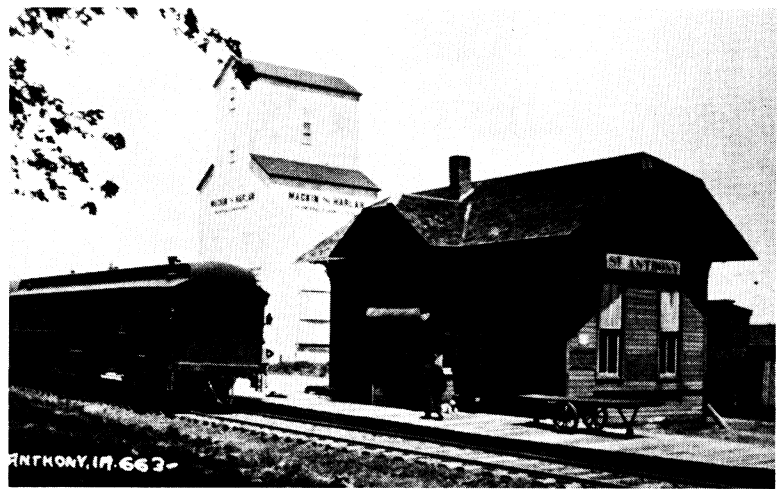


100 YEARS OF THE RAILROAD



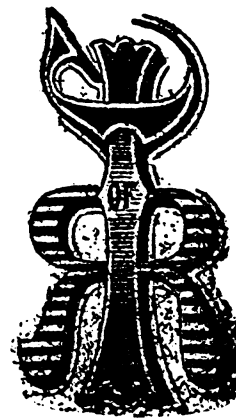
The Saint Anthony Station, Mile Post 252.9 came into existence when the town came into existence. Every town wanted a rail line and almost every town that survived had one. Several land owners, businessmen and organizations gave money to lure the tracks through their town, and such was the case at Saint Anthony.

Many promoters knew the value of a rail line through their towns, and spur lines sprouted like grasses on the prairie. Many were part of the so-called big lines, the "transcontinentals." Not so with the Iowa Central. It was conceived by Iowa men and operated from headquarters in Marshalltown. It never made large amounts of money, but it was dear to the hearts of the native sons. It opened up the markets to farm and town alike.

Land had been purchased by the railroad to run through Illinois Grove, and some of the roadbed had been graded when plans were changed. The line was built instead along Lower Minerva Creek, extending between Saint Anthony and Zearing.

The land for the railroad right of way in central Iowa had been purchased as early as 1859 in some areas. In the Saint Anthony area, most land was acquired in the 1880's, with the tracks being laid in 1881 and 1882. The property in the town proper was purchased from Richard and Jane Bryant and deeded to Iowa Central and Northwestern Railway Co. for a fee of \$200, dated June 29, 1881, and filed February 28, 1882.

It was known first as the Central Railroad Company of Iowa, but reorganized May 5, 1879, as the Central Iowa Railway. An independent line called the Iowa Central and Northwestern Railway operated a route between Minerva Junction and Story City. On March 1, 1882, it was acquired by the Iowa Central. Foreclosures and mergers came fast. Early in 1888 the line was known as the Iowa Railway Co. More litigation and foreclosures followed, and on August 1, 1888, it emerged as the Iowa Central Railway.



1874 logo of Iowa Central Railroad

An 1874 time schedule showed a logo featuring a large "I" with two smaller "R's" having their straight lines on the "I." A "C" was placed on its back across the top of the "I." The "C" is the hook and "I" the eye. The nickname "Hook and Eye" stuck and was soon known throughout the system.

The Hook and Eye paid less than standard wages in those days and there was a large turnover of help. It was a common saying that they never had the same crew twice. Times were really poor if one couldn't hire out on the Hook, but it seemed to be an excellent proving ground, for many trainmen and executives alike started on the Hook and Eye. It was said along the line that if a man could muster on the Iowa Central he could handle emergencies anywhere.

A little rhyme sung by trainmen of the 1890's went like this:

I came here broke, and it was do or die
So I hired out on the Hook and Eye.

Following more financial reverses and change in management in the early 1900's, the rail property was managed by the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railway. The road was formally purchased by the M. & St. L. January 1, 1912.

Many Saint Anthony residents recall riding the passenger trains to Marshalltown and other surrounding towns. Some rode the trains for business trips, others for vacations. It was not unusual for a Sunday outing to ride to some spot and picnic and ride home in the evening.

The train brought in "drummers" selling their wares, brought groceries and mail, and took farm goods to market. To those who heard the trains, the chugging of the steam engine and the wail of the whistle is still very real. It is a sound one never forgets.

The *St. Anthony Tribune* of March 21, 1902, reported that five cars of stock had been shipped from Saint Anthony to Chicago the previous week. Those who shipped were as follows: J. A. Bryant, one car of cattle; Albert Spence, one car of hogs and one car of cattle; F. Tagatoff, one car of cattle; N. A. Perry, one car of hogs. The bulk of this type of shipping ended in the 1920's.

In the same issue of the *Tribune* was listed the following timetable for the Iowa Central:

Going West	
No. 301 Passenger	10:42 A.M.
No. 103 Freight	7:42 A.M.
No. 305 Accommodation	7:20 P.M.
Going East	
No. 302 Passenger	3:48 P.M.
No. 306 Stock Train	11:55 A.M.
No. 304 Accommodation	7:40 A.M.

All trains daily except Sunday and all trains carry passengers.

It is generally recalled by those who traveled her rails that the schedules were not always kept. The M. & St. L. had many nicknames by trainmen and the general public. It was most often called "The Louie," but was also known as "Midnight and Sometimes Later" or "Midnight and Still Later." To some it was "Misery and Short Life," to others "Maimed and Still Limping."

J. F. Reed writes in his memoirs of his attendance at Albion Seminary, a Methodist school in Albion. He was taken with his brother Frank to Saint Anthony, which was five miles from their home, to board the train. The closest point to Albion was Minerva Junction, so they got off there and walked to Albion, a distance of three miles, carrying their baggage and a few books.

Georgia Clark Nordstrom remembers as a young child watching the mail come in on the train, and Oscar and Luena Wallwork load the mail sacks on the old steel-wheeled cart and pull it up the hill to the post office.

Donald Koch recalls that on several occasions his parents put him on the train in Saint Anthony and he rode into Marshalltown where his grandparents met him at the depot.

John Easton recalls many such trips to Marshalltown. It cost 2 cents a mile to ride the trains in those days, so the fare was 36 cents. During one period he rode daily to his work at a Clemons grocery. He reported that it was not unusual that during rush times or during such events as the county fair there would be such a line waiting for tickets that agent Ralph Tight would be hard-pressed to write them up fast enough. During those occasions perhaps two passenger cars and the caboose were used to carry passengers to town.

John recalled on more than several occasions, as a boy of about 12, he would help drive hogs into the railhead and load them on the train early in the morning. Herding 50 or 60 hogs into town to send to market may not have been the most trying thing he ever had to do, but he said it ranks plenty high on the list.

Several reported wedding trips to Marshalltown. Among those were Frank and Inez Lindquist, who rode the passenger train into Marshalltown to be married.

Ruth Schryver Mackin recalls several times riding with her mother to Marshalltown and then transferring to ride on to Liscomb to visit her grandparents.

A story is told of a drunk who got on the train at Marshalltown. When the conductor came by to get his ticket and destination, he found him none too sober. When asked where he wanted to go, he told the conductor he wanted to go to hell. The conductor said, "Put him off in Saint Anthony."

Homeseekers' Excursions.

On June 20, July 4, 18, August 1, 15, September 5, 19, October 3, 17, the Iowa Central will sell round trip Homeseekers' Excursion tickets at one fare plus two dollars (\$2) to points in following territory:

Arizona, British Columbia, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Indian Territory, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Northern Michigan; also to points in southeast.

For full particulars inquire of agents, or address the undersigned,
W. G. MARTIN, Acting G.P.A.

10-17 Marshalltown, Iowa.

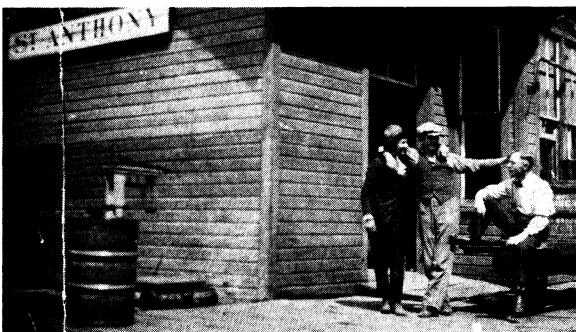
Zearing Enterprise, August 15, 1899

**IOWA CENTRAL
RAILWAY.**



**ST PAUL MINNEAPOLIS
PEORIA
ST LOUIS KANSAS CITY**

L.M. MARTIN, W.G. MARTIN,
GEN. MAN'GR. GEN. PASS. AGT.



Top: Zearing Enterprise, August, 15, 1899. Above: men at depot: Ralph Tight, seated; Mike Buchan, middle; unknown man at left. Right: M. & St. L. timetable, 1922

The rails made travel faster and easier even if you had to appropriate the hand car for your use, as this article from the *History of Story County* recalls:

March 7, 1883. Zearing had almost a murder on Sunday the fourth instant. Arch Neet, the section boss, without any provocation, struck Charley Ingram with a heavy iron poker used for the depot stove and very nearly killed him. Neet was arrested and his examination will be today. Liquor was the cause of the assault as Neet is a quiet peaceable man when sober. Neet and several of the boys had been down to Saint Anthony on the hand car and got full of beer and after the return the assault was made.

How many others recall other incidents when the hand car was appropriated for rides to "Horse Shoe Bend" and other destinations? The rails were also walked just for something to do, sometimes as far west as the second or third bridge. They also provided a short cut to Zearing or Clemons.

In 1937 the railroad was talking of pulling out, "rolling up the rails." The railroad felt they were operating at a loss by having so many stations, and wanted to close some of them.

In May 1938 the secretary of the Iowa Commerce Commission ruled that the M. & St. L. should continue maintenance of a station agent at Saint Anthony. The announcement followed an objection by locals, headed by Rev. J. P. Connell, to the railroad's petition to abandon the local agency. The victory was of short duration, as in the 1940's the railroad closed the agency and moved it to Clemons Grove, the official name of the station at Clemons.

It is not known how many agents served the Saint Anthony station. A newspaper obituary of Seth Gause indicates that he served from 1885-95. D. H. Buck served before 1908, and Ralph Tight from 1908 until it closed sometime in the 1940's.

EASTERN DIVISION		Between Story City and Minerva Junction	
EASTWARD		WESTWARD	
SECOND CLASS		SECOND CLASS	
342	340	341	343
Ex. Sun.	Ex. Sun.	Ex. Sun.	Ex. Sun.
Mixed	Passenger	Mixed	Passenger
P.M.-L	A.M.-L	P.M.-A	P.M.-A
1:15	6:40	12:45	7:45
3:41		3:41	
1:45	6:58	12:20	7:20
2:10	7:08	11:45	7:14
2:40	7:19	11:05	7:08
3:18	7:35	10:35	6:47
3:55	7:41	10:17	6:37
4:15	7:50	9:55	6:27
4:25	8:05	9:40	6:10
P.M.-A	A.M.-A	9:35	6:05
8:10	1:32	8:10	1:40
Running Time		Running Time	
No. 340 is superior by direction WESTWARD TRAINS ARE SUPERIOR BY DIRECTION.		No. 341. No. 342 is superior by direction to No. 343.	
		EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED	

Bill Shenkle, who started on the line in 1945, recalls that snow wasn't the only enemy of the iron horse. Rain and washouts also hampered train movement, requiring long and arduous hours to repair. At mile post 245.5 the whole curve would wash out for a distance of a quarter mile. Points near Minerva and Clemons also were prone to wash out.

After Bill Camp retired in 1949, several men served as section foreman. John Roberts served from 1949-65 and Phil Reetz from 1965-69. Bill Shenkle was foreman from 1970 until the road was embargoed and finally closed.

In addition to grain and coal and livestock, the railroads carried L.C.L. (less than car load lots). All grocery stores received their goods by rail in early days, delivered to their stores by local draymen. Bill Shenkle recalls that grocery stores were still getting cookies in bulk and vinegar by the barrel as late as 1945.

In 1960, the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railway was purchased by the Chicago & Northwestern Railway.

The advent of first the auto and then trucks hauling freight brought the slow death of the Story City branch. Following the first blow, closing of trackage from Roland to Story City in 1952, shippers along the line fought a battle with the railroad to keep the line operating. In 1968, an embargo was put on the line because of deteriorating trackage. This lasted until 1969 when minor improvements were made. From 1969 until December 1974 there were 35 derailments, and speeds were lowered to 10 mph. An illegal embargo was put on in December 1974 and railroad officials once again filed for abandonment in January 1975.

After Saint Anthony station was closed, the town was served from the agency at Clemons Grove. At the time Saint Anthony closed, the section house was moved from

Clemons to Saint Anthony. Bill Camp was the section foreman and A. L. White was "first man." Through the years many local young men worked on the section in summers, developing blisters, muscles and severe sunburns.

Winters were hard on both men and equipment. Old-time railroad men recalled the winters of 1935 and 1936 as especially rough. Snows were deep and drifted through the steep cuts, requiring hand-shoveling to free the engines. Just west of Saint Anthony at mile post 253.2 was one such "cut." Engines and cars often derailed in such deep snow and ice, and kept men busy re-railing the cars and keeping crossings and switches cleaned.

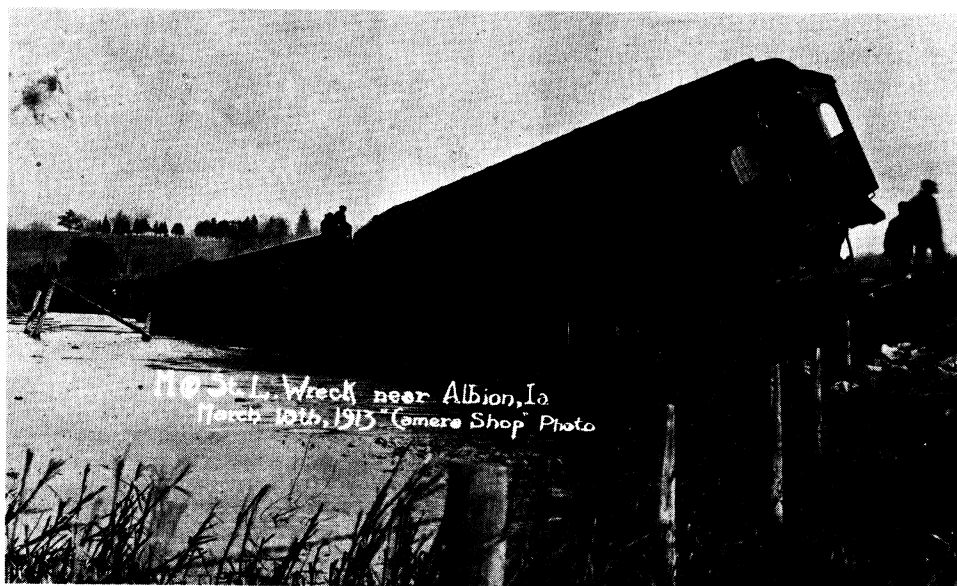
The shippers went four years without rail service while battling through several court cases. In 1976, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) ruled for restoration of service, but the Zearing to McCallsburg and Roland line was discontinued at this time.

Trains once again rolled on the branch in 1978, but the service was not to the shippers' liking and more litigation followed. This time the winds of change were blowing differently and the courts and the ICC ruled in favor of the railroads. In the fall of 1981 the rails were removed. The branch was dead.

The Central Iowa is gone. The Iowa Central is gone. The Minneapolis & St. Louis and Chicago & Northwestern are gone. All are gone.

The love affair with the railroad is over at Saint Anthony. Mile Post 252.9 is no more, except for those who still "remember when."

—Frank Shenkle



M. & St. L. wreck near Albion, Ia., March 10th, 1913 (Camera Shop Photo)