

A History of the Strasburg Rail Road, 1832-1862

by Lester James Kiscaden

PREFACE

This paper emerged out of a curiosity to investigate the origin of the Strasburg Rail Road.

A life-long resident of Strasburg and interested in its past as well as its future, I felt compelled to investigate the first thirty years of the railroad's existence in order to clarify the misconceptions and myths that have emerged about that era of the road's history.

Research has been conducted at the following locations: Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The William Penn Memorial Museum, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (Archives Building), The State Library (Law Library and Periodical Complex), and The Corporation Bureau; Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Lancaster County Historical Society, Frackenthal Library (Franklin and Marshall College), Lancaster County Court House (Prothonotary Office), and the Lancaster County Free Public Library; West Chester, Pennsylvania: Chester County Court House (Law Library), Francis Harvey Green Library (West Chester State College), and Chester County Historical Society; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Millersville, Pennsylvania: Helen Ganser Library (Millersville State College), and Strasburg, Pennsylvania;

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To undertake a project of this nature one needs the cooperation and assistance of many individuals which I wish to acknowledge.

I am deeply appreciative for the guidance of my advisor, Mr. Harold E. Shaffer. The following librarians were of invaluable assistance in helping my research: Miss Martha Simonetti, Associate Archivist, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; Mrs. Robert Thompson, Chester County Law Library; Mrs. Charles Lundgren, Lancaster County Historical Society; as well as Mr. Samuel Dyke, President of Lancaster County Historical Society. Recognition is also extended to Mrs. William Moedinger, Secretary of the Strasburg Rail Road Company, Mrs. Velma Lutz, Strasburg Borough Secretary, and Mrs. J. Franklin Miller, Editor of Strasburg Weekly News.

However, my deepest acknowledgment goes to my wife, Anne, to whom I dedicate this paper. Without her assistance in this endeavor I would not have been able to complete the paper.

INTRODUCTION

Today the Strasburg Rail Road is a major tourist complex in Lancaster County. Licensed by the Interstate Commerce Commission the railroad is a common carrier of freight and passengers. In 1971 the company hauled well over 300,000 passengers on their "Road to Paradise" through the heartland of the Pennsylvania Dutch Country.

However, business was not always as lucrative as it is now. First incorporated in 1832, the railroad has had a very sporadic development. The company has had several owners during the past one hundred and forty years, the latest being a group of railroad enthusiasts who purchased the road in 1959 from the John E. Homsher estate.

Initially Strasburg was a very prominent commercial center. Located on the Strasburg Road the borough was approximately one day's journey from the Susquehanna River. In the 1820's many teamsters and drovers battled their way through Strasburg on their way to Philadelphia and New Castle, Delaware, both major commercial centers in the East.

Strasburg was connected indirectly with both of these commercial centers by the Strasburg Road which connected Conestoga Indiantown, near the Susquehanna River, and Gap, Pennsylvania.

Gap was a major resting spot on the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike, and was linked with New Castle, Delaware.

However, the commercial interests of Philadelphia pressurized the State Legislature to improve the transportation network leading into their city. As a result the legislature passed an internal improvements bill in 1826 calling for the construction of a series of canals, the first linking Columbia, Pennsylvania, and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road was also incorporated with financing provided by the state.

With the initiation of these state projects the residents of Strasburg became alarmed over the possibility of losing their commercial position and out of this concern emerged the birth of the Strasburg Rail Road in 1832.

The Winter of 1825-26 was a cold, blusterly scene covering most of the Lancaster County roads with heavy snowfalls. Most of the roads leading to Philadelphia and New Castle, Delaware were blocked for days at a stretch. By mid-Winter traffic was at a standstill and lines of heavily laden Conestoga Wagons stood, hopelessly, in drifts up to their bellies along the roads leading into Strasburg.

Most of the teams had been unhitched and brought to shelter; some of the more perishable—and portable—goods had been salvaged on light sleighs furnished by Strasburg merchants and innkeepers and the teamsters holed up in the famous Strasburg Taverns.¹

Strasburg was situated in the midst of a wealthy and enterprising agricultural and commercial center. The Old Kings Highway (Strasburg Road) ran through the borough to the mouth of the Conestoga River. This highway eventually reached West Chester and Philadelphia. Being situated on an elevated plateau, with excellent drainage in every direction, it was known as one of the healthiest towns in Lancaster County.²

Few places on the highways of America at this early date offered as varied range of hostelries than this little Lancaster County town of 1,000 people. No less than 25 taverns and hotels were strung along the main street of the community; the swaying signs, that creaked and groaned in the snow-laden wind, displayed an amazing assortment of traditional devices. But if the road-side tavern had ever been the most democratic of American institutions, it had by this time acquired a well-developed snobbishness; so that a Conestoga teamster would no more think of putting up at a "stage house" than he would of wearing a silk shirt and ruffles.³

Consequently the taverns of Strasburg, on any night in that dreary, frigid February, included among their guests a blend of all the social and intellectual strata that destiny was hammering into a mold. The Black Horse taproom might echo to the cultural tones of Philadelphia merchants, sophisticated but penniless adventurers, or other travelers. Meanwhile a few doors down the street the bar of

a teamsters' hotel would ring with the colorful phrases from those tough gentry. Since Strasburg was the end of the teamsters' first day haul from the Susquehanna Canal at Columbia, these rough and ready, weather beaten, tired and hungry men pulled into Strasburg to eat, drink, and sleep.⁴

One of the things these interminable arguments and discussions had in common in early 1826 was steam. Already it was an accomplished fact. Crude engines had been built and while they were still practically useless, only the most obtuse intelligence could refuse to see the staggering possibilities those belching boilers, that pulled wheels across iron rails at a slow, but steady pace, had for future transportation. Even the teamsters could see here a vague, but annoying threat; however, they were immediately concerned about the State's announced intention of financing a system of canals. Already the Legislature had authorized the expenditure of \$300,000 for the construction of the teamster-despised "water ditches."⁵

Meanwhile the men of Strasburg listened intently at these mumblings as they sat quietly in the corners of their taverns smoking their meditative pipes. This talk of canals and railroads would prove to be a threat to their economic position as a leading commercial center if these rumors would come true.

When it was discovered that the construction of a canal between the Susquehanna River and Philadelphia proved to be impractical and costly, the townspeople again settled back to their normal pace of hosting the teamsters as they rumbled through Strasburg.

Spring came and the teamsters began to thaw out their frozen Conestoga Wagons and the hectic traffic began to move toward Philadelphia. Spring also brought a new concern for the proprietors of Strasburg as the State Legislature granted a charter to a group of investors promoting an enterprise to be known as the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road on April 7, 1826.⁶

Columbia was a bustling town on the Susquehanna River 82 miles from Philadelphia and the announcement that a possible "steam belcher" would be rivaling the county brewed trouble for Strasburg.

However, the awarding of a charter does not mean the development instantaneously of a railroad. At first it was hoped that the right-of-way for the Philadelphia and Columbia would pass near Strasburg.

By 1831 surveying had been completed and road grading crews of Irish construction workers began to invade Lancaster County to commence work on the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road. Strasburg knew well that it would be severed from the once prosperous teamster and stage coach trade since the railroad right-of-way was five miles from the borough lines.

Organized by Jacob Hoover, proprietor of the Swan Hotel.

Strasburg's largest hotel, public meetings were held to arouse the interests of the tavern owners and merchants as to the threat the railroad posed to their future.⁷

A petition was eventually formed, signed and delivered to the Honorable Thomas H. Burrowes, House of Representative delegate from Lancaster County. Mr. Burrowes, presented the petition to the House of Representatives on Monday, December 12, 1831, requesting authority to construct a railroad from Strasburg to intersect the Philadelphia and Columbia at the nearest point.⁸

Apparently not everyone in the vicinity of Strasburg was enthused over the attempt to construct a railroad as petitions were presented by the Honorable John Strohm and William Mackey, Lancaster County Representatives to the General Assembly, giving "remonstrances against a rail road from Strasburg to the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road" on January 4, 1832, and January 11, 1832, respectively.⁹

As debate continued at home over the possible construction of a railroad and business interests and tavern proprietors busied themselves as to where and how to acquire money for the project, the legislators finally introduced Bill No. 344 to incorporate the railroad on Saturday, January 21, 1832.¹⁰ More debate ensued over the feasibility of this bill and it was tied to other shortline railroad company proposals (Williamsport and Elmira Rail Road, Marietta and Columbia Rail Road, Portsmouth and Lancaster Rail Road, and Oxford Rail Road.)

By late spring the bill finally had its third reading in the Legislature and passed in the Senate by a vote of 18 to 11 on Tuesday, June 5, 1832¹¹ and was signed into law on June 9, 1832, by Governor George Wolf.

A description of the Articles of Incorporation for the Strasburg Rail Road follows:

"William Wilson and Henry Witmer of the City of Philadelphia, Peter Osborne of the borough of West Chester, in the County of Chester; James Given, Evan Greene, Frederick Hambright, George L. Mayer, Michael Musselman, Jacob Eshleman, Jacob Hoover, George Diffenbach, junior, Abraham Smith, David Shirk, junior, and Joseph S. Lefever, of the County of Lancaster, were appointed commissioners to do and perform the several things hereafter mentioned . . . They or any three of them shall procure a sufficient number of suitable books and in each of them enter as follows: 'We and each of us whose names are hereunto to subscribed, do promise to pay to the directors of the Strasburg Rail Road company the sum of fifty dollars for every share of stock set opposite our respective names and by us respectively subscribed, in such manner and proportions, and at such times and places as shall be determined and directed by the said directors, in pursuance of an act authorizing the Governor to incorporate the Strasburg Rail Road company: Witness our hands the day of Anno Domini, eighteen hundred and thirty

The Commissioners were also required to give at least twenty

days notice in four newspapers printed in Lancaster County and two newspapers printed in Philadelphia of the times when and the places where someone of the commissioners would attend and receive subscriptions for stock. These books were to be kept open for three days or until there as subscribed a minimum of six hundred shares or a maximum of eight hundred shares. No subscription would be valid unless the person subscribing paid the sum of five dollars on each share to the aforementioned commissioners for the use of the company.

The corporation had to be confined to legitimate purposes; seven directors were to be elected annually by the stockholders to manage the affairs of the company.

The company was authorized, as soon as they conveniently could, to locate and construct a railroad of one or more tracks, from the public house of Jacob Hoover, in the borough of Strasburg, then along the middle of the main street of the borough to the eastern boundary there of and then by the shortest and best route to a convenient point on and connecting with the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road and erect such warehouses, toll houses, carriages, cars, and all other works and appendages necessary for the convenience of the company.

The railroad was not to form any unnecessary obstruction to the free use and passage of the main street of the borough; the railroad was not to demand or receive toll for carriages unavoidably passing upon any part of the road. The road bed was not to be more than sixty feet wide and could not pass through any burying ground or place of public worship.

The company was permitted to charge tolls upon completion of the road provided that they would not exceed eight cents per ton per mile for merchandise nor more than four cents per mile upon passengers.

The State also had restrictions on time of construction. The company was to commence the construction of the railroad within two years from the passage of the Act (June 9, 1832) or within one year from the completion of the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road and if the railroad was not completed within four years from the actual commencement of construction, or if the corporation would suffer the road to decay or be impassable, the charter would be null and void.

The railroad promoters now had the official approval of the Commonwealth to venture forth on their scheme to construct a shortline railroad from Strasburg to meet the Philadelphia and Columbia.

An investigation of the county men appointed as commissioners gives the reader some inkling as to the type of men interested in the construction of the railroad.

Col. George A. Mayer was born in 1781 and died in Lancaster in 1862. Mayer was a member of the Pennsylvania Militia during the War of 1812 and was named Lt. Colonel of the 69th Regiment in 1814. After returning from the war he established a prosperous hardware business in Lancaster. He also was an inventor; however, his product the Mayer butt-hinge, was never patented.¹³

Frederick Hambright was a Lancaster gentleman and politician. He served as Sheriff of Lancaster County between 1821-23, and was later elected State Senator in 1828. Prior to his election as Senator he served as Water Commissioner for Lancaster. After a successful career in the Senate he was appointed Alderman of Lancaster in March, 1845.¹⁴

James Given and Evan Greene were prominent businessmen from Columbia, Pennsylvania. Greene was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in 1778 and later moved to Columbia in 1804 where he established a hat manufacturing business. He apparently accumulated a large sum of money in the enterprise as in 1829 he advanced money for the erection of the Columbia town hall.¹⁵

The remainder of the appointed commissioners were all prominent and influential citizens of Strasburg. All of them were at one time members of the Strasburg Borough Council.¹⁶ Not only did they have their own economic interests at hand but they were also concerned that the thriving borough would lose its economic and social position as the result of being cut off from the prosperous trade of Southern Lancaster County farmers and merchants that would pass through town and to Lancaster City if a railroad was not established.

As was directed in the Articles of Incorporation the Commissioners released a notice to the local papers advertising that the subscription books were to be opened on Wednesday, January 15, 1834, at the following locations: at the house of J. H. Witmer at 321 Market Street, Philadelphia; at the public house of Mr. Beaumont or the Sheriff's office in the borough of West Chester; at the public house of John Rowe, in the borough of Strasburg; at Mr. Parker's hotel, in the City of Lancaster; at the public house of Mr. Gossler, in the borough of Columbia; and at the public house of Mr. Overly at Paradise at ten o'clock on January 15 and continue open for six hours each day for three consecutive days provided it was necessary for the sale of said stock, when and where one or more of the Commissioners were to be in attendance.¹⁷

Accompanying the press release advertising the subscription of stock was the following description of the proposed project:

"In offering to the public this stock for sale the commissioners would remark that the route has been surveyed by a competent engineer (Major Joshua Scott¹⁸) who pronounces it highly practicable, without a single rivulet that will require a culvert, and so extremely level as to require but little excavation. He estimates the whole cost to complete the work (4½ miles) not to exceed \$20,000. It has been ascertained by calculation that the amount of flour and whiskey, etc.,

which is annually sent from the immediate county through which this road passes, to the Philadelphia and Columbia market, 'and which doubtless be conveyed over this branch of the great thoroughfare, which will soon be opened between those markets; that the ordinary tolls on such roads will nearly pay the interest of the amount necessary to complete the work.' In addition to this will be the other produce of the fertile country through which it passes as well as the many articles of transportation, such as lumber, coal, etc., which may be expected from different sources—which upon the whole make the investment profitable stock. These advantages, with many other of a local nature, we hope will induce capitalists to turn their attention to the sale of this stock."¹⁹

The Commissioners
 William Wilson
 Henry Witmer
 Peter Osborne
 James Given
 Evan Greene
 Frederick Hambricht
 George Louis Mayer

Michael Musselman
 Jacob Fshleman
 Jacob Hoover
 Joseph S. Lefever
 George Diffenbach, Jr.
 Abraham Smith
 David Shirk, Jr.

Apparently the commissioners were able to induce enough interested capitalists to purchase stock in this highly speculative enterprise at Strasburg as the following Commissioners of The Strasburg Rail Road Company, George Diffenbach, Jr., David Shirk, Jr., Joseph Lefever, Michael Musselman, Abraham Smith, Jacob Hoover, James Given, and Evan Greene, certified in writing to Governor George Wolf that they had complied with the Articles of Incorporation and had received five dollars per share commission on the sale of stock to the following subscribers with the subsequent charter signed into law June 4, 1835.²⁰ The following is a list of the 1835 stockholders:

John D. Miles	100 shares
Robert W. Miles	100 shares
James Robb	100 shares
James Campbell	100 shares
John S. McCohen	100 shares
William H. Hesberson	22 shares
John M. Kenedy	20 shares
Henry Whitmer	50 shares
Taxon Ritchie & Co.	50 shares
William Black	8 shares
James Warren	4 shares
Robert Spencer	20 shares
Samuel Bower	2 shares
Michael Musse'leman	10 shares
David Musselman	5 shares
Henry Hume	10 shares
Abraham Smith	4 shares
Elian F. Witmer	2 shares
Isaac Girvin	4 shares
George Hoffman	2 shares
N. W. Sample	2 shares
Jacob Hoover	8 shares ²¹

723 shares

TOTAL CAPITAL

\$36,150.00

TOTAL COMMISSIONERS' FEE

3,615.00

Twenty-five days from the issuing of the Charter a meeting was called of all stockholders to assemble at the public house of Jacob Hoover in Strasburg to elect seven directors to manage the affairs of the Strasburg Rail Road Company. This meeting was held Monday, June 29, 1835.²² Public documents do not record election results.

It is interesting to note that the names of the Commissioners issuing the press release were local men but the majority of the stockholders were not Strasburg residents.

The Strasburg entrepreneurs had received permission to construct their railroad and had amassed the capital to do so, but history does not record when construction began, how many men were involved, how many days were needed, or if the railroad was ever completed. As was typical of so many of these feeder lines in the early railroad era, once stock was sold and Charters granted, the construction failed to take place.²³

This writer suspects that construction did begin,²⁴ grading of the roadbed was completed,²⁵ but funds were exhausted prior to the actual laying of the rails. As the enterprise existed on the verge of financial collapse, this writer contends that the Panic of 1837 destroyed this infant operation, making it impossible to borrow revenue to complete the construction and diverting the interests of the Strasburg promoters to saving their own business enterprises rather than the railroad.

As the effects of the 1837 Panic began to wear off the merchants and businessmen again turned their interests toward economic recovery for Strasburg. However with the railroad gone Strasburg seemed to be on the verge of losing its once famous position as a leading trading center and hotelry. Traffic would now bypass the area and use the Lancaster junction of the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road. Strasburg merchants and political officials knew well the economic impact this situation would have for the borough. Therefore, efforts were renewed in the late 1840's to construct another railroad.

By 1851 enough support was established among the merchants and businessmen of the borough to seek permission to construct a new railroad to link Strasburg with the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road. Petitions were read before the State Senate on February 6 and 8, 1851, by Senator Konigmacher from the citizens of Strasburg requesting that a railroad be incorporated.²⁶ The Articles of Incorporation were approved on February 11, 1851.²⁷

According to the Writ of Incorporation Samuel Keneagy, Benjamin B. Gonder, Henry Musselman, John Gyger, George Diffenbach, Henry H. Breneman, Henry Leman, and Jacob Neff were appointed commissioners to open books, receive subscriptions, and organize a company by the name, style, and title of "The Strasburg Railroad Company" with all the power and subject to all the provisions and

restrictions prescribed by the February 19, 1849, Act Regulating Railroad Companies.

The above corporation was permitted to subscribe a maximum of 1,000 shares of stock valued at \$100 each share. They were granted the right to construct the railroad beginning at or near Lemman Place on the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road to or near the eastern boundary of the borough of Strasburg, provided that the railroad could not exceed three rods in width, and could not pass through any burying ground or place of public worship, or any dwelling place, without the consent of the owner or owners thereof.

According to the February 19, 1849, Act Regulating Railroads, as soon as the ten percent of capital stock as provided by any special act of incorporation was subscribed and five dollars paid on each share the commissioners of the said railroad, (in this case the Strasburg Rail Road) shall certify in writing to the governor the names of the subscribers and the shares subscribed, whereupon the governor will by letters patent, under the seal of the Commonwealth create and constitute the subscribers into a corporation.

Apparently the commissioners were able to subscribe the minimum ten percent of the capital stock immediately because Governor William F. Johnston issued the charter on March 12, 1851.²⁹

The following is a list of the March 12, 1851, stockholders:

John Gyger	20 shares
Benjamin B. Gonder	20 shares
Francis Caugly	5 shares
Francis Brackbill	10 shares
George Lefever	10 shares
Samuel Keneagy	10 shares
Henry Lemman	15 shares
Jacob Neff	20 shares
Adam F. Diffenbach	5 shares
John T. Herr	10 shares
Henry Brackbill	5 shares
Anthony Sechler	5 shares
George Diffenbach	10 shares
B. Musser	10 shares
William Guiles	5 shares
Henry Aument	3 shares
John Musselman	12 shares
William Steacey	10 shares
Abraham B. Witmer	3 shares
David McAster	200 shares ³⁰
	<hr/>
	388 Total shares

TOTAL CAPITAL \$38,800.00

TOTAL COMMISSIONERS' FEE \$ 1,940.00

It should be noted that all of the stockholders were Lancaster County citizens and Strasburg merchants, businessmen, and politicians except Henry Lemman, who was a hotel proprietor at Lemman Place. However in 1832 this was not true. Apparently the Strasburg promoters were able to induce enough local support for their railroad project, rather than relying on outside support.

Public documents do not record who constructed the railroad or the method utilized. However it may be assumed that the laborers contracted were Irish construction workers, since they had been previously employed during the completion of the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road. The method of laying the track was probably the same as that used in other railroads of the era. Long timbers were generally laid in the ground lengthwise of the road and iron bars 15 feet long, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide and $\frac{5}{8}$ inch thick were spiked on top of these timbers forming the rails upon which the cars ran.³¹

A report issued to Honorable William C. A. Lawrence, Speaker of the House of Representatives, February 24, 1859, established that the railroad was completed about September 1, 1852, at a cost of \$50,035.00. It is interesting to note that the amount of stock finally subscribed was 393 shares at \$100 per share, and the sum actually paid in was \$39,000.00 leaving an indebtedness of \$11,035.00 and there was borrowed temporarily for the purpose of commencing business \$3,500.00 making an indebtedness at the time of \$14,535.00. On October 24, 1853, the company executed a mortgage to the Lancaster Bank for \$10,000.00, leaving a floating debt of \$4,535.00.³² It is quite obvious that the directors and stockholders had created a financially unsound investment on the assumption that in a matter of time their debts would be cleared because of the wealthy locale in which they were situated.

An assortment of the advertisements of the period will give the reader some indication of the railroad's and the community's endeavor to promote expansion and the railroad as well.

"KENEAGY AND BROTHER — DRUGGISTS"

"*Strasburg Afloat* — It affords us exceedingly great pleasure to realize once more the prosperous and lively condition of our heretofore usually quiet borough. Time and the enterprising spirit of the citizens of the borough and vicinity (railroad speculators) have lately wrought wonders in its history unparalleled. Confidence is again restored and our borough is now constantly thronged with visitors."³³

"MUSSELMAN AND SPENCER"

Dealers in

Lumber, Coal, Plaster, Salt, Fish, Flour,
Grain, and Country Produce at Rail Road Depot

"The undersigned respectfully announce to their friends and the public that they have engaged in the above business and are now prepared at all times to furnish anything in their line with promptness and dispatch and at prices to suit the times. All orders addressed to them or their agent will be punctually attended to. The highest price will be in cash or trade for flour, grain, or country products. Having careful and experienced employees, they are warranted in saying that satisfaction will be given."

John Musselman and William Spencer

STRASBURG RAIL ROAD COMPANY

Forwarding and Transportation

"This company having fully equipped their road, hereby inform the public, that they are prepared to forward all kinds of produce, merchandise, live stock, etc., to and from Philadelphia and Baltimore, or any immediate point with promptness and dispatch and upon the most reasonable terms."

STRASBURG RAIL ROAD COMPANY

"The company now have their road fully equipped with cars, locomotives, etc., and are running their passenger trains every day (Sunday excepted) as follows: Leaves Strasburg at 8 o'clock A.M., connecting at Leman Place with the morning mail train going Eastward and with the morning mail trains going Westward; and return again to Strasburg at half past 11 o'clock. The afternoon train will leave Strasburg every day (Sunday excepted) at 2 o'clock P.M. and arrive at Leman Place at a quarter past 2 o'clock connecting with the Way Train going Eastward and the Way Train going Westward. Returning will arrive at Strasburg at half past 5 o'clock. Fare through to Leman Place 12½ cents. Fare through to Strasburg 12½ cents. Every effort is made for the comfort and convenience of the passengers."

S. K. Cramer, Agent

Not only were the railroad promoters and commercial entrepreneurs eager for the successful operation of the newly established corporation but the Borough of Strasburg was as equally concerned since they purchased twenty shares of stock at \$100 per share January 17, 1853.³⁴

Editorials appearing in the papers of the period lauded the efforts of the new enterprise and even conjured up the construction of turnpikes to expedite the movement of grain, lumber, and country products into Strasburg and then to the railroad depot. An implication of their position can be gleaned from the following letter written to Martin M. Rohrer, editor of the *Strasburg Bee*, from John T. Herr, President of the Strasburg Rail Road Company, dated January 19, 1853.

"I am pleased that a correspondent has seconded your move in the advocacy of a system of turnpikes or plank roads centering in your borough. To say that the project would be vastly desirable — that property along the route would be greatly enhanced; that it would be eminently beneficial to the Borough as well as to the stockholders of the Strasburg Rail Road Company; that it would be a great convenience to the traveling public and that it would pay handsomely on the investment, wouldn't be reiterating facts which must be evident to every discerning mind . . . Is it not a settled fact that Strasburg affords a better market for the farmers' products than any other section in the county? It is but necessary to compare the list of prices as published in your papers with those of the Lancaster papers and you have proof positive . . . I have no objections to a road leading south of Strasburg and I think it would be of great and decided utility, but what I wish to discuss in this letter relates to a connecting link between the borough and Lancaster. You proposed in your article to connect with the Willowstreet company at Mylin's Corner. I propose a

different route entirely. By way of Mylin's Corner the distance would be 10 miles or more and the distance to be piked at least 5 miles. The route I propose would make the entire distance about 9 miles and the distance to be piked only 2½ miles. Regarding the matter of construction, I would consider the above equal per mile. Besides, the road leading from Center Square of your borough to Lancaster and Philadelphia Pike at Miller's Tavern (formally Ferree's) is traveled fully as much as any other road in the county, at all times and at all seasons. It is a direct road which cannot be avoided and if piked would become the great thoroughfare to Lancaster from the south and southeastern sections of the county. On the other hand if you go by way of Mylin's Corner, it will never become a thoroughfare during good roads. The traveling public will always prefer the nearest course which is by way of Musselman's Mill. Besides, there is a large section of country due North of us dependent on the south for its fencing timber, which will prove a lucrative business to the Strasburg Rail Road Company provided you give them a suitable road. The south will exchange fencing timber for coal, pine lumber, etc., and the north will avail itself of a good road to purchase more conveniently than it otherwise can. These considerations with a host of others, which space will not permit me to enumerate, incline me to favor this route in preference to all others. If the object is merely to have a good road to Lancaster, I think I have shown conclusively that it is preferable to the other; first, because the distance to be made is but half that of the other; second, it cannot be so conveniently avoided on all occasions and as a natural result must pay much better on the investment.

By going a step further and consulting the welfare of the borough and the advantage accruing to the Rail Road Company, the small amount of capital required; I do not see how any person of prudence can come to any other conclusion, than, that the route here suggested is the only feasible one between this and Lancaster."³⁴

John T. Herr

Strasburg Township, January 19, 1853

It is obvious from Herr's letter that he was promoting the economic development of Strasburg but that his primary concern was the future development of the Rail Road Company.

An editorial written in the same issue of the *Strasburg Bee* by Martin Rohrer, editor, again gives the reader another indication of Strasburg's economic potential in the 1850's.

"That Strasburg from its central and therefore commanding position is destined to become a prominent place of business in the County of Lancaster, no one, we presume, who has given the matter any reflection, will feel disposed to controvert. Its importance and its influence have already alike been sensibly felt especially, by the section of the county immediately south and southeast of us. The completion of the Strasburg Rail Road and its successful operation has not only afforded that particular section speedy transportation for the products of its farmers but it has opened to them a ready and desirable *home market*. Thus, as yet, every stride that Strasburg has taken towards improvement has resulted in the benefit of her citizens and the surrounding community in about an equal ratio. For these happy results our friends in the county cannot feel more grateful to us than we in town feel to them . . . A great and fertile body of land lies south of us producing largely of almost everything on the tillers catalogue and as expeditum is the great desideratum of the times, the most expeditious means for bringing these products into market. . . . We may

see what facilities exist in that particular section towards the accomplishment of these ends . . . Is there a single *one* good road during all seasons of the year leading into that direction? The force and importance of this enquiry must be strikingly apparent to our southern friends as they find themselves compelled to reply in the negative. All know the impassable condition of the roads a greater portion of the year and hence it becomes an important question—one involving grave interests — to know whether such a state of things are to continue to exist or whether a remedy shall be substituted.

“We propose a remedy and this embraces the construction of a turnpike from Strasburg to Chestnut Level, by way of New Providence, Camargo, and other points on the lines. The advantages resulting to Strasburg and the southern section of the county in general, upon the consummation of such an enterprise, would be absolutely enormous — far greater than a superficial observer can possibly imagine. While it would guarantee a substantial thoroughfare during all seasons of the year, between and along a succession of towns, villages, and other minor places of business, doing in the aggregate of yearly trade amounting to tens of thousands of dollars; it would not only expedite the transactions of the same, but also afford them innumerable facilities, prominent among which are a daily line of stages, daily mail, and daily papers. Three powerful incentives to business and property. It would greatly enhance the value of property for miles in either direction of the road and finally make Strasburg one of the most popular and flourishing business marts in Lancaster County.”³⁶

It is apparent from Rohrer’s editorial that he was concerned with expediting the movement of produce and raw materials into Strasburg to enhance its economic position and the success of the railroad as well. It should be noted that both Herr and Rohrer were prominent community leaders, but also President and Treasurer, respectively, of the Strasburg Rail Road Company in 1853.³⁷

By 1854 the railroad company had completed arrangements with the Pennsylvania Rail Road Company (purchasers of the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road from the state in 1852) to utilize their roadbed for the transporting of passengers to Lancaster. A notification of this new service appeared in the advertisements of the *Strasburg Bee*. It read:

STRASBURG RAIL ROAD

—Latest Arrangements—

“On and after the 15th of February, 1854, the passenger train will make trips every day (Sunday excepted) as follows: Leave Strasburg at 9½ o’clock A.M., connecting at Lemon Place (sic) with the morning train going Eastward and Westward, and return to Strasburg at 11 o’clock. Leave Strasburg at 3 o’clock, connecting at Leamon Place with the Eastward and Westward Way Trains return to Strasburg at 5 o’clock. The cars will arrive at Lancaster 10 o’clock A.M. and leave Lancaster at 3 o’clock P.M.

Fare—to Lancaster and back	60 cts.
to Leamon Place	12½ cts.
to Strasburg	12½ cts. ³⁸

According to all the advertisements and editorials, it appeared as though the railroad was going to be a lucrative success. However the report of condition filed by the company at the request of the

House of Representatives in 1859 gives the impression that the railroad had not been as rewarding as the investors had anticipated.

The failure of the Lancaster Bank in 1857 spelled trouble for the company. John Musselman and William Spencer, operators of the lumber business at the depot, and railroad directors, paid the floating debt. However, the mortgage was transferred from the above defunct bank to Girard Bank of Philadelphia, after which time the railroad paid no further interest.³⁹ Mr. D. G. Eshleman, President of the railroad, did not indicate why the company had ceased paying the interest. Apparently they were financially unable to continue payments because of their own perilous economic position.

The annual report of business transactions for 1858 was as follows:

Total receipts received during the year	\$7,828.44
The expenses paid during the year	5,899.43
Excess of receipts	<u>\$1,929.01</u>

As was stated previously Musselman and Spencer had carried the floating debt and had also furnished from time to time whatever additional capital was necessary to carry on the business of the road and held for their security the articles purchased with their funds. The total amount of the assets of Musselman and Spencer on January 1, 1859, were \$12,153.59; their total liabilities were \$8,874.23, leaving a balance in their favor of \$3,279.36. The above assets consisted of lumber, coal, and produce (\$1,767.86); and of cash on hand (\$950.67) and book accounts (\$9,235.06). The liabilities were for coal, lumber, and produce.

The balance in the hands of the treasurer on January 1, 1859, was \$82.99 but did not include the salaries of the president and other officers of the company for the year 1858 which remained unpaid.

The whole assets of the company therefore including those held by Musselman and Spencer were \$12,236.48; the whole liabilities, including the salaries of officers were \$9,386.23. Balance in favor of the company \$2,850.25.

However, Mr. Eshleman, indicated in the same report that the balance, being in book accounts were subject to deduction from bad accounts, and that through the carelessness of some of their first agents, that deduction was large. It was estimated by the directors at about \$3,000.00, leaving an actual indebtedness by the company of \$149.75, besides the amount due on the mortgage, principal and interest of \$11,089.21.

Eshleman also indicated that the company had problems obtaining enough stockholders to conduct the business affairs at the annual meeting on the second Monday of January, 1859, and that the

directors had to summon the absent stockholders in order to conduct elections.

This statement indicates to this writer that the railroad was in a terrible financial position; economic support by the stockholders had deteriorated, and the railroad was on the verge of fiscal collapse. That collapse came on April 23, 1859, when foreclosure proceedings were initiated by the Girard Bank and the company sheriffed.⁴⁰

The following Sheriff's proceedings relating to the foreclosure of the railroad appeared in the record book of the Court of Common Pleas, April 23, 1859.

"Benjamin F. Rowe, Esq., High Sheriff of Lancaster County produced into the Court of Common Pleas of said county a Deed dated April Eighteen, Anno Domini, 1859, executed to Honorable Ferree Brinton of Paradise Township, Lancaster County, for all that certain Rail Road belong to the Strasburg Rail Road Company extending from the Eastern end of the Borough of Strasburg, to Leman Place on the Columbia and Philadelphia Rail Road and all locomotives, cars, fixtures, and privileges connected therewith, consisting of Locomotive engine, Eight wheeled passenger car, Nine long eight wheeled House Cars, Two short four wheeled cars, Five short four wheeled Lueks, One long eight wheeled stock car, Warehouse fifty by seventy-five feet, two stories high, an Engine House sixteen by thirty-four feet with smith shop attached, twelve by sixteen feet, a two story dwelling house twenty-two by twenty-six feet, stable sixteen feet square, together with the Lot of ground, Containing three acres (more or less) used for lumber and coal yard by said company, fronting on the Strasburg and Georgetown Road on the Southeast and by property of William Spencer on the east which he sold to the said Honorable Ferree Brinton, as the estate of the Strasburg Rail Road Company for the sum of Thirteen thousand dollars, by virtue of a writ of Sevari Facias issued out of said court at the suit of the Lancaster Bank for the use of the Girard Bank which Deed he, the said sheriff, acknowledged in open court to be his act and deed."⁴¹

This writer was granted permission by the current owners to investigate the railroad stock book dated from October 26, 1852. It is interesting to note that the last stock recorded as being sold was May 9, 1855. The book also revealed that several stock certificates were removed with no recording being made as to the proper owners. A list of the stockholders, excluding the names previously mentioned in the 1851 letters patent follows. According to D. G. Eshleman's report the railroad was indebted; however the amount of Stock subscribed after 1851 amounted to 405 shares, valued at \$100 per share. Therefore the railroad should have had an additional \$40,500 to pay off their debts. This has not been recorded in any annual reports which leads this writer to conclude that the railroad was operated in a haphazard manner and possibly explains why stockholder support had deteriorated by 1859.

<i>Date of Transaction</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Number of Shares</i>		
	H. Bushong and Co.		May 10, 1853	2
October 26, 1852	Ellis Lewis	10	Jesse Gyger for Landis E. Black	
October 28, 1852	Thomas B. Galt	15	June 3, 1853	10
October 30, 1852	William Guiles	5	June 30, 1853	1
October 30, 1852	Samuel Keneagy	5	H. Bishing and Company	2
November 2, 1852	D. W. Miller	5	October 11, 1853	5
November 6, 1852	Henry Breneman	3	October 11, 1853	5
November 20, 1852	Martin Pfoutz, Jr.	5	October 21, 1853	13
November 23, 1852	John Mussleman	10	John L. Keneagy	10
November 30, 1852	John T. Herr	12	November 28, 1853	10
November 30, 1852	Harvey Brackbill	10	December 21, 1853	12
December 9, 1852	William Spencer	5	December 21, 1853	12
December 16, 1852	Benjamin Breneman	6	Abraham Howrey	10
December 28, 1852	Henry Mussleman	1	January 2, 1854	19
January 4, 1853	B. Musser	20	January 9, 1854	5
January 8, 1853	Henry Keneagy	10	January 9, 1854	12
January 15, 1853	Samuel Caughey	5	March 25, 1854	10
January 15, 1853	Henry Keneagy	5	John T. Herr for Burns and Christian	10
January 15, 1853	Joseph Bowman	2	May 10, 1854	4
January 17, 1853	Jesse Gyger	20	May 10, 1854	5
February 5, 1853	B. B. Gonder	1	December 13, 1854	1
February 5, 1853	Abram B. Witmer	1	Christian H. Miller	3
February 21, 1853	Conrad Litzman	3	May 10, 1854	3
February 23, 1853	Francis Caughey	1	D. G. Eshleman	5
February 26, 1853	B. B. Gonder	5	October 21, 1854	5
March 23, 1853	Robert Girvin	20	Samuel P. Bower	5
March 31, 1853	S. and J. Brown	20	December 13, 1854	5
April 2, 1853	John Weintz	2	David Gyger	5
April 9, 1853	Patrick M. Ivory	5	December 13, 1854	3
May 5, 1853	George K. Miller	5	Henry Aument	5
			January 8, 1855	5
			Ellis Lewis	10
			March 10, 1855	1
			Ellis Lewis	12
			March 16, 1855	2
			Henry Musser	5
			March 16, 1855	1
			John T. Bowman	12
			March 16, 1855	2
			Henry Musser	5
			April 3, 1855	10 ^a
			B. B. Gonder	
			April 11, 1855	
			Henry Mussleman	
			May 9, 1855	
			Total Subscribed	405
			Shares	

As was previously established the Honorable Ferree Brinton, lay judge of Lancaster County Court from 1856 to 1861,⁴³ purchased the Strasburg Rail Road Company on April 18, 1859, at Sheriff sale for the sum of \$13,000 in trust for the following men:

Henry Brackbill	John Mussleman
Cyrus N. Herr	Robert M. Girvin
John T. Herr	John Miller
John E. Girvin	D. G. Eshleman
Henry Mussleman	Abraham Eshleman
Hon. Thomas E. Franklin	Samuel Keneagy
Hon. Thaddeus Stevens	Jacob Bower
Hon. O. J. Dickey	Joseph Hall
John S. Keneagy	Jacob Bachman
David Gyger	John Bachman
Henry Musser	B. B. Gonder ⁴⁴

A brief view of the personal lives of a few of the purchasers of 1859 will give some idea as to their vested interests.

Ferree Brinton was an assistant judge in Lancaster County in 1856 and served two terms as a judge. He was very upright and conscientious and discharged his duties with great credit. He came from a very wealthy family of Brintons that lived in Bart Township.⁴⁵ He had previously purchased stock in the railroad in 1854 and served as President of the company in 1855.⁴⁶

David G. Eshleman was born near Strasburg in 1816. He practiced law in Lancaster and served on the State Legislature as well as county solicitor. He was a previous stockholder of the railroad and was its President when it was foreclosed in 1859.⁴⁷

Thomas E. Franklin was a lawyer in Lancaster. He was married to Serena A. Mayer, daughter of George A. Mayer, a commissioner of the Strasburg Rail Road in 1832.

Henry Musser was a resident of Strasburg township. He served as clerk of Quarter Session and was an ardent supporter of public education in Lancaster County.

John Musselman was a miller in Strasburg Township from 1830. He had a flourishing business and produced 50 barrels of flour a day. He was a previous stockholder of the company.

Benjamin B. Gonder was a wealthy businessman in Strasburg. He had property assessed at \$2,900 in 1861, which was the highest assessment in Strasburg Borough at that date.⁴⁸

David Gyger, Jacob Bower, Samuel Keneagy, Joseph Hall, Harvey Breckbill, and John Miller were members of Strasburg Borough Council and previous stockholders of the company.

Samuel Bower had served as Justice of the Peace between 1840 and 1860 as well as Secretary of the railroad in 1855.⁴⁹

Robert Girvin was born in Strasburg in 1836; taught school three years, and later graduated from Jefferson School of Medicine.

Honorable O. J. Dickey came to Lancaster County in 1846 and worked in the law office of the Honorable Thaddeus Stevens. Dickey later served as District Attorney in 1856 and congressman 1868-1873.

All of the 1859 purchasers, with the exception of Franklin, Stevens, and Dickey, were previous stockholders in the company. Apparently the foreclosure by Girard Bank did not decrease their enthusiasm for the company of their intent on making it a financial success as well as filling their own pockets.

However, three years later these twenty-two men were still receiving sealed proposals at the office of D. G. Eshleman, 36 North Duke Street, to lease the Strasburg Rail Road with its rolling stock, fixtures, lumber and coal yard, depot, warehouse, dwelling house, and other appurtenances for a term of one or more years.⁵⁰

CONCLUSION

Thus the first thirty years of the Strasburg Rail Road drew to a close. The entire period seems to have been one of constant struggle for survival. Motivated with the zeal of retaining Strasburg's early 19th century position as an economic and social center, one which has been noted by several sources throughout this paper, the promoters hurriedly petitioned the State Legislature for permission to construct a railroad to link the borough with the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road, chartered in 1826.

The original intent of the townspeople was to make the project a local effort, however, it was quickly realized that local money was not sufficiently available; therefore the subscription of the majority of stock ended up in the hands of out of town speculators and the success of the project resting in non-Strasburg interests.

It appears that the project was doomed from the start. Joshua Scott, engineer and surveyor, estimated that the road would cost \$20,000 to construct. However, he had served as an engineer in the construction of the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road and its cost was \$28,000 per mile. In fact, the railroad needed state financing to be completed. But the Strasburg promoters either used the \$20,000 price tag as a scheme to deceive capitalists to subscribe stock or else were naive enough to believe that their 4.5 mile road could be constructed so much cheaper!

Public documents do not record whether the railroad was ever completed. It has been stated by Hazard in his *Registry of Pennsylvania* that construction began in 1835 but no individual has ever uncovered evidence to prove it.⁵¹

I contend that the railroad never operated after its charter was granted in 1835. The roadbed may have been graded, but rails were never laid, nor freight or passengers hauled. If the railroad had

operated there would not have been a need to re-incorporate a new railroad in 1851, nor would it have been necessary to construct a new roadbed from Lemans Place to Strasburg as the Articles of Incorporation specified, if the road has been initially completed. I have consulted maps of the borough of Strasburg which are located in the borough office and have failed to substantiate any demarcation that would indicate a railroad ever existed in Strasburg in the 1840's. The railroad promoters and businessmen were undoubtedly hindered by the financial Panic of 1837 and never really got the railroad in operation.

The second endeavor to construct a railroad in 1851 to meet the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road to Lemans Place was initially successful. Again the prime motive seems to be the retention of Strasburg as a prosperous economic center in southeastern Lancaster County, because the majority of the promoters were local businessmen and politicians. It appears from the lists of stockholders that enough local support was engendered but that initial stock subscription fell short of the projected cost of the road; therefore, money had to be borrowed from the Lancaster Bank to complete construction. Again Public Documents do not record nor does the present railroad have on file who constructed the road, but it is clear beyond a doubt that the road was completed and placed in operation in 1852.

Apparently the company was financially successful the first three years (1852-55) because, not only did the borough subscribe stock, but also 405 shares were additionally purchased by local speculators.

However, David G. Eshleman implied in his report submitted to the Legislature in 1859 that the company's business affairs were not conducted very efficiently. The failure of the Lancaster Bank, owing to the mismanagement of its President and Cashier, and the financial Panic of 1857, placed the company in a fiscal position that eventually led to foreclosure in 1859.

Therefore, I conclude, after extensive research of all public documents available to me, that the economic motives of the railroad promoters in 1832 and again in 1851 were based on a dream; a dream so infatuated with local prejudice of Strasburg being a center of trade equal to that of Lancaster, that the promoters could not see beyond the horizon of the harsh reality of a bygone era. More capital resources were needed to construct the road than they could ever obtain. It took state revenue to complete the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road. It was naive for the Strasburg promoters to think that they could master their road with private funds. It was a vain effort, but in all reality the first thirty years ended in failure.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Primary Sources

A. Public Document

- Journal of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives: 1831-32 Session.* Harrisburg: Henry Welsch. 1832.
- Journal of the Pennsylvania Senate: 1831-32 Session.* Harrisburg: Henry Welsch, 1832.
- Journal of the Pennsylvania Senate: 1851 Session.* Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Company, 1851.
- Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: 1831-32 Session.* Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Company, 1832.
- Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: 1851 Session.* Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Company, 1851.
- Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: 1855 Session.* Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Company, 1855.
- Letters Patent: Vol. 12.* Harrisburg: Secretary of the Commonwealth, 1835.
- Letters Patent: Vol. 15.* Harrisburg: Secretary of the Commonwealth, 1852.
- Pennsylvania Legislature, House of Representatives. *Report of the Strasburg Rail Road Company.* Doc. No. 55, February 28, 1859.
- Pennsylvania State Archives, R. G. 7. *Senate Files: 1831-32 Session.* Boxes 4 and 5
- Record Book, Court of Common Pleas. "Sheriff's Deeds" Vol. 2.,* Lancaster: Lancaster County Court House, 1859.
- Strasburg Borough Council Minutes: 1816-75,* Strasburg: Borough Council Files.
- Strasburg Rail Road Stock Certificate Books 1852-55.* Strasburg: First National Bank of Strasburg Depository.
- Strasburg Township Tax Records: 1842-78.* Lancaster: Lancaster County Historical Society.

B. Manuscript Collections:

- Lancaster County Historical Society, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.
H. Frank Eshleman, MSS.
Deed Collections (1740-1900)
Miscellaneous Collections (1700-1891)

C. Diaries, Memoirs, Autobiographies and Journals:

- Hazard, Samuel, ed. *Registry of Pennsylvania.* Vol. 15, No. 23. Philadelphia: June 6, 1835.
- Hildebrand, Jacob. *Reminiscences of Strasburg.* Lancaster: Historical Society of Lancaster County, 1928.
- Stewart, James. *Lancaster County in 1830's, a Diary.* Lancaster: Historical Society of Lancaster County, 1928.

D. Contemporary Newspapers

- Columbia, Pennsylvania. *The Columbia Spy.* December 29, 1831-June, 1832. Legislative Reports.
- Lancaster, Pennsylvania. *The Examiner and Herald.* 1835-1849 issues.
- Lancaster, Pennsylvania. *The Lancaster Journal.* January 13, 1832-June 8, 1832. Legislative Reports.
- Strasburg, Pennsylvania. *The Strasburg Bee.* January 22, 1853, and June 12, 1856, issues.

II. Secondary Sources

A. Articles and Essays in Publications, Annals, and Publications of Learned Societies:

Franklin, Walter M. *Historical Points of Interest Along the Strasburg Trolley Road*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Lancaster County Historical Society Papers, 1903.

Hallock, Donald E. L. *Brief History of Strasburg Rail Road*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Lancaster County Historical Society Papers, 1964.

Wright, Steven. *Paradise O Paradise*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Lancaster County Historical Society Papers, 1914.

B. Newspapers

Lancaster, Pennsylvania. *Sunday News*. September 12, 1926.

Lancaster, Pennsylvania. *Intelligencer Journal*. March 21, 1960.

Lancaster, Pennsylvania. *Sunday News*. January 24, 1945.

C. Indexes

Hasse, Adelaide, R. *Index of Economic Material in Documents of the States of the U.S.: Pennsylvania 1790-1904*. Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1919.

D. Interviews

Donald E. L. Hallock, July 10, 1969.

Miss Martha Simonetti, July 12, 1972.

Rodney Mayhew, July 17, 1972.

E. Magazines

The Penn Germania. Vol. 14, March, 1913, p. 171.

"Our Oldest Shortline." *Railroad Magazine*, November, 1947. pp. 46-54.

Moedinger, William. "Railroads of Pennsylvania." *Trains*, October, 1942. pp. 12-32.

Moedinger, William. "The Road to Paradise." *Trains*, April, 1961. pp. 25-34.

F. Atlas's and Maps

New Historical Atlas of Lancaster, Pa. Philadelphia: Everts and Stewart, 1875.

Sheafer, P. W. *Railroad, Canal, Iron and Coal Map of Pennsylvania*. Pottsville: 1868.

G. General Accounts

Biographical Annals of Lancaster County. Lancaster: J. H. Beers and Company, 1907.

Egle, William H. *History of Pennsylvania*. Harrisburg: De W. C. Goodrich, 1876.

Ellis, Franklin and Evans, Samuel. *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*. Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883.

Harris, Alex. *Biographical History of Lancaster County*. Lancaster: Elias Barr and Company, 1872.

Jenkins, Harold. *Pennsylvania Colonial and Federal: 1602-1903*. Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Historical Publishing Company, 1903.

Klein, Frederick S. *Lancaster County 1841-1941*. Lancaster: Intelligencer Printing Company, 1941.

Klein, H. M. J. *Lancaster County, Pennsylvania: A History*. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1924.

- McClure, Alexander Kelly. *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania*. Philadelphia: J. C. Winston Company, 1905-
- Moedinger, William E. *The Road to Paradise*. Lancaster: William E. Moedinger, 1962.
- Mombert, J. I. *History of Lancaster County*. Lancaster: Joseph E. Barr and Company, 1869.
- Saylor, Roger B. *Railroads of Pennsylvania*. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 1963.

APPENDIX

Secretary of the Commonwealth
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Letters Patent

Volume 15

Page 199

In the Name and of the authority of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, William F. Johnston, Governor of the State of Commonwealth, to all to whom these presents shall come, Sends Greeting.

Whereas an act of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth entitled "an act to incorporate the Strasburg Rail Road Company" approved the 11th day of February A. D. 1851, provided for the organization of a company by the name style and title of "The Strasburg Rail Road Company" subject to all the provisions and restrictions of an act entitled "an act regulating Rail Road Companies" approved the 19th day of February A. D. 1849 by which last sighted act of the Governor of this Commonwealth is authorized and required to issue his Letters Patent under the seal of the State in the manner and at the time therein specified and whereas the stipulations, conditions, and things in the said act directed to be performed having in all respects been fully complied with: Now Knowing Ye that in pursuance of the power and authority to me by law given I the said William F. Johnston, Governor of the Said Commonwealth do by these presents which I have caused to be made patent and sealed with the Seal of the State create and erect the Subscribers to the Stock of the Said company for the number of shares by them subscribers to wit: John Gyger 20 shares, Benjamin B. Gonder 20, Francis Caugly five, Francis Brackbill 10, George Lefever 10, Samuel Keneagy 10, Henry Leaman 15, Jacob Neff 20, Adam F. Diffenbach 5, John T. Herr 10, Henry Brackbill 5, Anthony Sechler 5, George Diffenbach 10, B. Musser 10, William Guiles 5, Henry Aument 3, John Musselman 12, William Steacy 10, Abraham B. Witmer 3, David McAster (amounting in the whole to two hundred shares) and also those who shall afterwards subscribe into one body politics and incorporate in deed and in law by the name style and title of the "Strasburg Rail Road Company" and by the said privileges and franchises incident to a corporation and the subscribers and those who shall afterwards subscribe their successors and assigns are generally to be invested with all the rights, power and privileges with full force and effect and to be subject to all the duties, requisitions and restrictions, specified and enjoyed and by the said acts of the General Assembly and all other Laws of the Commonwealth.

Given under my hand and the great seal of the state at Harrisburg this 12th day of March A. D. 1851 and the Commonwealth the Seventy-fifth.

By the Governor

A. L. Russel

Secretary of the Commonwealth

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Joseph T. Kingston, "Strasburg Lost the Metropolitan Future When Lancaster Got Railroad", *Lancaster Sunday News*, January 28, 1945, p. 11.
- ² *New Historical Atlas of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*, (Philadelphia: Everts and Stewart, 1875), p. xvii.
- ³ Kingston, *Lancaster Sunday News*, January 28, 1945, p. 11.
- ⁴ Charles D. Spotts, *They Called it Strasburg*, (Lancaster: Lancaster Theological Seminary, 1968), p. 69.
- ⁵ Kingston, *Lancaster Sunday News*, January 28, 1945, p. 11.
- ⁶ *Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, 1826 Session. Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Co. 1826), p. 432.
- ⁷ Charles Spotts, *They Called it Strasburg*, (Lancaster: Lancaster Theological Seminary, 1968), p. 69.
- ⁸ *Journal of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives*, 1831-32 Session, p. 25.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.
- ¹⁰ *Journal of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives*, 1831-32 Session, p. 115.
- ¹¹ *Journal of the Pennsylvania Senate*, 1831-32 Session, p. 794.
- ¹² The material from this paragraph and the following six paragraphs is drawn from *Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*. 1831-32 Session, (Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Company, 1832), pp. 564-572.
- ¹³ Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*, (Philadelphia, Everts and Peck, 1883), p. 366.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 213, 375, 380.
- ¹⁵ Ellis and Evans, p. 546.
- ¹⁶ *Strasburg Borough Council Minutes: 1816-1875*, (Strasburg Borough Office).
- ¹⁷ *Lancaster Journal*, Friday, January 10, 1834, Classified Advertisements.
- ¹⁸ *Lancaster Journal*, Friday, January 10, 1834.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Friday, January 10, 1834.
- ²⁰ *Letters Patent*, Vol. 12, p. 357 (see appendix I for complete Charter).
- ²¹ *Letters Patent*, Vol. 12, p. 358.
- ²² *Lancaster Examiner and Herald*, June 18, 1835, Notices.
- ²³ Interview, Miss Simonetti, July 12, 1972.
- ²⁴ Samuel Hazard, ed., *Register of Pennsylvania*, Vol. 15, No. 23, (Philadelphia: June 6, 1885), p. 363.
- ²⁵ *New Historical Atlas of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*, (Philadelphia: Everts and Stewart, 1875.), p. 37.
- ²⁶ *Journal of the Pennsylvania Senate*, 1851 Session, p. 182.
- ²⁷ This sentence and material in the next two paragraphs is drawn from *Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, 1851 Session, (Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Company, 1851), pp. 53-54.
- ²⁸ *Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, 1849 Session, (Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Company, 1849) , p. 80.
- ²⁹ *Letters Patent*, Vol. 15, (Harrisburg, Secretary of the Commonwealth. 1851), p. 199.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 199.
- ³¹ Ellis and Evans, p. 319.
- ³² The material in this paragraph is found in *Legislative Documents*, (Harrisburg: A. Boyd Hamilton, 1859), p. 895.
- ³³ This and the next three items are taken from *Strasburg Bee*, January 22, 1853, p. 4.
- ³⁴ *Stock Certificate of Strasburg Rail Road Company*, 1853, (Strasburg Borough Office)

³⁵ *Strasburg Bee*, January 22, 1853, p. 1.

³⁶ *Strasburg Bee*, January 22, 1853, p. 1.

³⁷ *Strasburg Rail Road Stock Certificate*, 1853, (Strasburg Borough Office).

³⁸ *Strasburg Bee*, June 14, 1856, p. 4.

³⁹ The material from this and the following six paragraphs is drawn from *Legislative Documents*, (Harrisburg: A. Boyd Hamilton, 1859), pp. 895-896.

⁴⁰ *Sheriff Deeds*, Vol. 2, (Lancaster County Court House, April 23, 1859), p. 386.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 386.

⁴² *Strasburg Rail Road Company Stock Book*, (Strasburg Rail Road File).

⁴³ *The Penn Germania*, Vol. 14, (March, 1913), p. 171.

⁴⁴ Ellis and Evans, p. 657.

⁴⁵ Alex Harris, *Biographical History of Lancaster County*, (Lancaster: Elias Barr and Co., 1872), p. 47.

⁴⁶ *Strasburg Rail Road Stock Certificate*, (Strasburg Rail Road File).

⁴⁷ This and the material in the following three paragraphs is drawn from *Biographical Annals of Lancaster County*, (Lancaster: J. H. Beers and Company, 1907), pp. 439, 402, 814, 187.

⁴⁸ *Strasburg Borough Tax Records*, (Lancaster County Historical Society).

⁴⁹ This and the material in the following two paragraphs is drawn from Ellis and Evans, pp. 661, 240.

⁵⁰ *Lancaster Examiner and Herald*, February 5, 1862, Advertisement.

⁵¹ I have researched every Lancaster newspaper of the period 1832-1851 and I did not discover any information related to the construction, operation, annual meeting or dividends declared by the company. Strasburg Tax records indicate that the road first paid taxes in 1854. Legal Documents nor annual reports could not be found in Harrisburg or the Archives Building.