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by

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The Detroit and St. Joseph Railroad Company was chartered by the Territorial Legislature on June 29, 1832.\textsuperscript{1} It was to build a railroad from Detroit to the mouth of the St. Joseph River. The route of this line was to pass through the counties of Wayne, Wastenaw (Washtenaw), Jackson, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and Van Buren. Actual work on the road did not begin until 1836.

The citizens of Prairie Ronde held a meeting in Schoolcraft, on January 12, 1836, to consider the propriety of establishing the railroad from Detroit to the mouth of the St. Joseph River on the route agreeable to the "last survey." A committee was appointed to draft and report a resolution in relation to the subject under consideration. E. H. Lothrop, who was to be very active later in efforts to construct a railroad through the village of Kalamazoo, was a member of this committee. The committee members asked for time in which to prepare their report and a petition to the Legislature, they also made the recommendation that a committee of correspondence be appointed to request the cooperation of the people of Michigan in this matter.

The meeting reconvened on January 16, at which time the committee reported three resolutions it had drawn up. The
\textsuperscript{1} S. Farmer, \textit{History of Detroit and Michigan}, p. 845.
first resolution stated that acts of the Territorial Council, conferring monopolizing advantages upon individuals or corporate companies, imply no obligation upon the people or their representatives calculated to cramp or confine the operation of more liberal, equal, and, consequently, more democratic policy in relation to public improvements of any kind whatsoever. If such acts exist it becomes the duty of the people to counteract their evil effects by the institution of parallel improvements, upon a plan more accordant with the public good. The second resolution declared that the act of the Legislative Council, granting to a private body the right of constructing and controlling a work of such great public importance as a railroad across the peninsula of Michigan, and naming the internal points in its course suited to the interests of the individuals making up that body, contrary to the great interests of the people, is an infringement of legislative right and demands to be corrected by a succeeding Legislature. The third resolution called for the securing of the cooperation of the other towns in Kalamazoo County in furthering the objects of the meeting. These resolutions, along with a petition to be presented to the Legislature, were unanimously adopted.2

The Allegan and Marshall Railroad was incorporated in 1836 by the Territorial Legislature. This road was designed to connect Marshall and Allegan, passing through Battle Creek, 2- *The Michigan Statesman*, II,100,(January 23, 1836).
Comstock, and Bronson (Kalamazoo). The charter called for the completion of twenty-five miles of the road within four years; the total length of the line was to fifty miles. The State loaned the company $100,000 for carrying on its work.3 On April 2, 1836, the Michigan Statesman observed that the line of the Detroit and St. Joseph, and the Allegan and Marshall Railroad would pass directly through the town on Bronson.4

However, the first railroad to which the prominent residents of Kalamazoo County gave their support was the Kalamazoo and Lake Michigan Railroad. Among the incorporators of the road were Epaproditus Ransom, later to hold many important offices in the State government, Charles E. Stuart, who was also to hold many important offices in the State government, and E. H. Lothrop.5 The Kalamazoo and Lake Michigan Railroad was chartered March 28, 1836, by the State Legislature. The capital of the road was $400,000 and the line was to be 40 miles long.6 The Michigan Statesman of April 2, 1836, noted that the Legislature had enacted a law having as its object the construction of a railroad from Bronson to Lake Michigan, at the mouth of the South Black River, in Van Buren County, and stated that this was a distance of but 35 miles. The paper was of the opinion that the enterprising and affluent proprietors of the line's terminal points would adopt measures

3- D. Fisher and F. Little, Compendium of History and Biography Of Kalamazoo County, Michigan, p. 47.
4- The Michigan Statesman, III, 110, (April 2, 1836).
6- H. M. Utley and B. M. Cutcheon, Michigan as a Province Territory and State, The Twenty-Sixth Member of the Federal Union, III, p. 118.
for the immediate construction of the road. The charter called for the commencement of work within three years, completion of twenty-five miles of track in six years, and the completion of the forty miles in eight years.

An advertisement in the Kalamazoo Gazette of February 11, 1837, announced that books would be opened at the Kalamazoo House for three days, beginning at 10:00 A. M. on the 20th day of March, for the purpose of receiving subscriptions to the capital stock of the Kalamazoo and Lake Michigan Railroad Company. In the same edition of the Gazette, the editor made reference to the advertisement, stating that every individual owning property at Kalamazoo, or the South Black River, or in the vicinity of either of these places, should take active interest in the promotion of the work. He said that the distance between the two points was but 35 miles on a direct route, and that if a road were built on this route it would place Kalamazoo, for most business purposes, on the shore of Lake Michigan. It would provide a means of transportation for merchandise which would be cheap, safe, and speedy; and it would open a route by which the farmers could send their surplus products to market. Since the line passed through the finest timbered district in western Michigan, the people of the areas bordering upon it, by the aid of the railroad, might be supplied with pine and other lumber delivered at their doors, at prices far below the prices they were then forced to pay. The effect of the railroad would be to increase the

8- Fisher and Little, Compendium of History and Biography of Kalamazoo County, Michigan, p. 47.
value of real estate many hundred per cent. The Gazette thought that the increased value of property at the terminal points of the road would be sufficient to defray the whole cost of the line. The capital stock of the company was divided into shares of fifty dollars each and therefore brought within the reach of every man, at least so the Gazette thought. It was the hope of the Gazette that every man in Kalamazoo and Van Buren Counties, at least, would aid and encourage the enterprise by subscribing to the stock. Competent and experienced engineers had been engaged to survey the route and locate the site of the road, and the Gazette understood that it was designed to place the whole work under contract in the coming season. Despite the hopes of the Gazette, the Kalamazoo area was too new to make possible the building of this road. Foreign capitalists were contacted but refused to advance the funds with which it would have been possible to build the road.

Evidently the people of the State were not satisfied with the progress made upon the railroad to be built between Detroit and the mouth of the St. Joseph River. The Gazette of April 1, 1837, reported that the Legislature had adopted a joint resolution authorizing the governor to receive proposals from the Detroit and St. Joseph Railroad Company for the purchase of their charter, and the stock of the company. The governor was required to give a full and correct report upon this at the next session of the Legislature.

9- The Kalamazoo Gazette, III, 145, (February 11, 1837).
11- The Kalamazoo Gazette, III, 152, (April 1, 1837).
St. Joseph Railroad Company was purchased by the State of Michigan on April 22, 1837.12 The line was then renamed the Central Railroad. In its issue of April 29, 1837, the Gazette announced that the Legislature had appropriated $400,000 for a railroad from Detroit to the mouth of the St. Joseph River. This road was to pass through the counties of Wayne, Wastenaw, Jackson, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and Van Buren, as with the original line. The completion of this road would complete the chain of communications from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. Part of the road was already finished. The distance between Kalamazoo and New York City, as traveled at the time, was 980 miles and could not be covered in less than ten days. When this chain of communication was finished it would be possible to cover the distance in 56 hours. With the completion of the railroad it would be possible to travel the 146 miles from Kalamazoo to Detroit in 8 hours at the most.13

The Board of Internal Improvement, the State agency in charge of the work on the Central, was determined to complete the first 30 miles of the road by the first of September. To do this it had employed an additional number of laborers; it was expected that cars would be running between Detroit and Ann Arbor by the first of September. One of the locomotives intended for use on the road was at Buffalo.14 The Gazette of June 17, 1837, said that it might be expected to have the railroad between Kalamazoo and Detroit pretty well completed within 2 years. Rails had been received and were being laid.

12- Farmer, History of Detroit and Michigan, p. 896.
14- The Kalamazoo Gazette, IV, 162, (June 10, 1837).
and 40 or 50 miles would be ready for use within 6 weeks or 2 months.\footnote{15}

The Detroit Free Press of December 11, 1837, stated that the Board of Commissioners of Internal Improvements had located the route of the Central Road from Ann Arbor to St. Joseph. The principal points through which it was to run were Dexter, Leonia, Michigan Center, Jacksonburgh, Barry, Albion, Marshall, Battle Creek, Comstock, Kalamazoo, Lafayette, Mason, Waterford, to St. Joseph.\footnote{16} In its annual report to the State Legislature, the Board of Commissioners stated that in the survey of the route to be followed from Battle Creek to Kalamazoo, but one survey was thought to be required. The route was to follow the Kalamazoo River to the village of Kalamazoo, then south of west to the village of Lafayette, on the Paw Paw River, in Van Buren County. A line leaving the Kalamazoo River at Albion, running southerly and passing through the south part of Kalamazoo County to St. Joseph County, had been surveyed in 1834. This earlier route seemed to be three or four miles longer than the route surveyed in 1837. Estimates showed that the southern route might be constructed with less expense, but the engineer expressed the opinion that if it were run as directly as the northern route there would be no difference worthy of consideration. The Board of Commissioners, in the annual report, estimated that the construction of the railroad between Ann Arbor and St. Joseph, a distance of 153 miles, would cost $1,391,040.90, an average cost of $9,026.41 per mile.\footnote{17}

\footnote{15} The Kalamazoo Gazette, IV, 163, (June 17, 1837).
\footnote{16} The Kalamazoo Gazette, IV, 189, (December 16, 1837).
\footnote{17} The Kalamazoo Gazette, IV, 196, (February 3, 1838).
On February 12, 1838, the inhabitants of the counties of Kalamazoo and Kent presented a petition to the Legislature asking for the incorporation of a company to construct a railroad from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids.\(^{18}\) The Gazette of August 4, 1838, stated that the Central Railroad, which was to pass through Kalamazoo, would be intersected there by the Allegan and Kalamazoo Railroad. It was said that the Allegan and Kalamazoo Railroad was already under construction and would probably be completed in the next year.\(^{19}\)

Governor Stevens T. Mason, in his annual message delivered on January 7, 1839, reported on the progress of the Central Road. The Central was then under contract as far as Jackson, and locations were in progress as far as Kalamazoo. Expenditures for the year 1838 on the road had amounted to $572,789.69.\(^{20}\) In his message of January 7, 1840, Governor Mason gave a further report of the progress made upon the Central. In the period from May 1837 to December 1839, the Central had absorbed expenditures amounting to $757,063. At the end of this period trains were operating between Detroit and Ann Arbor.\(^{21}\)

A joint resolution enacted by the State Legislature, on January 18, 1842, provided that the Acting Commissioner of Internal Improvements be directed to forbear entering into any new contracts involving the expenditure of additional

\(^{18}\) The Kalamazoo Gazette, IV, 200, (March 3, 1838).
\(^{19}\) The Kalamazoo Gazette, V, 222, (August 4, 1838).
\(^{21}\) Ibid, p. 280.
money, not contracted to be expended upon the works of internal improvement, until further directed to do so by the Legislature. This resolution was not to be so interpreted as to prevent the Commissioner from making necessary expenditures for the running of cars upon any railroad belonging to the State, or for necessary repairs.22

The Kalamazoo Gazette did not find favor with the above measure. On March 11, 1842, it expressed the opinion that the Central Railroad must be relied upon, by all judicious men, as the main resource of the State for paying the interest upon the public debt. It thought that the road would be highly productive, and that when finished as far as Kalamazoo, would be surpassed by few railroads in the United States. The editor was of the opinion that the road, with the State's share of the proceeds from the public lands, would reduce the annual tax to a moderate amount.23

Governor John S. Barry, in his annual message delivered on January 2, 1843, included a report of the progress on the Central Railroad. The Central was then in operation between Detroit and Jackson. Expenditures were being limited to that portion of the road between Jackson and Marshall. This portion of the road was so far advanced as to be ready for the iron in the Spring. The governor stated that the program of internal improvements could not be completed as planned because of financial difficulties, and that the Legislature should restrict the prosecution of internal improvements to such portions of the work as would yield the greatest revenue to the State and

23- The Kalamazoo Gazette, VII, 409, (March 11, 1842).
its citizens. The first money available for the purpose, should be used to purchase the iron necessary to complete the Central to Marshall, and the Southern to Hillsdale. After this had been done, the governor thought available funds would be expended with greatest advantage to the State in the further construction of the Central west of Marshall. 24

On Saturday, January 22, 1843, a group of citizens of the village of Kalamazoo met at the Court House to devise means for the prosecution of the Central Railroad west of Marshall. A committee was appointed to draw up resolutions expressing the sense of the meeting, and also to prepare a memorial to be presented to the State Legislature. The committee drew up the resolutions and memorial, and these were accepted by the meeting. 25 The Gazette of February 17, reported that a Mr. Sharkey had presented in the Senate a memorial of the citizens of Kalamazoo relative to the completion of the Central Road, and at the same time, another petition seeking the same thing, on behalf of other citizens of Kalamazoo. 26

The Gazette of February 17, also reported the debate in the House upon a bill which proposed to appropriate out of the proceeds of the public works $119,000, which it was thought would be sufficient to iron the Southern Railroad to Hillsdale and the Central to Marshall. The bill also proposed to appropriate $250,000 for the extension of the Central to Kalamazoo. The contracts for this work were to be paid by warrants drawn

26- The Kalamazoo Gazette, IX, 457, (February 17, 1843).
on the Internal Improvement fund; the warrants were to be receivable in payment for any of the lands belonging to the State which thereafter would come into the market. For the University and primary school fund. Mr. Lothrop, of Kalamazoo, defended the bill. He explained that the $119,000 was the amount required at the prevailing price of iron, with the tariff duties added. An application had been made to Congress for the remission of the duty on the iron; if this application were successful the required sum would be reduced by one third. The bill pledged the net proceeds of the roads in payment of the iron. It was thought that this pledge would make possible the purchase of iron at a reasonable rate. It was the opinion of Lothrop that the expenditure of further sums on these roads would be returned with handsome interest. He reported that the committee had been unanimous in favoring the points providing for the completion of the Southern to Hillsdale and the Central to Marshall, but that they had not been unanimous on the section providing for the extension of the road west from Marshall. It was also provided in the bill that if the Commissioners could not make contracts on as favorable terms as those made in 1841, contracts should not be made. He thought that the plan was feasible because all of the materials for grubbing and preparing the road were in the area, and it might be impossible to do it on as favorable terms later. A large number of men were employed upon that portion of the work which would be finished in the spring; having all the tools necessary, they would be ready to go in the spring. If the works should be discontinued, they could only be resumed at great disadvantage.
Lothrop thought it was highly important that the State continue the work beyond Marshall, if it could be done under the provision of this act. It was important because it regarded revenue. As the road had progressed it had increased in productiveness: when finished to Ann Arbor it netted 4\(\frac{1}{2}\) per cent, since finished to Jackson it had netted 6 per cent. He said that those who were acquainted with the interior of the State could presume without fear that when it reached Marshall it would produce a net profit of 7 per cent, when it reached Kalamazoo, 8 per cent, and Lake Michigan, 9 per cent. If these estimates were correct the railroad would produce five hundred thousand net revenue to the State. He thought that it was the only way in which the public lands could be made available, and that it was the only way, without resorting to direct taxation, that the foreign indebtedness of the State could be met with honor.

The committee had made various proposals for carrying on the works. One proposal was to make the warrants that had been issued, and those that might be issued, receivable for land belonging to the State, for interest and principal on School and University lands, and School funds. It was thought that it would increase the interest, and secure the principal, of that fund, the product of which would be more than sufficient to pay the interest. Lothrop stated that if there were any doubt on the subject it was not material; for there were sufficient resources without it to carry out the propositions of the bill.

Mr. Rice offered a substitute to the bill, making an
appropriation: of one hundred thousand dollars for the continuance of the Central from Marshall to Battle Creek. It was his contention that this bill, plus the joint resolution he had offered providing for payment of interest on the warrants, and purchase of iron sufficient for the Southern to Hillsdale, and the Central to Marshall, was all the present Legislature would be justified in adopting. This proposal was defeated by a vote of the House.

Mr. Bush then moved to amend the bill by inserting, after the second section, that the Auditor-General should have the power to sell the Southern and Central Roads, at not less than the cost and interest on the same, and receive the bonds of the State for which it had received value in payment. Lothrop was of the opinion that the sale of roads would merely leave the State under the heavy debt which the profits of the railroads had been expected to liquidate. Mr. Goodwin was of the opinion that it would not be profitable to halt the works on internal improvements at that time. He favored the policy of the committee over that of Mr. Bush. Further work on the Central would augment the wealth of the State. He said that the Central would yield more than the ordinary interest for the money expended. Revenue to the State should not alone be considered, for the road would augment the value of the products of the country.27

The Legislature passed the Internal Improvement bill of 1843, which provided for the appropriation of 150,000 acres of land for the completion of the Central to Kalamazoo. Aud-
itor's warrants were to be issued, with these lands as a basis for their redemption. The bill enabled any man to procure lands without inconvenience or cost by his own labor on the road.28 The editor of the Gazette expressed this opinion of the effect of the Central upon Kalamazoo: "This vast grain-growing country will present a different aspect when this road shall have been completed. Instead of a perpetual stagnation in our markets, and wheat, the stable commodity of Michigan, worth but two and sixpence per bushel, contractors will be here, and wheat will be but a few cents lower here, than in the Detroit market."29

The Act passed by the Legislature provided in section one for the appropriation of $119,000 for the purchase of iron and spike, and the transportation of the same. The Board of Commissioners of Internal Improvement were authorized to purchase sufficient iron and spike to iron the Central to Marshall, and the Southern to Hillsdale. The Board was authorized to pledge for the payment of the iron and spike the net proceeds of the State, and to pay from time to time according to the terms of the contract, from such net proceeds coming into the treasury. They were authorized to let such amount of contracts as would be paid for by one hundred and fifty thousand acres of land, State and University lands to be exempted, under such restrictions as were then or thereafter to be made law for the extension of the Central Railroad to Kalamazoo. Before such lands could be made subject to entry by persons holding

28- The Kalamazoo Gazette, IX, 458, (February, 24, 1843).
29- Ibid.
such warrants they were first to be offered for sale at public auction. These lands were to be received by persons holding these warrants at the minimum price set by law. The contracts were to be let at 12 per cent less than the estimate of 1841. No portion of the lands was to be located, and no warrants issued on such work done on contracts let under the act were to be received in payment for any of the State lands, until the first day of the following August, 1843.

The Commissioners of Internal Improvement were to make contracts on the Central which were to be payable in warrants drawn on the Internal Improvement fund. The State was not to be responsible for the payment of these warrants until the funds were reimbursed by the sale of the State lands, or from other moneys legitimately coming to the State. The Joint Resolution of January 18, 1842, which prohibited new contracts on the public works, was suspended in so far as it was concerned with the completion of the Central to the village of Kalamazoo and the Southern to the village of Hillsdale. The act was to take effect immediately upon its adoption. The act was approved February 21, 1843.30 It was thought that by the land appropriations of this act the Central would be completed to Kalamazoo by the fall of 1844.31

The Gazette of May 19, 1843, announced that those interested in obtaining contracts on the Central between Marshall and Kalamazoo, would see by the advertisement in that issue that the time for taking contracts was then at hand.32 The

30- The Kalamazoo Gazette, IX, 459, (March 3, 1843).
31- The Kalamazoo Gazette, IX, 465, (April 14, 1843).
32- The Kalamazoo Gazette, X, 470, (May 19, 1843).
Gazette of June 16, 1843, stated that a sufficient balance of the appropriations remained to let the contracts for furnishing the timber for the superstructure and for building the bridges. These contracts were to be let in the following August. It was the opinion of the Gazette that no doubt could be entertained that the railroad would be completed to Kalamazoo by the first of August 1844. It was also stated that the contracts for grubbing, grading, and building the culverts on the railroad between Marshall and Kalamazoo had all been granted at satisfactory prices. The Gazette, with its customary optimism, thought that the work on the road would proceed rapidly. On August 18, 1843, the Gazette stated that it had been informed by the engineers on the Central that, unless the contractors for jobs began their work on or before the 25th of that month, the contracts would be awarded to others without unnecessary delay.

Governor Barry, in his annual report delivered on January 1, 1844, gave a report of the work on the Central. He said that the Board of Commissioners was of the opinion that work on the road had gone forward so far that it would be possible to complete the work between Jackson and Marshall in the Spring of 1844. Contracts had been let for the grading between Marshall and Kalamazoo and considerable progress had been made in the work. The principal engineer estimated that to complete the grading and superstructure to Kalamazoo would cost $75,000. Approximately the same amount would be required to purchase

33- The Kalamazoo Gazette, X, 474, (June 16, 1843).
34- The Kalamazoo Gazette, X, 483, (August 18, 1843).
the iron needed to finish the road.  

Act 50, adopted by the Legislature on March 9, 1844, appropriated 64,000 acres of land for the purpose of finishing the Central Railroad from the village of Marshall to the village of Kalamazoo. This land was to be taken from the land granted the State by the Federal Government for purposes of internal improvement. Payment of contracts granted under this act was to be made in script issued by the Auditor-General, and payable in land, at the State land offices for internal improvement lands. It was provided that the script would be payable only whenever a sufficient amount of script, or other funds receivable by law, was presented to pay for any legal subdivision or fraction as subject to sale or entry. Seventy thousand dollars was appropriated for the purpose of purchasing iron and spike and for payment of the transportation of the same, to iron the Central from the village of Marshall to the village of Kalamazoo. This money was to come from the net proceeds of the Central after certain other obligations had been met.

On January 6, 1845, Governor Barry made a further report on the Central. He said that on or about the 10th of August, 1844, the road had been completed to Marshall. The Central was mostly graded from Marshall to Kalamazoo, and should be ready for the iron early in the year. It was thought that the Board would meet with little difficulty in obtaining iron for the

35- Fuller, ed., Messages of the Governors of Michigan, I, p.496.
section between Marshall and Kalamazoo, except for the tariff duty which would increase the cost approximately $30,000. It was confidently believed that iron could be obtained without further legislative action upon the subject, and the road completed to Kalamazoo before the close of the year. A further appropriation of 20,000 acres of land was required for the erection of buildings at the stations, and for construction of the necessary side tracks. 37 Act 15 of the Legislature, adopted on February 22, 1845, appropriated 25,000 acres of land for the purpose of completing the Central from Marshall to Kalamazoo, the building of a car-house at Kalamazoo, the station buildings at Battle Creek, Augusta and Galesburg, the necessary side tracks, turnarounds and wells, settlement of damages for right of way. Payment of all contracts granted under the provisions of this act was to be made in interest-bearing script, of the same type as that set forth in Act 50 of March 9, 1844. 38

Joint Resolution 11, adopted by the Legislature on March 3, 1845, was designed to hasten the work on the Central between Marshall and Kalamazoo. It authorized and required the Acting Commissioner of Internal Improvement to advertise, for a fifteen day period only, for the letting of contracts for the completion of the Central from Marshall to Kalamazoo. At the end of the fifteen day period he was directed to let the contracts pursuant to law. 39

On March 14, 1845, Governor Barry returned, with other

39- Ibid, p. 158.
appropriation bills, a bill which provided for the extension of the Central from the village of Kalamazoo to the village of St. Joseph. The bill proposed the appropriation of one hundred and forty thousand acres of land for grubbing, grading and bridging the Central west from Kalamazoo as far as the appropriation would complete it. No provision was made for the superstructure. Barry said that thirty thousand acres of land had already been appropriated upon the Central and the Tecumseh branch of the Southern. On March 9, 1844, $75,000 of the proceeds of the Central had been appropriated to iron that road between Marshall and Kalamazoo. The Governor returned these bills of appropriation to the Legislature without his signature, because the total liabilities for the year as enumerated in these bills would be $821,250. He thought that this was an appropriation which was much greater than the State could stand, even were it not in financial trouble. The bill proposing to appropriate 140,000 acres of land upon the Central provided only for grubbing, grading and bridging. No means would be held in reserve to procure the superstructure when desired. The grading and bridging would not be available for use when wanted and would be a loss to the State. 40

Joint Resolution 20, adopted by the Legislature on March 24, 1845, authorized the Board of Internal Improvement to have the route of the Central from Kalamazoo to St. Joseph surveyed and located, and a careful, detailed estimate made of the cost of grubbing, grading and building the road, and procuring the right of way; and to make a report to the next

Legislature. An appropriation was made of the land necessary to defray the costs of the survey and estimates.41

Governor Felch, in his annual message delivered on January 6, 1846, made a report of the progress of the work on the Central. Sixteen miles of the extension of the Central from Marshall to Kalamazoo had been completed; the unfinished portion was to be ready for use in six or eight weeks. Expenditures on the Central for the year 1845 for construction, exclusive of iron and spike, had amounted to $99,291.15. In 1845 the Central had shown a net profit of $98,628.48. The receipts had been $202,716.57 while the running expenses for the same period had been $104,118.09. With the exception of $600 paid into the treasury, all of the net profits of the two railroads, the Central and the Southern, had been expended during the year for iron, spike and transportation, for locomotives, cars, and pay of engineers employed in the construction of the road.

Governor Felch said, furthermore, that a project for the sale of the roads had been agitated by a previous legislature, and discussed by the public. The proposition of the sale was urged primarily to discharge in whole or in part the debt due from the internal improvement fund. To dispose of the property on terms that would leave the debt outstanding, would be to yield the means of payment, without getting rid of the trouble. The expediency of such a sale should be determined by the present and prospective revenue that would find its way to the State treasury or the sum that would be required to place the

roads in that condition which would yield the greatest revenue, and the ability of the State to place them in such condition.

Felch said that study of the revenues of the past year showed that the income of the roads in their present condition could do nothing towards paying the principal of the debt. The roads even fell far short of paying the interest upon the original cost of construction. If the revenue of the Central were to be applied to the payment of interest in accordance with the Act of 1843, nothing would remain with which to rebuild the road. If provision were made to enable the road to be repaired out of its proceeds, there would be no other means to pay the interest other than to levy a tax upon the people for that purpose. If the roads were not repaired they would soon become useless.

The roads would require more and more repairs if they were to be retained by the State, and if a proper regard for the interests of the State were taken, the Central should be extended to Lake Michigan. Much criticism had been made of the high rates charged, but it was doubtful that the revenue received would more than cover the expenses of transportation plus the actual damage done to the mobile equipment and the track. It seemed that true policy demanded that the Central be speedily re-built with a more substantial superstructure, and either a T or H rail. Only by this method would it be possible for the Central to do the business it was intended to do, with profits to the treasury, and at reasonable rates. However there were no funds available and none that could be made available.
for this purpose.

No direct proposal had been made for the purchase of the roads, but it was understood that there were those ready to negotiate for the purchase if satisfactory terms could be arranged. If relief from the debt were not provided by the sale of the roads, direct taxation by the State appeared to be the only way to meet the situation.42

Despite the uncertain future of the railroad, work had continued and the road was finally completed as far as Kalamazoo. The first train to enter Kalamazoo came on January 25, 1846, from Comstock. It entered on wooden stringers which had not yet been covered with iron strips. The engine, as with all early engines, was a wood burner. This first train moved at a speed of about 15 miles per hour.43 Unable to turn around in Kalamazoo the train was forced to back all the way to Comstock on its return trip. The second train to enter Kalamazoo, came on February 1, 1846, at approximately 2:30 P. M. Its arrival broke up the divine services which were in progress at the time.44 Regular service was started the next day with one train a day running in and out of Kalamazoo. The laborers who had been employed in grading the road were "a lot of raw foreigners", speaking their own language. They lived or were boarded in a row of board shanties by the side of the track, "a little west of the campus." They were said

43- Kalamazoo Public Library, Transportation Scrapbook, I, p. 5.
to be Irish and their speech "Galic." The newly completed railroad depot had been pronounced to be the best in the State. It was erected upon the same site as the present station, and stood in what was then the wilderness. On February 11, 1846 a celebration of the completion of the Central Road to Kalamazoo was held in the Kalamazoo House. It was understood by the Michigan Telegraph that the fare between Kalamazoo and Detroit, a distance of 145 miles, was to be $4.37.

Meanwhile the conviction grew that the sale of the railroad was the only solution to the State's strained financial status. The Michigan Telegraph, in the edition of February 20, 1846, stated that if the Rail Road Sale Bill, or some similar bill containing terms as favorable to the State, were not passed, the people would hold their representatives as disobeying their sovereign will. Something had to be done to remove the tremendous burden of taxes that would fall upon the people if the railroad were not sold.

Act 42, adopted by the State Legislature on March 28, 1846, created the Michigan Central Railroad Company which was to have the right to purchase, from the State, the Central Road in its entirety, for the sum of two million dollars. Within three years from the date the franchise granted by the act became vested in the company, the company was to construct, complete and place in operation, that portion of the line running from Kalamazoo to Lake Michigan; and were also to use a

45- Ibid, p. 4.
46- The Michigan Telegraph, 2, 4, (November 21, 1845).
47- The Michigan Telegraph, 2, 14, (February 13, 1846).
48- The Michigan Telegraph, 2, 15, (February 20, 1846)
iron rail weighing not less than 60 pounds to the yard, this
to be done under threat of penalty. The company agreed to
limit itself to a passenger rate of three cents a mile after
1848; and agreed to pay a tax of one-half of one per cent on
its property until 1851, and after that an annual tax of three
quarters of one per cent. The State reserved the right to re­
purchase the road after 1867.

The Detroit Free Press of July 4, 1846, announced that
the Acting Commissioner had reduced the fare over the Mich­
igan Central on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of July, between Detroit
and Kalamazoo, to a price that would permit a person to ride
300 miles for $4, and all intermediate points in proportion.

On September 18, 1846, the Gazette announced the news that a
new locomotive had been ordered by the Central and was on its
way. It had been christened "Battle Creek". The Gazette said
that the business of the road "certainly required a new En­
gine."

The Gazette of July 11, 1847, announced that the Central
had begun repairs on the eastern end of the road with the T
rail as required by law. "It was said to be heavy and durable
iron, and will certainly make one of the most substantial
roads in the country." On March 11, 1847, the Gazette announced
that the Central had decided that the route of the road through

49- Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed
at the Annual Session of 1846, pp. 27-55.
51- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XIII, 633; (July 3, 1846).
52- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XIII, 644; (September 18, 1846).
53- The Kalamazoo Gazette, 14, 683; (June 11, 1847).
the village of Kalamazoo should remain as it had been fixed. 54

The Directors of the Michigan Central met in Boston on Thursday April 22, 1847, to decide whether the Central should end at St. Joseph or New Buffalo. 55 The Gazette of May 28, 1847, reported that the Committee appointed by the Board of Directors of the Central was within the area and had been to New Buffalo and Chicago. It was said that the possibility was that they would decide upon St. Joseph as the terminal point for the railroad. 56 Several weeks later the Detroit Free Press printed a rumor which reported that the Central had decided on New Buffalo as the western terminus for the line. 57

Late in September of 1848, it was reported that the Central would be completed to Niles within a few days. When the line was opened to Niles there would be approximately 200 miles of the Central in operation. The Gazette of September 29, 1848, reported that much merchandise for Niles had already passed over the road in the expectation that the line would soon be completed to Niles. 58

The killing of livestock by the trains created much ill will among the farmers. The Gazette of July 20, 1849, stated: "We are glad to learn that the excitement in relation to the killing of cattle, on the Central Rail Road, is subsiding. This result had been brought about, by payment in full by the company to the owners of cattle killed. This, probably, is the safest, and in the end, we think, will be the cheapest mode

54 - The Kalamazoo Gazette, 13, 671; (March 26, 1847).
55 - The Kalamazoo Gazette, 13, 676; (April 30, 1847).
56 - The Kalamazoo Gazette, 14, 680; (May 28, 1847).
57 - The Kalamazoo Gazette, 14, 684; (June 25, 1847).
58 - The Kalamazoo Gazette, XV, 750, (September 29, 1848).
to dispose of this exciting controversy." 59 In October, 1850, the Central tried another means in their campaign to win the friendship of the farmers. The Superintendent offered to transport on the road, to and from the State Fair, all stock and other articles of exhibition, free of charge, with as little delay as practical, and passengers were to be carried at the same rates as had prevailed on previous occasions. 60

The Gazette of March 29, 1850, announced that it had learned that it was the intention of the Superintendent of the Central to make a considerable reduction of the rates on certain important items between Kalamazoo and Detroit after May 1st. For example:

- Wool and mill irons, 100 lbs. - 43 cents
- Ashes, beef and pork, " " - 35 " "
- Pork and beef, per barrel - 85 " "
- Flour, per barrel - 50 " "
- Wheat, per 100 lbs. - 22 or 23 cents
- Salt, " " " - 75 cents. 61

The Gazette of May 17, 1850, stated that the new freight rates would be published soon, and that a considerable reduction was to be made. 62

The business of the Central was continually increasing as more and more settlers came to Michigan. The Gazette of April, 19, 1850, informed its readers that boats were daily bringing up large numbers of passengers to Detroit, and another

59- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XVI, 792, (July 20, 1849).
60- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XVII, 857, (October 18, 1850).
61- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XVI, 828, (March 29, 1850).
passenger car had been added by the Central. The Gazette thought that the increased business would be so great as to require the running of two trains a day over the road. The Gazette of January 17, 1851, reported that the total receipt of pork over the Central for the month of December 1850 showed an increase of nearly 100 per cent over the corresponding month of 1849.

The Gazette of July 4, 1851, announced that despite all efforts to make the Central unsafe and unpopular, it continued to gain popularity and favor with travelers and business men. No serious accident had resulted, thanks to the care of the Superintendent of the Central, despite a conspiracy of men pledged to jeopardize the lives of passengers by obstructing and destroying the road. The Gazette stated that the Central had not yet had a calamitous accident on its 200 miles of track. This record of the Central was not destined to stand much longer, for a few days later a train bound for Detroit was derailed about six miles from Niles. The locomotive and tender, baggage car and two second class cars containing a few passengers, went into a deep ditch. The locomotive was more than half buried in mud and water. A fireman was seriously injured, and some of the passengers considerably bruised.

During this period work on the westward extension of the Central was being carried forward. The Michigan City News of July 11, 1851, stated that the contracts for the construction of the Central from Michigan City to the Illinois State line

63- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XVI, 831, (April 19, 1850).
64- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XVII, 870, (January 17, 1851).
65- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XVII, 894, (July 4, 1851).
66- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XVII, 897, (July 25, 1851).
had been let. It was thought that grading would be completed by the first of October.67

Despite the optimistic hopes previously expressed by the Gazette, the question of the liability of railroad companies for stock killed upon their roads continued to be a problem for some time. However, the Gazette of August 1, 1851, included an item from the Detroit Free Press which indicated that this long disputed problem was finally settled. The Free Press had learned that the State Supreme Court had decided that the railroad companies were not responsible for stock so killed. Once again it was the hope of the Gazette that this decision would bring an end to the controversy over this matter.68 The Gazette of February 13, 1852, announced that the cost of trying the Michigan Railroad conspirators, who had sought to disrupt operations of the Central, amounted to $31,861.36; all of which was legally chargeable to the County of Wayne, but the company voluntarily paid $27,429.61 of this sum.69

The Gazette of March 5, 1852, reported that a Chicago paper had stated that work had been started on that end of the Michigan Central Railroad; the iron was laid to a point within 22 miles of the city. It was said that the line would be entirely finished to Chicago by the time navigation was fully opened on Lake Erie, which was about the first May.70

The Gazette of May 7, 1852, stated that it had learned from the Detroit News, that a train on the Michigan Central,

67- Ibid.
68- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XVII, 898, (August 1, 1851).
69- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XVIII, 926, (February 13, 1852).
70- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XVIII, 929, (March 5, 1852).
in the previous week, had run from Detroit to Michigan City in six hours, which time included stops, and passengers had reached Chicago in less than thirteen hours. It was thought that this was quick traveling for that season of the year.\textsuperscript{71} The Gazette also told its readers that traffic was increasing beyond precedent. The trains of the days just previous had been so heavily loaded that additional locomotives were required to move them. The Gazette said: "The facilities for travel are now so abundant and so cheap that they invite to a pretty general indulgence of its luxuries."\textsuperscript{72} The number of passengers over the Central in the State in the first 15 days of May, 1852, showed an increase of 16 per cent over the same period in 1851.\textsuperscript{73}

The Gazette of November 18, 1853, told its readers that contracts were being let for the new depot at the Kalamazoo station of the Central. It was to be a handsome structure though not as large as the old depot. The Gazette had expected more because Kalamazoo was "undoubtedly" the main point on the road.\textsuperscript{74} On February 1, 1856, the Gazette said that it agreed with the suggestion that it would be a good idea to get the Michigan Central to erect appropriate signs where its line crossed the streets in Kalamazoo. It said that the track came in on a curve and the trains were not seen until close to the crossings. Several serious accidents had resulted from the lack of signs to bring the point of danger to the attention

\textsuperscript{71}- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XIX, 938, (March 7, 1852).  
\textsuperscript{72}- \textit{Ibid.}  
\textsuperscript{73}- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XIX, 941; (May 28, 1852).  
\textsuperscript{74}- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XX, 1018, (November 18, 1853).
of those using the crossings. The Gazette of October 2, 1856, reported that it was their understanding that Kalamazoo had been selected as the headquarters for the Michigan Central Railroad Telegraph Line. Thereafter the train dispatchers were to be located in Kalamazoo. To accommodate this addition offices were erected and the passenger house enlarged.

Late in the year 1855 the Centerville Chronicle announced that the letting of contracts for grading the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo Railroad had been advertised, with the hope of having the road ready for operation by the 1st of January 1857. All available evidence would seem to indicate that this line was never built.

The Engineering Corps of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad reached Kalamazoo on December 30, 1856, while engaged in making another preliminary survey. It was said that $9,000 more had to be raised to reach the $40,000 subscription asked for Kalamazoo. The Gazette advised its readers to furnish the $9,000 so as to secure to the village the advantages of the road. At a meeting of citizens of Kalamazoo, at the Court House on January 19, 1857, Mr. J. O. Cook, Chief Engineer of the Grand Rapids and Indiana, said that unless they received subscriptions from the Kalamazoo area they would be unable to bring the road to Kalamazoo, though they would like to do so.

75- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XXII, 1132, (February 1; 1856).
76- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XXIII, 1168, (October 2; 1856).
77- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XXII, 1120, (November 2; 1855).
78- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIII, 1181, (January 2, 1857).
Unless the citizens of the village and the surrounding area would assist in the building of the road from Vicksburg to Kalamazoo, they would have to run their line by another route.\textsuperscript{79}

The Gazette of February 20, 1857, announced to its readers that the G. R. and I. was to share in the railroad land grant. The Gazette thought that this would not only insure the immediate cooperation of the roads, but would put the road on a substantial and reliable financial basis. It thought that the citizens of Kalamazoo would now feel less doubt as to the success of the road, and would be more ready to take an active part in its prosecution.\textsuperscript{80} It was announced by the Gazette of July 31, 1857, that the G. R. and I. had succeeded in becoming solely interested in the route from Fort Wayne, Indiana, via Grand Rapids, to Mackinaw. The line had been located from Grand Rapids, to Mackinaw and, with but a partial exception, from Fort Wayne to Grand Rapids. The speedy completion of the road for the entire route, was confidently looked for.\textsuperscript{81}

The Gazette of August 21, 1857, made the announcement that it had seen handbills posted on the streets calling foreman to work on the track between Vicksburg and Kalamazoo. The editor was of the opinion that this looked like they were pushing the work forward.\textsuperscript{82} Work upon the G. R. and I. progressed rapidly as the company pushed the construction forward. One gang of hands was grading between Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, another near Vicksburg, and still another gang was grading between Austin's Lake and Kalamazoo.\textsuperscript{83} On October 30, 1857,

\textsuperscript{79} The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIII, 1184, (January 25, 1857).
\textsuperscript{80} The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIII, 1188, (February 20, 1857).
\textsuperscript{81} The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1211, (July 31, 1857).
\textsuperscript{82} The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1214, (August 24, 1857).
\textsuperscript{83} The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1218, (September 18, 1857).
the Gazette said that it was understood that the proper offi-
cers of the company were to select the site for the depot
in Kalamazoo. The Gazette added that the work on grading south
of the village was still going on.84

The Gazette of January 18, 1858, informed its readers
that the contract for the construction of track of the G. R.
and I. from near Otsego to 40 miles north of Grand Rapids had
been let to a Pennsylvania company. It was reported that this
company was entirely responsible and would push the work for­
ward with all possible speed.85 The Sturgis Republican early
in 1858 announced that contracts for the work had been let to
different companies, from Wolcottville to a point 40 miles
north of Grand Rapids. This included 150 miles of the line,
110 miles of which was to be made ready for the laying of the
iron during that year.86 A letter to James Scribner said that
the contract for grading the road north of Kalamazoo had been
let to Messers. Boyle and Company, and operations were to be­
gin within a short time. The contractors were already getting
their teams ready for the work.87

The Gazette of February 26, 1858, stated that the Board
of Directors of the company had been in session for three
days. The principal question was the location of the line from
Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids. The question, so the Gazette said,
was to have been decided by February 26. There were three
possible routes of the line. One route was the "Direct or

84- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1224; (October 30, 1857).
85- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1234, (January 8, 1858).
86- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1237, (January 28, 1858).
87- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1238, (February 5, 1858).
Plank road route", another was the old "Otsego line", and the third was the "Allegan line". The Gazette of March 5, announced that the company had selected grounds on the Stuart farm on Portage Street, for their depots and other works. The Gazette of March 26, 1858, stated that the offices of the Chief Engineer of the company had been removed to Kalamazoo, the second story of the Humphrey Block leased for their use.

By the latter part of July 1858, contracts had been let by the G. R. and I. for the construction of the road-bed, bridging, farm and road crossings, cattle-guards, and for the delivery of the ties. These contracts had been let to parties represented as responsible for their undertaking. Payment on these contracts was to be made in stocks and bonds.

An edition of the Dayton, (Ohio) Gazette early in August 1858, stated that a Mr. Beckel of that city had entered into a contract for constructing 88 miles of the G. R. and I., commencing at Kalamazoo and running 40 miles beyond Grand Rapids. The 88 miles were to be completed by the 1st of October, 1860; the price for the work was $1,200,000. The Grand Rapids Eagle, of August 14, stated that Mr. Beckel was a well known railroad man and was represented to be fully responsible for the fulfillment of the contract, even though no portion of the subscription to the road was paid. He was near Grand Rapids at this time and entered at once into the vigorous

88- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1241, (February 26, 1858).
89- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1242, (March 5, 1858).
90- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXIV, 1245, (March 26, 1858).
91- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXV, 1263, (July 30, 1858).
92- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXV, 1265, (August 13, 1858).
prosecution of the work. The work during the summer and fall months, was to be upon light grading, leaving the deep cuts for winter work. Large gangs of men were to strike out along the line within a few days. On the 14th the Eagle learned that Mr. Beckel had enlarged his contract. He now had 96 miles of the road under contract, and was to complete it, including the laying of iron and ballasting of the road. He left for Dayton on the 14th, leaving orders for his men to grade two miles per week.93

The Gazette of December 3, 1858, reported that the work on the road was still progressing between Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. Much the greater portion of the grading was completed; and there was every prospect, so one of the roads officers said, that the road would be in running order by the 1st of November, 1859.94 The Grand Rapids Eagle confirmed the report that much of the grading between Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids was completed.95

The Gazette of March 4, 1859, reported that the construction of the road from Kalamazoo to Fort Wayne had been let to Messrs. Jones, Barkelew and Company. Their contract embraced road-bed, bridges, ties, iron, ballasting, fencing, turn-tables, and water stations— all of which was to be put in readiness for cars. Forty thousand dollars worth of this work was to be finished by May 1st. It was to be completed from Kalamazoo to Sturgis by August 1, 1860; and to Fort Wayne by July 1, 1861. The work was to be begun within 30 days after December 25,

93- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXV, 1266, (August 20, 1858).
94- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXV, 1281, (December 3, 1858).
95- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXV, 1283, (December 17, 1858).
1859. The Gazette of May 27, 1859, reported that the Secretary of the Interior had approved a land grant of 470,000 acres for the G. R. and I.

Service to Kalamazoo over the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad began on August 18, 1870. Completion of the road was delayed by the Civil War and the ever present financial troubles faced by the early railroads. This line is now a part of the Pennsylvania system.

The Kalamazoo and South Haven Railroad Company was incorporated on April 14, 1860. It was to build a railroad between Kalamazoo and South Haven, as its name would indicate. This company came into being because of the active interest of the citizens dwelling in the territory through which the road was to pass. Citizens of Kalamazoo subscribed to $25,000 of the stock, and the city of Kalamazoo raised an additional $26,000 by taxation.

The Kalamazoo and White Pigeon Railroad was built to Constantine in 1852, on to Three Rivers in 1855, and completed to Kalamazoo in May 1867.

96- The Kalamazoo Gazette; XXV, 1294, (March 4, 1859).
97- The Kalamazoo Gazette, XXV, 1306, (May 27, 1859).
98- Kalamazoo Public Library, Transportation Scrapbook, I, p. 3.
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