along the favored route.³

Two lines were finally chartered in 1836. The division proved to be abortive to both the Georgia, and the Cincinnati, Louisville and Charleston groups. Funds raised by private and state subscription were divided between the two projects,

1. Ibid., 268-269

2. Meyer, History of Transportation in the U.S., 469.

3. Billington, op. cit., 339-340

neither receiving enough to complete its railroad, and the Panic of 1837 hastened them both to failure.¹

This was the death of a great plan to link the important cities of Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston, and was many years ahead of its time.² It was usually only accidental that the early railroads connected cities of similar importance.³ In dying, it sealed Lexington's fate commercially and left Louisville bound to the river. Kentucky had to wait until the advent of the 1850's before it could embark upon another interstate railroad project.

The Licking and Lexington Railroad

Revival of efforts to connect central Kentucky with Cincinnati did not arise again until 1847, when the Kentucky legislature was petitioned for a charter by the Licking and Lexington Railroad Company.⁴ This bill of incorporation met with opposition in the House largely on the question of taxation. A Mr. Crockett was spokesman for the opposing faction and remarked:

....the company ought to be taxed. He begged leave to submit one consideration. This company proposed to build a road which would divert trade from the State works, it should certainly be taxed to make up the deficit.

This argument lost its weight when the railroad advocates showed by logical arguments, that the road was really an internal improvement and should be supported by the state rather than be

1. Ibid., 339-340

2. Clark, History of Kentucky, 268

3. Paxton, op. cit., 404

4. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 268.

discriminated against. The improvement of property and sale of additional goods would more than offset the tax deficit.¹

The opposition was thus silenced, and the Licking and Lexington Railroad Company was chartered March 1, 1847.² Like its predecessors in Kentucky the railroad had to face the problem of subscription. Covington's weekly periodical the Licking Valley Register tried to interest subscribers by showing the possibilities of a Licking to Lexington railroad. It stated that such a work would connect the North and South, through a Cincinnati terminal, where connections could be made with other northern railroads. It was also pointed out, that other works could be constructed from Lexington to meet or intersect some important improvements farther south. "Thus the Licking and Lexington Railroad will connect the business intercourse of North and South," it stated. Still another argument was advanced against dependency upon the Ohio River. The railroad would continue to carry passengers and freight during the dry season of the year. For it was a common occurrence in summer, for the Ohio River to become too shallow for navigation by large boats. The Register ended its comment on the railroad with the exhortation, "We say again take stock in the Railroad. Take it if you can pay - take it if you can't pay. Take it anyhow."³

The subscription books were placed on Sale Monday May 9th. The city of Covington subscribed \$100,000 but only one private subscriber came forth and purchased 20 shares. For the

1. Licking Valley Register (Covington) February 20, 1847

2. Harry L. Eddy, Railroads 100 Years old, 1945-1955, (Washington, D.C. Association of American Railroads Bureau of R. R. Economics Library.)

3. Licking Valley Register, May 8, 1847.

railroad charter did not make Covington the northern terminal and so lost the support of her citizens.¹ Other cities responded similarly and the Licking and Lexington Railroad plans were shelved for two years, after which time the state re-chartered the road in 1849, under the name of the Lexington and Covington Railroad Company.² For two more years the road struggled for financial support, and in 1851 the railroad was still in the process of organization.³ But in the following year the officials of the company successfully disposed of the city and county bonds and began construction.⁴

The Lexington and Covington Railroad started at Covington and to a good extent followed the course of the Licking River to Falmouth. This resulted in an extremely crooked road. It then continued on a straight line to Cynthiana and Paris. This latter destination was not reached until 1854.⁵ At Paris the railroad joined the Maysville and Lexington Railroad, completing through connections with Lexington.⁶ The 78 miles from Covington to Paris was projected farther southward to Nicholasville and finally to the gorge of the Kentucky River, where the railroad

1. Licking Valley Register, May 14, 1847

2. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 268.

3. Connelley and Coulter, op. cit., 734

4. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 269.

5. Charles Truesdell, History of Kentucky and the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, unpublished MS, 20, Covington: Gist Historical Society of Northern Kentucky. Truesdell gives the date of the connection between the Lexington and Covington Railroad with the Maysville and Lexington Railroad as March 9, 1856. I have substituted Thomas D. Clark's date in its stead. Clark, History of Kentucky, 269.

6. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 269.

stopped until after the Civil War. In 1871 this road became the Kentucky Central and is now part of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.¹

The year 1850 ended the pioneer period of railroad construction in Kentucky and ushered in a period of expansion. The railroad emerged from the experimental stage and accomplished both standardization of equipment and the beginnings of modernity in operation.² From the year 1850 to 1860 more than twelve railroad charters were granted to various lines.

Among the first lines to be chartered at this time were two projects having their origin in Maysville. The Maysville and Lexington Railroad, and the Maysville and Big Sandy. The Maysville and Lexington road was incorporated by the State of Kentucky on March 4, 1850.³ It was to serve as a "feeder" route by which Lexington hoped to obtain its coal supply.⁴ Construction was begun on June 17, 1851, and completed as far as Paris, Kentucky, where it tapped the Lexington and Covington line. As time went on the road proved unsuccessful and finally became part of the Kentucky Central Railroad.⁴

Maysville's second railroad, the Maysville and Big Sandy, was chartered December 18, 1850.⁵ Some construction was begun but before the initial stage had progressed many miles hard times visited the section and the project failed. It was not

1. Trusdell, op. cit., 70

2. William H. Clark, Railroads and Rivers, (Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1939), 141.

3. Trusdell, op. cit., 70

4. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 269

5. Connelley and Coulter, op. cit., 734

revived until the Civil War was over, then it was chartered under the title of the Kentucky and Great Eastern.¹

Louisville, a leading river port for many years, was destined to become the railroad metropolis of Kentucky. In 1850 interest in the river waned and the railroad became the center of attraction. On March 5, 1850, a charter was granted by the Legislature of Kentucky under the title of the "Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company."² From the time the charter was granted the "Ellen N" had financial difficulties.³ The European market was unfavorable for floating loans, because of the Russo-Turkish war, and Kentucky capitalist were reticent in favoring the venture.⁴ These difficulties retarded construction; not until 1855 was the first rail laid.⁵ By 1856, twenty six miles of the railroad were in operation and the entire road, from Louisville to Nashville, was under contract.⁶ James Guthrie was elected vice-president of the railroad in 1857. It was largely due to his efforts, in floating bonds and eventually mortgaging all the railroad property, including its franchise, that enough money was obtained to complete the road.⁷ The last rail was swung in place October 8, 1859, at Bell's Station, Kentucky.⁸

1. Collins, op. cit., 66

2. T.D. Clark, Beginning of the L & N, 21-22

3. Starr, op. cit., 180

4. T.D. Clark, Beginning of the L & N, 35-37

5. Louisville, The Courier Journal, "The L & N One Hundred Years of Progress," April 19, 1950. P. 6.

6. T.D. Clark, Beginning of the L & N, 183.

7. Louisville, Courier Journal, April 19, 1950, p.6-7.

8. T.D. Clark, Beginning of the L & N, 183.

On October 31, 1859, the first train ran through from Louisville to Nashville, a distance of 187 miles. The year 1860 saw the Louisville and Nashville Railroad prosper, and under its new president, James Guthrie,¹ ready to face the strife that was soon to divide the North and South.

During the period extending from 1850 to 1860, the most important railroad chartered was the Louisville and Nashville. There were others, but they were of such a local nature that they need no mention here. However a line of inter-state importance was chartered at this time, the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. It was organized in 1848, by Mobile business men, and tapped Kentucky, in 1859, at Columbus.² Through the efforts of Stephen A. Douglas to connect the Illinois Central Railroad with the Mobile and Ohio, the national policy of Federal land grants to railroads was inaugurated.³

Before the year 1860 ended, Kentucky railroad builders had placed 596.93 miles of railway in operation.⁴ Many more miles were in the process of construction and new projects were being contemplated. These early railroads in Kentucky formed the nucleus for, or later became part of, the extensive railroad network that embraces the State today.

1. Ibid., 44-49

2. Kerr, op. cit., 16

3. Billington, op. cit., 398

4. T.D. Clark, History of Kentucky, 272

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Billington, Ray Allan. Westward Expansion. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949.
- Carter, Charles Fredrick. When Railroads were New. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1909.
- Clark, Thomas D. The Beginning of the L & N. Louisville: The Standard Printing Co., 1933.
- _____. A History of Kentucky. New York: Prentice Hall Inc., 1937
- _____. A Pioneer Southern Railroad. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1936.
- Clark, William H. Railroads and Rivers. Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1939.
- Collins, Lewis. History of Kentucky. Vol. II. Revised by Richard H. Collins. Covington, Ky: Collins & Co., 1882.
- Connelley, William Elsey, and Coulter, E.M. History of Kentucky. Vol. II. Chicago. American Historical Society, 1922.
- Eddy, Henry L. Railroads 100 Years Old, 1945-1955. Washington, D.C: Association of American Railroads Bureau of Railway Economics.
- Holbrok, Stewart H. The Story of American Railroads. New York: Crown Publishers, 1947.
- Kerr, John Leeds. The Louisville and Nashville, an Outline History. New York: Young and Ottley Inc., 1933
- Meyer, Balthasar. History of Transportation in the United States before 1860. Washington: The Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1917.
- _____. Railway Legislation in the United States. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909.
- Paxton, Frederic L. History of the American Frontier, 1763-1893. Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924
- Perrin, W.H., et al. A History of Kentucky. Louisville: F. A. Battey and Company, 1887
- Riegel, Robert E. America Moves West. Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1947

- Starr, John W. Jr. One Hundred Years of American Railroading,
New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1928
- Wilson, Samuel M. History of Kentucky, Louisville: The S.J.
Clarke Publishing Company, 1928. Vol. II.
- Wiltse, Charles M. John C. Calhoun Nullifier, 1829-1839.
Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1940

Periodicals

- Louisville: The Courier Journal.
- Covington: The Covington Journal.
- Covington: The Licking Valley Register.

Unpublished Material

- Allen, John M. "A Brief History of the Cincinnati Southern Rail-
way." Unpublished MS.
- Truesdell, Charles B. "Manuscripts on the History of Kentucky
and the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad." Written for
The Gist Historical Society of Northern Kentucky.