

[Printed Letterhead]

Lancaster County Historical Society
230 North President Avenue, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
June 29, 1962

Mr. Freeman Hubbard, Edt., Railroad Magazine,
205 East 42nd Street,
New York 17, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Hubbard:

I do not find any record of James Buchanan ever having been employed by a railroad company. He did legal work for men who were interested in railroads in Pennsylvania.

In, "The Works of James Buchanan," by John Bassett Moore, V. x p.314, I find this letter:
"Washington, 24 March, 1859.

Dear Sir:

I return the free ticket which Mr. Gittings has directed to be forwarded to me for the Northern Central Railroad with as many thanks for his kindness as though I had accepted it. It has been the practice of my life not to travel free on any Railroad, being opposed to the whole system of granting such privileges to individuals not connected with these Roads.

Yours very respectfully,
James Buchanan."

This letter would lead me to believe that James Buchanan never was employed by any railroad.

Sincerely,
Laura G. Lundgren
(Mrs. Charles W. Lungren, Lib.)

[In red pencil with arrow pointing to last sentence: See yellow clipping]

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LancasterHistory

[Yellow clipping: Memo to Mrs. Lundgren: I have since found out the facts about Buchanan's railroading and am publishing them in Railroad Magazine. Thought you might like to have them for your records. Sincerely, Freeman Hubbard, Editor, Railroad Magazine.

Text of clipping: 2. Was any railroad man every elected President of the United States?

No, not as the term is generally understood, although four White House occupants worked for railroads at one time or another.

On July 19, 1834, James Buchanan, then a 43-year-old lawyer, was elected first president of the Portsmouth and Lancaster Railroad that ran near his home in Lancaster County, Pa. See page 20.) We do not know whether or not he retained that title during his incumbency in the U. S. Senate, 1834-'45. Meanwhile, in 1835, the road was renamed the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mr. Joy & Lancaster. It came under Pennsylvania Railroad control April 21, 1849, the year Buchanan was appointed Secretary of State in President Polk's cabinet, and Dec. 29, 1860, was leased to the Pennsy for 999 years, thus becoming part of the PRR main line. (Facts from Walter A. Lucas, rail historian.)

The other three onetime railroad workers sent to the White House were Abraham Lincoln, who handled an Illinois Central legal case and had difficulty in collecting his fee; Grover Cleveland, who spent several months as a New York Central policeman and later, as President of the Nation, called out the Army to suppress the American Railway Union Strike; and Harry S. Truman (the "S" doesn't stand for anything—Truman has no middle name), who once had a timekeeper's job with a construction company that built part of the Santa Fe Railway.]

