

PRR CHRONOLOGY
1839

June 2004 Edition

- Jan. 1, 1839** Camden & Amboy opens for revenue service between a point south of New Brunswick (Millstone Jct. or "COUNTY" interlocking) and Trenton running along Delaware & Raritan Canal; New Jersey Railroad opens between New Brunswick and "COUNTY"; all-rail service begins between Jersey City and Camden; cuts New York-Philadelphia travel time to 5:30 vs. 6:50 via South Amboy; fare is \$4 or \$1 higher than via South Amboy; New Jersey Railroad receives only 1/6 of earnings, although it makes up 1/3 of route; Camden & Amboy inaugurates two new round trips via Camden and New Brunswick and two connections over Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad.
- Jan. 1, 1839** E.A. Stevens devises means of evading transit duty on traffic carried via Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad, treating as way traffic because passengers must walk across canal at Trenton. (Lane)
- Jan. 1, 1839** Associates of the Jersey Company transfer operating lease and sells boats and docks of Paulus Hook ferry from Francis B. Ogden to New Jersey Railroad & Transportation Company, it having purchased the Jersey City Ferry Company of 1836 and its four boats; ferry becomes officially known as Jersey City ferry. (HC)
- 1839** Philadelphia & Trenton changed from 4'-82" to 4'-10" gauge and connected to Camden & Amboy in Trenton, forming unbroken railroad between Jersey City and Kensington; most traffic routed via Trenton and Camden because of distance from Center City, Philadelphia to Kensington. (according to MB, this apparently not done til spring and summer of 1841?)
- Jan. 1839** Train of freight cars owned by Craig, Bellas & Martien displayed in Philadelphia; five 4-wheel and one 8-wheel; to be used in through service to Chambersburg once Susquehanna River bridge at Harrisburg opens.
- Jan. 2, 1839** Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad declared 6% dividend. (MB)
- Jan. 3, 1839** Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad authorizes

negotiation with Cumberland Valley Railroad for through business.
(MB)

- Jan. 4, 1839** Allen Cuthbert advertises the "Black Horse" inn and adjoining railroad depot on north side of Market Street above 11th for lease.
- Jan. 5, 1839** Northern Liberties & Penn Township Railroad contracts 1839 passenger service to P. Lucianna for \$2,000, payable in summer months only. (MB)
- Jan. 7, 1839** Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad authorizes purchase of locomotive *Osceola* from Coleman Sellers & Co.; contracts to build 40 platform cars for O'Connor's Portable Car Body Line. (MB)
- Jan. 8, 1839** PW&B Board approves design of Newkirk Monument; sets fare to Baltimore at \$4.00; orders importation of rail to compensate for those borrowed from Little Schuylkill & Susquehanna Railroad. (MB)
- Jan. 10, 1839** Mad River & Lake Erie Railroad suspends service for lack of business while Lake Erie closed. (Gerstner)
- Jan. 12, 1839** Baltimore & Susquehanna extends street trackage in Baltimore from Belvidere Station at Eager Street down Guilford Avenue to new station at Saratoga Street; also from Bolton Station down Cathedral and Howard Street to Franklin Street, connecting with a branch of the B&O; and from Guilford Avenue and Monument Street down Monument and Canal Streets to the City Block on Inner Harbor, connecting with the PW&B. (BaltAm, AR - City Block & Howard St. lines actually not completed until 1840)
- Jan. 12, 1839** First section of Williamsport & Elmira Railroad opens between Williamsport and Ralston, Pa. (Taber)
- Jan. 12, 1839** Edward Miller makes first report on survey for Sunbury & Erie Railroad; rejects low-grade route via Bennett Branch and Sandy Lick on account of greater distance in favor of route through highlands via Kane and Johnsonburg; probably done at urging of Thomas Struthers (1803-1892) and Jacob Ridgway (1767-1843), who had huge but isolated landholdings there: cost estimated at \$4.4 million (Rosenberger)
- Jan. 12, 1839** Delaware & Raritan's iron steam tug *Robert F. Stockton* tested on the Thames River at London towing four coal barges.
- Jan. 14, 1839** Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad appoints committee to procure a depot on North Street. (MB)

- Jan. 15, 1839** Democrat David Rittenhouse Porter (1788-1867) inaugurated as Governor of Pennsylvania.
- Jan. 16, 1839** Cumberland Valley Railroad bridge over Susquehanna River between Bridgeport and Harrisburg opens; 20-span Town truss 4,300 feet long; single railroad track on upper deck and road on lower; train of opening excursion is triple-headed by locomotives *Cumberland Valley*, *Carlisle* and *Nicholas Biddle*.
- Jan. 21, 1839** Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad requests city to permit experiment of operating with locomotives through streets from Bolton to Saratoga Street.
- Jan. 22, 1839** Engineer Hother Hagé makes second report on surveys of 1837-38 for all-rail route from Chambersburg to Pittsburgh; state considers too expensive; also reports on survey recommending slackwater navigation up Raystown Branch of Juniata. (CC)
- Jan. 23, 1839** Veteran Democrat James Clarke appointed Canal Commissioner in place of Thaddeus Stevens, resigned. (first meeting attended was 1/23!)
- Jan. 25, 1839** Act of Congress limits railroad mail pay to \$300 per mile per year. (Digest)
- Jan. 26, 1839** Gov. Porter issues address on state finances; notes total debts of \$30.2 million vs. \$31.7 million book value of state assets (which he neglects to mention are carried at far more than their market value); projects \$3.9 million deficit for 1839; urges completion of Erie and North Branch Extensions and abandonment of Gettysburg Railroad; also suggests western states construct a railroad from Pittsburgh to St. Louis.
- Jan. 26, 1839** Pennsylvania authorizes \$1.2 million permanent loan at 5%. (PL)
- Jan. 26, 1839** Flood carries away part of PW&B's Newkirk Viaduct; service interrupted for about two weeks. (AR)
- Jan. 26, 1839** Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad agrees to subscribe \$112,000 to Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad by receiving stock for existing debts and to provide rails and operate WY&G after completion.
- Jan. 28, 1839** Anthony B. Warford resigns as Principal Assistant Engineer of Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad as all work

is done; W. Milnor Roberts has already moved to Pittsburgh. (MB)

- Jan. 30, 1839** Pennsylvania legislative resolution authorizes new \$602,250 temporary loan. (PL)
- Jan. 31, 1839** Sunbury & Erie Board authorizes continuation of surveys and final location between Erie and Warren.
- Feb. 1, 1839** New Democratic Board of Canal Commissioners consisting of James Clarke, Edward B. Hubley (Congressman and relative of Henry A. Muhlenberg), and William F. Packer (publisher of Harrisburg *Keystone*) takes office; Thomas L. Wilson, Secretary. Clarke had supported ex-Gov. Wolf, Packer and Hubley had supported Muhlenberg. (CC, Snyder)
- Feb. 1, 1839** Through trade begins from Cumberland Valley Railroad to Philadelphia over Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster and Columbia Railroads.
- Feb. 2, 1839** James D. Harris reports on surveys to bypass Belmont Plane, including via Norristown & Valley Railroad (Downingtown-Norristown) and West Philadelphia Railroad. (CC)
- Feb. 4, 1839** Commonwealth advertises for bids on \$1.2 million loan until Mar. 5. (PubLdgr)
- Feb. 4, 1839** Southwark Railroad leaves connection with PW&B to discretion of Road Committee. (MB)
- Feb. 5, 1839** New Canal Commissioners order old Democratic engineers to report on supposed deterioration of Public Works under the Anti-Masons; begin purge of all employees appointed by Anti-Masons. (CC)
- Feb. 5, 1839** Charles De Hass makes third report on surveys for railroad or macadam road between Chambersburg and Pittsburgh. (CC)
- Feb. 6. 1839** Canal Commissioners appoint James Cameron (1801-1861), brother of Simon Cameron, Superintendent of Motive Power on the Columbia Railroad replacing Andrew Mehaffey. (CC)
- Feb. 8, 1839** Canal Commissioners appoint John Snodgrass Superintendent of Motive Power on the Portage Railroad. (CC)
- Feb. 8, 1839** Old six-man Indiana Board of Internal Improvement legislated out of existence and new three-man board appointed; ordered to build one project at a time. (PL)

- Feb. 9, 1839** Pennsylvania act authorizes new \$1.28 million permanent loan at 5%; appropriates \$230,000 for Tioga and Tunkhannock Lines of North Branch Extension, \$250,000 for Erie Extension, \$30,000 for Sinnemahoning Line, \$40,000 for Wiconisco Canal, \$380,000 to repay money borrowed for flood repairs on Juniata Division, \$30,000 for line to bypass Columbia Plane, and \$300,000 for ordinary repairs. (PL)
- Feb. 11, 1839** New Jersey Railroad Board approves issue of \$120,000 in Ferry bonds; \$70,000 to be issued to Associates of the Jersey Company, and the rest for new boats and other improvements; sign lease of ferry rights from Associates of the Jersey Company. (MB)
- Feb. 11, 1839** James P. Kirkwood makes final report on Maryland Canal on Brookville route; estimate \$11.7 million; subsequent depression marks end of attempt to build a canal route direct from Baltimore to the West. (Rept)
- Feb. 14, 1839** PW&B Board reports has sent memorial to Legislature for a railroad along the west bank of the Schuylkill River from Grays Ferry to Philadelphia & Reading Railroad at Belmont; rejects agreement with NC&F to avoid collision of boats when running against each other; hears requests of Southwark Railroad to operate pleasure cars from Broad Street to Grays Ferry and of Stockton, Falls & Co. of Baltimore for through ticketing between Philadelphia and Wheeling. (MB)
- Feb. 14, 1839** NC&F Board authorizes removal and sale of last of old track. (MB)
- Feb. 14, 1839** New stage route opens between Chambersburg and Pittsburgh connecting from Cumberland Valley Railroad.
- Feb. 1839** B&O begins surveys west of Cumberland towards Pittsburgh. (Dilts)
- Feb. 19, 1839** Benjamin Aycrigg makes final report on West Branch & Allegheny Canal linking Sinnemahoning Line with Allegheny Feeder; various engineering authorities affirm sufficient water for large canal; project pushed as only viable response to Erie Canal enlargement. (CC)
- Feb. 19, 1839** Special resolution of Legislature abandons all work on Gettysburg Railroad effective Mar. 1 after \$682,846 spent, with temporary loan of \$150,000 to pay off contractors; pay of all officers and agents to cease on June 15, 1839. (is this one vetoed by Porter on 3/6?)
- Feb. 19, 1839** New Castle & Wilmington Railroad Company incorporated in Delaware; not built until 1852. (Val)

- Feb. 22, 1839** LIRR Board orders contractors to resume work on Hempstead Branch by Mar. 10. (MB)
- Feb. 23, 1839** Canal Commissioners discharge principal engineers on Gettysburg Railroad, Columbia Railroad, Portage Railroad, Delaware Division, Eastern Division, Juniata Division, Western Division, Wiconisco Division and West Branch Division. (all antimasons, new democratic engineers appointed later)
- Feb. 23, 1839** Canal Commissioners again deny petition of John Dougherty of Reliance Transportation Company to build boat plane at Hollidaysburg. (CC)
- Feb. 23, 1839** Illinois authorizes new \$4 million loan for Illinois & Michigan Canal.
- Feb. 25, 1839** Joint Companies and New Jersey Railroad sign supplemental contract covering different services to be offered on each route between New York and Philadelphia; to run two "lines" (trips) via New Brunswick at \$4, of which C&A gets \$3, and one line via South Amboy at \$3; crew and engine change point to be New Brunswick station, even though NJRR owns track as far as "COUNTY". (C&A, MB)
- Feb. 25, 1839** Michigan State Bank suspends payments.
- Feb. 27, 1839** Pa. act permits Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad to own stock in Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad. (Digest)
- Feb. 1839** Work begins on Little Miami Railroad; R.M. Shoemaker Engineer; 17 miles of disconnected work are to be done in Greene County as condition of local subscription.
- Mar. 1, 1839** Charter supplement to Camden & Woodbury Railroad & Transportation Company authorizes extension to Delaware Bay between Stow Creek and Cape May, with a branch to Cape Island. (PL)
- Mar. 4, 1839** William F. Harnden begins world's first railroad express service over Boston & Providence and its connecting steamboats between Boston and New York; starting with trips made by Harnden with a carpetbag, Harnden & Co. grows into a large organization.
- Mar. 1839** Democrats purge Canal Commission of all holding appointments under Governor Ritner; engineers fired include William Hasell Wilson, Hother Hagé, John P. Bailey, James D. Harris, Benjamin Aycrigg, and Charles T. Whippo (who else); all? never work for the

State again.

- Mar. 5, 1839** New Democratic legislature in Ohio abolishes Whig Canal Commission of 1838 and restores Board of Public Works, but with five full-time members and no sectional representation.
- Mar. 6, 1839** Gov. Porter vetoes resolution for continuing work on Gettysburg Railroad until contractors paid off. (WBFrmr&Jrnl)
- Mar. 7, 1839** Gov. Porter notifies Legislature that no proposals have been received for the \$1.2 million loan of 1839; notes that the Philadelphia Bank, Farmers & Mechanics Bank and Bank of Pennsylvania have all refused to take loan even though state is a major stockholder; urges state sell all bank stocks. (PubLdgr)
- Mar. 7, 1839** William B. Foster, Jr., appointed Principal Engineer on North Branch Canal. (Hare)
- Mar. 11, 1839** Pennsylvania Canal Commissioners report that \$1.7 million is needed for urgent repairs to existing works; is essential to meet competition from New York, Maryland and Virginia; also discharge all assistant engineers and rodmen appointed by Anti-Masons. (CC)
- Mar. 12, 1839** PW&B Board reports bill for link to Reading at Belmont has passed Senate but House is doubtful; declines proposal of Stockton, Falls & Co. for through fare to Wheeling and to remove road toll from Grays Ferry Bridge. (MB)
- Mar. 13, 1839** Pennsylvania legislative resolution authorizes survey of Lackawanna River from mouth to Ragged Island below Carbondale; surveyed by William B. Foster, Jr. (PL)
- Mar. 14, 1839** Pennsylvania authorizes \$75,000 temporary loan. (PL)
- Mar. 14, 1839** NC&F Board authorizes moving from Chestnut Street to Dock Street wharf in Philadelphia; discontinues Sunday operation; authorizes ordering new locomotives and selling all old locomotives except *Pennsylvania* and *Virginia*. (MB)
- Mar. 14, 1839** Little Miami Railroad authorizes placing road under contract between Cincinnati city line and Columbia; authorizes borrowing \$10,000; appoints committee to fix terminus in Cincinnati. (MB)
- Mar. 15, 1839** PW&B purchases controlling interest in New Castle & Frenchtown by exchange of stock. (AR)

- Mar. 16, 1839** Pa. act authorizes new \$100,000 permanent loan for subscription to stock of Franklin Railroad. (PL)
- Mar. 1839** Canal Commissioners begins operating freight over Portage Railroad at night, reducing transit time. (Wilson - verify)
- Mar. 18, 1839** New Jersey Railroad Board authorizes engineer to prepare estimate of branch from Hudson Street, Jersey City, to Hoboken. (MB)
- Mar. 21, 1839** Edwin A. Stevens reports to Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad Board on negotiations with Commissioners of Northern Liberties on extension to Willow Street; agree to rent of \$2,000 a year for use of street. (MB)
- Mar. 23, 1839** Supplement to Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad charter authorizes extension of track down Frankford Road and Maiden Street to reach depot at 3rd & Willow Streets; is to be for one year until can build permanent line on another route. (Walther - check PL)
- Mar. 24, 1839** Commissioner Lin Zexu blockades the foreign factories (trading posts) at Canton, China, and forces them to turn over and destroy 20,000 chests of opium in first serious Chinese effort to suppress the opium trade conducted by British and American merchants.
- Mar. 25, 1839** Pa. legislative resolution orders Canal Commissioners to fit locomotive with anthracite burning boiler invented by Lewis Teese; also to contract with Philip Garrett to alter some of the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad locomotives to burn anthracite. (PL)
- Mar. 27, 1839** Pennsylvania authorizes new \$470,000 permanent loan to pay loans coming due on May 1. (PL)
- Apr. 1, 1839** New Jersey Railroad ends free passes for stockholders. (MB)
- Apr. 1, 1839** PW&B discharges Superintendent Charles Lombaert, father of future PRR VP Herman J. Lombaert, as economy measure. (MB)
- Apr. 1, 1839** Mad River & Lake Erie Railroad reopens.
- Apr. 1, 1839** Madison & Indianapolis Railroad leased by State of Indiana to David C. Branham & Co. for 60% of gross revenues; first 4-2-0 locomotive *Madison* (BLW c/n __) placed in service; regular operations with locomotive and freight cars begun; formerly just horse-drawn passenger cars. (Church, C&C, Anderson)
- Apr. 3, 1839** James O'Connor & Co. of Philadelphia inaugurates Baltimore-

Pittsburgh line of portable car bodies over Baltimore & Susquehanna and Main Line of Public Works; each car body carries 2-3 tons; are carried between York and Wrightsville on wagons pending completion of Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad. (1st ad in BaltAm 4/27)

- Apr. 4, 1839** Silas Moore of Pennsylvania Packet Boat Company writes to PW&B requesting through ticketing for Baltimore-Pittsburgh via Philadelphia. (MB)
- Apr. 4, 1839** Alarmed by the fact that steamboats and railroads provide quick and superior escape routes for runaway slaves, Maryland Legislature passes act prohibiting any slave from traveling on a steamboat or train unless in company of a master or with a signed pass; captains and railroads to be fined \$500 for each violation; owners of runaway slaves may recover full value from and railroad or boat line involved in escape. (PL)
- Apr. 5, 1839** Future PRR historian William Bender Wilson (1839-1919) born at Harrisburg; son of Thomas Low Wilson, Secretary to Board of Canal Commissioners, and Julianna Margaretta Wilson.
- Apr. 5, 1839** Maryland act authorizes further state loan of \$750,000 to Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad to complete to Wrightsville; new loan to be first lien superior to prior liens given to City of Baltimore. (Digest)
- Apr. 6, 1839** Joint Companies Board discusses New Jersey Railroad contract; appoints committee to meet with New Jersey Railroad. (MB)
- Apr. 6, 1839** P. Lucianna, passenger contractor on Northern Liberties & Penn Township Railroad, complains of people stealing rides on freight cars rather than ride his pleasure cars. (MB)
- Apr. 6, 1839** Maryland act loans \$1 million to Susquehanna & Tide Water Canals. (PL)
- Apr. 7, 1839** Maryland act authorizes town of Hagerstown to subscribe \$20,000 to Franklin Railroad in return for its passing through center of town. (Digest)
- Apr. 8, 1839** Spring flood washes out North Branch Canal feeder dam at Old Forge on Lackawanna River; replaced by "temporary" brush dam, while Canal Commissioners consider appeals to extend canal further up Lackawanna; flood also heavily damages Delaware Division Canal.
- Apr. 11, 1839** Delaware & Raritan steam tug *Robert F. Stockton*, a 71' x 10' vessel

with an iron hull and Ericsson screw propellor built at Liverpool, leaves London under sail.

- Apr. 11, 1839** PW&B Board authorizes depositing 13,000 with United States Bank of Pennsylvania as collateral for a loan of \$900,000 as originally promised by Wilmington & Susquehanna Railroad in 1837. (MB)
- Apr. 11, 1839** NC&F Board authorizes sale of old strap rail to PW&B. (MB)
- Apr. 19, 1839** Samuel Jaudon writes to PW&B that no bonds have been sold. (MB)
- Apr. 19, 1839** Baltimore ordinance fixes location of Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad from Canal & Wilk Streets, down Wilk Street to Exeter Street, and down Exeter to City Block. (Digest)
- Apr. 20, 1839** Michigan cuts Board of Internal Improvement to three members. (PL)
- Apr. 25, 1839** Southwark Railroad has contracted with PW&B, which pays one third of gross receipts in lieu of toll. (MB)
- Apr. 29, 1839** Supplement to LIRR charter authorizes additional \$750,000 in stock and issue of bonds equal to total capital stock. (Digest)
- Apr. 29, 1839** Joint Board of Joint Companies hears report that they have contracted with Jacob Ridgway to buy his ferry house at the foot of Market Street, Camden, and boats *Hornet*, *William Wray* and *Philadelphia* for \$44,000, to be paid for partly in stock of Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company, plus \$240,000 for real estate; Edwin A. Stevens is to buy the ferry company by subscribing to its stock, and Camden & Amboy Railroad is to deed ferry company its boats *State Rights* and *John Fitch*. (MB)
- Apr. 30, 1839** New York Legislature defeats bill to have state take over the New York & Erie Railroad as a state project by vote of 17 to 14.
- May 3, 1839** Philadelphia County Commissioners request PW&B to remove road toll from Grays Ferry Bridge. (MB)
- May 4, 1839** New York & Harlem Railroad opens southern extension from Walker Street to City Hall (Tryon Row, site of Municipal Building) in New York City. (Poor, GrnBk, Grogan)
- May 6, 1839** Canal Commissioners purchase an anthracite-burning locomotive designed by Ross Winans now being tested; an 0-4-0 with a vertical boiler; and order one additional locomotive of same type. (CC)

- May 6, 1839** New Jersey Railroad Board dismisses committee on Hoboken Branch as unable to reach agreement with Stevens family; accepts proposal of Mr. Edge to build hotel on south side of Montgomery Street opposite Jersey City Terminal. (MB)
- May 6, 1839** Little Miami Railroad reports that Cincinnati has issued \$60,000 in bonds on subscription; have placed Cincinnati-Columbia segment under contract. (MB)
- May 13, 1839** William D. Lewis resigns as PW&B director. (MB)
- May 14, 1839** PW&B Board reports has bought a plot for the Newkirk Monument at Grays Ferry; have negotiated with B&O to continue the use of its depot in Pratt Street; authorizes Southwark Railroad to operate "pleasure cars" to Grays Ferry; Southwark Railroad to charge 12.5 cents, of which PW&B is to get one-third; authorizes construction of wharf on Delaware River three miles north of Wilmington. (MB)
- May 1839** C&O Canal opens to Dam No. 6 ten miles above Hancock. (Dilts)
- May 20, 1839** Senate Committee on Roads, Bridges & Inland Navigation, with majority of Whigs and Anti-Masons, orders Canal Commissioners to investigate delays in location and paying estimates on North Branch and West Branch Extensions, particularly setting aside of old measurements and contracts made by Anti-Masons.
- May 21, 1839** *Robert F. Stockton* arrives in New York; first iron steamboat to cross the Atlantic, albeit under sail; crossed in 45 days (ARJ) at about 8 MPH; machinery installed at New York; four other tugs are delivered by 1842 but soon sold as wash damages canal banks.
- May 23, 1839** Pennsylvania authorizes Philadelphia & Trenton to extend from Kensington to 3rd & Willow Streets via track in Frankford Road to link up with other railroads entering the city and secure a depot closer to Center City.
- May 27, 1839** Canal Commissioners refuse to comply with Senate demands on grounds is tantamount to impeachment, and impeachment must originate in the House. (CC)
- May 28, 1839** On recommendation of Engineer William K. Huffnagle, Canal Commissioners order end to laying U.S.-made cast iron rail on road to avoid Columbia Plane; to be confined to sidings only. (CC)
- Spring 1839** Ohio Railroad begins construction between Lower Sandusky and

Toledo; company chooses 7'-0" gauge and construction on piles instead of regular grading; entire work is wasted without any part being finished. (Gerstner)

- June 1, 1839** **B&O opens new alignment of old main line eliminating inclined planes at Parrs Spring Ridge. (Dilts)**
- June 1, 1839** **Owners of 30 most important boats operating on the upper Great Lakes form association to pool profits and establish regular lines between Buffalo and Chicago with service equal to actual demand.**
- June 1, 1839** **Northern Cross Railroad opens between Meredosia and Morgan City (12 mi.); first railroad in State of Illinois.**
- June 4, 1839** **Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Harrisburg Railroad authorizes purchase of 18 miles of T-rail. (MB)**
- June 4, 1839** **Auburn & Syracuse Railroad opens between Syracuse and Auburn; steam locomotive replaces horse-drawn cars operated by J.M. Sherwood. (C&RR, RRCntNY - check Gerstner?)**
- June 6, 1839** **Madison & Indianapolis Railroad opens 2-mile extension from Grahams Ford to Vernon, Ind. (C&C, Anderson)**
- June 7, 1839** **Pennsylvania authorizes new \$50,000 permanent loan. (PL)**
- June 10, 1839** **Gov. Porter urges emergency appropriation for repairs to Public Works; by law all toll receipts are pledged to pay interest and cannot be applied to repairs.**
- June 11, 1839** **PW&B authorizes John Connell to go to England to help sell bonds. (MB)**
- June 11, 1839** **Ohio state report notes that state canal system as a whole does not earn enough to cover maintenance and is a drain on the treasury; state debt can only be paid by borrowing.**
- June 12, 1839** **Bear Valley Coal Company incorporated in Pa. by Calvin Blythe, James McCormack, Penjamin Parke, Joseph B. Smith, et al.; may hold 2,000 acres of anthracite coal land in Lower Mahontongo Township and build railroad to Wiconisco Canal. (PL)**
- June 12, 1839** **Union Railroad & Mining Company incorporated in Pa.; may hold 2,000 acres of anthracite coal land in Schuylkill and Dauphin Counties and build railroad to Wiconisco Canal or other railroads. (PL)**

- June 12, 1839** Allegheny & Bald Eagle Railroad, Coal & Iron Company incorporated in Pa.; not organized until 1857.
- June 13, 1839** NC&F Board reports that it has sold stock in Western Bank of Philadelphia and Schuylkill Bank of Philadelphia. (MB)
- June 15, 1839** Committee of Democrat-controlled legislature issues report on corruption of Canal Commission under Thaddeus Stevens.
- June 17, 1839** Robert Schuyler (1798-1855), an early railroad manipulator and grandson of Revolutionary War Gen. Philip Schuyler, elected a director of New Jersey Railroad. (MB)
- June 17, 1839** D. Leech & Co. begin operating their Emigrant Line to the West via Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad instead of via PW&B to Philadelphia.
- June 20, 1839** Pennsylvania act extends time for completion of B&O to Feb. 27, 1847, providing it allow connection with Pennsylvania railroads, including Franklin Railroad, and make no discrimination between Philadelphia and Baltimore; B&O refuses to accept terms. (PL, Dilts)
- June 20, 1839** Pennsylvania act authorizes Canal Commissioners to settle accounts with West Chester Railroad until \$25,000 in tolls are refunded as per act of 1838. (PL)
- June 20, 1839** Pennsylvania act authorizes Williamsport & Elmira Railroad to increase stock to \$400,000 and raise money by mortgage. (Digest)
- June 21, 1839** Clinton County created from parts of Centre and Lycoming Counties with county seat at Lock Haven. (Long)
- June 24, 1839** "West Branch" Franklin Railroad incorporated in Pa. to build from a point on the Franklin Railroad to the B&O on the Potomac River. (PL)
- June 27, 1839** Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad Board authorizes lobbying against having a survey for a Columbia-Harrisburg extension of Columbia Railroad included in improvement bill; settles with James Cameron, late Superintendent. (MB)
- June 27, 1839** Pennsylvania Legislature at special session passes act authorizing new \$1,150,000 permanent loan and \$220,000 temporary loan to fund \$1,050,000 in loans falling due before Jan. 1. (PL)
- July 1, 1839** Board of Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad,

including Simon Cameron, declares 4% dividend, even though there is no money in treasury and company has a \$150,000 floating debt; \$16,500 is borrowed from Pioneer Line for 6 months at 12% interest; Pioneer Line has option to have loan repaid by withholding tolls. (MB)

- July 2, 1839 Pennsylvania Legislature passes resolution calling for Treasurer, Secretary and Auditor General to investigate whether state interest payments in Aug. 1837, Feb. 1838 and July 1839 was paid in specie, and if paid in notes, state is to make up difference; no payment to be made to any bank that does not redeem its notes in specie. (Worthington)
- July 2, 1839 Pa. legislative resolution repeals provision of act of Feb. 9, 1839 calling for joint committee of Legislature to examine accounts for repairing the breach above Huntingdon in 1838; to be examined and paid by Auditor General. (PL)
- July 3, 1839 Syracuse & Utica Railroad opens, creating a continuous line from Albany to Auburn. (Stevens, Gerstner)
- July 4, 1839 Hempstead Branch of LIRR opens between Mineola and Hempstead. (RRH, Val)
- July 4, 1839 *Taglione*, a 2-2-0 and only locomotive built by Poughkeepsie Locomotive Company (1838), placed in service on LIRR; apparently not purchased until 1842, when it is renamed *John A. King*. (RRH, MB)
- July 4, 1839 Canal Commissioners order halt to all work on Sinnemahoning Line, as no new appropriation; \$130,000 spent. (CC)
- July 5, 1839 New Jersey Railroad makes new contract with Morris & Essex Railroad, superseding contract of Oct. 21, 1836; NJRR will carry M&E passenger cars from Passaic River Bridge to Jersey City; NJRR can run its Newark cars to M&E station on Broad Street and is to have all Jersey City-Newark business. (MB)
- July 6, 1839 John R. Thompson of Joint Companies writes to New Jersey Railroad complaining of Cumming's mail line using stages south of New Brunswick; this qualifies as an opposition line under their agreement and must be discontinued or will not renew NJRR contract. (MB)
- July 8, 1839 Canal Commissioners order halt to all work on Allegheny Feeder.
- July 8, 1839 John Davison Rockefeller, Sr. (1839-1937), founder of Standard Oil Company, born.

- July 9, 1839** George B. Fisk elected Pres. of LIRR, replacing Waldron B. Post, resigned. (MB)
- July 1839** New Brunswick Steam Boat & Canal Transportation Company places new steamboat *Raritan* on New York-New Brunswick run, replacing *Napoleon*. (Thompson)
- July 1839** Reliance Transportation Company dissolved, probably because small 6-ton boats were unprofitable; John Dougherty leaves company to develop own line using four-section boats; Dr. Shoenberger and other partners continue operation as Reliance Portable Boat Company.
- July 13, 1839** Canal Commissioners order all supervisors to reduce number of workers to a minimum to save money.
- July 15, 1839** Canal Commissioners appoint Charles Lyon Schlatter Principal Engineer to run surveys for all-rail line between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh on northern (West Branch-Clearfield), middle (Juniata) and southern (Chambersburg-Laughlintown) routes; appointment effective Aug. 1.
- July 19, 1839** Pennsylvania authorizes permanent loan of \$2.054 million for repair and extension of Public Works; loan may be issued in \$5 bills to be issued to contractors, providing banks will redeem them in specie; includes: \$70,000 for Allegheny Mountain reservoirs for Juniata and Western Divisions, surveys for a railroad from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh, negotiations to purchase the Norristown & Valley Railroad or Chester & Delaware (?) Railroad as route to bypass Belmont Plane, \$300,000 for Shenango Line, \$250,000 for Conneaut Line, \$200,000 for Tunkhannock Line, \$200,000 for Tioga Line, \$150,000 for Wiconisco Canal, and extension of North Branch Canal feeder two miles up Lackawanna River; no appropriations made for Sinnemahoning Line or Kittanning Feeder, killing those projects after an expenditure of \$164,100 and \$31,100 respectively; authorizes James D. Harris and William B. Foster to remeasure and re-estimate work on North Branch Extension, William E. Morris and Benjamin Aycrigg on Sinnemahoning Extension and John P. Bailey and A.B. Warford on Wiconisco Canal; Gov. Porter holds bill for one month before signing and delays taking loan from the hated United States Bank until all other possibilities are exhausted. (PL,)
- July 20, 1839** Edwin A. Stevens reports to Executive Committee of Joint Companies that it is necessary to borrow \$27,123 from New Brunswick Steamboat & Canal Transportation Company to meet expenses. (MB)

- July 20, 1839** Canal Commissioners rescind workforce cuts of July 13 after new appropriation passed. (CC)
- July 27, 1839** Canal Commissioners appoint John A. Roebling as Principal Assistant Engineer on southern route of Harrisburg-Pittsburgh rail surveys. (CC)
- July 29, 1839** J.S. Darcy of New Jersey Railroad replies to Joint Companies; through railroad service of Jan. 1 has destroyed business of Cumming's line, which now only carries mail in a covered wagon; complains that the substitution of heavy rail on Trenton Delaware Bridge to permit locomotive operation, which was promised in Feb. 1839, is not done yet, causing delays. (MB)
- July 31, 1839** Future PRR VP John Pugh Green (1839-1924) born.
- Aug. 5, 1839** Joint Companies cancel deed of Camden ferry property to Edwin A. Stevens and deed directly to Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company in return for ferry company stock; includes boats *State Rights* and *John Fitch*; Abraham Brown reports to Joint Board that Schuylkill County coal operator John C. Offerman will be unable to fulfill his contract to take the Phoenix Park coal lands. (MB)
- Aug. 6, 1839** Camden & Amboy Railroad replies to New Jersey Railroad that it will lay a heavy rail for locomotive operation over Delaware River Bridge as soon as iron arrives from Britain and will be done in a short time; however, is apparently not done until 1841. (MB)
- Aug. 1839** Morris Canal & Banking Company announces it is no longer able to honor accounts with State of Indiana, now amounting to \$2.54 million.
- Aug. 13, 1839** PW&B Board resolves it will carry only one mail daily, timed to regular passenger trains. (MB)
- Aug. 13, 1839** Baltimore ordinance grants Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad one half block bounded by Alice Anna, Exeter, Lancaster and Albemarle Streets for depot. (Digest)
- Aug. 18, 1839** Ex-Gov. Noah Noble, now a member of the Board of Internal Improvement, announces that the state is unable to borrow further and stops all payments to contractors; over \$1 million owed to contractors and state debt at over \$13 million.
- Aug. 19, 1839** Franklin Railroad begins construction from Maryland state line to Hagerstown.

- Aug. 1839** **B&O resumes construction Harpers Ferry to Cumberland. (Dilts)**
- Summer 1839** **Work on Little Miami Railroad slows to a halt.**
- Aug. 22, 1839** **The 23 largest transporting companies on the Erie Canal sign agreement pooling earnings and creating a general fund though Jan. 1, 1841.**
- Aug. 22, 1839** **Illinois Board of Public Works suspends all construction that is not directly linked with a navigable river and all work let in 1839 because of failure of loans.**
- Aug. 23, 1839** **Baltimore ordinance authorizes city to issue \$250,000 in city bonds to Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad in return for state stock. (Digest)**
- Aug. 24, 1839** **B&O Pres. Louis McLane leaves for England to market \$3.2 million of Maryland State bonds issued to finance B&O. (Dilts)**
- Aug. 29, 1839** **New Jersey Railroad Board appoints committee to prepare new contract with Joint Companies to take effect when existing one expires. (MB)**
- Aug. 29, 1839** **Canal Commissioners contract for replacement of all wooden locks on the North Branch Division Canal.**
- Aug. 1839** **Indiana suspends work on all projects except Madison & Indianapolis Railroad.**
- Sep. 1, 1839** **Charles L. Schlatter begins work on Harrisburg-Pittsburgh rail surveys. (CC)**
- Sep. 4, 1839** **Royal Navy bombards Canton in reprisal for the Chinese seizures of opium, beginning the First Opium War (1839-1842).**
- Sep. 7, 1839** **New Board elected by Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad; A.L. Hodgdon replaces A.J. Pleasanton as Pres.**
- Sep. 10, 1839** **Franklin Railroad opens between Chambersburg and Greencastle, Pa. (Brks&SchklJrnl)**
- Sep. 10, 1839** **Clark Williams returns to post of Little Miami Railroad Secretary and Alexander H. Ewing named Treasurer. (MB)**
- Sep. 12, 1839** **New Jersey Railroad agrees with Paterson & Hudson River Railroad to sell it 32 lots in Block 9 at Jersey City at cost; is then filled in for terminal. (MB)**

- Sep. 12, 1839** Runaway cars collide with steamboat on Camden & Amboy at South Amboy. (Shaw - verify)
- Sep. 1839** United States Bank of Pennsylvania takes \$2 million state loan in return for long-sought privilege of issuing \$5 notes. (was this the loan it was forced to take under charter when no others would??)
- Sep. 1839** John Dougherty orders several trucks capable of carrying four-section boats.
- Sep. 1839** George W. Dole and Oliver Newberry ship the first cargo of grain from Chicago to Black Rock in the brigantine *Osceola*, inaugurating grain trade from the further Midwest to the Erie Canal.
- Oct. 1, 1839** Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad agrees with Columbia Bank & Bridge Company that its locomotives will approach no closer than 200 feet of western end of bridge because of fire hazard. (Digest)
- Oct. 9, 1839** United States Bank of Pennsylvania suspends specie payment after failure of a program to prop up the price of U.S. export cotton; leaves Commonwealth without a fiscal agent and halting or damaging most improvement projects dependent on the Bank; the other Philadelphia banks are forced to suspend the same day; depression begins lasting through 1843.
- Oct. 9, 1839** John Connell reports to PW&B Board that it is impossible to sell bonds in England, but that he left some with a banking house in Amsterdam. (MB)
- Oct. 10, 1839** Baltimore banks meet to make plans to ward off drafts from out of state banks. (Vexler)
- Oct. 12, 1839** B&O Pres. Louis McLane succeeds in depositing entire \$3.2 million issue of Maryland State bonds with Baring Brothers & Co. (Dilts)
- Oct. 1839** Ohio Democrats secure larger majorities in both houses; Indiana Democrats capture House from Whigs.
- Oct. 1839** New Jersey Railroad inaugurates first regular freight train with rider coach; all freight previously carried on regular passenger trains.
- Oct. 17, 1839** Gov. Porter in public letter urges that banks be treated with "forbearance and moderation," raising possibility of open split with hard-money Democrats.

- Oct. 17, 1839** Michigan's Central Railroad opens between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor.
- Oct. 19, 1839** Pioneer Furnace placed in blast near Pottsville, Pa., by Welsh ironmaster Benjamin Perry; first to smelt iron with anthracite coal on a sustained basis. (Swank)
- Oct. 21, 1839** James O'Connor & Co., proprietors of Portable Car Body Line, begin operating winter service by wagon from Baltimore to Wheeling and Pittsburgh. (BaltAm)
- Oct. 21, 1839** Bank of the State of Illinois suspends.
- Oct. 23, 1839** B&O suspends surveying west of Cumberland. (Dilts)
- Oct. 28, 1839** New Jersey Railroad Board approves connection with Morris & Essex Railroad at Centre Street, Newark, but cars must be turned over by M&E at foot of Market Street. (MB)
- Nov. 3, 1839** B&O Pres. Louis McLane returns to U.S., having deposited bonds with Baring Brothers & Co. (Dilts)
- Nov. 4, 1839** Whigs sweep Michigan and elect William Woodbridge (1780-1861) Governor. (Sobel)
- Nov. 6, 1839** Canal Commissioners contract for construction of large reservoir on South Fork to supply upper Western Division Canal and end numerous delays caused by low water; earth dam 72 feet high designed by William E. Morris (1812-1875); failure of this earth dam in 1889 causes the Johnstown Flood. (CC)
- Nov. 9, 1839** Canal Commissioners contract for construction of similar reservoir on east side of mountain to feed Juniata Division Canal. (CC)
- Nov. 11, 1839** Canal Commissioners rescind authorization of Nov. 8, 1838, to substitute wood for stone in locks of Erie Extension. (CC)
- Nov. 1839** Bank of Illinois suspends.
- Nov. 19, 1839** Second State Bank of Indiana suspends.
- Nov. 23, 1839** Indiana Board of Internal Improvement orders suspension of work on Madison & Indianapolis Railroad; some contractors continue to work on own account, including finishing the inclined plane at Madison; all other state projects stopped except extension of Wabash & Erie Canal; completed projects includes Wabash & Erie (90 miles), Whitewater Canal (30 miles), Central Canal (9 miles), Madison &

Indianapolis Railroad (28 miles), and 41 miles of turnpike between New Albany and Paoli; 290 miles of works left incomplete; \$8 million spent.

- Nov. 25, 1839** Little Miami Railroad reports that it has been unable to negotiate a loan from Greene County on security of the Cincinnati bonds, but was able to get loan on individual pledges of directors for \$12,000 at 6%; to apply for state loan. (MB)
- Fall 1839** Water admitted to Susquehanna & Tide Water Canal. (Verify)
- Fall 1839** Whitewater & Cincinnati Canal Company suspends work because of failure to collect installments on stock.
- Dec. 6, 1839** First locomotive runs over line to bypass Columbia inclined plane; not fully used until next spring. (PubLdgr)
- Dec. 8, 1839** Alexander Johnston Cassatt (1839-1906), seventh PRR President, born at Pittsburgh; son of Robert Cassatt, a banker and later Mayor of Allegheny City, and Katherine Kelso Cassatt; family name was Dutch-Huguenot; originally "Cossart" and later "Cassat". (Davis)
- Dec. 9, 1839** Philadelphia & Reading Railroad ("Reading") opens for revenue service between Reading and foot of Belmont Plane; runs over Columbia Railroad and City Railroad to depot at southeast corner of Broad & Cherry Streets; first test run with a mixed train of 100 cars drawn by locomotive *Gowan & Marx* was Dec. 5. (Hare, Brks&SchlkJrnl)
- Dec. 10, 1839** Governor Carlin of Illinois, an anti-bank Democrat, in message to special session of Legislature, notes that state debt is \$13.1 million; if all public works completed would be \$21.8 million; Legislature then votes to abandon all construction.
- Dec. 11, 1839** Meeting held at Philadelphia Board of Trade to oppose removal of City Railroad from Market Street. (PubLdgr)
- Dec. 12, 1839** New Jersey Railroad Board reports that it has purchase steamboat *Stonington* for ferry for \$9,000. (MB)
- Dec. 15, 1839** Pioneer Line begins recovering \$16,500 loan to Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad by withholding tolls.
- Dec. 17, 1839** PW&B Board reports has erected Newkirk Column; authorizes purchase of lot adjacent to depot at southeast corner of 11th & Market Streets. (MB)

- Dec. 17, 1839** Schuylkill Bank of Philadelphia fails after revelation of large embezzlement and diversion of funds by its cashier, Hosea J. Levis; Levis had fraudulently issued \$1.08 million in stock of Bank of Kentucky, of which Schuylkill Bank is agent and for which it is later found liable. (PubLdgr)
- Dec. 19, 1839** Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad ceases operation of Owings Mills Branch in winter from mid-Dec. through end of March because of poor track, difficulty in clearing of snow, and light traffic; remains closed in winter throughout 1840s. (BaltAm)
- Dec. 1839** Only three chartered and four general-law banks left in Michigan.
- 1839** Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company moves Philadelphia terminus from Walnut Street to Market Street. (C&C - verify - see earlier)
- 1839** Anthracite-burning "Crab" type locomotive built by Ross Winans of Baltimore placed on Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad; by end of 1839, Philadelphia & Columbia has four anthracite and five bituminous coal-burning locomotives in service.
- 1839** Bill to enlarge Union Canal at state expense defeated in Legislature for second year in a row. (AR)
- 1839** William E. Morris, Engineer of Allegheny Portage Railroad, recommends building roofs over inclined planes to stop rapid deterioration of hemp ropes. (CC)
- 1839** Canal Commissioners order removal of Dam & Lock No. 1 of Franklin Line at Sugar Creek on complaint of landowners.
- 1839** John Bingham of the Despatch Line establishes own freight line on Main Line of Public Works.
- 1839** Baltimore & Susquehanna relaid with T-rail.
- 1839** Herman Haupt appointed Principal Assistant Engineer on Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad. (Wilson)
- 1839** B&O Board adopts location to Connellsville, Pa., whence it can go to either Wheeling or Pittsburgh. (Dilts)
- 1839** Maryland unable to sell its state bonds in Europe; \$3 million each in bonds given to B&O and C&O Canal, who sell them for whatever

they can get.

1839 Michigan places \$5 million loan with United States Bank of Pennsylvania.

1839 Ohio floats \$2.42 million canal loan.

1839 Capital of Illinois moved from Vandalia to Springfield.